THE PROPHETIC LEGACY:

STUDIES IN AENEAS' REACTIONS TO PROPHECIES

by

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(Under the Direction of Sarah Spence)

ABSTRACT

Throughout the *Aeneid*, Vergil's hero is exposed to both short-term prophecies, which foreshadow events in the future of the poem, and long-term prophecies, which call attention to the future of Rome. Between the first and second halves of the poem, there is a subtle shift in both the types of prophecies delivered and in the hero's reactions to the prophecies that he receives. This contrast seems to suggest that Aeneas is disturbed by prophecies when they concern his own future and confused by prophecies when they concern Ascanius, for whom the future of Rome is intended. Through the skillful incorporation of his audience into the poem's long-term prophecies, Vergil makes this contrast that much more effective, carefully conveying his own hopes and fears about the future under Augustus.

INDEX WORDS: Aeneas, *Aeneid*, Ascanius, Augustus, Prophecy, Vergil

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the *Aeneid*, Vergil's hero is exposed to both short-term prophecies, which foreshadow events in the future of the poem, and long-term prophecies, which call attention to the future of Rome.[1] The prophecies given to Aeneas in the first half of the poem typically concern the hero himself and are short-term. However, the prophecies found in the latter half of the poem tend to be centered on Ascanius and the future of Rome and are, therefore, long-term. Aeneas' reactions to these prophecies also show a subtle shift. In the first half of the poem, the hero is angry, dolorous, or fearful after experiencing a prophecy or prophetic mechanism, whereas, prophecies tend to leave him bewildered, yet joyous in the latter half of the poem. This contrast seems to suggest that Aeneas is only disturbed by prophecies when they concern his own future and confused by prophecies when they concern Ascanius and the future of Rome. In effect, Aeneas' bewilderment is the result of his not being the recipient of the prophecy's actions. Rather, Ascanius and his descendants are the rightful recipients of these prophecies. Vergil makes this clear in his discussions of Ascanius, especially where Venus is concerned. In addition, the point at which Aeneas begins to find joy in the prophecies that he experiences seems to be the point in the poem when Aeneas begins to abandon his Trojan past in favor of his Italian future. This shift parallels the experiences of Vergil's contemporary audience who is dealing with the disillusionment of civil war. This study will examine Aeneas' reactions to prophecies and their relationship to Ascanius and the future of Rome, paying particular attention

[1] Mack (1978) 56.

to the nuances used by Vergil in his depictions of the poem's prophecies or prophetic mechanisms.

Some scholars have recently read the *Aeneid* as an "ambiguous or, at times, profoundly pessimistic epic."[2] Others have vigorously denied the validity of this pessimistic reading in favor of a more positive and propagandistic stance from which to view the poem.[3] My intention here is neither to prove nor disprove these claims. Vergil's poem is dynamic and complex, making such black-and-white readings nearly impossible. I aim solely to point out several noticeable trends in Vergil's treatment of particular prophecy scenes in an attempt to show the poet's subtle manipulation of the past and the future. I rely heavily on the conclusions of James J. O'Hara in his book *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Vergil's Aeneid*, who notes that the prophecies of the *Aeneid*, though seemingly optimistic, suppress material that could be potentially discouraging to the recipients. He suggests that this suppression is the result of the prophecy's intention to encourage its recipient, and he argues that the prophecies of national significance, the long-term prophecies, incorporate Vergil's readers into the poem itself, placing them in the same positions as those of the characters receiving the deceptive prophecies.[4] I also rely on the conclusions of Sara Mack in her book *Patterns of Time in Vergil*, particularly those in her fourth chapter. Mack presents a detailed analysis of tense in the poem in an attempt to reveal the conflict between Aeneas' present and the history of Rome that is depicted in prophecies.[5]

A brief survey of this study's contents may be useful here. The first chapter will look at how the subtle shifts in both the types of prophecies and in the hero's reaction to these

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[2] Gurval (1995) 211. For a survey of the trends in Vergilian scholarship since the nineteenth century, see Harrison (1990) 1-20 and Johnson (1976) 1-22.
[3] See especially Galinsky (1988) 321-48 and Stahl (1990) 174-211.
[4] O'Hara (1990) 3-4.
[5] Mack (1978) 55-84.

prophecies suggest the prominence of Ascanius, not Aeneas, in the future of Rome. Included will be all the major instances in which a prophecy or prophetic mechanism is presented to the hero himself. The second chapter will contain a detailed analysis of Ascanius and his role in the poem as a whole. There will be a discussion of the previous chapter's conclusion, how it relates to Ascanius, and what it means for the future of Rome. Chapter three will look at Vergil's incorporation of his contemporary audience into the poem through long-term prophecies or prophetic mechanisms. Jupiter's prophecy of book one, Anchises' prophecy of book six, and the shield ekphrasis of book eight will be analyzed in detail in an attempt to show Vergil's careful manipulation of details. The ways in which Vergil uses the long-term prophecies of the *Aeneid* to speak directly to the plight of his audience will be discussed.

Aeneas' reactions to the prophecies of the *Aeneid* seem to suggest that he is not the intended receiver of the prophecies' contents. The hero is bewildered at the long-term prophecies presented in the *Aeneid*, not only because these prophecies are deceptive, but also because they contain predictions that are never really intended for Aeneas himself. Rather, these prophecies are meant for Ascanius, his descendants, and Vergil's audience. Through his careful manipulation of the Roman past, Vergil seems to suggest not only his hope for peace under Augustus, but also his uncertainty as to whether this peace is possible.

CHAPTER 1

AENEAS' REACTIONS

Prophecies in the *Aeneid*

On several occasions in the *Aeneid*, Aeneas learns something about the future. In a broad sense, all of these occasions are prophetic, in that they predict some future happening. These predictions, however, must accord with the will of the gods in order for their contents to have any legitimacy. Because they can see the whole of time, only divinities can know the future with any certainty. Mortals, on the other hand, can never fully comprehend future occurrences and must, therefore, rely on divinely ordained prophetic messages for any sort of future knowledge. As a result, all prophetic mechanisms are inherently enigmatic and fundamentally independent of full human comprehension. In order to bridge the gap between divine knowledge and mortal understanding, prophetic scenes typically contain some sort of divine claim that legitimates the prophetic message. This claim is either expressly stated or implied when a divinity gives the prediction directly.[6] In general, these divinely ordained predictions exist in various mediums. They are found in speeches, in the interpretations of miraculous signs or events,[7] and in dreams,

[6] For a list of specific divine claims, see O'Hara (1990) 54-5.

[7] Block (1981) 95 notes that "signs or omens implicitly or explicitly direct the course of mortal affairs, whether as comment on past action or indication of future action." For more on signs or omens and the terminology used to describe them see Block (1981) 95-107. See also Bailey (1935) 11-24. For a list of specific signs or omens, see O'Hara (1990) 57-8.

to name a few. In the *Aeneid*, prophecies and prophetic mechanisms are enigmatic glimpses of the future that are qualified by some claim of divine authority.

This chapter will look at the prophecies given to Aeneas and will attempt to show a shift both in the types of prophecies and in the hero's reaction to the prophecies. Within the *Aeneid*, prophecies can be subdivided into two major groups: the short-term prophecy and the long-term prophecy. Whereas short-term prophecies typically foreshadow events in the future of the poem and are relevant to Aeneas himself, long-term prophecies call attention to the future of Rome and concern the hero's descendants.[8] The first half of the poem generally involves the hero's receipt of short-term prophecies. James O'Hara has rightly argued that "in order to encourage their recipients many prophecies suppress material that would be disturbing or discouraging."[9] This idea is consistent with the shift in the types of prophecies that the hero experiences. In the first half of the poem, the primary goal is Italy. Aeneas receives several prophecies all containing some mission that the hero must complete in order to achieve the divinely ordained end that the deceptive prophecies predict. The prophecies of this first half guide and encourage the hero so that he may fulfill the necessary requirements that will get him to Italy. Once he reaches Italian soil, however, his prophetic purpose is complete, and the prophecies that he receives thereafter are long term and concern not the hero himself, but Ascanius and the future of Rome.

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[8] Mack (1978) 56 argues that short-term prophecies are "'directional' and educational, for the most part guiding Aeneas toward his destination by means of commands, instructions, and explanations. They address themselves primarily to the hero's personal career and so are largely fulfilled within the poem as each moment of predicted future subsides into the narrative present. The other future in the poem is the distant future centering on Rome from its founding to Augustan times . . . These deal little or not at all with Aeneas' personal future and so the present they represent for the most part comes to pass outside the framework of the poem." See also Block (1981) 107-8 and O'Hara (1990) 3.

[9] O'Hara (1990) 3. See also Mack (1978) 56ff.

Aeneas' reaction to the prophecies is consistent with this shift. In the first half of the poem, the hero displays negative emotions like fear or anger after he receives a prophecy or prophetic mechanism, whereas prophecies tend to leave him joyously unaware in the latter half of the poem. This contrast seems to suggest that Aeneas is only disturbed by prophecies when they concern his own future but is confused by prophecies when they concern Ascanius and the future of Rome. In effect, Aeneas' bewilderment when he receives a long-term prophecy is likely the result of his not being the recipient of the prophecy's actions. The prophecies delivered to the hero in the second half of the poem concern the future of Rome and Ascanius, and have little to do with Aeneas himself. Rather, Ascanius and his descendants are the rightful recipients of these prophecies. This study will look at all of the variations mentioned above and will draw conclusions based on these subtle shifts in the types of prophecies delivered and in the hero's reactions to the prophecies.

O'Hara has compiled a thorough list of certain typical features of prophecy scenes within the *Aeneid*.[10] Although not all occur in a given scene, these textual features are common indicators of a prophecy or prophetic mechanism. First, the poet describes the setting and mood of the recipient. O'Hara notes that the recipient is often discouraged before receiving a prophecy. The second major feature is a claim of divine authority, and the third is a qualification of the prophecy through what O'Hara terms the *si non vana* motif, so named after the phrase at Propertius 3.6.31, *si non vana canunt mea somnia* ("if my dreams do not sing empty things"). This motif effectively legitimizes the prophecy, adding to the idea that the message is divinely ordained. The fourth feature is the prophecy itself, which O'Hara notes is frequently optimistic and often includes the "omission of or hidden reference to the death of one individual, or some

[10] See also Block (1981) 107-16.

other discouraging event."[11] The fifth typical feature is the "request for, promise of, or receiving of confirmation of the prophecy, often by a miraculous sign or by fulfillment of part of the prophecy."[12] The next feature that is often seen in prophetic scenes is a prayer and, perhaps, a sacrifice by the recipient, which indicates that the recipient has accepted the prophetic message and is willing to follow the divine command included therein. The final typical feature is a description of the recipient's mood after hearing the prophecy.[13] Because they convey future action, prophecies are typically found in the future tense.[14] Also, prophecies that will be played out in the future of the poem often include some mission which the recipient must complete in order to achieve the future end that the prophecy outlines. This is typically found in the imperative voice.

Venus' interpretation of the bird omen in book one is a particularly good example of these textual features. Venus has just predicted that Aeneas' comrades and ships have reached the shores of Carthage safely, and she confirms this prediction with a profitable augury. Venus says,

> *Quisquis es, haud, credo, invisus caelestibus auras*
> *vitalis carpis, Tyriam qui adveneris urbem.*
> *Perge modo atque hinc te reginae ad limina perfer.*
> *Namque tibi reduces socios classemque relatam*
> *nuntio et in tutum versis Aquilonibus actam,*
> *ni frustra augurium vani docuere parentes.*
> *Aspice bis senos laetantis agmine cycnos,*
> *aetheria quos lapsa plaga Iovis ales aperto*
> *turbabat caelo; nunc terras ordine longo*
> *aut capere aut captas iam despectare videntur:*
> *ut reduces illi ludunt stridentibus alis*
> *et coetu cinxere polum cantusque dedere,*
> *haud aliter puppesque tuae pubesque tuorum*

[11] O'Hara (1990) 15.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] For more on the future tense in the *Aeneid*, see Mack (1978) 33-54.

> *aut portum tenet aut pleno subit ostia velo.*
> *Perge modo et, qua te ducit via, derige gressum.*
> (1.387-401)
>
> Whoever you are, by no means, I believe, hated by the gods do you breathe vital airs, you who have reached the Tyrian city. Proceed now and bear yourself from here to the thresholds of the queen. For I announce to you that your comrades are restored and your fleet has been restored and led to safety by the routing of the north winds, unless my false parents have taught me augury in vain. See the twelve swans rejoicing in line, whom the bird of Jove when it descended from the ethereal region threw into confusion in the open sky; now they seem either to settle on the ground in a long line or to look down on lands already settled: as they restored play with creaking wings and they have circled the sky in formation and they gave songs, by no means otherwise do both your ships and the young men of your ships either hold port or enter the harbors with a full sail.[15]

Vergil describes the setting and mood of Aeneas prior to his receipt of this prophetic mechanism, and the hero is, in fact, discouraged, as we learn from his preceding speech where he outlines the labors that he has undergone up until this point. The claim of divine authority is inherent in the epiphany of Venus, who includes the *si non vana* motif in her speech at line 392. The opening lines also provide the hero with a mission, a feature typical of prophecies that will come to fruition in the course of the poem. The encouraging prophecy is given at 390-1, and the bird omen immediately confirms what Venus has just prophesized. Though Vergil does not have his hero make any kind of prayer or sacrifice, he does include a description of Aeneas' mood following the scene, which I will discuss in detail below.

The Shift in Prophecies

Venus' interpretation of the bird omen is the first prophetic mechanism to which Aeneas is witness and is consistent with the shift already mentioned. Here, Venus tells her son to go to Dido's Carthage, saying that he will find his lost ships there, and she interprets the bird omen as

[15] The literal translations included are my own.

a sign of the validity of her words (1.387-401). This prophetic mechanism is short term and deals with Aeneas alone. As a result, the contents of the prophetic message should be fulfilled in the course of the poem, which is certainly the case. The prophetic mechanism is fulfilled almost immediately when Aeneas follows the orders of Venus and finds the ships exactly as his mother had predicted.[16]

When Hector appears to Aeneas in a dream in book two, his message contains a mission and prediction about what the future holds. The Trojan prince says to his comrade Aeneas:

> *'Heu fuge, nate dea, teque his' ait 'eripe flammis.*
> *Hostis habet muros; ruit alto a culmine Troia.*
> *Sat patriae Priamoque datum: si Pergama dextra*
> *defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.*
> *Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penatis;*
> *hos cape fatorum comites, his moenia quaere*
> *magna pererrato statues quae denique ponto.'*
>
> (2.289-95)

> 'Alas! Flee, goddess born,' he said, 'and snatch yourself away from these flames. The enemy holds the walls; Troy sinks from her high summit. Enough has been given to the fatherland and to Priam; if Pergama could have been defended by any right hand, it would have been defended yet by mine. Troy commends her sacred things and her own household gods to you; take these comrades of fates, with these, seek the great walls which you will establish at last with the sea having been traversed.'

Alhough found in book two, this is the first scene to contain a prophetic message. In fact, this scene lays out the themes of the poem as a whole.[17] The shade of Hector appears to Aeneas and commands the hero to flee the burning city of Troy with the Penates and to find the walls of the future city of Rome. This dream does have an element of prophetic truth to it. First of all, the shade appears to Aeneas *in somnis* (2.270). According to Williams, *somnus* is the "natural light sleep when visions can be seen, not the deep sleep (*sopor*, 173) in which unreal dreams and

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[16] Mack (1978) 77 says that this prophecy is "trivial" in that it predicts "something that is shortly to be self-evident." See my n.29 in this chapter on Cymodocea's prophecy.
[17] See Williams (1972) *ad* 2.268f. and Heinze (1993) 16-8.

figments of the imagination occur."[18] This is the same distinction made in *Odyssey* 19.547 between *onar* and *upar*.[19] Vergil's terminology, therefore, validates the contents of the dream and suggests that its predictions will come to pass. Since the dream concerns primarily Aeneas himself, we might expect the dream's predictions to occur in the course of the poem, and Aeneas does eventually carry the Penates to Italy after he and his men traverse much of the sea. This dream acts as a short-term prophetic message to the hero and is, therefore, consistent with the model described above.

Creusa's prophecy at 2.775-89 follows this same pattern. Her shade predicts happy times for Aeneas, outlining several events in which the hero will play a significant part in the future of the poem. She begins her speech with a claim of divine authority.

> *Non haec sine numine divum*
> *eveniunt; nec te hinc comitem asportare Creusam*
> *fas aut ille sinit superi regnator Olympi.*
>
> (2.777-9)
>
> These things do not happen without the divinity of the gods; nor is it divine will that you carry away Creusa as a comrade, nor does that ruler of upper Olympus allow it.

This divine claim, coupled with the predictions she makes about Aeneas' future in Italy, authenticates this scene as a prophecy and exonerates Aeneas of any guilt for the loss of Creusa.[20] Because these predictions concern Aeneas alone and make no mention of the future of Rome, the prophecy is short term and will come to pass by the end of the poem or just beyond the timeframe of the poem.

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[18] Williams (1972) *ad* 3.148f.
[19] Williams (1972) *ad* 3.173f.
[20] See Heinze (1993) 35: "There is one fact that the poet wishes to make clear beyond all doubt: that it had already been determined in advance, either by fate or by the decision of Jupiter, that Creusa was not to accompany her husband on his wanderings . . . This exonerates Aeneas from any charge of guilt that he himself or anyone else might bring against him; even if it was his senseless flight that had resulted in the loss of Creusa, he had only been a tool in the hands of the gods." See also Quinn (1968) 120-1.

The Penates are the next to deliver a prophetic message to Aeneas in a dream. The scene itself provides an interpretation of Apollo's oracle at 3.94-8.[21] The Penates encourage Aeneas to take up the course from which Anchises' previous misinterpretation diverted him. Just as when the shade of Hector appears to him, Aeneas receives the vision of the Penates *in somnis* (3.151, "in dreams"). The inclusion of this phrase validates the truthfulness of the message as does the claim of divine authority at 3.154-5. In this scene, the Penates make several predictions about the future, while at the same time guiding the hero towards Italy via the communication of several missions. Although the Penates tell the hero that they will "exalt his descendants into the stars and give sovereignty to the city" (*tollemus in astra nepotes imperiumque urbi dabimus* 3.158-9), the goal of this vision is to get Aeneas to Italy. The prevalence of imperatives and the lengthy description of the place are evidence of this. Ultimately, this scene conveys several missions to Aeneas in an attempt to encourage the hero towards his own future settlement, establishing the scene as a short-term prophetic mechanism.

The prophecies of Celaeno and Helenus in book three follow this same model. After the Trojans consume the herds and flocks of the Harpies, the leader of the foul women prophesies to the Trojans that, once they reach the desired site of Italy, they will encounter famine and bloodshed, that they will be forced to consume their tables (3.154-71).[22] Although Aeneas does not respond explicitly to this prophecy, he must be considered one of its recipients. In fact, as soon as Celaeno delivers her terrifying speech, the Trojans seek out their leader and ask him to

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[21] *Dardanidae duri, quae vos a stirpe parentum / prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere laeto accipiet reduces. Antiquam exquirite matrem. / Hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris / et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis* (3.94-8, "Hardy Trojans, the first land which bore you from the stock of your parents, that same land will receive you, restored, in her happy bosom. Seek out your ancient mother. Here the house of Aeneas and his children's children and those who will arise from them will rule over all the shores").

[22] This scene is an authentic prophecy in that Celaeno includes a claim of divine authority at 3.250-2 and predicts an element of the future that is highly enigmatic.

make peace (3.259-66). Clearly, this prophecy is a matter of concern for Aeneas. Because it comes to fruition in the second half of the poem, this prophecy-scene must certainly be short term.

Helenus delivers a prophecy at 3.374-462.[23] Within this lengthy scene, Helenus describes the signs that will confirm the location of Italy. This description contains several missions that the Trojans must complete before they can begin to establish their walls. This prophecy concerns the hero and his own journey towards Italy, establishing it as a short-term prophecy.

The prophecies of Anchises in book five and the Sibyl in book six are the last of the short-term prophecies delivered to Aeneas. In book five, the shade of Anchises appears to his son and confirms the words just spoken by the Trojan Nautes at 5.709-18, who ordered the hero to allow the weak and tired to establish their own colony in Sicily. In this prophecy, Anchises outlines several events that Aeneas will encounter once he reaches Italy, including his meeting with the Sibyl and the first long-term prophecy given to the hero himself (5.724-39). Because the words of both Nautes and Anchises contain claims of divine authority, the contents of their prophetic messages are validated (5.704-7 and 5.726-7). We also find that everything predicted by Anchises turns out to be true in the course of the poem, particularly in book six when the hero does, in fact, come across the Sibyl and receives the prophecy outlining the greatness of his future descendants. This prophecy is, therefore, short term. The Sibyl's lengthy prophecy at 6.83-97 and 6.125-55 follows this same model. The priestess, inspired by Apollo, presents Aeneas with a prophecy containing several missions. The hero must complete these missions in order to fulfill the destiny outlined by Jupiter in book one. As a result, the Sibyl's prophecy

[23] Helenus' words also contain claims of divine authority at 3.375 and 3.434, validating the scene as a prophecy.

primarily concerns Aeneas himself and, because her words do come to fruition in the course of the poem, is short term.

Beginning with the prophecy of Anchises in the underworld in book six, the prophecies delivered to the hero in the latter half of the poem all concern the future of Rome and the descendants of Aeneas. As I mentioned above, those prophecies devoted primarily to the future glory of Rome are long term and come to fruition outside the framework of the poem.[24] This is certainly the case with Anchises' prophecy of book six. Here, the shade of his father approaches Aeneas in the underworld and shows him the descendants that he is to spawn (6.752-853). Although Anchises does not make any explicit claim of divine authority, both Helenus and the Sibyl note that Aeneas will meet his father in the underworld so that he might tell Aeneas the truth about his lineage. This provides Anchises' prophecy with the necessary divine aspect since these two characters are conveying messages ordained by the gods. None of Anchises' predictions here concerns Aeneas; rather, his entire prophecy concerns the descendants of Aeneas leading all the way up to noted figures in the contemporary Rome of Vergil. This prophecy is long term and marks a subtle shift in the type of prophecies given to the hero.

When Tiberinus appears to Aeneas in a dream, he gives the hero a detailed mission that is particularly evocative of Rome. Tiberinus tells Aeneas to take heart because the anger of the gods has ceased, and he encourages Aeneas with the promise of the white sow and the future glory of his son (8.36-65).[25] Although several of the duties outlined by Tiberinus are relevant to

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[24] See my n.8.

[25] The description of the sow at 8.43-6 is repeated from the prophecy of Helenus (3.390-3). Heinze (1993) 74 notes that the appearance of the sow in the prophecy of Helenus is problematic and concludes that the version in book three is later. He argues, "There (in book eight) the exact description of where and how makes good sense, for the more precisely the details are predicted, the more convincingly their literal fulfillment proves that the vision was trustworthy." So, although this typically Roman image is included in Helenus' short-term prophecy, Heinze has

Aeneas himself, the interest of the prophetic message is the future glory of Rome and Ascanius. First, the white sow is a particularly significant image often associated with Rome.[26] This association establishes the long-term implications of Tiberinus' speech as a whole. After the description of the sow, Vergil moves directly to a discussion of Ascanius and his foundation of Alba Longa. This is the first situation where a prophetic message explicitly mentions Ascanius to his father. Because the youth is particularly significant in the development of Rome, his inclusion here is further evidence of the long-term nature of the prophetic mechanism.[27] The vision of Tiberinus is primarily concerned with the long-term implications of Aeneas' journey and is, therefore, consistent with the shift in the type of prophecies delivered to the hero as the poem progresses.

Although by definition an ekphrasis, the description of the shield of Aeneas in book eight contains various references to the future of Rome and, as a result, acts as a virtual long-term prophecy. Vergil writes of the shield's construction:

> *Illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos*
> *haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi*
> *fecerat Ignipotens, illic genus omne futurae*
> *stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella.*
> (8.626-9)
>
> There the Italian deeds and the triumphs of the Romans, the Lord of Fire, not ignorant of prophets or unknowing of the age to come, had fashioned there every generation of the future stock from Ascanius and the wars fought one by one.

Vulcan constructs the shield for the hero, adding a divine element to the ekphrasis that makes it

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shown that its position is better suited to the situation here in book eight, where Tiberinus is conveying a long-term prophetic message. See also Mack (1978) 66-7. For more on the deception associated with Tiberinus' claim of the cessation of the gods' anger, see O'Hara (1990) 31-5.

[26] Williams (1973) *ad* 8.43-6 notes that "the white sow with its thirty young marks the site of Lavinium from which after thirty years the Trojans were to move to Alba Longa." Cf. Heinze (1993) 73-4.

[27] See chapter two.

legitimately prophetic. Vergil provides further evidence of the shield's divine aspect when he describes Vulcan as *haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi* ("by no means ignorant of prophets and unknowing of the age to come") at 8.627. The description here contains several significant elements. First, Vergil's emphasis on Vulcan's all-knowing nature is highlighted by his use of two prophetic terms to describe the god. Because he is both *haud ignarus* of prophecy and *haud inscius* of the future age of Rome, his connection with long-term prophecies is clear.[28] That Vulcan's knowledge of prophecy and the future of Rome takes up the whole line further emphasizes the idea. The positioning of the phrase within the shield's description of the future of Rome suggests Vulcan's eternal connection with the city's founding. These features call attention to the fact that a long-term prophecy is about to be delivered. Vergil's description of the shield itself contains no reference to Aeneas; rather, the subjects of the artistic representation are Ascanius, his descendants, and the future of Rome. Thus, the shield acts as a long-term prophetic mechanism and is consistent with the subtle shift in the types of prophecies delivered to the hero.

Cymodocea, a sea nymph who had just recently been a boat in Aeneas' fleet, is the last character to present Aeneas with a prophetic message at 10.228-55, and her concern authenticates the prophecy as long term. After encouraging Aeneas to rouse himself, the nymph speeds the hero's ship forward so that he can come to the aid of his son.[29] The scene contains a divine claim: at 10.234 Cymodocea mentions of the fact that Cybele provided her with her current form. The phrases *fandi doctissima* (10.225, "most learned of speaking") and *haud*

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[28] *Haud ignarus* is particularly significant when talking about the future of Rome. The phrase appears several times in the *Aeneid*, all of which call attention to the Roman future implicit in the poem's long-term prophecies. The phrase acts as a virtual tagline for Rome and so must be considered here. See 4.508; 5.284, 618; 8.627; 10.247; 11.154.

[29] Mack (1978) 77 labels this prophecy as "trivial" in that the prediction concerns something that will soon be self-evident.

ignara modi (10.247, "by no means ignorant of the way") suggest the nymph's divine knowledge. As I mentioned above, *haud ignara* is especially associated with the long-term future of Rome.[30] Although this prophecy does contain instructions for Aeneas himself, it concerns primarily the safety of Ascanius who will one day contribute to the glory of Rome. Thus, the prophecy is long term.

The Shift in Aeneas' Reactions

Aeneas responds to each of these prophetic messages in a manner consistent with the subtle shift in the type of prophecy delivered. Aeneas' reaction to these scenes also shows a subtle shift. The hero is either fearful or angry when he receives a prophecy in the first half of the poem, but joyously unaware when he receives a prophecy in the latter half. The rest of this chapter will examine the hero's reactions to the prophetic mechanisms.

When Vergil describes Aeneas' reaction to the interpretation of the bird omen in book one, his language emphasizes the anger of his hero. Aeneas says

> *quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis*
> *ludis imaginibus? Cur dextrae iungere dextram*
> *non datur ac veras audire et reddere voces?*
> (1.407-9)

> Why do you, cruel too, mock your son so often with false images? Why is it not permitted to join right hand to right hand and to hear and return true voices?

There are several significant elements in this passage. First, *crudelis* occurs after a weak caesura, which adds natural emphasis to the immediately following word. This is further supported by the emphatic inclusion of *tu quoque*. The line's end is emphatic as well. Austin

[30] See my n.28.

has noted that this type of construction, where a line ends with two disyllabic words and the first is a pyrrhic, is infrequent.[31] With these subtle textual features, Vergil emphasizes Venus' cruelty in disguising her identity from her son. These features also highlight Aeneas' pain and anger, making his reaction particularly affecting, and they establish anger as a feature of Aeneas' reaction to short-term prophetic mechanisms.

Servius finds Aeneas' reaction to Venus' interpretation problematic. He comments first on the word *totiens*:

> *QUID NATUM TOTIENS saepe. et aut* kata to siôpômenon *intellegimus saepe eum esse delusum; aut certe secundum ipsum Vergilium, qui ait in secundo cum mihi se non ante oculis tam clara videndam obtulit. Multi tamen volunt in hoc ipso loco saepe eum esse deceptum.*
>
> "Why (do you mock) your son so often": we are to understand either out of silence that he was often deluded; or following Vergil himself, who says in book two "when she, not before so clear to my eyes, presented herself to me to be seen." Nevertheless, many think that he was deceived in this very place.

Problematic is the fact that at 2.589 Aeneas argues that Venus is without a disguise when she first appears to him. His statement that Venus has *totiens* mocked him with false representations is, therefore, unfounded. Only once before this point has Venus appeared to Aeneas, and, on that occasion, she revealed her true form. Servius goes on to suggest Venus' deceit of her son.[32] The commentator supports this idea in another comment on 407 when he says that Venus is acting *sicut Iuno ceterique dii, qui Troianis inimici sunt* ("like Juno and the other gods, who are unfriendly to the Trojans"). Servius suggests that, at least from the perspective of Aeneas, Venus' behavior here is consistent with that shown by Juno. Yet this is hardly the case. As O'Hara has shown, Venus here presents to Aeneas an optimistic prophecy, albeit deceptive, in

[31] Austin (1971) *ad* 1.199.
[32] See also Conington (1963) *ad* 1.407.

the hopes of encouraging her son.[33] Regardless of whether or not the prophecy is deceptive, Aeneas' response to Venus' interpretation of the bird omen seems exaggerated.

Vergil emphasizes the hero's exaggerated anger with his word choice. We have seen that *crudelis* occupies a prominent metrical position that emphasizes the implications of the word. Its common usages further complicate the situation. Of all the instances where a form of *crudelis* appears and especially those instances where the term describes a specific person, the majority are associated with death.[34] Dido first uses the term to describe Aeneas at 4.311. Here, Dido first realizes Aeneas' impending departure, as a result of which she resolves to commit suicide. Dido applies the term to Aeneas once again at 4.661 just before she completes the suicide, making the term particularly affecting. After Dido's death, Anna uses the term to describe the queen at 4.681. This same type of construction occurs at 9.483 when the mother of Euryalus describes her son as *crudelis*. All of these situations involve a loving relationship between two people who either will soon be or have just been separated by death. Dido has resolved to die as a result of the cruelty shown to her by Aeneas. His cruelty is the catalyst for her suicide. Once the queen fulfills her promises, her sister is left to grieve, causing Anna to condemn the cruelty of Dido in much the same way as Euryalus' mother condemns the cruelty of her son who has just died. In effect, the term suggests separation through death, so when Aeneas applies the term to Venus, he is clearly overreacting. Because Venus is immortal, she will never die. Aeneas'

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[33] O'Hara (1990) 9-12. Smith (2005) 28 says that "deception is necessary for Venus to convey information about Dido to Aeneas without the distraction that the epiphany of a goddess would have engendered. Recognition of Venus might have prompted Aeneas to seek the direct help and guidance that she chooses to provide less directly, for Venus understands that, to achieve his destiny, Aeneas must first undergo trials. He must meet Dido in the precise circumstances that Venus has arranged; these circumstances depend on deception, even if that means a mother must deceive her son."

[34] 1.221, 355, 361, 407, 547; 2.124, 368, 561, 746; 3.44, 616; 4.308, 311, 661, 681; 6.24, 359, 442, 446, 495, 501, 585; 8.146, 579; 9.483, 497; 10.386; 11.53, 535, 841; 12.636.

reaction here is overstated. His anger becomes the focal point of the scene, establishing the model for the hero's reaction to short-term prophecies within the poem.

We see Aeneas' exaggerated anger again when the hero questions his mother, asking why the two cannot join right hands. A similar scene occurs in book six where Aeneas says to Anchises in Elysium, *da iungere dextram, / da, genitor, teque amplexu ne subtrahe nostro* (6.697-8, "allow me to join your right hand, allow it, father, and do not withdraw yourself from our embrace"). At this point in the poem Anchises has already died, and Aeneas is reaching out to the ghost of his father. When Aeneas uses this type of language to describe his desire to embrace his dead father, he suggests that an embrace of this kind is reserved for family members who are drastically separated. The textual similarities between these two scenes suggest that Aeneas feels the same kind of drastic separation from his mother as he does from his dead father in book six. In much the same way that the hero's use of the term *crudelis* implies an exaggeration of anger, this statement, which suggests a drastic separation, seems forced. Aeneas is enraged that Venus will not embrace him in her true form when she certainly has the power to do so, and the hero implies that such an insult causes the pain that separation through death would produce. Because the hero's anger seems exaggerated, his reaction becomes a focal point which sets the stage for his response to the short-term prophecies contained in the *Aeneid*.

Later in book two, the image of Creusa predicts happy times for Aeneas.[35] As with his reaction to Venus' interpretation of the bird omen, Aeneas' response is not positive; rather, the weeping hero attempts to grasp the image of his wife in vain. Metrically, the emphasis is on his grief. Vergil writes: *haec ubi dicta dedit, lacrimantem et multa volentem* / *dicere deseruit* (2.790-1, "When she said these words, she deserted me weeping and wanting to say many

[35] Vergil does not make Aeneas' reaction to the dream of Hector explicit, so I will not discuss that scene here.

things"). The focal point of the line is *lacrimantem*, which comes after a weak caesura and gives the word natural emphasis. Aeneas' grief is highlighted in much the same way as his anger was a focal point in the previous example.[36] Because her prediction is meant for Aeneas alone, his response fits the model already described: when Aeneas receives a prophecy relating to his own future, the hero is visibly upset.

Vergil further emphasizes the anguish of Aeneas when he describes the hero's heartfelt attempts to grasp the image of his recently deceased wife. He writes

> *Ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum;*
> *ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago,*
> *par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno.*
> (2.792-4)
>
> Three times I attempted there to place my arms around her neck; three times her image, having been grasped, escaped my hands equal to the light winds and similar to a dream.[37]

These lines recur verbatim at 6.700-2 just before Aeneas receives Anchises' prophecy in the underworld. There, Aeneas grasps the image of his father in vain. The pathos of these two scenes is clear. Aeneas is seeking the ghosts of his family, and the textual repetition in the scenes emphasizes the pain of a lost family member. This is reminiscent of the scene from book one where Aeneas desires to embrace his mother. Although Creusa predicts happy times, Aeneas is unable to take solace in the favorable prophecy. He is attempting to retain his past and is, therefore, dismissive of his future, however bright it may turn out to be. The hero's negative attitude towards this positive prophecy supports the model already discussed. When Aeneas hears a prophecy that concerns him, he is noticeably distraught. However, as will be shown

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[36] For parallels with Orpheus and Eurydice, see Putnam (1966) 44-8.
[37] Smith (2005) 80-2 points to *Odyssey* 11.204-9 where Odysseus attempts to grasp his mother Anticlea as a model for this scene. He concludes that "Aeneas' vision of Creusa . . . indicates a spiritual metamorphosis of her character from devoted wife and lover to advice-giving mother-figure."

throughout the course of this study, when the hero receives a prophecy that concerns Ascanius or the future greatness of Rome, Aeneas is optimistically unaware of the magnitude of his lineage.

Aeneas' reaction to the dream of the Penates suggests the kind of fear that is consistent with this model. Vergil writes

> *Talibus attonitus visis et voce deorum*
> *(nec sopor illud erat, sed coram agnoscere vultus*
> *velatasque comas praesentiaque ora videbar;*
> *tum gelidus toto manabat corpore sudor)*
> *corripio e stratis corpus tendoque supinas*
> *ad caelum cum voce manus et munera libo*
> *intemerata focis.*
>
> (3.172-8)

> Thunderstruck by such visions and by the voice of the gods (this was not sleep, but I seemed to recognize face to face the countenances, the veiled hairs, and the present faces; then cold sweat dripped from my entire body) I snatched my body out of my bed, extended my upturned hands to heaven with a voice, and I poured out pure gifts on the hearths.

Of importance is the term *attonitus*, forms of which occur several times in the course of the poem.[38] The term implies some kind of fear typically associated with the presence of a god. Although its connotations are neither positive nor negative, the implication here is that Aeneas is frightened or stupefied by the dream. This idea is further confirmed by the fact that the hero is enveloped in a cold sweat following his receipt of the vision. Although *sudor* itself does not necessarily imply fear, the application of *gelidus* to the term makes the fear explicit.[39] *Gelidus* appears several times in the *Aeneid*, the majority of which are associated with some kind of fear.[40] Vergil's terminology suggests that Aeneas is fearful of the short-term prophetic message that the Penates present to him.

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[38] 3.172; 4.282; 5.529, 659; 6.53; 7.580, 814, 12.610.
[39] Forms of *sudor* can be found at 2.174; 3.175; 4.200; 7.459; 9.458, 812; 12.338.
[40] 2.120; 3.30, 175, 259; 5.395; 6.16, 54; 7.683, 801; 8.28, 139, 159, 597; 9.210; 12.331, 447, 796, 905.

The next scene of Aeneas' reaction to a prophecy comes after Aeneas receives Anchises' predictions at 5.724-39.[41] After Aeneas hears the words of Anchises, Vergil writes, *Aeneas* '*Quo deinde ruis*? *Quo proripis*?' *inquit, / 'Quem fugis*? *Aut quis te nostris complexibus arcet*?' (5.741-2, "Aeneas said, 'Where are you rushing next? Where are you hastening? Whom do you flee? Or who restrains you from our embraces?'"). Williams calls attention to the "broken urgency of this line [741] and the next, accentuated by the omission of the reflexive with *proripis* and the large number of short words."[42] These textual details call attention to the hero's anguish, making this negative reaction a focal point. This response is thematically similar to those in which Aeneas seeks out the embraces of Venus in book one following her interpretation of the bird omen and of Creusa in book two following her prediction of happy times for Aeneas. The pathos of these scenes is certain, and Aeneas' reaction here displays his despondency upon hearing a short-term prophecy, especially when it comes from a family member from whom the hero perceives himself drastically separated.

The next major prophecy to Aeneas comes from the Sibyl in book six. The contents of the prophecy concern Aeneas' own future, so the prophecy is short-term and we expect a negative response from the hero. In fact, Vergil provides two responses. After the Sibyl predicts another Achilles at 6.83-97, Aeneas interrupts the prophetess saying

> *Non ulla laborum,*
> *o virgo, nova mi facies inopinave surgit;*
> *omnia praecepi atque animo mecum ante peregi.*
> (6.103-5)
>
> No new or unexpected aspect of hardships, O maiden, rises up; I have anticipated everything, and I have traversed everything with myself in my mind beforehand.

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[41] The prophecies of Celaeno and Helenus are short term and contain divinely authorized predictions about the future. The hero's reaction is not made explicit in these instances, so I will not discuss these prophecies here.

[42] Williams (1972) *ad* 5.741.

This reaction is not surprising. Aeneas has already heard from Helenus in book three and his father in book five what the Sibyl has just foretold. His reaction is neither positive nor negative. The Sibyl continues her prophecy at 6.125-155, describing for Aeneas all the obstacles that he will face in the underworld and the death of one of his comrades. Aeneas responds to this prophecy with the despondency typical of short-term prophecies. Vergil writes

> *Aeneas maesto defixus lumina vultu*
> *ingreditur linquens antrum, caecosque volutat*
> *eventus animo secum.*
>
> (6.156-8)

> Aeneas, having cast down his eyes, advances with a sad face, leaving the cave, and deliberates over the mysterious outcomes with himself in his soul.

In his comment on line 156, Servius suggests that Aeneas has a sad face *propter mortem amici et rami inquisitionem* ("because of the death of his friend and his search for the branch") and that *defixa lumina habens, per quod tristitia mentis ostenditur* ("having downcast eyes is how sadness of mind is shown"). The hero's despondency is clear, supporting the conclusion that Aeneas tends to respond unfavorably to those prophecies that involve his own future.

At the end of book six, Aeneas receives his first major long-term prophecy of the poem, and his mood before the prophecy introduces a subtle shift in the hero's response. Aeneas sees the shade of his father and responds in a manner we have already discussed in this study. Vergil writes of the hero's initial response to the sight of his father

> *Ille autem: 'tua me, genitor, tua tristis imago*
> *saepius occurrens haec limina tendere adegit;*
> *stant sale Tyrrheno classes. Da iungere dextram,*
> *da, genitor, teque amplexu ne subtrahe nostro.'*
> *Sic memorans largo fletu simul ora rigabat.*
> *Ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum;*
> *ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago,*
> *par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno.*
>
> (6.695-702)

> But that man said: 'Your sad image, father, very often running to me, drove me to hasten towards these thresholds; the fleets stand in the Etruscan sea. Allow me to join your right hand, allow it, father, and do not withdraw yourself from our embrace.' Thus remembering, he moistened his face with a large amount of tears at the same time. Three times he attempted there to place his arms around (his father's) neck; three times in vain (his father's) image, having been grasped, escaped his hands equal to the light winds and similar to a dream.

As I mentioned above, several of these lines are highly reminiscent of, or are repeated verbatim from, scenes already discussed in this study. Just as Aeneas desires to embrace the right hand of Venus after she presents to him her optimistic interpretation of the bird omen, so too the hero desires to enjoy just such an embrace with the shade of his father here in book six. When Aeneas attempts to embrace the shade three times in vain, he repeats the very action that he attempted in book two with the ghost of Creusa. These textual similarities constitute a virtual ring composition in Aeneas' reaction to prophecies. As I noted above, short-term prophetic mechanisms dominate the first half of the poem, whereas the latter half tends to focus more on the long term. The textual repetition of the above-mentioned lines rounds out the prophetic themes displayed up to this point and anticipates a new theme centered on Rome. Just as there is a shift in the type of prophecy delivered to the hero, there is also a shift in his reaction to such prophecies, which from this point on will concern primarily the hero's descendants and the future of Rome.

The prophecy of Anchises is the first long-term prophecy presented to the hero himself, and the hero's reaction indicates a subtle shift in his character. The shade of Anchises provides the hero with a detailed description of his future lineage. Because this prophecy is a catalogue of heroes sprung from the stock of Aeneas, Anchises' prophecy is long term and so we would expect a positive reaction from the hero. In fact, Vergil says little about Aeneas' reaction to Anchises' prophecy, although what he does say is positive. Vergil writes

> *Quae postquam Anchises natum per singula duxit*
> *incenditque animum famae venientis amore,*
> *exim bella viro memorat quae deinde gerenda,*
> *Laurentisque docet populos urbemque Latini,*
> *et quo quemque modo fugiatque feratque laborem.*
> (6.888-92)
>
> After Anchises said these things, he led his son through each, and he inflames his spirit with a love of the coming fame, next he recalls to the man the wars that must be fought, and he teaches him about the people of Laurentum and the city of Latinus, and in what manner he is to flee and bear each labor.

Of importance here is the idea that Anchises *incendit animum famae venientis amore*. According to Austin, "the present participle *venientis* (889), where a future might have been expected, shows that *fama* is already on the way."[43] Because Aeneas burns with love for this approaching fame, his reaction is positive and is in accordance with the model presented in this study.

Aeneas' reaction to the shield in book eight indicates the hero's joyful ignorance.[44] Following his description of many prominent Romans depicted on the shield, Vergil writes of Aeneas' reaction

> *Talia per clipeum Volcani, dona parentis,*
> *miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet,*
> *attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum.*
> (8.729-31).
>
> Such things on the shield of Vulcan, the gift of a parent, he wonders at and although unknowing of the deeds, he rejoices in the image, lifting on his shoulders both the reputation and the fortunes of his descendants.

The terminology and imagery of Vergil's description of his hero's reaction make explicit his joy. Although *ignarus*, Aeneas still rejoices *(gaudet*) in the shield. When Aeneas lifts the shield onto his shoulders, Vergil suggests that the hero is lifting onto his shoulders the future of Rome

[43] Austin (1977) *ad* 6.888f.
[44] Aeneas' reaction to the prophecy of Tiberinus is unstated, so I will not discuss that scene here.

contained in the details of the shield, as well.[45] This implies the hero's overt acceptance of Rome's future glory. *Ignarus* Aeneas presents a marked contrast to Vulcan, described in line 627 as *haud ignarus*, as I mentioned above.[46] These two contrasting phrases encircle Vergil's description of the shield, calling attention to its contents. This ring composition adds emphasis to the future of Rome contained on the shield, calling attention to its long-term prophecy. These subtle details make this description particularly effective and support my model.

This same idea is evident in the final prophecy given to Aeneas by Cymodocea. The primary concern of Cymodocea's prophecy is Ascanius and his safety, establishing the long-term implications of the prophecy. The hero's response is consistent with the model encountered in other long-term prophecy scenes. Vergil writes of his hero's response *stupet inscius ipse* / *Tros Anchisiades, animos tamen omine tollit* (10.249-50, "The Trojan son of Anchises himself, unknowing, stands amazed; however he lifts his spirits at the omen"). Aeneas' reaction to the nymph's prophecy is one of stupefied joy, much like his reaction to the shield. Once again, we see Aeneas unknowing of prophecies dealing with the future of Rome, yet joyful in their presentation.

Aeneas' reactions to the shield and Cymodocea's prophecy both hint at the conclusion that Ascanius and the future of Rome are paramount. When Aeneas sees the shield fashioned by Vulcan detailing the future greatness of Rome, his reaction is one of stupefied joy. This reaction is not surprising, because the shield contains prophecies not actually meant for Aeneas himself. When Vergil describes Vulcan's fashioning of the shield at 8.629-30, he says outright that Vulcan, the knower of prophecy and the future of Rome, has just made a shield relating the

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[45]Hardie (1986) 372-6 discusses the shouldering of the shield and contrasts the scene with both the burden carried by Atlas and Aeneas' shouldering of Anchises in their escape from the burning city of Troy.

[46] For more on the connection between *haud ignarus* and *ignarus*, see Putnam (1998) 153-4.

future race sprung from the stock of Ascanius, not Aeneas. This subtle distinction distances Aeneas from the prophecies contained and explains why Aeneas is *ignarus*. The prophecy depicted on the shield is not intended for Aeneas, but is intended rather for Ascanius, his descendant. When Vergil describes Aeneas' inability to fully comprehend the scenes depicted on the shield, he hints not that Aeneas is a bad reader of signs, but that these prophetic messages are not intended for Aeneas himself. The same holds true for Cymodocea's prophecy, which encourages Aeneas to come to the aid of his son. Aeneas displays the same stupefied joy as when he sees the shield, suggesting once again that the hero misunderstands those prophecies that do not pertain explicitly to him. In effect, these later prophecies indicate a subtle shift in the way that Aeneas deals with prophecies. This shift is consistent with the progression of the poem's prophecies and prophetic mechanisms and is correlative with the type of prophecy.

The subtle differences between Aeneas' reactions to prophecies suggest that the hero is distraught when he receives a short-term prophecy intended for him, while he is joyfully unaware when the future glory of his descendants and Rome are presented to him in long-term prophecies. The shift in Aeneas' attitude towards prophecies can best be explained by the fact that he has, in the latter part of the poem, definitely achieved what was required of him. He has reached Italy and has set in motion the founding of a great city. Once this is achieved, the gods need only protect those individuals for whom the long-term prophecies are intended: Ascanius and his descendants.

The shift in Aeneas' reactions to prophetic messages is certainly related to his agency within the poem as a whole. As I mentioned above, the primary goal of Aeneas' mission is to reach Italy. He certainly completes this mission, although not with the fortitude one might expect of a hero. In the first two books, Aeneas is angry and reluctant when he receives a

prophecy. In book three, the hero usually defers to his father, especially where prophecies are concerned.[47] Book four depicts a hero who neglects his mission in favor of a love affair with Dido. In book five, Aeneas once again looks to Anchises to confirm the words of Nautes, and he retains his fear and anger up to the point where he receives the long-term prophecy from Anchises in the underworld. Once he receives this long-term prophetic message, we might expect the hero to regain the agency which he has previously given up. From this point on, however, the hero's agency in the receipt of prophecies is transferred to his son. It is Ascanius, not Aeneas, who first interprets the fulfillment of Celaeno's prophecy when the child notices that the Trojans are, in fact, consuming their tables at 7.116. The subsequent long-term prophecies concern primarily Ascanius and the future of Rome, suggesting that the agency of Aeneas in the interpretation of prophetic messages throughout the poem is secondary to the *pietas* of the hero. Aeneas must concern himself with the well-being of his father and son, and Vergil's characterization of the hero, at least in terms of the prophetic mechanisms presented in the *Aeneid*, is consistent with this sense of duty. Aeneas is the model of *pietas*, and his prophetic dealings uphold this characterization. Only when we look at the character of Ascanius can we gain insight into the goal of the prophecies of the poem.

[47] Quint (1982) 30 notes that "Aeneas defers to his father with the exemplary piety for which he is renowned, and it is difficult at times to determine just which of the two men is in charge."

CHAPTER 2

ASCANIUS

Chapter two will deal primarily with Ascanius. While the prophecies given to Aeneas in the first half of the poem typically concern the hero and are short term, the prophecies found in the latter half of the poem tend to center on Ascanius and the future of Rome and are long term. Aeneas' reaction to these prophecies also shows a subtle shift. In the first half of the poem, the hero experiences anger, grief, or fear after receiving a prophecy or prophetic mechanism, but he is joyously unaware when he receives a prophecy in the latter half of the poem. This contrast seems to suggest that Aeneas is only disturbed by prophecies when they concern his own future and is confused by prophecies when they concern Ascanius and the future of Rome. Aeneas' characteristic bewilderment after receiving long-term prophecies in the latter half of the poem is the result of his not being the recipient of the prophecy's contents. Rather, Ascanius and his descendants are the rightful recipients of these prophecies. Vergil makes this clear in his unique treatment of Ascanius.[48] Through textual and thematic features, the poet creates an effective framework that consistently associates Ascanius with the future glory of Rome. Aeneas represents the past, and Ascanius represents the future in present time. This chapter will look primarily at Ascanius and what other characters are saying about him in an attempt to show that the hero's child is the primary prophetic concern of the poem.

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[48] For a brief survey of ancient accounts of Ascanius, see Feldman (1953) 303-4, who notes that "Virgil characteristically, while adopting certain points from various sources, goes beyond all of them in giving Ascanius new importance."

Book One

Ascanius' first appearance in the poem comes at 1.267 in Jupiter's prophecy to Venus of the future greatness of Rome. When Jupiter mentions Ascanius in this context, he establishes a framework that, as we shall see, is used on many occasions to describe the child. The prophecy concerns the future of Rome and is not fulfilled in the course of the poem, so the scene constitutes long-term prophecy. When Jupiter describes Ascanius, his language suggests that the child is of great importance in the establishment of Rome. The king of the gods begins his prophecy with Aeneas but abruptly switches his focus to the hero's child:

> *bellum ingens geret Italia populosque ferocis*
> *contundet moresque viris et moenia ponet,*
> *tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas,*
> *ternaque transierint Rutulis hiberna subactis.*
> *At puer Ascanius, cui nunc cognomen Iulo*
> *additur (Ilus erat, dum res stetit Ilia regno),*
> *triginta magnos volvendis mensibus orbis*
> *imperio explebit, regnumque ab sede Lavini*
> *transferet, et Longam multa vi muniet Albam.*
>
> (1.263-71)

> (Aeneas) will wage a huge war in Italy, he will subdue the ferocious populations, and he will establish customs and walls for the people there, until the third summer will have seen him ruling in Latium, and three winters will have passed since the Rutulians were subdued. But the boy Ascanius, to whom the cognomen Iulus is added (Ilus was the cognomen while the Ilian state stood in power), will fill out thirty great circles of years with their unrolling months in power, he will transfer sovereignty from the seat of Lavinium, and he will fortify Alba Longa with much force.

There is a noticeable shift in Jupiter's focus, emphasized by the word *at* in 1.267. The word suggests a change in subject matter, which is evident here. Jupiter moves abruptly from a prophecy about Aeneas to a prophecy about Ascanius. This term also signals a subtle change in emphasis. When Jupiter describes Aeneas and then immediately turns his attention to the future significance of Ascanius, he suggests that Ascanius is a major concern in his prophecy, even

more so than Aeneas. The hero's contribution to Rome's foundation will be overshadowed by the achievements of Ascanius. Because the whole prophecy is primarily devoted to the future of Rome, this subtle shift implies not only Ascanius' connection with the long-term future outside the boundaries of the poem, but also his significance in the poem as a whole.

Servius notes the abruptness of this shift, arguing that it says something about the significance of Ascanius here and in later books:

> *AT PUER ASCANIUS prudenter exitum Aeneae et ostendit et tacuit dicendo filium postea regnaturum. Aut quia maior cura Veneri de nepote ut in X. liceat superesse nepotem et iterum ibi hunc tegere.*
>
> "But the boy Ascanius": (Vergil) wisely both revealed and was silent about the death of Aeneas in saying that his son would later rule. Because Venus is more concerned about her grandson as in book ten (when she requests of Jupiter that) 'it might be permitted that her grandson survive' and that she might be allowed 'to protect him' again there."

Servius points out that Vergil skips over the death of Aeneas in his quick shift to Ascanius and argues that the hero's child is Venus' top priority. The commentator provides a direct quotation of part of line 10.46 and a part of 10.50 in his discussion. On those occasions in book ten, Venus is pleading with Jupiter to keep Ascanius safe, betraying her very real preference for her grandson.[49] The similarities between the two scenes suggest that, at least from Venus' perspective, Ascanius and his safety are paramount. When he quotes this scene, Servius makes Ascanius' importance explicit.

Ilioneus, a deputy from the missing Trojan ships, is the next to mention Ascanius when he describes the fate of himself and his men:

> *sin absumpta salus, et te, pater optime Teucrum,*
> *pontus habet Libyae nec spes iam restat Iuli,*
> *at freta Sicaniae saltem sedesque paratas,*
> *unde huc advecti, regemque petamus Acesten.*
>
> (1.555-8)

[49] I will discuss this passage later in the chapter.

> But if safety has been destroyed, and the Libyan sea holds you, finest father of Teucrians, and the hope of Iulus does not still remain, at least let us seek the seas of Sicily and the prepared seats, from which place we have come here, and let us seek Acestes as king.

When Ilioneus says the "hope of Iulus," he means the hope of an heir to carry on the Trojan royal line.[50] If Aeneas is lost, then Ascanius must also be lost, and the hope of a new city gone.[51] Although Aeneas and his son are coupled here, the grimmer of realities seems to be the loss of Ascanius. Textual features support this conclusion. First, the hero's child is named at the end of line 556, adding natural emphasis to the seriousness of his loss. Aeneas is mentioned as well, although not by name, and the epithet *pater optime Teucrum* is applied to the hero only here. The hero's son, however, is described as *spes* at 4.274, 6.364, 10.524, and at 12.168, all situations where the future of Rome is at stake.[52] This repetition suggests Ascanius' eternal connection with Rome. The child is the hope of the Roman future, so his safety is paramount throughout the whole of the poem.

Vergil describes the hero's love for his son in book one when Aeneas tells Achates to fetch Ascanius:

> *Aeneas (neque enim patrius consistere mentem*
> *passus amor) rapidum ad navis praemittit Achaten,*
> *Ascanio ferat haec ipsumque ad moenia ducat;*
> *omnis in Ascanio cari stat cura parentis.*
>
> (1.643-6)

> Aeneas (for his paternal love did not allow his mind to rest) sent forth swift Achates to the ships, so that he might tell these things to Ascanius and lead him to the walls; every concern of the parent lies with dear Ascanius.

Vergil makes explicit Aeneas' love for his son, establishing from the outset of the poem that

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[50] Williams (1972) *ad* 1.556. See also Conington (1963) *ad loc.*
[51] Austin (1971) *ad* 1.556.
[52] The term *spes* is used of Pallas Athena at 2.162 and of Pallas, son of Evander, at 8.514. When he ascribes this term to an actual person, Vergil typically refers to a youth. This feature suggests that youths, in general, represent the hopes of their respective communities.

Aeneas loves his child very much. The active use of *cari* is unusual. According to Austin, it is "here used of the person who feels affection, not the object of affection."[53] This oddity is further emphasized by its position following a weak caesura. Vergil here highlights the love that Aeneas feels for his son. According to Austin, it is this very love and the hero's sense of duty that ultimately lead to the downfall of Dido.[54] As we find out later in book four, Aeneas forsakes his own happiness with Dido in favor of his child's future. The hero tells the enraged queen *Italiam non sponte sequor* (4.361, "I follow Italy not of my own free will"). These elements suggest that Aeneas realizes his son's importance in the establishment of the future city of Rome, and this realization motivates his pious actions throughout the poem.

The next two appearances of Ascanius in book one involve Venus and the deception of Dido. At 1.678, Venus first outlines her intention to deceive Dido with the aid of her divine son Cupid. Although Venus does not name Ascanius, the context of the passage makes clear that he is the person about whom Venus is speaking. Venus notes,

> *regius accitu cari genitoris ad urbem*
> *Sidoniam puer ire parat, mea maxima cura,*
> *dona ferens pelago et flammis restantia Troiae;*
> (1.677-9)
>
> The royal boy, my greatest concern, bearing the gifts of Troy that have survived the sea and flames, prepares to go to the Sidonian city because of the summons of his dear father.

Of greatest importance here is the fact that Venus refers to Ascanius, not Aeneas, as her *maxima cura*. Austin suggests that this kind of description is not significant becauseVenus is acting as any other grandmother might when speaking about her grandchild.[55] Servius, however, says in his discussion of 678:

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[53] Austin (1971) *ad* 1.646. See also Williams (1972) *ad* 1.646.
[54] Austin (1971) *ad* 1.646.
[55] Austin (1971) *ad* 1.678.

> *MEA MAXIMA CURA et Aeneas cura est, sed Ascanius maxima, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus debentur: et ubique Ascanius maxima cura Veneris introducitur, ut Veneris iustissima cura, item hunc tegere et dirae valeam subducere pugnae.*
>
> "My Greatest Care: Aeneas is a concern, but Ascanius, to whom the rule of Italy and the Roman land are owed, is the greatest concern: Ascanius is everywhere introduced as the greatest concern of Venus, just as he is introduced as 'the most justified concern of Venus' (at 10.132), so that 'she might have the power to touch him again and to remove him from the awful battle.'"

The commentator suggests that Venus refers to Ascanius as her *maxima cura* because the child is the hope of the Roman future. Servius also quotes line 10.50 where Venus pleads with Jupiter to allow her to rescue Ascanius from battle. Clearly, Servius sees a connection between Venus' treatment of Ascanius at 1.687 and her treatment of her grandchild at 10.50. These two instances present overwhelming evidence that Ascanius is, in fact, Venus' top priority. Ascanius is the character who will one day contribute to the establishment of Rome, and so he is the greatest concern.

Ascanius' final mention in book one comes at 1.691. Here, Venus attempts to protect Ascanius from her deception of Dido by physically removing the child from the situation:

> *At Venus Ascanio placidam per membra quietem*
> *inrigat, et fotum gremio dea tollit in altos*
> *Idaliae lucos, ubi mollis amaracus illum*
> *floribus et dulci aspirans complectitur umbra.*
>
> (1.691-4)

> But Venus diffuses peaceful rest through the limbs of Ascanius, and the goddess lifts him, fondled in [Dido's] lap, into the high groves of Idalia, where the soft marjoram, breathing upon him, embraces him in flowers and sweet shade.

Venus attempts to preserve the innocence of her grandson in what Norden labels *eine der zartesten Stellen des Gedichts* ("one of the tenderest scenes of the poem").[56] Because Ascanius is crucial to the establishment of Rome, Venus must preserve the virtues of her grandson. She

[56] Norden (1957) 429 n.1.

must remove Ascanius from the scene in order to make certain that he will have the qualities required of a major player in city foundation. When Venus shields her grandchild from the deceit of Dido, she preserves his virtues, allowing him to remain the ideal on which future Romans might model themselves.[57]

Book Two

Ascanius figures prominently in book two, and the contexts in which he first appears suggest his significance in the poem.[58] Aeneas is the first to mention the child when he describes the fear that came upon him after Priam's death:

> *At me tum primum saevus circumstetit horror.*
> *Obstipui; subiit cari genitoris imago,*
> *ut regem aequaevum crudeli vulnere vidi*
> *vitam exhalantem; subiit deserta Creusa*
> *et direpta domus et parvi casus Iuli.*
>
> (2.559-63)

> But cruel alarm surrounded me then for the first time. I was dazed; the image of my dear father came to mind, just as I saw my king, who was about the same age as my father, exhaling his life by means of a cruel wound; my Creusa, having been forsaken, came to mind, as did my plundered home and the misfortune of little Iulus.

The potential destruction of his family and home encourages the hero to escape from Troy. This type of construction occurs several times throughout book two.[59] On all of these occasions, the

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[57] See Petrini (1997) 87-91.

[58] Ascanius is mentioned at 2.563, 598, 652, 666, 674, 677, 682, 710, 723, and 747.

[59] *Non prius aspicies ubi fessum aetate parentem / liqueris Anchisen, superet coniunxne Creusa / Ascaniusque puer*? (2.596-8, "Will you not look first at where you left your father Anchises, weary with age? Will you not see first if your wife and the boy Ascanius have survived?"). *Hoc erat, alma parens, quod me per tela, per ignis / eripis, ut mediis hostem in penetralibus utque / Ascanium patremque meum iuxtaque Creusam / alterum in alterius mactatos sanguine cernam*? (2.664-7, "Was it for this, kind parent, that you rescued me from weapons and from fires, that I might discern the enemy in the middle of the sanctuary, that I might discern Ascanius, my father,

hero's family is the catalyst that propels the action of the plot. Aeneas must get out of Troy, and both Anchises and Ascanius must accompany him. Notice that Creusa is never mentioned first on these occasions. Vergil here subtly foreshadows the death of the hero's wife.[60] She is never the first family member to be mentioned, and Creusa herself suggests that Ascanius is of the utmost importance when she lifts her son up to his father in order to convince him to bring his family along on his journey:

> *Ecce autem complexa pedes in limine coniunx*
> *haerebat, parvumque patri tendebat Iulum:*
> *'Si periturus abis, et nos rape in omnia tecum;*
> *sin aliquam expertus sumptis spem ponis in armis,*
> *hanc primum tutare domum. Cui parvus Iulus,*
> *cui pater et coniunx quondam tua dicta relinquor?'*
> (2.673-78)

> But look! His wife, having embraced her husband's feet, hung in the threshold, and she held little Iulus up to his father: "If you, about to die, leave, take us with you into every danger; but if you, having experienced it, place some hope in the taking up of weapons, protect this home first. To whom is little Iulus left? Your father? To whom am I left, your wife, at one time called yours?

Creusa places herself after Ascanius and Anchises, suggesting that the survival of these two characters is paramount. Vergil here creates a subtle hierarchy with Anchises and Ascanius at the top. Although the ordering of these two characters varies in the given examples, the point is the same. Anchises and Ascanius are crucial to the progression of the plot's action, a fact that

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and Creusa nearby, all slaughtered, one in the blood of the other?"). *Ergo age, care pater, cervici imponere nostrae; / ipse subibo umeris nec me labor iste gravabit; / quo res cumque cadent, unum et commune periclum, / una salus ambobus erit. Mihi parvus Iulus / sit comes, et longe servet vestigia coniunx*. (2.707-11, "Then come, dear father, place yourself on my neck; I, myself, will bear you on my shoulders, and that labor will not burden me; whatever happens, there will be one common danger, there will be one safety for us both. May my little Iulus come as a comrade, and may my wife keep her tracks at a distance."). *Ascanium Anchisenque patrem Teucrosque penatis / commendo sociis et curva valle recondo* (2.747-8, "I entrust Ascanius, my father Anchises, and the Teucrian household gods to my comrades, and I hide them in a curved valley").

[60]For more on the foreshadowing of Creusa's death, see Servius *ad* 2.711 and Conington (1963) *ad* 2.711. Cf. Williams (1972) *ad* 2.711.

exposes the hero's lack of agency in the poem. Aeneas consistently places his family's survival before his own, making him the model of *pietas*.

Although Ascanius is mentioned many times in book two, the most significant context in which he appears is in association with a miracle. The scene concerns Anchises' positive interpretation of a flame on the head of Ascanius. The flame is described as *mirabile monstrum* ("wonderful omen") at 2.680. According to Block, a *monstrum* can signal a warning, a powerful force that may be evil, or a divine sign, as is likely the case here.[61] *Mirabile monstrum* appears five times in the poem, three of which are associated with the future of Rome and Ascanius.[62] The application of this phrase to the hero's child, therefore, suggests a powerful association with Rome. In addition, the flames are reminiscent of Servius Tullius, whom Livy also discusses at 1.39 of his histories. According to Conington, the flames represent an omen of future greatness in Livy, suggesting Ascanius' potential as a future king.[63] These associations suggest the future greatness of Ascanius, and Anchises' interpretation of the omen signals the importance of Ascanius in the whole of the poem. Following the confirmation of the portent, Anchises asks Jupiter to preserve his grandson (2.702, *servate nepotem*). According to Servius, Anchises makes this request because Ascanius is the character *a quo certum erat Romanam prolem*

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[61] Block (1981) 96-7. For more on features of prodigy scenes and reader interpretations, see Block (1981) 95-107.

[62] The term is used at 2.680 to describe the flame on the head of Ascanius, at 3.36 to describe Polydorus, at 8.81 to describe the white sow on the bank of the Tiber, at 9.120 to describe Cybele's transformation of the nymphs into dolphins, and at 10.637 to describe the image of Aeneas fashioned by Juno. The phrase is associated with Ascanius here at 2.680, at 8.81, and at 9.120. Grandsen (1976) *ad* 8.81 notes the similarity between lines 2.680 and 8.81, suggesting that each of these lines is associated with Ascanius and the future of Rome. The nymphs, particularly Cymodocea, will be associated with Ascanius later in book ten. The phrase is, therefore, predominantly associated with Ascanius and the future of Rome. See also my chapter one.

[63] Conington (1963) *ad* 2.683. See also Williams (1972) *ad* 2.682-3.

propagatum iri ("from whom it was certain that the Roman race would be moved forward").[64] Ascanius is not only marked for greatness, but he represents the future glory of the Roman state.

Book Three

When Ascanius appears in book three, he is a major concern for Andromache. When she questions Aeneas, Andromache subtly hints at Rome. After she recognizes the hero, she asks

> *Sed tibi qui cursum venti, quae fata dedere?*
> *Aut quisnam ignarum nostris deus appulit oris?*
> *Quid puer Ascanius? Superatne et vescitur aura?*
> *Quem tibi iam Troia –*[65]
> *Ecqua tamen puero est amissae cura parentis?*[66]
> *Ecquid in antiquam virtutem animosque virilis*
> *et pater Aeneas et avunculus excitat Hector?*
>
> (3.337-43)

> But what winds guided your course? What fates? Or what god drove you, unknowing, to our shores? How is the boy Ascanius? Did he survive, and does he feed on air? The one whom for you Troy already . . . But does the boy have any concern for his dead mother? Do both his father Aeneas and his uncle Hector rouse him to any ancient virtue and heroic spirits?

The pathos of this scene is apparent. Andromache hastily questions the hero about his arrival at Buthrotum, concentrating on the divine motivation of his actions. She then immediately turns her thoughts to Ascanius, indicating that the child is her major concern. According to Williams, Andromache poses her questions "so as to lead to the answer of Roman destiny."[67] She does not know what the future holds, yet she hints at the future of Rome when she makes Ascanius her

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[64] Servius *ad* 2.702. See also Conington (1963) *ad* 2.702.
[65] This is the only grammatically incomplete line in the poem. Sparrow (1931) 43 argues that "Virgil may have intended Andromache's utterance to be broken off by her sudden recollection of Creusa's death." Feldman (1958) 362 proposes that Andromache has broken down in tears.
[66] For more on the comparison of Andromache and Creusa, see Feldman (1958) 362 and Grimm (1967) 158.
[67] Williams (1972) *ad* 3.337-8.

primary concern. Andromache further displays her concern for Ascanius when she presents gifts to the child, addressing him directly:

> *accipe et haec, manuum tibi quae monimenta mearum*
> *sint, puer, et longum Andromachae testentur amorem,*
> *coniugis Hectoreae. Cape dona extrema tuorum,*
> *o mihi sola mei super Astyanactis imago.*
> *Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat;*
> *et nunc aequali tecum pubesceret aevo.*
>
> (3.486-91)

> Receive these also, which would be monuments of my hands for you, boy, and which would be testaments to the long love of Andromache, the wife of Hector. Take the final gifts of your people, sole-surviving image of my Astyanax. That one bore your eyes, your hands, your face; and now he would be your age, growing up with you.

This scene exhibits the same pathos as in the preceding example. Andromache displays her overwhelming concern for the child's well-being, likening him to her own deceased son Astyanax. As Grimm notes, the presence of Ascanius here makes the scene significantly more evocative.[68] When she gives the gifts directly to the child, she is virtually handing Ascanius the sad Trojan past that she has endured, including the death of her son, in the hopes that he may create a brighter future. Ascanius is Andromache's primary concern, not only because he reminds her of Astyanax, but also because he has survived the war and has the potential to extend the once ill-fated Trojan line.

Book Four

In book four, the character of Ascanius serves as a catalyst to propel Aeneas forward. Although mentioned several times in situations that emphasize the anguish of Dido,[69] Ascanius

[68] Grimm (1967) 160.
[69] 4.84, 602, 616.

is primarily associated with divine manifestations. Jupiter says

> *Si nulla accendit tantarum gloria rerum*
> *nec super ipse sua molitur laude laborem,*
> *Ascanione pater Romanas invidet arces?*
> *Quid struit? Aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur*
> *nec prolem Ausoniam et Lavinia respicit arva?*
> *Naviget! Haec summa est, hic nostri nuntius esto.*
>
> (4.232-7)
>
> If the glory of such great things does not inflame him, and if he himself does not strive to accomplish labor beyond his own praise, does the father begrudge Ascanius the Roman citadels? What is he planning? With what hope does he delay in the unfriendly nation? Does he have no regard for Ausonian progeny and Lavinian fields? Let him sail! This is paramount. This is my message.

Jupiter tells Mercury to order Aeneas to leave Carthage in favor of Italy. The king of the gods appeals to Aeneas' *pietas*.[70] If the hero will not pursue his destiny for his own sake, perhaps, he will continue on for the sake of his child. Aeneas must get to Italy with Ascanius, who will one day give rise to the Roman nation.[71] When Mercury delivers Jupiter's message, he uses the same type of language to goad the hero to leave Carthage. The messenger god says

> *Quid struis? Aut qua spe Libycis teris otia terris?*
> *Si te nulla movet tantarum gloria rerum*
> *[nec super ipse tua moliris laude laborem,]*
> *Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli*
> *respice, cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus*
> *debetur.*
>
> (4.271-6)
>
> What are you planning? With what hope are you wasting your leisure in Libyan lands? If the glory of very great things does not move you [and if you yourself do not strive to accomplish labor beyond your own praise,] look at Ascanius springing up and the hopes of your heir Iulus, to whom the kingdom of Italy and the Roman land are owed.

Mercury virtually repeats the message of Jupiter to Aeneas. Mercury appeals to Aeneas' *pietas*, and his language suggests the future of the Roman nation. According to Connington, *surgere*

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[70] See Austin (1955) *ad* 4.234.
[71] Servius *ad* 4.234.

indicates the springing up of a race.[72] When he ascribes *surgentem* as a participle to the child, Vergil explicitly associates Ascanius with the future growth of the Roman race. Vergil also says that the kingdom of Italy and the Roman land are owed to Ascanius (*cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus debetur),* making the child's connection with Rome explicit. When these two gods use Ascanius to goad Aeneas towards Italy, not only do they uphold the implications of *pietas*, but they also suggest that Ascanius is of the utmost importance. Aeneas must get to Italy with his son so that Ascanius may one day fulfill the destiny outlined in Jupiter's prophecy of book one.

After Mercury's frightening visit, Aeneas determines to set sail for Italy and to forsake his relationship with Dido. Rather than taking responsibility for his actions, Aeneas presents himself to Dido as the object of divine intervention, as a man subject to the demands of *pietas*:

> *Me patris Anchisae, quotiens umentibus umbris*
> *nox operit terras, quotiens astra ignea surgunt,*
> *admonet in somnis et turbida terret imago;*
> *me puer Ascanius capitisque iniuria cari,*
> *quem regno Hesperiae fraudo et fatalibus arvis.*
> *Nunc etiam interpres divum Iove missus ab ipso*
> *(testor utrumque caput) celeris mandata per auras*
> *detulit: ipse deum manifesto in lumine vidi*
> *intrantem muros vocemque his auribus hausi.*
> *Desine meque tuis incendere teque querelis;*
> *Italiam non sponte sequor.*
>
> (4.351-61)

> The troubled image of my father warns me in dreams and terrifies me, as often as the night covers the lands with dewy shades, as often as the fiery stars rise; the boy Ascanius and the wrong I am doing to his dear head moves me, the boy whom I defraud of his Hesperian kingdom and destined fields. Now even an interpreter of the gods sent by Jove himself (I swear by each of our heads) has carried down commands through the swift breezes; I myself in the clear threshold saw the god entering the walls, and I drank in his voice in these ears. Stop burning both me and you with your complaints; I am following Italy not of my own free will.

[72] Conington (1963) *ad* 4.274

Aeneas mentions Anchises and Ascanius first, suggesting that these characters are the primary cause for his departure. As in book two, the positions of Anchises and Ascanius create a subtle hierarchy in Aeneas' motivations. This feature suggests that these two characters are exceedingly significant in the progression of the poem's plot. Although Aeneas is leading much of the action, his sole motivation is his family. The hero consistently surrenders his agency to Anchises and Ascanius or to the gods themselves, as we see at 4.356-61. There, Aeneas argues that he is only acting as Jupiter demanded. He is not personally to blame. When Aeneas places his family at the top of his motivational hierarchy, he calls attention to its importance in the whole of the poem and exhibits his own lack of agency in the progression of the poem's plot.

Book Five

When he appears in book five, Ascanius is primarily connected with the *lusus Troiae*.[73] Vergil presents a "fictionalized *aetion* for contemporary revivals of the game, first by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C. and then by Augustus."[74] Ascanius is the third and last horseman and a primary target of description in these games. Vergil emphasizes Ascanius when he has the child enter last and when he describes the child as *ante omnis pulcher* (5.570, "handsome above all the others").[75] This emphasis points to Ascanius' prominence in the procession, and, because the

[73] 5.546, 548, 569, 570, 597.

[74] Petrini (1997) 93. Petrini suggests that the "occurrence (of the *lusus Troiae*) in the *Aeneid* asserts a continuity between past and present, both in the narrative time of the poem, *gaudentque tuentes . . . veterumque agnoscunt ora parentum* [they felt delight watching their sons . . . and recognized in them the faces of their forbears] (*A*. 5.575-76), and in the time of the Republic, *Troiaque nunc pueri, Troianum dicitur agmen* [and today the boys are called Troy, the band is called Trojan] (*A*. 5.602)." For more on the *lusus Troiae*, see Heinze (1993) 128-9, Syed (2005) 216-7, and Williams (1972) *ad* 5.545f.

[75] Coleman (1942) 143 suggests that when Vergil describes him as *pulcher*, the poet is signaling

games are explicitly associated with the future of Rome and Augustus, in particular, Ascanius must also be significant in the establishment of Rome.[76]

Ascanius speaks for the first time in book five when he pleads with the Trojan women after they burn their ships. Vergil describes the involvement of Ascanius:

> *Primus et Ascanius, cursus ut laetus equestris*
> *ducebat, sic acer equo turbata petivit*
> *castra, nec exanimes possunt retinere magistri.*
> *'Quis furor iste novus? Quo nunc, quo tenditis,' inquit,*
> *'heu, miserae cives? Non hostem inimicaque castra*
> *Argivum, vestras spes uritis. En, ego vester*
> *Ascanius!'*
>
> (5.667-73)

> First Ascanius, just as he was as he happily led the equestrian courses, so he, swift on his horse, sought the confused camps, and his breathless trainers were not able to hold him back. 'What new frenzy is that? Where now, where are you aiming?' he said. 'Alas! Wretched citizens? You are not burning the enemy and the hostile camps of the Argives, but your own hopes. Look! I am your Ascanius!'

Ascanius certainly shows his agency in the protection of the Roman future. Vergil describes the boy as *primus*, indicating his leadership in the affair. Ascanius also points himself out to the women at 5.672-3 in the hope that their recognition of him will restore their good judgment. Because his words are the catalyst for the Trojan women to regain their judgment, the character of Ascanius is a significant factor in the progression of the poem's action. Ascanius, even in his own words, even at this early point in the poem, is capable of taking on the responsibility for the survival of the Trojan destiny, a feature that becomes more and more prominent in the course of the *Aeneid*.

Ascanius' growth from the awkwardness of childhood to the handsomeness of boyhood, which signals his growing responsibility in the whole of the poem. See also Feldman (1953) 304 who notes the dynamic growth of Ascanius in comparison to the other characters of the *Aeneid*, "who are almost entirely static."

[76] See Petrini (1997) 93-100.

Book Six

Ascanius first appears in book six in the Palinurus episode. Here, Palinurus mentions Aeneas' family in his requests of the hero. The ghost says

> *quod te per caeli iucundum lumen et auras,*
> *per genitorem oro, per spes surgentis Iuli,*
> *eripe me his, invicte, malis:*
>
> (6.363-5)

> Therefore, I beg you by the pleasant light of heaven and the breezes, by your father, by the hopes of rising Iulus, snatch me away from these evils, my invincible friend.

Palinurus plays upon the *pietas* of Aeneas when he attempts to coax the hero with oaths. The distressed ghost swears by Anchises and Ascanius in order to make his requests more effectual. This is consistent with several instances, particularly those in book two, where characters mention the hero's family to play upon his *pietas*. Because he is mentioned in this context, Ascanius becomes a vehicle which others might use to coax the hero into executing their wishes. Ascanius is also associated with hope on this occasion. As at 1.556 and at 4.274, Vergil describes the boy in conjunction with the term *spes*. This repetition provides overwhelming evidence that Ascanius represents the hope of the future. As at 4.274, Vergil uses the term *surgentis* to describe the boy. As I mentioned above, Conington noted this term's association with the springing up of new nations.[77] This association provides further evidence of Ascanius' connection with the development of the Roman nation, which, in turn, indicates his significance in the future establishment of Rome.

Later in book six, Anchises mentions Ascanius in his detailed prophecy of the future of Rome. He says

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[77] Conington (1963) *ad* 4.274

> *Hic Caesar et omnis Iuli*
> *progenies magnum caeli ventura sub axem.*
> *Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti saepius audis,*
> *Augustus Caesar, divi genus, aurea condet*
> *saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arva*
> *Saturno quondam, super et Garamantas et Indos*
> *proferet imperium;*
>
> (6.789-95)
>
> Here is Caesar and the entire race of Iulus that will come under the great axis of heaven. Here is the man, right here, whom you have often heard promised to you, Augustus Caesar, race of a god, who will once again establish a golden age in Latium through the fields formerly ruled by Saturn and who will extend sovereignty beyond the Garamantes and the Indi.

Because the prophecy concerns Rome, Ascanius' mention therein connects him with the future city. Vergil also discusses the lineage of the boy in a passage primarily associated with Augustus, who is given prominence by the repetition of the demonstrative *hic* at 6.791.[78] Because Ascanius' descendants are mentioned in conjunction with such a prominent Roman figure, the boy becomes a virtual prototypical Roman, making his connection with the future city that much more apparent. Vergil's phrasing here explicitly connects Ascanius with the future of Rome and suggests the boy's significance in the development of the Roman state.

Book Seven

In book seven, Ascanius' recognition of a sign fulfills the prophecy of Celaeno in book three. After landing in Italy, hunger forces the Trojans to consume their "tables." Ascanius is the first to notice the fulfillment of the prophecy as delivered at 3.257: '*heus, etiam mensas consumimus*' *inquit Iulus / nec plura, adludens* (7.116-7, "Look! We are even eating our tables,"

[78] For more on the connection between Ascanius and Augustus, see Austin (1977) *ad* 6.788f.

said Iulus jokingly and nothing more").[79] Heinze has described this statement as a "piece of schoolboy humour"[80] Although Ascanius says only this, jokingly, his recognition of the sign is crucial to Aeneas' realization that he has, in fact, reached his destination. That Ascanius is responsible for Aeneas' understanding of the prophecy indicates the boy's growing role in the action. Interestingly, when he confirms the prophecy of Celaeno, Ascanius distinguishes himself from Anchises, whose misinterpretation of Apollo's oracle at 3.94-8 had caused the Trojans much hardship.[81] Although both characters contribute to the progression of the poem's plot, Ascanius leads the Trojans to a correct interpretation, getting them closer to their final destination. Indeed, the boy is contributing to his own Roman destiny. He takes the initiative on those occasions where his father will not or cannot. Aeneas has no agency in this scene, a point underscored by the hero's incorrect attribution of the prophecy to Anchises, rather than Celaeno, at 7.122f. Williams calls this mistake "an inconsistency due no doubt to the large part played by Anchises in the early stages of Aeneas' mission in advising and guiding his son."[82] When he makes this mistake, Aeneas displays his lack of agency in the interpretation of prophetic

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[79] Goins (1993) 378 discusses Ascanius' recognition of the fulfillment of Celaeno's prophecy and its affect on Aeneas' perspective on his *labores*. He argues that "Aeneas has gained the assurance and confidence necessary to meet his troubles without anxiety. Hereafter, the hero will undergo things that most men would call *labores*, indeed that he himself would have called *labores* earlier; but now, because of the vindication of his mission implicit in Iulus' statement, he no longer sees things in the same way."

[80] Heinze (1993) 220.

[81] *Dardanidae duri, quae vos a stirpe parentum / prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere laeto accipiet reduces. Antiquam exquirite matrem. / Hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris / et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis* (3.94-8, "Hardy Trojans, the first land which bore you from the stock of your parents, that same land will receive you, restored, in her happy bosom. Seek out your ancient mother. Here the house of Aeneas will rule over all the shores and his children's children and those who will arise from them").

[82] Williams (1973) *ad* 7.107f. Cf. Heinze (1993) 72-3. See also Quint (1982) 30, who notes that "Aeneas defers to his father with the exemplary piety for which he is renowned, and it is difficult at times to determine just which of the two men is in charge."

mechanisms. Ascanius becomes, in effect, the driving force behind the interpretation of the prophecy.

Ascanius appears later in book seven in the context of the killing of Silvia's stag and the resulting retaliation of the Latins (7.475-510).[83] This scene initiates war between Trojans and Latins, and Ascanius' involvement makes explicit his connection with the progression of the plot. Allecto incites the hounds of Ascanius to chase the pet stag of Silvia, the sister of King Latinus' chief herdsman. Unaware that the stag is a pet, Ascanius lets loose a fatal arrow upon the animal whose cries are soon heard by the Latins, inciting them to take revenge. Allecto has set the stage for the war that will eventually lead to the establishment of Rome through Ascanius. Feldman notes that "Allecto does not inspire Iulus with frenzy, as she does Amata and Turnus. The reason for this is obvious: because of Ascanius' importance in the future history of Rome he cannot be portrayed as the victim of such madness; rather it is his hounds that become frenzied."[84] In much the same manner as Venus shields Ascanius from her deceit of Dido, Vergil here maintains the good character of the boy when he directs Allecto's magic elsewhere. While Ascanius is the catalyst of forward action, Vergil frees him from negative divine enchantment when Allecto bewitches the boy's hounds, rather than the boy himself. Vergil preserves Ascanius for his role in the establishment of Rome.

[83] Putnam (1970) 410 notes the similarities between Iulus' killing of the stag and the Trojan killing of the Harpies' cattle, arguing that both acts were unjustified.
[84] Feldman (1953) 312 n.36.

Book Eight

In book eight, Ascanius appears on three occasions, two of which concern the future of Rome.[85] At 8.48, Tiberinus mentions Ascanius in his long-term prophecy after his short description of the white sow. He says

> *[Hic locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum,]*
> *ex quo ter denis urbem redeuntibus annis*
> *Ascanius clari condet cognominis Albam.*
> *Haud incerta cano.*
>
> (8.46-9)

> [Here will be the site of the city that will be a sure rest from your labors,] after which Ascanius will found the city Alba of the renowned cognomen when thirty years have passed. I sing things by no means uncertain.

When Tiberinus mentions Ascanius in a long-term prophecy that explicitly states his connection with Alba Longa, he confirms the boy's significance in the establishment of Rome. Tiberinus says that he is predicting events *haud incerta* (8.49, "by no means uncertain"). In much the same way as *haud ignarus*, discussed in chapter one, this phrase, used only here, points to the future of Rome.

At 8.629, Vergil mentions Ascanius in the shield ekphrasis:

> *Illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos*
> *haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi*
> *fecerat Ignipotens, illic genus omne futurae*
> *stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella.*
>
> (8.626-9).

> There, the Lord of Fire, not ignorant of prophets or unknowing of the age to come, had fashioned the story of Italy and the triumphs of the Romans, and, there, he had fashioned every generation of the future stock from Ascanius and the wars fought one by one.

Vergil explicitly associates Ascanius with the future of Rome, and he describes Vulcan as *haud*

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[85] 8.48, 550, 629.

ignarus, which has become a virtual tagline for Rome.[86] Of major significance here is the fact that Vergil never once mentions Aeneas in his initial description of the shield, suggesting that Ascanius is paramount where the future of Rome is concerned.

Book Nine

Ascanius figures prominently in book nine, more so than in any other book.[87] Because Aeneas is visiting Pallanteum via the Tiber throughout the whole of the book, Ascanius must act independently of his father and assume many adult responsibilities (9.311, *ante annos animumque gerens curamque virilem*, "carrying a manly mind and care beyond his years"). When he converses with Nisus and Euryalus (9.176-313) before their tragic mission, Ascanius stresses his newfound authority and enthusiastically supports the youths' plan, telling them that their efforts will be rewarded. As Williams points out, the speech is somewhat ingenuous.[88] Nevertheless, Ascanius' adoption of this adult role and his imitation of his father's heroic world indicate his increasing maturity. He is beginning to develop those characteristics required of adults while maintaining his childlike sensitivities. Hearing Euryalus speak of his mother, Ascanius is visibly upset:

> *percussa mente dedere*
> *Dardanidae lacrimas, ante omnis pulcher Iulus,*
> *atque animum patriae strinxit pietatis imago.*
> (9.292-4)
>
> The Trojans cried with a shaken mind, especially handsome Iulus, and the image of piety inspired his love for his fatherland.

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[86] See my n.28.
[87] 9.232, 256, 258, 293, 310, 501, 592, 622, 636, 640, 646, 649, 652.
[88] Williams (1973) *ad* 9.176f.; see also Williams (1973) *ad* 9.276.

Here at least, Ascanius assumes the *pietas* so characteristic of Aeneas himself, indicating his growing agency. Servius agrees, writing in his discussion of 292:

> *STRINXIT PIETATIS IMAGO praestrinxit, momordit, admonuit. Sensus autem est: aut postquam vidit istum sic amare matrem, paternae pietatis virtutem coepit agnoscere: aut certe coepit etiam ipse sic in pietatem moveri, ut eius consueverat pater: aut certe exemplo Euryali avidius coepit amare patrem etiam ante dilectum.*
>
> "The image of piety inspired (his love for his father): it squeezed him, it bit him, it reminded him. But the sense is: either after he (Ascanius) saw that he (Euryalus) so loved his mother, he began to acknowledge the virtue of his father's piety, or certainly he himself also began to be moved so towards piety, just as his father had been accustomed, or certainly through the example of Euryalus he began to love his father more avidly, although he had esteemed him before."

Servius suggests the possibility that Ascanius is assuming the pious role of his father after witnessing the heartfelt devotion of Euryalus. Moved by the bravery of the two youths, he solidifies his own growing *pietas*, a character trait to be valued by Romans to come.[89] Ascanius is the vital connection between Aeneas' heroic world and the future glory of Vergil's own Rome, and the poet skillfully depicts the boy's progression and his growing piety, presenting a model of admirable behavior.[90]

> Ascanius is initiated into the adult world of his father when he kills Numanus:[91]
>
> *Tum primum bello celerem intendisse sagittam*
> *dicitur ante feras solitus terrere fugacis*
> *Ascanius, fortemque manu fudisse Numanum,*
> (9.590-2)
>
> For the first time then Ascanius, previously accustomed to frighten wild beasts into flight, is said to have extended a swift arrow in war and killed brave Numanus with his own hand.

No longer is Ascanius the childlike character depicted at Carthage, nor is he the youth attempting

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[89] On the growth of Ascanius within the *Aeneid*, see Coleman (1942) 142-7 and Feldman (1953) 304.
[90] On Ascanius' growth and relevance to the future of Rome, see Petrini (1997) 87-110.
[91] Petrini (1997) 101-3.

to mimic his father's heroic world, whether through the *lusus Troiae* or his naïve promises to Nisus and Euryalus. With the killing of Numanus, Ascanius becomes a warrior capable of bringing death and destruction. Petrini remarks, "As Aeneas figuratively moves back in time to the world's 'childhood,' Ascanius moves in the opposite direction."[92] While Aeneas regresses, Ascanius progresses, a consistent feature throughout the poem. Ascanius is taking on the adult characteristics required for his very important role in establishing Rome.

Vergil carefully comments on the overtly transitional aspects of the young man. Already mentioned is the fact that the character of Ascanius differs greatly from other characters, who show very little development in the course of the poem.[93] Ascanius, on the other hand, shows the fluid movement of growing maturity. He moves from a child, to a boy, to a youth capable of leadership. Here in book nine, we see his final initiation into the adult world. At the same time, Vergil skillfully holds Ascanius back to preserve his character for his future role, carefully contrasting his youthful and adult features.

After Ascanius kills Numanus, Apollo pays the boy a visit.

> *macte nova virtute, puer, sic itur ad astra,*
> *dis genite et geniture deos. Iure omnia bella*
> *gente sub Assaraci fato ventura resident,*
> *nec te Troia capit.*
>
> (9.641-4)

> Boy, honored in your new manliness, born from gods and destined to bear gods, thus man is conveyed to the stars. All wars destined by fate to come under the line of Assaracus will justly come to an end, and Troy no longer holds you.[94]

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[92] Petrini (1997) 101; see also 49-58.
[93] Feldman (1953) 304 and Coleman (1942) 142-7.
[94] Petrini (1997) 104 notes that "Vergil stops short of resolving the contradiction between this prophecy (the positive reading, at least) and the momentum of history: Iulus remains a child, stalled before his final emergence as either a miraculous agent of change (like the *puer* of the fourth *Eclogue*) or as an epic character who will carry ancestral 'guilt' to later generations. The profession of deliverance remains only a promise, a formulaic hope for an always receding future."

Vergil contrasts *virtute* with *puer* when he places the two words side by side. As Petrini remarks, this feature "suggests that Iulus will have both his new adulthood (*vir* in *virtute*) and the innocence of childhood (*puer*)—heroism with no taint of the past."[95] This idea is further displayed in the second part of Apollo's speech to Ascanius.

> *sit satis, Aenide, telis impune Numanum*
> *oppetiisse tuis; primam hanc tibi magnus Apollo*
> *concedit laudem et paribus non invidet armis;*
> *cetera parce, puer, bello.*
>
> (9.653-6)

> It is enough, son of Aeneas, to have faced Numanus with your weapons with impunity; great Apollo conceded this first praise to you and he didn't begrudge you equal arms; spare the rest in war, boy.

Vergil once again presents a contrast between childhood and adulthood when he names Ascanius with his patronymic and then describes him as *puer* just three lines later. In fact, Ascanius receives his patronymic on this one occasion only, making its appearance that much more effective. Even as Venus preserves her grandson from her deceit of Dido in book one, so Apollo protects Ascanius from the evils of war. He frees him from his Trojan past and readies him for his Roman future. Troy no longer holds him (*nec te Troia capit*).

Book Ten

Venus' plea to Jupiter in book ten indicates her overwhelming concern for Ascanius. As in book one, Venus begs her father to allow her to protect her grandson. She says of the boy

> *Si nulla est regio Teucris quam det tua coniunx*
> *dura, per eversae, genitor, fumantia Troiae*
> *excidia obtestor: liceat dimittere ab armis*

[95] Petrini (1997) 103.

> *incolumem Ascanium, liceat superesse nepotem.*
> *Aeneas sane ignotis iactetur in undis*
> *et quacumque viam dederit Fortuna sequatur:*
> *hunc tegere et dirae valeam subducere pugnae.*
> (10.44-50)

> If there is no region that your harsh wife allows for the Teucrians, I beg you, father, by the smoking ruins of upturned Troy: allow me to send Ascanius away from the arms unharmed; allow my grandson to survive. Aeneas may well be tossed around in unfamiliar waves and follow whatever way Fortune may give: grant me the power to protect this boy and remove him from the harsh fight.

Venus displays her overwhelming concern for her grandson. In fact, she clearly disregards Aeneas in favor of the boy. Servius suggests an explanation for this noticeable disregard in his discussion of 47:

> *INCOLUMEM ASCANIUM ideo Venus pro Aenea non petit hoc loco, non quia pro eo non movetur, sed aut quia scit eum celerius esse moriturum, aut quia soli Ascanio debetur imperium, ut <IV 275> cui regnum Italiae Romanaque tellus debentur.*
>
> UNHARMED ASCANIUS On that account, Venus is not asking on behalf of Aeneas in this place, not because she is not concerned about him, but either because she knows that he will die soon after, or because sovereignty is owed to Ascanius alone, just as <at 4.275> (when Vergil says that) 'the rule of Italy and the Roman land are owed to him (Ascanius).'

These two possibilities lead to the same conclusion. Venus is concerned about her grandson, because he is to be the survivor who will one day most contribute to the establishment of Rome. Aeneas' survival is beside the point, so long as Ascanius is safe. Ascanius must be preserved, because he is the representative of the Roman future, not Aeneas. Once Aeneas reaches Italy, his mission is complete. Then it is for Ascanius alone to advance the Trojan cause.

Ascanius next appears at 10.236 in the context of Cymodocea's prophecy to Aeneas. When Vergil describes the nymph as *haud ignara* (10.247, "by no means unknowing"), he certainly suggests her connection with Rome.[96] Because her prophecy concerns the protection of

[96] See my n.28.

Ascanius, the boy must be associated with Rome as well. Cymodocea here presents the same sentiment expressed by Venus in the previous example. Ascanius must be preserved because of his role in the establishment of Rome, which is, after all, the professed goal of the poem.

After the death of Pallas, Aeneas rages through the Latins in an attempt to kill as many victims as possible, stopping at Magus who appeals to the hero's *pietas*. The Latin soldier insistently requests of Aeneas

> *per patrios manis et spes surgentis Iuli*
> *te precor, hanc animam serves natoque patrique.*
> *Est domus alta, iacent penitus defossa talenta*
> *caelati argenti, sunt auri pondera facti*
> *infectique mihi. Non hic victoria Teucrum*
> *vertitur aut anima una dabit discrimina tanta.*
>
> (10.524-9)

> I beg you, by the shade of your father and the hopes of growing Iulus, preserve this life for a father and son. I have a great house, and lying buried deep within are talents of engraved silver and weights of finished and unfinished gold. The victory of the Teucrians is not involved here, nor will one life make much of a difference.[97]

As in several examples already mentioned, Magus pleads with Aeneas to spare his life, first by invoking the hero's father and son and, second, by promising Aeneas a portion of his wealth. His own fury so preoccupies the hero that he denies even appeals to his *pietas*, so heightening the emotional impact of the scene.[98] Aeneas does attempt to justify his actions immediately after hearing Magus' pleas. He tells the Latin just before he kills him

> *argenti atque auri memoras quae multa talenta*
> *natis parce tuis. Belli commercia Turnus*
> *sustulit ista prior iam tum Pallante perempto.*
> *Hoc patris Anchisae manes, hoc sentit Iulus.*
>
> (10.531-4)

> The many talents of silver and gold which you recall, spare them for your sons. Turnus

[97] For more on Vergil's persuasive speeches, see Heinze (1993) 322-4.
[98] Harrison (1991) *ad* 10.524-5 notes that "this is a powerful appeal for the family-minded Romans and particularly for Aeneas, paragon of *pietas*, and his rejection of it is disturbing."

> has already done away with those spoils of war now that Pallas has been lost. The shades of my father Anchises and Iulus feel the same.

Aeneas tries to remove any blame from himself by saying that Anchises and Ascanius feel just as he does. The hero's words suggest that an appeal to his *pietas* would usually work. Were his responsibilities to his family not significant, there would be no need for the hero even to address Magus' request. Both Magus and Aeneas subtly demonstrate the importance of familial devotion and suggest that both Anchises and Ascanius are effective catalysts in the persuasion of the hero.

Book Eleven

Ascanius is mentioned only once in book eleven in a context that explicitly associates him with the deceased Pallas. At the funeral of Aeneas' dear friend, the hero says *Hei mihi, quantum praesidium, Ausonia, et quantum tu perdis, Iule*! (11.57-8, "Woe is me, how great a protection, Ausonia, and how great a protection you, too, are losing, Iulus.") As Williams notes, "Aeneas ends by linking Pallas with his own son Iulus, a further indication of his feelings of guilt for having failed to protect Pallas."[99] Aeneas is pained by the fact that he could not preserve the youth Pallas for the future protection of his son. The hero grieves not only for the loss of Pallas, but for the loss of the youth's potential. He sees the fragility of life and, as Heinze points out, "he is deeply concerned about the future of his family."[100] As we have seen, youths represent the hopes of a people.[101] When Pallas is killed, the youth's future potential is eliminated, leading the hero to contemplate the fragility of his own son's future.

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[99] Williams (1973) *ad* 11.58.
[100] Heinze (1993) 326.
[101] See my n.52.

Book Twelve

Vergil's treatment of Ascanius in book twelve further suggests the boy's significance. The poet writes of Aeneas and his son

> *Hinc pater Aeneas, Romanae stirpis origo,*
> *sidereo flagrans clipeo et caelestibus armis*
> *et iuxta Ascanius, magnae spes altera Romae,*
> *procedunt castris,*
>
> (12.166-9)

> Here, father Aeneas, the source of the Roman line, blazing with his starry shield and heavenly arms, and close at his side Ascanius, the other hope of great Rome, proceed from their camps.

Here Vergil explicitly associates Aeneas with Rome, but Aeneas as the father of Ascanius. The hero is described as both *pater* and *origo* in the same line, emphasizing his paternal relationship with Rome. This relationship, however, only exists through Aeneas' paternal tie to Ascanius. The hero is not directly relevant to the establishment of the great city; rather, he is the father of the character who will one day contribute most to the city's founding. Ascanius is described as the *spes* of Rome, a term that suggests the future. These features suggest that Aeneas is certainly connected with Rome, but only as a result of his being the father of Ascanius

Aeneas speaks to his son for the first time in book twelve in Ascanius' final appearance in the poem.

> *disce, puer, virtutem ex me verumque laborem,*
> *fortunam ex aliis. Nunc te mea dextera bello*
> *defensum dabit et magna inter praemia ducet.*
> *Tu facito, mox cum matura adoleverit aetas,*
> *sis memor et te animo repetentem exempla tuorum*
> *et pater Aeneas et avunculus excitet Hector.*
>
> (12.435-40)

> Learn about manliness and true labor from me, boy, and learn about fortune from others. My right hand now will give you protection and will lead you among great advantages.

> See to it that, when your mature age soon blazes up, you are mindful of this: when you are seeking models of your family to imitate, let both your father and your uncle Hector stir your heart.[102]

Vergil contrasts childhood with adulthood when he, once again, places *puer* and *virtutem* side by side. This feature emphasizes Vergil's protection of Ascanius' character.[103] The speech itself is reminiscent of Hector's speech to Astyanax at *Iliad* 6.476f.,[104] and Vergil virtually repeats line 12.440 from Andromache's speech in book three. These repetitions suggest not only Aeneas' concern for his child, but also Aeneas' connection with the Trojan past. When Vergil alludes to Hector and Andromache, he associates Aeneas with the former world of Troy and suggests the future potential of Ascanius in what will one day be Rome. It is for the boy to depart from the Trojan past in favor of the Roman future.

Vergil's depiction of Ascanius progresses and changes throughout the course of the poem. The characters of the *Aeneid* consistently refer to the hero's son in a manner that is suggestive of Rome, and they indicate the boy's prophetic importance in the progression of the narrative. Ascanius serves on several occasions as a catalyst through which particular characters encourage Aeneas, highlighting the estimable traits of *pietas*. In addition, the boy enjoys responsibilities of his own that suggest his ever developing maturity. In the course of the narrative, he moves from a child, to a boy mimicking his father's adult actions, to a killer who has the strength and conviction to survive the hardships that state formation will certainly require. Vergil allows him to maintain his childlike sensitivities through the intervention of several divine characters. Ascanius is an ever-changing character who exhibits several of the

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[102] Reed (2007) 186 notes the melancholy tone of Aeneas' words and his characteristic representation of himself as a victim.
[103] See my discussion of Apollo's blessing of Ascanius on pp. 51-2.
[104] Williams (1973) *ad* 12.435f.

features that will one day be valued in the Roman world. He is the hope of the Roman future and the concern of the poem, as a whole.

CHAPTER 3

VERGIL'S ROME

The long-term prophecies in Vergil's *Aeneid* relate directly to the future establishment of Rome. They do not come to fruition in the course of the narrative as the short-term prophecies do; rather, they deal primarily with events following Aeneas' establishment of a city in Latium leading all the way up to the rule of Augustus, to Vergil's Rome.[105] The distance between the narrative present and prophetic future of the *Aeneid* and the reality of Vergil's Rome, therefore, suggests that the poet is speaking directly to his audience, conveying his own ideas about the future when he includes a long-term prophecy or prophetic mechanism in his narrative.[106] Unlike the characters of the *Aeneid* who cannot know with any certainty the truth behind the prophetic messages to which they are witness, Vergil's readers have the capacity to comprehend the scenes included in the poem's long-term prophecies. They know the stories from their own history, and they have experienced the scenes in their own time. Vergil's audience cannot, however, have been certain about the poet's promises of future greatness under Augustus and beyond. These promises would be validated only after the fashioning of the poem and the (imminent) death of the poet. Just as Aeneas cannot have fully understood the future glory of his descendants, Vergil and his contemporary audience cannot have known the far-reaching fame and glory of the Roman Empire. Vergil's treatment of those scenes containing a long-term prophecy, therefore,

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[105] Mack (1978) 56.

[106] Horsfall (1995) 251-2 has shown that "knowledge of Virgil, or love for him, was not the privilege of an educational elite." See also Bell (1999) 264-6.

is crucial to any understanding of the poet's perspective on the contemporary world. This chapter will show how Vergil uses the long-term prophecies of the *Aeneid* to speak directly to his readers and to convey his own concerns regarding the political situation of Augustan Rome. In a world disillusioned by years of civil war, Vergil's contemporary Rome looked to the future for peace and prosperity. While the poet carefully presents this hope, he also hints at the fragility and uncertainty of the future. In his long-term prophecies, Vergil carefully contrasts his fragile hope for the future with the uncertainty of a world in transition.

Vergil's Audience

Divination in Roman politics was not unfamiliar in Vergil's world. As O'Hara notes, "Men used the rituals of divination to justify or nullify political actions, and often manufactured old prophecies (mostly Sibylline oracles) that could be made relevant to present-day political ambition."[107] So, when a comet was spotted at the funeral games of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., the event was immediately perceived as some sort of omen. The common people immediately viewed the comet as a sign of the deceased Caesar's apotheosis.[108] Educated opinion, however,

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[107] O'Hara (1990) 128. For more on public divination, see Liebeschuetz (1979) 7-29. See also Suet. *Aug*. 14-17, who lists several prophecies and omens about Augustus himself.

[108] Augustus *Vit*. fr. 6: *Ipsis ludorum meorum diebus sidus crinitum per septem dies in regione caeli sub septentrionibus est conspectum. Id oribatur circa undecimam horam diei clarumque et omnibus e terries conspicuum fuit. Eo sidere significari* ***vulgus credidit*** *Caesaris animam inter deorum immortalium numina receptam, quo nomine id insigne simulacro capitis eius, quod mox in foro consecravimus, adiectum est*; Suet. *Iul*. 88: *Periit sexto et quinquagensimo aetatis anno atque in deorum numerum relatus est, non ore modo decernentium, sed et* ***persuasione vulgi.*** *Siquidem ludis, quos primo consecratos ei heres Augustus edebat, stella crinita per septem continuos dies fulsit exoriens circa undecimam horam, creditumque est animam esse Caesaris in caelum recepti; et hac de causa simulacro eius in vertice additur stella.*

was somewhat more skeptical, as comets were typically associated with ominous events.[109] Vergil himself provides support for this idea when he writes *non alias caelo ceciderunt plura sereno / fulgura nec diri totiens arsere cometae* (*Georg*. 1.487-8, "At no other time did more lightning bolts fall from a clear sky, nor did ominous comets so often blaze"). Only when the comet was reinterpreted as a star and adopted by Octavian as a symbol of Caesar's deification did the omen take on a more positive interpretation.[110] Vergil writes

> *Daphni, quid antiquos signorum suspicis ortus?*
> *Ecce Dionaei processit Caesaris astrum,*
> *astrum quo segetes gauderent frugibus et quo*
> *duceret apricis in collibus uva colorem.*
>
> (*Ecl*. 9.46-9)

> Daphnis, why do you look towards the ancient risings of stars? Behold, the star of Dionean Caesar came forth, a star that made the cornfields take delight in their grains and the grape take on its color on the sunny hills.

The poet's presentation of both negative and positive interpretations of the celestial phenomenon indicates the transitional nature of the period as a whole. While comets were traditionally viewed as ominous events, Augustus encouraged others to reinterpret the omen in a more positive light. Vergil alludes to this contrast when he presents both views, suggesting his own uncertainties about the future under Augustus.

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[109] Ramsey and Licht (1997) 61; see also 135.2-4 for the specific references.

[110] Our sources suggest that Augustus himself played a major role in the positive interpretation of the omen: Servius *ad Aen*. 8.681: *APERITUR VERTICE SIDUS: apparet sidus in vertice, hoc est super galeam. Nam ex quo tempore per diem stella visa est, dum sacrificaretur Veneri Genetrici et ludi funebres Caesari exhiberentur, per triduum stella apparuit in septentrione. Quod sidus Caesaris putatum est* ***Augusto persuadente****: nam ideo Augustus omnibus statuis, quas divinitati Caesaris statuit, hanc stellam adiecit. Ipse vero Augustus in honorem patris stellam in galea coepit habere depictam*.; Servius *ad Aen*. 6.790: *CAELI VENTURA SUB AXEM: nam cum Augusts patri Caesari ludos funebres exhiberet, stella per diem apparuit, quam* ***persuasione Augusti Caesaris*** *esse populus credidit. Hinc est 'Dionaei processit Caesaris astrum' (Ecl.* 9.47*). 'Sub axem' ergo, id est ad divinos honores.*

Because Vergil's readers were familiar with divination, the poet's inclusion of prophecies and prophetic mechanisms, particularly those that concerned the experiences of the Romans themselves, would have engaged his audience. The poet heightens this engagement through textual and thematic details. When he presents to his readers a world happening *ipsius ante oculos* (1.114, "before the eyes of Aeneas himself"), the poet involves his readers to such an extent that they can see the heroic world through which the characters are moving from the perspective of the characters themselves.[111] This narratological technique brings readers into the action of the poem, adding to the intensity of the work.[112] When the technique is found in long-term prophecies, the effect is that much more pronounced.[113] Because these prophecies are directed at the future of Rome, defining specific events known to the poet's own audience, Vergil is able to speak directly to his readers, keeping their attention and heightening their personal involvement in the narrative.[114]

Vergil's description of the shield of Aeneas is a good example.[115] On several occasions, Vergil reminds his readers that they are viewing a piece of metal art when he mentions certain colors or deictic shifts.[116] The poet also explicitly calls attention to his audience through several

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[111] This type of construction occurs at 1.114; 2.270, 531; 3.150; 4.411; 5.109; 11.311, 887; 12.636.

[112] Reed (2007) 17 defines this technique as the poet's gaze, "an emotionally charged visual description, often assimilable to what and how a particular viewing character sees."

[113] This technique is not strictly Vergilian; rather, several of the poet's ancient predecessors used long-term prophecies to convey some event known only to the respective author's own audience. O'Hara (1990) 128-9 briefly discusses some pre-Vergilian examples of this poetic technique. See also Heinze (1993) 310, 338-9 n.37.

[114] Cf. Mineur (1982) 158 who suggests that "such a prophecy is an excellent device to make flattery of the monarch less obtrusive." See also Heinze (1993) 339 who says that "it enabled the greatest degree of flattery to be introduced without the speaker seeming to be saying it himself."

[115] DuBois (1982) 43 notes that with the shield, and with the Manlius scene in particular, "Vergil constructs the whole, shaping the reader's perception and thus the object's meaning."

[116] Vergil uses several color words in his description of the shield that indicate not only those colors often associated with the scene, but also the colors depicted on the shield itself. These

apostrophes in the description.[117] These features remind readers that they are part of the poem and are looking at the shield along with Aeneas. Following the description of the shield proper, Vergil includes a short description of Aeneas' reaction to Vulcan's handiwork. Again, when he notes that Aeneas *miratur*[118] (8.730, "wonders at") the shield, Vergil allows his readers to see the shield from Aeneas' perspective, incorporating them into the action along with the hero himself. The poet's audience becomes just as much a part of the narrative as the characters. As a result, Vergil's treatment of each long-term prophecy conveys some aspect of the poet's perspective on the events discussed, inciting his readers to look beyond the heroic world of the poem to their own time and their own situation.

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include: *viridi* (8.630), *auratis* and *argenteus* (8.655), *aurea* (8.659), *lactea* (8.660), *auro* (8.661), *aurea* (8.672), *caerula* (8.672), *cano* (8.672), *argento* (8.673), *aeratas* (8.675), *auroque* (8.677), *rubescunt* (8.695), *caelatus ferro* (8.701), *pallentem* (8.709), *caeruleum* (8.713), and *niveo* (8.720). Vergil also calls attention to the shield through several deictic shifts, indicating a position change on the shield. These include: *nec procul hinc* (8.635), *haud procul inde* (8.642), *in summo* (8.652), *hic* (8.655, 8.663), *hinc procul* (8.666), *haec inter* (8.671), *et circum* (8.673), *in medio* (8.675), *hinc* (8.678), *parte alia* (8.682), *hinc* (8.685), *in mediis* (8.696), *desuper* (8.705), and *contra* (8.711). For more on the shield, see Putnam (1998) 119-88.

[117] *at tu dictis, Albane, maneres!* (8.643, "But you, Alban, should have stuck to your words!"); *hinc procul addit / Tartareas etiam sedes, alta ostia Ditis, / et scelerum poenas, et te, Catilina, minaci / pendentem scopulo Furiarumque ora trementem, / secretosque pios, his dantem iura Catonem* (8.666-70, "Far from here he adds also the Tartarean seats, the high gates of Dis, and you, Catiline, hanging from a menacing rock and trembling at the faces of the Furies, and hidden apart the pious, Cato giving laws to them"); *totumque instructo Marte videres / fervere Leucaten auroque effulgere fluctus* (8.676-7, "you could see all Leucate blazing in preparation for war and the waves gleaming in gold"); *nefas* (8.688, "the shame!"); *pelago credas innare revulsas / Cycladas aut montis concurrere montibus altos* (8.691-2, "you might believe that the Cyclades, having been plucked away, were swimming on the sea or that high mountains were clashing with mountains"). For more on apostrophes in the *Aeneid*, see Block (1982) 7-22.

[118] *Miratur* appears at 1.421, 422, 456; 6.651; 7.813; 8.92, 310, 730, all occasions where a character, usually Aeneas, is viewing some object or event.

Jupiter's Prophecy

There are several misleading or untrue features of Jupiter's prophecy in book one,[119] the first of which involves the validity of the god's statements concerning Aeneas himself. Jupiter says

> *bellum ingens geret Italia populosque ferocis*
> *contundet moresque viris et moenia ponet,*
> *tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas*
> *ternaque transierint Rutulis hiberna subactis*
> (1.263-6)

> (Aeneas) will wage a huge war in Italy, he will subdue the ferocious populations, and he will establish customs and walls for the people there, until the third summer will have seen him ruling in Latium, and three winters will have passed since the Rutulians were subdued.

The first falsehood is the claim that Aeneas will subdue harsh populations. Although he does wage a large war in Italy and achieves victory, the final result is not so decisive as Jupiter had predicted. Later in book twelve, the hero says

> *non ego nec Teucris Italos parere iubebo*
> *nec mihi regna peto: paribus se legibus ambae*
> *invictae gentes aeterna in foedera mittant.*
> *Sacra deosque dabo; socer arma Latinus habeto,*
> *imperium sollemne socer; mihi moenia Teucri*
> *constituent urbique dabit Lavinia nomen.*
> (12.189-94)

> I will not order the Italians to obey the Trojans, nor do I seek royal authority for myself: let both unconquered nations throw themselves into eternal treaties with equal laws. I will give rituals and gods; let my father-in-law Latinus have arms, let my father-in-law have formal authority; the Trojans will establish walls for me, and Lavinia will give her name to the city.

Aeneas does win, but not nearly so forcefully as *contundet* suggests.[120] Jupiter also misleads

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[119] For the prophecies of Jupiter, I rely heavily on the conclusions of O'Hara (1990) 128-63.
[120] The *OLD* defines *contundo* as " 1) to pound to pieces or powder, pulp, crush, 2) to bruise,

when he says that Aeneas will provide *moenia* for the Latins. The hero says at 12.193-4 that the Trojans will set up a separate city for him. He does not give the Latins walls; rather, he builds his own walls for himself. As for the *mores* that Aeneas is to supply to the Latins, Jupiter says in his prophecy to Juno that *sermonem Ausonii patrium moresque tenebunt* (12.834, "the Ausonians will keep the language and customs of their ancestors"). The king of the gods blatantly contradicts himself. Jupiter says that Aeneas will rule in Latium, but Aeneas allots Latinus this responsibility when he claims at 12.193 that his father-in-law is to retain his *imperium*. When Aeneas makes these allowances for Latinus and the Latins, he proves Jupiter's prophecy wrong.[121]

Jupiter also misleads when he describes Ascanius' involvement in the founding of Alba Longa. He says of the hero's son

> *At puer Ascanius, cui nunc cognomen Iulo*
> *additur (Ilus erat, dum res stetit Ilia regno),*
> *triginta magnos volvendis mensibus orbis*
> *imperio explebit, regnumque ab sede Lavini*
> *transferet, et Longam multa vi muniet Albam.*
> *Hic iam ter centum totos regnabitur annos*
> *gente sub Hectorea, donec regina sacerdos*
> *Marte gravis geminam partu dabit Ilia prolem.*
>
> (1.267-74)

> But the boy Ascanius, to whom the cognomen Iulus is added (Ilus was the cognomen, while the Ilian state stood in power), will fill out thirty great circles of years with their unrolling months in power, he will transfer sovereignty from the seat of Lavinium, and he will fortify Alba Longa with much force. This place will now be ruled for three hundred full years under the Trojan race, until a queen priestess, Ilia, pregnant by Mars, will bring forth twin offspring.

When Jupiter mentions that Ascanius will fortify Alba Longa and then immediately turns his attention to its rule under the Trojan race, he suggests that Ascanius will be the source of the

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make sore, 3) to subdue utterly (nations, feelings, etc.), 4) to eclipse, outdo (a performance)."

[121] O'Hara (1990) 137-42.

family line. At 6.763-6, however, Anchises says that Silvius is the originator of that race.[122] This is further confirmed by Vergil's application of the adjective *Hectorea* to the race. Although the term can simply mean "Trojan,"[123] its use here is particularly suggestive of Ascanius, Hector's nephew.[124] This also associates Ascanius with the family line. Jupiter is being ambiguous.[125]

Next, Vergil includes a brief discussion of Romulus and Remus, the first of two found in this prophecy. In Augustan verse, Romulus was associated with fratricidal strife and civil war.[126] When he mentions the twins in this prophecy, therefore, Vergil hints at the negative aspects of the twins' involvement in the founding of Rome. The poet employs subtle textual details to strengthen this association:

> *regina sacerdos*
> *Marte gravis geminam partu dabit Ilia prolem.*
> *Inde lupae fulvo nutricis tegmine laetus*
> *Romulus excipiet gentem et Mavortia condet*
> *moenia Romanosque suo de nomine dicet.*
>
> (1.273-7)
>
> A queen priestess, Ilia, pregnant by Mars, will bring forth twin offspring. Then, delighting in the tawny skin of the she-wolf, his nurse, Romulus will inherit the race, he will establish the walls of Mars, and he will call the people Romans after his own name.

The explicit mention of the twins, followed by the description of Romulus alone and in the singular, is particularly suggestive of Romulus' fratricide. The poet later refers to the walls established by Rome's founder. Because Remus was killed by his brother after jumping over

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[122] O'Hara (1990) 147 notes that some inconsistencies can be chalked up to the "'chaos' of early Roman legend."
[123] Servius and Austin (1971) *ad* 1.273.
[124] O'Hara (1990) 145 n.45.
[125] O'Hara (1990) 144-7.
[126] Ross (1987) 127.

these very walls, Vergil again carefully hints at fratricidal strife.[127] With these subtle references, Vergil incites his audience to think about civil war, which is significant in a prophecy that seems to outline the positive features of Rome's establishment.[128]

Jupiter's deception is apparent in his discussion of Juno's diminished anger:

> *Quin aspera Iuno,*
> *quae mare nunc terrasque metu caelumque fatigat,*
> *consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit*
> *Romanos, rerum dominos gentemque togatam.*
> (1.279-82)
>
> Yes, even harsh Juno, who now tires out the sea, the land, and the sky with fear, will restore her counsels for the better, and she will cherish the Romans, masters of the world and toga-clad race, with me.

This consolation might lead readers to believe that Juno's anger will cease in the very near future, but that is not the case. The queen of the gods maintains her anger until after the Punic Wars, which is in the very distant future for the characters in the poem.[129] Jupiter misleads about the future, making it difficult to trust his prophecy.[130]

The final and most significant ambiguity in Jupiter's prophecy involves the identity of Vergil's *Troianus Caesar*. The poet writes

> *Nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar,*
> *imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris,*

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[127] Feeney (1986) 9.
[128] O'Hara (1990) 151-5.
[129] Austin (1971) *ad* 1.281 suggests that "Iuno will amend her design . . . For her yielding see 12.841." However, Feeney (1984) 180 notes that Juno's reconciliation is positioned "after the death of Aeneas, after the founding of Rome," effectively placing the claim in its correct chronological position. Servius *ad* 1.281 agrees, noting that Jupiter says that Juno's plans will change for the better *quia bello Punico secundo ut ait Ennius placata Iuno coepit favere Romanis.* Horsfall (1973-4) 3 says that the placement of Juno's reconciliation in the prophecy is correct, because it was "a necessary prelude to the defeat of Carthage, the first great obstacle to *imperium sine fine* encountered by Rome overseas and to the great wave of foreign conquests she undertook in the sixty years after the second Punic war." See also O'Hara (1990) 30-1 and 148-9.
[130] O'Hara (1990) 148-9.

Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo.
Hunc tu olim caelo spoliis Orientis onustum
accipies secura; vocabitur hic quoque votis.
Aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis:
cana Fides et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus
iura dabunt; dirae ferro et compagibus artis
claudentur Belli portae; Furor impius intus
saeva sedens super arma et centum victus aenis
post tergum nodis fremet horridus ore cruento.
(1.286-96)

A Trojan Caesar will be born with fair ancestry, who will limit his empire by Ocean and his fame by the stars, Julius, a name handed down from great Iulus. At some time, you, free from care, will receive him, burdened with the spoils of the East, in heaven; he will also be called in prayers. Then the harsh ages will become mild with wars having been put aside; white Faith and Vesta, and Quirinus with his brother Remus will give laws; the dire gates of War will be closed with iron and close-fitting joints; within unholy Madness, sitting above cruel arms and bound behind her back with a hundred bronze knots, will rage, bristling with a bloody mouth.

With this passage, Vergil presents an "eloquent symbolic representation of both the end of the civil wars and the Roman people's hope that the consolidation of power in the hands of Octavian would bring about a new order of peace and justice."[131] Vergil, however, is ambiguous about the identity of the *Troianus Caesar*.[132] This type of ambiguity, not unfamiliar in Vergil,[133] "forces the reader to think about both the bloody civil wars before and after Julius' death, and the similarities between Julius and Augustus."[134] So too, does Vergil's second mention of Romulus and Remus. The poet's discussion of the twins' joint bestowal of laws can be read as a sign of

[131] O'Hara (1990) 156. See also Williams (1968) 426-8.
[132] Scholars are divided about whether Vergil is talking about Julius or Augustus Caesar. See Austin (1971) *ad* 1.286ff. for a detailed analysis of the arguments for and problems with each designation. See also O'Hara (1990) 156-9.
[133] Feeney (1986) 5 notes that "Vergil is often studiedly vague about which members of a family we are meant to see behind the name" in his discussions of the Drusi at 6.824 and the Gracchi and Scipiones at 6.842-3. See also O'Hara (1990) 160.
[134] O'Hara (1990) 161. Syme (1939) 318 argues that "on the whole, better to say nothing of Caesar, or for that matter Antonius, save as criminal types. The power and domination of Augustus was in reality far too similar to that of the Dictator to stand even a casual reminder, let alone pointed and genuine comparison."

"reconciliation after fraternal strife."[135] Servius supports this possibility when he describes the expiation of Romulus' fratricide following a plague.[136] We may question the legitimacy of Servius' claim, however;[137] the fact of the matter is that Remus is dead. Vergil's readers would have recognized the fratricidal allusion,[138] leading them to question Jupiter's promise of *imperium sine fine*.[139] When the king of the gods presents material either entirely untrue or seemingly deliberately ambiguous, he calls into question the truthfulness of the prophecy in its entirety. Venus cannot trust the future that Jupiter predicts, just as Vergil's audience cannot trust the poet's own promises of peace under Augustus. There is no certainty about what the future under Augustus will bring.

Anchises' Prophecy

In Anchises' prophecy in the underworld, Vergil describes several seemingly positive Roman figures.[140] Silvius, the supposed founder of the dynasty at Alba Longa, is the first figure described by Anchises:

> *Ille, vides, pura iuvenis qui nititur hasta,*
> *proxima sorte tenet lucis loca, primus ad auras*
> *aetherias Italo commixtus sanguine surget,*
> *Silvius, Albanum nomen, tua postuma proles,*
> *quem tibi longaevo serum Lavinia coniunx*

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[135] O'Hara (1990) 153.
[136] Servius *ad* 1.276 notes that *post cuius mortem natam constat pestilentiam: unde consulta oracula dixerunt placandos esse manes fratris extincti; ob quam rem sella curulis cum sceptro et corona et ceteris regni insignibus semper iuxta sancientem aliquid Romulum ponebatur, ut pariter imperare viderentur. Unde est Remo cum fratre Quirinus iura dabunt*.
[137] Wagenvoort (1956) 177.
[138] See my discussion of the fratricidal allusions associated with Romulus at p. 66-7.
[139] Jupiter's idealistic promises are positioned nearly at the center of the prophecy proper at lines 16-7 of 34, total. The promises are surrounded on all sides by Jupiter's deceptive rhetoric.
[140] For my discussions of Anchises' prophecy, I rely heavily on Feeney (1986) 1-24.

> *educet silvis regem regumque parentem,*
> *unde genus Longa nostrum dominabitur Alba.*
> (6.760-6)
>
> That one, you see, the young man who is leaning on his unstained sword, holds his allotted place nearest the light, the first one, mixed with Italian blood, to rise to the ethereal airs, Silvius, an Alban name, your last offspring, whom your wife, Lavinia, will bear to you too late in old age as a king in forests and parent of kings, whence our race will rule in Alba Longa.

There are two significant problems with this part of the prophecy. First, Jupiter says in his prophecy in book one that Aeneas will rule for only three years in Latium (*tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aestas / ternaque transierint Rutulis hiberna subactis*, 1.265-6). So, when Anchises tells Aeneas that he will father a child in old age, he misleads his son.[141] Vergil subtly suggests in Jupiter's prophecy that Ascanius is the originator of the line of Alban kings.[142] Anchises contradicts that suggestion here. Through these inconsistencies, Vergil suggests from the very beginning of Anchises' prophecy that its truthfulness is in doubt.[143]

Next, Anchises names some early Alban rulers and their towns. After several glowing descriptions of the rulers themselves, the poet mentions the lapsed fame of their towns. He says *haec tum nomina erunt, nunc sunt sine nomine terrae* (6.776, "these were their names at that time, now the lands are without a name"). The shift in tense leads us to think about Vergil's Rome.[144] Because the towns named by Anchises had fallen into decline by Vergil's time, the

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[141] O'Hara (1990) 91-4 notes the application of the adjective to "such very old persons as Priam, Latinus, Turnus' father Daunus, the Sibyl, and Anchises himself." He goes on to suggest that the prominent placement of *tertia* at 1.625 and *ternaque* at 1.266 both emphasize the idea that Aeneas will live for only three years after he assumes power in Latium. Cf. Servius *ad* 6.764: '*quem tibi longaevo,' id est deo: aevum enim proprie aeternitas est, quae non nisi in deos venit*. Cf. O'Hara (1990) 93 who says that Servius' interpretation is not in accord with the most natural meaning of the word.

[142] See my discussion of the passage on pp. 65-6.

[143] O'Hara (1990) 144-7.

[144] Feeney (1986) 7 notes that "the tenses are intriguingly two-sided, depending on whether one's perspective in time is that of Aeneas, or of Vergil's audience. To Aeneas, the words say that

whole of the description, including that of the Alban rulers, which "is proffered as praise becomes disparagement, or condolence, as it is uttered."[145] This detail diminishes the accomplishment of the early rulers, rendering this part of the prophecy disheartening.

In his subsequent description of Romulus, Vergil connects the legendary founder of Rome with war, all the while alluding to the fratricide with which he is traditionally associated. The poet applies the term *Mavortius* (6.777, "of Mars") to Romulus, associating him with war from the outset of the description. He also equips him with the double-crested helmet of Mars just two lines later (*geminae stant vertice cristae / et pater ipse suo superum iam signat honore*, 6.779-80). These attributes associate Rome with war from her very foundation.[146] The fratricide of Romulus is also obvious. Anchises says *auspiciis illa incluta Roma / imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo* (6.781-2, "under [Romulus'] auspices, renowned Rome will make her power equal to the earth, her spirit to Olympus"). According to Feeney, "the taking of the auspices at the foundation of Rome, Vergil obliquely reminds us, was a *competition*, which Remus lost."[147] So, when Vergil excludes Remus from his description of the *auspicia*, he brings his death at the hands of his brother to the forefront.[148] When he mentions the wall of Romulus that enclosed Rome's seven hills, Vergil provides another allusion to fratricide. Remus was, in fact, killed as he jumped over this very wall.[149] This part of Anchises' prophecy proves very negative: not only is war a key feature of early Rome, but also fratricidal strife.

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these will be famous names after his time, whereas now, in his lifetime, they are areas of land without any title (or else, places that exist but have no fame). To the contemporary audience, the words are saying that the places will be what they are in fact –*mere names*; now, for 'us', they are only *pieces of land*, without the *reputation* they once had."

[145] Feeney (1986) 7.

[146] Mack (1978) 69.

[147] Feeney (1986) 8.

[148] Mack (1978) 70.

[149] Enn. *Ann*. 92-4 Skutsch; Ov. *Fast*. 4.841-4. See also my brief discussion of the wall on pp. 66-7.

Following his lengthy praise of Augustus,[150] Vergil turns his attention back to the early kings of Rome and the establishment of the Republic. The poet begins with Numa at 6.808-12, whose accomplishments include establishing peace after the wars of Romulus and giving laws. Tullus is next, *otia qui rumpet patriae* (6.813, "who will break the peace of his fatherland"). In moving from Numa to Tullus, Vergil is already alluding to the "evanescent quality of men's achievements."[151] The poet next describes Ancus, followed by the Tarquins and Brutus. Vergil links the Tarquins with Brutus in two key ways. Not only do they share a verse, but Brutus is called *superbus*, the traditional epithet of the second Tarquin.[152] This link reinforces the continuity in time of each family, although with darker undertones.[153] First, Vergil's description of Brutus subtly alludes to the later assassin of Julius Caesar.[154] Second, the poet describes Brutus' killing of his children at 6.818-23 with the *fasces*, an emblem of the consul and consequently of the Republic as well.[155] Mack notes

> If the founding of the monarchy is polluted by the murder of brother by brother . . . the founding of the Republic rests on the slaughter of children by their father, and it is on this aspect that Vergil lingers. Brutus acts on behalf of lovely liberty (*pulchra pro libertate*) and out of love of country (*amor patriae*), but he is unhappy (*infelix*) and motivated by an immeasurable passion for praise (*laudumque immensa cupido*). The price paid for glory in the *Aeneid* is always high.[156]

Vergil expounds the glory of Rome's establishment, while hinting at several darker realities.

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[150] I will discuss this description below.
[151] Mack (1978) 70.
[152] Austin (1977) *ad* 6.817. See also Mack (1978) 70.
[153] Feeney (1986) 10.
[154] Fletcher (1961) *ad* 8.817 suggests that the application of *superbam* to Brutus here "is a reminder that arrogance is not a monopoly of 'tyrants' (*reges*). None of Virgil's readers could fail to think of the descendant, another *ultor Brutus*, whose intellectual arrogance they had known. He had also violated natural ties in the belief that he was serving his country: the killing of Julius Caesar, like the execution of his own sons by the elder Brutus, was an act praised by some and blamed by others, and Virgil's comment in 822-3 may be applied equally to either action." See also Austin (1977) *ad* 6.817 and Feeney (1986) 10.
[155] Mack (1978) 70.
[156] Mack (1978) 70. See also Feeney (1986) 10-1.

These realities may lead the poet's readers to question the value of empire. Glory and conquest are achieved, but at what cost?

Vergil sandwiches his enumeration of the Drusi, the Decii, Torquatus, and Camillus between Brutus, on the one hand, and Caesar and Pompey, the chief rivals in the civil wars of Vergil's Rome, on the other. With the Drusi and the Decii, Vergil again alludes to the continuity of the *gentes*.[157] As with the Bruti, however, darker realities undercut this continuity. The famous Drusi and Decii both were father and son. Decius the son followed his father's example precisely; the younger Drusus, however, eventually became a paragon of degeneracy.[158] This contrast is consistent with the darker realities of this prophecy. When he describes Torquatus as *saevum securi* (6.824, "savage with his ax"), Vergil highlights the figure's slaughter of his own son. As in his discussion of Brutus, the poet signals the murder of a son by his father and the resulting stain of such a crime, regardless of the father's reasons. Vergil describes Camillus next, whose reputation is virtually free of fault; but the poet immediately turns his attention to Caesar and Pompey at 6.826-35, reminding his readers of recent civil wars and ensuing hardships.[159]

The next eighteen lines are filled with the names of several conquerors and other *fulmina belli* (6.842, "thunderbolts of war"). Following Mummius at 6.836, L. Aemilius Paullus at 6.838, and Cato[160] and Cossus at 841, Vergil mentions the *Gracchi genus* (6.842, "the family of Gracchus"), another instance of a degenerate son falling short of his noble father's standards.

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[157] Horsfall (1982) 12 notes that "the alliteration of *Decios Drusosque* is striking. Vergil highlights the strength of the *gens*."
[158] Feeney (1986) 12 notes that "this theme of sons falling short of their father's standards is one which Vergil will pick up later in the parade, in speaking of the Gracchi (842)."
[159] Feeney (1986) 11-12. See also Mack (1978) 70-1.
[160] Feeney (1986) 13 suggests that the application of the adjective *magne* to Cato raises the question whether Cato the Censor or Cato Uticensis is meant here.

Next come the Scipiones; through careful textual and thematic details, Vergil shows the family over the course of four generations, again asserting the continuity of the *gens* and calling to mind the family's ultimate defeat by Caesar at Thapsus in 46 B.C.[161] Anchises closes this part of his prophecy with a poignant claim:

> *Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera*
> *(credo equidem), vivos ducent de marmore vultus,*
> *orabunt causas melius, caelique meatus*
> *describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent:*
> *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento*
> *(hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem,*
> *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*
>
> (6.847-53)

> Others will hammer out the breathing bronze more softly (I certainly believe), they will bring out living faces from marble, they will speak their causes better, they will mark out the paths of heaven with a staff, and they will tell about the rising stars: you, Roman, remember to rule the people with sovereignty (these will be your arts), and to establish ways of peace, to spare the vanquished, and to crush the proud.

Griffin notes that "this unrivalled speech is at once a boast and a lament, a proud claim by a conqueror and a sigh of regret for the cost."[162] Vergil assigns arts and sciences to the Greeks, retaining for the Romans the harsh realities of war and conquest.[163] The price of empire must be paid in the pursuit of Roman destiny.

Anchises closes his prophecy with his lament for Marcellus, the nephew, son-in-law, and designated heir of Augustus, emphasizing the failed hopes of empire.[164] Both Aeneas and Anchises hint at the promising, yet ominous nature of the figure. Aeneas sees *egregium forma iuvenem et fulgentibus armis, / sed frons laeta parum et deiecto lumina vultu* (6.861-2, "a young man distinguished in form and in shining arms, but his brow was unhappy and his eyes were

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[161] Feeney (1986) 13-4.
[162] Griffin (1979) 65-6.
[163] Griffin (1979) 66.
[164] Tracy (1975) 38 notes the structural emphasis of the passage's placement at the close of the first half of the poem.

downcast"). The hero himself later says *quantum instar in ipso! Sed nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbra* (6.865-6, "How great the dignity in that one! But black night flits about his head in a sad shadow"). From the beginning of the description of Marcellus, Vergil emphasizes the duality of his character. He has all the promise in the world, but he is also destined to die prematurely. Anchises begins his description of the young man:

> *O nate, ingentem luctum ne quaere tuorum;*
> *ostendent terris hunc tantum fata nec ultra*
> *esse sinent. Nimium vobis Romana propago*
> *visa potens, superi, propria haec si dona fuissent.*
> *Quantos ille virum magnam Mavortis ad urbem*
> *campus aget gemitus! Vel quae, Tiberine, videbis*
> *funera, cum tumulum praeterlabere recentem!*
> *Nec puer Iliaca quisquam de gente Latinos*
> *in tantum spe tollet avos, nec Romula quondam*
> *ullo se tantum tellus iactabit alumno.*
> *Heu pietas, heu prisca fides invictaque bello*
> *dextera! Non illi se quisquam impune tulisset*
> *obvius armato, seu cum pedes iret in hostem*
> *seu spumantis equi foderet calcaribus armos.*
> *Heu, miserande puer, si qua fata aspera rumpas,*
> *tu Marcellus eris. Manibus date lilia plenis*
> *purpureos spargam flores animamque nepotis*
> *his saltem accumulem donis, et fungar inani*
> *munere.*
>
> (6.868-86)

> Oh son, do not ask about the great sorrow of your people; the fates will only show this one on earth, and they will not allow him to be longer. The Roman race would seem too powerful, gods, if these gifts had been secure. How great are the wailings of men that that camp leads towards the great city of Mars! Or, Tiberinus, what funerals you will see, when you glide by the new tomb! Never will any boy from the Trojan race exalt his Latin ancestors so much in hope; never in the future will the land of Romulus boast so much about any child. Alas loyalty! Alas ancient faith and the right hand, unconquered in war! No man could bring himself before that armed man unpunished, whether he went as a footsoldier against the enemy, or he dug his spraying spurs into the sides of a horse. Alas, pitiable boy, if only in some way you could break through the harsh fates, you will be Marcellus. Fill my hands full with lilies, let me sprinkle purple flowers, let me at least honor the spirit of the descendant with these gifts, and let me perform the useless duty.

The pathos of the scene is clear. Vergil laments the death of Marcellus, while at the same time

leading his readers to question both the cost of empire and the future under Augustus. When the poet describes Marcellus as *miserande puer*, he associates the young man with Lausus and Pallas, also described with this phrase at 10.825 and 11.42 respectively. Both scenes involve the hero's lament over the death of a promising young man, who pays the ultimate price for empire.[165] Just as the deaths of these two characters undermine the promise suggested by their youth, so too does the death of Marcellus, although with consequences very real to Vergil's Rome. "Since Marcellus was the designated heir of Augustus, his death pointedly symbolizes the death of the future . . . (Marcellus' death) therefore places a strong note of reservation on the vision of Rome's future greatness."[166] When Vergil concludes this prophecy, he does so with a passage that undercuts the complimentary tone of the scene.

The placement of Augustus in Anchises' prophecy, surrounded by seemingly laudable figures who upon closer inspection reveal darker realities, undercuts the glowing description of the ruler. Vergil describes Augustus at 6.788-805, just after Romulus. The poet sacrifices correct chronological order for the sake of a close association between Rome's first founder, Romulus, and her "second founder," Augustus.[167] The two figures are cosmically linked. The darker realities alluded to throughout the prophecy signal the overwhelming uncertainty of the future, particularly given the death of Marcellus. "The prophecy that has so often been assumed to proclaim a glorious future ends with death, not with life, and Marcellus' death casts a shadow back over what has gone before."[168] The whole of the prophecy is called into question, the promise that Augustus *aurea condet saecula* (6.792-3, "he will found a Golden Age") most of

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[165] Tracy (1975) 38 and Otis (1963) 303. Note that Pallas, like Ascanius, is described as a *spes* at 2.162 and 8.514, further indicating his youthful potential.
[166] Tracy (1975) 38. See also Feeney (1986) 15 and O'Hara (1990) 167-70.
[167] Williams (1972) *ad* 6.789.
[168] Mack (1978) 71.

all. When Vergil positions his description of Augustus amidst figures whose traditions include blemished reputations and severe disappointments, he casts a shadow over the bright future that he himself promises. If the past was filled with questionable characters, how can Vergil's Rome be sure that the future will be different under Augustus? The uncertainty of a fragile nation subtly eclipses the hope of the future.

The Shield

With the shield of Aeneas, Vergil expresses several darker undertones that blur the boundary between good and evil.[169] Of the first five scenes on the shield, four include an element of treachery. The fratricidal Romulus is the first to be described at 8.630-4.[170] Next, at 8.635-41, is the rape of the Sabine women and the resulting war between Romulus and Titus Tatius. When Romulus tricks the Sabines with the promise of games, he acts *sine more* (8.635, "without custom"), as Vergil himself says.[171] Following this deceit, the two parties immediately take part in a *novum bellum* (8.635, "new war"),[172] the outcome of which is not ultimate reconciliation, but only a truce.[173] The blurring between good and evil is apparent. The dismemberment of Mettus Fufetius is the next scene described by Vergil at 8.642-5. Although

[169] For my discussions of the shield, I rely heavily on Putnam (1998) 119-58.
[170] See pp. 66-7 and p. 71.
[171] Putnam (1998) 123 notes that the abduction of the Sabine women was "unexampled elsewhere in Roman history for its several violations of customary procedure." See also Gurval (1995) 219.
[172] Gurval (1995) 219-20 relates the *novum bellum* between Romulus and Titus Tatius to the *nova bella* at 6.820 in Anchises' description of Brutus in the parade of heroes.
[173] Putnam (1998) 124 sees the war as a "type of civil war, with sons set in opposition to their older, future fathers-in-law."

the Alban was exceedingly treacherous, his treatment would likely have been viewed as harsh.[174] The violence of the scene does not match the celebratory tone of the shield as a whole.[175] Following his description of Porsenna and his encounter with Cocles and Cloelia, Vergil turns his attention to Manlius and the invasion of the Gauls at 8.652-62. The poet alludes to treachery from the beginning when he describes the citadel as *Tarpeiae* (8.652, "Tarpeian").[176] While Manlius attempts to protect a citadel overtly associated with treachery, *Galli per dumos aderant* (8.657, "the Gauls were present, through the thickets").[177] In selecting these scenes for inclusion on the shield and in employing textual and thematic details that suggest treachery, Vergil questions the legitimacy of Rome's blemished past. If that past is tarnished, what certainty is there for the future?

Following a brief discussion of the Salii and the Luperci, Vergil turns his attention, at 8.666-70, to the underworld and two opposed figures resident there: Catiline and Cato. The poet's treatment of the scene highlights the duality represented by the two characters. Whereas Catiline is a conspirator and enemy of the Roman state, Cato is both "an exemplum of Stoic virtue" and a "patriotic Roman fighting for Republican *libertas* against the inexorability of empire and of one-man rule."[178] Although the two figures are cosmically opposed, they receive equal prominence through the poet's skilled use of detail and emphasis.[179] This prominence

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[174] Livy 1.28.11: *Primum ultimumque illud supplicium apud Romanos exempli parum memoris legum humanarum fuit. In aliis gloriari licet nulli gentium mitiores placuisse poenas*. See also DuBois (1982) 42.
[175] Gurval (1995) 220-3.
[176] Putnam (1998) 130 notes that Tarpeia was the "daughter of Spurius Tarpeius who, during Romulus' struggles with the Sabines, was bribed by their leader, Tatius (whom we saw depicted in the second episode of the ekphrasis), to admit armed men onto the *arx*, and was forthwith crushed to death by their shields." See also Gurval (1995) 227.
[177] Putnam (1998) 128-32.
[178] Putnam (1998) 135.
[179] Catiline is the subject of an apostrophe at 8.668, and Cato is named at the end of 8.670. See

connects the two, despite their very different qualities. So, when Vergil concludes his overview of the Republic with these parallel figures, he effectively encapsulates the duality of Roman history. Hers is a "tale of animality, unwonted violence, retributive vengeance, and victimization, but also of the heroic search for *libertas* and of the strength of religion's rituals against the onslaught of incivility."[180] Catiline and Cato represent opposite ends of the moral spectrum, yet they are parallel, a feature that suggests the potential for a similar dichotomy in the future of empire under Augustus. If Rome's past involves the distortion of good and evil, then her future is vulnerable to this same distortion.

Vergil's final ekphrastic description centers on Augustus, the battle of Actium, and its aftermath. The poet's initial description of Augustus is overwhelmingly positive. He says

> *Hinc Augustus agens Italos in proelia Caesar*
> *cum patribus populoque, penatibus et magnis dis,*
> *stans celsa in puppi, geminas cui tempora flammas*
> *laeta vomunt patriumque aperitur vertice sidus.*
> (8.678-81)

> Here Augustus Caesar, leading the Italians into battle with the senators and the people, the household gods and the great gods, standing on the lofty stern, whose happy brow spews forth twin flames, and the star of his ancestors appears at the top.

Here Augustus has the support not only of the senate and people, but also of the gods. His actions are ordained by all. When Vergil describes Cleopatra, however, he includes several subtle details that would evoke sympathy.[181]

> *Ipse videbatur ventis regina vocatis*
> *vela dare et laxos iam iamque immittere funis.*
> *Illam inter caedes pallentem morte futura*
> *fecerat Ignipotens undis et Iapyge ferri,*
> *contra autem magno maerentem corpore Nilum*

Putnam (1998) 135.

[180] Putnam (1998) 135.

[181] Sympathy for Cleopatra is not strictly Vergilian. See Hor. *Od*. 1.37.30-32: *saevis Liburnis scilicet inviden / privata deduci superbo / non humilis mulier triumpho*.

> *pandentemque sinus et tota veste vocantem*
> *caeruleum in gremium latebrosaque flumina victos.*
> (8.707-13)
>
> The queen herself, with the winds having been called, seemed to spread sails and now, even now, to let loose her slackened ropes. The lord of fire had fashioned that woman among slaughters, pale at her impending death, to be carried by the waves and the wind of Iapyx. But opposite her was the Nile, mourning in his great body, opening wide his folds, and, with his entire garment, calling the conquered into his sea-blue lap and sheltering seas.

When he describes the queen as *pallentem morte futura*, Vergil reminds his readers of Dido, described as *pallida morte futura* (4.644, "pale with her impending death"). Although Dido "nearly seduced the ancestor of Rome from his fated mission and whose heirs would battle the city in three wars for domination of the Mediterranean basin," Vergil's treatment of the queen incites pity throughout the first third of the poem.[182] Because Vergil's description of Cleopatra links her with Dido, her description here also incites pity and remorse for her fate, emotions further heightened by the poet's description of the Nile's sorrow and compassion.[183] Augustus may be the focal point of this ekphrasis, but Vergil's description of Cleopatra calls his actions into question. This again signals blurred boundaries between good and evil.

Through the long-term prophecies of the *Aeneid*, Vergil speaks directly to his audience, conveying his own ideas about Augustan Rome. These prophecies, although fulfilled outside the framework of the poem, contain scenes familiar to the poet's audience. When Vergil incorporates his readers into the action of the plot through the gaze of his characters, he allows them to see their own time in the heroic world of the poem. As a result, the manner in which the poet treats each scene says something about the poet's message to his audience and his own hopes and fears about his contemporary world. These hopes are evident in the often glowing

[182] Putnam (1998) 148. See also Gurval (1995) 240.
[183] Putnam (1998) 147-8. See also DuBois (1982) 45 and Johnson (1967) 387-401.

descriptions of particular characters, while details suggesting grimmer realities indicate uncertainty about the future. This idea is compounded by the poet's treatment of each character's reaction to the prophecies. There is a duality not only in the long-term prophecies, but also in the characters' reaction to these prophecies. Through his characters, the poet shows us a world where the future cannot be trusted, despite glowing descriptions of contemporary figures. Vergil's Rome had just experienced years of disheartening civil wars at the time of the poem's composition. With Augustus came the promise of peace, but the uncertainty of a world in transition. If the past depicted in the poem's long-term prophecies serves as an example, then the future may not be as bright as the poet suggests. Vergil's Rome may hope that the poet's promises of peace and a Golden Age under Augustus will be realized. The future, however, offers no such guarantee.

CONCLUSION

Vergil's treatment of the prophecies in the *Aeneid* indicates the poet's subtle art. He presents a world that is filled with divine messages and prophetic missions that both dishearten and encourage the hero. In so doing, the poet creates a delicate shift in both the prophecies and in Aeneas' reaction to them. The prophecies of the poem's first half are typically short term and concern Aeneas, whereas the second half's prophecies are long term and concern the hero's descendants. The hero's reactions also show a shift. The poet depicts a hero who is angry or scared only when he himself is the subject of a prophecy and who is joyfully unaware when he receives a prophecy directed at the future of Rome, far beyond the scope of the poem's plot. In light of the poet's discussions of Ascanius, we see that the hero's son is the lawful recipient of the poem's long-term prophecies. Ascanius is associated with Rome on numerous occasions, and several discussions of the boy suggest that his survival is paramount. Aeneas will get to Italy and will set in motion the foundation of Rome, but Ascanius will play a much more active role in the establishment of the city. When Vergil notes the joyful ignorance of the hero in scenes centered on the future of Rome, he suggests that Aeneas is unaware because his Roman contribution is secondary to that of Ascanius. It is left to the hero's son to contribute the most to Rome's foundation.

Aeneas' ignorance about the future contained in the poem's long-term prophecies mirrors the plight of Vergil's contemporary Rome. In general, prophecies require some sort of divine

manifestation, making anything outlined in a prophecy divinely ordained.[184] According to O'Hara, the gods use deceptively optimistic prophecies to encourage the characters of the poem.[185] In this respect, the gods fashion the outcome of the poem, driving the plot forward and ultimately removing much of the hero's agency. Aeneas is merely a vehicle by which the gods attempt to further their own agendas. He is powerless against his own destiny and that of his line. This powerlessness against the will of the gods parallels the uncertainty of Vergil's own contemporary world. I have shown in chapter three that the poem's long-term prophecies contain seemingly optimistic futures that are consistently eclipsed by several darker realities. Because these prophecies speak directly to Vergil's audience, the overall message is one of uncertainty. In a world recovering from bitter civil war, Vergil's Rome looked to the future for peace and prosperity under Augustus. However, just as the characters of the *Aeneid* cannot have known the future with any certainty, so too is Vergil's audience ignorant about the future, despite Vergil's often optimistic promises. The poet emphasizes this detail not only in the long-term prophecies themselves, but also in the hero's reaction to the prophecies. On each occasion where Aeneas receives a long-term prophecy, the hero is joyfully unaware. He is delighted by the prospect of the future greatness of his line, but he can never be sure if this hopeful future will be realized. If the past is any indicator, the future will likely not be as bright as the poet seems to suggest both for Aeneas and for his audience. Vergil's Rome represents the hopeful uncertainty of a world in transition.

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[184] See p. 4.
[185] O'Hara (1990) 3-4.

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