

## ALLEGORY IN THE AENEID

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Already before the close of the Classical Age the tradition of an allegorical interpretation of the Virgilian epic had taken shape. Witnesses of that are Donatus, Servius, and Macrobius, in the Fourth Century. In particular, Donatus thought that Virgil, in writing his poems, followed an order similar to the development of man's life which is first pastoral, then agricultural and lastly warlike. Hence, the *Bucolics*, the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*. Philargyrius and Servius held that Virgil praises Augustus by exploiting the achievements and works of Aeneas. In the Middle Ages the allegorical interpretation of the poem reached absurd proportions. Fulgentius, who wrote in the Fifth or Sixth Century, in his *De Continentia Vergiliana*, builds up a most detailed allegorical picture interpreting each book in terms of the stages of man's life on earth. Bernard of Chartres, in his commentary to the first six books of the *Aeneid*, holds that Virgil describes the fortunes of human life and what the soul does as long as it is temporarily enclosed in the body. John of Salisbury considers the *Aeneid* as an allegory of all philosophical truth, and, like Fulgentius, considers the first six books of the *Aeneid* as an allegory of the vicissitudes of human life from infancy to old age.

Some scholars in our own times have revived the allegorical theory and have tried to detect symbolical interpretations in certain parts or passages of the *Aeneid*. But some of these interpretations read rather like guesswork and are hardly corroborated by any internal or external evidence. Others command more serious attention.

The allegory of the *Aeneid* is more subtle than that of the *Bucolics*, because it is less direct and, therefore, less apparent. In its broad lines it is consequent on the very purpose of the poem. Although Virgil had toyed with the idea of writing an epic since his young days when he was writing the *Bucolics*, and again later, when writing the *Georgics*, the actual suggestion to write the poem which we have come from higher quarters. When Octavian definitely brought the whole Roman Empire under his rule after the battle of Actium, he meant to make his position as durable as he could make it. In Julius Caesar the idea of absolute autocracy, possibly of a monarchical shape, took some time to develop. But Octavian had the experiences of his grand-uncle to lead him, and from the very start he decided on a monarchy: a hereditary monarchy which, if it was not to be surrounded with the brilliance of an oriental court, was still to be no less absolute in its powers. Its support was to be two-fold: a strong and centralized army and popular favour. One of the means by which this popular favour was to be secured was propaganda. In this sense Octavian was perhaps a fore-runner of our own contemporary age. With that in view he gathered around him, through the agency of his home-minister Maecenas, most of the writers of the age, protected them, made them financially secure by bestowing land upon them, thus making sure not only that they would write nothing that ran counter to his autocracy but also that they would positively support his policy whenever that was needed.

The *Aeneid*, I repeat, was also the result of a similar suggestion by the ruling powers. True to his propaganda drive to prop up his infant throne, Octavian wanted to idealize his person and his work. The very title of *Augustus*, assumed by a decree of the Senate in 27, a title which really defies exact analysis, and which was meant to shed around Octavian an aureola of a higher greatness which not only distinguished him from Octavian the triumvir and the military despot, but commended him to gods as well as men, indicates that he wanted to appear in the eyes of his subjects as the god-sent, the one about whom the gods had planned a special providence, one who had become something almost bordering on the divine. Hence the divine cult which Augustus organized for his person throughout Italy and the Empire.

The help of the poet who had already aided so well the agricultural policy of the regime by his stupendous *Georgics* would have an incalculable propaganda value. Hence the *Aeneid*, which, in this sense, may well be considered in the nature of a political publication.

The person of Augustus and the Rome of Augustus were to be presented to Rome, to Italy, and to the Empire, in the idealized light of poetry which would capture the imagination of the multitude and make of the heroes (Augustus and Rome) household names of national import. The subject was not an easy one: it has never been easy to turn contemporary politics into poetry, and we know that it took Virgil some time to find an appropriate background on which to build this theme. Augustus, in spite of his titles and his present work for Rome, in spite of the *pax augustea* he had ultimately achieved, was still for many, indeed for the thinking many of Rome, the Octavian who in 43 had used to his own private advantage the legions given to him by the Senate, marching with them upon Rome in 43 B.C. and blackmailing the Senate and people into accepting his nomination and election to the consulship (and that of his first cousin Q. Pedius) when he was only 21 years of age (the age for the consulship was then, according to Sulla's Constitution, 42 years of age: Pompey and Crassus had already broken that law in 70 B.C. when they obtained the consulship, also by military blackmail, when they were 36 years of age); allying himself with Mark Antony, the arch-enemy of the Senate; he was still the triumvir who had signed the wholesale political proscriptions which followed and which sent to their doom hundreds who, like Cicero, had merited well of the Republic; he was still the Octavian who had filled the Senate with his own nominees, rendered the magistracies a mere shadow, monopolised the military machine of the whole Empire, and set up the strictest military autocracy the Roman people had ever experienced. That, of course, besides the personal short-comings, both of a private and public order, which were well known to both friends and foes. At Modena, Antony had really been defeated by Hirtius and Pansa, not by Octavian; at Philippi, Octavian's wing had been worsted by Brutus and it was Antony's generalship that had secured the final victory over the enemy. His ultimate victory over Sextus Pompeius and his defeat of Antony at Actium were all due to the brilliant generalship of Agrippa, not to mention other instances. One might perhaps recall also that in his private life not everything was straight and tidy. When Octavian had privately written to Antony chiding him for dalliance with Cleopatra to the detriment of his (Octavian's) sister Octavia, Antony answered back recalling Octavian's own numerous

flirtations with Terentilla, Rupilla, Sabina Titiensia, etc. Years later Nero compared the desertion of Scribonia by Octavian and his hasty marriage with Livia immediately after, to the rape of the Sabines. Hence it was rather difficult to turn the blood-stained hands of the scheming, hypocritical, autocratic Octavian into the pious hands that must achieve the god-planned victories of an epic poem of national import. But if Augustus could hardly be idealized in flesh and blood, that process might be achieved through a symbol, and Virgil wisely fell back on a legendary and half-mythical age and therefrom chose a personality on which he might work as a symbol of the real Augustus, so that the halo of semi-divine greatness proper to the symbol might enhance, as required, the prestige of Augustus by overshadowing him with the resulting majesty which the brilliant colours of the symbol engendered.

The subtle meaning of the *Aeneid*, therefore, is that of an allegory borrowing colours from a distant imaginary past and bearing on the present with an almost mystical suggestiveness. As Augustus had rescued the Roman people from the blood-stained wreckage of fifty years of civil strife and warfare and had guaranteed a new lease of life to Rome by the establishment of the imperial autocracy, thus making it possible that after the irrevocable extinction of the Republic Rome should continue with its mission for civilization and order, so Aeneas, of whom Augustus is a direct descendant, leads his people from the wreckage of Troy after the irrevocable fall of the city to a new lease of life by founding for them a new city which will guarantee the perpetuation of the Trojans' work, namely, that of giving rise, in conjunction with the native Latins, to the great glory that was to be Rome. As Augustus is linked with Aeneas by the material ties of blood and kinship and by the moral ones of leadership, so Rome is linked up with Troy by the material transportation from one city to the other of Troy's *penates* and Troy's sacred fire, as related in Book II, and the pre-eminence of Troy in the East, materially shown both by the stand against the united effort of the whole of Greece for ten years, and by the fact that it merited to be sung by the greatest poet of antiquity, Homer, is paralleled by the pre-eminence of Rome in the ages to come, in Italy, in the Mediterranean and in the whole civilized world. So the allegory is developed by a double picture, that of Aeneas=Augustus and that of Rome's greatness, and these two are again interlinked together inasmuch as in the story Rome comes into being through the agency of Aeneas as later Rome receives its second lease of life in terms of its glorious Empire through the agency of Augustus, the heir of Aeneas' name and greatness.

This link between Aeneas and Augustus may be seen in various ways. In Book VIII, while both sides, Trojans and Latins, are preparing for the coming clash, Venus gets from Vulcan for Aeneas a suit of armour the most conspicuous part of which is a shield embossed with pictures (panels) representing the milestones of future Roman greatness. As the shield is to be the sure protection of Aeneas against his foe, so it represents the greatness of Roman history towards which the safety of Aeneas is directed:

Illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos  
 haud uatum ignarus uenturique inscius aevi  
 fecerat Ignipotens,

(VIII, 626)

and later Aeneas, having on his shoulder this shield, is unknowingly carrying the whole fame and fate of his glorious descendants:

attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum.

(VIII, 731)

It contained, on one side, a picture of the wolf nursing Romulus and Remus, next, the rape of the Sabine women, the corpse of Mettius of Alba drawn by Tullus Hostilius, Porsenna besieging Rome with Horatius defending the bridge and Cloelia escaping, Manlius defending the Capitol, the Salii and the Luperci dancing at the sacrifice, Catiline going into Tartarus, and Cato acting as the judge of the departed. All these panels are embossed around a scene which occupies the centre of the shield and which depicts in four parts the victory of Actium and the triumph of Augustus after it. On one side there is depicted the actual battle, with Augustus directing his troops from his flagship, accompanied by the Senate, the people, the penates and the great gods of Rome; next to it is represented the battle between the Egyptian and Roman gods; and on the other side the flight of Cleopatra and the triumph of Augustus. This triumph is dwelt upon in great detail:

At Caesar, triplici inuectus Romana triumpho  
moenia, dis Italis uotum immortale sacrabat,  
maxima ter centum totam delubra per Urbem.....

(VIII, 714ff.)

The central position occupied by the group of four pictures dealing with the battle of Actium and its consequent triumph makes it clear that Augustus is considered as the core towards which is directed the whole course of Roman history fashioned by the achievements of so many great Romans. All these, and especially Augustus, are descendants of Aeneas:

famamque et fata nepotum.

(VIII, 731)

The decisive victory of Actium made Octavian supreme and is definitely the culmination of the events which led to the establishment of the Empire under Augustus.

The burning flame which appears on the head of Iulus in Book II, 683, and the star which in the same portent flashes across the sky (ib. 694) are the same Julian star which is depicted on the forehead of Augustus in Vulcan's shield, thereby showing that Augustus is the one among Aeneas' descendants who shall one day fulfil the destiny set in motion by Aeneas in bringing the Trojans to Italy and in thus being responsible, through Iulus and the Alban kings, for the foundation of Rome.

On his return from the victory of Actium, Augustus built, in honour of Apollo and in fulfilment of a vow made during the battle, a temple on the Palatine and reinstated the Ludi Apollinares which, first celebrated at the time of the battle of Cannae, had fallen into disuse. Augustus also celebrated in honour of Apollo and Diana the Ludi Saeculares. In the temple of Apollo on the Palatine he placed the revised edition of the Sibylline oracles and set up a new college of priests to keep them in custody and interpret them.

Now, all that is poetically imagined by Virgil to be done in fulfilment of a vow made by Aeneas to the Sibyl in Book VI. In the beginning of Book VI, where Aeneas goes to the Sibyl and asks her to unfold to him his future, known to her by her prophetic powers, he promises in return to build to the god of prophecy, her inspirer, a temple, to institute new games in his honour and to set up in her particular honour a new college of priests:

Tum Phoebos et Triuias solido de marmore templum  
instituat festosque dies de nomine Phoebi.  
te quoque magna manent regnis penetralia nostris:  
hic ego namque tuas sortes arcanaque fata  
dicta meae genti ponam, lectosque sacro,  
alma, uiros.

(VI, 69)

That promise Aeneas fulfils in the person of his descendant Augustus.

The deification of Augustus is foreshadowed in the promise of deification which is repeatedly made to Aeneas in the poem. Thus in the promise of Jove to Venus in I, 259-260:

sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli  
magnanimum Aenean.

So also in VI, 789-790:

Hic Caesar et omnis Iuli  
progenies magnum caeli uentura sub axem,

and in XII, 794-795:

Indigetem Aeneas scis ipsa et scire fateris  
deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli.

The drive made by Augustus to reinstate morals and religion in Rome is well known. The collapse of private and public morality in the last hundred years of the Republic, which Sallust depicts so vividly in the introductory paragraphs to his *Catilinarian War*, made any new social order impossible, and Augustus saw clearly that any new fabric had to have in the first instance a sound moral basis. Hence his social legislation to foster marriage, to combat childless marriages, to punish adultery, and the example he himself set of putting his own house in order, punishing by exile his own and only daughter Julia and his grand-daughter, Julia the second. Hence also his drive to renovate the state religion, to revive the *pax deorum* of an earlier age and to re-establish the former serene belief in the state-protecting deities of Rome. Hence his systematic repair of disused temples, which he undertook in 20 B.C.; his resuscitation of many half-forgotten ceremonies; his careful supervision of the worship of Vesta; his revival of the cult of Dea Dia by the obsolescent college of the Arval Brotherhood; his reappointment of a flamen Dialis; and his celebration of the Ludi Saeculares. And what is more, Augustus positively wanted that the public should know of this devotion of his for the gods and of his drive for the enhancement of public and private morality.

Now, that drive for religion is foreshadowed in the *pietas* of Aeneas. Virgil repeatedly reminds us that his hero is *pius*, 'pius Aeneas'. In Book II, when the penates of Troy are to be rescued from the conflagration of the city, they are consigned by the ghost of Hector to Aeneas who is told that he is to be their custodian until he can build a new city for them. He leaves Troy, gathers the Trojan refugees at Anthandros and leads them through the perils of a long sea journey in search of a distant new home in pursuance and always mindful of that mission and that trust imposed upon him by the gods: *da ... / ... Latio considerare Teucros / errantisque deos agitataque numina Troiae* (VI, 66-68). It is the gods he continually consults, at Delphi, at the famous oracle, in Crete in his dream, in Chaonia through the prophet Helenus, at Cumae through the Sibyl, and, as soon as he arrives at the Tiber, Tiberinus. One may here recall that we are told more than once that Augustus receives advice from the gods appearing to him in sleep, from Jove Capitolinus, from Apollo, possibly from Juno.

Aeneas' prowess in war, amply shown in Book II, on the night of the fall of Troy, and in Books X, XI, and XII, in the fighting against the Latins and Turnus, foreshadows the martial qualities which Augustus expected the Empire to see in him. The leadership of Aeneas of his people has its counterpart in Augustus' imperial leadership of Rome. It is hardly an overstatement to assert that the whole of Roman history centres around Augustus. The Republic which Cicero tried hard to save was beyond remedy. The attempts to patch up the old republican institutions had all ended in civil strife and political chaos. It was Augustus who, with his strong but gentle autocracy, reinstated the authority of a central administration and made it possible for Rome's *imperium* to continue to dominate over Western Europe and the shores of the Mediterranean for a full five hundred years. He set his mark on Rome's army making it definitely professional; he definitely stabilized the frontiers on the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, and the Sahara; he re-shaped Rome's civil administration; he covered Rome with the Splendour of marble and gold; he embarked upon and finished many ambitious schemes of public works throughout Italy; he created an efficient civil service which could control and protect life and property not only in Rome but throughout the whole Empire; and he inspired in a new and very thorough manner Rome's verse and prose writers, so that his very name overshadowed his age and gave it a new meaning.

All this we find suggested at the end of Book VI. As in the shield of Aeneas, Augustus occupies the central and the most prominent part, so here, in Book VI, in the review of Rome's future heroes, Augustus' personality stands quite apart and towers above all the others with his mighty personality and far-reaching achievements:

Hic uir, hic est, tibi quem promitti saepius audis,  
 Augustus Caesar, Diui genus, aurea condet  
 saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arua  
 Saturno quondam.

(VI, 791)

To this allegorical picture in which Augustus is overshadowed by Aeneas, is intimately linked, we think, the drama of the personal struggle between Aeneas and Turnus in the second half of the poem, inasmuch as that struggle on the story plane takes place for the hand of Lavinia, while on the allegorical plane it signifies the final struggle for power between Octavian and Antony. The final victory of that struggle, obtained in the final drama of the Actium duel (signified in the final duel between Aeneas and Turnus), makes it possible for Augustus to establish his autocracy thereby giving to Rome its new lease of life which we mentioned at the beginning, in given the basic general allegorical meaning of the poem, exactly as it allows Aeneas to give to his Trojans their new lease of life as a nation by achieving for them their settlement in Latium. Thus in the final victory of Aeneas in Book XII we have the definite link up together of the two parallel allegorical pictures of the poem, i.e. that of Augustus and that of Rome.

The imperial propaganda of Augustus did not admit of a double leadership as in the double magistracies of the old Republic, and of that Virgil had to be the poetical mouth-piece. In 26, when after the death of Cornelius Gallus, Virgil published his second edition of the *Georgics*, with the substitution of the episode of Aristaeus for the praises of Gallus, Virgil repeated the same motive: *melior uacua sine regnet in aula* (Georg. 4, 90). Protected by Asinius Pollio, the faithful lieutenant of Antony, Virgil at the time of his *Bucolics*, had been, if not an Antonian in the sense of party politics, certainly one who had admired Antony as the principal of the late Julius Caesar's lieutenants. In 40 B.C., in the Fourth Eclogue, Virgil had reserved for Antony the role of Achilles in the Parthian War which was still to be fought before universal peace was achieved as a result of the Peace of Brundisium, and because of his continued friendship for Pollio, Virgil could not disparage Antony even when, since the period of the *Georgics*, Virgil had definitely passed into the circle of Octavian. But Octavian who in 31 had in fact prevailed had to be represented as such to the detriment of Antony who, when Virgil was planning his *Aeneid*, was already dead, apart from the fact that he marred his prestige with his liaison with Cleopatra. Hence Virgil could represent Antony as having fallen in his allegorical symbol of Turnus, but that fall is represented as having happened not because of any lack of courage or prowess on the part of Turnus, but because it was the will of the gods that events should turn out that way so that Aeneas / Augustus might reign, very much in the same way as Troy in Book II falls not because of any martial inferiority of her people vis à vis the Greeks, but because Jove had so decreed so that its people might migrate to Italy and give rise to Roman greatness. Virgil indeed betrays all along his sympathy for Turnus. He makes him brave and self-confident; he adorns him with all the attributes for leadership and makes him organize and inspire the most spirited resistance to Aeneas and his Trojans, wreaking havoc both on them as a whole and on some of their most notable warriors. Virgil does not only make of Turnus a violent and bold hero in true Achilles fashion, but he endows him with a deep sense of honour; and when he makes him fall he gives him the consciousness that superior and obscure forces are in motion against him, and that itself, even at the moment when fear of death creeps into him, gives Turnus the strength to accept with calmness his destiny, offering himself as a victim according to the will of his fate. Virgil allows Antony to fall in the person of Turnus, but admires his resistance and sheds on it the brilliant colours of bravery and glory.

Kenneth Quinn criticizes Virgil for not sparing Turnus when the latter has accepted the terms of victory and has in fact recognized his defeat. I believe that the actual death of Turnus has a specific allegorical meaning. Virgil wanted to present an apology for Octavian for not having spared Antony, his old partner in the triumvirate, in the sense that Antony had come to fight Octavian at Actium adding insult to injury by bringing with him Cleopatra whose presence reminded Octavian of the insult offered to his sister Octavia by her repudiation, just in the same way as Turnus had come to fight Aeneas wearing the belt of Pallas thereby insultingly reminding Aeneas of the injury he had caused to his brave friend. When Aeneas says to Turnus: *tunc hinc spoliis indute meorum / eripiare mihi? Pallas te hoc uulnere, Pallas / immolat*, one might easily put those words on the lips of Octavian at Actium substituting for the name of Pallas that of his sister Octavia.

Within this framework of Antonian allegory of Turnus we should look at Amata and the role she plays in the Turnus story. Amata does her best to impede Aeneas from settling in Latium and from marrying her daughter, and urges Turnus to fight Aeneas hoping for his destruction but fails and commits suicide, exactly as Cleopatra had provoked the estrangement and final conflict of Antony against Octavian after the Peace of Brundisium, hoping that Antony might definitely oust Octavian, but fails and dies by her own hand. Amata, therefore, is for us an allegory of Cleopatra serving to help build up the final picture of triumph by Octavian.

Rome itself, with its history and its great mission among the nations, has its great share of both the allegory and patriotism of the *Aeneid*. Its universal rule and civilizing mission is clearly forecast in Book VI, 851:

tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento –  
hae tibi erunt artes – pacique imponere morem,  
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.

(VI, 851)

The unity of Italy and of the Empire under Augustus is symbolized by the fact that, as we are told in Book III, in their journey the Trojans leave behind them, in some places which they visit, Trojan settlements. Thus they leave a settlement in Thrace, another in Crete, and yet another at Eryx in Sicily. The connection which Aeneas' journey has with places on the coast of South Italy, e.g. Cumae, Palinurus, Misenum, and Caieta, sometimes poetically imagining that these places acquired their names from the deceased companions of Aeneas, serves to stress the link that the South of Italy has with Aeneas and hence with Rome and to symbolize the intimate national union which, effected as a result of the Social War, was at the time of Augustus a reality. In this sense the *Aeneid* was meant to be a national poem with an appeal not only to Rome but to the whole of Italy: the intimate association of these places with the voyage of Aeneas should symbolize this broad nationalism.



The incorporation, then, of the whole of Italy into Rome's *civitas*, consequent on the extension of Rome's hegemony of the peoples of Italy, one after the other, is allegorically recalled in the second part of the poem.

This second part, in its general motive, reflects the first part of the history of the Republic. When the kings were driven out the Republic had to fight, first for its very existence against the Etruscans of Porsenna, and afterwards against the Latin League. After the battle of Lake Regillus the period of consolidation was over and Rome little by little started on its career of conquest, fighting practically continuous wars against the Latins, Volsci, Rutuli, Marsi, Equi. After the conquest of Latium, Rome's attention was turned to Etruria, and when that part of Italy was annexed, there followed the conquest of Samnium in three long wars, until the whole of the peninsula fell under the hegemony of Rome. The only allies which Rome, at times, found in this continuous war of conquest were the Greek cities of Campania. The result of this conquest was not the extermination of the conquered Italians but their incorporation in an enlarged federation, mostly in the way of *amici et socii*. This integration of all these peoples, some of them, like the Oscans and Greeks of the South, of different ethnical character from the Latins, became so complete that by the end of the Republic the Italians were sharing on a completely equal footing the benefits of Rome's victories abroad and the glamour of Rome's honours at home in the administration of the capital. In the last half century of the Republic, Marius and Cicero coming from the Volscian town of Arpinum, Pompey from Picenum, Catullus and Virgil from Cisalpine Gaul, felt that they were as Roman as Caesar or Brutus who were natives of the capital.

Now the alignment of forces for or against Aeneas in the last six books of the *Aeneid* reflects all that. While the allies of Aeneas are the Greeks of Evander, the coalition against him represents, broadly, the peoples Rome had to fight against, first to assert and to consolidate itself as a republic and then to bring a unified and federated Italy under her rule: Turnus represents and leads the troops of the Ausonians, the Rutuli, the Sicanians, the Sacranians and the Labici, Camilla the Volsci; Catilus and Coras led troops from Tibur; Caeculus led his host from Praeneste, Gabii, the Hernici, from Anagnia and from the lands along the Anio; Messapus came with his troops from Fescennia, from Mount Soracte, from among those living round the lake and mountain of Ciminus and in Capena's groves as well as the Aequi Falisci; Mezentius brought troops from Tuscany and his son Lausus from Agylla; Aventinus came from the Sabine country; Clausus also led the Sabines from Amiternum, from Cures, Mustusca, Nomentum, Velinus, from Mount Tetrica and Mount Severus, from Casperia, from Foruli, Nursia and the valley of the River Allia; Ufens led the Umbrians from Nersae and the Aequiculi; Umbro led the Marsi; Virbius came from Aricia; Oebalus led the Campanians from Capri, from Rufrae, Batulum, Celezna, from Abella as well as the Sarrastes, also of Campania; Halaesus led the Campanians from the Massic Mountains, from Suessa Aurunca, from Sidicinum and Cales, as well as the Samnites of Saticula and the Oscans. Altogether they roughly make up the whole of Italy as known to be inhabited by the Italici (hence no mention is made of the Gaulish North or the Greek South), so that Virgil can truly say: *Ardet . . . Ausonia* (Aen. 7, 623).

All these in vain do their best to frustrate what Aeneas had set out to achieve, as all these peoples, each in their own time and circumstances, had in vain tried to stem the advance of Rome. But, reading the battle books in the latter part of the *Aeneid*, especially Books X and XI, one feels that Virgil is all the time in full sympathy with the Italian heroes who valiantly struggle in vain against the Trojans. Their valour gets its due meed of praise, and although the heroes themselves are vanquished their prowess is fully recognized. This is particularly the case of Turnus. In the attack on the Trojan camp in Book IX Turnus wreaks as much slaughter as ever Aeneas does, and in the single combat with Aeneas in Book XII one feels that he is doomed not because he is inferior to Aeneas but because so have the gods decreed, to make it possible for Aeneas to achieve the purpose for which he had come from Troy to Italy. It is clear that Virgil wants to give the impression that once the war is over and once the Trojans will have joined themselves as one people with their former foes they will go hand in hand to ensure the national destiny which awaits jointly Rome and the romanized peoples of Italy in their conquest of the Mediterranean.

The victory of Aeneas will not have as its result the extermination of the conquered but only a federation of conquerors and conquered, on a perfectly equal footing, for the achievement of a common destiny. These are the very words of Aeneas in Book XII, 187:

Sin nostrum adnuerit nobis Victoria Martem —  
 ut potius reor et potius di numine firment —  
 non ego nec Teucris Italos parere iubebo  
 nec mihi regna peto: paribus se legibus ambae  
 inuictae gentes aeterna in foedera mittant.

(XII, 187)

And, further on, in the same book, in line 827, Juno's prayer, granted by Jove, is:

sit Romana potens Itala uirtute propago.

(XII, 827)

Aeneas' final victory is in fact the beginning of that process announced in Book I, 33: *Tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem*.

But, in addition to that, particular parts of the *Aeneid* recall special instances of Roman history, giving in that way to the book itself a special national significance of its own. There is hardly any doubt that the story of Dido as a whole is allegorical. I do not endorse the opinion of those (Drew and Camps) who see in Dido a symbol of Cleopatra. Dido's genuine love for Aeneas and her pangs at his desertion can hardly stand for the wiles of the Egyptian queen who tried her arts with varied success on Caesar and Antony first and then, with failure, on Augustus. The unmistakable sympathy of Virgil for the Carthaginian queen could hardly be his feelings for the Egyptian seducer. Dido's prayer in Book IV, 622 ff. rather links up her story with one of the most crucial and decisive episodes of Rome's history. As in the Punic Wars, and particularly in the second one, Rome's advance towards Mediterranean and world domination was very nearly cut short by Hannibal's Carthage, and it needed all the strength of Rome's character and resources

to weather the storm and save Rome's civilizing influence for all time, so Aeneas' course towards Italy, where he is destined to give rise to the greatness for which Rome stands, runs a very serious danger of being cut short by his stay in Carthage and his marriage with Dido; and Aeneas needs all his strength of character to shake himself off from the ties which would have absorbed his Trojans into the Carthaginian people and city. The intimate relation between the episode of Dido and the Carthaginian Wars is clearly indicated in the lines in which Virgil makes these wars the result of the curse of the dying Dido:

Tum uos, o Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum  
exercete odiis, cinerique haec mittite nostro  
munera. nullus amor populis nec foedera sunt.  
exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor  
qui face Dardanio ferroque sequare colonos,  
nunc, olim, quocumque dabunt se tempore uires.  
litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas  
imprecor, arma armis: pungent ipsique nepotesque.

(IV, 622)

In this sense Dido's episode belongs not to the allegorical picture of Octavian but to that of Rome.

Hence I reject also the allegorical interpretation of the Book (IV) in terms of the short-lived marriage of Octavian with Scribonia in 39 B.C., assessing that marriage as a momentary retreat of Octavian from his ascent towards supreme power and as an acquiescence of having to resign to a division of power with Sextus Pompeius. This interpretation of Book IV is contrary to the facts of History. In 39 B.C. Octavian was already sharing his power with Antony who had married Octavia the year before to cement the alliance – not to speak of Lepidus, the third triumvir – and Actium was still a good ten years away. In 39 B.C. nothing had as yet happened to disqualify Antony from his role of equal partner, indeed of leader, of the triumvirate – he had not as yet marred his military prestige with his Parthian failure, nor his reputation with his romance with Cleopatra. We reject also Drew's suggestion that Book IV is an allegory of Octavian's amorous inclinations and his success in overcoming them. We can hardly imagine Virgil with his refined tastes blundering into such awkward situations in order to praise, indeed, to idealise Augustus.

In his article on Dido and Amata La Penna has definitely shown, I think, that Dido and Amata form a perfect parallelism. Virgil uses almost the same words and phrases, the same similes, the same reflections in the development of the psychological drama of both. Dido speaks to Aeneas as Amata later addresses Turnus. This correspondence of language and presentation is for us – and here we go beyond La Penna – a confirmation of the allegorical role of each. Indeed we believe that these two allegorical roles are parallel and complementary in the sense that as Dido tries to cut short Aeneas' journey when he is half way through it and does not succeed and Amata does the same thing when that journey is completed and Aeneas is at the point of settling in Latium thus starting the new lease of life for his Trojans as a nation, so Carthage in the Punic Wars tried to cut short

Rome's advance in her career of Empire when Rome was half way through it, and Cleopatra by trying to destroy Octavian would have impeded the latter from giving to the Roman people their new lease of life in terms of the Empire founded by Augustus. In this sense the episode of Dido forms part of the picture of Rome while that of Cleopatra of that of Augustus.

When the Trojans arrive at the mouth of the Tiber, they come to land and find the white sow with its thirty young ones, as Tiberinus had foretold that they would do, and from that they know that that was the place where they should build their new city:

iamque tibi, ne uana putes hanc fingere somnum,  
litoreis ingens inuenta sub ilicibus sus  
triginta capitum fetus enixa iacebit,  
*alba* solo recubans, albi circum ubera nati,  
– hic locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum, –  
ex quo ter denis urbem redeuntibus annis  
Ascanius clari condet cognominis Albam.  
haud incerta cano.

(VIII, 42)

The marked allusion to Alba Longa is evident and the thirty piglets may refer to the thirty years mentioned by Virgil as to pass before it is built. But, we think, the sow with its thirty young ones around her is an allegory of Alba Longa as mother of the thirty Latin cities that formed the first Latin League with Rome in 493 B.C., thereby giving unity to Latium and the beginning to Rome's incorporation of the whole of Italy.

The reconciliation of Juno with the Trojans in Book XII, 791–842, may be an allegory of the practice of the Romans to incorporate among their gods the gods of the cities they conquered and destroyed. Line 480: *nec gens ulla tuos aequae celebrabit honores* is a clear indication of the veneration in which the Romans of Virgil's time held Juno as the wife of Jove, veneration well embodied in the great temple of Juno on the Capitol, along with that of Jove.

So, one feels that the *Aeneid* is, broadly, an allegory. Under the veil of the toil of the Trojans to settle in Latium and the personality and achievements of Aeneas lies a deeper significance in terms of the foundation of Rome and the development of the Republic, and of the new lease of life which the tottering Republic received from Augustus by the mighty experiment of his imperial autocracy. In this sense, the name of *Gesta populi Romani* by which the *Aeneid* may have also been known, in the first instance, in ancient times, does not seem to be inappropriate to the full significance of the poem.

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