

Virgil's *Aeneid*: A Discussion Guide

By David Bruce

**I recommend that you read the translations
by Robert Fagles and by Robert Fitzgerald.**

**I also recommend Elizabeth Vandiver's course
on the *Aeneid*, which is available from
the Teaching Company.**

This is a non-royalty book. I will not make a dime from it — even from the print edition.

**Dedicated with Love to
Josephine Saturday Bruce**

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Note: The book titles are taken from Robert Fitzgerald's translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* and from Robert Fagles' translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Robert Fitzgerald's book titles are listed first.

Preface

The purpose of this discussion guide is educational. I have read, studied, and taught Virgil's *Aeneid*, and I wish to pass on what I have learned to other people who are interested in studying Virgil's *Aeneid*. In particular, I think that the readers of this introduction to Virgil's *Aeneid* will be bright high school seniors and college first-year students, as well as intelligent adults who simply wish to study Virgil's *Aeneid* despite not being literature majors.

This discussion guide uses a question-and-answer format. It poses, then answers, relevant questions about Virgil, background information, and the *Aeneid*. This book goes through the *Aeneid* book by book. I recommend that you read the relevant section of the *Aeneid*, then read my comments, then go back and re-read the relevant section of the *Aeneid*.

Teachers may find this book useful as a discussion guide for the epic poem. Teachers can have students read chapters from the epic poem, then teachers can ask students selected questions from this study guide.

It helps to know something about Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Greek and Roman mythology, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and other works, but this background reading is not strictly necessary. You have to begin reading great literature somewhere, and Virgil's *Aeneid* is a good place to start. (Come on in! The water's great! And later you can go and read the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, etc.)

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Background Information

• What are the Greek and Latin names of the gods and goddesses?

The Greek gods and goddesses have Roman equivalents. The Greek name is followed by the Roman name:

Aphrodite: Venus

Apollo: Apollo (yes, the same name)

Ares: Mars

Artemis: Diana

Athena: Minerva

Hera: Juno

Hades: Pluto

Hephaestus: Vulcan

Hermes: Mercury

Poseidon: Neptune

Zeus: Jupiter

The Roman gods and goddesses have Greek equivalents. The Roman name is followed by the Greek name:

Apollo: Apollo (yes, the same name)

Diana: Artemis

Juno: Hera

Jupiter: Zeus

Mars: Ares

Mercury: Hermes

Minerva: Athena

Neptune: Poseidon

Pluto: Hades

Venus: Aphrodite

Vulcan: Hephaestus

Of course, Homer uses the Greek names, and Virgil uses the Roman names.

By the way, the Greek warrior Odysseus has a Roman name: Ulysses.

• **What is the *Aeneid* about?**

The *Aeneid* is a Roman epic poem by Virgil that tells the story of Aeneas, a Trojan prince who survived the fall of Troy and led other survivors to Italy. His adventures parallel the adventures of Ulysses/Odysseus on his return to Ithaca. In fact, they visit many of the same places, including the island of the Cyclopes. One of Aeneas' most notable characteristics is his *pietas*, his respect for things for which respect is due, including the gods, his family, and his destiny. His destiny is to found the Roman people, which is different from founding Rome, which was founded long after his death. Aeneas journeyed to Carthage, where he had an affair with Dido, the Carthaginian queen. Because of his destiny, he left her and went to Italy. Dido committed suicide, and Aeneas fought a war to establish himself in Italy. After killing Turnus, the leader of the armies facing him, Aeneas married the Italian princess Lavinia, and they became important ancestors of the Roman people.

• **What is the basic story of the Trojan War?**

The basic story of the Trojan War can be told very quickly. Paris, prince of Troy, visits Menelaus, king of Sparta, then Paris runs off with Menelaus' wife, Helen, who of course becomes known as Helen of Troy. This is a major insult to Menelaus and his family, so he and his elder brother, Agamemnon, lead an army against Troy to get Helen (and reparations) back. The war drags on for 10 years, and the greatest Greek warrior is Achilles, while the greatest Trojan warrior is Hector, Paris' eldest brother. Eventually, Hector is killed by Achilles, who is then killed by Paris, who is then killed by Philoctetes. Finally, Ulysses/Odysseus comes up with the idea of the Trojan Horse, which ends the Trojan War.

• **Who is Achilles, and what is unusual about his mother, Thetis?**

Achilles, of course, is the foremost warrior of the Greeks during the Trojan War. His mother, Thetis, is unusual in that she is a goddess. The Greeks' religion was different from modern religions in that they were polytheistic (believing in many gods) rather than monotheistic (believing in one god). In addition, the gods and human beings could mate with each other. Achilles is unusual in that he had an immortal goddess as his mother and a mortal man, Peleus, as his father. Achilles, of course, is unusual in many ways. Another way in which he is unusual is that he and Thetis have long talks together. Often, the gods either ignore their mortal offspring or choose not to reveal themselves to them. For example, Aeneas' goddess mother is Venus/Aphrodite. Although Venus/Aphrodite does save Aeneas' life or help him on occasion, the two do not have long talks together the way that Achilles and Thetis do.

• **Which prophecy about Achilles was given to his mother, Thetis?**

The prophecy about Thetis' male offspring was that he would be a greater man than his father. This is something that would make most human fathers happy. (One exception would be Pap, in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Pap does not want Huck, his son, to learn to read and write or to get an education or to live better than Pap does.)

• **Who is Zeus, and what does he decide to do as a result of this prophecy?**

Zeus is a horny god who sleeps with many goddesses and many human beings. Normally, he would lust after Thetis, but once he hears the prophecy, he does not want to sleep with Thetis. For one thing, the gods are potent, and when they mate they have children. Zeus overthrew his

own father, and Zeus does not want to give birth to a greater man than he is because his son will overthrow him. Therefore, Zeus wants to get Thetis married off to someone else. In this case, a marriage to a human being for Thetis would suit Zeus just fine. A human son may be greater than his father, but is still not going to be as great as a god, and so Zeus will be safe if Thetis gives birth to a human son.

• **Who is Peleus?**

Peleus is the human man who marries Thetis and who fathers Achilles. At the time of the *Iliad*, Peleus is an old man and Thetis has not lived with him for a long time.

• **Why is Eris, Goddess of Discord, not invited to the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis?**

Obviously, you do not want discord at a wedding, and therefore, Eris, Goddess of Discord, is not invited to the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis. Even though Eris is not invited to the wedding feast, she shows up anyway.

• **Eris, Goddess of Discord, throws an apple on a table at the wedding feast. What is inscribed on the apple?**

Inscribed on the apple is the phrase “For the fairest,” written in Greek, of course. Because Greek is a language that indicates masculine and feminine in certain words (so does Latin), and since “fairest” has a feminine ending, the apple is really inscribed “for the fairest female.”

• ***Hera/Juno, Athena/Minerva, and Aphrodite/Venus each claim the apple. Who are they?***

Three goddesses claim the apple, meaning that each of the three goddesses thinks that she is the fairest, or most beautiful.

Hera/Juno

Hera is the wife of Zeus, and she is a jealous wife. Zeus has many affairs with immortal goddesses and mortal women, and Hera is jealous because of these affairs. Zeus would like to keep on her good side.

Athena/Minerva

Athena is the goddess of wisdom. She becomes the patron goddess of Athens. Athena especially likes Ulysses/Odysseus, as we see especially in Homer’s *Odyssey*. Athena is a favorite of Zeus, her father. Zeus would like to keep on her good side.

Aphrodite/Venus

Aphrodite is the goddess of sexual passion. She can make Zeus fall in love against his will. Zeus would like to keep on her good side.

• **Why doesn’t Zeus want to judge the goddesses’ beauty contest?**

Zeus is not a fool. He knows that if he judges the goddesses’ beauty contest, he will make two enemies. The two goddesses whom Zeus does not choose as the fairest will hate him and likely make trouble for him.

Please note that the Greek gods and goddesses are not omnibenevolent. Frequently, they are quarrelsome and petty.

By the way, Athens, Ohio, lawyer Thomas Hodson once judged a beauty contest featuring 25 cute child contestants. He was running in an election to choose the municipal court judge, and he thought that judging the contest would be a good way to win votes. Very quickly, he decided never to judge a children's beauty contest again. He figured out that he had won two votes — the votes of the parents of the child who won the contest. Unfortunately, he also figured out that he had lost 48 votes — the votes of the parents of the children who lost.

• **Who is Paris, and what is the Judgment of Paris?**

Paris is a prince of Troy, and Zeus allows him to judge the three goddesses' beauty contest. Paris is not as intelligent as Zeus, or he would try to find a way out of judging the beauty contest.

• **Each of the goddesses offers Paris a bribe if he will choose her. What are the bribes?**

Juno/Hera

Juno/Hera offers Paris political power: several cities he can rule.

Minerva/Athena

Minerva/Athena offers Paris prowess in battle. Paris can become a mighty and feared warrior.

Venus/Aphrodite

Venus/Aphrodite offers Paris the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife.

• **Which goddess does Paris choose?**

Paris chose Venus/Aphrodite, who offered him the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife.

This is not what a Homeric warrior would normally choose. A person such as Achilles would choose to be an even greater warrior, if that is possible.

A person such as Agamemnon is likely to choose more cities to rule.

When Paris chooses the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife, we are not meant to think that he made a good decision. Paris is not a likable character.

• **Does the Judgment of Paris appear in the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*?**

We are not certain that Homer knew of the myth of the Judgment of Paris; however, we know that Virgil knew of the myth because he mentions it near the beginning of Book 1 of the *Aeneid*.

• **Does myth develop over time?**

Myth does develop over time. Possibly, the myth of the Judgment of Paris was created after Homer had created the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

• **As a result of Venus/Aphrodite's bribe, Paris abducts Helen. Why?**

Venus/Aphrodite promised Paris the most beautiful woman to be his wife. As it happens, that woman is Helen. Therefore, Paris abducts Helen, with Venus/Aphrodite's good wishes.

Did Helen go with Paris willingly? The answer to this question is ambiguous, and ancient authorities varied in how they answered this question.

• **To whom is Helen already married?**

Helen is already married to Menelaus, the king of Sparta. Paris visits Menelaus, and when he leaves, he carries off both a lot of Menelaus' treasure and Menelaus' wife, Helen. Obviously, this is not the way that one ought to treat one's host.

• **Who are Agamemnon and Menelaus?**

Agamemnon and Menelaus are the sons of Atreus. They are brothers, and Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae, is the older brother and the brother who rules a greater land, as seen by the number of ships the two kings bring to the Trojan War. Menelaus brings 60 ships (Fagles 2.678-679, *Iliad*). Agamemnon brings 100 ships (Fagles 2.667-672, *Iliad*).

• **Who is responsible for leading the expedition to recover Helen?**

Agamemnon is the older brother, so he is the leader of the Greek troops in the Trojan War.

• **Why do the winds blow against the Greek ships?**

When the Greek ships are gathered together and are ready to set sail against Troy, a wind blows in the wrong direction for them to sail. The goddess Diana/Artemis is angry at the Greeks because she knows that the result of the Trojan War will be lots of death, not just of warriors, but also of women and children. This is true of all wars, and it is a lesson that human beings forget after each war and relearn in the next war.

• **Why does Diana/Artemis demand a human sacrifice?**

Diana/Artemis knows that Agamemnon's warriors will cause much death of children, so she makes him sacrifice one of his daughters so that he will suffer what he will make other parents suffer.

• **Who does Agamemnon sacrifice?**

Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter, Iphigeneia. This is a religious sacrifice of a human life to appease the goddess Minerva/Athena.

• **Did Homer know about this sacrifice?**

Very possibly, he did. In Book 1, Agamemnon tells the prophet Calchas that he always brings bad news to Agamemnon. Calchas is the prophet who told Agamemnon that he had to sacrifice his daughter in order to get winds that would sail the ships to Troy.

• **What do Menelaus and Agamemnon do?**

After the sacrifice of Iphigenia, Agamemnon and Menelaus set sail with all the Greek ships for Troy. They land, then they engage in warfare.

• **Who are Achilles and Hector?**

Achilles is the foremost Greek warrior, while Hector is the foremost Trojan warrior. Both warriors are deserving of great respect.

• **Does Homer assume that Achilles is invulnerable?**

Absolutely not. Achilles needs armor to go out on the battlefield and fight.

• **What happens to Hector and Achilles?**

Hector kills Achilles' best friend, Patroclus, in battle. Angry, Achilles kills Hector.

• **What is the story of the Trojan Horse?**

Ulysses/Odysseus, a great strategist, thought up the idea of the Trojan Horse. Epeus built it.

The Greeks build a giant wooden horse, which is hollow and filled with Greek warriors, then they pretend to abandon the war and to sail away from Troy. Actually, Agamemnon sails behind an island so that the Trojans cannot see the Greek ships. The Greeks also leave behind a lying Greek named Sinon, who tells the Trojans about a supposed prophecy that if the Trojans take the horse inside their city, then Troy will never fall. The Trojans do that, and at night the Greeks come out of the Trojan Horse, make their way to the city gates and open them. Outside the city gates are the Greek troops led by Agamemnon, who have returned to the Trojan plain. The Greek warriors rush inside the city and sack it.

Virgil's *Aeneid* has the fullest extant ancient account of the Trojan Horse. Of course, he tells the story from the Trojan point of view. If Homer had written the story of the Trojan Horse, he would have told it from the Greek point of view. For the Greeks, the Trojan War ended in a great victory. For the Trojans, the Trojan War ended in a great disaster.

• **Which outrages do the Greeks commit during the sack of Troy?**

King Priam is killed by Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, aka Pyrrhus, at the altar of Zeus. This is an outrage because anyone who is at the altar of a god is under the protection of that god. When Neoptolemus kills Priam, an old man (old people are respected in Homeric and Latin culture), Neoptolemus disrespects the god Zeus.

Hector's son is murdered. Hector's son is a very small child who is murdered by being hurled from the top of a high wall of Troy. Even during wartime, children ought not to be murdered, so this is another outrage.

Cassandra is raped by Little Ajax even though she is under Minerva/Athena's protection. Cassandra is raped in a temple devoted to Minerva/Athena. This is showing major disrespect to Minerva/Athena. Again, the Greeks are doing things that ought not to be done, even during wartime.

The Greeks sacrificed Priam's young daughter Polyxena. The Trojan War begins and ends with a human sacrifice of the life of a young girl. This is yet another outrage.

• **How do the gods and goddesses react to these outrages?**

The gods and goddesses make things difficult for the Greeks on their way home to Greece.

• **What happens to the Greeks after the fall of Troy?**

Nestor is a wise, pious, old man who did not commit any outrages. He makes it home quickly.

Ulysses/Odysseus may not have committed any outrages, but apparently his patron goddess, Athena, is angry at all of the Greeks, because she does not help him on his journey home until 10 years have passed.

Little Ajax, who raped Cassandra, drowns on his way home.

Agamemnon returns home to a world of trouble. His wife, Clytemnestra, has taken a lover during his 10-year absence, and she murders Agamemnon.

Menelaus is reunited with Helen, but their ship is driven off course, and it takes them years to return home to Sparta.

• **What happens to Aeneas?**

Aeneas fights bravely, and he witnesses such things as the death of Priam, king of Troy; however, when he realizes that Troy is lost, he returns to his family to try to save them. He carries his father on his back, and he leads his young son by the hand, but although he saves them, his wife, who is following behind him, is lost in the battle.

Aeneas becomes the leader of the Trojan survivors, and he leads them to Italy, where they become the founders of the Roman people.

• **Who were the Roman people?**

The Romans had one of the greatest empires of the world.

Aeneid, Book 1: A Fateful Haven / Safe Haven After Storm

Important Terms

Furor means rage or passion.

Pietas means respect for things for which respect is due, including gods, family, and destiny.

• What happens to these characters after the end of the *Iliad*?

Antilochus

Antilochus dies in the Trojan War.

Achilles

Achilles kills the warrior who kills Antilochus, then Achilles is killed by Paris and the god Apollo.

Great Ajax

After Achilles dies, his mother, the goddess Thetis, wants to give away his magnificent armor that was made by the god Hephaestus. The armor will go to either Odysseus or Great Ajax. The warriors vote, and the armor is awarded to Odysseus. Great Ajax goes insane, and he tortures and kills sheep that he thinks are Agamemnon and Odysseus. When he recovers his senses, he is so ashamed that he commits suicide. The tragedian Sophocles tells this story in his play *Ajax*.

Little Ajax

Little Ajax rapes Cassandra, a virgin, in the temple of Minerva/Athena, one of the virgin goddesses. This is an outrage because she is supposed to be safe when she is in a temple. This causes Minerva/Athena and the other gods to be angry at the Greeks, and hardships ensue for many of them. Little Ajax drowns on his way home.

Agamemnon

Agamemnon returns home to Mycenae with Cassandra, who has been awarded to him. His wife, Clytemnestra, has taken a lover during his 10 years of absence. Cassandra and her lover, Aegisthus, slaughter Cassandra and Agamemnon.

Menelaus

Menelaus is driven off course and lands in Egypt, where he stays for several years amassing treasure. He and Helen eventually arrive home to Sparta. While in Egypt, Helen learns about a drug known as heart's-ease. She uses it to control her husband.

Nestor

Nestor, an old man who did not commit any outrages at Troy, arrives home quickly and safely.

Diomedes

Diomedes ends up going to Italy; he will appear as a character later in the *Aeneid*.

Ulysses/Odysseus

Ulysses/Odysseus takes 10 years to return home to Ithaca, meaning that he has been away from Ithaca for 20 years (the Trojan War lasts for 10 years). Everyone thinks that Ulysses/Odysseus is dead, and when he returns home alone because he has lost his ships and men, he must use strategy to kill the over-100 suitors who are trying to marry his wife, Penelope, and plotting to kill his son, Telemachus. Homer tells this story in his epic poem the *Odyssey*.

It is useful to read Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, although you may certainly read Virgil's *Aeneid* first without having read those epic poems. In any case, you should be aware that the Greeks and the Romans worshipped the same gods but under different names. (The Romans adapted much Greek mythology for their own culture.)

• What is the Latin name of the Greek hero Odysseus?

The Greek and Latin names of the gods and goddesses — and at least one human — are different. For example, the name of the Greek hero Odysseus is Ulysses in Latin literature.

• The proem (the 1st 19 lines of the *Aeneid* in Robert Fitzgerald's translation) makes its debt to Homer obvious. How do the very first words of the *Aeneid* reveal its debt both to the *Iliad* and to the *Odyssey*? The first words in Latin are *Arma virumque cano Troiae*; in English, that means "I sing of arms and a man of Troy." ("Arms" means weapons.)

Virgil's *Aeneid* is both indebted to and different from Homer's two epic poems: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

The debt and the difference are made clear in Virgil's proem to the *Aeneid*. By the way, a *proem* is a short introduction.

The first 19 lines of the *Aeneid* (the first 11 lines of Latin) read, in Robert Fitzgerald's translation:

I sing of warfare and a man at war.
From the sea-coast of Troy in early days
He came to Italy by destiny,
To our Lavinian western shore,
A fugitive, this captain, buffeted
Cruelly on land as on the sea
By blows from powers of the air — behind them
Baleful Juno in her sleepless rage.
And cruel losses were his lot in war,
Till he could found a city and bring home
His gods to Latium, land of the Latin race,
the Alban lords, and the high walls of Rome.

Tell me the causes now, O Muse, how galled
 In her divine pride, and how sore at heart
 From her old wound, the queen of gods compelled him —
 A man apart, devoted to his mission —
 To undergo so many perilous days
 And enter on so many trials. Can anger
 Black as this prey on the minds of heaven? (1.1-19 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

Wars and a man I sing — an exile driven on by Fate,
 he was the first to flee the coast of Troy,
 destined to reach Lavinian shores and Italian soil,
 yet many blows he took on land and sea from the gods above —
 thanks to cruel Juno's relentless rage — and many losses
 he bore in battle too, before he could found a city,
 bring his gods to Latium, source of the Latin race,
 the Alban lords and the high walls of Rome. (1.1-8 Fagles)

These are the first few lines in Latin

ARMA virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris
 Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit
 litora — multum ille et terris iactatus et alto
 vi superum, saevae memorem Junonis ob iram,
 multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem,
 inferretque deos Latio — genus unde Latinum,
 Albanique patres atque altae moenia Romae. (1.1-7 Pharr)

The first few words of the *Aeneid* — in Latin, *Arma virumque cano* (“I sing of arms” — that is, weapons — “and a man”) let us know that Virgil is writing in the tradition of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Arma or arms recalls the *Iliad*, which tells the story of the wrath of Achilles in the Trojan War. The first word of the *Iliad* is *menon* or wrath, and of course Achilles' wrath leads to many deaths in the Trojan War. At first he is angry at Agamemnon, and many Greeks, aka Achaeans, die as a result. Later, he is angry at Hector, and many Trojans die as a result. Aeneas will also be fighting

in a war in the second half of the *Aeneid*, and in this Virgil's *Aeneid* owes a debt to Homer's *Iliad*.

The second word of the *Aeneid* is *virum* or man; the first word of the *Odyssey* is *andra* or man. The *Odyssey* is very much about the adventures of one man: Odysseus (his Roman name is Ulysses). The *Aeneid* is very much about the adventures of one man: Aeneas.

Why does Virgil do this?

- 1) Virgil is saying that he will do some of the same things that Homer did and that he is writing in the Homeric epic poetry tradition.
- 2) Virgil is announcing that he can play with the big boys. Homer created two works of literature that rank among the best that Humankind has created, and Virgil is saying that he is going to do that kind of creation in his *Aeneid*.
- 3) Virgil is announcing that his *Aeneid* will have as its subjects the subjects of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Like Homer in the *Iliad*, Virgil will write about war. Like Homer in the *Odyssey*, Virgil will write about one man.

Immediately after "*Arma virumque cano*" ("Arms and the man I sing") comes the word *Troiae*, which means "from Troy." Virgil lets us know that he will be writing about a man from Troy. That man, of course, is Aeneas.

That Aeneas is from Troy also connects the *Aeneid* with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The *Iliad* tells of Achilles' wrath during the Trojan War, while the *Odyssey* tells of what happened to Odysseus (Ulysses) after the Fall of Troy.

The myth of the Trojan War has been very fertile for literature and art. Both Homer and Virgil used that myth to create great works of literature.

• What are some differences between Virgil and Homer?

Despite the many similarities, great differences exist between Homer's epic poems and Virgil's epic poem. Virgil is not simply rewriting Homer and retelling Homer's kind of story.

Here are some differences between Homer's epic poems and Virgil's epic poem:

1) *Subsequent History is Important in the Aeneid*

The story of Aeneas is important because Aeneas left Troy, went to Italy, established himself there and took an Italian bride, and became an important ancestor of the Romans.

2) *Homer's epic poems were created in the oral tradition, while Virgil wrote the Aeneid.*

Homer may or may not have known about writing, but if he did know about writing, it was a new technology to him. Homer's epic poems show much evidence of having been composed in the oral tradition. In Homer's day and before, bards recited epic poems before audiences. The bards memorized their epic poems and sang. They were not written because writing did not exist. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* contain a large number of repeated lines. For example, certain lines are said whenever people have a meal. That is evidence of oral composition. True, Homer may have known about writing. Knowledge

of writing would have helped Homer create two massive epic poems. However, clearly Homer was still working in the oral tradition.

• **What is the most important goal of Aeneas? (What is Aeneas fated to do?)**

The most important goal of Aeneas is to go to Italy and found the Roman people.

The *Aeneid* is about the adventures of one person — Aeneas — but it is also about his fate, which is to become an important ancestor of the Roman people.

According to the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is fated to do this, but although this accomplishment is inevitable, that does not mean that accomplishing this goal is easy. Indeed, the founding of the Roman people is very difficult.

• **How is fate portrayed differently by Homer and by Virgil?**

Fate is portrayed differently by Homer and by Virgil.

Homer

In Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, fate is concerned with individuals.

Moirai is usually translated as fate. *Moirai* means “share” or “portion” or “lot.” We still use the word *moira* in this way. If you give people a *moira* of roast beef, you give each person a portion of roast beef.

Moirai in the *Iliad* means “share of life” or “portion of life.” According to the Bible, the usual *moira* of human being is three score and ten years, or 70 years. Of course, not everyone lives this long, and some people live longer.

In the *Iliad*, warriors' *moira* varies. Many warriors, of course, die on the battlefield, but other Achaean warriors will survive war and return home again. Warriors tend not to know in advance what their *moira* will be. They know that it is possible that they will die on the battlefield, but they also know that it is possible that they will survive the war.

One way to look at *moira* is to say that it is what is bound to happen. Or better, with hindsight, we can say that it is what was bound to happen. On your deathbed, you will know that it is your day to die, and you will then know that you were fated to die on this day.

The gods and goddesses have unusual abilities, of course. They know the fates of human beings in advance. Thetis knows that Achilles, her son, has two fates. Zeus knows that Sarpedon is fated to die in a battle in the *Iliad*. Zeus also knows that Patroclus will kill Sarpedon, Hector (with help) will kill Patroclus, and Achilles will kill Hector.

In addition, cities have fates as well. Troy is fated to fall, and the gods apparently cannot change that fate.

Virgil

In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas' fate is linked with the fate of Rome. Aeneas is fated to go to Italy, marry an Italian woman, and found a city named Lavinium. Aeneas and his wife, Lavinia, become important ancestors of the Roman people. It is important to note that Rome is founded long after Aeneas' death. Romulus and Remus found Rome.

• What is a simile?

A simile is a comparison in which two things are directly compared because they are alike. It uses words such as “like.” Here in the final sentence is a simile from Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*:

As he was passing by the house where Jeff Thatcher lived, he saw a new girl in the garden — a lovely little blue-eyed creature with yellow hair plaited into two long tails, white summer frock and embroidered pantalettes. The fresh-crowned hero fell without firing a shot. A certain Amy Lawrence vanished out of his heart and left not even a memory of herself behind. He had thought he loved her to distraction, he had regarded his passion as adoration; and behold it was only a poor little evanescent partiality. He had been months winning her; she had confessed hardly a week ago; he had been the happiest and the proudest boy in the world only seven short days, and here, in one instant of time she had gone out of his heart like a casual stranger whose visit is done. (19-20)

Twain, of course, is an excellent writer, and his similes are excellent. Here is a simile from his novel *The Prince and the Pauper*: Miles Hendon “felt much as a man might who had danced blithely out to enjoy a rainbow, and got struck by lightning” (227).

By the way, a metaphor also compares two things, but it does not use words such as “like.” For example, the very profitable novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was a gold mine for Mark Twain.

• What is an epic simile?

Homer is known for his epic similes. *A Handbook to Literature*, edited by C. Hugh Holman, defines epic simile in this way:

An elaborated comparison. The epic simile differs from an ordinary simile in being more involved and more ornate, in a conscious imitation of the Homeric manner. (172)

For example, My love is like a red, red rose. This is an ordinary simile. However, epic simile is much more extended.

We read a famous three-ply epic simile at 14.467-474 of Homer’s *Iliad* (translated by Robert Fagles). It is used to describe the noise made by the clashing of the Trojans, led by Hector, and of the Achaeans, led by Poseidon:

Not so loud the breakers bellowing against the shore,
driven in from open sea by the North Wind’s brutal blast,
not so loud the roar of fire whipped to a crackling blaze
rampaging into a mountain gorge, raging up through timber,
not so loud the gale that howls in the leafy crowns of oaks
when it hits its pitch of fury tearing branches down —
Nothing so loud as the cries of Trojans, cries of Achaeans,
terrible war cries, armies storming against each other. (Fagles 14.467-474, *Iliad*)

This is the only negative simile in the *Iliad*.

• **What is the first epic simile in Book 1 about?**

We see in the *Aeneid*'s first simile an emphasis on society and law and order rather than on an individual. Aeneas' ships have been scattered by a storm, and Neptune (Greek name = Poseidon) calms the storm like a public man calms a mob:

When rioting breaks out in a great city,
 And the rampaging rabble goes so far
 That stones fly, and incendiary brands —
 For anger can supply that kind of weapon —
 If it so happens that they look round and see
 Some dedicated public man, a veteran
 Whose record gives him weight, they quiet down,
 Willing to stop and listen.
 Then he prevails in speech over their fury
 By his authority, and placates them. (1.201-210 Fitzgerald)

• **How are the epic similes used by Homer and by Virgil different?**

The similes in Homer are different — they often focus on the individual and nature. The first simile in the *Iliad* compares the warriors responding to Agamemnon's call to a swarm of bees. The first simile in the *Odyssey* compares Odysseus among the suitors to a lion among deer.

Of course, the heroes of the three epic poems are very different:

Early in the *Iliad*: "I am Achilles. I want honor and glory, and I don't care who I have to kill to get it — except for Patroclus."

Odyssey: "I am Odysseus, and I am going to kill every suitor when I get home."

Aeneid: "I am Aeneas, and my duty is to protect the remaining Trojans and to found the Roman people."

• **Which work is based in the oral tradition; which work was definitely written?**

Homer's epic poems are definitely based in the oral tradition, while Virgil's *Aeneid* is definitely written.

Homer

Generations of oral poets developed epic poetry over the ages, and Homer is a part of that oral tradition, as seen by the set scenes such as eating a meal and by the repetition of epithets (such as "swift-footed Achilles") and by the repetition of lines in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Some people believe that Homer is not one man; instead, they believe that many poets over many generations

created the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. We do not know exactly when the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were created.

I personally believe that Homer was one man and one poet, but that he built on the work of poets before him. Masterpieces of literature are not created by committees.

Virgil

We know that Virgil uses writing to create the *Aeneid*. We know that one man — Virgil — created the *Aeneid*. We know when Virgil created the *Aeneid* — during the reign of Caesar Augustus.

The opening of the *Aeneid* shows that one person created the *Aeneid*: The first words in Latin are *Arma virumque cano Troiae*; in English, that means “I sing of arms and a man of Troy.” (“Arms” means weapons.)

• Both poets invoke the Muse at the beginning. Which poet asks the Muse to sing the epic poem; which poet says, “I sing”?

In each of his epic poems, Homer invokes the Muse at the beginning of the epic poem.

Homer

These are the first eight lines of Robert Fagles’ translation of the *Iliad*:

Rage — Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus’ son Achilles,
murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses,
hurling down to the House of Death so many sturdy souls,
great fighters’ souls, but made their bodies carrion,
feasts for the dogs and birds,
and the will of Zeus was moving toward its end.
Begin, Muse, when the two first broke and clashed,
Agamemnon lord of men and brilliant Achilles. (Fagles 1.1-8, *Iliad*)

The first few lines of the *Odyssey*, in English (Robert Fagles’ translation), are these:

Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns
driven time and again off course, once he had plundered
the hallowed heights of Troy.
Many cities of men he saw and learned their minds,
many pains he suffered, heartsick on the open sea,
fighting to save his life and bring his comrades home.
But he could not save them from disaster, hard as he strove —

the recklessness of their own ways destroyed them all,
 the blind fools, they devoured the cattle of the Sun
 and the Sungod blotted out the day of their return.
 Launch out on his history, Muse, daughter of Zeus,
 start from where you will — sing for our time too. (Fagles 1.1-12 *Odyssey*)

In Homer, the Muse is singing the epic poem and is using the bard as an instrument.

Virgil

In contrast to Homer, Virgil writes, *cano* — that is, “I sing.” Virgil does eventually mention the Muse, but when he does, he asks the Muse to remind him of the events that he will sing about.

The first 19 lines of the *Aeneid* (the first 11 lines of Latin) read, in Robert Fitzgerald’s translation:

I sing of warfare and a man at war.
 From the sea-coast of Troy in early days
 He came to Italy by destiny,
 To our Lavinian western shore,
 A fugitive, this captain, buffeted
 Cruelly on land as on the sea
 By blows from powers of the air — behind them
 Baleful Juno in her sleepless rage.
 And cruel losses were his lot in war,
 Till he could found a city and bring home
 His gods to Latium, land of the Latin race,
 the Alban lords, and the high walls of Rome.
 Tell me the causes now, O Muse, how galled
 In her divine pride, and how sore at heart
 From her old wound, the queen of gods compelled him —
 A man apart, devoted to his mission —
 To undergo so many perilous days
 And enter on so many trials. Can anger
 Black as this prey on the minds of heaven? (1.1-19 Fitzgerald)

The translation by Robert Fitzgerald has “Tell me the causes now, O Muse” (1.13), but the original Latin has *Musa, mihi causas memora*, which can be translated as “Muse, remind me of the reasons.” This emphasizes that Virgil is telling the epic poem. The Muse is merely helping him.

One of the reasons for Virgil to invoke the Muses is simply because Homer and other epic poets did that in their epic poems. Virgil is writing an epic poem, and he follows the customs of other epic poets.

• **Define “proem.” What are the main purposes of the proem at the beginning of the *Aeneid*?**

A proem is a short introduction at the beginning of an epic poem.

The main purposes of the proem are these:

- 1) To let the audience know that Virgil is indebted to Homer and that he will be doing some things differently from Homer.
- 2) To let the audience know some of the main themes of the *Aeneid*. One of these major themes is the anger of Juno.
- 3) To let the audience know something about Aeneas’ character: what kind of man he is.
- 4) To let the audience know something about Aeneas’ destiny.

• **What does “theme” mean?**

Here is a definition of “theme”:

theme (theem): a common thread or repeated idea that is incorporated throughout a literary work. A theme is a thought or idea the author presents to the reader that may be deep, difficult to understand, or even moralistic. Generally, a theme has to be extracted as the reader explores the passages of a work. The author utilizes the characters, plot, and other literary devices to assist the reader in this endeavor. [...] In truly great works of literature, the author intertwines the theme throughout the work and the full impact is slowly realized as the reader processes the text. The ability to recognize a theme is important because it allows the reader to understand part of the author’s purpose in writing the book. See *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama*, NTC’s *Dictionary of Literary Terms*, and *Literary Terms: A Dictionary*. — Susan Severson, Student, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

• **What are some of the key themes mentioned in the proem?**

Some key themes mentioned in the proem are these:

- Aeneas is fated to have these adventures.
- Rome is fated to come into existence.
- A major distinguishing characteristic of Aeneas is his *pietas*.

• **The events of the *Aeneid* are brought about by human and divine agency and by what other main force?**

The actions of humans, the actions of gods and goddesses, and fate are the forces that determine the outcome of events in the *Aeneid*.

Fate can be defined as the necessary outcome of events. Things that are fated to happen cannot happen otherwise than they have been fated. If Troy is fated to fall, then nobody and nothing can keep Troy from falling. No matter how great a warrior Aeneas is, he cannot prevent the Fall of Troy. In fact, Troy does fall, and Aeneas becomes an exile.

• **Aeneas is noted for his *pietas* (PEE-a-tahs). What is *pietas*?**

Aeneas is *insignem pietate virum* (line 10) — a man noted for his *pietas* (PEE-a-tahs).

Pietas can be difficult to translate. In his edition of the first six books of the *Aeneid*, Clyde Pharr translates it as “loyalty, devotion, sense of duty” (16).

Robert Fagles translates *insignem pietate virum* as “a man, so famous for his devotion” (1.11).

Robert Fitzgerald translates *insignem pietate virum* as “A man apart, devoted to his mission” (1.16).

Pietas has also been translated as “goodness” and as “piety.”

Classics scholar Elizabeth Vandiver lectures about translating *pietas* as “goodness” and as “piety” in her Teaching Company course on Virgil’s *Aeneid*:

These translations, however, are inadequate to explain what *pietas* actually means. Piety refers to, at least in modern terminology, only to our attitude towards the gods or God. *Pietas* is much, much broader than that. *Pietas* refers to one’s duty and proper behavior toward all to whom duty is owed. I’m sorry that I can’t make it much more concise than that.

To be *pious*, one must behave properly toward parents, spouse, children, king (if the person happens to be a subject), subjects (if the person happens to be a king), comrades, peers, friends, guests, hosts, everything in society towards whom you could possibly have a duty, your actions towards those people would be comprehended under the heading of *pietas*, if you behave properly towards them. If you behave improperly toward them, you are being *impius* (not *pious*).

Homeric heroes often have a descriptive epithet applied to them; for example, swift-footed Achilles and Hector of the glancing helmet. Odysseus’ epithet is *polutropos*, which is translated in Robert Fagles’ translation of Homer’s *Odyssey* as “the man of twists and turns” (1.1). This is an excellent descriptive epithet for Odysseus. For one thing, his journey back to Ithaca takes a lot of twists and turns. More importantly, he is a man of cunning. His mind is full of twists and turns. We certainly see that in his invention of the Trojan Horse. Odysseus is crafty. Odysseus is able to think his way out of difficulty.

Over and over again in the *Aeneid*, Aeneas will be referred to by the adjective *pious* and as being distinguished for his *pietas*. This is his most important characteristic. This is his most common epithet.

• **What do we learn about the founding of Rome in the proem?**

Two things are stressed in the proem about the founding of Rome:

- 1) The founding of Rome is inevitable. It is fated to happen.
- 2) The founding of Rome is difficult even though it is fated to happen. In order for Rome to come into existence, Aeneas must make his way to Italy, marry an Italian woman named Lavinia, and found a city called Lavinium. However, doing these things is very difficult.

In line 33 of the Latin, we read:

Tantae molis erat Romanum condere gentum. (1.33 Pharr)

Clyde Pharr translates *molis* as “mass, burden, difficulty” (19).

Robert Fagles translates that line in this way:

Such a long hard difficulty it was to found the Roman people. (1.41 Fagles)

Robert Fitzgerald translates that line in this way:

[...] so hard and huge

A task it was to found the Roman people. (1.48-49 Fitzgerald)

To become an important ancestor of the Roman people, who are a mixture of Trojan and native Italian blood, Aeneas had to suffer. He had to pay a price for fulfilling his destiny. In addition, his fellow Trojan exiles had to pay a heavy price to fulfill this destiny, as did many of the people the exiled Trojans met as they traveled around the Mediterranean and after they reached and landed in Italy.

We will see that one person who paid a heavy price is Dido, the Queen of Carthage, who dies.

• **Why is Juno angry at Aeneas and the Trojans?**

In addition to introducing us to some key themes of the epic poem, the proem also introduces us to some of the most important characters, including Juno. The other two gods mentioned in the proem are Jupiter and Venus. These gods will be important in the *Aeneid*.

Juno's Greek name is Hera. Jupiter's Greek name is Zeus. Venus' Greek name is Aphrodite.

A major characteristic of Juno is her anger. We read that she is angry at Aeneas. She also gets angry in ancient literature at her husband, Jupiter, who has affairs with many mortal women and many goddesses. She is a jealous wife — with good reason to be jealous. Jupiter's affairs result in many children, and Juno hates these children as well as the females who give birth to them. Hercules' father was Jupiter, and Juno hates Hercules and causes trouble for him throughout his life. Juno is very talented at hating.

The title character played by Ellen Page in the movie *Juno* was named after this goddess, by the way.

Juno is angry at Aeneas and at all the Trojans for a number of reasons:

1. *The Judgment of Paris*

Who is Achilles, and what is unusual about his mother, Thetis?

Achilles, of course, is the foremost warrior of the Greeks during the Trojan War. His mother, Thetis, is unusual in that she is a goddess. The Greeks' religion was different from modern religions in that they were polytheistic (believing in many gods) rather than monotheistic (believing in one god). In addition, the gods and human beings could mate. Achilles is unusual in that he had an immortal goddess as his mother and a mortal man, Peleus, as his father. Achilles, of course, is unusual in many ways. Another way in which he is unusual is that he and Thetis have long talks together. Often, the gods either ignore their mortal offspring or choose not to reveal themselves to them. For example, Aeneas' goddess mother is Venus. Although Venus does save Aeneas' life or help him on occasion, the two do not have long talks together the way that Achilles and Thetis do.

Which prophecy about Achilles was given to his mother, Thetis?

The prophecy about Thetis' male offspring was that he would be a greater man than his father. This is something that would make most human fathers happy. (One exception would be Pap, in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Pap does not want Huck, his son, to learn to read or write or to get an education or to live better than Pap does.)

Who is Zeus, and what does he decide to do as a result of this prophecy?

Zeus is a horny god who sleeps with many goddesses and many human beings. Normally, he would lust after Thetis, but once he hears the prophecy, he does not want to sleep with Thetis. For one thing, the gods are potent, and when they mate they have children. Zeus overthrew his own father, and Zeus does not want to give birth to a greater man than he is because his son will overthrow him. Therefore, Zeus wants to get Thetis married off to someone else. In this case, a marriage to a human being for Thetis would suit Zeus just fine. A human son may be greater than his father, but is still not going to be as great as a god, and so Zeus will be safe if Thetis gives birth to a human son.

Who is Peleus?

Peleus is the human man who marries Thetis and who fathers Achilles. At the time of the *Iliad*, Peleus is an old man and Thetis has not lived with him for a long time.

Why is Eris, Goddess of Discord, not invited to the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis?

Obviously, you do not want discord at a wedding, and therefore, Eris, Goddess of Discord, is not invited to the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis. Even though Eris is not invited to the wedding feast, she shows up anyway.

Eris, Goddess of Discord, throws an apple on a table at the wedding feast. What is inscribed on the apple?

Inscribed on the apple is the phrase "For the fairest," written in Greek, of course (at least the Greek epics assume that). Because Greek is a language that indicates masculine and feminine in certain words, and since "fairest" has a feminine ending, the apple is really inscribed "for the fairest female."

Juno/Hera, Minerva/Athena, and Venus/Aphrodite each claim the apple. Who are they?

Three goddesses claim the apple, meaning that each of the three goddesses thinks that she is the fairest, or most beautiful.

Juno/Hera

Juno/Hera is the wife of Zeus, and she is a jealous wife. Zeus has many affairs with immortal goddesses and mortal women, and Hera is jealous because of these affairs. Zeus would like to keep on her good side.

Minerva

Minerva is the goddess of wisdom. She becomes the patron goddess of Athens. Minerva especially likes Odysseus, as is shown in the *Odyssey*. Minerva is a favorite of Zeus, her father. Zeus would like to keep on her good side.

Venus

Venus is the goddess of sexual passion. She can make Zeus fall in love against his will. Zeus would like to keep on her good side.

Why doesn't Zeus want to judge the goddesses' beauty contest?

Zeus is not a fool. He knows that if he judges the goddesses' beauty contest, he will make two enemies. The two goddesses whom Zeus does not choose as the fairest will hate him and likely make trouble for him.

Please note that the Greek gods and goddesses are not omnibenevolent. Frequently, they are quarrelsome and petty.

By the way, Athens, Ohio, lawyer Thomas Hodson once judged a beauty contest featuring 25 cute child contestants. He was running in an election to choose the municipal court judge, and he thought that judging the contest would be a good way to win votes. Very quickly, he decided never to judge a children's beauty contest again. He figured out that he had won two votes — the votes of the parents of the child who won the contest. Unfortunately, he also figured out that he had lost 48 votes — the votes of the parents of the children who lost.

Who is Paris, and what is the Judgment of Paris?

Paris is a prince of Troy, and Zeus allows him to judge the three goddesses' beauty contest. Paris is not as intelligent as Zeus, or he would try to find a way out of judging the beauty contest.

Each of the goddesses offers Paris a bribe if he will choose her. What are the bribes?

Juno

Juno offers Paris political power: several cities he can rule.

Minerva

Minerva offers Paris prowess in battle. Paris can become a mighty and feared warrior.

Venus

Venus offers Paris the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife.

Which goddess does Paris choose?

Paris chose Venus, who offered him the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife.

This is not what a Homeric warrior would normally choose. A person such as Achilles would choose to be an even greater warrior, if that is possible.

A person such as Agamemnon is likely to choose more cities to rule.

When Paris chooses the most beautiful woman in the world to be his wife, we are not meant to think that he made a good decision. Paris is not a likable character.

Juno is very angry at the Trojans because Paris did not choose her as the most beautiful goddess in the beauty contest. In fact, Juno and Minerva, who were not chosen in the beauty contest, are on the side of the Greeks in the Trojan War. Venus, whom Paris did choose as the winner of the beauty contest, is on the side of the Trojans in the Trojan War.

Very often, the Greek and Roman gods and goddesses appear petty in Homer's *Iliad* and in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Here, three goddesses choose which side to support in a war on the basis of how they fared in a beauty contest.

We are not certain that Homer knew of the myth of the Judgment of Paris; however, we know that Virgil knew of the myth because he mentions it near the beginning of Book 1 of the *Aeneid*.

2) *Troy was Founded by an Illegitimate Son of Jupiter*

As I have mentioned, Juno is a jealous wife. She hated the children whom Jupiter, her husband, has had with other females.

Dardanus is the founder of Troy. His parents are Jupiter and Electra. Because Dardanus is an illegitimate child of Jupiter, Juno hates him and the city that he founded. She also hates the citizens of the city that Dardanus founded.

3) *Juno Hates the Trojan Royal Family Because of Ganymede*

Ganymede was a Trojan prince whom Jupiter kidnapped to be the cupbearer of the gods. In addition, because of his great beauty Ganymede was a lover of Jupiter; thus, Juno's hatred of Ganymede and the Trojan royal family from which he came. Jupiter is a horny god, and Ganymede became his paramour or lover.

4) *Aeneas will be an Important Ancestor of the Roman People, and the Romans will Eventually Conquer Carthage, a City that Juno Loves*

Rome and Carthage fought three wars, and Rome won all three wars. These wars were called the Punic Wars.

In the second Punic War, the great Carthaginian general Hannibal crossed the Alps with his war elephants from Spain into Italy, where he terrified the Romans for years. Eventually, Scipio Africanus took an army to Carthage, forcing Hannibal to leave Italy to defend his city. There Scipio Africanus won a great victory. (That is how he got his name: Africanus. Carthage is in North Africa.)

Juno hates Aeneas and the Trojans because she knows that their descendants will eventually conquer Carthage. (One of the powers of the immortal gods and goddesses is that they know the fates of people and of cities. They know the future of human beings and of cities.)

The main point here is that Juno hates Aeneas and the Trojans.

• **What is Venus's attitude toward Aeneas? How can she help him?**

Venus, however, supports Aeneas and the Trojans.

Venus is the immortal mother of Aeneas. Like mortal mothers, Venus loves her mortal son.

Venus' Greek name is Aphrodite.

Venus is concerned for her son Aeneas and tries to help him. Venus tries to help Aeneas in three main ways, both in Book 1 and elsewhere in the epic:

- 1) As an immortal goddess, Venus has access to Jupiter, the King of Gods and Men. Venus can appeal to Jupiter and ask him to help Aeneas and the Trojans. In Book 1, she confronts Jupiter and reminds him of the Trojans' destiny: to go to Italy and become important ancestors of the Roman people.
- 2) Venus can help Aeneas directly by manipulating other people. In Book 1, she uses her power — the power of sexual passion — to get Dido, the Queen of Carthage, to fall in love with Aeneas and give him aid. In doing this, she has the help of her son, Cupid, whom she substitutes for Aeneas' real son.
- 3) Venus can help and advise Aeneas directly, meeting with him face to face (albeit sometimes in disguise). In Book 1, Aeneas lands near Carthage. Venus goes to him and advises him to seek help from Dido, the Queen of Carthage.

• **What are some characteristics of Jupiter? What is his Greek name?**

Jupiter is another important deity (DAY-a-tee) who will play an important role in the *Aeneid*. Jupiter's Greek name is Zeus.

Jupiter is the King of Gods and Men. He is immensely powerful. In Book 1 of the *Aeneid*, it appears that fate and what Jupiter decrees is the same thing. In Homer's epics, it appears that fate is separate from Zeus. Zeus knows the fates of men and cities, but he is unable to alter fate — at least not without doing immense harm — harm that he is unwilling to do.

At other points in the *Aeneid*, however, it appears that fate is separate from Jupiter.

• **What does Jupiter prophecy to Venus?**

Robert Fitzgerald's translation has this (Jupiter is speaking to Venus):

“For these [the Romans] I set no limits, world or time,

But make the gift of empire without end.” (1.374-375 Fitzgerald)

That Jupiter says this gives Virgil's audience a sense of the inevitability of Rome's coming into existence and of the Romans' building of a great empire.

The phrase translated as “empire without end” (1.375 Fitzgerald) is, in the original Latin, *imperium sine fine* (1.279).

Imperium can be translated as “supreme power.”

One point to notice in that in the original Latin Virgil has Jupiter saying, *imperium sine fine dedi* (1.279 Pharr). *Dedi* is past tense (I have given), although many translators, including Robert Fitzgerald, use the present tense when translating it. Robert Fagles uses the past tense when translating it:

“I have granted them power, empire without end.” (1.334 Fagles)

Rome and the Roman Empire will not come into existence for a long time, but they are fated to come into existence. Jupiter has already decreed that they will come into existence.

Virgil does what Homer did in the *Iliad*. He uses the gods to tell us what is fated to happen.

According to E.T. Owen, author of *The Story of the Iliad*, Homer’s use of the gods to tell us what is going to happen has a plain artistic advantage:

[...] one can see the significance of an event in a series much more clearly when one knows to what they are tending; one’s interest is oriented. (140)

In addition, Homer’s use of the gods to tell us what will happen gives these events a sense of inevitability, a sense that nothing else could happen.

Virgil’s use of the gods and of fate has the same advantages that Homer’s use of the gods and of fate has.

Furthermore, Jupiter makes additional prophecies for Venus:

The Trojan Caesar comes, to circumscribe

Empire with Ocean, fame with heaven’s stars.

Julius his name, from Iulus handed down: (1.385-387 Fitzgerald)

Who is the Trojan Caesar? We may think of Julius Caesar here, but Augustus Caesar is most likely meant. When Octavian (Augustus Caesar’s birth name) was adopted by Julius Caesar, he also took the name Julius.

Jupiter continues,

“And grim with iron frames, the Gates of War

Will then be shut inside, unholy Furor,

Squatting on cruel weapons, hands enchained

Behind him by a hundred links of bronze,

Will grind his teeth and howl with bloodied mouth.” (1.394-398 Fitzgerald)

The phrase that Robert Fitzgerald translates as “unholy Furor” is “*Furor impius*” (1.294 Pharr) in the original Latin.

Impius means, as you would expect, “not *pious*.” *Furor* means rage or passion.

In the *Aeneid*, one of the great themes is a conflict between two things: *furor* (rage or passion) and *pietas* (proper, dutiful behavior).

• **What does *in medias res* mean?**

The *Iliad* begins *in medias res*. The Roman poet Horace created this term, which is literally translated as “in the middle things,” or more idiomatically, “in the middle of things.” The phrase means that the storyteller starts in the middle. In an epic poem such as the *Iliad*, the epic poet Homer can do that because his audience already knows the story. Homer does not have to tell us who Achilles, Zeus, or Agamemnon are, or why the Trojan War is being fought. Homer assumes that his audience already knows that. However, Homer cleverly fills his audience in on previous events of the Trojan War in Books 2-8 of the *Iliad*.

Homer’s *Odyssey* also begins *in medias res*. In the *Odyssey*, Homer definitely starts in the middle of the story rather than at the beginning. Odysseus has not returned to Ithaca yet, but the 10 years of wanderings and of being kept a prisoner after the Fall of Troy have already occurred. Homer will let his audience know what happened to Odysseus following the Fall of Troy in some flashback books. Books 9 through 12 will tell the audience of Odysseus’ wanderings and adventures following the Fall of Troy.

At the beginning of the *Aeneid*, it is seven years since the Fall of Troy. This is an *in medias res* beginning. We are in the middle of the story. If Virgil were to start at the beginning of the story, he would start with the Fall of Troy. Of course, Virgil will tell us in flashback books (Books 2-3) what happened during the Fall of Troy and up to the present time, and then he will tell us what happened in Carthage and in Italy.

• **When the *Aeneid* starts, where are Aeneas and his men?**

Aeneas and his men are in ships that they built after the Fall of Troy. They are now near Carthage. Juno arranges for a storm at sea to cause trouble for them. One of their ships sinks, and the others are in danger of sinking.

• **What do we learn about Aeneas from the first speech he makes in the *Aeneid*? (We learn about the private Aeneas.)**

As mentioned above, in the *Aeneid*, one of the great themes is a conflict between two things: *furor* (rage or passion) and *pietas* (proper, dutiful behavior).

Aeneas himself will be conflicted. He has a duty that he is fated to perform, but it would be easier for him not to perform his duty. Fortunately, because of his *pietas*, he will perform his duty.

We see the conflict in Aeneas in Book 1. There is a public Aeneas and a private Aeneas. The private Aeneas has fears and doubts. The public Aeneas is an act that he puts on for others. That Aeneas appears confident and bold.

Aeneas’ first speech reveals the private Aeneas, the Aeneas who is in anguish. Juno has sent a storm to wreck Aeneas’ fleet, and this is another burden that Aeneas has to suffer — he who has already suffered so much, including the loss of his wife during the Fall of Troy.

Aeneas says,

“Triply lucky, all you men
 To whom death came before your fathers’ eyes
 Below the wall at Troy! Bravest Danaan,
 Diomedes, why could I not go down
 When you had wounded me, and lose my life
 On Ilium’s battlefield? Our Hector lies there,
 Torn by Achilles’ weapon; there Sarpedon.
 Our giant fighter, lies; and there the river
 Simoïs washes down so many shields
 And helmets, with strong bodies taken under!” (1.134-143 Fitzgerald)

Odysseus says something very similar in Homer’s *Odyssey* when he is about to be raft-wrecked near the island of the Phaeacians:

“Three, four times blessed, my friends-in-arms
 who died on the plains of Troy those years ago,
 serving the sons of Atreus to the end. Would to god
 I’d died there too and met that fate that day the Trojans,
 swarms of them, hurled at *me* with bronze spears,
 fighting over the corpse of proud Achilles!
 A hero’s funeral then, my glory spread by comrades —
 now what a wretched death I’m doomed to die!” (5.338-345 Fagles, *Odyssey*)

Despite the similarity in the speeches, there is a difference in the situations of Aeneas and of Odysseus. Odysseus is alone on his raft. All of his men have perished, and all of his ships have been lost. In contrast, Aeneas has many men and many ships left.

The main thing that Aeneas’ speech shows is that he is in anguish.

• What do we learn about Aeneas from the second speech he makes in the *Aeneid*? (We learn about the public Aeneas.)

Aeneas’ second speech is not made to himself, but to his men. In his first speech, which he said to himself, he was able to reveal his private concerns, but in his second speech, which he makes to his men, he has to put on a show of confidence.

Aeneas and seven of his ships land on the North coast of Africa, near Carthage. Aeneas has seen one ship sink, and he knows that the other ships may have sunk as well (at the beginning of the *Aeneid*, he had 20 ships).

Here Aeneas puts on a brave front:

“Friends and companions,
Have we not known hard hours before this?
My men, who have endured still greater dangers,
God will grant us an end to these as well.” (1.270-273 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas is a good leader. He points out to his men that they have survived hardships before and that they will survive this one as well. He also reminds his men of their destiny: They are fated to go to Italy and to found a city there.

The conflict between the private and the public Aeneas will be found throughout the *Aeneid*. In order to accomplish his fate, Aeneas must do things that he would prefer not to do. The private Aeneas longs for Troy; the public Aeneas is set on going to Italy and on founding a new city.

• **How does Aeneas get help from his immortal mother, Venus? Is there a separation between Venus and Aeneas?**

Venus does help Aeneas, as we have seen, but there is a separation between the two.

In Book 1, Juno sends a storm to bedevil Aeneas and his ships. In the storm, Aeneas and seven of his ships are separated from the other 12 ships (Aeneas saw a 13th ship sunk). Venus appears in front of Aeneas, and she gives him information and advice. She tells Aeneas where he is: near Carthage. She also interprets a bird-sign to tell him that 12 of his ships are either entering the harbor of Carthage or are already in the harbor of Carthage. Venus advises him to seek help from Dido, the Queen of Carthage.

However, she appears before him in disguise. Aeneas knows her to be a goddess, but because she is in disguise as a Tyrian girl, he does not recognize her until she moves away from him. Then he complains to her (in Robert Fagles’ translation):

He knew her at once — his mother —
and called after her now as she sped away:
“Why, you too, cruel as the rest? So often
to ridicule your son with your disguises!
Why can’t we clasp hands, embrace each other,
exchange some words, speak out, and tell the truth?” (1.492-497 Fagles)

Robert Fitzgerald translates the speech in this way:

“You! cruel, too!
Why tease your son so often with disguises?
Why may we not join hands and speak and hear
The simple truth?” (1.558-561 Fitzgerald)

Venus does not answer her son.

One thing that we will see in this epic poem is that Aeneas is isolated. Here he is isolated from his mother.

• If you feel like doing research, identify Carthage, Dido's city. What relationship did Carthage have to Rome? Friendly, or not?

Carthage and Rome fought a series of three wars together. Rome won each war, and eventually Rome destroyed Carthage.

Juno dislikes the Trojans because she knows that their descendants, the Romans, are fated to destroy Carthage.

• What happens when Aeneas goes to Carthage?

When Aeneas arrives in Carthage, he finds a bustling city with lots of construction going on.

Aeneas' arrival in Carthage combines two important themes:

- 1) The private Aeneas' desire for the past.
- 2) The public Aeneas' concern about the future.

Venus hides Aeneas in a cloud or mist or fog so that other people cannot see him. Basically, Venus makes Aeneas invisible.

Aeneas visits a temple of Juno at which are works of art depicting scenes from the Trojan War. Here the private Aeneas weeps at these reminders of the past and his lost home. He does receive some encouragement from the works of art in that Troy has not been forgotten.

Aeneas then sees, Dido, Queen of Carthage, and the public Aeneas and his concern for the future becomes important.

Is Aeneas a sympathetic character or not? Readers' opinions can vary. On the negative side, he is susceptible to despair and lack of confidence; however, he overcomes those things and fulfills his destiny — he pursues a goal larger than himself and becomes an important ancestor of the Roman people. We should note that although in private Aeneas is susceptible to despair and lack of confidence, in public he projects hope and confidence as a leader.

• Write a short character analysis of Dido based on what you learn from Book 1.

The Carthaginian queen Dido is a hospitable leader. She is kind to Aeneas and the other exiled Trojans. She is a good leader of the Carthaginians.

Dido is a Phoenician, but after her husband was killed by her greedy brother, she fled. Landing on North Africa, she has decided to build her own city, Carthage, there.

Dido is impressed by Aeneas, and we will see in Book 4 that she falls in love with him; this is a tragic love affair with a tragic ending.

Venus enlists the aid of Cupid, her son, to help make Dido to fall in love with Aeneas.

• **What does Venus plan to do to Dido? How does Book 1 end?**

Dido will fall in love with Aeneas. She has adequate reason to fall in love with him already, as she would like to have a King of Carthage and Aeneas would make a good king. However, Venus helps her to fall in love with Aeneas, so we have an example of double motivation here.

In double motivation, a realistic motivation exists for something to occur, but a god or the gods or fate also decrees that something will occur. We moderns might say that Troy fell because of the superior numbers of warriors fighting against it, but the ancient Greeks would say that in addition fate decreed that Troy would fall.

Aeneas sends for his son, Ascanius, and Venus substitutes Cupid, her own son, for Ascanius, disguising him so that Aeneas does not recognize that this is a god and not his own mortal son. Cupid has special powers — he can make people fall in love — and he makes Dido fall in love with Aeneas.

Dido, in fact, does fall in love with Aeneas, and this has disastrous results for her.

We will read the tragedy of Dido in Book 4 of the *Aeneid*.

***Aeneid*, Book 2: How They Took the City / The Final Hours of Troy**

• What is the importance of Book 2 of the *Aeneid*?

Book 2 of the *Aeneid* is very important because it provides the fullest surviving ancient account of the Fall of Troy.

The Trojan War myth has been one of the most important myths in human culture.

• How are Books 2-3 of the *Aeneid* similar to the *Odyssey*?

In writing the *Aeneid*, Virgil was influenced by Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

In writing Books 2-3 of the *Aeneid*, Virgil was influenced by Books 9-12 of Homer's *Odyssey*.

In Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is a guest of the Phaeacians, who show him very good hospitality. He tells his Phaeacian hosts the story of his wanderings following the Trojan War. He does not tell about the Fall of Troy; instead, he tells his story beginning immediately after the Fall of Troy. This section of the *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus tells his own story, is known as the Great Wanderings.

In Books 2-3 of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is a guest of Queen Dido of Carthage. He tells her of two things: 1) the Fall of Troy and 2) his wanderings after Troy fell. Like Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, Aeneas tells his own story.

Books 2-3 of the *Aeneid* and Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey* have many similarities:

- 1) Both heroes are guests. Odysseus is a guest of the Phaeacians, an island people who are renowned for providing good hospitality and a return home for guests in need of transportation. Aeneas is a guest of Queen Dido of Carthage. Centuries later, Carthage is one of Rome's greatest enemies, but in the *Aeneid* Queen Dido falls in love with Aeneas.
- 2) The visit of both heroes causes trouble for their hosts. Poseidon, the Greek sea-god, becomes angry at the Phaeacians for helping Odysseus, whom he is already angry at because Odysseus blinded Poseidon's son the Cyclops Polyphemus. Poseidon turns the Phaeacian ship that carried Odysseus home to stone. Poseidon also threatens to put a mountain in the Phaeacians' port, but it is not certain that he does that. In the *Odyssey*, the King of the Phaeacians prays to Poseidon not to put a huge mountain in their port, and it is possible that as a result of the prayer and attendant sacrifices that Poseidon does not do this. In the *Aeneid*, Queen Dido falls in love with Aeneas, and when he leaves her to go to Italy and fulfill his destiny, she commits suicide.
- 3) Both heroes could possibly get married and stay with their hosts. Odysseus meets the Phaeacian princess Nausicaa, who shows an interest in marrying him. Indeed, Nausicaa's father, the King of the Phaeacians, invites Odysseus to marry Nausicaa. Similarly, Queen Dido would like Aeneas to marry her and become King of Carthage.
- 4) Both heroes are in some danger despite having friendly hosts. If Odysseus were to marry the Phaeacian princess Nausicaa, he would forget his homecoming and never return to his home island, Ithaca; his wife, Penelope; his son, Telemachus; and his father, Laertes. If Aeneas were to marry Queen Dido and stay in Carthage, he would never fulfill his destiny of going to Italy and becoming an important ancestor of the Roman people.

5) The stories of Odysseus and Aeneas both begin at Troy and end with the arrival of the hero at the home of his hosts. Odysseus begins at Troy, tells about his adventures wandering the Mediterranean, and ends with his arrival at Scheria, the home island of the Phaeacians. Aeneas begins with the Fall of Troy, tells about his adventures wandering the Mediterranean, and ends with his arrival at Carthage.

6) Aeneas visits many of the same places that Odysseus visited. For example, Odysseus landed on the island of the Cyclopes, where he blinded Polyphemus. Shortly after Odysseus left the island of the Cyclopes, Aeneas arrives there, and he picks up a man whom Odysseus left behind. (In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is a hero. In the *Aeneid*, Odysseus is a bad guy. Of course, in the *Aeneid*, Odysseus is known as Ulysses.)

• **How are Books 2-3 of the *Aeneid* different from Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*?**

Despite the great similarities of Books 2-3 of the *Aeneid* and Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*, these sections have great differences as well:

1) The focuses of the two narratives are very different. Odysseus' narrative shows how clever he is at surviving under great difficulties — something that he has to do once he returns to Ithaca, where he discovers that almost everyone thinks that he has died and where over 100 suitors are courting his wife, Penelope, in hopes of marrying her. These suitors would kill Odysseus if they knew that he had returned to Ithaca without an army to protect him. In contrast, Aeneas' narrative focuses on two things:

1) his fate and destiny.

2) his sorrows.

Aeneas' destiny is to go to Italy and become an important ancestor of the Roman people. However, although this is fated to happen, this is not going to be easy to accomplish. In fact, it is very difficult. Aeneas would prefer an easier fate: to go to Carthage and marry Queen Dido, but despite the great difficulties he does go to Italy and fulfill his fate.

When Odysseus begins to tell his story, he says,

“I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, known to the world
for every kind of craft — my fame [*kleos*] has reached the skies.”

(9.21-22 Fagles, *Odyssey*)

What Aeneas says when he begins to tell his story is quite different:

“Sorrow too deep to tell, your majesty,
You order me to feel and tell once more.” (2.3-4 Fitzgerald)

In a different translation:

[...] “Sorrow, unspeakable sorrow,
my queen, you ask me to bring to life once more.” (2.3-4 Fagles)

2) Aeneas tells the story of the Fall of Troy; Odysseus does not. Book 2 of the *Aeneid* is concerned with the Fall of Troy.

3) In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is a hero who cares about his men and does his best to get them back to Ithaca so that they can see their day of homecoming. He fails to do this, and his men all die, but Homer makes a major effort to show that the men died because of their own foolish actions. In the *Aeneid*, Ulysses is a bad guy who even leaves a man behind on the island of the Cyclopes.

4) The characters of Odysseus and Aeneas are quite different. Odysseus is the great individualist. When he arrives home on Ithaca, he is alone (although he does get help from the goddess Athena). All of his men and ships have been lost. Aeneas is the great leader. He succeeds in bringing many of his ships and his men to Italy.

• **How do Aeneas and Odysseus differ in their motivations following the Trojan War?**

The motivation of the two heroes is very different as well:

Odysseus

Odysseus is happy with the outcome of the Trojan War: His side won. Now Odysseus is ready to return home. The *Odyssey* begins with an emphasis on homecoming, and throughout the first 12 books of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is eager to be home again, in part because of prophecies that bad things will happen if he is late returning home. Of course, even without the prophecies Odysseus would be eager to return home to see his wife, his son, and his father.

Aeneas

For Aeneas and the Trojans, of course, the end of the Trojan War is a disaster. They have lost loved ones during the war, and at the end of the war they lose their city and homeland. Aeneas is in exile from his homeland. He spends the first half of the *Aeneid* searching for a new homeland, and he spends the second half of the *Aeneid* getting established in his new homeland. Aeneas will never return to Troy.

• **Is the *Aeneid* simply a Roman *Odyssey*?**

The *Aeneid* is very different from Homer's *Odyssey* despite the similarities. The focuses of the two epic poems are different, although both are concerned with homelands. Odysseus must return to Ithaca and reestablish himself as King. Aeneas must find a new homeland and establish himself there.

The *Odyssey* is very much concerned with the adventures of one man: the hero named Odysseus. Odysseus is a great individualist, but his return to Ithaca actually means little to history, although of course the *Odyssey* has been enormously important in culture. If Odysseus had married the sea-nymph Calypso, and if Penelope had married one of the suitors, history would not be different, although culture would lose a great ancient epic poem.

The *Aeneid* is very much concerned with the adventures of one man: the hero named Aeneas. However, Aeneas has a destiny. His destiny is to become an important ancestor of the Roman people. Whether or not Aeneas makes it to Italy is enormously important. We are to understand that if Aeneas does not make it to Italy but instead stays in Carthage and marries Queen Dido

that no Roman people and no Roman Empire will exist. Instead of studying the Roman Empire in ancient history classes, we would be studying the Carthaginian Empire. So the *Aeneid* is really about one man's destiny: Aeneas must go to Italy and become an important ancestor of the Roman Empire. Aeneas is dutiful, and he does this, but fulfilling his destiny is difficult, and if it were not for his destiny, he would choose an easier path.

• What do most of the Trojans assume when they wake up and find a huge wooden horse outside their walls and find that the Greeks appear to have returned to Achaea (Greece)?

When Aeneas begins to tell his story, he immediately mentions the Trojan Horse. The Trojan Horse was thought up by Ulysses (his Greek name was Odysseus). The Trojan Horse is a huge hollow wooden horse that is filled with Greek soldiers. Of course, the Trojans don't know that the horse is filled with Greek soldiers. If they knew that, they would destroy the horse and the warriors inside it, and they would win the war. Such major Greek warriors as Ulysses and Menelaus, the husband of Helen, over whom the war is being fought, are inside. With many important Greek warriors, and especially with the husband of Helen dead, the Trojans would win the war.

The plan of the Greeks is excellent. They build the horse, fill it with soldiers, and then pretend to leave Troy (which is in modern-day Turkey) and sail back home to Greece. However, they don't sail back home to Greece. Instead, they sail behind an island named Tenedos so that the Trojans are not able to see the Greek ships and men.

The Greeks sail behind the island at night, and the Trojans are astonished to wake up one day and see that no Greeks are camped before Troy. They see the empty camps where the Greeks had stayed for the 10 years of the war, and they see the huge wooden horse.

Of course, the Trojans are very happy because they believe that the long war is over and that they have been victorious. They think that the Greeks have sailed away for their homes, leaving behind the Trojan Horse as an offering to the gods.

Making an offering to the gods is something that would be good for the Greeks to do, by the way. Before undertaking something important, the Greeks (and Trojans) would sacrifice to the gods (the Greeks and the Trojans believed in the same gods) to get them on their side. The ancient Greek and Roman gods do bad things to humans who have displeased them, and not sacrificing to the gods before undertaking something important is not wise for human beings to do. After winning the Trojan War, Menelaus did not sacrifice to the gods before he left to sail back to Greece. The gods blew him off course, he and Helen (with whom he had been reunited) stayed in Egypt for a number of years, and he was the last Greek (except for Ulysses) to return home to Greece.

• What is the caution that Laocoön gives the Trojans?

Not everyone lacks suspicion about the Trojan Horse. Laocoön, a priest of the sea-god Neptune (whose Greek name is Poseidon), is suspicious of the horse.

Robert Fitzgerald translates perhaps the most famous words of the *Aeneid* — which are spoken by Laocoön — in this way:

“[...] Have no faith in the horse!

Whatever it is, even when the Greeks bring gifts,
I fear them, gifts and all.” (2.68-70 Fitzgerald)

• **What example of double motivation do we see when the Trojans do not recognize that the huge wooden horse is hollow?**

Double motivation is a term that is often used in Homeric and Virgilian studies. It refers in part to the impact that the gods have on human beings. In Book 4 of the *Iliad*, Athena convinces Pandarus to attempt to assassinate Menelaus although it means violating the truce. Two motivations are at work here. The realistic motivation is that the war will be over and the Trojans will be triumphant if Pandarus assassinates Menelaus. The divine motivation is that Athena tempts Pandarus to attempt to assassinate Menelaus.

In ancient Greece, the gods and goddesses were thought of in part as doing the work that we assign to psychological impulses today. Aphrodite is the goddess of sexual passion. When a heterosexual man sees a beautiful naked woman, the man will be sexually aroused. The ancient Greeks would say that Venus caused that sexual arousal.

We moderns might say that the sight of a beautiful naked woman is enough in itself to cause the sexual arousal, but the ancient Greeks would say that there is an additional motivation in the fact of the goddess causing sexual arousal in the man.

This is double motivation. A realistic motivation exists for something to occur, but a god or the gods or fate also decrees that something will occur. We moderns might say that Troy fell because of the superior numbers of warriors fighting against it, but the ancient Greeks would say that in addition fate decreed that Troy would fall.

In double motivation, motivation exists on two levels: the god level and the human level.

We should keep in mind, of course, that the gods and goddesses are more than mere psychological impulses. They also take direct part in the action. For example, in Book 1 of the *Iliad*, Athena is sent by Hera to go to Achilles and tell him not to kill Agamemnon. And in Book 3 of the *Iliad*, Aphrodite saves Paris from being slaughtered by Menelaus.

In Book 2 of the *Aeneid*, we see double motivation. Laocoön throws his spear against the side of the Trojan Horse. From the sound that the spear makes when it hits the horse, it is obvious that the horse is hollow. However, the Trojans ignore this.

Laocoön was correct. The Trojans should fear the Greeks, even when the Greeks appear to be leaving them a gift such as the Trojan Horse.

Aeneas then points out why the Trojans ignored Laocoön’s warning. In Robert Fitzgerald’s translation, Aeneas says,

“If the gods’ will had not been sinister,
If our own minds had not been crazed
He would have made us foul that Argive den
With bloody steel, and Troy would stand today —

O citadel of Priam, towering still!" (2.76-80 Fitzgerald)

Here we have double motivation. The Trojans' minds were "crazed" (2.77), and "the gods' will" was "sinister" (2.76). The Trojans were so happy to believe that the Greeks had sailed away and the Trojans had won the war that they believed that the Trojan Horse was not dangerous. In addition, the gods were set on destroying Troy and so they helped the Trojans to believe that the Trojans had won the war.

Virgil's Latin says,

Et, si fata deum, si mens non laeva fuisset,

impulerat ferro Argolicas foedare letebras,

Trojaque nunc staret, Priamique arx alta maneres. (2.54-56 Pharr)

"*Fata deum*" means the fate of the gods. "*Mens*" means the "mind" of the Trojans. The adjective *laeva* modifies both *fata* and *mens*. "*Laeva*" means "opposed" or "against." Because the same word is applied to the fate of the gods and to the mind of men, we can see that the two are very closely related. Neither the fate of the gods nor the mind of the Trojans would allow the Trojans to discover the treachery of the Trojan Horse.

On the human level, we have adequate reason to understand why the Trojans did not discover the treachery of the Trojan Horse; however, the gods also kept them from discovering the truth of the Trojan Horse. That the Trojans did not discover the treachery of the Trojan Horse is doubly motivated both by the gods and by the Trojans' own actions and failings.

• What lies does Sinon tell when he is captured?

Sinon, a Greek, is captured while the Trojans are debating what to do about the Trojan Horse.

Sinon is a Greek who has been deliberately left behind to lie to the Trojans and convince them to take the Trojan Horse inside the city of Troy. Of course, to the Trojans he is treacherous (and Dante will put Sinon among the liars in the Inferno in his *Divine Comedy*), but we have to realize that what Sinon does takes a lot of courage.

Sinon asks the Trojans for mercy. He tells the Trojans a story that is designed to convince the Trojans to bring the Trojan Horse inside the city of Troy. His story is an example of good rhetoric. His story is very persuasive.

Lie: Ulysses Hates Sinon

One of the first things that Sinon does is to say that Ulysses hated him. Because the Trojans also hate Ulysses, this statement is designed to get the Trojans to support Sinon. If Ulysses wants Sinon dead, the Trojans would want Sinon to stay alive because they would not want to do anything that Ulysses would approve of.

Sinon mentions a man named Palamedes, who opposed the Trojan War. Because of this, the Greeks executed him. (By the way, Palamedes is not mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*.) Sinon was a friend of Palamedes, and because of that, he says that Ulysses kept persecuting him. Eventually, Ulysses was able to convince a prophet, Calchas, to name Sinon as the person to be sacrificed to the gods before the Greeks started their voyage back home to Greece. At the beginning of the

Trojan War, Agamemnon, the leader of the Greeks, had sacrificed Iphigenia, his own daughter, to the gods so that he would have fair winds that would take the Greek ships to Troy. Therefore, it is symmetrical that the Greeks also sacrifice a human being before they set sail to return to Greece.

Lie: The Greeks Have Returned to Greece to Sacrifice to Minerva

One of the exploits of Ulysses and Diomedes during the Trojan War was to steal the Palladium, a statue of the goddess Minerva, out of Troy. This, Sinon says, angered Minerva. Because it is never a good idea to have a god or a goddess angry at you, the Greeks returned home to sacrifice to Minerva. If they could appease Minerva and get her back on their side, they would return to Troy.

Lie: The Trojan Horse is a Gift to Minerva

Sinon also says that the Trojan Horse is a gift to Minerva. The Greeks had stolen the Palladium (a statue of Minerva) out of Troy, and they built the Trojan Horse as an offering to make up for their offense against Minerva.

Lie: If the Trojans Take the Trojan Horse Inside Their City, Troy will Never Fall

Of course, the Trojan Horse is very large. Sinon says that the horse was made so large so that the Trojans could not take it into Troy. If the Trojans were to take the horse inside the city, then Troy would never fall.

Conclusion

Of course, these lies are very persuasive, and they are designed to convince the Trojans to take the horse inside their city. The Trojans don't want their city to fall, and if taking the Trojan Horse inside the walls of their city means that Troy will never be conquered, then they are very happy to take the Trojan Horse inside the walls of their city.

• Are Sinon's lies persuasive? How do the Trojans react to his lies? What does this tell us about the Trojans?

Sinon's lies are definitely persuasive. Sinon is a very good and persuasive liar, and the Trojans believe his lies. Sinon has designed his lies to be persuasive. He uses good rhetoric.

In addition, of course, the Trojans are good people. In the *Aeneid*, they are the good guys. (Actually, in Homer's *Iliad*, many of the Trojans are difficult to hate. They are not cardboard caricatures of bad guys who are easy to hate. Hector, the crown prince of Troy, loved his wife and son, and it is easy to relate to and to care for him.)

Because the Trojans are good people, they listen to Sinon, and they believe him. If they had been different kinds of people, they would have immediately put Sinon to death, not even allowing him to speak and to tell them lies.

King Priam is very likeable in Homer's *Iliad*, and he is very likeable in Virgil's *Aeneid*. He gives mercy to Sinon, and he tells him that he can stay in Troy and not worry about being killed.

• **What causes the downfall of the Trojans?**

The Trojans err on the side of mercy, and they pay for it. The Trojans have all sorts of good qualities: they are kind, they are compassionate, they are merciful, and they are trusting. They are decent human beings.

The Trojans have the good qualities that the Romans saw themselves as having. The Romans identified with the Trojans much more than they did with the Greeks. Of course, the Romans saw Aeneas and the other Trojans whom Aeneas brought to Italy from Troy as being their ancestors. Therefore, the Greeks in the Trojan War are the bad guys, according to the Romans.

In addition, the Romans mistrusted the Greeks, who were too slick with their words, according to the Romans. The Greeks studied rhetoric and public speaking from the Sophists. One of the things people do in debate classes is to learn to argue either side of an issue. A good exercise is to write a paper or make a speech for something, and then to write a paper or make a speech against the same thing you just argued for. Sophists did this, for example, by arguing that Helen was innocent and did not run away willingly with Paris, and then the next day arguing that Helen was guilty and did run away willingly with Paris. This may be a good way to learn rhetoric and argumentation, but people can misuse what they learn and make the weaker side appear to be the stronger. An unethical person (including politicians) can use a knowledge of rhetoric to mislead and manipulate people. Sinon does that here. He uses rhetoric to persuade the Trojans to take the Trojan Horse inside Troy. This will lead to the fall of Troy.

Unfortunately, because of the Trojans' good qualities, Sinon is able to deceive them.

• **What happens to Laocoön and his two sons?**

Laocoön and his two sons are killed by sea-snakes. The sea-snakes swim out of the ocean while Laocoön is sacrificing to Neptune. The sea-snakes kill the two sons, and they kill Laocoön as he tries to save his sons' lives.

This scene is the subject of some famous art. If you Google "Laocoon" images, several paintings of this scene will appear.

In 1506, a famous sculpture of this scene was discovered. The sculpture, which was missing Laocoön's right arm, is now in the Belvedere Garden at the Vatican. Michelangelo suggested that Laocoön's right arm should be bent over his back, while other sculptors suggested that the arm should be outstretched. Pope Julius II ordered that a replacement arm — outstretched — be added to the sculpture.

In 1957, Laocoön's right arm was discovered, and we now know that Michelangelo's suggestion was correct.

After killing Laocoön and his two sons, the two sea-snakes go into Minerva's temple.

• **How do the Trojans interpret the omen of what happens to Laocoön and his two sons? What is the real interpretation of the omen?**

Such things as what happened to Laocoön and his two sons are omens sent by the gods. One problem with omens, unfortunately, is that interpreting them correctly can be difficult. In fact, the Trojans misinterpret this omen.

Laocoön had argued that the Trojan Horse was a trick of the Greeks. The gods send sea-snakes to kill Laocoön and his two sons, and so the Trojans conclude that Laocoön is being punished for believing that the Trojan Horse is a trick. This is true.

They also conclude, however, that the Trojan Horse is not a trick. Here they misinterpret the omen. Very definitely, the Trojan Horse is a trick.

The correct interpretation of the omen is that the gods who sent the two sea-snakes want Troy to fall to the Greeks. This is not how the Trojans interpret the omen.

Here we have more double motivation. Sinon's lies are enough motivation for the Trojans to take the Trojan Horse into the city, but the omen and their misinterpretation of that omen is additional motivation for the Trojans to take the Trojan Horse inside the city.

• **What do the Trojans do with the huge wooden horse?**

In fact, the Trojans take the Trojan Horse inside the walls of Troy.

Because the Trojan Horse is so big, the Trojans have to tear down part of their walls by the gates so that they can take the horse inside the city.

This, of course, makes it easier for the Greeks to conquer Troy. The Trojans have torn down part of their own fortifications.

• **What do the Achaeans do at night?**

At night, Sinon goes to the Trojan Horse, opens it up, and releases the Greek warriors from inside the Trojan Horse.

The Greek warriors then make their way to the gates of Troy, kill the Trojan guards, and open the gates.

Meanwhile, Agamemnon has led the other Greek warriors back from Tenedos. They are waiting outside the Trojan gates. Agamemnon and the other Greek warriors enter Troy and sack the city.

• **What advice does the ghost of Hector give to Aeneas?**

Like most of the Trojans, Aeneas is asleep. While he is asleep, the ghost of Hector, the foremost Trojan warrior (who was killed by Achilles, the foremost Greek warrior, in the *Iliad*) appears to him and tells him that Troy is being sacked and that it is doomed. Because it is doomed, fighting will not help, and Hector advises Aeneas to flee from Troy, taking with him his family and his household gods.

The household gods are the Penates. They are actually Roman household gods, but Virgil backdates them here and makes them the household gods of Troy.

Modern Jews, Christians, and Muslims would call the Penates idols.

• **What are the Penates (the Roman household gods)?**

The Penates are Roman household gods. They are idols that the Romans would have a shrine for and venerate in their houses.

Of course, the Penates are Roman household gods, but Virgil has Aeneas carry the Penates out of Troy and to Italy as a way of establishing that the Trojans are ancestors of the Roman people. If the Penates originally came from Troy, then Aeneas must be an ancestor of the Roman people.

The proem of the *Aeneid* speaks of the hardships that Aeneas would face (Robert Fitzgerald's translation):

Till he could found a city and bring home

His gods to Latium, land of the Latin race, (1.10-11 Fitzgerald)

The “gods” mentioned at 1.11 refer to the Penates, the household gods mentioned by Hector in Aeneas’ dream.

• **What does Aeneas do instead of following Hector’s advice?**

Hector has advised Aeneas to flee the city, but Aeneas decides to fight instead. He is a brave warrior, and his first impulse is to fight. He climbs to his roof to see what is going on, sees Troy in chaos, under attack, and he decides to fight.

Aeneas and some other Trojan warriors whom he meets do fight for a while, and they have some success. They are able to kill several Greek warriors, but they lose warriors of their own. In addition, they are unable to stop the Fall of Troy.

In this part of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas describes what he saw when he was fighting. His description is a realistic description of what would happen during the fall of an ancient city.

• **What happens when the Trojans put on the armor of the enemy Greeks?**

Aeneas and the Trojans with him have success at first. In the confusion of the sacking of Troy, they are able to kill some Greek warriors.

The Trojans decide to put on the Greeks’ armor. That way, when they meet Greek warriors, the Greeks will look at their armor and think at first that they are fellow Greek warriors. This works at first, but it eventually backfires.

Unfortunately, other Trojan warriors look at the Greek armor and think that Aeneas and the other Trojans wearing Greek armor are actually Greeks, and they fight them. This is an ancient example of friendly fire. Aeneas says about two Trojans:

“Hypanis, Dymas die as well,

run through by their own men — ” (2.534-535 Fagles)

Something similar happened in World War II. Andy Rooney writes about American soldiers who killed some Germans, then used the German machine guns against the Germans. Other American soldiers heard the sound of the German machine guns coming from some woods (the sound of the German machine guns was different from the sound of the American machine guns), thought that Germans were in those woods, then trained artillery on that area until the sound of the German machine guns could no longer be heard — because the American soldiers who had been shooting the guns were all dead. (Experienced soldiers know not to do what those American soldiers did.)

• What happens to Cassandra?

Aeneas sees Cassandra, the virgin daughter of King Priam. She is being dragged from the temple of Minerva, with her hands in chains. Because she can't raise her hands to Heaven, she raises her eyes to Heaven.

In the ancient world, women taken captive in the capture of a city would become slaves. If they were young and desirable, they would become sex-slaves.

From other sources (and earlier in the *Aeneid*), we learn that Cassandra was raped by Little Ajax in the temple of Minerva. (Great Ajax is dead, having killed himself after suffering a period of insanity due to anger at Ulysses, who was awarded the armor of Achilles after Achilles died.)

Rape is an outrage in itself. The rape of a virgin is even more outrageous. Being raped in the temple of a goddess who is herself virgin is more outrageous yet. Anyone who is in a temple or at the altar of a god is under the protection of that god, according to the ancient Greeks.

Because of this and other outrages that occurred during the Sack of Troy, Minerva and the other gods and goddesses became angry at the Greeks, and many of the Greeks either died while returning home or were late in returning home.

Cassandra, by the way, is a prophetess, but she is cursed because no one believes her prophecies until they come true. (Apollo gave her the gift of prophecy after she promised to sleep with him, but because she then declined to sleep with him, he cursed her by making it so that no one would believe her prophecies until they come true.) She becomes Agamemnon's slave and is taken by him back to his homeland: Mycenae. There, Cassandra prophesies that she and Agamemnon will be slaughtered by Clytemnestra (Agamemnon's wife) and her lover. No one believes or understands her, and yes, she and Agamemnon are slaughtered by Clytemnestra and her lover,

• How does King Priam die?

King Priam is also killed during the Fall of Troy. Aeneas has made his way to King Priam's palace and made his way inside through a secret passageway. He witnesses the death of King Priam.

King Priam is an aged man; his son Hector was the general of the Trojan forces during the Trojan War until he was killed. However, now King Priam puts on armor.

His wife, the aged Hecuba, begs him to stay with her at the altar, where they will be under the protection of the god. Of course, she is aware that the Greeks may not respect the god, but if that happens, she hopes that King Priam and she will be killed together.

Achilles' son, here called Pyrrhus, has made his way to the Trojan War. He chases down Polites, a young son of Priam, and kills him in front of King Priam. Although King Priam is old and weak, he is outraged, and he throws a spear at Pyrrhus, which barely grazes his shield. Pyrrhus then kills King Priam at the altar.

The sight of the aged King Priam being killed reminds Aeneas of his own aged father.

• **What happens when Aeneas sees Helen of Troy?**

Aeneas sees Helen of Troy in the shadows. Enraged at the Fall of Troy, he considers killing her. However, his mother, the immortal goddess Venus, stops him from doing that.

Helen's character is ambiguous in antiquity. The ancients argued about whether Helen was guilty of voluntarily running away with the Trojan prince Paris or whether Paris kidnapped her.

In Aristophanes' comic play *Lysistrata*, we are told that Menelaus saw Helen during the Fall of Troy and considered killing her, but she bared her breasts to him, and overcome by her beauty, Menelaus allowed her to live.

In Book 4 of Homer's epic poem the *Odyssey*, Helen controls Menelaus by drugging him with heart's-ease, a drug she learned about in Egypt. A man who is drugged with heart's-ease will feel no sorrow — not even if all his family is slaughtered in front of him.

• **What vision does Venus give to Aeneas?**

Venus saves Helen's life, and she also gives advice to Aeneas. Her advice, which is good, is for Aeneas to rescue his family. He needs to go home and lead his family to safety.

Venus tells Aeneas that the Fall of Troy is the will of the gods.

Venus gives Aeneas special sight: He is able to see the gods as they destroy Troy. (In Book 5 of the *Iliad*, Venus gave Diomedes special sight: He was able to recognize the gods on the battlefield before Troy.) In Robert Fagles' translation, Venus tells Aeneas,

“Look around. I'll sweep it all away, the mist
so murky, dark, and swirling around you now,
it clouds your vision, dulls your mortal sight.” (2.748-750 Fagles)

Aeneas sees Neptune tearing up “the foundation-stones of Troy” (2.756 Fagles). Juno, Minerva, and even Jupiter are on the side of the Greeks.

Seeing the gods destroying Troy convinces Aeneas that his city is doomed. The best thing for him to do is to try to save his family.

Note that Aeneas is not to blame for fleeing Troy. He has fought bravely, he has killed many Greeks, and no one will blame him for leaving Troy when the gods and goddesses are set on destroying the city.

• **What happens when Aeneas tries to persuade his father (Anchises) to leave Troy?**

Aeneas returns to his home to try to save his family.

Unfortunately, his father, Anchises, is a stubborn old man. He refuses to leave Troy, saying that he is too old to leave the city and travel elsewhere. Indeed, he is old, and when he finally agrees to leave Troy, Aeneas must carry him on his back.

Aeneas is aware of his duty, which is to protect his father. If Anchises will not leave Troy, Aeneas will stay in Troy and go down fighting the Greeks as he tries to keep them from harming his father. This is an example of the *pietas* (PEE-a-tahs) for which Aeneas is renowned.

Pietas can be difficult to translate. In his edition of the first six books of the *Aeneid*, Clyde Pharr translates it as “loyalty, devotion, sense of duty” (16). Aeneas is *insignem pietate virum* (1.10 Pharr) — a man noted for his *pietas*.

Aeneas’ wife, Creusa, does not want him to fight, but since his father will not agree to leave Troy, Aeneas is determined to keep on fighting.

• **What makes Anchises decide to leave Troy?**

An omen convinces Anchises to leave Troy. Non-burning fire envelopes young Iulus’ head like a crown.

Anchises interprets the omen as promising great things for his descendants: Both Aeneas and Iulus will be crowned as kings.

Anchises now agrees to leave Troy, and Aeneas carries Anchises on his shoulders and leads Iulus by the hand as they try to escape from Troy. Anchises carries the household gods, and Aeneas’ wife, Creusa, follows the group at a distance.

• **Analyze the image of Aeneas leaving Troy with his father on his back, his son at his side, and his wife following at a distance.**

Aeneas is a good leader. He is not afraid to die himself, but he does worry about the safety of his family. That is a quality of a good leader. In Robert Fitzgerald’s translation:

“[...] Through shadowed places
On we went, and I, lately unmoved
By any spears thrown, any squads of Greeks,
Felt terror now at every eddy of wind,
Alarm at every sound, alert and worried
Alike for my companion and my companion.” (2.942-947 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas carries his father on his back, and he leads his son by the hand. His father carries the household gods, and his wife follows at a distance.

This scene is the subject of some famous art. If you Google “Aeneas” images, several paintings and sculptures of Aeneas’ flight from Troy will appear.

In this scene, we have symbols. According to the 6th edition of *A Handbook to Literature*, by C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon,

A symbol is something that is itself and also stands for something else; as the letters *a p p l e* form a word that stands for a particular objective reality; or as a flag is a piece of colored cloth that stands for a country. All language is symbolic in this sense, and many of the objects that we use in daily life are also. (466)

In this scene, we can say that some of the people are symbols:

Iūlus

Iūlus is a symbol of the future.

Anchises

Anchises is a symbol of the past that we can take with us. Aeneas successfully carries Anchises out of Troy. Aeneas can take the traditions of Troy with him. He can take the household gods with him.

Creusa

Creusa is a symbol of the past that we cannot take with us. Creusa dies during the Fall of Troy. Aeneas cannot take his home with him; he has to leave it behind, as symbolized by Creusa.

When Aeneas carries Anchises on his back and leads Iūlus by the hand, he is carrying the past and leading the future.

It is odd that Aeneas tells Creusa to, in Robert Fagles' translation, "follow me at a distance" (2.885). One would think that Aeneas would want Creusa to stay close to him.

Creusa must die, by the way, because Aeneas must be free to marry when he finally reaches Italy. Aeneas and his Italian wife will become important ancestors of the Roman people.

• **What happens to Creusa in Book 2? What does Aeneas do in response?**

Creusa dies during the Fall of Troy. Aeneas hears a noise that may be caused by enemy warriors, so he takes off running. When he gets out of Troy, his wife is not with him, so he leaves his father and his son outside Troy, and he goes into Troy to try to find his wife.

The ghost of Creusa appears before him. She tells Aeneas that she is dead, and she lets Aeneas know that he has a destiny: to find a new homeland and marry a queen.

• **At the end of Book 2, what do the Trojan refugees do?**

Other survivors have made their way out of Troy. Aeneas is a high-ranking Trojan warrior, so he becomes their leader. He leads them out of the valley they had gathered in and to the mountains. They need to get away from Troy. If the Greeks were to see them in the morning, they would kill them or make them slaves.

The Trojan War has come to an end after 10 years. The Greeks are triumphant. The Trojans are defeated. To the Greeks, the Fall of Troy is a magnificent accomplishment. To the Trojans, it is a disaster. The Trojans have lost their city, and many, many Trojans, including women such as Creusa and old men such as King Priam, have died during the Fall of Troy.

• **Write a short character analysis of Aeneas based on what you learn from Book 2.**

Aeneas' story shows that he follows *pietas*. He has a duty to his city and to his family, and he has done his best to do his duty. He fought bravely until it became clear to him that the gods had doomed Troy to fall. He then did his best to lead his family to safety. When he discovered that his wife had not made it out of Troy, he bravely went back into Troy to try to find her. She died, but Aeneas did his best to get her to safety.

- **What would Dido think when she hears his story?**

Of course, Aeneas is telling his story to Dido, Queen of Carthage, and we need to think about what Dido would think as she hears this story.

Also, we need to remember something from Book 1. Venus' son, Cupid, is making Dido fall in love with Aeneas. This is double motivation, of course. Dido would like to have a husband to help her build and rule Carthage, and Aeneas' story shows that he is perfect husband material. This is enough motivation for her to be interested in Aeneas, but Venus' son, Cupid, provides additional motivation for her to be interested in Aeneas.

As Dido hears Aeneas' story, she will think that Aeneas is perfect husband material.

***Aeneid*, Book 3: Sea Wanderings and Strange Meetings / Landfalls, Ports of Call**

- **Is it true that the *Aeneid* alternates books of high emotional intensity and books of low emotional intensity?**

We can notice that Virgil varies the emotional intensity of the books in the *Aeneid*. For example, Books 2, 4, and, 6 are of high emotional intensity, whereas Books 1, 3, and 5 are of much lower emotional intensity. Book 2 describes the fall of Troy, Book 4 describes the suffering and suicide of Dido, and Book 6 recounts Aeneas' visit to the Land of the Dead, where he will see all his future descendants.

This is a good idea on Virgil's part. After the audience experiences a period of high emotional intensity, it is a good idea to give the audience a break. Other truly great authors do this. For example, in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the horrific scene in which Macbeth murders King Duncan is followed by the comic scene with the Porter.

- **In whose voice are Books 2-3 told?**

Books 2-3 are told by Aeneas; he tells Books 2-3 in his own voice. He is explaining to Dido his personal history. This is similar to Odysseus in the *Odyssey* telling his story to the Phaeacians in the section of the *Odyssey* known as the Great Wanderings.

- **What is the most important point of Book 3?**

The most important point of Book 3 is that Aeneas learns that he must go to Italy — that is where his destiny lies. In Book 3, we see a number of false starts. Aeneas tries to found a city, but it doesn't work out because his destiny lies elsewhere — in Italy. This is clearly shown in Book 3; however, Dido will hope that Aeneas will stay with her in Carthage, although his destiny lies elsewhere.

- **What happens at the beginning of Book 3?**

Following the fall of Troy, the surviving Trojans meet as refugees and become followers of Aeneas. They build ships, and at the beginning of summer they set sail. Anchises, Aeneas' father, gives the order to set sail.

Note that Anchises is making the decisions. Aeneas is observing *pietas* by obeying the orders of his father.

- **Who is Polydorus, and what happens when Aeneas and the Trojans run across him?**

An eerie scene occurs when Aeneas attempts to found a city named Aenus, after himself. He tears a branch from a bush, and the bush drips blood.

It turns out that Polydorus, a Trojan prince, was assassinated here. His father, King Priam, either knew or suspected that Troy would fall, and not wanting his line to die out, he sent one of his sons and some of his treasure to Thrace. The King of Thrace wanted the treasure and so he had Polydorus assassinated. His assassins killed Polydorus with wooden spears, and the spears took root in the soil. The blood that comes from the bush is the blood of Polydorus.

This scene is echoed in Dante's *Inferno*. In the Wood of the Suicides, Dante the Pilgrim tears a branch from a bush, and the bush drips blood.

Of course, this is a bad omen, and Aeneas and his men will not stay here to found a city. In fact, Polydorus himself tells them to leave.

Aeneas gives Polydorus a decent burial, thus showing *pietas*, and then they leave.

• **What do Aeneas and the Trojans learn at Delos? Which prophecy does Apollo make?**

Because Aeneas and the Trojans are pious, they consult an oracle at Delos, an island sacred to Apollo, who according to myth was born there. Pilgrims can ask questions of the oracle. Apollo will answer those questions. (An oracle is a prophet or prophetess.)

At Delos, Aeneas and the Trojans learn that they must seek the land of their ancestors, a land where Aeneas' descendants will rule for a long time.

This is Apollo's prophecy:

“Tough sons of Dardanus, the self-same land
That bore you from your primal parent stock
Will take you to her fertile breast again.
Look for your mother of old. Aeneas' house
In her will rule the world's shores down the years,
Through generations of his children's children.” (3.130-135 Fitzgerald)

Dardanus and Teucrus (aka Teucer) are the two main ancestors of the Trojans. Dardanus was born in Italy, and he married a daughter of Teucrus, who came from Crete. The Trojans believe that their new home will be in Crete.

• **How does Anchises misinterpret the prophecy? What happens when the Trojans do what Anchises advises them to do?**

Anchises misinterprets the prophecy, which he believes refers to Crete, the island from which the earliest Trojan settlers came.

The Trojans attempt to found a city named New Troy on Crete, but things go badly for them. A plague strikes, and crops don't grow well:

a plague struck now, a heartrending scourge
attacking our bodies, rotting trees and crops,
one whole year of death ...
Men surrendered their sweet lives
or dragged their decrepit bodies on and on.
And the Dog Star scorched the green fields barren,
the grasses shriveled, blighted crops refused us food. (3.169-175 Fagles)

• **How does Aeneas learn what the Trojans must do?**

The ancient Greeks and Romans believed that the gods sent such things as plagues. If a god sends a plague against the Trojans, then the Trojans must be doing something wrong. The thing that they are doing wrong, of course, is settling on Crete, rather than on Italy, where their true destiny lies.

Fortunately, other gods, the Penates, which are the Trojan household gods, let Aeneas know in a dream what he must do. The Trojans had planned to sail back to Delos to consult the oracle of Apollo, but Apollo himself sends the Penates to Aeneas to give him the information he needs:

‘What from the Delian god thou go’st to find,
 He tells thee here, and sends us to relate.
 Those pow’rs are we, companions of thy fate,
 Who from the burning town by thee were brought,
 Thy fortune follow’d, and thy safety wrought.
 Thro’ seas and lands as we thy steps attend,
 So shall our care thy glorious race befriend.
 An ample realm for thee thy fates ordain,
 A town that o’er the conquer’d world shall reign.
 Thou, mighty walls for mighty nations build;
 Nor let thy weary mind to labors yield:
 But change thy seat; for not the Delian god,
 Nor we, have giv’n thee Crete for our abode.
 A land there is, Hesperia call’d of old,
 (The soil is fruitful, and the natives bold —
 Th’ Oenotrians held it once,) by later fame
 Now call’d Italia, from the leader’s name.
 Iasius there and Dardanus were born;
 From thence we came, and thither must return.
 Rise, and thy sire with these glad tidings greet.
 Search Italy; for Jove denies thee Crete.’ (John Dryden)

The Penates remind Aeneas that his ancestor Dardanus and Iasius, his brother, were born in Italy. Now Aeneas knows that he and his followers must sail to Italy.

• **What are the Penates, and is it reasonable that they don't take much part in the action of the *Aeneid*?**

The Penates and the Lares are protective spirits:

The Penates: protective spirits of the pantry. (A pantry is a small room that is used for storing food.)

The Lares: protective spirits of the household.

When Troy fell, Aeneas carried his father on his back and led his son by the hand as they fled Troy. Creusa followed at a distance, but she got separated from her family and died. Aeneas' father was carrying the household gods — the Penates. These are the household gods that appear to Aeneas now in a dream and give him good advice — sail to Italy and found your city there.

This is the only time that the Penates play a direct role in the *Aeneid*. Usually, the Penates are simply talked about or mentioned in the *Aeneid*. For example, in the Proem, we learn that Aeneas carried his household gods from Troy to Italy.

It is unusual that the Penates would play a direct role in the *Aeneid*. Some gods are anthropomorphized — that is, they are like human beings. Jupiter, Juno, and Venus all play direct roles in the *Aeneid*. They are like human beings. They walk, they talk, they feel emotions.

The Penates and the Lares were household gods. They were protecting spirits of the pantry and the household. Families would have a shrine to these gods. Families would give offerings to these gods (for example, when the family ate a meal, they would throw a little food into a fire as an offering to these gods), hoping to keep them favorable to the family. However, families would not expect these gods to appear before them.

• **Does Aeneas act like a leader?**

Who is the leader of the Trojans? Aeneas is, but he defers often to his father, Anchises, who is often wrong. We should note that the household gods appear to Aeneas. This is an indication that Aeneas is the leader of the Trojans. However, as a mark of his duty to his father, he defers often to the judgment of his father.

• **What happens when Aeneas recounts his dream to Anchises?**

Anchises remembers something important when Aeneas tells him about the appearance of the Penates in a dream. He remembers that Cassandra had prophesied that they would go to Italy:

He found his error of the double race;
 Not, as before he deem'd, deriv'd from Crete;
 No more deluded by the doubtful seat:
 Then said: 'O son, turmoil'd in Trojan fate!
 Such things as these Cassandra did relate.
 This day revives within my mind what she
 Foretold of Troy renew'd in Italy,

And Latian lands; but who could then have thought
That Phrygian gods to Latium should be brought,
Or who believ'd what mad Cassandra taught?

Now let us go where Phoebus leads the way.' (John Dryden)

It is not unusual for Anchises to suddenly remember this now. Cassandra was cursed. She wanted the gift of prophecy, and she promised to sleep with the god Apollo if he made her a prophet, but after he gave her that gift, she reneged on her promise and did not sleep with him.

Therefore, Apollo cursed her. Yes, she was a prophetess and knew the future, but no one would ever believe her when she was making the prophecies. They would realize that she was right only much, much later.

The “double race” refers to Dardanus and Teucrus, the two main ancestors of the Trojans. Dardanus was born in Italy, and he married a daughter of Teucrus, who came from Crete. The Trojans now know that their new home will be in Italy.

The Trojans sometimes call themselves Dardanians or Teucrians after these ancestors.

Teucrus is sometimes known by the name Teucer.

Teucrus was the first king of Troy, and Dardanus was his successor.

• **Why didn't the Trojans follow Creusa's prophecy earlier (2.1014-1017 Fitzgerald)?**

Back in Book 2, Creusa had mentioned that Aeneas would go to Hesperia — the Western Land, another name for Italy. However, the Trojans do not do what Creusa said that they would do.

That the Trojans first go to Crete may be due to a number of reasons:

1. The *Aeneid* was not finished by the time Virgil died. This may be an inconsistency that Virgil would have corrected if he had lived.
2. Men were valued more highly than women, and fathers are valued more highly than wives. If Anchises says that Aeneas will go to Crete and Creusa says that Aeneas will go to Italy, then Aeneas will go to Crete.

These are Creusa's words:

“You shall make landfall on Hesperia
Where Lydian Tiber flows, with gentle peace,
Between rich farmlands, and the years will bear
Glad peace, a kingdom, and a queen for you.” (2.1014-1017 Fitzgerald)

• **What are the Harpies, and which prophecy does Celaeno (se-LEE-no) make when the Trojans land on the island of the Harpies?**

The Trojans set sail from Crete, heading for Italy, but they have many adventures and, as we know, sail to Carthage before reaching Italy.

The Trojans set sail on the island of the Harpies, which are half human-female, and half bird. The Trojans fix a meal twice, but the Harpies foul all the Trojans' food before they are able to eat it.

The Trojans try to attack the Harpies with their swords, but the swords have no effect on the Harpies. This means that the Trojans have to sail away in order to eat. Before they sail away, however, the main Harpy, Celaeno (se-LEE-no) makes a prophecy: Before the Trojans are able to found a city, hunger will drive them to eat their tables. This is certainly an ominous-sounding prophecy:

“Italy is the land you look for; well,
The winds will blow, you'll find your Italy,
You'll be allowed to enter port;
But you may never wall your destined city
Till deathly famine, for the bloodshed here,
Has made you grind your tables with your teeth!” (3.344-349 Fitzgerald)

• **Who is Andromache? What happened with her and her husband and child in Book 6 of Homer's *Iliad*?**

Note: The quotes in the answers to these questions are from Homer's *Iliad*, translation by Robert Fagles.

Andromache was the wife of Hector, the main defender of Troy. They had a son named Astyanax who died after the fall of Troy.

Obviously, they have a good marriage, as we discover when Hector returns to Troy to ask his mother to pray to Athena to help the Trojans in the battle, to get Paris to return to battle, and to see his family.

We know that Hector loves his family because he takes time to see them. Earlier in the *Iliad*, both his mother and Helen asked him to rest from the battle, but each time he says that he must return to the battle. (Hector says the same thing when his wife wants him to stay behind the walls of Troy.) That he takes time to see his family shows how much he loves them — Hector is a man of duty, and he will fight because he must, although he would rather have peace.

In the scene in which Hector visits his family, we see a contrast between Hector and Paris and in how their wives regard them. Helen has contempt for Paris, but Andromache loves Hector.

Hector wants to see his wife and baby son because he knows that he may die in battle:

“[...] I must go home to see my people first,
to visit my own dear wife and my baby son.
Who knows if I will ever come back to them again? —
or the deathless gods will strike me down at last

At the hands of Argive fighters.” (6.435-439 Fagles, *Iliad*)

We get to see Hector not just as a Trojan leader and a Trojan warrior, but also as a man who loves his wife and his child. We get to see exactly what Troy is giving up by allowing Paris to keep Helen. Because Paris and Helen want to have an adulterous relationship (or at least because Paris wants to sleep with Helen), Hector will die, Hector’s wife will become a sex slave, and Hector’s son will be thrown from the high walls of Troy.

Hector is the most sympathetic character in the *Iliad*. He is the character that male readers of the *Iliad* at least can most identify with.

Hector first goes to his home to see his wife and his child. They are not there, disappointing him, but he knows his duty, and he heads to the gate of Troy so that he can rejoin the fighting. There his wife sees him and comes running to him. Like other Trojan women, she has been worried about the fighting and has gone to the Trojan walls to watch the battle. She has been hoping to catch sight of Hector so that she knows he is still alive. Diomedes has been a war machine for the Achaeans, and Andromache is worried that he may have killed Hector. A servant tells Hector,

“Up to the huge gate-tower of Troy she’s gone
because she heard our men are so hard-pressed,
the Achaean fighters coming on in so much force.
She sped to the wall in panic, like a madwoman —

The nurse went with her, carrying your child.” (6.456-461 Fagles, *Iliad*)

The first thing we learn about Andromache is that she loves him. The first time we see Andromache, she is running to meet her husband:

There his warm, generous wife came running up to meet him, (6.466 Fagles, *Iliad*)

Andromache loves Hector. We see that when she runs up to meet him, after he has been disappointed in not seeing her at their house. We know also that she loves him when she tempts him to defend a wall of Troy — she knows that he will be safer if he stays behind the city’s walls.

Andromache is very worried about her husband, Hector. Hector is

[...] the lone defense of Troy. (6.478 Fagles, *Iliad*)

The nurse is behind Andromache and is carrying Hector’s young son. What Hector does now is very rare in the *Iliad*: He smiles:

The great man of war breaking into a broad smile,
his gaze fixed on his son. (6.479-480 Fagles, *Iliad*)

Smiles are rare in the *Iliad*. Andromache also smiles in this book — through her tears. Another smile occurs in Book 23, when Achilles — of all people — smiles.

Hector and his son have a wonderful scene. In addition to loving Andromache, Hector loves his son. At first, his son cries when he sees Hector wearing his helmet, but after Hector takes off his

helmet, the son is quiet. The son knows his father and loves his father, but he is afraid of the implements of war. This is as it should be — the son will die at the end of the Trojan War when the helmeted Achaeans throw him from the walls of Troy.

Hector's helmet would frighten a young child. Hector is often called "Hector of the glancing helmet" — this scene is why he is called that. Often, the epithets are important and carefully chosen by Homer. Later in the *Iliad*, we will see why Achilles is so often called "swift-footed Achilles," even when he is sitting down.

We also know that Hector loves Andromache because he fears what will happen to her after the war ends. Hector is afraid that Troy will fall, and that Andromache will become a slave woman to one of the Achaean kings. As we know, this in fact will happen. Hector says that he hopes to die before he can hear his wife's cries as she is taken off to become the slave of an enemy king. Of course, this is exactly what happens.

When Hector dies, Troy will fall. After Troy falls, Andromache will become a slave, and Hector's son will be thrown from the top of Troy's walls and killed.

This scene shows us what Agamemnon's speech (6.63-70 Fagles, *Iliad*) really means. Troy will fall, yes, but it means the death of Hector's son and the enslavement of Hector's wife. Even though Troy, because of Paris' action, is guilty, the fall of Troy will result in much misery. Agamemnon has said that he wants all male Trojans, even unborn male Trojans, to die. Hector's son will be thrown from the high towers of Troy.

The members of Homer's audience knows all of this. They know that Hector will die, that Troy will fall, that Andromache will become a slave, and that Astyanax will be murdered by the Achaeans. When Homer recited this scene to his audience, his audience had foreknowledge of what would happen. Hector has no foreknowledge of these things, but Homer's audience does.

• What has happened to Helenus and Andromache since the Trojan War?

The Trojans continue their voyage, and they arrive at Epirus, where are living Helenus and Andromache, two survivors of the Trojan War.

The Greeks took Helenus and Andromache captive after the fall of Troy, and both became the slaves of Pyrrhus (aka Neoptolemus), the son of Achilles. In Andromache's case, being a slave means being a sex slave. She gave birth to a child by Pyrrhus.

However, Pyrrhus wanted to marry the granddaughter of Leda, so he gave Andromache to Helenus. From Homer's *Odyssey*, we know that Pyrrhus wanted to marry Hermione, the daughter of Menelaus and Helen (who is the daughter of Leda and Jupiter). Here we learn that Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, also wanted to marry Hermione, and Orestes killed Pyrrhus.

After Pyrrhus died, Helenus received part of Pyrrhus' kingdom. Now Helenus and Andromache have built a city, which is a pale imitation of Troy.

Helenus is a prophet, and he prophecies for Aeneas.

Summary

Of course, Andromache's husband Hector died in the Trojan War, and after the Greeks conquered the Trojans, her and Hector's son Astyanax was thrown from the high walls of Troy and killed.

In Book 3 of the *Aeneid*, we get to find out what happened to Andromache after the Trojan War:

- 1) Achilles' son, Pyrrhus, took her as a slave woman and had a child with her.
- 2) Achilles' son, Pyrrhus, decided to chase after a woman named Hermione (Helen of Troy's daughter). Therefore, he married off Andromache to the slave named Helenus. Helenus is a Trojan, a son of Priam and Hecuba (and so Hector's brother), and a prophet. Pyrrhus married Hermione.
- 3) Achilles' son, Pyrrhus, was killed in turn by Orestes, who was jealous of Hermione (Helen of Troy's daughter) and who therefore murdered Pyrrhus. (Orestes was also maddened by the Furies when he killed Pyrrhus.) Orestes was already engaged to Hermione.
- 4) Part of Pyrrhus' kingdom passed to Helenus, and he made it into Little Troy.

• **Describe the city of Helenus and Andromache: Buthrotum.**

The city of Helenus and Andromache is called Buthrotum; it is like a little Troy.

Pretty clearly, Aeneas' destiny does not lie in Little Troy. Nothing mighty will come from Little Troy, which is only a pale shadow of the original mighty city of Troy.

At Little Troy, there is a brook, which they call the Simois, which is the name of a river in Troy. A tomb exists which is called Hector's tomb, but of course Hector's ashes are not in it. This empty tomb can be seen as a symbol of the emptiness of Little Troy. Little Troy, which is located in Greece, is a pale replica of the real thing.

Aeneas will not settle for second class; he moves on because his destiny is to found the real thing. Little Troy shows the danger of holding on to the past; Aeneas will let the past be the past; Aeneas will move on to the future.

Little Troy is reminiscent of the title of the *Little Iliad*, a part of the epic cycle. The next epic in the Epic Cycle after the *Aethiopis* was called the *Little Iliad*, which was four books long and told of the after-effects of Achilles' death and the Sack of Troy itself. One of the main episodes of the *Little Iliad* was the death of Great Ajax. After Achilles died, his mother, Thetis, wanted his magnificent armor that had been made by Hephaestus to go to one of the Greek champions. The Greeks voted, and Odysseus was awarded the armor — Great Ajax came in second in the voting. Because of the vote, Great Ajax went insane. He tortured and killed some sheep, thinking that they were Odysseus and Agamemnon. When he regained his senses, he was so overcome by shame that he committed suicide.

Of course, the author of the *Little Iliad* had a very difficult task. He had to follow Homer, who wrote the awe-inspiring *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Ancient authorities recognized that the *Little Iliad* does not match Homer's epics. Similarly, Little Troy does not match Troy. Also similarly, Aeneas is in the situation of trying to match or surpass something that was great. In Aeneas' case, he succeeds. Troy was great, but the Roman Empire was greater.

• What prophecy does Helenus make to the Trojans? What advice does Helenus give to the Trojans?

Helenus tells the Trojans that they will know the site of their new city when they find a white sow (pronounced ow with an s in front of it) nursing a litter of 30 piglets.

Helenus also tells the Trojans other things:

- Beware of the Greeks during your journey.
- Sail around Scylla and Charybdis.
- Pray to Juno.

This is good advice. Juno is angry at the Trojans, and she has been creating trouble for the Trojans, so it is a good idea to try to get on her good side.

Helenus also tells Aeneas that he must visit the Cumaean (Koo-MEYE-an) Sibyl when he arrives in Italy. The Cumaean Sibyl, who lives in a cave, is a priestess of Apollo, and she has the gift of prophecy. In addition, she will be Aeneas' guide when he visits the Land of the Dead in Book 6:

“Pay vows to Juno; Juno’s aid implore.
 Let gifts be to the mighty queen design’d,
 And mollify with pray’rs her haughty mind.
 Thus, at the length, your passage shall be free,
 And you shall safe descend on Italy.
 Arriv’d at Cumae, when you view the flood
 Of black Avernus, and the sounding wood,
 The mad prophetic Sibyl you shall find,
 Dark in a cave, and on a rock reclin’d.
 She sings the fates, and, in her frantic fits,
 The notes and names, inscrib’d, to leafs commits.
 What she commits to leafs, in order laid,
 Before the cavern’s entrance are display’d:
 Unmov’d they lie; but, if a blast of wind
 Without, or vapors issue from behind,
 The leafs are borne aloft in liquid air,
 And she resumes no more her museful care,
 Nor gathers from the rocks her scatter’d verse,

Nor sets in order what the winds disperse.
 Thus, many not succeeding, most upbraid
 The madness of the visionary maid,
 And with loud curses leave the mystic shade
 [...] Think it not loss of time a while to stay,
 Tho' thy companions chide thy long delay;
 Tho' summon'd to the seas, tho' pleasing gales
 Invite thy course, and stretch thy swelling sails:
 But beg the sacred priestess to relate
 With willing words, and not to write thy fate.
 The fierce Italian people she will show,
 And all thy wars, and all thy future woe,
 And what thou may'st avoid, and what must undergo.
 She shall direct thy course, instruct thy mind,
 And teach thee how the happy shores to find.
 This is what Heav'n allows me to relate:
 Now part in peace; pursue thy better fate,
 And raise, by strength of arms, the Trojan state. (John Dryden)

• **What do the Trojans see when they see Italy?**

The Trojans stop in Sicily, which is their last stop before Juno sends a storm that blows the ships to Carthage.

When the Trojans see Italy, they see four snow-white horses: an omen. This omen is both negative and positive:

Negative omen: Horses are used in war, so this is a negative omen.

Positive omen: However, horses are used in peace, so this is also a positive omen.

As it turns out, Aeneas will fight a war when he lands on Italy, but he will win the war. Peace will follow the war, and he will found a city.

Anchises interprets the omen:

Scarce landed, the first omens I beheld
 Were four white steeds that cropp'd the flow'ry field.
 'War, war is threaten'd from this foreign ground,'

My father cried, 'where warlike steeds are found.
 Yet, since reclaim'd to chariots they submit,
 And bend to stubborn yokes, and champ the bit,
 Peace may succeed to war.' (John Dryden)

• **What happens when the Trojans see Charybdis?**

Of course, to the Trojans (and their descendants the Romans), Ulysses (Odysseus) was an evil character. We remember that in the *Odyssey* Odysseus sailed between Scylla and Charybdis, and he lost several of his men to Scylla. In this book, the Trojans sail around Scylla and Charybdis; the Trojans lose no men. I have to wonder whether Virgil is trying to point out that the Trojans were smarter than Odysseus. (A football coach took his players to a field where a brick wall was located, then he ordered the players to go through the brick wall. The players who first reached the brick wall and crashed through became offensive linemen. The players who followed the offensive linemen became defensive linemen. The player who snuck around the fence became the quarterback.)

Aeneas and his men follow the advice given to them earlier by Helenus:

"Better to waste time,
 skirting Sicily then in a long arc rounding Cape Pachynus,
 than once set eyes in gruesome Scylla in her cave,
 her rocks booming with all her sea-green hounds." (3.505-508 Fagles, *Odyssey*)

• **What is the story of Ulysses (his Greek name is Odysseus) and the Cyclops which is told in the *Odyssey*?**

According to Virgil, Sicily is the land of the Cyclopes, a race of one-eyed giants. The Trojans stop there, as did Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is a hero who does his best to take care of his men. In the *Aeneid*, Ulysses (Odysseus' Roman name) is a bad guy who leaves one of his men — Achaemenides — behind as he and some of his men escape the Cyclops Polyphemus.

Notice that Aeneas and Ulysses are following a similar route. Ulysses visited Scylla and Charybdis; so do the Trojans. Ulysses visited the island of the Cyclopes; so do the Trojans.

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus and one ship filled with men visit the island of the Cyclopes. They visit the cave of Polyphemus, and they help themselves to the Cyclops' cheeses while he is not home. Polyphemus turns out to be a bad host who eats some of Odysseus' men. He also puts a huge boulder in front of the opening to the cave so that Odysseus and his men can't get out. Odysseus would like to kill Polyphemus, but he can't because he can't move the huge boulder. If he kills Polyphemus, he and his men will be trapped in the cave. They will die after they eat all the food in the cave.

Odysseus is able to fool Polyphemus, however. He tells the Cyclops that his name is Outis, a common ancient Greek name that is pronounced much like the ancient Greek word for Nobody.

He gets the Cyclops drunk, and he then puts out the Cyclops' one eye with a sharpened, red-hot stake.

Now that the Cyclops is blind, Odysseus and his men are able to leave the cave by tying themselves under the Cyclops' animals. (Polyphemus feels the tops of the animals in an attempt to make sure that Odysseus and his men do not escape.)

In the *Odyssey*, the episode with the Cyclops shows Odysseus at his most clever.

• **Who is Achaemenides (a-kee-MEN-i-deez) ? Why does he supplicate the Trojans?**

Achaemenides is a Greek who was left behind on the island of the Cyclopes by Ulysses three months previously. We know that it is three months because Achaemenides tells us that:

And now three moons their sharpen'd horns renew,
 Since thus, in woods and wilds, obscure from view,
 I drag my loathsome days with mortal fright,
 And in deserted caverns lodge by night; (John Dryden)

Achaemenides supplicates the Trojans for mercy. Achaemenides

[...] stumbled onward to the shore headlong
 With tears and prayers.
 'In heaven's name,' he said,
 'By all the powers, I beg you —
 Oh, by the light and air we breathe! Take me
 with you, Trojans! Anywhere at all
 Will be good enough for me. I am, I know it,
 One of the Danaans, one from the fleet;
 I won't deny I fought to take Troy's gods.
 For that, if so much harm came of our deviltry,
 Cut me to bits, scatter me on the water,
 Drop me in the sea. If I must die,
 Death at the hands of men will be a favor!'
 With this he took our knees and groveled, kneeling,
 Clinging there. (3.792-806 Fitzgerald)

• **What form did supplication take in the ancient world?**

Being a suppliant — begging for one's life or begging for help — takes on a standard form in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*:

- The suppliant takes one arm and puts it around the knees of the person he is supplicating. This keeps the warrior from moving.
- The suppliant uses his other hand to reach up and grab the warrior's chin or beard or weapon.
- The suppliant begs for mercy.

Why does supplication take this form?

- The suppliant is showing that he does not have a weapon. One hand is around the warrior's knees; the other hand is grabbing the warrior's chin or beard or weapon. The suppliant is not holding a weapon in either hand.
- The suppliant is making the warrior pay attention to the suppliant. One hand is around the warrior's knees, so the warrior can't move. The other hand is grabbing the warrior's chin or beard or weapon. The warrior has got to pay attention to the suppliant.
- The act of supplication shows that the suppliant is completely vulnerable. In addition to being unarmed, the suppliant's throat is exposed because he is looking up at the warrior.

In the act of supplication, the suppliant is completely vulnerable and submissive to the warrior.

• **What does the incident at the island of the Cyclopes tell us about the respective merits of the Achaeans and Ulysses (Odysseus), and the Trojans and Aeneas?**

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is a hero. In the *Aeneid*, Ulysses is a bad guy.

We see here a contrast between the cruel Ulysses and the merciful Trojans. In Book 2, we saw that the Trojans were merciful to Sinon the lying Greek, and they paid for it with the fall of Troy. Here, the Trojans are still merciful. They have reason to hate the Greeks, but they take pity on Achaemenides and allow him to board ship with them and thereby rescue him from the Cyclopes. Odysseus left him behind to be eaten by the Cyclopes or to starve to death.

• **How many people is Ulysses (Odysseus) able to lead home? How many people is Aeneas able to lead to their new home?**

One major distinction between Aeneas and Odysseus is in the number of people they are able to lead to their home — in Aeneas' case, to their new home. When Odysseus finally returns home to Ithaca after 20 years of absence, he returns alone. Odysseus left Ithaca with 12 ships, and not one ship returns home. In addition, out of all the men who left with Odysseus, not one returns home. Odysseus is the only Ithacan who makes it back alive. In contrast, Aeneas is able to reach Italy with many of his people. A few have died along the way, which is understandable (Anchises dies of old age), and a few have decided to settle elsewhere, which is understandable. Still, Aeneas brings many people with him to Italy to found a new city.

• **What happens when Anchises dies?**

Anchises dies on Sicily, and he is buried there.

We can look at this as being symbolic. We can't take all of the past with us. Creusa died at Troy. She represented the past that we can't take with us. Here with Anchises' death we see again that we can't take all of the past with us.

Some of the past can be taken with us. Aeneas succeeds in carrying his household gods out of Troy. We can take our traditions and customs and religion with us.

• **What does it mean to say that we have come full circle at the end of Book 3?**

Aeneas has finished telling his story to Dido, the Queen of Carthage. His story ends with him mentioning the storm that blew his ships to Carthage, where he met Queen Dido.

So we have come full circle to the beginning of the *Aeneid* again. The *Aeneid* began (after the proem) with the storm sent by Juno, and Aeneas' story (and Book 3) ends with that storm.

Like the epic poems of Homer, the *Aeneid* begins *in medias res*.

• **How would Aeneas' story affect Dido?**

Of course, we need to think about how Aeneas' story would affect Dido. Aeneas told his story in Books 2 and 3. Aeneas' going back into Troy in an attempt to find Creusa, his wife, must affect Dido positively. He is brave enough to risk his life in trying to save the life of his wife.

In addition, the Trojans' mercy shown to Achaemenides, the Greek left behind by Ulysses on the island of the Cyclopes, must affect Dido positively. Aeneas and the Trojans showed much mercy toward an enemy there.

In addition, Aeneas has faced and survived many dangers. This most likely has a positive effect on Dido. In Shakespeare's *Othello*, Act 1, scene 3, Othello says about Desdemona, "She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd [...]." Something similar is likely happening with Dido.

Book 4 makes clear that Dido loves Aeneas.

***Aeneid*, Book 4: The Passion of the Queen / The Tragic Queen of Carthage**

• What does the word “passion” mean?

Here are some definitions of “passion” from the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*:

1 often capitalized a : the sufferings of Christ between the night of the Last Supper and his death b : an oratorio based on a gospel narrative of the Passion

2 obsolete : suffering :

3 the state or capacity of being acted on by external agents or forces

4a (1) : emotion <his ruling passion is greed> (2) plural : the emotions as distinguished from reason b : intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction c : an outbreak of anger

5a: ardent affection : love b : a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept c : sexual desire d : an object of desire or deep interest

Source: <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/passion>>.

Date Downloaded: 25 October 2009

• What in Book 4 is original with Virgil?

In Books 3-4 of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas narrated his own story to Dido, Queen of Carthage. Similarly, in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus narrated his own story to the Phaeacians.

In Book 4, the omniscient narrator takes control again.

In Book 4, we will learn about the tragic affair between Aeneas and Dido. Apparently, this tragic affair is the creation of Virgil because other surviving ancient authors before Virgil did not write about this tragic affair when they wrote about Aeneas' wanderings.

• Book 4 is the shortest book of the *Aeneid*. It is divided into three sections, each beginning with the Latin words *At regina*. Translated, these words mean “But the queen [...]”

Book 4 is the shortest book of the *Aeneid*, but it is one of the most famous. In Latin, it has 705 lines. This is a book that readers remember.

Virgil very clearly divided Book 4 into three sections. Virgil begins each section with the Latin words *At regina*. Translated, these words mean “But the queen [...]” In addition, the phrase *At regina* is followed by a word that sets the tone of the part.

• Describe the beginning of Section 1 of Book 4. It begins with *At regina gravi*. *Gravi* means “serious.”

The first section of Book 4 begins with *At regina gravi*, which can be translated as “But the queen serious.” *Gravi* can mean “serious” or “heavy.”

The first section of Book 4 consists of lines 1-295 in the Latin. The first section of Book 4 narrates the beginning of the affair between Aeneas and Dido. The word that sets the tone is *gravi* (“serious”).

Book 4 begins in Latin with these lines:

*At regina gravi jamdudum saucia cura
vulnis alit venis et caeco carpitur igni.* (4.1-2 Pharr)

In English:

The queen, for her part, all that evening ached
With longing that her heart's blood fed, a wound
Or inward fire eating her away. (4.1-3 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

But the queen — too long she has suffered the pain of love,
hour by hour nursing the wound with her lifeblood,
consumed by the fire in her heart. (4.1-3 Fagles)

• **Describe the beginning of Section 2 of Book 4, which begins with *At regina dolos*. *Dolos* means “tricks” or “deceits.”**

The second section of Book 4 begins with *At regina dolos*. *Dolos* can mean “tricks” or “deceit.”

The second section of Book 4 consists of lines 296-503 in the Latin. The second section of Book 4 tells of the falling-out between Aeneas and Dido. The word that sets the tone is *dolos* (“tricks” or “deceit”). Dido feels that Aeneas has tricked or deceived her.

The second section of Book 4 begins in Latin with these lines:

*At regina dolos (quis fallere possit amantem?)
preasensit, motusque excepit orima futuros
omnia tuta timens.* (4.296-298 Pharr)

In English:

The queen, for her part, felt some plot afoot
Quite soon — for who deceives a woman in love? (4.403-404 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

True, but the queen —
who can delude a lover? — soon caught wind
of the plot afoot, the first to sense the Trojans
are on the move ... (4.365-369 Fagles)

- **Describe the beginning of Section 3 (the final section) of Book 4, which begins with *At regina pyra*. *Pyra* means “funeral pyre.”**

The third and final section of Book 4 begins with *At regina pyra*. *Pyra* means “funeral pyre.”

The third and final section of Book 4 consists of lines 504-705 in the Latin. The third and final section of Book 4 tells of the departure of Aeneas from Carthage and of the suicide of Dido. The word that sets the tone is *pyra* (“funeral pyre”). Dido commits suicide on a funeral pyre.

The third and final section of Book 4 begins in Latin with these lines:

*At regina pyra penetrali in sede sub auras
erecta ingenti taedis atque ilice secta, (4.504-505 Pharr)*

In English:

The queen, seeing the pyre in her inmost court
Erected huge with pitch-pine and sawn ilex, (4.697-698 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

But now the queen,
as soon as the pyre was built beneath the open sky, (4.630-631 Fagles)

- **How is Book 4 reminiscent of an ancient Greek tragedy? To which ancient Greek tragedies does it allude? Define “tragedy” and “allusion.”**

Book 4 tells of the passion by Dido for Aeneas, her abandonment by Aeneas, and the suicide of Dido. This book could be staged as a play in part because it has so many speeches in it.

Book 4 contains some allusions to ancient Greek tragedies.

This is a definition of “tragedy”:

TRAGEDY: A serious play in which the chief character, by some peculiarity of psychology, passes through a series of misfortunes leading to a final, devastating catastrophe. According to Aristotle, catharsis is the marking feature and ultimate end of any tragedy. He writes in his *Poetics* (c. 350 B.C.E.): “Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; . . . through pity [eleos] and fear [phobos] effecting the proper purgation [catharsis] of these emotions” (Book 6.2). Traditionally, a tragedy is divided into five acts. The first act introduces the characters in a state of happiness, or at the height of their power, influence, or fame. The second act typically introduces a problem or dilemma, which reaches a point of crisis in the third act, but which can still be successfully averted. In the fourth act, the main characters fail to avert or avoid the impending crisis or catastrophe, and this disaster occurs. The fifth act traditionally reveals the grim consequences of that failure.

Source: http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms_T.html

Date Accessed: 15 January 2013

This is a definition of “allusion”:

A brief reference to a person, place, thing, event, or idea in history or literature. Allusions conjure up biblical authority, scenes from Shakespeare’s plays, historic figures, wars, great love stories, and anything else that might enrich an author’s work. Allusions imply reading and cultural experiences shared by the writer and reader, functioning as a kind of shorthand whereby the recalling of something outside the work supplies an emotional or intellectual context, such as a poem about current racial struggles calling up the memory of Abraham Lincoln.

Source: http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/literature/bedlit/glossary_a.htm

Book 4 of the *Aeneid* alludes to Euripides’ tragedy *The Bacchae*, Aeschylus’ tragic trilogy *The Oresteia*, and Euripides’ tragedy *Medea*.

• **Where does Book 4 allude to Euripides’ tragedy *The Bacchae*?**

Book 4 contains an allusion to *The Bacchae*, a tragedy by Euripides. Dido is maddened by her passion in Book 4 of the *Aeneid* just as Pentheus is maddened in *The Bacchae*.

as Pentheus gone mad

Sees the oncoming Eumenides and sees

A double sun and double Thebes appear, (4.649-651 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

as frantic as Pentheus

seeing battalions of Furies, twin suns ablaze

and double cities of Thebes before his eyes. (4.588-590 Fagles)

Note: The Eumenides is another name for the Furies, who are avenging deities.

In Euripides’ tragedy *The Bacchae*, Pentheus banned the worship of the god Bacchus and even imprisons Bacchus. Of course, Bacchus is a god, so his chains fall off. Bacchus makes Pentheus spy on his (Bacchus’) female followers. The female followers see Pentheus, think that he is a wild animal, and tear him to pieces.

• **Where does Book 4 allude to Aeschylus’ tragic trilogy *The Oresteia*?**

Virgil continues,

Or, as when, hounded on the stage, Orestes

Runs from a mother armed with burning brands

With serpents hellish black,

And in the doorway squat the Avenging Ones. (4.652-655 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

Or Agamemnon’s Orestes hounded off the stage,

fleeing his mother armed with torches, black snakes,
while blocking the doorway coil her Furies of Revenge. (4.591-593 Fagles)

These lines allude to Aeschylus' tragic trilogy *The Oresteia*. The Avenging Ones are also known as the Eumenides and the Furies. In this trilogy, Agamemnon returns home from the Trojan War, but he is killed by his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover, Aegisthus. Agamemnon's son, Orestes, then avenges Agamemnon's death by killing both Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. Matricide (murdering your mother) is a horrible crime, and so Orestes is pursued by the Furies, who are avengers of the dead.

We see here a difference in how Homer and Aeschylus regard Orestes. In Homer's *Odyssey*, what Orestes does wins him great renown. Homer's audience is supposed to approve of what Orestes does. In Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, however, Orestes' actions set the Furies on him.

Once again, the allusion describes Dido's madness.

• **Where does Book 4 allude to Euripides' tragedy *Medea*?**

Dido says,

“Even Ascanius could I not have minced
And served up to his father at a feast?” (4.835-836 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

“[...] Or slashed his men with steel,
butchered Ascanius, served him up as his father's feast?” (4.751-752 Fagles)

This is an allusion to Euripides' *Medea*. Jason, the leader of the Argonauts, married Medea, a foreign witch. Jason planned to dump Medea, and she got revenge by killing their sons, cooking them, and serving them to Jason.

As we can see, Virgil alludes directly to Greek tragedy in Book 4, the most tragic book of the *Aeneid*.

• **Of which diametrically opposed interpretations is Book 4 capable?**

Two main interpretations can be made of Book 4; they are diametrically opposed:

One interpretation is to see Aeneas as a good man who is doing exactly what he ought to do: fulfilling his destiny by going to Italy and founding a city and becoming an important ancestor of the Roman people.

One interpretation is to see Aeneas as a cruel man who dumps Dido, Queen of Carthage, who sincerely loves him.

• **Why does Venus want Aeneas and Dido to become lovers?**

Venus forces Dido and Aeneas to become lovers and form a liaison (LEE-aay-zon). In Book 1, Venus forces Dido to fall in love with Aeneas. She does this by using Cupid, her son, to make Dido fall in love with Aeneas.

• **Why does Juno want Aeneas and Dido to become lovers?**

In Book 4, Juno also helps Dido to form a liaison with Aeneas. Both Venus and Juno want Dido and Aeneas to form a liaison.

Venus believes that a liaison will benefit Aeneas. If Dido is in love with Aeneas, she will offer him help.

Juno believes that a liaison will prevent Aeneas from fulfilling his destiny. If Aeneas were to fall in love with Dido, he is likely to stay in Carthage and rule as its king. He will not go to Italy and become an important ancestor of the Roman people.

Juno, of course, loves Carthage. She would love it if Rome were never founded because then Carthage would be the dominant power in the Mediterranean. We know from history, of course, that Rome was founded, the Romans had a great empire, the Romans fought and won three wars with the Carthaginians, and after winning the third war the Romans destroyed Carthage.

One important point to notice is that Dido is innocent when she falls in love with Aeneas. Two goddesses, who are very powerful beings, are making her fall in love with Aeneas.

When Venus tricks Dido into falling in love with Aeneas, Juno goes along with it. Juno is a trickster. The scene of Zeus' seduction in Book 14 of the *Iliad* by Hera (her Roman name is Juno) gives a very undignified portrait of the "father of gods and men." Hera seduces Zeus in order to help Poseidon help the Greeks. If she can turn Zeus' attention away from the battlefield, the Greeks can temporarily overcome the Trojans. Zeus will be asleep, and so he won't help the Trojans. So Hera decks herself out. She borrows seductiveness from Aphrodite (her Roman name is Venus). She makes herself as beautiful as possible. She gets the god Sleep to promise to put Zeus to sleep after Hera and Zeus have had sex. And then Hera shows herself to Zeus, who immediately wants to sleep with her. Her trick works. She seduces her husband, he goes to sleep, and then the Greeks are triumphant on the battlefield for a while.

In Book 4 of the *Aeneid*, Juno is again a trickster when she forms an alliance with Venus. She wants Aeneas to stay in Carthage. Venus, of course, has her own reasons for wanting Dido and Aeneas to have an affair, and so she goes along with Juno, although she knows what Juno has in mind:

Perceiving at once
that this was all pretense, a ruse to shift
the kingdom of Italy onto Libyan shores,
Venus countered Juno: (4.130-133 Fagles)

• **Which human considerations make Dido weaken and consider making Aeneas her lover?**

At the beginning of Book 4, Dido is in love with Aeneas:

His looks, his words, they pierce her heart and cling —
no peace, no rest for her body, love will give her none. (4.6-7 Fagles)

Dido talks with Anna, her sister, who makes an argument for marrying Aeneas. The argument is that Carthage needs a king. Aeneas would make a good king, and so Dido ought to marry Aeneas. A marriage to Aeneas will be good for her people and for Carthage.

Anna tells Dido,

“This little spot of land, which Heav’n bestows,
On ev’ry side is hemm’d with warlike foes;
Gaetolian cities here are spread around,
And fierce Numidians there your frontiers bound;
Here lies a barren waste of thirsty land,
And there the Syrtes raise the moving sand;
Barcaean troops besiege the narrow shore,
And from the sea Pygmalion threatens more.
Propitious Heav’n, and gracious Juno, lead
This wand’ring navy to your needful aid:
How will your empire spread, your city rise,
From such a union, and with such allies?” (John Dryden)

Compare:

Sister,
what a great city you’ll see rising here,
And what a kingdom, from this royal match!
With Trojan soldiers as companions in arms
By what exploits will Punic glory grow! (4.65-70 Fitzgerald)

In addition, Anna mentions children:

would you waste away, grieving your youth away, alone,
never to know the joy of children, all the gifts of love? (4.40-41 Fagles)

Dido really does have good reasons for marrying Aeneas:

- Her country needs a king.
- She is in love with Aeneas.
- She would like to have children.

• **Would a marriage with Aeneas sacrifice Dido's integrity? Yes.**

After Dido's husband, Sychaeus (Si-KEE-Us), died, she did not want to remarry. This is common, I believe, with widows and widowers. They feel that they would be unfaithful to the memory of their dead spouse if they were to remarry.

Dido tells Anna,

"If my heart had not been fixed, dead set against
embracing another man in the bonds of marriage —
ever since my first husband deceived me, cheated me
by his death — if I were not as sick as I am
of the bridal bed and torch, this, perhaps,
is my one lapse that might have brought me down." (4.19-24 Fagles)

Dido would feel guilty if she were to marry or have an affair with another man. Anna is aware of that, but she believes that Dido can ask for and receive forgiveness from the gods if she were to marry another man:

"Only ask the indulgence of the gods,
Win them with offerings," (4.71-72 Fitzgerald)

In addition, Dido will be unchaste if she has an affair with Aeneas.

By the way, Dante echoes a passage in this section in his *Purgatory*. In the *Aeneid*, Dido tells Anna,

"I confess it, Anna, yes. Ever since Sychaeus,
my poor husband met his fate, and my own brother
shed his blood and stained our household gods,
this is the only man who's roused me deeply,
swayed my wavering heart ...
The signs of the old flame, I know them well." (4.25-30 Fagles)

When Dante sees Beatrice in Dante's *Purgatory*, he turns around because he wishes

to say to Virgil: "Not one drop of blood
is left inside my veins that does not throb:

I recognize signs of the ancient flame." (30.46-48 Musa)

The words "I recognize signs of the ancient flame" (Musa 30.48) is a quotation from the *Aeneid* 4:23 (Latin). Dido says these words when she realizes that she is falling in love with Aeneas. In the *Aeneid*, this is not a good thing because of two reasons:

1) After the death of her husband, Sichaesus, Dido vowed to remain true to his memory and not be remarried.

2) Dido's love affair with Aeneas ends unhappily, and she commits suicide.

Virgil writes about the love between Aeneas and Dido in the *Aeneid*, a love that ended unhappily, with Dido's suicide. In Dante's *Purgatory*, the love of Dante and Beatrice ends happily. In a way, Dante is rewriting the story of Aeneas and Dido, with himself and Beatrice playing the star roles.

In this passage (30.46-48 Musa), Dante pays tribute to Virgil.

• **How is Dido's passion for Aeneas affecting her abilities as a ruler?**

Dido's passion for Aeneas has a bad effect on her abilities as a ruler:

Towers, half-built, rose

No farther; men no longer trained in arms

Or toiled to make harbors and battlements

Impregnable. Projects were broken off,

Laid over, and the menacing huge walls

With cranes unmoving stood against the sky. (4.120-126 Fitzgerald)

• **Which epithet does Virgil most often give to Dido?**

The epithet that Virgil most often gives to Dido is *infelix*, which means unhappy, ill-fated, ill-starred, unlucky, and unfortunate.

Of course, Dido is also unhappy emotionally, as well as in her circumstances.

With an epithet like that applied to Dido, we can guess that the end of the story will be unhappy for Dido.

• **What happens when Aeneas and Dido take shelter in the same cave during a storm?**

The affair of Dido and Aeneas begins when they are hunting; a storm arises (because of Juno), and they seek shelter in a cave together.

Virgil's description of this includes terminology and imagery that is appropriate to marriage:

Primal Earth herself and Nuptial Juno

Opened the ritual, torches of lightning blazed,

High Heaven became witness to the marriage,

And nymphs cried out wild hymns from a mountain top. (4.229-232 Fitzgerald)

Juno is the goddess of marriage, and Juno seems to treat this affair as a marriage. Juno even tells Venus:

"I'll bind them in lasting marriage, make them one.

Their wedding it will be!” (4.155-156 Fagles)

• **Are Aeneas and Dido married?**

Although Juno uses the word “marriage,” as does Dido, this is not a marriage in a legal or a ritual sense. They are having an affair; they are not legally married.

Dido calls it a marriage, but she calls it that to hide her fault. *Culpa* in Latin means fault, crime, or guilt.

We read:

She thought no longer of a secret love
But called it marriage. Thus, under that name,
She hid her fault. (4.236-238 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

She no longer thinks to keep the affair a secret,
no, she calls it a marriage,
using the word to cloak her sense of guilt. (4.216-218 Fagles)

• **What happens when rumors of Aeneas and Dido’s affair begin to circulate?**

Rumors circulate very quickly, both around Carthage and in the surrounding areas.

When Dido first came to this area to build Carthage, kings courted her, but she rejected them because the death of her husband was so recent. One of the kings she rejected, whose name is Iarbas, prays to Jupiter about her affair.

Virgil writes well when he describes Rumor:

The loud report thro’ Libyan cities goes.
Fame, the great ill, from small beginnings grows:
Swift from the first; and ev’ry moment brings
New vigor to her flights, new pinions to her wings.
Soon grows the pigmy to gigantic size;
Her feet on earth, her forehead in the skies.
Inrag’d against the gods, revengeful Earth
Produc’d her last of the Titanian birth.
Swift is her walk, more swift her winged haste:
A monstrous phantom, horrible and vast.
As many plumes as raise her lofty flight,

So many piercing eyes inlarge her sight;
 Millions of opening mouths to Fame belong,
 And ev'ry mouth is furnish'd with a tongue,
 And round with list'ning ears the flying plague is hung.
 She fills the peaceful universe with cries;
 No slumbers ever close her wakeful eyes;
 By day, from lofty tow'rs her head she shews,
 And spreads thro' trembling crowds disastrous news;
 With court informers haunts, and royal spies;
 Things done relates, not done she feigns, and mingles truth with lies.
 Talk is her business, and her chief delight
 To tell of prodigies and cause affright.
 She fills the people's ears with Dido's name,
 Who, lost to honor and the sense of shame,
 Admits into her throne and nuptial bed
 A wand'ring guest, who from his country fled:
 Whole days with him she passes in delights,
 And wastes in luxury long winter nights,
 Forgetful of her fame and royal trust,
 Dissolv'd in ease, abandon'd to her lust. (John Dryden)

• **Why does Jupiter send Mercury to Aeneas?**

Jupiter wants Aeneas to become an important ancestor of the Roman people, so he sends Mercury to tell Aeneas that he must go to Italy to fulfill his destiny.

• **In which way are the love affairs of Aeneas and of Jupiter different?**

Iarbus is a very minor character in the *Aeneid*, but we are told that he is the offspring of a nymph whom Jupiter raped.

The ancient Greek and Roman gods are not omnibenevolent. Very often, they do repugnant things. Jupiter had forcibly raped the nymph, and he has raped many gods and goddesses and mortal women. Jupiter rules by might, and because he is so powerful, he can get away with rape. In Book 12, we find out that Jupiter raped Turnus' sister, Juturna, and then he made her a goddess, a nymph.

In contrast, the affair of Aeneas and Dido is consensual. No force is involved, and both participants are volunteers.

However, when Jupiter rapes someone, he gets away with it. No one is powerful enough to punish Jupiter.

But although Dido and Aeneas are having a consensual affair, they are forced to break it off, and both feel deeply about breaking off the affair. Aeneas must go to Italy to fulfill his destiny, and so he cannot stay in Carthage with Dido. Dido's reaction to the breakup with Aeneas is to commit suicide.

The lives of human beings and of immortal gods and goddesses are very different.

• **Where does Mercury find Aeneas? What is Aeneas doing? What would Virgil's Roman audience think of what Aeneas is doing?**

Previously, before Aeneas and Dido began their affair, Dido was ignoring her duties as a ruler. Carthage was half-built, and she was ignoring the rest of the building of the city.

Anna argued that Carthage needs a king, and Aeneas has been serving well as king. When Mercury finds Aeneas, he finds Aeneas wearing Carthaginian clothing and supervising the rest of the building of Carthage:

he spots Aeneas founding the city fortifications,
building homes in Carthage. And his sword-hilt
is studded with tawny jasper stars, a cloak
of glowing Tyrian purple drapes his shoulders,
a gift that the wealthy queen had made herself,
weaving into the web a glinting mesh of gold. (4.324-329 Fagles)

Compare:

Alighting tiptoe
On the first hutments, there he found Aeneas
Laying foundations for new towers and homes. (4.351-354 Fitzgerald)

To Virgil's Roman audience, this is a shocking scene. Aeneas is building the walls of Carthage, Rome's great enemy, an enemy that the Romans fought against in the three Punic wars.

Of course, what Aeneas ought to be doing is building his own city — in Italy, not in North Africa.

• **Why does Aeneas decide to leave Carthage?**

Aeneas decides to leave Carthage because of the message that Mercury brings to him.

Mercury brings a message from Jupiter, and Aeneas is known for his *pietas*. Aeneas will do what the king of gods and men tell him to do.

Mercury reminds Aeneas that he has a destiny to fulfill: Aeneas must go to Italy, found a city, and become an important ancestor of the Roman people.

In addition, Mercury reminds Aeneas that he has a duty to his son, Ascanius. Ascanius will also become an important ancestor of the Roman people — the Trojan males will marry Italian women, and their children will be ancestors of the Romans. (Rome will be founded much later.) If Aeneas rejects his own destiny, he also rejects the destiny of his son.

Because of his *pietas* — Aeneas always wishes to do the right thing by the gods and his family members — he realizes that he must leave Carthage and go to Italy. He makes plans to leave Carthage, and he thinks about how to break up with Dido.

• **How does Dido learn of Aeneas' plan to leave Carthage?**

Dido learns of Aeneas' plan to leave Carthage when she hears a rumor.

Of course, this is a bad way to find out about a lover leaving you. Dido thinks that Aeneas was going to leave her without even talking to her first.

Breakups are bad enough, but having a lover sneak away and not even say goodbye is very bad indeed.

• **How is critical opinion divided over the breakup of Dido and Aeneas?**

Critics interpret the characters of Dido and Aeneas very differently:

Both Dido and Aeneas can be interpreted as being blameworthy in their breakup.

Both Dido and Aeneas can be interpreted as being innocent in their breakup.

• **What does Dido say to Aeneas after learning of his plans?**

Dido has heard a rumor that the Trojans' ships are being readied for a voyage, and she thinks that Aeneas was going to leave her without even saying goodbye to her first.

She says to him,

“You even hoped to keep me in the dark
As to this outrage, two-faced man,
And slip away in silence? Can our love
Not hold you, can the pledge we gave not hold you,
Can Dido not, now sure to die in pain?” (4.417-421 Fitzgerald)

She also says to him,

“Do you go to get away from me? I beg you,
By these tears, by your own right hand, since I
Have left my wretched self nothing but that —
Yes, by the marriage that we entered on,

If ever I did well and you were grateful
 Or found some sweetness in a gift from me,
 Have pity now in a declining house!
 Put this plan by, I beg you, if a prayer
 Is not yet out of place.” (4.429-437 Fitzgerald)

She ends her speech to him by saying,

“If only you’d left a baby in my arms — our child —
 before you deserted me! Some little Aeneas
 playing about our halls, whose features at least
 would bring you back to me in spite of all,
 I would not feel so devastated,
 so destroyed.” (4.407-412 Fagles)

This speech by Dido is very moving. She regards her affair with Aeneas as being a marriage, and she is devastated that he wants to leave her. She even wishes that she and Aeneas had had a child together.

• **How does Aeneas respond to Dido?**

Aeneas demonstrates *pietas* by following the commands of Jupiter:

The man by Jove’s command held fast his eyes
 And fought down the emotion in his heart. (4.456-457 Fitzgerald)

Following the commands of Jupiter, however, takes an effort of the will. Aeneas does not show any emotion when he speaks to Dido, although it takes a major effort for him not to show any emotion.

Aeneas replies to Dido,

“As for myself, be sure
 I never shall deny all you can say,
 Your majesty, of what you meant to me.
 Never will the memory of Elissa [Elissa is another name for Dido]
 Stale for me, while I can still remember
 My own life, and the spirit rules my body.
 As to the event, a few words. Do not think
 I meant to be deceitful and slip away.

I never held the torches of a bridegroom,
 Never entered upon the pact of marriage.
 If Fate permitted me to spend my days
 By my own lights, and make the best of things
 According to my wishes, first of all
 I should look after Troy and the loved relics
 Left me of my people. [...]" (4.459-473 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas is very concerned about his destiny, and he tells Dido that he is following the command of Jupiter when he pursues his destiny. After all, Jupiter sent Mercury to Aeneas to remind him that his destiny is to go to Italy. In order to do that, he must leave Dido behind:

"So please, no more
 Of these appeals that set us both afire.
 I sail for Italy not of my own free will." (4.497-499 Fitzgerald)

Importantly, Aeneas tells Dido, "I sail for Italy not of my own free will" (4.499 Fitzgerald).

• **What case can be made that Dido is wrong to want Aeneas to stay with her in Carthage?**

Critics disagree over whether Dido is right or wrong to want Aeneas to stay with her in Carthage. This is something that can be argued either way.

We can make a case that Dido is wrong to want Aeneas to stay with her in Carthage:

Dido should remain faithful to the memory of deceased husband, Sychaeus, and she should not marry or have an affair with Aeneas for these reasons:

1. *Dido should not lose her integrity.*

Dido made a vow not to remarry. She ought to keep her vow.

2. *Dido should follow the morality of her society.*

A woman's having an affair is against the ethics of ancient societies. Remember that Virgil clearly says that Aeneas and Dido are not married — Dido hides her fault by calling the affair a marriage. Dido is in lust with Aeneas, but she also says that Carthage needs a king. This can be regarded as just an excuse for Dido to have sex.

3. *Dido should not be like Cleopatra.*

Virgil's contemporary audience would compare Dido to Cleopatra because of Dido's affair with Aeneas.

• Both Dido and Cleopatra are queens of North Africa.

• Both Dido (with Aeneas) and Cleopatra (with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony) had affairs that diverted leaders important to Rome from the work that they should have been doing for Rome.

The Romans much prefer that their leaders stay away from foreign entanglements with foreign queens.

Because of this comparison, Virgil's contemporary audience is unlikely to hear with any sympathy Dido's emotional speech to Aeneas.

• **What case can be made that Dido is completely innocent in her affair with Aeneas?**

On the other hand, we can consider Dido to be innocent:

1. *Dido does not fall in love of her own volition.*

Venus and Juno both act to cause Dido to fall in love and have an affair with Aeneas. Venus uses Cupid, her son, to make Dido fall in love with Aeneas. Juno causes a storm that makes Dido and Aeneas seek shelter in the same cave. It is then that they start their affair.

2. *Carthage really does need a king, and Aeneas would make a very good king.*

These, of course, are Anna's arguments, and they are good arguments. Carthage does in fact need a king. It also needs an heir. Plus, the Trojan soldiers would beef up Carthage's defenses. Carthage is, after all, surrounded by neighbors who could turn hostile.

3. *Remarrying is expected in this society; it is not immoral.*

Yes, a person with a deceased spouse wants to remain loyal to the memory of that spouse; however, after a period of mourning, we need to start living our lives again. This is an important theme of Homer's *Iliad*, in which Apollo says,

Apollo says,

“Achilles has lost all pity! No shame in the man,
shame that does great harm or drives men on to good.

No doubt some mortal has suffered a greater loss than this,
a brother born in the same womb, or even a son ...

he grieves, he weeps, but then his tears are through. (24.52-56 Fagles, *Iliad*)

In addition, Penelope in Homer's *Odyssey* is expected to get remarried if her husband is dead. Penelope has two conflicting duties. If Odysseus is alive, then her duty is to remain faithful to him. If Odysseus is dead, then — in her society — her duty is to be remarried. Because Penelope does not know whether Odysseus is alive or dead, she does not know what her duty is.

Whether Dido is blameworthy or Dido is innocent is a matter of interpretation; readers must make up their own minds, and of course, reasons exist to support both interpretations.

• **What case can be made that Aeneas is justified in his very cold response to Dido?**

Critics also argue over whether Aeneas is justified in his very cold response to Dido. Again, a case can be made for either interpretation. Aeneas can be regarded as blameworthy, and Aeneas can be regarded as innocent.

Critics can make a good case that Aeneas is innocent:

1. *Aeneas says that he is not a husband.*

Aeneas tells Dido,

“I never held the torches of a bridegroom,
Never entered upon the pact of marriage.” (4.467-468 Fitzgerald)

2. *When Aeneas told Dido his story in Books 2-3, he told her about his destiny to go to Italy and to found a city there.*

Because of this, Dido should have known that Aeneas would not be able to stay in Carthage.

3. *Aeneas is under orders from the gods to leave Carthage and to go to Italy.*

Jupiter sent Mercury to him to tell him exactly that. If Aeneas does not do his duty, he will be guilty of impiety.

4. *If it were up to Aeneas, he would stay in Carthage.*

Aeneas tells Dido,

“[...] I set sail for Italy —
all against my will.” (4.451-452 Fagles)

In Book 6, Aeneas sees Dido in the Land of the Dead and speaks to her. Aeneas' words there help us to understand his motivation in Book 4, when he left Dido to go to Italy and fulfill his destiny. In Robert Fitzgerald's translation he says that he left her and Carthage “against my will” (6.620). In Book 4, Aeneas also says that (Fagles' translation).

When Aeneas sees the ghost of Dido in Book 6, we read,

He wept and spoke
Tenderly to her: “Dido, so forlorn, [*infelix* is translated as “forlorn”]
The story then that came to me was true,
That you were out of life, had met your end
By your own hand. Was I, was I the cause?
I swear by heaven's stars, by the high gods,
By any certainty below the earth,
I left your land against my will, my queen.
The gods' commands drove me to do their will,
as now they drive me through this world of shades,
These mouldy waste lands and these depths of night.
And I could not believe that I would hurt you

So terribly by going. Wait a little.

Do not leave my sight.

Am I someone to flee from? The last word

Destiny lets me say to you is this.” (6.611-628 Fitzgerald)

5. *Aeneas has a duty to found the Roman people. He also has a duty to his son, Ascanius.*

If Aeneas does not fulfill his destiny, he will alter Ascanius’ destiny as well. Ascanius will not be able to be an important ancestor of the Roman people.

6. *By choosing to fulfill his destiny, Aeneas is choosing pietas (duty) over furor (meaning sexual passion in this case).*

Aeneas has a duty to the gods, to his son, to the surviving free Trojans, and to the future Roman people. He also has a duty to his father, who does not reach Italy. Aeneas has allowed himself to be sidetracked by his sexual passion (*furor*) for Dido, but now he reasserts his *pietas*.

• **What case can be made that Aeneas is NOT justified in his very cold response to Dido?**

A case can be made that Aeneas is NOT justified in his very cold response to Dido:

1. *Dido, of course, regards Aeneas differently from the way that we do.*

Aeneas is her lover, so of course she feels very strongly about him. Dido believes that Aeneas is spurning her, is planning to sneak away and not even tell her that he is leaving. Aeneas should have told her that he was leaving before he began to get his ships ready.

2. *Aeneas’ response to Dido is colder than it needs to be.*

Aeneas says that if he could do anything, he would have rebuilt Troy on its original site. Of course, if he had done that, he never would have met Dido at all.

Aeneas could have told Dido that his heart was breaking, but that he had a destiny to fulfill under orders of the gods. If he had told Dido that his heart was breaking, she may have better taken the news that he was leaving.

• **How do we regard Aeneas as opposed to how Dido regards Aeneas?**

How do we regard Aeneas? We can pity him. He loves Dido, but in order to fulfill his destiny, he must go to Italy and marry an Italian woman. Here we see an opposition between *furor* (rage or passion) and *pietas*, and we see an opposition between the private Aeneas and the public Aeneas.

How does Dido regard Aeneas? Dido loves Aeneas, but in her opinion Aeneas has enjoyed an affair with her (taken advantage of her) and now he is ready to leave her without even saying goodbye to her.

Virgil gives us insight into the private Aeneas — the Aeneas that Dido has no insight into. Aeneas wants to comfort Dido, Aeneas pities her, but Aeneas carries out the gods’ commands:

Duty-bound,

Aeneas, though he struggled with desire

To calm and comfort her in all her pain,
 To speak to her and turn her mind from grief,
 And though he sighed his heart out, shaken still
 With love of her, yet took the course heaven gave him
 And went back to the fleet. (4.545-551 Fitzgerald)

• **Does Aeneas weep for Dido?**

Virgil includes one ambiguous line in this section of the *Aeneid*. Dido wants Aeneas to stay a little longer, and she sends Anna, her sister, to plead with him to stay longer. The ambiguous line is “tears fell in vain”:

And just as when the north winds from the Alps
 This way and that contend among themselves
 To tear away an oaktree hale with age,
 The wind and tree cry, and the buffeted trunk
 Showers high foliage to earth, but holds
 On bedrock, for the roots go down as far
 Into the underworld as cresting boughs
 Go up in heaven’s air: just so this captain,
 Buffeted by a gale of pleas
 This way and that way, dinned all the day long,
 Felt their moving power on his great heart,
 And yet his will stood fast; tears fell in vain. (4.610-621 Fitzgerald)

Whose tears fell in vain?

In the translation by Robert Fagles, Dido weeps, and Anna may be weeping earlier as she brings Dido’s appeal to Aeneas:

So Dido pleads and
 so her desolate sister takes him the tale of tears
 again and again. But no tears move Aeneas now.
 He is deaf to all appeals. He won’t relent. (4.549-553 Fagles)

One interpretation is that Anna is weeping as she pleads her sister’s case. In the translation by Robert Fitzgerald, Anna is indeed weeping earlier:

She [Dido] pleaded in such terms, and such, in tears,

Her sorrowing sister brought him, time and again,
 But no tears moved him, no one's voice would he
 Attend to tractably. (4.605-608 Fitzgerald)

Other critics believe that it is Aeneas who is weeping. Aeneas says that he is leaving Dido not of his own free will, so he may be weeping here.

• **How does Dido convince Anna, her sister, to build a funeral pyre for her?**

Dido tricks her sister into building the funeral pyre for her. She says to Anna,

“I’ve found a way,
 dear heart — rejoice with your sister — either
 to bring him back in love for me or free me
 of love for him.” (4.598-601 Fagles)

Supposedly, by burning all of the reminders of Aeneas in a funeral pyre, either Dido will bring Aeneas back to love her or she will cease loving him. Of course, by killing herself, she will cease to love Aeneas. Logically, she made a true statement. All she needs for the statement to be true is for one part of it to be true: Either Dido will bring Aeneas back to love her OR she will cease loving him.

Of course, Dido is committing the fallacy of suppressed evidence here. In this fallacy, the arguer leaves out important information that is needed to reach an accurate conclusion. Dido is telling Anna enough to convince her to build the funeral pyre, but she is not telling Anna that she wants the funeral pyre to be built so that she can kill herself.

• **What curse does Dido call down on Aeneas and his descendants?**

Dido kills herself because Aeneas leaves her. But before she dies, she curses Aeneas and his descendants.

Dido tells her people, the people of Carthage:

“On unjust terms, let him not, even so,
 Enjoy his kingdom or the life he longs for,
 But fall in battle before his time and lie
 Unburied on the sand! This I implore,
 This is my last cry, as my last blood flows.
 Then, O my Tyrians, besiege with hate
 His progeny and all his race to come:
 Make this your offering to my dust. No love,
 No pact must be between our peoples; No,

But rise up from my bones, avenging spirit!
 Harry with fire and sword the Darden countrymen
 Now or hereafter, at whatever time
 The strength will be afforded. Coast with coast
 In conflict, I implore, and sea with sea,
 And arms with arms: may they all contend in war,
 Themselves and all the children of their children!" (4.860-875 Fitzgerald)

In history, of course, Rome and Carthage fought three wars, with the final war resulting in the final destruction of Carthage as a city and as a power in the Mediterranean. Virgil's audience would be very aware of this history and would regard Dido's curse as the beginning of the enmity between Rome and Carthage.

In her curse, Dido wants an avenger to arise from her ashes. This avenger may be Hannibal Barca, the Carthaginian general of the Second Punic War (218-202 B.C.), who invaded Italy after crossing the Alps with his elephants.

Hannibal Barca truly was a great general. Here is an anecdote about his generalship:

The Second Punic War, Italy, 217 b.c. The darkness of night covered the Apennine mountains of central Italy. The invading army of Carthaginians trembled in the blackness, awaiting the certain doom that dawn would bring. Brave warriors from North Africa, their civilization had been locked in a deadly contest with the burgeoning might of Rome to see which would rule the Mediterranean — and which would perish. A year earlier, they'd crossed into Italy over the Alps with their war elephants and begun ravaging the Roman hinterland. They had won many victories, but they had lost many men. Now vastly outnumbered, they were trapped like vermin in a narrow valley. By the next evening, their corpses would be rotting on enemy soil. But after midnight, whispers passed up and down the line: Hannibal, their general, had come up with a plan. Quickly, quietly, the men gathered up their torches and assembled around a herd of 2,000 captured cattle. They set to work with the urgency of men about to die. In an instant the signal was given. Fire passed from torch to torch. Sputtering tongues of flame leaped from the firebrands lashed to each of the cattle's horns until the night was riven by spears of flickering orange. Panicked, maddened by the heat and light, the bellowing herd stampeded right up through the Roman lines. In seconds the enemy sentries were overwhelmed in the thundering onslaught of flame, and the entire Roman army fled before what seemed a suicide assault by the Carthaginian force. In the chaos Hannibal and his men slipped out of their deathtrap and lived to fight another day.

Source: <http://www.anecdote.com/index.php?aid=15767>

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Here is information about the battle of Cannae:

During the Second Punic War, the Carthaginian general Hannibal crossed the Alps — with war elephants! — and invaded Italy. He had much early success in the war, although the Romans eventually won. One of Hannibal's greatest successes was at the Battle of Cannae. So many Roman soldiers were killed that the Roman historian Livy related that the Carthaginian soldiers gathered three bushels of gold rings from the fingers of the dead Roman soldiers.

Here is an anecdote about how Hannibal eventually died, plus some trivia:

When the Romans defeated King Antiochus III's Syrian forces at Magnesia (in 189 BC), they demanded that Hannibal, Antiochus' advisor and the man who had routed Roman forces at Lake Trasimeno and Cannae three decades before, be handed over to them. Though Hannibal wisely fled, first to Crete and then to Bithynia (in Asia Minor), a battalion of Roman soldiers soon found him...

Clearly cornered, Hannibal removed the phial of poison which he always carried with him and promptly drank it. "Let us relieve the Romans of the fear which has so long afflicted them," he declared, "since it seems to tax their patience too hard to wait for an old man's death."

[Trivia: When Hannibal crossed the Alps to invade Italy, his military engineers employed fire to smash immovable rocks. Heated with blazing logs and doused with vinegar, they split into fragments which could be pushed aside.]

Sources: Livy, *Annals*

Source: <http://www.anecdotal.com/index.php?aid=11078>

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The Romans were aware that Carthage was their main rival for a very long time. Cato the Censor believed that for Rome to be safe Carthage had to be destroyed. Therefore, whenever he made a speech as a Roman politician, he would end his speech — no matter what its matter was — with the words *Carthago delenda est*. This sentence means "Carthage must be destroyed." Eventually, Carthage was destroyed following the Third Punic War. By the way, the Latin word *Punicus* means Phoenician. Carthage was founded by Phoenicians; therefore, the wars against Carthage are called the Punic Wars.

The Second Punic War started after the Romans became worried when the Carthaginian general Hannibal captured the city of Saguntum in Spain. According to the Roman historian Livy, several Roman leaders, including Fabius, traveled to Carthage to demand that the Carthaginians either give them Hannibal or face war. The Carthaginians refused to hand over Hannibal, so Fabius said, "We bring you peace and war. Take what you will." The Carthaginians answered, "Whichever you please — we do not care." Fabius then said, "We give you war," and the Carthaginians, unmoved, replied, "We accept it." (Source: Don Nardo, *Rulers of Ancient Rome* pp. 28-29.)

The Roman general Fabius succeeded in preserving the Roman empire against the Carthaginians in the Second Punic War, and he earned the respect of the Roman people. After he died, shortly before the Romans defeated the Carthaginians, he was not given the usual funeral financed by the state that he was entitled to as a deceased leader. Instead,

out of respect for him, ordinary citizens contributed one coin apiece for his funeral.
(Source: Don Nardo, *Rulers of Ancient Rome* p. 35.)

• **What does Dido do after Aeneas leaves?**

After Aeneas leaves, Dido curses him, and then she dies on a funeral pyre. She stabs herself with a sword, and she takes a long time to die, with her breath whistling through the wound the sword made.

In Book 5, we learn that Aeneas and his men see the smoke rising from her funeral pyre. They don't know that the smoke is rising from her funeral pyre, but the smoke gives them a very bad feeling.

Dido's death is a hard death:

Thrice Dido tried to raise her drooping head,
And, fainting thrice, fell grov'ling on the bed;
Thrice op'd her heavy eyes, and sought the light,
But, having found it, sicken'd at the sight,
And clos'd her lids at last in endless night.
Then Juno, grieving that she should sustain
A death so ling'ring, and so full of pain,
Sent Iris down, to free her from the strife
Of lab'ring nature, and dissolve her life.
For since she died, not doom'd by Heav'n's decree,
Or her own crime, but human casualty,
And rage of love, that plung'd her in despair,
The Sisters had not cut the topmost hair,
Which Proserpine and they can only know;
Nor made her sacred to the shades below.
Downward the various goddess took her flight,
And drew a thousand colors from the light;
Then stood above the dying lover's head,
And said: "I thus devote thee to the dead.
This off'ring to th' infernal gods I bear."
Thus while she spoke, she cut the fatal hair:

The struggling soul was loos'd, and life dissolv'd in air. (John Dryden)

• **In what ways is Dido similar to Troy?**

Dido is in some ways similar to Troy:

- Both burn.
- Both are destroyed by outsiders and by their own actions and by the gods:
 - As the gods wish, the Trojans bring the Trojan Horse inside their city.
 - As Juno and Venus want, Dido falls in love with Aeneas. She then commits suicide when he leaves her.
- Both are left by Aeneas.
- Aeneas must leave both to fulfill his destiny.

• **Compare and contrast Dido and Aeneas.**

Both Dido and Aeneas are the leaders of their people. Dido is the queen of Carthage, and Aeneas is the leader of the surviving free Trojans.

As leaders of their people, both have duties to their people.

Dido ignores those duties. When she falls in love with Aeneas, she stops building the city. Later, when she and Aeneas have an affair, the building resumes. Also, after Aeneas leaves Dido, she commits suicide rather than continuing to lead her people. Dido chooses *furor* (rage or passion) over *pietas*.

In contrast, Aeneas chooses *pietas* over *furor* (rage or passion). He chooses to do his duty, although he loves Dido and would like to stay in Carthage with her.

• **In Book 4, who bears the burden (*molis*) of founding the Roman people?**

Both Aeneas and Dido bear the burden (*molis*) of founding the Roman people.

Dido dies, and that is part of the cost of founding the Roman people. If Aeneas had stayed with her instead of leaving her to go to Italy so that he could found the Roman people, Dido would not have committed suicide.

Dido pays some of the cost of founding the Roman people even though the Roman people will eventually destroy the city that she has founded.

Aeneas, of course, also pays some of the burden (*molis*) of founding Rome because he has to leave Dido to go to Italy, marry an Italian woman, and found the Roman people.

***Aeneid*, Book 5: Games and a Conflagration / Funeral Games for Anchises**

• **As Book 5 opens, what do Aeneas and the Trojans see?**

In Book 4 of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas and Dido have a love affair. However, Aeneas is reminded by the gods that his destiny lies in Italy, not in Carthage. He sets sail for Italy, and Dido, upset by the breakup with Aeneas, commits suicide.

Aeneas and the Trojans sail away from Carthage. In the distance, they see smoke rising from Carthage, and the smoke gives them a bad feeling. We know that the smoke is from Dido's funeral pyre burning, but Aeneas and the Trojans aren't sure what causes the smoke:

MEANTIME the Trojan cuts his wat'ry way,
 Fix'd on his voyage, thro' the curling sea;
 Then, casting back his eyes, with dire amaze,
 Sees on the Punic shore the mounting blaze.
 The cause unknown; yet his presaging mind
 The fate of Dido from the fire divin'd;
 He knew the stormy souls of womankind,
 What secret springs their eager passions move,
 How capable of death for injur'd love.
 Dire auguries from hence the Trojans draw;
 Till neither fires nor shining shores they saw. (John Dryden)

• **When Aeneas and the Trojans arrive back in Sicily, what anniversary is it? What do they do in observance of that anniversary?**

Aeneas and the Trojans return to Sicily. This is where they had been before the storm sent by Juno blew them to Carthage. In Sicily, King Acestes, a Sicilian king who is of Trojan descent, welcomes Aeneas and the Trojans.

When Aeneas and the Trojans arrive back in Sicily, it is the anniversary of the death of Aeneas' father, Anchises. Therefore, we know that Aeneas and the Trojans spent an entire year in Carthage, minus some travel time.

Aeneas honors his father by holding athletic games (sometimes called funeral games) in which his men (and Acestes) participate.

• **What is the aesthetic purpose of the funeral games?**

In the first part of the *Aeneid*, books of high emotional intensity alternate with books of lower emotional intensity. Book 4 had as its subject the passion of Queen Dido; in it, Dido commits suicide. Book 6 will have as its subject Aeneas' visit to the Land of the Dead, where he will see the soul of his father and the souls of his descendants. Book 6 is another book of high emotional intensity.

Book 5, however, has lower emotional intensity. Virgil is giving his readers a break from high emotional intensity here, at least during the funeral games.

• **In what way is the description of the funeral games influenced by Homer's *Iliad*?**

The description of the funeral games that we read about here is influenced by the funeral games that we read about in Book 23 of Homer's *Iliad*. In this epic poem, Patroclus, who is the best friend of Achilles, dies. To honor his best friend, Achilles holds a magnificent funeral for him. Following the funeral, Achilles holds funeral games in his best friend's honor.

By the way, the Etruscans also held funeral games to honor their dead. Possibly, the gladiatorial contests of ancient Rome come from gladiatorial contests held by the Etruscans. The Etruscan gladiatorial contests probably began as Etruscan funeral games.

• **What happens in the ship race?**

In the *Iliad*, Achilles holds a chariot race in honor of Patroclus but no ship race.

In both the chariot race and the ship race, strategy is important. When making a turn, the competitors want to make as tight a turn as is safely possible. In the ship race, the ships head for a rock and then turn around and come back.

The competitors in the ship race finish in this order:

- 1st: Cloanthus, captain of the *Scylla*
- 2nd: Mnestheus, captain of the *Dragon*
- 3rd: Gyas, captain of the *Chimaera*
- 4th: Sergestus, captain of the *Centaur*

A chimaera in Greek mythology is a

fire-breathing female monster with a lion's head and a goat's body and a serpent's tail;
daughter of Typhon

Source: wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn

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We see a rough kind of humor in the ship race. Gyas thinks that his pilot is steering too conservatively, so he throws him in the sea. This makes the Trojans laugh:

Hardly his head the plunging pilot rears,
Clogg'd with his clothes, and cumber'd with his years:
Now dropping wet, he climbs the cliff with pain.
The crowd, that saw him fall and float again,
Shout from the distant shore; and loudly laugh'd,
To see his heaving breast disgorge the briny draught. (John Dryden)

We also see an accident in the ship race. Sergestus, pilot of the *Centaur*, steers too close to the rock, and he ends up breaking his ships' oars and coming in last in the race.

As they do in the *Iliad*, the gods help their human favorites. Cloanthus and Mnestheus are very close in the race, but Cloanthus wins because he prays to the gods, who help him:

Both urge their oars, and fortune both supplies,
 And both perhaps had shar'd an equal prize;
 When to the seas Cloanthus holds his hands,
 And succor from the wat'ry pow'rs demands:
 "Gods of the liquid realms, on which I row!
 If, giv'n by you, the laurel bind my brow,
 Assist to make me guilty of my vow!
 A snow-white bull shall on your shore be slain;
 His offer'd entrails cast into the main,
 And ruddy wine, from golden goblets thrown,
 Your grateful gift and my return shall own."
 The choir of nymphs, and Phorcus, from below,
 With virgin Panopea, heard his vow;
 And old Portunus, with his breadth of hand,
 Push'd on, and sped the galley to the land.
 Swift as a shaft, or winged wind, she flies,
 And, darting to the port, obtains the prize. (John Dryden)

• **What happens in the foot race?**

Both the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* have a foot race in the funeral games.

The competitors in the *Aeneid* finish in this order:

1st: Euryalus

2nd: Helymus

3rd: Dioreas

4th: Salius

5th: Nisus

and many others

Of special note are Nisus and Euryalus, who may be homosexual lovers. Nisus is the older of the two (but he is not an old man, for he would have won the foot race and is called a “fine young runner” [4.402 Fagles]), and Euryalus is a handsome younger man. They will be important characters in Book 9.

We read about these characters:

Trojans mixed with Sicilians come from all directions,
with Nisus and Euryalus out in front. Euryalus radiant,
famed for the bloom of youth — Nisus, for the pure love
he devoted to the boy. (5.327-330 Fagles)

Nisus is a swift runner and should have won the race, but he slips on the blood and manure of the animals slaughtered for sacrifices. However, he cheats in behalf of his friend Euryalus. Nisus gets in the way of Salius, thus allowing Euryalus to take first prize. Salius, who should have finished first because of Nisus’ mishap, instead finishes fourth.

• **What kind of a leader is Aeneas as he judges the funeral games?**

In the foot race, Salius is deliberately fouled by Nisus. This, of course, is not fair, and Salius cries foul.

Aeneas handles the situation well. He does not change the order of the finishers of the race, but he does give an extra gift to Salius:

Then thus the prince: “Let no disputes arise:
Where fortune plac’d it, I award the prize.
But fortune’s errors give me leave to mend,
At least to pity my deserving friend.”
He said, and, from among the spoils, he draws
(Pond’rous with shaggy mane and golden paws)
A lion’s hide: to Salius this he gives. (John Dryden)

Nisus then asks for a prize; after all, he would have finished first, if he had not slipped on animal blood and manure. Again, Aeneas behaves generously and gives him a shield:

Nisus with envy sees the gift [given to Salius], and grieves.
“If such rewards to vanquish’d men are due,”
He said, “and falling is to rise by you,
What prize may Nisus from your bounty claim,
Who merited the first rewards and fame?
In falling, both an equal fortune tried;

Would fortune for my fall so well provide!”
 With this he pointed to his face, and show’d
 His hand and all his habit smear’d with blood.
 Th’ indulgent father of the people smil’d,
 And caus’d to be produc’d an ample shield,
 Of wondrous art, by Didymaon wrought,
 Long since from Neptune’s bars in triumph brought.
 This giv’n to Nisus, he divides the rest,
 And equal Justice in his gifts express’d. (John Dryden)

In Homer’s *Iliad*, Achilles also behaves generously during the funeral games for Patroclus. He also gives away extra awards.

• **What happens in the boxing contest?**

In the boxing contest, it appears that Dares has no challengers, so he seems to have won the 1st place prize — a bull — by default, but Entellus, an older but powerful man, is convinced to box Dares.

They fight with rawhide gloves, which is a good thing, because Entellus’ gauntlets are daunting, indeed. Entellus

threw
 Two pond’rous gauntlets down in open view;
 Gauntlets which Eryx wont in fight to wield,
 And sheathe his hands with in the listed field.
 With fear and wonder seiz’d, the crowd beholds
 The gloves of death, with sev’n distinguish’d folds
 Of tough bull hides; the space within is spread
 With iron, or with loads of heavy lead:
 Dares himself was daunted at the sight,
 Renounc’d his challenge, and refus’d to fight. (John Dryden)

Eryx is a Sicilian king and half-brother to Aeneas. Eryx was killed by Hercules:

ERYX was a king of the Sicilian town of Eryx, a son of either the god Poseidon or Aphrodite and the hero Boutes. When Herakles was herding the cattle of Geryon across the island, he stole the finest bull from the herd and challenged the hero to a wrestling or boxing match when he came to fetch it. Eryx lost his life in the deadly contest which ensued.

Source: <<http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Eryx.html>>.

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Pseudo-Apollodorus, Bibliotheca 2. 5. 10 (trans. Frazer) (Greek mythographer C2nd A.D.) “[Herakles returning to Greece with the cattle of Geryon, travelled the length of Italy :] At Rhegion a bull broke away and hastily plunging into the sea swam across to Sikelia (Sicily), and having passed through the neighboring country since called Italy after it, for the Tyrrhenians called the bull *italus*, came to the plain of Eryx, who reigned over the Elymoi. Now Eryx was a son of Poseidon, and he mingled the bull with his own herds. So Herakles entrusted the kine to Hephaistos and hurried away in search of the bull. He found it in the herds of Eryx, and when the king refused to surrender it unless Herakles should beat him in a wrestling bout, Herakles beat him thrice, killed him in the wrestling, and taking the bull drove it with the rest of the herd to the Ionian Sea.”

Source: <<http://www.theoi.com/Heros/Eryx.html>>.

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In the boxing match, Entellus wins. This is probably his last notable victory. He goes out in glory, as Laertes does at the end of Homer’s *Odyssey*, which he kills one of the avengers out to kill his son, Odysseus. Here we have respect being shown to an older man, just as respect is shown to the older man Nestor in Homer’s *Iliad* during the funeral games held for Patroclus.

After winning the boxing match, Entellus, however, does one more notable deed. Wearing the gauntlets, he hits and kills the bull:

The champion, then, before AEneas came,
Proud of his prize, but prouder of his fame:
“O goddess-born, and you, Dardanian host,
Mark with attention, and forgive my boast;
Learn what I was, by what remains; and know
From what impending fate you sav’d my foe.”
Sternly he spoke, and then confronts the bull;
And, on his ample forehead aiming full,
The deadly stroke, descending, pierc’d the skull.
Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound,
But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground.
Then, thus: “In Dares’ stead I offer this.
Eryx, accept a nobler sacrifice;
Take the last gift my wither’d arms can yield:

Thy gauntlets I resign, and here renounce the field.” (John Dryden)

Entellus then retires as a boxer.

• **What happens in the archery contest?**

The competitors finish in this order:

1st: Acestes

2nd: Eurytion

3rd: Mnestheus

4th: Hippocöon

In the archery contest, the competitors shoot at a dove tied with a string to the mast of a ship.

Hippocöon’s arrow hits the mast.

Mnestheus’ arrow severs the string that ties the dove.

Eurytion’s arrow hits the dove.

It appears that Acestes has lost the archery contest because the dove is dead, but to demonstrate his skill, he shoots an arrow into the sky. The arrow catches on fire. This, of course, goes against the laws of nature, and so it is an omen from the gods. Because of the omen, Acestes (a Sicilian king) is awarded first place.

This is the omen:

Acestes, grudging at his lot, remains,

Without a prize to gratify his pains.

Yet, shooting upward, sends his shaft, to show

An archer’s art, and boast his twanging bow.

The feather’d arrow gave a dire portent,

And latter augurs judge from this event.

Chaf’d by the speed, it fir’d; and, as it flew,

A trail of following flames ascending drew:

Kindling they mount, and mark the shiny way;

Across the skies as falling meteors play,

And vanish into wind, or in a blaze decay. (John Dryden)

• **In what way is the description of the equestrian games that Ascanius and the other Trojan youths play influenced by the *Iusus Troiae* or “Trojan Games” instituted by Caesar Augustus?**

Part of what we read here is influenced by the *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games instituted by Caesar Augustus, the first Roman emperor.

Ascanius and the other Trojan youths participate in equestrian games — games played on horseback.

Caesar Augustus tried to revive some old customs. He believed in old-fashioned values. He rebuilt some temples, and he reestablished some old customs, one of which was the *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games.

When Virgil writes about the *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games in the *Aeneid*, he makes up an origin for these games. According to the *Aeneid*, Ascanius, the founder and first king of Alba Longa, revives the *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games in Italy:

Ascanius was the first to revive the Ride
when he girded Alba Longa round with ramparts,
teaching the early Latins to keep these rites,
just as he and his fellow Trojan boys had done,
and the Albans taught their sons, and in her turn
great Rome received the rites and preserved our fathers' fame.

The boys are now called *Troy*, their troupe the *Trojan Corps*. (5.656-662 Fagles)

Actually, according to historians, the *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games have nothing to do with the historical Troy. According to classicist Elizabeth Vandiver in her Teaching Company course on Virgil's *Aeneid*, *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games were probably originally named the *Iusus Truiae*. “*Truiae*” is actually an Etruscan word, perhaps meaning “dance.” Of course, *Truiae* eventually transformed into *Troiae*.

By the way, the equestrian games include skills that would be useful in warfare, as do the funeral games. The boys are practicing horseback riding, including riding at each other while carrying spears, as if they were in a cavalry charge.

• **How does the narrative underline the symbolic functions that we've talked about before of Anchises and Ascanius?**

Both Anchises and Ascanius have symbolic functions, the same symbolic functions that we talked about in Book 2, when Aeneas carried his father on his back and led his son by the hand as they fled Troy.

Anchises represents the past. From the past we can take some things, but we have to leave other things behind. From the past we can take customs and traditions and memories.

Ascanius, of course, represents the future.

In Book 5, Ascanius honors his deceased grandfather by participating in the equestrian games of the *Iusus Troiae* or Trojan Games.

• **Why do the Trojan women mutiny and burn the ships?**

The funeral and equestrian games are lighthearted, but now Book 5 turns serious. Juno continues to make trouble for the Trojans. This time, she sends the goddess Iris (the messenger goddess and the goddess of the rainbow; Mercury is the messenger god) to make trouble for them. Iris takes on the human form of Beroë, and she convinces the Trojan women to set fire to the Trojan ships.

The idea is that the Trojan women are tired of journeys. In Sicily, the Trojans have friends, so why not build a city in Sicily rather than in Italy? If the ships are destroyed, the Trojans will have to stay here — at least until another fleet of ships can be built.

We can understand that the Trojan women are tired of journeys. It has been seven years since Troy was conquered, as we learn from Iris' speech while she has taken on Beroë's form:

“[...] Seven summers gone since Troy went down
and still we're swept along, measuring out each land, each sea — ”
and how many hostile rocks and stars? — scanning an endless ocean, [...]”
(5.691-693 Fagles)

The Trojan women listen to her, they mutiny, and they set fire to the Trojan ships. One reason they listen to her is that she claims that Cassandra appeared to her in a dream and advised her to

“Look for Troy right here, your own home here!” (5.705 Fagles)

• **How does Ascanius react to the burning of the ships?**

Ascanius tries to stop the Trojan women from burning the ships. He is on horseback, and he arrives at the burning ships before anyone else:

and finding the camp in chaos, shouts out: “Madness,
beyond belief! What now? What drives you on?
Wretched women of Troy, it's not the enemy camp,
the Greeks — you're burning your own best hopes!” (5.739-743 Fagles)

• **What saves the ships?**

Jupiter stops the ship from burning, after Aeneas prays to him:

The pious hero rends his robe, and throws
To heav'n his hands, and with his hands his vows.
“O Jove,” he cried, ‘if pray'rs can yet have place;
If thou abhorr'st not all the Dardan race;

If any spark of pity still remain;
 If gods are gods, and not invok'd in vain;
 Yet spare the relics of the Trojan train!
 Yet from the flames our burning vessels free,
 Or let thy fury fall alone on me!
 At this devoted head thy thunder throw,
 And send the willing sacrifice below!" (John Dryden)

Jupiter sends a rainstorm to put out the fire. Because of Jupiter's answer to Aeneas' prayer, only four of the Trojans' ships are destroyed:

Scarce had he said, when southern storms arise:
 From pole to pole the forky lightning flies;
 Loud rattling shakes the mountains and the plain;
 Heav'n bellies downward, and descends in rain.
 Whole sheets of water from the clouds are sent,
 Which, hissing thro' the planks, the flames prevent,
 And stop the fiery pest. Four ships alone
 Burn to the waist, and for the fleet atone. (John Dryden)

Aeneas started out with 20 ships (1.461 Fagles; 1.381 Virgil). One ship perished in the storm sent by Juno in Book 1. Aeneas is separated from the rest of his fleet when he lands at Carthage with seven ships. However, he is reunited with the other 12 captains, and so the 12 ships must have been saved. In fact, one of the captains says that only one ship was lost (1.699 Fagles). In Sicily Aeneas loses four ships to fire, so apparently 15 ships make it to Italy.

• **What advice does Nautes give to Aeneas? Is it good advice?**

The Trojan women's action is a blow to Aeneas, who is discouraged and wonders whether he should stay in Sicily and forget about Italy.

Nautes, fortunately, gives Aeneas good advice. Only four ships were destroyed, so why not allow four ships' worth of Trojans to stay in Sicily? Leave behind the old, the tired, and the women (with at least one exception whom we will read about later). That way, the people whom Aeneas takes to Italy will be the best of the bunch: the young, the vigorous, and the male. (Ancient societies prized males.) Of course, to found the Roman people, the Trojan men need to marry Italian women.

This is what Aeneas does.

Note that the people left behind in Sicily almost made it to Italy. In the very next book of the *Aeneid*, the Trojans will land in Italy. Those who kept their eyes on the prize won the prize.

Here is old and wise Nautes' advice to Aeneas:

“O goddess-born, resign'd in ev'ry state,
 With patience bear, with prudence push your fate.
 By suff'ring well, our Fortune we subdue;
 Fly when she frowns, and, when she calls, pursue.
 Your friend Acestes is of Trojan kind;
 To him disclose the secrets of your mind:
 Trust in his hands your old and useless train;
 Too num'rous for the ships which yet remain:
 The feeble, old, indulgent of their ease,
 The dames who dread the dangers of the seas,
 With all the dastard crew, who dare not stand
 The shock of battle with your foes by land.
 Here you may build a common town for all,
 And, from Acestes' name, Acesta call.” (John Dryden)

The Trojans who are left behind will be able to found a city, and they will have a good Trojan king: Acestes, after whom the city will be named (Acesta).

• **What does Aeneas learn from the vision of his father?**

Even after receiving good advice from Nautes, Aeneas needs more encouragement to continue to go to Italy. He receives that encouragement when his father, Anchises, appears to him in a dream and tells him,

“O more than vital breath,
 Lov'd while I liv'd, and dear ev'n after death;
 O son, in various toils and troubles toss'd,
 The King of Heav'n employs my careful ghost
 On his commands: the god, who sav'd from fire
 Your flaming fleet, and heard your just desire.
 The wholesome counsel of your friend receive,
 And here the coward train and women leave:
 The chosen youth, and those who nobly dare,
 Transport, to tempt the dangers of the war.

The stern Italians will their courage try;
 Rough are their manners, and their minds are high.
 But first to Pluto's palace you shall go,
 And seek my shade among the blest below:
 For not with impious ghosts my soul remains,
 Nor suffers with the damn'd perpetual pains,
 But breathes the living air of soft Elysian plains.
 The chaste Sibylla shall your steps convey,
 And blood of offer'd victims free the way.
 There shall you know what realms the gods assign,
 And learn the fates and fortunes of your line.
 But now, farewell! I vanish with the night,
 And feel the blast of heav'n's approaching light." (John Dryden)

Anchises tells Aeneas a number of things:

- Nautes gave you good advice. Leave the old, the weary, the female (yes, Virgil's society is sexist) in Sicily and continue on to Italy.
- Visit me in the Land of the Dead.

Like other ancient heroes (including Hercules and Ulysses), Aeneas must pay a visit to the Land of the Dead while he is still living. Aeneas will have a guide when he goes there: the Cumaean (Koo-MEE-an) Sibyl, a prophetess of Apollo.

Anchises will provide motivation for Aeneas to fulfill his destiny. He will show Aeneas his illustrious descendants. Currently, they are in the Land of the Dead, waiting to be born on Earth.

Dante picks up on the idea of a visit to the Land of the Dead and a guide from the *Aeneid*. In his *Inferno*, Dante the Pilgrim pays a visit to Hell although he is still living. His guide is Virgil, creator of the *Aeneid*.

Earlier, in Book 3, Helenus told Aeneas that he must pay a visit to the Cumaean (Koo-MEE-an) Sibyl. Helenus told Aeneas that the Sibyl can tell him about the Italians and about the battles that he must fight.

• What happens to the Trojan women?

Aeneas is heartened by the vision of his father. He does exactly what Nautes recommended that he do. The old Trojans and the Trojan women stay behind. Aeneas and the vigorous Trojan men set sail in the remaining ships.

The individual Trojans decide whether to stay on Sicily with the buried Anchises or go to Italy with the young, living Ascanius. The choice is between the past and the future.

Now, Aeneas has a band of vigorous male Trojans to lead.

Now the Trojan women are gone, with one exception: a mother who does not want to leave her son. The Trojan women need to be disposed of because Aeneas and the Trojans will become important ancestors of the Roman people. When they go to Italy, they will marry Italian women. From their descendants will arise the Roman people. The Romans believed that they were descended from Trojans and from Italians.

• **How did Neptune (whose Greek name is Poseidon) help Aeneas in the *Iliad*?**

What happens when Achilles and Aeneas meet in battle? Very little. The two exchange insults, Aeneas recites his ancestry, then the two fight. Poseidon rescues Aeneas because Aeneas must live to become an important ancestor of the Romans and he is afraid that Achilles will alter the course of fate by killing him. Poseidon says to Hera:

“So come, let us rescue him from death ourselves,
for fear the son of Cronus might just tower in rage
if Achilles kills this man. He is destined to survive.” (20.347-349 Fagles, *Iliad*)

and

“[...] Aeneas will rule the men of Troy in power —
his sons’ sons and the sons born in future years.” (20.355-356 Fagles, *Iliad*)

Aeneas is the hero of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, which is to the Romans what Homer’s works were to the ancient Greeks. Virgil died in 19 B.C.E., and his *Aeneid* was published after his death, against his wishes. Because we think that Homer’s *Iliad* was written down circa 730 B.C.E., there is a span of over 700 years between the two great epic poems.

• **Write a brief character analysis of Palinurus.**

Aeneas and the remaining Trojans set sail to Italy.

At this time, Venus speaks to Neptune, god of the sea. Venus is worried about the hatred of Juno for the Trojans, and Venus wants Neptune to allow the Trojans to reach Italy safely.

Neptune promises to allow the Trojans to reach Italy safely — with one exception. Palinurus, the pilot of Aeneas’ ship, must die.

This happens. Although Palinurus is portrayed as a competent pilot trying hard to do his duty, he falls asleep (helped by the god of Sleep) and falls overboard and drowns.

Palinurus does not fall asleep easily. He tells the god of Sleep:

“Me dost thou bid to trust the treach’rous deep,
The harlot smiles of her dissembling face,
And to her faith commit the Trojan race?
Shall I believe the Siren South again,

And, oft betray'd, not know the monster main?" (John Dryden)

• **What is the river Lethe?**

Palinurus knows that the sea can be treacherous, and he does not fall asleep when the god of Sleep first bids him do that. Instead, the god of Sleep dips a branch in the waters of the river Lethe and then lets the water drip into Palinurus' eyes.

Lethe makes people forget. Here Palinurus forgets his duty and falls asleep. In Dante's *Purgatory*, saved souls who have climbed up the Mountain of Purgatory and reached the Earthly Paradise (the Forest of Eden) drink from two streams: Lethe and Eunoe:

1) *The Lethe*

"Lethe" means oblivion. Drinking from this stream will remove the sting of sin. We read in Dante's *Purgatory* that drinking from this stream will "erase sin's memory" (28.128 Musa, *Purgatory*); however, in Paradise, the souls realize that they have been forgiven although they have sinned. Also, some of the souls whom Dante speaks to in Paradise remain aware of their sins. Therefore, it is more accurate to say that this stream erases the sting of our sins. Souls in Paradise are aware that they have sinned, and they are grateful to have been forgiven for their sins.

2) *The Eunoe*

"Eunoe" means well-minded. Drinking from this stream revives the memory of good deeds that one has performed in one's life.

Matelda tells Dante,

"The water here on this side flows with power
to erase sin's memory; and on that side
the memory of good deeds is restored;
it is called Lethe here, Eunoe there
beyond, and if one does not first drink here,
he will not come to know its powers there — " (28.127-132 Musa, *Purgatory*)

Matelda adds,

"Those who in ancient times have feigned in song
The Age of Gold and its felicity,
Dreamed of this place perhaps upon Parnassus.
Here was the human race in innocence;
Here evermore was Spring, and every fruit;
This is the nectar of which each one speaks." (28.139-144 Longfellow, *Purgatory*)

Hearing this, Dante turns around and looks at two “poets of long ago” (28.139 Musa, *Purgatory*) — Virgil and Statius — and he sees that they are smiling.

• **How is the episode with Palinurus influenced by Homer’s *Odyssey*?**

Both Palinurus and a character named Elpenor died right before the heroes of their respective epic poems make a visit to the Land of the Dead.

Palinurus’ death is more dignified than Elpenor’s death. Palinurus is doing his best to do his duty as pilot. Elpenor gets drunk, climbs to the top of a roof to sleep (it’s cooler up there), and in the morning falls off the roof and dies.

Odysseus (Ulysses) met Elpenor near the Land of the Dead, and Aeneas will meet Palinurus in the Land of the Dead.

• **How does Book 5 end?**

Book 5 ends with Aeneas finding the ship drifting without a pilot; this is how he finds out that Palinurus has fallen overboard and has died.

Aeneid, Book 6: The World Below / The Kingdom of the Dead

Important Term

Nekuia: A work describing a visit — usually by a living person — to the Land of the Dead.

• What is stressed in Book 6?

An important event that occurs in Book 6 is that Aeneas and the Trojans land in Italy; however, a more important event — and the event that is stressed — is Aeneas' visit to the Land of the Dead.

Later, in Book 7, Aeneas will visit the future site of Rome. That is an important visit, and it is stressed in Book 7.

In Book 6, Aeneas and the Trojans land near Naples, at Cumae (KOO-mee). Aeneas must consult the Cumaean Sibyl and visit the Land of the Dead with her as his guide. In the Land of the Dead, he will consult his father. Also, in the Land of the Dead Aeneas will be newly motivated to fulfill his destiny.

We can easily see Book 6 as a turning point in the *Aeneid*. In Book 6, Aeneas' wanderings come to an end. He has been trying to find the land where he is destined to become an important ancestor of an important people. In Book 6, he does exactly that. In addition, as a result of his visit to the Land of the Dead, he is greatly motivated to finish fulfilling his destiny. He needs to establish himself in Italy and to take an Italian princess as his bride.

In addition, Book 6 is one of the central books of the 12-book-long *Aeneid*. Often, in literature the central parts are of particular importance.

• Aeneas' trip to the Underworld is modeled on Odysseus' trip to the Underworld in Homer's *Odyssey*.

As so often, parts of the *Aeneid* are modeled on Homer's great epics the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas visits the Land of the Dead, is modeled on Book 11 of the *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus visits the Land of the Dead.

As always, Virgil does not blindly imitate Homer; instead, he adapts Homer's situations for his own purposes. The visits to the Land of the Dead in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* are similar in many ways, but they also have significant differences.

• Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are similar in that both meet a friend who is unburied and who cannot cross the River Styx.

Odysseus sees the dead Elpenor, who begs Odysseus to bury him so that he can enter the Land of the Dead.

Aeneas sees the dead Palinurus, his pilot, who cannot cross the River Styx and enter the Underworld because he is unburied.

- **Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are similar in that both make their visits to the Land of the Dead in order to seek information from the spirit of a dead person.**

Odysseus consults the blind Theban prophet Tiresias, who gives him advice about how to reach Ithaca quickly and safely. Aeneas consults the spirit of his dead father, Anchises, who shows him his future descendants and tells him what will result if he fulfills his destiny. Aeneas is newly and greatly motivated to achieve his destiny as a result of his visit to the Land of the Dead.

- **Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are similar in that both see loved ones in the Land of the Dead.**

Odysseus discovers that his mother, Anticleia, is dead when he sees her spirit in the Land of the Dead. He tries to embrace her three times, but because she is a spirit, he is unable to hug her. Aeneas sees the spirit of his dead father, Anchises, in the Land of the Dead. Aeneas, of course, knows that his father is dead. Like Odysseus tried to hug his mother, Aeneas tries to embrace his father three times, but he fails because his father is a spirit.

- **Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are similar in that both see someone who is angry at them.**

Odysseus sees the soul of Great Ajax, who is angry at him. The meeting of Odysseus and Great Ajax is a very famous scene that later authors took note of. We remember that Great Ajax committed suicide. After the death of Achilles, Thetis wanted to give away his armor. Both Odysseus and Great Ajax wanted it. The judges were "Pallas [Athena] and captive Trojans" (11.625 Fagles, *Odyssey*). They voted, and they awarded Odysseus his armor. Of course, Pallas Athena favors Odysseus — she is his patron goddess — so perhaps it is no surprise that he is awarded Achilles' armor.

This made Great Ajax angry, and in a fit of insanity he slaughtered sheep that he thought were Odysseus and Agamemnon. After recovering from his insanity, Great Ajax was so ashamed that he committed suicide.

In the Land of the Dead, Great Ajax is still angry at Odysseus, and he does not speak to him. Instead, he returns to the Land of the Dead.

This scene is echoed in Virgil's *Aeneid*. After the Trojan War, Aeneas and the other Trojan survivors of the war build ships and seek a new homeland. They journey to Carthage, where Aeneas has a love affair with Dido, the Carthaginian Queen. To fulfill his destiny, Aeneas must go to Italy, where he will become an important ancestor of the Roman people, who will have a great empire. When Aeneas leaves her, Dido commits suicide.

Later, just like Odysseus, Aeneas visits the Land of the Dead. He sees Dido there, and he speaks to her, but she ignores him, just like Great Ajax ignores Odysseus.

- **Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are different in that Odysseus does not seem to be in the Land of the Dead for much of his visit, but Aeneas is definitely in the Land of the Dead.**

For much of his visit to the Land of the Dead, Odysseus seems not to be actually underground, but instead at the entrance of the Land of the Dead. Odysseus is on Persephone's Island, which has one of the entrances to the Land of the Dead. Odysseus sacrifices animals at this entrance,

and the spirits come up out of the Land of the Dead to drink the blood of the slaughtered animals. This allows them to talk to Odysseus. However, Odysseus does see a few of the sinners of the Land of the Dead, so possibly he does enter the Land of the Dead later.

Aeneas, however, very definitely does go down into the Land of the Dead with the Cumaean Sibyl as his guide. He sees various parts of the Land of the Dead, including the Elysian Fields, which is where good people go.

• Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are different in that in the *Aeneid*, the Land of the Dead rewards good people, while in the *Odyssey*, the Land of the Dead is an unhappy place for everybody, good and bad.

In Book 11 of the *Odyssey*, the Land of the Dead is gloomy for everyone. The souls of the dead, excluding Tiresias, have lost their intellect. They are like bats. They are mindless. It seems that they have to drink blood in order to regain their human minds. Achilles, the greatest warrior of the Trojan War, says that he would prefer to be the slave of an impoverished farmer in the Land of the Living than to be the King of the Dead in the Land of the Dead. In Book 24, however, we get a much different picture. There the souls of the dead are able to speak to each other. We can look at the difference in the two accounts of the Underworld as being due to the purposes of the narrative:

1) In Book 11, Odysseus uses a *Nekuia* to tell a fascinating story to the Phaeacians so that they will give magnificent guest-gifts. He may be exaggerating or even lying in parts. For example, Odysseus uses his sword to prevent the shades from drinking the blood, but when he tries to embrace his dead mother, he cannot. If Odysseus is unable to touch a shade, why would they be afraid of his sword? A sword would be unlikely to touch or hurt them.

2) In Book 24, the bard uses a *Nekuia* to put to rest the comparandum of Odysseus to Agamemnon, and of Penelope to Clytemnestra. Odysseus did not experience the homecoming that Agamemnon did. Penelope is very much different from Clytemnestra. Even Agamemnon praises Penelope.

It is possible that the ghosts need a drink of blood to talk to a living soul, but that they don't need a drink of blood to talk among themselves. At the beginning of Book 24, we read that when Hermes leads the souls of the suitors to the Underworld, they make cries like bats. However, in the Underworld, they speak to each other normally. By the way, the suitors have not yet been buried. A little later, after this second *Nekuia*, the poet sings that the deaths of the suitors become known, and families gather and bury their dead: 24.456-464 Fagles, *Odyssey*.

Some very great sinners are punished especially in the Land of the Dead in Book 11 of the *Odyssey*. Late in Book 11 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus mentions some people who are being punished for the transgressions that they committed while they were alive.

Tantalus is Agamemnon's grandfather, and he was allowed to drink nectar and eat ambrosia, the gods' drink and food. However, he committed a crime. One myth states that he wanted to share the gods' nectar and ambrosia with other mortals. Another myth states that he killed and cooked his own son and served him to the gods to show that they were not omniscient. However, only one goddess (Demeter) took a bite of the food. She ate a bit of Tantalus' son's shoulder. The gods brought the son back to life (going against fate?), replacing the bit of shoulder with ivory,

and punishing Tantalus forever. By the way, Tantalus' son was Pelops, who started the Olympic Games.

Because of his transgression, Tantalus is punished by standing in a stream of water forever while being forever hungry and thirsty. Above his head are branches with ripe fruit, but whenever he raises his hands to reach the fruit so that he can eat it, the wind blows the branch and its fruit out of his reach. And whenever he bends down to drink the water, the water recedes from him. So Tantalus is always hungry and thirsty, and he is always looking at fruit and water that he cannot eat or drink.

From the name Tantalus, we get our word “tantalizing,” which is a desire for something that we can't have.

We should note that the Land of the Dead is not a good place to be. Even the ghosts who are not punished have a bleak afterlife. According to Book 11 of the *Odyssey*, they do not have human intelligence until they have a drink of blood.

Sisyphus is a trickster who even managed to use trickery to get out of the Land of the Dead after he had died. When he was on his deathbed, he told his wife not to perform his funeral rites. In the Land of the Dead, he complained about his wife to Hades, the god of the Underworld. Hades allowed Sisyphus to return to the Land of the Living, with the understanding that he would return to the Land of the Dead after his funeral rites were performed. Sisyphus, however, stayed in the Land of the Living for a very long time. Sisyphus is punished with meaningless work. He rolls a boulder up a hill, and just when he is about to push it over the hill and down the other side, the boulder rolls back down the hill again. Sisyphus is condemned to never reach his goal of rolling the boulder down the other side of the hill. The Existentialist philosopher Albert Camus wrote a famous essay titled “The Myth of Sisyphus,” in which he argued that Sisyphus is in the same situation as normal, living human beings. What we do is essentially meaningless, but nevertheless, we — and Sisyphus — can find happiness.

Later, the afterlife became more desirable. In Virgil's *Aeneid*, the good souls are in the Elysium Fields, which is a happy place to be. Bad people go to Tartarus, while good people go to Elysium.

However, in Book 4 of the *Odyssey*, the sea-god Proteus gives an interesting description of the Elysian Fields, which suggests that good people have a good time in the Land of the Dead:

the Elysian Fields, where gold-haired Rhadamanthys waits,
where life glides on in immortal ease for mortal man;
no snow, no winter onslaught, never a downpour there
but night and day the Ocean River sends up breezes,
singing winds of the West refreshing all mankind. (4.635-639 Fagles, *Odyssey*)

Possibly, in Homer there is a place where good souls go after death, but Odysseus did not see it where he visited the Land of the Dead because he did not go deep enough underground. Possibly, in Book 24 of the *Odyssey* we see the souls in the Elysium Fields. Possibly, souls need to drink blood in order to talk to the living Odysseus, but while souls are in the Elysium Fields they do not need to drink blood in order to talk to each other.

Aeneas enters the Underworld. He goes underground with the Sibyl as his guide, and he sees various parts of the Land of the Dead.

• Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are different in that in the *Aeneid*, the location of the entrance to the Land of the Dead is specific, while in the *Odyssey* the location of the entrance to the Land of the Dead is vague.

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus sails out into the River Ocean, which flows around the land of the Earth. The Mediterranean is in the middle of the land. Land surrounds the Mediterranean, and the River Ocean is around all the land. We would say that Odysseus sails into the Atlantic Ocean, where he lands on Persephone's Island. (Persephone is the Queen of the Underworld.)

In the *Aeneid*, one of several entrances to the Land of the Dead is located near Naples. Supposedly, the landmarks that Virgil mentions can still be seen today. Therefore, the entrance to the Underworld is much more specific in the *Aeneid* than it is in the *Odyssey*.

• Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are different in that in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus tells the story of his trip to the Underworld using first-person narration, while in the *Aeneid*, an omniscient narrator tells the story of Aeneas' visit to the Underworld.

Odysseus tells his own story in the *Odyssey*. Also, of course, Odysseus is a talented liar in the *Odyssey* — when he returns to Ithaca he must lie convincingly in order to stay alive. This can bring up the question of whether Odysseus is exaggerating or outright lying when he tells the story of his visit to the Underworld.

In the *Aeneid*, an omniscient narrator tells the story of Aeneas' visit to the Underworld. We give credence to omniscient narrators, and so we believe this section of the *Aeneid* as much as we believe the rest of the *Aeneid*. (As in watching a play, the audience makes a willing suspension of disbelief while reading epic poetry; after all, we no longer believe in the ancient Greek and Roman gods.)

• Aeneas' and Odysseus' trips to the Underworld are different in that in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus does not have a guide, while in the *Aeneid*, Aeneas does have a guide: the Cumaean Sibyl.

Odysseus gets directions to Persephone's island from the goddess Circe, but she does not accompany him to the Land of the Dead. Odysseus and his men sail there on their own.

Aeneas is accompanied by the Cumaean Sibyl when he visits the Land of the Dead.

• Write a brief character analysis of the Cumaean Sibyl.

The Sibyl of Cumae (KOO-mee) is one of a number of famous female prophets in the ancient world. The others were located at Cimmeria, Delphi, Erythraea, Libya, Marpeesus, Samos, Persia, Phrygia, and Tibur.

These female prophets were real. There really is a cave of the Sibyl in Cumae near Naples.

In the *Aeneid* we read that the Sibyl wrote prophecies on leaves, which would be scattered by the wind.

One story about the Cumaean Sibyl is that she appeared before Tarquin II of Rome with nine volumes of prophecies. She offered the volumes to Tarquin II of Rome at a high price, which he refused to pay. She then burned three volumes and offered him the remaining volumes at the same high price that he had refused to pay before. Again he declined to pay the high price. Again she burned three volumes and offered him the remaining volumes at the same high price that he had refused to pay before. This time he bought the three remaining volumes.

Another story about the Cumaean Sibyl is that Apollo fell in love with her and wanted her to sleep with him. She agreed, but in return she asked to be allowed to live for as many years as the grains of sand that she could grab in her hands. Unfortunately, she forgot to ask for youth to go along with long life, and so she grows older and older and older. Whenever people ask her what she wants, she replies, "I want to die." Many stories of ancient mythology make the point that immortality (or a life of many, many years) does not work for human beings.

By the way, the Cumaean Sibyl has a name. She is "Deiphobe, Glaucus' daughter" (6.43 Fagles).

• **Which artwork appears on Apollo's temple? Who created the artwork?**

The Sibyl lives in a cave. Outside the cave is a grove of trees that is sacred to Diana. Also outside the cave is a temple to Apollo, with artwork created by Daedalus. Daedalus is the first man who was able to fly, and when he landed at Cumae after using his artificial wings to escape from Crete, he built the temple to Apollo and he created the artwork of the temple. He also dedicated his wings to Apollo.

The Death of Androgeos

On a gate of the temple, Daedalus created an artwork depicting the death of Androgeos.

Androgeos was the son of King Minos of Crete. He competed in athletic contests, but the Athenian losers were jealous of his victories and murdered him. As a result of the murder, King Minos demanded that the Athenians periodically pay a tribute to Crete of young men and young women. These young people were then devoured by the Minotaur.

Pasiphaë

On another gate Daedalus created an artwork that depicted the story of Pasiphaë and the Minotaur.

Pasiphaë is guilty of misusing sex. In particular, she is guilty of bestiality: having sex with an animal. She was a Queen of Crete who fell in love with a bull, so she commissioned Daedalus to create an artificial cow for her to creep into. The bull made love to the artificial cow (and to Pasiphaë), and Pasiphaë conceived and gave birth to the Minotaur, a mythical half-human, half-bull creature that feasted on human flesh.

The Minotaur lived in a maze that no one was able to get out of. The young men and young women sent periodically to Crete from Athens were put in the maze, and the Minotaur killed them and feasted on their bodies.

Eventually, Theseus of Athens arrived to kill the Minotaur. Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, helped him by giving him a spool of string that Theseus used to get out of the maze after he had killed the Minotaur.

Icarus: An Artwork that Daedalus Did Not Finish

Daedalus tried twice to depict the fall of Icarus, his son, out of the sky, but he failed both times out of grief for the death of his son.

Icarus is the son of Daedalus. Daedalus built the wooden cow that Pasiphaë crept into when she fell in love with a bull and wanted the bull to make love to her. After Pasiphaë gave birth to the Minotaur, Daedalus built the Labyrinth that housed the Minotaur. Obviously, Daedalus was ingenious, but he doesn't seem to have always used his ingenuity to accomplish good things.

Daedalus was imprisoned with his son, and he fashioned wings made out of wax and feathers so that they could fly away from the island where they were imprisoned. He warned his son not to fly too high, for if he did the sun would melt the wax, the feathers would fly out, and he would fall into the sea and drown.

This is exactly what happened. Icarus became excited because he was flying, he flew too high, the wax of his wings melted, and he drowned.

• **What does the Sibyl prophesy for Aeneas? How else does she help him?**

The Cumaean Sibyl helps Aeneas by prophesying for him:

- War lies in store for Aeneas and the Trojans. She sees the Tiber River bloody.
- Another Achilles shall appear to challenge Aeneas and the Trojans.
- Juno is still angry at Aeneas.
- A foreign bride will cause great misery for the Trojans just as Helen caused great misery for the Trojans.
- Aeneas and the Trojans will get help from an unexpected source: a town settled by Greeks from Arcadia.

This is the Cumaean Sibyl's prophecy:

The coast, so long desir'd (nor doubt th' event),
 Thy troops shall reach, but, having reach'd, repent.
 Wars, horrid wars, I view — a field of blood,
 And Tiber rolling with a purple flood.
 Simois nor Xanthus shall be wanting there:
 A new Achilles shall in arms appear,
 And he, too, goddess-born.
 Fierce Juno's hate,
 Added to hostile force, shall urge thy fate.
 To what strange nations shalt not thou resort,

Driv'n to solicit aid at ev'ry court!
 The cause the same which Ilium once oppress'd;
 A foreign mistress, and a foreign guest.
 But thou, secure of soul, unbent with woes,
 The more thy fortune frowns, the more oppose.
 The dawns of thy safety shall be shown
 From whence thou least shalt hope, a Grecian town." (John Dryden)

• Who are some of the ancient heroes who have entered the Land of the Dead while they were living?

Orpheus

Orpheus was supposed to marry Eurydice, but she died on their wedding day. He went down to the Underworld and asked Hades to allow her to return to the Land of the Living. He was a master of the lyre, and his music convinced Hades to allow Eurydice to return to the Land of the Living — on one condition: Orpheus could not turn around and look at her until the two had reached the Land of the Living. Unfortunately, Orpheus gave in to temptation and did turn around and look at her. Because he had broken the condition set by Hades, Eurydice had to stay in the Underworld.

Theseus

Theseus had a friend named Perithous who wanted to be married to Persephone, whom Hades, the lord of the Underworld, had kidnapped. Theseus and Perithous went down into the Land of the Dead to speak to Hades and try to get Persephone back. The plan did not work. Hades bade them sit in a chair, and once they sat in the chair they were unable to stand up again. They were held captive in the chair.

Hercules

Hercules entered the Underworld as part of his Twelve Labors. His main task was to capture the three-headed dog, Cerberus, and take him up the Land of the Living, but he also freed Theseus while he was down in the Land of the Living. He tried to free Perithous, but the earth shook so much that he was afraid to release him.

• What does the Sibyl tell Aeneas about getting out of the Underworld?

The Cumaean Sibyl is capable of black humor. When Aeneas asks her about visiting the Land of the Dead, she replies that the hard part is not going to the Land of the Dead but returning to the Land of the Living.

She says,

"The way downward is easy from Avernus.
 Black Dis's door stands open night and day.

But to retrace your steps to heaven's air,

There is the trouble, there is the toil." (6.187-190 Fitzgerald)

(Avernus is another name for the Underworld.)

Of course, the Sibyl is correct. It is easy to get to the Land of the Dead. All you have to do is to die. But to get back to the Land of the Living is very difficult. Only a few ancient heroes have done that.

• **What happens when Aeneas finds the golden bough?**

Before Aeneas will be able to descend into the Underworld, something that few men — and most of them were the sons of a god or goddess (Ulysses is an exception) — he must perform a task. He must go into the woods and find a golden bough.

Aeneas will have to grab the golden bough and tear it off the tree. The Sibyl tells him that if he is fated to go into the Land of the Dead as a living man, then the bough will break off easily, but if Aeneas is not fated to go into the Land of the Dead as a living man, then the bough will not break off, no matter how Aeneas tries to break it off:

"The willing metal will obey thy hand,

Following with ease, if favor'd by thy fate,

Thou art foredoom'd to view the Stygian state:

If not, no labor can the tree constrain;

And strength of stubborn arms and steel are vain." (John Dryden)

Aeneas gets divine help after he prays to his mother, Venus, for help in finding the golden bough. Two doves, birds sacred to Venus, lead him to the golden bough.

When Aeneas breaks off the golden bough, it hesitates, then breaks:

Aeneas at once took hold of it [the golden bough]

And, though it clung, greedily broke it off,

Then took it to the Sibyl's cave. (6.297-299 Fitzgerald)

Earlier, the Sibyl had told him this:

"Pull away the bough. It will come willingly,

Easily, if you are called by fate.

If not, with all your strength you cannot conquer it,

Cannot lop it off with a sword's edge." (6.214-217 Fitzgerald)

Why does the bough hesitate or cling to the tree? It may be a symbol of the *molis* (hardship) of founding Rome.

• **Who must Aeneas bury before entering the Underworld?**

Aeneas is unable to enter the Underworld immediately, although he has the golden bough. Instead, he must bury Misenus (meyer-SEE-nus), who died after challenging the gods to a contest involving a musical instrument: a trumpet:

Swoln with applause, and aiming still at more,
 He now provokes the sea gods from the shore;
 With envy Triton heard the martial sound,
 And the bold champion, for his challenge, drown'd;
 Then cast his mangled carcass on the strand:
 The gazing crowd around the body stand.
 All weep; but most Aeneas mourns his fate,
 And hastens to perform the funeral state. (John Dryden)

The translation by Robert Fagles makes clear the Misenus challenged the gods: “the madman challenged the gods to match him blast for blast” (6.205 Fagles).

Aeneas and his men bury Misenus and make the proper sacrifices to the gods.

Aeneas, of course, is going to the land ruled by Hades. If Aeneas were to be proud like Misenus, he may not return from Hades.

• **Why does Virgil invoke the gods?**

When Aeneas and the Sibyl enter the Underworld, Virgil invokes the gods. This is something that epic poets do when they are about to describe something important. And certainly a trip by a living person into the Underworld is important:

Ye realms, yet unreveal'd to human sight,
 Ye gods who rule the regions of the night,
 Ye gliding ghosts, permit me to relate
 The mystic wonders of your silent state! (John Dryden)

• **Who are the guards at the entrance to the Underworld?**

The guards at the entrance of the Underworld are interesting because they are personifications of ills besetting Humankind. They include Cares and Sorrows and Diseases and Age and Toils and Death and Sleep (Sleep can be a blessing, but it is also related to Death) and Frauds and Force and Strife:

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,
 Revengeful Cares and sullen Sorrows dwell,
 And pale Diseases, and repining Age,

Want, Fear, and Famine's unresisted rage;
 Here Toils, and Death, and Death's half-brother, Sleep,
 Forms terrible to view, their sentry keep;
 With anxious Pleasures of a guilty mind,
 Deep Frauds before, and open Force behind;
 The Furies' iron beds; and Strife, that shakes
 Her hissing tresses and unfolds her snakes. (John Dryden)

In addition, mythological creatures guard the entrance to the Underworld. In the passages above, the Furies are mentioned, but Centaurs, Harpies, and Gorgons also are present.

A tree with empty dreams is also present.

• According to the Sibyl, how long do dead people who have not had a funeral have to wait until they can be ferried across the River Styx by Charon and enter the Underworld?

We find out that unburied people have to wait 100 years before they can be ferried across the River Styx by Charon and enter the Underworld. Apparently, after 100 years natural forces will bury their bones. Here is an important passage, which is spoken by Palinurus:

“And no spirits may be conveyed
 across the horrendous banks and hoarse, roaring flood
 until their bones are buried, and they rest in peace ...
 A hundred years they wander, hovering around these shores
 till at last they may return and see once more the pools
 they long to cross.” (Fagles 6.371-376)

• Palinurus' account of his death is different from the account we read at the end of Book 5. What can account for that inconsistency?

On the shore of the River Styx, Aeneas meets the spirit of Palinurus, his pilot, who cannot cross the River Styx because he is unburied. As we have seen, to be ferried across the River Styx by Charon, the soul must be either unburied or to have been dead for 100 years.

Just as Odysseus spoke to the dead Elpenor in the *Odyssey*, so Aeneas speaks to the dead Palinurus. Aeneas does not know how Palinurus died. Aeneas saw that his ship had no pilot and guessed that Palinurus had drowned. Therefore, Aeneas asks Palinurus how he died.

Here we have a narrative inconsistency — or at least what looks like a narrative inconsistency. At the end of Book 5, we read that the god of Sleep made Palinurus fall asleep and fall overboard. Palinurus was doing his best to do his duty, but the gods were against him, and the gods are very powerful. Neptune wanted Palinurus to die as a kind of tribute or sacrifice to him. Neptune would not kill everyone on board the ship, but he would kill Palinurus.

However, Palinurus tells a different story. He says that the rudder of the ship broke and pulled him overboard.

Here are a couple of ways to explain the inconsistency:

1. The inconsistency is evidence of the incompleteness of the *Aeneid*. When Virgil died, the *Aeneid* was almost, but not quite, finished. Here we have an inconsistency that Virgil would have corrected had he lived longer.
2. Palinurus is lying to make himself look better. He doesn't want to tell Aeneas that he fell asleep on his watch and then fell overboard; therefore, he makes up a better story, one that makes him look better.

Note that the evidence backs up both stories. At the end of Book 5, we read that when Palinurus fell asleep and then fell overboard, the rudder was torn off:

The pilot, vanquish'd by the pow'r divine,
 Soon clos'd his swimming eyes, and lay supine.
 Scarce were his limbs extended at their length,
 The god, insulting with superior strength,
 Fell heavy on him, plung'd him in the sea,
 And, with the stern, the rudder tore away. (John Dryden)

• **Why can't Palinurus cross the Styx?**

Palinurus would like to cross the River Styx with Aeneas, but he cannot. As the Sibyl tells him, he is still unburied and so cannot cross the River Styx. However, the Sibyl gives him some good news. Some neighboring people will build a tomb for him. Also, the site of his tomb will be named after him:

“What hopes delude thee, miserable man?
 Think'st thou, thus unintomb'd, to cross the floods,
 To view the Furies and infernal gods,
 And visit, without leave, the dark abodes?
 Attend the term of long revolving years;
 Fate, and the dooming gods, are deaf to tears.
 This comfort of thy dire misfortune take:
 The wrath of Heav'n, inflicted for thy sake,
 With vengeance shall pursue th' inhuman coast,
 Till they propitiate thy offended ghost,
 And raise a tomb, with vows and solemn pray'r;

And Palinurus' name the place shall bear."

This calm'd his cares; sooth'd with his future fame,

And pleas'd to hear his propagated name. (John Dryden)

• **How does Aeneas get across the River Styx? Why does Charon object to taking Aeneas across the Styx?**

At this point, Aeneas and the Sibyl must cross the Styx. The way to cross the Styx is to be ferried across by the ferryman Charon (CARE-on). Once souls have crossed the Styx, they are in the Underworld proper.

Charon does not want to take Aeneas across the Styx because Aeneas is still a living man, and when Charon has let a living man into the Underworld, often there has been trouble. For example, Hercules went down into the Underworld, and when he came out again he took the three-headed dog, Cerberus, with him. And when Theseus went down into the Underworld, he was trying to bring out with him Persephone, the wife of Hades.

Fortunately, the Sibyl reassures Charon that Aeneas is not like the other living heroes who have caused trouble in the Underworld. She says,

"The man of Troy, Aeneas,

Remarkable for loyalty, great in arms,

Goes through the deepest shades of Erebus

To see his father." (6.542-545 Fitzgerald)

In addition, the Sibyl points out that Aeneas has the golden bough with him. The possession of the golden bough is evidence that yes, Aeneas ought to be allowed to visit the Underworld although he is still a living man.

Aeneas is allowed to board the ferryboat, which creaks because it is not used to the weight of a living person:

The leaky coracle groaned at the weight

And took a flood of swampy water in. (6.559-560 Fitzgerald)

• **How do Aeneas and the Sibyl get past Cerberus the three-headed dog?**

Aeneas and the Sibyl get past Cerberus the three-headed dog because the Sibyl feeds Cerberus honey and drugged meal — the drug makes the three-headed dog sleep.

In Dante's *Inferno*, Cerberus guards the Gluttons. The third Circle of Hell punishes the Gluttons, whose guard is Cerberus, the three-headed dog of mythology. Cerberus is a fitting guard of the Gluttons because he is a Glutton himself — having three heads also means having three mouths to feed. When Aeneas visits the Underworld, his guide the Cumaean Sibyl quiets Cerberus by giving him something to eat. In Dante's *Inferno*, Dante the Pilgrim's guide, Virgil, also quiets Cerberus by giving him something to eat — in this case, Virgil throws gobs of mud down Cerberus's three throats. (In Virgil's *Aeneid*, when Aeneas journeys to the Underworld, his guide, the Sibyl, gives Cerberus honey-cakes that are drugged to make the three-headed dog

sleep.) Also, of course, having three heads means having six eyes — all the better to keep an eye on the sinners.

• **What does Aeneas see after he crosses the River Styx and before he sees the Fields of Mourning?**

The first thing that Aeneas sees when he crosses the River Styx is the place where these souls reside:

- The souls of infants.
- The souls of those who were unjustly condemned to die by judges and juries.
- The souls of suicides.

These souls mourn. The souls of the infants cry.

• **What happens when Aeneas meets Dido in the Fields of Mourning?**

Aeneas next sees the Fields of Mourning — in Latin, *Lugentes Campi*.

The Fields of Mourning is the residence of people who died for love. Dido is here, and when Aeneas sees her, she refuses to speak to him.

When Aeneas sees the ghost of Dido, we read,

He wept and spoke
 Tenderly to her: “Dido, so forlorn, [*infelix* is translated as “forlorn”]
 The story then that came to me was true,
 That you were out of life, had met your end
 By your own hand. Was I, was I the cause?
 I swear by heaven’s stars, by the high gods,
 By any certainty below the earth,
 I left your land against my will, my queen.
 The gods’ commands drove me to do their will,
 as now they drive me through this world of shades,
 These mouldy waste lands and these depths of night.
 And I could not believe that I would hurt you
 So terribly by going. Wait a little.
 Do not leave my sight.
 Am I someone to flee from? The last word
 Destiny lets me say to you is this.” (6.611-628 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas' words help us to understand his motivation in Book 4, when he left Dido to go to Italy and fulfill his destiny. Here in Robert Fitzgerald's translation he says that he left "against my will" (6.620). He had to put his destiny and the destiny of his descendants ahead of his love for Dido.

Dido declines to even talk to him. Instead, she silently walks away from him to the soul of her first husband, Sychaeus (si-KEE-us).

Aeneas, tearful, gazes after her, but then he rejoins the Sibyl and they continue their journey. In Book 6, as in Book 4, Aeneas leaves Dido to fulfill his destiny.

• **How is this scene with Dido influenced by Homer's *Odyssey*?**

This scene with Dido is influenced by Homer's *Odyssey* in two ways:

1. This is the first time that Aeneas knows that Dido has died, although he has heard rumors. Previously, he had seen the smoke rising from Carthage, but he had not known what it meant. This is similar to the episode in Odysseus' journey to the Underworld. There he learned for the first time that his mother, Anticleia, had died.
2. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus sees the ghost of Great Ajax, who is angry at him. Great Ajax will not speak to Odysseus, just as Dido will not speak to Aeneas.

The meeting of Odysseus and Great Ajax is a very famous scene that later authors took note of. We remember that Great Ajax committed suicide. After the death of Achilles, Thetis wanted to give away his armor. Both Odysseus and Great Ajax wanted it. The judges were "Pallas [Athena] and captive Trojans" (11.625 Fagles, *Odyssey*). They voted, and they awarded Odysseus the armor of Achilles. Of course, Pallas Athena favors Odysseus — she is his patron goddess — so perhaps it is no surprise that he is awarded Achilles' armor.

This made Great Ajax angry, and in a fit of insanity he slaughtered sheep that he thought were Odysseus and Agamemnon. After recovering from his insanity, Great Ajax was so ashamed that he committed suicide. The great Athenian tragedian Sophocles tells this story in his play *Ajax*.

In the Land of the Dead, Great Ajax is still angry at Odysseus, and he does not speak to him. Instead, he returns to the Land of the Dead.

This scene is echoed in Virgil's *Aeneid*. After the Trojan War, Aeneas and the other Trojan survivors of the war build ships and seek a new homeland. They journey to Carthage, where Aeneas has a love affair with Dido, the Carthaginian Queen. To fulfill his destiny, Aeneas must go to Italy, where he will become an important ancestor of the Roman people, who will have a great empire. When Aeneas leaves her, Dido commits suicide.

Just like Odysseus, Aeneas visits the Land of the Dead. He sees Dido there, and he speaks to her, but she ignores him, just like Great Ajax ignores Odysseus.

• **What happens when the ghosts of the Achaeans see Aeneas in the region of the underworld that is devoted to the spirits of people renowned in war?**

After the encounter with Dido, Aeneas and the Sibyl visit the part of the Underworld that is inhabited by the spirits of warriors.

The ghosts of the Achaeans see Aeneas, and many of them are frightened and ran away. Others try to raise a war-cry, but because they are spirits, they cannot:

Seeing the living man in bronze that glowed
 Through the dark air, they shrank in fear. Some turned
 And ran, as once, when routed, to the ships
 While others raised a battle shout, or tried to,
 Mouths agape, mocked by the whispering cry. (6.659-663 Fitzgerald)

• **What is the story of Deiphobus (dee-IF-o-bus)?**

Aeneas meets the Trojan prince Deiphobus (dee-IF-o-bus), who tells the story of his betrayal by Helen, and who was killed by Menelaus and Ulysses.

Helen, of course, was married to Menelaus, but she either ran willingly away with or was kidnapped by the Trojan prince Paris. After Paris died in the Trojan War (he was killed by Philoctetes), Helen married Deiphobus.

In mythology, whether Helen is on the side of the Greeks or the Trojans is ambiguous. In Homer's *Odyssey*, the story that Menelaus tells to Telemachus certainly makes the case that Helen is on the side of the Trojans — she tried to get the Greek warriors, including Menelaus, inside the Trojan Horse, killed. (But the story that Helen tells to Telemachus makes the case that she is on the side of Greeks.)

In Deiphobus' story, Helen is on the side of the Greeks. She signaled Agamemnon and the Greek armies when it was time to attack Troy:

“You know in what deluding joys we pass’d
 The night that was by Heav’n decreed our last:
 For, when the fatal horse, descending down,
 Pregnant with arms, o’erwhelm’d th’ unhappy town
 She [Helen] feign’d nocturnal orgies; left my bed,
 And, mix’d with Trojan dames, the dances led;
 Then, waving high her torch, the signal made,
 Which rous’d the Grecians from their ambuscade.” (John Dryden)

The “orgies” John Dryden refers to are religious (not sexual) orgies that the followers of Bacchus engaged in.

Helen also led Menelaus and Ulysses to Deiphobus (dee-IF-o-bus) during the fall of Troy. The two Greek warriors mutilated and killed him. Basically, they tortured him, and then they killed him.

The mutilations that Menelaus and Ulysses inflicted on Deiphobus are still apparent in death:

Here Priam's son, Deiphobus, he [Aeneas] found,
 Whose face and limbs were one continued wound:
 Dishonest, with lopp'd arms, the youth appears,
 Spoil'd of his nose, and shorten'd of his ears.
 He scarcely knew him, striving to disown
 His blotted form, and blushing to be known;
 And therefore first began: "O Teucer's race,
 Who durst thy faultless figure thus deface?
 What heart could wish, what hand inflict, this dire disgrace?" (John Dryden)

• **How is the scene with Deiphobus influenced by Homer's *Odyssey*?**

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus learns of Agamemnon's death during his visit to the Land of the Dead.

Agamemnon had a treacherous wife, and so did Deiphobus. In each case, their wives got them killed.

When Agamemnon returned from the Trojan War, a 10-year war, his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover, Aegisthus, killed him.

As with Anticleia, Odysseus had not known that Agamemnon was dead. Aeneas had heard rumors that Deiphobus died during the Fall of Troy.

• **The road now divides into two forks. Where do those forks lead?**

The fork leading to the right goes to Elysium or the "Blessed or Fortunate Groves," where good souls are rewarded.

The fork leading to the left goes to Tartarus, where evil souls are punished.

Aeneas and the Sibyl go left toward Elysium, where Aeneas will meet his father; however, the Sibyl tells him about some of the souls being punished in Tartarus. However, she adds,

"Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues,
 And throats of brass, inspir'd with iron lungs,
 I could not half those horrid crimes repeat,
 Nor half the punishments those crimes have met." (John Dryden)

• **What is Anchises doing when Aeneas sees him in the Underworld?**

Aeneas has gone into the Underworld to see his father, Anchises, just as Odysseus went into the Underworld to consult the famous Theban prophet named Tiresias. In both cases, the heroes gain important information.

In Elysium, Anchises is looking at his future descendants. The ones who are named are important Romans and Roman ancestors.

The story of Aeneas is more important historically than the story of Odysseus. If Odysseus had not returned home to Ithaca, someone else would have taken his place as King of Ithaca, and history would not be different. Of course, in art, we would not have had Homer's *Odyssey* (assuming that the epic poem is based on a kernel of historical fact).

Aeneas' story is much different. In the world of the epic poem, we are supposed to believe that if Aeneas had not made his way to Italy and married an Italian princess, then there would have been no Roman people and no Roman empire.

• **What belief in reincarnation does Anchises express in Elysium?**

Anchises is viewing a number of heroes, and he tells Aeneas that these are souls who will be reborn into the Land of the Living.

The souls who will be reborn drink from the Lethe River, which is the river of forgetfulness. By doing so, they forget their past lives and are reborn into a new life.

When a good person dies, that person is purged of his sins, then sent to Elysium. There they stay for 1,000 years. After that time, they drink from the Lethe River and are reborn into the Land of the Living. Anchises tells Aeneas,

Nor death itself can wholly wash their stains;
 But long-contracted filth ev'n in the soul remains.
 The relics of inveterate vice they wear,
 And spots of sin obscene in ev'ry face appear.
 For this are various penances enjoin'd;
 And some are hung to bleach upon the wind,
 Some plung'd in waters, others purg'd in fires,
 Till all the dregs are drain'd, and all the rust expires.
 All have their manes, and those manes bear:
 The few, so cleans'd, to these abodes repair,
 And breathe, in ample fields, the soft Elysian air.
 Then are they happy, when by length of time
 The scurf is worn away of each committed crime;
 No speck is left of their habitual stains,
 But the pure ether of the soul remains.
 But, when a thousand rolling years are past,

(So long their punishments and penance last,
 Whole droves of minds are, by the driving god,
 Compell'd to drink the deep Lethaeon flood,
 In large forgetful draughts to steep the cares
 Of their past labors, and their irksome years,
 That, unrememb'ring of its former pain,
 The soul may suffer mortal flesh again. (John Dryden)

• **What are the two main purposes of the Pageant of Heroes?**

The famous “Pageant of Heroes” is the culminating point of Book 6.

Aeneas and Anchises watch the souls of their future descendants walk past them. Anchises tells his son the names of the souls and something about their history.

The Pageant of Heroes has two main functions:

1) Pageant of Heroes: Reaffirms Aeneas' Purpose

The Pageant of Heroes reaffirms Aeneas' purpose. Aeneas sees his descendants, and he is motivated to fulfill his destiny. He knows that if he fulfills his destiny he will be the ancestor of a mighty people and many heroes. He has something worth fighting for. Even though Aeneas has been discouraged in the past, as when the Trojan women tried to burn their fleet of ships, now he has new motivation to bear the hardship of founding the Roman people.

2) Pageant of Heroes: Reminds Romans of Their History

The Pageant of Heroes reminds Virgil's audience — both his contemporary audience and the audience he has had since then, including ourselves — of the major events of Roman history.

These heroes have had an important part to play in Roman history. The ancient Romans would hear the names and know what the heroes had done. Many of us moderns, however, need to do research to know who these heroes are.

Here we have a case both of prophecy and of history. For Aeneas, Anchises tells him a prophecy. For Virgil's audience, Anchises is recounting history.

• **Anchises tells Aeneas how Romans ought to act in 6.1151-1154 (Fitzgerald) / 6.981-984 (Fagles). Explain that advice in your own words.**

Anchises tells Aeneas how Romans ought to act in a very famous passage. Anchises looks at the soul who will be the general Fabius Maximus, and he says,

“Others will cast more tenderly in bronze
 Their breathing figures, I can well believe,

And bring more lifelike portraits out of marble;
 Argue more eloquently, use the pointer
 To trace the paths of heaven accurately
 And accurately foretell the rising stars.
 Roman, remember by your strength to rule
 Earth's peoples — for your arts are to be these:
 To pacify, to impose the rule of law,
 To spare the conquered, battle down the proud.” (6.1145-1154 Fitzgerald)

The last four lines are especially important.

In Latin, the word that is translated in line 1151 as “remember” is a future imperative. (An imperative is a command.) Anchises says, “Thou, Roman, shalt remember.”

Future imperatives are strong wordings. Think of the 10 Commandments: Thou shalt not kill, etc.

In this passage, Anchises is pointing out that the genius of the Roman people will lie in government. The Greeks and other peoples may be better at art and making speeches and doing astronomy, but the Roman people will be unmatched when it comes to government.

Of course, Anchises is expressing an ideal here. One question that will arise is how Aeneas and the future Romans adhere to that ideal. Will Aeneas and the future Romans “spare the conquered” (6.1154 Fitzgerald)? Is Virgil giving advice here to Caesar Augustus?

Here are the four most important lines as translated by Robert Fagles:

“But you, Roman, remember, rule with all your power
 the people of the earth — these will be your arts:
 to put your stamp on the works and ways of peace.
 to spare the defeated, break the proud in war.” (6.981-984 Fagles)

• **When Aeneas goes to see the Cumaean Sibyl, he sees a temple created by Daedalus (DEE-da-lus). What is the story of Daedalus?**

Daedalus certainly had talents. When Pasiphae, the Queen of Crete, fell in love with a bull, Daedalus created an artificial cow inside of which the Queen of Crete crept so that the bull would fall in love with her. From their union came the Minotaur.

When Daedalus was imprisoned along with his son, he created artificial wings out of feathers and wax so that he and his son, Icarus, could escape. His son flew too near the sun, the wax melted, the feathers molted, and he fell into the sea and drowned.

In three major places, we have works of art described in the *Aeneid*:

- 1) Book 1: Scenes of the Trojan War depicted on the doors of Juno's Temple in Carthage.

2) Book 6: Scenes from Daedalus' life depicted in the entrance to the temple to Apollo that he constructed.

3) Book 8: The description of the Shield of Aeneas.

• Can what can be learned from the story of Daedalus be compared to what can be learned from Anchises' advice?

Why do we have scenes from Daedalus' life depicted here? Daedalus had great intelligence and great talent, but he sometimes misused these gifts with unhappy consequences for himself and his son. Allowing Pasiphaë to make love to a bull and give birth to the Minotaur is a bad act.

The story of Daedalus shows that great gifts must be used wisely. Similarly, Anchises' exhortation to the Romans seems to be giving the same message. The Romans will have great power, but they must use that power wisely.

• Who is Silvius?

Silvius is the last-born son of Aeneas and his future Italian wife, Lavinia. Silvius will become king of the city of Alba Longa. (Ascanius will be the first King of Alba Longa.)

• Who is Silvius Aeneas?

Silvius Aeneas is the son of Silvius. He is another King of Alba Longa.

• Who is Romulus?

The King of Alba Longa was Amulius, who was an evil man who exiled his brother, Numitor, and forced his brother's daughter, Rhea Silvia, to become a Vestal Virgin. The god of Mars saw Rhea Silvia, desired her, and slept with her.

The unions of gods with mortal women are always fertile. Rhea Silvia gave birth to twins: Romulus and Remus. Because Vestal Virgins are supposed to be virgins, King Amulius ordered the twin boys to be thrown into the river. Instead, the man responsible for throwing them into the river put them in their cradle and let it float down the river. A she-wolf found the twin boys and suckled them.

A shepherd by the name of Faustulus found them by the banks of the Tiber River and took care of the boys and raised them. Eventually, as grown men, Romulus and Remus built a city on the bank of the Tiber River where they had been discovered. The two quarreled. Romulus killed Remus, and so the city was known as Rome rather than Reme.

Romulus founded the city of Rome.

• Who is Julius Caesar?

Julius Caesar was a Roman general and politician who helped turn the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire.

In 55 B.C.E. he invaded Britain.

In 47 B.C.E. he made Cleopatra Queen of Egypt.

In 48 B.C.E. he defeated Pompey.

From 45-44 B.C.E. he ruled Rome.

On March 15, 44 B.C.E., a group of republicans led by Cassius and Brutus assassinated him.

Here are some anecdotes about Julius Caesar:

- When Julius Caesar was a young man, he sailed for Rhodes, where he wished to study rhetoric and persuasive speaking. Pirates captured him and held him for ransom. Julius Caesar told the pirates that after he was ransomed he would hunt them down and crucify them — something that the pirates thought was funny. After Julius Caesar was ransomed, he got some ships, hunted down the pirates and crucified them.

Source: Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*

- Among his other accomplishments, Julius Caesar was a good writer. In 47 B.C.E. after he defeated the king of Pontus, Pharnaces II, at Zela (in Asia Minor), he sent this message to Rome: “*Veni, vidi, vici.*” In English, this means “I came, I saw, I conquered.”

Source: Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*

- In 49 B.C.E., against orders Julius Caesar took an army of soldiers to Rome, precipitating civil war. To reach Italian soil after traveling from Gaul, he had to cross the Rubicon River. This was a big step. Once he crossed the Rubicon River, he would be defying the orders of the Roman Senate, and he would not be able to turn back. He and his army did cross the Rubicon River, and he said, “*Alea iacta est,*” which means “The die is cast.”

Source: *Little, Brown Book of Anecdotes*

- During the Roman civil wars when Julius Caesar was fighting against Sextus Pompey for power, Caesar landed on the coast of North Africa. As he jumped from his ship into the shallow water, he stumbled and fell. Knowing that his superstitious Roman troops would regard his stumbling as an unlucky omen, Caesar decided to make his troops think he had fallen on purpose. He grabbed two fistfuls of sand, stood up, and raised his hands so his troops could see the sand. He then yelled, “Africa, I hold you in my hands!” Hearing these inspiring words, his troops charged upon the beach with high morale.

Source: James Barter, *Julius Caesar and Ancient Rome in World History*, pp. 80-81.

- During a dinner that Julius Caesar was having with friends, conversation turned to the subject of death. Someone asked Julius Caesar what kind of death was best, and he replied, “A sudden one.” The next day, 15 March 44 B.C.E., aka the Ides of March 44 B.C.E., a group of republicans led by Cassius and Brutus assassinated him.

Source: Plutarch, *Lives*

- Early in March of 44 B.C.E., an augur named Spurinna warned Julius Caesar that the Ides of March (March 15) would bring danger to him. On March 15, Julius Caesar walked to the Senate. He saw Spurinna and said to him, “The Ides of March have come.” Spurinna replied, “Yes, they have come, but not yet gone.” Shortly afterward, Julius Caesar was assassinated.

Source: Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*

- One of the people who assassinated Julius Caesar on March 15, 44 B.C.E. was Marcus Junius Brutus, whom Julius Caesar trusted. When Julius Caesar saw Brutus among the assassins, he cried out, “*Et tu, Brute?*” This means, “You, too, Brutus?”

Source: Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*

• **Who is Caesar Augustus?**

Caesar Augustus fought a civil war to become the first Roman emperor.

Caesar Augustus was born with the name Octavian. He lived from 63 B.C.E. to 14 C.E.

He defeated Mark Antony at the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.E.

Here are some anecdotes about Caesar Augustus:

- Before the battle of Actium, Octavian (later he was renamed Caesar Augustus) set up a camp that overlooked his fleet and the fleet of Mark Antony. He met a peasant with a donkey, and he asked the peasant what was his name and what was the donkey’s name. The peasant replied that his name was “*Eutyches*” (Good Fortune) and the donkey’s name was “*Nikon*” (Victor). Such positive omens go a long way toward motivating superstitious soldiers. (The good omen may have been arranged as a way to motivate Octavian’s superstitious soldiers.)

Source: Plutarch, *Lives*

- Caesar Augustus once fired a young soldier, who pleaded with him not to be fired, saying, “How am I to go home? What shall I tell my father?” Caesar Augustus replied, “Tell your father that you didn’t find me to your liking.”

Source: Macrobius, *Saturnalia*

- After a Roman nobleman died, leaving behind enormous debts, Caesar Augustus ordered that the nobleman’s pillow be bought at an auction, saying, “That pillow must be particularly conducive to sleep if its late owner, in spite of his debts, could sleep on it.”

Sources: Macrobius, *Saturnalia*

- February has only 28 days unless it’s a leap year. Why? Caesar Augustus renamed the month Sextilis after himself: “August.” Sextilis had 30 days, but he wanted an extra day for his month, so he took it from February.

Source: I. Asimov, *Book of Facts*

- A retired Roman commander who had fought for Caesar Augustus had to appear at court, and he wanted Caesar Augustus to appear at the court and testify for him. Caesar Augustus replied that he would not appear in court himself but would send an agent instead. The retired Roman commander showed Caesar Augustus several scars and said, “When you were in danger at Actium, I didn’t choose a substitute, but fought for you in person.” Caesar Augustus appeared in person in court and testified for the retired Roman commander.

Source: Macrobius, *Saturnalia*

- Caesar Augustus sometimes purchased at high prices talking birds that had been trained to give compliments. A cobbler hoped to make money that way, so he bought a raven and tried to train it to speak compliments. The training was hard-going, and the cobbler sometimes said, “Nothing to show for all the trouble and expense.” Finally, the training paid off, and the raven began to speak compliments. The cobbler set up an audience with Caesar Augustus and showed him the raven, which spoke some compliments. However, Caesar Augustus was unimpressed, pointing out that he already had birds that spoke those compliments. The cobbler was leaving when the raven suddenly said, “Nothing to show for all the trouble and expense.” Caesar Augustus was amused and bought the raven for a high price.

Source: Macrobius, *Saturnalia*

• **Who is Marcellus, and why is he being mourned?**

Near the end of Book 6, Anchises laments for Marcellus, the young nephew of Caesar Augustus. Aeneas is wondering why a handsome young man looks so sad. Anchises replies,

“Oh, do not ask
About this huge grief of your people, son.
Fate will give earth only a glimpse of him,
Not let the boy live on. Lords of the sky,
You thought the majesty of Rome too great
If it had kept these gifts.” (6.1179-1184 Fitzgerald)

Anchises continues,

“Child of our mourning, if only in some way
You could break through your bitter fate. For you
Will be Marcellus.” (6.1197-1199 Fitzgerald)

Marcellus, the son of Octavia, Caesar Augustus’ sister, died young. He was born in 42 B.C.E. and died in 23 B.C.E. He married Julia, Caesar Augustus’ daughter. If he had not died so young, he would have been the second Roman emperor.

According to Aelius Donatus’ *Life of Virgil*, Virgil

“recited three whole books for Augustus: the second, fourth, and sixth — this last out of his well-known affection for Octavia, who (being present at the recitation) is said to have fainted at the lines about her son, ‘...You shall be Marcellus’ [Aen. 6.884]. Revived only with difficulty, she ordered ten-thousand sesterces to be granted to Virgil for each of the verses.”

Source: <<http://virgil.org/vitae/>>.

Translator: David Wilson-Okamura

Marcellus is the last soul whom Aeneas sees in the Underworld in the Pageant of Heroes.

The future Roman heroes are people who have lived before. Aeneas sees purified souls in the Elysian Fields. They want, however, to return to the living world, and to do so, they will forget all their former lives and memories of the Underworld. To forget, they will drink the water of the River Lethe.

The Romans, of course, would know the names of the heroes whom Anchises names as future Romans. If a modern Virgil were an American and wrote a modern *Aeneid*, the heroes in the Elysian Fields would be heroes such as Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

• **Which two gates lead out of the Underworld?**

Two gates lead out of the Underworld. Both are gates of sleep.

The gate of transparent horn is the gate of true shades.

The gate of polished ivory is the gate of false dreams.

Anchises tells Aeneas,

“There are twin Gates of Sleep,

One, they say, is called the Gate of Horn

and it offers easy passage to all true shades.

The other glistens with ivory, radiant, flawless,

but through it the dead send false dreams up toward the sky. (6.1029-1033 Fagles)

• **Which gate does Aeneas take, and why does he take that gate?**

Aeneas and the Sibyl pass through the gate of false dreams:

And here Anchises, his vision told in full, escorts

his son and Sibyl both and shows them out now

through the Ivory Gate. (6.1034-1036 Fagles)

This seems an odd choice, and critics have written about this choice. Why does Anchises have Aeneas and the Sibyl use the Gate of Ivory? Here are some interpretations:

1) Aeneas uses the gate of false dreams because he is not a spirit and therefore cannot use the gate of horn.

An objection: The great writers don't put unnecessary details into their works. If two gates are here, they must be important, and readers need to figure out why they are important. Why is there a gate of false dreams?

2) Aeneas uses the gate of false dreams because, in some way, the Pageant of Heroes and what Aeneas wants to accomplish in Italy is a false dream. Anchises has presented the

glorious part of Roman history and has left out much human suffering and human misery. He has presented the good parts of Roman history and left out the bad parts.

An objection: Of course, Anchises is in Elysium, looking at the good souls, so he has not been talking about the bad parts of Roman history. Any really bad Roman souls are going to be in Tartarus, not in Elysium.

Critics are likely to continue to argue about the correct interpretation of the two gates.

***Aeneid*, Book 7: Juno Served by a Fury / Beachhead in Latium, Armies Gather**

• **The *Aeneid* can be divided into two halves. How are the two halves different?**

In Book 7 Aeneas arrives in Latium and meets a number of characters who will play important roles in the second half of the *Aeneid*.

Aeneas being in Italy and fulfilling his destiny are important, and this importance is marked by an invocation to the Muse Erato.

The first half of the *Aeneid* and the second half of the *Aeneid* are different. Sometimes Books 1-6 of the *Aeneid* are referred as the Odyssean part of the *Aeneid* because in it Aeneas wanders the Mediterranean (so did Odysseus), has an affair with Dido (Odysseus had an affair with Circe), and visits the Underworld (so did Odysseus). Books 7-12 of the *Aeneid* are referred to as the Iliadic part of the *Aeneid* because both are concerned with war.

Most modern readers prefer the first half of the *Aeneid* for good reasons: Book 2 and the fall of Troy, Book 4 and the affair with Dido, Book 6 and the trip to the Underworld. These books are of great interest to us.

Many ancient critics preferred the second half of the *Aeneid*. Apparently, they preferred stories of battles. They did think, however, that the first half of the *Aeneid* was good, but not as good as the second half.

• **What is Virgil's opinion of the second half of the *Aeneid* (as expressed in his invocation to the Muse Erato near the beginning of Book 7)?**

The ancient critics thought that the second half of the *Aeneid* was the better of the two halves; Virgil himself also thought this.

Virgil calls the second half of the *Aeneid* "A greater history" (7.58 Fitzgerald), and he states that writing it is "A greater task" (7.59 Fitzgerald).

Virgil also writes an invocation at the beginning of the second half of the *Aeneid*; this is an excellent indication that he considers that the task of writing the second half of the *Aeneid* is an important task:

Be with me, Muse of all Desire, Erato,
While I call up the kings, the early times,
How matters stood in the old land of Latium
That day when the foreign soldiers beached
Upon Ausonia's shore, and the events
That led to the first fight. Immortal one,
Bring all in memory to the singer's mind,
For I must tell of wars to chill the blood,
Ranked men in battle, kings by their own valor

Driven to death, Etruria's cavalry,
 And all Hesperia mobilized in arms.
 A greater history opens before my eyes,
 A greater task awaits me. (7.47-59 Fitzgerald)

The last two lines especially would seem to indicate that Virgil saw the first half of the *Aeneid* as preparation for the second half. This, the second half, is the greater history and the greater labor.

• **Who are the Muses? Who, in particular, is the Muse Erato?**

The choice of Erato (Muse of Love and Lyric Poetry) as the Muse to ask help from seems odd. In all, there were nine Muses, and other Muses seem more relevant to the second half of the *Aeneid*, which is full of war.

Here is information about the nine Muses:

The Muses and their attributes

CLIO

Muse of History, her name derives from the Greek *kleos* (glory) or *kleiein* (to celebrate). She is depicted as a virgin with a laurel wreath, a trumpet in one hand and a volume in the other one.

EUTERPE

Muse of Music. Her name means *she who makes herself loved* and she is usually represented as a maid crowned with a flower garland, playing the instrument she invented, the flute.

THALIA

Muse of Comedy, her name derives from the Greek *thallein* (to bloom). She is depicted as a young woman crowned with an ivy garland, holding a mask and wearing ankle boots.

MELPOMENE

Muse of Tragedy. Her name comes from the Greek *melpein* (to sing). She is represented as a woman in buskins, holding a sceptre and a dagger covered in blood.

TERPSICHORE

Muse of Dance. Her name means *she who loves dance*. She is depicted as a young woman, crowned with flower garlands, who dances and plays the harp.

ERATO

Muse of [L]yric Poetry and Anacreontic Poetry, her name derives from the Greek *Eros* (love). She is represented as a nymph crowned with myrtle and roses, holding a lyre and a bow.

POLYHYMNIA

Muse of Rhetoric and of [V]ocal Music, her name comes from the Greek *poly* (many) and *hymnos* (hymn), or from *mnasthai* (to remember). She is depicted with a flower or pearl crown, dressed in white, her right arm in the act of haranguing, her left hand holding a sceptre.

URANIA

Muse of Astronomy. Her name comes from the Greek *ouranos* (sky) and she is represented as a virgin holding a globe and a bar.

CALLIOPE

Muse of Eloquence and [H]eroic Poetry. Her name means *fine voice* and she is depicted with stylus and tablets.

The Muses are called with many different **epithets**, frequently referred to the places where they settled: *Aganippides*, *Aonides*, *Camenae*, *Castaliae*, *Libethrides*, *Mnemonides*, *Pimpleae* or *Pimpleides*, *Ilisides*, *Meones*, *Pegasides*, *Pierides*, *Ardalides*, *Cytherides*, *Ianthiae*, *Partheniai* and also Olympians, Parnassians, Thespians, Heliconians, Winged, Lydians.

Source: <http://www.bo.astro.it/~biblio/Vultus-Uraniae/attributes.html>

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Why wouldn't Virgil address himself to Clio, the Muse of History; Calliope, the Muse of Epic; or Melanippe (in Greek, Melpomene), the Muse of Tragedy? Why does he address himself to Erato, the Muse of Love/Desire and of Lyric Poetry?

It could very well be that Virgil addresses himself to Erato, the Muse of Love, because of his love of Italy. Certainly Italy is the land that Aeneas has desired to reach. In addition, of course, the war is being fought over who will marry Lavinia.

Here is definition of Lyric Poems:

Lyric poems typically express personal or emotional feelings and is traditionally the home of the present tense. They have specific rhyming schemes and are often, but not always, set to music or a **beat**.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyric_poetry

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• Why might ancient readers have preferred the second half of the *Aeneid* to the first half?

Ancient readers preferred the second half of the *Aeneid* perhaps for the following reasons:

1. The *Aeneid* is now set in Italy, which is where Virgil's contemporary audience lived. Virgil's audience would be aware that Latium is set on the land on which Rome will be founded. Virgil's audience would be aware of the landmarks of Rome that are mentioned during a tour of Latium in Book 7.

2. Aeneas fights a war that may remind Virgil's contemporary audience of the civil wars that had been fought by people such as Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus. Because these wars had been fought recently — Virgil had lived through them — Virgil's contemporary audience would be very aware of them.

3. Quite simply, violence is interesting to audiences, as we can see from Hollywood blockbusters. The second half of the *Aeneid* is filled with battles as Aeneas fights a war so that he can stay in Italy and marry an Italian princess.

4. Readers who enjoyed Homer's *Iliad* may like the final six books of the *Aeneid* because they are Iliadic in nature.

• **What happens as Book 7 begins?**

At the beginning of Book 7, Caieta, Aeneas' nurse, dies. She is buried on the promontory of western Latium, which is then named after her:

And thou, O matron of immortal fame,
Here dying, to the shore hast left thy name;
Cajeta still the place is call'd from thee,
The nurse of great Aeneas' infancy.
Here rest thy bones in rich Hesperia's plains;
Thy name ('t is all a ghost can have) remains.
Now, when the prince her fun'ral rites had paid,
He plow'd the Tyrrhene seas with sails display'd. (John Dryden)

The burial of Caieta can again be regarded as a burial of the past. Once again, Aeneas must leave the past behind. Once again, he must grow up and be an adult and a leader.

Aeneas then sets sail, passes the island of Circe, and sails up the Tiber River.

• **How many children does King Latinus have?**

King Latinus has one daughter: Lavinia.

He also had a son who died young.

In ancient times (and until recently), many children died. Modern medicine did not exist, and no one knew about antibiotics and vaccines.

That the king has only a daughter is important. He does not have a male heir, so whoever marries his daughter will become king when Latinus dies.

King Latinus' city is named Laurentum.

Do not confuse King Latinus with King Evander. King Evander led his citizens away from Arcadia, and they have founded a city named Pallanteum on the future site of Rome. King

Evander's troops will fight for Aeneas. Unfortunately, King Latinus' troops will fight against Aeneas.

• **Which two major omens occur in Italy? How should these omens be interpreted?**

Two major omens occur in Italy:

1) Bees swarm to the top of a laurel tree in the courtyard of the palace of King Latinus, and then they lock their feet together in a weighted mass:

A soothsayer declared: "In this we see
A stranger's advent, and a body of men
Moving to the same spot from the same zone
To take our fortress." (7.90-93 Fitzgerald)

2) Lavinia's hair seems to catch fire, although she does not burn:

And it was read by seers to mean the girl
Would have renown and glorious days to come,
But that she brought a great war to her people. (7.102-104 Fitzgerald)

When Lavinia's hair seems to catch fire, we are reminded of the omen in Book 2 when Ascanius' hair seemed to catch fire. That omen was positive in that Ascanius would become a king. Similarly, Lavinia will become a queen.

Neither omen in Book 7 is totally good for the Latins. Both foretell a war.

• **What is the message of the oracle of King Latinus' father, Faunus?**

These omens seem ominous, so King Latinus consults the oracle of his father, Faunus.

Faunus has an oracle in a grove with a stream. The oracle breathes in the fumes from the stream and prophesies.

Latinus sacrifices a hundred sheep, and a voice comes from the grove:

"Propose no Latin alliance for your daughter,
Son of mine; distrust the bridal chamber
Now prepared. Men from abroad will come
And be your sons by marriage. Blood so mingled
Lifts our name starward. Children of that stock
Will see all earth turned Latin at their feet,
Governed by them, as far as on his rounds
The Sun looks down on Ocean, East or West." (7.125-132 Fitzgerald)

Of course this oracle refers to Aeneas and the Latins. The oracle tells King Latinus not to marry his daughter to a Latin (Italian); instead, he needs to marry his daughter to a stranger. That stranger, of course, is Aeneas.

The news from the previous omens is partly bad: A war will be fought.

However, good news also exists: According to the oracle of Faunus, the descendants of Lavinia and the stranger will rule the world. Of course, those descendants will be the Romans.

• How does the previous prophecy made by the Harpy Celaeno (se-LEE-no) (3.344-349 Fitzgerald) come true?

Aeneas and his men land, and they prepare a meal and eat. They use hard wheaten cakes as plates for their food. After eating the food on top of the hard wheaten cakes, they then eat the hard wheaten cakes themselves. This is kind of like eating a bread bowl or the wheat bowl that a taco salad comes in at Taco Bell.

Ascanius sees the Trojans doing this, and he jokes that they are eating their tables.

Of course, now the prophecy of the Harpy Celaeno (se-LEE-no) has come true. She had predicted that the Trojans would be so hungry that would eat their tables, and that has come true. For once, things are going favorably for the Trojans. The prophecy sounded ominous, but it turns out not to be ominous at all.

This is the Harpy's prophecy:

“Italy is the land you look for; well,
The winds will blow, you'll find your Italy,
You'll be allowed to enter port;
But you may never wall your destined city
Till deathly famine, for the bloodshed here,
Has made you grind your tables with your teeth!” (3.344-349 Fitzgerald)

• What does Aeneas say after his son says that the Trojans are eating their tables?

Aeneas now recalls that Anchises, his father, had made a prophecy that stated that when the Trojans had eaten their tables that they would have found the land they sought — the land where they would make a home. Aeneas says,

“A blessing on the land
The fates have held in store for me, a blessing
On our true gods of Troy! Here is our home,
Here is our fatherland. You know, my father
Anchises once foretold this secret token —
Now I remember — of our destiny.

He told me then: ‘My son, when the time comes
 That hunger on a strange coast urges you,
 When food has failed, to eat your very tables,
 Then you may look for home: be mindful of it,
 Weary as you are, and turn your hand

To your first building there with moat and mound.’” (7.157-169 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas does not mention the prophecy of the Harpy Calaeno at all. Of course, this is an inconsistency. This is an inconsistency that no doubt Virgil would have corrected had he lived to finish writing the *Aeneid*.

• What are Latium and King Latinus’ palace like?

Everything that we learn about Latium and King Latinus is good.

When Ilioneus and the other Trojan envoys arrive, the boys and young men of Latium are doing what boys and young men should do in this culture. They are doing such things as riding horses and practicing shooting arrows and throwing javelins. In other words, they are training themselves in the arts of war.

The palace itself is also impressive. Again, people are doing what they ought to do. The elders are sacrificing animals. Everyone is able to feast.

In addition, the palace has art: statues of kings of old, including Picus.

• What is the story of Picus?

Picus is one of the former kings of Latium. The goddess Circe fell in love with him, but he rebuffed her. Because of the rebuff, Circe turned him into a woodpecker with brightly colored wings. “Picus” is Latin for woodpecker.

• What happens when Ilioneus visits Latinus?

Aeneas sends 100 envoys, led by Ilioneus, to King Latinus’ city. Aeneas himself stays behind and fortifies the Trojans’ camp.

King Latinus welcomes Ilioneus and the Trojan envoys. The two leaders — Ilioneus and King Latinus — exchange gifts. Aeneas has sent such gifts as a golden goblet, King Priam’s scepter and coronet, and Trojan robes. King Latinus gives 300 horses in return. Because horses can be used in war, this is not entirely, perhaps, a happy gift. A special gift for Aeneas is two immortal fire-breathing horses.

Of course, King Latinus has heard the prophecy that came from the grove of his antic (prophetic) father, Faunus. That prophecy told him to marry his daughter to a foreigner. Now foreign men have come to him, seeking peace. King Latinus is intelligent enough to figure out that the foreign men’s king — Aeneas — is the man to whom he ought to marry his daughter.

In fact, King Latinus does offer his daughter in marriage to Aeneas, although he has never met Aeneas. Note that his daughter, Lavinia, has no say in the marriage. She has never seen Aeneas either.

This is a political marriage. King Latinus has no male heir. His country needs a male to rule the kingdom. Aeneas has been a good leader (possibly, King Latinus knows that because Aeneas survived the Trojan War and has led the Trojan survivors ever since). Aeneas also has many experienced warriors. This would be a good marriage for the citizens of Latium. King Latinus, by the way, is old. This is what King Latinus says to Ilioneus:

“Have what you ask; your presents I receive;
 Land, where and when you please, with ample leave;
 Partake and use my kingdom as your own;
 All shall be yours, while I command the crown:
 And, if my wish’d alliance please your king,
 Tell him he should not send the peace, but bring.
 Then let him not a friend’s embraces fear;
 The peace is made when I behold him here.
 Besides this answer, tell my royal guest,
 I add to his commands my own request:
 One only daughter heirs my crown and state,
 Whom not our oracles, nor Heav’n, nor fate,
 Nor frequent prodigies, permit to join
 With any native of th’ Ausonian line.
 A foreign son-in-law shall come from far
 (Such is our doom), a chief renown’d in war,
 Whose race shall bear aloft the Latian name,
 And thro’ the conquer’d world diffuse our fame.
 Himself to be the man the fates require,
 I firmly judge, and, what I judge, desire.” (John Dryden)

“Doom” means “fate.”

• **Book 7 balances Book 1 in important ways: 1) How are Queen Dido and King Latinus similar?**

Elizabeth Vandiver in her Teaching Company course on Virgil's *Aeneid* points out that in two important ways Book 7 balances Book 1; after all, both are beginnings to important parts of the epic poem:

1. Dido and King Latinus are similar in that both receive Aeneas and the Trojans very kindly. Both provide assistance to Aeneas and the Trojans.
2. Unfortunately, things do not work out for Dido and King Latinus. Dido commits suicide when Aeneas leaves her to go to Italy. In Italy, although King Latinus makes a pact of peace with Aeneas, what results is war.

The war in Italy results because King Latinus wants to marry his daughter to Aeneas rather than to Turnus, a leader of the Italian Rutulians. Queen Amata prefers to marry Lavinia to Turnus, but King Latinus has heard prophecies telling him to marry Lavinia to a foreigner. If Lavinia marries a foreigner, their descendants will be powerful.

• **Book 7 balances Book 1 in important ways: 2) What do Aeneas' relationships with Dido and with Lavinia bring?**

Both Dido and Lavinia are innocent women, but nevertheless bad things happen to or around them. Dido commits suicide, while Aeneas and Turnus fight a war to determine who shall marry Lavinia.

We can compare Lavinia to Helen of Troy. In both cases, two men are disputing who shall be married to her. In the case of Helen of Troy, Menelaus and Paris fight over Helen. In the case of Lavinia, Aeneas and Turnus fight over her.

The war between the Latins and the Trojans in the second half of the *Aeneid* can be seen as a second Trojan War — and this time, the Trojans win.

Both Dido and Aeneas bring destruction to their people. Dido's people grieve because they lose a queen; Lavinia's people grieve because of the hardships and death that war brings.

Back in Book 6, the Sibyl prophesied war over a foreign bride. That bride is Lavinia:

“Already a new Achilles springs to life in Latium,
son of a goddess too! Nor will Juno ever fail
to harry the Trojan race, and all the while,
pleading, pressed by need — what tribes, what towns
of Italy won't you beg for help! And the cause of this,
this new Trojan grief? Again a stranger bride,
a marriage with a stranger once again.” (6.106-112 Fagles)

• **Book 7 balances Book 1 in important ways: 3) What does Juno do in both books?**

In addition, in both Books 1 and 7, Juno shows that she is an enemy of the Trojans by using a minor deity.

In Book 1, she has Aeolus, King of the Winds, send a storm against the Trojan ships.

In Book 7, she has a Fury — Allecto — stir up war between the Trojans and the Latins. Allecto maddens both Queen Amata and Turnus.

• **What are the Furies? (Note that “Furies” is capitalized.)**

A Fury is a spirit of fury, just like the name says. Another name for Furies is Erinnyes. They are known as “the Angry Ones.”

The Furies are avenging spirits. When Orestes killed his mother, Clytemnestra, to avenge the death of his father, Agamemnon, the Furies pursued him, according to Aeschylus’ great trilogy the *Oresteia* (but not according to Homer’s *Odyssey*).

The Furies also punished Oedipus for killing his father, although he did it unknowingly.

They punished Alcmaeon by driving him insane because he murdered his mother, Eriphyle.

They punished Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons, who had accidentally killed her sister, Hippolyte, while hunting.

The Furies are often depicted in art as repulsive winged women; they sometimes are depicted as having snakes for hair. In the *Aeneid*, the Furies have wings and snakes for hair.

• **What does Amata do when Allecto maddens her?**

Juno sends the Fury Allecto to madden Amata, who wants Lavinia to marry Turnus. Allecto takes a snake and lets it crawl onto Amata and madden her.

Amata pretends to be a follower of the god Bacchus and roams the forests. She hides her daughter, Lavinia, and says that she wants Bacchus to have Lavinia:

She flies the town, and, mixing with a throng
Of madding matrons, bears the bride along,
Wand’ring thro’ woods and wilds, and devious ways,
And with these arts the Trojan match delays.
She feign’d the rites of Bacchus; cried aloud,
And to the buxom god the virgin vow’d.
“Evoe! O Bacchus!” thus began the song;
And “Evoe!” answer’d all the female throng.
“O virgin! worthy thee alone!” she cried;
“O worthy thee alone!” the crew replied.
“For thee she feeds her hair, she leads thy dance,

And with thy winding ivy wreathes her lance.” (John Dryden)

The other Latin women follow Amata. These women also act like followers of Bacchus, and apparently they are not feigning anything.

• **Who are Bacchus and the Maenads (MEE-nads)?**

Bacchus is the god of wine, and his followers are known as Maenads. The Maenads are women who range the forests and mountains in ecstatic devotion to Bacchus. Another name for Bacchus is Dionysus.

According to one myth, Zeus is Bacchus’ father and Semele, a mortal woman, is his mother. Semele made him swear an inviolable oath that he would grant her request, and then she told him that she wanted Zeus to show himself to her in all his glory. Because Zeus had sworn an inviolable oath, he did so, but since mortals cannot see a god in all his glory and live, she was incinerated. Zeus, however, rescued the fetus, sewed it into his thigh, and later when the fetus developed into a full-grown infant, released it from his thigh.

Another myth involves Bacchus’ foster father, Silenus, who turned up missing, was discovered unconscious, and carried to Minos, King of Crete, who entertained him for 10 days. Bacchus was pleased by how Minos had treated his foster father, so he offered Minos anything he wanted. Minos requested that everything he touched would turn to gold. Of course, this did not work out, as Minos’ food, wine, and child soon turned to gold. Minos requested that Bacchus take back his gift, and Bacchus did.

In Euripides’ tragedy *Bacchae*, Bacchus wants revenge against some people of Thebes who did not believe that Zeus impregnated his mother. The women become Maenads and roam the countryside. Pentheus, the King of Thebes, spies on them. The Maenads see him, think that he is a wild animal, and tear him to pieces.

• **What does Turnus do when confronted with the Fury Allecto in Book 7?**

The Fury Allecto maddens Turnus as well as Amata. Allecto appears to Turnus in a dream; she appears disguised as an old woman named Calybe, who is an aged priestess of Juno.

Allecto points out to Turnus that Latinus wants a foreign prince to marry Lavinia.

It takes a Fury to madden Turnus. Before she does that, Turnus seems to be a man of peace, although he is clearly capable of being a warrior. Unfortunately, throughout most of his appearance in the *Aeneid*, Turnus is maddened.

This means that Turnus is basically innocent. If not for Allecto, Turnus would not go to war.

In his dream, Turnus tells Allecto, whom he thinks is an old, mortal woman, basically to back off:

Now, making light of her,

The young man gave his answer to the seer:

“News of the squadron making port on Tiber

Has not failed, as you think, to reach my ears.

Do not imagine me afraid. Queen Juno
 Has not forgotten me. But old age, mother,
 Sunk in decay and too far gone for truth,
 Is giving you this useless agitation,
 Mocking your prophet's mind with dreams of fear
 And battles between kings. Your mind should be
 On the gods' images and on their shrines.

Men will make war and peace, as men should do.” (7.604-613 Fitzgerald)

Allecto then reveals herself to Turnus, and she plants a firebrand in Turnus' chest. This makes Turnus mad for war.

Earlier, Juno had referred to a firebrand just before seeking Allecto. The firebrand that Juno referred to was one connected with Paris. His mother, Queen Hecuba, while pregnant with Paris, had dreamed that she was pregnant with a firebrand. Juno calls Aeneas “a Paris reborn” (7.376 Fagles). She believes that Aeneas will grab Lavinia the way that Paris grabbed Helen, and a war will break out. However, the phrase “a Paris reborn” (7.376 Fagles) seems more apt as a description for Turnus. We can say that Lavinia is destined to be Aeneas' bride, and therefore Turnus is the man illegally trying to marry her, just as Paris illegally made Helen his wife.

• **How does the war between Latins and Trojans start? (Hint: Juno and Allecto.)**

The war between Latins and Trojans starts over a relatively trivial incident. Ascanius and some other Trojan youths are hunting when the Fury Allecto, sent by Juno, causes their dogs to pick up the scent of a particular stag — a tame stag belonging to Silvia, the daughter of Latinus' gamekeeper, Tyrrhus.

• **Which trivial incident sets off the actual fighting? (Hint: Ascanius and the pet deer.)**

Ascanius shoots this stag, which runs home to Silvia, and dies.

A fight then breaks out between the Trojan youths and the local people over this stag. Allecto causes this fight as well.

In real life, a small incident can set off a major war. For example, World War I began because Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated on 28 June 1914. In that war, over 15 million people were killed. In addition, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist.

Of course, the Trojan War was set off when Paris ran away with Helen. Many people died because of Helen, and Helen wasn't worth it. The Trojan War was fought over something trivial; it was fought because Paris wanted to have an adulterous affair with Helen.

• **When war begins, how does King Latinus react?**

King Latinus is a peace-loving man. However, he knows that war will result, so he shuts himself away in his house. He also stops governing.

Juno now sends Allecto away because her work has been done, and done well.

• **When war begins, Juno throws open the gates of war (the gates of the temple of Janus). Who was the god Janus?**

The temple of Janus is special. When its gates are open, there is war. When its gates are closed, there is peace.

King Latinus does not want to open the gates of the temple, so he stays in his house and does not govern.

It is Juno who opens the gates of the temple dedicated to the god Janus.

Here is some information about Janus:

Janus in Myth

Janus was the god of gates in Roman mythology. And in his role as the *numen* of gates and doors, Janus was also thought to represent beginnings. The explanation for this belief comes from the idea that one must emerge through a gate or door before entering a new place.

As the god of beginnings, Janus also lent his name to the first month of the year. This month was referred to by the ancient Romans as *Ianuarius* — you can see how similar this word is to our own version (which is, of course, January).

The god Janus has a distinctive appearance in art, as he is often depicted with two faces. Some sources claim that the reason Janus was represented in this peculiar fashion was due to the notion that doors and gates look in two directions. In this way, one of the god's faces could look forward, while the other looked backward.

In addition, the Romans had an important temple to Janus, which was called the *Ianus geminus*. This temple served a symbolic function. When the gates of the structure were closed, this represented peace in the Roman Empire; but when the gates were open, it meant that the Romans were at war.

It [is] worth noting that Janus was well respected and highly regarded by the ancient Romans. From his role as the guardian of gates and his position as the god of beginnings, to the honor of having the first month of the year named after him, it is clear that Janus played a significant part in Roman myth and religion.

Janus did not have a counterpart in Greek mythology.

Source: <http://www.loggia.com/myth/janus.html>

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• **Book 7 ends with a catalog of the Latins and their allies who will be fighting the Trojans.**

The ending of Book 7 of Virgil's *Aeneid* is reminiscent of the ending of Book 2 of Homer's *Iliad*. Both books end with a catalog of the forces arrayed against the eventual victors of the war.

Turnus has many allies. He and his allies are described in this catalog.

• **How is Mezentius described in the catalog?**

One of the more interesting allies of Turnus is Mezentius the former Tyrant of Tuscany, who we are told “held the gods in scorn” (7.892 Fitzgerald). Mezentius was the tyrant over the Etruscans until the Etruscans deposed him because of his evil ways. His son is Laurus, who is described as being better than his father:

Mezentius first appear'd upon the plain:
 Scorn sate upon his brows, and sour disdain,
 Defying earth and heav'n. Etruria lost,
 He brings to Turnus' aid his baffled host.
 The charming Lausus, full of youthful fire,
 Rode in the rank, and next his sullen sire;
 To Turnus only second in the grace
 Of manly mien, and features of the face.
 A skilful horseman, and a huntsman bred,
 With fates averse a thousand men he led:
 His sire unworthy of so brave a son;
 Himself well worthy of a happier throne (John Dryden)

• **How is Turnus described in the catalog?**

Turnus is described very positively. We read,

Turnus himself came on, a mighty figure
 Moving among the captains blade in hand
 And by a head the tallest. (7.1077-1079 Fitzgerald)

• **Book 7 How is Camilla described in the catalog?**

Camilla of the Volscian people is especially interesting because she is a woman warrior.

Women warriors were common in Greek myth, as we know from references to the Amazons. Camilla is NOT an Amazon. However, Camilla is like the Amazons in that she ignores traditional female roles.

Here is some information about the Volsci:

The Volsci were an ancient Italian people, well known in the history of the first century of the Roman Republic. They then inhabited the partly hilly, partly marshy district of the south of Latium.

They were among the most dangerous enemies of Rome.

Source: <http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Volsci>

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Here is Virgil's description of Camilla:

Last, from the Volscians fair Camilla came,
 And led her warlike troops, a warrior dame;
 Unbred to spinning, in the loom unskill'd,
 She chose the nobler Pallas of the field.
 Mix'd with the first, the fierce virago fought,
 Sustain'd the toils of arms, the danger sought,
 Outstripp'd the winds in speed upon the plain,
 Flew o'er the fields, nor hurt the bearded grain:
 She swept the seas, and, as she skimm'd along,
 Her flying feet unbath'd on billows hung.
 Men, boys, and women, stupid with surprise,
 Where'er she passes, fix their wond'ring eyes:
 Longing they look, and, gaping at the sight,
 Devour her o'er and o'er with vast delight;
 Her purple habit sits with such a grace
 On her smooth shoulders, and so suits her face;
 Her head with ringlets of her hair is crown'd,
 And in a golden caul the curls are bound.
 She shakes her myrtle jav'lin; and, behind,
 Her Lycian quiver dances in the wind. (John Dryden)

Women warriors are unusual, and so people stare at Camilla as she goes by. In addition, she can run on the top of stalks of wheat and run on water.

• In this catalog, the Latins are described very positively although they will be fighting the Trojans. Why might Virgil describe the Latins so positively?

It may seem odd that Virgil describes the Italians so positively when Aeneas is going to fight a war against them. There are two main reasons for that:

1) The Italians along with the Trojans will be the ancestors of the Roman race.

2) As time passed, a freeborn person could be a Roman citizen even if he or she was not born in Rome. This is one of the good things that Rome did. If someone were born free (not a slave) in Italy, that someone was a Roman citizen. Virgil was a Roman citizen, but he was not born in Rome. He was born near Mantua.

Here is some information about the spread of Roman Citizenship:

In his *Res Gestae* Augustus notes with pleasure the census he took of the Roman citizens, registering their increase in numbers from 4,063,000 in 28 B.C. to 4,937,000 in A.D. 14. While some of this must represent the regular population increase of existing citizens, it also includes grants of Roman citizenship made to non-Romans (peregrines). Throughout the principate the custom of extending Roman citizenship went on through grants both to entire communities and to individuals, until in A.D. 212 Caracalla granted Roman citizenship to the entire freeborn population of the empire. In the process the concept of Roman citizenship had greatly changed. It no longer had anything to do with either Latin culture or participation in the political institutions of the city of Rome. Instead, "Rome" now signified not the city on the Tiber but the area ruled by the Roman emperor. In this sense, all his subjects were Romans.

Source: http://www.ualberta.ca/~csmackay/CLASS_378/Citizenship.html

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• **What is stressed at the end of Book 7?**

At the end of Book 7, the coming war is stressed. War is inevitable; it will be fought.

Turnus has gathered a number of allies to fight for him.

Aeneid, Book 8: Arcadian Allies / The Shield of Aeneas

• **How does Book 8 open? What is Turnus doing?**

Book 8 opens with Turnus sending a delegation to Diomedes, a hero of the Trojan War, to ask him to become an ally in the war against Aeneas and the Trojans.

Diomedes was the youngest hero on the Achaean side of the Trojan War. After the war, he settled in Italy, where he is the king of a city. Turnus has good reason to suppose that Diomedes will support the Latin in the war the surviving Trojans. After all, Diomedes fought against the Trojans in the Trojan War.

Diomedes played an important supporting role in Homer's *Iliad*. In Book 5, he wounded both Ares and Aphrodite (with the permission and aid of Athena). In Book 10, he and Odysseus made a night raid against the Trojans and their allies. They killed a Trojan spy named Dolon, and they killed a newly arrived Trojan ally named King Rhesus and many of his men.

• **How does Book 8 open? What is Aeneas doing?**

Aeneas is worried at the beginning of Book 8. He is unsure what he ought to do:

While Turnus and th' allies thus urge the war,
The Trojan, floating in a flood of care,
Beholds the tempest which his foes prepare.
This way and that he turns his anxious mind;
Thinks, and rejects the counsels he design'd;
Explores himself in vain, in ev'ry part,
And gives no rest to his distracted heart. (John Dryden)

Aeneas, however, will have divine help in making a decision.

• **What is an epiphany?**

An epiphany is defined by the 4th edition of *The American Heritage Dictionary* as "A revelatory manifestation of a divine being."

Epiphanies occur often in epic poetry. Here, again, we see an epiphany. The river-god Tiber appears to Aeneas in a dream and gives him advice.

• **What prophecy does the river-god Tiber give to Aeneas? Who else earlier made the same prophecy?**

As Aeneas is sleeping by the banks of the river Tiber, the river-god Tiber appears to him in a dream and gives him important information.

The river-god Tiber gives Aeneas information that this is a real epiphany and not just a dream. He tells Aeneas that after he wakes up he will find a white sow with 30 piglets on the bank of the river. Not only will this show that this is an epiphany, but it has another meaning as well (see next question).

In Book 3, the Trojan prophet Helenus, who had married Hector's widow, Andromache, had told the Trojans that they will know the site of their new city when they find a white sow (pronounced ow with an s in front of it) nursing a litter of 30 piglets.

The river-god Tiber also predicts success for Aeneas in the upcoming war:

Fear not! The war shall end in lasting peace,
 And all the rage of haughty Juno cease.
 And that this nightly vision may not seem
 Th' effect of fancy, or an idle dream,
 A sow beneath an oak shall lie along,
 all white herself, and white her thirty young.
 When thirty rolling years have run their race,
 Thy son Ascanius, on this empty space,
 Shall build a royal town, of lasting fame,
 Which from this omen shall receive the name. (John Dryden)

• **What is the interpretation of the sign of the white sow and the 30 piglets?**

The interpretation has two parts:

- 1) Aeneas has come to the right spot. This is the land he is destined to come to.
- 2) In 30 years, Ascanius will found the city of Alba Longa on this site and become the city's king.

• **What advice does the river-god Tiber give to Aeneas?**

The Trojan warriors are not numerous, and so the river-god Tiber advises Aeneas to find allies.

In particular, the river-god Tiber advises Aeneas to seek as allies King Evander and the Arcadians. King Evander migrated from Arcadia in the Peloponnese of Greece, and he built the city of Pallanteum on the future site of Rome. They will help the Trojans to fight the Latins. In addition, the river-god Tiber advises Aeneas to make sacrifices to Juno:

“Time shall approve the truth. For what remains,
 And how with sure success to crown thy pains,
 With patience next attend. A banish'd band,
 Driv'n with Evander from th' Arcadian land,
 Have planted here, and plac'd on high their walls;
 Their town the founder Pallanteum calls,
 Deriv'd from Pallas, his great-grandsire's name:

But the fierce Latians old possession claim,
 With war infesting the new colony.
 These make thy friends, and on their aid rely.
 To thy free passage I submit my streams.
 Wake, son of Venus, from thy pleasing dreams;
 And, when the setting stars are lost in day,
 To Juno's pow'r thy just devotion pay;
 With sacrifice the wrathful queen appease:
 Her pride at length shall fall, her fury cease.
 When thou return'st victorious from the war,
 Perform thy vows to me with grateful care." (John Dryden)

• **What does Aeneas do when he wakes up?**

When Aeneas awakes, he finds the sow and 30 piglets, and he immediately sacrifices all 31 of them to Juno.

Aeneas is following the advice of the river-god Tiber, as he should.

• **What are the purposes of Aeneas' visit to King Evander, father of Pallas and founder of Pallanteum?**

Aeneas' visit to Evander has a number of purposes:

- 1) Aeneas' visit introduces the important character Pallas, who is King Evander's young son.
- 2) Aeneas' visit introduces Aeneas to the future site of Rome. Pallanteum, King Evander's town, is built on the site where Rome will later be built. Pallanteum, by the way, is named after Pallas. Pallas was King Evander's "great-grandsire's name" (Dryden).
- 3) Aeneas' visit connects three heroes: a hero of the past (Heracles), a hero of the present (Aeneas), and a hero of the future (Caesar Augustus).
- 4) Aeneas wants to get allies, and he does.

• **What happens when Aeneas arrives at Pallanteum?**

Aeneas does as the river-god Tiber advised. He sets sail with two ships and arrives at Pallanteum, King Evander's town.

Pallas, King Evander's young son, sees them and asks who they are. When he finds out that they are Trojans, he and his father welcome them and treat them well.

In fact, King Evander knew Anchises, Aeneas' father, and so he is able to recognize Aeneas by his resemblance to Anchises.

Priam and Anchises had visited Italy when King Evander was still a young boy. Anchises had given him gifts: a cloak, a quiver and arrows, and two gold bits (or gilded reins) for horses. In turn, Evander has given these gifts to his son, Pallas. King Evander thinks highly of Anchises. Of course, Anchises was following the protocol of *xenia*. King Evander and Aeneas are now hereditary guest-friends.

King Evander and Aeneas become allies.

• **Which ceremony are King Evander and his people holding when Aeneas arrives?**

King Evander and his people are holding a ceremony when Aeneas arrives. The ceremony honors Hercules, who had defeated a fire-breathing monster named Cacus, who was a son of Vulcan and had tried to steal Hercules' cattle.

• **What is the story of Hercules and Cacus?**

Cacus (who is half-man, half-beast) stole some of Hercules' cattle, dragging them backwards into his cave, so that the tracks would look like they had headed in another direction.

However, Hercules discovered the trick (one of the heifers mooed) and he came running. Cacus used a boulder to block the entrance to his cave just in time. But Heracles tore off the top of the cave and was able to kill Cacus by throwing things at him and then choking him to death. All the people of the land were happy when Cacus died.

Cacus appears as a guard in Dante's *Inferno*. He is a Centaur who guards the thieves.

• **In which ways are Aeneas and Hercules similar?**

Aeneas and Hercules have a few similarities. Of course, they are both heroes. Another main similarity is that Juno persecuted both of them. Hercules was persecuted because Jupiter was his father, but Juno was not his mother and Juno is a jealous wife. Aeneas is persecuted because of the reasons laid out in Book 1.

In addition, when Hercules defeats Cacus, good triumphs over evil. Similarly, Aeneas will triumph over Turnus, and Caesar Augustus will triumph over Antony and Cleopatra in the Battle of Actium (2 September 31 B.C.E.).

• **King Evander takes Aeneas on a tour. One place they visit is the Capitoline Hill. What is the Capitoline Hill?**

King Evander's city is set on the future site of Rome. Virgil's contemporary audience would recognize many or all of the locations as King Evander shows Aeneas around his city, which is named Pallanteum.

King Evander and Aeneas go to the Capitoline Hill, one of the hills that overlook the Forum in Rome. A forum is a meeting place for public discussion. Here is some information about the Roman Forum:

The **Roman Forum** (Latin: *Forum Romanum*), sometimes known by its original Latin name, is located between the Palatine hill and the Capitoline hill of the city of Rome. It is

the central area around which the ancient Roman civilization developed. Citizens referred to the location as the “Forum Magnum” or just the “Forum.”

The oldest and most important structures of the ancient city are located in the forum, including its ancient former royal residency, the Regia, and the surrounding complex of the Vestal virgins. The Old Republic had its formal Comitium there where the senate, as well as Republican government began. The forum served as a city square and central hub where the people of Rome gathered for justice, and faith. The forum was also the economic hub of the city and considered to be the center of the Republic and Empire.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Forum

Date Downloaded: 2 November 2009

The temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus stood on this hill when Virgil was alive. In the supposed time of King Evander and Aeneas, a grove was at the top of the hill. King Evander says that the grove is sacred to some god, but no one is sure which god, although some people think the god is Jupiter:

Some god, they knew — what god, they could not tell —
 Did there amidst the sacred horror dwell.
 Th’ Arcadians thought him Jove; and said they saw
 The mighty Thund’rer with majestic awe,
 Who took his shield, and dealt his bolts around,
 And scatter’d tempests on the teeming ground. (John Dryden)

The temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus was Rome’s most sacred site, and Virgil’s audience must have been happy to read that even in the supposed time of Aeneas, this was a sacred site.

We do need to point out that Aeneas does not know what the future history of these sites is. Aeneas is simply seeing a contemporary city. Similarly, when Aeneas looks at the shield that Vulcan creates for him, Aeneas does not know what the scenes depicted on the shield represent.

• Who does King Evander entrust to Aeneas?

King Evander provides some soldiers for Aeneas, and he tells him where he can find more soldiers to fight for him.

King Evander also entrusts his young son, Pallas, to Aeneas. Aeneas is supposed to look out for Pallas in the upcoming war.

King Evander prays for his son as Aeneas and Pallas leave, and then he faints. Of course, he knows that war is dangerous.

• How cruel is Mezentius?

Evander also does one more thing for Aeneas. He lets Aeneas know about Mezentius the tyrant, one of Turnus’ allies in the upcoming war. We find out that Mezentius was a very cruel tyrant indeed. One of the punishments he meted out was to bind a living human being to a corpse. The

living human being would die slowly as the corpse rotted. Because Mezentius was so evil, the Etruscans deposed him as tyrant and he fled to Turnus, who befriended him. King Evander lets Aeneas know that the Etruscans will be good allies.

Of course, this says something bad about Turnus — he befriended a very evil man.

• **The description of Aeneas' shield is influenced by the description of Achilles' shield in Homer's *Iliad*.**

Venus goes to her husband, Vulcan, and convinces him to make armor for Aeneas. She does this by seducing her husband.

The shield that Vulcan creates for Aeneas is more than mere armor — it is a work of art. On the shield appear many scenes of Roman history.

The description of Aeneas' shield is influenced by the description of Achilles' shield in Homer's *Iliad*. However, the two shields have differences as well as similarities.

• **Achilles' shield shows generic scenes, while Aeneas' shield shows specific scenes.**

The following information describing Achilles' shield are quoted word for word (bolded numbers added) from Michael Silk, *The Iliad*:

On it [the shield] are five segments (481), evidently circles, each with a different scene.

No. 1: At the centre are the earth, the sky and the sea (483ff.).

No. 2: Outside the central circle are two cities, one at peace, busy with a marriage and a law-suit, the other at war, suffering siege, and preparing an ambush against its attackers, while the old men, the women and the children are left inside the city wall (490ff.).

No. 3: The third circle contains the seasons of the rural year (541ff.),

No. 4: the fourth a dance (590ff.),

No. 5: and the fifth, 'around the outermost rim', Ocean (670ff.).

The whole is a microcosm that begins with the elements and is enclosed by Ocean, which in Greek myth is a river that encloses the world. The natural elements, therefore, occupy the beginning and the end, and within them is human life, lived according to the seasons and social custom, and represented as a unified whole. Within that whole, alongside civil disputes and social celebrations, war has a proper place — war in two guises: the ambush and the siege, technique and might, the kind of war the *Iliad* ignores and the kind the *Iliad* is about.

In the *Iliad*, Achilles is special. When he goes into battle, he bears a representation of the entire Universe with the exception of Hades on his shield.

Aeneas' shield shows specific scenes from Roman history. Many important events are shown on the shield, including the suckling of Romulus and Remus by a female wolf, the rape of the Sabine women, and Caesar Augustus' victory at Actium.

• **Would the Romans enjoy the description of the shield?**

The Romans would have enjoyed the description of the shield because they know their own mythology, their own history, their own heroes, and their own villains. They would have understood the references to people and places, something that many modern students are unlikely to do unless they have had courses in Roman mythology and Roman history.

However, imagine if one of our founding fathers — say, George Washington — was given a shield decorated with pictures of future episodes of American history. We might see such scenes as the Alamo, the Battle of Gettysburg, D-day, the Civil Rights movement. These scenes, of course, we would recognize. People represented on the shield might include Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy. These people, of course, we would recognize. We would then be in the same position as the Romans listening to the description of Aeneas' shield.

• **If you feel like doing research, tell (in your own words) the story of Romulus and Remus and the founding of Rome.**

Let me give you some background about Romulus and Remus and early Rome. Romulus and Remus appear on Aeneas' shield.

Rhea Silvia, a descendant of Aeneas and the god Mars, gave birth to two twin boys: Romulus and Remus. They were set adrift in a basket on the river Tiber because their uncle was a usurper. Their great-uncle (brother of their grandfather), whose name was Amulius, had forced Rhea Silvia to become a Vestal Virgin because he was afraid that she would have male children who would try to depose him, just as he had deposed their grandfather, whose name was Numitor, and who should have been king.

The basket that Romulus and Remus were in washed up on shore. A female wolf found them and suckled them, keeping them alive. A shepherd then found and adopted them and raised them to adulthood. They grew up and made their grandfather King of Alba Longa, a city that had been founded by Ascanius, the son of Aeneas.

Romulus and Remus then built their own city. The two brothers quarreled over who should name and rule the city. They fought, and Romulus killed his brother, Remus. This is why the city is named Rome and not Reme.

Of course, this is not the best way for a city to be founded. The history of Rome begins in fratricide: one brother killing his brother. In addition, the founders of Rome were conceived because of rape as the selection below from Livy shows.

The website Perseus has a translation of Livy, Book 1, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*. This book tells the early story of Rome:

THE STORY OF ROMULUS. Birth and Upbringing.

But the Fates had, I believe, already decreed the origin of this great city and the foundation of the mightiest empire under heaven. The Vestal was forcibly violated and gave birth to twins. She named Mars as their father, either because she really believed it, or because the fault might appear less heinous if a deity were the cause of it. But neither gods nor men sheltered her or her babes from the king's cruelty; the priestess was thrown

into prison, the boys were ordered to be thrown into the river. By a heaven-sent chance it happened that the Tiber was then overflowing its banks, and stretches of standing water prevented any approach to the main channel. Those who were carrying the children expected that this stagnant water would be sufficient to drown them, so under the impression that they were carrying out the king's orders they exposed the boys at the nearest point of the overflow, where the Ficus Ruminalis (said to have been formerly called Romularis) now stands. The locality was then a wild solitude. The tradition goes on to say that after the floating cradle in which the boys had been exposed had been left by the retreating water on dry land, a thirsty she-wolf from the surrounding hills, attracted by the crying of the children, came to them, gave them her teats to suck and was so gentle towards them that the king's flock-master found her licking the boys with her tongue. According to the story his name was Faustulus. He took the children to his hut and gave them to his wife Larentia to bring up. Some writers think that Larentia, from her unchaste life, had got the nickname of "She-wolf" amongst the shepherds, and that this was the origin of the marvellous story.

As soon as the boys, thus born and thus brought up, grew to be young men they did not neglect their pastoral duties but their special delight was roaming through the woods on hunting expeditions. As their strength and courage were thus developed, they used not only to lie in wait for fierce beasts of prey, but they even attacked brigands when loaded with plunder. They distributed what they took amongst the shepherds, with whom, surrounded by a continually increasing body of young men, they associated themselves in their serious undertakings and in their sports and pastimes.

Source: <<http://tinyurl.com/kecfj7y>>

Editions and translations: English (ed. Rev. Canon Roberts)

The website Perseus has a translation of Livy, Book 1, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*. This book tells how Romulus killed Remus:

Death of Remus.

Remus is said to have been the first to receive an omen: six vultures appeared to him. The augury had just been announced to Romulus when double the number appeared to him. Each was saluted as king by his own party. The one side based their claim on the priority of the appearance, the other on the number of the birds. Then followed an angry altercation; heated passions led to bloodshed; in the tumult Remus was killed. The more common report is that Remus contemptuously jumped over the newly raised walls and was forthwith killed by the enraged Romulus, who exclaimed, 'So shall it be henceforth with every one who leaps over my walls.' Romulus thus became sole ruler, and the city was called after him, its founder.

Source: <<http://tinyurl.com/mreyg26>>

Editions and translations: English (ed. Rev. Canon Roberts)

• Who were the early citizens of Rome?

Rome needed citizens, and the men whom Romulus gathered around him were young men who were not the best citizens. We would call them never-do-wells and criminals and such. One

problem that Romulus ran into was that his city needed female citizens as well as male citizens. The young men who gathered around Romulus needed wives.

• If you feel like doing research, what was the rape (in this case, the word means kidnapping) of the Sabine women?

Some bad things happened during the early years of Rome. Not only did Romulus kill his brother, but Romulus and the early citizens of Rome got wives by violating a religious festival.

The early citizens of Rome were male. Very few, if any, women were early Romans. The men wanted wives, so they invited their neighbors, the Sabines, to a religious festival. Someone gave a signal, and the Romans kidnapped the Sabine women. These women became their wives.

Note that the word “rape” here means “kidnap.” Supposedly, the women wanted Roman husbands or at least were persuaded to marry Roman men. Or that might be a later Roman story created to excuse bad behavior.

The website Perseus has a translation of Livy, Book 1, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*. This book tells about the Rape of the Sabines Women:

The Rape of the Sabines.

The Roman State had now become so strong that it was a match for any of its neighbours in war, but its greatness threatened to last for only one generation, since through the absence of women there was no hope of offspring, and there was no right of intermarriage with their neighbours. Acting on the advice of the senate, Romulus sent envoys amongst the surrounding nations to ask for alliance and the right of intermarriage on behalf of his new community. It was represented that cities, like everything else, sprung from the humblest beginnings, and those who were helped on by their own courage and the favour of heaven won for themselves great power and great renown. As to the origin of Rome, it was well known that whilst it had received divine assistance, courage and self-reliance were not wanting. There should, therefore, be no reluctance for men to mingle their blood with their fellow-men.

Nowhere did the envoys meet with a favourable reception. Whilst their proposals were treated with contumely, there was at the same time a general feeling of alarm at the power so rapidly growing in their midst. Usually they were dismissed with the question, ‘whether they had opened an asylum for women, for nothing short of that would secure for them inter-marriage on equal terms.’ The Roman youth could ill brook such insults, and matters began to look like an appeal to force.

To secure a favourable place and time for such an attempt, Romulus, disguising his resentment, made elaborate preparations for the celebration of games in honour of ‘Equestrian Neptune,’ which he called ‘the Consualia.’ He ordered public notice of the spectacle to be given amongst the adjoining cities, and his people supported him in making the celebration as magnificent as their knowledge and resources allowed, so that expectations were raised to the highest pitch. There was a great gathering; people were eager to see the new City, all their nearest neighbours — the people of Caenina, Antemnae, and Crustumium — were there, and the whole Sabine population came, with their wives and families. They were invited to accept hospitality at the different

houses, and after examining the situation of the City, its walls and the large number of dwelling-houses it included, they were astonished at the rapidity with which the Roman State had grown.

When the hour for the games had come, and their eyes and minds were alike riveted on the spectacle before them, the preconcerted signal was given and the Roman youth dashed in all directions to carry off the maidens who were present. The larger part were carried off indiscriminately, but some particularly beautiful girls who had been marked out for the leading patricians were carried to their houses by plebeians told off for the task. One, conspicuous amongst them all for grace and beauty, is reported to have been carried off by a group led by a certain Talassius, and to the many inquiries as to whom she was intended for, the invariable answer was given, 'For Talassius.' Hence the use of this word in the marriage rites. Alarm and consternation broke up the games, and the parents of the maidens fled, distracted with grief, uttering bitter reproaches on the violators of the laws of hospitality and appealing to the god to whose solemn games they had come, only to be the victims of impious perfidy.

The abducted maidens were quite as despondent and indignant. Romulus, however, went round in person, and pointed out to them that it was all owing to the pride of their parents in denying right of intermarriage to their neighbours. They would live in honourable wedlock, and share all their property and civil rights, and — dearest of all to human nature — would be the mothers of freemen. He begged them to lay aside their feelings of resentment and give their affections to those whom fortune had made masters of their persons. An injury had often led to reconciliation and love; they would find their husbands all the more affectionate because each would do his utmost, so far as in him lay to make up for the loss of parents and country. These arguments were reinforced by the endearments of their husbands who excused their conduct by pleading the irresistible force of their passion — a plea effective beyond all others in appealing to a woman's nature.

Source: <<http://tinyurl.com/lzw6s5a>>

Editions and translations: English (ed. Rev. Canon Roberts)

• If you feel like doing research, what are the two ways in which the death of Romulus is described in legend?

The two different versions of how Romulus died are very different. One death makes him out to be a hero, but the other death is ignominious (shameful, degrading).

The version that makes him out to be a hero is this: The gods came and lifted Romulus up to Mount Olympus so that he would become a god.

The version in which his death is ignominious is this: The Senators hated Romulus, and they assassinated him. Someone gave a signal, and the Senators tore Romulus to pieces.

Both of these versions of Romulus' death are told by Livy:

Disappearance of Romulus.

After these immortal achievements, Romulus held a review of his army at the 'Caprae Palus' in the Campus Martius. A violent thunder storm suddenly arose and enveloped the king in so dense a cloud that he was quite invisible to the assembly. From that hour Romulus was no longer seen on earth. When the fears of the Roman youth were allayed by the return of bright, calm sun-shine after such fearful weather, they saw that the royal seat was vacant. Whilst they fully believed the assertion of the Senators, who had been standing close to him, that he had been snatched away to heaven by a whirlwind, still, like men suddenly bereaved, fear and grief kept them for some time speechless. At length, after a few had taken the initiative, the whole of those present hailed Romulus as 'a god, the son of a god, the King and Father of the City of Rome.' They put up supplications for his grace and favour, and prayed that he would be propitious to his children and save and protect them. I believe, however, that even then there were some who secretly hinted that he had been torn limb from limb by the senators — a tradition to this effect, though certainly a very dim one, has filtered down to us. The other, which I follow, has been the prevailing one, due, no doubt, to the admiration felt for the man and the apprehensions excited by his disappearance. This generally accepted belief was strengthened by one man's clever device. The tradition runs that Proculus Julius, a man whose authority had weight in matters of even the gravest importance, seeing how deeply the community felt the loss of the king, and how incensed they were against the senators, came forward into the assembly and said: "Quirites! at break of dawn, to-day, the Father of this City suddenly descended from heaven and appeared to me. Whilst, thrilled with awe, I stood rapt before him in deepest reverence, praying that I might be pardoned for gazing upon him, 'Go,' said he, 'tell the Romans that it is the will of heaven that my Rome should be the head of all the world. Let them henceforth cultivate the arts of war, and let them know assuredly, and hand down the knowledge to posterity, that no human might can withstand the arms of Rome.'" It is marvellous what credit was given to this man's story, and how the grief of the people and the army was soothed by the belief which had been created in the immortality of Romulus.

Source: <<http://tinyurl.com/kz4udhz>>

Editions and translations: English (ed. Rev. Canon Roberts)

• If you feel like doing research, what is the story of Horatius Cocles?

Horatius Cocles also appears on Aeneas' shield.

Here is some information about Horatius:

- Horatius Cocles (Horatius the One-Eyed) was a famous Roman soldier.
- Lars Porsenna, an Etruscan king, attacked Rome in the 6th century B.C.E.
- The Romans, who had recently overthrown their monarch (in 509 B.C.E.), gathered behind the walls of the city.

- A vulnerable spot was the Sublician bridge, which was made of wood, over the Tiber River.
- Horatius was guarding this bridge when the Etruscans appeared. His soldiers wanted to run away and reach safety behind the walls of Rome, but he convinced them to stay and destroy the bridge so that the Etruscans could not use it.
- Horatius guarded the bridge as his soldiers destroyed it. Two soldiers joined him, but when the bridge was almost destroyed, Horatius told them to cross the bridge to safety. This meant that Horatius alone faced the Etruscan army.
- The Etruscans had held back, impressed by the bravery of Horatius, but now they attacked Horatius just as the bridge fell. Horatius jumped into the river while wearing armor. One version of the story says that he drowned. Another version of the story says that he made it to Rome, where he was rewarded with land. Either way, the Romans regarded him as a hero and told his story to their children.
- Livy tells the story of Horatius in *History of Rome*, Volume 1, Book 2, Paragraph 10:

[2.10] On the appearance of the enemy the country people fled into the City as best they could. The weak places in the defences were occupied by military posts; elsewhere the walls and the Tiber were deemed sufficient protection. The enemy would have forced their way over the Sublician bridge had it not been for one man, Horatius Cocles. The good fortune of Rome provided him as her bulwark on that memorable day. He happened to be on guard at the bridge when he saw the Janiculum taken by a sudden assault and the enemy rushing down from it to the river, whilst his own men, a panic-struck mob, were deserting their posts and throwing away their arms. He reproached them one after another for their cowardice, tried to stop them, appealed to them in heaven's name to stand, declared that it was in vain for them to seek safety in flight whilst leaving the bridge open behind them, there would very soon be more of the enemy on the Palatine and the Capitol than there were on the Janiculum. So he shouted to them to break down the bridge by sword or fire, or by whatever means they could, he would meet the enemies' attack so far as one man could keep them at bay. He advanced to the head of the bridge. Amongst the fugitives, whose backs alone were visible to the enemy, he was conspicuous as he fronted them armed for fight at close quarters. The enemy were astounded at his preternatural courage. Two men were kept by a sense of shame from deserting him — Sp. Lartius and T. Herminius — both of them men of high birth and renowned courage. With them he sustained the first tempestuous shock and wild confused onset, for a brief interval. Then, whilst only a small portion of the bridge remained and those who were cutting it down called upon them to retire, he insisted upon these, too, retreating. Looking round with eyes dark with menace upon the Etruscan chiefs, he challenged them to single combat, and reproached them all with being the slaves of tyrant kings, and whilst unmindful of their own liberty coming to attack that of others. For some time they hesitated, each looking round upon the others to begin. At length shame roused them to action, and raising a shout they hurled their javelins from all sides on their solitary foe. He caught them on his outstretched shield, and with unshaken resolution kept his place on the bridge with firmly planted foot. They were just attempting to dislodge him by a charge when the crash of the broken bridge and the shout which the Romans raised at seeing the work completed stayed the attack by filling them with sudden panic. Then Cocles said,

“Tiberinus, holy father, I pray thee to receive into thy propitious stream these arms and this thy warrior.” So, fully armed, he leaped into the Tiber, and though many missiles fell over him he swam across in safety to his friends: an act of daring more famous than credible with posterity. The State showed its gratitude for such courage; his statue was set up in the Comitium, and as much land given to him as he could drive the plough round in one day. Besides this public honour, the citizens individually showed their feeling; for, in spite of the great scarcity, each, in proportion to his means, sacrificed what he could from his own store as a gift to Cocles.

Source: <http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/txt/ah/Livy/Livy02.html>

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• If you feel like doing research, describe the incident of the cackling geese on the Capitoline Hill.

The incident with the geese on the Capitoline Hill appears on Aeneas' shield.

Here is some information about this incident:

- In 396 B.C.E. the Romans made Marcus Furius Camillus dictator. He fought and conquered the Etruscans and became a hero.
- Camillus, however, was accused of taking booty from the Etruscan stronghold named Veii. It was against the law for him to take the booty for his own personal gain. He said that he was innocent, but he was thought to be guilty.
- Camillus went into voluntary exile, along with some supporters.
- An army from Gaul arrived and won a battle 11 miles north of Rome.
- The Capitoline Hill was still defended by the Roman general Marcus Manlius. He and a few supporters defended the temples of Jupiter, Minerva and Juno on the Capitoline Hill.
- The Roman general Marcus Manlius sent a messenger to Camillus, asking him to return and fight the Gauls.
- Camillus agreed to return — as long as the troops of the Roman general Marcus Manlius formally approved his return.
- A messenger took Camillus' message to Manlius, using a hidden trail up the Capitoline Hill. The Gauls observed the messenger and discovered the hidden trail.
- The Gauls used the hidden trail, hoping to spring a surprise attack upon Manlius.
- Geese that were sacred to Juno were on the Capitoline Hill. The geese heard the Gauls, and so the geese began to cackle.

- The Roman heard the geese, and they successfully repelled the Gauls.
- Camillus and an army of 40,000 soldiers arrived at exactly the right time. Manlius and his men were exhausted, and so they were trying to buy peace from the Romans, using gold from the temple sacred to Juno.
- Camillus said, “Rome buys its peace with iron, not gold,” then he and his army attacked the Gauls and drove them north, away from Rome.
- Camillus was given the title of Second Founder of the City and stayed in Rome.

• **If you feel like doing research, say who Cato the Younger and Cato the Elder were. (Cato the Younger appears on Aeneas’ shield.)**

Cato the Younger is seen on Aeneas’ shield giving laws to the just souls in the Underworld. One of his ancestors was Cato the Elder.

Here are a few facts about Cato the Elder:

- M. Porcius Cato is aka Cato the Elder or Cato the Censor. He lived in the 2nd century B.C.E.
- Cato the Elder was a Roman politician, general, and writer.
- Cato the Elder had moral principles that he observed, and he had an austere way of life.
- The Romans were aware that Carthage was and had been their main rival for a very long time. Cato the Elder believed that for Rome to be safe Carthage had to be destroyed. Therefore, whenever he made a speech as a Roman politician, he would end his speech — no matter what its topic was — with the words *Carthago delenda est*. This sentence means “Carthage must be destroyed.” Eventually, Carthage was destroyed following the Third Punic War. By the way, the Latin word *Punicus* means Phoenician. Phoenicians founded Carthage; therefore, the wars against Carthage are called the Punic Wars.

Cato the Younger fought against Julius Caesar because he believed that Julius Caesar wanted to make himself king. Cato the Younger wanted a Roman republic, not a Roman kingdom. After Julius Caesar defeated Cato the Younger, Cato the Younger committed suicide. He stayed up and read Plato’s *Phaedo*, which makes arguments for the immortality of the soul, before he committed suicide.

• **If you feel like doing research, tell (in your own words) what happened at the Battle of Actium.**

In the center of Aeneas’ shield is a depiction of the Battle of Actium.

Here is some information about the Battle of Actium:

- After the death of Julius Caesar, people jockeyed for power in Rome. The main contenders for power were Octavian (who was later renamed Caesar Augustus) and Mark Antony.
- Mark Antony married Octavian’s sister, Octavia, but later started an affair with Cleopatra. Anecdote: Mark Antony wanted to impress Cleopatra with his fishing ability,

but unfortunately the fish weren't biting, so he secretly ordered some fishermen to dive underwater and attach fish to his hook. With this aid, he was able to catch fish after fish in the presence of Cleopatra. However, Cleopatra understood what was going on, so she secretly ordered a fisherman to attach a *salted* fish to Mark Antony's hook. (Source: Hillary Hauser, *Scuba Diving*, pp. 78-79.)

- The Battle of Actium took place on 2 September 31 B.C.E. Actium was a Roman colony in Greece.
 - In the battle of Actium, Octavian (who was later renamed Caesar Augustus) defeated Mark Antony and Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.
 - The Battle of Actium was a naval battle.
 - Cleopatra and her 60 ships fled back to Egypt in the late afternoon, leaving the battle.
 - Mark Antony followed her with 40 of his own ships.
 - With the opposing leaders gone, Octavian's forces won a massive battle. They killed 5,000 of Mark Antony's men. Mark Antony's land soldiers also soon surrendered.
 - One year later, Octavian took the war to Egypt. Mark Antony committed suicide.
 - Cleopatra also committed suicide. Octavian had captured her, but rather than be seen in a Roman triumph, she ordered that a poisonous snake be smuggled in to her. She allowed the poisonous asp to bite her, and she died from the poison.
 - Within three years after the Battle of Actium, Octavian became emperor and took the name of Caesar Augustus.
- **In Book 8, we have three heroes: a hero of the past (Hercules), a hero of the present (Aeneas), and a hero of the future (Caesar Augustus).**

The story of Heracles and the story of Caesar Augustus are meant to be compared to the story of Aeneas. Heracles is a hero of the past, and Aeneas is a hero of the present — present meaning the time frame of the *Aeneid*. Caesar Augustus is a hero of the future.

Three heroes appear in Book 8:

- 1) A hero of the past: Hercules (whose festival is being celebrated as Aeneas arrives to visit King Evander)
- 2) A hero of the present: Aeneas
- 3) A hero of the future: Caesar Augustus (who appears on the shield of Aeneas)

Many heroes have trod in Rome.

• **When Aeneas lifts up his shield, what is he lifting up (symbolically)?**

When Aeneas lifts up this shield on his arm, he is lifting up something important. He is lifting up the history of Rome, depictions of important events in Roman history.

Aeneas glories in the shield, but he does not know what the depictions mean. In Elizabeth Vandiver's phrase in her Teaching Company course on Virgil's *Aeneid*, Aeneas is lifting "the weight of Roman glory to come" when he lifts the shield.

Book 8 ends with Virgil writing,

All these images on Vulcan's shield,
His mother's gift, were wonders to Aeneas.
Knowing nothing of the events themselves,
He felt joy in their pictures, taking up
Upon his shoulder all the destined acts
And fame of his descendants. (8.987-992 Fitzgerald)

In the *Iliad*, Achilles is special. When he goes into battle, he bears a representation of the entire Universe (with the exception of Hades) on his shield.

In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is special. When he goes into battle, he bears a representation of the history of Rome on his shield.

• **What does Book 8 open and close with?**

Book 8 opens and closes with the gods letting Aeneas know that his mission will be successful.

At the beginning of Book 8, the River Tiber tells Aeneas that when he wakes up he will see a sow and 30 white piglets. The interpretation of the omen is that in 30 years, Ascanius will found the city of Alba Longa and become its king.

At the end of Book 8, Aeneas receives a shield that depicts the future glorious history of Rome.

Conclusion

In Book 9 of the *Aeneid*, war will start between the Latins and the Trojans.

Like the *Iliad*, the rest of the *Aeneid* will be concerned with warriors and warfare.

***Aeneid*, Book 9: A Night Sortie, A Day Assault / Enemy at the Gates**

• **Which section of the *Aeneid* is most similar to Homer's *Iliad*?**

The section of the *Aeneid* that is most similar to Homer's *Iliad* is Books 9 and 10. Here we have a number of battle scenes.

In Book 9, Nisus and Euryalus are featured; in some ways, they are similar to Aeneas and Pallas.

Also in Book 9, Turnus' *aristeia* is featured. In an *aristeia*, a warrior fights magnificently. The high point of Turnus' *aristeia* is his killing of Pallas.

The last four books of the *Aeneid* — Books 9-12 — are concerned with the war between the Trojans and the Latins.

• **The main theme of Book 9 is lack of self-restraint. Does Aeneas usually show self-restraint? Where is Aeneas during Book 9?**

The main theme of Book 9 is lack of self-restraint. We will see characters in this book display a lack of self-restraint frequently — a lack of self-restraint that keeps them from achieving their main goals.

Aeneas is hardly mentioned in this book. He is away visiting King Evander and getting the Etruscans and their king, King Tarchon, to be the Trojans' allies. The main theme of Book 9 is self-restraint, and that is something that Aeneas — usually — possesses.

• **How does Book 9 begin? What does Turnus do?**

The beginning of Book 9 returns the readers' attention to Aeneas' camp. Aeneas himself is away from the camp because he is visiting King Evander. Aeneas has foresight, and he has given orders that if the camp is attacked in his absence, the Trojans are not to fight a battle in the open; instead, they are under orders to stay behind the fortifications of the camp.

In fact, Turnus and his soldiers do attack the camp. Juno sends Iris to Turnus with a message that now is a good time to attack the camp because Aeneas is not present.

Aeneas' soldiers obey his orders and stay behind their fortifications, although they would rather display their bravery and fight:

Thus warn'd, they shut their gates; with shouts ascend
The bulwarks, and, secure, their foes attend:
For their wise gen'ral, with foreseeing care,
Had charg'd them not to tempt the doubtful war,
Nor, tho' provok'd, in open fields advance,
But close within their lines attend their chance.
Unwilling, yet they keep the strict command,
And sourly wait in arms the hostile band. (John Dryden)

• **How does Juno influence Turnus? Does Juno show self-restraint here — and usually?**

Turnus is influenced by Juno in what he does here. It is Juno's message to him — delivered by Iris, the messenger-goddess who is the rainbow — that influences him to attack the camp and set fire to the Trojans' camp. Juno lets Turnus know that Aeneas is away, and that now is a good time to attack his camp.

Juno is not showing self-restraint here. She is blinded by her hatred of the Trojans. Knowing that Aeneas is fated to become an important ancestor of the Roman people, she should not attempt to alter fate. She ought to allow what is fated to happen.

Juno knows that what is fated to happen will happen. She causes a lot of misery by trying to interfere with fate. What is fated to happen will happen, but it is much more difficult for Aeneas to fulfill his destiny because of the meddling of Juno.

• **How does Turnus' attempt to burn the Trojan ships have strong parallels to Homer's *Iliad*?**

Homer's *Iliad* also has one side trying to set fire to the other side's ships. Hector and the Trojans are able to set fire to and burn one Greek ship. Now Turnus tries to set fire to the Trojans' ships.

Note that in each case it is the losing side that tries to set fire to the other side's ships. The Trojans lose their war, and the Latins lose their war.

• **How is Turnus like the Trojans, Paris, and Hector during the Trojan War?**

The Trojans

Turnus is fighting for the two main reasons that the Trojans were fighting in the Trojan War. Of course, the Trojans were fighting to protect Troy. The Greeks wanted to conquer Troy, and the Trojans fought to keep that from happening. Hector in particular is fighting to save his city and his family. The Trojans were also fighting for a wife: Paris' wife, Helen.

Paris

Turnus is fighting like Paris for two main reasons:

- 1) Each is trying to protect his country.
- 2) Each is trying to get a bride — although the bride is not really his. The war could have been stopped if Paris had given Helen back to Menelaus, who was Helen's legal husband. Turnus is like Paris in that he is fighting to get a bride who is not really his.

Hector

Turnus is like Hector in that both try to burn the ships of the other side. If Hector had succeeded in burning the Greek ships, the Trojans would have won the Trojan War. The ships were used to bring provisions to the Greek soldiers. Also, both Hector and Turnus are the foremost warriors for their side.

Note

Of course, the *Aeneid* is not a rewriting of the *Iliad*, although it is definitely influenced by the *Iliad*. The parallels are not exact. Turnus is some ways like Paris, but Paris had Helen, while Turnus is fighting to get Lavinia.

• **How is Aeneas like Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey*?**

Of course, the *Aeneid* is also influenced by Homer's *Odyssey*.

Aeneas is like Odysseus for two reasons:

- 1) Each is trying to reach his homeland.
- 2) Each is trying to gain a bride — of course, Odysseus was trying to get back to and reclaim his wife.

Note

Of course, the *Aeneid* is not a rewriting of the *Odyssey*, although it is definitely influenced by the *Odyssey*. The parallels are not exact.

Aeneas is trying to reach a new homeland, while Odysseus was trying to reach the island that he was already king of.

Aeneas is trying to gain a new bride, while in the *Odyssey* Odysseus is trying to rejoin Penelope, whom he has not seen in 20 years.

• **How is Aeneas like Achilles in Homer's *Iliad*?**

Aeneas is like Achilles for two reasons:

- 1) Each has armor that was made for him by the god Vulcan/Hephaestus.
- 2) Each is the foremost warrior in his army.

• **How are the Trojan ships saved from burning?**

The Trojan ships are not burnt because the Mother of the Gods saves them from burning.

The wood that the ships were made from came from a grove of pines where people brought offerings to her. She gave up the grove of trees willingly so that the Trojans would have ships, but she did not want the ships to burn.

In the *Aeneid*, the Mother of the Gods is an amalgamation of two goddesses:

- 1) The Greek goddess Rhea (RAY-a), who is the mother of Jupiter and the wife of Cronus.
- 2) The Near Eastern goddess Cybele, who lived on Mt. Ida, which is very close to Troy.

The Mother of the Gods did not want anything to happen to the ships, but Jupiter points out that human beings should not have this privilege: to travel on ships that can never sink. However, he does say that when the Trojans have reached their new homeland, and the purpose of the ship is accomplished, then all surviving ships shall be transformed into sea-nymphs:

“How dare you, mother, endless date demand
 For vessels molded by a mortal hand?
 What then is fate? Shall bold AEneas ride,
 Of safety certain, on th’ uncertain tide?
 Yet, what I can, I grant; when, wafted o’er,
 The chief is landed on the Latian shore,
 Whatever ships escape the raging storms,
 At my command shall change their fading forms
 To nymphs divine, and plow the wat’ry way,
 Like Dotis and the daughters of the sea.” (John Dryden)

Note: Dotis is a daughter of the sea-god Nereas.

When Turnus’ soldiers begin to set fire to the Trojan ships, the ships change into sea-nymphs. A voice is heard saying,

“Turnus may sooner fire the sea itself
 Than hulls of holy pine. Ships, now go free,
 Go as sea-goddesses. Your Mother sends you.” (9.162-166 Fitzgerald)

The ship dive into the ship, and when they surface, they are sea-nymphs.

• Who are the nymphs in Greek mythology? Who are a few notable nymphs? (Which notable nymphs appear in Homer’s epics?)

Here is some information about nymphs:

Nymphs were an important part of Greek mythology and religion. They were revered as the spirits of specific natural features — mountains, rivers, trees, and even groves were usually associated with a type of nymph. The name “nymph” comes from the Greek word that means “young woman,” and so naturally these beings were considered to be female. Indeed, they were represented as lovely and eternally youthful creatures. And while there is some question about whether they were immortal or not — Hamadryads in particular were linked with the lives of their chosen trees — it is believed that they were extremely long lived.

Source: <http://www.loggia.com/myth/nymphs.html>

Date Downloaded: 4 November 2009

A good way to regard nymphs is as female nature spirits. Some nymphs are famous:

Calypso: The sea-nymph Calypso kept Odysseus captive on her island in Homer’s *Odyssey*.

Thetis: The sea-nymph Thetis is the mother of Achilles, the best warrior of the Trojan War and the hero of Homer's *Iliad*.

• How does Turnus misinterpret the omen of the transformation of the Trojan ships? What is the correct interpretation?

Turnus misinterprets the omen of the turning of the ships into nymphs. He says that this is a good omen for the Latins. Now that the Trojans have lost their ships, they have lost their means of escape.

Actually, it would be better for Turnus if the Trojans still had their ships. If the Trojans were to grow discouraged, they could sail away in their ships; instead, now they are forced to fight because they have no means of sailing away from Italy.

In Homer's *Iliad*, at first Hector simply wants the Greeks to sail away. If the Greeks go back home, then the Trojans have won the war and Hector's family and city are safe. Later, victory is almost within Hector's grasp, and he wants to destroy the ships so that the Greeks cannot escape destruction at his hands.

Of course, Turnus' interpretation of the omen is wrong, just as the Trojans' interpretation of the omen of the destruction of Laocoön and his two sons was wrong. The Trojans interpreted the destruction of Laocoön and his two sons as meaning that they ought to take the Trojan Horse inside the city and so the city would then be safe. The correct interpretation of the omen was that the city was doomed.

Turnus interprets the omen of the ships turning into sea-nymphs as good for the Latins because now the Trojans have no means of escape. The correct interpretation is the omen is good for the Trojans because they have their new homeland and therefore do not need ships any longer.

If this were real life, Turnus would be acting as a good leader here. A good leader ought to interpret omens as being positive. However, in the *Aeneid*, the gods and the goddesses are real, and a good leader ought to correctly interpret omens.

Julius Caesar once turned a bad omen into a good omen:

During the Roman civil wars when Julius Caesar was fighting against Sextus Pompey for power, Caesar landed on the coast of North Africa. As he jumped from his ship into the shallow water, he stumbled and fell. Knowing that his superstitious Roman troops would regard his stumbling as an unlucky omen, Caesar decided to make his troops think he had fallen on purpose. He grabbed two fistfuls of sand, stood up, and raised his hands so his troops could see the sand. He then yelled, "Africa, I hold you in my hands!" Hearing these inspiring words, his superstitious troops charged upon the beach with high morale.

Source: James Barter, *Julius Caesar and Ancient Rome in World History*, pp. 80-81.

• Who are Nisus and Euryalus? Which other combinations of a somewhat older man and a younger man appear in the *Aeneid*?

We learned about Nisus and Euryalus in Book 5, in which they competed in a footrace that was part of the funeral games held in honor of Aeneas' father, Anchises.

The main fact about Nisus and Euryalus is that they are a somewhat older man and a younger man who are very devoted to each other. Nisus is the older man, and Euryalus is the younger man.

We will see the same theme with Aeneas and Pallas. Aeneas is the older man, and he will be devoted to Pallas, the younger man.

In addition, when Anchises visited the land of Evander, they became devoted to each other. At the time, Evander was a youth.

• **Why do Nisus and Euryalus plan a night raid on the Rutulian camp?**

The Rutulians are outside the Trojan camp, and they will attack the next day. The Trojan elders believe that a messenger ought to be sent to Aeneas so that Aeneas will return and defend the camp against the Rutulians.

Nisus would like to win glory by being the messenger to Aeneas. He would like to go alone to Aeneas, but his friend Euryalus wants to accompany him. As it happens, it would have been better if Nisus had gone alone.

• **What evidence exists that Nisus and Euryalus could be successful in their night raid? What are the Rutulians — especially the Rutulian guards — doing?**

Much evidence exists that the night raid of Nisus and Euryalus could be successful — this is not a hare-brained scheme.

The Trojan guards are well disciplined and do a good job while they are on guard duty. In contrast, the Rutulian guards are slack:

Fourteen Rutulians are picked to guard the ramparts,
each commanding a hundred troops, their helmets crested
with purple plumes, their war-gear glinting gold.
They scatter to posts and man the watch by turns
or stretching out on the grass, enjoy their wine,
tilting the bronze bowls while the fires burn on
and the watchmen dice away a sleepless night ... (9.193-199 Fagles)

Nisus is intelligent enough to know that the Rutulians are slack in their guard. He tells Euryalus,

Thou see'st the foe secure; how faintly shine
Their scatter'd fires! the most, in sleep supine
Along the ground, an easy conquest lie:
The wakeful few the fuming flagon ply;
All hush'd around (John Dryden)

• **Before leaving on the night raid, what does Euryalus ask Ascanius to do for him? Why does he do that?**

Before they leave on their night raid, Euryalus asks Ascanius to take care of his (Euryalus') aged mother.

Most of the Trojan women, of course, stayed behind on Sicily. A few Trojan women did go to Italy with Aeneas. We read about a few Trojan women, who mourn for the dead Pallas in Book 11:

Their household stood around, with men of Troy,
And Trojan women, hair unbound in mourning. (11.46-47 Fitzgerald)

Although the Rutulians are slack in their guard, the night raid is dangerous, and Nisus and Euryalus know that they can die during it.

• **What is foreshadowing?**

The 6th edition of *A Handbook to Literature* by C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon defines "foreshadowing" in this way: "The presentation of material in a work in such a way that later events are prepared for" (201).

Here are a couple of other definitions:

Foreshadowing is the use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in literature.

Source: http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/lit_terms/foreshadowing.html

Definition: A literary device used to hint at events that will follow later in the story, sometimes generating feelings of anxiety or suspense. Anton Chekhov once said that "if there is a gun hanging on the wall in the first act, it must fire in the last." That remark captures the essence of foreshadowing.

Source: <http://contemporarylit.about.com/library/bldef-foreshadowing>

• **What foreshadowing shows that the night raid of Nisus and Euryalus will be unsuccessful?**

We have some foreshadowing that the night raid of Nisus and Euryalus will be unsuccessful:

- 1) Nisus says that he hopes that Euryalus will survive him if the night raid ends in disaster.
- 2) Euryalus asks Ascanius to take care of his mother if he dies in the night raid.
- 3) We learn from the narrator that that the tidings Ascanius gives them for Aeneas are "unheard" (9.439 Fitzgerald):

[...] and in particular
Princely Iulus, thoughtful, responsible
Beyond his years, gave many messages
To carry to his father. These the winds

Of heaven scattered, every one, unheard,
And puffed them to the clouds. (9.435-440 Fitzgerald)

• What does Ascanius promise to Nisus and Euryalus if they are successful? Is Ascanius showing self-restraint in what he promises?

Ascanius — who is very young — shows a lack of self-restraint in this book. He over-reacts to the danger posed by Turnus and the Latins. As it happens, his warriors — if they show self-restraint and stay behind the walls of the camp, as Aeneas ordered them to — should be able to hold them off, so Ascanius need not offer as much reward to Nisus and Euryalus as he does.

Ascanius promises that he will give these things to Nisus and Euryalus, if they are successful:

- Two embossed silver cups.
- Two tripods.
- Two bars of gold.
- An ancient wine bowl (a gift from Dido).
- Turnus' mount, armor, and weapons.
- Twelve deep-breasted beauties.
- Twelve slave men with armor.
- The private lands of King Latinus.

Ascanius also promises to be Euryalus' friend for the rest of his life. (Euryalus is closer to Ascanius' age than is Nisus.)

This is too much of a reward for what Nisus and Euryalus are attempting to do. Aeneas could very well hear about this and say, "Ascanius, are you CRAZY?"

By the way, Andrew Tobias is a personal finance expert and a very funny man and an anti-tobacco activist. His Managing Your Money personal finance software program has a life expectancy estimator. You can type in your age and such facts as whether you smoke and whether you wear a seat belt and it will predict how many more years you are likely to live. Of course, people like to play around with this. If you type in that you are 12 years old and that you smoke, this message pops up: "YOU'RE 12 YEARS OLD AND YOU SMOKE! ARE YOU CRAZY?"

In addition, during parties, Andrew Tobias leaves his computer on. His computer is on his desk next to his telephone. If anyone wants to use his telephone, they will almost certainly look at what is on the computer screen. On the screen is a fake Net Worth table that makes Mr. Tobias look like a billionaire.

Ascanius also makes a promise to Euryalus if he is unsuccessful. He promises to take care of Euryalus' mother if Euryalus is killed. Since Social Security and Medicare/Medicaid do not exist in this society, it is the responsibility of sons to take care of aged parents. Euryalus is supposed to take care of his mother, but if he is dead, he can't. This promise is not excessive and does not show a lack of self-restraint.

• **How is this night raid modeled on Book 10 of Homer's *Iliad*? How is the night raid of the *Aeneid* different from the night raid of the *Iliad*?**

The night raid in Book 9 of the *Aeneid* is modeled on the night raid in Book 10 of Homer's *Iliad*. Here Ascanius promises a great reward to Nisus and Euryalus if they are successful in their mission. In Book 10 of Homer's *Iliad* Hector promises the Trojan spy Dolon a great reward if he is successful in his mission: the chariot and immortal horses of Achilles.

In Book 10 of the *Iliad*, the Achaeans have suffered a defeat at the hands of the Trojans. To revive the spirits of the Achaeans, Diomedes and Odysseus undertake a night raid against the Trojans. Their raid is very successful. They kill several Trojan allies, including the newly arrived King Rhesus, and they capture his horses and chariot.

Success vs. Lack of Success

As always, Aeneas modifies what he finds in previous epic poems. The most important modification is that the night raid undertaken by Nisus and Euryalus is unsuccessful. The two Trojans die during the night raid.

Pathos vs. Lack of Pathos

Also, the night raid of Nisus and Euryalus has more pathos. They die, and Euryalus' mother mourns.

Necessity vs. Lack of Necessity

In addition, we can say that the night raid of Diomedes and Odysseus is not strictly necessary. They could easily have stayed in camp. The night raid of Nisus and Euryalus is more necessary. Their purpose is to take a message to Aeneas to let him know that he is needed back at the Trojan camp to defend it against Turnus and the Latins.

Different Themes: Cooperation vs. Lack of Self-Restraint

An important aesthetic function of the night raid is to contrast the cooperation shown by Diomedes and Odysseus with the lack of cooperation shown by Agamemnon and Achilles. Nisus and Euryalus, on the other hand, illustrate the theme of lack of self-restraint. They have no need to kill Latin soldiers. Their main purpose is to reach Aeneas, but they endanger their lives by killing Latin soldiers and seizing booty. Also, after Euryalus is killed, Nisus ought to remember his goal and leave to seek Aeneas. Instead, he suffers from a lack of self-restraint and dies while avenging the death of his friend.

• **How and why do Nisus and Euryalus die?**

Nisus and Euryalus have a lot of success in their night raid. They manage to kill a number of the enemy. They may have to kill some of the enemy to clear a way through the enemy soldiers, but they seem to kill more enemy soldiers than is necessary.

However, Euryalus demonstrates a lack of self-restraint when he acquires booty. He picks up a shiny helmet, which leads to his capture when the helmet shines in the moonlight:

The helmet — Euryalus forgot — it glints in the dark,
it gives him away, it's caught in a shaft of moonlight. (9.434-435 Fagles)

Nisus wishes to save Euryalus, so he returns and begins killing — while staying hidden — the enemy soldiers who are holding Euryalus captive.

This, of course, angers Volcens, who is the leader of the soldiers holding Euryalus captive, and he kills Euryalus. The similes used to describe the death of Euryalus emphasize his youth and delicacy:

Down fell the beauteous youth: the yawning wound
 Gush'd out a purple stream, and stain'd the ground.
 His snowy neck reclines upon his breast,
 Like a fair flow'r by the keen share oppress'd;
 Like a white poppy sinking on the plain
 Whose heavy head is overcharg'd with rain. (John Dryden)

Compare:

Euryalus
 In death went reeling down,
 And blood streamed on his handsome length, his neck
 Collapsing let his head fall on his shoulder —
 As a bright flower cut by a passing plow
 Will droop and wither slowly, or a poppy
 Bow its head upon its tired stalk
 When overborne by a passing rain. (9.612-620 Fitzgerald)

Nisus then rushes at the enemy. He is killed, but before he is killed he kills Volcens, thus avenging the death of Euryalus.

In doing these things, Nisus shows a lack of self-restraint. His main task is to take a message to Aeneas, but he allows himself to be sidetracked by his love for Euryalus. Both Nisus and Euryalus end up dead, and they never carry the message to Aeneas.

• **What are the aesthetic purposes of the night raid in Book 9?**

What is the night raid doing in this part of the *Aeneid*? Why does Virgil include this scene? I think there are four main reasons.

Reason #1: Theme of Lack of Self-Restraint

Nisus and Euryalus want glory, so they kill some of the enemy. However, they are supposed to be delivering a message. They are more likely to be able to deliver the message if they do not get distracted by killing the enemy. Euryalus wants material possessions — so he takes Messapus' helmet as booty. This is a mistake because it is the helmet — lights reflect off it — that gives him away and lets the Rutulians capture him. If Euryalus had not been so eager for booty, he

would not have been captured. In addition, Nisus should have gone to Aeneas rather than try to help Euryalus. The main thing Nisus needed to do was to get a message to Aeneas. Because he tries to help Euryalus and avenges his death, Nisus ends up dead and Aeneas never gets the message.

Reason #2: A Parallel to Aeneas and Pallas

Nisus and Euryalus are an older man and a younger man. They are parallel to Aeneas and Pallas. Euryalus dies here, and Pallas will die later.

Reason #3: A Vivid Picture of the Grief of Euryalus' Mother

We see a vivid picture of the grief of Euryalus' mother. The Rutulians behead Nisus and Euryalus and put their heads on pikes so that they can display them to the Trojans and let the Trojans know that Nisus and Euryalus are dead. Euryalus' mother hears that her son is dead, and she appears on the wall of the Trojan fortification and mourns for her son. Later, Pallas will die and King Evander will mourn for him.

Reason #4: The Burden of Founding the Roman People

The burden of founding the Roman people is high. Aeneas must leave Dido, who commits suicide. Here, Euryalus' mother must suffer the death of her child: This is a heavy burden in part because she does not have her son's mutilated corpse and so cannot give it a decent burial. Of course, many people die in war, and all of these people have mothers — and fathers. Pallas' father will mourn for him.

• **A theme that runs through the second half of the *Aeneid* is the grief of elderly parents for the death of young sons. How does Euryalus' mother grieve for him after finding out that he has been killed?**

Here we have another important theme in the second half of the *Aeneid*: elderly parents who mourn the death of their children.

We learn that Euryalus' mother is one of the few Trojan mothers who came to Troy. (Later, Trojan women will mourn after Pallas is killed. This may be one of the minor inconsistencies that appear in the *Aeneid* because Virgil died before finishing the epic.) Nisus tries to get Euryalus to stay in the Trojan camp by saying that he does not want to cause his mother grief, then adding,

She alone, out of so many Trojan mothers, dared
to follow you all the way. She had no love
for great Acentes' city." (9.258-260 Fagles)

Of course, Euryalus dies, and his mother mourns.

Death, of course, is an expected part of war:

When MacLean Stevenson, who played Colonel Blake, left the television sitcom *M*A*S*H*, his character's plane was shot down over the Sea of Japan — there were no survivors. This was a bit of realism no TV sitcom had previously engaged in, and the episode's writers, Jim Fritzell and Everett Greenbaum, were both praised and damned by

letter writers. To people who wrote him letters criticizing the decision to kill the character, Mr. Greenbaum wrote back, "The essence of war is the quick and final departure of a loved one."

Virgil does show some sympathy for the victims of war. We see that he vividly depicts the grief of Euryalus' mother. In fact, with Euryalus dead, she no longer wants to live:

"Put your spears
 Into me, Rutulians, if you can be moved.
 Let fly your javelins all at me, and let me
 Be the first you kill. Or else take pity,
 Father of the great gods, with your bolt
 Dispatch this hateful life to the abyss.
 I cannot else break off my tortured life." (9.698-704 Fitzgerald)

"Bolt," of course, means lightning bolt.

Of course, this is accurate. The death of a child is a great tragedy, and almost all mothers love their children unconditionally. You can be a mass murderer, and your mother will still love you.

A Chinese poet was asked to compose a blessing. The poet wrote.

Grandfather die
 Father die
 Son die

The person who commissioned the poet was outraged because he considered this poem a curse, not a blessing, but the poet explained that it was truly a blessing because people died in the correct order as they grew old and died. A curse would be for the son to die before the father died, and for the father to die before the grandfather died. All of us will die, and the best that we can hope for is to die in the correct order.

Sometimes, death occurs when it ought not to occur. At Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, four Korean students were killed in a car accident. Ohio University arranged a memorial service for the students, which the students' parents attended. One of the fathers of the students thanked the mourners attending the service, then said, "This is not the way it is supposed to be. When a parent dies, you bury them in the ground, but when a child dies, you bury them in your heart." (Source: Ohio University Emeriti Association, compilers, *Ohio University Recollections for the Bicentennial Anniversary: 1804-2004*, p. 72.)

This is how Euryalus' mother mourns for him:

Thus, then, my lov'd Euryalus appears!
 Thus looks the prop of my declining years!
 Was't on this face my famish'd eyes I fed?

Ah! how unlike the living is the dead!
 And could'st thou leave me, cruel, thus alone?
 Not one kind kiss from a departing son!
 No look, no last adieu before he went,
 In an ill-boding hour to slaughter sent!
 Cold on the ground, and pressing foreign clay,
 To Latian dogs and fowls he lies a prey!
 Nor was I near to close his dying eyes,
 To wash his wounds, to weep his obsequies,
 To call about his corpse his crying friends,
 Or spread the mantle (made for other ends)
 On his dear body, which I wove with care,
 Nor did my daily pains or nightly labor spare.
 Where shall I find his corpse? what earth sustains
 His trunk dismember'd, and his cold remains?
 For this, alas! I left my needful ease,
 Expos'd my life to winds and winter seas!
 If any pity touch Rutulian hearts,
 Here empty all your quivers, all your darts;
 Or, if they fail, thou, Jove, conclude my woe,
 And send me thunderstruck to shades below!" (John Dryden)

• **What is an *aristeia* (a-ris-STAY-a)?**

Aristeia (a-ris-STAY-a): a warrior's period of excellence in battle. *Aristeia* is a Greek, not Latin, word.

An *aristeia* is a warrior's day of glory in battle, a day in which the hero is nearly unstoppable and fights so well that bards such as Homer keep their memory alive after the warrior dies by singing about the warrior's *aristeia* in epic poems such as the *Iliad*.

The word *aristeia* means "excellence" — including excellence in battle.

When a warrior will have an *aristeia*, often the warrior's armor will be described as being magnificent, and often the warrior and armor are described with fire imagery. For example, the warrior's helmet will be described as glinting like fire.

- At 9.739-743 (Fitzgerald) and 9.601-604 (Fagles) is the third invocation of the *Aeneid*. Calliope and the other Muses are invoked. Who is Calliope, and why is she an appropriate Muse to be invoked in particular here?

The *Aeneid* has a number of invocations of the Muses:

1. As you would expect, Virgil invokes the Muses at the beginning of the *Aeneid*, just as Homer does in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.
2. In Book 7, Virgil invokes Erato and asks her to inspire him as he writes the second half of the *Aeneid*. Erato is an unusual choice of a Muse to invoke because Erato is associated with love poetry and much of the second half of the *Aeneid* is concerned with war.
3. Here in Book 9, Virgil invokes the Muse Calliope. This is appropriate because Calliope is the Muse of Epic Poetry.

This third invocation introduces the *aristeia* of Turnus — an *aristeia* is a time that a warrior fights magnificently.

Here is the invocation:

Calliope, I pray, and Muses all,
Inspire me as I sing the bloody work,
The deaths dealt out by Turnus on that day,
And tell what men each fighter sent to Orcus:
Help me to spread the massive page of war. (9.739-743 Fitzgerald)

Orcus is a name for the underworld.

I pray you, Calliope — Muses — inspire me as I sing
what carnage and death the sword of Turnus spread that day,
what men each fighter speeded down to darkness. Come,
help me unroll this massive scroll of war! (9.601-604 Fagles)

• How well does Ascanius fight?

Ascanius fights — with a bow and arrows — early in the fighting, and he kills his first man: Numanus, who is Turnus' new brother-in-law.

Numanus taunts the Trojans by calling them women, not men, and Ascanius responds by shooting an arrow at him. The arrow goes through Numanus' head. This is one more reason for Turnus to hate the Trojans.

Ascanius did what he ought to do in this culture. He prayed to Jupiter before he shot the arrow, and he promised Jupiter a sacrifice if he were successful in his shot.

• Why does Ascanius stop fighting?

The gods are looking out for Ascanius. They don't want him to die.

Appropriately, Apollo, the god of archery, stops Ascanius from fighting. Apollo appears in disguise to Ascanius. He congratulates Ascanius on his first kill, but he also tells him not to fight any more:

“Advance, illustrious youth, increase in fame,
 And wide from east to west extend thy name;
 Offspring of gods thyself; and Rome shall owe
 To thee a race of demigods below.
 This is the way to heav’n: the pow’rs divine
 From this beginning date the Julian line.
 To thee, to them, and their victorious heirs,
 The conquer’d war is due, and the vast world is theirs.
 Troy is too narrow for thy name.” He said,
 And plunging downward shot his radiant head;
 Dispell’d the breathing air, that broke his flight:
 Shorn of his beams, a man to mortal sight.
 Old Butes’ form he took, Anchises’ squire,
 Now left, to rule Ascanius, by his sire:
 His wrinkled visage, and his hoary hairs,
 His mien, his habit, and his arms, he wears,
 And thus salutes the boy, too forward for his years:
 “Suffice it thee, thy father’s worthy son,
 The warlike prize thou hast already won.
 The god of archers gives thy youth a part
 Of his own praise, nor envies equal art.
 Now tempt the war no more.” (John Dryden)

• **How do the Trojans recognize Apollo?**

Apollo is disguised as the Trojan Butes, but the Trojans recognize him when he flies away into the sky. They know that he is Apollo because they hear the rattle of his arrows in his quiver:

He said, and flew
 Obscure in air, and vanish’d from their view.
 The Trojans, by his arms, their patron know,

And hear the twanging of his heav'nly bow. (John Dryden)

Often, human beings recognize a god or goddess only when the god or goddess leaves their presence. (This is true in Homer as well as in Virgil.)

In Book 1, Aeneas talks to his mother, who is disguised, without recognizing her. He recognizes her only when she leaves him.

In Book 9, the disguised Iris visits Turnus. He recognizes her only when she leaves his presence. Iris is the goddess of the rainbow, and presumably he recognizes her because of the rainbow.

Classics scholar Elizabeth Vandiver in her Teaching Company course on Virgil's *Aeneid* suggests as a topic for consideration that "perhaps this is a metaphorical way of expressing the idea that the gods' intervention is normally recognized only after the event, that humans can see the divine hand at work in human events only with hindsight, with hindsight, in retrospect."

• How old is Ascanius?

Ascanius' age can be difficult to determine. Here he is fighting like a young man, but he may be fairly young.

How old is Ascanius when he and his family flee Troy? He can walk because Aeneas leads him by the hand. He must be a couple of years old.

When the Trojans arrive at Carthage, Dido is able to hold him on her lap. At least, she thinks that she is holding Ascanius, when actually she is holding Cupid. At the beginning of the *Aeneid*, seven years have passed since Troy was conquered. Ascanius may be nine years old when Dido thinks that she is holding him.

The Trojans spend a year in Carthage, so now in Book 9 Ascanius may be 10 years old.

Of course, shooting a man with an arrow and killing him is a remarkable deed, and Virgil may be showing just how remarkable the son of Aeneas is.

Or perhaps we have an inconsistency here. If Virgil had lived to put the finishing touches on the *Aeneid*, perhaps he would have resolved the inconsistency.

Or perhaps young boys were capable of doing more in this vein than boys today are. Our society is much different from that of the ancient world.

• How do Pandarus and Bitias show a lack of self-restraint?

Turnus' *aristeia* continues, and he is fighting magnificently.

Pandarus and Bitias also show a lack of self-restraint. They are huge men — giants of men — and they have too much self-confidence. In a foolhardy display of self-confidence, they open up the gate they are defending. Of course, they are inviting the Trojans to attack them, and of course, they are confident that they can hold off the Trojans.

• How does Turnus get inside the Trojan camp?

Pandarus and Bitias make a major mistake when they open the gate they are defending. Turnus is fighting magnificently, and he kills Bitias. Pandarus closes the gate again, but when he does

Turnus is inside the Trojan camp. (Some Trojans are left outside the gate; presumably, they are killed.)

• **Why doesn't the war end now?**

Turnus could have ended the war right then if he had opened the gate again so that his soldiers could get inside the Trojan camp. His soldiers likely would have annihilated the Trojans and/or have captured Ascanius:

The Trojans swerve and scatter
in panic and if the conquering hero had thought at once
of smashing the gate-bolts, letting his cohorts in,
this day would have been the last of the war. (9.853-856 Fagles)

However, all Turnus can think about is fighting and so he does not open the gate. This gives the Trojans a chance to rally and drive Turnus into the river.

• **In Book 9, give some examples of how, due to lack of self-restraint, people lose sight of their main goal and thus fail to achieve it.**

We can note that this book includes some failures. In a few places, people lose sight of their main goal and thus fail to achieve it.

1) Nisus and Euryalus had the Main Goal of Taking a Message to Aeneas.

Nisus and Euryalus had the main goal of taking a message to Aeneas. However, Euryalus got caught up in taking booty from the Rutulians they had slain, and because of this got himself and his friend killed.

2) The Main Goal of Pandarus and Bitias is to Defend the Gate.

The main goal of Pandarus and Bitias is to defend the gate. By opening it, they are hardly doing the best they can to defend it.

3) Turnus Loses Sight of His Main Goal, Which is to Conquer the Trojans as a Whole.

Turnus loses sight of his main goal, which is to conquer the Trojans as a whole. He gets caught up in trying to kill individual Trojans instead of letting his comrades into the camp to help him kill all of them.

• **Where else do we see a lack of self-restraint?**

Ascanius

Ascanius promises a great reward to Nisus and Euryalus if they are successful in their mission. The reward he promises is too great for the mission. True, Nisus and Euryalus die during the mission, but they die because of their own mistakes.

Juno

Juno knows that Aeneas is fated to found the Roman people. She ought to give in to fate, but instead she resists it.

How About Aeneas?

Similarly, Aeneas must struggle to keep his eyes on the prize. When he gets caught up in something other than his main goal, such as loving Dido, he risks being unable to achieve his main goal, which is to found a new city in Italy for the Trojans and to found the Roman people. Still, Aeneas manages to show self-restraint — he leaves Dido when he is reminded of his destiny by the gods.

• **Why does Turnus leave the Trojan camp?**

Turnus is fighting very well, but of course he is out-numbered. He is in the Trojan camp.

Eventually, Turnus is forced back to the part of the camp that is by the Tiber River, and he jumps into the river and is not killed by the Trojans. He returns to his own soldiers.

One purpose of Book 9 is to show that Turnus is a formidable warrior. He has fought very well in Book 9.

• **The events of Book 9 happen at the same time as the events of Book 8. What is Aeneas doing at the times of the major events of Book 9?**

The events of Book 9 happen at the same time as the events of Book 8.

- 1) Turnus tries to set fire to the Trojan ships at the same time as Aeneas journeys to Evander.
- 2) Nisus and Euryalus make their night raid at the same time as Aeneas sleeps and Vulcan makes his armor.
- 3) Turnus attacks the Trojan camp at the same time as Aeneas journeys to the Etruscans.

Conclusion

Book 10 of the *Aeneid* further develops the war between the Latins and the Trojans. In Book 10, Aeneas kills the young warrior Lausus and his father, Mezentius.

[*Aeneid, Book 10: The Death of Princes / Captains Fight and Die*](#)

Important Terms

Furor means rage or passion.

Pietas means respect for things for which respect is due, including gods, family, and destiny.

• **In the council of the gods at the beginning of Book 10, how does Jupiter respond to Venus and to Juno?**

Book 10 opens with Jupiter calling and holding a council of the gods.

The main things that happen in the council are

- 1) Venus and then Juno make arguments about why her particular side should win in the upcoming war.
- 2) Jupiter does not take sides.

Venus, of course, supports Aeneas and the Trojans, while Juno, of course, supports Turnus and the Latins.

Jupiter says that he will not show special favor to either side:

“Take heed then, and keep fast in memory
 These words of mine. Whereas Ausonians
 Are not allowed to league themselves with Trojans,
 And it is not acceptable to you
 To end your discord, therefore I shall hold
 Without distinction Rutulians and Trojans,
 Whatever fortune each may have today,
 Whatever hope may guide him; whether the camp
 Lies under siege as fated for Italians
 Or through Troy’s blunder, and through prophecies
 Malign and dark. Neither do I exempt
 The Rutulians. The effort each man makes
 Will bring him luck or trouble. To them all
 King Jupiter is the same king. And the Fates
 Will find their way.” (10.143-157 Fitzgerald)

The most important thing that Jupiter says here is that “the Fates / Will find their way” (10.156-157 Fitzgerald). Fate is an important concept in the ancient Greek and Roman world.

The Greeks and Romans believe in fate. We are fated to die at a certain time, although we do not know when we will die.

In addition, people may be fated to do certain things in their lives. For example, Oedipus is fated to kill his father and to marry his mother.

Similarly, certain events are fated to happen. For example, Troy is fated to be conquered in the Trojan War.

In the passage above, Jupiter is saying that the Fates will determine what will happen in the war. Jupiter himself will not intervene. The Fates are different from Jupiter, King of Gods and Men.

Jupiter specifically says he won't worry about these things:

“[...] whether the camp
Lies under siege as fated for Italians
Or through Troy's blunder, and through prophecies
Malign and dark.” (10.150-153 Fitzgerald)

The things that Jupiter won't worry about are destiny, human mistakes, and omens. Jupiter will not at this time take sides in the war between the Trojans and the Latins.

• In what way does Jupiter's speech recall the recent civil wars before Augustus made a peace? (By “recent,” I mean recent in Virgil's day.)

All authors write for a contemporary audience — for people who are alive at the same time the author is. This is true even when an author hopes that his or her writing will be read by succeeding generations.

All authors assume that the contemporary audience is aware of recent important events. In this case, the recent important events are the civil wars that were fought in Roman history. The civil wars resulted in the changing of a republic into an empire with Caesar Augustus becoming the first Roman emperor.

Virgil's contemporary audience would be very aware of the recent civil war fought between Mark Antony and Caesar Augustus.

Civil wars are fought between peoples who ought to be on the same side. Because of this, civil wars are worse than regular wars. In the American Civil War, in some cases brother was fighting against brother.

• Aeneas visits the Etruscans. What does he get from them?

Aeneas visits the Etruscans, and very quickly he makes them his allies. Because Mezentius was so cruel when he ruled the Etruscans, they are happy to fight against him and Turnus, his ally.

Very quickly, Aeneas returns to his camp, where the Trojans are fighting against Turnus and his warriors. Aeneas sails back to his camp, and he has 30 ships of allies sailing with him. Pallas is also with him.

When Aeneas sails back to his Trojan camp, Virgil gives a brief catalog of the Etruscans who will be fighting with him.

These are some important kings in Italy:

King Latinus: King of Latinum, and father of Lavinia, his only child, who will marry Aeneas. He supports Aeneas, but his people are fighting against Aeneas under the leadership of Turnus. He is old.

King Evander: He and his people migrated from Arcadia. He founded the city of Pallanteum on the future site of Rome. His son is Pallas, whom he entrusts to Aeneas. He is an ally of Aeneas, but he is old.

King Tarchon: King of the Etruscans, and an ally of Aeneas.

King Turnus: Leader of the Rutulians. He leads the Italians against Aeneas.

• Write a brief character analysis of Mezentius. Why would the Etruscans want to become allies of Aeneas?

In Book 8, Evander let Aeneas know about Mezentius the tyrant, one of Turnus' allies in the upcoming war. We find out that Mezentius was a very cruel tyrant indeed. One of the punishments he meted out was to bind a living human being to a corpse as it rotted until the living human being died. Because Mezentius was so evil, the Etruscans deposed him as tyrant and he fled to Turnus, who protected him. The Etruscans are willing to fight with Aeneas so that they can get revenge against Mezentius.

• Describe the catalog of the Etruscans. It is very brief. Can you think of any reasons why it is so brief?

Catalogs sometimes appear in ancient epics. For example, in Book 2 of the *Iliad* we have a catalog of the Greek ships and a catalog of the Trojans and their allies. Homer's purpose in having the catalog is to let the reader know his cast of characters. Most of the characters who are named reappear later in the *Iliad*.

In Book 10 of the *Aeneid*, only eight Etruscans are named in the catalog and only three of the Etruscans who are named reappear later in the *Aeneid*.

Why are so few Etruscans named? Perhaps because the Etruscans disappear from history. The Romans became dominant in history.

• What help does Aeneas get from the nymphs who used to be his own ships?

Aeneas receives help from the sea-nymphs who used to be his ships. They give him information: The Trojan camp is under attack by Turnus and the Latin warriors.

Cymodocea, one of the old ships, speaks,

“Now learn from us:

The boy, Ascanius, is pinned down behind

His wall and moat, amid attacking spears

Of Latins, rough in onslaught. Even now
 Arcadian horse, mingled with brave Etruscans,
 Hold their appointed place; but Turnus plans
 To throw his squadrons in between, to keep
 The Arcadians from your camp.” (10.325-332 Fitzgerald)

Nisus and Euryalus did not have to die. As it happens, the nymphs who used to be Aeneas’ ships give Aeneas the message that Nisus and Euryalus were supposed to deliver.

• **When the Rutulians see Aeneas and his new allies approach, Aeneas’ helmet glows and his shield spouts flames. Which image is being recalled from Homer’s *Iliad*?**

Of course, when a warrior is about to fight very well and have an *aristeia*, his armor is often described as shining. When Aeneas’ helmet glows and his shield spouts flames, Virgil’s audience knows that Aeneas will fight very well.

As Aeneas approaches the Rutulians, his helmet glows and his shield spouts flames:

Aeneas’ helmet blazed; flames from the crest
 Gushed upward; the gold boss of his great shield
 Shot out vast firelight, even as when
 Blood-red, ill-omened, through transparent night
 A comet glows, or Sirius comes up,
 That burning star that brings drought and disease
 To ill mankind, and makes all heaven drear
 With baleful shining. (10.374-381 Fitzgerald)

Often Virgil will take an image from Homer’s *Iliad* or *Odyssey* and use it in the *Aeneid*. This is not plagiarism; it is an homage to the great epic poet Homer.

In Book 18 of the *Iliad*, Achilles’ head appears to be on fire. He is standing in front of a sunset, and the sunset makes his head appear to be on fire. Achilles has discovered that his best friend, Patroclus, has died. Achilles is unable to go into battle because he has no armor; nevertheless, he is able to recover the corpse of Patroclus by showing himself to the Trojans and shouting.

Athena enhances Achilles. Athena crowns Achilles with flame and wraps a cloud around him. This would seem to be an image of a volcano — it is definitely fire imagery. When Achilles appears to the Trojans, he is standing by the Greek ditch, he has flame encircling his head, and he shouts aloud.

This is a very visual scene. We can think in terms of a fiery-red sunset. Achilles is standing in the west as the sun sets. The sunset behind his head makes him appear to be on fire.

As is fitting, it is Achilles who recovers Patroclus' body. Achilles gives his war-cry three times — that and the sight of Achilles, who is described as having flame encircling his head — is enough to make the Trojans flee. (Athena also cries out with him.) Twelve Trojans die in the retreat:

And Trojans hearing the brazen voice of Aeacides,
all their spirits quaked — even sleek-maned horses,
sensing death in the wind, slewed their chariots round
and charioteers were struck dumb when they saw that fire,
relentless, terrible, burst from proud-hearted Achilles' head,
blazing as fiery-eyed Athena fueled the flames. Three times
the brilliant Achilles gave his great war cry over the trench,
three times the Trojans and famous allies whirled in panic —
and twelve of their finest fighters died then and there,
crushed by chariots, impaled on their own spears. (18.257-266 Fagles *Iliad*)

When Achilles and Athena shout, the Trojans and their horses panic and scatter. Many fighters die in the panic, “impaled on their own spears” (18.266 Fagles, *Iliad*), and the Achaeans recover Patroclus' corpse.

The flame from Achilles' head is a famous image that Virgil uses in the *Aeneid*. Aeneas is being compared to Achilles, a magnificent fighter in the *Iliad*. Achilles was the greatest warrior of the Trojan War.

• How well does Pallas fight in the battle?

Pallas fights well in battle. We read that he fights twin brothers (Larides and Thymber) in the battle. These twin brothers were so alike that even their parents could not tell them apart. However, Pallas makes it easy to tell them apart. In addition to killing other warriors, Pallas cuts off the head of one brother, and he cuts off a hand of the other brother:

And, after him, the Daucian twins were slain,
Laris and Thymbrus, on the Latian plain;
So wondrous like in feature, shape, and size,
As caus'd an error in their parents' eyes —
Grateful mistake! but soon the sword decides
The nice distinction, and their fate divides:
For Thymbrus' head was lopp'd; and Laris' hand,
Dismember'd, sought its owner on the strand:

The trembling fingers yet the fauchion strain,
And threaten still th' intended stroke in vain. (John Dryden)

However, Turnus will kill Pallas in the battle.

• **When Pallas prays to Hercules to give him valor in battle, how does Hercules respond?**

Hercules was perhaps the greatest hero of the ancient world. His name appears over and over in ancient literature. He was renowned for his bravery and his strength, and after he died he became a minor god.

Pallas prays to the god Hercules for valor in battle, but Hercules grieves when he hears the prayer. The gods know the fate of human beings; that is, the gods know when a particular human being is fated to die. Hercules knows that Pallas will die in battle on this day. It seems that the gods cannot alter fate (or if they do alter fate, it will have bad repercussions through the universe). Therefore, Hercules knows that he can't do anything to prevent Pallas from dying, and therefore he grieves.

Virgil tells us that Hercules heard Pallas' prayer. Jupiter says to Hercules that human beings, including Jupiter's son Sarpedon, die in battle:

Hercules heard him. Deep in his heart he quelled

A mighty groan, and let the vain tears flow. (10.646-647 Fitzgerald)

Hercules groans and cries when he hears Pallas' prayer.

• **Jupiter speaks to Hercules. Which scene from Homer's *Iliad* is being recalled in this passage?**

This is what Jupiter says to Hercules after Hercules groans and cries:

At this the Olympian father addressed his son

In kindness: "Every man's last day is fixed.

Lifetimes are brief, and not to be regained,

For all mankind. But by their deeds to make

Their fame last: that is labor for the brave.

Below the walls of Troy so many sons

Of gods went down, among them, yes, my child,

Sarpedon. Turnus, too, is called by fate.

He stands at the given limit of his years."

So saying, Jupiter turned his eyes away

From the land of the Rutulians. (10.648-659 Fitzgerald)

Sarpedon, of course, was Jupiter's son who was killed in the *Iliad*. We have the theme of fate here, and we have the theme of *kleos*. Warriors fight to win *kleos* — reputation.

All human beings are mortal. All of us will die one day. This is what it means to be a mortal human being.

In the *Iliad*, Jupiter's son Sarpedon was fated to die at the hands of Patroclus, Achilles' beloved friend. Jupiter had to let his son Sarpedon die; similarly, Hercules must allow Pallas to die.

We get two perspectives: a human perspective from Hercules and a god's perspective from Jupiter:

Hercules is the most human of the gods, as he was born mortal and acquired immortality later. His perspective is human. He mourns for the death of Pallas.

Jupiter's perspective takes a God's view of things. Pallas is fated to die, so he advises Hercules to accept it.

Hercules' perspective is more sympathetic than Jupiter's perspective.

Often, the perspective of the gods and goddesses is different from the perspective of human beings. We see that in the *Odyssey* when Odysseus asks Athena why she did not help him during the 10 years following the Trojan War.

Athena replies that she knew that Odysseus would return to Ithaca eventually, but what about Odysseus? He doesn't have a god's-eye view of things. He had no way of ever knowing that he would eventually make it back home to Ithaca.

Of course, gods and humans regard time and fate differently.

The gods know the fates of human beings. Athena knows when Odysseus is fated to die, but Odysseus does not know that. When Zeus throws a thunderbolt at Odysseus' ship because Odysseus' men sacrificed the cattle of the Sun god, Odysseus thinks that he has a real chance of drowning, but Athena knows that he will survive and eventually make it to Ithaca.

In addition, the gods regard time differently from the way that human beings regard time. We humans know that life is not long, and that we ought to use time wisely. If we are going to accomplish something, we have something like 70 years to do it in, although some of us die much later and some of us die much earlier than that.

The gods can waste 1,000 or 2,000 years doing nothing, and still have eternity left.

For Athena, whether Odysseus makes it home three years after the Trojan War or 10 years after the Trojan War is not important. For Odysseus, it is very important. Take his return to his home on the island Ithaca. If he had returned home seven years earlier, he would have been able to watch and help Telemachus grow up to become a young man. If he had returned home seven years earlier, he and Penelope would perhaps have had more children. If he had returned home seven years earlier, he would have been able to take care of his father, who would not now be living like a poor farmer in the country. If he had returned home seven years earlier, the suitors would not now be living in his palace.

• **What happens when Turnus and Pallas meet in battle?**

Pallas is not afraid to meet Turnus. He says that there is glory whether he lives or dies:

“Now’s my time to win some glory, either for stripping
off a wealth of spoils or dying a noble death —
my father can stand up under either fate.” (10.530-532 Fagles)

If Pallas dies, he dies nobly in battle. If he wins, he gains glory by defeating a notable enemy. (In fact, the war would be over. After Turnus dies, the war ends.)

However, Turnus is an experienced warrior, while Pallas is young and inexperienced. In ancient epics, the stronger warrior usually or always defeats the weaker warrior. (When Paris shoots Achilles with an arrow, he has the help of the god Apollo.)

After Turnus kills Pallas, he takes a trophy that will be important at the end of the *Aeneid*: He takes Pallas’ decorated sword-belt. (The sword-belt goes from shoulder to waist.)

Virgil lets his readers know about the importance of the sword-belt:

The minds of men are ignorant of fate
And of their future lot, unskilled to keep
Due measure when some triumph sets them high.
For Turnus there will come a time
When he would give the world to see again
An untouched Pallas, and will hate this day,
Hate that belt taken. (10.701-707 Fitzgerald)

• **Pallas’ sword-belt depicts the marriage of the 50 daughters of Danaus. If you feel like doing research, retell that story in your own words.**

Pallas’ sword-belt mirrors his fate. The sword-belt is both functional and a work of art. The swordbelt tells the story of the 50 bridegrooms of the 50 daughters of Danaus. Nearly all of the bridegrooms died young, and so does Pallas. In fact, Pallas dies on his first day of fighting in the war.

According to the myth, Danaus had 50 daughters, and Ægyptus had fifty sons. The 50 sons of Ægyptus wanted to marry the 50 daughters of Danaus. Danaus was suspicious of the 50 sons, so although he allowed the marriages he also ordered his 50 daughters to kill the 50 sons of Ægyptus. All of his daughters except Hypermnestra, who had married Lynceus, who respected her wish not to have sex with him until she knew him better, obeyed the order of Danaus.

The Danaïds are the daughters of Danaus. In Hades, they (with the exception of Hypermnestra) are condemned to spend forever doing meaningless work: filling a sieve with water.

• **Why does the marriage of the 50 daughters of Danaus appear on Pallas' sword-belt? Why do you suppose Virgil put this particular scene on Pallas' sword-belt?**

Here are a few ideas:

1. Perhaps Virgil is stressing Pallas' youth.
2. Perhaps Virgil is saying that a civil war is like a marriage where the bridegroom is killed by the bride on their wedding night.
3. The marriages of the daughters of Danaus and the sons of Ægyptus are mostly inappropriate. Similarly, Turnus is pursuing an inappropriate marriage with Lavinia. This marriage is inappropriate because Lavinia is fated to marry Aeneas. Together, they will found the Roman people.
4. One marriage ended happily. The husband respected the wish of his wife not to have sex on their first night; later, after they had gotten to know each other, they had sex and children. Here is an example of *clementia*. *Furor* marked the other marriages. At the end of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas can do an act of *clementia* or an act of *furor*.

• **After hearing the news of the death of Pallas, what does Aeneas do? How is Aeneas reminiscent of Achilles in Homer's *Iliad* after Achilles finds out that Patroclus has been killed?**

Aeneas is known for his self-control, but when he hears about the death of Pallas, Aeneas completely gives way to *furor*.

In the *Iliad*, after Achilles hears about the death of Patroclus, Achilles also gives way to *furor*.

Achilles and Aeneas act in much the same way when they give way to *furor*:

1. Each capture enemy youths to be killed as a human sacrifice.
2. Each kills suppliants.

Achilles captures 12 Trojan youths and then kills them as a human sacrifice. Human sacrifice, of course, is a horrible thing.

Aeneas captures eight enemy youths to be used as a human sacrifice.

Achilles kills without mercy. Not only does he kill youths in a human sacrifice, but also he does not respect suppliants, killing them now although in the past he would have allowed them to live so that he can ransom them. After the death of Patroclus, Achilles is pitiless.

Aeneas also does not respect suppliants. One suppliant he kills is named Magus. Magus implores Aeneas by Anchises and by Ascanius to take him alive and ransom him. Aeneas refuses:

“Those bars of gold
And silver that you tell of, spare for your sons.
Turnus has already done away
With all such war-trade, Pallas being lost.

My father Anchises' ghost feels as I say,
 And so does Iulus." And with this he took
 The man's helm in his left hand, bent the neck
 Backward, still begging, and drove home the sword
 Up to the hilt. (10.745-754 Fitzgerald)

• **What form does supplication take in the ancient world?**

Being a suppliant — begging for one's life or begging for help — takes on a standard form in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*.

- The suppliant takes one arm and put it around the knees of the person he is supplicating. This keeps the warrior from moving.
- The suppliant uses his other hand to reach up and grab the warrior's chin or beard or weapon. Lycaon grabs Achilles' spear.
- The suppliant begs for mercy.

• **Why does supplication take this form?**

- The suppliant is showing that he does not have a weapon. One hand is around the warrior's knees; the other hand is grabbing the warrior's chin or beard or weapon. The suppliant is not holding a weapon in either hand.
- The suppliant is making the warrior pay attention to the suppliant. One hand is around the warrior's knees, so the warrior can't move. The other hand is grabbing the warrior's chin or beard or weapon. The warrior has got to pay attention to the suppliant.
- The act of supplication shows that the suppliant is completely vulnerable. In addition to being unarmed, the suppliant's throat is exposed because he is looking up at the warrior.

In the act of supplication, the suppliant is completely vulnerable and submissive to the warrior.

• **Compare and contrast what happens after Turnus kills Pallas and after Aeneas kills Tarquitus.**

When Aeneas kills Tarquitus, Aeneas is merciless. Aeneas says that he will not allow Tarquitus to be buried:

"Lie there now, fearsome as you are. No gentle
 Mother will ever hide you in the earth
 Or weight your body with a family tomb.
 Either you stay here for the carrion birds
 Or the sea takes you under, hungry fishes
 Nibble your wounds." (10.783-788 Fitzgerald)

Earlier, Turnus was much more merciful earlier after he killed Pallas. Turnus is willing to allow Pallas to be buried:

Turnus called:

“Arcadians, note well

And take back to Evander what I say:

In that state which his father merited

I send back Pallas. And I grant in full

What honor tombs confer, what consolation

Comes of burial. No small price he’ll pay

For welcoming Aeneas.” (10.684-691 Fitzgerald)

Of course, Turnus knew that the death of Pallas would cause King Evander pain. However, King Evander would want to have a funeral for his dead son. Not having a funeral means that Pallas would be kept out of the Underworld for 100 years.

Aeneas is the person we would expect to be merciful, but Aeneas is overtaken by *furor*.

• Which simile does Virgil use to describe Aeneas at 10.794-801 (Fitzgerald) and 10.671-676 (Fagles)?

At this point, Virgil compares Aeneas to a monster: Aegaon, who had 50 heads and 100 arms and who fought against the gods with 50 shields and 50 swords. Aegaon obviously was not noted for *pietas*. Because Aeneas is so furious, he is like a monster:

As men say

The titan Aegaon had a hundred arms,

A hundred hands, and sent out burning breath

from fifty mouths and breaths when he opposed

Jove’s thunderbolt, clanging his fifty shields

And drawing fifty swords, just so Aeneas

Multiplied savagery over the whole field

Once his sword-point warmed. (10.794-801 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas is like a monster when he denies another suppliant. Aeneas first kills Lucagus, and Lucagus’ brother, Liger, who had been boasting previously, now pleads to Aeneas to spare his life. Aeneas tells him,

“Your speech was not like this just now.

Die and be brotherly, stay with your brother.” (10.843-844 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas then kills Liger.

• **What is fate (*moira*)?**

In Homer's *Iliad*, Patroclus kills Sarpedon, the son of Zeus. Zeus loves his son, but Sarpedon is fated to die, and so Zeus is forced to allow him to die.

Moira is usually translated as fate. *Moira* means “share” or “portion” or “lot.” We still use the word *moira* in this way. If you give people a *moira* of roast beef, you give each person a portion of roast beef.

Moira in Homer's *Iliad* means “share of life” or “portion of life.” According to the Bible, the usual *moira* of human being is three score and ten years, or 70 years. Of course, not all people live this long, and some people live longer.

In the *Iliad*, warriors' *moira* varies. Many warriors, of course, die on the battlefield, but other Achaean warriors will survive war and return home again. Warriors tend not to know in advance what their *moira* will be. They know that it is possible that they will die on the battlefield, but they also know that it is possible that they will survive the war.

One way to look at *moira* is to say that it is what is bound to happen. Or better, with hindsight, we can say that it is what was bound to happen. On your deathbed, you will know that it is your day to die, and you will then know that you were fated to die on this day.

The gods and goddesses have unusual abilities, of course. They know the fates of human beings in advance. Thetis knows that Achilles, her son, has two fates. Zeus knows that Sarpedon is fated to die in a certain battle. Zeus also knows that Patroclus will kill Sarpedon, Hector (with help) will kill Patroclus, and Achilles will kill Hector.

• **Can fate be changed?**

Sometimes it seems as if fate can be changed. This is true both in Homer's *Iliad* and in Virgil's *Aeneid*.

Iliad

Zeus is Sarpedon's father, and in the *Iliad* Zeus says when he knows that Sarpedon is about to die at the hands of Patroclus:

“My heart is torn in two as I try to weigh all this.

Shall I pluck him up, now, while he's still alive

and set him down in the rich green land of Lycia,

far from the war at Troy and all its tears?

Or beat him down at Patroclus' hands at last?” (16.517-521 Fagles *Iliad*)

Zeus knows that Sarpedon is fated to die on this date; however, Zeus seems to be tempted to change Sarpedon's fate and to allow Sarpedon to live. Usually, it seems that gods and goddesses cannot change fate. Thetis can tell Achilles his two fates, but she does not seem to be able to change those fates. It seems that she would if she could because she loves Achilles, her son.

However, Zeus seems to be able to change Sarpedon's fate and allow him to live. Perhaps Zeus is simply more powerful than Thetis. Certainly, he is *the* major god, and she is a minor goddess.

Hera objects to Zeus saving Sarpedon, and she convinces Zeus not to alter Sarpedon's fate. Hera tells Zeus that if he saves Sarpedon against his fate, then the other (major) gods will do the same thing with their human children who are fated to die. She tells Zeus in the *Iliad*,

“if you send Sarpedon home, living still, beware!
 Then surely some other god will want to sweep
 His own son clear of the heavy fighting too.
 Look down. Many who battle round King Priam's
 Mighty walls are sons of the deathless gods —
 You will inspire lethal anger in them all.” (16.529-534 Fagles)

Hera wants Zeus to allow Sarpedon to be killed, and then to have his body taken home for a proper and respectful burial. Zeus does this.

Apparently, at least the major gods have the power to choose to change fate, but they agree not to. Apparently, changing fate would have bad consequences and would upset the natural order.

This shows something that we have probably already realized. These ancient Greek gods and goddesses are not like the Judeo-Christian God who is thought to be transcendent — to be outside the universe. These ancient Greek gods and goddesses are a part of the universe.

Aeneid

In Book 10, Juno does not want Turnus to die yet. Turnus seems to be fated to die, yet Juno asks Jupiter to allow Turnus to live a little longer. Jupiter tells Juno that Turnus must die soon; however, Jupiter is willing to allow Juno to save Turnus' life so that Turnus can live a little longer:

“If a reprieve is asked
 From imminent death, more time for the young man
 Before he falls — if you so understand me —
 Take Turnus off in flight, wrest him away
 From fate that stands before him. There is room
 For that much lenience. If some greater favor
 Lies hid in your mind beneath your prayer,
 If you imagine the whole war affected,
 Changed by this, you cherish a vain hope.” (10.871-880 Fitzgerald)

Turnus is fated to die in this war, but he can still live for a few days longer. In addition, Aeneas and the Trojans are fated to win the war, and nothing that Juno can do will stop that.

Similarly, in Homer's *Iliad*, the Greeks are fated to conquer Troy; however, Zeus (Jupiter) is able to arrange things so that the Trojans can win some victories before they are conquered.

Note that these interferences with fate allow the wars to last longer and get more human warriors killed. The gods tend not to care about the lives of human beings unless the human beings are the children of a god or goddess.

• **How does Juno save the life of Turnus?**

Juno saves Turnus' life by creating a phantom of Aeneas that Turnus chases. Turnus thinks that he will be able to meet Aeneas in battle, but "Aeneas" is really a phantom that vanishes once Turnus is on a ship. Juno then cuts the cable of the ship, and Turnus sails downstream.

Something similar also occurs at the end of Book 21 of Homer's *Iliad*. To allow the Trojans to escape the wrath of Achilles temporarily and allow them to escape the battlefield back to Troy, Apollo takes on the form of a Trojan warrior and leads Achilles away from Troy. Achilles chases after the disguised Apollo until Apollo reveals his true form to him.

By the way, Turnus is not happy about being on a ship going downstream. He is worried about his reputation:

With sense of honor stung, and forfeit fame,
 Fearful besides of what in fight had pass'd,
 His hands and haggard eyes to heav'n he cast;
 "O Jove!" he cried, "for what offense have I
 Deserv'd to bear this endless infamy?
 Whence am I forc'd, and whether am I borne?
 How, and with what reproach, shall I return?
 Shall ever I behold the Latian plain,
 Or see Laurentum's lofty tow'rs again?
 What will they say of their deserting chief?
 The war was mine: I fly from their relief;
 I led to slaughter, and in slaughter leave;
 And ev'n from hence their dying groans receive.
 Here, overmatch'd in fight, in heaps they lie;
 There, scatter'd o'er the fields, ignobly fly.
 Gape wide, O earth, and draw me down alive!
 Or, O ye pitying winds, a wretch relieve!
 On sands or shelves the splitting vessel drive;
 Or set me shipwrack'd on some desart shore,
 Where no Rutulian eyes may see me more,

Unknown to friends, or foes, or conscious Fame,
Lest she should follow, and my flight proclaim.” (John Dryden)

This also shows something good about Turnus. He is worried about his men now that he is no longer present on the battlefield to lead them.

• **How well does Mezentius fight? Which prophecy is made about him by Orodes at 10.1037-1040 (Fitzgerald) and 10.873-875 (Fagles)?**

Now that Turnus is gone, Mezentius takes over as the leader of the Latins.

Mezentius fights well. He kills Orodes, but he will not kill him from behind. Instead, he caught Orodes, who was trying to run away. He then turned him around so that the wound would be in the front. Dying, Orodes said,

“Whoever you are, you’ll not joy
In this death long, for it will be avenged.
An equal destiny awaits you here.

The same field will be yours to lie in soon.” (10.1037-1040 Fitzgerald)

There is a contrast between Mezentius and Aeneas. Mezentius believes in no god. When he throws a spear at Aeneas, he has no god but his right arm:

“Let this right arm — my only god — and the spear I hurl
be with me now!” (10.914-915 Fagles)

Mezentius misses Aeneas with the spear but hits another warrior. Aeneas, however, who is described as “godfearing” (10.1100 Fitzgerald), is able to wound Mezentius, although not fatally. Note: Robert Fagles does not use the word “godfearing”; however, we know that Aeneas does worship the ancient gods.

• **How is Lausus killed?**

Aeneas fights well, and he is able to kill Lausus, the son of Mezentius. Mezentius may be an evil man, but his son loves him anyway.

Mezentius needs help. He is moving away from Aeneas, but Aeneas’ spear is in his shield — Aeneas’ shield went all the way through Mezentius’ shield and wounded Mezentius in the groin.

Lausus comes to help his father. Aeneas kills him. Because Aeneas is caught in the grip of *furor*, he taunts Lausus; however, after Aeneas kills Lausus, he pities him.

Aeneas tells the corpse of Lausus that one consolation is that a great warrior killed him:

“O poor young soldier,
How will Aeneas reward your splendid fight?
How honor you, in keeping with your nature?
Keep the arms you loved to use, for I

Return you to your forbears, ash and shades,
 If this concerns you now. Unlucky boy,
 One consolation for sad death is this:

You die by the sword-thrust of great Aeneas.” (10.1154-1161 Fitzgerald)

This statement is true. If we have to die, it is better to be killed by a great warrior than by an amateur soldier. Sarpedon in Homer’s *Iliad* would agree. He wants glory for himself, but if he can’t get it, then he says let a great warrior win glory by killing Sarpedon.

Think of sports teams. Every team wants to win the championship, but if your sports team must be defeated, I think that you would prefer that it be beaten by a team that goes on to win the championship, not be upset by an underdog that loses its next game.

• **Compare and contrast Lausus and Pallas.**

Of course, Lausus and Pallas are similar in many ways:

- They are both young men.
- They both die young.
- They both die in battle.
- They are both loved by their fathers.

Of course, Lausus and Pallas are different in many ways:

- Pallas dies fighting for the Trojans, while Lausus dies fighting for the Latins.
- Pallas has a good father, while Lausus has a bad father.

• **How is Mezentius killed?**

Aeneas gives Lausus’ body back to his companions in an act of mercy. This shows something good about Aeneas.

Aeneas then meets Mezentius, Lausus’ father, in battle and kills him.

Aeneas uses good strategy in the fight against Mezentius. Mezentius is on horseback, circling Aeneas. Aeneas kills the horse, and when the horse falls it traps Mezentius, making it easy for Aeneas to kill him.

Mezentius may be an evil man, yet he grieves because of the death of his son, Lausus. Of course, King Evander will mourn the death of his son, Pallas.

This is something that we have seen before. One of the themes of the *Aeneid* is an elderly parent mourning the loss of an only son. We remember Euryalus’ mother mourning his death.

Now that Mezentius’ son is dead, he does not mind dying. Of course, he would prefer to avenge his son’s death by killing Aeneas, but if Aeneas ends up killing him, that’s OK, too.

At the end of Book 10, when Aeneas kills him, Mezentius tells Aeneas his last wishes:

“Bitter as gall, my enemy,
 Why pillory me and hold up death before me?
 Taking my life you do no wrong; I had
 No other expectation, coming to battle.
 Lausus, my son, made no compact with you
 That you should spare me. One request I’ll make
 If conquered enemies may ask a favor:
 Let my body be hid in earth. I know
 On every hand the hatred of my people.
 Fend off their fury and allow me room
 In the same grave with my son.” (10.1261-1272 Fitzgerald)

Mezentius knows that his people, the Etruscans, hate him and will mistreat his body, so he asks that Aeneas allow his body to be buried.

Unless his body is buried, Mezentius’ spirit will be unable to enter the Underworld until after 100 years have passed. Apparently, after 100 years natural forces will bury their bones. Here is an important passage, which is spoken by Palinurus:

“And no spirits may be conveyed
 across the horrendous banks and hoarse, roaring flood
 until their bones are buried, and they rest in peace ...
 A hundred years they wander, hovering around these shores
 till at last they may return and see once more the pools
 they long to cross.” (Fagles 6.371-376)

Mezentius accepts his fate. He knows that Aeneas will kill him, and Mezentius does not beg for his life. All he asks is that his body be buried.

• The main theme in Book 10 may be that no one is all good or all bad. What evidence supports this idea?

Perhaps the main theme in Book 10 is that no characters are all good or all bad:

- Aeneas is mainly a good character, but in Book 10 he is also a war machine who refuses burial to dead enemies and who refuses to honor suppliants. Also, he did not protect Pallas, who was under his care. In addition, he captures Trojans to be used as human sacrifices.
- The tyrant Mezentius is perhaps the most evil character in the epic poem, but he fights well, loves his son, and dies honorably.

- Although Turnus is fighting against Aeneas, the hero of the epic, he is a sympathetic character because he is fighting for his fatherland and because he is an underdog fighting against fate and because the Fury Allecto maddened him.

• **What are some other important themes of Book 10?**

The first words of the *Aeneid* promised us a story about arms (weapons and war) and a man. Aeneas finally begins to fight in Book 10. (We did have some fighting in Book 9, but without Aeneas, who was away getting allies.) Books 10-12 are about the war in Italy.

Book 10 makes use of some of the battle scenes in Homer's *Iliad*. One thing that that accomplishes is to make the battles in the *Aeneid* important. If the battles in Homer's *Iliad* are important (and they are), then since the battles in the *Aeneid* refer (non-ironically) to the battles of the *Iliad*, then the battles of the *Aeneid* are also important.

[*Aeneid*, Book 11: Debaters and a Warrior Girl / Camilla's Finest Hour](#)

• **To what are Books 11 and 12 building?**

Books 11 and 12 are building toward the end of the *Aeneid*: Aeneas kills Turnus, thus ending and winning the war between the Trojans and the Latins.

• **Describe the Roman trophy that Aeneas builds at the beginning of Book 11. What is its purpose?**

At the beginning of Book 11, we have a pause in the fighting. Pallas' body is made ready to be sent back to his father, King Evander. In addition, the corpses on both sides are buried.

First, however, Aeneas prepares a Roman trophy.

In his notes to Robert Fagles' translation of the *Aeneid*, Bernard Knox defines "Roman trophy" in this way:

A trophy (*tropaeum* in Latin) consisted of a tree trimmed to human shape and decked with the armor of a slain warrior so as to resemble the dead. (422)

Aeneas takes a big oak trunk, cuts off its branches, and places the armor and weapons of Mezentius on it. From the description of these items, we are able to figure out what happened to Mezentius after his death:

He [Aeneas] fitted it with a crest still oozing blood,
With javelins of the warrior, and his cuirass,
Twelve times cut and breached. (11.10-12 Fitzgerald)

Definition: A cuirass is a breastplate — a piece of armor that protects the chest and the back.

At the end of Book 10, when Aeneas killed him, Mezentius told him his last wishes:

"One request I'll make
If conquered enemies may ask a favor:
Let my body be hid in earth. I know
On every hand the hatred of my people.
Fend off their fury and allow me room
In the same grave with my son." (10.1267-1272 Fitzgerald)

Apparently, Mezentius' last wishes — or some of his last wishes — were not respected. We read that Aeneas cut Mezentius' throat and Mezentius died, but here in Book 11 we read that his cuirass has been cut 12 times. Apparently, Mezentius' former subjects hate him so much that they have been abusing his body. In the *Iliad*, the Achaeans also stabbed the body of the great Trojan warrior Hector several times after he died.

We don't know whether Mezentius has been buried or will be buried. Aeneas made no promise to him, and given that Mezentius' enemies have been abusing his corpse, they may not allow it to be buried.

• **What does Aeneas do with the victims for human sacrifice whom he had captured earlier in Book 10?**

Aeneas mourns the death of Pallas, and he sends 1,000 men to take Pallas' corpse back to Pallas' father, King Evander:

Thus having mourn'd, he gave the word around,
To raise the breathless body from the ground;
And chose a thousand horse, the flow'r of all
His warlike troops, to wait the funeral,
To bear him back and share Evander's grief:
A well-becoming, but a weak relief. (John Dryden)

In addition, Trojan women accompany the corpse and mourn. In accordance with the ancient custom, the hair of the Trojan women is loose.

Aeneas also sends the Latin youths he had captured earlier to be killed as a human sacrifice during Pallas' funeral. Human sacrifice is a bad thing, and we are not meant to approve of it.

In addition, Aeneas failed to protect Pallas. Although Aeneas is a hero, he does have faults.

• **What do the Latin envoys ask for? How do they regard Aeneas? As good or bad? Do the Latin envoys get what they asked for?**

Latin envoys arrive at Aeneas' camp to ask for a truce so that both sides can bury their dead. This is a necessity, of course. Every few days the armies would need to call a truce in order to bury the dead. If they do not, both armies could suffer from the plague because of the unburied bodies.

Aeneas does the right thing. He agrees to the truce. He also takes this opportunity to say that he does not want war. He would prefer to meet Turnus in single combat rather than have many men die.

Virgil calls Aeneas "good" (*bonus*) (11.123 Fagles). Aeneas, of course, has captured youths to be killed in a human sacrifice, yet Virgil still believes that Aeneas is a good man.

The envoys, led by Drances, an enemy of Turnus, is (or pretends to be) impressed with Aeneas. It seems that the Latins don't want war against Aeneas. (Turnus does, of course, but he is still maddened by the Fury Allecto.)

Drances, who hates Turnus, speaks to Aeneas:

Drances, their chief, who harbor'd in his breast
Long hate to Turnus, as his foe profess'd,

Broke silence first, and to the godlike man,
 With graceful action bowing, thus began:
 “Auspicious prince, in arms a mighty name,
 But yet whose actions far transcend your fame;
 Would I your justice or your force express,
 Thought can but equal; and all words are less.
 Your answer we shall thankfully relate,
 And favors granted to the Latian state.
 If wish’d success our labor shall attend,
 Think peace concluded, and the king your friend:
 Let Turnus leave the realm to your command,
 And seek alliance in some other land:
 Build you the city which your fates assign;
 We shall be proud in the great work to join.” (John Dryden)

The truce is for 12 days. This is enough time to gather wood, burn the bodies, and bury the bones in funeral mounds.

• **What happens when Pallas’ body is returned home? Which scene in Homer’s *Iliad* is this scene reminiscent of? Who else mourns for Pallas?**

Virgil describes funerals on both sides, beginning with the funeral of Pallas. Virgil stresses the heavy cost of the war between the Trojans and the Latins. In a war, both sides are trying — and succeeding — in killing enemy soldiers. This results in grief for both sides.

King Evander hears of the death of his son, and he throws himself on the corpse of his beloved son.

King Evander mourns the death of his son, but he is proud that Pallas died honorably in war. His wounds are in front. If he had been a coward and run away from the enemy, the wounds would NOT have been in front. Zorba the Greek, in the famous movie, is proud because all his scars are in the front, not in the back. He is not a coward.

King Evander says that he does not hold Aeneas responsible for Pallas’ death:

“Yet will I not my Trojan friend upbraid,
 Nor grudge th’ alliance I so gladly made.
 ’T was not his fault, my Pallas fell so young,
 But my own crime, for having liv’d too long.
 Yet, since the gods had destin’d him to die,

At least he led the way to victory:
 First for his friends he won the fatal shore,
 And sent whole herds of slaughter'd foes before;
 A death too great, too glorious to deplore.” (John Dryden)

Here again we have an elderly parent mourning the death of a son. A famous passage in the *Iliad* also uses this theme. In the final book of the *Iliad*, King Priam of Troy goes to Achilles' camp to beg Achilles to accept a ransom and release the body of Hector, Priam's son, to Priam. In Achilles' camp, Priam grieves for Hector.

In the *Iliad*, Priam is the only such mourning father that we see. Achilles' father, Peleus, is mentioned, but he is not present. Since Achilles doesn't die in the *Iliad*, but dies later, we know that Peleus will mourn for him, although we don't actually see it.

The times that we see an elderly parent grieving over the death of a son in the *Aeneid* are these:

- Euryalus' mother grieving over his death.
- Mezentius grieving over the death of Lausus. Evander grieving over the death of Pallas.
- Evander grieving over the death of Pallas.

We read that Trojan women mourn the death of Pallas. Previously, we read that the Trojan women had been left behind when they tried to burn the ships. This may be an inconsistency on Virgil's part that he would have corrected during revision if he had lived long enough. Perhaps he would have written that some of the Trojan women were left behind, but some, including the mother of Euryalus, stayed with Aeneas. Certainly the Trojan women come in handy when it is time to mourn someone.

• Are the Latins in support of the idea that Turnus and Aeneas should meet in a single combat to the death? Why or why not?

The Latins have suffered many deaths, and many of the Latins are tired of war. As in all wars, children lose their fathers, sisters lose their brothers, mothers lose their sons, and wives lose their husbands. Nearly all of the Latins want the war to end

But, in the palace of the king, appears
 A scene more solemn, and a pomp of tears.
 Maids, matrons, widows, mix their common moans;
 Orphans their sires, and sires lament their sons.
 All in that universal sorrow share,
 And curse the cause of this unhappy war:
 A broken league, a bride unjustly sought,
 A crown usurp'd, which with their blood is bought!

These are the crimes with which they load the name

Of Turnus, and on him alone exclaim:

“Let him who lords it o’er th’ Ausonian land

Engage the Trojan hero hand to hand:

His is the gain; our lot is but to serve;

’T is just, the sway he seeks, he should deserve.” (John Dryden)

Many of the Latins want Turnus and Aeneas to fight in single combat. Drances, an enemy to Turnus, especially wants Turnus and Aeneas to fight in single combat. Drances would be happy if Turnus were to die in the single combat.

Amata the Queen, however, supports Turnus.

• **Will Diomedes help the Latins in their war against Aeneas and the Trojans?**

At this point, the Latin envoys who were sent to ask Diomedes to be the Latins’ ally in the war against the Trojans return with Diomedes’ reply. Diomedes advises the Latins to make peace with Aeneas. Diomedes will not be their ally against the Trojans.

Diomedes was one of the youngest main Greek warriors in the Trojan War. He fought well both by himself and with Ulysses/ Odysseus. Following the Trojan War, he went to southern Italy and founded a city. In Aeneas’ very first speech, back in Book 1, he mentioned Diomedes as being a foremost Greek warrior. The discouraged private Aeneas was wishing that he had been killed by Diomedes on the plain before Troy:

“If only I’d gone down

under your right hand — Diomedes, strongest Greek afield —

and poured out my life on the battlegrounds of Troy!” (1.114-116 Fagles)

Because Diomedes had been an enemy to the Trojans in the Trojan War, the Latins thought that he was likely to be an ally to them as they fight against the Trojans. Of course, they are wrong.

• **How highly does Diomedes praise Aeneas? Is this consistent with the portrait of Aeneas that appears in Homer’s *Iliad*?**

Diomedes praises Aeneas extremely highly — much more highly than the portrait of Aeneas that appears in Homer’s *Iliad* justifies.

In the *Aeneid*, Diomedes ranks Aeneas with Hector, who in Homer’s *Iliad* is by far the foremost Trojan warrior.

In Homer’s *Iliad*, Aeneas in no way deserves to be ranked with Hector. Aeneas is a good warrior, yes, but he is not even close to being the warrior that Hector is.

Speaking about Aeneas, Diomedes says,

“Had Ida’s land borne two more men just like him,

Troy would have marched upon the towers of Argos,
 Greece would be mourning a contrary fate.
 As to our stalemate before stubborn Troy,
 The sword arm of Aeneas, with Hector's, halted
 Dominance of the Greeks for ten long years;
 Both known for courage, both for skill in arms,
 Aeneas first in reverence for the gods.
 Your right hands and your forces should be joined
 And well may be. Take care they do not clash
 In combat." (11.387-397 Fitzgerald)

"Reverence" in 11.394 (Fitzgerald) translates *pietas*.

Of course, Virgil is writing about an important ancestor of the Roman people when he writes about Aeneas, and therefore he jacks up Aeneas' reputation very high indeed. Homer does no such thing.

According to Virgil, Aeneas is Hector's equal as a warrior, and Aeneas is first when it comes to having reverence for the gods.

• **What does Diomedes suggest that the Latins do? Is Latinus agreeable?**

Diomedes has no desire at all to fight against Aeneas, and he recommends that the Latins make a treaty with Aeneas and the Trojans:

"Make peace, ye Latians, and avoid with care
 Th' impending dangers of a fatal war." (John Dryden)

Latinus (la-TEYE-nus), the king of the Latins, agrees with Diomedes — he would like to make a peace treaty with the Trojans.

Latinus is willing to give the Latins land on which to build a city, or if they prefer, he is willing to build for them 20 ships — or more — on which they can sail away.

Latinus wants to send 100 envoys to Aeneas to give him gifts and to ask to make a peace treaty.

• **Write a brief character analysis of Drances. What is his attitude toward Turnus?**

Drances is hostile to Turnus.

The character of Drances is not good:

Then Drances rose, belligerent as before.
 The fame of Turnus galled him, made him smart
 With envy unconfessed, this wealthy man,

A lavish spender and an orator
 But a cold hand in battle; held to be
 No empty counselor; a strong party man.
 His mother's nobility had made him arrogant,
 Though he had no certain father. Now he spoke
 To add to and to aggravate their anger: (11.454-462 Fitzgerald)

Drances is:

- belligerent.
- envious of Turnus' fame.
- wealthy and a lavish spender.
- no good in battle.
- a good orator.
- noble on his mother's side.
- a bastard, since his father is uncertain.
- arrogant.
- an instigator of anger and of hate and discontent.
- someone who wants Turnus to face Aeneas in single combat (probably hoping that Aeneas will kill Turnus).

• How does Turnus respond to Drances?

Although Turnus talks about how much Drances talks, his speech in reply to Drances is longer than Drances' speech.

Turnus points out that he recently had a notable victory over Aeneas' troops; when Aeneas was away getting troops from Evander, Turnus even made his way inside the Trojans' fortifications and slaughtered many of the enemy warriors.

Turnus says that Drances is pretending to be afraid of him right now, so that he can say that Turnus is an intimidator (and a bully).

Turnus points out that although the Latins have had reversals of fortune, so have the Trojans.

Turnus says that he will be happy to meet Aeneas in single combat.

• During the debate, some of Aeneas' advance troops arrive. What plan does Turnus form?

While the Latins, including Drances and Turnus, are in debate, Aeneas' troops arrive. Aeneas is not with them. He is leading the other troops through a valley.

Camilla asks Turnus to let her go first into battle; he agrees because he wishes to set an ambush for Aeneas as Aeneas leads his other troops through a valley.

• **What does the description and simile at 11.661-676 (Fitzgerald) and 11.581-594 (Fagles) say about Turnus?**

When Turnus arms himself, Virgil uses a simile to describe him.

According to Elizabeth Vandiver in her Teaching Company course on Virgil's *Aeneid*, "Virgil takes this simile from Homer, who used it to describe first Paris, then Hector, at times when they behaved irresponsibly. We are meant here to believe that Turnus is behaving irresponsibly":

Turnus, furiously
 On edge for battle, pulled his armor on,
 First his cuirass, glowing red, with scales
 A-quiver; then he encased his legs in gold,
 His head still bare; then belted on his sword
 And ran down from the citadel, his figure
 Glittering, golden, while his heart beat high,
 At grips with foemen even now in thought —
 As a stallion breaks his tether and goes free
 At last out of the stall, and down the meadow,
 Gaining the open land: there he may turn
 To a grazing herd of mares, or canter on
 To a stream he knows well for a cooling plunge,
 Neighing and frisking, tossing back his head,
 His mane at play over his neck and shoulders. (11.661-676 Fitzgerald)

In this simile of the stallion breaking free, we see the stallion in scenes of peace. The stallion can go to the mares and make love, not war; or the stallion can go to a stream and cool off.

Turnus likewise should be seeking peace with Aeneas, not preparing to fight him.

• **Camilla's *aristeia* is introduced by a long speech of the goddess Diana, whom Camilla serves. What does Diana say in that speech?**

At this point, we have a description of the battle between the Latins, who are led by Camilla, and the Trojans' advance guard.

Camilla will have an *aristeia* — she will fight extremely well, even though she ends up dying.

Camilla — an important ally to Turnus — is a virgin, as is the goddess Diana. We find out in a speech by Diana, to whom Camilla is devoted, that Camilla will die. Diana mourns Camilla's

nearing death, and Diana wants Camilla's death to be avenged. This lets Virgil's audience know that Camilla will die, and so orients the audience's attention to that fact — we will be looking for Camilla's death as we read the end of Book 11.

In Diana's speech, she recounts Camilla's history, which is exceptional.

When Camilla was an infant, her father, Metabus, was driven by war out of his town. Pursued by enemies, he came to a flooded river, which he knew he had to cross if he wanted to stay alive. But how can he cross the flooded river with an infant daughter? He tied his infant daughter to the middle of a spear, and then he threw the spear over the river, praying to Diana to take care of her:

“Accept, great goddess of the woods,” he said,
 “Sent by her sire, this dedicated maid!
 Thro’ air she flies a suppliant to thy shrine;
 And the first weapons that she knows, are thine.”
 He said; and with full force the spear he threw:
 Above the sounding waves Camilla flew.
 Then, press’d by foes, he stemm’d the stormy tide,
 And gain’d, by stress of arms, the farther side.
 His fasten’d spear he pull’d from out the ground,
 And, victor of his vows, his infant nymph unbound; (John Dryden)

He then swam the river and collected his daughter, who was safe. He brought her up and taught her to use weapons.

Camilla is both a virgin and a warrior. This makes her out of the ordinary. Most Roman women would marry and bear children. They would not remain virgins. They also would not be warriors. Camilla acts the way that a Roman man — not a Roman woman — would act.

• **Who is Diana? (In Greece, she was known as Artemis.)**

In gratitude, Camilla's father dedicates her to Diana (Artemis).

Diana is an interesting goddess:

- Apollo and Diana are twins born to Leto. (Diana's Greek name is Artemis.)
- Apollo and Diana bring sudden death to humans. In ancient times, people did not know about heart attacks and strokes. When someone who appeared to be healthy died, they would say that Apollo shot him with an arrow or that Diana shot her with an arrow. Both Apollo and Diana are archers.
- Apollo and Diana are protective of their mother, Leto. In Homer's *Iliad*, Achilles tells the story of Niobe, who managed to eat even after all twelve of her children had been killed in a single day. Niobe had angered Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis, by saying that she herself was worthy of more worship than Leto. Niobe had 12 children,

while Leto had only two. Leto's two children, Apollo and Artemis, killed all of Niobe's children. (Of course, this is an example of the *menis* — the anger — of the gods.) For several days, Niobe did not eat, but after all of her children were buried, then she ate.

- Diana is a virgin goddess who militantly protects her virginity, as is shown in the story of Actaeon. The goddess Diana gets very angry whenever a mortal man seems to threaten her virginity. One story about Diana involves the hunter Actaeon, who goes hunting with his dogs one day. Actaeon comes to a place where a pool of water is, and unfortunately for him Diana is bathing naked in the pool of water. Even more unfortunately for him, Diana notices that Actaeon is present and has seen her naked. Therefore, she turns Actaeon into a stag — a male deer. His dogs are trained to hunt, and the dogs hunt the stag, and the dogs tear to pieces Actaeon, who still has a human mind and knows what is happening. In this myth, Diana acts immediately. Actaeon has seen her naked, and therefore must pay with his life. Diana does not care that Actaeon saw her naked by accident — he did not know that she was bathing naked in the stream. Actaeon saw her naked, and therefore Actaeon must pay for that with his life.

- Diana is a virgin huntress; she is associated with wild beasts. She is the protector of wild animals and their young as well as being a huntress of wild animals. This is not contradictory. Many hunters are protective of the environment and the young of wild animals. By protecting the environment and the young of wild animals, hunters help ensure that they will be able to hunt in the future.

- Because Diana is a huntress, she wears a short tunic so that she can run, and she carries a bow and a quiver of arrows.

- A phrase that Homer calls Diana (Artemis) is *Potnia Theron* or “Mistress of Wild Beasts” or “Lady of Wild Beasts.”

- At Ephesus in Asia Minor was Diana's most important shrine. She had a cult statue there.

- She is one of the three virgin goddesses: Diana (Artemis), Minerva (Athena), and Hestia.

• **Write a brief character analysis of Camilla.**

Here are some facts about Camilla:

- Camilla is a virgin woman.
- Camilla is a warrior.
- Camilla is a general.
- Camilla has a number of women fighting with her. All of the women are virgins.
- Camilla fights with one breast exposed “for fighting ease” (11.883 Fitzgerald). (The Amazons also did this; sometimes the Amazons are said to have cut off one of their breasts so that it would not interfere with archery.)
- Mothers want Camilla to be their daughter-in-law, but of course that will not happen.

- Camilla is devoted to Diana, a virgin goddess.
- Camilla is extraordinary. She does not accept the roles of being a wife and a mother that the Roman women will accept.

• **How well does Camilla fight in the battle?**

Camilla fights well in the battle, and she kills a number of opposing warriors.

Camilla kills Ornytus, a hunter, who is the tallest by a head in his company of warriors. These male warriors are all running away, but Camilla is able to kill him from behind and then taunt him:

“In forests, were you, Tuscan, flushing game?

The day has come when boasts of all your kind

Are proven wrong, by women under arms.

You’ll take no light fame to your fathers’ shades:

To have been killed by the lance-head of Camilla.” (11.932-936 Fitzgerald)

Camilla also kills the son of Aunus, although he tries to trick her into not killing him. He tells her that she owes her success in battle to her horse and tells her that she ought to fight him in hand-to-hand combat on the ground. Camilla falls for the trick. She gets off her horse, and the son of Aunus rides off on his horse. However, Camilla is a remarkable woman. She outruns the horse and kills the son of Aunus.

• **What do we learn about Chloreus at 11.1045-1058 (Fitzgerald) and 11.903-913 (Fagles)?**

After killing many of the enemy soldiers, Camilla stalks Chloreus in an attempt to strip him of his fancy armor.

This is how Virgil describes Chloreus:

By chance Chloreus, Mount Cybelus’ votary,

Once a priest, came shining from far off

In Phrygian gear. He spurred a foaming mount

In a saddle-cloth of hide with scales of bronze

as thick as plumage, interlinked with gold.

The man himself, splendid in rust and purple

Out of the strange East, drew a Lycian bow

To shoot Gortynian arrows: at his shoulder

Golden was the bow and golden too

The helmet of the seer, and tawny gold

The brooch that pinned his cloak as it belled out

And snapped in wind, a chlamys, crocus-yellow,
 Tunic and trousers, too, both Eastern style,
 Were brilliant with embroidery. (11.1045-1058 Fitzgerald)

The most important points of this description are that Chloereus is wearing fancy clothing and that he is a follower of the goddess Cybele.

• **Chloereus is a follower of the goddess Cybele. Who is Cybele?**

Here are a few facts about Cybele:

- Cybele is known as “Great Mother of the Gods.”
- Cybele’s priests are called Corybantes.
- Worship of her included dancing to the music of drum and fife, both of which she is said to have invented.
- The Greeks believed that Cybele was the wife of Cronus; therefore, she was the mother of many of the Olympian gods, including Zeus and Poseidon.
- In art, Cybele is often shown seated with lions by her side.

The priests of the Phrygian goddess Cybele are known as Corybantes. Their worship of Cybele included an ecstasy in which they castrated themselves.

All of this means, of course, that Chloereus is a eunuch. His description of his clothing sounds effeminate. He and Camilla are alike in being unusual. Camilla is a virgin; Chloereus is a eunuch.

• **Why is Camilla stalking Chloereus?**

Camilla stalks Chloereus because she wants his fancy clothing:

Blindly, as a huntress,
 Following him, and him alone, of all
 Who took part in the battle, she rode on
 Through a whole scattered squadron, recklessly,
 In a girl’s love of finery. (11.1062-1066 Fitzgerald)

• **How is Camilla slain? Who slays her, and how is he then slain?**

Camilla is slain by Arruns while she is stalking Chloereus, hoping to kill him and take his fine clothing.

Arruns prays to Apollo to be allowed to kill Camilla; however, Camilla’s death is avenged by a follower of Diana.

After Arruns throws his spear at and hits Camilla, he gallops away from the scene. However, Opis, the sentinel (a lookout, someone who watches for an expected event — here the expected event is the death of Camilla) of Diana, kills Arruns with an arrow.

Camilla's actual death is described in some lines that will be repeated at the end of the *Aeneid*. After Arruns shoots Camilla with an arrow, she leaves a message for Turnus — to start fighting to keep the Trojans from the town — and then we read,

Even while speaking she let slip the reins
 And slid fainting to earth. Little by little,
 Growing cold, the girl detached herself
 From her whole body and put down her head,
 Death's captive now, upon her strengthless neck,
 And let her weapons fall.
 Then with a groan for that indignity,
 Her spirit fled into the gloom below. (11.1125-1132 Fitzgerald)

The last two lines above are repeated at the end of the *Aeneid*, when Turnus dies at the very end of the *Aeneid*, except that "her" is changed to "his."

• **How do the Latin women react to the death of Camilla?**

Although Camilla is dead, she inspires the Latin women to defend the city:

On the walls
 Even older women, mothers — as true love
 Of homeland taught them, and as they had seen
 Camilla fight — outdid each other now
 At hurling missiles with unsteady hands,
 In place of steel, hard oaken balks and pikes
 With fire-hardened points. For their town wall
 They dared, they burned, to be the first to die. (11.1208-1215 Fitzgerald)

Balk: Wooden beam or rafter.

• **Camilla seems to have inspired Cloelia, who is depicted on the shield of Aeneas. Who was Cloelia?**

Camilla seems to have influenced other Roman heroines. For example, she seems to have inspired Cloelia, whose escape is depicted on the shield of Aeneas.

Cloelia was a Roman girl at a time when Rome was having difficulties with the Etruscans. At one point, the Etruscan king Lars Porcenna made a treaty of peace with Rome. To ensure that the peace would be kept, he received a number of Roman hostages: 10 boys and 10 girls. The Etruscan camp was close to Rome, and Cloelia led an escape of some of the Roman girls back to

Rome. Porsenna was angry at first, but then he respected her courage. He asked for her to return to be his hostage, promising to keep her safe. She returned, and Porsenna even allowed her to choose a few hostages to be returned to Rome. She chose the little boy hostages. Apparently, she eventually returned home safely, and an equestrian statue of her was put up in the Via Sacra.

Here is some information about Cloelia:

Cloelia

To ensure the peace with Rome, Porsenna had been given a number of young Romans to hold as hostages. One of the hostages, a young woman named Cloelia, escaped her guards and led a number of other Roman girls to safety as well. Versions vary as to how they escaped, either by swimming the Tiber river or on horseback.

Porsenna was very angry when he learned of the hostages' escape but after a time came to admire the courage of this young woman. Rather than consider that the treaty had been broken, he promised that Cloelia would be safe in his camp if she were returned, and he further promised that he would return her unharmed to her parents when his troops were safely out of Roman territory. Cloelia returned and remained at Porsenna's camp and was even allowed to select other hostages to be returned to Rome. She asked that the little boy hostages be returned, since they would suffer most from the separation from their families.

Upon the achievement of peace, the Romans celebrated Cloelia's courage with a statue on the Via Sacra depicting a young maiden astride a horse.

D. Fite, 2001.

Source: <http://www.dl.ket.org/latinlit/historia/people/heroes/cloelia01.htm>

Date Downloaded: 18 August 2004

Here is some additional information about Cloelia from Livy's *History of Rome*:

165. **Cloelia the hostage.** Traditionally Rome, 506 B.C. (Livy, *History of Rome* 2.13.6-11. Late 1st cent. B.C.-early 1st cent. A.D.)

The Romans made a treaty with the Etruscan Lars Porsenna, king of Clusium, and sent ten boys and ten girls as hostage. In his account of the legendary events of the period, Livy places the episode of Cloelia, a story of the physical prowess and daring of an adolescent, near the spectacular acts of bravery and self-sacrifice of Mucius Scaevola and Horatius at the bridge. In later accounts of women's physical and moral courage, such as those told by Appian (no. 167), the heroines are almost invariably married women defending their husbands.

Seeing that the Romans so respected courage, women too were inspired to carry out acts of heroism, and Cloelia, one of the girls given as hostages, since the Etruscan camp was situated not far from the bank of the Tiber, eluded the guards, and swam the Tiber amidst a rain of enemy spears at the head of a group of other girls. They all reached Rome safely and she restored them to their families. When the king found out, he was furious at first and sent emissaries to Rome to ask that Cloelia be given back; he did not care about the other girls. But his anger turned to admiration and he said that her undertaking had been

greater than that of a Cocles or a Mucius, and gave it to understand that, although he would consider the non-restoration of the hostage equivalent to breaking the treaty, he would nonetheless return her unharmed. Each side trusted the other: the Romans, according to the treaty, returned the pledge of peace, and the Etruscan king not merely respected her courage but honoured it; he praised the girl and said that he would give her half the hostages: she should herself choose the ones she wanted. They were brought before her and it is said she picked the boys, the appropriate choice for her young age, and by agreement of the hostages themselves i[t] was the right thing, as they preferred to have released the persons at the greatest risk of harm by the enemy. Peace was re-established, and the Romans rewarded this act of courage — new in a woman — with a new kind of honour, an equestrian statue. At the top of the Via Sacra a statue of the girl on horseback was set up.

Source: <http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/wlgr/wlgr-publiclife165.shtml>

Date Downloaded: 18 August 2004

Translator: Rev. Canon Roberts

• **What message does Camilla leave for Turnus?**

When Camilla dies, she leaves a message for Turnus to come and defend the city:

“Acca, ’t is past! he swims before my sight,
Inexorable Death; and claims his right.
Bear my last words to Turnus; fly with speed,
And bid him timely to my charge succeed,
Repel the Trojans, and the town relieve:
Farewell! and in this kiss my parting breath receive.” (John Dryden)

• **How does Turnus react to the death of Camilla?**

When Turnus receives Camilla’s message, he abandons his ambush and rushes to the city.

However, in abandoning the ambush, Turnus makes a big mistake. Almost as soon as he abandons the ambush, Aeneas arrives and goes through the pass, which is now unguarded. If Turnus had waited, he would most likely have been able to inflict great damage on the Trojans in the pass. As it happens, leaving early does the Latins no good. It is too dark to fight when Turnus arrives at the city, so Turnus might as well have stayed and sprung the ambush.

• **What happens at the end of Book 11?**

The armies of Turnus and of Aeneas march toward the city; they are very close to each other:

He leaves the hilly pass, the woods in vain
Possess’d, and downward issues on the plain.
Scarce was he gone, when to the straits, now freed

From secret foes, the Trojan troops succeed.
 Thro' the black forest and the ferny brake,
 Unknowingly secure, their way they take;
 From the rough mountains to the plain descend,
 And there, in order drawn, their line extend.
 Both armies now in open fields are seen;
 Nor far the distance of the space between.
 Both to the city bend. AEneas sees,
 Thro' smoking fields, his hast'ning enemies;
 And Turnus views the Trojans in array,
 And hears th' approaching horses proudly neigh.
 Soon had their hosts in bloody battle join'd;
 But westward to the sea the sun declin'd.
 Intrench'd before the town both armies lie,
 While Night with sable wings involves the sky. (John Dryden)

• **Has this been a good day for the Latins?**

This has been a grim day for the Latins:

- They have buried many warriors.
- Diomedes has said that he will not fight on their side.
- Diomedes advises that they make peace with the Trojans.
- Drances stirs up hate and discontent.
- Aeneas' men launch a surprise attack.
- Camilla is killed.
- Turnus' attempt to ambush Aeneas fails.

Conclusion

In Book 12, Turnus and Aeneas will finally meet and fight to the death.

The interpretation of the death of Turnus varies from critic to critic. Some regard it as good, while others regard it as bad.

[Aeneid, Book 12: The Fortunes of War / The Sword Decides All](#)

- **Compare and contrast the attitudes of Turnus, Latinus, Amata, and Aeneas at the beginning of Book 12 toward the war and Turnus' meeting Aeneas in single combat.**

At the beginning of Book 12, Turnus, Latinus, and Amata talk about what to do in the war.

Turnus

Turnus is set on meeting Aeneas in single combat. He is a brave warrior.

Latinus

Latinus, as he has before, prefers peace. He wants to make peace with Aeneas and give him his daughter, Lavinia, as a bride. He believes that this is the right thing to do. For one thing, he has heard from the gods that he ought to give Lavinia as a wife to a foreign man. Clearly, Aeneas is that foreign man. Latinus does not want Turnus to face Aeneas in man-to-man combat.

Amata

Amata also does not want Turnus to face Aeneas in man-to-man combat. However, Amata does not want Aeneas to marry Lavinia. She prefers that the war continue:

But now the queen, who fear'd for Turnus' life,
And loath'd the hard conditions of the strife,
Held him by force; and, dying in his death,
In these sad accents gave her sorrow breath:
"O Turnus, I adjure thee by these tears,
And whate'er price Amata's honor bears
Within thy breast, since thou art all my hope,
My sickly mind's repose, my sinking age's prop;
Since on the safety of thy life alone
Depends Latinus, and the Latian throne:
Refuse me not this one, this only pray'r,
To waive the combat, and pursue the war.
Whatever chance attends this fatal strife,
Think it includes, in thine, Amata's life.
I cannot live a slave, or see my throne
Usurp'd by strangers or a Trojan son." (John Dryden)

We see foreshadowing here. Amata will commit suicide when she thinks that Turnus has fallen in combat. Here she says, “I cannot live a slave, or see my throne / Usurp’d by strangers or a Trojan son” (John Dryden).

Aeneas

Aeneas has already made it clear that he would love to meet Turnus in single combat.

• Which of these people (Turnus, Amata, and Latinus) have been maddened by the Fury Allecto? Which of these people is able to think clearly?

Turnus and Amata

We remember that both Turnus and Amata have been maddened by the Fury Allecto. They are not in control of themselves.

Latinus

Latinus is not maddened by the Fury Amata. He is able to think clearly. What Latinus wants is the right thing to do in this situation.

• In which way is the scene at the beginning of Book 12 reminiscent of Homer’s *Iliad*?

At the beginning of Book 12 of the *Aeneid*, two parents — Latinus and Amata — plead with Turnus not to face Aeneas in single combat. This is reminiscent of the scene in Homer’s *Iliad* in which King Priam and Queen Hecuba plead with their son Hector not to remain outside the walls of Troy and face Achilles in single combat. Latinus and Amata are not Turnus’ parents, but in this scene they are much like Priam and Hecuba, Hector’s parents. (If Turnus should marry Lavinia, Latinus and Amata would be Turnus’ father- and mother-in-law.)

The two scenes have parallels. Both Turnus and Hector had suffered significant defeats of their armies. Fighting the leader of the opposing army in single combat and killing him is a way to restore their honor and turn defeat into victory.

We see foreshadowing here. When Hector meets Achilles in single combat, Hector is killed. When Turnus meets Aeneas in single combat, Turnus is killed.

Here in Book 12, Turnus is inevitably drawn toward his death — a death that ends the *Aeneid*.

• Write a brief character analysis of Lavinia. How does she react to the debate about her?

In recent decades, feminist criticism has become more prevalent. Critics think more about the female characters in great works of literature.

At this time, royal women would have little choice in whom they would marry. Their parents would decide that for them. Often, the choice of a groom would depend upon who would be a good political ally.

Lavinia is the woman for whom the war is being fought. Both Aeneas and Turnus want to marry her. Turnus actually knows Lavinia and is inflamed with love for her. Aeneas does not know Lavinia, but he must marry her in order to fulfill his destiny of becoming an important ancestor of the Roman people. The Roman people will come into existence as a result of marriages

between Trojan men and Latin women. As the leader of the Trojans, Aeneas must marry an Italian princess.

Lavinia never speaks in the *Aeneid*; in fact, she does very little. We seldom read about her. In this scene, we learn a little about her. She listens to the debate, and she cries and she blushes:

At this, a flood of tears Lavinia shed;
 A crimson blush her beauteous face o'erspread,
 Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red.
 The driving colors, never at a stay,
 Run here and there, and flush, and fade away.
 Delightful change! Thus Indian iv'ry shows,
 Which with the bord'ring paint of purple glows;
 Or lilies damask'd by the neighb'ring rose. (John Dryden)

When Lavinia blushes, Turnus looks at her, and he is even more in love with her. The blush makes her more beautiful.

• **Why is Lavinia crying?**

Lavinia may be crying because so many people are dying in the war being fought about whom she will marry.

• **Why is Lavinia blushing?**

Is it blushing because she is flattered that two warriors are willing to fight a war over her and meet in single combat to determine who will marry her? Is she blushing because she is young and embarrassed?

• **What does Juno do to prolong the conflict?**

That night, both Turnus and Aeneas prepare themselves for the single combat that is supposed to be fought the following day. Unfortunately, the truce that has been arranged for the single combat will be broken. More warriors will die before Aeneas and Turnus meet in single combat to determine who will marry Lavinia.

Juno knows that Aeneas is fated to found the Roman people, and she knows that she can nothing to stop him from founding the Roman people. However, she still hates the Trojans and Aeneas, and she knows that the Roman people will one day destroy her beloved city of Carthage. Therefore, Juno makes it difficult for Aeneas to found the Roman people. Although she cannot change a person's destiny, she can make it difficult for that person to achieve his destiny.

The war could be over very quickly if Turnus and Aeneas were to meet in single combat. Aeneas would kill Turnus, and the war would be over. However, Juno sets in motion a way to abort the truce and continue the war for a few more hours. This, of course, gets more people, including Queen Amata, killed; however, the Greek and Roman gods are not always benevolent. Very often, they do evil things to human beings.

Juno sends for Turnus' sister, Juturna, who is now immortal. Juno wants Juturna to delay the killing of Turnus by making sure the truce between the Trojans and the Latins is broken.

• **Write a brief character analysis of Juturna.**

Juturna is a mortal woman who has become an immortal nymph. She started life as a perfectly ordinary human being — the sister of Turnus.

Jupiter saw her, desired her, and raped her, and then he made her an immortal nymph: a young, immortal female minor deity.

Remember that the Greek and Roman gods are not always benevolent. We certainly see this in Juno and her hatred for Aeneas and the Trojans. Juno does not mind if lots of human beings die as long as it delays the death of Turnus a little. Also, Jupiter raped many women and he had many affairs.

Juturna loves her brother, and she would like to keep him alive.

Juno frequently uses minor deities (DAY-a-tees) to accomplish her will:

Book 1: She used Aeolus, Immortal King of the Winds, to create a storm to blow Aeneas' ship off course.

Book 7: Juno uses the Fury Allecto to create war between the Trojans and the Latins.

Book 12: Juno uses the nymph Juturna to break the truce between the Trojans and the Latins and to delay the single combat between Aeneas and Turnus.

We read this about Juturna:

Then thus the goddess of the skies bespake,
 With sighs and tears, the goddess of the lake,
 King Turnus' sister, once a lovely maid,
 Ere to the lust of lawless Jove betray'd:
 Compress'd by force, but, by the grateful god,
 Now made the Nais of the neighb'ring flood. (John Dryden)

Juturna is a water-nymph.

• **What are the terms of the single combat?**

All seems set for the single combat between Turnus and Aeneas. The two sides make sacrifices and agree on terms.

If Turnus wins the single combat, then the Trojans will leave the area and stay with King Evander, and Turnus shall marry Lavinia.

If Aeneas wins the single combat, then Aeneas shall marry Lavinia, and the Trojans shall stay in this part of Italy. However, Aeneas promises not to humiliate the Italians. These are generous terms.

This is what Aeneas says when he makes the terms of the single combat:

“All-seeing sun, and thou, Ausonian soil,
 For which I have sustain’d so long a toil,
 Thou, King of Heav’n, and thou, the Queen of Air,
 Propitious now, and reconcil’d by pray’r;
 Thou, God of War, whose unresisted sway
 The labors and events of arms obey;
 Ye living fountains, and ye running floods,
 All pow’rs of ocean, all ethereal gods,
 Hear, and bear record: if I fall in field,
 Or, recreant in the fight, to Turnus yield,
 My Trojans shall encrease Evander’s town;
 Ascanius shall renounce th’ Ausonian crown:
 All claims, all questions of debate, shall cease;
 Nor he, nor they, with force infringe the peace.
 But, if my juster arms prevail in fight,
 (As sure they shall, if I divine aright,)
 My Trojans shall not o’er th’ Italians reign:
 Both equal, both unconquer’d shall remain,
 Join’d in their laws, their lands, and their abodes;
 I ask but altars for my weary gods.
 The care of those religious rites be mine;
 The crown to King Latinus I resign:
 His be the sov’ reign sway. Nor will I share
 His pow’r in peace, or his command in war.
 For me, my friends another town shall frame,
 And bless the rising tow’rs with fair Lavinia’s name.” (John Dryden)

• **How is the truce broken? How is this similar to a scene in Homer’s *Iliad*?**

Juturna is able to cause the truce to be broken by disguising herself as a Latin soldier named Camers and spreading rumors.

She points out that the Latin soldiers outnumber the Trojans and their allies.

She also falsely says that if Turnus loses the single combat, then the Latins will be enslaved to the Trojans — Aeneas has already said that that would not happen.

Juturna tells the Latin soldiers,

“For shame, Rutulians, can you bear the sight
Of one expos’d for all, in single fight?
Can we, before the face of heav’n, confess
Our courage colder, or our numbers less?
View all the Trojan host, th’ Arcadian band,
And Tuscan army; count ’em as they stand:
Undaunted to the battle if we go,
Scarce ev’ry second man will share a foe.
Turnus, ’t is true, in this unequal strife,
Shall lose, with honor, his devoted life,
Or change it rather for immortal fame,
Succeeding to the gods, from whence he came:
But you, a servile and inglorious band,
For foreign lords shall sow your native land,
Those fruitful fields your fighting fathers gain’d,
Which have so long their lazy sons sustain’d.” (John Dryden)

In addition, Juturna causes a misleading omen: An eagle kills a swan and is then attacked by many birds and drops the dead swan into a river.

A Latin augur named Tolumnius interprets the omen favorably for the Latins. The swan represents Aeneas, and Aeneas will die on this day. Of course, the omen is false. Aeneas will not die on this day.

• **How is the breaking of the truce modeled on a similar event in Homer’s *Iliad*?**

Frequently, Virgil will model a scene of the *Aeneid* on a scene in either Homer’s *Iliad* or Homer’s *Odyssey*. In this case, the scene is modeled on a scene in the *Iliad*. Paris and Menelaus are supposed to fight a single combat to see who wins the Trojan War and to see who wins Helen. However, the truce is broken when a Trojan archer named Pandarus shoots an arrow at and hits Menelaus.

In the *Iliad*, the Trojans illegitimately break the truce and then lose the war (and Helen). In the *Aeneid*, the Latins illegitimately break the truce and then lose the war (and Lavinia).

Virgil's modeling of events on similar scenes in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* frequently foreshadows what will soon occur.

However, Virgil is not simply rewriting Homer. Virgil's scenes are different from the scenes in Homer's epic poem. In the scene in the *Aeneid*, Juturna causes the breaking of the truce. She is motivated by love for her brother and wishes to keep him alive as much as possible.

So Virgil is again modeling his narrative largely on Homer, but again modifying it to fit his own narrative — as seen by Juturna, who is so much more emotionally bound with Turnus than Athena is to any human being in the *Iliad*. Juturna is concerned for her brother, and that's why she motivates the breaking of the truce. In the *Iliad*, Athena motivates Pandarus to break the truce. Athena is not motivated by love in that scene; she wants to keep the Trojan War going so that eventually Troy will fall. If the war ends now, Menelaus will get Helen back and much treasure, but Troy will remain standing. However, if Athena convinces Pandarus to break the truce, the war will continue, and eventually Troy will fall.

In the *Iliad*, an archer named Pandarus wounds Menelaus.

In the *Aeneid*, an unknown assailant will a little later wound Aeneas with an arrow.

• **How do Aeneas and Turnus react to the breaking of the truce?**

Aeneas and Turnus react differently to the breaking of the truce. Aeneas acts to stop the fighting. Aeneas wants a single combat, not full-out war. This says something good about Aeneas. He acts to stop unnecessary bloodshed.

Turnus, on the other hand, fights after an arrow wounds Aeneas. Turnus is very willing to take advantage of Aeneas' enforced absence from battle.

This is what Aeneas says after fighting breaks out (just before an arrow wounds him):

But good Aeneas rush'd amid the bands;
 Bare was his head, and naked were his hands,
 In sign of truce: then thus he cries aloud:
 "What sudden rage, what new desire of blood,
 Inflames your alter'd minds? O Trojans, cease
 From impious arms, nor violate the peace!
 By human sanctions, and by laws divine,
 The terms are all agreed; the war is mine.
 Dismiss your fears, and let the fight ensue;
 This hand alone shall right the gods and you:
 Our injur'd altars, and their broken vow,
 To this avenging sword the faithless Turnus owe." (John Dryden)

• **How is Aeneas wounded, and how is Aeneas cured?**

When Aeneas is wounded by an arrow (no one takes credit for shooting it), the wound forces him to leave the field, and Turnus immediately attacks, hoping to take advantage of Aeneas' absence from the field.

The wound is too bad for the mortal doctor to take care of, but Venus aids her son Aeneas:

But now the goddess mother, mov'd with grief,
And pierc'd with pity, hastens her relief.
A branch of healing dittany she brought,
Which in the Cretan fields with care she sought:
Rough is the stem, which woolly leafs surround;
The leafs with flow'rs, the flow'rs with purple crown'd,
Well known to wounded goats; a sure relief
To draw the pointed steel, and ease the grief. (John Dryden)

• **After being cured, Aeneas speaks to Ascanius and kisses him. What can we learn about their relationship in that scene?**

After Venus cures Aeneas' wound, Aeneas speaks to his son, Ascanius. This is the only time in the *Aeneid* that Aeneas speaks directly to Ascanius. Ascanius has had dialogue in the *Aeneid* (he speaks to the Trojan women when they attempt to burn the Trojan ships), but he does not speak to Aeneas in the *Aeneid*.

Aeneas gives Ascanius a farewell speech:

Once he had fitted
Shield to flank, harness to back, he hugged
Ascanius, embracing him with steel,
Then through his vizor brushed his lips and said:
“Learn fortitude and toil from me, my son,
Ache of true toil. Good fortune learn from others.
My sword arm now will be your shield in battle
And introduce you to the boons of war.
When, before long, you come to man's estate,
Be sure that you recall this. Harking back
For models in your family, let your father,
Aeneas, and uncle, Hector, stir your heart.” (12.591-602 Fitzgerald)

Aeneas tells Ascanius to learn about hard work from him, and to learn about good fortune from others.

Aeneas kisses Ascanius through the vizor of his helmet. This must be a difficult thing to do. This interesting little detail may be a comment by Virgil about the difficulty of founding the Roman people. Because Aeneas is so concerned with fighting a war to enable the Trojans to settle in Italy, he is unable to devote as much time to Ascanius as he would like to.

Vizor: The front piece of the helmet of a suit of armor, capable of being raised and lowered and designed to protect the eyes, nose, and forehead. — *American Heritage Dictionary*

Aeneas is known as a great hero, but he is also known for being isolated and for being separated from others:

- The private Aeneas and the public Aeneas are frequently different. In private Aeneas can feel discouraged, but in public Aeneas acts like a confident leader.
- Aeneas and his mother, Venus, are separated because Aeneas is mortal while Venus is immortal.
- Aeneas' father, Anchises, and his wife, Creusa, are dead.
- Because of the war, Aeneas cannot live the life he would like to live with Ascanius; this is represented symbolically by Aeneas kissing his son through the vizor of his helmet.

• **How does Juturna protect Turnus, her brother?**

Having been cured of his wound, Aeneas goes back into the battle. He wants to fight Turnus, but Juturna takes the form of Turnus' charioteer, and she drives the chariot away from Aeneas. She knows that if Aeneas and Turnus were to fight, Aeneas would be victorious.

• **What does Amata do when Aeneas attacks the city?**

Aeneas, of course, is unable to fight Turnus because Juturna will not allow the two warriors to meet.

Inspired by Venus, Aeneas decides to attack the Latin city. This is similar to what happened in the Second Punic War. For many years, the Carthaginian general Hannibal roamed Italy, winning many battles. Finally, the Romans were able to get Hannibal out of Italy by attacking Carthage itself. Hannibal went to North Africa to defend Carthage, and there he was finally decisively defeated.

Amata sees the Trojans and their allies attacking the city, and she believes that Turnus must have been killed in the battle. Rather than see Aeneas marry Lavinia, she commits suicide.

Of course, Amata has been maddened by the Fury Allecto. If Allecto had not maddened her, Amata most likely would not have committed suicide. Instead, she would have welcomed Aeneas as her son-in-law.

Amata is one of the people who bear the hardship of founding the Roman people. She dies when she hangs herself:

But fate and envious fortune now prepare

To plunge the Latins in the last despair.
 The queen, who saw the foes invade the town,
 And brands on tops of burning houses thrown,
 Cast round her eyes, distracted with her fear —
 No troops of Turnus in the field appear.
 Once more she stares abroad, but still in vain,
 And then concludes the royal youth is slain.
 Mad with her anguish, impotent to bear
 The mighty grief, she loathes the vital air.
 She calls herself the cause of all this ill,
 And owns the dire effects of her ungovern'd will;
 She raves against the gods; she beats her breast;
 She tears with both her hands her purple vest:
 Then round a beam a running noose she tied,
 And, fasten'd by the neck, obscenely died. (John Dryden)

• **How has Aeneas affected the Latins?**

Aeneas has a destiny: to found the Roman people. This destiny creates a lot of hardships, both for him and for many of the people he meets. In Book 4, Dido, Queen of Carthage, committed suicide when Aeneas left her.

Aeneas' destiny also creates hardships for the people of Italy, although Juno bears much of the responsibility for that. If Juno were not interfering, perhaps Aeneas and the Trojans would have been able to settle peacefully in Italy. Certainly King Latinus has wanted peace with the Trojans.

Amata

Amata commits suicide when she thinks that Turnus has died in a battle between the Latins and the Trojans.

King Latinus

King Latinus has suffered because Aeneas came to Italy. His people are at war against the Trojans, and many people have died. His wife committed suicide, so now King Latinus is a widower.

Lavinia

No one had consulted Lavinia about whom she wants to marry. She is a woman of royal birth, and her marriage will result in a political alliance, so she has no say in deciding whom she will marry. At this point, whoever wins the war between Trojans and Latins will marry her. Lavinia

also mourns the death of her mother. This is the last time we see Lavinia in the *Aeneid*; she has just learned that her mother is dead:

Soon as the fatal news by Fame was blown,
 And to her dames and to her daughter known,
 The sad Lavinia rends her yellow hair
 And rosy cheeks; the rest her sorrow share:
 With shrieks the palace rings, and madness of despair.
 The spreading rumor fills the public place:
 Confusion, fear, distraction, and disgrace,
 And silent shame, are seen in ev'ry face.
 Latinus tears his garments as he goes,
 Both for his public and his private woes;
 With filth his venerable beard besmears,
 And sordid dust deforms his silver hairs. (John Dryden)

Many people suffer because Aeneas arrives in Italy, although all Aeneas wants to do is to fulfill his destiny peacefully.

Many people bear the burden of founding the Roman people.

• **Why does Juno stop protecting Turnus?**

Jupiter tells Juno that she must stop supporting Turnus. Because Jupiter is so powerful and because Turnus' death is fated, she has no choice but to agree. We have a reference to the Fates when Jupiter holds the fates of Turnus and of Aeneas in a set of scales. We aren't told who will die at this point, but of course we know that Aeneas achieves his destiny.

Things have not been going well for Turnus. He attacks Aeneas, but his sword breaks because he picked up the wrong sword when he rushed into battle — an indication that he is not a good leader.

Aeneas chases Turnus the way that Achilles chased Hector around the walls of Troy in the *Iliad*. In the *Iliad*, Achilles ends up killing Hector so here we have foreshadowing that Aeneas will kill Turnus.

And then Jupiter tells Juno to stop supporting Turnus. Juno agrees, but she says that she does not want the Latins' language to disappear. She also wants the Latins to retain their own name and not take the name of the Trojans. Basically, Juno wants the Trojans to be subsumed into the Latins, not the Latins subsumed into the Trojans.

Juno says,

“Never command the land's own Latin folk

To change their old name, to become new Trojans,
 Known as Teucrians; never make them alter
 Dialect or dress. Let Latium be.
 Let there be Alban kings for generations,
 And let Italian valor be the strength
 Of Rome in after times. Once and for all
 Troy fell, and with her name let her lie fallen.” (12.1116-1123 Fitzgerald)

Jupiter is agreeable to Juno’s request.

Ironically, the last word Juno speaks in the *Aeneid* (in the Latin) is Troy.

Jupiter then sets the final events of the *Aeneid* in action by sending a Fury to separate Juturna and Turnus.

• **What happens when Turnus and Aeneas meet in single combat?**

The Fury does its work. When Juturna sees the Fury, she mourns because she knows that her brother will die. She also mourns being immortal because she would like to accompany her brother to the Land of the Dead and keep him company:

“Ah me!” she cries, “in this unequal strife
 What can thy sister more to save thy life?
 Weak as I am, can I, alas! contend
 In arms with that inexorable fiend?
 Now, now, I quit the field! forbear to fright
 My tender soul, ye baleful birds of night;
 The lashing of your wings I know too well,
 The sounding flight, and fun’ral screams of hell!
 These are the gifts you bring from haughty Jove,
 The worthy recompense of ravish’d love!
 Did he for this exempt my life from fate?
 O hard conditions of immortal state,
 Tho’ born to death, not privileg’d to die,
 But forc’d to bear impos’d eternity!
 Take back your envious bribes, and let me go
 Companion to my brother’s ghost below!

The joys are vanish'd: nothing now remains,
 Of life immortal, but immortal pains.
 What earth will open her devouring womb,
 To rest a weary goddess in the tomb!" (John Dryden)

In the combat between Turnus and Aeneas, the Fury keeps Turnus from being successful. For example, Turnus tries to throw a stone at Aeneas, but it falls short:

The stone drops from his arms, and, falling short
 For want of vigor, mocks his vain effort.
 And as, when heavy sleep has clos'd the sight,
 The sickly fancy labors in the night;
 We seem to run; and, destitute of force,
 Our sinking limbs forsake us in the course:
 In vain we heave for breath; in vain we cry;
 The nerves, unbrac'd, their usual strength deny;
 And on the tongue the falt'ring accents die:
 So Turnus far'd; whatever means he tried,
 All force of arms and points of art employ'd,
 The Fury flew athwart, and made th' endeavor void. (John Dryden)

Aeneas wounds Turnus with a spear-throw to his thigh, and Turnus knows that he has been defeated.

Turnus says that if he must die, please return his corpse to his father so that it may be properly buried:

Now low on earth the lofty chief is laid,
 With eyes cast upward, and with arms display'd,
 And, recreant, thus to the proud victor pray'd:
 "I know my death deserv'd, nor hope to live:
 Use what the gods and thy good fortune give.
 Yet think, O think, if mercy may be shown —
 Thou hadst a father once, and hast a son —
 Pity my sire, now sinking to the grave;
 And for Anchises' sake old Daunus save!

Or, if thy vow'd revenge pursue my death,
 Give to my friends my body void of breath!
 The Latian chiefs have seen me beg my life;
 Thine is the conquest, thine the royal wife:
 Against a yielded man, 't is mean ignoble strife." (John Dryden)

• **Why does Aeneas kill Turnus?**

Aeneas considers showing mercy to Turnus and allowing him to live, but he sees Pallas' sword-belt hanging from the shoulder of Turnus, and enraged, Aeneas kills Turnus, thus ending the *Aeneid*:

In deep suspense the Trojan seem'd to stand,
 And, just prepar'd to strike, repress'd his hand.
 He roll'd his eyes, and ev'ry moment felt
 His manly soul with more compassion melt;
 When, casting down a casual glance, he spied
 The golden belt that glitter'd on his side,
 The fatal spoils which haughty Turnus tore
 From dying Pallas, and in triumph wore.
 Then, rous'd anew to wrath, he loudly cries
 (Flames, while he spoke, came flashing from his eyes):
 "Traitor, dost thou, dost thou to grace pretend,
 Clad, as thou art, in trophies of my friend?
 To his sad soul a grateful off'ring go!
 'T is Pallas, Pallas gives this deadly blow."
 He rais'd his arm aloft, and, at the word,
 Deep in his bosom drove the shining sword.
 The streaming blood distain'd his arms around,
 And the disdainful soul came rushing thro' the wound. (John Dryden)

• **In Books 11 and 12, how do Chloereus, Camilla, and Juturna help show that Turnus is doomed?**

Chloereus, Camilla, and Juturna are unusual sexual characters. All of them are unmarried.
 Chloereus is a priest of Cybele who has castrated himself.

Camilla is a virgin warrior; Roman women were expected to be wives and mothers, not warriors.

Juturna was raped by Jupiter, who then made her immortal. Rape is immoral, even when committed by a god, and immortality is not for mortals.

Chloerus: A Eunuch Priest

Here are some facts about Chloerus:

- Chloerus is a priest of Cybele. The priests of the Phrygian goddess Cybele are known as Corybantes. Their worship of Cybele included an ecstasy in which they castrated themselves.
- All of this means, of course, that Chloerus is a eunuch. The description of his clothing sounds effeminate. He and Camilla are alike in being unusual. Camilla is a virgin; Chloerus is a eunuch.

Camilla: A Virgin and a Warrior

Here are some facts about Camilla:

- Camilla is a virgin.
- Camilla is a warrior.
- Camilla is a general.
- Camilla has a number of women fighting with her. All of the women are virgins.
- Camilla fights with one breast exposed “for fighting ease” (11.883 Fitzgerald). (The Amazons also did this.)
- Mothers want Camilla to be their daughter-in-law, but of course that will not happen.
- Camilla is devoted to Diana, a virgin goddess.
- Camilla is extraordinary. She does not accept the roles of being a wife and a mother that later the Roman women will accept.

Juturna: A Mortal Who Became an Immortal Nymph

- Juturna is a mortal who became an immortal goddess.
- Jupiter raped Juturna, and he then gave her immortality.
- Juturna loves her brother, both as a mortal and as an immortal. Juturna does not want to be immortal when her brother dies. She prefers to be mortal so that she can go with her brother to the Land of the Dead.
- As a minor immortal goddess, Juturna has more power and knowledge than her brother. In Roman times, men would have more power than women.
- Juno befriends Juturna, although normally Juno hates the females with whom Jupiter, her husband, sleeps. Juno does not even care when the sex is involuntary, as in Juturna’s case. Almost always, she hates the female with whom her husband has had sex.

Camilla and Juturna: Sexuality Gone Awry

Camilla and Juturna both represent sexuality gone awry.

Camilla is a virgin, but in Roman society women are supposed to be wives and mothers.

Juturna has been raped, and she has become immortal. Rape is a horrible thing in any society, and immortality does not work well for mortals, according to Greek and Roman mythology.

Purpose of Camilla and Juturna: They Stress that Turnus is Seeking an Inappropriate Marriage with Lavinia

The purpose of Camilla and Juturna, in part, is that they stress that Turnus is seeking an inappropriate marriage with Lavinia.

Being an adult virgin is inappropriate.

Rape is an inappropriate form of sex. Many men of the time are less likely to marry a woman whom they know has been raped.

Lavinia is destined to marry Aeneas, not Turnus. We know that Aeneas is fated to found the Roman people. He will do that by marrying and having children with Lavinia. Oracles have foretold that Lavinia will marry a foreigner. Turnus should not seek a marriage with Lavinia. (Of course, it is not all his fault that he does; a Fury maddens him.)

• Turnus is doomed because he is pursuing an inappropriate marriage with Lavinia. How do we see the theme of ruined marriages in Pallas' sword-belt?

Turnus has been pursuing an inappropriate marriage with Lavinia. This marriage is inappropriate because Lavinia is fated to marry Aeneas.

Similarly, the artwork on Pallas' sword-belt shows other ruined marriages. The sword-belt is both functional and a work of art. The swordbelt tells the story of the 50 bridegrooms of the 50 daughters of Danaus. Nearly all of the bridegrooms died young, and so does Pallas. In fact, Pallas dies on his first day of fighting in the war.

According to the myth, Danaus had 50 daughters, and Ægyptus had fifty sons. The 50 sons of Ægyptus wanted to marry the 50 daughters of Danaus. Danaus was suspicious of the 50 sons, so although he allowed the marriages he also ordered his 50 daughters to kill the 50 sons of Ægyptus. All of his daughters except Hypermnestra, who had married Lynceus, obeyed. The Danaïds are the daughters of Danaus. In Hades, they (with the exception of Hypermnestra) are condemned to spend forever filling a sieve with water.

The marriages of the daughters of Danaus and the sons of Ægyptus are mostly inappropriate. Similarly, Turnus is pursuing an inappropriate marriage with Lavinia. This marriage is inappropriate because Lavinia is fated to marry Aeneas. Together, they will found the Roman people.

The final two books of the *Aeneid* stress ruined marriages. We see that in three places:

- Camilla is an adult woman who is a virgin and rejects marriage (as shown by her being a warrior and by her being a follower of Diana, a virgin goddess).

- Juturna's marriage was ruined because she was raped by Jupiter. Many men of the time are less likely to marry a woman whom they know has been raped.
- Pallas' swordbelt depicts many ruined marriages.

• **At the end of Book 12, what does Turnus say and how does Aeneas respond?**

At this time, we can take a look at the killing of Turnus by Aeneas. Critics differ over whether the killing of Turnus should be applauded or deplored. Some critics think that Aeneas did exactly the right thing when he killed Turnus; other critics think that Aeneas should have been merciful and let Turnus live.

The last 20 lines of the *Aeneid* (in Latin) are the most controversial. In these lines, Aeneas considers whether he ought to kill Turnus. Seeing Pallas' sword-belt, he is overcome by *furor* and kills him, although Turnus has begged for mercy after being wounded by Aeneas in the thigh and knowing that he has been defeated.

Turnus says,

“Clearly I earned this, and I ask no quarter.
 Make the most of your good fortune here.
 If you can feel a father's grief — and you, too,
 Had such a father in Anchises — then
 Let me bespeak your mercy for old age
 In Daunus, and return me, or my body,
 Stripped, if you will, of life, to my own kin.
 You have defeated me. The Ausonians
 Have seen me in defeat, spreading my hands.
 Lavinia is your bride. But go no further
 Out of hatred.” (12.1266-1276 Fitzgerald)

Daunus is the father of Turnus.

Aeneas hesitates, but when he notices the swordbelt of Pallas on Turnus' shoulder, he is overcome by fury:

Fierce under arms, Aeneas
 Looked to and fro, and towered, and stayed his hand
 Upon the sword-hilt. Moment by moment now
 What Turnus said began to bring him round
 From indecision. Then to his glance appeared
 The accurst swordbelt surmounting Turnus' shoulder.

Shining with its familiar studs — the strap
 Young Pallas wore when Turnus wounded him
 And left him dead upon the field; now Turnus
 Bore that enemy token upon his shoulder —
 Enemy still. For when the sight came home to him,
 Aeneas raged at the relic of his anguish
 Worn by this man as trophy. (12.1276-1289 Fitzgerald)

Seeing Pallas' sword-belt, Aeneas says that Pallas is striking this blow and then he kills Turnus:

Blazing up
 And terrible in his anger, he called out:
 "You in your plunder, torn from one of mine,
 Shall I be robbed of you? This wound will come
 From Pallas: Pallas makes this offering
 And from your criminal blood exacts his due." (12.1289-1294 Fitzgerald)

The last two lines of the *Aeneid* repeats the lines in Book 11 that describe Camilla's death (with "her" changed to "him"):

He sank his blade in fury in Turnus' chest.
 Then all the body slackened in death's chill,
 And with a groan for that indignity
 His spirit fled into the gloom below. (12.1295-1298 Fitzgerald)

Turnus' death ends the *Aeneid*.

• **In your opinion, are we meant to approve or disapprove of Aeneas' killing of Turnus?**

A strong case can be made for either interpretation.

Critical opinion is divided about whether Aeneas should have killed or spared Turnus.

• **What case can be made that Aeneas is justified in killing Turnus?**

A strong case can be made Aeneas is completely justified in killing Turnus here.

1) Aeneas is a Warrior in the Thick of Single Combat

Aeneas hesitates before he kills Turnus. This shows that Aeneas is a good guy — at least he hesitates. However, the thing that a warrior is expected to do at this time is to kill the enemy.

First of all, Aeneas is a warrior in the thick of single combat; his hesitation when Turnus pleads for his life indicates his magnanimity and humanity, but some scholars say it is anachronistic of

us to expect him to spare Turnus at this point. That is simply not something a warrior at this time in this culture would have done.

When two warriors fight in single combat, it is a duel to the death (unless something like sunset happens, so that the two warriors are unable to keep on fighting). Single combats are supposed to end with the death of the defeated warrior.

2) *Aeneas Cannot Leave Pallas Unavenged*

Aeneas is known for his *pietas*. Unless he avenges the death of Pallas, he will fail in his *pietas* toward Pallas and toward Evander. Turnus has killed Pallas. Pallas must be avenged, and the way to avenge him is to kill Turnus. The rule here is an eye for an eye, and a death for a death.

3) *Turnus, if He is Allowed to Live, Could Rebel Against Aeneas in the Future*

You don't want the enemy to stay alive and attack you again at a later time.

4) *Aeneas Acts Through Justified Anger*

Aeneas acts through anger, but his anger is *justified*. When anger is justified, it is not negative. Think of righteous indignation. The anger of Jesus against the money-changers is not regarded by Christians as a negative.

Conclusion: Aeneas is Justified When He Kills Turnus

When Aeneas kills Turnus, he is acting as a leader and he is doing what a leader ought to do.

• **What case can be made that Aeneas is NOT justified in killing Turnus?**

Of course, there is an opposing view, and that view states that Aeneas is not justified when he kills Turnus.

Critics who take this viewpoint bring up the point that Turnus mentions Aeneas' father, Anchises, in his final plea to Aeneas to show him mercy. Also, they believe that Aeneas is not following the ideals that he ought to follow:

1) *The Theme of Furor vs. Pietas*

The *Aeneid* has been concerned with the theme of *furor* versus *pietas*. Aeneas is known for his *pietas*. When he gives in to *furor*, as when he has an affair with Dido, he forgets his destiny. (This is *furor* in the sense of sexual passion.) At the end of the *Aeneid*, when Aeneas kills Turnus, he gives in to *furor* and is ruled by *pietas*. We are not meant to regard this as good.

2) *Anchises' Advice to Aeneas in Book 6*

The mention of Anchises brings up the image of an aged father. Of course, in the second half of the *Aeneid*, we see many aged parents mourning the death of their sons. At the end of the *Aeneid*, Turnus also mentions his own father. Turnus wants Aeneas to give his body to his father so that it can be properly buried. Turnus' father will mourn the death of Turnus.

More importantly, we remember Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, the last time that Anchises appears in the *Aeneid*. In Book 6, Aeneas visits the Land of the Dead to see his father. Also, his father gives the future Romans advice in that book, advice that we can assume that Anchises wishes Aeneas to follow:

Roman, remember by your strength to rule
 Earth's peoples — for your arts are to be these:
 To pacify, to impose the rule of law,
 To spare the conquered, battle down the proud.” (6.1151-1154 Fitzgerald)

Compare:

“But you, Roman, remember, rule with all your power
 the people of the earth — these will be your arts:
 to put your stamp on the works and ways of peace.
 to spare the defeated, break the proud in war.” (6.981-984 Fagles)

Turnus was proud, but now he is conquered and battled down. Because he is conquered, he should be spared, according to Anchises' words. But of course, Aeneas does not spare Turnus. Therefore, he goes directly against what his father recommended that future Romans do. So is Aeneas lacking in his *pietas* for his father?

Another important Latin term is *clementia*, from which we get our word “*clemency*.” A person is clement when he or she gives a mild rather than a harsh punishment.

At the end of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas has a chance to be clement, but he does not.

Other Roman leaders showed clemency. One such Roman leader was Julius Caesar, who would often spare the lives of his enemies.

Of course, Pallas' swordbelt shows that *clementia* can be a good thing. *Clementia* resulted in a good marriage. *Furor* resulted in forty-nine bad marriages.

The critics who hold this viewpoint argue that Aeneas is not acting appropriately when he does not show clemency to Turnus.

They point out that Aeneas is acting out of *furor* when he kills Turnus. He sees Pallas' swordbelt, becomes furious, and kills Turnus. He does not think to himself, *What is the right thing to do? Should I kill Turnus now in order to prevent him from leading a rebellion in the future?* Instead, Aeneas acts out of anger.

Therefore, Aeneas is not acting the way that a good leader ought to act and so we ought to regard the ending of the *Aeneid* negatively, say these critics.

• **Is it possible that Virgil was using Aeneas as an example for Caesar Augustus?**

We can ask whether Virgil was trying to give advice to Augustus.

Virgil died in 19 B.C.E., and Caesar Augustus had won the Battle of Actium only 12 years previously in 31 B.C.E. Was Virgil trying to give an opinion about the way that Caesar Augustus ought to act?

If Virgil meant the end of the *Aeneid* to be positive, he is telling Augustus to be firm as a leader. Augustus must make hard decisions. In the best interests of his country, he may cause other people to die.

If Virgil meant the end of the *Aeneid* to be negative, he is telling Augustus to be merciful as a leader. Augustus must make hard decisions. In the best interests of his country, he may cause other people to live rather than to die.

• **In Book 12, Juno appears to give in to Jupiter's will, but does she really?**

Another point of critical discussion is the conversation between Jupiter and Juno in Book 12.

Juno appears to be reconciled to the victory of Aeneas, but is she really reconciled? Some evidence points to the answer no.

Juno loved the Carthaginians, and they loved her. Tanit was the main goddess of the Carthaginians, and the Romans identified Tanit as another name for Juno. This means that Juno favored the Carthaginians, a point that Ennius makes in his epic poem *Annales* in the 2nd century B.C.E. In the *Annales*, Ennius writes that during the Punic Wars, Juno favored the Carthaginians rather than the Romans.

So even though Juno says that she is reconciled to Aeneas' victory here and to his founding the Roman people, perhaps she is not really reconciled.

One way to look at Juno is as a symbol of *molis*, a symbol of all the hardship that must be overcome so that the Roman people can be founded.

• **What can we learn from the *Aeneid* that is relevant to our personal lives?**

We can learn a lot from the *Aeneid* about such things as the fall of Troy and Roman mythology.

One thing that we can learn from the *Aeneid* is the importance of perseverance.

Aeneas is fated to found the Roman people, but that does not mean that he can just sit back and let fate take its course. Instead, Aeneas puts in a great effort to achieve his destiny. Similarly, we will probably need to put in a great effort toward achieving something significant.

Other important themes are *furor* and *pietas* and *clementia*. We can learn to pursue *pietas* and *clementia* rather than *furor*.

• **We almost did not have the *Aeneid*.**

We almost did not have the *Aeneid*. When Virgil died, he had not yet completed the *Aeneid*. In fact, Virgil wanted the manuscript to be destroyed because it was unfinished. However, Caesar Augustus recognized the great worth of the manuscript, and he ordered that the *Aeneid* not be destroyed.

We are fortunate that Caesar Augustus saved the *Aeneid*.

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Paper Topics

- Discuss the *molis* — the hardship — that it took to found the Roman people. Discuss the *molis* not just as it affected Aeneas but also other characters such as Dido, Lavinia, Euryalus' mother, Lausus, and Pallas.

Note: "To found" means "to establish." The Trojan men marry Italian women and become the ancestors of the Roman people. "To found" is different from "to find."

Note: Aeneas founded the Roman people; he is their ancestor. Romulus and Remus founded Rome 300 years after Aeneas's time. Caesar Augustus is the first Roman emperor.

Note: Instead of writing that Aeneas' destiny is to found the Roman people, you may want to write that Aeneas' destiny is to become the ancestor of the Roman people.

- Discuss the theme of marriage in the *Aeneid*.
- Discuss the theme of leadership in the *Aeneid*.
- Discuss the conflict between Aeneas's private desires and his public duties.
- Discuss the conflict that Aeneas faces in choosing between *furor* (passion, including sexual passion and the passion of anger) and *pietas* (proper, dutiful behavior).
- Compare and contrast Aeneas and Turnus.
- Why is the *Aeneid* the great national epic of Rome? What would Roman citizens learn from it?
- Compare and contrast Aeneas and Achilles (in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*).
- Compare and contrast Aeneas and Odysseus (in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*).
- Discuss Aeneas's relationships with family members and other people.
- Discuss the theme of omens and prophecies in the *Aeneid*.
- Discuss one book of the *Aeneid* in detail. For example, you may discuss the theme of lack of self-restraint in Book 9.

Paper Hints

- Discuss the *molis* — the hardship — that it took to found the Roman people. Discuss the *molis* not just as it affected Aeneas but also other characters such as Dido, Lavinia, Euryalus' mother, Lausus, and Pallas.

Note: “To found” means “to establish.” The Trojan men marry Italian women and become the ancestors of the Roman people. “To found” is different from “to find.”

Note: Aeneas founded the Roman people; he is their ancestor. Romulus and Remus found Rome 300 years after Aeneas's time.

- Troy must fall in order for the Roman people to be founded. (If Troy does not fall, then there is no reason for Aeneas to go to Italy.)
- Creusa must die so that Aeneas can marry an Italian princess and found the Roman people.
- Aeneas must leave Dido so that he can go to Italy, marry an Italian princess, and found the Roman people.
- Many elderly parents lose their only sons as a part of the cost of founding the Roman people.
 - Euryalus' Trojan mother and Euryalus
 - Evander and Pallas
 - Mezentius and Lausus
- Lavinia is the innocent cause of the war between the Trojans and the Latins. She loses her mother, and she is not asked whom she would like to marry.
- A war is fought so that Aeneas can stay in Italy and marry Lavinia.
- Turnus and Amata are maddened by a Fury sent by Juno. Turnus is slain by Aeneas, and Amata commits suicide.
- Juno is responsible for much of the hardship of founding Rome.
- **Discuss the theme of marriage in the *Aeneid*.**
- In Book 2, Aeneas' wife dies.
- In Book 4, Dido, who is a widow and who wishes to be married to Aeneas, commits suicide because Aeneas leaves her.
- Lavinia is to be married to Aeneas, but this is a political marriage. The two don't know each other.
- Turnus wishes to marry Lavinia, but this is a doomed marriage, as she is fated to marry Aeneas.
- Pallas' swordbelt depicts the doomed marriages of the daughters of Danaus.
- Chloereus, the priest of Cybele, will never marry. Why?
- Camilla will never marry. Why?

- Juturna will never marry as a mortal. Why?
- Jupiter and Juno have a bad marriage.
- Why do you suppose so many doomed marriages are in the *Aeneid*?
- Doomed marriages are a part of the hardship of founding the Roman people.
- Turnus is pursuing an inappropriate marriage with Lavinia. The marriage is inappropriate because Lavinia is fated to marry Aeneas and become an important ancestor of the Roman people.
- **Discuss the theme of leadership in the *Aeneid*.**
- **Discuss the conflict between Aeneas' private desires and his public duties.**
- **Discuss the conflict that Aeneas faces in choosing between *furor* (passion, including sexual passion and the passion of anger) and *pietas* (proper, dutiful behavior).**
- In Book 1, Aeneas' first two speeches illustrate the private and the public Aeneas.
- In Book 4, Aeneas' public duty and private desire don't mesh.
- In Book 12, when Aeneas is hesitating over whether to kill Turnus, we see a conflict (possibly) between his public duty and his private desire.
- Aeneas often must choose between *pietas* and *furor*.
- Aeneas brings most of his men to Italy; Odysseus arrives on Ithaca alone because his men have all been killed.
- Is Aeneas a better leader than Achilles? (Up until Book 23 of the *Iliad*, Aeneas is, I think, a better leader than Achilles. However, both are very good leaders during their funeral games.)
- **Compare and contrast Aeneas and Turnus.**
- Both are warriors.
- Aeneas is in the right; Turnus is in the wrong.
- Turnus is maddened by a Fury; he is not responsible for his actions.
- Aeneas is not maddened. He is in control of his actions, at least much of the time.
- Turnus is a representative of *furor*.
- Aeneas is at least usually a representative of *pietas*.
- **Why is the *Aeneid* the great national epic of Rome? What would Roman citizens learn from it?**
- Anyone who writes about this topic will most likely focus on the trip to the Underworld and on Aeneas' shield.
- Roman citizens can learn about their glorious history.
- Roman citizens can learn about the importance of *pietas*.

- Roman citizens can learn the importance of dedication. It was not easy for Aeneas to found the Roman people, but he persevered and was successful.
- The meaning of the end of the *Aeneid* is ambiguous. Should Roman citizens think that Aeneas did the right thing or the wrong thing when he killed Turnus?
- Can the *Aeneid* be interpreted as a criticism of Rome?
- Can the *Aeneid* be interpreted as giving advice to Caesar Augustus?
- **Compare and contrast Aeneas and Achilles (from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*).**
 - In the *Iliad*, Achilles and Aeneas nearly meet in battle, but Poseidon will not let Aeneas die because he is fated to survive the Trojan War and found a city. Note that Achilles is mightier than Aeneas.
 - Both Aeneas and Achilles have fates, but Achilles has a choice of two fates, while Aeneas has only one fate.
 - Achilles dies during the Trojan War, while Aeneas survives the Trojan War.
 - Both are mighty warriors. Achilles is the best warrior of the Achaeans, while Aeneas is the best warrior among the men who survive the fall of Troy.
 - Aeneas is noted for his *pietas*; Achilles is not.
 - Students can argue that Aeneas is a better leader than Achilles is as he appears early in the *Iliad*.
- **Compare and contrast Aeneas and Odysseus (from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*).**
 - Aeneas brings most of his men to Italy; Odysseus arrives on Ithaca alone because his men have all been killed.
 - Odysseus is the great individualist; Aeneas is a man of *pietas*.
- **Discuss Aeneas' relationships with family members and other people.**
 - Aeneas is isolated from his mother. When she appears to him, she is in disguise.
 - Aeneas is isolated from his son. The one time he kisses Ascanius is through a visor.
 - Aeneas does not know Lavinia, yet he must marry her in order to found the Roman people.
 - Aeneas' fate forces him to leave Dido.
 - Throughout the course of the *Aeneid*, many of the family members and people whom Aeneas loves most die: Creusa, Anchises, his old nurse, and Dido.
 - Aeneas kills many people in war.
 - Aeneas mourns the death of Pallas.
- **Write about the importance of omens and prophecies in the *Aeneid*.**

The omens and prophecies must be interpreted, and sometimes they can be interpreted wrongly.

Omens and prophecies direct the readers' attention. When the reader knows that something will happen, the reader is on the lookout for it.

Omens and prophecies can make what will happen seem inevitable — it is fated to happen, and therefore it does happen.

• **Write an interpretation of one theme or of one book of the *Aeneid*.**

The Love Affair of Dido and Aeneas

Why does it happen?

Are they married?

Is Dido right or wrong to want Aeneas to stay in Carthage?

Is Aeneas right or wrong to go to Italy?

Could Aeneas have handled breaking up with Dido better?

Is either Dido or Aeneas guilty of bad faith?

The Hatred of Juno

Juno makes things as hard as possible for Aeneas and the Trojans.

Book 9: Lack of Self-Restraint

The main theme of this Book 9 is lack of self-restraint. We will see characters in this book display a lack of self-restraint frequently — a lack of self-restraint that keeps them from achieving their main goals.

• **In Book 9, give some examples of how, due to lack of self-restraint, people lose sight of their main goal and thus fail to achieve it.**

We can note that Book 9 includes some failures. In a few places, people lose sight of their main goal and thus fail to achieve it. Or they show a lack of self-restraint in other places.

1) Nisus and Euryalus had the Main Goal of Taking a Message to Aeneas.

Nisus and Euryalus had the main goal of taking a message to Aeneas. However, Euryalus got caught up in taking booty from the Rutulians they had slain, and because of this got himself and his friend killed.

2) The Main Goal of Pandarus and Bitias is to Defend the Gate.

The main goal of Pandarus and Bitias is to defend the gate. By opening it, they are hardly doing the best they can to defend it.

3) Turnus Loses Sight of His Main Goal, Which is to Conquer The Trojans as a Whole.

Turnus loses sight of his main goal, which is to conquer the Trojans as a whole. He gets caught up in trying to kill individual Trojans instead of letting his comrades into the camp to help him kill all of them.

4) *Ascanius*

Ascanius promises a great reward to Nisus and Euryalus if they are successful in their mission. The reward he promises is too great for the mission. True, Nisus and Euryalus die during the mission, but they die because of their own mistakes.

5) *Juno*

Juno knows that Aeneas is fated to found the Roman people. She ought to give in to fate, but instead she resists it.

6) *How About Aeneas?*

Similarly, Aeneas must struggle to keep his eyes on the prize. When he gets caught up in something other than his main goal, such as loving Dido, he risks being unable to achieve his main goal, which is to found a new city in Italy for the Trojans and to found the Roman people. Still, Aeneas manages to show self-restraint — he leaves Dido when he is reminded of his destiny by the gods.

Short Reaction Memos

The questions in this discussion guide to Virgil's *Aeneid* can be used in discussions; however, they can also be used for short reaction memos. For example, I do this at Ohio University. See below for the assignment and sample short reaction memos. *How Do I Complete the Reaction Memo Assignments?*

During the quarter, you will have to write a series of short memos in which you write about the readings you have been assigned.

Each memo should be at least 250 words, not counting long quotations from the work of literature. Include a word count for each memo, although that is not normally part of the memo format.

Following the memo heading (To, From, Re, Date, Words), write the question you are answering and the part of the book that the question applies to.

You may answer one question or more than one question. I will supply you with a list of questions that you may answer.

Note that a Works Cited list is needed if you use quotations.

For examples from my Great Books courses at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, see the following pages.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *Odyssey*, Book 12 Reaction Memo

Date: Put Today's Date Here

Words: 323

Odyssey, Book 12: Is Odysseus a bad leader?

This is an important question in the *Odyssey*. After all, Odysseus leads 12 ships and many men to Troy, but the ships are all destroyed and all of his men die and he returns home to Ithaca alone. Who is responsible for the deaths of Odysseus' men? Is Odysseus responsible for their deaths, or do the men bear some responsibility for their own deaths? Many readers prefer Odysseus, the great individualist, to Aeneas, the man who founds the Roman people, but then they realize that all of Odysseus' men died, while Aeneas succeeded in bringing many Trojans to Italy. When readers think of that, they begin to have a greater respect for Aeneas.

From the beginning of the *Odyssey*, this has been an issue. The bard says that the men perished because of the "recklessness of their own ways" (1.8). However, we notice that Odysseus is asleep at odd times. In Book 10, Aeolus gives Odysseus a bag in which the contrary winds have been tied up. This allows Odysseus to sail to Ithaca safely. However, they reach the island and see smoke rising from the fires, Odysseus goes to sleep and his men open the bag, letting the contrary winds escape, and the ship is blown back to King Aeolus' island. Similarly, in Book 12, on the island of the Sun-god, Odysseus is asleep when his men sacrifice the Sun-god's cattle.

It does seem that Odysseus does not bear the blame for his men's death. In many cases, they do perish through their own stupidity. In other cases, of course, they die during war or during adventures, but in those times, Odysseus was with them, and he could have died, too.

One other thing to think about is that Odysseus is telling his own story. Could he be lying? After all, some of the adventures he relates are pretty incredible. (Probably not. The gods vouch for some of what he says.)

Works Cited

Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Print.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *Inferno*, Canto 1 Reaction Memo

Date: Put Today's Date Here

Words: 263

Inferno, Canto 1

- What do you need to be a member of the Afterlife in Dante's *Inferno*?

To be a member of the afterlife in Hell, you must meet a number of criteria:

- 1) You must be dead.
- 2) You must be an unrepentant sinner.
- 3) You must be a dead, unrepentant sinner by 1300.

Of course, only dead people — with a few exceptions such as Dante the Pilgrim — can be found in the *Inferno*.

Only unrepentant sinners can be found in the *Inferno*. Everyone has sinned, but sinners who repented their sins are found in Purgatory or Paradise, not in the *Inferno*.

Dante set his *Divine Comedy* in 1300, so the characters who appear in it are dead in 1300.

Inferno, Canto 1

- What does it mean to repent?

A sinner who repents regrets having committed the sin. The repentant sinner vows not to commit the sin again, and he or she does his or her best not to commit the sin again.

Inferno, Canto 1

- What is the geography of Hell? In *The Divine Comedy*, where is Hell located?

Hell is located straight down. We will find out later that when Lucifer was thrown out of Paradise, he fell to the Earth, ending up at the center of the Earth. The center of the Earth is the lowest part of Hell. Lucifer created the Mountain of Purgatory when he hit the Earth.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *Candide*, Ch. 26-30

Date: Today's Date

Words: 368

Ch. 30: Write a brief character analysis of the old man and his family.

When Candide and his friends meet the old man, the old man is “sitting in front of his door beneath an arbor of orange trees, enjoying the fresh air” (119). The old man basically ignores politics that he cannot influence. Some people have recently been killed in Constantinople, and the old man does not even know their names. However, the old man does enjoy some material things, including good food, and he enjoys hospitality.

The old man invites Candide and his friends to enjoy some refreshments inside his house. They are served with “several kinds of fruit-favored drinks” and “boiled cream with pieces of candied citron in it, oranges, lemons, limes, pineapples, pistachio nuts, and mocha coffee” (119). The old man and his family have an abundance of food, but although Candide wonders if the old man has an enormous farm, the old man tells him, “I have only twenty acres of land, which my children and I cultivate. Our work keeps us free of three great evils: boredom, vice, and poverty” (119).

From this brief encounter, we learn several things:

- The old man and his family are content — even happy.
- The old man and his family ignore the wars and murders and crimes that happen elsewhere.
- The old man and his family have enough. They work hard on their little farm, and they have plenty of food and good things to eat.
- The old man and his family have only 20 acres, but 20 acres are enough.

Candide and his friends decide to emulate the old man and his family. Each of them begins to work hard on their little farm. Cunegonde learns to make pastry, Paquette begins to embroider, and the old woman does the laundry and repairs the linen. Brother Giroflée becomes a carpenter, and Candide and the others grow “abundant crops” (120). At the end of the short novel, the group of friends seem to have come the closest they can to happiness in a world filled with evil, but it does take an effort on their part. As Candide says in the short novel's last words, “... we must cultivate our garden” (120).

Works Cited

Voltaire. *Candide*. Trans. Lowell Bair. New York: Bantam Books, 1981. Print.

To: David Bruce

From: Jane Student

Re: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, Ch. 1-4 Reaction Memo

Date: Put Today's Date Here

Words: 286

CH. 3: "KNIGHTS OF THE TABLE ROUND"

- What hints do we have of the relationship between Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot?

Some hanky-panky is going on between Sir Launcelot and King Arthur's wife, Queen Guenever. Some six or eight prisoners address her, and they tell her that they have been captured by Sir Kay the Seneschal. Immediately, surprise and astonishment are felt by everybody present. The queen looks disappointed because she had hoped that the prisoners were captured by Sir Launcelot.

As it turns out, they were. Sir Launcelot first rescued Sir Kay from some attackers, then he took Sir Kay's armor and horse and captured more knights. All of these prisoners were actually captured by Sir Launcelot, not by Sir Kay at all.

Two passages let us know that something is going on between Sir Launcelot and Queen Guenever:

1. The first is subtle; she looks disappointed when Sir Kay says that he captured the knights: "Surprise and astonishment flashed from face to face all over the house; the queen's gratified smile faded out at the name of Sir Kay, and she looked disappointed ..." (503).
2. The other is much more overt and occurs after Guenever learns that the knight who really captured the prisoners was Sir Launcelot: "Well, it was touching to see the queen blush and smile, and look embarrassed and happy, and fling furtive glances at Sir Launcelot that would have got him shot in Arkansas, to a dead certainty" (503).

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Twain, Mark. *Four Complete Novels*. New York: Gramercy Books, 1982. Print.

About the Author

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine's brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka "The Joker," decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn't been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don't often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for "sounds like" and "two words," then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn't let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor's degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a master's degree in English and a master's degree in Philosophy. Currently, and for a long time to come, I publish a weekly humorous column titled "Wise Up!" for *The Athens News* and I am a retired English instructor at Ohio U.

Shameless Commerce

Visit David Bruce's storefront at

<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/brucebATohioDOTedu>

<http://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/bruceb>

By the way, this storefront offers free downloads of collections of my students' autobiographical essays. For example, one such collection is titled *Love and Friendship: Stories About Growing Up*. It also has a number of free downloads of collections of good deeds.

If all goes well, I will publish one or two books a year for the rest of my life. (On the other hand, a good way to make God laugh is to tell Her your plans.)

Other Books by the Author

Author: Discussion Guides Series

Dante's Inferno: A Discussion Guide

Dante's Paradise: A Discussion Guide

Dante's Purgatory: A Discussion Guide

Forrest Carter's The Education of Little Tree: A Discussion Guide

Homer's Iliad: A Discussion Guide

Homer's Odyssey: A Discussion Guide

Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice: A Discussion Guide

Jerry Spinelli's Maniac Magee: A Discussion Guide

Jerry Spinelli's Stargirl: A Discussion Guide

Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal": A Discussion Guide

Lloyd Alexander's The Black Cauldron: A Discussion Guide

Lloyd Alexander's The Book of Three: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court: A Discussion Guide

Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper: A Discussion Guide

Nancy Garden's Annie on My Mind: A Discussion Guide

Nicholas Sparks' A Walk to Remember: A Discussion Guide

Virgil's Aeneid: A Discussion Guide

Virgil's "The Fall of Troy": A Discussion Guide

Voltaire's Candide: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Discussion Guide

William Sleator's Oddballs: A Discussion Guide

(Oddballs is an excellent source for teaching how to write autobiographical essays/personal narratives.)

Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature

Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose

From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica

Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose

Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose

Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica

Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose

Author: Kindest People Series

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 1

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 2

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The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 6

The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds: Volume 7

The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 1)

The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 2)

The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 3)

The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 4)

The Kindest People: Heroes and Good Samaritans (Volume 5)

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