

On Vergil's Epic Poem

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I think it is useless to dispute many things universally about epic poetry, when we have so many books, in which abundantly and accurately there is teaching about this matter, and when there are few, for which it is useful, that they be kept for a long time in instruction. And such a disputation is not able to have any force in teaching the minds of young people or to import any utility, except with one or the other epic song carefully read, diligently perused, and learnedly explained; let me not teach this now, that with these precepts and disputations more is promised than is delivered.* For many things, which have a degree of utility, are such, that when one or the other poet has been read by each one more liberal mind, or with someone teaching, they are observed easily by them; however that age better lacks vain and empty subtleties and arguments. Then, that utility is not able to be expected, which they display, amongst the judgment about the records of geniuses, which we now hold in our hands, the sort of which judgment remains to be ___; such that those, indeed, who are going to publish some product of their own genius, provide good from those teachings a little more than from one or two good examples. Those, nevertheless, who interpret the poets for young people, I wish most especially that they be imbued with an understanding of these works; for thus finally, when they themselves know well the disputations of learned men and hold them in their heart, they will have at their disposal the ability to teach in singular matters and cases well and to explain these things with benefit, which are able to nourish the minds of youths, to sharpen their judgments, and either to instill or to excite a sense of elegance and virtue.

(Translate paragraph from Omnino p.20 to ille videatur p. 21)

But this sort of utility is not intended once philosophical rationales extended such that it seeks thence poetic reasons and examines them. That by the admiration of the things narrated, hearts are effected and this is the goal which he follows. The nature of these things and our spirits bears thus, that, because it is devoid of virtue and public utility, it is unable to have force in compelling our spirits through admiration. Therefore, it is not able to happen by any reason that a good epic poem contains nothing which is able to have value toward public and civil utility. Great and sublime councils, in turn, lofty and magnificent insights of hearts, virtue beyond the common way and means of mortality, a mind unbroken by any adverse circumstances, the well-being of citizens, or the grandeur of command imparted or preserved and defended, these same things are those by which especially admiration is injected into the hearts of men which from the very first supplies suitable material for epic poetry.

And so, it is not necessary that wonder be sought from the miracles of the real world and nature; but as each person understands easily, things which have arisen from a great virtue of the heart or some other immense action, they affect our souls with wonderment completely, from a great man, a great force of genius, with great strength of body, with great emotions and affectations of the heart, among great difficulties, and happenstances, and dangers, with great help and aid, from great causes undertaken and done, the sort of which things almost are accustomed to be clear and distinguished and of great example even in the outcome, so that either the fortunes of some great man or of a population or of a city, or human race they contain it in every way. It is not difficult to recognize a place in rhetoric and poetics for grandeur; nor

nevertheless all greatness of epic poetry is accommodated to its nature, but this especially, which arises from senses and fantasies, indeed that grandeur which has strength especially in moving hearts and imbuing them with wonderment. And all these things everywhere have been explicated by learned men very learnedly.

In order that the soul be held by so much the more with wonderment however, not only is it necessary that the thing done, which is narrated, and the action be fitted to it, but also the type of narration and a reason suitable for creating or maintaining wonderment is required. For which reason nothing attains more to teaching. For who does not see that the type of speech ought to be neither low nor weak but strong and sharp and grandiose and, even if fitted differently in behalf of the diverse nature of the plot, and the other things which are fitted.

As if from these two principles, all things are to be sought, on which depend the plot of the epic song, the epic characters, their deeds, virtues, and personalities, opinions, diction and their type of speech; in a word, the delight sought from admiration directs all things in this genre.

It is possible, however, for admiration of events or men to occur our minds sometimes with a softer, sometimes with a more sever impulse of our minds; we admire some things as if we are dumbfounded, other things as if struck with terror, and other things moved by pity; sometimes the wonderment is conjoined with a great turmoil of mind, other times with a lenient and more remiss drive, and with a gentler and sweeter effect on the mind. From which it follows that it is possible that there is a great variety in this genre for the diverse nature of the plot, and that empty is learned men's work, who with the examples of Homer and Virgil wish to describe the entire nature of epic song.

Who would not see or understand that this admiration of things, which impels with mind with terror or pity and heavy impact on the mind completely, at first to know how to make the heart strong, and to have great delight, is in harmony with human nature? This matter noticed in particular led Marmontel to the opinion that he concluded that it was possible that the epic genre equally is contained within tragic emotions and the same plot constructs are accommodated into the same use. But it is easily understood from what is above that epic song lies open more widely than drama, that is, that the narration is brought forward through causes and plans; and the many emotions created are from the plurality of causes motivating wonder, not just one. Let me not address this topic, that the many virtues of epic poetry must be sought from the inborn nature of good narrative, to which this also pertains, that all narrative is sweeter to the extent that it stirs the mind with terror and pity. However, I hesitate to say that some futile combination of tragic actions brings forth a good epic which the most elegant man produces in public. But it is another matter that it is possible that good tragedies be produced from the parts of epic songs, about which Aristotle talks in the *Poetics*.

That, nevertheless, is not able to be denied since this heroic narrative, which has force of greater admiration is so much more powerful in moving our minds, constitutes the most noble genre of epic poetry; especially, if the plot is sought from heroic times, in which by the intervention of the gods things either were done or believed to be done; even if the whole force of the epic poem is derived less well from these ministrations of the gods by Batteusius and others.

The other things, which are accustomed to be taught about epic, in part from the reasoning of good storytelling and from precepts, in part from the genius of the poetic

expression, have been repeated, and are able to be repeated easily; especially other things, which things about the episodes are disputed subtly more than accurately. Nor would I wish more gentle hearts be detained for a long time in these matters. For there are several such things, that, unless someone is of a very slow nature, at first immediately upon the first encounter with these things, he perceives them. For why would you teach to write many things and recall them tediously, as has happened, what the plot contains, that it ought to be one thing and absolute, and enclosed in the right space of time? Why would you teach about the tying and dissolving of the know that is about the difficulties presented? Why teach about the affinity of episodes and their connection with the epic story? It is not very difficult to follow and to understand these things; but the difficulties somewhat greater are born, if those points of contention are to be carried into the relevant topic, as it might appear, by which reasoning and art the plot of the poem is thus able to be adorned and brought out in a great number of deeds, such that the matter is brought together to a unity. This is left behind to the genius of the poet; who, if he thrives well enough in his genius as to this matter, he will lack a copious exposition of these precepts by so much more.

But truly, so that the admiration of a great matter be able to hold the heart and to saturate it with delight, who does not see that all those things, which are able to be profitable to that plan, ought to be cared for and widely provided by the poet, and those things ought to be avoided which would stand in the way? That before all things, the mind of the reader ought to be imbued with some notion of the plot, such that it is not too satiated, and that the mind of the reader must be snatched into the midst of things, and since all things return to the senses and impressions in the poem, thus it must be deceived and tricked by deceptions encountered, such that the mind is settled in another nature and order of things, another way and reason of thinking, feeling and

doing, in other times and among other people, and outside themselves and the accustomed tenor of their life, it does not fall into anything, from which awoken as if from golden sleep, the mind notices that it has become an illusion to itself; this thing which cannot happen without any indignation and sorrow of him, who has returned to himself. From there, many things have been disputed by learned men to the great enjoyment of those reading about poetic and mythic credibility and about their verisimilitude, which a poet ought to follow, who does not himself wish to call back his own acts. Altogether as to this deception, as more recent writers call it suitably, it is obvious to recall several things, which are able to be taught about epic poetry with some utility; and to this norm I am want to note especially those things which are disputed about many passages of Vergil from VV DD. (pp. 24)

Therefore, when young people rightly discern the qualities of Vergilian poetry and perceive them, let them bend their minds to this, I'm a big fan, that they consider how much is in both the total argument and in the singular parts put there for holding the mind with wonderment not just pleasure. It is put forth by the poet of Aeneas the fugitive from captured Troy, after long wandering, the arrival to Latium is shown by the fates, and the colony of Trojans founded by him in these places, and the new seat settled. Who, however, cannot understand this easily from the beginning, that it is a great thing, a hard thing, and has some quantity of wonderment, because some refugee from a burnt city, with the fates leading him in a land so far away in Latium, places a new seat? Who does not see that in all these highest dangers and crises, in the sea journey and in Italy put up to him, that there is new material for effecting wonderment? And no less in individual parts of the poem, in the emotions and affectations of the soul, in the characters and opinions? And that to this same plan, that the type and colour and adornment of the speech have

been accommodated? In these and similar things, Vergil is able to be easily eloquent and a unique interpreter of poetry.

Vergil earns praise for inventing things, very different from Homer, nor nevertheless none to be despised. Let me compare one with him, who undertakes the adornment of real history, and another author of the Milesian story. Of course, Homer did this, that he was willing to betray the story of the true history to opinion, by whose subtly and grandeur, he kept the mind inflamed having come into contact with it; he touches heroic times nearer, and follows the sort of report itself, which is born in the popular mouth, since the passage of time has magnified all things into the greater, and, as is customary to happen in the deeds of one's ancestors and in matters of a primitive age, he has abstracted human deeds to some divine appearance and dignity; and therefore with the ministrations of the gods, he carried out all things, since this had been persuaded to early humans, that the gods interfered in conducting all human business, being present and much more powerful in the matters done in the age of our fathers, they put in the minds of humans good or bad counsel, they present difficulties and crises, they anger, grieve, fear, and have hope; he lived under the same sky and went to those places in which those matters, adorned by reports so magnificently, had been done; he used conversation, which is poetic by its nature, that is, through the subtlety of philosophers, and the intricacies of rhetoricians and grammarians not yet broken and thinned out, but which very much builds from the genius of the ancient Greek speech, which was typical of all unsophisticated languages, (pp. 26) in order that he recall things to the senses, and especially things felt and thought in the heart, and that he make clear physical and ethical opinions, through the natures of things, their properties, habits, uses, translated or depicted because of some similarity. Inside all these things,

the poetic force is especially great. And thus it is almost always accustomed to happen that the opinions and teachings of philosophers also impart a likeness of the narration of the facts. For instance, the beginning of the world from chaos through the battle of elements changed into persons and gods was narrated. Homer especially, therefore, used this skill of genius, such that he saw that these narratives of poets before himself, which interprets philosophical doctrines, were wholly able to serve in the place of poetic narratives; in order that by the poets before him from the genius of early speech had been put forward through a symbolic description of the things thought, those things by him through deeds and sayings of the gods are narrated, and they have the nature and appearance of old myths. Homer especially by this reasoning founded a poetic doctrine about the gods and some sort of mythological system; and when to epic and dramatic exposition of things it had been accommodated notably, he seated it into the patrimony of poets. In order that I distill the matter in short, they were midwived from Homeric genius and, such that it seemed to have a doctrine without doctrine and art without art, made many things which if you departed from that age, it would be absent from all poets. Vergil, from his childhood, blocked from such impetus and headlong drive of genius and mind, clearly destitute of so many props for nourishing exciting, and inflaming his enthusiasm, imprisoned by earlier examples of poets as if by bars, with reigns already then and other things imposed on his genius by Aristotle, by necessity he had to seek all things from art. In another age, very remote from this heroic period, amidst the very diverse motivations of men, affairs, times, places, and the heavens, he approached his work. Without abundances of doctrine and of many and various interpretation, there was no praise of his genius then. With the impulse of his mind broken in this way, nevertheless, you would recognize especially his great native talent even in discovering these

things from the following: first he saw the epic poem of Homer, that is, that the heroic could be accomplished and embellished; that the plot was scarcely able to be suitable for him, unless it was properly sought from the utmost antiquity and age of heroes, particular of those cited in Homer. Nevertheless, the matter has been provided by nature, that as a result the names themselves of ancient heroes, their accomplishments and their deaths even through themselves not very memorable hold the human spirit and affect it with wonderment. There is, furthermore, in this age, a simplicity of character and life, which supplies a poetic adornment and sublime forms of things and a gravity of sentiment much more elegant than the life of man; since these deeds are done more by the force of bodies and by the drive of their hearts and their courage than by the wisdom of their plans and by the subtlety of art or genius. Finally, the gods were believed themselves to intercede in human affairs. Thus, he was able to explain matters by using the agency of the gods, from the whole mythic cycle he was able to take what he wanted. And he added new sweetness, unknown to the Greeks to Italian myths. Then, he, with good judgment, he chose a plot from the old epic cycle, not yet treated by any brilliant poet, nevertheless not completely untouched and as if contiguous and neighboring on Homer and other stories. For thus, he followed this, as a result he had copious material, not raw, but dealt with in the poetic tradition by others, and accommodated to an epic dignity and force. Every poet would have desired for himself persons, characters, morals and deeds now well known from elsewhere, entrusted, constituted, and defined. This is conducive to understanding how ready and easy the supply should be of poetic adornments and episodes in such an argument so widely dispersed and open; which itself Homer either saw or sensed, when from the whole narrative of the Trojan war, he selected one hero, one deed, and he was able to use rightly an infinite number of other

things from the history of that war to adorn and amplify the plot. By this one decision of his, Maro bore very many distinguished assistances for his song and rich rewards. Not new and unknown is the hero to the reader, whose fate he explains, nor is the name of the Trojans and their fortune so obscure but that from the beginning immediately we are affected by pity and admiration of his virtue. The interference of the gods, of Juno and Venus, their anger and desire, the parts that are to be attributed to them, had been clearly defined by Homer. When at the beginning of the Aeneid, the mindful anger of Juno, and the causes of her angers and her cruel episodes are recalled, the hate of Juno from Homer immediately impresses the reader and already from the beginning the heavy worry about the fortune of Aeneas they throw in.

I wish that the acumen and the skill of the poet should also be seen in this, that not only did he draw the plot of the Aeneid from the most noble part of antiquity, what sort of is the Trojan affairs, but also from this part of the times, which inside the discussion of a few years, he brought together the force of the illustrious deeds and memorable happenstances and the wondrous changes of things, both of the Greeks and of Asia, and also of Italy. For after the destruction of Troy, it is scarcely able to be said with how much strength and how it was upset. The conquered and the conquerors, dispersed through the whole earth, they wandered in order to seek new homes, and especially towards the west, which was known at this time very little to the Greeks. And first to them, a navigation beyond Sicily began to be repeated, when the Phoenicians at that time held those seas, except for the fact that from Crete and other islands by chance a few ships reached Sicily.

Those wanderings of the heroes returning from Troy in various epic songs of the Greeks, entitled the *Nostoi*, they offered material and argument; which if they had reached our time, we

would detect by chance more steps in these on which Vergil stood; indeed in a similar argument with these it is turned. But the same histories or tales about the return of the Greeks provided material for a great part of the Greek tragedies, so that primarily it appears from Euripides, and is understood from so much more from the titles of the lost tragedies. It is permitted to suppose that from the Greek tragedies, especially Euripides, the poet succeeded especially and from them acquired the dignity of their discourse everywhere and majesty, also the pathos of the thoughts, sometimes bordering on the tragic, the impact and seriousness of tragedy, as in the case of Amata, Dido, Pallas, and Euryalos. A great part of the tragedies now have been given back by later Latin poets; which matter ought to bring to the poet nothing small of help as to the cultivation and supply of language.

Let us go to the choice made in the case of the hero, which the poet assumed for himself. First, his character, birth, fortune, name, and virtue and once also each one thing he ought to retain liberally constituted and so imbued with Homeric diction and now does hold onto; and what misfortune led him to Italy, we are eager to teach; moreover from the burnt fatherland of the Trojans, we understand freely the fates of fugitives. Why should not the long sea passage through the sea, little frequented by ships at that time, two lands not yet packed with human culture, which was to be accepted at some point, have a place because of the very many dangers and difficulties with which the courage of Aeneas could snatch us into admiration of him? The harshest anger of a hostile goddess and from another direction the warnings of so many gods makes a great suspense.¹ All which things when to the greatness of the deeds which hold the soul

¹ The only disparagement is Montellus against Vergil, built on the sole misunderstanding that Aeneas arrived in Italy, so unless to his courage touched by a similar misbelief he was able to have no force. I will resolve the matter in a word: let us place Aeneas with the warnings of the gods put aside to have settled in another land,

in admiration when they are strong, they are partners in the believability of the narrative especially. But when many things of this sort are able to be told, and are noted in notes and explanations, nevertheless in the choice of Aeneas, it demonstrates the genius and learned judgment of the great poet nothing more than that he sought him as the very powerful hero of his story, who had lead the colony of Trojans in Italy, established a new kingdom in Latium, from which the origins of Rome and Alba Longa were sought, and who, although it is not possible to be displeasing to us to understand the first origins of such an empire, nevertheless ought to be most welcome and accepted to the Romans throughout all antiquity. About the wanderings and sayings of Aeneas, all the old annals of the Romans say that which is able to be well enough collected from the fragments everywhere preserved Sextus Aurelius Victor and Dionysius and Festus; and you may recognize that the same Aeneas played a role, not obscure, in some songs of the Greeks which have been lost, from Lycophrone who collected older literature and other imitators and excerptors of the ancients, from Quintus Calabrus Book 6 et Dictys. Since, however, altogether in the books of the Greeks and Romans about Aeneas, so many things had been told, there appear to have been sources for adorning and amplifying a story prepared for him at hand. And this luck of the poet, since it is little noted and understood in the public, let us pursue the matter a little more accurately soon, with various explanations also about the single parts. With the organization of things brought into Italy, new names and types of things, people,

and to have established a seat with Dido, which the most wise man preferred; and let us think, with what spirit we would be going to carry this into reading and hearing. Another is the point of Batteusius, who saw there to be nothing in the story about the arrival of Aeneas and the Trojans into Italy that pertained to a sense of humanity. But really? Will you think that he is different from you, if you are a man, or that a great man, distinguished by his virtue, a fugitive from his burnt fatherland, after so many trials and misfortunes, bravely endured, was finally borne to a safe place.

and places emerge, and it happened to the poet, that what he ought to have in prayers, besides those things which were treated well enough by the Greeks, he was able to bring new and untouched things.

The judgment of the poet in his choice of hero, whom he adorns, how elegant and exquisite it is, I think it would be possible to judge, if anyone compares the plots of the other epic songs, such as the deeds of Hercules and Theseus, the Argonautica, the war of Thebes, the battle of the Giants or Titans; all which things would have been able to be treated and refined with the highest skill, although they are not able to be cultivated to that degree of splendor, nor do they hold sufficient importance to impel and turn the soul; to the contrary, the fates of Aeneas have such great force as to grasp the minds of the populace in the first place. All these things which Dionysius of Halicarnassus notes to build upon the reality of the arrival of Aeneas into Italy, likewise pertain to declaring the wisdom of the poet: all the Romans are witnesses of the arrival of Aeneas and the Trojans for Italy, and the things done by them both in sacrifices and festivals, are informative, as well as the sayings from the Sibyl, the Pythian oracles, and many other things.

Nor, however, to this felicity of plot-making and the abundance of such great material was the genius of the poet deficient. I would wish that this were able to be explained to more people! But, lest the discussion wander off into the immense field of the world, an account of some things will be held by us, which are especially seen in this place. These things point in part to the imitation of Homer and in part to the elegant appearance of the images and the narration overall, and in part finally to the dignity and adornment of the speech.

It is not possible to be denied that the idea of the Aeneid, its description and disposition of parts were created based on the Homeric example, in part the Odyssey and in part the Iliad; I think that there are few highlights and significant passages of the song and adornments of the action and the speech, which I believe it is possible to be affirmed as having been invented by Vergil without an exemplar and from scratch from the material itself represented and described. Certainly, very few do I recall happening, of which anyone is able to cite not either examples nor seeds nor materials now rude and unformed and in an early stage from some other Greek poet. And from Greek poets so few come to us; what if more were surviving, especially in the Alexandrians? Nor is it possible to affirm, by chance or by necessity, that a Greek and a Roman poet, while with an open wandering of the mind they wander through the same circle of actions and thoughts, was able and ought to fall into the same image or sense or language. This has often happened, without a doubt. And another thing which we note by chance cannot be denied, many things everywhere are adduced by Ursino et al. As if imitated and as described boldly and are born rashly and without the discrimination of judgment in place of imitated and represented things, which in part have similitude just so much, and sometimes this is very obscure, and in part, they are such that any sane and knowledgeable man, if he lays out the same things in the same ways and words with the same senses and thoughts would use; of whatever ways many things have been omitted by me of this sort, some pertinent to this thought, that when done by comparison they delight. But many things prove that to Vergil, in countless places, the Greek things, especially of Homer were before his eyes, and first, indeed, the layout of the whole poem was sought from Homer, and so many verses to the word in Latin were translated, so many passages, what things produce a more exquisite effect and poetic figures and insight and teaching

and anything which abstruse natures produce, what he was going to utter out of frankness, as the remaining, if there had not been a person who had seized these things already; and besides the rational for changing Greek words or speech, which pertain to the inner nature of the poetic diction of Vergil, and to his genius; then in the speech of the poet himself, “I first returning into my fatherland with myself, I will lead down the muses from the height of Ionia;” and finally the authority of the ancients as the third Suasoria of Seneca, which affirms that Vergil, “not for the sake of stealing but of openly imitating with this intention, in order that he wishes to be recognized,” modeled other things in many verses. It is a long job to point out in what diverse directions of praise and censure these clear vestiges of Homeric imitation have been modified by learned men. To some, there has been nothing more divine than Vergil the imitator, to others, nothing more thin and sterile. Indeed I see there are many things in this place, which have a place neither for praise greatly nor for pardon, but which are so consistent with the nature of the matter and the rationale, that a suitable reason does not appear how and why they hold themselves otherwise. When once the poet had composed the Aeneid as if according to the Odyssey and the Iliad; which I do not see why we say was done with little wisdom by Vergil, since it had been tried amongst the Romans as yet; why would he not think Homer should be followed in general directions also and in singular passages? And since he stood in all ways in his footsteps, seeing that he treated the plot closely and like Homer, it was difficult to avoid entering into the same ideas of things everywhere, the same images, the same thoughts, the same experiences. There are many things which are able to be said and expressed correctly in just one way; many things which, if they ought to be consistent with nature, it would be unsuitable to wish to vary. Besides this, it is not easy to understand how a learned poet and having a genius, ornate and compelled

by the reading of Greek authors, when he turns himself to his task, was able to express and force out thus all things which he had read, from his heart, such that nothing he had from his earlier reading would occur to his mind. Most of these things, which are able to be expressed through imitation, is of this sort, that he is able to seem to have wished to render Homeric words and thoughts not so much from the effort given and by study as that he rather ought to seem to have fallen into them, with this matter itself again recalling to his mind those things which once he held in memory, having read and recognized in a similar plot line. And yet this type of imitation is absent so much that he is able to be censured (even if some do this amongst our poets also even among the most talented Wieland) that he shows and teaches nothing more than that he is a learned poet. But in criticizing or praising Vergil, learned men have not recalled this fact which had to be born in mind in the first place, that the poet, even if he had born this genius toward new and untouched material, ought to have attributed this to his own age and his own people, or at least in the common opinion of his time to have this justification, when it was believed to pertain to the art of the poet and to the major delight of the song, if many things had been expressed and represented from the Greek things. Let someone scan for me the fragments of the old poets before Vergil, especially Ennius, and he will see almost all and individually from any Greek poet either expressed in Latin or represented by imitation. Even Plautus and Terence are crafted and compared almost entirely from Greeks or in alignment with the Greeks. On the Greek genius, the Romans entirely modeled themselves; in Greek things, they spent their boyhood and adolescence. And from many of the writers, especially the passages of Cicero, the matter is better known than that rather many things must be reminded about it. Therefore, although with the Roman speech now cultivated, and with more of the fruits of Romans talents brought forth into

public light, nevertheless not even under Augustus did the best men fail to love Greek things and to express those things in Latin, and to vie with the Greeks in ornamentation, and to make the Greeks inventions their own, all the more if they imported a new type of song into Roman literature. Indeed, in no way do I doubt that several songs of Horace have been silhouette from as having been Greek lyric; since indeed among so few fragments preserved from those lyrics, there is scarcely one or another the imitation of which you are able to assert was not made by Horace; which we will believe to be the case, if one could compare the whole body of Greek lyric with Horace. Nor is it right to believe that the matter would hold itself otherwise with Ovid, Propertius, and others, if the Greek writers of Elegy, especially the Alexandrian poets existed to this day. Who would reproach Vergil for following the sense of his own people, the judgment and habit, and applying himself entirely to Greek poets in expressing his songs? A new desire seems to enter, which brought a delight much greater, if an outstanding and sweet thought produced a memory at the same time of a Greek passage, whence it had been expressed. In the Aeneid, therefore, there are few characters, scarcely any notable deed, scarcely any outstanding passage, in which not of any Greek poet, especially Homer, do you recognize the references. But in the case of this same Aeneid, you easily recognize much more learned and ingenious imitator, than in the Eclogues, in which we have noted many things placed far from the truth and reasoning of reality, and other things in which the poet out of a hardly subtle desire to imitate fell into, as when the unlearned shepherd recalls the Arar and Oaxes (Ap. Rhod. Argo. 1134), or in these things; recently I saw myself on a shore (Theocritus Idyll 6 34 38), or (Idyll 5 41), and other sorts. Nor indeed should this imitation of the Greeks be thought to lack either genius or judgment. For this imitation is by no means that sort which is servile or artificial, of which kind

is accustomed to emerge from a small and ignoble genius, nor has the poet diminished the strength of his genius vilely in varying the words, ways, and figures of another poet; but when he ran into something, thought or invented by another, at once he made the thing his own, and his soul touched by the imagery of Homer, as if with a spark taken from its own appropriate kindling, suddenly snatched up by flame, it grows hot and burns with a great fire. Hence, come forth new forms of things, new types of things, and new natures of things. No one does not understand easily that Vergil vied with the Greek poet, if he recognizes things one by one and examines them, especially when he follows closely, sometimes with a more with a more refined, beautiful, and august imagery of the story, with the elegance of the Latin discourse, or with a novel presentation, at other times with an opinion or statement created felicitously and deflected to another type of matter. At first, however, the culture of the Augustan age had to to greatly justify itself to the Romans in the imitation of Homer, wherein the uncultivated simplicity and shaggy age of Homer was tempered to the more honorable and milder culture by Vergil, sometimes to a more elegant phrasing. Aeneas himself was also able to seem more commendable with this reputation. In all his deeds, character, and sayings, there is some milder cultivation of humanity. The organization of the story is more ornate; the dignity, splendor, elegance, magnificence, but worthy of the character of heroes, illustrates the enhancements. And this matter indeed could be drawn into a long argument, if it were more pleasing in the heart, but instead we prefer to follow the plan of my own writing.² But to each who is going to duly judge

² These things had been written, when we took into the hands of Hurdius, the most elegant Briton, a disputation about poetic imitation, and he explained the matter clearly, to the extent he teaches that there is such a great affinity among them of stories treated by poets and of genius, such that it was necessary for the majority of poets to speak in the same way or say the same things. And he also places well notes of true

the virtues of Vergilian poetry, they ought to set this foremost in mind, in what age, among what population, in what city, among which people the poet lived, what surface appearance this poem had, such that, even if with the character of heroic times still safe and intact, the outwards appearance would be more pure, elegant, and restrained, the affect and the emotional impact would have in some ways gentler and some ways heavier nature, and on the whole the dignity of a more cultivated age, and the character of the heroes, their thoughts and words, even if suitable to a heroic age, would breathe nevertheless something from the elegance of the time period, the city, and the court in which the poet lived.

To the pleasing and pleasant cultivation of Vergilian song, the nature of the discourse no less looks, at least which in the remarkable simplicity keeps a dignity and a gravity. For with various and exquisite ornamentation and the splendor of poetic diction, with the gravity of the speech, with the weight of the thoughts, by a long distance he surpasses Homer, whose praise has been especially placed in the propriety and simplicity of his language, even if neither the force, the strength, the beauty, nor sometimes the ornamentation is lacking. But Vergil should not be seen to be without simplicity and propriety in his most ornate discourse; even if inferior writers adopted many hues and flattery of his speech from him; but with these things which are appropriate to song poorly carried into prose. Certainly, I think the poetry of Vergil is a most unique and outstanding example of elegant and affective poetic; it is permitted to understand in this the genius of the poetic diction established from the beginning and drawn out along certain principles and rules of narrative and to learn the natures of tropes and figures and the reasons for changes described and rendered to the law. And this very matter, when I observed it, led me, in

imitation, but we change our opinion about the imitation of Vergil, we have seen nothing that has been added by him.

explaining and explicating the poetic discourse of Vergil, to make a clearer effort than I would think it was possible to be done by me correctly in the case of any other writer. Nevertheless in this determination itself of poetic diction, praise of the wisdom of the poet ought to rest not as much in the inventing as in transferring the invention of another person's into his own use with ingenious wisdom. It is accepted that the genius and nature of poetic discourse uniquely must be traced back to Alexandrian poets, Callimachus, Apollonius, Nicander, and Aratus; their writings teach this, by calling to mind the splendor, and admirable ornament, cultivated in the greatest simplicity, and which from all ages no one else we see to have followed. Indeed the poets seem to have noticed, most learned and polished in the brotherhood of the Ptolemies, that it was possible felicitously to temper the bloated discourse of the tragedians with Homeric simplicity. Vergil held these authors in so much greater praise for their judgment because Ennius and the others who had preceded him had labored too little concerning the elegance and stricter ornamentation of their discourse.

Now it is finally pleasing to furnish some things and to caution through satire, with what opinions of certain learned men, which you see to undercut the whole inborn nature of the song and the characters, quietly or overtly encountered by us; for it is neither of my nature or habit to descend into contention with any of them.

First, about the argument, which the poet followed in writing the Aeneid, and about the goal, what he had as his purpose, many people contrive various answers. Nothing can be more alien from epic song than allegory; it strangles its whole force, it thins the dignity of the events and characters, it shakes out the pleasant wandering of the mind and it chills the passion amidst reading, and interrupts all pleasure. Nevertheless, learned men struggle in competition to snatch

the persona of Aeneas from us with their own arguments and to put in place Augustus. Even from the new seat prepared in Latium, they have driven out the miserable Trojans; that the new principate of one man had been depicted by the poet as constituted at that time at Rome. With similar arcane insight, others have seemed to themselves to find plans of some (nescioquae, no comma) Augustan dominion hidden in the Aeneid. Thus Spence, a man of exquisite genius, has persuaded himself that the Aeneid is a *politikon* epic,³ nor did the poet look at anything other than that he provide kindling to souls, sick with the desire of the liberty that had been taken from them, and sanction a new leader. Nevertheless, you would not see that the personality, fortune, deeds, and fates of Aeneas have anything which corresponds to this argument; no person in the Aeneid is free to accept a master; you would see no benefits of monarchy either laid out or praised; in the language, nothing occurs by which souls, moved with the love of liberty, can be adduced or brought forward, such that they would by a good leader prefer to be ruled safely than to be vexed by the domination of a few powerful men under the vain name of liberty. As to the honour of the Julian gens, which wishes to be seen to trace its origin from Iulus, the son of Aeneas, it becomes manifest in the reading of the poem itself that if the work of the Aeneid were not undertaken for this, nevertheless somethings are recalled everywhere sweetly and others are inserted ingeniously for the praise of Augustus and by the old Grammarians also it was advised (to follow this course) in many passages; but how much force these things could have for commending the dominion of Augustus, I freely admit that this does not stand well with me. Nor, if the new home of Aeneas in Latium were fortified with divine and human laws, do I understand from that what sort of bulwark has been created for the new kingdom of Augustus; such that, if

³ Polymetis Dialogue 3

this case were able to be made, that this plan of the poet in writing the Aeneid was proposed, I would say hardly happily has he seemed to have busied himself with this matter.

Nevertheless, a learned man among the Fracogauls had fallen into this same opinion before Spence, a man who especially learnedly pursued the similarity between the persona and fortune of Aeneas and Augustus. You would not deny that he played ingeniously; and it is the common opinion of many learned men that Augustus is depicted under the persona of Aeneas, and in him you see the virtues attributed to Aeneas by the poet; there they say many other things. You would see some so obviously please themselves in this discovery, that from every side they seek and hunt these things which can be accommodated to Augustus. Thus the dignity of the face (Aeneid 1. 593) “similar to a god in his face and shoulders” is recalled with agreement as to Augustus. You would find more things of this sort in Jortin Six Dissertations on Different Subjects (1755). 6. o. 248 and others. I would think that these things can be forgiven to anyone from the middle of the crowd of Flatterers who drag one or the other praise of Aeneas to Augustus, in order to flatter the emperor. But that a poet would wish to compare such dissimilar personas fortunes virtues and deeds and accomplishments between the two, I do not think it is probable if I rightly understand the judgment an elegance of Vergil.

By almost the same path, the political song created by the poet once seemed to Father Rene le Bossu (Tr. Du Poeme epique) as if Vergil wished to lead the Romans in part to embracing and approving the present state of things and in part to exhort Augustus to moderation and clemency and call him back from lust of domination and immoderation. But neither the plot nor the handling of the Aeneid responds at all to this idea; a refugee from a burnt-down city,

Aeneas seeks a new home, he impels force on people with arms, and so forth; what, then, is in these things which looks to the arts and values of ruling through power?

But no one would deny that such things which are able to be handed over to princes as good advice are everywhere in the Vergilian tale and in individual parts of the song or occur in passages or verses; but rather among these useful things which are owed to the songs of poets this especially should be recalled. But it cannot be said and ought not to be: that in constructing the poem and in ordering the story and organizing it, such a notion was a premise of the poet, for the sake of explaining which he established the narrative. He wished to and felt a debt to tell a great, lofty, and marvelous thing. Because this story and the enjoyment which is received from there, are linked with utility to all classes of people, and especially to the minds of princes, this is fitting for an epic narrative in and of itself; for the nature itself of the matter bears thus, that the great deeds, distinguished without end, of great men are not able to be explained and narrated with benefit, all the more if the narrative should be carried out with a splendor of thoughts and with the adornment of rhetoric.

Just now above, we were suggesting that it is scarcely probably to us that the character of Aeneas has been either fit to the character of Augustus or drawn from it. The poet was more wise and more understanding of poetic matters than to admit such a thought process into his mind. And besides, because he did not invent the character of Aeneas, but received it handed down by others, (*circumspiciendae not cicum*) the qualities of this same Aeneas had to be examined by the poet, virtues which had force and brilliance in the epic story, and supplied sufficient motivation of the deeds, which had to be narrated. But it Vergil had wished to place his effort in this matter especially, that Aeneas resembled Augustus, how many things and how hardly suitable ones to

epic narrative, plot, the character of the work, and the sequence of events, the poet would have imported into the song!

Nevertheless, they say that Aeneas is wholly dissimilar to Homeric heroes; and also inferior to Achilles and Odysseus; distinguished by piety alone. What then? If Aeneas were another Achilles or another Odysseus, would they not rather call him written and expressed by servile imitation? I am not the sort of person who out of some blind love of my poet would wish to argue that nothing was done wrong by him. If someone were to say that the plot of the Illiad had more felicitous material nearer to the dignity of epic, he has me agree with him; and is himself a delighter much more in the reading of Homer than Vergil; for not all epic poems from one and the same type are able to proceed; but after the angers of Achilles and the wisdom or cunning of Odysseus, which was better suited both to an older and age to epic song than wisdom, when something must be varied and innovated by a poet, why should he not have tempered the virtue of Aeneas, which he has in common with other heroes, with the bravery of soul in enduring calamities and in his obedience to the gods? The changed scheme of events and timing led him to this and the things which had been handed down by the earlier poets about the wanderings of Aeneas and his arrival into Latium induced him to this also. With the warnings as oracles of the gods, tradition had narrated that all things had been undertaken and accomplished by Aeneas, and that the Penates and holy things of his fatherland had been imported by him into new homes; what is more suitable to the matter than that a hero be exhibited, distinguished by piety and religiosity? Nor indeed should so great a poet not have seen that religious matters, causes, and plans have exceptional force as to the magnitude of things and some holy dignity. And so, he especially used this indeed as if a hinge of things, that he would hold our minds in

suspense with hope and expectation through various pronouncements, and he would exhibit some “august” and religious appearance of things through the events.⁴ Indeed the strength of Achilles and his anger were foreign to the whole plot; the virtue of Aeneas is sedate and serene and tempered with a sense of humanity; and although it must be conceded that epic strength is greater in Achilles, nevertheless, it is manifest that not all epic characters are able to recall Achilles. The more elegant and gentle judgment of the Augustan age would scarcely have approved of pure battles like those in Homer and martial bravery. Therefore, since the character of the Aeneid is entirely other and diverse than the character of the Iliad, who does not see that it is misguided to seek the things in the Aeneid which are appropriate to the Iliad; the same escalations, fires, and tempers of spirit? But other things in the Aeneid which you would approve of, why do you not find comfort in these! But it would be an endless task to follow all things which are praised and criticized by those who wish to be subtle judges of poets, while they confuse the arguments, examples, and causes and reasons of things, especially as often as they compare Homer and Vergil among themselves. But we must resist every urge by which we could be distracted. This neither will we make reference to the opinion of William Warburton (Divine Legation of Moses T. I. B. II. Sect. IV.), who argued that the perfect example of a founder who gives laws was exhibited in Aeneas by the poet; especially when in another passage (Book 6, Heyne Excursus 10) a warning is made on a few points about this matter.

It seems hardly accurately to have been handed down that in seven years the plot of the Aeneid was resolved. It is very true that the wanderings of Aeneas consumed seven years (see

⁴ Servius is tedious in this matter, that he molded Aeneas from the guise of some priest or Pontifex, and he uses some skewed argument of which, nevertheless, there ought to have been some support.

Excursus 2 as to Book 3). But the narration of the poem itself does not have a beginning except with the summer of the seventh year and is resolved in the same year. With equal wandering, the plot of the Odyssey is believed to be constrained in eight, nine, or ten years, although nevertheless it is manifest to the one who has paid attention that this is carried out to its end within thirty-six or thirty-seven days.

Many people everywhere lament that there is a much smaller number of characters and variety of them in the Aeneid, that is, men signified by deeds and virtues than in the Illiad; nor do they recall the verses without criticising the poet from Aeneid 1.220 *fortemque Gyam fortemque Cloanthum*; and they seem hardly to agree even amongst themselves what they mean. For indeed this praised passage mentions no heroes whose characters ought to have some epic force; but these men come into an accounting and crowd of those who should be praised in name only and must be furnished with an epithet for the sake of sweetness: the sort of which are in Homer, those numberless fighters and slaughtered people, *esthloi, amumones, krateroi, aichmetai*, and so on. Voltaire and Addison excuse the poet, but so ingeniously that you would admire the subtlety of these best men. One of them says that when Homer shows Achilles withdrawing from battle, he should have shown others in the meantime performing brave deeds, which is (fit vs. sit) not so in the Aeneid. The other refers this matter to the elegance of Vergil which, since he intended to characterize Augustus, joined no one equal to him in virtue. But indeed since the nature of the plot and the nature of the whole piece are a model and standard, undoubtedly more characters are not able to be participants and allies of the deeds and things done than those which the matter itself demands; and if the poet introduced into his song a few others who stand out in virtue, he does not so much delight in a Homeric level of diversity of

qualities and character: but let us wonder at the wisdom of the man, at least, in this matter, that one Aeneas stands out in virtue among all others so much, and no one impedes his splendour except perhaps Turnus. And this matter was so much more difficult since he (Aeneas) does not surpass all mortals by any Achillean quality of body or mind, nor does he keep us excited as to why the immense anger of his enraged heart or the grief felt by the death of Patroclus would erupt.

It would be pleasing to argue about the epic verse of Vergil and his considerable sweetness and gravity to the ear, if this matter did not have greater subtlety than that he was able to hold the minds and eyes of the readers. We will make this one proviso, that these things seem to lead young peoples minds into error, if they are overdone in the poem, rather let the verses incline to be formed and accommodated to the sounds and natures of the action. Indeed, I do not deny that a sense of anger holds me struggling, whenever I try to persuade myself, that any great poet, snatched by the passion of such great things and inflamed by the violence of great images, labours in rendering the sound of horses running or tubas or other things; this matter weakens and suppresses the genius of the poet and dignity of the poetic art. There are, nevertheless you say, such verses in any high quality poet. Yes; there are certainly many; although it is the inclination of those who devote themselves to such matters to accommodate many other verses to this kind of pastime. But it seems best to me to establish that it is closer to the character of poetry that the very nature of speech has been provided such that it expresses the sounds of many things; that the mind, however, is inflamed by the appearance of images presented to it, when he toils at the appearance of things as they occur to him such that he express them vividly in language, that by necessity he falls into those words, especially when the propriety of speech

directs him. Any good orator and much more so any poet will thus accommodate heavy and quick, light and harsh sounds to the nature of the narrative, whether or not he does it intentionally.

ABOUT THE INVENTION OF THINGS TREATED IN THE AENEID

What sort Vergil's genius was in inventing plot elements whole-cloth, not so much a thing favorable in thinking up new types of plot elements nor daring toward undertaking or attempting things untouched untried by others, or those things of which the outcome was unclear and uncertain; but, which is no less praise, a genius born and useful for perfecting and polishing and adorning the primitive and incomplete inventions of earlier poets; how admirable indeed and happy of the story which the plot of the song made for itself, is the nature and how great a judgment in this delight emerges: this all has been explaining in the above disquisition. There remains what we promised in that place, that we would declare in a few words, from what place the poet received his tale and the material for arranging and adorning it so fully, so that thence it may appear more clearly, what and how great a praise of his invention is owed to the genius of the poet in this matter, and how polished and subtle was his judgment in choosing an argument of this sort for himself, which had a huge abundance of events and ornaments already prepared and offered to him by others, such that he had only to make his choice on the basis of his learning and the wisdom of his judgment.

Critics are generally accustomed and others who deal in this affair, as far as I know, to decide thus: people say that the poet followed some obscure story about the arrival of Aeneas

into Italy. Indeed, from these, which are recalled by _____ in reference to Vergil, it should be manifest entirely from a more accurate understanding of the history that there was this narrative about the wanderings of Aeneas and the colony of Trojans led into Latium among the more illustrious histories, especially those put forth and adorned by many Greek and Roman poets and writers. They were able with this at least to teach these things which Ryckius put forward in his work *A Dissertation about the First Colonies of Italy and the Arrival of Aeneas*, although by a different rationale. (See the conclusion of Hostenius Notarius on Stephanus Byzantius)

As a whole, of the story about the arrival of Aeneas into Italy (and if we use the word *fabula*, it is not intended to mean a matter made up and imaginary, but *fabula* like *muthos*, indicates every ancient history before it had begun to be written in letters and published in prose) therefore, that most famous passage of Homer (*Iliad* 20.307-308) is considered the origin, where Neptune is the first to say to the gods that they should remove Aeneas from the battle after meeting Achilles and being unequal to him, so that the posterity of Dardanus not come to an end with his death, whom nevertheless Jupiter esteemed above all other mortals; but that Priam now is hated by Jupiter along with his progeny and thus Aeneas and his posterity will rule the Trojans:

It is clear that the kingdom is promised in these words to Aeneas and his posterity; but in which place this would be, the story was varied among the ancients; indeed about the wanderings of Aeneas and his home, it was handed down quite diversely, since some had said that he settled and ended his life on the shore of Thrace, others in Arcadia, others in Sicily, others in Italy, which story finally was believed and entrusted above all others; there were also those who were

of the opinion that this kingdom was settled in the Troad itself. This is not my question, which of these narrations is more historically accurate than the others; but my argument makes the point that from this variety of narration itself it becomes obvious that this, which is my opinion, that Aeneas is not some obscure man in old histories or among poets and his fate and the events of his life were not invented and made up by Vergil in the end. For this diversity of narrative argues for the diversity and abundance of authors, who hand down traditions about Aeneas, and of poets who have dealt with this same story. For as each poet happened upon the material treated by others before him, and as he accommodated it to his own way of thinking, either the whole story or some part of it, he often reshaped some things and changed them, added or removed. The Greek historians, however, while they were repeating the origins of their nation or people, they were following a popular narrative. Indeed it was the custom for all states of Greece, that they wished the founder of their race or city be considered some distinguished hero from distant antiquity. Since(?), however, many colonies of Trojans were dispersed throughout Greece everywhere, is it any surprise that all of these preferred to attribute their origin to Aeneas? And from this, that diversity and narrative ought to have arisen by necessity. So that we remember this in the meantime, the diversity of narrative does not at all detract historicity from ancient legends; for some foundation always remains no more deprived of its own truth than the things handed down by the most serious authors; and especially to this point, Thessalus, son of Hippocrates, The Trojan Affair was not a myth, but fact; and to this matter, Cluver and Bochart can be seen to have established a weak case, who wished to prove from that diversity of opinions that Aeneas never reached Italy. Ryckius quite sharply pushed back against their argument in his lauded dissertation, but with (lit. confusedly lavish) lavish and confused arguments and too

subtle a judgment. Except for rumour, which if it is not certain and unchanging, is nevertheless rather influential and wide-spread, this question about Aeneas' arrival in Italy is not able to be explained and resolved; nevertheless there is such a story in all antiquity in place of faith and probable reason a story in which it is necessary to be satisfied and to follow.

If, however, not even that more powerful faith and likelihood of events to be followed by the poet is about to hold the heart sufficiently, this rationale must be followed, which is able to have the most impact on the minds of people through its renown and brilliance. So then, even if there was a great dissension among Greek authors about this matter, although the Roman writers are unanimous in reporting about the arrival of the Trojans into Italy and the origins of Alba Longa derived from Aeneas and his progeny (see especially Sextus Aurelius Victor *On the Origins of the Roman Race*) by his own judgement, Vergil was able and ought to have preferred this story, celebrated among the Romans, to others.

Before we progress to other matters, I will advise a few things here about the passage of Homer cited above. The words of Homer present quite openly a certain kingdom which Aeneas and his descendants obtained. Homer, therefore, who lived closer in time to the time of the Trojans, followed another legend existing at this time about this matter, as he is accustomed; unless by chance he himself happened upon the descendants of Aeneas in his journeys. That there was this kingdom in the very Troad, in which Priam had been ruler, this is the sense of the words which occur in this passage; and thus, the ancients interpreted the passage (See Strabo) and there were in addition those who will prefer that Aeneas founded a kingdom in other lands, with the interpolation made of *pantessin* for *Troessin*, and drag the poet into their own regions. Some have decided that Aeneas was different from the son of Anchises and Venus; there were

also those who say that he was badly recalled from his father because it must be recalled to Ascanius; others yet had argued that with the matters in Italy settled, Aeneas returned to Troy from the same place. How famous amongst the ancients and noble that narrative ought to have been, which with the greatest variety of opinions was drawn into different parts!

Strabo indeed thought entirely to contradict the Homeric passage in favour of a popular narrative or storyline about the wanderings of Aeneas and his arrival in Italy; it is hinted in this that Aeneas remained in Troy and succeeded the throne and handed it down to his family line. It is possible that the Trojans were commanded by Aeneas in other places, even in Italy; and with this established, his opinion agrees with the Homeric passage; which Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the keen writer, saw. Which prophecy Homer gave to Neptune so obscurely, even if this was done suitably to the nature and habit of poets. Nevertheless the reason of this matter is able to be rendered, even this very fact, that this kingdom of Aeneas had been founded in faraway lands; whence nothing but obscure and uncertain reports were able to exist about this matter among the Greeks. For how little visited by Greeks and how little known was the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic in the time of Homer, as you can especially understand from the myths of Odysseus, which are restricted within those seas, nor were they able to be narrated by the poet with any probability, unless this region had not been very little known to his populace and so suited to stories.

Many things make it probable that we should believe that with Troy overturned and the departure of the Achaenas complete, the Trojans scattered in flight again got together in those places and restored a semblance of their kingdom, and so many narratives of the poets allude. Following those whom Dictys follows, the Trojan Kingdom was soon handed over to Antenor by the Greeks in an agreement having been attacked by Aeneas, but in vain. Demetrius of Scepsis,

although it is possible to suspect that he wished to gratify his own citizens had handed down that his own Scepsians, after the destruction of Troy, were ruled by Scamandrius the son of Hector and by Ascanius the son of Aeneas, but it is foreign to good sense that we follow this matter verbatim. (Compare this to Book 2 Exc 17 p.256) Quarrels, however, a little later in this kingdom arose amongst the leading men descended from royal stock, and hence new revolutions, new departures, and journies into other locations followed. Indeed in this manner, even the most diverse accountings of writers are all able to be compiled and reconciled amongst themselves.

But, as I said, we must not act such that we reduce the diversity of the narrative into consensus, but rather such that we declare from this diversity the abundance of things narrated, which the poet had as material for his song. However, there are many things which even though they are handed down, some from some account, others from other accounts, and are elaborated, nevertheless they clearly reveal the common foundation of some early narrative accepted by the majority; there are others in which all the sources all but agree, for instance Callistratus, Satyrus, and Arctinus, this one also the most ancient, agree in that Aeneas absconded with the Penates with the Palladium, that he led his father and son with him, (inquire about error page) “Now Aeneas is at the gates, son of the goddess, holding his father on his shoulders, letting fall his linen cloak from his thunder-struck back.” Both this and other things among the chatterings are recalled by Strabo, about which passages one by one we will see, and especially that Aeneas escaped into Latium, and stayed in that place in accordance with the oracle, where they ate a table. That this was a story popular amongst the Italians, as also that other tale about the pregnant sow, Dionysius of Halicarnassus shows abundantly I 55 56. As does Conon, and from Lutatius, Cato, and Caesar, the Author from whom it is entirely apparent that there was no readily

apparent individual from the ancient Roman writers, who did not present the fates of Aeneas and his entrance to Italy. Likewise, Varro in DRR 2.4 Also Lycophron Alexandra 1255 (Where they badly join thirty towers, going back to the Scholiast; but take it that for “towers” land is meant, and that “counting thirty offspring” looks (refers) to the sow.) Among other things, this seems to be, however, most notable, that Greek writers some time before the age of Augustus reckoned the origin of the Romans from Trojans and Aeneas and attributed global power to them from the Homeric verses about Aeneas, especially ... I would add passages if I were not perusing brevity, and there will not be any place more suitable from these of pursuing when they are treated individually. For we have in particular this proposition, that we are investigating the obscure vestiges, especially obscure, of an old history which the poet can be seen to have applied everywhere. For it is readily apparent that he does not speak without an authoritative source. Likewise, we want young people to have this example readily at hand, for this matter is not easily disclosed through precepts, by what plan, by what reasoning, and by what desire it had to be altered into mythic narratives. For to be willing to do nothing other than learn, research, and bring together into one place what this person or that person and six hundred others handed down, thought, and dreamt in this matter, this is to waste effort and free time. On the other hand, there is much utility and adornment in this study, if only you elucidate the old histories and origins of people, the customs of primitive men, and their lifestyle and language and beliefs, and the inventions of poets, and you also learn what those of the ancient poets who fortune has preserved for us, had before their eyes, how they varied and adorned those things, what in each matter and each plot, what they followed and saw; and you diligently discern how from the native stories of poets those inept comments of grammarians, monks, and translators. But now, in

general, it was the plan to summarily explain some things which pertain to the story of the Aeneid.

The fact that the whole course of the Aeneid is predicated on the vagaries of oracles⁵, is now considered elsewhere to be among the inventions of a most ingenious poet. There is, however, also a pretense of this sort, that Vergil must be said not to have devised this scheme, but to have employed it wisely, conveniently found, for his own use. For, by a wondrous consensus of all writers, the whole narrative about Aeneas is conducted through prophecies, oracles, dreams, auguries, and omens, whether this must be attributed to the geniuses of poets, by whom the matter had been treated from the beginning, or of people in antiquity, from whom their descendants received it. The Trojans clearly ought to have carried into Greece and Italy many stories of this sort from Phrygia, as if they had set out from the source and home of auguries, and altogether of the arts of prophesizing and divining. To that point, from Servius 3.359, you can learn that there were those who handed down the science of augury which was brought from Phrygia into Italy; unless one must believe that the Tyrrhenians had these arts first earlier. Even if there were no race in early times at all, which believed that the future was not signified and able to be understood and predicted by certain people (Cic. De Divin 1) however, at first, especially in sending out colonies, oracles and prophets had the greatest authority; which rests especially on Herodotus alone (Cf. Cic 1 c c 1 f) Thus, to the seats established by the Trojans in Italy, nothing seems to be better accommodated than oracles and prophecies. The poet certainly clearly embraced this ancient belief or tenet, and for that reason he used the reputation of his ancestors and the belief of the histories in the Trojans as his own, such that all things narrated by him proceeded through the decrees of the fates and the intervention of the gods. However, having

⁵ Could be more literal, "earlier works"

set forth cleverly from obscure and uncertain things to more certain and definite things, he kindled a desire of learning subtly by these new stimuli. First, Book 2.281 (Heyne's own edition) and following, the ghost of Hector persuades Aeneas in his sleep to take flight, and promises "a new settlement, in another land beyond the sea," which flows near the Troad. Soon, an omen, the first received of a flame on the head of Iulus 2.681, then of a falling star having arisen suddenly 5.692, these point to a fortified location of Ida and the "hope of posterity from Iulus;" and Creusa also suggests that Hesperia is their future home. In Delos, the oracles of Phoebus declares other things about this land, because the Trojans cite their origin from there, and because the descendants of Aeneas were to establish a great empire there. Which since they were intending to settle in Crete, the Penates having appeared to Aeneas in his sleep expound about Italy more clearly, after which these facts were able to be said rightly by Aeneas in Book 1, "I seek Italy as a fatherland." The Harpies add one other thing about the tables consumed after a banquet, as it were a sign of the future home and colony. Finally, Helenus in Epirus explains all the reasons then clearly and openly 3.54 also about the sow having given birth to thirty piglets, she warns that other things are to be expected from the Sybil. In Sicily, in a dream, the soul of Anchises foretells the descent to the underworld 5.739 and at her home in Cumae, the Sybil predicts the approach to Lavinia, the war, and the alliance with Evander. Add to these the survey itself of posterity among the dead, and Book 6 891-892 "Thence Anchises narrates the wars to the man, which thn will be conducted and he shows him the Laurentian people and the city of Latinus, and in what way he must flee and bear each labour." We will see that all these things are positioned according to some authority, in part in single passages, and in part it will be apparent from what follows.

Entirely, some prediction was offered from the beginning, by which, when Troy was overturned, a greater order of things, greater fates were promised to Anchises and Aeneas. Homeric verses themselves lead to this, as mentioned above, e.g. Il. 20.307-308. Then, in the *Laocoon* of Sophocles, you should understand that Anchises, mindful of the orders received from Venus, deliberates about flight and urges his son to withdraw to Ida, from a fragment in Dionysius 1.48 which by chance our version looked back to, while Venus urges Aeneas in Book 2, “Flee, you, born of a goddess.” Even that prediction that the place of founding their home would be a deadly one, where they, compelled by hunger, would eat their tables, was given long ago to Anchises by Venus, Victor reminds us about this from Caesar Book 1 and Lutatius Book 2, “Then with Anchises foretelling that this was the end of miseries and wandering, indeed he advised that Venus had predicted somewhere for him, etc.” and chapter 9 from Alexander of Ephesus Book 1 about the Marsic war, “He is seeking Ida, and there with ships constructed, he seeks Italy on the advice of the Oracle,” and Dionysius 1.55 “lest the Trojan fleet sail into the furtherer parts of Europe, “These oracles were the cause, having reached their end in those places, and the spirit revealing its plan in many ways.” From there, the portent made on the landing at Laurentum says that the waters of a fountain suddenly leap forth from the land and tables are consumed.

There also seems to have been some dream of Aeneas published by many from Cicero *De Divinibus* 1.21, “Let there be these in addition, dreams of myths and to them, let the dream of Aeneas also be added, which in the Greek Annals of Numerius Fabius Pictor is of the same sort, that all the things which have been done by Aeneas and which happened to him, they were what was visible to him following his rest. Therefore, there was narrated in Numerius Fabius, who,

given that he wrote in Greek, was able to follow Greek authors, a dream in which the fates of Aeneas were explained during sleep in order, and in this way, then, the outcome confirmed it.

Moreover, one may learn that the many warnings of the Penates, which Aeneas had received everywhere, were cited from a passage in Servius on *Aeneid* 3.148, The Penates “whom certain men say were introduced by the poet and give warning through a dream, for, ordered by their warning in his sleep, he made a pact with Latinus, and also by their warning that Latinus joined himself to Aeneas; (these same comments occur in Dionysius 1.57) Varro says that these same gods appeared sometimes in dreams, and ordered what they wish done, and that our ancestors cultivated these dreams publicly.” The gods of the fatherland, having presented themselves to Aeneas in his sleep, also removed doubt about capturing the place of a new city according to some, after the attack against the Laurentian field (Dionysius 1.56) and these events are also copied from Cato in OGR, whom Dionysius follows in this entire passage; these things in the OGR are taken from that book almost verbatim.

Latinus had been warned by an oracle of Faunus that he would take as his son in law a particular foreigner and would share his reign with him (see Vergil 7.254). Victor hands down comparable things from Cato about OGR 13 (not from Quintus Lutatius): “as is natural, (Latinus) was forced into this plan on the authority of the gods; for often he had been warned through extispicy and dreams that he would be safer against the enemy if he joined his own forces with strangers.”

Similarly, it is also clear from the same authors that in other matters which were conducted by Aeneas in Italy, that the poet did nothing else than that he accommodated ancient stories to his plans, and it will be shown below one by one, each in its own passage. What

authority he followed in the destruction of Troy will be shown in further discourses addressing Book 2.

It is sufficiently understood, I think, from these items which have been discussed up to this point that the basic content of the poet's song had been presented to him through a remarkable bit of fortune and was not thought up and invented by him. As a poet, he did not seek from himself the treatment and ornamentation, but nevertheless, by following in the footsteps of Homer, he won that praise for himself, that he completed all things with more elegant judgement, with greater care, and with more refined decoration.

We noted above that there was some felicity of this argument that ought to be considered, which the poet took for himself to be treated, because, since the matter had to be carried out through the services of the gods, the divine presence of Juno and Venus offered themselves, who serve most especially well for the purpose of the poet, the former most powerful and herself having been enshrined in the story long since; for the reader holds as familiar to him from Homer that Aeneas is cherished with the distinctive love of Venus, and Juno's hatred for Trojans is no less well-known from Homer. Now by some exemplary twist of good fortune the matter proceeded such that the divine power of one of the goddesses was able to be accommodated to the Carthaginians, and later, to Turnus, and such that the other goddess however, was not only cultivated just like a tutelary deity of the Romans in their religion constantly (cf. Lucretius 1), but also was considered the first parent and origin of the Julian line.

In treating the hatred of Juno, however, and modifying it to poetic force, the myths of the *Heracleia* were able to benefit the poet, which once existed about Hercules, just as is seen in

Stesichorus. For as to the hatreds of Juno, many things seem to have been laid out in these poems; in which matter now Homer had anticipated in many places, see II.