Classical Quarterly **31** (i) 140–146 (1981) *Printed in Great Britain*

THE *INSOMNIUM* OF AENEAS

One of the major prophecies in the *Aeneid* is given to Aeneas in the underworld by Anchises, who had ordered his son to come to him to learn of his whole race and the city which would be given to him (5.737). In the prophecy (6.756–886), which covers more than a thousand years, Anchises identifies the spirits who will be born as his descendants, from Aeneas' son Silvius to the young Marcellus, and describes how they will win glory and world dominion for Rome. Aeneas sees the spirit of each man as he will appear in life, and hears Anchises' admonition to the Roman who embodies the race, in which he tells him how to rule the world (6.851–3). The speech is stirring, and one would expect that this vision of the future glory of his race would have some effect on Aeneas, but we may ask whether in fact it does.

First, consider Aeneas' behaviour during his meeting with Anchises. At their first encounter all he asks is to embrace his father (6.697–8). Next, when he sees the spirits near the river Lethe, he shudders and asks who they are. When Anchises tells him that they are waiting to be reborn and that he is eager to point out his descendants, so that Aeneas will rejoice to have found Italy,[1] Aeneas shows no curiosity about the spirits, but protests against the idea that they should have to leave Elysium and go back to the life of the body. What *lucis dira cupido* possesses them, he asks. During Anchises' explanation of the doctrine of purification and rebirth, and then the long parade of the Roman heroes, Aeneas never speaks again, until he asks who is the young man around whose head flies black night (6.863–6), a question which evokes Anchises' lament for the death of Marcellus, the conclusion of his speech. The only indication that Aeneas has been impressed by what he has heard and seen is given us by Vergil himself when he tells us that Anchises inflamed his mind with love of glory to come (6.889 *incenditque animum famae venientis amore*). This comment is strange, because nowhere else in the *Aeneid* does Aeneas show any desire for *fama* or *gloria*.[2] Concern for them does not seem to be part of his character. Indeed, his enthusiasm might well have been quenched when Anchises went on to describe the war and the *labor* which awaits him.

Secondly, at no point after he returns to the land of the living does Aeneas ever show any recollection of what his father has revealed to him.[3] He never mentions any

[1] Only here is *laetor* used of Aeneas, but *laetus* describes him, either alone or with others, more often than any other adjective except *pius*. His joy is, however, usually brief, and followed by some misfortune. When he does reach Latium he is *laetus* (7.36, 130, 147, 288), but soon plunged into war.

[2] *Fama* is ambiguous. In the *Aeneid* it most commonly means gossip or rumour, but also reputation, good or bad. Characters who are concerned about their *fama*, sometimes too late, suffer for it, as do Dido, Turnus and Nisus, while Pallas and Camilla receive it after death. Aside from 6.889, it is connected with Aeneas only three times. Once he describes himself to his disguised mother as *fama super aethera notus* (1.379), a translation of the phrase with which Odysseus introduces himself to Alcinous (*Od.* 9.20). He and Dido are *oblitos famae melioris* (4.221) and Drances flatteringly calls him *fama ingens* (11.124). He does carry on his shoulders the *fama* of his descendants, but does not know it.When in 1.94–101 Vergil paraphrases *Od.* 5.306–12, he omits from Aeneas' words Odysseus' regret that he had not won the glory of death in battle. Furthermore, *gloria* and *laus* are connected with Aeneas only when he is unconcerned about them (4.232 f., 272). Apparently Vergil did not intend Aeneas to be interested in his own reputation.

[3] Whatever his father told him about the way to deal with the coming war in Latium, Aeneas seems not to remember it, for he still needs guidance and advice later. I can find only two hints in the text that Aeneas might remember anything that Anchises had told him. At 7.122–9 he

of it to his followers nor, more surprisingly, to Ascanius, although a little of it might have encouraged them. He never mentions Rome, nor anywhere in the *Aeneid* does anyone, except Anchises, mention Rome to him.[4] In Vergilian studies of this century there has been an increasing tendency to see the visit to the underworld as the turning point in Aeneas' career, the moment at which he abandons the past, and confidently faces the future, prepared to labour for the greatness of his race which lies centuries ahead.[5] But is this really what Vergil tells us?

After Book 6 Aeneas still needs help both human and divine. When the Trojans first land at the mouth of the Tiber, he does not know for sure where in Italy he is, until Iulus remarks *heus, etiam mensas consumimus?* (7.116), and then, *stupefactus numine*, he recognizes from the fulfilment of prophecy that he has reached his goal. When the Latin war erupts he is confused – *magno curarum fluctuat aestu* (8.19) – and *tristi turbatus pectore bello* (8.29), until in a dream the god Tiber assures him that he really has reached his *certa domus*, and tells him to seek help from Evander. By Tiber's aid he reaches Pallanteum, and Evander encourages him by telling him to go to the Etruscans who, also because of an oracle, are looking for a foreign leader. Even so, he and Achates are troubled – *multaque dura suo tristi cum corde putabant* (8.522) – until Venus sends a favourable omen, and he recognizes its message with a statement which is unusually bold for him – *ego poscor Olympo* (8.533). Again, Venus encourages him not to fear the Latins or Turnus (8.613–14) when she brings him the armour made by Vulcan. The armour and his reception by the Etruscans (10.148–54) must have

attributes the prophecy which Celaeno had given him (3.250–7) to Anchises. One could argue that his father reminded him of the Harpy's words in his last instructions, but Aeneas does not say so. 12.110–11 (Aeneas) *tum socios maestique metum solatur Iuli/fata docens* might echo 6.759 *et te tua fata docebo*, but the *fata* to which Aeneas refers might be simply his own, an assurance that he will defeat Turnus. There is a similar association of *fata* and *docere* already in 3.716 f.: *sic pater Aeneas intentis omnibus unus/fata renarrabat divum cursusque docebat*. Aeneas is familiar with his own *fata* before Anchises' revelation (1.382, 3.375, 395, 494, 6.166–8). I conclude that 12.111 probably does not echo 6.759. Cf. W. Camps, 'The role of the Sixth Book in the *Aeneid*', *P.V.S.* 7 (1967), 27: 'And after this, neither the revelation nor any effect of it is ever mentioned in the poem.'

[4] At 4.275 Mercury refers to the *regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus* owed to Ascanius, but, as Aeneas has not heard of Rome, the adjective can mean nothing to him. Similarly, Hesperia, referred to by Creusa (2.781), has to be identified with Italy by the Penates (3.163–6) before he knows where this western land is, and he still cannot identify the Tiber (5. 83). Although Aeneas' mission is often said to be the foundation of Rome, one has to remember that actually the city was founded by Romulus, 333 years after Aeneas founded Lavinium.

[5] It would be impossible here to refer to more than a few of the works in which this idea is developed. It began, I think, in 1903 with R. Heinze's first edition of *Virgils Epische Technik* 270–3, in which he portrays Aeneas as *developing* self-confidence as the result of Anchises' words, *but gaining it fully at last in his battles*. E. Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro Aeneis Buch VI* (1903) 353, and W. Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London, 1911), 411–24, saw a more abrupt change in Aeneas as a result of the revelation. In the following years this concept became generally accepted, until it reached its ultimate expression in B. Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilised Poetry* (Oxford, 1963), who says (308), 'He does undergo an experience of death and resurrection or its psychological equivalent, and emerges from the underworld as a new man', and (311) 'Here Aeneas learns to live for the future, to accept the future as what determines his *pietas* and his destiny. And here therefore Virgil finally completes his picture of the Roman and Augustan hero, the divine-man who devotes his life to the service of future history.' W. A. Camps, however, rejects the climactic nature of Aeneas' experience (op. cit. (note 3) 26–8, and *Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid* (Oxford, 1968), 21–30), as does M. DiCesare (*The Altar and the City* (New York, 1974), 118, 123). A. J. Boyle ('The Meaning of the *Aeneid*', *Ramus* 1 (1972), 63–90, 113–51) also sees Aeneas as experiencing 'what might be construed as a spiritual regeneration... He returns to his task as the conscious, unfaltering bearer of the imperial destiny of Rome' (113 f.). Boyle, however, reads the *Aeneid* as an attack on 'the ideology of empire', which is a delusion that Aeneas follows to the destruction of his own humanity.

cheered him. Nevertheless, as he sails down the coast with his new allies he is still concerned about the outcome of the war – *secumque volutat eventus bello varios* (10.159–60), *neque enim membris dat cura quietem* (10.217) – although the words of Cymodocea raise his spirits – *animos tamen omine tollit* (10.250). In the rest of Book 10 he is inspired by rage rather than confidence in the outcome of the battle, which is uncertain (10.755–7) up to the end when he kills Mezentius. At the beginning of Book 11 he speaks to his men with a new confidence which is inspired not by faith in the future but by what has just been accomplished:

> maxima res effecta, viri; timor omnis abesto
> quod superest; (11.14–15)

He recognizes what has been won in his tribute to the fallen:

> 'ite', ait 'egregias animas, quae sanguine nobis
> hanc patriam peperere suo, decorate supremis
> muneribus...' (11.24–6)

The *patria* has been brought forth in blood, but more fighting remains:

> nos alias hinc ad lacrimas eadem horrida belli
> fata vocant...(11.96–7)

When the Latin embassy comes asking for a truce, he is quite sure of himself and of the destiny that has brought him to Italy – *nec veni, nisi fata locum sedemque dedissent* (11.112). His subsequent move on the city of Latinus shows his confidence as he takes the offensive across unfamiliar territory. In Book 12 he has to rouse himself for battle – *se suscitat ira* (12.108) – but can calmly console the fearful Ascanius by pointing to his destiny – *fata docens* (12.111). In his prayer at the making of the treaty, his expression of self-confidence is modified, perhaps out of tact, or respect for the gods:

> sin nostrum adnuerit nobis victoria Martem,
> ut potius reor et potius di numine firment, (12.187–8)

When, after his wound has been healed and he is about to return to his duel with Turnus, he again seems sure of the result he says to Ascanius:

> ...nunc te mea dextera bello
> defensum dabit et magna inter praemia ducet. (12.436–7)

His last words to his son, however, say nothing of a glorious future, but refer the boy to the examples of himself and Hector:

> sis memor et te animo repetentem exempla tuorum
> et pater Aeneas et avunculus excitet Hector. (12.439–40)

This reversion to the past, and especially to the great champion of a lost cause, would be odd if Aeneas really had his mind fixed on a distant future. He is, however, sure of his ability to cope with the present when he begins the assault on the city of the Latins (12.567–9). From then on his rage and his desire to avenge the breaking of the treaty carry him forward until he finally buries his sword in Turnus' body.

Thus one can argue that, in the last half of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is fully occupied with his immediate problems and is not thinking of the future of his race. He believes that it is his *fatum* to found a city and leave his son secure, but beyond that he hardly has time to look. Moreover, he has not put behind him his past and his memories of Troy, as his last words to Ascanius indicate. Indeed he is told by Tiber that he is to build a new Troy:

> o sate gente deum, Troianam ex hostibus urbem
> qui revehis nobis aeternaque Pergama servas, (8.36–7)[6]

He also has acquired a new past, that of Italy into which he is entering. When Evander takes him for a walk around the place which will some day be Rome, he is curious about the *virum monimenta priorum*, and learns the history of the area from his host.[7]

If Aeneas shows no recollection of Anchises' prophecy, and it has no effect on subsequent behaviour, is there in the text itself any explanation of his forgetfulness? The clue to the situation, I would suggest, lies in the lines which have puzzled readers since antiquity, 6.893–8. There are two Gates of Sleep, one of horn through which easy exit is given to *verae umbrae*, genuine ghosts, the other of ivory by which the Manes send *falsa insomnia* to the upper world (*ad caelum*). By the latter Anchises, now one of the Manes, sends away Aeneas and the Sibyl. That they leave Hades by one of the Gates of Sleep may be explained if we accept the hypothesis that Vergil intended the whole journey through the underworld to be interpreted as a dream from which Aeneas now wakes.[8]

If this hypothesis is acceptable, one is forced to ask what might have led Vergil to introduce the episode into the story. The journey to the underworld itself surely was inspired primarily by the nekuia in the Odyssey,[9] but the idea that it should be transformed into a dream might have been suggested by two Roman writers. According to Cicero (*De. Div.* 1.43) Fabius Pictor said that all Aeneas' deeds and adventures had been seen by him in his sleep.[10] Cicero himself in the *Somnium Scipionis* describes the dream of Scipio Aemilianus in which he received from his grandfather and his father both a revelation of the doctrine of immortality and a prophecy of

[6] cf. *recidiva Pergama* (7. 322, 10. 58) and *Troia nascens* (10. 27, 74–5) referred to by Venus and Juno. The Trojan camp is referred to as *Troia* (10. 214, 378). Cf. Dion. Hal. 1. 53. 3. It is only at Juno's insistence that Jupiter finally agrees to obliterate the name of Troy and the Trojans (12. 828, 834–6), thus with a word destroying what Aeneas was working for.

[7] It is clear from the text that all references to Rome in this episode are Vergil's own comments to the reader. Evander and Aeneas are interested only in the past of Latium and the present of Pallanteum, although some modern interpretations see here another revelation for Aeneas.

[8] See E. Norden (op. cit. (note 5), 3rd edition, 47–8) on the propriety of presenting a prophecy or apocalypse in a dream. He compares Aeneas' exit by the Ivory Gate to the last words of the *Somnium Scipionis – ego somno solutus sum* – and says 'sachlich ist beides identisch'. I cannot find that Norden specifically states that Aeneas dreams the underworld episode, but he seems to imply it. See also his note on *Aen.* 6. 893 with its reference to false dreams coming after midnight. Cf. F. Fletcher (Vergil, *Aeneid* VI (Oxford, 1941), 102): 'But we are surely right in feeling that when he sends Aeneas out by the 'gates of sleep' there is a suggestion that truths about the after-life can only be expressed in terms of dream and vision'. In 'Lucretius and the Sixth Book of the *Aeneid*', *A.J.P.* 65 (1944), 135–48, I suggested, on different grounds, that Aeneas' katabasis was a dream, but had not then realized that he might have forgotten it. Brooks Otis came to the same conclusion ('Three Problems of Aeneid 6. III. The Two Gates of Sleep', *T.A.P.A.* 90 (1959), 173–9), which was accepted by R. D. Williams, *Virgil Aeneid I–VI* (1972), ad 6. 893 f., and apparently by M. C. J. Putnam, '*Aeneid VII* and the *Aeneid*', *A.J.P.* 91 (1970), 408–30, who renders *falsa insomnia* as 'treacherous misleading nightmares'. A. J. Boyle (op. cit. (note 5), 121 f.) refers the *falsa insomnia* to the revelation of Anchises: 'To believe in fact that the world of man is rational and ordered and that human beings are so constituted that the ideology of empire can be made reality and the glorious process of history assured is to dream and to dream falsely at that.'

[9] Norden (op. cit. (note 5), 20–48) discusses other possible Greek sources, but emphasizes the influence of an apocalypse by Posidonius which seems to have been a *Traumvision* (47–8).

[10] Obviously Vergil would have had to change the contents of the dream, since they provide the material for Books 7–12.

his own future career. The possible use of these sources, however, does not explain why Vergil should have taken Penelope's description of the Gates of Dreams (*Od.* 19.562–7), which is completely unrelated to the nekuia, turned them into Gates of Sleep, located them in the underworld,[11] assigned the Gate of Horn to ghosts, not dreams, and made Aeneas leave the land of the dead by the Ivory Gate. Surely, if he was not implying that the whole journey was a dream, he was capable of inventing some other route for Aeneas' return. If he chose to use the Gates of Sleep, he must have intended them to mean something. To say that Aeneas and the Sibyl cannot use the Gate of Horn because they are not real ghosts seems too simple, since it is Vergil himself who assigned the gate to the ghosts. He has intentionally sent Aeneas through the gate used by the *falsa insomnia*. This then raises the question, what are *insomnia*?

Insomnium is not a very common word, and Vergil uses it only here and at 4.9 when Dido says to Anna *quae me suspensam insomnia terrent*. Elsewhere in Latin literature it occurs as a synonym for *somnium*,[12] but it has also a technical meaning in the art of the interpretation of dreams. Macrobius, at the beginning of his Commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis* (1.3.2–6), lists five types of dreams under their Greek names and gives the Latin equivalents. The Greek enhypnion is the Latin *insomnium*. It is a type of dream which is unworthy of the trouble of interpretation, as it provides nothing of divination (*quia nihil divinationis adportant*). It comes to a man in sleep when he has been worried by *cura animi corporisve sive fortunae*. Such dreams disturb the sleeper and vanish with sleep – *una cum somno avolant et pariter evanescunt*. An *insomnium* leaves behind it no helpfulness or meaning – *nullam sui utilitatem vel significationem relinquit*. Macrobius adds *falsa esse insomnia nec Maro tacuit*, and quotes *Aen.* 6.896 and 4.4 f. and 9 to make his point.

Macrobius' reference to the Greek enhypnion leads us back to Artemidorus' book on the interpretation of dreams, written in the late second century A.D.[13] Here (1.1–2) we find the same list of five types of dreams. Artemidorus states that the oneiros (in Latin *somnium*) 'differs from the enhypnion in that the first indicates a future state of affairs, while the other indicates a present state of affairs' – that of the dreamer. Artemidorus too attributes the enhypnion to the dreamer's state of mind or body, and adds that 'the operation of the enhypnion is limited to the duration of one's sleep, the minute the sleeping ends it disappears' whereas 'after sleep it is the nature of the oneiros to awaken and excite the soul by inducing active undertakings'.[14] Later (1.6) he remarks 'Those dreams that are similar to the dreamer's thoughts are non-

[11] The Gates of Dreams were, of course, well known to post-Homeric writers, as were the gates of Hades, and it was a commonplace that dreams may come from the dead, but I have not been able to find that any writer before Vergil conflated these ideas and located Gates of Sleep as an exit from Hades.

[12] V. Ussani, Jr, *Insomnia: Saggio di Critica Semantica* (*Studi e Saggi, Collana diretta da Ettore Paratore*) (Rome, 1955). Ussani controverts the argument of R. Getty, who maintained that *insomnium* did not acquire the meaning of dream until the Elder Pliny so used it ('Insomnia in the Lexica', *A.J.P.* 54 (1933), 1–28), and that in Vergil it meant 'waking visions'.

[13] For the text see R. A. Pack, *Artemidori Daldiani Onirocriticon Libri V* (Leipzig, 1963). On the interpretation of dreams in classical antiquity, see H. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination dans l'antiquité* (1879), 1. 277–329; T. Hopfner, *R.E.* VIA II (1937), 2233–45; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (1951), 102–34; D. Del Corno, *Graecorum de re Onirocritica Scriptorum Reliquiae* (*Testi e documenti per lo studio dell'antichità* XXVI, 1969), with a full bibliography, and '*I Sogni e la loro interpretazione nell'età dell'impero*', *ANRW* II, 16. 2, 1605–18.

[14] It is interesting to compare with these statements the translation of Homer *Od.* 19. 564–5 given by A. Amory on page 31 of her article 'The Gates of Horn and Ivory', *Y.C.S.* 20 (1966), 1–57: '[The dreams] which come through [the gate of] sawn ivory are dangerous to believe for *they bring messages which will not issue in deeds.*'

significative and are in the enhypnion class...These are called anxiety dreams and petitionary dreams by some men.'[15]

How do these descriptions of *insomnia* apply to Aeneas' situation? Certainly he has been suffering from *cura animi* and *fortunae* for years, as well as a good deal of *cura corporis*. Anchises' revelation of Roman history is of no practical use (*utilitas*) for Aeneas himself, although of great interest to Vergil's readers, nor does it prophesy anything about him, since it begins with his son, Silvius. Aeneas' experience in the underworld might well be described as an anxiety dream, since he is reminded of many unhappy far-off things, and has been anxious about the future, or as a petitionary dream, since he has petitioned the Sibyl for permission to go to his father. Most important, Artemidorus' comments explain why, if Aeneas has been dreaming an *insomnium*, he is not impelled to any greater undertakings than those to which he was already committed before Book 6, which were, in all conscience, great enough for one man. As I have tried to show, the whole experience seems to have vanished from his mind, just as Macrobius says an *insomnium* does.

If the whole journey through the underworld is an *insomnium*, then the Aeneas and the Sibyl who make the journey are part of the dream of the real Aeneas, and may rightly pass through the gate used by *insomnia*. But why does Vergil describe *insomnia* as *falsa*? He can hardly mean that they are untrue or deceptive, because most of the ghosts whom Aeneas has encountered in Hades had been part of his life, and the spirits which Anchises showed him were to be part of Roman history. *Falsa* here must mean, as it often does, unreal,[16] in contrast to the *verae umbrae*, those genuine ghosts which can easily appear to the living, as the ghost of Anchises did when he told Aeneas to come to him (5.722–40). When one remembers what Artemidorus and Macrobius say about *insomnia*, one might even say that they are unreal in relation to the dreamer because they are irrelevant to his future activities, unlike the dreams which convey advice or warnings.

If Vergil did not mean Aeneas to remember Anchises' words, and they do not give him increased confidence, as I have tried to demonstrate, what was his purpose in writing the revelation of Rome's history? To answer this question, one must note that in the rest of the *Aeneid* there are two types of prophecy. The majority are given to

[15] Del Corno (*Graecorum...Reliquiae*, pp. 173 ff.) argues that Posidonius had only three categories of dreams, and could not have been the source for the classification which included non-predictive dreams, but A. H. M. Kessels ('Ancient Systems of Dream Classification', *Mnemosyne* 22 (1969), 394–424) does not exclude the possibility that, when Cicero (*De Div.* 1. 64) refers to Posidonius' triple classification, he includes only those that come *deorum adpulsu*, which leaves room for the non-predictive dreams also. Although enhypnion is used of dreams in general, it and *insomnium* may well have acquired their restricted technical meaning early enough, in works now lost, for Vergil to have known it.

[16] See *T.L.L.*, s.v. falsus. Servius (*Aen.* 6. 893) assumes that Vergil's *umbrae* are *somnia vera* and explains the *falsa insomnia* by saying: *vult autem intellegi falsa esse omnia quae dixit.* He goes on to say that the Gate of Horn represents the eyes which see *vera*, while the Ivory Gate represents the teeth through which we speak what can be *falsa*. But then he adds: *est et alter sensus: Somnum novimus cum cornu pingi. et qui de somniis scripserunt dicunt ea quae secundum fortunam et personae possibilitatem videntur habere effectum. et haec vicina sunt cornu: unde cornea vera fingitur porta. ea vero quae supra fortunam sunt et habent nimium ornatum vanamque iactantiam dicunt falsa esse*: this explanation sounds as though it had been influenced by the distinction between oneiros and enhypnion. Commenting on the *vana somnia* which nest in the tree at the entrance to Hades (*Aen.* 6. 284) Servius Danielis says: *et duo somniorum genera putantur: unum de caelo ut visa dehinc caelo facies delapsa parentis Anchisae, quod est verum, aliud ab inferis quod est vanum*, which suggests that *vanus* may on occasion be a synonym for *falsus*. Cf. Tiber's words to Aeneas (8. 42) *ne vana putes haec fingere somnum*, and at 10. 593 *vanae umbrae*. Also Propertius 1. 19. 9: *sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis* where the hands of Protesilaus' ghost must be unreal, not lying.

mortals to help them cope with present difficulties, and to keep the action of the story moving forward. These refer only to a brief span of time, not more than a few years.[17] The other type is that of the long-term prophecies which cover many centuries, spoken by Jupiter to Venus (1.257–96), to the assembled gods (10.11–14), and to Juno (12.834–40). These are not revealed to mortals, and thus have no effect on the actions of men in the story. Like Vergil's constant allusions to Rome and Roman history,[18] Jupiter's prophecies seem to be aimed at Roman readers, over the heads of the actors in the story. Anchises' revelation seems to combine the two types, since it is addressed to a mortal, but is a long-term prophecy delivered by a character who, as one of the Di Manes, may now be considered a god. He has at least acquired the ability to think on the vast time scale of the gods. Like Jupiter's prophecy, this one has no effect on the action of the story. It would seem therefore that Vergil's real purpose in putting it here in the middle of the poem is to keep before the minds of his readers the destiny of Rome which will be the final result of Aeneas' *labores*, although he is not to know this secret of fate.

If my interpretation is correct, Vergil must have agreed with Horace that God deliberately conceals the future from mortal men, who should not be unduly concerned with it, but cope with the present.

> Prudens futuri temporis exitum
> Caliginosa nocte premit deus,
> Ridetque si mortalis ultra
> Fas trepidat. Quod adest memento
> Componere aequus...
> Horace, *Od.* 3. 29. 29–33

Throughout the *Aeneid* Aeneas deals as best he can with each situation as it comes up, occasionally helped or prodded on his way by the gods, but always used as their unhappy tool for their own ends[19] or to carry out the decrees of fate. He has no desire for personal glory, he is lonely, weary in body and soul, often discouraged and at a loss, sometimes angry and cruel, but he follows his *fatum* which is, as far as he knows, to found a city which will be a home for his gods, his people and his son.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina AGNES KIRSOPP MICHELS

[17] I find three exceptions to this principle. The oracle at Delos, after telling the Trojans to seek their ancient mother, adapts to the situation the prophecy of Poseidon (*Iliad* 20. 307 f.), and promises the rule of the unidentified land to the house of Aeneas, its grandsons, and their descendants (3. 94–8). The Penates tell Aeneas that they will raise his *nepotes* to the stars and give *imperium* to a city. In this case the city is not named but can hardly be other than Rome, not Lavinium (3. 156–9). The oracle of Faunus promises Latinus that the *nepotes* of the foreign sons-in-law will rule the world (7. 96–101). All these statements are, however, very vague, give none of the details which characterize the other types of prophecy, and do not name Rome. It is perhaps significant that when Mercury delivers Jupiter's message (4. 227–36) to Aeneas, he omits the part about the distant future (229–31), as though it were not suitable for mortal ears. One might include here Carmenta's prophecy referred to in 8. 338–41, but Vergil does not tell us to whom it was given.

[18] The most striking example of these is the description of the scenes from Roman history (8. 626–728) placed on the shield of Aeneas by Vulcan, who was *haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi*. Vergil tells us explicitly that Aeneas did not understand the subjects of these scenes, although he rejoiced in their representation: *rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet* (8. 730). The repetition of *ignarus* contrasts Aeneas' ignorance with the knowledge of Vulcan. Compare *ignarus rerum* used at 10. 666 in reference to Turnus' ignorance of Juno's trickery. The long description of the shield is obviously intended to excite the reader, like the prophecies of Jupiter and Anchises, not to inform Aeneas.

[19] For a discussion of the callousness of the gods in the *Aeneid* see W. A. Camps, *An Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid*, 41–50.