

CONCEPTS OF DESTINY IN VERGIL'S AENEID

by

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"Now the centre of interest in a poet is his poetry : not his themes, his doctrines, his opinions, his life or conduct, but the poetical quality of the works he has bequeathed to us."

A.E.Housman, The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol.IX.

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PREFACE

Throughout this dissertation the text quoted is that of the edition of R.A.B.Mynors, P. Vergili Maronis Opera (Oxford, 1969).

Editions of commentaries referred to by the name of the author only are as follows :

- Austin : R.G.Austin. P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Primus. (Oxford, 1971).
———. P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Secundus. (Oxford, 1964).
———. P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus. (Oxford, 1955).
- Butler : H.E.Butler. The Sixth Book of the Aeneid. (Oxford, 1920).
- Conington : J.Conington. P. Vergili Maronis Opera The Works of Virgil. (London, 1872).
- Fowler : W.Warde Fowler. Virgil's "Gathering of the Clans" being Observations on Aeneid vii. 601-817. (Oxford, 1916).
———. Aeneas at the Site of Rome - Observations on the Eighth Book of the Aeneid. (Oxford, 1917).
———. The Death of Turnus - Observations on the Twelfth Book of the Aeneid. (Oxford, 1919. Rpt. 1927).
- Gransden : K.W.Gransden. Virgil Aeneid Book viii. (Cambridge, 1976).
- Henry : J.Henry. Aeneidea or Critical, Exegetical, and Aesthetical Remarks on the Aeneis. (1873-1892. Rpt. New York, 1972).
- Mackail : J.W.Mackail. The Aeneid. (Oxford, 1930).
- Maguiness : W.S.Maguiness. Virgil : Aeneid. Book xii. (London, 1953).
- Page : The Aeneid : Books i - vi (vii - xii) 2 vols. Part of Macmillan's "Classical Series". (London, 1894 - 1900).

- Pease : A.S.Pease. Publi Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus.
(Harvard, 1935. Rpt. Darmstadt, 1967).
- Servius : Servii Grammatici qui Feruntur in Vergilii Carmina
Commentarii. Eds. G.Thilo and H.Hagen. (Leipzig, 1881.
Rpt. Hildesheim, 1961).
- Sidgwick : A.Sidgwick. P. Vergili Maronis Opera. (Cambridge, 1890).
- Wagner : G.P.E.Wagner. P.V.M. varietate lectionis et perpetua
adnotatione illustratus a C.G.Heyne. Editio quarta
curavit G.P.E. Wagner. (London, 1830).
- Westendorp Boerma : R.E.H.Westendorp Boerma. P. Vergili Maronis
Aeneis Libri i - vi. (Leiden, 1970).
- Williams : R.D.Williams. P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Tertius.
(Oxford, 1962).
———. P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quintus.
(Oxford, 1960).
———. The Aeneid of Virgil Books 1 - 6.
(London, 1972).
———. The Aeneid of Virgil Books 7 - 10.
(London, 1973).

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this investigation is to define the various concepts of destiny which are to be found in Vergil's Aeneid, as far as it is possible to do so from the text of the epic and from a study of the prevailing religious and philosophical thought of the poet's day.

The research was undertaken as a result of an abiding personal interest in the poet and in the world described in his epic which the writing of an M.A. dissertation did not fully satisfy.¹ During the course of work for that degree it had become increasingly apparent that critics' appreciation of Vergil largely depended upon their personal sympathy with what they regarded as his philosophy of life. Their response to his poetic achievement tended to be coloured by their belief as to whether or not the poet was, at one extreme, a fatalistic imperialist or, at another, a republican who insisted upon Man's free will. This multifariousness of critical assessment of this many-sided poet led to a desire to study the epic in greater depth in an attempt to solve the problem which caused this critical confusion. It seemed that what was needed was a systematic study of all the words referring to the concept of destiny which Vergil either used himself or put in the mouths of his characters, with a view to discovering, as far as was possible, exactly what he meant by them and what he meant his characters to mean by them.

As a preliminary to the close study of the words referring to the concept of destiny a comprehensive survey of the opinions of classical scholars and literary critics was made to discover the

1. David Lightfoot, "Vergil and his English Literary Critics from Dryden to the Present Day" M.A. Diss. Wales, 1964.

full range of the various concepts of destiny in the Aeneid that had already been defined. Once more, however, it became apparent that just as the critics had disagreed about Vergil's importance as a poet so they disagreed again about what exactly his concept of destiny was.

The Dutch scholar M.R.J. Brinkgreve once commented that it needs a whole book fully to expound what Vergil means by the word "fatum".² Nevertheless, surprising though it may seem, no comprehensive work on concepts of destiny in Vergil has yet been written. Most classical scholars, it is true, either in one chapter of a book, or in an article in a learned periodical, or even in a footnote in a textual commentary, have ventured some opinion on the subject, but none of them has ever attempted the truly exhaustive study which this enigmatic subject surely requires and deserves.

This investigation has been undertaken in an attempt to provide such a study. It will be argued later that the difference between it and other critical assessments of concepts of destiny in the Aeneid lies in its methodology, which will now be outlined.

In Chapter One an examination is made of what has been said by others about concepts of destiny in the Aeneid; their opinions are compared and contrasted; and an attempt is made to define the differing standpoints of various scholars. In Chapter Two a reason is suggested for some of the confusion and complexity of critical opinion revealed in Chapter One and at the same time a critical

2. "Annotationes Vergilianae" Mnem XLIII (1915) p. 339 : "Non commentationis brevi parte sed toto libro opus est ut penitus proponatur locique Vergilianis ex quibus ea res perspicitur, allatis et accurate interpretatis probetur quid fati vocabulo Vergilius voluerit."

2 (a). Since producing this thesis my attention has been drawn to W. Pötscher Vergil und die göttlichen Mächte (Hildesheim, 1977).

3.

principle of vital and fundamental importance, occasionally referred to by others, is expounded and established. This critical principle, deserving of far greater application than it has hitherto been awarded, is simply that of making a very clear distinction between what a poet says, and what a poet makes one of his characters say. It has been the prevailing tendency of modern literary criticism to assume that one can safely infer from the sentiments expressed by an author's character what are the sentiments of the author himself. This assumption will be shown to be not only incapable of proof but often irrelevant to true poetic appreciation and even productive of misinterpretation. In Chapter Three a review is made of the religious and philosophical ideas concerning the concept of destiny which were current in Vergil's day that could possibly have influenced him or against which he could have been reacting. The possibility is also considered that any concept of destiny he may be said to have had could have been the spontaneous and original creation of his own mind. In Chapter Four all the various words which Vergil uses in the Aeneid to refer to the concept of destiny, viz. "fatum, fatalis, fatifer, fatidicus, Parcae, fortuna, fors and sors," are examined in detail in an attempt to define and distinguish their various shades of meaning. In Chapter Five, in the light of the critical principle established in Chapter Two, all these words are re-examined from the viewpoint of their use by each of the various characters in the epic, and then their use by Vergil himself, in an attempt to determine what differences existed in the attitudes to destiny shown by the gods, the prophets, the men and women, and the poet himself.

It is conceded at the outset that any attempt to attribute a specific shade of meaning in any given context to a particular word is fraught with difficulties because of the essential ambiguity of poetry, especially that of a poet as notoriously difficult to

translate as Vergil. The attempt has nevertheless been made and the meanings assigned to various words in their various contexts are the result of a personal, and therefore admittedly subjective, reading. They do represent, however, the consistent viewpoint of one reader who can in all honesty see no other method available, either to himself or to anyone else, of grasping the elusive meanings intended by a subtle "lord of language" whose deepest thoughts still escape final analysis

"par leuibus uentis uolucrique simillima somno".

CHAPTER ONE : REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY OPINION THIS CENTURY

Although there is considerable variety of scholarly opinion on the question of Vergil's concept of destiny, it is possible to discern two major schools of thought. This dichotomy can be made by examining each critic's answer to the question : is fate the supreme power in the Aeneid, ruling even Jupiter ; or is Jupiter omnipotent, ruling even fate ? Despite differences of definition of what fate is, even within one of these two schools of thought, most critics eventually align themselves on one side or another of this crucial dividing line.

Three critics, in fact, take a deliberately held position right on the dividing line and refuse to describe one of these two powers as either superior or inferior to the other, stressing rather the separateness and mutual independence of Jupiter and fate. W.C. Greene, in "Young Virgil and 'The Doubtful Doom of Human Kind' " A J Ph 43 (1922), pp.344-351, comments (p.351) : "Even in the Aeneid the identification of fate with the will of Jupiter is not complete ; the two forces remain at the most only parallel." H.V.Canter, in "'Fortune' in Latin Poetry" Studies in Philology XIX (1922), though he refers (p.80) to "fortuna" meaning "Fate or Providence, the will of Jupiter as favourable to the Roman state", goes on to assert that : "... destiny is also conceived of as independent of Jupiter, who, despite the entreaties of Venus and Juno, declines to favor Trojan or Rutulian." M.Ruch more recently speaks of Jupiter's personal will identifying itself with the impersonal law that only he knows but goes on to say that this same will "remains distinct from the action of the fates ; it is not the simple expression of their decrees, nor passive obedience, but it is willed conformity." "Le Destin dans

L'Énéide" in Vergiliana : Recherches sur Virgile, ed. Bardon and Verdière (Leiden, 1971) p. 315. ¹

This question is so critical because any attempt to answer it involves one at once in making an important assessment of the role of destiny in the epic : is it the central force which shapes and gives meaning to all the action, or is it an impersonal instrument of the will of a god who is, at best, a theistic conception, or, at worst, an anthropomorphic despot ? Indeed, the central nature of this problem for Vergilean criticism was recognised as early as Servius who comments on the "locus classicus" (x.112-113) :

"rex Iuppiter omnibus idem.

fata uiam inuenient."

- "et videtur hic ostendisse, aliud esse fata, aliud Jovem." Much subsequent debate upon this problem has in reality been little more than a development of, or an exegesis upon, this pithily provocative dictum.

One of the first modern scholars, however, to comment with any authority upon this question was W.Y. Sellar in his The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age : Virgil (Oxford, 1877). He clearly states (p. 337 of 2nd. edition 1883) that : "Even Jupiter is represented rather as cognisant of the Fates than as their author", though he goes on to modify this by saying : "The original relation between this impersonal agency and the deliberate purpose of Jupiter is left undefined. But there is no collision between them..."

Earlier, in 1853, H.R. Dietsch had referred in Theologumenon Vergilianum Particula (Prague, 1853) p.26 to the line { iv. 225) :

"fatisque datas non respicit urbes"

1. "...reste distincte de l'action des destins : elle n'est pas la simple expression de leurs arrêts, ni obéissance passive, mais elle est conformité voulue."

as being an indication that the power of the fates was superior to that of Jupiter, who might otherwise have said "a me datas".

In 1903, however, appeared the ^{much of} work that was to plot the course of Vergilean criticism for the rest of the century : Richard Heinze's Virgils Epische Technik.² He quite categorically asserts : "Virgil's Jupiter is the 'Almighty', and to him alone this quality belongs, in him is embodied the 'eternal power' to which gods and humans and their destinies are subject."³ With typical Teutonic precision he goes on to drive home this point : "Virgil leaves no doubt that in truth Fatum is nothing more than the will of the highest god."⁴

Nevertheless, in the following year, we find T.R. Glover in his influential book Virgil (London, 1904), which reached no fewer than seven editions, able, when commenting on Jupiter's words in x. 111-112 :

"sua cuique exorsa laborem
fortunamque ferent"

- to say (p.300): "Whatever interpretation we put on Jupiter's speech, it is quite clear that the gods are not the supreme rulers of the universe." He expands this idea later (p.302) by claiming that throughout the whole Aeneid "we are taught to think that Destiny, if not divine, at least is greater than the traditional gods, has plans and aims, which it achieves."

2. Leipzig-Berlin, 1903; 2nd. edition 1908; 3rd. 1915 ; reprinted Stuttgart-Darmstadt 1957 and 1965.

3. Op. cit. (3rd. ed.) p.293 : "Virgils Juppiter ist der 'Allmächtige', ihm allein kommt diese Eigenschaft zu, in ihm verkörpert sich die 'ewige Gewalt', der Götter und Menschen und ihre Geschicke untertan sind."

4. Ibid. p.293 : "Virgil lässt keinen Zweifel darüber, dass in Wahrheit das Fatum nichts anderes ist als des höchsten Gottes Wille."

Already, then, a polarity of critical opinion may be seen developing. Perhaps the first scholar, however, to notice this divergence of viewpoint and to comment upon it in an article written six years later specifically to discuss this very issue was J. MacInness in his "The Conception of Fata in the Aeneid" C R 24 (1910) pp. 169 - 174. He mentions Heinze pointedly and declares it to be his intention in his article to expose such an interpretation of the Aeneid as mistaken (op.cit. p. 170) : "Now if the portrait of Jupiter in the Aeneid is chiefly a concession to convention, probably those critics err who see so much spirituality in his functions that they identify fata with the will of Jupiter. That this identification is wrong may, I think, be proved by an examination of the meaning of fata in the Aeneid." This is really the first article in which the problem of Vergil's concept of destiny is discussed - or indeed recognised as being a problem - and at once we see how the elementary consideration of the relationship between the fates and Jupiter (the key, as has been suggested, of the whole problem) leads on naturally to wider statements about the philosophy, and even theology, underlying the Aeneid.

"But first," continues MacInness (ibid. p. 170), "let me state briefly what I believe Virgil's scheme of theology to have been."⁵ It was this : There is one supreme and spiritual deity whose decrees are 'fata' - inviolable courses of destined events. But the deity has not irrevocably fixed the destiny of every man before his birth. For nations...and individuals...there are certain matters of their life

5. The critical problem raised by such a phrase as "Virgil's scheme of theology" will be dealt with in Chapter Two : The Personal Heresy, where a full treatment is given of the question whether it is indeed possible to deduce from statements made in a poem the true feelings or opinions of the poet himself.

which must come to pass ; these are actualities determined beforehand in the divine mind, but there are many contingencies which are left to the self-determining human agent. The instruments of the divine mind are the gods and man."

We see at once that yet another debatable question has been touched upon : the thorny problem of free will as opposed to deterministic fatalism. On this subject too the critics disagree, though to a far lesser extent than they do about the relationship of Jupiter to the fates. Most, indeed, of the problems arising from the whole question of free will and fatalism in the Aeneid have at root an essential misconception, in that they presuppose (incorrectly, in the opinion of most critics) that the modern, popular notion of fate (based perhaps more upon ill-digested influences from Islam and nineteenth century Physics than upon an understanding of the late Roman Republic) is identical with the concept of destiny which Vergil may have held. ⁶

MacInness stoutly defends his thesis with reference to the text (ibid. p.172) : "Against the identification of 'fata' with the will of Jupiter many passages may be adduced. Most decisive, perhaps, are the passages where the decisions of 'fata' and of Jupiter, or another god, are contrasted, e.g. viii. 398 ; iii. 395 ; and cf. ii. 121 ; iii. 337 ; iv. 440 and viii. 334, 574 ; x. 112 ; xii. 725 ... That he is conditioned by some other power is shown in x. 467 and ix. 94 ff. ... Though Jupiter may promise vaguely, it is for the Parcae to determine the time of fulfilment (ix. 107, xii. 150)." He concludes from these lines that "things happen otherwise than Jupiter knows or intends. But Jupiter and the gods are not the only instruments of 'fata'. In the

6. A discussion of various definitions of "fate" is attempted in Chapter Three. For a full discussion of the problem of fate and free will see G.E. Duckworth's "Fate and Free Will in Vergil's Aeneid" C J (1956), pp. 357 - 364 (Boulder, Colorado).

Aeneid we seem to be presented with two other sources of action - the will of men and the operations of 'fortuna'." He goes on (ibid. p.173) to assert that Vergil does not doubt the reality of the freedom of the will and makes the important point that Vergil's conception of "fortuna" must be that of a theist and could not include any idea of the purely random, since such a concept would involve the belief (for Vergil unthinkable) "that actions unpurposed by God may happen."

It will perhaps be most profitable, now that the two major viewpoints on the problem of Vergil's attitude to the relationship of fata and Jupiter have been defined, to deal with all the main protagonists of each viewpoint together, commenting where necessary upon any developments of the central idea, or any important new insights into it, rather than attempting a strictly chronological treatment in which the movements of the critical pendulum would soon become as tiresome as they would seem confusing.⁷

Although W. Warde Fowler had been writing steadily throughout the first World War on Roman religion and Vergil⁸, it was not until 1920 that he pulled together the threads of his ideas on the questions of destiny in Vergil in his Roman Essays and Interpretations (Oxford).

7. In 1912, for example, two years after MacInness's article, H.W. Garrod in his much read and admired essay "Vergil" in English Literature and the Classics ed. G.S. Gordon (Oxford) commented (p.164) : "But the Jupiter of Vergil is 'omnipotens', he is 'hominum rerumque aeterna potestas', and the Fates are spoken of as belonging to him ('fata Iovis'). "

8. Roman Ideas of Deity (London, 1914) ; Vergil's Gathering of the Clans - Observations on Aeneid VII 601-817 (Oxford, 1916) ; Aeneas at the Site of Rome - Observations on the Eighth Book of the Aeneid (Oxford, 1917) ; and The Death of Turnus - Observations on the Twelfth Book of the Aeneid (Oxford, 1919).

In the meantime, in 1917, L.E. Matthaëi wrote a sensitive and closely argued article entitled, "The Fates, the Gods and the Freedom of Man's Will in the Aeneid" C Q (1917). The pessimistic mood of the essay matched the world gloom of its year of publication, but it contained many ideas that were to produce further debate.

Matthaëi makes much of two quotations which seem to indicate to her an inherent contradiction in the concepts of destiny which we find in the Aeneid :

" contra ego uiuendo uici mea fata" (xi. 160)

and

" tum libera fati

classem conscendit iussis gens Lydia diuum " (x. 154-5).

In the first she claims, "fate is what life ought to be contrasted with what life is" (op. cit. p. 12) ; whereas in the second, "fate is what life is contrasted with what it ought to be" (ibid. p. 13).

This rather subtle distinction leads her to wonder how any stable notion can be "rescued from such a contradiction". "I believe," she asserts (ibid. p. 13), with a conviction which demonstrates the extreme position a critic may reach when once the major premise of a Jupiter subordinate to fate has been conceded, "that Vergil inherited a gloomy and pessimistic definition of fate, as of a malignant pursuer of men, a power to be feared and placated, but without moral inspiration or elevation of any kind."

Perhaps cautioned by Maciness, she points out, in discussion of the idea of Fortune as pure chance, that "the Romans had always struggled against this miserable doctrine, and foremost among them is Vergil. He is constantly pouring a mass of moral aspirations into his 'fata', constantly making them orderly and beneficent, instead of disorderly and malignant." Reverting to her original thesis, however, she nevertheless insists (ibid. p. 13) that : "...he does not entirely

get rid of the old ideas ; he is always swaying between the thought of a moral world, and the thought of a sad world, of a world, indeed, which is unjust."

Her most controversial statement, however, concerns the mood of the epic as a whole (ibid.p.13) : "...the laws on which one fate fights another fate in some remoter sphere are utterly obscure. Here is the very root of pessimism, and pessimistic the Aeneid most certainly is."

Speaking, moreover, of the ignorance of events displayed by gods of the first rank, she comments (ibid.p.15) that it "can only lead us to infer an inferiority of the gods to the fates : perhaps even Jupiter does not know the fates, until he unrolls them."

W.Warde Fowler, in his Aeneas at the Site of Rome, challenges (p.126) this assertion that Vergil or his poem are "in any true sense of the word pessimistic." "For Virgil," insists Warde Fowler (p.124), "Fate was a moral force." In Roman Essays and Interpretations (Oxford, 1920) he unburdens his mind of the result of years of research and thought on the problems raised by the ideas expressed in the Council of the Gods in Aeneid x.1-117. His assessment (p.201 ff.) still remains one of the most lucid and sober of the many attempted and deserves quotation at length, if only out of **due** respect for its monumental common sense, a quality in Vergilean criticism not always very conspicuous : "A few words on the relation of Jupiter and the other gods to the ~~Fates~~ may be useful here. After reading everything I can find on the subject I have come to a fairly definite conclusion ; but it should be clearly understood that Virgil is not wholly consistent throughout the poem, as was inevitable for a poet who had to adopt a decaying system of polytheism to the philosophical needs of his story.

"But now comes the crucial question ; was Jupiter himself capable

of making a decision outside the driving force of destiny ? ... Can we ...say either that he can overrule destiny, or that his will is identical with destiny ?

"On the whole, I think the answer must be No. If we read carefully his great speech in bk. i. 257 ff., though it is by no means perfectly clear, I think that the general result is that Jupiter is rather the high priest (so to speak) of destiny than identical with it ; as also in i. 375-6, he rather consults it than controls it. True, he sometimes uses language which seems to put him in the place of destiny, as in i. 278, but that should not be a serious difficulty... His last words mean 'destiny will find its own way' (not, will find out a way) 'without any help or interference from me'."

In the same year, T.Frank published an article entitled "Epicurean Determinism in the Aeneid" A J Ph 41 (1920), pp.115-126, which he later incorporated almost verbatim into his book Vergil - A Biography (Oxford, 1922). The main thesis of this article is the somewhat remarkable assertion that Vergil was not, as most scholars had supposed, a Stoic, but the opposite - an Epicurean. While arguing this point, however, Frank comments ("Epicurean Determinism in the Aeneid", p.119) : "If then Vergil were a Stoic, his Jupiter should be omnipotent and omniscient and the embodiment of 'fatum'.....but such ideas are not found in the Aeneid." He adds in passing, however, (p. 120, n.10) the important observation, not always heeded by critics : "Care must be observed not to press all the occurrences of 'Fatum' and 'fata' into philosophical connotations."

Although it appeared in 1922 in a periodical not strictly devoted to classical matters - Open Court, A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea (Chicago) - A.L.Keith's article (pp.385-401) entitled "Vergil's Conception of Fate" promised to deal with exactly

the main theme of this investigation. Some comments in it suggest that the author was uncertain how the gods and fate related to each other, such as (p.388) : "This omnipresence of the fates is aided by the close association with the gods. This association is so close at times as to indicate that the poet aimed at no exact distinction. In some vague way they seem almost identical" ; and (p.389) : "... instances will be found...where the gods attempt to thwart or to delay the fates. Jupiter, however, is an exception. His will and theirs accord entirely. The supreme divinity and the purpose of the fates may not collide. Yet the poet does not always clearly show which power dominates." Nevertheless he comes to this conclusion (p.390) : "Perhaps it is safe to say that generally the idea of the fates in the poet's mind dominates the power of the gods, that the fates represent the eternal laws without author, without beginning or end, the ultimate, impersonal necessity, while the conception of the gods is more intimate, more personal and included within the larger idea of fate. Gods may be persuaded and implored, fate is 'inexorable' and 'ineluctable'."

A. Cartault is careful in his L'Art de Virgile dans l'Énéide (Paris, 1926) to distinguish the respective roles of Jupiter and fate, while stressing the importance of the latter in the epic as a whole (Vol. I p.84) : "...on peut dire dans un certain sens que le héros de l'Énéide ce n'est pas Énée, c'est le fatum..." Jupiter's unique function he sees as watching over the fulfilling of destiny (p.86) : "Le fatum n'est pas l'ordre des choses établi par sagesse et Jupiter n'est pas le Providence. Le fatum existe en dehors de lui ; mais il est l'intelligence qui en a une connaissance absolue, l'activité qui lui prépare les voies et moyens. Virgile lui a conservé l'attribut de la toute-puissance - omnipotens -, toute-puissance restreinte d'ailleurs, puisqu'il lui est soumis et doit la mettre à son service."

It is with a somewhat perverse ingenuity that F. Sforza puts forward in an article entitled "The Problem of Vergil" C R (1935), pp. 97-108, the theory that Vergil was an Epicurean rationalist in full agreement with Lucretius and bitterly opposed, as a native provincial, to Roman imperialism in Italy or anywhere else. "Jupiter," insists Sforza (p.104), "is a puppet, who suffers the other Immortals, his inferiors, to flout him. His prestige is nil.....He quite frankly admits, when asked about things that are beyond his reach, that his power does not extend so far, and that Fate has the upper hand, even over him, the Almighty."

In his article "The Hero and Fate in Vergil's Aeneid" Eranos 43 (1945), pp.111-135, G. Carlsson makes the rather important point that, despite Jupiter being called "omnipotens", the fates rule even over the gods and the use of such an epithet "merely represents concessions to literary tradition" (p.112).

The assertion that Vergil did not belong to any sect, religious or philosophic, is made by W.P. Clark, who discusses and dismisses Vergil's gods in a violently anti-Semitic article, "Vergil's Gods" Classical Weekly, New York XLII (1948-9), pp. 50-55, which reads more like a hymn of praise to Santayana than a serious assessment of a Roman poet. "First place among deities," says Clark (p.53), "if deity it be, in Vergil goes to Fate.....Is Jupiter subject to Fate or Fate to Jupiter in Vergil's mind ?Has Jupiter any freedom under or over Fate ?The answer to such hard questions, so far as it is given in Vergil, is easy, I think. He just did not know and does not frankly face them." Despite his firm belief in Vergil's agnosticism, however, Clark asserts in his next paragraph that Vergil : "assumes...that certain major ends have apparently been set by Fate or Deity or both, and that these will be effected despite Jupiter himself (here there is room for a doubtful Providence)."

In one of his earlier published papers on the Aeneid, "The Gradual Unfolding of Aeneas's Destiny" Classical Journal, Evanston 58 (1953), pp. 281-284, H.L. Tracy makes the vital point that the necessity of the epic plot coloured the way in which Vergil presented Jupiter, and that one ought not to make too many firm philosophical and theological inferences from such evidence.⁹ Vergil, says Tracy (p.283), "thought it sufficient to leave the theological implications to his readers, and represent the divine action in a way that would best suit the special purpose of his story.....seeing that Aeneas had to flounder (since the scenario was made that way) the only recourse Vergil had was to show some looseness in the celestial management."

In a later article, " 'Fata Deum' and the Action of the Aeneid " G&R 11 (1964), pp.188-195, he develops his ideas on what he regards as a central problem of the Aeneid (p.189) : "how to reconcile the idea of an all-controlling Destiny governing our hero's progress with the facts of his hesitation, uncertainty and error..." "What gives fate its formidable aspect," claims Tracy (p.190), "is not power or purpose, but simply its inscrutability. Che sarà sarà - but neither gods nor men have any clear idea of what will be... The relation between Fate and the will of the divine beings is left ambiguous, though the two ideas are often coupled. Jupiter seems to be something like an executive officer under Fatum. He resembles the president of a company, putting into effect the decisions of his directors..."

Such are the main ideas that have been put forward this century in support, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, of the proposition that in Vergil's Aeneid we find a Jupiter who is subordinate to the power of fate ; a fate so powerful that it rules even the king of gods and men. As H.L. Tracy remarks, however, (p. 189 of " 'Fata Deum' and the Action of the Aeneid "): "The commentators on Virgil show

9. This simple but profound observation will be enlarged upon later.

remarkable diversity of opinion about Virgil's notion of Fate, and make some really extraordinary assertions about it."

It is now time to demonstrate the truth of his remark by turning to examine that body of critical opinion which holds that Jupiter is not, as the other party maintained, inferior to fate but either superior to it (because it is simply the expression of his will) or identical with it (because they are merely different names for the same power).

The mainstream of thought in this school is profoundly influenced by the belief that Vergil was either a Stoic, or a sympathetic exponent of Stoic views. E.V.Arnold, in his much admired book Roman Stoicism (Cambridge, 1911) comments in passing (p.390) that Vergil: "appears truly to hold the Stoic principle that Fate and Jove are one..." E.E.Sikes, in his Roman Poetry (London, 1923) is more explicit and convinced for he asserts (p.184) that : "...the outstanding problem for the ancient mind was not so much the character of the supreme god as his relation to Fate ; and here Virgil is most indebted to StoicismTo the Stoic, Jupiter cannot be above the Fates, but neither can he stand below them ; he must rather be the personal representative of the universal Law. This is precisely the conception of Jupiter in the Aeneid, if we allow for the fact that the poet is not always careful about absolute consistency."

Apparent inconsistency in their poet is often a convenient refuge for some critics in flight from ominous leaks in an apparently water-tight argument. Others prefer to embrace the contradictory nature of the poetic evidence and veil their statement with cautious modifications. D.C.Woodworth, for example, in his "The Function of the Gods in Vergil's Aeneid" Classical Journal, Chicago XXVI (1930),p.115, ventures to assert that : "Jupiter, in part at least, is identified with Fate itself."

It was by conceiving of Vergil more as a theologian than as a

poet, however, that T.Haecker solved the difficulties of the problem. In his Vergil, Vater Des Abenlandes (Leipzig, 1931) ¹⁰ he states (p. 87) : "Jupiter also may be regarded as subject to Fate, in that he must give it effect, must carry it out." This would appear, at first sight, to put Haecker's tent in the other camp, but with the insight rather of a schoolman than a scholar he proceeds to explain (p.88) that Jupiter cannot alter fate: "...for it is stronger than he, though he have all power ; he cannot change it, for the fate is his fate - et sic fata Iovis poscunt - he is at once the utterer and the utterance ; he himself is the fate ; in him there exists no external relationship to fate, that he should be able to will a thing otherwise than as he has spoken, to desire it otherwise than as he has said and done." He places great significance upon this paradox and goes on to assert (p. 88) that such a conception of the inter-relationship of Jupiter and fate : "...is the summit and perfection of Virgil's theological ideas.....sic placitum, it is decreed.....By whom ? By me, Jupiter! The adventist paganism of Virgil and the Stoics in this phrase anticipated one of the revealed mysteries of Christianity, the beneplacitum Dei..... The last, inevitable step taken by the pagan world was belief in a fate identical with the chief of its gods, with Jupiter."

Religion in Virgil (Oxford, 1935) may be regarded almost as the definitive work in English on the subject, but its author, C. Bailey, was once less certain in his own mind about the vexed question of the relationship of Jupiter to fate than he seems to have been at the time of writing his magnum opus. In his Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome (Oxford, 1932) he clearly states (p.234) that : "...the fata in Virgil...appear as a power sometimes superior to Jupiter, sometimes subordinate, sometimes identified with him." He even draws attention

10. Trans. A.W.Wheen Virgil, Father of the West (New York, 1934).

(p.234 n.48) to a fragment of Cleanthes which suggests the identification of Zeus and destiny ¹¹, a viewpoint which he himself, perhaps nudged by Haecker, came to favour a few years later when, in Religion in Virgil, he discusses the problem at length and comes to a firm conclusion. "What is the relation," he asks (p.220), "of the will of the gods to the impersonal destiny ?.....Virgil's answer, based on the theory of the Stoic philosophy, is that they are identical." He reaches this conclusion by arguing that there can be only three possible solutions to the problem of the relationship of fate and Jupiter : (a) that the will of Jupiter is subordinate to universal destiny, (b) that it is independent but parallel in its action, or (c) that it is identical. Since, he claims, after considering and dismissing apparent passages to the contrary, there is no direct indication of (a) in Vergil, and since there is no hint in Vergil, or indeed in any Greek or Latin author of (b), by a process of elimination, which is irrefutable if his premise of only three possible viewpoints be granted, (c) is the correct answer to the problem.

In his Roman Vergil (London, 1944), W.F.Jackson Knight is concerned, as was Haecker, with the theological implications of a God limited by fate. A fate on the Stoic pattern, he feels, would be hard to consider moral. Vergil, therefore, joined two things (p.320) : "He attached the sense of destined national greatness...to the Greek conception of fate. So fate might not be moral, but it yet guarded and guided Rome." By this function of guidance, he goes on to say (p.320) : "...fate approached God again...Vergil had only to go a step further and make the fate the instrument of the supreme God. Sometimes he does so." In a much later book, Elysion - On Ancient

11. Collectanea Alexandrea ed. Powell, 227, No. 2. Oxford Book of Greek Verse No. 484 :

Ἄγου δέ μ', ὦ Ζεῦ, καὶ σύ γ' ἡ πεπρωμένη.

Greek and Roman Beliefs Concerning a Life After Death (London,1970), Jackson Knight expresses the same opinion (p.138) : "Fate is inexorable - though sometimes it seems to be the instrument of Jupiter."

Apart from explaining away inconsistencies by pointing to Vergil's attention to dramatic presentation, C.M.Bowra in his From Virgil To Milton (London,1945) adds little that is new, claiming (p.77) that : "Much ado has been made about the ambiguity of Jupiter's relation to the Fates, and Virgil sometimes seems to indicate that they are more powerful than he, but that is his mythological way of presenting drama in Heaven. In the last analysis Jupiter and the Fates are one : for what Jupiter wills is fate..."

Heinze has a faithful disciple in K.Büchner, the authority behind the massive erudition contained in the article on Vergil - "Der Dichter Der Römer" - in Pauly's Realencyclopaedie Der Classischen Altertums-wissenschaft (Stuttgart,1958) pp.1337-1486, who states : "The highest symbol is 'fata'. Jupiter is their embodiment - the 'fata' are his will." ¹² In a much earlier work, Der Schicksalgedanke Bei Vergil (Freiburg,1946) ¹³, he had dealt with Vergil's treatment of fate at some length but come to the same conclusion (p.275): "Jupiter...is the caretaker of the Fata, the Fates are his will, and this will stays firm and unchangeable." ¹⁴

Mention of symbol must bring to mind V.Pöschl and Die Dichtkunst Virgils : Bild und Symbol in Der Aeneis (Innsbruck,1950). ¹⁵ Besides

12. Op.cit.p.1343 : "Das höchste Symbol sind die 'fata'. Iuppiter ist ihre Verkörperung - die 'fata' sind sein Wille."

13. Reprinted in Wege Zu Vergil (Darmstadt,1968) pp.270-300,ed. H. Oppermann.

14. "Jupiter...ist also der Verwalter der Fata, die Fata sind sein Wille, und dieser Wille bleibt fest und unwandelbar."

15. Trans. Seligson, The Art of Virgil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid (Michigan,1962).

the general statement (trans.p.3) that: "In Vergil's poetry everything participates in the inner drama and reflects the poet's awareness of the stirrings within the souls of his characters and of the destiny inherent in the events", Poschl has little to say about destiny's relation to Jupiter, except to refer to him (p.22) as the god "who firmly controls the fata."

Proof that Heinze's viewpoint is influential as far afield as Finland is provided by I.Kajanto in his book on Livy, God and Fate in Livy (Turku, 1957), which has much to say also about Vergil (p.22) :
 "...in Stoicism god and fate may be said to have been identical... This is what we find in the Aeneid...The Jupiter and fatum which lead Aeneas towards his destiny are only different names for providence." 16

In France, P.Boyancé tends to adopt the paradoxical style of Haecker in his La Religion de Virgile (Paris, 1963) p.47 : "Dieu s'est donc en quelque sort lié lui-même par la loi qu'il a un jour fixée. Chez Virgile, Jupiter connaît les destins, il est lié par eux. Les a-t-il aussi ordonnés ?" He shares, however, Bowra's insistence (see above p.20) on the pressure of dramatic necessity upon Vergil (p.49) : "Jupiter n'est sans doute subordonné par Virgile aux Destins que dans la mesure où le mythe oblige de le faire..." and makes in conclusion (p.49) the point often forgotten by critics in their zeal for discovering philosophical and theological systems in the Aeneid : "Virgile ne peut être philosophe qu'autant que le lui permet la poésie."

The importance of Vergil's poetic sensitivity and the effect it may have upon the mood and subsequent interpretation of any given passage is also stressed by W.A.Camps in his An Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid (Oxford, 1969) p.42 : "...Jupiter, is supreme over the rest, and

16. Cf. Virgils Epische Technik p.295 : "Die εἰσπρόνοια ist aber zugleich die πρόνοια ." (Trans. "εἰσπρόνοια is, however, at the same time πρόνοια .")

is always identified with the ordinances of Fate. Whether he is author as well as executor of these ordinances is not always clear, and no doubt depends more on the poet's feeling in a given context than on any doctrinal theory." He goes on to discuss the crucial passage x. 112-113 : "fata uiam inuenient", and after making the important comment that these lines imply that Jupiter is not the author of fate's ordinances "in the poet's conception at this moment", he concludes (p.43) :

"Certainly under one aspect Jupiter in the Aeneid is a personification of Fate ; and it results from this that the working of Fate in the poem appears as the working of a purpose and not simply as the fulfilment of an impersonal scheme : Fate assumes the character of Providence."

This idea of fate as Providence is developed by F.A.Sullivan in his article "Virgil and the Mystery of Suffering" A J Ph 90 (1969) pp. 161-177. He summarises the main trend of modern scholarship and approves of it (p.164f.) : "Scholars have often discussed the relations between the fata and Jupiter, making Jupiter now subservient to them, now their mouthpiece or executor. More recently they have come to the conclusion - surely the right one - that the fata which dominate the story of Aeneas are the fata Iovis, the expression of Jupiter's will." Far from finding the heroic suffering in the Aeneid a stumbling-block, as have several critics and many readers, he embraces it as part of a deliberate divine plan towards the fulfilment of Aeneas's fate.

"Despite some occasional obscurities in Virgil's use of the word fatum ...," he insists (p.166), "it is clearly his over-all view that the fata Iovis which companion and guide Aeneas on his way express what ought to happen, what ought to emerge from man's work, from the freedom of the human spirit, so that the world may come to be what Jupiter intended.....The Aeneid is anything but a story of blind fatalism."

The balance of recent scholarly opinion seems, therefore, to be

in favour of the view that Jupiter and fate are virtually identical or, at any rate, that Jupiter is not subordinate to fate. Although this may be a true assessment of the current critical position there remains the uncomfortable problem of the very existence of the other point of view. How can scholars differ so radically about so central a matter in the work of so important a poet ? The matter is so central because of its ramifications. If Jupiter, along with the other gods and all human beings, is subject to fate, there then becomes possible the adoption by critics of the view that there is to be found in this epic a philosophy of determinism which, when one considers what happens to many of the main characters in the Aeneid, must be at root pessimistic and which invites the belief that the power behind the universe is either amoral or indifferent to human suffering. If, however, fate is subject to Jupiter, whose character is known in the epithets Optimus and Maximus, whose purposes are intimately linked with the historical development of the civilizing Roman Empire, a contrastingly optimistic world-view, verging upon the later Christian conception of Providence - that of a personal God Who cares for His creation as a Father for His family - becomes more easily tenable. Moreover, not only is the nature of God revealed by the answer to the question : Which is the greater - Fate or Jove ? The nature of Man is better understood also : is man an automaton, fated to perform a predetermined concatenation of actions ; or is he a noble creature capable of choosing between good and evil, civilization and barbarism ?

The following chapter will attempt to show how such conflicting viewpoints as those just described have been reached by different critics at different times from a reading of the same poem.

CHAPTER TWO : THE PERSONAL HERESY

As has been shown in Chapter One, critics may be divided into two main groups : those who claim fate is superior to Jupiter and those who deny this. In most cases indeed it is from their interpretation of the locus classicus, x.112-113 :

"rex Iuppiter omnibus idem.

fata uiam inuenient."

that one can decide in which camp they have pitched their tent. It is the intention of this chapter now to attempt to demonstrate that this locus classicus is also the pons asinorum of our subject, for it is certainly no exaggeration to claim that the apparent confusion among Vergilean critics as to the poet's true feelings and the flatly contradictory theories that have been ventured in explanation of his seemingly inconsistent attitude are largely due to a fundamental failure to reach agreement, or perhaps even a failure to recognise that agreement was needed, upon a simple principle of literary criticism. This principle is the crucial need to distinguish as early and as clearly as possible between the views of the poet as an individual and the views expressed by his major (or even minor) characters. To take the example of the locus classicus quoted above : who is speaking here - Jupiter or Vergil ?

This question may seem at first so elementary that it hardly needs asking, yet as soon as one examines the statements of many Vergilean critics about Jupiter's role in relation to the fates, it becomes evident that either they are unaware of the importance of the distinction or they assume that no such distinction can or indeed ought to be made and therefore take it for granted that almost any sentiment expressed by a character in Vergil's poetry which is generally sympathetic to what they already regard as Vergil's philosophy is

in fact to be considered as virtually the ipsissima verba of the poet himself. It is the intention of this chapter to attempt to demonstrate that this dangerously facile assumption is not only incorrect but positively misleading in its application.

A typical example of this assumption occurs in the work of no less a scholar than Sir Maurice Bowra. In his From Virgil to Milton (London, 1945), p. 77, he states that : "Much ado has been made about the ambiguity of Jupiter's relation to the Fates." The truth of this remark, indeed, has been indicated in Chapter One but Bowra does little to resolve this ambiguity when on his next page, while identifying Fate, Zeus, *πρόνοια*, the Fates, the will of the gods, Jupiter and Providence, he claims that : "Virgil himself believes in it, and when he comes to stating the core of his belief he abandons his mythology and speaks of a universal mind." He then proceeds to quote vi. 724-727 :

"Principio caelum ac terras camposque liquentis
lucentemque globum lunae Titaniaque astra
spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet."

What he does not indicate - what he no doubt considers unnecessary to indicate - is the fact that these words are spoken by Anchises and therefore need not represent the beliefs of Vergil himself at all, any more than, say, the words of the Sibyl to Palinurus in vi. 376 :

"desine fata deum flecti sperare precando"

need represent Vergil's own beliefs in the efficacy of prayer. Both statements rather represent what Vergil considered to be poetically necessary in the mouths of such characters at such moments in his story, viz. a statement by the revered father of the doubting hero that there was

a deep meaning and purpose at the very core of things, an assurance of the existence of Providence to strengthen Aeneas's resolve at a psychologically crucial moment, a pronouncement "ex cathedra" from a man favoured by the gods (had he not been privileged to share the bed of Venus herself ?), with a special authority for and over Aeneas (was not this the old man who had carried the "penates" from the flames of Troy as he himself in turn was carried by his son ?). The whole speech must surely be seen in the light of the function of Anchises as guide and guardian to Aeneas : just as in ii.733 he looks ahead, literally, and warns his son of approaching danger :

"prospiciens 'nate,' exclamat, 'fuge, nate ; propinquant...,"

so

in vi.722-723 he promises to Aeneas a preview of his destiny :

" 'dicam equidem nec te suspensum, nate, tenebo'

suscipit Anchises atque ordine singula pandit."

Similarly, the command of the Sibyl to Palinurus to abandon hope of changing the purposes of the gods by prayer is specifically directed to his impious request that he be made an exception to the divine laws concerning the fate of the souls of the unburied. By stressing the rigour of the laws concerning life and death, and the passage between the two states, the exceptional position of Aeneas is thereby heightened, with obvious dramatic effect.

A more recent example is to be found in M.W.Edwards's article, "The Expression of Stoic Ideas in the Aeneid" Phoenix 14 (1960) which virtually identifies the hero of the poem with the poet. "Aeneas himself," claims Edwards (p.165), "conforms in action, but he is not a Stoic and I cannot believe Virgil intended him to be. Nor is he Augustus ; rather he is the mouthpiece of Virgil himself, with his yearning for peace, his fear of life and its responsibilities, its decisions and its commitments, his human emotional feelings not

overcome by Stoic reason, his sense of vocation and duty, his feeling of unworthiness for his task and lack of satisfaction at its completion." This piece of criticism, it should be noted, goes a step further than Bowra's, for not only is the assumption made - nay, openly asserted - that Vergil speaks through his characters, we are also given a glimpse into the character and personality of Vergil himself : the man who yearned for peace, was afraid of responsibilities, of making decisions, of committing himself, of his own human emotions, etc, etc. We have now, albeit imperceptibly, gone much further than criticism of the poem. We are now in the realm of biography and psychoanalysis : **Servius** has given way to Suetonius. It will be shown below that this transition from criticism of the poem to biography of the poet is the natural result of failure to establish the essential invalidity of the equation : words of character equal thoughts of poet.

To illustrate further this tendency to biographical assumption among critics who apply the above equation, attention could be directed to the remarks of A.L.Keith in his article "Vergil's Conception of Fate" Open Court (1922) p.386 : "We feel that fundamentally his idea of fate was a development of the experiences through which he had passed, the events which he had witnessed, culminating in the establishment under Augustus of the world-empire." The very wording of the title of Keith's article - "Vergil's Conception of Fate" - begs the whole question under discussion in this chapter and therefore before further progress can be made the fundamental principle of literary criticism which has been thrown up by the examination of critics' opinions in Chapter One must now be explored in detail for its establishment and subsequent application **are** a key to a better understanding of the contradiction and confusion apparently inherent in interpretation of Vergil's poetry. Therefore

an excursion of some length is now necessary into the field of literary criticism and attention must be brought at once to a work of signal importance, for in it the very issues under discussion are formally disputed by two great scholars : C.S.Lewis and E.M.W. Tillyard. Their book is entitled The Personal Heresy : A Controversy (Oxford,1939). Although it originated in discussion of statements made in Tillyard's book Milton (London,1930), the application to the works of Vergil of the principle of literary criticism expounded and defended by Lewis is simple, illuminating and of fundamental relevance to the main argument of this dissertation. It would be out of place here to digress further and reopen the actual disputation in an attempt to evaluate the relative worth of the opinions of both scholars, for the issue discussed is not one capable of proof. Indeed, their very use of the word "heresy" in the title of their book suggests that the opinions of literary critics may have about them the deep-felt sincerity of a religious faith which does not easily admit of rude questioning. Therefore, the position adopted by Lewis will now be examined in further detail (without reference to Tillyard's counter-arguments, which here would serve only to darken counsel) not only because of its intrinsic merit ¹ but also because of its direct relevance to our treatment of concepts of destiny in Vergil.

1. J.Lawlor in his chapter "The Tutor and the Scholar" in Light on C.S.Lewis (ed. J.Gibb, London,1965),p.68, has an interesting reminiscence: "Lewis on form (and I do not remember him ever being much below form) was a Black Belt among novices. There was a memorable occasion when in the Hall at Magdalen Dr. Tillyard met him to round off in debate the controversy begun with the publication of Lewis's indictment of 'the Personal Heresy'. I am afraid there was no debate. Lewis made rings round Tillyard : in, out, up, down, around, back again - like some piratical Plymouth bark against a high-built galleon of Spain."

It was the reading of a publisher's blurb upon an anthology of war poets, which promised to reveal their innermost souls, that first prompted Lewis to begin the train of thought that led to the writing of The Personal Heresy. "The assumption was," he comments (p.1), "that to read poetry means to become acquainted with a man in intimate conversation, to steep ourselves in his personality ; and the appeal based on this assumption was an appeal to curiosity."

"Few will deny," he continues, "that the role of biography in our literary studies is steadily increasing : and if we look into the most popular literary biographies of the last decade or so, we shall find that in them the poet's life is connected with his work after a fashion quite alien from the methods of Johnson. Poetry is widely believed to be the "expression of personality" : the end which we are supposed to pursue in reading it is a certain contact with the poet's soul : and 'Life' and 'Works' are simply two diverse expressions of this single quiddity."

A glance at some of the writings of classical scholars in the thirties (the "last decade or so" to which Lewis was referring) confirms his assessment of the situation. W.C.Greene in his article "Self-Revelation in Vergil - The Heart of a Poet" Classical World 24 (1931) p.169, clearly establishes the principle that poetry is the expression of the poet's personality : "Of course it is in the pages of his major poems that we can look most clearly into the heart of the poet." "In the Aeneid," he continues (p.70), "he maintains the epic reserve with a fair degree of consistency, but there are times when he lifts the veil of anonymity, and bears his heart ; the watchful student, reading between the lines, may often look behind the veil and see what Vergil means to convey but does not state directly." "Vergil reveals himself," we are informed (p.179), "wherever he betrays his own affections and loyalties to friends and causes and the characters

whom he has created."

In his article "Aeneas and the Stoic Ideal" G & R III (1933), p.21, C.M.Bowra claims that : "By making us feel some qualms about Aeneas he (Vergil) gave us his own inmost feelings about the heroic type."

Speaking more directly about the subject of this investigation, P.Boyancé in his "Virgile et le Destin" in Mélanges Offerts à Paul Laumonier (Paris,1935) ², says that : "Analyser l'idée que Virgile s'en fait mais plus encore le sentiment qu'il en a, c'est s'efforcer de pénétrer à un des centres les plus profonds de son âme." He later adds (p.16) : "Ces Destins inflexibles (Si qua fata aspera rumpas!), et malgré tout ce vain désir, cet inutile espoir d'y échapper, nous font toucher aux profondeurs de l'âme de Virgile." Not, be it noted, "the depths of the soul" of Anchises, whose remark about the asperity of fate prompted Boyancé's observations!

"In Dr. Tillyard's Milton," continues Lewis (p.2), "we are told that the only critics of Paradise Lost who 'seemed to tackle' the 'problem'...in the 'right kind of way' were the Satanists: and their rectitude consisted, apparently, in the fact that 'they invested the character of Satan with all that Milton felt and valued most strongly.' They were right because they assumed from the outset that Milton's poetry must be the expression of his personality."

Again and again, the same assumption, mutatis mutandis, is still being made by Vergilean scholars. One of the leading modern critics, B.Otis, in his Virgil : a Study in Civilized Poetry (Oxford,1963) p.49, states that : "Virgil is constantly conscious of himself inside his characters ; he thinks through them and for them." He even goes as far as to assert, when discussing the foot-race in v.315-342, that Vergil "identifies himself successively with the runners as a whole (315-17), with Nisus, then with the others (but specifically with

2. Op. cit. (Slatkine Reprints, Geneva, 1972), p.11.

Diores) and then again with Nisus though his attention reverts at the end to Euryalus, Salius and the rest.....Virgil thus enters the psyche of each runner in turn..."

No less an authority than R.D.Williams, in his edition of Book Five (Oxford,1960), p.xxiii, states that : "The inner conflict in Aeneas' character corresponds in some degree with the conflict in Virgil's own mind." ³ Again, in a comment upon the vexed question of free will, G.E.Duckworth, in his article "Fate and Free Will in Vergil's Aeneid" Classical Journal LI (Boulder, Colorado, 1956),p.361, comes to the conclusion that : "In the words of Jupiter, the supreme authority, we have Vergil's definite statement that mortals can and must work out their own salvation in a world governed by Destiny."

"More difficult to interpret," says Lewis (p.3), "is Mr.T.S. Eliot's statement that 'The rage of Dante...the deep surge of Shakespeare's general cynicism and disillusionment, are merely gigantic attempts to metamorphose private failures and disappointments.' ⁴It concerns our present purpose more to notice the assumed, and concealed, major premiss that the cynicism and disillusionment put into the mouths of some Shakespearian characters are Shakespeare's. Even dramatic poetry is tacitly assumed to be the expression of the poet's personality..."

That Eliot did, in fact, assume such a major premiss is clear from his other writings, especially perhaps the comments which he makes in The Sacred Wood (London,2nd ed.1928), p.102, about "Hamlet and His Problems" : "We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for him. Why he attempted it at all is an insoluble puzzle : under compulsion of what experience

3. The qualification "in some degree" of course makes Williams's exact position unclear. See p.46 below.

4. The quotation is from Selected Essays (London,1923),p.137.

he attempted to express the inexpressibly horrible, we cannot ever know. We need a great many facts in his biography..." Much later, in an article entitled "Vergil and the Christian World" Sewanee Review LXI (1953), p.11, when referring to the words of Aeneas to Dido in vi.461-463 :

"sed me iussa deum, quae nunc has ire per umbras,
per loca senta situ cogunt noctemque profundam,
imperiiis egere suis ; "

- Eliot (making the same assumptions, be it noted, about Vergil as he makes about Dante and Shakespeare) assures us that he has "no doubt that Vergil, when he wrote these lines, was assuming the role of Aeneas and feeling very decidedly a worm."

"A critic of a different school," continues Lewis (p.3), "Professor Garrod, has admitted into his Wordsworth sentences which bear, if they do not invite, a dangerous interpretation. We are there told that 'a man's poetry is but a part of him' (Wordsworth, 2nd ed. 1927, p.9) ; and this, in some sense is true.....But Professor Garrod goes on to say that if, in reading poetry, 'we put the poet out of the room, we let in one of two interlopers. We let in either ourselves, or else a false image of the poet.' Professor Garrod's words...may, perhaps, be so understood as not to involve the personal heresy. But it cannot be denied that they are most easily read as though they involved the assumption that what we attend to, in reading poetry, is a representation claiming to be the poet ; and that to read poetry well is to have a true idea of the poet, while to read it ill is to have a false idea of him. Taken in this sense their implication seems to me to be a serious error."

That Garrod's critical viewpoint did, in fact, involve the "Personal Heresy" may be seen from what he had already written in his Vergil (English Literature and the Classics, ed. G.S.Gordon, Oxford,

1912), p.157ff., where he makes the same assumptions about our poet and Milton as he was to make about Wordsworth : "Look again at what we call his philosophy - what we should more appropriately call his religious creed... It would startle us to learn that Milton was a Puritan in 'Paradise Lost' and a Catholic in 'Paradise Regained'. We should feel that here was a fact of supreme importance for criticism. Well, the man who wrote the 'Aeneid' is a man who has undergone a conversion not much dissimilar to that which I am supposing for Milton."

After some close arguing in the area of lyric poetry, where he asserts that what is presented to us in a poem is first and foremost the poetic experience itself, not the poet's personality, Lewis moves on to a consideration of poetic drama and claims that this form of poetry, along with epic, is the strongest witness for his contention. The relevance to Vergil of what he goes on to say is, of course, clear since most critics, certainly from Conington onwards, have recognised the powerful dramatic element in Vergil's epic form, whatever their viewpoint with regard to the "Personal Heresy". "Even my convinced opponents," asserts Lewis (p.8), "would falter in dealing with the Drama, for there the poet is manifestly out of sight, and we attend not to him but to his creations. How far any of them resemble him is, no doubt, an interesting question ; but to ask that question, still more to answer it, is clearly to have turned from imaginative apprehension to later and unpoetic reflection. The objective or impersonal theory of poetry which I am defending finds its easiest application in the drama and the epic."

He also insists, however, that this objective theory must be applied to all forms of poetry and points out (p.11) that even if it be granted that the reader does approach the poet himself in his poem, "at least I do it by sharing his consciousness, not by studying it. I look with his eyes, not at him... To see things as the poet sees

them I must share his consciousness and not attend to it ; I must look where he looks and not turn round to face him ; I must make of him not a spectacle but a pair of spectacles."

He goes on, while complaining that the Personal Heresy gives rise to poetolatry ⁵ and thereby offends against personality itself, to refer to Vergil and makes an observation of profound relevance to the subject of this investigation. "If personality is amongst the noblest modes of being," he argues (p.66f), "...then it is important that our response to personality should not be side-tracked or perverted... The nobility of Johnson is a real thing, and so is the nobility of the 'Aeneid' ; but the nobility of Virgil is a mere snare for self-deception, because we can (within very wide limits indeed) fashion that idol in any shape we want.

"Johnson, because his personality survives - because he affects us as a man and not merely as an author - is obstinate and resistant... Virgil is malleable : he will never pull you up short, as Johnson, even across the centuries, so often does. It is no good pretending that Johnson would have listened sympathetically to an account of my repressions : it is quite easy (if one likes) to imagine Virgil doing so."

Scarcely a year after the publication of those words indeed, we find F.H.Cowles, in his article "The Epic Question in Virgil" Classical Journal XXXVI (1940-1), p.134, attempting a description of what he

5. Op. cit. p.65 : "Some time ago Matthew Arnold prophesied that poetry would come to replace religion ; and the personal heretics have made this true in a sense which he probably did not foresee... Every teacher of English has had pupils to whom the study of literature principally meant a series of acts of devotion to various dead men who wrote poetry. We have biographies of Keats and even (I believe) of D.H.Lawrence which are almost exercises in hagiography."

imagined to be the nobility of Vergil : "Being what he was, a sensitive and humane observer of the world scene, a consistent and sincere sympathizer with the under-dog, a hater of that 'criminal folly' which is war, bowed under a 'majestic sadness' which he never lost, it was 'lacrimae rerum' to which he wistfully tuned his lyre..."

Although Lewis was the first to draw formal attention in his book The Personal Heresy to what he regarded as the insidious development of an underlying assumption in contemporary literary criticism, several other scholars had already made comments upon the danger of confusing the singer with the song which lead one to believe that they would probably have approved of Lewis's challenge.

In his "General Answer to Mr. Kingsley", J.H. Newman, as early as 1864, had made the important point that : "...you must not suppose that a philosopher or moralist uses in his own case the licence which his theory itself would allow him. A man in his own person is guided by his own conscience ; but in drawing out a system of rules is obliged to go by logic, and follow the exact deduction of conclusion from conclusion, and be sure that the whole system is coherent and one. You hear of even immoral and irreligious books being written by men of decent character ; there is a late writer who says that David Hume's sceptical works are not at all the picture of the man." ⁶

Nor, it may be added, need the descriptions of the World Soul in Book Six, or the attitudes of Jupiter in the Olympian Councils, be "at all the picture" of Vergil's own personal religious beliefs. While writing his epic Vergil was "obliged to go by logic" and wrote about what Aeneas needed to be told, and what Jupiter had to decide, at those particular moments in the development of the story, being to a large extent compelled as he wrote by the inner logic of dramatic necessity.

Just as, in the confused state of mind in which he must have been

6. Apologia Pro Vita Sua (Collins-Fontana edition, London, 1959) p. 304.

at the end of Book Six, Aeneas needed reassurance from a figure as trustworthy as his father, so Jupiter, in the political crisis on Olympus at the beginning of Book Ten, needed to be seen to reassert his authority and to attempt to satisfy the conflicting demands of two influential goddesses. What he says may, in fact, owe more to diplomatic expediency than philosophical conviction!

Readers of Vergil were warned against making the possibly false assumption that a character in the epic must be speaking with the voice of the poet himself by W. Warde Fowler in his Aeneas at the Site of Rome (Oxford, 1917), p. 124 : "As the Aeneid grew in the course of years the point of view from which the poet looked on Fate changed from time to time, according to his own mood while writing, or to the context immediately in hand, and he not infrequently puts into the mouth of a speaker in the action a view which need not be assumed to be his own." The additional point which Fowler makes about the changing mood of the poet during composition is one which at first sight Lewis might well have considered irrelevant. A poet's moods are, of course, a part of his biography, but on further reflection this insistence upon the gradual growth of the Aeneid actually underlines Lewis's theory of poetry. To those who claim that all the utterances about destiny in the Aeneid, by whomsoever made, throw light upon the beliefs of Vergil himself may be put the question : precisely which Vergil ? The Vergil who began the epic with imperial encouragement, or the Vergil who wished to consign the whole work to the flames, or all the other intermediate Vergils who contribute to the making up of the personality labelled Publius Vergilius Maro ? The sheer impossibility of answering such a question with any assured accuracy reveals the flaw in the argument which insists upon, or assumes, the essential unity of "Life" and "Works", of "poet" and "characters". Fowler himself, indeed, felt the point worth repeating in his Roman Essays and

Interpretations (Oxford, 1926), p. 209 : "Beyond question he passed through various moods while the Aeneid was being written, with the result that those who will can always find contradictions in his view of life and destiny ; but in drawing conclusions from such contradictions we must beware of getting involved in a labyrinth of speculation about his ways of thinking."

It was while trying to prove that Vergil was an Epicurean and discussing his treatment of the Olympian gods that Tenney Frank made an important point about the claims of art, rather than of any private belief, dictating the way in which Vergil wrote. In his article "Epicurean Determinism in the Aeneid" A J Ph XL I (1920), p. 123, he points out that : "...it is as uncritical to search for the poet's own conception of divinity in these personages as it would be to infer his taste in furniture from the straw cot which he chooses to give his hero at Evander's hovel. In the epic of primitive Rome the claims of art took precedence over personal creed, and so they would with any true poet."

The importance of the claims of art, the insistence that the story told, the poem itself, not the man who writes it, is the only true and lawful object of our attention is made again in his own inimitable way by D.H. Lawrence, though Lewis, one feels, would not have welcomed such an ally.⁷ Lawrence warns us in his Studies in Classic American Literature (London, 1924) that : "An artist is usually a damned liar, but his art, if it be art, will tell you the truth of his day. And that is all that matters..... The curious thing about art-speech is that it prevaricates so terribly, I mean it tells such lies... The artist usually sets out - or used to - to point a moral and adorn a tale. The tale, however, points the other way as a rule. Two blankly opposing morals, the artist's and the tale's. Never trust

7. See p. 34, n. 5 above.

the artist. Trust the tale." ⁸

A more conservative and cautious note of warning was sounded by A.S.Pease Classical Journal XXII (1927), p.248f., when he spoke of Vergil's philosophic views and concluded that : "Whether these are to be defined as Stoic, Platonic or eclectic, depends, in large measure, upon one's analysis of the eschatology of the sixth book of the Aeneid and the degree to which one considers it as representative of the poet's own philosophic creed."

Since the publication of Lewis's book other scholars have made statements about the interpretation of Vergil's poetry which agree with the principles of the criticism of poetry established by him in The Personal Heresy, though they make no direct reference to the work. Surprisingly, when one considers the fundamental importance of the subject under dispute, its influence upon the literary world has been apparently slight. Lewis himself did not publish anything else directly connected with the controversy, but he did make comments in later works which indicate that he had not in any way altered his position and which can be understood as suggesting a reason why the "Personal Heresy", as he termed it, has now become virtually the current orthodoxy. Indeed, in An Experiment in Criticism (Cambridge, 1961), he protests against what are to him incorrect attitudes to literature which lead to avoidable misunderstandings and misreadings of an author. He claims (p.86f.) that this state of affairs : "is unfortunately encouraged by the increasing importance of 'English Literature' as an academic discipline" and goes on to complain that : "This directs to the study of literature a great many talented, ingenious and diligent people whose real interests are not specifically literary at all. Forced to talk incessantly about books, what can they do but try to make books into the sort of things they can

8. Op. cit. (Phoenix edition, London, 1964) p.2.

talk about ? Hence literature becomes for them a religion, a philosophy, a school of ethics, a psychotherapy, a sociology - anything rather than a collection of works of art. Lighter works - divertissements - are either disparaged or misrepresented as being really far more serious than they look. But to a real lover of literature an exquisitely made ~~divertissement~~ ^{divertissement} is a very much more respectable thing than some of the 'philosophies of life' which are foisted upon the great poets. For one thing it is a good deal harder to make."

In a penetrating article on the Golden Bough, "Discolor Aura" A J Ph 41 (1953), p.270, R.A.Brooks warns us against concerning ourselves with secondary matters before surrendering ourselves to the full effect of the poetry itself, sentiments of which Lewis, one feels, would have thoroughly approved ⁹ : "None of the conjectures, ~~therefore~~, which relate ultimately to the circumstances of the poem, and of the poet, should be entertained until the internal progress, the organic coherence of Virgil's imagination, has been examined. The point is universal. The creative product is never a logical and predictable result of its environment. The necessities and sequences of poetry are its own; if they are considered as fully explicable in terms of external statement - historical, philosophical, religious or critical - poetry is destroyed."

While T.Frank and R.A.Brooks had, as we have seen above, spoken respectively of the "claims of art" and of the "organic coherence of Virgil's imagination", H.L.Tracy, in his article "The Gradual Unfolding of Aeneas's Destiny" Classical Journal, Evanston 48 (1953) underlined the important point that Vergil was restricted

9. In "Hamlet : The Prince or the Poem ?" - The Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy, 1942, published in They Asked for a Paper (London, 1962) - Lewis comments characteristically (p.59) : "the first thing is to surrender oneself to the poetry and the situation."

in what he wrote by the demands of the epic form and what was already known by his readers of the plot. He warns against deducing from the actions of Jupiter any theories about Vergil's philosophy and prefaces his article with the rather scathing but regrettably necessary comment (p. 281) : "This paper would be unnecessary if we read our Vergil either innocently or attentively." He goes on to say (p. 283) that : "The philosophers may see in Vergil's treatment of the supreme god his notion of free-will and predestination. In this paper, only a practical view will be taken. The story could only be told in the prescribed form on condition that Jupiter's control over the action is not constant and consistent but spasmodic and occasional."

The dangers of the Personal Heresy may be further demonstrated (independently of the opinions of other scholars and critics) by briefly applying its principles to an interpretation of two other poets universally conceded to be among the greatest exemplars of English and Greek poetry respectively : Shakespeare and Homer.

To insist upon the validity of the Personal Heresy one would have to argue, for example, that when King Edward, in 3 Henry VI, iv. 3, exclaims :

"What fates impose, that men must needs abide :

It boots not to resist both wind and tide."

- Shakespeare is himself revealed as a fatalist, even though in Julius Caesar, i. 2, Cassius remarks :

"Men at some time are masters of their fates :

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

Similarly, the Personal Heretics would presumably argue, as T.S.Eliot in fact did ¹⁰, that Macbeth's despairing, cynical picture of life in

10. See p. 31 above.

the famous lines from v. 5 :

"...it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

- is Shakespeare's own view, even though
we find the same poet making Hamlet, in v. 2, affirm to Horatio :

"...that should learn us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

The wiser course is surely to attempt no guess at what Shakespeare himself thought but to take these utterances as those of Edward, Cassius, Macbeth and Hamlet, made as and when dramatic necessity and the inner logic of their characterisation demanded. The alternative course leads ultimately to a literary mare's nest, doubtless of commendable ingenuity, but of questionable relevance to the study of the poetry itself. Indeed, an example of such extravagance in the linking of Life to Works may be found in Anthony Burgess's biographical novel about Shakespeare, Nothing Like The Sun (London, 1964), and in his more serious Shakespeare (London, 1970), which make interesting use of ideas put forward earlier in the mouths of characters in James Joyce's Ulysses (Paris, 1922).¹¹ Working from the facts that

11. Penguin ed. (London, 1969), p.208f. : "As for his family, Stephen said, his mother's name lives in the forest of Arden. Her death brought from him the scene with Volumnia in Coriolanus. His boy son's death is the death scene of young Arthur in King John. Hamlet, the black prince, is Hamnet Shakespeare. Who the girls in The Tempest, in Pericles, in Winter's Tale are we know. Who Cleopatra, fleshpot of Egypt, and Cressid and Venus are we may guess..... He had three brothers, Gilbert, Edmund, Richard..... an Edmund and a Richard are recorded in the works of sweet William."

Shakespeare called his son Hamnet and was reputed to have acted the part of the ghost in Hamlet, Burgess suggests that the tragedy was virtually a commentary upon the Bard's own situation. In Hamlet a son broods about avenging the murder of his father by an uncle ; the murderer marries Hamlet's mother ; in the "play within the play" a drama is performed which reinforces the theme of adultery and murder. Therefore, runs the argument, very possibly, in real life, Shakespeare was cuckolded by his brother ; the discovery of Ann Hathaway's infidelity "killed" Shakespeare's happiness ; this led in turn to the obsession with the themes of sexual jealousy, betrayal and revenge so prominent in many of his tragedies.

There are Vergilean critics quite capable of following the Personal Heresy to such lengths. In his President's Address to the Classical Association, "Ancient Literature and Modern Literary Criticism", (1972), L.P.Wilkinson issued a commendable warning (p.16): "No doubt if we could ask Shakespeare what he meant by Hamlet, or Virgil what he set out to do in the Georgics, the reply might be unexpected, perhaps even disconcerting to our way of thinking. We cannot hope to see exactly with a modern author's eyes, let alone an ancient one's." Commenting further on the modern trend in classical literary criticism towards the study in depth of imagery and symbol, in a sideswipe surely aimed at Pöschl and his school, he refers (p.24f.) to the dangers of "subjective fantasy" : "Just how much symbolism there is in the Eclogues is a matter of dispute..... does Tityrus in any sense represent Virgil himself ? No wonder the Eclogues, and still more the Aeneid, have been the battle-ground as to covert meanings of critics ranged according to temperament or the accident of birth. As soon as Virgil chose the national myth instead of recent history for his subject, his epic could not fail to carry undertones of the Punic War and the Social War as well as of the Augustan present.

But now much more is claimed."

Echoing Wilkinson's strictures, G.S.Kirk, in his Homer and the Oral Tradition (Cambridge, 1976), takes modern Vergilean critics to task : "Even the austerer critics," he states (p.86), "have acquired the habit of making pretentious and unsubstantiated claims for Virgil's subtlety and symbolism - so much so that the world of Homeric criticism begins to look a sane place by comparison." It is in that comparatively sane world, indeed, that perhaps the most unanswerable challenge to the Personal Heretics is to be found, for what, on the basis of their critical approach to poetry, do they make of Homer ?

It would be a cruelly interesting experiment to find a literary critic who both subscribed to the Personal Heresy and was ignorant of the whole Homeric Question, and to ask him, when he had read the Iliad and the Odyssey (in translation), to give an account of Homer's concept of destiny! Some idea of what might thus be so lovingly conceived can possibly be seen in T.E.Shaw's (i.e. Lawrence's) comments in his translator's note on Homer's personality at the end of The Odyssey of Homer (New York, 1932) : "In four years of living with this novel (sic!) I have tried to deduce the author from his self-betrayal in the work. I found a bookworm, no longer young, living from home, a mainlander, city-bred and domestic. Married, but not exclusively, a dog-lover, often hungry and thirsty, dark-haired, fond of poetry, a great if uncritical reader of the Iliad, with limited sensuous range but an exact eyesight which gave him all his pictures..... He loved the rural scene as only a citizen can. No farmer, he had learned the points of a good olive tree. He is all adrift when it comes to fighting, and had not seen deaths in battle. He had sailed upon and watched the sea with a palpitant concern, sea-faring being not his trade. As a minor sportsman he had seen wild boars at bay and heard

tall yarns of lions." 12

The principle of literary criticism upon which the analysis of the various concepts of destiny in the Aeneid will subsequently be undertaken in this dissertation has now been examined and the Personal Heresy revealed in all its potential absurdity. The analysis will be based upon what has been described as the objective, or impersonal, theory of poetry. This objective, or impersonal, theory of poetry may now, for clarity's sake, be summarised as follows :

When we read a poem we are intended to direct our attention to the subject of the poem itself, not to the poet.

We can do this effectively, in fact, only ~~when~~ we do not direct our attention to the poet himself.

In epic poetry the poet is usually describing a former age, peopled by characters who are often already known by his readers to have acted and felt in certain ways, in certain fairly familiar situations.

If, therefore, in a given situation, an epic character makes a remark about life or destiny, it is utterly uncritical for a reader to assume, even if the prevailing literary fashion has fostered him in the assumption, that this remark must represent what the epic poet himself feels about life or destiny.

Any attempt, therefore, to reconstruct the "philosophy of life" or religious creed of the poet himself, or worse still

12. p.440 of The World's Classics edition (Oxford, 1955).

any attempt to reconstruct the events of his life, from an analysis of the utterances of his characters is invalid.

Even a similar reconstruction which is based solely upon the utterances of the poet speaking in his own person must also be regarded with extreme caution, since the poet, qua epic artist, is himself, in a sense, a character in his own creation, adopting a formal stance which need not mirror exactly his own private position.¹³

The exposure of the Personal Heresy and the establishing of a crucial principle of criticism can only lead to a useful clarification of the concepts of destiny in the Aeneid. A vast and significant distinction should now be evident between such titles for a dissertation as "Vergil's Concept of Destiny in the Aeneid" and "Concepts of Destiny in Vergil's Aeneid", for there are, of course, several concepts of destiny in the epic of which Vergil the Epic Poet's is only one. It has also been made clear that in the chapters to follow the study of the poetry (not of the poet), of the words written (not of the man who wrote them), of the heroes sung (not of the elusive singer) will be put firmly back in the centre of our attention, where it rightly belongs.

The next chapter, however, will concern itself with the background of ideas that was current in Vergil's world, for it must in fairness to all critical viewpoints be conceded that even the extreme position of C.S.Lewis would not rule out of court entirely the

13. This last point about the persona of the poet will be discussed more fully in Chapter Five when Vergil's own use of words referring to destiny (as opposed to the use made of them by his characters) will be collated and analysed.

proposition that a poet is to some degree a man of his time and that therefore the prevailing concepts of a given period must constitute at least a part of the texture of a poet's thought. That "no man is an island, entire of itself" is a sentiment with which one feels Lewis would concur, as he might also perhaps have guardedly accepted the cautious statement of R.D.Williams quoted earlier (p.31): "The inner conflict in Aeneas' character corresponds in some degree with the conflict in Virgil's own mind." ¹⁴ Lewis's view of the poetry of others was perhaps coloured by his attitude to his own poetry, from which, despite his craftsmanship and commitment, he could remain astonishingly detached. As evidence of this attitude, which he would seem to assume was common to most poets, we have the statement of his secretary, Walter Hooper, who records in his preface to Poems of C.S. Lewis (London, 1964), p.vii, that : "Often, when I quoted lines from his own poems he would ask who the author was." Of even greater significance, perhaps, is the testimony of a close personal friend of Lewis, Owen Barfield, in the introduction to Light on C.S.Lewis (ed. J.Gibb, London, 1965), pp.x-xi. In explanation of the comment which he himself had made out loud that the last page of the third chapter of The Personal Heresy was "pastiche" (i.e., in this context, a literary work deliberately written in the style of a known author), he writes that : "Lewis would usually send me any poem he wrote and I always responded with some sort of comment. I cannot identify the particular poem I am now referring to, but on this occasion, after generally praising it, I added as an afterthought that it left me with the impression, not of an 'I say this', but of a 'This is the sort of thing a man might say'. Next time he wrote, he said this remark had raised an important question which we should have to discuss : he was not at all sure that the distinction could really be

14. My italics.

maintained." Barfield then goes on to wonder : "was there something, at least in his impressive, indeed splendid, literary personality, which was somehow - and with no taint of insincerity - voulu ? So that, taken in conjunction with his immersion in the literature of the past and his imaginative power of vigorously re-animating it, there was something there that would justify my involuntary exclamation... some touch of a more than merely ad hoc pastiche ?"

With the above consideration in mind to modify the argument against the Personal Heresy, it should now be appropriate to turn, on the tacit acceptance of the principle that indeed "every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main", to an examination of the hinterland of Vergil's poetic consciousness.

CHAPTER THREE : THE BACKGROUND OF IDEAS

Whatever opinions may be held on the question as to whether or not it is possible, or indeed relevant, to deduce Vergil's concept of destiny from a study of the concepts of destiny which are discernible in the Aeneid, those concepts themselves and the words by which they are conveyed to the reader were not coined by Vergil. They have, of course, a history of their own which must now be examined in order that an attempt can be made to discover what they may have meant to Vergil before and during the composition of his epic. The business of this chapter is to try to examine as fully as space allows what concepts of destiny were current in the religion and philosophy of Vergil's world that may have coloured the ways in which he used any words which referred to these concepts when he put them either, with possibly a conscious sense of anachronism, into the mouths of his epic characters or into the mouth of his own persona as epic vates.

Just as in the last chapter a plea has been made for the theory of "objective" poetry, which attempts to re-establish the freedom and integrity of the poetic imagination from the toils of biographical circumstances, so in this chapter it will be urged that we ought to reconsider the proposition that the process of true poetic creation may well owe less than we imagine to the influence of external ideas and more to spontaneous and original thought and feeling. The possibility at least must be conceded that Vergil, though doubtless well read in the classics of his day and susceptible to the authority of prevailing philosophical and religious ideas, was nevertheless capable of assimilating these influences, judging them, rejecting some, and then perhaps initiating some trains of thought which were

almost, if not on occasions entirely, the product of his own spontaneous genius. He did not after all come to be regarded during the Middle Ages as the Magician because of his ability to pull all the philosophies of other thinkers of antiquity out of his hat, and Dante did not choose him as his guide and refer to him as "il miglior fabbro" because of his reputation as a repository of the ideas of other people.¹ Some consideration must be given to the proposition that any concepts of destiny which we may find in the Aeneid may be entirely the products of Vergil's own poetic imagination with which he himself, working from no models, has filled his epic canvas, though he would naturally express such concepts by using words with which his audience was already familiar. The meanings which they attributed to such words need not coincide exactly with the meanings in Vergil's own mind. The poet's gestalt embraces the popular concept but, for him, perhaps only subconsciously, is charged with deeper meaning, and more meaning again as the epic grows organically to its conclusion.

Attention is therefore drawn at the outset to the dangers of underestimating the originality of a poet in a futile search for "influences" and of misdirecting one's attention from his intended subject (the action of the epic) to an irrelevant examination of possible "models". It was Aldous Huxley in his essay The Doors of Perception (London, 1954) who issued the following salutary warning when he referred so scathingly to this tendency in modern scholarship, and had he known then of some of the "sources" which were to be in all seriousness suggested by Vergilean scholars as having "influenced" Vergil, he would not have felt obliged to moderate his criticism. "In a world where education is predominantly verbal," comments Huxley (op. cit. p.62), "highly educated people find it all but impossible to pay

1. See D.P.A.Comparetti's Virgilio Nel Medio Evo (Livorno, 1872 ; reprinted London, 1966, trans. E.F.M.Benecke.)

serious attention to anything but words and notions. There is always money for, there are always doctorates in, the learned foolery of research into what, for scholars, is the all-important problem : Who influenced whom to say what when ?"

"Influences", moreover, even when detected from a similarity of subject-matter between one poet and another, have then to be proved to be operative. The same C.S.Lewis, whose theory of literary criticism was referred to in the last chapter, also has something instructive to say about the dangers of giving too ready a credence to critics who claim to have reconstructed the "sources" of a writer's inspiration. In one of his last essays, Fernseed and Elephants (London, 1975, ed. W.Hooper), he demonstrates with incontrovertible proof from his own experience the fallacy of at least one critical "reconstruction" and, by extension, the shakiness of any critical theory which is based upon a study of supposed "influences".

"Only the other week," he warns us (p.116), "a reviewer said that a fairy-tale by my friend Roger Lancelyn Green was influenced by fairy tales of mine. Nothing could be more probable. I have an imaginary country with a beneficent lion in it : Green, one with a beneficent tiger. Green and I can be proved to read one another's works ; to be indeed in various ways closely associated. The case for an affiliation is far stronger than many we accept as conclusive when dead authors are concerned. But it is all untrue nevertheless. I know the genesis of that Tiger and that Lion and they are quite independent."

It is instructive here, and of supreme relevance to the argument of this chapter, to refer to a letter of Lewis's on this matter which appeared in the "Times Literary Supplement" of 28th November 1958 (p. 689) :

"Sir, - A review of Mr. R.L.Green's Land of the Lord High Tiger in your issue of 21 November spoke of myself (in passing) with so

much kindness that I am reluctant to cavil at anything it contained : but in justice to Mr. Green I must. The critic suggested that Mr. Green's Tiger owed something to my fairy-tales. In reality this is not so and is chronologically impossible. The Tiger was an old inhabitant, and his land a familiar haunt, of Mr. Green's imagination long before I began writing."

Lewis then proceeds to make a general point of vital importance which flows from his exposure of the critic's error : "There is a moral here for all of us critics. I wonder how much 'Quellenforschung' in our studies of older literature seems solid only because those who knew the facts are dead and can't contradict it ?"

"Now this surely ought to give us pause," continues Lewis in Fernseed and Elephants. "The reconstruction of the history of a text, when the text is ancient, sounds very convincing. But one is after all sailing by dead reckoning ; the results cannot be checked by fact. In order to decide how reliable the method is, what more could you ask for than to be shown an instance where the same method is at work and we have facts to check it by ? Well, that is what I have done. And we find, that when this check is available, the results are either always, or else nearly always, wrong. The 'assured results of modern scholarship', as to the way in which an old book was written, are 'assured', we may conclude, only because the men who knew the facts are dead and cannot blow the gaff. The huge essays in my own field ², which reconstruct the history of Piers Plowman or The Faerie Queen are most unlikely to be anything but sheer illusion."

Having therefore drawn attention to the consideration that, firstly, Vergil may well not have been influenced by current ideas of destiny at all and, secondly, that, even if he had been, the influence upon him

2. C.S.Lewis held the chair of Mediaeval and Renaissance English at Cambridge from 1954.

which may now appear most obvious may well in fact be scholarly illusion, it must be further considered, before examining in more specific detail these philosophies that could have influenced Vergil, whether or not our contemporary concepts of destiny are indeed the same as the concepts of destiny which were held either by Vergil himself or by the other writers of his day.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary, for example, a work to which any reader might reasonably be expected to turn in search of a simple definition, says of destiny : "Predetermined events; person's, country's etc., appointed or ultimate lot; power that foreordains, invincible necessity." 'Fate' it defines as : "Power predetermining events unalterably from eternity; (Myth.) goddess, one of the three Greek goddesses...of destiny; what is destined to happen; appointed lot of person, etc., person's ultimate condition...; death, destruction."

The ideas of destiny and fate contained in these definitions may be considered to all intents and purposes to be identical with each other, and the modern reader of Vergil regards such definitions as also identical with what he imagines Vergil meant by the word 'fatum'. In the mind of the modern reader, however, there often slips in unnoticed an unconscious additional assumption : that all events are predetermined. This assumption, where it is made, is a source of considerable misunderstanding. In other words, how many readers of the Aeneid, be they the untutored reading C.Day Lewis's or Jackson Knight's excellent translations, or even classical students and scholars following the Latin text, assume the validity of the equation : belief-in-'fatum' equals fatalism ?

"Fatalism" is defined by The Concise Oxford Dictionary as follows : "Belief that all events are predetermined by arbitrary decree ; submission to all that happens as inevitable." (My italics) The

addition of the word "all" (omitted in the definitions of destiny and fate quoted above) is indeed all-important! The need to draw attention to this essential distinction between "fatalism" and "belief-in-'fatum' " is supported by a comment of R.D.Williams in his edition of Books i - vi of the Aeneid (London, 1972). In his note on i.39 ("quippe uetor fatis") he points out that : "...For all the dominance of the idea of fate in the Aeneid, Virgil is very far from being a fatalist ; ³ it needs the efforts of men to bring to fruition the intention of fate, and there are supernatural powers working both for and against fate."

Where then could this idea that Vergil is presenting us in the Aeneid with a philosophy of fatalism originate ? Putting aside for the sake of argument the whole question whether or not Vergil is, in fact, presenting us with a philosophy at all (i.e. the "Personal Heresy" objection), it must surely be recognised that our attitude to "concepts of destiny in Vergil" are reflected in our choice of words to describe these attitudes. Our contemporary use of such words as "fate" and "destiny" has been coloured, at least in popular usage, by exposure to the unconsciously absorbed concepts and beliefs of Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic cultures, which were doubtless assimilated during the long period of time from the Crusades to the British Raj. That popular notion of destiny or fate which often shrugs its shoulders at moral failure and natural disaster alike and appeals to the inevitable with the cry of : "It was meant to happen!" or "His number came up!" is in reality far nearer the Islamic "kismet" than the Stoic "πρόνοια".⁴

3. Pace C.S.Lewis!

4. Dependent upon religious antecedents, there may also be something of Calvin's "predestination" in the concept, i.e. the belief that God has unalterably destined some souls ("the Elect") to salvation and some to damnation.

"Kismet", indeed, in The Concise Oxford Dictionary is defined simply as "Destiny".⁵ It is easy to see, therefore, how a well-meaning reader, brought up in the climate of opinion where "fate" or "destiny" is equated more nearly with fatalism of the "che sarà, sarà" variety, could quite understandably make erroneous assumptions about Aeneas's world-view. That such misunderstandings are, in fact, current and are moreover in need of correction is clear from the care with which R.D. Williams feels it necessary to insist upon the freedom of Aeneas's will in his article "Virgil Today" Proceedings of the Virgil Society 12 (1972-73). Giving a further example of what he has called the "many-sidedness" of Vergil, he writes (p.35) about the relationship between fate and free will : "Virgil did not believe that the existence of a divine purpose for the world denied to men their free-will, and in the Aeneid he explores the question of how that free-will can operate in collaboration with the divine purpose."

It is clear that "destiny" would be a less misleading translation of Vergil's "fatum" than "fate" from the definition of "fate" given in his introductory article in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (Ed. J.Hastings, Edinburgh, 1908-26) by A.Dorner, especially if "fate" is in any danger of being confused with "fatalism". "The idea of fate," he states (Vol.V p.772), "is found only in conditions where some attempt has been made to trace all phenomena, and more particularly the phenomena of human life, to an ultimate unity. Fate, indeed, is precisely this unity apprehended as an inevitable necessity controlling all things ; it is the absolutely inscrutable power to which all men are subject, and may be either personified or represented as impersonal. It is a conception which prevails wherever the mind of man is unable to frame the idea of rational necessity or of a supreme

5. It is derived, through the Turkish, from the Arabic "qisma(t)" from "qasama" - to divide.

purposive will, and it survives so long as either of these, though within the field of consciousness, is imperfectly realised. Further, men tend to fall back on the idea of Fate when, at a higher level of intellectual development, they begin to doubt of a rational order, or a rational end, in the universe." The "fate" defined here is hardly the concept which pervades the Aeneid, yet "fate" of the sort here defined forms the basis of twentieth century Western man's concept of that power.

"If any distinction is to be drawn," continues Dorner, "between Fate and Destiny, it is simply that the latter is but the former regarded as operative in particular cases. The idea of Destiny, however, does not necessarily preclude the rationality of the thing destined ; it merely implies that this rationality is not perceived. Destiny, in fact, being a somewhat indefinite conception, may even connote an ethical vocation, and may in that case be applied to the end which a higher will sets before a moral personality as an ideal to be realised in moral endeavour."

With these considerations in mind, it is now intended to review the various ideas about destiny which may have had some effect upon Vergil as he composed the Aeneid. Insomuch as the Aeneid is an epic poem which is universally conceded to be modelled, at least as regards genre, upon the Iliad and Odyssey, perhaps the most fruitful ground for initial study would be Homer.

The idea of a predetermined order of things (i.e. fate or destiny) seems to have been familiar to the Greek mind from the earliest times. The deep-seated beliefs in the efficacy of oracles would itself be some evidence for this assertion, for surely the very possibility of prediction implies some sort of foreordained future. The Greeks, in contradistinction to the Romans, had several words for this idea : ἄλμα, μοῖρα, μόρος, εἴμαρται, εἴμαρμένον, ἢ εἴμαρμένη,

πέπρωται, πεπρωμένον, ἢ πεπρωμένη, κήρ, δαίμων.

Although the idea of fortune (τύχη) seems unknown to Homer, the idea of fate is everywhere present both in the Iliad and Odyssey, and the passage which is surely the most likely of all to have influenced Vergil is Iliad xx. 156-340.

In this passage, Apollo, in the form of Lycaon, Priam's son, has approached Aeneas and encouraged him, trusting in his mother, Aphrodite, to fight Achilles. Poseidon, though fighting on the Greek side, pities Aeneas because the man has been deceived by Apollo, pious though he is :

“ἀλλὰ τί ἤ νῦν οὗτος ἀνάιτιος ἄλγεα πάσχει
μὰψ' ἔνεκ' ἀλλοτρίων ἀχέων, κεχαρισμένα δ' αἰεὶ
δῶρα θεοῖσι δίδωμι τοι οὐρανὸν εὐρύν ἔχουβιν;”

He suggests that Aeneas be saved lest Zeus get angry at his death, for Aeneas is destined to survive and preserve the race of Dardanus, Zeus's favourite (xx. 300-305, 307-309) :

“ἀλλ' ἄγεθ' ἡμεῖς πέρ μιν ὑπὲρ θανάτου ἀγάζωμεν,
μή πως καὶ Κρονίδης κεχολώβεται, αἶ κεν Ἀχιλλεὺς
τόνδε κατακτείνει· μόριμον δ' οἱ ἔστ' ἀλέασθαι,
ὅφρα μὴ ἀόπερμος γενεὴ καὶ ἀφαντος ὀληται
Δαρδάνου, ὃν Κρονίδης περὶ πάντων φίλατο παίδων...
... ἤδη γὰρ Πριάμου γενεὴν ἔχθηρε Κρονίων·
νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνεΐας βίη Τρώεσβιν ἀνάξει
καὶ παίδων παῖδες, τοί κεν μετόπισθε γένωνται.”

Poseidon then picks up Aeneas and throws him safe, warning him to avoid Achilles (xx.336) :

“μή καὶ ὑπὲρ μοῖραν δόμον Ἀἴδος εἰσαφίκηται”

but after Achilles's death no other Greek will be able to kill him.

If the germ of the Aeneid is to be found anywhere in Homer, it is surely here, where the preservation of Aeneas hints at his future greatness and where the very idea of his premature death is described

as “ὕπὲρ μοῖραν” . There are, of course, in the Iliad a number of expressions such as “ὕπὲρ μοῖραν”(xx.336), “ὕπὲρ μόρον”(xx.30, xxi.517), “ὕπὲρ μορᾶ”(ii.155), “ὕπὲρ αἰῶνα” (vi.487, xvi.780), “καὶ ὑπὲρ Διὸς αἰῶνα” (xvii.321), “καὶ ὑπὲρ θεῶν” (xvii.427), which suggest by implication that man is capable on occasions of overpassing fate. The sort of fate that we find in Homer is thus not that of a rigid, unyielding law, but one which allows some freedom of movement. The attitude of Zeus to fate in Homer is interesting : he now and again thinks of setting it aside, but never actually does (e.g. Iliad xxii.178ff.).⁶ His attitude is rather one of impartiality, as when in viii.69-74 and xxii.209-213 he merely holds the scales of battle and allows the “fates” of the individuals concerned to settle the matter, an attitude which Vergil reproduces of course in Aeneid x.112f.

While Hesiod speaks of the Μοῖραι, naming them as Κλωθώ, Λάχεσις and Ἄτροπος, and in Theog. 218f. defines their function :

“ αἶτε βροτοῖσι
χειρομένοισι διδούσιν ἔχειν ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε,” —

and while Pindar mentions “Clotho and her sister Moirai”, we must look next to the tragedians for more likely sources of possible influence. In the Prometheus Bound of Aeschylus it is suggested that even Zeus himself is subject to destiny, and that Prometheus knew a secret of fate which would eventually bring about his deliverance.⁷

“Pray not at all, since there is no release for mortals from

6. For further discussion of this question see A.Adkins Merit and Responsibility (Oxford, 1960) Chapter 2.

7. Aeschylus P.V. 515-518 :

Χο. τίς οὖν ἀνάγκης ἔστιν οἰακοτρόφος ;
Πρ. Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονες τ' Ερινύες.
Χο. τούτων ἄρα Ζεὺς ἔστιν ἀδθενέστερος ;
Πρ. οὔκουν ἂν ἐκφύγοι γε τὴν πεπρωμένην.

predestined calamity," says the Chorus to Creon in Sophocles' Antigone (1337f.),⁸ lines which are perhaps echoed in the Sibyl's words to Palinurus in Aeneid vi.376 :

"desine fata deum flecti sperare precando."

A greater example of the power of fate could hardly be found than the plot of Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannos, though it could be argued that the existence of free will is demonstrated also.⁹ Even Euripides' plays contain many references to the concept of fate, such as the opinion expressed in Heracles 615 :

"μόριμα δ' οὐτί φυχὲν θέμις ",

or that in Iphigeneia in Tauris

1486 :

" τὸ γὰρ χρεὼν σοῦ τε καὶ θεῶν κρατεῖ ."

It must, however, be admitted that by no means all scholars agree that the Greeks were as dominated by the idea of fate as the preceding paragraphs might suggest. A. Leach, for example, in his article "Fatalism of the Greeks" A J Ph XXXVI (1915) insists that misconceptions have arisen and makes one realise yet again the supreme importance of ensuring that one recognises the distinction between "fatalism" and "belief in fate". "Fatalism," he asserts (p.374), "benumbs and paralyses the will, and apathy and stoical submission are the only

8. " μή νυν προδέυχου μηδέν· ὥς πεπρωμένης
οὐκ ἔστι θνητοῖς συμφορὰς ἀπαλλαγὴ."

9. C.S. Lewis is again instructive. Speaking of Oedipus Tyrannos in Of Other Worlds : Essays and Stories (London, 1966), he comments (p.15), in a chapter entitled "On Stories" : "Another very large class of stories turns on fulfilled prophecies.....We have just had set before our imagination something that has always baffled the intellect : we have seen how destiny and free will is the modus operandi of destiny. The story does what no theorem can quite do."

resource. To accept the inevitable without a murmur, with passionless calm to wrap one's mantle around oneself and with bowed head to say in impassive tone, kismet, it is ordered, this is fatalism, and this is what a fatalistic belief engenders.

How can anyone attribute such a deadening doctrine as this of fatalism to a people like the Greeks with their alert minds, their power of making independent judgements, their daring spirit of adventure and unresting activity, their proud confidence in themselves that made them dare and do what seemed impossible and their buoyant courage that rose quickly over even direst disaster ?"

Only someone, one is tempted to answer, who confuses - in accordance with the doctrines of the Personal Heresy - what Sophocles himself thought with the thoughts which Sophocles put into the mouth of a tragic character.

Although Heraclitus said that all things took place "καθ' εἰμαρμένην", and Plato seems to take it for granted that there is a predetermined order of destiny ¹⁰, it is generally considered to be the philosophies of either the Stoics or the Epicureans which influenced Vergil most, with such a preponderance of scholarly opinion in favour of the former persuasion that insistence upon the influence of the latter could be regarded as somewhat perverse. The Stoic Chrysippus, indeed, compared man's position of bondage to fate with that of a dog tied to a cart which he must "follow" willingly or reluctantly. The following passage (Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta 2, No.975 : J. von Arnim, Leipzig, 1923), rich as it is in imagery, may once have attracted the poetic imagination of Vergil : "καὶ αὐτοὶ δὲ τὸ καθ' εἰμαρμένην εἶναι πάντα διεβεβαιώσαντο παραδείγματι χρηδάμενοι τοιούτω, ὅτι ὥσπερ ὀχήματος ἔαν ἢ ἐξηρτημένος κύων, ἔαν μὲν βούληται ἐπέσθαι, καὶ ἔλκεται καὶ ἔπεται, ποιῶν καὶ

10. See Phaedo, 113 A ; Phaedrus, 255 B ; Protagoras, 320 D ; Rep. 566 A.

τὸ αὐτοεξούσιον μετὰ τῆς ἀνάγκης [αἶον τῆς εἰμαρμένης]. εἰ δὲ μὴ βούληται ἔπεσθαι, πάντως ἀναγκασθήσεται· το αὐτὸ δῆπου καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· καὶ μὴ βουλόμενοι χαρ ἀκολουθεῖν ἀναγκασθήσονται πάντως εἰς το πεπρωμένον εἰσελθεῖν." ¹¹

E.V.Arnold in his Roman Stoicism (Cambridge, 1911) points out the importance of divine and human will in the Stoic doctrine of fate (p. 202) : "...the Stoics, however strongly they assert the rule of fate or necessity, intend so to interpret these terms as to reconcile them with the common use of words, that is with the inherited belief in divine and human will, breaking through the chain of cause and effect." More recently, É. Bréhier has summarised Stoic beliefs about fate in his The Hellenistic and Roman Age (Chicago, 1965 ; trans. W.Baskin) by saying (p.50) : "The theory of Fate is only a refined expression of the integral rationalism found in the Stoics. Fate, which in Greek thought was at first the wholly irrational force that apportioned their lot to men, becomes the universal 'reason according to which past events have happened, present events are happening, and future events will happen'." J.M.Rist, however, distinguishes between "fate" and "determinist necessity" in his Stoic Philosophy (Cambridge, 1969), p.122 : "Fate is a word for describing (quite neutrally) the state of affairs that was, is and will be." ¹² There is, therefore, no reason

11. There is, perhaps, a poetic echo of this in Aeneas's description in ii.723-4 of little Iulus being dragged stumbling off to meet his destiny as founder of the Julian 'gens' : "dextrae se parvus Iulus / implicuit sequiturque patrem non passibus aequis."

12. Cf. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in Deutsche Rundschau 225 (1940) p.19, who points out, when speaking of fate, that : "...das Schicksal ist nichts anderes als die umgedrehte Erfahrungstatsache : so ist es geschehen, also musste es geschehen."

why Chrysippus should not speak of the future as 'fated'. This would mean that what would be, will be. Necessity in the determinist sense has nothing to do with fate. When we say that something is fated, we are looking at it 'sub specie aeternitatis...'

The poet who wrote Rome's national epic may also, if influenced at all by the past, have consulted, from motives of political policy as well as of genuine national pride, the religion and philosophy of his own Roman predecessors, not to mention contemporaries.¹³ That the Romans did have distinctive religious ideas of their own is suggested by W. Warde Fowler in his Roman Ideas of Deity (London, 1914) when he states (p.44) that : "...it is my conviction that the intensely conservative Roman mind could never, even under the domination of Etruscan and Greek religious ideas, have lost the sense of a great power in the universe, summing up as it were the varied powers of the numina. I think it quite possible that this sense was always in the background of the Italian mind..."

In Aeneid viii.334, Evander speaks of "Fortuna omnipotens et ineluctabile fatum". It is tempting to suppose that we have here a hendiadys, and that for Evander (and perhaps for most early "Italians") the two ideas were virtually interchangeable rather than mutually exclusive. Indeed, although Fortuna was identified in classical times with Τύχη, there is good reason to believe that she was earlier regarded as different from and more serious than mere chance. Polybius may

13. Dio Cassius has preserved a "speech" of Octavian on the occasion of his offer to restore the Republic in 27 B.C., in which (53, 5,2) reference is made to "ἐμάρμενη τις" as an operative force : "ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐμάρμενη τις, ὥς εἴκεν, ἐς τοῦτο προήγαγεν ὑμᾶς ὥστε καὶ ἐμοῦ, καίπερ νέου ἔτι τότε ὄντος, καὶ χρεῖαν ἔχειν (καὶ πείραν λαβεῖν)... καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτι τῶν πάντων ἀπέτρεψε με κινδυνεύουσιν ὑμῖν ἐπικουρῆσαι."

have said at the beginning of his history that Τύχη was a force at work in the world,¹⁴ and Pliny the Elder have later asserted that "Fortuna" was worshipped to the exclusion of all else,¹⁵ but for the early Italians "Fortuna" was something more simple. As H.J.Rose says in his article on "Fortuna and Fors" in the Oxford Classical Dictionary (Oxford, 1949), p.268 : "There is...good evidence that she was in the native cult not a deity of chance or luck, but rather 'the bringer', as her name signifies ('ferre'), of fertility or increase."¹⁶

W.Warde Fowler again, in his article on "Fortune (Roman)" in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (Vol.VI, 1913), p.98f., sees her as more than a goddess of mere chance : " 'Fortuna' is formed adjectivally from 'fors', as 'Portunus' from 'portus', 'Neptunus' from some

14. 1,4,4 : " ἡ τύχη ἔχουσα πάντα τὰ τῆς οἰκουμένης πράγματα πρὸς ἐν ἑκλινε μέρος, καὶ πάντα νεύειν ἡνάγκαζε πρὸς ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν σκοπόν."

15. Nat. Hist. 2,v. 22 : "...toto quippe mundo et omnibus locis omnibusque horis omnium vocibus Fortuna sola invocatur et nominatur, una accusatur, rea una agitur, una cogitatur, sola laudatur, sola arguitur et cum conviciis colitur ; volubilis, a plerisque vero et caeca existimata, vaga, inconstans, incerta, varia indignorumque fautrix...adeoque obnoxii sumus sorti, ut sors ipsa pro deo sit, qua deus probatur incertus."

16. J.B.Carter in his Religion of Numa (London, 1906), p.51f., also stresses this point : "...the early Fortuna was a goddess of plenty and fertility, among mankind as a protectress of women and of childbirth, among the crops and herds as a goddess of fertility and fecundity...whenever it was that Fortuna began to exist...she came into the world as a goddess of plenty and did not turn into a goddess of luck till centuries after her birth."

word unknown to us ; and 'fors', so far as we can guess from later literature, must have signified what we call luck, whether good or bad, i.e. the incalculable element in Nature and in human life. Not a capricious force...but the idea of luck or accident which is common to the minds and language of all peoples at all times without any reflexion or reasoning on the mysteries of human life..... Fortuna must have been, for the early Latins, the deity presiding over the incalculable element in human life, not a mere personification of Chance itself."

Fowler's insight is acknowledged by C.Bailey in his Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome (Oxford, 1932), who himself suggests (p.234) how Vergil may have used the old Italian idea of Fortuna : "It needed no great effort to attach to Jupiter the character and functions of a world-god. Nor again was the Stoic idea of 'providence' hard for a Roman to accept, though he would probably attach it not to Iuppiter, but to the old Italian goddess Fortuna, who was not thought of by the Romans, at any rate until the idea was corrupted by the Greek Τύχη , as a capricious and arbitrary deity, but as a governing, purposeful force, which was yet incapable of being swayed by human prayer."

It is not, however, only concepts of "Fortuna" that may have had an Italian origin. "Fatum" too may have sprung from that soil, as R.E.A.Palmer points out in his Roman Religion and Roman Empire (Philadelphia, 1974), p.108, when speaking of the deities referred to on the inscriptions found at Tor Tignosa : "Although the 'Fata' of classical Latin usage are the plural personifications of the neuter 'fatum', 'the spoken word', at Tor Tignosa the deity Fata is singular and feminine. She is the indisputable ancestress of the three Fata." The singular goddess later became pluralised and concepts familiar to any reader of the Aeneid emerge. "As deities," continues Palmer (p. 109), in his reconstruction of early Roman religion, "Fatae speak the

divine word, which appears to have been the 'fatum'. Thus they closely resemble Sibyls... The fact remains that the Fatae, at first nine in number, came to be identified with the Parcae... Thereafter the three Parcae / Fata came to be identified with the three Greek 'Moirai', and to share a principal control over life and death..... Their immediate origin seems to have been neither at Rome nor in Magna Graecia : they came from Lavinium, more exactly from Tor Tignosa."

The connection between the inscriptions of Tor Tignosa and the works of Vergil had been made more specifically by P. Boyancé in his La Religion de Virgile (Paris, 1963), when he stated (p.40f.) that : "La Fata de Tor Tignosa nous oblige à faire remonter dans un passé relativement reculé cette déesse... L'inscription ne peut nous renseigner sur ces points importants. Il reste qu'elle nous atteste la signification proprement religieuse à une date assez ancienne des idées dont le fatum est l'expression classique." He goes on to claim, in reference to the dedications to Nona Fata and Lar Aeneas, that : "cette liaison d'Énée avec le thème du Fatum, telle qu'on la voit chez Virgile, a quelque fondement dans les traditions indigènes."

Mention of "indigenous traditions" must make one think not only of early Italo-Roman concepts of fate but also of the ideas current among those other inhabitants of the Italian peninsula : the Etruscans. Although the origins of this race are still a matter of controversy, their influence upon Roman religion is hardly disputed. Nor is it fiercely in dispute that Vergil himself may have been of Etruscan extraction. This fact is mentioned (pace C.S.Lewis!) to indicate how Vergil may have acquired some knowledge of Etruscan words and concepts. His use of them in his epic, of course, need not in any way reveal to us his own feelings or beliefs about such concepts. The biography of Vergil attributed to Aelius Donatus (deriving, according to some scholars, from Suetonius) refers to him as "Mantuanus", and the Vita

Servi uses the same adjective, adding "quae civitas est Venetiae".

W.F.Jackson Knight, in Roman Vergil (London, 1944), p.54, comments that : "Vergil himself has been supposed an Etruscan, a Venetian, a Celt and a Jew. Vergil's praise of the Etruscan strain at Mantua need not of course mean that he himself had, or thought he had, Etruscan connexions," but later (p.55) comes to the conclusion that : "From the evidence that exists it is safe to regard Vergil as a Latin, with probable Etruscan connexion."

O.W. von Vacano, in his Die Etrusker in der Welt der Antike (London, 1960, trans. S.A.Ogilvie), claims that one can obtain a better understanding of the Etruscans' distinctive religious belief in fate by studying their peculiar method of reckoning time. The Etruscans, he says, (p.13f.) "believed that different peoples each had an existence of predetermined duration, with a beginning and an end in between which they grew, flourished and faded away..... The 'Nomen Etruscum' was supposed to have been assigned eight, or according to other traditions, ten 'saecula' ¹⁷ and it is a strange fact that Etruscanism as an entity in culture and history did begin to disappear from sight and to merge into the Roman Empire in the years in which its destiny was, according to this doctrine, fulfilled."

One other distinctive Etruscan belief concerning fate, according to von Vacano (p.16) was that it could be postponed : "An individual's fate can be postponed by ten years, all Etruria's by so much as thirty. This theory of postponement of fate made it possible to explain individual cases and allowed for reconciliation between what ought to happen according to the observed portents, and what can be seen

17. A 'saeculum' lasted, in von Vacano's definition, "from the end of the preceding one till the death of the last of all those who had been alive at its beginning." Vergil uses the word in the Aeneid seven times : i.291, 445, 606 ; vi.235, 793 ; viii.508 ; xii.826.

actually to happen..... In the doctrine of the 'saecula' itself we can trace the same attitude to life which produced a belief in the possibility of postponement of destiny being granted subject to certain conditions." One thinks at once of such passages as Aeneid viii.398-9 and Vulcan's words to Venus :

"nec pater omnipotens Troiam nec fata uetabant
stare decemque alios Priamum superesse per annos."

Another distinctively Etruscan concept is that of the 'libri fatales'. J.Heurgon in his La Vie Quotidienne Chez Les Étrusques (Paris, 1961), p.279, speaks of these as books "qui permettaient de connaître les arrêts du destin : et là se trouvaient consignés toutes les formes concevables de prodiges ('ostenta') par lesquels se manifestait aux experts la volonté cachée des dieux." Later in his book (p.291) Heurgon describes the decorations on a sarcophagus of Laris Puleas at Tarquinia : "Il déroule devant lui un 'volumen', et nous avons vu que la présence d'un tel livre était fréquente dans la décoration funéraire pour suggérer les arrêts du fatum." One again thinks of such a passage as that in which Jupiter reassures Venus in Aeneid i.262, where the image employed is very probably that of the unrolling of a scroll :

"fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet,
longius, et uoluens fatorum arcana mouebo..."

There is, however, yet another ancient book which has been claimed as a probable influence upon the mind of Vergil. In 1959, J.Lallemant suggested, in an article entitled "Une Source de l'Eneide : le Mahabharata" Latomus 18, pp.262-287, that it was Cornelius Gallus who had first drawn Vergil's attention to the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, available in a Greek translation in Alexandria. G.E.Duckworth then took this idea of the Sanskrit epic being a possible source of the Aeneid even further in his article "Turnus and Duryodhana" TAPA 92

(1961), pp. 81-127. Duckworth seems convinced that Vergil must at least have known of the Mahabharata for, as he pleads (p. 111), "if he did not, we are dealing with an incredible series of impossible or at least highly improbable coincidences." He goes on to explain (p. 117) that : "the structural parallels between Mahabharata v.-viii. and Aeneid vii., ix. - xi., are so numerous, book by book, that they can hardly be the result of chance ; when we consider in addition the many close similarities in Mahabharata lx. and Aeneid xii., presented in almost the identical sequence of ideas and events, it seems beyond the bounds of probability that Vergil could have arranged this material, for which in most cases Homeric models are weak or non-existent, in its present form without a fairly detailed knowledge of the epic nucleus of the Mahabharata."

So small, it seems, is the faith of some modern scholars in Vergil's intrinsic originality that they prefer to look not only to Greece, as did earlier critics, but to Etruria and even to India for sources of his epic invention. One wonders if in the future some Japanese epic of the first century B.C. were to be discovered containing a story of a bamboo that seeped blood when being cut by a sacrificing priest, whether some means would be found of establishing the probability of a trade route along which a translation of such an epic could be brought, by way of China, India and Egypt, to give Vergil some ideas on how to write the beginning of Book Three of the Aeneid!

There are clearly no means of proving, or of disproving, whether such influences as have been mentioned in the preceding pages affected Vergil during the composition of his epic poem. What is surely more to the point is the consideration whether, even if such sources of influence were available, Vergil actually paid them any attention. Even more important again, however, is the point that, even if he did, in fact, pay them any attention, the true appreciation of his epic

poem, as epic poetry, is an aesthetic process which ought to be entirely unaffected by any such considerations. The one vital key to unlocking the appreciation of poetry is the concentration of the reader's attention upon the one object to which the poet is attempting to direct that attention : not the contents of the poet's library ; not even the poet's own political, religious or aesthetic prejudices ; but the epic itself. As Vergil himself states quite clearly :

"Arma uirumque cano..."

CHAPTER FOUR : TYPES OF EXPRESSION

Now that preliminary considerations concerning critical attitudes and historical background to the concepts of destiny in the Aeneid have been made, it is appropriate to commence an investigation into the various words which Vergil employs in his epic to refer to destiny. This will involve a study of eight words in all : FATUM and its derivatives FATALIS, FATIFER and FATIDICUS, PARCAE, FORTUNA, FORS and SORS, though, in fact, only three of these are of basic importance - FATUM, PARCAE and FORTUNA. All these words will be examined in this chapter in an attempt to distinguish not only the shades of meaning which each one bears as distinct from another but also the various shades of meaning which each one carries within itself.

It is accepted at the outset that such a task is fraught with difficulties of which the most obvious and dangerous is subjective interpretation of meaning. Nevertheless it may be said that since complete objectivity in the criticism of poetry is virtually impossible to achieve any subjective view which may become discernible to the reader of this investigation will be at least the view of one person who has throughout attempted to maintain one consistent viewpoint. Another major difficulty is the frequent lack of precision of the English language and the fact that Latin is content to allow one word to do the work which English shares among many. The translator of Vergil into English could quite justifiably use the term "destiny" (with or without a capital letter) to construe any or all of the five nouns mentioned above. A glance at Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary will reveal the many possible translations of these words, and it does not require a great effort of the imagination to visualise the confusion that could result if one were always seeking to establish a

distinct pattern of equivalent meanings between the Latin and the English.

1. FATUM is translated as : "a prophetic declaration, oracle, prediction ; that which is ordained, destiny, fate ; the will or determination of the gods" and in its plural form as : "the Fates, bad fortune, ill fate, calamity, mishap ; death ; one who brings calamity, a plague."

2. PARCA is translated as "one of the goddesses of Fate" and PARCAE as "the Fates".

3. FORTUNA is translated (if written with a small 'f') as : "chance, hap, luck, fate, fortune (good or ill)"; also as : "good luck, ill luck, good fortune, prosperity ; mishap, misfortune, adversity ; state, condition, circumstances, fate, lot".

4. FORS can mean : "chance, hap, luck, hazard, the goddess of Chance".

5. SORS can mean : "a lot, share, an oracular response, a prophecy, oracle, oracular verses, fate, destiny, chance, fortune, condition, part, rank".

With such overlapping and interchange of meaning, confusion is inevitable unless an attempt is made to sift and separate the various meanings of these words into some sort of system. This work will now be undertaken by an examination, firstly of the word FATUM and its derivatives.

1 : FATUM

After prolonged and reiterated study of those passages in the Aeneid in which the word "fatum" occurs it became gradually apparent that there are six distinguishable concepts ; that is to say there are six different ways in which the word could be translated into English. It was found convenient to choose one English word to stand for each of these concepts and an attempt was made to select English words which in themselves succinctly embody the central and basic meaning of the concept concerned. Thus six different ways of translating "fatum" were eventually chosen and thereafter adhered to, viz. FATE, DESTINY, DOOM, LOT, DEATH and LIFE-SPAN. These could, it was realised, be moreover divided into two groups of three : three in which "fatum" was considered mainly with reference to the divine viewpoint (i.e. FATE, DESTINY and DOOM), and three in which it was considered mainly from the point of view of mankind (i.e. LOT, DEATH and LIFE-SPAN).

The word "fate" was chosen in some instances rather than "destiny" on the following principles : "fate" looks backward at what has happened ; to what, from the religious viewpoint, Heaven has done ; "destiny", however, looks forward to what will happen ; to what, again from the religious viewpoint, Heaven plans, wants or purposes.¹ "Fate" is indisputable - once grant the will to believe in Providence and the claim that something has happened "by fate" cannot be disproved : "destiny" is open to debate and is incapable of proof. The vital distinction is that that which forever makes "destiny" uncertain (viz.

1. The deliberately equivocal term "Heaven" will be used in preference to the terms "God" or "Jupiter" because the latter quite obviously beg very large questions indeed about the nature of the relationship between the two.

human, and divine, free will) is no longer present where "fate" is concerned, for clearly once "will", whether it was really free or not, has operated, the consequences of its operations are no longer intrinsically uncertain. Thus, just as the present moment is the borderline between the past and the future, so free will (and the myriad possibilities of choice enshrined in the instant) is the borderline between fate and destiny, between "realised will" and "intended will" (in the senses in which they are here being used). The term "fate", then, will mean "the realised will of Heaven", whereas "destiny" will mean "the intended will of Heaven".²

The word "doom" will be used, however, for the will of Heaven, whether realised or intended, as it is communicated to mankind (or indeed on occasions to minor gods and prophets) by means of oracles, prophecies or decrees. The Anglo-Saxon word was considered the best to correspond to the most basic meaning of the Latin "fatum", viz. "something spoken or decreed", the utterance itself considered quite apart from its metaphysical implications.

Similarly, the simple Old English "lot" will be used to mean "the fate" or "the destiny" of an individual, or of a city, or of a race, etc., without any reference to whether the "lot" is regarded as having happened or as being about to happen. The distinction between the realised and intended will of Heaven does not apply to this particular concept.

There are several instances of "fatum" being almost interchangeable in meaning with "mors" and naturally enough in such cases the term "death" will be used.

2. The German language allows of this distinction in its use of the words "Geschick", "Schicksal" and "Bestimmung". "Geschick" and "Schicksal" would correspond to "fate" as defined in this chapter, whereas "Bestimmung" would correspond to "destiny".

Finally, almost as if to illustrate the breadth of meaning covered by the concept, the term "life-span" will be used for the few examples where "fatum" bears the diametrically opposite sense to "mors".

An examination will now be made in further detail of each one of these ~~six~~ meanings of "fatum", which for ease of reference are now tabulated below. ³

MEANINGS OF FATUM

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| (a) FATUM/FATE : | the realised will of Heaven ; what Heaven has done. |
| (b) FATUM/DESTINY : | the intended will of Heaven ; what Heaven wants. |
| (c) FATUM/DOOM : | the will of Heaven (realised or intended) as communicated to Man by oracles, prophecies, decrees, etc. |
| (d) FATUM/LOT : | the fate/destiny of an individual man, city or race, etc. |
| (e) FATUM/DEATH : | the death of a man. |
| (f) FATUM/LIFE-SPAN : | the life-span (realised or intended) of a man. |

3. The use of capital letters has been deliberately avoided since it at once begs the unhelpful question of the distinction between "Destiny" and "destiny", "Fate" and "fate", etc. Only the distinction between "Fortuna" and "fortuna" is of any importance (see below p.108f.) but, clearly, the use of majuscule lettering in the major Vergilean MSS. renders the whole question open to futile speculation.

1 (a) : FATUM/FATE

(12 instances : i.2, 32 ; ii.54, 257 ; iii.717 ; vii.239, 255 ;
viii.334 ; ix.204 ; x.67 ; xi.112.)

The first and perhaps best example of "fatum/fate" is, of course,
the familiar i.2 :

"Italiam fato profugus Lauinaque uenit litora."

Aeneas is

described by Vergil at the very outset of the epic as being both a
refugee "by the realised will of Heaven" and as coming to Italy "by the
realised will of Heaven".⁴ The establishment of Rome (the prerequisite
of Augustan empire) depended upon the Trojans leaving Troy and arriving
in Italy. It was also important to make clear that such events were
the result neither of purely random and irresponsible forces nor of
baser human motives such as cowardice or greed. As Servius commented
(ad loc.) : "et bene addidit 'fato', ne videatur aut causa criminis
patriam deseruisse, aut novi imperii cupiditate." Aeneas, from the
reader's first contact with him, is neither a turntail nor a pirate
but a missionary. He himself explains to the Latin ambassadors in
xi.112 (another example of "fatum/fate") that the reasons for his being
in Italy are beyond reproach or question :

"nec ueni, nisi fata locum sedemque dedissent."

4. Cf, Wagner (ad loc.) : "Fato autem cum summa rerum in hoc
carmine expositarum gubernetur, fieri non potest, quin eae res ipsae
fiant augustiores, legentes autem impleantur et reverentia tanti
numinis et admiratione rei Romanae volente Fato et constitutae et ad
eam, quae fuit Virgilii tempore, potentiam ac dignitatem erectae."

In iii.717 the concept is more definitely and explicitly linked with the will of Heaven by the addition of the genitive plural of "divus", a term indicating the combined wills of the Olympian gods:

"Sic pater Aeneas intentis omnibus unus
fata renarrabat diuum cursusque docebat."

The whole of the events of Books Two and Three, from the fall of Troy to the arrival of the Trojans in Carthage, is thus referred to as being "fata...diuum cursusque". All those deaths and departures are "the realised will of Heaven". There is a considerable difference in the use of the genitive case here from that in, for example, vii.294 :

"heu stirpem inuisam et fatis contraria nostris
fata Phrygum!"

where "fata Phrygum", "the fates of the Phrygians", means the individual fates belonging to individual Phrygians, i.e. "~~what-had-happened-to-the-Phrygians~~" or "~~what-is-going-to-happen-to-the-Phrygians~~", (an example of "fatum/lot"). "Fata diuum" surely could not mean "the fates of the gods" in the sense of "~~what-had-happened-to-the-gods~~" or "~~what-is-going-to-happen-to-the-gods~~" but must rather indicate something like "~~what-the-gods-purposed~~".

This concept of "fata deum" is extended further in ii.257 by the addition of the adjective "iniquus". Aeneas describes Sinon's activities on the night of the fall of Troy :

"fatisque deum defensum iniquis
inclusos utero Danaos et pinea furtim
laxat claustra Sinon."

Aeneas's partiality cannot disguise the origin of the forces that allowed Sinon to begin the process that led eventually to the foundation of Rome : it was, again, "the realised will of Heaven", unjust (or is it merely "injurious"?) though it may

have seemed at the time.

As a final example of this concept one may look at vii.334, where old Evander explains to Aeneas, one kindred spirit to another, how he came to the site of Rome :

"me pulsum patria pelagique extrema sequentem
Fortuna omnipotens et ineluctabile fatum
his posuere locis."

The concept of the "realised will of Heaven" is clarified further by the use here of the adjective "ineluctabilis" for in the view of Evander at least that will is so powerful that nothing can prevent its realisation. The juxtaposition of the phrase "Fortuna omnipotens" with "ineluctabile fatum" will be discussed further below (p.112). Suffice it to say here that an inevitable association is set up in the reader's mind between the concept of an all-powerful Fortune and this "fate" which cannot be escaped, the "realised will of Heaven".

1 (b) : FATUM/DESTINY

(43 instances : i.18, 39, 262, 299, 546 ; ii.653 ; iii.7, 9, 17, 395 ; iv.225, 340, 440, 614, 651, 696 ; v.656, 703, 707, 709, 784 ; vi.147, 438, 869 ; vii.120, 123, 272, 314, 584, 594 ; viii.12, 133, 512, 575 ; ix.94, 135, 643 ; x.501 ; xi.759 ; xii.111, 676, 795, 819.)

Just as "fatum/fate" refers to what has indisputably been accomplished, so "fatum/destiny" looks forward to what Heaven intends. A fairly straightforward example of this concept of "fatum/destiny" is to be found in i.18, where Vergil describes Juno's plans for the city of Carthage :

"hoc regnum dea gentibus esse,
si qua fata sinant, iam tum tenditque fouetque."

"If in any
way the intended will of Heaven may allow it," she will have her way.

Similarly, in i.39, she scornfully complains at the restrictions placed upon her designs and whips herself up to take action, all of which amply illustrates not only the reality of her free will but also the intrinsic uncertainty of the "intended will of Heaven" that has to take account of precisely such acts of defiance.⁵ Her exclamation of divine awkwardness -

5. Cf. Williams (ad loc.) : "Juno is aware (cf.18) that the fates are against her : nevertheless she has the power to scheme against them and even to delay them. For all the dominance of the idea of fate in the Aeneid, Virgil is very far from being a fatalist; it needs the efforts of men to bring to fruition the intention of fate, and there are supernatural powers working both for and against fate."

"mene incepto desistere uictam
nec posse Italia Teucrorum auertere regem!
quippe uetor fatis."

- " 'Forbidden by the intended will of Heaven' am I?", is perhaps the best example in the epic of free will in action.

Further uncertainty about the "intended will of Heaven" is shown by Venus in Book One, but Jupiter attempts (262) to put her mind at rest by promising to reveal to her the "secrets of the intended will of Heaven" :

"hic tibi (fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet,
longius, et uoluens fatorum arcana mouebo)..."

A similar use of this concept in the genitive plural is to be found in v.703, where Vergil describes Aeneas in an agony of uncertainty, debating with himself whether to press on for Italy or to stay in Sicily, "forgetting the intended will of Heaven" :

"Siculisne resideret aruis
oblitus fatorum, Italasne capesseret oras."

This sense of "Heaven's intention" is perhaps nowhere stronger than in i.299, where Mercury is sent by Jupiter to Carthage to ensure that the Trojans receive a kindly welcome there from Dido and are not attacked in their weakened state by the Carthaginians who could then, had they but known it, have nipped in the bud the future rivals of their empire :

"Haec ait et Maia genitum demittit ab alto,
ut terrae utque nouae pateant Karthaginis arces
hospitio Teucris, ne fati nescia Dido
finibus arceret."

There has been a lot of critical speculation in the commentaries upon the meaning of the phrase "fati nescia", and

the many renderings which have been suggested serve only to demonstrate the essential problem of this investigation : the accurate definition of the various concepts of destiny to be found in the Aeneid. Does "fati nescia" mean "ignorant of Fate", or "ignorant of Destiny", or "ignorant of her fate", or "ignorant of her destiny", or "ignorant of their fate", or "ignorant of their destiny" ? The permutations of meaning are bewildering. The suggestion that "fati nescia" here means "ignorant of the intended will of Heaven" finds support in Servius, who comments (ad loc.) : "non sui : nam si sciret exitum suum, multo magis vetaret : sed 'fati' dixit voluntatis Iovis." ⁶ Conington indeed comments (ad loc.) : "'Fati nescia' is observable, as showing Virgil's conception of fate as a power which other agencies may thwart, though they cannot ultimately overcome it." Sidgwick also feels the need to remark upon the uncertain nature of Heaven's intention by pointing out (ad loc.) that "fati nescia" involves "a curious idea of destiny, as though it might have been thwarted by Dido's ignorance had not Iuppiter himself interposed."

In iv.614 the "fata" are directly referred to as "belonging to" or "being of" Jupiter himself :

"si tangere portus
infandum caput ac terris adhare necesse est,
et sic fata Iouis poscunt, hic terminus haeret..."

Dido's

prayers are uttered "if" such is the intended will of Jupiter. R.G. Austin indeed, commenting on this line, even makes a comparison with vi.376 and adds, in brackets, that fate = voluntas here. The famous dictum of the Sibyl in vi.376, however,

"desine fata deum flecti sperare precando"

6. He also suggests later : "Aut certe fati Troianorum, qui non sponte, sed necessitate ad Africam venerant, quod utique ignorabat Dido."

is easier to understand if it is taken to mean "the decrees of the gods", i.e. if it is regarded as an instance of "fatum/doom".

It is in iv.651, however, that the association of the intended will of Heaven contained in the word "fata" is so strong that it brings with it, almost in hendiadys, the idea of "and (the) god". "Fata" here is surely forward-looking rather than retrospective, i.e. "fatum/destiny" rather than "fatum/fate", despite the use of the past tense in "sinebat" :

"dixitque nouissima uerba :

'dulces exuuiæ, dum fata deusque sinebat,
accipite hanc animam meque his exsoluite curis...' "

Dido is in effect saying : "Sweet relics, sweet, that is, while what Heaven was intending allowed you to be sweet..."

Perhaps the most thought-provoking example of the use of the word "fatum" in the whole Aeneid is that contained in iv.696, where Vergil comments directly upon the death of Dido, whom Juno pities and releases from the throes of a difficult death :

"nam quia nec fato merita nec morte peribat,
sed misera ante diem subitoque accensa furore,..."

Dido's suicide is stated to be "not by the intended will of Heaven", and the fact that she is further described as dying "ante diem" suggests that the intended time of her death was much later. It was her own sudden action ("furor") that was the cause. Free will is thus, on the adoption of this translation, vindicated but many critics have seen great problems here. Servius has a lengthy note (ad loc.) which is worth studying :
"...cum dixerit 'stat sua cuique dies' quomodo hic dicit, 'ante diem'? harum rerum ratio sic redditur : sunt (et) fata quae dicuntur

denuntiatiua, sunt alia fata quae condicionalia vocantur.

denuntiatiua sunt quae omni modo eventura decernunt, ut verbi gratia

'Pompeius ter triumphaturus est' : hoc illi fata decernunt, ut ubicumque terrarum fuerit, ter triumphet, nec potest aliter evenire : et ideo fatum quod hoc denuntiat, denuntiativum vocatur, condicionali vero huius modi est 'Pompeius si post Pharsalicum bellum Aegypti litus attigerit, ferro peribit' : hic non omni modo necesse erat ut videret Aegyptum, sed si casus ad aliam regionem forte duxisset, evaserat."

Conington feels that Servius's fine distinction between "fatum denuntiativum" and "fatum condicionali" hardly removes the inconsistency by which the scholiast appears so troubled, while Mackail archly dismisses the whole matter as almost beneath consideration : "...Virgil is a poet, not a metaphysician, and the elaborate distinctions drawn by Servius...and further, but to no more purpose, elaborated by subsequent commentators may be safely ignored." R.G.Austin suggests that "fato" is here equivalent to "the fulfilment of time", and M.W.Edwards, in "The Expression of Stoic Ideas in the Aeneid" Phoenix 14 (1960), p.159, n.26, says that it "seems to mean only 'not by a natural death', with no allusion to fatalism." Pease too had taken this view, commenting (ad loc.) that : "Deaths may be roughly divided into those arising from natural causes ('fato' ; κατὰ φύσιν), such as old age...and those 'nec fato' (παρὰ φύσιν, Θάνατος βιάος).

Despite the occasional carping of later critics, however, Servius's feeling that there is something crucial here which requires explanation is surely well founded. His distinction between "fatum denuntiativum" and "fatum condicionali", it will be noted, corresponds closely, though of course not entirely, with the terms "fatum/fate" and "fatum/destiny" employed in this investigation. Problems of interpretation inevitably arise when too vague and expansive a meaning is attributed to the word "fatum" : the distinction between

"the realised will of Heaven", which would safely, by hindsight, be described as "denuntiativum", and "the intended will of Heaven", which has to be described, in view of the uncertainty of human response, as "condicionale", is not only useful but also important.

The final example of this concept of "fatum/destiny" is to be found in x.501, and again involves what could be described as a hendiadys (cf. iv.651), which this time links the concepts of "fatum" and "sors" :

"nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae."

This comment is

made by Vergil himself upon the spoliation of Pallas's body by Turnus. Turnus is ignorant of the "intended will of Heaven" and of "future lot". Here the futurity, and essential potentiality, of this concept of destiny is clear. Jupiter intends that Turnus, if he kills Pallas, should die at the hands of Aeneas. Nevertheless, Turnus has the choice whether or not to kill Pallas, just as Aeneas can choose whether or not to kill Turnus later. The fact that Jupiter knows in advance which choices they will, in fact, make does not affect the freedom of their choices when they make them. Turnus, however, does not have the advantage (if such it be) of Jupiter's foreknowledge, which is the whole point behind Vergil's choice of words ("nescia mens hominum") in this line to describe Turnus's predicament. It is precisely their ignorance which makes men's choices possible and which, at the same time, makes them morally responsible for their actions.

1 (c) : FATUM/DOOM

(11 instances : i.205 ; iii.444, 700 ; iv.110 ; vi.45, 72, 376 ;
vii.50 ; viii.292, 499 ; x.417.)

There are three occasions when "fatum" is clearly used in the sense of "the will of Heaven as communicated by an oracle, prophecy or decree". The first is in iii.444, where Helenus prophesies Aeneas's meeting with the Sibyl :

"insanam uatem aspicias, quae rupe sub ima
fata canit foliisque notas et nomina mandat."

She "sings oracles", i.e. foretells the "doom" of Heaven. The same verb is used in the other two examples, viii.499, where Evander explains to Aeneas how the Etruscans have been waiting for a foreigner to lead them against Mezentius :

"toto namque fremunt condensae litore puppes
signaque ferre iubent, retinet longaeus haruspex
fata canens :"

and x.417, where Vergil briefly dwells on the early vain attempt by Halaesus's father to save the life of the son who was to die at the hand of Pallas :

"fata canens siluis genitor celarat Halaesum."

In each of these examples, all three linked by the use of the verb "cano", the simple translation "oracle" is surely more in keeping with the context than either "fate" or "destiny".

Similarly, the two examples connected with the Sibyl (specifically referred to by Helenus as a "singer of oracles") are best treated as

instances of "fatum/doom". In vi.72 Aeneas promises the Sibyl that he will build her a shrine where her prophecies will be (physically) stored :

"hic ego namque tuas sortis arcanaque fata
dicta meae genti ponam."

The "fata" are not only to be "placed" there but are referred to as "having been said" to Aeneas's nation and as being "in need of interpretation" (arcana). The virtual hendiadys ("tuas sortes arcanaque fata") clearly associates these "oracles" with the famous Sibylline books. Earlier, in vi.45, the Sibyl herself, on sensing the approach of Apollo, had exclaimed it was time to "demand oracles" :

"uentum erat ad limen, cum uirgo 'poscere fata
tempus' ait : 'deus, ecce deus!'"

Butler, in his edition of Aeneid vi., comments (ad loc.) on this use of "fata" that : " 'fatum' is used in its primary sense of 'solemn utterance', 'oracle'. Cf. iii.444, vi.72." ⁷

In i.205 Aeneas encourages his followers to believe that their wanderings have a goal, and his reference to their destination as Latium can only be an allusion to the hints and promptings which he has already received from Creusa about "a Western Land where Tiber flows" (ii.781-782), from Celaeno about Italy (iii.253-254), and from Helenus about "the land of Ausonia" (iii.477). All these, however, were spoken prophecies and are clearly the source of information to which Aeneas refers as "showing" him where they will find rest :

"tendimus in Latium, sedes ubi fata quietas
ostendunt..."

7. Cf. also Conington (ad loc.) : "These words seem to mean 'to ask Apollo for oracles'."

An even more clear-cut example of this concept is provided by iii.700, where the town of Camarina is referred to as "doomed" never to be moved. Although it could be argued that this is rather an example of "fatum/destiny", i.e. that it was never "Heaven's intention" that the town should be moved, Jackson Knight's translation - "which according to the oracle 'might never be moved'" - is surely better. Servius indeed even preserves the oracle itself :

"μὴ κίνῃε Καμάρινα· ἀκίνητος γὰρ ἀμείνων."

On at least two occasions the translation "decree" might seem more apt than "oracle" though of course the term "doom" covers both of these. In vii.50 Vergil refers to Latinus as having no male heir "by the decree of the gods" :

"filius huic fato diuum prolesque uirilis
nulla fuit..."

Similarly, in viii.292 he refers to the Salii singing hymns about Heracles in which they describe the hero performing many labours for king Eurystheus :

"ut duros mille labores
rege sub Eurystheo fatis Iunonis iniquae
pertulerit."

"By the decree(s) of Juno" would seem the best sense, just as "by the decree of the gods" in vii.50 above, though Servius suggests (ad loc.) "voluntate Iunonis", and Page prefers "'by the destiny of cruel Juno', the destiny which the cruelty of Juno contrived to bring upon him." ⁸

Finally there is the more difficult instance in iv.110, where Venus replies to Juno's suggestion (that Aeneas and Dido be allowed to marry and settle in Africa) by feigning to have severe doubts about

8. Cf. also Mackail (ad loc.) : "The 'fata Iunonis' are little if anything more than 'the decrees of Juno'.

what Jupiter really intends for the Trojans :

"sed fatis incerta feror, si Iuppiter unam
esse uelit Tyriis urbem Troiaque profectis..."

At first sight,

the translation "I am (borne) uncertain (about) the 'intended will of Heaven'" seems correct, as indeed Henry would have it.⁹ Austin, however, feels (ad loc.) that "fatis" : "must be causal (Henry's 'doubtful of the fates' is surely impossible) ; it is the existence of Fate and its possibilities that makes Venus feign such doubts - Jupiter, she says, may not allow the scheme. In fact, of course, she had no doubt whatever of Aeneas' destiny."

Tenney Frank, in "Epicurean Determinism in the Aeneid" A J Ph XLI (1920), p.120, n.10, actually uses this very instance as an example of the dangers of too philosophical an interpretation of Vergil's every use of the word : "Care must be observed not to press all the occurrences of 'fatum' and 'fata' into philosophical connotations. At times the poet uses the word with his eye upon its derivation from 'fari' : cf. ...'fatis incerta feror' iv.110. ...it is a metrical equivalent of 'oracles' or 'predictions'." For his part, Pease feels (ad loc.) that : "The grammatical construction of 'fatis' is hard to explain... To connect 'fatis' closely with 'feror' is easy in grammar but hard in sense." Jackson Knight, however, in his translation paraphrases with : "I am subject to the Fates, whose design is obscure to me." Perhaps the most satisfactory solution is to translate the feigned bewilderment of the disingenuous goddess as follows : "But (honestly, Juno) I don't know where I am with (all these) predictions! (I don't know) if...or if..."

9. (Ad loc.) : "De 'fatis incerta feror', i.e. de 'fatis incerta' sum."

1 (d) : FATUM/LOT

(49 instances : i.239(a), 239(b), 258, 382 ; ii.34, 194, 246, 294, 433, 506, 554, 738 ; iii.182, 337, 375, 494 ; iv.14, 450 ; v.725 ; vi.67, 449, 466, 511, 546, 683, 713, 759, 882 ; vii.79, 224, 234, 293, 294 ; viii.398, 477, 731 ; ix.137 ; x.35, 109, 113, 154, 380, 472, 624 ; xi.287, 587, 701 ; xii.149, 726.)

There are many unambiguous examples of "fatum" used in the sense of the "lot" of an individual person or city rather than in the sense of "fate" or "destiny" in general. Instances of such meaning are readily enough provided by, for example, Jupiter's promise to Venus in i.258 :

"parce metu, Cytherea, manent immota tuorum
fata tibi..."

- or Aeneas's description of what happened to Priam, in ii.506 :

"Forsitan et Priami fuerint quae fata requiras."

Similarly,

"fata" can be limited to a person or nation, as when Anchises in iii.182 (and v.725) refers to Aeneas as "Iliacis exercite fatis", or when Ilioneus in vii.234 swears by his lord's "fata" :

"fata per Aeneae iuro dextramque potentem..."

showing that, to his mind at least, a man's "fata" could be as personal and individual as his right hand.

In Book Six there are further examples of "fata" linked to an individual by the use of the possessive adjective. One is when Anchises reveals to Aeneas both the future glory of the Trojan race and his own destiny (vi.759) :

"expediam dictis, et te tua fata docebo." ¹⁰

Another is when Deiphobus, meeting Aeneas in the underworld, blames his own "fata" for what has happened to him (vi.511) :

"sed me fata mea et scelus exitiale Lacaenae
his mersere malis..."

The best example, however, is perhaps xii.726, where Vergil, in an obvious literary echo of Iliad xxii.209ff., describes Jupiter as placing the "fata" of Aeneas and of Turnus on his scales :

"Iuppiter ipse duas aequato examine lances
sustinet et fata imponit diuersa duorum,
quem damnet labor et quo uergat pondere letum."

Here the differing fates of the two men are clearly thought of as being so distinguishable and individual that they can be described as lying side by side to be weighed almost as if they were physical parts of the men concerned - an example of "fatum/lot" about as far as one can get different from "fatum/destiny".

Once this concept of "fatum/lot" is accepted as valid and distinguishable it may be applied to several other more controversial examples of the use of "fatum" which make better sense when taken as meaning "lot" or "individual destiny" than when attempts are made to translate the Latin as if these were examples rather of what we have

10. Aeneas's own "fata" are referred to in vi.888-892 :

"quae postquam Anchises natum per singula duxit
incenditque animum famae uenientis amore,
exim bella uiro memorat quae deinde gerenda,
Laurentisque docet populos urbemque Latini,
et quo quemque modo fugiatque feratque laborem."

termed "fatum/fate" or "fatum/destiny". Thus, in iii.375, when Helenus begins his prophecy to Aeneas by declaring the clear guidance of Jupiter in his wanderings, he is surely making a specific statement that the "king of the gods" is controlling Aeneas's own destiny, rather than announcing the theplogical principle that Jupiter is supreme over the fates :

"Nate dea (nam te maioribus ire per altum
auspiciis manifesta fides ; sic fata deum ~~rex~~
sortitur uoluitque uices, is uertitur ordo)..."¹¹

The difficulties surrounding vi.882 are as much caused by punctuation as the translation of the word "fata". Mynors's text gives the following punctuation :

"heu, miserande puer, si qua fata aspera rumpas,
tu Marcellus eris."

That is to say : "...if you could break through fate, you most certainly will be a Marcellus, a true Marcellus." R.D.Williams, however, objects to this, claiming (ad loc.) that : "this affords no satisfactory sense", and suggesting rather : " 'Alas, unhappy boy, if only somehow you could break through harsh fate! You will be Marcellus.'" This is surely more satisfactory and is then a clear example of "fatum/lot": "Alas, unhappy boy, if only somehow you could break (your own individual) lot! (For, being Anchises, I happen to know what lies in store for you - early death.) You will be (the) Marcellus (who ~~will die~~ young)."

The remaining two examples to be discussed are both crucial, in the sense that their interpretation has greatly affected scholars' views upon the whole relationship between Jupiter and fate and consequently (depending upon their degree of involvement in the

11. Sidgwick's translation (ad loc.) runs : "...thus the king of the gods draws thy destiny, and allots thee chance and change."

Personal Heresy!) their interpretation of the meaning of the whole epic. These two instances, however, (viii.398 and x.113) will be considered here not so much from the standpoint of an exhaustive attempt at determining a philosophy but rather from the standpoint of an inquiry into the meaning of the word "fata" in either case. It will be seen that if the translation "(individual) lot" is preferred to "(general) Destiny" then the philosophical problems about the precise interrelationship of Jupiter and destiny largely vanish.

In viii.398, Vulcan tells Venus that he could easily have been able to help her by arming the Trojans, even in Troy, when it would have meant protracting the war, without incurring displeasure :

"nec pater omnipotens Troiam nec fata uetabant
stare decemque alios Priamum superesse per annos."

Such an

extension of the life of Troy and of Priam was forbidden "neither by the Father Almighty nor by..." By what ? By destiny ? But if the Father is "omnipotens" what need to mention any other authority ? By "their personal destinies" ? Surely this is the sense intended, and the most satisfactory translation runs : "Neither the Father Almighty forbade Troy to stand and Priam to survive for ten more years, nor did their personal destinies."

A book could be written solely about the discussion that has resulted from the juxtaposition of the two sentences of Jupiter in x.112-113 :

"rex Iuppiter omnibus idem.
fata uiam inuenient."

Suffice it to say here that this seems best translated as an example of "fatum/lot", i.e. "King Jupiter (will be) the same to all. The (individual) fates (of the Trojans and of the Rutulians) will find a way." The preceding line (111) must

always be borne in mind as supplying the context :

"nec Rutulos soluo. sua cuique exorsa laborem
fortunamque ferent."

That is to say : "Each individual's own undertakings will bring his (own individual) struggle and (own individual) success." As R.D.Williams comments (ad loc.) : "...the will of the fates, which Jupiter will not permit to be made void, is nevertheless dependent on the human actors ; Aeneas and the Trojans receive help from Jupiter when most in need, but they must themselves achieve their destiny."

1 (e) : FATUM/DEATH

(10 instances : i.222 ; ii.121 ; iv.20, 519, 678 ; x.438, 740 ;
xi.97 ; xii.507, 610.)

Perhaps the clearest instance of "fata" used in the sense of simply "death" is in iv.20, where Dido confesses to Anna her love for Aeneas :

"Anna (fatebor enim) miseri post fata Sychaei
coniugis et sparsos fraterna caede penatis
solus hic inflexit sensus..."

- and all that seems to be meant is "after the death of my husband Sychaeus", though there is perhaps the underlying suggestion that his death, and all that happened to Dido as a result of it, was itself fated. R.G.Austin comments (ad loc.) that the word "fata" here means "'death'...as Homer uses *μῦθα*", and goes on to make the observation that : "The plural is regular in this sense (cf. *τύχαι*) : Virgil has the singular 'fatum' only in the sense of destiny." Indeed, ^{but one of the} all ^{ten} instances of what has been termed "fatum/death" are in fact plural ; the expression "fata/death" has been avoided merely for consistency's sake since all six concept-labels (see p.73 above) are singular. ¹²

12. The question of the importance of the distinction between "fatum" and "fata" has deliberately been given no prominence in this investigation for it was discovered that the singular was used (pace Austin) with no apparent distinction from the plural, in several meanings : "fatum/fate"- i.2; viii.334; "fatum/destiny"- i.299; ii.653; iv.696; viii.512; ix.643; x.501; xii.819; "fatum/doom"- vii.50; "fatum/lot"- ii.738; vi.449, 466, 713; x.154; "fatum/death"- iv.519.

Similarly, there seems little doubt about the simple meaning of the word in xii.507, where Vergil describes Aeneas plunging his sword into Sucre the Rutulian's ribs "qua fata celerrima" - "where death (comes) quickest". Fowler succinctly uses the example (ad loc.) to draw a moral : "'Fata' here apparently means death : another proof of the folly of trying to make too much of Virgil's use of the word." Again, in xii.610, Vergil describes Latinus's grief at the suicide of his queen with the same simple meaning of the word :

"it scissa ueste Latinus
coniugis attonitus fatis urbisque ruina."

At first sight, x.438, where Vergil describes Pallas and Lausus as deliberately kept apart by Jupiter, might seem better taken as an example of "fatum/lot" :

"ipsos concurrere passus
haud tamen inter se magni regnator Olympi ;
mox illos sua fata manent maiore sub hoste."

- but further

consideration reveals "death" as a more satisfactory translation, especially when a little further on, in x.740, we find Orodes, in reply to the boasting Mezentius, picking up the same theme of death coming at the hand of a greater warrior :

"ille autem expirans : 'non me, quicumque es, inulto,
uictor, nec longum laetabere ; te quoque fata
prospectant paria atque eadem mox arua tenebis.'"

This idea of

a "similar death" or even "the same death" is also found in iv.678, where Anna complains to her dying sister :

"quid primum deserta querar ? comitemne sororem
spreuisti moriens ? eadem me ad fata uocasses,
idem ambas ferro dolor atque eadem hora tulisset."

There remain three instances which are more open to other interpretations. In i.222 Vergil pictures Aeneas, after the storm, wondering what has happened to some of his comrades in the ships that were separated from him :

"nunc Amyci casum gemit et crudelia secum

fata Lyci fortemque Gyan fortemque Cloanthum."

This could be regarded as an example of "fatum/lot", but the verb "gemit" suggests that Aeneas had got beyond anxiety and was giving way to grief on the assumption that these followers had actually died, so the translation "death" is probably all that is required.

The exact meaning of ii.121 has been the subject of much discussion. Sinon tells the Trojans how every Greek had been terrified to hear the oracle of Apollo brought back by Eurypylus which indicated that Greek blood must be shed to secure their return home :

"obstipuerunt animi gelidusque per ima cucurrit

ossa tremor, cui fata parent, quem poscat Apollo."

The crux of the problem facing translators of this line is simple : is "fata" nominative or accusative ? That is to say, is one to translate : "for whom the fates (i.e. "fatum/destiny" or even "fatum/doom") are preparing..." or "for whom they (i.e. the authorities, or Ulysses and Calchas) are preparing death (i.e. "fatum/death") ? Scholarly opinion varies considerably. Servius^{accus} assumes that "fata" means "responsa", and is followed by Conington and by Austin, who suggests the translation "utterances" and goes on to explain (ad loc.) that : "'fata' is the oracle, with 'Apollo', the giver of the oracle, as a parallel variation. The lack of an expressed object to 'parent' is no real difficulty, and makes the picture more sinister." R.D.Williams, however, feels the difficulty of the unexpressed object to be more palpable, and puts forward (ad loc.) the rendering : "(as they

wondered) for whom they were to prepare death, who it was that Apollo demanded", commenting that ^{otherwise} "..."the absence of an object is very strange." R.E.H. Westendorp Boerma actually has the note (ad loc.) : "'fata', dood, als b.v. iv.20" ¹³, and makes a direct comparison with the example "post fata Sychaei" to which reference has already been made (p.92 above) as the "clearest instance" of the concept of "fatum/death".

Finally, in iv.519, while describing Dido preparing her own funeral pyre, Vergil refers to her as calling to witness the gods and the stars :

"ipsa mola manibusque piis altaria iuxta
unum exuta pedem uinclis, in ueste recincta,
testatur moritura deos et conscia fati
sidera..."

Are the stars here "conscious of destiny"("fatum/destiny"), "conscious of her destiny"("fatum/lot"), or "conscious of her death"("fatum/death") ? Or is Dido herself "conscious of destiny", "conscious of her destiny", or "conscious of her own (approaching) death" ? It must not be forgotten that Vergil has already described her as preparing the sacrifice, inside the palace, but nevertheless in the open air (iv.504) :

"At regina, pyra penetrali in sede sub auras
erecta..."

and goes on pointedly to set the scene of a "star-spangled" night (iv.522 ff.) :

"Nox erat..."

...cum medio uoluuntur sidera lapsu..."

The stars above are thus, quite literally, "accessories to her death". Moreover, the

13. Trans. : "'fata', death, as for example iv.20."

attitude adopted by the ancients when praying was to stand with palms upturned ("manibusque piis") and face gazing to heaven. As she looks up to call on the gods to hear her, Vergil, with his poet's eye for detail and effect, makes us see what she saw then : the stars above. Line 519 is, therefore, essentially descriptive and pictorial in its meaning and surely does not refer to any astrological belief in the stars' being aware of the intended will of Heaven, as Jackson Knight's translation suggests : "she called on the gods and the stars which know fate's secrets to hear her."

1 (f) : FATUM/LIFE-SPAN

(2 instances : xi.160 ; xii.395.)

In his grief-stricken speech over the corpse of his son, Evander bewails the fact that he has lived long enough to lose Pallas (xi.160):

"contra ego uiuendo uici mea fata, superstes
restarem ut genitor."

It is difficult here to translate "fata" by any of the five concepts hitherto mentioned. The use of "mea" limits the translation in any case to, possibly, "fatum/lot" (i.e. "by living I have conquered my individual destiny"). But what exactly would that mean ? As Servius long ago commented (ad loc.) : "fata ergo eius generalia dixit, referens se ad naturalem ordinem, non ad fatum proprium ; nam fata superare nemo hominum potest." Does then Evander mean any more than what could be paraphrased by the sentiment: "I have lived too long!" Sidgwick suggested (ad loc.) : "I have overpassed my term", and Page translates "fata" here as "my proper term of life". Warde Fowler, however, in Roman Essays and Interpretations (Oxford, 1926), p.208, is more positively certain that a simple translation is required : "'Fata' is not used here in any metaphysical sense, but simply as we used the word 'lot', both the Latin and the English words being used for the span of life... All that Evander means is that he has reached beyond the ordinary span of human life, his wife and son having gone before him ; just as in xii. 395, we find 'proferre fata' used of seeking to prolong a man's life ...there is no mystical meaning in the phrase 'vincere fata'."

Fowler's mention of xii.395 brings us to the other example of this rare usage. Vergil refers to Iapyx, the son of Iasus, as having

once preferred to develop his skill as a physician rather than shine as a warrior, though Apollo offered him the gift of excellence in both fields :

"ille, ut depositi proferret fata parentis,
scire potestates herbarum usumque medendi
maluit et mutas agitare inglorius artis."

The motive behind this preference for medicine was his desire "to prolong the life of his father", as Jackson Knight translates. Maguiness, however, says (ad loc.) that "fata = mortem", and R.D.Williams translates the phrase "proferret fata" as "postpone the death", making a comparison with Horace, Odes I,15.33 - "diem proferret Ilio". Lewis and Short, in their Latin Dictionary quote xii.395 indeed as their last of many examples of "profero", and give it the meaning of "prolong", though they also give it the sense of "put off", "defer", and "adjourn". As it happens, of course, the two translations "postpone the death"("fatum/death") and "prolong the life-span"("fatum/life-span") amount to the same thing, but the basic and more normal meaning of "profero" would seem to be "bring out" ("vin' proferri pateram ?" Plaut. Am.2,2,137), "advance" ("signa proferre" Liv.4,32,10), "extend" ("linguam in tussiando" Plaut. As.4,1,50), "enlarge" ("et proferre libet fines" Juv. Sat.14,142), "lengthen out" ("beatam vitam usque ad rogam proferre" Cic. Fin.3,22,76) and "prolong", and therefore the object of such a verb needs to carry the meaning, surprising and exceptional though it may be in xii.395, of "life" or "life-span".

1 (g) : FATALIS

(12 instances : ii.165, 237 ; iv.355 ; v.82 ; vi.409, 515 ; vii.115 ; ix.133 ; xi.130, 232 ; xii.232, 919.)

Although The Concise Oxford Dictionary (5th ed., Oxford, 1964) defines the meaning of "fatal" as follows : "like fate, inevitable, necessary ; of, appointed by, destiny ; fateful, important, decisive ; destructive, ruinous, ending in death ; deadly, sure to kill" - popular usage surely tends to favour the last mentioned meanings, viz. "deadly, ending in death". The Latin adjective "fatalis" is indeed cited as the source of the English word. In the Aeneid, however, the meaning is always, with one possible exception, rather that of "fateful" or "of destiny".

The possible exception is xii.919 :

"Cunctanti telum Aeneas fatale coruscat..."

Vergil is

describing Turnus at the moment before Aeneas hurls the spear that brings him down. The translation "deadly" or "leading to death" is, of course, satisfactory here, though one could object that it was actually Aeneas's sword, not his spear, that despatched Turnus soon afterwards. The inevitability of Turnus's death, however, is surely more forcibly brought out, especially after the preceding lines (896-918) in which his sudden dreamlike weakness is described, by giving to "fatale" its proper weight, viz. "(the weapon) that was part of Turnus's destiny", or as Jackson Knight translates, combining both ideas : "the quivering spear which was his doom".

In all other instances the nouns qualified by "fatalis" are either objects charged with destiny, or people or things connected

with oracles, themselves the very utterances of fate. The objects are : the Palladium (ii.165), the Trojan Horse (ii.237 and vi.515), and the Golden Bough (vi.409). In the other instances, in addition to the sense of "fated", there is also implied the sense of "already mentioned in oracles (and therefore fated)". In iv.355 and v.82 we have "the fields of Italy" mentioned by Helenus in iii.477 ff. ; in vii.115 the "round crust" foretold by Celaeno in iii.257 (though, of course, in vii.122-127 Aeneas attributes the prophecy to Anchises) ; in ix.133 Turnus boasts that the "fatalia...responsa deorum" do not bother him ; in xi.130 Drances suggests that the Latins will be pleased actually to assist Aeneas build the new Troy and raise up the "fated" mass of its walls ; in xi.232 Aeneas is described by Vergil as now appearing to the Latins to be indeed "a man of destiny" ; while finally, in xii.232, Juturna, disguised as Camers, encourages the Rutulians to break the truce by pointing out to them the unfairness of Turnus having to fight Aeneas in single combat, and referring to the Etruscans as, in Mackail's phrase (ad loc.) "the slaves of their oracles", or, as Jackson Knight puts it in his translation : "that omen-ridden contingent".

1 (h) : FATIDICUS

(3 instances : vii.82 ; viii.340 ; x.199.)

The translation "prophetic" would appear in all three instances to be perfectly satisfactory, i.e. "fate-telling" - the "fatum" which is told being in each case presumably an example of "fatum/destiny", the "intended will of Heaven". The adjective "fatidicus" is thus merely a compressed, and perhaps metrically more convenient, way of saying : "qui (quae) fatum dicit". The three people thus referred to by Vergil (and it is the poet himself who so describes them on each occasion) are : Latinus's father, Faunus (vii.82) ; the nymph Carmentis (viii.340) ; and, interestingly, Manto, after whom Vergil's own city of Mantua was named.¹⁴

14. See above (Ch.3,p.64f.) for Vergil's Etruscan ancestry. If, of course, Vergil's Etruscan extraction were not surmised from other sources, this reference to Mantua would excite no more comment from Personal Heretics than, say, his brief descriptions of Carthage in i. 12-18. As it is, this description of Mantua (x.200-203) forms no part of the main epic, in the telling of which a different level of poetic imagination is exercised. Indeed, if Vergil's birthplace were unknown from external biographical sources, a critic guilty of the Personal Heresy would probably assume on the "evidence" of the epic, especially the detail lavished on the description in viii.337-361, that Vergil was "in all probability" born in, or near, the Forum Romanum.

1 (i) : FATIFER

(2 instances : viii.621 ; ix.631.)

In contrast to "fatidicus" the adjective "fatifer" ("not found before Virgil", according to Gransden in his note on viii.621) seems in both instances to mean simply the same as "mortifer", viz. "death-bringing" or "deadly".

The adjective is used, appropriately enough, in vii.621 to describe the sword made for Aeneas by Vulcan ; and in ix.631 the bow used by Ascanius to slay Numanus Remulus.

In each case, the "fatum" which the weapon described "bears" is presumably "fatum/death".

2 : PARCAE

(8 instances : i.22 ; iii.379 ; v.798 ; ix.107 ; x.419, 815 ;
xii.147, 150.)

Servius in his comment upon i.22 suggests that the "Parcae" are so called by paradox because they spare ("parcere") no-one. Whether this view of the Three Sisters ¹⁵ as "lucus a non lucendo" is etymologically correct or not, their meaning for Vergil has now to be considered.

It would seem that they cannot really be identified with any of the six concepts of "fatum" that have already been discussed. They are rather the agents of Heaven's will than that will itself.

In i.22 Juno is described as having heard that the "Parcae" were

15. For Vergil, and indeed for most Latin poets, the "Parcae" are the three sisters Nona, Decuma and Morta, whose function is collectively to arrange the details of the life-span of a human being. They correspond almost exactly to the three Greek Moirai - Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, whose functions were, respectively, to spin, to draw out or measure, and finally to cut short the thread of a man's life. Greek myth is somewhat confused about their exact relationship to Zeus. According to some sources Zeus can intervene in the activities of Atropos if he so chooses, and even Apollo, it was suggested, could make them drunk to save Admetus (Iliad vii.69 ; xxii.209 ; xvi.434 & 441-3 ; xi.411. Odyssey i.34). According to other sources, however, Zeus himself was subject to the fates, because they are not his children but parthenogenous children of the great goddess Necessity (Aesch. Prometheus 511 & 515 ; Herodotus 1,91 ; Plato Republic 10, 24, 4 & 1, 19, 2.)

planning the overthrow of Carthage by means of the Trojan race :

"hinc populum late regem belloque superbum
uenturum excidio Libyae ; sic uoluere Parcae."

"Aut a filo

traxit 'volvere' aut a libro" says Servius (ad loc.), "una enim loquitur, altera scribit, alia fila deducit." Whatever the true origin of the metaphor, the "Parcae" seem to be regarded as executives of a decision already made : they draw out a thread already spun, or unroll a book already written.

In iii.379 Helenus is recorded by Aeneas as having said that the Trojans will reach Italy but is further described as being unable to say more :

"expediam dictis ; prohibent nam cetera Parcae
scire Helenum farique uetat Saturnia Iuno."

The exact meaning of these lines has been the subject of some debate : is "Helenus" the direct object of "prohibent" or of "uetat" ? Whatever translation is adopted, the functions of the "Parcae" as revealers and editors of information is unquestioned. It is equally clear that they, and Juno, are intended to be regarded as receiving such information as they wish to impart (or withhold) from another (higher?) source. In lines 375-376 Helenus has already made obvious the real source of such information :

"sic fata deum rex
sortitur uoluitque uices, is uertitur ordo..."

Venus's request to Neptune in v.798 to give safe passage as far as the Tiber for the Trojan ships is made on the assumption that he may grant her request if the "Parcae" do, in fact, want Rome to be founded :

"si concessa peto, si dant ea moenia Parcae."

It is of

interest to note that the second half of this idea ("si dant ea moenia Parcae") is, as often in Vergil, an amplification of the first ("si concessa peto"). The physical detail of the granting of the actual walls of the city is the specific duty of the "Parcae", but the granting of the walls presupposes the general concept of the desirability of the city's initial foundation. Venus asks for Neptune's help, "si concessa peto" - and one is led to ask, "granted by whom?" The answer, as in iii.375-376, would seem to be Jupiter, "deum rex". He grants the permission, and the "Parcae" arrange the details.

The association of the "Parcae" with another force, if not their subordination to it, is clearly seen in xii.147, where Juno addresses Juturna and speaks of how she (Juno) has protected Turnus for as long as she has been able :

"qua uisa est Fortuna pati Parcaeque sinebant
cedere res Latio, Turnum et tua moenia texi..."

Again we have the general principle ("uisa est Fortuna pati") and then the specific example ("Parcaeque sinebant"). The meaning of the concept of "Fortuna" will be discussed below (Chapter Four, pp.111-113), but suffice it to say here that Juno is telling Juturna that : "the Goddess of destiny seemed to allow" and "the executors of destiny permitted" affairs to go Latium's way. The "Parcae" follow "Fortuna", and one is tempted to add - post hoc ergo propter hoc.

In x.419 and 815 the "Parcae" are clearly described as fulfilling their traditional role as executing the will of destiny. They are "in at the kill" and "cast their hands" upon the chosen victim or "gather up his thread" ready for the final cutting. They arrange the death of Halaesus by Pallas's spear :

"ut senior leto canentia lumina soluit,

iniecere manum Parcae telisque sacrarunt

Euandri..."

and are described as superintending the last foolhardiness of Lausus in challenging Aeneas :

"nec minus ille

exultat demens, saeuae iamque altius irae

Dardanio surgunt ductori, extremaque Lauso

Parcae fila legunt."

Finally, they may be seen as the powers responsible, as it were, for the details of destiny's timetable and its smooth operation. In ix.107 they are described as performing precisely this function :

"Ergo aderat promissa dies et tempora Parcae

debita complerant..."

Once more we have the general concept ("aderat promissa dies") and then the elaboration of the same theme ("tempora Parcae/ debita complerant"). Were one to ask who it was had promised the day, the answer could again be found in the preceding lines, in which Vergil has digressed to explain **to his readers how the Trojan ships came to be saved from Turnus's fire** : Jupiter himself promised it to his mother Cybele (ix.106) -

"adnuat, et totum nutu tremefecit Olympum."

Jupiter plans ;

the "Parcae" arrange.

In xii.150, the same idea of the "Parcae" being responsible for the final arrangements of death is quite clear. Juno admits defeat to Juturna as Turnus's hour approaches :

"nunc iuuenem imparibus uideo concurrere fati,

Parcarumque dies et uis inimica propinquat."

On yet another occasion, therefore, one finds the overall theme ("imparibus...

concurrere fatis") followed by the variation ("Parcarumque dies... propinquat"). Turnus's destiny is primarily responsible for what is going to happen ; the "Parcae" arrange when it is to happen. Heaven proposes ; the "Parcae" dispose.

The "Parcae", then, may be regarded as the personified agents of destiny, or of the will of Heaven. There is no evidence that Vergil's "Parcae" embody any new concept, or that he has in any way attempted to alter their traditional function. He merely emphasises, by the metaphors which he uses to describe their activities, their connection with the mechanical working out of fate's plan.¹⁶ They could, indeed, be described as the female equivalents of "Old Father Time" for they are closely associated with time and its operations.¹⁷ In short, they are best regarded as "The Three Old Sisters Time", or as "Time" personified, as it relates to the demands of destiny.

16. In Eclogue iv.46-47 they are described as issuing instructions to the spindles that bear the thread of life and are thought of as being "in accord with the firm power of the fates" :

"'Taliam saecula' suis dixerunt 'currere' fusi'
concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae."

They are thus not
identified with that power but said to be in co-operation with it.

17. If one includes Eclogue iv., the language in which Vergil describes the operations of the "Parcae" is steeped in time expressions ("saecula", "dies", "tempora", "extrema") and verbs which imply the progression of time ("volvere", "currere", "propinquare").

3 : FORTUNA

There appear to be six distinguishable concepts of the word "fortuna" used in the Aeneid, though only two have any direct bearing upon the subject of this investigation. Following the method adopted with "fatum" (see above Chapter Four, pp. 71-73), it was found convenient to choose one English expression to stand for each of these six concepts, words which in themselves succinctly embodied the central meaning of the concept concerned. Thus six different ways were chosen of translating "fortuna", viz. : DAME FORTUNE, DESTINY, PROSPERITY, MISFORTUNE, OPPORTUNITY and OUTCOME.

The expression "Dame Fortune" was deliberately chosen in contradistinction both to the more familiar and popular "Lady Luck" and to the second concept of "destiny", i.e. the individual "fortune" (without the capital letter) of a man, city or race. The point was made in Chapter Three (see above pp. 61-63) that the goddess "Fortuna", certainly in early Roman thought, was not to be identified exactly with *Τύχη*, but was regarded as being purposeful rather than capricious, more concerned with fertility and increase than with luck and chance, and open to prayer rather than blindfolded to the consequences of her whims. Whatever may have been the attitude to "Fortuna" in Vergil's day, the poet makes Evander, in viii.334, refer to her as "omnipotens" in the very same breath as he mentions "ineluctabile fatum". To emphasise this sort of attitude to "Fortuna" the more formal term "Dame" has, therefore, been selected in preference to the popular "Lady" and, similarly, "Fortune" has been chosen rather than "Luck" in order to suggest an attitude to "Fortuna" which certainly predates that described by Pliny the Elder (see above Chapter Three, p. 62, n. 15) as being prevalent in his day.

The majuscule lettering of the earliest manuscripts, of course, makes it impossible to tell when Vergil intended his readers to understand that he meant the goddess, and when the more general concept of "fortune" - if, indeed, the poet ever actually made such a distinction in his own mind. The term "destiny", as shorthand for "destined individual fortune", has been used for those instances where there is a strong sense of purpose or destiny operating in the events described, and where **this sense is seen as affecting, or** belonging to, an individual man, city or race. In these instances "fortuna" means, in effect, virtually the same as "fatum/lot".

This strong sense of destiny is not so apparent in the instances of "fortuna/prosperity" and "fortuna/misfortune". Some of the things that happen to the characters in the Aeneid seem to be regarded, both by the poet and by the characters themselves, as random occurrences rather than predestined events. Although the same Latin word ("fortuna") has been used, there is not, in these instances of "fortuna/prosperity" and "fortuna/misfortune", the same context of divine intervention as in instances of "fortuna/destiny".

Finally, the terms "opportunity" and "outcome" are self-explanatory. They are few in number and quite obviously distinct from the other concepts already mentioned.

An examination in further detail will now be made of each one of these six meanings of "fortuna", which for ease of reference are tabulated below. The last four concepts are included mainly to contrast with the first two, which, as has been said, are of the greatest interest to a study of concepts of destiny.

MEANINGS OF FORTUNA

- (a) FORTUNA/DAME FORTUNE : the goddess.
- (b) FORTUNA/DESTINY : the (destined, individual) fortune of
a man, city or race.
- (c) FORTUNA/PROSPERITY : good fortune, good luck.
- (d) FORTUNA/MISFORTUNE : bad fortune, bad luck.
- (e) FORTUNA/OPPORTUNITY.
- (f) FORTUNA/OUTCOME.

3 (a) : FORTUNA/DAME FORTUNE

(19 instances : ii.79, 385, 387 ; iv.653 ; v.22, 604, 625 ; viii.127, 334, 578 ; ix.214 ; x.49, 284, 435 ; xi.43, 128, 427 ; xii.147, 677.)

In Book Ten Vergil himself describes the operations of "Fortuna" in a passage which closely links the goddess with the clearly associated concepts of Jupiter and "fatum/death" (433-438). Pallas and Lausus are both performing deeds of valour, though both are destined to die, but not at each other's hands :

"hinc Pallas instat et urget,
hinc contra Lausus, nec multum discrepat aetas,
egregii forma, sed quis Fortuna negarat
in patriam reditus. ipsos concurrere passus
haud tamen inter se magni regnator Olympi ;
mox illos sua fata manent maiore sub hoste."

"Fortuna" has

"denied" them a return to their fatherland, just as the "ruler of Olympus" has kept them apart in battle. It is Turnus who must kill Pallas, just as it is Aeneas who must survive the duel with Lausus to kill Turnus later. To suggest that mere "luck" is responsible for their deaths is surely to misunderstand that "Fortuna" here is being described as a power capable of acting with foresight and in accordance with a deeper plan.

Similarly, in viii.127, Aeneas tells Evander that he stands in his presence at last, seeking his friendship, by the will of "Fortuna":

"optime Graiugenum, cui me Fortuna precari
et uitta comptos uoluit praetendere ramos..."

Such a meeting,

we are made to feel, with all its weighty consequences, is no mere fluke ; the goddess "Fortuna" willed it. The verb used ("uoluit") implies both personality and purpose.

Again, in viii.334, Evander ascribes his arrival at the site of Rome to the activity of "omnipotent Fortuna" and "inescapable fate" :

"me pulsum patria pelagique extrema sequentem

Fortuna omnipotens et ineluctabile fatum

his posuere locis..."

It is impossible to tell whether Evander here regards "Fortuna" and "fatum" as merely different aspects of the same power, or as quite distinct forces who happen, on this occasion, to have co-operated, with "Fortuna" perhaps being regarded as a more approachable feminine personification than the neuter "numen" of "fatum". Nevertheless, the tone of the whole passage surely suggests that the old man has in mind something more purposeful than the fickle Fortune worshipped in the early Empire. As Page comments (ad loc.) : "Conington quotes, apparently with approval, the remark of Servius that 'Fortune and Fate are not philosophically consistent'. Doubtless they are not, if Fortuna = 'pure chance', the exact opposite of 'inevitable fate', but Virgil goes not mean this. 'Fortune' is here not the opposite of 'Fate', but a more mysterious name for it, describing the unknown but 'all-powerful' force which carries ("fert") us whither it will."

Just as "Fortuna" was linked in viii.334 with "fatum", so in xii. 147 (see also p.105 above) the term is used in association with the "Parcae". Juno tells Juturna not to blame her for withdrawing her protection from Turnus :

"qua uisa est Fortuna pati Parcaeque sinebant

cedere res Latio, Turnum et tua moenia texi..."

"Wherever

'Fortuna' seemed to permit(me)" - is almost another way of saying :
 "the 'Parcae' allowed". Again, it is impossible to determine with
 certainty whether Juno regards "Fortuna" and the "Parcae" as different
 aspects of the same power or whether she sees them as quite distinct,
 but the total effect of the passage is fairly clear, as Warde Fowler
 insists (ad loc.) : "Note that 'Fortuna' is here equivalent to the
 'Parcae'; she is the cosmic power which is closely related to the
 Stoic *ἑμπαμένη* and the editor may be right in printing her with a
 large F."

Similarly, in xii.677, "Fortuna" is unequivocally linked with the
 terms "deus" and "fata" by Turnus, when he finally tells Juturna that
 her attempts to save his life are in vain :

"iam iam fata, soror, superant, absiste morari ;

quo deus et quo dura uocat Fortuna sequamur."

"Fata", "deus"

- who but Jupiter in Turnus's eyes ? -, and "Fortuna" are all, it would
 seem, terms used to refer to aspects of the same power, although
 Mackail feels able to differentiate (ad loc.) : "the delicate
 distinction between the goal which is appointed by God, and the way to
 it which is in the control of Fortune, is quite in Virgil's manner."
 Nevertheless, the confusing variety of expression is perhaps best
 regarded as poetic hair-styling rather than theological hair-splitting.

3 (b) : FORTUNA/DESTINY

(13 instances : i.517, 628 ; iii.493 ; iv.434 ; vi.96, 533, 683 ;
ix.282, 723 ; x.107 ; xi.253, 345, 413.)

Perhaps the most obvious example of "fortuna" used in the sense of personal, destined fortune is the only instance of the term in the plural. In vi.683 Vergil describes Anchises reviewing his future family :

"omnemque suorum
forte recensebat numerum, carosque nepotes
fataque fortunasque uirum moresque manusque."

Again, as in the

examples of "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" discussed above, there is a close connection with the concept of "fata". Anchises is reviewing what is going to happen to each of his descendants ; he is seeing "the fates and the fortunes" - a virtual hendiadys ? - of each one of them.

This sense of unique, personal fortune is found again in x.107, where there is also an association (in line 113) with the concept of "fata" - "fata uiam inuenient". Jupiter explains to the assembled gods his own alleged impartiality in the coming struggle :

"quae cuique est fortuna hodie, quam quisque secutur spem,
Tros Rutulusne fuat, nullo discrimine habebam..."

He will be the

same to all, he claims ¹⁸, "whatever is the personal fortune of each individual", i.e. "whatever their individual destinies".

This concept of personal fortune is further emphasised by the use

18. The important question whether Jupiter is speaking the whole truth here will be discussed in Chapter Five.

of the possessive adjective in several instances. In iii.493 Aeneas wishes Helenus and Andromache well :

"uiuite felices, quibus est fortuna peracta
iam sua : nos alia ex aliis in fata uocamur."

As Conington

translates (ad loc.) : "you are persons who have accomplished their destiny."

In iv. 434 Dido asks Anna to crave of Aeneas only time :

"tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori
dum mea me victam doceat fortuna dolere."

Jackson Knight

translates : "until my fortune can teach me submission and the art of grief." Dido's personal destiny is to live long enough to taste the full gamut of grief and then to live through it. That she later fails to live up to this destiny, dying "nec fato", is another matter - a matter so unexpected by Proserpine, in fact, that she is caught napping, as it were, and exceptional arrangements have to be made by Juno and Iris (iv.698-705).

Although Mynors gives "fortuna" a capital letter in vi.96, Hirtzel prefers a small "f" :

"tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito,
qua tua te Fortuna sinet."

These words of the Sibyl to Aeneas seem surely to refer to what his own personal destiny permits him. Again in Book Six, Deiphobus asks Aeneas what brings him to the underworld (533). After suggesting that Aeneas might have been forced there by wanderings over the sea or by the warnings of the gods, he offers a third suggestion (which may not be incompatible with the first two) that a "fortuna" may have been wearing him down :

"pelagine uenis erroribus actus

an monitu diuum ? an quae te fortuna fatigat,
ut tristis sine sole domos, loca turbida, adires ?"

He surely does not mean merely : "What bad luck was wearing you down to bring you here ?" but rather : "What sort of a personal destiny must you have, wearing you down, so that you came here ?"

It is the same sort of "fortune" to which Dido refers in i.628 when, recognising in Aeneas a kindred spirit, she assures him that he has her sympathy :

"me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores
iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra..."

The essential distinction, then, between this concept of "fortuna/destiny" and the two which follow (viz. "fortuna/prosperity" and "fortuna/misfortune") is that the latter have no obvious overtones of destiny about them. The difficulty in distinguishing arises, of course, from the essential ambiguity of the term "fortuna" : when does it mean something very like "fate" or "destiny" (i.e. when is it equivalent to "fatum/lot" ?) and when does it mean "luck" or "pure chance" (i.e. when is it equivalent to "casus" ?) ¹⁹ The context

19. The whole concept of "casus" has also been examined during the course of this investigation. It was found that none of its meanings involve any significant connection with the concepts of "destiny" or "fate" (cf. Servius's comment on viii.334 : "nihil tam contrarium est fato quam casus."). Three distinguishable concepts of "casus" were identified : (a) MISFORTUNE(S) - i.9, 204, 221, 240, 599, 614, 615, 754 ; ii.10, 93, 563, 750 ; iii.183, 265, 299, 317, 504, 709 ; iv.560 ; v.700 ; vi.377, 475, 531 ; viii.533, 578, ; ix.277, 292, 299 ; x.61, 316, 791 ; xi.244 ; xii.21, 32, 61. (b) FALL - i.623 ; ii.507 ; v.350, 453, 869 ; vi.32 ; ix.514 ; x.352. (c) CHANCE or LUCK - v.201 ; ix.723, 211 ; xii.321.

alone provides the clue. Perhaps the best illustration of the distinction is the well-known passage in Book Ten already referred to above (p.114). In line 107 -

"quae cuique est fortuna hodie..."

- Jupiter surely means

"whatever is the personal fortune" or "whatever is destined for them".

In line 112, however, in the words :

"sua cuique exorsa laborem

fortunamque ferent..."

he seems to be contrasting the concept of "fortuna" with that of "labor". It would, in fact, make little sense to translate : "Each man's undertakings will bring him suffering and (personal) destiny". In this context, "fortuna" surely means rather "(good) fortune", in the sense of "good luck", or "prosperity", or even "happiness". As Jackson Knight translates : "To each man shall his own free actions bring both his suffering and his good fortune."

3 (c) : FORTUNA/PROSPERITY

(15 instances : i.454 ; iii.16, 53, 318 ; iv.109 ; vii.243, 413 ;
viii.15 ; ix.260 ; x.43, 112, 422 ; xi.180 ; xii.405, 436.)

In xii.436 Aeneas has some words of wisdom for Ascanius :

"disce, puer, uirtutem ex me uerumque laborem,
fortunam ex aliis."

Setting aside the observation that

"laborem" in this line almost certainly does not mean the same as it did in the previous example (x.111) - such is the complexity of ascribing meanings to Vergil's words! - it must surely be evident that "fortuna" here cannot mean "fortune" in the sense of "personal destined fortune". If, after all, one wanted to choose an example of a man with a personal destiny, who would be a better choice than Aeneas ? His advice to his son must, therefore, mean that Ascanius has to look away from Aeneas if he wants to find a good example of "prosperity", "good fortune" or "happiness". Despite Servius's quibble (ad loc.) - "subaudimus 'opta' : nec enim fortuna discitur" - the message is clear : "I may be valiant and industrious, but do not look to me to find happiness." "From me, my son," translates Jackson Knight, "you may learn what is valour and what is strenuous toil : as for what good fortune is, others must teach you that."

It is this sort of "fortuna" - something quite different from either the goddess who came to be thought of as distributing it, or the feeling that whatever life "brought" in its path was somehow due to her intention - to which these instances refer.

3 (d) : FORTUNA/MISFORTUNE

(11 instances : i.240 ; ii.350 ; iii.609, 615 ; v.356, 710 ; vi.62, 615 ; ix.41 ; xi.108 ; xii.593 .)

Venus complains to Jupiter in i.240 that her Trojans are being pursued from one disaster to the other :

"nunc eadem fortuna uiros tot casibus actos
insequitur."

The "fortune" to which she refers is the "same" as that which befell them at Troy's downfall ("occasum Troiae tristisque ruinas" - i.238), viz. a terrible misfortune. Nine other instances would seem to mean the same.

The meaning of "fortuna" in v.710, however, is difficult to pin down with any certainty and is mentioned here as an illustration of the extreme difficulty of assigning any given instance to an unalterable category. Old Nautes reassures Aeneas after the loss of the ships by saying that their endurance will overcome whatever may befall :

"quidquid erit, superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est."

The whole passage is charged with reference to fate and destiny, and Nautes could be understood to mean what Jackson Knight makes him say : "Whatever is to befall, it is always our own power of endurance which must give us control over our fortune." Such a rendering would make this an instance of "fortuna/destiny". It would, nevertheless, seem simpler to take it as an example of "fortuna/misfortune" and make Nautes mean what the Latin actually says, viz. "all (mis)fortune must be overcome by enduring".

3 (e) : FORTUNA/OPPORTUNITY

(6 instances : ii.656 ; vii.559 ; ix.240 ; xi.761 ; xii.637, 920 .)

"Fortuna" is used also in the sense of "opportunity" or "chance", as in the English expressions : "opportunity to escape" or "chance of survival". The best examples are to be found in xi.761 and xii.920.

In the former, Arruns is described as dogging Camilla :

"circuit, et quae sit fortuna facillima temptat."

He tries out

"the best opportunity" for an attack. Similarly, in xii.920, Aeneas is portrayed as marking Turnus, and being ready to hurl his spear at the first "chance" of striking home :

"Cunctanti telum Aeneas fatale coruscat,
sortitus fortunam oculis..."

Servius brings in destiny with his gloss (ad loc.) : "hunc locum oculis ad ferendum elegit Aeneas, quem fortuna destinaverat vulneri" - "which fortune had decided upon". Conington translates : "having hit upon success with his eyes" (an example of "fortuna/prosperity" ?), while Sidgwick suggests : "choosing with a glance the lucky aim", and Page prefers : "seeking with his eyes to win the happy spot". P.Colaclides, however, in an interesting article in Glotta 51 (1973) pp.140-142, "Note sur un emploi de fortuna chez Virgile", offers yet another possibility. He compares this use of "fortuna" with the Homeric "ὅπῃ εἴξεται μάχεται" (Iliad xxii.321) and claims (p.141) that Vergil used "fortuna" to translate a Greek term meaning : "ce qui est a propos, avantageux, opportun".

The four remaining instances of this relatively unimportant concept are self-explanatory.

3 (f) : FORTUNA/OUTCOME

(2 instances : iv.603 ; xii.694 .)

Yet another, rather exceptional, sense of "fortuna" is to be found in iv.603, where Dido, on seeing Aeneas's fleet already afloat, rages in fury, thinking how she could have destroyed the Trojans. A pause for reflection makes her realise that a war against Aeneas might not necessarily have resulted in a Carthaginian victory, but she pushes that thought aside with the observation that the risk of death would have been worth it, since now she will die in any case :

"uerum anceps pugnae fuerat fortuna. fuisset :
quem metui moritura ?"

R.D.Williams (ad loc.) suggests the translation : "the upshot of the battle". The sense is clear, and since none of the other concepts of "fortuna" already dealt with will serve here, the translation of the extract must read that it was the "outcome" of such a fight that would have been doubtful.

Similarly, in xii.694, Turnus stops the fighting and prepares for single combat, telling the Rutulians and Latins, whom he is going to represent, that whatever the "outcome" (of the fight to come) it is going to be his victory or his defeat, not theirs any more :

"'parcite iam, Rutuli, et uos tela inhibete, Latini.
quaecumque est fortuna, mea est ;...'"

Conington translates :

(ad loc.) : "I take on myself the event, whatever it may be", and Page : "whate'er the issue it is mine". In short, the "outcome" will affect only Turnus.

4 : FORS

The concept of "fors" is almost the exact opposite to the concept of "fatum". Its meanings, for example, as listed in Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary, include, as has been said above (p.70) "chance". The adverbs "fors (sit)" and "forte" are given the meanings : "perchance", "perhaps", "casually", "accidentally". Of the seven instances in the Aeneid where "fors" is used as a noun, rather than as an adverb, six are in the nominative (ii.94 ; vii.554 ; viii.476 ; x.458 ; xii.41, 714) and one only in the ablative (i.377). This last example is something of an exception, for here, and here alone, "forte" seems to mean something like "caprice".²⁰ Of the six instances of "fors" in the nominative, five mean simply "chance", but one (xii.41) seems to mean something else. It is this example which interests us.

Latinus is trying to persuade Turnus that they should make peace with Aeneas while Turnus is still unharmed, but the young man will have none of it. Latinus asks what will the Rutulians, indeed all Italy, think if he proves to be the cause of Turnus's death because of his promise of Lavinia in marriage :

"quid consanguinei Rutuli, quid cetera dicet
Italia, ad mortem si te (fors dicta refutet!)
prodiderim, natam et conubia nostra petentem ?"

20. Aeneas describes how the Trojans have been driven ashore by a storm :

"diuersa per aequora uectos
forte sua Libycis tempestas appulit oris."

Austin comments (ad loc.) : "The expression (which might well have raised the brow of early critics) has no parallel...The meaning seems to be 'by a chance of its own', a capricious whim of nature."

At the ill-omened mention of Turnus's death, he wishes back his words with the expressed hope that "fors" might refute what he has said. This hardly means "chance", but is surely an example (even if the only one in the Aeneid) of "fors" meaning "fortuna" (i.e. "fortuna/destiny"), or even "Fortuna" (i.e. "Fortuna/Dame Fortune"). Lewis and Short, indeed, in the entry in their dictionary under "refuto", cite this instance, giving "fors" a capital letter and actually translating : "may fate avert". Vergil may have had in mind the goddess "Fors Fortuna", but whatever is the case, Latinus's words seem to suggest that he hopes his prayer will be heard by some power that can at least influence events.

5 : SORS

Of the twenty-seven occurrences of the word "sors" in the Aeneid, eleven quite simply mean nothing more than "lot", "lot-token", or "lottery" (i.139, 508 ; ii.201 ; v.132, 490 ; vi.22, 431, 761 ; ix.268, 271 ; xi.110), while x.40 seems to bear the exceptional meaning of "part" ²¹, and xii.54 is best translated by "risk" ²² . There are also five instances (four in the plural) of the word clearly meaning "oracle(s)" (iv.346, 377 ; vi.72 ; vii.254, 269). The remaining nine, however, (ii.555 ; v.190 ; vi.114, 332 ; x.450, 501 ; xi.165 ; xii.243, 932) all seem to mean "fated portion", "what destiny has allotted in the lottery of life", or simply "fate".

The first example of "sors" with a meaning that concerns this investigation is to be found in ii.555, where the death of Priam is described, using the noun alone without any accompanying adjective :

"haec finis Priami fatorum, hic exitus illum
sorte tulit Troiam incensam et prolapsa uidentem
 Pergama..."

Jackson Knight actually translates : "Priam's destiny ended here, after seeing Troy fired and Troy's walls down ; such was the end fated to him..." It is not difficult to see the

21. Venus complains about the unprecedented activities of Juno and Allecto :

"nunc etiam manis (haec intemptata manebat
sors rerum) mouet..."

22. Vergil refers to Amata's grief at the renewed risk of battle and danger to Turnus:

"At regina noua pugnae conterrita sorte
 flebat et ardentem generum moritura tenebat..."

reasoning of the ancients by which a concept as apparently free of destiny as a lottery came on occasions to be considered as identical with it. A lottery is held when it is difficult to decide with fairness, or with justice, or without partiality, who should undergo some (usually unpleasant or dangerous) experience. Lots are put into a helmet and the helmet shaken until one of the lots jumps out. No human agency can then be blamed for choosing the unlucky man. Nevertheless, a decision is thus made : it has been decided, by some force other than human will, who is going to have to undergo the experience which no one else wants to undergo. The person thus "chosen" will then accept as inevitable what must follow. He will interpret the fact that his lot, rather than anyone else's, jumped out, as a sign that he has been chosen or selected by whatever force it was to which they appealed when they resorted to the lottery. One feels fairly sure that it was unlikely that anyone who had once consented to take part in a lottery was ever bold enough to question its outcome and suggest setting it aside as of no account. It was precisely this sense of inevitability when one saw one's own lot come to rest on the ground that made one feel that it could not have happened otherwise, that is to say that it was "fated" or "destined" to happen.

The force, then, that claimed Priam's life at that moment may have seemed to Aeneas at that stage in his development to be as blind and as impartial as the force that decides a lottery, but he does recognise it as a force (note the metaphor of "carrying" in the verb "tulit") and a few breaths earlier has almost equated it with another force with which he is to become all too familiar himself :

"haec finis Priami fatorum..."

The moment that Priam's personal destiny comes to an end is regarded by Aeneas as being identical with

the moment in which he left life "by lot", i.e. "by fate".

The other example of the noun being used on its own without a qualifying adjective is in vi.114, where Aeneas begs the Sibyl to let him see his father Anchises, with whom he has gone through so much and who, weak as he was, shared his troubles beyond the strength and the normally "fated lot" of old age :

"ille meum comitatus iter maria omnia mecum
atque omnis pelagique minas caelique ferebat,
inualidus, uiris ultra sortemque senectae."

It is interesting

to note that "sors" is here connected with the noun "senectae" in a way rather different from xi.165 (see below p.127).

In two other examples accompanying adjectives are found, though they do little to modify the essential meaning of the noun. In x.450, Pallas is happily confident that glory or death will await him when he faces Turnus in battle ; "either fate" will be the same in his father's eyes :

"aut spoliis ego iam raptis laudabor opimis
aut leto insigni : sorti pater aequus utrique est."

In xii.932,

the adjective is a possessive and is used by Turnus, in his dying speech to Aeneas, to refer to the "(fated) portion" which he tells the victorious hero to use :

"nequidem merui nec deprecor" inquit ;
'utere sorte tua...'"

In yet another two examples the adjectives chosen relate "sors" to the passage of time. In v.190, Mnestheus urges on his rowers, whom he chose as companions at Troy's "last fated hour" (Jackson Knight's translation) :

"Hectorei socii, Troiae quos sorte suprema
delegi comites."

Commenting in x.501 upon Turnus's spoliation of Pallas's body, Vergil himself says that the mind of man is ignorant of fate and of his "future (destined) portion" :

"nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae..."

In the three remaining instances the adjectives which qualify "sors" are all pejorative. In xi.165, Evander does not blame the Trojans for the death of Pallas but regards the disaster as being "that fated lot" owed to his old age :

"nec uos arguerim, Teucri, nec foedera nec quas
iunximus hospitio dextras : sors ista senectae
debita erat nostrae."

As has been noted above (p.126), there is a syntactical difference in function between the phrase "sors senectae" in vi.114 and the words "sors ista...senectae...nostrae" of xi.165. In the former it would seem to mean "the fated lot of old age" i.e. "what normally happens to old men", whereas in the latter one should perhaps translate : "that fated lot owed to my old age" i.e. "what I had coming to me in my old age". In the first instance "sors" seems to refer to the normally restful end of the lives of old men generally. In the second it refers specifically to the tragedy of Pallas, an outstandingly fateful event for more than one character in the Aeneid.

Finally, in both vi.332 and in xii.243, the adjective "iniqua" is chosen to qualify the concept of "sors". In vi.332 Aeneas is described as greatly troubled at the "destined lot" of the souls of the unburied :

"constitit Anchisa satus et uestigia pressit
multa putans sortemque animo miseratus iniquam."

Again in xii.

243 the Laurentines and Latins are depicted, after Juturna's rabble-

rousing, as undergoing a change of heart and becoming keen to fight when they consider Turnus's "unfair (fated) portion" :

"qui sibi iam requiem pugnae rebusque salutem
sperabant, nunc arma uolunt foedusque precantur
infectum et Turni sortem miserantur iniquam."

In all the instances of the use of "sors" considered above (with the one exception of x.501, which would seem to have a more general application) the term appears to be used in a manner which refers to the various "fated portions" of individuals : viz. those of Priam, old men generally, Pallas (twice), Aeneas, Troy, the unburied generally, and Turnus. This concept corresponds, it should be noticed, almost exactly with the concept of the fate or destiny of an individual man, city or race, a concept defined earlier in this chapter (p.72 above) as "fatum/lot".

Now that the various words used by Vergil to refer to the concept of destiny have been identified, examined and distinguished, it will perhaps be easier to concentrate upon those concepts which are of special significance for the expression of any conscious philosophy of destiny, if such there be in the poem.

Several of the concepts were seen to be of limited application or semantic significance and to refer merely to individuals or to meanings that could be as well expressed by other words. Among these were such concepts as "fatum/doom", "fatum/lot", "fatum/death" and "fatum/life-span" ; "fortuna/destiny", "fortuna/prosperity", "fortuna/misfortune", "fortuna/opportunity" and "fortuna/outcome" ; "fors" ; and "sors".

There were concepts of more general application, however, which referred to an idea of destiny that involved the divine, the universal and an awareness of what could be termed a world-order at least greater in its perspective than the scope of one human life or even one human generation. These concepts appealed to a world-view that could appreciate the significance of such ideas as the passage of time, the flow of history and the purpose of existence. These more philosophically significant concepts are surely those that have been termed "fatum/fate", "fatum/destiny", the "Parcae" (inasmuch as they are an aspect of the foregoing concepts), and "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" (inasmuch as she is another aspect of the same).

The identification and clarification of these concepts, however, though perhaps of some philological interest, still cannot provide a complete understanding of the concepts of destiny in the Aeneid. The recognition of the various shades of meaning (even if perfectly understood) of the many words themselves does not, in isolation, throw sufficient light upon the meaning and purpose of the epic in which

these words are used. To approach such an understanding, indeed, a new approach is now needed and the originality of this investigation rests upon the belief that the next chapter will provide that approach by looking again at the various concepts of destiny from a new angle and regarding them no longer just as "types of expression" but rather as "expressions of type".

CHAPTER FIVE : EXPRESSIONS OF TYPE

Now that a survey has been made in the previous chapter of the various meanings of the words used by Vergil to refer to concepts of destiny, it is time to look at these words again in a new light. They will now be examined from the standpoint of the character who uses them. It is believed that this fresh approach will throw a clearer light upon concepts of destiny in the Aeneid. The application of the critical implications arising from the exposure of the Personal Heresy will now be put to the test and the following question will be kept constantly in mind : not - "What does Vergil mean when he makes a character use these words ?" so much as - "What does Aeneas (or Jupiter, or Vulcan or Evander) mean when he uses these words at this particular juncture in the epic ?" It will be argued that the exigencies of the plot, and the dramatic and logical necessities of the situation will best explain the meaning of the utterances of various characters at various moments in the poem. Plot, rather than philosophy, will be revealed as the factor that determines opinion about destiny. The sort of man speaking will settle the sort of word spoken. A certain type of character will demand, when expressing himself, a certain type of expression.

The many characters who use words which refer to some concept or other of destiny in the Aeneid have therefore to be dealt with in some sort of systematic order. Firstly, the whole question of the importance of realising who is voicing the opinion (explicitly or implicitly) about destiny will be illustrated by a discussion of the somewhat exceptional and unusual character of Sinon. Secondly, human characters who say little about destiny will be dealt with ; then gods whose utterances are similarly brief. Fourthly, attention will be

turned to those humans who can be said to have some special insight into the workings of fate, viz. Helenus, the Sibyl and Anchises. Fifthly, humans who say a significant amount about destiny are grouped together, in order of increasing frequency of utterance, viz. Dido, Turnus, Evander and, of course, Aeneas. Then will come the more important gods : Venus and Juno, representing opposing sides in the epic struggle ; and Jupiter, whose position as "king of gods and men" must surely entitle him to a place of special consideration in any catalogue. Last of all to be examined will be the viewpoint of the poet himself, finally isolated from all other voices that could be (and have been!) mistaken for his own.

1 : SINON

"hoc primum ; nec, si miserum Fortuna Sinonem
finxit, uanum etiam mendacemque improba finget."

It is impossible to calculate how many readers of Vergil have read these lines (ii.79-80) and unthinkingly gained the impression that the great epic poet of Rome is so right in sharing their own deep-seated belief, perhaps seldom expressed and certainly never so beautifully, that Fortune is outrageous in the way in which she treats poor human beings. Without, however, even labouring the point that Sinon's view of Fortune need not be Vergil's, it is worth saying, obvious though it may seem, that Sinon's view of Fortune, as expressed in the lines above, need not even be Sinon's!

The one outstanding fact of importance about Sinon, a fact which is strangely so seldom really emphasised in the whole vast corpus of critical exegesis of Book Two, is that he is a liar. The creation of the character of Sinon, indeed, as we find him in Book Two, is as much a dramatic masterpiece of the poet as the problem of "the lying poet" was a masterpiece of the philosopher. The attempt to solve the complexities of : "A poet said all men are liars. Therefore..." is reputed to have driven at least one man mad. Trying to discover when Sinon is telling the truth is surely a conundrum of similarly perilous potential.

Before we can attach any importance to what Sinon says about Fortune we must examine the part which he plays in the overall plot of the epic. We are distinctly told that the Greeks deliberately left Sinon behind to be found by the Trojans, after the withdrawal of the Greek ships, with the intention of getting them to drag the horse into

the city so that he might later on let out the armed warriors hidden within (ii.59-62) :

"qui se ignotum uenientibus ultro,
hoc ipsum ut strueret Troiamque aperiret Achiuis,
obtulerat, fidens animi atque in utrumque paratus,
seu uersare dolos seu certae occumbere morti."

Aeneas leaves
his Carthaginian audience in no doubt about what happened (ii.65-66) :

"accipe nunc Danaum insidias et crimine ab uno
disce omnis."

The duplicity of Sinon is, indeed, repeatedly
stressed (ii.107) :

"prosequitur pauitans et ficto pectore fatur..."

Although he
begs Priam by the gods of truth to spare him (ii.141-143) :

"quod te per superos et conscia numina ueri,
per si qua est quae restet adhuc mortalibus usquam
intemerata fides, oro..."

- and although Priam adjures him to
be truthful in his account of the purpose of the horse (ii.149) :

"mihique haec edissere uera roganti..."

- he goes
on to gull the Trojans with a tale so credible that Aeneas is again
compelled (ii.152) to warn his audience of Sinon's unreliability :

"dixerat. ille dolis instructus et arte Pelasga
sustulit exutas uinclis ad sidera palmas..."

The final effect
of Sinon's story is summarised by Aeneas in four unforgettable lines
simultaneously packed with moral indignation, national pride and a
sense of bitter irony, in which the fall of Troy is specifically
attributed not to martial might but to the ruse of the horse and to

Sinon's lies (ii.195-198) :

"Talibus insidiis periurique arte Sinon
 credita res, captique dolis lacrimisque coactis
 quos neque Tydides nec Larisaeus Achilles,
 non anni domuere decem, non mille carinae."

Sinon, then, at any rate in Aeneas's eyes, is the archetypal liar, whose testimony is worthless. What credence then can be given to any of his utterances upon any subject ? When, in ii.79, he refers to Fortune as "improba", are we to assume that he really feels this, or that he is merely affecting a pose of misery to achieve his ulterior aim of being pitied ? When he describes the Palladium, in ii.165, as "fatale", can we feel any surer that his choice of adjective reflects genuine belief in the significance of the statue than when he says, in ii.180, that the Greeks have sailed home to Mycenae ? We know from other sources (as he himself did) that the Greeks were waiting off Tenedos. What, therefore, do we know - what, indeed, can we ever know - about the way in which Fortune had ever really treated him, or how he really regarded her, or how charged with destiny he felt the Palladium to be ?

The function of Sinon, then, in the plot of the Aeneid is to provide the means for securing the entry of the horse into Troy. From this everything else follows. If he had not been such a successful liar, there would have been no epic to relate. It is precisely because the Trojans believed him that anything he says, especially anything about the ultimate purposes of life, or destiny, or the gods, we for our part thereafter cannot believe.

It will become abundantly apparent in the examination which follows of the attitudes of all the other characters to destiny that their function in the overall plot of the epic - a plot whose main outlines were, of course, already fixed for Vergil - has a great effect

upon what they have to say about destiny. Sinon is an extreme example of this principle, but the others must now be considered. The poem has its own inner logic and the task of the poet (a task performed in the Aeneid by Vergil with the consistent integrity of a true craftsman) is to fix the attention of his listeners so firmly on the progress of the tale which he has to tell that they have no time, much less desire, to notice or inquire what manner of man the bard himself may be or what his own views are about the destiny of which he sings.

2 : OBITER DICTA HUMANA

It is instructive to begin with references to "fatum" and "fortuna" which cannot with ease be ascribed to any one character. Normally it is quite obvious who is making a speech, but at the beginning of Book Eight there are two instances (12 and 15) of the use of these words, at first sight by Vergil himself in the course of narrative description, which are interesting as illustrations of the extreme unwisdom of assuming that any reference to destiny in the epic necessarily reflects the poet's own personal viewpoint.

At the start of hostilities, Venulus is described as being sent as envoy to Diomed at Argypira to ask him for help against the Trojans :

"mittitur et magni Venulus Diomedis ad urbem
 qui petat auxilium, et Latio consistere Teucros,
 aduectum Aenean classi uictosque penatis
 inferre et fatis regem se dicere posci
 edoceat...
 quid struat his coeptis, quem, si fortuna sequatur,
 euentum pugnae cupiat, manifestius ipsi
 quam Turno regi aut regi apparere Latino."

Precisely whose concept of "fatum" and "fortuna" do we have in this passage ? Vergil's own, as some would always claim, filtered through the viewpoint of Turnus and Latinus and put in the mouth of Venulus ? Turnus's ? Or Latinus's ? Or that of both leaders, for it is unclear which of them told Venulus what to say ? Or is Venulus's own viewpoint to be allowed some expression, anticipated as it is here in the "oratio obliqua" ? Or are these really the sentiments of Aeneas, being in turn reported as they were themselves earlier reported - e.g. in the speech

of the Trojan envoy, Ilioneus, in vii.213-248 ? It is impossible, therefore, to say whether Venulus was instructed to quote Aeneas's claim to kingship with scorn in his voice (Turnus's viewpoint), or with foreboding (Latinus's viewpoint), or with calm assurance (Aeneas's viewpoint), or, indeed, whether he spoke with grey, official, impersonal neutrality, as befits a Civil Servant, and that accordingly the voice which, as Servius would say, "subaudimus" is perhaps Vergil's viewpoint.¹

Of the nine characters who refer to destiny once only, none uses the concepts of "fatum/fate", "fatum/destiny" or "fatum/doom". Hector's ghost, in ii.294, urges Aeneas in a dream to take with him the "penates" as "fatorum comites" - "sharers of his 'fatum/lot'". Andromache, in iii.337, wonders what winds and what "fatum/lot", or indeed what god, have brought Aeneas to her shore.² In iv.678, Anna complains to the dying Dido that she should have invited her to share the same death - "fatum/mors", and similarly, in x.740, Orodes warns the vaunting Mezentius that the same sort of death awaits him. "Sors" is used in its sense of "fate", i.e. "fatum/lot", by Mnestheus in v. 190 when he refers to his crew as men whom he chose as comrades at the last "fated hour" of Troy. "Fortune" is used once in its sense of "bad luck" by Achaemenides in iii.615 when he wishes he had stayed at

1. Can the reader, it must be asked, infer with certainty from the words "as befits a Civil Servant" what the attitude of the writer is, at the time of writing, to the Civil Service ?

2. Conington comments (ad loc.) : "Andromache means...to ask Aeneas how he has come to Epirus - by stress of weather, or by destiny, or divine intervention... The alternatives are scarcely meant to exclude each other, being rather different ways of stating the same thing." From iii.237, it must be insisted, we may form some idea of Andromache's view of destiny, but nothing more than that.

home, poor like his father Adamastus :

"mansissetque utinam fortuna!"

It is also used once by Ascanius, in ix.260, in the opposite sense, when he tells Nisus and Euryalus, as they set out on their mission, that he relies upon them utterly :

"quaecumque mihi fortuna fidesque est,
in uestris pono gremiis."

The other two references, to "Fortuna/Dame Fortune", are more instructive. She is referred to by Coroebus in ii.387 when he encourages Aeneas's small band, after the slaying of Androgeos and his party, to take advantage of the apparently heaven-sent opportunity to disguise themselves as Greeks. This is indeed a good example of the critical principle underlying the whole approach of this chapter. Can one assume that Vergil himself would approve of the behaviour which thus takes advantage of an apparent intervention of "Fortuna" ? Was Vergil a man to encourage the swift exploitation of a stroke of luck, a procedure which would doubtless win the approval of such a man as we know Octavian to have been ? One could argue that indeed he was, but would, of course, then have to explain why Aeneas has just spent so long denouncing the unmanly deception perpetrated by Sinon ; why he refers to Coroebus as "exsultans" (386) and "furiata mente" (407) ; and why it is pointedly mentioned in 424 that Coroebus was the first to fall in the slaughter that resulted partly from their wearing Greek uniform (on his suggestion) and partly from his mad and ill-timed desire to save Cassandra. If, after all, a minor figure such as Coroebus can be regarded as a mouthpiece of Vergil, Aeneas certainly can. In fact, of course, each behaves as he does because he is a character with a part to play in an epic story. Coroebus, being Coroebus, the headstrong youth, acts as he does on that terrible night

as one would expect such a character to act, and his views upon the beneficence of Fortune are simply what such a youth's would be, and short-lived at that. Aeneas's views also, as we shall see, have their own inner logic. The point that must be made, however, is that neither view can lead us, from such descriptions of how men acted and spoke in a particular crisis, to any certain knowledge of what Vergil's own feelings were about the use of deception in battle, or the desirability or otherwise of reckless courage. Similarly, when Palinurus, in v.22, urges Aeneas to change their course, "superat quoniam Fortuna", to where she calls them, we hear, no more and no less, the advice such a good helmsman would give at such a time, faced with such a storm, and need not assume that Vergil himself was the sort of man who thought highly of running before the wind.

Among those characters who have a little more to say the non-Trojans, as a group, say the least. Diomed is reported, in xi.253, by Venulus as having asked what "fortuna/destiny" was troubling the Italians to the extent that they were contemplating war, and as having pointed out (287) that the prowess of Aeneas was in his experience such that, had there been two others like him, Troy would have invaded Greece and by an exchange of "fatum/lot",

"uersis lugeret Graecia fatis."

Drances tells Aeneas in xi.128 that the Latins will ally him to their king, "if 'Fortuna' provides a way", and goes on (130) even to offer their aid in building the "fatalis murorum...moles" of a second Troy. Although there may be associative echoes here of ii.237 :

"scandit fatalis machina muros"

and even of i.33 :

"taetae molis erat Romanam condere gentem"

the allusion to

"Fortuna" and to the new Troy being "fated" are surely attempts to

represent the tone of Drances's speech, full of flattery and the desperate oratory of conciliation, and motivated as much by expediency as by personal hatred of Turnus. But even if his words really are anything more than what a skilled politician would, in fact, say in such a situation, can we possibly read between his lines and see Vergil's own opinions there? Indeed, when Vergil does speak in his own voice, in xi.336-342, he takes some pains to make it quite clear with what motivation Drances is speaking when he claims that all the Latins really know what their "fortuna/destiny" is bringing. We are warned in advance that Drances is -

"idem infensus, quem gloria Turni
obliqua invidia stimulisque agitabat amaris,
largus opum et lingua melior..."

There seems little reason,
in fact, for rating his sincerity much higher than that of Sinon.

King Latinus uses "fors" in the sense of "Fortuna" in xii.41, when he tries to dissuade Turnus from single combat with Aeneas, but his other two references to destiny are clear examples of "fatum/destiny". In vii.272, after hearing the speech of Ilioneus announcing Aeneas's claim to the kingdom of Italy, he admits that the Trojan seems to be the man of destiny for whom he has been warned by oracles to keep his daughter. In vii.594, however, he cries out, as his people crowd around him demanding war, that the same force which he knew and hoped in line 273 ("et reor et...opto") wanted Aeneas as his son-in-law and ally, is now forcing war upon him :

"frangimur heu fatis" inquit "ferimurque procella!..."

Such a
confused and contradictory attitude to destiny can only be seen as
belonging solely to the confused and contradictory character of
Latinus, at that particular moment in the development of the story,

and can surely in no way represent Vergil's own view.³

From the Trojans who use more than one of the words containing concepts of destiny, viz. Nautes, Pallas, Euryalus, Nisus, Deiphobus and Ilioneus, very little in the way of a philosophy can be assumed. After the burning of the ships, Nautes expresses his beliefs, in v. 709-710, as to the best course to follow, and does so in what appear to be Stoic "sententiae" :⁴

"nate dea, quo fata trahunt retrahuntque sequamur ;
quidquid erit, superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est."

The

anachronism of a "sententia" in the mouth of a hero in no way affects the central point that the views expressed here are such as would be expressed by a person such as Nautes at such a critical juncture, and cannot be claimed to represent Vergil's own private view of destiny and fortune. Henry, indeed, sees line 710 as a lie and claims (ad loc.) that Vergil exposes it as a lie in v.22 :

"superat quoniam Fortuna sequamur..."

Needless to

say, Henry makes little of the fact that the words of v.22 are actually

3. M.W.Edwards, in "The Expression of Stoic Ideas in the Aeneid" Phoenix 14 (1960), p.159, n.27, has an interesting comment : "The only explicit case I know of a mistake being made in estimating the designs of Fate is a minor one, that of Latinus in thinking the Latins are being destroyed by Fate (7.594) when they are in fact acting in opposition to it (7.583-584)." Whatever they are doing, Vergil surely intends to present to us Latinus's confusion and error, not his own.

4. R.D.Williams, commenting ad loc. on the "sententiae", points out : "...the contrasts between 'fata' (destiny which we must all follow) and 'fortuna' (a set of circumstances which we may fight against, and overcome by endurance)."

spoken by Palinurus. The important point, however, is that whether "Fortune rules, and we follow" (as Palinurus believes) or whether "all (mis)fortune is to be overcome by endurance, and fate leads and we follow" (as Nautes believes), Vergil's own feelings are simply not revealed to us : we are presented merely with the opinions of a compliant helmsman and a pious old man.

The young men on the Trojan side have little to offer as far as metaphysics are concerned. Pallas speaks of "fortuna/prosperity" (x.422) and of "sors" in the sense of "fatum/lot" (x.450). Euryalus speaks once of "fatum/fate" (ix.204) and once of "fortuna/destiny" (ix.282), while Nisus speaks only of "fortuna", though in three different senses : "misfortune" (v.356), "Dame Fortune" (ix.214) and "opportunity" (ix.240).

Of the older men, Deiphobus speaks only as a shade and then only of "fatum/lot" (vi.511 and 546), of "fortuna/destiny" (vi.533), and of the Trojan horse as "fatalis" (vi.515). Ilioneus has the most to say, though what little there is tends to be overshadowed by the absent Aeneas. In i.546 he feels that all will be well, "si fata uirum seruant ...", a reference to "fatum/destiny" ; while in his capacity as envoy to Latinus in Book Seven he can be presumed merely to pass on Aeneas's words (154-155), though the actual mode of expression may be his own. He refers twice to "fatum/lot" (vii.224 and 234), once to "fortuna/prosperity" (vii.243), and once to "fatum/fate" (vii.239), a reference which may perhaps include the concept of "fatum/doom" :

"sed nos fata deum uestras exquirere terras
imperiiis egere suis."

J.P.Brisson has compared these lines
with vii.216-217 :

"consilio hanc omnes animisque uolentibus urbem
adferimur pulsi regnis..."

and commented in Virgile : Son Temps et le Nôtre (Paris, 1966), p.296 n. : "Expressions qui mettent sur la même plan de causalité la délibération et la volonté humaine d'une part, les 'destins' et les injonctions divines des oracles d'autre part." Whether it was Ilioneus or Aeneas, however, who thought thus about human and divine intervention, Vergil's own thoughts remain, so far at any rate, still inscrutable.

3 : OBITER DICTA DIVINA

The minor gods and goddesses have little to say about destiny. Juturna (xii.232) and Iris (v.625) both speak in disguise and as their intention seems, therefore, to be to deceive, what they say is difficult to describe with certainty as true to their own feelings, let alone Vergil's. Diana (xi.587) refers to Camilla's bitter "fatum/lot", but makes no general statement. Apollo, however, in whose mouth as the god of prophecy one might have expected Vergil to place many more pronouncements about destiny, if it had been his intention to avail himself of mouthpieces, makes one prediction, viz. that under the rule of the Trojan race all wars which are destined to come ("fata uentura" - ix.643) will settle into peace. This "vaticinium post eventum" could hardly be put in the mouth of any other character in the epic than the god whose temple overlooked the battle of Actium. For Vergil, the knowledge that the Julian family had brought peace to the world was as much a part of Apollo's biography as of his own and it is totally consistent that Apollo should speak these lines where he does.

In the same way, the choice of Vulcan as the speaker of the lines (viii.398-399) :

"nec pater omnipotens Troiam nec fata uetabant
stare decemque alios Priamum superesse per annos..."

is not

without significance. The Homeric model of Hephaistos as the maker of Achilles's shield was probably too powerful in the consciousness of almost every likely reader of the Aeneid for Vergil to choose anyone else as the maker of Aeneas's armour. Again, it is the hero's mother who makes the request, Venus, in Vergil's case, being doubly appropriate as she was surely as much thought of by the educated as

the wife of Vulcan as the mother of Aeneas. So far, tradition and a sense of narrative appropriateness have decided Vergil's plot for him. He himself, however, is at least free to decide what Vulcan will say. What he makes him say is totally consistent with the character of Vulcan in this vignette of the old fire-god. It has apparently escaped the notice of some critics, who read these lines with one eye on the epic and the other watching the poet for any philosophical pronouncements upon destiny, that we have here in viii.386-406 one of the most sensual passages in the whole of Vergil's poetry. The whole point of the passage, indeed, is easily lost if the reader's concentration is centred upon the wrong object. Vergil presents us with a poetic description of an old god besotted with the beauty of a young goddess - the same irresistible beauty that was responsible for the Ineluctable Conception of the hero of the poem ; who favours and guides him throughout the poem ; and who so pleads his case that he can hardly fail to achieve the ambition she desires for him, short of not willing it himself. The lines could be said to constitute a Vergilean Hymn to Venus for his readers would perhaps hear literary echoes both of Lucretius's invocation of Venus at the beginning of De Rerum Natura and of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, in which the poet dwells upon her overwhelming power of seduction.

Vulcan is reluctant at first to listen to Venus's request. Her approach is to stress that she has never asked for his specialist assistance before, since she did not wish to waste his time on futile work, Troy being sure to fall ("casuras arces" - line 375). By sheer sexual charm she overcomes his reluctance until Vulcan's self-control is presented as progressively crumbling as his desire for her mounts : ("accepit solitam flammam...deuinctus amore...dedit amplexus...infuso gremio."). What then is the purpose of his comment that there was actually no reason why she could not have asked him such a favour for

Aeneas before Troy fell ? Surely it is not intended, at such a moment in the proceedings, as a philosophical insight, for her edification, into the workings of Jupiter's mind! It is rather a disclaimer of the suggestion she had made in 377-378 that he might have been annoyed by her pestering him :

"nec te, carissime coniunx,
incassumue tuos uolui exercere labores..."

He is surely out to

persuade her that he would, even then, have done anything for her and this is just another way of telling her how much influence over him her beauty has. Vulcan's remarks (accurate though they may be, especially in the ears of any Etruscan reader) are really no more than pillow talk. The main drift of his speech, delivered under the pressure of rising passion (and diminishing reason) is simple :

"quid causas petis ex alto ? fiducia cessit
quo tibi, diua, mei ? similis si cura fuisset,
tum quoque fas nobis Teucros armare fuisset..."

The very

unusual repetition of the final "fuisset" (in 396 and 397) is almost an obvious indication of distracted thought. After all, what did Vergil intend us to suppose that Vulcan was doing while he was saying all this ? And what was Venus doing to make Vulcan say :

"absiste precando
uiribus indubitare tuis." ?

Interesting though the words of

Vulcan may be, therefore, as illumination upon concepts of destiny in the Aeneid, they must be taken in context. When this is done they are seen as totally consistent with the character of Vulcan, in that particular situation, as presented by Vergil for our delight. They can only be taken as sober proof of Vergil's own private belief in the

possibility of the postponement of fate, however, by a reader
perversely determined to ignore a rare moment of Vergilean humour.

4 : PROPHETS

The three prophets who use words referring to concepts of destiny, viz. Helenus, the Sibyl and Anchises, have nothing to say about "fatum/fate" (the realised will of Heaven). One might after all expect this from those whose prime function is to look into the future, but they also have very little to say about "fatum/destiny" (the intended will of Heaven).

Helenus refers once to "fatum/doom", when speaking of the Sibyl's activities (iii.444) ; once to the "Parcae" (iii.379), and once to "fatum/lot" (iii.375). The one occasion on which he does refer to "fatum/destiny" (iii.395) is to reassure Aeneas that Celaeno's prophecy about the Trojans having to "eat their tables" is not something to fear, for -

"fata uiam inuenient aderitque uocatus Apollo."

The use of

exactly the same expression as that of Jupiter in x.113 is interesting. Jupiter seems to mean "fatum/lot" (see above p.90 and below p.183), and there is, of course, no reason to suppose that precisely the same interpretation must be put upon the word "fata" in both instances. Indeed, as the investigation during the course of this chapter has already demonstrated, context is vitally important in determining the meaning of any given expression. It is also important to reiterate that whatever Helenus means by "fata uiam inuenient" - whether it is "destiny will find a way (for you)" or "(your own) fate will find a way (for you)" - the opinion presented to us is his not Vergil's.

The Sibyl refers twice to "fatum/doom" (vi.45 and 376), once to "fortuna/misfortune" (vi.615), and once to "fortuna/destiny" (vi.96). Once only does she mention "fatum/destiny" : when she tells Aeneas

that the Golden Bough will be plucked easily enough, "if destiny is calling you" (vi.147). Such a belief about destiny, viz. that achievement of one's desire is easy if one's wishes are in accordance with those of the gods, is typical of what one would expect from a person who had devoted a lifetime of service to one of them.

Anchises refers five times to "fatum/lot" (iii.182 ; v.725 ; vi.713, 759, and 882) and once only to "fatum/destiny". This is when he tells Aeneas (vi.869), in answer to his inquiry about the youth walking beside Marcellus, that :

"ostendent terris hunc tantum fata nec ultra
esse sinent."

He goes on at once virtually to identify these "fata" with the "superi" who felt that the Romans would become too great if the youth lived to reach his full potential :

"nimium uobis Romana propago
uisa potens, superi, propria haec si dona fuissent."

Such an opinion about the almost provocative and capricious behaviour of the gods/fates is typical in the mouth of an old man whose dominant memory of divine intervention must, even in the underworld, have been the decision of Venus to choose him as the father of Aeneas but then to forbid him, on pain of being struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt, to boast of his intimacy.⁵ The whole passage, indeed, is totally consistent with the attitude of a man whose experience of the gods is that of powers who give with one hand and for reasons best known to themselves, as in his old age he would piously admit, take away with the other.

5. See the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, 191 ff.

5 : HUMANS

(a) : DIDO

Dido uses words referring to concepts of destiny on eight occasions. There is, however, no discernible philosophy running through them. In fact, she uses "fata" in the unusual sense of simply "death" (iv.20) and "fortuna" in its even rarer sense of "outcome" (iv.603). Her one reference to "fatum/lot" (iv.14) •

"heu, quibus ille

lactatus fatis!"

- is of interest. Pease has a note ad loc. that deserves close attention : "...Dido may merely, in her use of the word, be quoting him (Aeneas). It is noticeable that while Aeneas constantly uses "fate(s)" in the fashion of the Stoic sage to whom he has been likened, Dido, on the other hand, prefers to speak of "casus" (i.615-6, 623, 754) or, again, of "fortuna" (iv.434, 603, 653), and where she might well have mentioned fate, she sometimes uses other expressions ; e.g. iv.550 : "non licuit"; iv.613 : "necesse est". The only other lines in which she employs the term "fate" are unusual : iv.614 : "fata Iouis" ; iv.651 : "fata deusque". In each of these may be detected a sneering reference to the religiosity of Aeneas...and we are consequently not justified in inferring from the use of the word any sincere belief on her part in fate..."

Her two references to "fatum/destiny", then, may well be coloured by her attitude to Aeneas and it need hardly be added that if we are uncertain what exactly was Dido's view of fate, then how much more uncertain are we what was Vergil's!

Her other references to "fortuna" are two in the sense of

"fortuna/destiny" (i.628 and iv.434) and one to "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" (iv.653) which provides yet another excellent example of the danger of the Personal Heresy. Vergil himself comments (iv.696) that Dido did not die "fato" but "ante diem". This assertion, taken with iv.653 -

"uixi et quem dederat cursum Fortuna peregi..."

- causes untold

difficulty for a critic attempting to elucidate a coherent attitude to destiny in the works of Vergil. If one assumes that "Fortuna" here is not the blind goddess of pure, random luck, but yet another aspect of the will of Heaven, and if one tries also to bring into consideration the dictum of Jupiter to Hercules in x.467 -

"'stat sua cuique dies..."

- as representing Vergil's view,

one has then to explain how Dido, who feels she has reached the end of the span allotted to her, can still be described by the poet as dying "nec fato" and "ante diem".⁶ The solution to the problem is surely to realise that it is a mare's nest in the first place. Dido's belief that she has run the course which "Fortuna" has allotted her is simply her opinion, all the more tragic because it is mistaken. The dramatic irony of the situation is heightened by Vergil in iv.696 when he

6. Servius made an ingenious attempt in his commentary (ad loc. iv. 653) only by stressing the literal and popular meaning of "fortuna", i.e. as if it equalled "casus" : "non natura, nec fatum. tribus enim humana vita continetur : natura, cui ultra centum et viginti solstitiales annos concessum non est ; fato, cui nonaginta anni, hoc est tres Saturni cursus, exitium creant, nisi forte aliarum stellarum benignitas etiam tertium eius superet cursum ; fortuna, id est casu, qui ad omnia pertinet quae extrinsecus sunt, ut ad ruinam, naufragia. bene ergo dixit 'Fortuna'. sic Cicero in Philippicis (I,4,10) 'multa mihi imminere videbantur praeter naturam, praeterque fatum, id est gladii Antonii ex casu.' "

describes the wretched queen as quite certainly dying, in his opinion, before her time. We are left in no doubt that Dido's death is not only tragic, but unnecessary, and tragic, moreover, because it is unnecessary. We are again presented by the poet with the spectacle of an epic character (perhaps, dramatically speaking, his most successful) whose actions and utterances are totally coherent and consistent, provided that they are seen as being no more (and no less) than expressions of that particular character in that particular situation.

(b) : TURNUS

Turnus uses "sors" once in the sense of "fate" (xii.932), claims that the "fatalia...responsa deorum" do not frighten him (ix.133-134), and urges on his men with the assurance that he has a personal destiny (i.e. "fatum/lot") of his own (ix.137) :

"sunt et mea contra
fata mihi, ferro sceleratam exscindere gentem
coniuge praerepta..."

This conviction of his that he too has a destiny as well as Aeneas leads him to question the justice of the will of Heaven, i.e. of "fatum/destiny", in ix.135 -

"sat fatis Venerique datum..."

- but never to doubt its existence.

He mentions "fortuna" no fewer than six times (more than any other character in the Aeneid, apart from Aeneas) and leads one to wonder exactly what he meant by the word. In xi.413 he uses it in the sense of individual destiny ; in xii.637 in the rare sense of "opportunity"; and in xii.694 in the rarer shade of meaning of "outcome". His three other uses of the word, however, surely refer to "Dame Fortune", in the old Italian sense of the word, not the later fickle goddess of Luck.

Two lines in Book Twelve - 676 and 677 - seem to settle this point, for the word "Fortuna" is used immediately after and in close association with the words "fata" and "deus". Juturna, disguised as Metiscus, Turnus's charioteer, has drawn her brother out of the thick of battle but he finally recognises her and all her attempts to save his life. As Saces brings news of further disaster, Turnus addresses his sister in resignation :

"iam iam fata, soror, superant, absiste morari ;
quo deus et quo dura uocat Fortuna sequamur."

He knows that

his end is near and that forces greater than himself - certainly not just the sheer luck of the draw - have brought him where he is, making use, perhaps, of his own free will to do so. Turnus's concept of destiny, indeed, is one in which "fatum" and "fortuna" become increasingly identical.

The tragedy of Turnus is that he takes so long to realise this. In xi.427 he is still optimistic, or at least says he is :

"multa dies uariique labor mutabilis aevi
rettulit in melius, multos alterna reuisens
lusit et in solido rursus Fortuna locauit."

Earlier still, in x.284, his optimism is sufficient to urge his men to boldness, a virtue which he feels receives the special favour of Fortune :

"audentis Fortuna iuuat."

In view of what ultimately happens to Turnus, who even before the final duel still holds to this courageous but misguided belief (xii.693-694) :

"parcite iam, Rutuli, et uos tela inhibete, Latini.
quaecumque est fortuna, mea est..."

- it must be evident that this belief that Fortune favours the bold could not have been one which Vergil himself staunchly held. It is totally consistent, however, with the character of Turnus, the headstrong youth with everything to fight for, that he should think and act as he does. Had he not so have thought and acted, of course, Aeneas would have lacked a heroic rival and there could not have been a Roman Iliad.

(c) : EVANDER

Evander uses the word "fors" once to mean "chance" (viii.476), which, therefore, need not concern us, and "sors" once in its sense of "fated portion" (xi.165). "Fortuna" he uses once in its sense of "prosperity" (xi.180), and "fata" in its relatively unimportant meanings of "doom" (viii.499), "lot" (viii.477) and "life-span" (xi.160). The five other occasions, however, on which he uses concepts of destiny are more significant.

It is important to realise, for the purposes of the point being made in this chapter, that the figure of Evander comes, in many senses, to replace that of Anchises.⁷ Up until Book Seven, Anchises is, in a way, the "éminence grise" of the Aeneid. His influence and presence (even after death) are never far away from the consciousness of the hero.

Just as Aeneas found comfort, solace and guidance at Cumae from Anchises, so he finds similar encouragement at the site of Rome from Evander. From the Arcadian king, however, Aeneas also receives a gift which perhaps he had no right to expect : loyalty. He is also privileged to witness a prolonged act of faith in the purposes of destiny in the way in which the old man accepts him as the fated leader and entrusts his son to the cause of fulfilling that destiny.

He is convinced that "Fortuna omnipotens" and "ineluctabile fatum" have brought him to where he meets Aeneas (viii.334). The revealers of this purpose have been his mother, Carmentis, and the god Apollo. For

7. He is mentioned by name in the epic on no fewer than 27 occasions: viii. 52,100,119,185,313,360,455,545,558; ix.9 ; x. 148,370,394,420,492, 515,780; xi. 26,31,45,55,140,148,394,835; xii. 184,551.

him, it is fairly clear, "Fortuna" is no blind, fickle force but a purposive influence, a personification of destiny perhaps more approachable than the neuter numen of "fatum". He recognises, quite selflessly, that destiny smiles on Aeneas, who has all the qualifications of greatness, a man with the "right background", appearing at the "right moment" (viii.512) :

"tu, cuius et annis
et generi fatum indulget, quem numina poscunt,
ingredere, o Teucrum atque Italum fortissime ductor."

One of the main platforms of the epic plot which Vergil inherited when he undertook the Aeneid was the need to make it sound really convincing why it was that Rome's greatness was founded on a foreign, non-Italian, Trojan leader. The epic plot demands at this point in its unfolding that any local focus of leadership should subject itself willingly to Aeneas. Evander is, par excellence, the noble leader who can selflessly perceive a greater man than himself. The tragedy of Evander, however, is that his faith fails him, not where Aeneas is concerned, but in the matter of his son Pallas. He has no doubts that Aeneas will succeed, but it is evident to all but the most insensitive reader that he knows with equal certainty what is going to happen to Pallas, but cannot bring himself to admit it. In one of the most distressing passages in the Aeneid (viii.572-584) Evander is described (by the poet who knew quite well the outcome of Book Ten) as begging the gods above and Jupiter and destiny and "Fortuna" for life, if Pallas is to be spared, but for death there and then if he is not :

"at uos, o superi, et diuum tu maxime rector
Iuppiter, Arcadii, quaeso, miserescite regis
et patrias audite preces. si numina uestra
incolumem Pallanta mihi, si fata reseruant,
si uisurus eum uiuo et uenturus in unum,

uitam oro, patior quemuis durare laborem.
 sin aliquem infandum casum, Fortuna, minaris,
 nunc, nunc o liceat crudelem abrumpere uitam..."

These are no

more, and no less, than the fears of an old and anxious father,
 dreading the worst and equally dreading to express it, calling in
 foreboding to every god he knows who might help him. They must not be
 confused with any fears that Vergil himself might feel about the
 operations of destiny.

(d) : AENEAS

Since Aeneas uses more words that refer to concepts of destiny than does any other single character in the poem - forty-six in fact - it would seem probable that in his case some definite sort of pattern of usage could be established. According to Personal Heretics, it is in the mouth of Aeneas that we are most likely to find the disguised, or some might even say overt, opinions of Vergil himself.⁸ What we find, in fact, is an attitude to destiny totally consistent with what one would expect a leader in Aeneas's position to hold, viz. the increasing certainty that, as things went his way, the prophecies (that things would go his way) were right and that things would go his way increasingly. Aeneas sees his mission almost entirely in terms of "fatum/fate" and "fatum/destiny", for on no fewer than twelve occasions, more than any other character, he refers, as we shall see, directly to that all-important concept.

For some reason, however, which may be significant, though it is hard to see in what way, Aeneas never uses the term "Parcae". He uses "fors" once (i.377) and then in its unique sense of "caprice". "Sors"

8. Vergil's artistic decision to place two whole books of the epic (Two and Three) in the mouth of Aeneas is, apart, of course, from the consideration of Homeric precedent, of great interest. Did he do so to play down deliberately his own persona as epic poet and to give prominence to his own protagonist, or was it to use Aeneas as a vehicle for his own opinions? The description of the fall of Troy and the early wanderings in his own person would surely have removed a great deal of uncertainty of interpretation, unless, of course, Vergil was all along deliberately hiding his own views. Did he, in fact, ever conceive the time would come when he would be confused with his own creations?

he uses twice and then on both occasions with the sense of "the fated lot", or simply "the fate" of a person (of Priam in ii.555, and of Anchises in vi.114). This concept of individual destiny is often prominent in Aeneas's thinking for he uses "fatum" in this sense on no fewer than ten occasions (i.382 ; ii.34, 246, 433, 506, 554, 738; iii.494 ; vi.67, 466.), seven of these in reference to the fall of Troy, an event of enormous significance in Aeneas's life, one of those emotional watersheds after which the course of a man's life and his whole attitude to it will never be the same again.

Only once, however, does Aeneas use "fortuna" in this same sense of "individual destiny" : in iii.493, in his farewell address to Helenus and Andromache :

"uiuite felices, quibus est fortuna peracta
iam sua : nos alia ex aliis in fata uocamur."

On all the other occasions when he speaks of "fortuna" he refers either to "prosperity" (iii.16, 53, 318 ; xii.436) or to "misfortune" (ii.350 ; iii.609 ; vi.62 ; ix.41 ; xi.108), apart from the one occasion when he uses the word in the rare sense of "opportunity" (ii.656), and the three references to "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" (ii.385 ; viii.127, xi.43) which will be discussed below.

For a man whose life was so dominated by oracles, Aeneas himself says remarkably little about them. He uses the concept of "fatum/doom" only three times (i.205 ; iii.700 ; vi.72). For him, as we shall now see, the overriding concept of destiny is that of the realised, or intended, will of Heaven. Indeed, all his three adjectival references to the concept of destiny use "fatalis" in the sense of "fated" - to describe the Trojan horse (ii.237) and the fields of Italy (iv.355 and v.82).

Of the four references to "fatum" as the "realised will of Heaven"

three occur in his long narrative to Dido and her court about the fall of Troy. The backward look over the unalterable past will, of course, reveal the will of Heaven, and such difference as exists between "fatum/destiny" and "fatum/fate" is largely a function of viewpoint within the time continuum. The "intended will of Heaven" cannot become the "realised will of Heaven" until the operation of human free will has been taken into account. This truth is neatly illustrated, indeed, in the last instance of the four mentioned, xi.112, where Aeneas, with heavy heart after the funeral of Pallas, receives the Latin ambassadors, who come to ask for burial for their dead. He tells them that his presence in Latium is due to the operation of fate :

"nec ueni, nisi fata locum sedemque dedissent,
nec bellum cum gente gero..."

"If the fates had not given me the place," he explains, "I should not be here." The use of the indicative "ueni" is, of course, an untranslatable brilliancy of Vergil. Aeneas is saying, in other words : "I am here now, because the fates have given (me) the place." Because his occupation of Latium is a "fait accompli", because Heaven's will for him has been realised, "fata" must surely be regarded here as an instance of "fatum/fate". Aeneas is again, as in Books Two and Three, looking back and interpreting the events of the past in the light of his personal obsession.

This obsession of Aeneas leads him to describe the Greek leaders, in ii.13, as :

"fracti bello fatisque repulsi..."

Their failure to capture Troy is regarded as being the work of fate. Yet, some twenty lines further on (ii.34) the suggestion is made that Thymoetes's proposal that the horse be brought into the city may also have been part of the fate of Troy :

"...seu iam Troiae sic fata ferebant."

What then can

Aeneas mean by describing the failure of the Greeks to win the war as the work of "fatum/fate" ? The answer surely is that he has come to realise that it was necessary for Troy to fall in precisely the way it did. Moreover, the whole weight of Homeric tradition made it virtually impossible for Vergil to represent Aeneas as thinking in any other way. It would simply not have done for the Trojans to have been defeated in battle on the plain ; to have then sued for peace ; and given up Helen with the city still standing. Nor would it have been in accord with the intended will of Heaven for Aeneas either to have died fighting on the plain or to have survived to live on in Troy. It was essential both that Troy be utterly destroyed, so that Aeneas could no longer think of it as home, and also that Aeneas, in the confusion of the treacherous night attack, should have the opportunity of escaping, honourably, with his family and followers.

The necessity for the destruction of Troy is quite evident to Aeneas by the time he comes to relate the tragedy to Dido (ii.54-56):

"et, si fata deum, si mens non laeua fuisset,
impulerat ferro Argolicas foedare latebras,
Troiaque nunc staret, Priamique arx alta maneres."

In ii.257

he even refers to the will of Heaven as "unfair" : ⁹

"fatisque deum defensus iniquis
inclusos utero Danaos et pinea furtim
laxat claustra Sinon."

At the time of narration he is, perhaps,

9. The only other adjective which could suggest disapproval applied to "fata" by Aeneas is "horrida", in xi.96, but here the reference is to "fatum/death", the only instance of Aeneas using this concept.

emotionally too close to the events to be able to describe them otherwise and is still speaking as a Trojan exile and not yet as a Roman patriarch. Intellectually, however, he has come to realise the significance of what he has lived through. In a sense, the well known line of Aeneas from Book One (462) :

"sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt"

- could, besides

the many other translations, perhaps also mean : "I can weep for what we have suffered, and (having just now seen the fall of Troy depicted objectively) those experiences touch my intellect (i.e. I can understand now what it was all for!)."

It must, however, be observed that such a viewpoint is precisely what one would expect of a character such as Aeneas. He is human enough to resent what Heaven intends for him and to deplore the way in which the will of Heaven operates ("fatisque deum...iniquis") but pious enough also to accept the necessity for it all ("nec ueni, nisi fata locum sedemque dedissent"). The best translation of "pius" has been the subject of much discussion but surely "faithful", especially with its undertone of "full of faith", cannot be the worst. The description of Aeneas above as "patriarch" was quite deliberate ; he is to the Romans exactly what Abraham was to the Hebrews.¹⁰

It is this attitude of faith in the intended will of Heaven and the expressed belief that it has, on occasions, already been achieved, which characterise Aeneas above all else. The maturity of this faith is shown in the fact that he can recognise the will of Heaven, not

10. Cf. Hebrews 11, 8-10 (N.E.B.) : "By faith Abraham obeyed the call to go out to a land destined for himself and his heirs, and left home without knowing where he was to go. By faith he settled as an alien in the land promised him... For he was looking forward to the city with firm foundation, whose architect and builder is God."

only when it is inconvenient for him, but even when it seems positively dangerous, as in ii.653, when he encourages Anchises not to stay and add to the pressure of the apparent will of Heaven :

"nos contra effusi lacrimis coniunxque Creusa
Ascaniusque omnisque domus, ne uertere secum
cuncta pater fatoque urgenti incumbere uellet."

At that moment

Aeneas was still at the stage where he regarded the activities of fate as harmful to his home and family. His actual words on that night are difficult to reconstruct exactly, since he uses "oratio obliqua". They may well have been something like : "Noli, pater, incumbere huic calamitati urgenti!" Or, if the actual word "fatum" were indeed used, it may well have borne that sense of "disaster" in Aeneas's mind at that moment. After due reflection, however, when he comes to relate the story to Dido, the sufferings of that terrible night seem better described by the now more significant term "fatum".

This need sometimes to puzzle out the workings of fate and to trust in its ultimate good intentions, even though the present implications are uncertain and therefore mysterious, is a process of thought familiar to Aeneas, as we see in vii.123 :

"genitor mihi talia namque
(nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit..."

His description of the fates, in iii.17, as "iniquis" is at first sight puzzling, especially as that adjective can mean so many things.¹¹ The best sense, however, seems surely to be the most literal and

11. Lewis and Short in their Latin Dictionary give the following meanings of "iniquus" : "unequal, uneven, not level, steep; not of the right measure, too great, too small; unfair, unjust; inimical, hostile, adverse; hurtful, injurious, unfavourable, disadvantageous; unwilling, impatient, discontented; unsuitable; imperfect, improperly drawn up."

original, viz. "not of the right measure", i.e. "out of proportion" or "not in keeping (with mine)". Aeneas had fondly imagined when he founded the city of Aeneadae that his wanderings were at an end, but the "intended will of Heaven" did not "square with" his conception of it :

"moenia prima loco fatis ingressus iniquis..."

This rather

ambivalent mixture of uncertainty and trust is also shown in iii.7 and 9, where "fatum/destiny" is referred to by Aeneas as a guiding force that controls his life (in his use of the metaphor of "bearing" : "incerti quo fata ferant") and a motive force almost as physical, yet as invisible, as the wind ("dare fatis uela iubebat").

There can be no doubt that Aeneas is quite clear in his own mind about the difference between his own personal inclinations and the will of Heaven. There is no danger that he will ever ultimately confuse his own desires with those of Heaven and persuade himself, as so many political leaders have done, that what they want is what Heaven wants. In iv.340 he expressly tells Dido that if "the fates" allowed him to live his life according to his own wishes he would have stayed at Troy and rebuilt it as a memorial to his comrades.¹² He goes on to insist that, despite the commands of Jupiter, "Italiam non sponte sequor." Even in the underworld he assures her that it was not his idea to leave

12. These lines have been touchingly paraphrased by F.W.H.Myers in Classical Essays (London, 1883), p.122 :

"Me had the fates allowed my woes to still, -
 Take my sad life and shape it at my will, -
 First had I sought my buried home and joy,
 Loves unforgotten, and the last of Troy ; -
 Ay, Priam's palace had rerisen then,
 A ghost of Ilium for heart-broken men."

Carthage when he did (vi.460) :

"inuitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi."

After the revelations of the latter half of Book Six, however, Aeneas can address Italy in vii. 120 as the land "owed" to him by the will of Heaven :

"salve fatis mihi debita tellus..."

and assure Evander in viii.133 that, despite what he knows he has said to Dido, he has come up the Tiber in harmony with "fatum/destiny" :

"sed mea me uirtus et sancta oracula diuum
cognatique patres, tua terris didita fama,
coniungere tibi et fatis egere uolentem."

For a man with such a view of destiny there can hardly be any room for belief in a goddess of Luck. Nor do we find it. Indeed, Aeneas refers only three times to "Fortuna/Dame Fortune", and on those occasions seems to regard her as an aspect of destiny. In the first, ii.385, the goddess smiles on their first engagement with the enemy. Aeneas sees Androgeos's mistake as being a revelation of the protection of "Fortuna", just as Coroebus seizes the opportunity (ii.386-388) of capitalising upon the divine intervention in a manner typical of his youthful enthusiasm. The fact that he is killed soon afterwards, while Aeneas survives, would serve only to convince such a man as Aeneas that the initial failure of the Greeks to recognise them as enemies was an act of the goddess.

If it can be doubted that Aeneas regards "Fortuna" as closely connected with the operations of "fatum" one has only to look, for confirmation of the connection, at viii.127, where he greets Evander at their first meeting as the man to whom "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" wished him to be a suppliant :

"optime Graiugenum, cui me Fortuna precari
et uitta comptos uoluit praetendere ramos..."

Six lines later,

as we have seen above, Aeneas insists that he has come to Evander "fatis...uolentem". The whole drift of his speech, indeed, is to assure the Arcadian king that he is asking for his help as a result neither of random chance nor of cynical opportunism ; their alliance is the will of Heaven.

Aeneas's last reference to "Fortuna" is in xi.43, where he addresses his last words to the corpse of Pallas :

"'tene,' inquit 'miserande puer, cum laeta ueniret,
inuidit Fortuna mihi, ne regna uideres
nostra neque ad sedes uictor ueherere paternas ?'"

The clause

"cum laeta ueniret" surely refers to their happy first meeting and subsequent alliance, ordained by destiny with "Fortuna" assisting. How, then, does one explain the goddess's apparent change of mind ? Aeneas's suggestion that she might be jealous of his happiness ("inuidit") if he had been allowed to have both his victory and Pallas alive to see it, seems at first sight strange. The answer to this problem, however, lies in a study of the context and of the character of Aeneas. If one remembers that, on Pallas's departure with Aeneas to the wars in Book Eight, Evander had voiced dark fears about the outcome, one will see that it is this incident which the guilt-ridden Aeneas has in mind. Evander's actual words had been (viii.578) :

"sin aliquem infandum casum, Fortuna, minaris..."

though he had

opened his prayers with an appeal to Jupiter (viii.572-574). Aeneas is therefore in turn suggesting here that Evander had been right in supposing that the gods intended some terrible thing to happen to Pallas, also right in nevertheless letting him go, and also right in blaming "Fortuna", as, perhaps, an agent of Jupiter, rather than

naming the king of gods himself. In xi.43, Aeneas himself suggests that "Fortuna" is responsible, piously excludes reference to Jupiter, and convinces himself by the use of such words as "regna nostra" that he had nevertheless been right to take Pallas away. Although the activities of "Fortuna" were regarded by Aeneas as associated with the will of Heaven and as being, in fact, expressions of it, it seems that the religious mind - certainly the mind that worships a transcendent rather than an immanent deity - is quite capable of separating, and indeed needs to separate, the Godhead from its various aspects.¹³

Aeneas, then, has definite views about destiny. It need hardly be added that to assume from these what the opinions of Vergil himself were about destiny is fraught with danger. The very fact that some critics see Aeneas as Vergil himself, while others see him as Augustus, should be ample warning. The text allows several interpretations, but only one is safe : Aeneas is Aeneas - a man obsessed with destiny, depicted as describing this force which he feels driving him on, in the words in which such a man, in such a situation, naturally would use. The man who, as every Roman schoolboy knew, had brought Troy to Rome could not be presented by any poet, however celebrated, as insisting that he had achieved the foundation of an empire by his own efforts and by the opportune exploitation of pot luck any more than Julius Caesar could ever have been portrayed by Shakespeare as having refused to go to the Capitol on the morning of the Ides of March.

13. Cf. the problem, in Old Testament scholarship, of the distinction between "Yahweh" and "the angel of Yahweh" (e.g. Genesis 16,18,19, 21,22,31; Judges 6,13). Some scholars insist that "the angel of Yahweh" must be seen merely as an exteriorisation of Yahweh (perhaps added by later writers who felt Yahweh was too transcendent to be seen walking on earth), while others maintain that Yahweh and his angel are two different personalities. See The Theology of Angels and Devils by R. van der Hart, (Cork, 1972) in "Theology of Today" Series, no.36.

6 : GODS

(a) : VENUS

Venus does not seem to know very much about the plans of destiny. Although as a major goddess and mother of the protagonist she exerts considerable influence upon the action, she does not intervene with any deeply laid strategy and seems to need reassurance that all will go well (i.254ff. ; v.779ff. ; viii.370ff. ; x. 16ff.). Nor does she speak a great deal about destiny : "fortuna/misfortune" she mentions once (i.240) ; "fortuna/prosperity" twice (iv.109; x.43) ; "fatum/doom" once (iv.110) ; and "fatum/lot" three times (i.239 twice ; x.35), according to the last of which she seems to identify destiny with the commands of Jupiter :

"sin tot responsa secuti

quae superi manesque dabant, cur nunc tua quisquam

uertere iussa potest aut cur noua condere fata ?"

Her one reference to "fatum/doom" (iv.110) is of interest, however, because it raises the whole question of her reliability. In her conversation with her rival, Juno, she realises that the Trojans' persecutrix is being disingenuous when she suggests that they both allow Dido and Aeneas to seek alliance in marriage, because Juno's ulterior purpose is to deflect Aeneas from Italy and thus thwart fate's plan to foster Rome. She accordingly replies :

"sed fatis incerta feror, si Iuppiter unam

esse uelit Tyriis urbem Troiaque profectis,

misceriue probet populos aut foedera iungi."

Again, as in the case of Sinon, the context of the speaker's remarks is vital to our

understanding of them. As R.G.Austin pointed out (ad loc.) : "Jupiter, she says, may not allow the scheme. In fact, of course, she had no doubt whatever of Aeneas' destiny." Venus, in short, is simply exercising a crafty diplomacy. It would be unwise, therefore, to build any theories about her concept of destiny from these lines.¹⁴

The same caution, however, needs to be applied to what Venus says about "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" in her impassioned appeal to Jupiter at the beginning of Book Ten. She suggests that she will be prepared to let Aeneas suffer if only she can be assured that her grandson Ascanius will survive (x.46-50) :

"liceat dimittere ab armis
incolumem Ascanium, liceat superesse nepotem.
Aeneas sane ignotis iactetur in undis
et quacumque uiam dederit Fortuna sequatur :
hunc tegere et dirae ualeam subducere pugnae."

One could argue

long about the exact concept of "Fortuna" she has in mind here, but all to little purpose. She is again acting a part and appearing to offer a "quid pro quo". How safe, after all, would Iulus be with Aeneas dead, and to what avail would have been the cajoling of Vulcan to produce armour for her son if she were really prepared to lose him as part of some political bargain ? It is clear that what she says is entirely dependent upon her character and the situation in which she finds herself.

In the same way, in her speech to Neptune at the end of Book Five, her single references to "fatum/destiny" and to the "Parcae" are to be interpreted in the context of special pleading, as even she herself

14. This has not, however, prevented W.F.Jackson Knight from suggesting that the character of Venus represents Vergil's own mother—Roman Vergil (London, 1944), p.111f.

admits (v.781-782) :

"Iunonis grauis ira neque exsaturabile pectus
cogunt me, Neptune, preces descendere in omnis..."

She goes on

at once to describe Juno as "unbroken by the intended will of Heaven" :

"quam nec longa dies pietas nec mitigat ulla,
nec Iouis imperio fatisque infracta quiescit."

There has been

some debate, as one can imagine, as to whether "imperio" is to be taken solely with "Iouis", thereby leaving "fatis" to stand alone and mean "destiny" as opposed to Jupiter ; or whether we are to understand her to mean "...unbroken by the command and decrees of Jupiter", thereby subordinating the fates to him. ¹⁵

Some lines further on, in v.798, she expresses doubt concerning the intended will of Heaven when she asks Neptune for a fair wind for the Trojans to make a safe landfall in Italy :

"quod superest, oro, liceat dare tuta per undas
uela tibi, liceat Laurentem attingere Thybrim,
si concessa peto, si dant ea moenia Parcae."

Again, whatever

Venus's concept of the "Parcae" may have been, she has no need to qualify her request to Neptune with spurious riders about the possibility of her asking for something which has not been allowed ("si concessa peto") and which the agents of Jupiter's will may not have granted ("si dant ea moenia Parcae"), for in i.257-259 she was given Jupiter's firm promise :

15. Conington has recourse (ad loc.) to the reading of the MS.

Vaticanus : "fatisve", and comments, rather obscurely, that it "signifies little which we adopt. The command of Jove and the will of destiny are naturally combined, tending as they do the same way, and as naturally distinguished."

"parce metu, Cytherea, manent immota tuorum
fata tibi ; cernes urbem et promissa Lauini
moenia..."

The doubts which she expresses are merely emotional devices to sway Neptune (cf. her approach to Vulcan in Book Eight) and her apparent opinions upon the exact nature of the powers of the "Parcae" are dictated by the rhetorical requirements of the situation.

Venus's concept of destiny, therefore, is totally obscure and provides yet again a striking example of the overriding importance of paying constant and close attention to the inner logic of both the characterisation and the narrative situation.

(b) : JUNO

Juno regards destiny as an essentially constraining power, opposed to her interests, against which she nevertheless struggles. She refers to "fatum/lot" on three occasions (vii.293, 294 ; xii.149) and to "fortuna/opportunity" once (vii.559). Her one other reference to fortune (xii.147) is in close connection with the "Parcae" and needs to be considered along with her two references to those powers (xii. 147 and 150).

At the beginning of the epic we have, of course, her infamous and ironical comment (i.39) : "quippe uetor fatis" - "so I'm forbidden by the intended will of Heaven, am I ?" Her decision to oppose what destiny intends is necessary for the whole action of the poem. As soon as she withdraws her opposition in xii.818 :

"et nunc cedo equidem pugnasque exosa relinquo..."

- the drama

hurries to its conclusion. The structure of the Aeneid requires that some supernatural power should counterbalance the activity of Venus on behalf of the Trojans, and this opposition is provided by Juno. Dramatic tension is thus maintained and the scope of the struggle given an extra dimension by the involvement of Olympus. In short, if Juno's opposition to destiny had not existed, it would have been artistically necessary to invent it.

In both vii.314 and x.67 Juno again admits that Aeneas cannot be ultimately prevented from reaching Italy and ruling there. On both occasions she uses the same words of concession - "esto". Lavinia remains Aeneas's bride "by the intended will of Heaven" and he has made for Italy "with the realised will of Heaven behind it all ("fatis auctoribus"). She nevertheless insists upon her ability to delay the

designs of destiny (vii.315) :

"at trahere atque moras tantis licet addere rebus..."

- showing

thereby that she knows at least as much as Vulcan did in viii.398-399.

She also seems to know something about what the "laws of destiny" permit and do not permit, for she reminds Jupiter in xii.819 that it is not forbidden for the Latins to retain their name, even though they may have been defeated by the Trojans :

"illud te, nulla fati quod lege tenetur,
pro Latio obtestor, pro maiestate tuorum..."

Her concept of

destiny, it would therefore seem, has no room for a complete and thoroughgoing determinism.

It would, however, appear to attribute considerable power to "Fortuna" and the "Parcae". In her speech to Juturna in xii.142-153, Juno says that she herself protected Turnus while "Fortuna" seemed to allow it and the "Parcae" permitted success to Latium :

"qua uisa est Fortuna pati Parcaeque sinebant
cedere res Latio, Turnum et tua moenia texi ;
nunc iuuenem imparibus uideo concurrere fatis,
Parcarumque dies et uis inimica propinquat."

"Fortuna" here is

surely the goddess herself, and so closely linked with the "Parcae" that together they represent destiny in its feminine exteriorisation - a form of the concept no doubt most palatable to the Queen of Heaven.¹⁶ Servius, indeed, jumps to the conclusion that some sort of general

16. Warde Fowler comments (ad loc.) : "Note that 'Fortuna' is here equivalent to the 'Parcae' ; she is the cosmic power which is closely related to the Stoic *ἐμπαρμένη*, and the editor may be right in printing her with a large F."

theological rule can be inferred from Juno's comments and asserts (ad loc.) : "sane latenter ostendit, favorem numinum sine concessione factorum non posse procedere." Again, however, one must examine the context of Juno's remarks.

She is addressing Turnus's sister in a last ditch attempt to get her to break the truce and thereby perhaps save his life. The reference to Jupiter's amour with Juturna is not without significance. The point is that Juno is having to ask a favour of a rival, albeit one who has a common interest with her at that moment, and this fact colours everything she says. Her description of Juturna as (xii.142):

"nympha, decus fluuiorum, animo gratissima nostro..."

- need

not be taken as a genuine declaration of affection. This reminder of her husband's infidelity is hardly designed to encourage her to attribute to him all the honour and influence which she knows he really possesses. In fact, the only power of Jupiter to which she makes any reference in the passage is that of his sexual appetite (144):

"quaecumque Latinae

magnanimi Iouis ingratum ascendere cubile."

The reference to

his bed as "ingratum" - "ungrateful" - is surely indicative of that sympathy (which need not exclude mutual dislike and distrust) between females who have both been deceived by the same male. Vergil himself had earlier commented (139-141) that Jupiter had rewarded Juturna for her favours by giving her the charge of pools and rivers. This is not specifically admitted by Juno, who prefers to remind the nymph that she herself has rewarded her (143 and 145) :

"scis ut te cunctis unam..."

praetulerim caelique libens in parte locarim..."

The outline of

the activities of destiny provided by Juno in this passage are therefore exactly what we should expect a poet of Vergil's subtlety to put into the mouth of a proud, scheming, jealous goddess at such a critical moment in the unfolding of the plot. It would, of course, be a serious error of literary criticism to attempt to elevate such an outline into a general theological statement about the subservience of Jupiter to "Fortuna" and the "Parcae".

There can be little doubt, then, about Juno's concept of destiny. The force is a profound inconvenience to her. Obvious though her attitude to it may be, however, it must again be emphasised that Juno's concept of destiny cannot lead us to Vergil's.¹⁷

17. Henry makes this necessary distinction between Juno and Vergil, when discussing "quippe uetor fatis" (i.39), but goes on, as have so many others, to make a general assertion : "In other words, what use in Gods if the Fates rule ? The very question put by theist and atheist alike at the present day ; and which, answered by the theist to himself as Juno answers it in her own breast, is answered by the atheist aloud as it is answered by Virgil and the poem."

(c) : JUPITER

In any discussion of "Jupiter's concept of destiny" there is an obvious preliminary problem that is inherent in such a subject and to which a solution must be attempted : if Jupiter is indeed the same as destiny, or even if he is simply a personification of it, can he, in any meaningful sense, then be said to have a concept of destiny at all ? It will be assumed in this chapter that for the purposes of argument he can indeed have a concept of destiny, inasmuch as it seems valid to assert that any man - and, therefore, by extension any anthropomorphic god - can have a concept, however nebulous or illusory, of himself.

Whereas all the other characters of the epic who have so far been considered in this chapter can be examined in isolation from each other and can have their utterances analysed in search of any overriding, or even hidden, concept of destiny, there is something about the very nature of the concept of Jupiter which puts him into quite a different category. Anything that the others may have said is subject to ignorance, error, prejudice or even deceit, but anything that Jupiter says must surely be considered to have an authority so great that the difference between it and the authority of all the other statements is one not merely of degree but of kind. If Jupiter is seriously characterised by Vergil as the omnipotent ruler of Olympus, the king of gods and men - and the overwhelming balance of scholarly opinion is in favour of such an interpretation - then we must weigh his words with care. Setting aside the arguments already described in Chapter One of this investigation about the relationship between Jupiter and destiny, we must now proceed to examine in what ways the words "fatum" and "fortuna" are used by the character to whom Vergil has given the name of Jupiter - be he the same as destiny, or destiny's

agent, or destiny's pawn.

The first point of interest, in fact, is that those are the only two terms that Jupiter uses in the epic. He never uses "fors" or "sors" to refer to destiny ; never makes "fatum" into an adjective ; and, perhaps most interesting of all, never mentions the "Parcae". The significance of this omission, however, is difficult, if not impossible, to discover. Was Vergil, by refraining from putting the word in the mouth of Jupiter, perhaps indicating that the character of the lord of Olympus was such that he was either too proud to acknowledge the existence of any rivals or completely unaware of their existence as distinct from himself, in much the same way that, say, a schoolmaster may be unaware of a nickname given to him by his pupils, the aspect of his character which prompts the nickname being invisible to himself ?

"Fortuna" he uses twice (x.107 and 112), firstly in the sense of "(individual) destiny" and secondly in the sense of "prosperity", but on both occasions in a sense opposed to "labor" ("suffering" or "hardship"). This passage in which he declares his impartiality is well known and will be examined in greater detail below (p.180f.).

He speaks on five occasions of "fatum/lot" (i.258 ; x.109, 113, 472, 624) and although this has been regarded in this chapter so far as a relatively unimportant concept of destiny, the term, when used by Jupiter, takes on a special significance since it is, perhaps, he himself who has arranged that individual destiny. For all other gods and men "fatum/lot" is something given, which they can comment upon, wonder about, perhaps defer, but hardly change ; for Jupiter "fatum/lot" is either something he decides and gives himself, or something he delegates to his agents the "Parcae" and "Fortuna" to arrange in accordance with his general will, or something given by a power greater than himself, the doing of whose will, as king of gods and men, he upholds.

Whatever the truth of the matter, Jupiter certainly seems to know a great deal about the "fatum/lot" of many characters. In i.258 he is able to reassure Venus that the "individual fates" of her people are unchanged :

"parce metu, Cytherea, manent immota tuorum
fata tibi ; cernes urbem et promissa Lauini
moenia, sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli
magnanimum Aenean ; neque me sententia uertit."

It would seem that the last statement - "neque me sententia uertit" - is clearly connected with the assurance that the "fata" of Venus's people are "immota" ; because Jupiter wishes Aeneas to be glorified, he is fated to be glorified.

Similarly, in x.472, Jupiter is equally certain what will happen to Pallas and to Turnus. He has just told Hercules that :

"stat sua cuique dies, breue et irreparabile tempus
omnibus est uitae..."

- and goes on to explain that :

"etiam sua Turnum
fata uocant metasque dati peruenit ad aeuum."

It must, of course, be observed that he does not here say, or even imply, who or what it is that gives the length of life ("dati...aeui"). In x.622-625, however, when answering Juno's complaint that he has not allowed her to save Turnus, he is more explicit. He grants her the power to delay the fated death of Turnus, on the clear understanding that die he must eventually and then because he, Jupiter, is so arranging it :

"si mora praesentis leti tempusque caduco
oratur iuueni meque hoc ita ponere sentis,
tolle fuga Turnum atque instantibus eripe fati :
hactenus indulsisse uacat."

She is told to snatch him from the "fatum/lot" which is pressing upon him. This would indeed seem to be fairly firm proof that Jupiter regarded himself as controlling destiny, but it must be pointed out that he need only be referring to his control over individual destinies. There is also the problem of the meaning of the expression "hactenus indulsisse uacat". Lewis and Short quote x.625 in their Latin Dictionary as an example of "uacat" meaning the same as "licet", i.e. "it is permitted". The primary meaning they give to it, however, even quoting i.373 -

"et uacet annalis nostrorum audire laborum"

- , is "there is time, room, leisure for". Jupiter could quite simply, therefore, mean : "snatch him from his approaching destiny : there is (still) time for me to indulge your request." This leaves him in control of what happens to Turnus. The translation "it is permitted (for me) to indulge your request", however, raises the whole question of "permitted by whom or by what ?"

With this uncertainty in mind we must now turn to that passage in Book Ten which seems to encapsulate the whole problem of Jupiter's relation to destiny, viz. his speech to the other gods in lines 104-113. He has called a council to discuss the fact that, contrary to his wishes, there is war in Italy. Venus and Juno both state their case and it is largely in an attempt to pacify them - a point which must constantly be borne in mind - that Jupiter speaks :

"quandoquidem Ausonios coniungi foedere Teucris

haud licitum, nec uestra capit discordia finem,

quae cuique est fortuna hodie, quam quisque secat spem,

Tros Rutulusne fuat, nullo discrimine habebo,

seu fatis Italum castra obsidione tenentur

siue errore malo Troiae monitisque sinistris.

nec Rutulos soluo. sua cuique exorsa laborem
 fortunamque ferent. rex Iuppiter omnibus idem.
 fata uiam inuenient."

Having first heard Venus complain that the Trojans are nearly done for because the Rutulians are allowed to press home their siege now Aeneas is away, and Juno counter this by claiming in turn that Aeneas was foolishly misled into leaving Troy, where he should have stayed, and attacking a peaceable people ("Quis deus in fraudem...egit ?" she pointedly asks), Jupiter has a delicate task to perform. He knows very well, as do Venus and Juno, that Aeneas has not come to Italy in the manner outlined by Juno. He knows which god intended Aeneas to rule in Italy. He knows too that to achieve the eventual establishment of Rome he must, in effect, favour the Trojans at the expense of the Rutulians, even though the Trojans must also struggle to play their part in their ultimate victory. But how, at the moment, is he to break this news to Juno without making her an object of mockery in front of the whole court of Olympus ? It is, after all, when they are alone together, in xii.791-806, that Jupiter finally persuades Juno to admit that nothing can prevent Aeneas being finally glorified. There is also the consideration that Vergil was very much aware that an unequivocal announcement at this moment in the mouth of Jupiter of the ultimate triumph of the Trojans would remove most of the tension from the ensuing drama of the pitched battle. Again, the exigencies of the epic situation demand that Jupiter speak less than the whole truth, and we must evaluate the importance of his words accordingly.

What, in effect, he may be paraphrased as saying is this : "Since fighting between the Italians and the Trojans seems inevitable, and since you two cannot come to terms, I shall keep out of this quarrel by favouring neither side, whether the present desperate plight of the

besieged Trojans is a result of the individual fates of the Italians, arranged by me to favour them (as you claim, Venus), or a result of their being misguided by someone into wrongly invading a peaceful country (as you claim, Juno). (If that sounds as if I am withdrawing my influence over events at a moment particularly unfavourable to your side, Venus) do not imagine that I am releasing the Italians from the laws of fate - each man's own free actions will bring him either failure or success. I shall be impartial to all. Their own individual destinies will sort out what happens.¹⁸ (And since you and I, Venus, know the true qualities of Aeneas, all will be well.)"

The tense of the understood verb in Jupiter's statement -

"rex Iuppiter omnibus idem"

- is surely

future ("erit" balancing the "habebo" which precedes and the "inuenient" which follows) and is taken to refer only to his attitude and conduct in the coming battle. There can be little question of his meaning that he "is" impartial to all, as a general statement about his divine and unchanging nature. In any case, whatever he may have said about, or meant by, his impartiality, he does not, in the event, maintain it. In support of the argument that Jupiter is here speaking with Juno particularly in mind, attention must be drawn to the indisputable fact that in x.689 we are clearly told that while Turnus is removed from the battle by Juno, Mezentius is brought more forcibly into it. One would expect, perhaps, to find that it was also Juno who was thus replacing one hero with another, but in fact, despite what he said in

18. For another interesting interpretation of the expression "uiam inuenient" see M.W.Edwards, "The Expression of Stoic Ideas in the Aeneid" Phoenix 14 (1960), pp.151-165. He describes the phrase (p.154) as one "which I take to mean not 'a way for themselves' nor 'a way out of the difficulty', but 'a road (for man) to travel'."

x.113, we learn that it is none other than Jupiter himself :

"At Iouis interea monitis Mezentius ardens
succedit pugnae..."

Jupiter's intervention at this critical moment is open to two interpretations : either he wanted to prolong the war for as long as it took for Turnus to be eliminated (and a sudden Trojan victory at the disappearance of Turnus would prevent this), or he had good reasons for bringing Mezentius (the "contemptor diuum") and Aeneas together in combat (viz. so that Mezentius should be killed). For whichever reason he "warned" Mezentius to stir himself, Jupiter cannot be described as acting "nullo discrimine" towards either Turnus or Mezentius, for if he had not intervened at this crucial moment and had indeed allowed their individual fates to "find a way", both could possibly have survived.

There is no need, however, to make of x.113-114 a breeding-ground of theological complications, a procedure initiated by Servius with his well-known gloss : "et videtur hic ostendisse, aliud esse fata, aliud Jovem." All that is required for an understanding of this passage is the simple recognition that here we have an example not of "fatum/fate" or of "fatum/destiny" but of "fatum/lot" ; that Jupiter is not preaching a sermon upon his relationship to destiny, but trying to pacify two warring goddesses ; and that Vergil, the epic craftsman, is attempting to maintain the inner logic of his plot by presenting to his readers a king of the gods who acts and speaks in character, viz. as a king skilfully controlling a royal court, and is also attempting to sustain the dramatic tension of his slowly unfolding narrative.

There now remain the four instances of Jupiter's use of "fatum" to mean destiny (i.262 ; iv.225 ; ix.94 ; xii.795). That he never refers to "fatum/fate" - the realised will of Heaven - is perhaps simply explained by the observation that all his appearances in the poem

occur at moments when all the interest of the action is trained upon the future. His references to "fatum/destiny", however, give no clear-cut indication of what his real concept of destiny is.

In i.262 he promises the anxious Venus that Aeneas's race have a glorious future before them and a historical mission to perform. His outline of Roman history (i.257-296) is too well-known to need any comment, but he prefaces it with the parenthetical statement that in giving her this glimpse of the future he will reveal the secrets of the intended will of Heaven :

"(fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet,
longius, et uoluens fatorum arcana mouebo)..."

He would seem,

therefore, to know the "secrets of the fates", or at least to have access to them. He can, apparently reveal them, as he pleases, to whomsoever he pleases. The metaphor of (un)rolling a book ("uoluens"), if indeed such it be, is interesting inasmuch as it implies that the "book of fate" is already written. Jupiter is able to read on ahead, just as the reader of a novel may, if he wishes, read the last chapter first, and is therefore able to see, "sub specie aeternitatis", what must happen. This does not, of course, tell us whether Jupiter wrote the book.

In his instructions to Mercury in iv.225 Jupiter describes Aeneas as not having a care for the cities that have been given him by the "intended will of Heaven" :

"fatisque datas non respicit urbes..."

Again, it is

uncertain whether Jupiter himself or some other power has granted these cities to Aeneas. The same uncertainty about the exact position of Jupiter is revealed in xii.795 where he finally persuades Juno to give up her opposition to the Trojans, reminding her that Aeneas, as well

she knows, is to be raised to divine honours "by the intended will of Heaven" :

"indigetem Aenean scis ipsa et scire fateris
deberi caelo fatisque ad sidera tolli."

Some possibility of a solution to the problem may, however, present itself in ix.94. After Turnus has fired the Trojan ships, Cybele turns them into sea-nymphs. She is allowed to do this because Jupiter, who now rules ("domito Olympo" - ix.84), once promised her, when Aeneas first built his fleet on Phrygian Ida, that whichever ships finally reached Italy safe and sound would be changed into sea-nymphs. At the time she had, in fact, asked that none of the ships should ever be destroyed by any voyage or storm but he had refused this request as excessive :

"o genetrix, quo fata uocas ? aut quid petis istis ?
mortaline manu factae immortale carinae
fas habeant ? certusque incerta pericula lustret
Aeneas ? cui tanta deo permissa potestas ?"

The grounds for his refusal are of some interest. Apparently Cybele is "calling the intended will of Heaven" in a wrong direction. It must be assumed, therefore, that it is the intended will of Heaven for Aeneas not to be granted absolute certainty of success. It is part of Heaven's plan for him that he should suffer at sea and earn his glory. Aeneas's active co-operation in his destiny is a necessary requirement. The founder of the Roman race cannot be a mere puppet.

One other important point emerges from this incident : Jupiter clearly addresses Cybele as his mother. It is difficult to assess how well educated in theogony Vergil's audience were ; certainly his use of epithets may indicate that he felt it necessary to remind his readers of the exact pedigree and function of some Olympians. At any

rate, Vergil's insistence upon the nature of the relationship between Jupiter and Cybele seems quite pointed here. He refers to her in ix.82 as "ipsa deum...genetrix Berecynthia". She addresses Jupiter in ix.83 as "nate" and refers to herself in ix.84 as "tua cara parens". In ix.93 Vergil again refers to Jupiter as her "filius", even if he is a son who "torquet...sidera mundi". These references to Cybele's motherhood and Jupiter's sonship - possibly constructed as pointed reminders to Vergil's readers - of course imply that Jupiter himself once had a beginning and that therefore there was a time when he did not exist. That idea in itself begs some important questions.

If Jupiter controls destiny, who controlled it before he came to power ? If Jupiter is equivalent to destiny, was there no destiny before he was born ? In short, are what have been referred to throughout as "the realised will of Heaven" and "the intended will of Heaven" necessarily the same things as "the will (realised or intended) of Jupiter ? The character of Jupiter himself has given no clear answer to these questions. We have simply seen from an examination of his utterances that what he says about destiny is either open to several interpretations or just the result of the demands of the epic plot rather than a statement of doctrine. It is time, therefore, to turn at last to an examination of what the author and embellisher of that plot says, or seems to say, about destiny.

7 : VERGIL

Before turning to an examination of those lines in the Aeneid in which the poet may be said to speak in his own voice, rather than through the mouthpiece of any particular epic character, there is a group of references to destiny made by Vergil which must first be dealt with. These are references which, though apparently made by the poet himself, actually report what are in effect the words or thoughts of a character, and which could perhaps just as easily have been put into direct speech on the lips of a character, if the poet had so wished.

An example of this type of Vergilean reference is xii.243, where the poet reports the feelings, after Juturna's speech, of the Laurentes and Latini about Turnus having to face death in single combat :

"nunc arma uolunt foedusque precantur
infectum et Turni sortem miserantur iniquam."

Vergil is, in effect, saying : "The Italians muttered among themselves, 'Damn the treaty! Poor Turnus!' " The attitude which considers the treaty to be "infectum" is that of the Italians - it is they who think Turnus's "sors" to be "iniqua", not necessarily Vergil himself.

Similarly, it is the words of Juno herself, rather than his own, that Vergil reports in i.17-18 when he records the goddess's intentions :

"hoc regnum dea gentibus esse,
si qua fata sinant, iam tum tenditque fouetque."

And it is Juno's fears about the plans of destiny, rather than his own, which he

refers to in i.21-22 :

"hinc populum late regem belloque superbum
uenturum excidio Libyae ; sic uoluere Parcas."

Once more, in i.299-300, it is Jupiter's intention that is relayed to us through the message of Mercury. Dido must not drive Aeneas off her coast and thus out of ignorance thwart fate's plan :

"Maia genitum demittit ab alto,
ut terrae utque nouae pateant Karthaginis arces
hospitio Teucris, ne fati nescia Dido
finibus arceret."

Although Vergil says this, he is merely stating in "oratio obliqua" what would have been expressed in "oratio recta" by having Jupiter tell Mercury : "Go down to Carthage and see to it that the Trojans are welcomed there and that Dido does not drive them away from her borders because she is ignorant of the will of Heaven." It was Jupiter's intention that the Trojans should have a merely temporary respite in Carthage before proceeding to Italy, but it is, of course, Venus who makes Dido fall in love with Aeneas to ensure that the Carthaginian queen cannot, under the possible malign influence of Juno, ever think of harming him. R.G.Austin perceptively comments (ad loc.) : "There is a terrible irony in 'fati nescia' : Dido must not frustrate, through mere human ignorance of the will of Jupiter ('fatum'), the plan which was to bring her a personal 'fatum' of which her ignorance counted for nothing." The phrase "fati nescia", however, is perhaps rather part of Jupiter's words to Mercury, merely reported here, and any irony contained therein is to be attributed to the ruler of Olympus, as conceived by Vergil, rather than to be regarded as indicative of what Vergil himself felt would be a fair description of Dido's condition.

A similar case arises in iv.519 where, although it is Vergil who

describes Dido as calling the gods and stars to witness her prayer, it is effectively the words of Dido that we hear :

"testatur moritura deos et conscia fati
sidera..."

She has already made up her mind (iv.451) to die :

"Tum uero infelix fatis exterrita Dido
mortem orat..."

Her words in iv.519, therefore, could well have been expressed in the first person as : "testor, moritura, uos deos et sidera quae conscia estis fati (mortis) mei." Thus understood they do not, of course, reflect any astrological view of Vergil himself.¹⁹

There are four other occasions when, although Vergil himself and not any particular character is speaking, the words spoken are virtually "oratio recta" and reflect the actual words or thoughts of an epic character. The first is v.700-703, when Aeneas's worries are described :

"At pater Aeneas casu concussus acerbo
nunc huc ingentis, nunc illuc pectore curas
mutabat uersans, Siculisne resideret aruis
oblitus fatorum, Italasne capesseret oras."

Another is vii.

78-80, when the miraculous catching fire of Lavinia's hair is announced as a fateful omen of her own fame :

"id uero horrendum ac uisu mirabile ferri :
namque fore inlustrem fama fatisque canebant

19. Nor, if the simple meaning of "mors" is given to "fatum" here, need they reflect any astrological belief of Dido. Nevertheless, A.S. Pease refers (ad loc.) to an article of M. De Witt Gray who detected what he considered could be an astrological allusion.

ipsam, sed populo magnum portendere bellum."

The third is vii.

255-256, where old Latinus ponders the oracle of Faunus and realises that Aeneas is the son-in-law foretold for him :

"hunc illum fatis externa ab sede profectum
portendi generum..."

and the last is to be found in xii.110-111, where Aeneas explains to Iulus how the coming single combat between Turnus and himself is part of destiny :

"tum socios maestique metum solatur Iuli
fata docens..."

The nine references dealt with above, then, do not really represent the thought of the poet himself as epic narrator but are rather oblique expressions of the viewpoints of his various characters. We may now proceed to examine the words of the poet himself.

In turning first to the less significant concepts of destiny, viz. "fatum/lot", "fatum/doom", "fatum/death" and "fatum/life-span", we find that Vergil uses "fatum/lot" more than any other particular concept. He uses it, in fact, on eight occasions : to refer to the individual destinies of Dido (iv.450); Caeneus (vi.449); the descendants of Anchises (vi.683); the descendants of Aeneas (viii.731); the Etruscan race (x.154); Lagus (x.380); the son of Aunus (xi.700) ; and Aeneas and Turnus (xii.726). Although "fatum/lot" is not so important a concept as "fatum/fate" or "fatum/destiny" - at any rate where the extraction of a general philosophy of destiny in the Aeneid is concerned - this does not, of course, mean that Vergil applied the term to these characters in any trivial way. He saw their actions and deaths as part of the overall pattern of destiny running through his epic poem and therefore saw each as charged with a significance upon

which he evidently felt it necessary to comment by his deliberate choice of the word "fatum" rather than any other.²⁰

"Fatum/doom" he uses only three times : to describe Latinus (vii. 50); Heracles (viii.292); and the father of Halaesus (x.417). "Fatum/life-span" he uses, on one of the two occasions it occurs in the whole epic, to refer to Iapyx (xii.395); while "fatum/death" he uses four times, when speaking of Lycus (i.222); Pallas and Lausus (x.438); Sucro the Rutulian (xii.507); and Amata (xii.610).

The derivatives of "fatum" ("fatalis", "fatifer" and "fatidicus") Vergil uses on no fewer than nine occasions. He alone uses the words "fatifer" and "fatidicus", and of the twelve occurrences of "fatalis" in the whole epic he is responsible for four. It is difficult, however, to assign any significance to his usage of these words or to discern any pattern in them. "Fatalis" he uses to describe things as disparate as the Golden Bough (vi.409); the loaf of bread whose consumption fulfilled the oracle (vii.115); Aeneas himself, as seen by Latinus (xi.232);²¹ and the spear of Aeneas, which brought Turnus down (xii.919). "Fatifer" refers to Aeneas's sword (viii.621) and to Ascanius's bow (ix.631), while "fatidicus" is used to describe Faunus

20. Warde Fowler comments on xii.726 : "...with all Greek literature and philosophy to help him, is it likely that Virgil's idea of this weighing should revert to the Homeric type, and compel us to translate 'fata duorum' as the 'deaths' of the two rivals? Surely not: 'fatum', 'fata', all through the Aeneid, conveys or implies the idea of moral values. Aeneas is the instrument of a just destiny, that is to bring good government and finally peace to the world. To suppose that the balance is to decide the fate of the two men without reference to their values is to my mind preposterous..."

21. There is also the possibility that we have here Latinus's thoughts, rather than Vergil's, being obliquely expressed.

(vii.82), Carmentis (viii.340) and Manto (x.199). These adjectives seem, indeed, to be little more than convenient labels to remind the reader occasionally of the great theme of the book,²² even when it affects apparently minor characters, and to underline the importance in destiny's plan of the role of certain hallowed objects, viz. the Golden Bough, the Loaf, the Sword and the Bow.²³

Of the fifty-three occasions upon which Vergil uses words that refer to some concept of destiny only eleven times does he mention "fortuna", and only two of these are clear references to "Fortuna/Dame Fortune", which will be discussed later (see below p.198). He uses "fortuna/destiny" twice (vi.683 and ix.723); "fortuna/prosperity" three times (i.454; vii.413; xii.405); "fortuna/misfortune" twice (i.517 and xii.593); and "fortuna/opportunity" twice (xi.761 and xii.920). Of the seven references to "fors" (in the nominative, used substantivally rather than adverbially) in the whole epic Vergil himself can be said to utter only two (x.458; xii.714), both being instances of the word in its simple meaning of "chance" - the philosophical opposite of destiny. Of the twenty-seven instances of "sors" in the epic, however, Vergil speaks only two (vi.332; x.501). On both occasions the meaning would seem to be "fated portion" or "what destiny has allotted". In vi.332, however, -

22. These reminders tend to gravitate towards the latter half of the epic. Of the total 17 instances, 4 only occur in the first 5 books, 2 in the cardinal Sixth, and the remaining 11 in the last 6.

23. It is perhaps worth noting how full the Aeneid is of objects of sacred or special significance, themselves almost characters in their own right. One can even think of one in particular for each book :

i. the Frieze, ii. the Horse, iii. the Penates, iv. the Sword, v. the Ships, vi. the Bough, vii. the Loaf, viii. the Shield, ix. the Tower, x. the Baldric, xi. the Arrow, xii. the Spear.

"constitit Anchisa satus et uestigia pressit

multa putans sortemque animo miseratus iniquam..."

- it could

be argued that what we are presented with are the thoughts of Aeneas, rather than those of Vergil himself, and that the epithet "iniquam" is a judgement of Aeneas upon "sors".²⁴ If, however, the words are taken as a reflection of the poet's own point of view, then one could conclude that Vergil finds the lot of the unburied to be "unfair" - "unfair", that is, in proportion to the amount of their inadvertence in having neglected to get themselves buried with the necessary ritual. This, of course, represents an opinion upon the justice of Heaven and the severity of its Law rather than upon the Will of Heaven as such, since the question of the circumstances of a man's burial necessarily involves the interaction of human free will.

The apostrophe of x.501, however, -

"nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae

et seruare modum rebus sublata secundis!"

- is undeniably a

comment of Vergil himself and serves as an excellent introduction to an examination of those references by the poet to significant overall concepts of destiny from the study of which an attempt may at last be made to deduce what his own beliefs may have been.

Before such an attempt may be profitably begun, however, it is necessary to draw attention to the question of what has been described (see above p.45) as "the poet, qua epic artist". Not only, as has been argued in Chapter Two, are the beliefs expressed in the words of the poet's characters to be firmly distinguished from the beliefs of the poet himself, but the beliefs expressed in the words of the poet

24. N.b. that it was again Aeneas who used this epithet to describe "fata" in ii.257.

himself must also be examined in contradistinction to the real beliefs of the poet himself. One must consider what has been termed the poetic "persona". With what voice does a man speak when he practises the art of poetry ? This is a profound question, clearly too large to enter into here in full, and many answers have been given to it. It was customary in Vergil's day to attribute poetic inspiration to the Muse, and whether Vergil believed in such an entity or not, his epic is written as though he ~~did~~, as i.8 testifies :

"Musa, mihi causas memora, quo numine laeso..."

and also ix.77 :

"Quis deus, o Musae, tam saeva incendia Teucris..."

Modern

critics might well assert that the Muse is a myth and that the source of poetic inspiration is a poet's own subconscious mind (collective or individual). The essential problem of literary criticism still remains. Vergil either believed in the Muse or he did not. If he did not, then his very appeal to such a being shows at once that he is striking a pose, adopting an attitude, behaving as expected of him by literary convention, in short, assuming an aspect of personality which is something contained by his true self. In other words, Vergil the epic artist, speaking as epic artists are expected to speak, must be less than (i.e. cannot be the same as) Vergil the man.

The difficulty, of course, is to know exactly when he is adopting the conventional stance and when he is revealing his true feelings. To attempt to codify his utterances into two such divisions may well be an undertaking full of interest, but hardly one full of certainty. If he did believe in the Muse, however, we are faced with the spectacle of a man expressing thoughts and feelings and attitudes towards the epic actions of the remote past which he himself believes to be derived from something outside himself. We are listening, as it

were, to an instrument. It is, doubtless, an instrument with its own individual shape, quality and tone, a product of its age, but it is nevertheless an instrument, a channel, a medium for some greater player, a larger force, a mightier element.

Who, then, is Vergil the poet whose utterances we are about to examine ? The modern Western critic may be uncertain about whether or not Vergil believed in the Muse but would feel fairly certain that, even if he did, he was mistaken in that belief. We are presented by the consensus of modern criticism with a middle-aged bachelor of provincial extraction, who, after literary success with Latin replicas of Theocritus and Hesiod, was commissioned by a political genius to write the Roman Iliad and Odyssey to justify, glorify and interpret the Roman Achievement, a task which occupied the ten remaining years of his life, itself a period long enough for his opinions on many matters to have modified a great deal. Before proceeding, then, to an examination of his statements about destiny, and attempting to draw conclusions from them, the following questions are put forward as salutary reminders of the dangers of the critical task now about to be undertaken. They will constantly be kept in mind.

1. Though this is an instance of what Vergil himself is saying, do we, in fact, have here a statement of Vergil the epic "vates" rather than Vergil the individual ?

2. If we have the "vates", which mask is he speaking through - that of Imperialist or Humanist ?

3. If we have the individual, are we listening to a 41 year old Epicurean, a 42 year old Celt, a 43 year old Stoic, a 44 year old Italian, a 45 year old Platonist, a 46 year old Roman, a 47 year old Pythagorean, a 48 year old Etruscan, a 49 year old Eclectic, or a 50 year old homosexual pacifist ?

4. Are the "vates" and the individual one and the same, and speaking with integrity, or are we listening to a divided self, tortured, perhaps, by what may have seemed to him his own hypocrisy ?

5. Whether his mind was whole or divided, did Vergil ever take his own opinions, as a mere poet in a world dominated by politicians, as seriously as scholars have taken them ever since his death ?

6. Was his artistic intention the portrayal of an heroic age, from the contemplation of which his own and succeeding generations could derive pleasure and instruction, or the propounding in verse of a school of philosophy of Good and Evil, of Fate and Free Will ?

The reference to "sors futura" in x.501, described above (p.193) as an excellent introduction to significant overall concepts of destiny, closely linked as it is with the preceding word "fati", is one of the few instances in which, on the face of it, Vergil actually speaks for himself and makes a general observation on life. It must at once be noted, of course, that the statement comes at an important moment in the development of the epic plot. Turnus has just removed the baldrick from the lifeless Pallas, the very action which will ensure his death at the hands of Aeneas later on. Although the "sententia" could be taken to have a general application, and therefore be taken to represent a view of Vergil himself on human life generally, it is surely of Turnus and of his situation in the epic structure that the poet is here primarily, if not entirely, thinking. Once more, the demands of the plot have a profound effect upon the opinions of the plotter. In making such a comment at such a moment Vergil was surely motivated mainly, if not completely, by the artistic demands of preparing his audience for the coming climax of the whole poem.

It is at about the same stage in the epic that we find clustered fairly closely together (ix.107; x.419, 815) Vergil's three references

to the "Parcae". His view of them would seem to contain little that was unconventional : they are merely the agents of destiny, the tidiers-up of temporal detail, the arrangers of the Great Timetable. In ix.107, in reference to the prophecy of Jupiter that one day, when they have safely reached an Italian harbour, the ships of Aeneas will become sea-nymphs, Vergil reminds his audience that the promised day has come and adds that it was the "Parcae" who were responsible for this process of bringing time to completion :

"Ergo aderat promissa dies et tempora Parcae
debita complerant..."

In x.419, they are represented as having waited for the death of Halaesus's father, who had tried to prolong his son's life by hiding him in the forest, before arranging for Halaesus to die in any case at the spear of Pallas :

"ut senior leto canentia lumina soluit,
iniecere manum Parcae telisque sacrarunt
Euandri."

The suggestion is that they are merely claiming what has been all along due to them. ²⁵

In x.815 Vergil suggests that they intervene in the life of Lausus at just that moment when he enrages Aeneas beyond control :

"nec minus ille
exultat demens, saevae iamque altius irae
Dardanio surgunt ductori, extremaque Lauso
Parcae fila legunt."

This last reference to them, as the controllers of the "thread" of a man's life (i.e. their spinning,

25. Servius comments (ad loc.) : "traxerunt debitum sibi. et sermone usus est iuris : nam manus iniectio dicitur quotiens nulla iudicis auctoritate expectata, rem nobis debitam vindicamus."

drawing and cutting of it), is completely conventional.

If Vergil himself refers to the "Parcae" on only three occasions, it is only twice that he mentions "Fortuna/Dame Fortune" (v.604; x.435). This is clearly a concept of destiny that Vergil himself did not care to speak of to any great extent. Nevertheless, an examination must be made of these two references in an attempt to elicit from them some hint of an attitude towards the concept on the part of the poet.

In v.604, after the account of the Funeral Games, he refers to Juno's plot to burn the Trojan fleet and thus strand Aeneas and his followers in Sicily, where many of them, at this psychological moment, were already predisposed to settle. He introduces this final section of Book Five with the words :

"Hinc primum Fortuna fidem mutata nouauit."

What can this strange line mean ? It might appear, at first sight, to contain a reference to "Fortuna", the Lady Luck of the early Empire, and indeed Jackson Knight translates it, rather surprisingly, as : "It was at this moment that fortune first veered, and turned treacherously against the Trojans." Further consideration, however, shows that the meaning of the line really turns on the exact translation of the word "fidem". If it means "the true fulfilment of a promise (of an oracle)", as it almost certainly does in Aeneas's words to the ghost of Palinurus in vi.346, questioning the promises of Apollo :

"en haec promissa fides est ?"

- then it

would seem to mean here : "Here first Fortune changed and altered the fulfilment of her promise." This suggests that "Fortuna", whom we have seen to be closely associated throughout the epic with destiny and its ultimate plan for Aeneas, is in some fickle way making an arbitrary decision to spoil this arrangement, an interpretation which

hardly fits what we know of Heaven's intended will. There is, however, another meaning of "fides" which makes better sense.

In ii.541 Vergil describes Priam as berating Pyrrhus for daring to kill a son before a father's eyes and as claiming that Achilles respected a father's grief and a suppliant's rights as a true warrior ought : ²⁶

"sed iura fidemque
supplicis erubuit..."

Here "fides" means "the protection due to a suppliant", and it is surely this nuance of meaning which Vergil has in mind in v.604. Throughout the first five books of the epic Aeneas and his Trojans have been portrayed as people dependent upon the benevolence of the gods ; indeed, our very first glimpse of Aeneas is of a man in the attitude of prayer (i.93) :

"ingemit et duplicis tendens ad sidera palmas..."

- and so far

their prayers have been granted ; they have suffered the storm but kept together with their fleet intact. ²⁷ In Book Five, however, this almost miraculous protection is apparently withdrawn, i.e. "Here first Fortune changed (viz. by acting differently from the way in which she had behaved to date) and altered her protection (viz. by removing it temporarily)." That the withdrawal of protection, leading to the firing of the ships, is in fact only temporary is, of course, evident

26. This use of "fides" as meaning "the protection due to a suppliant" and the reference of the passage in Book Two to the nobility of Achilles in granting Priam's request for the body of Hector surely touches upon the very heart of the Iliad and reveals Vergil as firmly rooted in the inevitable Homeric tradition.

27. i.390 : "namque tibi reduces socios classemque relatam / nuntio" says Venus to Aeneas.

from what happens in v.685-699, when Aeneas, again, be it noted, adopting exactly the same attitude of supplication as in i.93 :

"tum pius Aeneas umeris abscindere uestem
auxilioque uocare deos et tendere palmas..."

- prays to

Jupiter for the salvation of his fleet and is answered by a miraculous shower of rain and the loss of only four ships. On this interpretation, "Fortuna's" withdrawal of her protection is to be seen rather as a constructive test of Aeneas's piety than as an arbitrary act of a fickle goddess - even the four lost ships provide an opportunity later to weed out those Trojans unsuited for the demands of the war to come - and Vergil's comment upon the event is thus demonstrated as being totally consistent with the overall movement of the epic plot.

The other reference by Vergil to "Fortuna" (x.435) is of especial interest, not so much because it would appear to suggest that it is the goddess who has refused a safe return home to both Pallas and Lausus, as because of the concepts occurring in close association with it :

"hinc Pallas instat et urget,
hinc contra Lausus, nec multum discrepat aetas,
egregii forma, sed quis Fortuna negarat
in patriam reditus. ipsos concurrere passus
haud tamen inter se magni regnator Olympi ;
mox illos sua fata manent maiore sub hoste."

The tone of the whole passage surely suggests that Vergil wishes his audience to understand that the deaths of Pallas and Lausus are the will of "Fortuna" ; that Jupiter has not allowed them to kill each other ; and that their deaths awaited them at the hand of a mightier foe. It could be argued that "Fortuna" here is virtually another name for Jupiter, since the intention and will of "Fortuna" and the "magni

regnator Olympi" are identical. Or one could claim that "Fortuna's" interest in the affair is more general in scope - she is concerned only that they do not survive to return home - ; and Jupiter's more particular - he wishes that Turnus should kill Pallas (so that Aeneas has to kill Turnus later) and Aeneas kill Lausus (so that Mezentius will try, but of course fail, to kill Aeneas later) ; and, one could add, the interest of the "Parcae" would be more particular still - they arrange exactly when and in what order the young men die. Which-ever interpretation is correct, one can hardly take this reference by Vergil to "Fortuna" as being to the fickle Lady Luck. "Fortuna" here, as always in the Aeneid, is an aspect of destiny. Here too, it must be stressed, the exigencies of the epic plot (viz. that Pallas be killed by Turnus and he in turn by Aeneas ; that Lausus be killed by Aeneas and he in turn kill Mezentius) and the artistic requirement that the audience be constantly reminded of the overall purpose of all this carnage and also have their appetites whetted for the climax to come ("mox illos sua fata manent..."), both virtually dictate to Vergil the sort of comment he must insert at this juncture, if he is to break the flow of the epic narrative at all. To suggest here, as a Personal Heretic might, that Vergil is informing us that he does not believe in free will and that, perhaps, he is sorrowfully bewailing the fact that Pallas and Lausus must die whether they like it or not, would be unjustifiable speculation. The only complaint that we may just about by inference be able to hear between the lines is that of a poet chafing under the procrustean restrictions of an epic plot.

Of the ten references to destiny now remaining three are to "fatum/fate" (i.2, 32 ; iii.717), a concept, therefore, which the poet himself would appear to use sparingly when one considers that there are fifty-three references to "fatum/fate" in all. All three simply state the epic theme that Aeneas's wanderings are the result of the

will of Heaven, and inasmuch as these wanderings are viewed as having already taken place they must be regarded as the realised, rather than the intended, will of Heaven. They occur at the very start of the epic, and at the very end of Book Three (when the audience has been brought up to date by the long narrative of Aeneas), and thus neatly bracket the first quarter of the epic.

We are left in no doubt in i.2 that Aeneas was "fato profugus" - an exile by the will of Heaven. Similarly, it is said of the Trojan remnant in i.32 that they :

"errabant acti fati maria omnia circum."

One might have expected Vergil to have described them rather as "acti a Iunone", but it is more accurate to say that they wandered because of Juno but were driven, all the time, by destiny. Their wandering, did they but know it, was part of their destiny, as Servius comments (ad loc.) : "si odio Iunonis fatigabantur, quo modo dicit 'acti fati' ? sed hoc ipsum Iunonis odium fatale est." The last reference to "fatum/fate" (iii.717), indeed, describes what Aeneas has just told the Carthaginian court (i.e. the contents of Books Two and Three) as not only "fata" but "fata...dium" ; we are again clearly told that what has happened to the Trojans is the will of the gods. Attention must also be drawn to the fact that in each of these three references Vergil is very conscious, at this stage, of the fate of the Trojans being closely connected with voyages and with the sea. One cannot help feeling that during this the most Odyssean part of the Aeneid destiny is closely associated with what it meant for his characters in physical terms. No sooner has he mentioned "fato" for the first time (i.2) than we have the word "litora" (i.3) ; as soon as he mentions "fatis" (i.32) the very next two words are "maria omnia" (i.32) ; and immediately after "fata renarrabat diuum" (iii.717) we have "cursusque docebat".

Whenever, in these references, we hear the music of destiny, the sound of the sea - that element of Ulysses/Aeneas - is always in the background. Yet again we hear the pressure of epic convention making his Roman timbers creak.

Of the seven references to "fatum/destiny" two throw relatively little light on what could be regarded as an overall consistent viewpoint. In v.654-656 the Trojan matrons are described as hesitating whether or not to fire the ships :

"at matres primo ancipites oculisque malignis
ambiguae spectare rates miserum inter amorem
praesentis terrae fatisque uocantia regna..."

The phrase

"fatisque uocantia regna", apart from possibly, of course, being a reflection of their own words (viz. "incertae sumus utrum praesens terra melior sit an regna ad quae fata nos vocent") and therefore not really Vergil's view at all, simply apply to Italy as viewed from the standpoint of the epic plot - the land whose occupation is the main point of the story. Whichever is the correct interpretation, there is hardly any general metaphysical statement being attempted here either by the Trojan matrons or by Vergil.

In xi.759 Vergil describes Arruns as "fatis debitus". At first sight this might appear to be an instance of "fatum/mors"²⁸, but the slayer of Camilla is surely of more importance from the Olympian viewpoint for, as we are assured in xi.845-846 :

"non tamen indecorem tua te regina reliquit
extrema iam in morte..."

Opis, the agent of Diana, is involved in the death of Arruns and anyone whose death has to be brought about

28. Cf. Page (ad loc.) : " 'due to death', i.e. as we say, 'whose hour was come'. "

so deliberately by an immortal must surely have his end referred to as being the result of "the intended will of Heaven". There is little foundation here, however, on which to build a general philosophy. Vergil has simply indicated, as he has already with Pallas and Lausus, that the death of one individual is inevitably linked, in the epic plot, with the death of another.

In four of the five remaining instances, however, (iv.440; v.707; vii.584; x.501) there is a common element in the context of the use of the word "fatum" which may suggest an attitude towards destiny on the part of the person using that word. This common element is a reference, in the very same line as the word "fatum", to another concept of destiny or of divinity : "deus" in iv.440 ; "ira magna deum" in v.707 ; "numine" in vii.584 ; and "sors futura" in x.501. These references must now be examined in closer detail.

The use of the word "fatum" in x.501 has been touched upon already (pp.82, 127 and 196), but it is worth repeating here that this "sententia" of Vergil is more a comment upon the particular blindness of Turnus to the workings of "fatum/destiny" at that moment in the action than a general statement of the poet's own private beliefs concerning Man's Ignorance of Destiny. Indeed, the main character of the epic can hardly be described at this point in the course of it as possessing a mind which is "nescia fati". Whatever may be said about anyone else, Aeneas at any rate is surely at this stage in the epic very well informed indeed as to what is going to happen. It would be rather ironic, in fact, if any reader of the epic which celebrates an imperial "fait accompli" were to assume that what Vergil is trying to tell him here is that he, the poet, feels after mature reflection that the will of Heaven, and the way in which it unfolds itself, are always, essentially and by definition, things which the mind of Man can never know! Such an interpretation would, of course, at once bring into

doubt the essential humanity of the hero of the poem.²⁹

In iv.440 Vergil describes Aeneas as firmly resisting the pleas of Dido, relayed by Anna, for him to delay his departure :

"sed nullis ille mouetur
fletibus aut uoces ullas tractabilis audit ;
fata obstant placidasque uiri deus obstruit auris."

The reasons

given by Vergil himself for Aeneas's refusal to be swayed are twofold : the "fata" oppose and "deus" renders deaf his "calm" ears. The question must be asked : what is the connection intended between these statements ? Do we have the familiar Vergilean "theme and variation" (i.e. "the fates oppose and the fates, working through Jupiter or Mercury to render him deaf, oppose") ? Or are there two separate statements (i.e. "both the fates oppose and a god blocks his ears") ? Is this another example of the virtual hendiadys ?

Some little light may be thrown on these questions that inevitably arise by vi.438, which has not been included in the mainstream of references dealt with by this investigation because R.A.B.Mynors's text for that line reads :

"fas obstat, tristisque palus inamabilis undae
alligat et nouies Styx interfusa coercet."

In his "apparatus criticus", however, he mentions the variant reading of Servius and

29. The "inhumanity" of Aeneas, of course, (especially his treatment of Dido) is something upon which many critics and scholars (and, doubtless, many amateur readers of the Aeneid) have often commented. This attitude towards the hero, however, often springs from a romantic (rather than Roman!) approach which is fundamentally unhistorical in that it shows a modern lack of sympathy with "heroic" values and, consequently, with the whole concept of "pietas".

that collection of ninth century MSS. which he distinguishes by the generic siglum "C" as having "fata obstant" for "fas obstat". This reading, of course, would follow the same pattern as iv.440 in that after the theme ("fata obstant") one has the variation :

"...tristisque palus inamabilis undae
alligat et nouies Styx interfus coercet."

The suicides in the

underworld are thus described by Vergil as now wishing fervently for life above, however hard it may be, but "fate opposes and the waters of the underworld confine them." This restriction is, of course, itself an aspect of the destiny of suicides. Is, therefore, the "deus" of iv.440 similarly an aspect of the "fata" of that line ? It need hardly be pointed out that the two passages have more in common than the possible use of the phrase "fata obstant", for twelve lines further on in Book Six we have Aeneas's last meeting with Dido, and in iv.440 we have, in effect, through the intermediary Anna, Aeneas's last contact with Dido on earth. The one passage looks forward just as the other looks back, and the act which links them is Dido's suicide. In both cases, the opposition, be it to Dido's pleas or to the wishes of suicides generally, is the same : the intended will of Heaven.

What, however, are we to assume about Vergil's own beliefs from the evidence of iv.440 ? Nothing more, again, than that he is drawing the attention of his audience to the operation of the forces of destiny upon his main epic character and making clear to them Aeneas's heroic response to those forces. It is vital to the plot of the epic that Aeneas does not bend here, therefore his resolve is supernaturally strengthened and it is necessarily here that Aeneas's free will is portrayed at its apparently most tenuous when it is, in fact, at its most sublime. Vergil's own attitude to free will and its operation,

however, is still open to speculation.

The use of the term "fatorum ordo" in v.707 is merely a reference by Vergil to the prophetic powers of old Nautes and hardly represents any sort of statement about destiny in general. In order to give weight to the advice which follows - the weeding-out, in effect, of the feebler Trojans - Nautes's training in prophecy by Pallas Athene is mentioned along with his ability to interpret the meaning of disaster and indicate the best action to take after it :

"haec responsa dabat, uel quae portenderet ira

magna deum uel quae fatorum posceret ordo..."

He is, Vergil

says, able to tell "what the great anger of the gods foretells" or "what the 'fatorum ordo' demands". The translation of this phrase "fatorum ordo" is not easy. Jackson Knight paraphrases it with "what sequence of future events has been fixed by Destiny", but this seems to overstress the force of "posceret" and to allow little room for the operation of free will. Vergil is surely rather portraying Nautes as able, after a disaster such as the one which the Trojans have just experienced, to tell either exactly what it foretells or what the pattern of the intended will of Heaven (revealed in the disaster) now demands of those who witnessed it. In this particular case he can see (and can help Aeneas to see) that the loss of four ships, but the saving of the others, is a heaven-sent opportunity (in the literal sense of that cliché!), fitting into the pattern of all the other promptings of destiny to date, for Aeneas responsibly to rid himself of his weaker followers and press on in the certainty that all thereafter sailing with him will be keen to fulfil their destiny. The "fatorum ordo" - "the pattern of the intended will of Heaven" - demands this, though it is up to Aeneas to comply with it or not. Once more, Vergil is drawing attention to the underlying plot of the

epic, which binds him almost as much as it binds Aeneas.

In vii.584 Vergil describes the Latin nation clamouring furiously around their old king, demanding revenge for the deaths of Almo and Galaesus, and insisting, at the instigation, of course, of Juno and Allecto, on war :

"ilicet infandum cuncti contra omina bellum,
contra fata deum peruerso numine poscunt."

They all at once demand a war that is wicked ("infandum"), contrary to the omens, and contrary to the intended will of the gods, and they do all this "peruerso numine". The translation of this phrase is not easy. Page suggests (ad loc.) : "with misdirected impulse" but concedes that "numen" is usually used of divine power or will. The influence of Juno and Allecto seems, at first, an obvious explanation of the phrase, but there is also the possibility that we again have "theme and variation" and that Vergil is saying that any action which is "contra fata deum" (and the use of that specific genitive plural leaves little room for doubt as to what he means by the expression ³⁰) is, by its very nature, "peruerso numine", and is merely emphasising the point by repetition. It hardly need again be pointed out, of course, that the plot of the epic, certainly that of the "Iliadic" Books Seven to Twelve, demands a war and that it is essential that Latinus give way to his people at this juncture. We are accordingly presented, in vii. 584, with a Latin king and people whose free will, at this moment in

30. If it be taken to mean "oracles of the gods" (i.e. an example of "fatum/doom") to which oracles is Vergil referring ? The most recent, which the audience would most easily remember, is that of Faunus to Latinus (vii.96-101), but that forbade Lavinia's marriage to a Latin and made no mention of war. Jackson Knight translates : "led by some malign Power to defy Heaven's warning and the Gods' destined will."

the unfolding of the epic plot, is minimal. All that we may infer from this, however, about the poet's own belief in free will is that he is as much constrained to write about the war as his characters are to fight in it.

There now remains only one more instance of Vergil's use of the word "fatum" and this - iv.696 - is perhaps the most interesting of all. Juno takes pity on Dido's death agony and sends down Iris to release her spirit by cutting off the lock of hair normally claimed by Proserpina :

"nam quia nec fato merita nec morte peribat,
sed misera ante diem subitoque accensa furore,
nondum illi flauum Proserpina uertice crinem
abstulerat Stygioque caput damnauerat Orco."

The indicative mood of "peribat" (and of "abstulerat") suggest that here we have indeed Vergil's own view of the necessity for Juno's intervention and not merely Juno's alleged opinion reported by him, which would presumably have been indicated by the use of the subjunctive mood. The plot demands that Dido die for love, if only to meet Aeneas later in the underworld. The tragedy becomes all the greater, however, if the queen seems noble. To have her die at the mere whim of a god, or because of some great fault, will not do. Vergil is at pains to tell us that she died "undeservedly" ("nec merita morte") and that her death was a tragedy ("misera"). He seems also to want to stress that she could have lived longer, for her death at that particular moment was the result of her own free will ("subito accensa furore") and untimely ("ante diem"), so untimely that it would seem that the normal arrangements for releasing a soul could not be completed ("nondum illi..." etc.). In essence, therefore, she did not die "fato", that is to say, she did not die "by the intended will of Heaven".

What is one to make of such a statement by the poet of an epic in which so many characters die "by fate" ? Is this an assertion by Vergil of his own belief in free will ? Or is it merely a comment upon the relative unimportance of Dido ? Her main purpose, in the plot of the epic, is to delay Aeneas, as Circe and Calypso had Odysseus, and to tempt him away from his destiny. Had he stayed with her, Rome could not have been founded. An Aeneas who could have been persuaded to stay would have been unworthy of founding Rome. His firmness of purpose and, accordingly, his suitability for the task which he has to perform are therefore demonstrated by his very decision to abandon her. It is perhaps one of the ironies of literature that subsequent generations have often misinterpreted Aeneas's motives and maligned him for his actions, but Vergil's intention in dwelling so memorably upon the whole Dido episode was surely to build up the image of his hero and glorify him as a paragon of resolution, duty and altruism.

Aeneas's decision to abandon Dido can only be presented as a decision at all if Aeneas has free will. Were he a mere puppet, there could, with justice, be neither admiration for his sense of duty nor revulsion at his hardness of heart. It follows, however, that if Aeneas has free will, then Dido must have it too, and that is, indeed, how she is presented to us. So free, in fact, is her will that she can break loose from the intended will of Heaven and die "ante diem". Had Vergil insisted that her death was fated, then her free will would have been brought into question and with it, more importantly, the free will of Aeneas. The epic plot, however, and the credibility of the founder of the Roman race, and moreover the artistic considerations of dramatic tension, all demand that, at any moment, Aeneas's sense of duty could weaken and fail, but does not. The man "qui...primus... Italiam fato profugus...uenit" must emerge at the end of Book Twelve

a hero of integrity. Vergil's description of Dido's death as "nec fato", therefore, should be seen in the context of the whole epic as an assertion by the poet, for the purposes of the epic, of human free will. The inevitable corollary of this assertion, of course, is that, again for the purposes of the epic, Vergil would seem to regard "fatum/destiny" as a force which, however mighty, requires human co-operation for its fulfilment. Whether or not one is therefore justified in concluding, from a study of iv.696, that Vergil himself subscribed to a belief in human free will and its power to modify destiny, and is, indeed, here attempting to propound that belief as a general philosophical statement, is still a matter for speculation. His main concern here is surely the effectiveness of his statement upon our understanding of his epic as a whole.

It has been demonstrated, then, that the various "types" of character in the epic each express themselves with the complete consistency of attitude that one would expect from a character playing the role demanded of him by the plot. The poet himself is similarly restricted, but by the operation of his bardic art generally succeeds in diverting our attention from the chains of epic convention which bind him. Throughout the whole epic his artistic purpose is to enable us to experience the birth of the Roman nation and to see the will of Heaven working behind and through this process.³¹ When our

31. N.b. A.E.Housman's comment in his lecture "The Name and Nature of Poetry", given at Cambridge in 1933 : "...I think that to transfuse emotion - not to transmit thought but to set up in the reader's sense a vibration corresponding to what was felt by the writer - is the peculiar function of poetry." A.E.Housman : Selected Prose, ed. J. Carter (Cambridge, 1961), p.172.

attention wanders and shifts to him, he hides his private face and allows us to see only the mask of the imperial poet laureate. Everything that he makes his characters say, and everything that he says himself in the "persona" of "vates", is designed to relate to the overriding structure of the story that he has to tell. Why he tells it, however, or what he thinks of the story - whether it was one, in his view, of futility or of glory - , or what manner of man he was who told it, are all questions to which his inimitable poem can provide no certain answers.

CONCLUSION

It has been shown in Chapter One that, whatever concepts of destiny may be found in the Aeneid and whatever Vergil's concept of destiny may have been, classical scholars have been unable to agree about the precise nature of those concepts. The balance of scholarly opinion was seen to rest in favour of the view that Jupiter in the Aeneid is not subordinate to fate and can, to all intents and purposes, be regarded as virtually identical with it. This gives us an epic that describes a basically orderly universe, ruled by the purposeful will of an anthropomorphic god. The existence of the opposite viewpoint, viz. that Jupiter is subordinate to fate, was in itself seen to raise a serious question that had to be answered. The question was simply this : why such a divergence of opinion ? The question was serious because Jupiter's relationship to destiny deeply affects the understanding of the reader. A Jupiter subordinate to fate gives us an epic that describes a universe in which the ultimate power is an impersonal force which is, on the evidence of human suffering in the poem, indifferent to Man's moral endeavour and achievement. It became evident that, for many critics, the world-view presented in the poem - whether pessimistic or optimistic - would, once accurately interpreted, reveal the world-view of the man who wrote the poem. In short, the concepts of destiny in the Aeneid would lead us to Vergil's concept of destiny.

The question of Vergil's world-view leads directly into the whole problem dealt with in Chapter Two : the nature of poetic statement. This chapter on the "Personal Heresy" brought to light the oddly overlooked critical theory that in poetry, especially in epic and dramatic poetry, the object with which the reader (or listener) is

presented by the poet is primarily, if not entirely, the poem itself and its characters, plot, colour and mood, and not the personality of the poet himself, and certainly not his biography. Attention was drawn to the fact that a significant distinction exists, though it is apparently invisible to many critics, between "Vergil's Concept of Destiny in the Aeneid" and "Concepts of Destiny in Vergil's Aeneid". It was argued that it is a futile exercise to attempt to reach back through the text of the poem to an assessment of Vergil's own religious and philosophical beliefs.

It is nowhere claimed in this investigation that there are no concepts of destiny in the Aeneid. On the contrary, it is asserted that there are many ; as many, in fact, as there are epic characters. It is conceded that these characters, and accordingly their ideas, are the creation of the poet and conceded further that the poet would have been influenced in the assimilation, treatment and arrangement of such ideas of destiny as he had by the various concepts of destiny prevalent in his day. It was therefore considered necessary to examine the background of ideas which could have shaped, and in many cases probably did shape, those concepts of destiny which Vergil put into the minds of his epic characters. One could possibly object that if Vergil did not intend to represent these ideas of destiny as his own, then he was either probably deliberately, or else improbably carelessly, guilty of the anachronism of putting into the mouths of warriors of a supposedly Heroic age the sentiments of Hellenistic philosophers which they were unlikely even vaguely to have anticipated. In answer to this objection it must be argued that Vergil does not seem to have concerned himself much with anachronism or naturalistic detail - what language, after all, does Aeneas use when speaking without benefit of interpreter to Dido, the Sibyl, Evander and Latinus ? - and his audience would most certainly not have

done. More to the point, however, is the observation that concepts of destiny, although perhaps not expressed in writing until Homer, Hesiod and Pindar - long after the age when Aeneas fought and conquered - , must have been common currency in the minds of men from the earliest times when they began to think at all and first wondered who they were and why they were there.

The first written formulations of Man's attempt to solve the riddle of his existence, be they Hindu, Etruscan, Greek or Italian, are surely the fruits of a long period of growth, the seeds of which were planted long before even the Heroic Age which Vergil describes for us so unforgettably. Who can doubt, after a re-reading of, say, the dark, fire-lit magnificence of Book Two of the Aeneid, that there would not have crossed the mind of the real Aeneas, as he paused in flight and surveyed the ruin of his city, some concept of a power that had made such a disaster possible and some concept also of a power that had preserved him for some uncertain purpose ? It was inevitable that Vergil, in attempting to reconstruct for the delight, edification and encouragement of his contemporaries, that Heroic Age in which they believed the foundations of their own destiny had been laid down, should have assimilated and used some of the religious and philosophical concepts of destiny that had been current in the Mediterranean world perhaps before, probably during, and certainly after that age, and recast them in the mouths of his epic characters as though they were the currency of their time, so that his own contemporaries should feel more at home in the world of his poem. The fact that Aeneas is made to speak Latin and sound at times like a Stoic would not have lessened his credibility before an Augustan audience any more than a Brutus in Elizabethan dress, reading a book with pages that could be turned down and speaking Tudor English, was less real to a Roman to Shakespeare's playgoers watching Julius Caesar. The

artistic necessity for maintaining a "willing suspension of disbelief" is a relatively modern problem.

However much Vergil was influenced by currently and formerly prevailing concepts of destiny, and however he represented those influences by expressing them in the mouths of his characters, the lesson of Chapter Two must again be applied. In writing the Aeneid Vergil was not trying to show his readers how much he himself had read about various ideas of destiny, but trying to show them a man and his people in the grip of that power called destiny, which was a concept as familiar to his readers as it had doubtless been to the real heroes about whom he sang, though the words that they may have used to refer to it may have been different. It is, indeed, a fact of considerable significance that nowhere in the whole Aeneid does Vergil ever attempt to define "fatum" or explain its meaning to his readers. It seems tacitly assumed that they already know what the word means, and behind this tacit assumption must surely lie the fact that, whatever concepts of destiny there are in the Aeneid, there are no new ones.

This question of the use of words brings us to the next aspect of this investigation. Chapter Four attempted to examine the various shades of meaning that are to be found in the words which Vergil uses to refer to the concept of destiny. It became evident that, although the shades of meaning were many and various, some were clearly of more general philosophical and religious significance than others. The important basic concepts which could be said to represent an attempt, either by a character or by the poet himself, to construct a world-view were these : "fatum (fata)" - meaning the will (intended or realised) of Heaven (i.e. the gods of Olympus when acting in general agreement with Jupiter as their leader); the "Parcae" - meaning the personification of Time, as a function of destiny ; and "Fortuna" - meaning the old

Italian goddess, representing "fatum" in a more incalculable, feminine aspect.

Although all these words have a meaning of their own which becomes clearer when they are systematically examined in the context of their immediate linguistic and literary function, it was demonstrated in Chapter Five that they acquire even greater meaning for us when they are interpreted in the context of their function in the overall structure of the epic plot. The "types of expression" examined in Chapter Four were accordingly re-examined in Chapter Five and redefined as "expressions of type". That is to say, it was shown that the overridingly important factor in the interpretation of the philosophical or religious significance of the various concepts of destiny was the precise function in the epic plot of the character who used those concepts.

"The play's the thing"

as Hamlet said,

"Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King."

And as Vergil

said, did we but listen to him, the poem was the thing in which he hoped to catch the imagination of the world.

"Arma uirumque cano Troiae qui primus ab oris..."

This initial

statement of the poet's theme is really also the key to the understanding of the epic, for it is here, in what is effectively the Prologue to the poem, where the poet in his "persona" as epic "vates" speaks directly to his audience and announces his artistic intention, that the root concept of destiny in the Aeneid is best encapsulated :

"Italiam fato profugus..."

...dum conderet urbem..."

The necessity of singing this song to a new tune, of telling this

old tale in a new way, laid enormous artistic constraints upon Vergil with which he wrestled for ten years in a private Trojan War that must have absorbed his creative energies and left little, if any, room for self-revelation. It was, perhaps, a struggle in which he finally came to feel that he had been defeated, for we are told that his last wish was to have his poem, like Troy, destroyed by fire.

What impulse can have been responsible for such a perverse wish ? It could not, if C.S.Lewis is right in his denunciation of the Personal Heresy, have been the fear that the Roman world would now have revealed to it the innermost secrets of his soul on the publication of the poem. It was surely more likely to have been the perfectionist's concern that his masterpiece had not yet been properly finished and did not yet perfectly correspond with his artistic purpose. Quite possibly, again, it could have been his secret certainty that his literary executors would in the event simply be unable to bring themselves to do as he requested. Enigmatic to the last, he could hide behind such a gesture of inadequacy and secretly feel sure that the same power of destiny, the operations of which he had described so persistently and yet so elusively in his poem, would itself inevitably preserve the Aeneid for his compatriots and for posterity. His executors would, in effect, be destined to disobey him precisely because they would remember how he had written about the force of destiny so self-effacingly for so long, and how he had never allowed himself, or them, to forget

"tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem."

The most appropriate tribute, therefore, that can be paid to the artistic dedication and poetic achievement of Vergil is wisely to follow the example of the friends at his deathbed and steadfastly ignore the poet himself for a while in order properly to enjoy his poem for ever.

APPENDIX

Table of instances of words referring to concepts of destiny

BOOK	fatum	fatalis	fatifer	fatidicus	Parcae	Fortuna	fors	sors
i.	13	0	0	0	1	4	1	2
ii.	13	2	0	0	0	5	1	2
iii.	11	0	0	0	1	6	0	0
iv.	12	1	0	0	0	4	0	2
v.	6	1	0	0	1	5	0	3
vi.	15	2	0	0	0	5	0	6
vii.	14	1	0	1	0	3	1	2
viii.	10	0	1	1	0	4	1	0
ix.	5	1	1	0	1	6	0	2
x.	12	0	0	1	2	7	1	3
xi.	7	2	0	0	0	9	0	2
xii.	9	2	0	0	2	8	2	3
TOTALS:	127	12	2	3	8	66	7	27

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ABSTRACT

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CONCEPTS OF DESTINY IN VERGIL'S AENEID

A study of the history of scholarly opinion upon the concepts of destiny in the Aeneid reveals a dichotomy : the view that Jupiter is the supreme power, with Fate as something he controls or by which he expresses his will ; and the opposite view that Jupiter is subordinate to Fate. The problem is not so much which of these viewpoints is correct as why there should be two at all. The critics tend to assume that they can arrive at the opinion of Vergil himself from a study of the comments about destiny made by his characters. This assumption is bound to lead to contradiction and confusion. A more trustworthy critical procedure, however, is provided by applying the vitally important principle of literary criticism expounded by C.S.Lewis in The Personal Heresy : viz. it is false to assume that what one finds in a poem is the poet himself. The poet must never be confused with his creations, for what they say (and often even what he says himself in the "persona" of poet) is largely the result of the demands of his story. This is not to say that Vergil was not influenced in what he made his characters say by any of the religious and philosophical ideas current in his day. These ideas are reviewed and examined for likely sources of influence. All the words that Vergil uses to refer to the concept of destiny are then systematically analysed to try to extract the essence of their meaning, distinguish one from the other, and find the important ones. The same words are then re-examined, according to "Impersonal Orthodoxy", and their significance shown to be a function of context and dramatic necessity. Vergil's personal comments upon destiny are thus isolated and evaluated as being an inadequate basis for any obvious doctrine.