PART II: WAR

1. Absence

The withdrawal of Achilles in anger from the fighting at Troy, after his quarrel with Agamemnon, and the run of Trojan victories which follow and continue until the death of Patroclus, constitute the narrative core of the *Iliad*. The Trojans saw their good luck as the result simply of the loss to the Greeks of their greatest warrior: so Polydamas in *Iliad* XVIII:

> So long as this man was angry with noble Agamemnon,
> For so long were the Achaians easier to fight against . . .

But a Trojan counter-attack was also the will of Zeus, and Homer invents an Olympian story to show this. Achilles' mother Thetis appeals to Zeus on her son's behalf, reminding him of an obligation she put him under (another Homeric invention, apparently) when she helped him put down a rebellion. Zeus acknowledges the obligation although he is aware that his consort Hera/Juno already thinks he is too pro-Trojan, and agrees to Thetis's request to allow Trojan victories 'until the Achaians do my son honour and exalt him from recompense'. Zeus does not do much about his promise until *Iliad* VIII, when there begin two days of fighting dominated (despite some Greek counter-attacks) by the Trojans. After book XVIII, when Patroclus is dead, Achilles and Agamemnon are reconciled and the Trojans' cruel, delusory run of victories peters out with Hector's death. In the returning symmetry of book XXIV it is Zeus who summons Thetis, and warns her that the gods have lost patience with Achilles. His honour has been sufficiently redeemed: he must

ransom Hector's body. The wrath is over, and Zeus's promise fulfilled. Troy survives, but not for much longer.

The *Aeneid*, too, starts with a promise by the supreme deity to the mother of the poem's hero. In book I, Jupiter reassured Venus that his promise to give the Trojans empire without end still stood, despite apparent set-backs to Aeneas engineered by Juno. Now in IX fighting breaks out during Aeneas's absence, and there are some Italian victories. But Aeneas is not absent out of wrath or pique, and the war starts against, not in fulfilment of, the will of Jupiter: *quae contra uetitum discordia?*[1]

Book IX begins with a transitional verse linking the narrative to VIII, which ended with Aeneas receiving the magic Shield from Venus to Caere on his way north to seek Etruscan reinforcements. He forms an alliance with the Etruscan king Tarchon, though we do not see this in VIII, nor do we see Aeneas again until he returns to the war in X at the head of his new contingent of Etruscan allies.

There follow three successive spondaic lines charged with a sense of foreboding:

> Irim de caelo misit Saturnia Iuno
> audacem ad Turnum. luco tum forte parentis
> Pilumni Turnus sacrata ualle sedebat.
>
> *Iris was sent from heaven by Juno Saturn's daughter*
> *To Turnus the bold. By chance in the ancestral grove*
> *Of Pilumnus in a holy valley Turnus rested.*

Turnus now moves to the centre of the narrative. Again, the syntax controls and directs the reader's shaping of the narrative. Turnus's name is repeated, first in the accusative, then in the nominative. The effect is like that of a cinema camera tracking forward. The sequence is: Juno–Iris–Turnus. The verse depicting the sending of Iris by Juno is repeated from 5.606, where it inaugurates the episode in

[1] See ch. 4 below. Jupiter speaks these words at the council of the gods at the beginning of X (line 8). *Discordia* means for the implied reader nothing less than civil war, not 'the quarrels of gods as well as men' (Conington *ad loc.*).

which the Trojan women, weary of travel, set fire to the ships. Now another attempt is made to burn the ships, this time by Turnus. This attempt is foiled by their miraculous transformation into nymphs. The model for this miracle is the transformation of a ship into a stone cliff in *Odyssey* XIII.[2] Such an Odyssean marvel may seem strangely placed at the beginning of Virgil's Iliad, though paranormal manifestations and phenomena in which natural laws are suspended occur also in the *Iliad*. Here we find yet another of Jupiter's promises fulfilled: he had promised the goddess Cybele that the ships, made from pine trees sacred to her, will be turned into sea nymphs when their mission is completed.

What Virgil has done in this episode is to modify passages in the *Iliad* in which Hector does succeed (after one foiled attempt) in setting fire to the Greek ships, as part of the damage inflicted on the Greeks during Achilles' absence.[3] The motif of Aeneas's absence is stated at the opening of IX by Iris, when she calls Turnus to arms: *nunc tempus equos, nunc poscere currus*, 'time now to call up horses and chariots'. The fighting in this book goes the Rutulians' way in Aeneas's absence, just as the fighting in *Iliad* VIII–XVI goes largely the Trojans' way in Achilles' absence. Structurally, the metamorphosis of the ships is complex and ambivalent. Turnus's attempt to fire them is thwarted by a piece of predetermined mythological invention, but the ships vanish none the less. Yet another bit of Troy is removed from the tale. Aeneas no longer needs the ships. They have brought him home, and he will return to the fight triumphantly in book X at the head of a new Etruscan navy.

But Turnus sees the miracle as an omen in support of his cause. 'The Trojans', he cries exultantly, 'are now trapped. The seas are closed to them. And this land is in my power. Nor do I fear the promises of fate; it is enough, the Trojans have

[2] In the *Odyssey* Poseidon, with Zeus's consent, turns to stone the Phaeacian ship which has conveyed Odysseus to Ithaca, when it is heading back for the harbour at Scheria. Again, the ship is metamorphosed after its mission is accomplished: it is really a piece of spite by Poseidon.

[3] *Iliad* 8.215–20; end of 15; 16.122–9.

touched our shore. Now it is my turn to play my role, to destroy this hated people who have taken my bride, to take arms as once the sons of Atreus did. I do not need Vulcan to make me armour, as Achilles did, nor a thousand ships, nor a wooden horse to hide in. I shall fight in the light and burn down their camp, as once they say the walls of Troy, built by the hand of Neptune, subsided in flames.'

The grandeur, the vaunting and the challenge of this speech recall many heroic orations in the *Iliad*. The reader will also note the deliberate reference to the Iliadic quarrel over Helen. Turnus is made to project himself into an Iliadic role. The Sibyl in VI prophesied that Aeneas would find a new Achilles in Latium, but it is characteristic of the Virgilian mode of secondary epic that the characters in the story assume various roles. As we read on into the Virgilian Iliad, the patterns and motifs of the Homeric *Iliad* can be continually detected under the surface, like the traces of an earlier text on a palimpsest. These allusions are not just decorative or rhetorical. We embark now on a carefully constructed recension of the *Iliad*, and particularly of its central block, books VIII–XVI.

Turnus finishes his speech and dismisses his troops for supper and sleep. This directs the reader to *Iliad* VIII (the 'unfinished battle' book in which Zeus's promise to Thetis begins to be fulfilled), when Hector dismisses his troops after the abortive attempt to fire the Greek ships.

Night falls on the Rutulian camp. Structurally and thematically, this is a re-enactment of the famous night-piece at the end of *Iliad* VIII. During this night, which lasts through *Iliad* IX and X, two missions are undertaken: the unsuccessful embassy to Achilles by Odysseus, Ajax and Phoenix, which ends in his refusal to return to the fighting; and an intelligence reconnaissance, by Odysseus and Diomede, during which they capture and kill the Greek spy Dolon and the Thracian king Rhesus and his chiefs and remove their horses. These two episodes, embassy or Presbeia, and reconnaissance or Doloneia, take place in the same night and occupy the ninth and tenth books of the *Iliad*.

The famous ending of *Iliad* VIII depicts the Trojans' night watch after their first successful day's fighting since Zeus began to fulfil his promise to Thetis left in abeyance in books II to VII, which are largely devoted to various introductory and recapitulatory episodes. After this night watch there is to be a run of Trojan victories, during the continued absence of Achilles, which will culminate in book XVI in the death of Patroclus. Virgil has compressed the narrative structure of these books (*Iliad* VIII–XVI) into two books (*Aeneid* IX, X). The night watch of the Rutuli in *Aeneid* IX also marks the start of a run of Italian victories which will culminate in the death of Pallas. Virgil begins this sequence at 9.161. He incorporates a reminiscence of the start of *Iliad* IX, when Homer shifts the scene from the Trojan night watch to the camp of the Greeks, who in their turn set guards while they debate their next move. For in Homer, as we expect, the centre of the action is not the temporarily victorious, ultimately doomed Trojans, but the Greeks, temporarily on the defensive yet destined to triumph, both in the war itself and more immediately in the action of the *Iliad* after Achilles returns.

In *Iliad* IX and X Homer presents two Greek reactions to the Trojan offensive. In *Aeneid* IX, after a Rutulian night scene corresponding to Homer's Trojan night scene at the end of *Iliad* VIII –

> conlucent ignes, noctem custodia ducit
> insomnem ludo.
>
> *The watch fires gleam, in the guard-house they while away*
> *The unsleeping night with dice* –

Virgil takes the implied reader back to *Iliad* IX to show Aeneas's men (as Homer had shown Agamemnon's) wakeful also: not confident and carefree like the Rutuli, not drinking and dicing, but anxious at their leader's absence at a moment of peril.

2. Nisus and Euryalus

The story of Nisus and Euryalus which forms the central section of *Aeneid* IX. although structurally modelled on *Iliad* IX and X, is wholly unhomeric in tone and treatment. In Homer, the embassy and the Doloneia are unrelated save that both take place on the same night and both involve Odysseus. The two episodes are themselves different in tone The embassy is an affair of bitterness and heart-searching Achilles not only rejects Agamemnon's apology and refuses his gifts; he criticises the heroic code itself. 'The coward and the brave man, they have both died alike', he says, in the course of one of the most powerful speeches in the entire *Iliad*, and his refusal to return to the battlefield dominates the whole central section of the epic. The Doloneia, however, is on an altogether lower emotional plane. It takes no cognisance of the embassy just ended; the situation is that which obtained at the end of *Iliad* VIII. Agamemnon cannot sleep; worried about the Trojan offensive he summons a nocturnal war-council, as a result of which Odysseus (who has just returned from seeing Achilles, though there is no reference to this) is despatched with Diomede to try to spy out the enemy's intentions. On the Trojan side Hector makes a similar decision (a piece of rather obvious epic 'doubling') and Dolon is despatched to try to find out if the Achaians are still guarding their ships or have decided on retreat. The events of the Doloneia are never again referred to in the poem[4] and have no apparent effect on the narrative of book XI. where the arming of Agamemnon formally signals the resumption of hostilities.

Virgil combines the Homeric embassy and Doloneia into a single episode the first conspicuous *aristeia* of his Iliad. The entire passage is suffused with the intense mutual affection of Nisus and Euryalus, and it is this which makes it so

[4] See M. M. Willcock, *The Iliad* 295.

characteristic of Virgil. The starting-point of the narrative is that the two are not sent out as spies; they volunteer for a mission of rescue, to inform Aeneas of the danger to the Trojans and to bring him back. Their feeling for each other has already been displayed for the reader of book v, where they play a prominent part in the foot-race. An accidental fall by Nisus, who slips in a pool of blood, offers a prefiguration of book IX:

> Unlucky Nisus stumbled
> In some slippery blood, and already confident of victory
> Failed to keep his footing, overbalanced,
> Fell in the dirt and blood.

Nisus, still on the ground, trips the leading runner and enables Euryalus to win the race. Virgil has projected the love of a friend as obsessive and overriding. He has established the lengths these two will go to, the risks they are prepared to take for each other.

Nisus's love for Euryalus is mirrored in IX. The famous verse

> tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum
>
> *only he loved his unlucky friend too much*

brings back the epithet given to Nisus in V.[5] It also recalls a crucial passage in *Aeneid* I (474–5), where the poet first states a theme which dominates his epic in a way that it does not dominate the *Iliad*: the tragedy of those who die young in battle. Aeneas is in Carthage gazing at the murals in Juno's temple, where scenes from the Trojan war are depicted, among them the death at Achilles' hands of Troilus (not in Homer but from some later part of the cycle):

> parte alia fugiens amissis Troilus armis
> infelix puer atque impar congressus Achilli.

[5] *Aen.* 9.430, 5.328–38

In another scene there's Troïlus running away,
weaponless,
Unlucky boy, no match for Achilles.

The lines introduce two separate but related motifs: the deaths of young men, and unequal combat. They recur throughout the *Aeneid*. In X Pallas and Lausus, both young, both doomed, are not destined to fight each other: 'for each his destiny waits at the hand of a greater foe'.

In Homer the motif of those who die young is not a strong one. There is one famous formulaic epitaph, used of both Patroclus and Hector:

The soul fluttering free of the limbs went down
into death's house
mourning her destiny leaving youth and manhood
behind

But the idea of youth, *hebe*, is not seen as specially poignant. Most of Homer's heroes are in the prime of fighting manhood, seasoned warriors of nearly ten years' campaign experience but in the *Aeneid* a significant distinction is made between chiefs like Aeneas, Turnus and Mezentius, and young, untried heroes like Pallas and Lausus, coming fresh into battle like so many on the western front in the First World War, proteges of older and more experienced soldiers. (We tend to forget that Patroclus, though less greatly born and a lesser warrior than Achilles, was actually older.)

Virgil finds a special pathos in the theme of the young soldier meeting a superior foe Homer does not. 'Patroclus too is dead, and he was a better man than you', says Achilles fiercely to Lycaon just before he kills him (*Iliad* XXI). 'Do you not see what sort of man I am, how beautiful, how big, and I come of a good father and a goddess mother, but on me too death and strong destiny wait, some morning or evening or at high noon.' For Homer, the overriding pathos is simply awareness of mortality, from which none in the *Iliad* is exempt.

Virgil chronicles not a few weeks in a ten-year war but a complete war lasting a few weeks only. Death comes quickly to young men brought up to live in peace. Achilles' epic boast to Lycaon finds an odd echo in *Aeneid* X when Aeneas kills Mezentius's son Lausus. He alludes both to Lausus's youthfulness and to his inadequate prowess:

> Do you go crashing into your own death, taking risks you are too weak for

Aeneas calls Lausus *infelix*, unlucky (cf. Troilus and Nisus) and *miserande puer*, 'pitiful boy', and says it should console him that 'you die at the hand of great Aeneas'.

The phrase *miserande puer* recalls another passage earlier in the *Aeneid* which throws light on the poet's deep sense of tragedy underlying the deaths of the untried. This passage is the description in book VI of Marcellus, Augustus's heir-designate, shown to Aeneas by Anchises in the pageant of heroes in the Elysian fields.

> Fate will let the world glimpse him for a little while only . . .

Marcellus too is called *miserande puer*:[6] that he would have triumphed had he lived links his early death with the untimely deaths of books IX and X. The story of Marcellus depends on the idea of rebirth, a doctrine which does not render the brevity of human life any less sad: indeed it perhaps renders it more so.

> stat sua cuique dies, breue et inreparabile tempus
> omnibus est uitae.[7]
>
> *Determined each man's day, brief and irrecoverable the time*
> *Of life for everyone.*

Those words are spoken in book X by Jupiter to Hercules, in a

[6] *Aen.* 6.882. [7] *Aen.* 10.467–8.

significant context which is also relevant here. Pallas has just sent up a prayer to Hercules, who, as we learnt in VIII, was his father Evander's guest at Pallanteum when he killed the monster Cacus. He has prayed to be allowed to kill Turnus. Hercules is powerless to grant such a prayer; it will take a greater warrior to kill Turnus. Jupiter then speaks the words just quoted, and goes on to refer to his own son Sarpedon, who fell at Troy and he could do nothing, and whose death, moreover, in *Iliad* XVI at the hands of Patroclus led to Patroclus's own death just as in *Aeneid* X the death of Halaesus at the hands of Pallas leads to Pallas's own death. *etiam sua fata uocant*, 'for Turnus too destiny calls', says Jupiter. Throughout Virgil's Iliad, starting with the first *aristeia* and self-sacrifice of Nisus and Euryalus who, like the Romans (called at 8.648, significantly, Aeneadae) on Aeneas's Shield, *pro libertate ruebant*, 'fell in the cause of freedom', the sense of *déjà vu*, already established in the Elysian fields, is overwhelming. For every rebirth there must be yet another death.

The narrative is highly dramatic. The friends are on watch, the fires burn through the night. Nisus speaks, and his opening words are striking in their impatience, as though he can no longer contain himself:

> Do the gods instil in us, Euryalus, this burning
> desire for glory,
> Or is this dreadful longing a god inside us all?

This dreadful longing, *dira cupido*, has already figured in the underworld, in the context of reincarnation. Aeneas asked the shade of Anchises 'whence comes this dreadful longing for the light of life?'[8] The hero who has suffered so much cannot understand how those who have reached the larger air and ampler light of the Elysian fields should wish to be reborn, yet the life-force recurs and fights a regressive death-wish.

Nisus's question has also a larger significance, and one relevant to the entire psychology of heroic epic. Do our

[8] *Aen.* 6.721.

passions come from outside us – *Ate*, the disturber of men's rationality, referred to by Agamemnon – or from within ourselves? The question falls like a shadow across the whole poem, from its opening lines – 'Do heavenly beings really feel such wrath?' – down to the last book and the poet's last question about war-madness: 'Was this your will, Jupiter?'

Nisus's speech shows the same love for Euryalus which he displayed in the foot-race. Again, it is of his friend not of himself that he thinks.

> You can see how sure of things the Rutulians are:
> Hardly a light shines over there, relaxed with drink and sleep
> They've gone to bed. All's quiet. Now listen.
> I've been thinking, and this is my plan.
> Aeneas must be got back – all of us are saying it,
> Somebody's got to go and tell him what's happening.
> If they promise to give you what I shall ask them – as for me,
> The deed itself is glory enough – I think I can find
> A way through the lines by the foot of that hill to Pallanteum.

The Latin is simple and straightforward, the tone direct. But Euryalus insists on going too, and his words seem to pick up the concept of *dira cupido*: for this love of glory is death-bound:

> ĕst hic, est animus lucis contemptor et istum
> qui uita bene credat emi, quo tendis, honorem.
>
> *Here's courage holds cheap the light and thinks that*
> *Glory you go to worth the price of life.*

'Here's courage holds cheap the light': this contempt for life is different from anything we find in the *Iliad*. In Sarpedon's speech to Glaucus, for instance,[9] it is made clear that risks have

[9] *Iliad* 12.310–28.

to be taken because men are mortal: if they were not, there would be no incentive, no point in taking the risks; yet the risks are not taken in order to court death, nor is there any inherent virtue in taking them. For Virgil, though he had access to spiritual consolations unknown to Homer, fate and death conspire to project a tragic sense of life as something to be endured. A pervasive *Weltschmerz* replaces the death-challenging vitality and zest of Homer. In the *Iliad*, the contrast between life and death is absolute. In the *Aeneid* the line between them is often faint and blurred.

The narrative style of *Aeneid* IX is direct and simple, yet quite unhomeric. Virgil had evolved for his early *Eclogues* a technique of supple and translucent elegance.[10] In his maturity he seems to have revived that style, but now it is deeper, plainer, less self-conscious, the pathos and sentiment stronger.

Various modifications of the Homeric narrative structure produce a tauter, more dramatic story. At Homer's war-council the volunteers are already present when the mission is discussed. In Virgil's narrative, the Trojans ponder how to get news of their vulnerable situation to Aeneas. Nisus and Euryalus burst into the tent, their plan ready, and put it across with all the force and enthusiasm of youth. The incentive is with them. The scene is structurally integrated into the Iliadic *Aeneid*, of which indeed it is a paradigm, determining the whole tone and treatment of the war narrative which comprises the poem's last four books.

In Homer, the embassy to Achilles is essential to the monumental *Iliad*, essential to the wrath theme, the Doloneia is not. The Doloneia, such as it is and for what it is worth, is a success, the embassy a failure, since Achilles does not return until much later in the narrative, yet it is the embassy we want to read now, with its long resonant speeches, its bitter insights. The story of Nisus and Euryalus is also a tale of

[10] Whatever terms we use to describe the *Eclogues*, 'they clearly imply a register far removed from that of epic' (see R. G. G. Coleman (ed.), *Vergil: Eclogues* (Cambridge 1977) 26). Not only are the modes of presentation different – the structure of the hexameters, uses and incidence of elision, lexical range, deployment of figures – but the presented worlds are different also.

failure, but not of bitterness or rejection, and the poet's and reader's involvement dramatises the narration and makes possible a transformation of Homer.

> Fortunate pair! If my poem has any power,
> No day shall ever take you from time's memory,
> So long as Aeneas's house by the immovable rock
> of the Capitol
> Shall stand and the fathers of Rome have
> dominion.

In the *Aeneid* the prophetic future occurs frequently in the firs eight books. It virtually disappears from the narrative of IX–XII, the core of the Virgilian Iliad, to return at the end of the poem in the final scene between Jupiter and Juno, which stands in structural and thematic symmetry with the scene between Jupiter and Venus in I, where the promise of *imperium sine fine* is set out. Most of the passages in the future tense in the earlier books take the form of oracular or divine relevations; in VI the implied author speaks as a didactic or philosophical instructor in the Lucretian manner, using as his mouthpiece the character of Anchises: the signal for such passages is picked up by the reader in

> expediam dictis et te tua fata docebo
>
> *I shall disclose, teach you your destiny*

When the Trojan *penates* speak to Aeneas in his sleep and warn him that he must leave Crete and go to Italy (book III) the narrative voice is complicated by the fact that Aeneas is telling his story to Dido. (Students of book IV are apt to forget that Dido received a very early warning of Aeneas's destined goal.) What the *penates* tell Aeneas is couched in the form of an ecphrasis. Again, there is a clear signal for the reader:

> est locus, Hesperiam Graii cognomine dicunt . . .
> hae nobis propriae sedes.

There is a place the Greeks call Western Land:
This is where we belong.

The ancient and fruitful land of Italy, whence Dardanus himself, Troy's royal founder, had originated, enters the narrative. The *nobis* of the *penates* must be enlarged by the implied reader to include the speaker–narrator (Aeneas) and the whole Roman nation, for whom the words carry an emotive trigger, as though for the British the opening bars of 'Land of Hope and Glory' were played. Moreover, the *penates* themselves are only the mouthpiece of Apollo, and their speech to Aeneas begins with him: the signal is *canit*, he prophesies (so too of the Sibyl in VI), but it is also the signal-word for the function of the epic *uates*.

In the later books of the *Aeneid* there are only a few brief incursions into the future, and these are of a special kind, for they are the voice of Virgil himself, making a direct entry into the poem: not as the epic narrator, nor as the instructor or philosopher, nor as the empathising and experiencing 'I' of the poem's great emotive statements, but as the artist conscious of what he is doing. The story of Nisus and Euryalus is told with deep empathy, yet clearly it remains a story, with no independent existence outside the *Aeneid*. Here it must be distinguished from such historical passages as the account of Actium. Thus the poet's claim, 'if my poem has any influence', is a complex kind of statement. The poem's 'influence', its power, lies with the reader, and if there is a reader when the Capitol has fallen, as in fact there is, Virgil might seem actually to have underestimated his power. Horace, too, seems not to have thought about the possibility of Latin surviving Rome. The Augustans circumscribed their art within an apparently limitless order of temporality, the 'eternal' power of Rome, an image so powerful that the implied author did not, perhaps could not, see beyond it. The only image that is more powerful is that of time itself. We get a glimpse of this from Ovid, at the end of the *Metamorphoses*,

perque omnia saecula fama
. . . uiuam

but even Ovid does not envisage any poetic future for his work outside the context of Rome.

Thus the fact that, in the story of Nisus and Euryalus, a piece of epic *aristeia* in the Homeric mode has outlived the *imperium* of which it was supposed to be a preparation, changes the meaning of the passage and of the poem. It comes back into a purely fictional context, and what may seem a reductionist reading (Rome no longer matters, but it remains a good piece of narrative) has in fact set the poem free from its conditional historical context.

In the *Iliad* Helen says of herself and Paris

> We two, on whom Zeus set a vile destiny, so that hereafter
> We shall be made into song for men of the future.

This is a clear reference to the tradition of heroic song of which the monumental *Iliad* is itself the culmination. Helen's words are guaranteed by the fact that they appear in precisely that song for men of the future which they prophesy. The figure is surprisingly sophisticated, and recurs in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* when Cleopatra, a character in a play, speaks as though she were the 'real' historical Cleopatra prophesying that one day she will be portrayed on the stage by a boy-actor. But Cleopatra's lines (act v, sc. ii, 213–20) differ from Helen's in that Helen foresees that her shame will be the immortal subject of heroic song; Cleopatra foresees that her real greatness will be, not immortalised but diminished and trivialised in art. What both passages share is an ironic self-awareness which is the voice, not just of an epic narrator but of an implied author who directs his readers towards an awareness of the metaphysics of fiction.

There is no instance in Homer of the poet himself claiming to have preserved an event by his song, and this is surely evidence of that oral tradition on which the song depends.

Homer is fascinated by the fact that the past can be remembered. The awareness his own heroes show of the recording process has been incorporated in the narrative by himself as monumental composer (though it may of course have been traditional). The pictures of the Trojan war embroidered by Helen, or Achilles' song of the deeds of heroes, are a kind of instant epic, or at least invite the reader to some such metaphorical reading. They show the beginning of a concept of history, of an exploration of the relation between events and their representation. But the motif of the artist, the conscious 'I', as the preserver and immortaliser of events is a topos of post-Homeric literature, from Pindar to the Renaissance. Virgil still pays lip service to the remembering Muses. Thus he twice has passages beginning

> Pandite nunc Helicona, deae, cantusque mouete
>
> *Open the gates of Helicon, Muses. Let my poem tell*

which are based on Homer. But he also has the more personal, Alexandrian form of invocation, in which the emphasis has changed from the song to its creator (9.525–8)

> Vos, O Calliope, precor, aspirate canenti
> quas ibi tum ferro strages, quae funera Turnus
> ediderit, quem quisque uirum demiserit Orco,
> et mecum ingentis oras euoluite belli.
>
> *You, O Calliope, I pray, inspire your poet singing*
> *What deaths by the sword and what demises Turnus*
> *Dealt out, what heroes each man sent to the underworld,*
> *And with me unroll the mighty documentary of war.*

In the epitaph for Nisus and Euryalus Virgil combines a pledge for the future – 'so long as . . . so shall' is a rhetorical formula familiar in various forms, in the protestations of lovers as well as in claims for the power of poetry to preserve the memory of past deeds – with another rhetorical figure, the direct address by the poet to his character:

Fortunate pair! If my poem has any power,
No day shall ever take you from time's memory . . .

He uses this figure again at the death of Lausus in X:

Here death's cruel accident and your most glorious deeds –
If the antique past may be credited with such work –
Yes, and yourself shall be my song . . .

Earlier in X, when Pallas, the principal character of the Virgilian Iliad, is killed, there is a more complex version of the figure:

Ignorant is man's mind of destiny and the future,
And can't control itself when fortune boosts it.
For Turnus the time shall come when he'll pray for Pallas
To be unharmed, give anything for that, loathe
This day, these spoils . . .
O you who return to your father, source of much sorrow and pride,
This was your first day of war, your last also.

Here, after a generalising comment on man's hubris and blindness to the future, the poet (not narrator but self-conscious author) considers Turnus in his moment of exultation, undercutting the narrative by jumping ahead to a point it has not yet reached, the point of Turnus's peripeteia. He emphasises Iliadic precedent and structure by echoing the warnings of the dying Patroclus to Hector and the dying Hector to Achilles. The poet then addresses the dead Pallas, intensifying further the emotional involvement the reader already shares. Homer, too, had employed the figure of apostrophe,[11] direct address to a character, most remarkably in

[11] On the tension between the narrative and the apostrophic modes see Culler, *Pursuit* 149–50. Apostrophe introduces a 'special temporality which is the set of all moments at which writing can say "now"'. The apostrophising author, himself a figure of the reader, 'substitutes a temporality of discourse for a referential temporality'. See also Prologue, 27–30.

XVI when he addresses Patroclus as his death approaches him: the reader is thus made to feel that that death, as a narrative climax, is approaching him in his act of reading.

> So in your fury you pounced, Patroclus . . .
> There, Patroclus, the end of your life was shown forth . . .
> And now dying you answered him, O rider Patroclus

The effect of these addresses is to create a new relationship between the singer and the song. For a moment the narrator, the impersonal epic bard, vanishes, to be replaced by another figure, who is not only controlling the narrative but is intensely and consciously aware (as the hearer/reader must now through this control become) of having reached a moment in the narrative in which feeling is too strong to be left to speak wholly inside the story. Our sense of grief for the doom of Patroclus cannot be wholly subsumed through narrative (however empathetic its presentation) nor through the grief of Achilles (although it is expressed in violent action).

Thus, although Virgil has not originated vatic empathy, he extends and intensifies its function. Our sense of grief for the fallen young heroes in the *Aeneid* is not wholly subsumed in the grief of those (chiefly Aeneas himself) who mourn them. The author interposes an intense emotional pressure, and not merely the emotional pressure which is generated by a crucial moment in the narrative, as Patroclus's fate prompted Homer to a bold use of the vocative, but an empathy so pervasive and sustained that the reader may find himself constructing out of an epic of traditional heroic prowess another, very different kind of epic, an epic of sensibility, in which reactions to events become as important as the narration of the events themselves, and perhaps more important.

Perhaps the most striking instances in the *Aeneid* of extended passages of vatic empathy are to be found in the two flower-similes which elaborate the death of Euryalus in IX and the funeral of Pallas in XI.

Homer has a flower-simile in *Iliad* VIII,[12] illustrating the death of Gorgythion, who is hit by an arrow intended for Hector. His head droops and is likened to the head of a poppy drooping under its own weight or that of rain. The simile works on the usual 'tangent' principle of primary epic: tenor and vehicle[13] meet at one point, even though divergent before and after. The tangent offers a verbal, not a visual parallel (which would often be absurd or grotesque), almost, indeed, a kind of pun. The delaying force of this simile, with its return to the tenor ('so his head bent slack . . .') keeps the vignette of this death of an unimportant character (the arrow was not even meant for him) a little longer in our minds and singles it out for pathos. The simile reminds us that in death all, even minor characters, become significant.

Another related simile in *Iliad* XVII,[14] illustrating the death of Euphorbos (an episode to which Virgil later makes an important structural allusion) is also relevant to the *Aeneid*. The falling hero, with his beautiful hair, is likened to an olive sapling raised and watered by a man in an exposed place, blossoming forth and then ripped out by a sudden violent storm-wind. Again, the tangent is not a visual detail – Euphorbos is not *like* a sapling – but the sapling was carefully nurtured by the husbandman as was Euphorbos by his father, and to no avail: both plant and hero were prematurely torn from life. The vulnerability of the sapling is seen by the reader as appropriate also to Euphorbos. Menelaus's spear destroys

[12] *Iliad* 8.306–8.

[13] 'Tenor' and 'vehicle' are the terms coined by I. A. Richards in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford 1936), lecture 5, to denote the two ideas present in any metaphor (e.g. 'life's but a walking shadow', in which 'life' is the tenor, 'shadow' the vehicle). The tenor is thus the main subject or purport of the discourse, the vehicle the borrowed or metaphorical image. Richards argues that 'the co-presence of the vehicle and tenor results in a meaning (to be clearly distinguished from the tenor) which is not attainable without their interaction'. It seems to me that these terms may usefully be extended to cover the simile, where, especially in Virgil, it is clear that the total meaning of the discourse when enriched by the simile is different from the meaning without the simile or indeed of the separate meanings of discourse and simile, in so far as these can be isolated.

[14] *Iliad* 17.53–60.

him as suddenly and as violently as the wind had blasted the young tree.

The incorporation of such scenes and moods into the world of the *Iliad*, scenes and moods from ordinary life and its set-backs, life going on far from Troy and at the same time as heroes are dying, is one of the tasks of the reader in creating the total meaning of Homer's war epic. Life does not stop when a hero dies. But the simile has another strange tangential point which may strike the modern reader. The sapling was reared in a lonely place, and Euphorbos has gone to the loneliness of death. It is in any case an over-simplification to say that Homeric similes are independent of the scenes they decorate; although Homer's art is sequential not simultaneous, I believe that, if the simile was the poet's display piece, it was the audience's chance, too, to exercise its powers of holding in the mind two separate but co-ordinate pictures, the one enriching the other.

Virgil goes further: but how? The death of Euryalus moves the reader partly because Nisus was there when his friend died; in the narration the simile links the dying hero to his friend who then makes his last death-charge. The three lines about the flower separate the friends in death yet also unite them, in a perspective of grief. The simile also – and deliberately – places the end of this passage inside that world of art which, in his epitaph, the implied author declares shall immortalise the story as long as Rome lasts. The simile enacts 'whatever my songs can do'. The poet's epitaph becomes more than a directive to the implied reader; it challenges and transcends its own confines; it looks beyond those past readings to all possible future readings, including ours, which have outlasted Roman power.

When in book x Virgil came to describe the death of Pallas he had moved far into his Iliadic narrative, into the very heart of his Patrocleia. There is no simile, no empathetic perspective of friendship. Pallas dies far from any friend, with only the gloating Turnus to despatch his soul. The poet's epitaph this time comments directly on the end of the poem

and on the end of every reading of it. The time will indeed come for Turnus to regret killing Pallas, it will come in XII, and it is to this end of his epic and our reading of it that the poet specifically refers. The pathos of Pallas's death is felt most strongly in the epiphonema 'this was your first day of war, and your last'. There is no mediating presence, no Nisus, no Anchises speaking of Marcellus in the Elysian fields and associating the dead-unborn youth with flowers. There is an unfinishedness in this death, not just because of the account with Turnus which will be settled in XII. The full pathos of response is held back for the funeral in XI. The reader will there need the fullest empathy of grief. A flower-simile in X would have made Pallas's death a repetition of Euryalus's. But in XI, when the dead Pallas is lifted on to the bier, Virgil likens him to a soft violet or drooping hyacinth, picked by a maiden, its beauty cut off from earth's nourishment, but not yet faded. This is a more elaborate version of the Homeric flower-simile in IX. There are more tangents: Pallas had not yet lost his beauty, he was picked off, but the virgin-reaper is a transference, for virginity belongs to Pallas, not to Turnus, and the flexibility of Latin word order aids the transference:

> qualem uirgineo demessum pollice florem
> seu mollis uiolae seu languentis hyacinthi,
> cui neque fulgor adhuc nec dum sua forma recessit,
> non iam mater alit tellus uirisque ministrat.
>
> *Just like a flower a girl has picked,*
> *A violet maybe or a drooping lily,*
> *Its sheen, its graceful shape still linger,*
> *But it draws no life now from the earth that bore it.*

This is the world of erotic elegy: Virgil alludes to the closing simile of Catullus 11, in which the poet's rejected love is compared to the flower on the edge of the meadow caught by the casual ploughshare. Virgil had said a pessimistic farewell to the world of erotic pastoral in his tenth *Eclogue*:

nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis
tela inter media atque aduersos detinet hostis.

Now by love's uncontrollable force am I held
In war's cruel arms under the fire of the foe.

The madness of love has driven the disconsolate Gallus, as in his eleventh poem Catullus was driven by his unfaithful mistress, to war. Nisus and Euryalus have remained lovers in a world of war and conflict: the fragile, pessimistic eroticism of pastoral has not merely survived transplantation into heroic epic, it has flowered and flourished in the stronger context.

The flower-similes distance the reader from the narrated act of death. The analogy between human mortality and the mortality of flowers, grass, leaves, is one of the oldest figures in 'wisdom' literature, found in Homer and in the Old Testament. The cutting and picking of flowers is a commonplace of shared experience, as is their destruction by nature. An epic about war turns deaths into commonplaces, may even seem to be in danger of exploiting death for narrative sensation. Nor is the reaction 'it's only a story' an adequate defence. The mimetic analogy with historical experience is too insistent for that. We may not want to linger in our reading too long on the chronicled deaths. But we are invited to linger on the flower-similes. They operate as narrative figures, breaking up an assault on the reader's sensibilities which might become insupportable. Thus the similes are not just self-indulgences of the poets, whether of Homer elaborating or adding to a rich traditional repertoire of illustrative vignettes, or Virgil refining and extending this tradition in accordance with the Alexandrian tastes of his implied reader. The juxtaposition of simile and narrative requires the reader to construct a meaning for the entire epic in which the sensibilities are fully stretched. Words like *seu*, *qualem*, signalling the start of a simile, alert the reader to change, but to spend too long on the similes, or to extrapolate them, is to sentimentalise one's response. The single flower, momentarily isolated, forces us to think of a

single death, in the series of deaths repeated infinitely through legend and history.[15]

3. Siege

The story of Nisus and Euryalus forms the centrepiece of book IX, which, like so many books of the *Aeneid*, has a triadic structure. The long final section, describing the assault on the Trojan camp, marks the first narrative of general fighting in the *Aeneid*. It is written in the poet's grandest epic style. It offers not only a re-enactment of the *Iliad*, but also a continuation of it. History repeats itself, but in each repetition a new element is found. There is development and extension. Early in the passage, the Volsci, allies of Turnus led by Camilla, mount the first assault on the camp, and the Trojans find themselves once again in a situation with which they are only too familiar.

adsueti longo muros defendere bello

They are

Well used to defending their walls in a long war

The spondaic line, as so often in the *Aeneid*, slows down the action and the reader: there is a narrowing of focus. The reader feels the static weight of perpetual defensive campaigns pressing on the Trojans; behind the single verse is the whole of the *Iliad*, and with it something else – the implied Augustan reader's awareness of Rome herself having passed through a historical time of what must have seemed perpetual defensiveness, against Etruscans, Gauls, Carthaginians, and the enemy within herself.

The attack culminates in a striking passage in which Turnus is actually shut up inside the Trojan gates by Pandarus,

[15] For a critical discussion of the death of Euryalus see W. R. Johnson, *Darkness Visible* (Berkeley 1976) 59–66. On the flower-simile, see D. West, 'Multiple Correspondence Similes in the *Aeneid*', *JRS* 59 (1969) 47.

perhaps an allusion to the wooden horse in which the Trojans had foolishly and fatally shut their enemy within their own gates. This time, however, there will be a reprieve. Another mighty spondaic line marks Pandarus's efforts to secure the gates:

> portam ui multa conuerso cardine torquet
> obnixus latis umeris, multosque suorum
> moenibus exclusos duro in certamine linquit;
> ast alios secum includit recipitque ruentis,
> demens, qui Rutulum in medio non agmine regem
> uiderit inrumpentem ultroque incluserit urbi,
> immanem ueluti pecora inter inertia tigrim.
>
> *With mighty force he turns the gate on its hinge*
> *Using his shoulders, leaves many of his own army*
> *Outside the walls, unprotected in the struggle,*
> *But others he shuts in with him as they rush headlong,*
> *Fool, not to see that charging in their midst was King*
> *Turnus,*
> *And he actually shut him inside with them,*
> *Like shutting a tiger in with cattle.*

Book IX begins the *aristeia* of Turnus. The model for this is the *aristeia* of Hector in the Trojan breakthrough in *Iliad* XII. But the relation between Aeneas and Turnus and their Homeric archetypes Achilles and Hector is a complex one. Turnus plays both roles; so does Aeneas. The fluctuation of the Homeric roles is an important element in the structure of Virgil's Iliad. And there is a good reason for it. For this is a war which nobody loses. After the defeat of Turnus the two sides, Latins and Trojans, indigenous and immigrant, will become one nation. Thus the Homeric concepts of victory and defeat are in a sense irrelevant in the *Aeneid*, or they are transcended. As a Trojan, Aeneas avenges the death of Hector and is a second Hector, but this time a victorious one. Turnus is, in the words of the Sibyl's prophecy to Aeneas in *Aeneid* VI, a second Achilles born in Latium awaiting a second Troy: but this time,

if he is Achilles, he will die, as indeed did Homer's Achilles, whose self-awareness that by staying in Troy he is doomed (he often threatens to go home but cannot resist playing out his hand against fate) adds much to the tragic power of the *Iliad*.

In book IX, the absent Aeneas is playing the role of the absent Achilles which in Iliadic terms works in with Turnus's replaying of the role of Hector on the offensive. Yet when Turnus finds himself inside the enemy walls he naturally recasts himself as Achilles, for the Trojans are now on the defensive as the Greeks were temporarily during Hector's *aristeia*. When Pandarus taunts him

> This is not the stronghold of your native Ardea.
> You are in the enemy camp and you can't get out

his reply comes pat:

> You'll be able to tell Priam that you found here
> another Achilles.

But Turnus's triumph, like that of Hector in the *Iliad*, is short-lived. As Achilles returned, so will Aeneas.

Virgil's Trojans have just escaped from the most famous military defeat in the ancient world. Their role as challengers in Latium (for so they have now unwillingly become) must have seemed to the Italian leaders fairly incredible, and naturally elicits various unflattering sneers at their military record, most notably in the taunts of Turnus's brother-in-law Numanus in the last section of book IX. He refers sneeringly to the Trojans' defeat at the hands of the Achaians, and asks them if they are not ashamed to face a second disaster, not this time at the hands of the Greeks but of a much tougher people, *patiens operum paruoque adsueta iuuentus*, 'young, used to hard work and roughing it'. If the Trojans could be beaten by the Greeks, who in Augustan times were not regarded as a race of warriors, how can they have the nerve to take on the Italians? All this is addressed to the implied Augustan reader. Virgil's account of the tough (*duri*) Italians in Numanus's speech carries the same moral implications as the portrait of the hard-

working Italian farmer in his second *Georgic*; there is the same contrast between simplicity and effeminate luxury.[16] Just as the farmer is the antitype of the city-dweller with his fine house and dependence on foreign luxuries, so the Italian is the antitype of the Trojan, who is effeminate in dress, oriental in origin, devoted to the worship of strange gods and goddesses, especially the Magna Mater (Great Mother): it is a deliberate irony of the poet's that earlier in IX we have seen the women of Latinus's city, under the influence of Juno–Allecto, behave in the uncontrolled and orgiastic fashion now attributed to the Trojans, who are first called *Phryges* (a people despised by the Augustans for their effeminacy) and then *Phrygiae*, Phrygian women. So in the *Iliad* Thersites sneered at the Achaians as women, and Priam after Hector's death referred with contempt to his other sons as heroes of the dance-floor. Paris's preference for love-making over fighting is also mentioned in the *Iliad* several times, notably in III,[17] and the metamorphosis of Aeneas himself into a second Paris, ready to take another man's wife, is another element in the manipulation of figures in the poem. Aeneas must move through the roles of Paris (discredited) and Hector (defeated), and finally reassume the role of Achilles, ousting Turnus.

So Turnus will see the role of Achilles slip from his grasp when victory seemed certain. What defeats him is finally Aeneas, but before that, his *caedis insana cupido*, 'crazy lust for slaughter'. The madness of war, symbolised earlier in VII by the visitations of Allecto, sweeps over the victorious hero; instead of concentrating on strategy, he behaves like an old-fashioned Homeric hero obsessed with self-displaying prowess. He kills many Trojans, but in Roman eyes this *aristeia* is magnificent but it is not war. The reader will think continually of the ten-year siege of Troy, ended not by any *aristeia*, but a ruse, an intelligence strategy.

Virgil modifies the *Iliad* in many ways, not the least important of which is that he passes judgement, through the

[16] *Georg.* 2.458–74. For bibliography see Williams (ed)., *Georgics* (1979) 173.
[17] *Iliad* 2.235, 24.261, 3.54–7.

unsatisfactory and interrupted attack in VIII, then the resumed and greater *aristeia* of XII, XV and XVI. In XV the exhortation of Nestor to the Achaians to acquit themselves like men is the model for Mnestheus's exhortation in *Aeneid* IX. In the *Aeneid*, the Rutulian attack in the Trojan camp is interrupted by the divine intervention of Iris.[20] Turnus, exhausted by personal vendetta, retreats at the moment of potential triumph (another Homeric echo: Ajax under fire in *Iliad* XVI). In the ebb and flow of attack and counter-attack which articulate the enormous narrative of the *Iliad*, the unfinished battle book of *Iliad* VIII offers a check to the Trojan offensive which surges forward again through the central books of the poem. Virgil has a much shorter narrative span for his Iliad, four books, into which he compresses the broad outline of the Homeric conflict from books VIII to XXII; his structure of movement and counter-movement is sharper, less wayward, tighter, he pays scrupulous attention to the laws of cause and effect and to military probability. He does not try, nor would he have been able, to represent the multiplicity of views, voices, characters, perspectives, the sheer density of Homer, a poet working with an enormous mass of traditional material in which the emphases continually shift within and around the narrative core, never quite lost sight of for long, the choice or perhaps the invention of Homer himself, the story of the wrath of Achilles.

The endings and beginnings of books in a *carmen perpetuum* ('continuous poem') are of special significance. They expect, and bear, close scrutiny. They carry the reader across gaps, allowing him either to pause in his reading or to continue. They articulate changes in time and place. They pick up echoes, anticipate or confirm parallels and correspondences, bring into the mind images and symbols from an earlier point in the narrative or from a later point recalled from earlier readings. The river Tiber is an important symbol in the *Aeneid*. It is the Simois and Xanthos of the Italian Iliad, in the

[20] Iris also figures in *Iliad* VIII, though it is not she who interrupts Hector's *aristeia* but nightfall, which supervenes during an argument between the gods.

prophetic words of the Sibyl *multo spumantem sanguine*, 'foaming with much blood' (its fellow river is the Numicus, where Aeneas's death and translation occurred). It is the way by which Aeneas reaches the site of Rome. It forms the pastoral transition of the opening passage of *Aeneid* VII. It dominates the first section of VIII, in which Aeneas prays for protection to the personified and manifest Tiberinus:

> O father Tiber with your sacred stream,
> Receive Aeneas and keep him safe from peril at the last.

Now at the end of IX it receives Turnus, washes his wounds, bears him back safe to his comrades. The word *laetum* is strikingly and perhaps strangely applied to Turnus in the last line of IX; it was a key word for the receptive, eager and optimistic Aeneas of book VIII. But Virgil needs to emphasise that the river of Italy receives and succours all her sons, indigenous no less than immigrant. Structurally, the end of IX takes us back to the pastoral opening of VII and completes the third quarter of the epic and the first half of the Iliadic *maius opus*. It makes a strong and historically significant reference to the river as a source of succour. It offers a decrescendo in the narrative leading us briefly away from the war and preparing us, by a strikingly dramatic transition, to read the opening of X, the council of the Olympian gods, which grandly ushers in the last movement of the poem.

Thus in *Aeneid* IX Virgil has begun his Iliad, his *maius opus*, and also the task of writing the Homeric wrath theme out of his Iliad. But in writing out the wrath theme he did not write out wrath. There is much wrath in the last books of the *Aeneid*, and Aeneas himself does not escape it, but it is the wrath of Achilles against Hector, not against Agamemnon. When in *Aeneid* X Aeneas returns to the fight he returns in triumph at the head of fresh Etruscan troops. Homer's Achilles also returned to the fighting in *Iliad* XX, at the head of his Myrmidons. But he returned after and because of Patroclus's death. Aeneas returns from an absence prompted not by wrath

and pique and refusal to fight (unthinkable in a hero renowned alike for *pietas* and military prowess) but by military necessity. He has been behaving not like a sulking Homeric hero but like a Roman *dux*. And he returns to the war before the death of Pallas. Indeed he cannot prevent that death; it lies heavy on his heart throughout the sombre eleventh book. Pallas has been entrusted to his protection. But he did not cause his death, as Achilles' wrath had let Patroclus die. Virgil had to write the wrath theme out of his Iliad, for the enormous and paranoid egotism of Achilles was inappropriate to a Stoic hero and father-figure of the Roman nation.

4. The council of the gods

Knauer has argued[21] that the model in Homer for the scene on Olympus with which *Aeneid* x opens is the scene between Achilles and Patroclus at the start of *Iliad* xvi. Certainly *Aeneid* x corresponds structurally to *Iliad* xvi. In his telescoped and speeded-up Iliad Virgil has reached his Patrocleia. There are a number of parallels. But there are also significant modifications. Achilles does not return in the Patrocleia, though the appearance of Patroclus on the battlefield in his armour (which causes many of the warriors to believe Achilles has indeed returned)[22] constitutes a kind of mock- or shadow-return of the hero. In *Aeneid* x Aeneas returns, in a grandly resonant passage, at the head of his Etruscan allies, *before* the death of Pallas. The catalogue of these new Etruscan allies corresponds to the catalogue of the Myrmidons who follow Patroclus into battle in *Iliad* xvi. At a moment of crisis in both poems reinforcements are introduced into the narrative.

But it is clearly important to understand why Virgil needed a change of scene to Olympus at the start of his Patrocleia. It is as valuable to study the differences between the openings of the two books as to draw attention to their structural

[21] *Die Aeneis* 296–8. [22] *Iliad* 16.278–83.

resemblance. Indeed, it is possible to over-stress the structural parallel here. There is an unsurpassable human sadness in the encounter between Achilles, who will not fight, and Patroclus, who will fight and die. Patroclus weeps because the Achaians are losing good men. He begs Achilles to act, or, if he is forbidden by pride or scruple, to allow *him* to lead the Myrmidons, who are fresh and unweary (like the Etruscans whom Aeneas will lead into battle in x). Proleptically, Patroclus's tears dominate the opening of *Iliad* XVI; it is characteristic of him (we think of his selflessness in *Iliad* XI when he pauses in his mission to Achilles to administer first aid to the wounded Eurypylos) to weep for others, though himself doomed (Homer says that his request to Achilles was a prayer for his own death); and it is equally characteristic of Achilles to respond to his grief without any reference to a possible fault on his own part. He compares his friend's grief to the tears of a small child on a walk, wanting to be picked up by its mother – one of those Homeric similes whose simple humanity surprises and delights the modern reader – and he wonders whether Patroclus has had bad news from home; only then does he consider that the tears might be occasioned by the deaths of many of the Argives – 'through their own transgression', he adds with characteristic defiance and self-righteousness.

One of the most effective transitions in the entire *Iliad* occurs at 16.100ff., when the poet shifts the scene from the colloquy of Achilles and Patroclus back to the battle.

> Now as these two were talking thus to each other,
> meanwhile
> the volleys were too much for Aias, who could
> hold no longer
> his place. The will of Zeus beat him back . . .

At this point in the narrative Hector fires the first ship and Achilles orders the Myrmidons into battle under the command of Patroclus. There follow a catalogue of Achilles' fifty ships, and the celebrated prayer of Achilles to Zeus for success

in the counter-attack and the safe return of Patroclus ('the father granted him the one prayer and denied him the other'). The battle which is to claim the lives first of Sarpedon and then of Patroclus is now fiercely resumed.

Virgil broadly follows this structure in *Aeneid* x. The council of the gods is followed by a return to the siege as we left it in IX: the transitional verses

> Interea Rutuli portis circum omnibus instant
> sternere caede uiros et moenia cingere flammis
>
> *Meanwhile the Rutuli at every gate threaten*
> *To destroy men with death and ring the walls with fire*

echo a phrase from IX, but now in a different sense: then the walls were ringed with watch-fires, now it is the fire of the enemy. The Trojans, among them the young Ascanius, are on the defensive. This is the moment for Aeneas's spectacular re-entry into the narrative. In a few rapid lines the narrator summarises Aeneas's activities since the end of VIII: after leaving Evander, he went to the Etruscan king Tarchon who put his fleet at the heaven-sent foreign leader's disposal, fulfilling the oracles. There follows the catalogue of the thirty Etruscan ships. Through the night Aeneas sails, as he had sailed through the night to Pallanteum in VIII, Pallas at his left side (*sinistro adfixus lateri*, another grim proleptic touch). As dawn breaks, the nymphs who were once his old Trojan fleet, now miraculously transformed, swim out to meet him and escort him in. They tell him the bad news of the war. Aeneas prays to the Great Mother for a successful outcome to the second day of fighting. The scene is now set for the Virgilian Patrocleia. For the rest of X, fighting is continuous. The return of Aeneas, splendid on the deck with flashing shield, prefiguring Augustus himself at Actium (as depicted in VIII on Aeneas's prophetic Shield), and the encounter with the nymphs who escort him ashore, forms the end of the first section of the book, completing the opening council of the gods. The supernatural ends the first section, the divine began

it. Death and mortality will dominate the rest. Virgil needed the scene on Olympus and the marvellous episode of the nymphs to separate the fighting of his Patrocleia from the fighting in IX. The nymphs also serve as links back to IX and indeed back to VII and VIII, the two voyages to the mouth of the Tiber and upstream to Evander's settlement. Both these earlier landfalls are now reinforced in the account of Aeneas's third and final voyage home; in a fine symbolism, his old Trojan ships, now metamorphosed, pilot his new fleet in; the Trojan *nostos*, completed, has become miracle and myth; military reality now lies in the future, with the real nations, Latins and Etruscans; just as the Trojan fleet was metamorphosed, so, soon, will the Trojans themselves be transformed into Italians, and both their Odyssey and their Iliad will be over.

Into this structure Virgil has incorporated the Homeric council of gods which opens *Iliad* XX, the *aristeia* of Achilles. Virgil has telescoped his *Iliad* into four books and a few days of fighting. He begins the *aristeia* of Aeneas in book X. The pathos which colours Achilles' return to battle in Homer's *Iliad*, so movingly articulated at the start of book XVI in the scene between him and Patroclus, has no place in Virgil's story. There is a loss in human sympathy, a gain in moral clarity. And because Virgil has written out the wrath theme, because his hero returns to the war before, not after, the death of his Patroclus, nothing corresponding to the opening scene of *Iliad* XVI would be appropriate. Aeneas and Pallas, to start with, are not boyhood friends united in *Blutbrüderschaft*: they only met in *Aeneid* VIII, when Evander entrusted his son to Aeneas, a relationship of disciple to master, son to father.

Structurally, some other episode, a massive and pivotal opening statement, was necessary. The council of the gods was the answer to the problem. Such councils are a feature of Homeric epic; moreover, Virgil uses the episode to make some comments on the nature of human destiny and history which underpin the moral structure of the entire epic.

The closest parallel in the *Iliad* to Virgil's council is that in

Iliad XX (though there are also, as we shall see, allusions to *Iliad* IV). Achilles is in the full spate of his furious *aristeia*. Zeus expresses a fear (which in Milton's God becomes authorial irony) that Achilles may storm the walls and take Troy 'contrary to what is fated'. He sends forth the gods to war, himself sitting apart. After this scene we return to the fighting and it is now that Homer's Aineias makes his most significant entry into the poem. He wants to engage Achilles, but is divinely prevented from doing so, 'for it is appointed to him to escape, that the race of Dardanus perish not . . . thus shall the might of Aineias reign among the Trojans, and his children's children, who shall be born in the aftertime'.[23]

The gods, who removed Homer's Aineias from the fighting, for if he had faced Achilles he would have been killed, now, in the Virgilian Iliad, send him out against the second Achilles, Turnus. The polyvalent allusions of secondary epic allow Aeneas to appear as a second Achilles, as a second, this time victorious, Hector, and as himself, saved from Troy to fight another day, preserved by Homeric guarantee which enabled later mythography to link Rome directly to Troy.

Book X opens with resounding dactyls: the language is grand and Ennian. The reader who paused at the end of IX where Turnus was carried gently, washed and refreshed, back to his comrades, crosses an invisible gap in narrative space and time.[24]

> Panditur interea domus omnipotentis Olympi
> conciliumque uocat diuum pater atque hominum
> rex,
> sideream in sedem, terras unde arduus omnis
> castraque Dardanidum aspectat populosque Latinos.
>
> *And now stands open the house of omnipotent Olympus,*
> *And the father of gods and men summons a council*

[23] *Iliad* 20.300–8.

[24] The transition is not unlike that between the middle and last sections of *A Passage to India* discussed above, 68–70.

To his throne in the stars, whence on high he all the earth,
Even the camp of the Trojans and the Latin people, surveys.

Jupiter demands an explanation of the present conflict: *quae contra uetitum discordia*, 'What is this civil war in defiance of my veto?'; *abnueram*, 'I forbade it', he says. Throughout epic, there is a narrative tension between the will of the supreme deity, co-ordinate with destiny though in Homer and Virgil capable of being considered separately, and human free will (or the will of other deities). Temporary checks to the will of the supreme deity may be afforded by others, gods or heroes, but in the end the story of the *Iliad* is the story of how 'the will [or design] of Zeus was accomplished'; the *Aeneid* reveals the historical process as the unfolding of destiny, foreknown to Jupiter and his agents. Milton's God, though he had forbidden (*abnuerat*) the eating of the tree of knowledge, saw beyond the fall to the redemption, so that ultimately the tension between his will ('what I will is Fate') and human free will is resolved.

Jupiter's brief speech is followed by long and important speeches by Venus and Juno. Their rhetorical confrontation creates a pause in the narrative of action. We stand back as history is made, to consider its motivating causes, its effects and implications. Venus's speech is full of pathos and irony. She uses a familiar technique: a speaker affects to put an extreme case against himself and his cause, hoping for a refutation and the confirmation of his real secret desires. Can Venus really believe, as she says she does, that the reiterated promises of fate by oracle, deity and shade throughout the poem, all of them in conformity with the will of Jupiter, whom she addresses as *hominum rerumque aeterna potestas*, the very personification of 'everlasting dominion over men and their affairs' – can she really believe that any power, even Juno, can alter those decrees and change the course of destiny? She appears, or affects, to believe it, and, indeed, to believe that the diversion is already being accomplished. Diomede, she

believes (in error, as we learn in XI) is about to rise up against his ancient foes, including, no doubt, she says, herself, once wounded by him at Troy. She no longer hopes that the Trojans will gain their promised *imperium*; let them be defeated, let Aeneas resume his wanderings –

> et quacumque uiam dederit Fortuna sequatur
>
> *whatever path fortune provides, let him take it*

– she asks, or affects to ask, only (with a renewal of pathos) that her grandson Ascanius be saved, *positis inglorius armis exigat hic aeuum*, 'let him put off his armour and live inglorious with me'. Then, in a travesty of history which the implied reader will read ironically, 'Let Carthage rule in Italy, there will be no opposition there.' And her last thought is the bitterest irony of all: so traumatic an escape from Troy, so much suffering by sea and land, has it all been for nothing? The Trojans had better have stayed in the ashes of their dead city.

What response from Jupiter – and the reader – is to be elicited from this exercise in self-indulgent hypothesis? When in book I Venus watched the Trojans, storm-tossed and far from the goal of their *nostos*, she had addressed Jupiter in a speech similar in its tone of plaintive reproach, a speech likewise starting with an appeal to Jupiter's omnipotence, *o qui res hominumque deumque aeternis regis imperiis*, 'o thou who rulest the affairs of men and gods in everlasting dominion', and affecting to be resigned to a reversal of the irreversible course of history. Jupiter had answered reassuringly:

> parce metu, Cytherea, manent immota tuorum
> fata tibi
>
> *Spare your fear, Cytherea, the destiny of your*
> *Descendants has not changed*

There then followed Jupiter's and the implied author's unfolding to the Augustan reader of a 'destiny' which was

already history or quasi-history. Now, in book X, Venus hopes for the same comfort and reassurance from Jupiter. She does not get it. The tragic context of the Virgilian Iliad requires a different set of responses. The modern reader must experience a sense of crisis, a possible turning of fortune's wheel. Epic is in its larger movement a narrative of the expected; but there must be smaller movements, currents and cross-currents of the unexpected, on which all fictions thrive. If Jupiter can begin a speech *quae contra uetitum discordia*?, if Milton's God can begin a speech 'Nearly it now concerns us to be sure / Of our omnipotence', then the implied author may be trying to generate in his reader a shock of moral dislocation, something more than a twist of the narrative, the shadow across the pure serene of the divine will. Venus's rhetoric articulates the reader's moral bewilderment.

The parabola of the poem's movement is now at the furthest point it ever attains from the golden vision of peace and reassurance unfolded by Jupiter to Venus in book I. Nothing, in the context of book X, seems further away than the time when

> Fast in their iron frame
> Shall the gates of war be shut, and locked inside,
> war-madness
> Chained, bound, squatting on her arsenal,
> Bloody-mouthed, shall snarl . . .

Now the gates of war have been opened, *Furor* is free and stalks the plains of Latium. And it is with that same *furor*, *acta furore graui*, driven by the weight of wrath, that Juno bursts into speech as soon as Venus has finished, as Hera had done in *Iliad* IV when Zeus spoke on behalf of the Trojans. Virgil has made some use of this earlier Homeric council, which had ended with an uneasy truce between Zeus and Hera, the gods agreeing on only one thing, that the war is to continue, each deity jealously guarding his own sphere of influence. In Virgil's council, Juno's indignant appeal for her sphere of influence ('You, Venus, can act within your province, am I to

be forbidden to help the Rutuli?') is an echo of Hera's indignation in *Iliad* IV.

The war in Latium cannot end until Turnus is dead and Aeneas and Latinus can make and keep a peace treaty. To this end, Juno's powers may be further exercised. Neither the demands of the narrative nor those of historical necessity can permit Venus to be comforted.

Jupiter's arbitration at this point is crucial, as is the day of fighting which will follow upon Aeneas's return, the day of the Virgilian Patrocleia. The fighting which starts with the dawn marked at 10.256–7 continues until the beginning of XI. When the nymph Cymodocea escorts Aeneas to land and reviews for him the military situation she says

> crastina lux, mea si non inrita dicta putabis,
> ingentis Rutulae spectabit caedis aceruos.
>
> *Tomorrow's light, if you can take my words as valid,*
> *Will see a great slaughter of the Rutuli.*

The day of book X, then, is crucial, and in Jupiter's arbitration Virgil comes as close as he ever comes to expressing the concept of free will. The nymph gifted with prophetic powers can see something of what the day will bring forth, but Jupiter's statement makes it clear that the future is not rigged in such a way that heroes are mere automata.

> Since between Italians and Trojans there can be
> No peace, nor your strife find an end

(that is, the strife of Venus and Juno),

> Then, what each man's fortune is today, the hope
> each pursues,
> Trojan or Rutulian, let him carve it out, I'll make
> no distinction,
> Whether this siege is because of the destiny of the
> Italians
> Or the mistakes and bad tactics of the Trojans.

Nor are the Rutuli exempt by me from fate. For each
Whatever he sets his hand to will bring him toil and fortune.
King Jupiter is the same for all men.
Fate will find the way.

In *Iliad* XX the gods, with Zeus's permission, go forth to prepare for war, while Zeus himself sits apart. This is the point in the narrative when Achilles' renewed might seems invincible and when the poet, wishing to postpone the climactic encounter between Achilles and Hector, introduces the abortive encounter between Achilles and Aineias. Apollo inspires Aineias to offer his opposition to Achilles. Hera counters by proposing renewed support for Achilles.

For all of us have come down from Olympus to take our part
In this battle, so nothing may be done to him by the Trojans
On this day.

But Poseidon arbitrates and leads the gods out of the battlefield – to which they do not return in earnest until book XXI after the fight between Achilles and the river-god has already brought Hephaestus into the conflict. 'Let us go apart and watch', says Poseidon, 'and leave the battle to men.' This is a similar situation to that in *Aeneid* X. Jupiter will not on this day permit any intervention or himself take sides in the war. It began without him, let it end without him. We may contrast the intervention of God through his Son in the holy war against Satan in *Paradise Lost* VI (685–703):

Two days, as we compute the days of heaven,
Since Michael, and his powers, went forth to tame
These disobedient, sore hath been their fight
As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed.
For to themselves I left them, and thou knowest,
Equal in their creation they were framed,

> Save what sin hath impaired, which yet hath
> wrought
> Insensibly, *for I suspend their doom*,
> Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
> Endless, and no solution will be found.
> War wearied hath performed what war can do,
> And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
> With mountains as with weapons armed, which
> makes
> Wild work in heaven and dangerous to the main.
> Two days are therefore past, the third is thine.
> For thee I have ordained it, and thus far
> Have suffered, that the glory may be thine
> Of ending this great war, for none but thou
> Can end it.

Milton presents the war in heaven as a stalemate, to be broken on that significant third day by the Son. God did not will the war but once it had happened it was subsumed into his will by having happened, since all history must be seen as thus subsumed. Jupiter in the *Aeneid* presented to Venus in book I a solemn unrolling of the book of destiny, a history which he does not repudiate in book X even though he does not, either, restate it. What he does is to assert, uniquely here, his impartiality: the doctrine 'fate will find the way' carries a bleak dignity. The deity puts off the burden of human responsibility, it becomes man's existential choice, on the plains of Latium man in his lonely destiny must enact history.

Thus the central conflict of the *Aeneid*, between the pro-Trojan Venus and the anti-Trojan Juno, remains in suspense. On this crucial day (*hodie*) the conflict must work itself out without divine interference.

In *Iliad* XX, the strange episode of the rescue of Aineias from Achilles is managed by Poseidon himself 'lest the son of Kronos [Zeus] be angry if Achilles slay him, for it is appointed to him to escape, that the race of Dardanus perish not . . .' In *Aeneid* X Juno is allowed to rescue Turnus temporarily from

the battle, but Jupiter makes it clear that her interference and Turnus's respite are only a delay in waiting death, *mora praesentis leti*:

> But if you think you can change the whole course
> Of the war, you nurse a vain hope.

Neither in *Iliad* XX nor in *Aeneid* X is the confrontation between the two principal heroes destined to take place. This still leaves room for manoeuvre for the gods in both epics. There actions, or the rhetoric of their refusal to act, shape the narrative.

The crucial day of *Aeneid* X thus corresponds to the day in *Iliad* XX before the final confrontation of Hector and Achilles. In the *Iliad* Aineias has to yield to Achilles. In Virgil's Iliad, Aeneas will finally confront the 'second Achilles' of the Sibyl's prophecy, and himself take over that role. The stone which in *Iliad* XX Aineias picked up but never threw at Achilles becomes in *Aeneid* XII the stone which Turnus picks up but never throws at Aeneas.

> The wheel is come full circle: I am here.[25]

But first there is the same 'day of suspense' to be lived through, while the gods fiddle with a mechanism they cannot stop or alter, for they are part of it.

> And all sway forward on the dangerous flood
> Of history which never sleeps or dies . . .[26]

Both the Homeric and Virgilian episodes illustrate the difference between the power of Zeus/Jupiter and that of the other gods. In Homer these are passionate and warring, immortal versions of the heroes whose causes they espouse. Occasionally, as with Poseidon, god of the sea, they take on a larger, more elemental and symbolic significance, as do Virgil's Juno and Venus. Venus in particular, mother of Aeneas and hence of the Roman people, the *Aeneadum genetrix*

[25] *King Lear*, act V, sc. iii, 174 (Edmund to Edgar).
[26] W. H. Auden, 'August for the People', *Look, Stranger!* (1936) no. 30.

of Lucretius's great prologue to the *De Rerum Natura*, presiding deity of generative fruitfulness and sexual love, had a special and beneficent function in the Roman cosmic system.

The key words of *Aeneid* X, however, are Jupiter's, and they require the reader to give them the greatest possible emphasis. *nullo discrimine habebo*, 'I shall make no distinction.' A Pallas for a Halaesus, a Lausus for a Pallas – Jupiter's arbitration takes its toll of both sides alike. Just as Achilles' prayer in *Iliad* XVI for Patroclus was only partly successful, for Zeus refused Patroclus a safe return, so Aeneas in *Aeneid* X prays for success on the crucial day of battle which follows his return at the head of his Etruscan 'Myrmidons'. But his prayer is only partially successful, for he will lose his Patroclus. Immediately after his prayer, the fateful day is introduced in rushing syllables.

> tantum effatus et interea reuoluta ruebat
> matura iam luce dies noctemque fugarat . . .
>
> *He spoke no more, meanwhile rolled back and rose*
> *The day, light strengthened, night despatched.*

The day that now dawns is not just a day in a mythical past. The poet's use of the historic present helps the reader to see that 'today' as any and every day, a paradigm of life as it must be lived through by us all. If Jupiter can proclaim a suspension of divine interference on one day, he can suspend it on any or every day. Men can no longer assume divine aid or divine hostility. They must act alone. They will find out soon enough whether their actions, the consequences of free will, have won divine approval or provoked divine outrage.

5. The return of Aeneas

The return of Aeneas is one of the great focal points of the narrative, both when one is reading it and in any retrospective view of the work. The atmosphere of the marvellous returns

with him, from the eighth book, when his arrival by river at the site of Rome, the gleam of bronze, the painted prows, strike the very landscape with awe, as well as the celebrants at the Great Altar of Hercules, backwoods colonists confronted with the legendary magnificence of Troy. Now on another ship, standing high on deck like Augustus at Actium, Aeneas sails once more into the story to the wonder of those who see him. To the Rutuli and their leader it seems as if the whole sea is rolling towards them, *ea mira uideri*, 'a marvel to behold'.

Virgil sustains and enhances this epiphany of Aeneas with a Homeric simile, of cranes against a stormy sky. And from the hero's helmet stream flames, as from Augustus's head at Actium, a dramatic hyperbole further ornamented by another simile, of a baleful star or comet portending disaster to the enemy, though Virgil characteristically broadens the reader's sympathy with a generalisation so that Sirius is said to bring diseases to wretched mortals. Thus an atmosphere of magic and wonder surrounds each of Aeneas's three arrivals in Latium which articulate the divisions of the Virgilian Iliad. First, the arrival at the mouth of the Tiber, in VII, its pastoral peace reflecting the hitherto untroubled peace of Latinus: Aeneas is then *laetus*, joyful, but this mood of peace and happiness is shattered almost at once. His second arrival, in VIII, at Pallanteum, *in rebus egenis*, a suppliant for aid in a Greek city, as prophesied by the Sibyl, brings him support and comfort, and book VIII ends in joy and wonder again as he puts on the Shield of History, last and most significant pledge of divine providence. Once more he departs on the next stage of his mission, to the Etruscans, while the military situation deteriorates. This third epiphany, also by water, is a prefiguration for the implied reader of Augustus at Actium. He holds up the Shield, and for the first time the Trojans feel a sense of possible victory, *spe suscitat iras*, 'hope reawakens aggression'.

This is the crucial day on which Jupiter has decreed that 'fate will find the way'. The renewed optimism of the Trojans is balanced by a renewed determination on the part of Turnus,

and the conflicts of the day will swing to and fro, neither side being able to make a decisive breakthrough. Jupiter's words, *sua cuique exorsa laborem fortunamque ferent*, 'For each, whatever he sets his hand to will bring him toil and fortune', underpin the conclusion of Turnus's *hortatio* to his soldiers as the Etruscan fleet approaches the shore.

> What you longed for in your prayers has happened.
> This is the break-through.
> Be men, and this war is in your grasp. Let each
> man now
> Think of his wife and home, let each man now
> recall
> The great and glorious deeds of our ancestors. Let
> us take them here
> On the water's edge, as they disembark,
> vulnerable, insecure.
> Fortune favours the bold.

Jupiter's proclamation of divine impartiality is wholly consonant with a comment of the poet when contemplating the destinies of Lausus and Pallas: 'the great ruler of Olympus by no means suffered these two to challenge each other; hereafter did their fate await them, at the hand of a mightier foe'. The reader elicits from the narrative itself a bleak awareness of a deity who has chosen not to intervene in history, but to let its processes work themselves out: 'what I will is fate'. The authorial comment comes from the omniscient narrator, and carries strong Homeric precedent; the *Iliad* contains many such proleptic reflections, taking the reader to a point beyond that which the narrative has so far attained. Jupiter's proclamation of non-intervention is in itself a defining element of the narrative structure seen in retrospective overview as though from the end of the poem.

At the crisis of his brief *aristeia*, Pallas, face to face, not with another untried youth (Lausus) but with Turnus, prays to Hercules, his father's old guest-friend at Pallanteum and erstwhile saviour of the city from Cacus:

si qua fors adiuuet ausum
uiribus imparibus

Hoping for help from chance, bold but
In might unequal

he thus resembles Troilus at Troy, as depicted on the walls of Juno's temple at Carthage and seen there by Aeneas in book I:

infelix puer atque impar congressus Achilli.

Just as Troilus, 'unlucky boy', was 'no match for Achilles', so Pallas is no match for Turnus. Hercules, powerless to help, weeps. It is his father, Jupiter, who speaks next; eloquent and evocative words which bring back the death of his own son Sarpedon at the hands of Patroclus in *Iliad* XVI, a death which was followed by Patroclus's own.

Determined each man's day, brief and irrecoverable
the time
Of life for everyone. But to extend glory by deeds,
This is the work of virtue. Under the high walls of
Troy
There died so many sons of the gods, yes and
among them
Sarpedon, my son. Turnus too by his own
Fate is called; he is come to the end of his time.

Just as Patroclus draws his spear from Sarpedon 'together with his spirit', so too does Turnus draw his spear from Pallas.

Pallas's courage – he not only faces the enemy but chides his faltering comrades as they run away from the pursuing Latins – is a re-enactment of Sarpedon's when he chides his fellow Lycians in *Iliad* XVI. In Pallas's death are combined the deaths of both Sarpedon and of Patroclus: in the shifting kaleidoscope of war, the tragic events of Homer's Patrocleia are re-enacted and conflated. Sarpedon's death is a major event in the *Iliad* for two reasons. First, he is Zeus's son and provides a test case as to whether Zeus will go so far as to save him from death. But

human mortality, in this tragic epic, is stronger than the power of the gods. Secondly, Sarpedon's death carries a further tragic irony in that he dies at the hands of Patroclus, who is himself doomed, the last victim of the death-littered promise of Zeus to Thetis – the greatest and most fatal act of Hector's *aristeia*. Virgil relies on the power and relevance of intertextuality when he makes Jupiter recall the *Iliad* for the implied reader: a modern reader ignorant of the *Iliad* will here miss an essential element in the reading of *Aeneid* x. Jupiter recalls Sarpedon's death at that very moment in the *Aeneid* when Pallas is praying to Hercules for protection against Turnus's attack. Thus the two most important deaths in *Iliad* XVI are transposed and assimilated into *Aeneid* x. When Turnus pulls the spear from Pallas's flesh, Virgil echoes Homer's words at the moment when Patroclus pulls his spear from Sarpedon's flesh: the dying Pallas assumes for a moment the figure and role of Sarpedon. But as soon as Turnus takes Pallas's baldric, Pallas 'becomes' Patroclus and the reader initiates the ultimate Iliadic confrontation between Turnus, wearing the baldric, and Aeneas, the avenging Achilles.

Virgil's proleptic comment on the end of his poem has already been noticed: *Turno tempus erit* . . .

> For Turnus the time will come when he will pray
> for Pallas
> To be unharmed, give anything for that, and loathe
> This day, these spoils . . .

The reader will remember for how brief a time Hector wore Patroclus's armour, which was Achilles' own, and this memory will itself cast a shadow over the narrative of Virgil's Iliad. He will remember too Zeus's sombre soliloquy as he watches Hector put on that armour: 'you have killed this man's dear friend who was strong and gentle, and taken the armour as you should not have done'.

The violence of Aeneas after Pallas's death has troubled modern readers who wish to see the *Aeneid* as 'civilised poetry'. But Aeneas's role as an Achillean avenger cannot be

contained in the mode of civilised poetry. When Aeneas refuses Magus's plea for mercy, for all its Italian operatic eloquence –

> per patrios manis, et spes surgentis Iuli
> te precor –

he answers him as Achilles answered Lycaon in *Iliad* XXI when he told him that until Patroclus's death he had spared the lives of many Trojans, 'but now none shall escape death'.

Turnus's killing of Pallas touched Aeneas closely, for Evander had entrusted him to his protection:

> sub te tolerare magistro
> militiam et graue Martis opus, tua cernere facta
> adsuescat, primis et te miretur ab annis.
>
> *Let him learn under your leadership to endure*
> *Campaigning and the burden of war, watching your deeds*
> *While he is young, have you as his ideal.*

Evander's words, his guest-friendship, return to Aeneas's mind when he hears of Pallas's death. What time has he had to teach him the art of war? Thus the motive for his Achillean fury and violence in 10.510–65 is again a transformed and purified version of the wrath of Achilles. Homer's Achilles feels savage and bitter grief for Patroclus's death; his anger against Agamemnon has led inexorably to that death. No similar trait of character in Aeneas is shown by Virgil to be the cause of Pallas's death. He was unlucky; he was fated to meet Turnus; this element in the narrative was structurally central to Virgil's Iliad. But by introducing Pallas into the story through his father Evander Virgil has emphasised a psychological force which springs as much from his own Roman convictions about *pietas* as from Homeric ones. Indeed, the two poets share a deep humanity and a sense of the love between father and son. In *Iliad* XXIII, the ghost of Patroclus reminds Achilles that his father Peleus took him into his house

when still a child and made him in due course his son's squire. In *Iliad* XXIV Priam appeals to Achilles by reminding him of his father. In *Aeneid* X when Aeneas kills Lausus, *mentem patriae subiit pietatis imago*, 'there came into his mind the image of his own love for his father'. Such emotions do not belong exclusively to any one cultural tradition; they are part of our common humanity, without its share of which no poetry can be great. When Liger begs Aeneas for his life after Aeneas has killed his brother Lucagus, *per qui te talem genuere parentes*, 'by the parents who made you what you are', Aeneas says to him 'Die; let not brother desert brother.' But Liger had told Aeneas *he* was going to kill *him* and had taunted him with a sneering reference to his divinely engineered escapes from Diomede and Achilles at Troy.[27] Part of Virgil's intention in the *Aeneid* is to remind his readers that Rome's originator was as renowned for fighting as for *pietas*. We must not forget that for all his impartial humanity and notwithstanding the nobility of the character of Hector, Homer was a Greek poet, and for him most Trojans were to some extent tainted with the fault of Paris – lack of military discipline, effeminacy; Aeneas was after all the son of Paris's special champion, Aphrodite. In the *Aeneid* his reputation as a warrior, not only supreme among the Trojans since Hector's death but the equal of Achilles himself in warlike prowess (and his superior in *pietas*), must be established. He is amply shown by Virgil to be capable of pity. He does not show pity consistently in the fighting; he remains an epic hero, romanised but not 'civilised'. Some of those he kills exist only at the moment of their meeting with him, in the manner of the *Iliad*.[28] His 'arrogant and sarcastic speech'[29] when he kills Tarquitus is closely modelled on that of Achilles when he kills Lycaon in *Iliad* XXI. Achilles says:

[27] *Aen.* 10.581–3; *Iliad* 5.311ff., 446ff., 20.290ff. An interesting example of how Virgil 'plants' his allusions to the Homeric text. Liger shows an acquaintance with Aeneas's military record which is a metaphor or surrogate for the implied reader's knowledge of Homer. As Aeneas himself observed (l.459–60) *quis iam locus . . . quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris*? What Liger 'knows' is the *Iliad*: it is not the events which signify but their Homeric record.

[28] See J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford 1980) 103–43.

[29] Williams (ed.), *Aeneid VII–XII* (London 1973) on 10.557ff.

'Lie there now among the fish, who will lick the blood away
from your wound, and care nothing for you, nor will your mother
lay you on the death-bed and mourn over you, but Skamandros
Will carry you spinning down to the wide bend of the salt water.
And a fish will break a ripple shuddering dark on the water
As he rises to feed upon the shining fat of Lycaon.

Aeneas says:

'There now, dread warrior, lie. Nor shall your dear mother
Bury you deep in your fatherland:
You shall be left to the birds of prey, or as you drown
The waves shall take you away and the fishes lick your wounds.

There are in heroic epic as many ways of killing as there are of dying. And in the twentieth century it hardly needs saying that war breeds and is bred by violence; that in war acts of kindness and pity are still performed, but that if they were the rule rather than the exception there would be no more war.

Like Homer, Virgil is aware of the need for *uariatio* in a long stretch of battle narrative. At the height of Aeneas's *aristeia*, when *furor* rages on the plain of Latium, Juno asks Jupiter's permission to rescue Turnus from the battle. We have noted that Homer's Aineias was himself rescued from battle 'so that the race of Dardanus might not perish' in *Iliad* XX, but Virgil has also assimilated another structural parallel, the rescue of Hector from Achilles later in the same book. There, as here in *Aeneid* X, the warrior fated to die is given a brief and poignant reprieve. Hector is caught up in a mist by Apollo, which postpones his doom but does not alter it. What is postponed,

we may say, is the moment at which the reader comes to Hector's death. The poet manipulates this postponement by inserting digressions, extensions and elastications of narrative temporality. Thus the amount of 'real' time separating the reader, at a particular point in the narrative, from the climax of the hero's death, may be several weeks or a single day. When the climax does finally occur, it must seem to the reader that no further postponement would be tolerable. The decisive act must finally be accomplished. When the reader looks back over the act, and the various postponements and digressions which preceded it, it will seem inevitable that it was reached when it was reached, and not earlier.[30]

In *Iliad* v Apollo made a phantom Aineias when the real Aineias was threatened by Diomede. There are resonances in that episode which are heard again in Virgil. It is Diomede, now settled in Italy, to whom Turnus has sued for help against Aeneas and, as we learn in xi, sued in vain. Virgil has also made use of the second rescue of Homer's Aineias in *Iliad* xx when he is confronted with Achilles: Poseidon sheds a mist over Achilles' eyes. This follows a dialogue between Poseidon and Hera, in which Hera reiterates her implacable hatred of the Trojans, while Poseidon shows concern for Aineias both because of his piety and because he knows that 'it is appointed to him to escape that the race of Dardanus perish not'. Virgil thus blends two different Iliadic motifs: that of the temporary reprieve of a hero who is doomed, and the saving of a hero not fated to die within the temporality of the epic narrative.

Virgil's description of the phantom Aeneas follows another Olympian dialogue, between Jupiter and Juno, which begins Homerically but in tone and treatment develops far beyond its model in *Iliad* iv, a passage already used by Virgil in his great opening council in x. This second council (10.605–32) starts with Jupiter saying to Juno, as Aeneas's irresistible *aristeia*

[30] Cf. Tolstoi, *War and Peace* ix. i: 'Each man lives for himself, using his freedom to attain his personal aims, and feels with his whole being that he can now do or abstain from doing this or that action. But as soon as he has done it, that action performed at a certain moment in time becomes irrevocable, and belongs to history, in which it has not a free but a predestined significance.'

continues, 'Of course you were thinking it is Venus who is propping up the Trojans, not their own prowess.' Zeus in *Iliad* IV had taunted Hera when he said 'Aphrodite is helping Paris, but Menelaus's divine protectors are conspicuously absent'. Zeus also alluded to Aphrodite/Venus's assiduity in the Trojan cause, but what he said in *Iliad* IV was plain fact. In *Aeneid* X Venus is not helping Aeneas.

Homer's Hera answered Zeus angrily, taunt for taunt. Virgil's Juno is deeply aware of Turnus's approaching doom and of the long delayed but inevitable triumph of the Trojans which she has so constantly and bitterly opposed. Her answer is full of pathos and self-pity. 'You no longer love me; if you did, you would let me rescue Turnus.' She would like to believe, against all the evidence of fate, that Jupiter will alter destiny itself and save Turnus altogether, but she leaves herself a way out: a temporary reprieve will be better than nothing and, on the narrative level, is exactly what is now needed to keep the action in suspense and to allow the irruption of Mezentius into battle as Aeneas's chief enemy in Turnus's absence, an irruption which leads to his and his son's deaths at the hands of Aeneas, and provides the climax and conclusion of book X.

> 'If what you are asking is a delay and for the doomed
> Young hero respite, snatch him from immediate fate.
> That much is granted. But if some deeper motive
> Lurks in your plea, and you think you can change the whole course
> Of the war, you nurse a vain hope.'

And Juno:

> 'What if, that which lies reluctant on your lips,
> You granted in your heart, and Turnus should live?
> No. Death's burden waits for him, innocent of crime. Else I

Am mistaken and deceived. Oh, if only my fears
were false,
And you would – for you can – change your
decree.'

The council of the gods in *Iliad* IV shows the Homeric gods in their worst light, with Zeus yielding to Hera's insatiable desire to destroy Ilion ('perhaps if you were to enter the gates and eat Priam and his sons raw, your anger might be assuaged'), but yielding reluctantly, and demanding in exchange the right to destroy some other city without demur by Hera. Zeus's personal feelings for Troy are counter to what is destined. Virgil's Jupiter is wholly committed to destiny, his will fully co-ordinate with it. At the end of the Homeric council the two warring armies are reported by Homer as saying helplessly 'Either the war will be resumed, or Zeus will establish peace': that is, at this point the war might end or not end. The cynical and immoral debate on Olympus determines that it shall continue. If it did not, there would be no *Iliad*. The poet and reader must therefore assent to the gods' will.

Virgil's dialogue between Jupiter and Juno serves a different purpose and its tone is quite different. True, Jupiter's opening words seem deliberately calculated to provoke Juno, but their irony is not so much taunting as illustrative of Jupiter's all-seeing power over the minds of gods and men alike. 'I know what you are thinking now,' he says to Juno; 'you are thinking that all this is Venus's doing, not the result of Trojan prowess, and' (blandly) 'you are right.' Jupiter refers to Juno's Homeric obsession with Venus's championship of Troy, a resentment which has its origins in the judgement of Paris:

manet alta mente repostum
iudicium Paridis spretaeque iniuria formae
et genus inuisum et rapti Ganymedis honores

deep in her heart it sticks,
The judgement of Paris, her beauty spurned,
That hated race, Ganymede grabbed and exalted

Ganymede, Zeus's cup-bearer, of whom Juno is also jealous, was a Trojan too: her hatred of the Trojans, which troubled Homer's Zeus because he could not share it yet also could not alter the city's doom, becomes in the *Aeneid* an *idée fixe*. In Homer Hera won; in the *Aeneid* she loses, yet what she loses ultimately is her hatred and her obsession. She becomes free of the past.

Jupiter's words to Juno are more than an ironic dig. They show his power to read her thoughts. She does blame Venus; like all obsessives she would prefer to attribute an event to her obsession than to its true cause, in this case Trojan prowess, with Aeneas stimulated to *furor* by his grief for Pallas. Jupiter articulates Juno's fears, her heart-sickness, as her answer shows:

> Why, fair consort,
> Do you provoke a heart sick with fear at your sad words?

The word I translate 'provoke' (*sollicitas*) Williams renders 'taunt', in order to strengthen his sense of the passage's irony, but it means 'trouble' or 'disturb'.[31] Juno has a premonition of the end: yet, as people do when they know in their hearts that something is inevitable yet retain a secret, half-real, half-pretended reservation that even now, against all the odds, it may yet turn out differently, so she too leaves a tiny crack of light, in her heart the door of fate is even now not quite shut on Turnus, there is still time for all-powerful Jupiter to change his mind, the impossible can still happen, the inevitable need not occur. The psychological insight of this passage is acute and powerful, more Dantesque than Homeric.[32]

The episode of the phantom Aeneas is a strange piece of writing in Virgil's most fantastic and imaginative style, owing as much to Lucretian theories of *imagines* as to Homer. Juno endows the phantom with

[31] See *Oxford Latin Dictionary* s.v., where the sense of 'taunt' does not appear.
[32] For Dante's insight into other minds, see e.g. *Inf.* 13.25–7, *Purg.* 21.103–11.

words without substance,
Speech without intelligence, the power of
movement,
Like the ghosts supposed to hover after death,
Or phantom forms which trick the sleeping brain.

The simile is weirdly effective, and the reader who has read the last book of the poem will pick up also a proleptic shadow of the final scene, in which the real Aeneas confronts a Turnus who moves to the horror of death like an automaton in a dream,

But he cannot feel himself run or move,
Or raise his hand or shift the great stone,
But as in dreams, in a night of heavy sleep,
We seem desperately to need to run,
Yet at the moment of crisis we fail, our tongues
Have no voice, our bodies no responses,
We are paralysed and cannot cry or speak,
So from Turnus, whichever way his courage tried
to break out,
The dread goddess withheld power. Confused
images
Trouble his mind . . .

In *Iliad* XXII the failure of Achilles to catch Hector and of Hector to escape Achilles is likened to a dream in which the pursuer never catches the pursued and the pursued never escapes. Virgil has taken this familiar dream-experience of frustrated movement (whose persistence seems to indicate the survival of an archetype) and developed it in terms of a traditional epic motif. But in *Aeneid* XII the use of the first person plural (*uidemur*, 'we seem') makes the reader identify with the experience as one he has shared and thus draws him into empathy with Turnus's final paralysis of will. So in this earlier passage in X, the episode of the phantom, another Homeric motif, is brought into the human light of shared dream-experience for the reader through the simile. The ghosts supposed to hover after death, the phantom forms

which trick the sleeping brain, are phenomena which Lucretius explained materialistically so that men would no longer be afraid of them.[33] The epic phantom, the automaton in the form of Aeneas, may be related by the reader, through the common ground of the simile, to his own experience; and because the simile takes us into the world of dreams the reader can make sense of this episode in terms of the final confrontation between the real Aeneas and a Turnus who, outlawed now by Jupiter himself, has become a kind of phantom or automaton, no longer able to command his old heroic *uirtus*, a man already dead.

One final point must be made about this passage. The phantom Aeneas, apparently in fearful flight, hides on board one of the Etruscan ships; thither Turnus pursues it, Juno breaks the mooring, and the ship drifts out to sea. The humiliated and badly shaken Turnus considers both suicide and an attempt to swim ashore, but Juno carries the ship safely round to land and deposits Turnus back in the city of his father. This scene echoes the end of IX when Turnus was carried to safety by the Tiber. This is his second escape by water, and it is his last. Its manner, the deception of the phantom, continues to haunt him in book XI and contributes something to the growing sense of despair which comes over him as the poem, and his own life, draw to a close.

His removal from the battle-scene marks the transition to the final triad of book X, the *aristeia* of Mezentius, *contemptor deum*, 'despiser of the gods'. The poet signals the change by the emphatic *at*:

> At Iouis interea monitis Mezentius ardens
> succedit pugnae . . .
>
> *But now it was Jupiter's thinking that sent Mezentius*
> *Berserk into battle . . .*

He comes in to replace Turnus, keeping the contest even: Juno's temporary protection of Turnus is balanced, briefly, by

[33] Lucretius, *DRN* 4.722–76.

his deeds of prowess. The final triad is strongly Iliadic in its proliferation of similes and its presentation of Mezentius as a traditional epic hero, only concerned with single combat and personal glory. Aeneas kills his son Lausus (a Lausus for a Pallas) and finally Mezentius himself (a surrogate for Turnus, who has lived to fight again, in XII). But the reader leaves the Iliadic world again for the world of Italian sentiment in the touching lament of Mezentius for his son: it is an anticipation of the grief-laden eleventh book, when Evander learns of Pallas's death. It is one of Virgil's finest soliloquies, deeply felt and strongly written, and ending in a characteristic expression of feeling towards which the poet is always responsive, the longing for the end of life, which is quite foreign to the philosophy of the *Iliad*.

> Now I live still, and am not yet gone from the
> light and from men,
> But I am going.

Alongside these lines must be placed two other sentiments in this final *aristeia* of book X, which serve to relieve and distance us from the violence and grandeur of war. First, there is a couplet depicting the gods watching the conflict from Olympus; they feel an unhomeric and wholly Virgilian empathy for a conflict so evenly balanced that both sides labour in vain: it is a summing up of the pointlessness of war.

> The gods in Jupiter's house feel pity for the
> pointless anger
> Of either side, and for all the efforts of men . . .

The second example of pathos occurs in the account of the death of Mezentius's young son Lausus – a Lausus for a Pallas, the very embodiment of that bleak and evenly balanced state of the war in book X: *nullo discrimine habebo*. Before Aeneas kills Lausus he is attacked by Mezentius but the latter's spear misses Aeneas and strikes Antores. This hero, once a comrade of Hercules (presumably a younger companion) who had

joined Evander's brigade, is nowhere else mentioned by Virgil. In his epitaph

> Unlucky, he is brought down by a wound meant
> for another. He looks up
> To the sky, and dying remembers Argos, his
> beloved land.

Virgil has finely transferred a poignant motif of the *Iliad*, that of the hero dying far from home. But Virgil's empathy is distinguished from the Homeric handling of the motif by the word *reminiscitur*: it is not merely that the poet introduces the idea of a hero dying far from home, leaving the reader to respond to the pathos of the situation; he identifies the last feeling of the dying man as a nostalgia, so that the reader's sense of pathos is that of Antores himself.

Virgil also gives its full weight of pathos to Lausus's loyalty to his father Mezentius, that typical embodiment of war lust. Mezentius, *contemptor diuum*, acknowledges only one god, his right hand, *dextra mihi deus*, he says, with a terrifying self-sufficiency, and when he strikes a foe down he says, 'but as for me, let the father of gods and men see to that', thus expressing his indifference to divine mercy. Jackson Knight translates 'the so-called father of gods and men', presumably because the Latin is an Ennian phrase (*diuum pater atque hominum rex*) so that Mezentius's use of it is a kind of sneer, like an atheist quoting the Bible. The picture of the raging Mezentius forms the final grim tableau of book X: his *furor*, his challenge to his son's slayer, a kind of suicide, in fulfilment of his pledge not long to outlive his son, leave the reader as though himself in the middle of a battle, in which hatred, revenge, bloodshed and death are the sole objects of human courage and endeavour.

Readers of the *Aeneid* do not always attend sufficiently to Virgil's indications of narrative time. In X, a day which began at 257 with the return by sea of Aeneas at the head of his Etruscan reinforcements, has ended with the deaths of Pallas, Lausus and Mezentius, and many others. The previous day

(9.459 – 10.256) had been a day of Trojan disaster, following the night raid and the deaths of Nisus and Euryalus, a re-enactment of the siege of Troy, a day without Aeneas. The day now ended has reversed this fortune and the two days have thus together illustrated and exemplified 10.755–9, where the struggle was even and death fell impartially on both armies while the gods watched with pity the swing and balance of war as the whole grim tragedy of the *Iliad* was played out again over the peaceful fields of Saturn's Italy and the shadow of the age of heroes passed across the land.

6. The funeral of Pallas

Book XI is the only book of the *Aeneid* to open with a dawn-formula. The mood of this opening is in strong contrast to the deliberately controlled savagery of the end of X, the defiant death-speech of Mezentius and the remarkable cluster of violent and aggressive words in the final lines:

> *'hostis amare*, quid *increpitas mortemque minaris*?
> nullum in *caede nefas*, nec sic ad *proelia* ueni,
> nec tecum meus haec pepigit mihi foedera Lausus.
> unum hoc per si qua est uictis uenia *hostibus* oro:
> corpus humo patiare tegi. scio *acerba* meorum
> circumstare *odia*: hunc oro, defende *furorem*
> et me consortem nati concede sepulcro.'
> haec loquitur, *iuguloque* haud inscius accipit *ensem*
> *undantique animam diffundit in arma cruore.*

> *'My bitterest foe, why do you have to crack death-threats*
> *at me?*
> *I wouldn't have gone to war if I'd scruples about killing.*
> *And when you killed my son there were no concessions,*
> *But if there are such, for the defeated, then I ask only*
> *this:*

Let my body be buried deep. I know my own people's hatred
Is waiting on every side. Protect me from their fury
And let my son and me share the same sepulchre
He spoke; and deliberately offered his throat to the sword
And drained his soul out on a stream of blood.

Hated even by his own men, redeemed only by his love for his son, Mezentius dies. It is as though in his arrogance he deliberately shares with his killer the responsibility for his own death. Now 'the monstrous anger of the guns' gives place to a solemn ritual, the burial of the dead, which takes up two days of a twelve-day truce. On the third day (11.210) there is a war council of the Latins, occupying the central section of the book, whose structure follows the usual triadic pattern. This third day, which ends with the end of the book, sees the renewal of battle: the final section is dominated by the *aristeia* of Camilla.

Thus book XI offers a great variety of tone and incident. The opening is dark and majestic, with a drum-like, leaden repetition of the word *maestus* ('gloomy', 'sombre'), a form of which is found eleven times in the book (nine times in the other three war-books, IX, X, XII, put together, and fourteen times in books I–VIII). The central section is a rhetorical debate in which Turnus and a new character, Drances, play large parts, while the final section is varied and relieved by the presence of Camilla, the first part played in the poem by a woman since the 'Bacchic' scenes in VII.

The last three books of the *Aeneid* are the most complex in structure and the richest in variety of mood and incident. They make enormous demands on the reader's concentration. It is the reader who must relate the divisions of the narrative to each other and gradually construct as complete a meaning as possible for the whole. Meanwhile, the reader will become increasingly aware not only of a narrator who links the various parts of the poem, but also of an 'implied author' who becomes, in the last three books, a more and more

indeed do more than comment; they make of it a rhetorical representation which brings the narrative to a virtual standstill and stalemate. Both sides attack, both are winning, both are losing, neither will yield. Juno watches on one side, Venus on the other, and in the middle of the conflict a pale Fury out of hell keeps the war going. Just so, at the battle of Actium on Vulcan-Virgil's vatic shield, we have seen, and Aeneas has seen, the gods ranged on either side, with the war-god raging indiscriminately at the heart of the conflict, Civil Strife, Bellona and the Furies at his side.

A conflict which neither side can win for a long time, a war of attrition, is a *donnée* of Homer's *Iliad*, and accounts to a considerable degree for the psychological tensions so brilliantly drawn in the first two books of the *Iliad*, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon and the latter's weak and ill-judged testing of the troops. Virgil's Iliad lasts only a few days, yet in this brief time he includes this aspect of the Trojan war its sense of stalemate frustration, and tension. In Homer's *Iliad* there is no final end to the war, though the death of Hector, the Trojans' only real champion, acts as a symbolic prefiguration of that end. But Hector's death is not the end of Homer's narrative. In book XXIV Achilles gives back Hector's body to Priam, a personal decision made not (as Achilles characteristically insists) in response to Priam's supplication ('I myself am minded to give him back to you' but in conformity to the expressed concern of Apollo ('Achilles has destroyed pity) and the will of Zeus, who refuses to interfere directly but sends Thetis to plead with her son; a symmetry which mirrors the situation in book I. This gesture of reconciliation ends the story of the wrath of Achilles in a mood of love and pity but is far from prefiguring – indeed its tone and mood contradict – the end of Troy as we see it in *Aeneid* II, when the Greeks (now without Achilles) showed no pity to their conquered foes. This is why an epic about the wrath of Achilles 'means' to every reader something much more complete and all-embracing than the proclaimed subject might suggest. The motif of the eventual fall of Troy, repeated prophetically

several times in the poem, helps to create in the reader a sense of a larger meaning which demands a response to the total context of the Trojan war, from its remote first cause, through the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, the quarrel with Agamemnon, the deaths of Patroclus and Hector, and so down to the coming of the Amazon, the death of Achilles, the wooden horse, and the sack of the city.

In the *Aeneid* the death of Turnus and the end of the war in Latium are the same. But they are not the end of the whole story or of the significance of the *Aeneid*. Through various prophetic passages the poet brings into the narrative events which lie beyond the heroic age, events which Aeneas, gazing on the Shield, delights in as pictures, while ignorant of their meaning. In a curious way, this too has become prophetic: for Virgil's implied Augustan reader, those events whose meaning Aeneas could not understand were his own history, but the modern reader will identify with Aeneas, delighting in images whose historical meaning he may not be able to reconstruct. Yet he must take his unfamiliarity with Roman history into his reading of the *Aeneid*; as he may also, perhaps, have to take his unfamiliarity with the Bible into his reading of *Paradise Lost*. 'An epic', said Pound, 'is a poem containing history', and by history we may also understand legends, myths and traditional tales as well as 'what happened in the past'. The modern reader may bring to his reading of secondary epic ignorance of the past, so that, indeed, the epic becomes all that he knows of the past: the *Aeneid* will contain for him, as it did for many in the times when Greek culture was forgotten, the whole of the *Iliad* and the fall of Troy and the subsequent *nostoi*. It will also contain the triumph of Augustus.

But 'meaning' for a reader of literary epic does not stop with knowledge of facts, legends and Homer. For the reader of the second half of the *Aeneid* – and that reader will additionally achieve a retrospective sense of books I–VI different from any he would have gained had the second half not been attempted – what may now come across most intensely is the poet himself, not the epic narrator of a Romanised Homeric conflict but the

commentator and moraliser on a spectacle of misery, carnage and 'impartial' disaster for both sides. A heroic poem expressing hatred of war is not wholly surprising: many passages in the *Iliad* express an intense and possibly traditional nostalgia for peace as it was before the Achaians came, while others depict the waste and madness of war. But in the *Aeneid* such sentiments dominate and colour the entire narrative. The presence and sensibilities of the empathising poet emerge more and more strongly as the reader encompasses the closing books of the epic.

Indeed, by the end of X, the reader's own sense of the war-narrative as a rhetoric of violent images has become more intense and more restless. After the deaths of Nisus and Euryalus in IX, have come the deaths of Pallas, Lausus, Mezentius; the last word of X is blood, the last image that of blood spurting from Mezentius's throat over his armour, the last speech that of Mezentius, proud, bitter, contemptuous, ready for Aeneas's sword, asking only, as Hector had once asked, for safe burial: the whole scene forms, in terms of epic narrative, a scene from an imaginary theatre of cruelty and of the absurd. Aeneas does not answer Mezentius in the violent and characteristically rejective fashion in which Achilles had answered Hector. He gives, indeed, no answer, and the book ends abruptly, as does XII, with an act of almost ritualised bloodshed.

From that ending of X to the dawn which opens XI the reader has to bridge an eloquent gap or blank in the narrative. Indeed, the first line of XI

Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit

with the echo of *interea* from 10.1, *Panditur interea* . . ., serves a similar kind of narrative bridge-function. Aeneas, as this day dawns, though troubled by Pallas's death, his thoughts wholly on the dead and the need for burial (*sociis dare tempus humandi* in line 2), does first his duty as a Roman: he gives thanks to the gods for victory as the new day starts. We may recall the beginning of book VIII when after a troubled night

Aeneas faces the rising sun and prays to the river-god Tiberinus for protection, before he goes upstream to Pallanteum. Aeneas *imperator* has become Aeneas *pontifex*, *pius* Aeneas, as he is again, supremely, in the final book. The narrative now slows down to the rhythm of a funeral cortège, as we settle to a deeply felt slow movement in the symphony, a long-drawn-out, solemn funeral march.

The opening of XI is both a continuation of, and a break from, the end of X. We paused in our reading as the blood of Mezentius flowed from his throat. The new day comes up with the new book, a coincidence found nowhere else in the poem, and we at once enter the troubled mind of Aeneas. We see Aeneas carry out the construction of a trophy, a practice current in the armies of Virgil's own day, a Romanisation of epic warfare which also has an epic grandeur appropriate to a bronze-age warrior. With barbarous and grim splendour a huge oak lopped of its branches is decked in the armour of Mezentius, *contemptor diuum* in life but in death subject to the proper rites imposed by his conqueror and antithesis, *pius* Aeneas. Aeneas then reviews the military situation and gives a brief *hortatio*:

> 'This is a great achievement, men; be of good courage,
> For what still waits. Here are the spoils of war, a proud king's
> Weapons. Mezentius is in my hands now. Here he is.
> Now to march on Latinus and his citadel . . .
> Meanwhile let us commit the unburied bodies of our comrades
> To earth, the only honour of the underworld.
> Go,' he said, 'and to those noble souls who with their blood
> Have won for us this land, pay the last tributes
> Of honour, and to Evander's town of mourning let Pallas

Be sent home, for the black day of death
Which took him, found him not without courage.'

The narrative moves away now from the dead Mezentius, the primitive and crude trophy, to the long intense description of the funeral of Pallas, a passage displaying all the techniques of the literature of pathos. We follow the narrative, and the cortège, through Aeneas's eyes; his immense sense of desolation which we experience, his sense of Evander's loss. It is Aeneas who superintends the placing of the body on the bier, and he who pronounces, in the second paragraph of book XI, the funeral oration.

This speech is one of the focal points of the entire poem, around which some of its central moral and emotional attitudes are organised. Through it the reader may direct his sense of the narrative away from the grand heroic gestures of the epic of action the necessities by which things happen and by which they are as they are towards that which was not to be, towards the intuition of loss and pain. Like all great literature, the *Aeneid* frequently enacts the things which were not enacted, says the things which were not said, whereby the reader constructs an alternative world in which 'If only Pallas had not died' (but he had to) becomes 'Pallas did not have to die', and then (momentarily) 'imagine a world in which he did not die'. For a while, one of the poem's most important characters still lives in that other world – Evander does not yet know of his son's death. The rhetoric of *consolatio* becomes in terms of the narrative a means by which the reader may construct a meaning for the entire poem which depends on negation, not affirmation. The key words of Aeneas's speech are words of negation, disappointment, loss, failure, an ironic awareness of the gap between heroic boast and human destiny: *non haec, spe . . . inani, exanimum, nil iam caelestibus ullis debentem, uano . . . honore*, and the ubiquitous *maesti, meastum, maesto, maestus, maesta*, the declension of sorrow.

Aeneas begins his oration with words in which the implied

reader secures another secondary epic allusion to Homer. In *Iliad* XVIII Achilles laments Patroclus:

> Ah me. It was an empty word I cast forth on that day
> when in his halls I tried to comfort the hero
> Menoitios.
> I told him I would bring back his son in glory to
> Opous . . .

Aeneas addresses Pallas as *miserande puer*, words he heard his father use, in the Elysian fields, about another young hero who died before he was 'put on', whose premature death, indeed, is foretold even before he is born, thus deepening the sense of mortality which underlies Virgil's use of the idea of reincarnation. The words *miserande puer* belong to Marcellus, but also to Nisus and Euryalus and now to Pallas and so to every young man of whom these characters are types.

> O young man, most pitiable, did Fortune grudge
> you
> To me, though she came smiling? You were not to
> see
> Us in our kingdom, nor to your father ride home
> victorious.
> No. This was not the promise I gave Evander your
> father at our going
> When he embraced me and charged me to begin an
> empire
> But told me in fear of dangerous foes and a tough
> war.
> And oh, perhaps even now, led on by hope's fool's
> light,
> He is saying his prayers and piling with offerings
> his altar,
> And here we are, and his son lifeless with nothing
> left
> Of obligation to any god, and so with empty
> pomp,

Comrades in sorrow, we bring him home.
Ah so unlucky, soon to see this bitter death.
Is this our homecoming, our long awaited triumph?
Was this my grand assurance: Oh Evander, at least
you shall not
See him defeated by the wounds of shame, nor
pray
A father's prayer for death because your son has
saved
His life but not his honour. But oh, how great
A rock, how great a refuge, is lost to you,
My son, and to Italy.

Achilles, after mentioning his vain promise to Patroclus's father, does not refer again to Menoitios; instead, he foretells his own death at Troy and makes a pledge to kill Hector. It is characteristic of Virgil to sustain a single large and universal image of pathos; to invite us to feel, not only with Aeneas but through Aeneas with Evander. Aeneas, having been a surrogate father to Pallas, speaks as a father and for a father, a father as yet ignorant, like Andromache, in *Iliad* XXII, who hadn't yet heard the news and was preparing Hector's warm bath for his return from the battle. 'while he', says the poet, 'far from warm baths was cut down by Pallas Athene at the hands of Achilles'. The pathos of this famous piece of dramatic irony is transformed by Virgil into a different scene: the ignorance is the same, but an intensely Roman act of prayer and *pietas* replaces the domestic task; Aeneas puts words of awareness and tragic grief proleptically into Evander's mouth just as Homer invites his audience to feel with Andromache in those terrible last moments of ignorance before she learns the news. In *Aeneid* XI when Evander hears the news and goes out to meet the cortège, his own words are made by the poet to begin with an echo of Aeneas's

non haec, o Palla, dederas promissa parenti

This was not the promise you made your father, Pallas

cf. Aeneas:

> non haec Euandro de te promissa parenti
> discedens dederam . . .
>
> *This was not the promise I gave Evander your father*
> *about you*
> *At our going. . .*

Then the reader anticipates Evander's grief, carries his sense of the poem's unfolding meaning beyond Evander's immediate unawareness, to realise the full significance of this protracted episode. Moreover, Aeneas's speech gives the reader a further chance to link the meaning of the narrative across the break between books X and XI, for while it is true, as we saw, that X ends in violence and blood, the dying hero Mezentius, *contemptor diuum*, has already put into the poem an intensely moving version of a father's sense of agony at his son's death. He feels a kind of guilt in survival, at having not yet gone from the light – 'but I am going'; and he turns to address his horse Rhaebus, in another marvellous transformation of Homer, in words which are peculiarly Virgilian in their pathos:

> Rhaebus, we have lived a long time, if anything
> Mortal can be said to live long . . .[35]

Even the proud, now vanquished foe, second only to Turnus among the Latin chiefs, whose symbolic figure, a lopped trunk decked with arms stands as the first gaunt image of book XI, even Mezentius has in the author's direction of the narrative close of book X made a contribution proleptically to the long perspectives of pathos through which the reader of book XI must now pass. Evander, too, expresses the by now

[35] The transformation is characteristic. Hector encourages his horses before battle at *Iliad* 8.184ff. without considering the possibility of failure. Mezentius says that if horse and hero do not return together victorious then they will die together. For the motif of horses weeping for their masters cf. *Aen.* 11.89 (Pallas's horse) and *Iliad* 17.426ff. (Achilles' horses weep for Patroclus); but again there is a characteristic transformation, for Mezentius's horse does not only mourn for Lausus, but (as it were) for Mezentius himself, whose death is not far off.

familiar Virgilian sentiment of 'contempt for the light'. And he expresses a further sentiment which links his speech back to the opening image of XI:

> You too would now be standing, a huge trunk on the field,
> If your ages and strengths had been equally matched,
> Turnus.

The death of Mezentius, his lopped image, must stand for the time being for the death of Turnus, Pallas's slayer; yet Mezentius is not wholly disjunct from the pathos of Pallas's funeral and Evander's and Aeneas's grief: his own lament for his son is, as it were, held over from book X and allowed to permeate the reader's sense of the unfolding of the brief, tragically charged Virgilian Iliad. Pallas's death now makes Turnus's confrontation with Aeneas certain the Iliadic structure, and the sentiment, require it; the reader expects no other end. Only the death of Camilla is to be encompassed; otherwise, the rest of the poem is dominated by Turnus.

Aeneas's last words of ritual despatch over Pallas are among the briefest and most eloquent of all his speeches.

> nos alias hinc ad lacrimas eadem horrida belli
> fata uocant: salue aeternum mihi, maxime Palla,
> aeternumque uale.
>
> *We from this place to other tears by war's same dreadful doom*
> *Are called. For ever and for ever, noblest Pallas,*
> *Hail and farewell.*

These formulaic words echo both Achilles' farewell to Patroclus in *Iliad* 23.19 and Catullus's words over his brother's tomb (101.10). Thus ends the first part of book XI. The majestic funeral tone, the repetition of *maestus*, continues to dominate the passage which follows, until Evander and his dead son face each other and the dreadful reality is brought

home to the reader, who now reads through Evander. As the funeral cortège winds its way towards Evander and that final outburst of grief, *maestam incendunt clamoribus urbem*, other Iliadic themes are being interwoven into the narrative. The funeral of Pallas signals a twelve-day truce for the general burial of the dead. The Iliadic models are the truce after the fight between Ajax and Hector in book VII together with the truce granted at the very end of the *Iliad* by Achilles. Neither of these models corresponds exactly in structure to that in *Aeneid* XI. Aeneas plays the Achillean role of truce-granter, but he has not yet killed his Hector, and the moral argument is that of the implied author. Aeneas replies to the request of the Latin ambassadors in carefully chosen, emphatically rhetorical words which require the reader to consider not merely epic precedent but also moral justice.

> Do you ask me for peace for the dead?
> Indeed I should have wished to extend it also to the living
> I only came here because fate said it was my place;
> I have no quarrel with your people. It was your king who
> Rejected my guest-friendship, preferring Turnus and war.

The point is taken up, speciously, by Drances, a Latin leader who hates Turnus and flatters Aeneas with rhetorical flourishes:

> O great in fame, greater in action,
> Hero of Troy, with what praise shall I lift you to the sky?
> Shall I start with your moral scruples or your military prowess?

Drances now goes on to say that he will try to persuade Latinus to resume his alliance with Aeneas and repudiate Turnus. In the debate which follows, Drances comes out as an

opponent of war, but he does not thereby emerge as trustworthy or admirable, any more than Belial does when he counsels peace in the debate in Pandemonium.[36] Drances' praise of Aeneas is a reworking of a familiar formula, almost a cliche of his character, equal in renown for *pietas* and for prowess, an epic vaunt used by Aeneas himself, for example, at 1.544; here the smooth flattery might suggest a sneer if Drances did not hate Turnus so much.

It is sometimes said that early in XI Virgil is at pains to reinstate Aeneas in the reader's eyes after showing him, in book X, subject like other men to *furor* in the extreme and catastrophic situation of battle. Williams goes so far as to speak of Aeneas being here in his normal frame of mind[37] after the frenzy he showed in X, but the reader's memory is not so short that he can forget. It is the reader's task to make sense of inconsistencies in behaviour, if this is what they are, and of the gaps between books and episodes. If there are judgements to be made, the reader must make these too, and change them as he reads. One might read the poem, to give an extreme instance, in such a way as to place most emphasis on the battle scenes ('this is what Aeneas really enjoys, all the time he has been controlling himself, now all his *furor* is released'): the exemplary story of Hercules and Cacus in VIII, in which the saviour hero showed *furor* against his enemy, then becomes paradigmatic of the entire epic. One might reduce such passages as Aeneas's speech to Drances and the other Latin representatives about the truce (11.108–19) to propagandist rhetoric on the part of the Augustan author, inserted to ensure that the founder of the *gens Iulia* has clean hands. One might read the hero's frequent protestations – 'I would not have come here if fate had not sent me', etc. – as mere self-justification, no more convincing than his words to Dido ('It is fate, not my own will, that took me from you'); Dido's

[36] *Paradise Lost* 2.106ff. The 'peace party' in Milton's council is represented by both Belial and Mammon. Satan's rejection of their advice and determination to continue his opposition to God are modelled on Turnus's proud and contemptuous rejection of Drances' *nulla salus bello* argument: see esp. *Aen.* 11.411–15.

[37] 'Here we see him as he really is'; Williams on 11.100ff.

silence in the underworld may then express the reader's own lack of conviction about the validity of this Aeneas.

It is probably not surprising that some critics, faced with a work as complex as the *Aeneid*, should seek to simplify it. This is partly the result of the poem's having been too long a school book. The modern reader is too seldom able to manipulate the multiplicity of viewpoints it contains, the shifting of the narrative from narrator to hero to other characters, the continually changing perspectives, the variety of pace and tone, the way the episodes can stand alone and must yet relate to each other, the gaps between passages and between books, the elaborate time-structure which takes the reader backwards and forwards around a 'now' which is both Virgil's Augustan present and the reader's own time, the 'now' when he reads: the fact that so much of the poem is written in the historic present facilitates this synchronic structure. The episode being read will always seem to draw into itself all the perspectives of the whole epic. All this makes the *Aeneid* a very modern piece of fictional narrative, which can only be properly understood if the reader is aware of his own role and responsibility: to make sense of the poem from all its parts and from the interstices between them. Any judgement we pause to make, struck by the force of a particular scene, and the apparent contradictions which (in a naive reading) this judgement seems to set up, must be seen as partial, true perhaps, but for the time being. Any judgement which decides that Aeneas the apologist, the statesman, the man of *pietas* is 'normal' and Aeneas the frenzied is abnormal has in a sense fallen victim to a propagandist or 'ennobling' interpretation of the poem, in which the battle-scenes are distasteful reminders of the unpalatable realities of *imperium*. War is uncivilised, and a 'civilised' poet cannot really 'mean' what he writes about war: true, but the poet's discourse on the insanity of war (shared by his whole generation, sick of *discordia*), operates within a narrative in which war becomes a grand rhetorical topos. We must not so etiolate Virgil as to remove from him all zest for heroic narrative. I believe, too, that for Virgil the *Iliad*

remained a great masterpiece; in attempting a recension of it in terms of his own nation's legendary past, he did not intend a repudiation. Whether its object is to sack a city or to found one, war remains insane; he that wills the end must will the means. And the greatness of the end, the positive act of founding a city as distinct from the negative act of destroying one, does not automatically glorify the means. For the modern (as distinct from the implied Augustan) reader, even the end, *urbs condita*, is now subject to the ironies of history: 'Alaric has avenged Turnus.'[38]

After Evander's farewell to Pallas, the scene changes back to the battlefield and the sombre burial of the dead. A new day dawns at line 182, marking the end of one of the shortest narrative days in the poem (182 lines). The funeral cortège has taken, as it would have had to do, a whole day to wind its way back to Pallanteum. The day now dawning is ushered in with a characteristically Virgilian and deeply appropriate version of a familiar topos:

> Aurora interea miseris mortalibus almam
> extulerat lucem referens opera atque labores.
>
> *And now dawn to miserable mortals her kindly*
> *Light had revealed, bringing back toil and labour*

Behind the panoply and rhetoric of the funeral and of the war council about to take place, the life of man is all the time as wretched as it was in *Iliad* XVII, when all heroic grandeur was reduced to zero in the meditative words of Zeus to an immortal horse. Here the epexegesis, *opera atque labores*, extends and reinforces the sense of mortal man's unending tasks. The new light shows up the desolate spectacle of the battlefield, the building of pyres, the ritual of the Trojan cremations, the lamentations until nightfall. Two days are allotted to the burial; after describing the Trojan rites the poet turns to the Latins, and depicts their mourning in slow spondaic measure:

[38] W. H. Auden, 'Secondary Epic', in *Homage to Clio* (1960).

tunc undique uasti
certatim crebris conlucent ignibus agri.

And all around the devastated fields
Are lit by fitful and conflicting fires.

The women of Latium in particular are already in profound reaction against the war:

dirum exsecrantur bellum Turnique hymenaeos;
ipsum armis ipsumque iubent decernere ferro.

They curse the dreadful war and Turnus's marriage contract;
Him they bid fight, let him decide the war with his sword.

They will recall now, with (and for) the reader, how they let Amata, fury-driven, lead them into a Bacchic frenzy, crying vengeance in the name of that same marriage contract. Soon now we shall see them file repentant into Athene's temple.

The long first section of *Aeneid* XI ends at last at line 224, having reached its climax in the passage showing the grief-stricken 'city of most wealthy Latinus', *praediuitis urbe Latini*, the unusual adjective powerful with irony. The language is highly wrought, with elaborate alliterative patterns (the repeated 'c' at lines 207–9, for instance), the repeated verb *maerentes*, *maerentem* (root of *maestus*) emphasising the extent of a shared and protracted grief, *longi luctus*. The entire passage is modelled on the lamentation for Hector and funeral truce in *Iliad* XXIV (with the earlier and structurally less significant truce in *Iliad* VII) yet, as so often in the last part of the *Aeneid*, Virgil moves further from the tone and spirit of the *Iliad*. In structure and thematic focus, his *Iliad* is modelled on Homer's, with a Patrocleia and with careful assimilations of the deaths of Sarpedon and Euphorbos. But each action in the *Aeneid* generates an immense charge of emotional discourse which slows the reader down in a way he is not slowed down

in the *Iliad* even by the funeral of Patroclus or of Hector. The normal pace of reading the *Iliad* is fast; even the passages of extended pathos and sensibility do not decelerate this pace noticeably. The normal pace of the *Aeneid* is slow; the heavier hexameter, the longer descriptions, the proportion of feeling to action, all contribute to this. The interaction in the *Aeneid* between events and responses is an extreme and fascinating example of expressionism.

The miserable mortals on whom another day of toil and labour dawns become specifically the *miseri Latini . . . matres miseraeque nurus*, the miserable mothers, brides and sisters of dead warriors; Homer's formula 'wretched mortals' is not now a piece of traditional gnomic wisdom, the proper response of man to his mortality, but a sense of the intolerable burden which living and action place on human sensibility. The pressure to end this war, after only a few days, is already overwhelming, for it is more than a story-book war. It is for the implied reader a paradigm of historical civil war. In the *Iliad*, after nearly ten years, an attempt to end the war by single combat between Paris and Menelaus is aborted by divine intervention. The only heroes who 'must' die in order to produce the narrative of the wrath of Achilles, are Patroclus and Hector. No other important heroes die in the poem.[39] In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas must get rid of all his rivals as surely, and with as firm a basis in historical necessity, as Octavian had to.

The quarrel over Helen is not the 'real' theme of the *Iliad*. Virgil not only wrote the wrath theme out of his Iliad. He assimilated the motif of the rape of Helen into his Patrocleia and his version of the Achilles–Hector confrontation. In the *Iliad*, we see Helen not so much as a *casus belli* but as its chief and most self-aware victim. As an element in the narrative, she belongs with the effects, not the causes of war. Though in no way blamed by the Trojans, she knows how the poet will project her into the future. She foresees the Iliad.[40]

In the *Aeneid*, Turnus sees Aeneas in Iliadic terms as Paris to

[39] See F. Ferrucci, *The Poetics of Disguise* (Cornell, Ithaca 1980) 22–3.
[40] See above, Prologue, 19–22.

his Menelaus, an effeminate oriental seducer, the dancing-master and chorus-boy of Hector's and Priam's taunts against the hero whom Aphrodite loved and rescued from Menelaus's spear. But the motif of the marriage-contract is a true *casus belli* in the *Aeneid* since whoever marries Lavinia succeeds to the throne of Latium. Helen's recovery carries no territorial guarantee to her rescuers, whose aim is plunder and destruction, not empire. The Trojan war is vendetta and the saving of 'face'. It is not through Paris or Menelaus or the bumbling Agamemnon, but through the story of Achilles, Patroclus and Hector, that Homer brings tragic intensity and meaning to the ten-year siege. For Virgil, the 'cause' of his *Iliad*, the silent and all but invisible Lavinia, seems mere pretext. The Latin war must be fought so as paradigmatically to lay the foundations for that past on which Virgil's Rome is constructed. The ultimate cause of the war is to be found in history itself.

The inevitable finality of Troy's fall, from which the *Aeneid*, and the Roman foundation legend, takes its beginning, lies far beyond the end of Homer's *Iliad*, yet that end is included in the poem by Homer, in the famous prophetic words of Agamemnon and Hector:

> For I know well this thing in my heart and mind:
> the day will come when holy Ilium shall be
> destroyed
> and Priam and the people of Priam of the good ash
> spear.

For Virgil that inescapable 'cause', now past, reverberates through the narrative as part of the effect of the Italian Iliad: the winning of the gods back to the city of *pietas* which they seemed once to have abandoned – back to the new Troy, Rome.[41]

[41] Professor Kenney has suggested to me that Homer's words about the coming fall of Troy are 'echoed and inverted' at *Aen.* 1.283–5, when Jupiter foresees the ending of Greek power: *ueniet lustris labentibus aetas | cum domus Assaraci Phthiam clarasque Mycenas | seruitio premet ac uictis dominabitur Argis.*

uenit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus
Dardaniae. fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium et ingens
gloria Teucrorum; ferus omnia Iuppiter Argos
transtulit.

The last day and inevitable time has come
To Ilium. We are past, Troy is past, and our mighty
Glory. So cruelly Jupiter has taken all
Over to the enemy.

At the end of the *Aeneid*, the last stage of the working out of destiny through the will of Jupiter does indeed involve the final disappearance of Troy; the Trojans, who throughout their wanderings, and throughout the poem, have striven to keep alive their traditions and identity, must now surrender them: the grim words of Panthus, recalled by Aeneas to Dido, come true at last. With Turnus's death the ghosts of Hector and Priam are finally laid to rest, and the very name of Troy, sounding out like a musical figure for the last time at 12.828 (the last word spoken in the epic by Juno) vanishes for ever. If Jupiter changed sides and deserted Troy, Juno now changes sides herself to become a tutelary deity of the Roman people and one of the divine guardians of the Capitol. This is the magnitude of the finality which the Virgilian Iliad sets out to achieve. Not only Homer's Troy, but in a sense Homer's *Iliad* is subsumed in the *Aeneid*, to such an extent that for a long time it usurped its model as the supreme epic of heroic warfare. The rediscovery of the original *Iliad* in the Renaissance and in the centuries which followed, had the effect of putting the *Aeneid* back into the transforming intertextual relation to the *Iliad* which Virgil had always assumed and intended.

7. The council of war

The second triad of book XI describes the council of war held by the Latins at which they first receive the ambassadors despatched in VIII to seek aid from the Greek settler Diomede, survivor of the Homeric *Iliad*. It is a typical gesture of secondary epic to introduce him into the *Aeneid*, and a striking piece of moral irony to introduce him as a non-combatant, for he was one of the greatest heroes of the Achaians. But Diomede has had enough of war. His message is first related briefly in indirect speech by the poet as narrator; it is then that Latinus summons a council, a scene parallel to the council of gods at the beginning of X, introduced in a passage of parallel grandeur (11.231–8):

> deficit ingenti luctu rex ipse Latinus:
> fatalem Aenean manifesto numine ferri
> admonet ira deum tumulique ante ora recentes.
> ergo concilium magnum primosque suorum
> imperio accitos alta intra limina cogit.
> olli conuenere fluuntque ad regia plenis
> tecta uiis. sedet in mediis et maximus aeuo
> et primus sceptris haud laeta fronte Latinus.
>
> *King Latinus breaks down under the heavy strain.*
> *The gods' anger, so many newly dead –*
> *Aeneas must be the man of destiny*
> *Sent by the declared will of heaven.*
> *And so he calls a council of all his chiefs.*
> *They come through packed streets to the great hall.*
> *There, eldest in years, first in authority,*
> *Much troubled in countenance, Latinus takes his place.*

Between Latinus and Jupiter there is both parallel and contrast. The king is traditionally in epic an earthly figure of the king of men and gods Zeus/Jupiter, but whereas Jupiter, although

displeased with events, is still in control even when proclaiming that events shall take their course. Latinus, equally displeased, is not in control. Yet both Jupiter and Latinus are themselves opposed to this war; Latinus is too weak to oppose Turnus, Jupiter refuses to arbitrate between Venus (longing for peace, but on her terms like Drances in the council) and Juno (a figure of Turnus).

The envoy Venulus now gives in full and direct speech the long and powerful rejection by Diomede of the Latin call for military aid against the Trojans. It provides a chance for the poet to engage the reader in a résumé of the Trojan war and its aftermath from the viewpoint of the victorious Greeks: the sufferings of the war itself, the dead, the disasters which attended the homecomings of many of the surviving heroes (notably, in ascending order of fame, Neoptolemus, Idomeneus, Agamemnon). All this is presented as the justifiable punishment of sinners. Zeus at the beginning of the *Odyssey* also rehearses the fate of Agamemnon, distinguishing it from the undeserved sufferings of Odysseus, though to Virgil Odysseus, as the hero ultimately responsible for the sack of the city, is specially culpable. Homer thought of his two opposing sides primarily in terms of their respective champions – the Trojans had Hector and Aineias, but the Greeks had a string of mighty warriors, and their superiority won them victory. Between Homer and Virgil came the rise of the city and nation states, the sense of events as collectively brought about, the formalisation of national characteristics (adumbrated already by Homer as a patriotic Greek poet). For the Roman poet, Trojan piety (Homer's Zeus admired the Trojans for their religious observances) is reinforced with the heroism of Hector while the military superiority of Achilles is transposed to the new Roman nation through Aeneas, supreme in prowess as in *pietas*, and by an infusion of the fighting blood of the tough (*duri*) Italians. Just as the defeated Trojans retained their *pietas* in exile as the Jews retained theirs, a kind of national badge, so the defeated Latins will retain their best characteristics when the war is over. In Diomede's speech

it is, therefore, the impiety of the Greeks which must be stressed, as it was in book II, in which Aeneas was the narrator: both he and Diomede are made by the implied author to present, so to speak, an agreed version of the sack of Troy as an act of moral outrage. In particular, the famous account in II of the killing of Priam by Pyrrhus, who first killed Priam's son Polites in front of his eyes, is presented as an act of monstrous impiety. The king is in his palace, in the sanctuary of his own altar, an altar full of Roman significance like all the altars in the *Aeneid*.

Virgil's council of war is an assimilation of three Trojan councils in the *Iliad*. In *Iliad* VII Antenor proposes the return of Helen, 'for we are fighting having falsified our true pledges', a reference to the oaths sworn in book III by both sides to leave the outcome of the war to be decided by Paris and Menelaus. In the council, Antenor's proposal is overruled. Structurally, this council is important for Virgil since it occurs in the context of a truce for the disposal of the dead, a truce which, while not crucial to the story of the *Iliad* at that point, *is* crucial to Virgil's narrative at the point reached in book XI. The truce willingly granted by Aeneas, granted along with a heartfelt wish to extend that peace also to the living, forms the prelude to the truce in book XII which the Rutuli break, thus becoming violators like the Greeks at the sack of Troy – for the breaking of oaths like the sanctity of altars, was central to Roman *pietas*: these violations carry for Virgil's implied reader a force and horror absent from the world of Homer's *Iliad*.

But Virgil has assimilated to his council not only that from *Iliad* VII but also that in *Iliad* XVIII, which is a longer episode and offers an important analogy with *Aeneid* XI, for in it two opposing views on how the next stage of the war is to be conducted are put forward, and again the more prudent and sensible one, the 'Antenorian' one, is rejected: this time its exponent is Polydamas, who advises the Trojans to stay inside the walls and not go out and risk the fresh and dangerous aggression of Achilles beside the ships. Not for the first time, the brave but foolhardy Hector rejects this counsel: the motif

of the impetuous hero overruling the voice of prudence occurs several times in the *Iliad*.

The third council of war in the *Iliad* which has contributed to *Aeneid* XI is that in *Iliad* II. in which Agamemnon tries to persuade the Greeks to go on fighting by suggesting that they ought to go home. This devious plan backfires on him and in any case seems illogical when he has just had a dream of certain victory, but it is characteristic of his weak generalship:[42] elsewhere in the *Iliad* he seriously proposes retreat and is answered with contempt by Diomede and Odysseus.[43] In *Aeneid* XI Latinus advises peace but is unable to sway the war-party. From *Iliad* II Virgil takes the attack on Agamemnon by Thersites, the only common and ugly man mentioned by Homer in his heroic poem. His advice to withdraw is rejected with contempt by Odysseus, as is Drances' by Turnus. Thersites' view, and his presence in the poem, may perhaps represent, as Willcock suggests, 'new political strivings', the ruling class having become suspect by Homer's time with 'discontent beginning to find a voice'.[44] Certainly Drances' rancour and his dubious ancestry suggest that Thersites may have served as a model. The content of his speech is closer to that of Thersites than to that of Polydamas, for he does not just counsel more prudently than Turnus, as Homer says Polydamas counsels more prudently than Hector: he counsels surrender, blaming the war on Turnus as Thersites blamed it on Agamemnon.

Gilbert Highet has pointed out[45] that Drances' speech works quite differently from Thersites'. As he rightly says, it is more dignified, more intellectual, more effectively incorporated into the narrative. But why is this so? Highet does not offer an explanation. In part, the answer must be, as noted above, that Virgil has assimilated other councils from the *Iliad* besides that in book II: Drances is certainly not a straight transcription of Thersites. But in addition, Virgil's rhetoric functions in a

[42] Willcock, *Companion* 18. [43] *Iliad* 9.26–8, 14.74–81.
[44] Willcock on *Iliad* 2.212, and *Companion* 20.
[45] *The Speeches in Vergil's Aeneid* (Princeton 1972) 248–51.

more complex way than Homer's. In the speeches in *Iliad* I, for example, Achilles, though he does not speak at random, seems to speak in the very heat of anger and temper: the poet cleverly makes him seem to speak 'off the top of his head': this is the great achievement of the monumental composer working with oral techniques at the beginning of the age of literature, whereas Virgil's speeches are codified in accordance with five hundred years of rhetorical theory and practice and belong at the centre of all Graeco-Roman culture.

Thersites' speech is also motivated differently from that of Drances. Homer tells us that he talked in a disorderly fashion and in order to make the Argives laugh. In fact they do laugh, but only when he is beaten by Odysseus. The reader may, I suppose, read this passage so as to construct a meaning unfavourable to the heroes – an allegory of how the upper class keeps down the lower by force? The silencing of Thersites by Odysseus when he hits him with his staff and raises blood on his back is felt by the rest of the company to be a good thing, and Homer gives us a general reaction in the form of speech one to another. Homer often gives us his implied author's reactions to what he tells us as narrator (as in the council scene in book XVIII where he comments on the foolishness of the Greeks in rejecting Polydamas's strategy in favour of Hector's), and the fact that he can criticise Hector, the most sympathetic character in his story, validates his criticism of Thersites and makes it harder for us to dismiss it, even though we find the suppression of minorities by force distasteful. Homer has introduced Thersites into his aristocratic poem and also rejected him. His inclusion, and his rejection, are elements in the poem's enormous versatility and polyvalence; his treatment is, perhaps, an unresolved element in the poem's archaic value-structure.

The confrontation between Drances and Turnus is crucial to the *Aeneid* in a way that none of the Homeric war-councils are, or can be (given the poem's psychological and narrative modes), least of all Thersites' outburst, which occurs too early in the poem to have any significant effect on the action. In

Aeneid XI the choice between peace and war is presented to the reader for almost the last time in the poem. We are at a point in the second half of the poem which corresponds structurally to that reached in the first half at book V, where (as in XI) Aeneas is approaching a climax in his labours (the visit to the underworld, the duel with Turnus). In both V and XI he celebrates the funeral of one close to him, and for whom he feels deep personal grief – his father Anchises and his surrogate son Pallas. Anchises' death is in a sense negated by his role in VI as expounder of spiritual and historical truth, while Pallas's death is not negated but avenged by the death of Turnus and the peace which can then, and only then, begin. The end of V, too, the death of the sympathetically drawn figure of Palinurus, has affinities with the end of XI, the death of Camilla (both characters are in some sense deceived against their better judgement).

In *Virgil: A Study in Civilised Poetry*, Brooks Otis[46] works out a more elaborate and less convincing correspondence between XI and III. To go back in reverse through the six books of the 'Odyssean' *Aeneid* is to reduce the poem's powerful linear thrust and its significance as a narrative text. By the time we reach XI, we do not want a reading which will involve references back to III, a book which is part of Aeneas's narrative at Carthage, when he is far from his Odyssean, let alone his Iliadic goal. But we may make some gesture of recall towards V, for then we were in sight as readers of a goal in our act of reading, no less than Aeneas is, and was, in sight of a goal as protagonist. A moment of destiny is all but within the grasp, a decisive act towards which Turnus himself is now directing the narrative by the sheer force of his determination to fight. From now until the end, Turnus is the central focus of the narrative, and we see events, and respond to them, increasingly through his eyes. By putting the case for peace into the clever but ill-motivated speech of Drances the certainty of renewed conflict is guaranteed by the heroic and

[46] Otis, *Virgil* 363.

indeed Achillean response of Turnus which makes his bitter hostility to the very end of the action inevitable. Indeed, behind all the other Iliadic models of councils which pervade this scene in book XI, we become more and more aware of the undercurrent of the most important confrontation in the entire *Iliad*, that in book I between Agamemnon and Achilles. Turnus's violent response to Drances' smooth and plausible argument contains something of the violence and angered pride of Achilles: thus late in the *Aeneid* the wrath theme makes a kind of return to the story; it is the last Achillean gesture of a hero who must soon resign his role of Achilles to Aeneas and assume the role of Hector, but a Hector who has forfeited sympathy by an Achillean anger which will stay with him now till he is killed, the last trace and vestige of a traditional heroic prowess history has doomed. It is here that the ambivalence and interest of Turnus's character lie. He is wrong to keep the war going, he represents an outdated concept of personal heroism, he leads an army composed largely of similarly inclined heroes dedicated to personal glory – of whom Camilla still survives as the most appealing figure. Yet he is also the focus, through the Iliadic *Aeneid*, as Dido was through the Odyssean *Aeneid*, of a structurally and morally significant antithesis. The reader does not want to walk out on Dido or Turnus, any more than he does on the great flawed fallen heroes of later fiction, in Milton or Conrad, to name two writers who offer heroic narratives with strong sets of antithetical value-structures, both indispensable to the narrative.

The last fifteen lines of Drances' speech are an eloquent, authorially ironic plea to Turnus to make peace, or, if his desire for personal glory will not let him, then to face Aeneas man to man, and not sacrifice other lives in the cause of his marital quarrel. This motif of 'it is not our cause' again echoes the first scene of the *Iliad*, but now, in the Virgilian manipulation of Homeric roles, Drances has momentarily put Turnus into the figure of Agamemnon, or rather his brother, and speaks as Achilles once spoke to his commander-in-chief:

'the Trojans have not wronged me, it is your honour and Menelaus's which was wronged and which we are defending here'. For Turnus is not only Achilles who will soon become Hector, he must also take on himself the burden of the discredited and effeminate figure of the seducer Paris (thus freeing the Trojan Aeneas from the taint of this role) trying in vain to retain a bride whom destiny has not permitted him: the final duel in XII is the abortive duel between Paris and Menelaus from the *Iliad* fought now to a finish, as well as a re-enactment of the duel between Achilles and Hector; the two plots of the *Iliad* come together, Helen/Lavinia is won, Patroclus/Pallas avenged.

Drances' eloquence mounts to the words *nulla salus bello, pacem te poscimus omnes, Turne*; Drances here names Turnus for the first time in a speech full of criticism of him.

> There is no safety in war, peace is what all of us,
> Turnus, want from you . . . feel for your
> followers,
> Set your pride aside. You have been beaten.
> Surrender. We have seen enough
> Of death, enough of us have died, we have made
> desolate so many acres.
> Oh yes, so long as Turnus can marry a princess he
> can
> Leave us, humble souls, to lie out there, unwept,
> unburied,
> Dead. And what of you? If you have the might
> And martial force your father had, stand face to
> face
> With him your challenger.

Turnus replies by pouring scorn on Drances as a mere talker, not a doer, and reminding the council of his own achievements inside the enemy camp before the return of Aeneas. He makes no mention of the loss of Mezentius or of his own pursuit of the phantom Aeneas, presumably the defeat to which Drances referred, but it would seem natural for an 'Achillean' hero to

dwell on his successes, and of course he includes the killing of Pallas, a boast both hubristic and full of proleptic irony; he will pay in full and in person for the destruction of the house of Evander. It seems possible, too, that Turnus is still too baffled and confused by the episode of the phantom and his adventure on the ship at the end of X. He was, in any case, not running away from but, as he supposed, pursuing his arch-foe, so he might feel himself in no way '*pulsus*', beaten, an accusing word of Drances, which, according to the rules of rhetoric, he quotes in order to repudiate it: not, understandably, by trying to explain what for him remains an inexplicable cause of shame (and the reader will feel sympathy here, knowing that the gods had 'Homerically' weakened the hero by interfering with his sense-impressions and his power over the external world) but by dwelling on the victories he has achieved, on the Trojan losses (for the storm of loss has broken over both armies equally, another echo of Jupiter's warning that if this war is fought 'against' his will, both sides will have to accept the blows of impartial fortune) and on the still unbeaten battalions of his army, Camilla and her Volsci, another piece of proleptic hubris. He is still ready to make peace if this is really the best way – 'but oh, if we had anything of our old courage' we should not think of it. In some famous lines adapted by Virgil from Ennius he reminds the council of the changing fortunes of war:

> Many a day's labour of men's mutable lifetimes
> Has brought change for the better, many a day has gaming Fortune
> Deluded men, then turned again and restored them to solid ground.

These words may also be a covert reference to his own mysterious return to land from his involuntary sea-journey in pursuit of the phantom Aeneas.

Finally, Turnus agrees to face Aeneas in single combat if this is decided on as the best course – *solum Aeneas uocat? et uocet oro,*

'Aeneas is challenging me alone? Pray let him challenge . . .' – and this takes us back to *Iliad* III, in which Paris, after being taunted by Hector, agrees to face Menelaus. The Iliadic tension begins to increase.

But all this debate is swiftly brought to nothing by the news that Aeneas has renewed the attack, the truce having expired.

8. Camilla's last stand

At this point in his narrative, with a new Trojan offensive about to start, Virgil makes an indispensable allusion to Homer's *Iliad*, and one for which the reader has been prepared since *Aeneid* I, when Aeneas gazed with grief and nostalgic pride at the murals in Juno's temple at Carthage depicting scenes from the Trojan war. The presentation of Troilus's death at the hands of Achilles (a pre-Iliadic episode) has already engaged the reader as the type of a pervasive Virgilian motif, the death of the young hero at the hand of a more experienced one. But now another scene is re-enacted: the incident in *Iliad* VI in which the matrons of Troy take gifts to Athene's temple and pray to the goddess to break the shield of Diomede, depicted at *Aeneid* 1.479–82. The goddess rejected their prayer, for she was not only on the side of the Greeks but had, in *Iliad* V, specifically encouraged Diomede, kindled flame from his helmet, head and shoulders, and launched him on his *aristeia*, which was to include the wounding of Aphrodite, Aineias's mother. Those murals at Carthage also showed the Amazon Penthesilea, killed, in a post-Iliadic period of the war, by Achilles. The implied reader is invited to reconstruct these episodes in preparation for the *aristeia* of the 'Amazonian' leader of the Volsci, Camilla, singled out by Turnus in his speech to the war council as a great ally whose forces were still virtually intact, and for her death, which removes Turnus's last remaining hope and prepares him and the reader for the final confrontation with Aeneas.

The reader thus enters a richly associative and transforming phase of the Virgilian Iliad. The author places significant parallels like signposts, which control the reader's response, and his awareness of what the structure and direction of the narrative must be. Now, in *Aeneid* XI, the women of Latium, led by Queen Amata, repair to the temple of Athene and pray to the goddess, as their Trojan counterparts had done before, that the spear of their most dangerous foe, this time Aeneas, might be broken. The role of Diomede has been transferred to Aeneas, for now it is the Latins who are hard-pressed and fearful. Moreover, the silent allusion to the 'suppressed' figure of Diomede, already implied in the scene on the murals at Carthage, is transformed in its new context by the very fact that Diomede himself, the Homeric original cause of that fearful women's prayer, has just been written out of the *Aeneid*. His heroic role, therefore, devolves, like other Homeric roles, upon Aeneas, as a number of lines from different starting-points converge towards a single terminal point. Aeneas becomes the focus and end of several heroic perspectives: one by one these are, so to speak, eliminated (or assimilated to him); the omens for Turnus grow more unfavourable; with each new allusion to Homer the implied author offers his reader an increasingly inescapable sense of the 'intertextuality' of his poem and the *Iliad*. One more turn of the screw now: the mention of Lavinia among the suppliant women is crucial to Virgil's motif of a second Iliad in Italy, for she is called here (11.480) *causa mali tanti*, 'cause of so much evil', the very words of the Sibyl in her prophecy to Aeneas in VI, when she warns him to prepare for a second Troy, with Lavinia in the role of Helen.

Thus in a few highly charged transitional lines between the end of the Latin council and the renewal of the attack, Virgil draws together several motifs and directs the reader to recall the pattern of a cyclic recension of the *Iliad*: to recall also, perhaps, the fourth *Eclogue* which tells how, before Saturn's peace returns to the world, there must be a renewed era of heroic warfare: 'and once more shall Achilles come to Troy'.

The word *iterum*, once more, is a signifier of cyclic prophecy,[47] and it is not surprising to find it also in the Sibyl's prophecy to Aeneas in VI:

> causa mali tanti coniunx iterum hospita Teucris
> externique iterum thalami.
>
> *Once more to the Trojans shall a foreign bride be the cause of so much evil,*
> *Once more the alien marriage bed.*

The transition from the war council to the renewal of the war is one of the finest passages in the *Aeneid*: here, perhaps, the reader can best approach an understanding of the presentational mode of Virgilian epic. The transition is from speech to narrative, but the reader must unify both modes into the symbiosis of a single text. For too long there has been a tendency for the reader to see the two modes as in some sense disparate literary operations, to regard the rhetoric of long speeches as less relevant to our expectations as forward-readers of fictional narrative. The reader has been persuaded to find the speeches too formal, elaborate and static (whereas Homer's seem more accessible because apparently arising spontaneously from the traditional 'tale') and to be impatient for the 'real' action to be resumed. This may help to account for the relative unfamiliarity of the second half of the *Aeneid*, in which the interdependence of speech and tale becomes increasingly evident and increasingly important.

The speeches contribute as much to the reader's final experience of the work as does the narrative of action, and the contribution is made in the same way. We ought not to seek, or need, different reading techniques for the two modes, but to find a single technique for a single text. Whatever we decide to be the value and significance of this text, and of our reading of it, our formulation is likely to be in some sense a formulation about the nature of human discourse as a

[47] Christian as well as Sibylline: *et iterum uenturus est cum gloria iudicare uiuos et mortuos.*

description and analysis of human conduct. Human nature emerges as much from what men say as from what they do, often more: Virgil's speeches offer the reader statements about the role of language itself in human behaviour. We learn from them more about the psychology of professed purpose, human defensiveness and aggression, the concealing and revealing of motive, the power of generalising issues and conflicts. Our understanding of 'reality' through fiction depends on how we interpret modes of articulation. Reality becomes that which is expressed.

While the council is still unresolved between peace and war, while the proposal of Turnus, that he will meet Aeneas in mortal combat if that seems best, is still on the table, Aeneas sets the war going again, for the sooner it starts again the sooner it will end. The Latin council has actually delayed for the reader that ending of the war and the epic which must now be pursued. Yet the delay was not digressive and it is a pity to skip it. In the words of Richard Lanham, 'the rhetorical interlude perpetually analyses the kind of statement the narrative plot is allowed to make'.[48] The speeches now ended give a clearer perspective to the narrative. Drances' dissembling plea for peace, Latinus's weakness, Turnus's old-fashioned heroic egotism, confer significance on the resumed battle and separate it from the long funeral passage. Three blocks of text: funeral, speeches, military action: all part of the same reading experience, continuous yet articulated by felt transitions of mood and mode, as sentences are articulated into clauses and paragraphs into sentences.

We move into the book's last triad, the *aristeia* and death of Camilla. Turnus had specifically mentioned her in his speech, in two glorifying signal-verses:

> est et Volscorum egregia de gente Camilla
> agmen agens equitum et florentis aere cateruas.

[48] R. Lanham, 'Theory of the Λόγοι: the Speeches in Classical and Renaissance Narrative', in *To Tell a Story* (Clark Library Seminar Papers, Los Angeles 1973) 89–90.

And we still have Camilla, the noble Volscian,
And the cavalry she commands, brilliant with bronze.

It is on her that the narrative now focuses. She is to engage the enemy cavalry while Turnus lays an ambush for Aeneas and the infantry. She is a composite figure whom Virgil, in his characteristic synthetic manner, contrives to make wholly original; she is in part the Amazon of the continuation of the *Iliad*,[49] and here we have been prepared for her by the reference in the passage depicting the murals in Juno's temple at Carthage in book I:

ducit Amazonidum lunatis agmina peltis
Penthesilea furens mediisque in milibus ardet,
aurea subnectens exsertae cingula mammae
bellatrix, audetque uiris concurrere uirgo.

Leading the crescent-shielded Amazon ranks
Penthesilea blazes conspicuous,
Golden-girdled, one bare breast,
Woman-warrior, man-challenging maid.

Some of the key words in this passage recur in the description of Camilla in XI: she too is an Amazon, she too has one side of her breast bare (*exserta*), she too is conspicuous in gold and can be seen in the midst of the battle (*medias inter caedes exsultat*), she too is *uirgo* and *bellatrix* (7.805). Later in XI she is actually compared to Penthesilea and the phrase *lunatis agmina peltis* is repeated from 1.490. Moreover, the placing of the picture of Penthesilea at the very end of the catalogue of murals in book I is a brilliant stroke, for it leads straight into the appearance, for the first time in the poem, of Dido, herself, like Camilla, and like Penthesilea, *regina*, bearing on her shoulders, also like Camilla, the quiver of the huntress Diana, to whom she is compared. Camilla is a protégée and devotee of Diana, whose virgin servant she is: the name, like its masculine form

[49] The story of Penthesilea was included in the *Aithiopis* of Arktinos, the poem in the Trojan cycle which followed chronologically after the *Iliad*.

Camillus, means the servant of a god, and Virgil calls her *dia Camilla* ('divine'): the archaic adjective occurs nowhere else in his work. Furthermore, when the goddess Venus appears to her son Aeneas in book I she assumes the form of a virgin huntress and is likened to Harpalyce of Thrace, of whom Servius says that her father was exiled and killed, and that she had to take to the woods and live rough: Virgil himself refers to her swiftness of foot and her horsemanship. All these characteristics also belong to the magical pastoral side of Camilla, of whom in the Catalogue of Italian Leaders in VII Virgil writes, in a beautiful passage to which the reader ought now to refer back, that she is

> bellatrix, proelia uirgo
> dura pati cursuque pedum praeuertere uentos.
> illa uel intactae segetis per summa uolaret
> gramina nec teneras cursu laesisset aristas,
> uel mare per medium fluctu suspensa tumenti
> ferret iter celeris nec tingeret aequore plantas.
>
> *A maiden warrior, in battle*
> *Tough, faster on foot than the winds.*
> *She might glide over cornfields and leave the crop*
> *Intact, never harm the tender shoots in her passing,*
> *Or over the sea skim lightly, on the rolling*
> *Waves upborne so swiftly, never so much as wet her feet.*

Thus Camilla assimilates several figures from elsewhere in the poem. Like Dido, she is a royal foe of Aeneas with whom we feel some sympathy; she resembles Dido, as she also resembles Turnus, with whom, in their brief scene together in XI, she clearly has a sympathetic understanding. Her death removes a major obstacle for the Trojans, yet we feel the poet's empathy when she dies. The verse which describes her death is also used of the death of Turnus and is the very last line of the poem: this seems to be an echo of the common Homeric epitaph for Patroclus and Hector. Her death is brought about by Arruns, who has no other role in the *Aeneid*, and who is later himself

killed by Opis, Camilla's protectress; this parallels and modifies the wounding of Patroclus by Euphorbos and his subsequent death in *Iliad* XVII at the hands of Menelaus. She thus also subsumes yet another version of the figure of Homer's Patroclus, and prepares the way for the 'Iliadic' death of Turnus in book XII.

But she also has affinities with Harpalyce, a pastoral figure who may have been treated by Callimachus. According to Servius, Callimachus, who wrote much aetiological poetry, said that the name Camillus signified in Etruscan Mercury, chief messenger and minister of the gods.[50] Mercury in Virgil's descriptions is noted for his swiftness. The famous passage in *Aeneid* IV in which Mercury is despatched by Jupiter to warn Aeneas against Dido emphasises his speed and his power to fly over land and sea. In *Aeneid* VII Camilla is only said to look as though she *could* perform such miracles, an oblique allusion by Virgil to the grace and lightness with which he himself has endowed her. His subjunctives do not let us read this miraculous lightness as something counter to any natural law, instead they idealise a very human woman:[51] but the hint of the supernatural enters the reader's understanding of her.

Camilla's strange pastoral unbringing has affinities with the legend of Harpalyce. She is also assimilated to the figure of another Italian chieftain catalogued in *Aeneid* VII, Virbius, also associated with Diana, and with Hippolytus, who also took a vow of virginity: Virgil curiously makes Virbius Hippolytus's son:[52] there are common elements of virginity, pastoral isolation and rural hardship in both legends. These elements are developed in the account depicting Camilla's early life. Her father Metabus, driven into exile like the father of Harpalyce, needing to cross the river Amasenus in spate and hampered by his baby daughter, swaddled her in cork, tied her to his spear and threw her across, committing her to the protection of Diana. Camillus is recorded as having used corks to cross the

[50] See Austin on *Aen.* 1.317.
[51] W. Fowler, *Virgil's Gathering of the Clans* (Oxford 1918) 85–6.
[52] Fowler, *Virgil's Gathering* 79–81; Fordyce, *Aen. VII–VIII* on 7.761ff.

Tiber[53] and Virgil may have recalled and assimilated the incident. Other details of her life may have come from the legend of Harpalyce.

The dark fate which forced Aeneas to war is relieved and lightened by the story of Camilla, the acme of Italian heroism. Yet behind the glittering conclusion, the lust for gold which overcame her as it overcame Cleopatra (and we see the same *auri sacra fames* in the picture of the gold-necklaced Gauls, Rome's enemies in historical times, on Aeneas's Shield[54]), there is more violence, and her death, a reworking of the Euphorbos–Patroclus passage in the *Iliad*, returns us to the world of the *Iliad*. Camilla's last words to her companion Acca are nevertheless powerful, simple and self-dramatising in a manner wholly unhomeric in tone and recalling strongly the death of Dido.

> I can do no more, Acca my dear. Now the sharp wound
> Undoes me, and about me all things blacken in the dark.

The news of her death reaches Turnus when he is on the point of ambushing Aeneas. He abandons the rocky pass he had commanded and returns to the plain, in time to see Aeneas ride through safely. Another nightfall ends the day's fighting and postpones the final duel until the last book; as the Trojans pitch camp we are taken back to two nightfalls in the *Iliad*, that in book VIII, after the short battle which inaugurated the run of Trojan victories, and that in XVIII, when Patroclus is dead and Achilles poised to return to the battle. Turnus might have faced Aeneas now, had night not fallen – Virgil has postponed the final encounter, the last climax, in the manner of Homer, who often used the oldest trick of all story-telling, that of holding back the climax, a technique essential to any extended narrative.

Thus the situation to which we return as the eleventh book

[53] Plutarch, *Vita Camilli* 25. [54] *Aen.* 8.659–62.

ends and the last begins is essentially Iliadic, but the treatment is less and less Homeric. Structurally, the Turnus who confronts the reader in his violent and frustrated anger after Aeneas has escaped his stratagem is a Homeric figure: in the shifting and variable mutations of the Virgilian Iliad he is poised between the roles of Achilles and Hector as between victory and defeat. In the simile of the wounded lion roused to fresh attack, we are returned, by a remarkable transition, through our fresh memory of Camilla, to the now distant opening of *Aeneid* IV and the figure of Dido as with unsated love–fury she prowls through her city;[55] her dialogue with Anna corresponds structurally to Turnus's dialogue with Latinus. The opening words of both IV and XII offer the same image of a wound, the first a metaphor, the second a simile working as a symbol.

> at regina *graui iamdudum saucia* cura
> *uulnus* alit . . .
>
> (4.1–2)

> *Poenorum* qualis in aruis
> *saucius* ille *graui* uenantum *uulnere* pectus
> *tum demum* mouet arma leo . . .
>
> (12.4–6)

Not only are *saucius* and *graui uulnere* common terms, but *iamdudum* matches *demum*, conveying a strong surging forward to a long delayed but now inevitable end, while the detail *Poenorum* in XII adds a further associative touch (an African queen, an African lion). With the death of Camilla, the last heroic Italian warrior who could stand worthily at his side, the remaining vestige of glamour and sympathy vanishes from Turnus, and he must face at last single combat with Aeneas to decide the fate of Italy. The simile of the lion is used by Homer of Diomede in *Iliad* V and again of Achilles against Aineias in XX. Here Turnus is for the last time Homerically on

[55] Cf. Pöschl, *The Art* 109–38.

the offensive: Virgil stresses the force of his *uiolentia* with a rare verb, *gliscit*:

> haud secus accenso gliscit uiolentia Turno
>
> *No differently*[56] *is the violence of Turnus kindled into a blaze.*

Turnus's dialogue with Latinus, which opens XII, again assimilates two passages from Homer's *Iliad*, one from the first part – the planned combat between Menelaus and Paris in III – and one from the later part, when Priam tries to dissuade Hector from facing Achilles. As so often in his telescoped and assimilated Iliad, Virgil fuses a pre-Patroclean and a post-Patroclean passage: the two great quarrels of the Homeric *Iliad*, that between Paris and Menelaus and that between Achilles and Hector over Patroclus, reappear. Nor, as we shall see, does Virgil entirely lose sight of that other quarrel, between Agamemnon and Achilles, the so-called wrath theme, the germ of Homer's *Iliad*.

9. War and peace

In *Aeneid* XII Virgil manipulates the roles of Hector and Achilles for the last time. In *Aeneid* VI the Sibyl had foretold that a second Achilles already born in Latium would engage Aeneas in a second Trojan war. Thus Aeneas must become an avenging Hector, destined to reverse, this time, his earlier defeat. In the *Iliad* Achilles' death is a *donnée* of the poem, although not part of it. In book IX he says that he has the power to choose between two destinies – either to die at Troy or, returning home, to live long and ingloriously. The *Iliad* itself is 'about' this choice, and indeed about the *Angst* and stress of all human choice: it is an existential poem. Achilles' decision to stay in Troy, and his awareness of what he has chosen,

[56] This formula signals the return to the subject after the simile.

reverberate through the poem. His approaching death is unforgettably articulated in book XIX when the horse Xanthos speaks.

But Virgil reaffirms Turnus's affinity with the doomed Hector by stressing his ignorance of his own fate. He is prepared to take risks; he thinks he has a chance of victory until near the end of XII. Homer's Hector, too, had acted with the impetuous, obstinate valour of a man who can't give up. He had expressed, as indeed also had Agamemnon, that tragic prescience of the city's destined fall which colours every reading of the poem, but of his own future he says only that no man can escape his destiny, and encourages his wife with cheerful words. When Turnus sets aside the plea of his despairing mother-in-law never to be, Amata, the implied reader will hear again the pleas of Priam and Hecuba in *Iliad* XXII and, behind that, more faintly and distantly, the despairing foreboding of Andromache in VI. Turnus calls Amata *mater*, thus emphasising the Homeric echo and adding pathos to a claimed relationship which, in his obstinate pride, he still clings to. The reader will also remember the counter-effective divine protection exercised by Venus, which recalls, yet far outshines, the concern of Thetis for Achilles.

Virgil's Aeneas is a man set apart by a destiny of which he himself seems uncertain. Venus knows that her son will die and be deified within three years of the settlement of Latium, a tradition assumed for the implied reader. But Aeneas himself does not know this. His faith in his destiny is not based on any immense pride and self-regard (Achilles) nor on the soldier's assumption that either the bullet has your name on or it doesn't (Hector), but on a remote, bleak, awareness of a process of historical necessity wholly indifferent to the individual will. Even when a future beyond his personal fate is revealed to him, the future of the Roman nation (as the future doom of Troy was known to Agamemnon and Hector), he shows little understanding of it. In the Elysian fields he had wondered sadly how any human soul could bear to go through life's sorrows a second time, and his only question to

Anchises, characteristically, concerned Marcellus, the young, flower-decked hero, untimely dead. And the magic Shield gives him pleasure as an artefact, but he cannot understand its significance.

For the reader of *Aeneid* XII, constructing as he reads a prefiguration of the Augustan settlement which lies outside Aeneas's grasp, there is an impatience, now, to reach the poem's end, to see Italian *uirtus*, for all its spectacular audacity and fire, yield to a stronger force, that of historical necessity, 'what will be in the long run', that which awaits its time, the embodiment of Trojan *pietas* and patience in adversity. The qualities of toughness and endurance, of which Numanus had boasted that the Italians had the monopoly, was all the while building as the greatest strength of the Trojans: *durate*, Aeneas had said in his first words to his storm-wearied company in book I: 'endure'.

Now the time has come, and in Turnus's angry and impetuous arming the reader too feels a sense of urgency, or impatience for the poem's last dawn, when the duels between Paris and Menelaus, Hector and Achilles, will recur. But the killing of a rival suitor is also an Odyssean motif, and a distant memory of that other Homeric ending may come into a reading of *Aeneid* XII. In the scenes between Amata and Latinus domestic elements are as important as dynastic ones. The motif of *nostos*, homecoming, so strong in *Aeneid* VIII when Aeneas sailed up the Tiber to the site of Rome, is not wholly lost sight of.

The arming of Turnus is a full-scale epic episode based on several Iliadic exemplars, but postponed by Virgil until this last book, and now of much greater impact and significance than the very grand but display-conscious and, in terms of any military outcome, largely gestural arming of Agamemnon in *Iliad* XI; while the arming of Paris for his abortive duel with Menelaus in *Iliad* III strikes the reader almost as a kind of dressing up. The other two Iliadic armings are those of Patroclus, full of pathos, and of Achilles, full of wrath, but also of foreboding, for it is on this occasion that the horse

Xanthos prophesies his coming death. These two are the crucial armings of the *Iliad*, and it is these which carry for the implied reader of *Aeneid* XII the strongest resonance. But the arming of Turnus is more decisive even than these, for it is the immediate prelude to the end of the war, and its true thematic function is to prefigure the battle of Actium. *nunc . . . nunc tempus adest*, says Turnus, 'now, now the time is at hand': that time of which the poet himself had warned, in book X, when Turnus killed Pallas: *Turno tempus erit . . .* We are at a crisis and turning-point more significant than anything in the *Iliad*: it is time as *kairos* that is at hand, not time as *chronos*.[57]

> For Turnus the time will come when he will pray
> for Pallas
> To be unharmed, give anything for that, and loathe
> This day, these spoils . . .

This is the time that has now come.

Aeneas's arming is no less powerfully presented:

> Nec minus interea maternis *saeuus* in armis . . .
>
> *No less cruel he, in his mother's gift of arms . . .*

Later, when the war breaks out again in defiance of the treaty at the instigation of Juturna, Turnus's sister and Juno's agent (her name is a word-play on the other two names), Virgil tells how anger invades both armies and both leaders:

> non segnius ambo
> Aeneas Turnusque ruunt per proelia; nunc, nunc,
> fluctuat ira intus . . .
>
> *with no less energy*
> *Aeneas and Turnus charge into battle. Now, now*
> *Is the surge of wrath . . .*

That repeated *nunc, nunc*, picks up the *nunc, nunc, tempus adest*

[57] On the distinction see F. Kermode, *The Sense* 46–50.

of Turnus's arming, words addressed to his own spear, perhaps echoing Mezentius's defiant *dextra mihi deus et telum* in X. In this last book we are taken back to book VII and the first outbreak of war-madness in a structure of returning symmetry: the Virgilian Iliad ends as it began.

But the next day sees the treaty between Aeneas, still armed, still with the drawn sword, still *imperator*, and Latinus. Just before it is solemnised, Juno authorises Juturna to overthrow it, so that the reader follows the very grand and majestic account of the ritual with a kind of incredulity. The Homeric model is in *Iliad* III – the treaty solemnised between Agamemnon and Priam before the duel between Menelaus and Paris. Aeneas's prayer at the treaty-making is a version of Agamemnon's: both invoke the Sun, the Earth, Zeus/Jupiter and the Rivers; both give undertakings about what they will do if they lose and if they win (in that order). Aeneas says that he thinks the latter more likely; Agamemnon does not actually say this, but he spends longer on what will happen if he wins than on what will happen if he loses. Virgil also assimilates the opening words of Aeneas's oath to a second oath of Agamemnon's in the reconciliation between him and Achilles in XIX when he swears that he has not touched Briseis. Just as that reconciliation is the prelude to Achilles' *aristeia*, and Hector's death, this one is the prelude to Aeneas's *aristeia* and Turnus's death.

With Latinus's oath Virgil introduces a new motif from the *Iliad*, one which contributes further to the sense of tension and unease generated by the scene between Juno and Juturna:

> By that same earth, Aeneas, sea and sky, I also swear
> And by the sun and moon and by two-headed Janus,
> And by the power of the infernal gods, and by the shrine of Dis.
> Hear this, o father of gods and men, who keepest treaties with the power of the thunderbolt.

My hand on this altar, these sacred fires between
us, and the gods, I so testify:
Never shall come the day for the Italians to break
this peace, this treaty
Whatsoever shall befall. No force shall bend my
will.
While I have any power, no, not even if it should
Pour the whole world into the sea, the heavens into
hell.
As this sceptre of mine (for he held his sceptre
now)
Shall never again put forth leaves and give men
shade
Once cut from the woods and its mother earth,
trimmed by the knife,
Once a tree, now the hand of the artificer has
decorated it
With bronze, to be borne by the elders of Latium.

Those last words are the words of Achilles' oath in the quarrel scene in *Iliad* I, when he swears to Agamemnon that the time will come when he will be wanted in battle and will not be there. Achilles' threat comes true in the course of the story, just as Virgil's *Turno tempus erit* comes true when Turnus faces Aeneas wearing Pallas's baldric. Virgil has assimilated two aspects of Homer's Agamemnon. First, in relation to Priam swearing a treaty before the duel between Helen's 'suitors' secondly, in relation to Achilles, both in the reconciliation between them in *Iliad* XIX and in the quarrel which set in motion the wrath theme. *Furor*, war-fury, stalks the plain of Latium as once it did the plain of Ilium. Virgil's Aeneas must not sulk, quarrel or withdraw: he must subsume the roles of Menelaus, rightful suitor, and Agamemnon commander of the armies of victory, and assimilate these roles to those other roles, of Hector and Achilles: Hector to Turnus's Achilles, Achilles to his Hector. But the words of Achilles, the wrath-hero, are now adapted to Latinus, a figure

in part of Priam, the old king, unable to control events

Thus in the final scenes of the Virgilian Iliad, the implied reader must reconstruct the Homeric cause of that tragic death which alone could bring the absent champion back into battle and turn the tide of victory against the defenders In the *Iliad* itself, the wrath theme is the pre-emptive narrative cause of the greater quarrel, between Achilles and Hector over Patroclus, itself a paradigm of the Trojan conflict as a whole. This final confrontation in *Iliad* XXII eclipsed the duel between Menelaus and Paris, so early in the poem, an expected ingredient of a Troy-tale but not causally linked to the wrath theme.

All these motifs and parallels, then, Virgil has blended into one: nowhere else is his extraordinary 'esemplastic' power, to use Coleridge's remarkable word, so much in evidence. Wrath dominates *Aeneid* XII but it is not the wrath only of Achilles dishonoured by Agamemnon, though that is alluded to in Latinus's oath. and though that quarrel, also over rivalry for a woman, reinforces the quarrel over Helen the two stories parallel each other.

Latinus's oath is immediately nullified by the swift and sudden intervention of Juturna, which like that of Allecto in VII induces a fresh outburst of war fever The throwing down of the altars, the defiling of the sacred vessels, the acts of sacrilege which follow the oath, are like the carnage in the *Iliad* which follows Zeus's promise to Thetis Structurally, both oaths are followed by a renewal of fighting (there is no real fighting in the *Iliad* until book IV) It is to the situation, then, with which Homer's *Iliad* started that Virgil directs the reader as he reaches the twelfth book. The circle is almost complete.

It is at this point that one last crucial placing reference to the Trojan war is offered to the implied reader of *Aeneid* XII. We are taken back once more to the murals in the temple of Juno at Carthage in the first book: thus *Aeneid* XII completes not only the circle of Homer's *Iliad* but the circle of the *Aeneid* itself. a complex double structure of ring-composition. Among the other murals Aeneas had seen Priam unarmed stretching forth

his hands in supplication over Hector's corpse. *tendentemque manus Priamum conspexit inermem.* Now in XII when the war breaks out again in defiance of the solemn treaty Virgil writes

> At pius Aeneas dextram tendebat inermem.

Aeneas had been *pius* when he swore his oath, with drawn sword: that sword had become ceremonial; it awaited only Turnus. Now Aeneas is a second Priam unarmed, suppliant, begging that the treaty be not dishonoured, in a deeply Roman appeal against wrath and on behalf of law:

> o cohibete iras! ictum iam foedus et omnes
> compositae leges . . .
>
> *O control your wrath. Now is the treaty struck and all*
> *The laws enacted . . .*

In his oath to Latinus Aeneas had already promised that the indigenous laws of Latium would remain in force even if the Trojans were victorious:

> paribus se legibus ambae
> inuictae gentes aeterna in foedera mittant.
> sacra deosque dabo; socer arma Latinus habeto
> imperium sollemne socer.
>
> *In equal laws let both*
> *Nations undefeated make an everlasting covenant.*
> *I shall set up our gods. Let my father-in-law Latinus*
> *hold*
> *His ancient powers.*

Latinus shall keep his *imperium*; the Roman concept of a duumvirate is strongly felt here, but in the defeat of Latinus after the breaking of the treaty the implied reader may also have to consider the kind of necessity whereby in defiance of all the proclaimed republican principles which stand against allowing all power to flow into one man's hands. Augustus

himself nevertheless after Actium assumed all power and established the Principate.[58] And Aeneas's religious mission – *sacra deosque dabo* – which was his sacred trust since he left Troy with the household gods and his father, symbols of *pietas* towards gods and men and the essential feature of the legend of Aeneas – becomes here a formulation of the powers of the head of state as *pontifex maximus*. In the final scene of the poem Aeneas must accept *imperium* and the role of lawgiver as well as *religio* and the role of *pontifex*. The breaking of the treaty has made this necessary. The Italians have shown themselves deficient in *pietas*, as did the Greeks when they sacked 'the holy citadel of Priam': the denotative 'holy' is that of a patriotic Greek poet, Homer himself, and if he was using a traditional formula that only confirms the persistence of the idea of Trojan *pietas*

The spectacle of Aeneas stretching forth his unarmed hand in supplication against the sacrilege of treaty-breaking and the horror of war completes the cycle of the second Iliad. Aeneas must re-enact the role of Priam before he re-enacts that of Achilles, an Achilles whose wrath is that anger without which no man can fight at all. Sergeant-majors who incite their recruits to scream furiously at the dummies they run at with fixed bayonets act correctly in abnormal circumstances. To kill in cold blood is not in the nature of most men, and epic heroes are not psychopaths. Aeneas's *furor* is the direct outcome of war and is a direct response to it: Achilles' anger in *Iliad* I was a matter of personal pique over the spoils of war. Virgil's Iliad must enact a transcendence of the old heroic code of personal honour and material gain; Turnus must finally discredit that code but so also must Aeneas himself. And perhaps what is to be discarded must first be discredited

> Nec minus interea maternis saeuus in armis
> Aeneas acuit Martem et se suscitat ira . . .

[58] See Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (2nd ed., Oxford 1952) 297. It was largely due to Virgil's artistry that the story of Aeneas and the battle of Actium took on a similar colouring as official myths of the Augustan principate and became parts of the same larger-than-life epic narrative.

No less cruel he, in his mother's gift of arms
Whetted the knife of war and roused himself in wrath .

When the treaty was solemnised Aeneas laid aside his wrath; afterwards, that wrath re-invades him as much as it does Turnus:

non segnius ambo
Aeneas Turnusque ruunt per proelia; nunc, nunc
fluctuat ira intus . . .

The allusion to Priam in the treaty-scene further enriches our reading of the final scenes of *Aeneid* XII and deepens our understanding of what Virgil himself meant by the wrath of war. In *Aeneid* II Aeneas had described to Dido how Priam, before he was killed by Pyrrhus on that last dreadful night of Troy, said that even Achilles had not threatened him but was abashed, respected the rights due to old age and the suppliant, and had returned the body of Hector. The conduct of the Homeric Achilles in *Iliad* XXIV provides the necessary and confirmed conclusion to the poem of his wrath. The chain of events which started with the quarrel in *Iliad* I – Achilles' withdrawal, Zeus's promise to Thetis, the Trojan counter attack, Hector's *aristeia* and Patroclus's death, Achilles' reconciliation with Agamemnon, his *aristeia*, the revenge-killing of Hector and the dishonouring of his body – ends when Achilles, of his own free will, and not under divine coercion though with strong divine prompting, surrenders Hector's dead body to Priam as, in book I he had refused to surrender Briseis's living body to Agamemnon.

But Aeneas, when he kills Turnus, is not only acting out again the Patroclus-motif; he must also avenge the murder of Priam. The wounding of Aeneas the suppliant is thus a crucial element in the poem's final scenes. It transfers to the Latins the guilt of the Greeks on the last night of Troy. They too have thrown down altars and overturned shrines, now they have tried to kill an unarmed man, *pontifex* not *imperator*, and only

divine intervention heals the priest-king's wound. At the miracle of healing the surgeon Iapyx speaks some significant words. Once again, as in the *Iliad*, Aeneas is preserved for the future of his race.

> non haec humanis opibus, non arte magistra
> proueniunt, neque te, Aenea, mea dextera seruat:
> maior agit deus atque opera ad maiora remittit.
>
> *No human help is here, and by no master's art*
> *Are these things done; not by my hand, Aeneas.*
> *A greater god acts here to greater work sends you forth*
> *again.*

The greater work which now awaits Aeneas will itself complete the *maius opus*, the greater work undertaken in *Aeneid* VII by the implied author, of which book XII is the fulfilment.

In the renewed conflict which now follows many more men are killed. The poet in his own person asks, stepping outside his own narrative, as he had at the start of book I,

> tanton placuit concurrere motu,
> Iuppiter, aeterna gentis in pace futuras?
>
> *Was this great conflict your will*
> *Jupiter, between nations destined for eternal peace?*

The implied reader recalls the eleventh line of the *Aeneid*: *tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*, 'Is there in heavenly spirits so much wrath?' Jupiter had said in book X that the war between Latins and Trojans, indigenous and immigrant nations, civil war (*discordia*), was against his will (*abnueram*). He thus appeared to permit what he had not willed. This theological paradox persists throughout epic narrative. Men will their own acts, but within a pattern of destiny foreknown by the gods, resisted by some of them (Juno, Satan), and glimpsed by some mortals in moments of foreboding or revelation, by most men, never.

Virgil's questions are the beginning and end of the poem: 'Is there in heavenly beings so much anger?' 'Was this great conflict your will, Jupiter?' create a theological framework within the confines of which the narrative moves. But the questions – how can the gods permit, even encourage, world-evil – present the questioner in a role other than that of empathising narrator, and identify the poem's most significant 'undecidability'. If the *Aeneid* is a kind of pagan saint's legend, the reader must be expected to assent, as a believer, to the hero as a man operating in a universe in which historical necessity and divine providence move to their appointed end. If the poem is to be read as a poem of ideas, a spiritual pilgrimage for the reader as well as the hero, then the poet as metaphysician becomes more important in any construction of a total meaning for the poem than the epic narrator: the doubtful, speculative questions offer a morally ambiguous ideology which is bound to cast its shadow over any reading of the end of the poem. Indeed, if the reader is to assent to the implied author's ideological and moral uncertainty, it must alter his sense of the poem as a whole. The implied author has, after all, chosen to remind us of his opening question as we reach the poem's last narrative stretch. He need not have done this. The presented world of the poem must include this moral doubt, and the reader is included in that doubt. The gods do not merely allow men to enact history as Jupiter proclaimed in book x. By their own discords, they create the tensions within which that history must be enacted.

The last question of the poet – 'Was this great conflict your will, Jupiter?' – occurs in the poem's last invocation, itself cast in the form of a question.

> Quis mihi nunc tot acerba deus, quis carmine caedes
> diuersas obitumque ducum, quos aequore toto
> inque uicem nunc Turnus agit, nunc Troius heros,
> expediat?
>
> *What god, now, I wonder, could unfold in song*

> *So many bitter things and diverse deaths and falls*
> *Of princes, over all the field*
> *By Turnus now despatched, now by the Trojan hero*
> . . .

The invocation is a gesture towards Homeric authorial convention. Before long stretches of narrative, especially those containing many names, an appeal to the remembering Muses signals to the hearer a guarantee of the accuracy of the sequence and a correct attribution of the various achievements. It also implies that the poet himself is following tradition rather than composing in his own right. But Virgil uses the tradition quite differently. He implies the unwillingness, if not the powerlessness, of any god to assist in the chronicling of such bitter and tragic events. It is as if, the epic now moving to its end the implied author is casting doubt on the epic tradition itself, with its divine apparatus. its aiding Muses, its never-failing machinery. It is not the historical but the moral credibility of the last events which seems beyond earthly chronicle and beyond divine inspiration. Could Jupiter himself underwrite so sad a story of the death of kings?

The paragraph beginning with this doubtful invocation, with its triple *nunc* (*now* who can tell what happened *now* . . .) ends with some lines already quoted:

> non segnius ambo
> Aeneas Turnusque ruunt per proelia; nunc, nunc
> fluctuat ira intus, rumpuntur nescia uinci
> pectora, nunc totis in uulnera uiribus itur.

The two heroes are compared to forest fires converging on dry brushwood, and to mountain rivers. They are alike in their destructive power in their violence, in their lack of control. The whole emphasis of the paragraph is on the indistinguishable conduct of the two sides and the two leaders.[59] The triple *nunc* at the end of the passage encloses it inside a

[59] In *Iliad* XVIII, Hector 'becomes' Achilles when he puts on his armour (taken from the dead Patroclus). The two heroes are mirror images of each other. See Ferrucci, *Poetics* 26–8.

narrative 'present' which, in the poet's own 'now', is total and inescapable. The elemental blindness of irrationality is like fire and water. In natural disaster there is only a timeless 'now'. So in the double *aristeia* of the two heroes: often the reader cannot quickly identify the killer, either by the *hic* or *ille* which designates him, or by the undifferentiated catalogue of victims, most of whom simultaneously enter and leave the poem, like names on a list of the fallen. I believe we can see here an authorial intention which has not been fully recognised. Servius was the first to notice a confusion:[60] but suppose it to be deliberate? Suppose the implied author to be saying that total war cannot be contained within decorous epic conventions? Suppose that, ultimately, it does not matter who kills whom? Suppose that, like Jupiter, the poet makes no distinction between the two sides? On such hypotheses a view of war emerges which is closer to that of Wilfred Owen than to Homer: that emphasis on *nunc* does not allow the implied reader to pretend that this all belongs in the remote past.

> If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
> Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs . . .
> My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
> To children ardent for some desperate glory
> The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
> Pro patria mori.[61]

But there is one victim of *furor* who stands out in these final scenes. Though briefly narrated, and without direct speech, the suicide of Amata is crucial to Turnus's final isolation. Moreover, there are uneasy echoes of another queen's suicide. Now both leaders have this on their conscience; once more, the scales are balanced. *Tros Rutulusne fuat, nullo discrimine habebo*: Jupiter's words come grimly home again to the reader. Both queens die, what is more, as a direct result of thwarted dynastic ambition.

[60] Servius on 10.747–54: *hoc loco est confusio in aliquibus nominibus. Nam quis sit Troianus, quis sit Rutulus, ignoratur.* M. Willcock, 'Battle Scenes in the *Aeneid*', *PCPS* (1983) 87–99.

[61] Wilfred Owen, 'Dulce et Decorum Est'.

Just as in book X Jupiter abandoned the war to the heroes who must fight it, who must enact history, so now he abandons Turnus, or Turnus thinks he does. Amata, too, had killed herself under a delusion, that Turnus was already dead. And perhaps he is, as good as dead *di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis*, he says; 'the gods terrify me, Jupiter himself is my enemy'.[62] He sees that he has crossed the permitted bounds of his power into an isolation comparable perhaps, in its pagan context with the isolation of Marlowe's Dr Faustus. Turnus in the closing scene of the epic retains the bravado which has been his most conspicuous characteristic, but the despair of those six words (he speaks after that only once more, to surrender to Aeneas and ask that his body be returned for burial, in the conventional and formal manner of the old-style Homeric hero) is absolute. It is a despair already articulated by his sister Juturna, who, lamenting her immortality, asks

> Could any abyss of the earth be deep enough
> To open and swallow me and send me to the shades?

Turnus himself had used some of those same 'Faustian' words in his soliloquy in book X when he was carried away on the ship in his vain pursuit of the phantom Aeneas: but only some of them. He had not then fully experienced the longing to die now articulated by Juturna. In this growing atmosphere of despair Virgil more and more reminds the reader of parallels between Turnus and Dido. And because there is a parallel with Dido there is also one with another suicide of an enemy of Rome, Cleopatra, and thus Aeneas in his hour of victory will complete his prefiguration of Augustus at Actium and, with whatever reluctance or show of reluctance, accept supreme power. The single combat was not only a device to spare more lives; it was a means of ensuring that the survivor was without a challenger and could now proceed to dispose as he wished the total power which had come to him, by the will of the gods.

[62] W. Fowler, *The Death of Turnus* (Oxford 1919) 152–6.

There is a strong sense in any reading of the poem nowadays, and this has perhaps been true ever since the Renaissance, that Turnus and Dido are tragic victims in the classical mode. *hubristic*, flawed by *hamartia*, proclaiming a self-deluding innocence. Turnus's farewell reads like an operatic aria as indeed does Dido's, with its final dramatic gesture, *sic, sic iuuat ire sub umbras*, as she stabs herself on the words *sic, sic*. Turnus too makes a self-dramatising and self-justifying statement

> uos, o mihi Manes
> este boni, quoniam superis auersa uoluntas.
> sancta ad uos anima atque istius inscia culpae
> descendam magnorum haud umquam indignus
> auorum.
>
> *O shades below, to me*
> *Be good, now that heaven's will has turned from me.*
> *I shall to you a holy soul and innocent of blame*
> *Go down for ever worthy of my great forefathers.*

Turnus proclaims his innocence, not as a general moral claim, but as a specific repudiation of the one fault no hero can carry: cowardice. It is an act of bravado, or propitiation to the gods of the underworld, *dis manibus*, and perhaps a belated defence against Drances' rankling accusations in XI. Turnus has always put himself first, and does so to the end: again, he acts like a pagan Faustus, and the reader may now perhaps also recall Juno's defiance of the Olympian will: 'if I can't persuade the gods above, I'll stir up hell'. Aeneas has never put himself first, he has acted throughout *non sponte sua*, as Augustus also claimed he acted, not by his own will but by that of the people of Italy who asked him to be their leader.[63] Dido had put her own political and sexual needs first; so did Cleopatra. The end for which Aeneas has laboured is not merely outside himself: it lies beyond his son's lifetime, in remote centuries which will

[63] *iurauit in mea uerba tota Italia sponte sua, et me belli quo uici ad Actium, ducem depoposcit* (*Res Gestae Diui Augusti* 25.2).

only start to evolve with Romulus. Only beyond two myths can Roman history begin. That end lies, too, beyond the poem as narrative, yet it is an essential part of any reading of it, since the reader is not meant to be bound by Aeneas's perspectives, but to see beyond them. And how is the reader to be stopped from seeing also beyond Virgil's?

Yet the grandeur of Turnus's egotism, in his daring to cross the permitted limits of his world, the courage which shines through his egotism, will not vanish wholly from history, and (like Faustus's soul) 'ne'er be found'. It will persist in many acts of personal *uirtus* in time of danger throughout Rome's history, acts depicted on Aeneas's Shield, associated with Romulus, Horatius Cocles, Cloelia (of whom Camilla is the type), Manlius, Cato. Turnus's grandeur dominates book XII as Dido's had dominated book IV.

The settlement between Jupiter and Juno in XII is a mirror of the scene between Jupiter and Venus in I, a mighty instance of returning symmetry or 'ring-composition'. The smile with which Jupiter turns to Juno

> olli subridens hominum rerumque repertor

mirrors the smile with which he had reassured Venus in book I that all in the long run should be well

> olli subridens hominum sator atque deorum

The words are a clear signal from the implied author that the reader is approaching the end.

> This nation which shall arise from Italian stock
> Shall in its piety transcend both men and gods.
> You shall see it.
> And no nation shall honour you as they shall.

Here is the famous transformation of Juno from inveterate anti-Trojan to guardian of Rome, a member, with Minerva and Jupiter himself, of the 'Capitoline triad' of deities who symbolised *imperium sine fine*. 'You can't beat us – join us': *uidebis*, 'you shall see it', is a joke of the implied author (and

part of the joke is that he speaks now with the voice of Jupiter) to the Augustan reader. Not *uidebis* but *uides*. The future becomes present and completes a meaning. Not 'the meaning': for the modern reader cannot make that particular syntactical change. For him, the implied future is already past. Yet he may, reaching this end, suspend syntax, with that future not yet mediated into history, 'something evermore about to be', held in a past remoter from him than Troy was from the Augustans.

The end of the *Aeneid* is not 'just' the death of Turnus, abrupt, perfunctory even, with its repeated curtain line already used for Camilla as Homer had used Patroclus's for Hector. Homer saw that Hector's death could not be the end of the *Iliad*; there had to be a resolution of the wrath theme, the long decrescendo of the games and the ransoming of Hector's body to Priam alone in the tent with his son's killer.

The *Aeneid* has two endings. The sending of Turnus's soul is the narrator's last task, the god's last sad act of chronicle vicariously and reluctantly performed.

> What god now, I wonder, could unfold in song
> So many bitter things and diverse deaths and falls
> Of princes, over all the field
> By Turnus now despatched, now by the Trojan
> hero . . .

When Aeneas despatches Turnus, the reader's task may seem to be at an end. The narrative is complete, the presented world of the Virgilian Iliad stops, with the death of Turnus as Hector and the triumph of Aeneas as Achilles. But the reader must also transform the narrative by including the process by which the presented world is offered and make this a part of his understanding of the poem's total meaning. And for this there is the poem's other ending to be included: that is, the scene between Jupiter and Juno, and, behind that the mirror scene between Jupiter and Venus, so that in a sense the poem's 'end' was written in book I. When the reader gets to the end of XII images and motifs from book I remain in, or return to, his

mind, a persistence more powerful than, and in a sense transcending, any specific reading: almost an independent life in the memory of the poem's meaning a life independent, that is, of the actual 'text'. We may emphasise different parts of the poem with each reading, select this, exclude that, but our interaction with the poem will in the end be more than the sum of any particular passages read or translated, and will lead to the construction of an *Aeneid sine fine*, 'without end', the poem as a prelude to history and to the understanding of history

Patterns of returning symmetry are found in a variety of narrative fictions from Homer onwards. For the reader of long works, these structures facilitate the construction of a total meaning: the sense of the ending involves a memory of the beginning: the true significance of the presented world of the fiction is perceived through the presentational process itself. When we first met Aeneas in *Aeneid* I. he was cold, tired, frightened and wishing he had died at Troy. 'His limbs were numb with cold', *soluuntur frigore membra* (1.92): the allusion here, and in the speech which follows, the *o terque quaterque beati*, 'o thrice and four times blessed . . .', is to *Odyssey* v, where Odysseus is also lost in a storm and far from the goal of his *nostos*. Odysseus wished he had died when the Trojans tried so hard to get him after Achilles' death. Aeneas wishes he had not survived Diomede's onslaught and had died alongside Sarpedon and Hector, deaths closely linked with the saga of Achilles' wrath deaths fated to be re-enacted in the Italian Iliad. Those words far away in book I, *soluuntur frigore membra*, recur in the last line but one of book XII: now they describe Turnus, and the cold is not that of the elements, or of a wished for and elusive death, but of the thing itself, inescapably there. In I.97 Aeneas wished he had died at the right hand of Diomede 'I wish I could have poured out this soul of mine': at the end of XII it is Aeneas's right hand which pours out Turnus's soul The motif of Aeneas's preservation for posterity first heard at the poem's outset, is heard again at its ending It is for this he was spared He has re-enacted the Iliadic vendetta not just to avenge a personal loss (the

Pallas–Patroclus motif) but to secure the future 'so that the race of Dardanus might not perish', thus validating both Iliadic and Roman prophecy.

At the end of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is nearly persuaded into an act of mercy which, had he managed it, would have perhaps changed the modern reader's sense of the entire text.

> et iam iamque magis cunctantem flectere sermo
> coeperat . . .
>
> *And now he hesitated, now Turnus's words nearly*
> *Turned him from his purpose . . .*

But the Iliadic motif of the armour of Patroclus is introduced, and Aeneas plunges in the sword. in a last access of that *furor* which in Homer's Achilles was by the last book of the *Iliad* spent: that same *furor* which Hercules, the type of culture hero and saviour hero had shown in his killing of Cacus in book VIII, itself prefigurative of this last duel. Hercules in VIII is *furens animis*, he is *feruidus ira*. This is the model for Aeneas at the end of XII, *furiis accensus et ira terribilis*. When he puts in the sword he is *feruidus*, in contrast to Turnus, on whom the cold of death has settled:

> '. . . Pallas te hoc uulnere, Pallas
> immolat et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.'
> hoc dicens ferrum aduerso sub pectore condit
> feruidus; ast illi soluuntur frigore membra
> uitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.
>
> *'Pallas strikes you down, with this cut Pallas*
> *Takes this vengeance, sheds your evil blood.'*
> *Thus saying he buries his sword in the other's breast*
> *In the heat of the moment But the other's limbs are cold*
> *And his reluctant spirit, crying, vanishes to the dead.*

Structurally, the Iliadic revenge motif becomes a cover for the politically necessary elimination of a dangerous rival (So

too for Octavian the morally outrageous conduct of Antony with Cleopatra provided a cover for what was politically necessary.) At the end of the *Odyssey* no reader wants Odysseus to spare the suitors, and perhaps Virgil wanted his implied reader to take some of his sense of the ending of the *Aeneid* from the end of the *Odyssey*. But there is no psychological paradigm, and, for the modern, though perhaps not the implied Augustan reader, only a doubtful moral one. Despite the oracles, it is hard for the reader to feel much enthusiasm for Aeneas's claim to Lavinia or to see Turnus in the role of Paris rather than Menelaus. But for the implied reader Aeneas is Menelaus, who has traversed the sea to claim his lawful bride and secure the succession. The pattern of arrival, combat and victory (for the absence of Achilles is the crucial single element in the plot of the *Iliad*) seems peculiarly Homeric, and is common to both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Behind the despatching to the shades of Turnus's reluctant soul it is not easy, though, to detect the twittering shades of Penelope's suitors, down in Hades among the souls of Troy's greatest dead. It is to these great warrior ghosts that Turnus, in his self-proclaiming pride descends.

Epic heroes may make the world a better place, albeit only for the time being. They cannot make it a good one. For Virgil all war is mad and one cannot conduct oneself morally on the battlefield. Only in an Odyssean sense can the killing of Turnus be morally acceptable, and then only if we import into our reading a sense that Aeneas's marriage to Lavinia was made in heaven long before her earthly betrothal to Turnus. This is a revenge killing, for Pallas–Patroclus; and for the killing in the *Iliad* of Trojan Hector, so that the reader may transfer to the furious Aeneas some of the anger he, the reader of the *Iliad* also, felt at the treatment of Hector by the furious Achilles. The foul deeds which Homer himself says Achilles devised for noble Hector are now requited.

Homer's Trojan war was fought for a domestic cause, yet clearly the deaths of so many great heroes and the ultimate destruction of the city of Troy, distantly descried within the

poem yet lying, as an event, beyond it, gives the work a tragic grandeur and plenitude which transcends the story of Helen: transcends also the wrath theme. Virgil's Lavinia is much more of a minor character than the Helen of *Iliad* III, whom we see relating in such different ways to Priam, Aphrodite and Paris (let alone the Helen of *Odyssey* IV, reunited with Menelaus): indeed, Lavinia never speaks. It is not because of her that Aeneas is seized with that last cold fit of wrath. Turnus had not expected to be spared: he faced his destiny to the end. His request for decent burial follows that of Hector to Achilles. Aeneas does not echo Achilles' terrible rejection of that plea. Indeed, he goes much further than merely not rejecting the plea for burial: he nearly spared his life *dextramque repressit*, stayed his hand'. Some critics have suggested that the final decision was a piece of covert political allegory, an encoded reference to acts of cruelty by Augustus against political rivals. But I know of no evidence for this. In *The Faerie Queene* Spenser has left the reader signs by which to construct from the narrative of Mercilla and Duessa an allegorical 'meaning' in terms of contemporary politics. There seems nothing comparable in the final scene of the *Aeneid*. What ought to surprise the reader, or so it seems to me, is not that Aeneas does not spare Turnus but that he should have hesitated at all. The hesitation constitutes the surprise.

We know that Virgil abandoned the idea of an epic about Augustus in favour of a different kind of epic: a kind of synchronisation of the *Iliad* and Actium. The Homeric epics remain the principal ordering structure of the *Aeneid*. But this does not enclose readings of the poem within the confines, large and complex though they are, of the Homeric epics. It is unfortunate that some modern readings of the *Aeneid* take the poem's political and historical signs as propaganda, and there is sometimes a tendency to suppress these and see the poem 'without' or 'despite' this element. Or it is argued that Virgil himself lost faith in the Augustan dream, and wanted the poem destroyed not just because it had not been finally revised but because of some fancied 'philosophical' revulsion from

Realpolitik; and that Augustus's determination to have it published posthumously was a propagandist decision.

Augustus did not need propaganda. He had after Actium no rival, but what he did want was display, in various forms, in sculpture as well as poetry, of the values and virtues of the principate. Jupiter's first speech, for example, may be read like that. The benefits to Rome of the new regime flowed from the *princeps* downwards in a great expression of celebration. Virgil saw in the popular story of Aeneas a paradigm of those benefits, the story of the assumption, with some appropriate show of cautious reluctance, by one man of powers traditionally and destructively divided.

Virgil began his poetic career, in the first *Eclogue*, with an idealistic *Dankgesang* for the benefits, in *otium* and *libertas*, of the new leader, a saviour-hero for whom, as for Hercules, extravagantly figurative language was appropriate both in terms of literary tradition and as a political gesture. Between the pastoral poet's heartfelt thanksgiving for peace to write – *deus nobis haec otia fecit*, 'a god has made us this peace' – and the vision of the *pax Augusta* in Jupiter's speech, in *Aeneid* I, it is hard to register any falling-off of enthusiasm for the new order.

At the end of the *Odyssey*, Homer fulfilled, in another returning symmetry, the promise of Zeus to his daughter Athene in book I. Odysseus, a good man, who took heed of the gods, would come safe home, unlike Agamemnon and despite the opposition of Poseidon. (The fulfilment of a divine promise thus provides the starting-point for Homer's two epics.) This structure is repeated in the *Aeneid*: Aeneas, a good man, made safe landfall as promised by Jupiter to his daughter in book I, propitiated Juno and secured the Trojan succession by dynastic intermarriage. If Aeneas had not hesitated, there would be no problem at the end of the poem.

But he did. Would the implied reader, should he, have hesitated also, delaying assent to the final slaughter, the last piece of the Homeric jigsaw? It is an assent the modern reader, such is the nature of the poem, may continue to withhold. He

may indeed want to 'lose' the poem after that *iam iamque magis*; to emphasise that moment, prolonged as though for ever, and skip the final act with its double Homeric allusion to Hector and the suitors ('noble Hector' and the suitors, more deplorable than Turnus). The combined tragic and moral strengths of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* could not provide Virgil with any other ending for his unendable poem. Where else could he have got another ending?

There was nowhere else. Aeneas's last act is an existential choice, terrible as such choices are; so it was also for the implied author, self-obliged to re-enact Homer in a historical context which lets in the reader's own doubts and insecurities.

Among all the burdens Aeneas carried – his father and his gods from Homeric Troy, the Shield bearing the fame and destiny of the future Rome – itself a model of the universe, which Atlas bore on his shoulders and which Hercules traversed in the cause of civilisation – the burden of Homeric epic was the greatest, for it was the poet's own. In the last lines of the poem he all but lays it aside – but not quite. The hero who turns his sword in Turnus's heart is the same man of whom, far back in book I, Virgil wrote: fate-driven, pursued by divine hatred, burdened, unlucky. His last words to his son in book XII are important now:

> Learn virtue and the truth about a hero's labours
> From me. But luck? Get that from others.

Of all Aeneas's burdens, this last killing is the heaviest: yet it always awaited him. The time that was foretold for Turnus was also his time, his *kairos*. He could not know, till the moment came, the doubts and hesitations it would involve. The hesitation at the end is the hero's and the reader's for an existential choice is made for all, and sets a certain stamp upon humanity.

And perhaps that hesitation is also the poet's. His sense of having left the *Aeneid* unrevised, of being unable to complete a fully achieved text, are well authenticated. Thus there entered into the poem when it was published with its fifty-seven

hemistichs (some of them editorially completed, though these completions have never entered the text), a sense of the finally unachieved.

Thus any reading of the poem will, even more than would be the case with a fully achieved work (for no finality is conceivable in any act of reading) produce a sense of having reached only one of many possible meanings. (*The Faerie Queene*, not merely unrevised but incomplete in terms of the poet's own published schema, is a more extreme example.) The very abruptness and, in a curious sense, the very finality of the ending of the *Aeneid* leaves the reader with a sense of uncertainty. The ending was foreseen and structurally 'given', and indeed in the scene on Olympus the reader has already gone past, overshot that narrative 'end': in its vaster perspective the death of Turnus seems almost like a flashback although written in the historic present, 'narrative time'. Yet because the devices of prophecy had opened the poem up beyond its narrative end, the reader may wonder about the possibility of ending at all an epic whose revealed theme was *imperium sine fine*. And does not the uneasy 'end' imply for the modern reader doubts and ironies about *imperium sine fine* which, once read into the poem, seem to become Virgil's own? The splendours which the poem 'prophetically' opens up are now part of a past which for many readers exists now chiefly *in* the poem itself. The author and his implied (Augustan) reader had access to external referents, institutions, monuments, the living tissue of history, which he drew upon in the great visions of Rome in books I, VI and VIII. Now those descriptions often amount to all, or nearly all, we have. The rest has gone, or survives in material only the specialist can interpret. They have been superseded in our minds by a past Virgil could not imagine. Any reading of the *Aeneid*, then, will be coloured by insights and images to which Virgil had no access. And this too, in some unmistakable way, becomes part of the poem. The old idea of Virgil as *anima naturaliter Christiana*, poised uncertainly at the very end of the era of what Dante called the false and lying gods, unable to

escape from the pagan world to whose values he seemed not wholly to assent, remains powerful. And we may recall other words of Dante, from the *Purgatorio*, the last words he wrote for Virgil to say in *his* epic:

> Expect no more signs from me . . .
> You are free to choose . . .[64]

I believe the peace and freedom, *otium* and *libertas*, with which Virgil hailed the Augustan settlement, remained for him the cornerstone of his creative career. I believe that in writing the *Aeneid*, his greatest work, and especially in writing the second half of it, *maius opus*, he found himself less free in his choices. As he went on, he created more and more signs to denote a hero for whom there simply did not exist enough freedom of choice. Dante perceived with love and reverence how close Virgil might have come to understanding the nature and value of freedom in choice and action. When he made Jupiter in book x detach himself from the action, he gave his heroes as much freedom as it was in his power to give them. The modern reader may invest Aeneas with a greater range of insight and choice than he could have possessed for his creator, and may also create an implied author with access to value-systems which lie in fact beyond the limits of the poem and of the pagan world. Yet the reader, importing these, is not, save in the narrowest and most scholastic sense, 'misinterpreting' the *Aeneid*. Indeed, he may be uncovering a more significant text, one that may be related to a greater range of insights into history and humanity.

[64] *Purgatorio* 27.139.

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