Translatio and the Constructs of a Roman Nation in Virgil's *Aeneid*

Kimberly K. Bell
Sam Houston State University

For centuries, historians and literary critics have discussed the political nature of Virgil's *Aeneid*.[1] In recent years, historians, including E.L. Harrison, have explored Virgil's allusions to the Punic Wars and the destruction of Carthage; R.D. Williams, John Alvis, and D.A. West, among others, have traced Virgil's references to Augustus' victory at Actium and the *princep*'s desire to hearken back to the traditions of the ancient Romans,[2] and Nicholas Horsfall has discussed the propagandistic speeches of Virgil's characters. Literary scholars have also investigated Virgil's literary techniques that support and perpetuate Augustus' political agenda; for example, D.H. Berry shows how Virgil blends mythological materials with contemporary political and social concerns in his description of Tartarus, and Richard F. Thomas shows how Virgil conflates the figures of Aeneas and Jupiter with Augustus.[3] One literary topos Virgil employs in his epic for political ends that has received little scholarly attention is the transferal topos. Virgil uses this rhetorical trope of transferal, *translatio studii et imperii* or the transferal of culture and empire, to weave strands of contemporary Roman history into his literary tapestry of ancient wars, legendary heroes, and mythical gods; *translatio* functions through his hero Aeneas, who serves as the vehicle for transmitting the culture of Troy to Rome. In using the *translatio* topos, Virgil draws certain parallels between his fictional hero and the *princeps* Augustus, transforming his Greek sources to achieve one of his many political aims—constructing a national identity for Rome as glorious and ancient as that of Greece.

Born in Mantua in 70 BCE, Virgil witnessed the final vestiges of the Republic fall into ruin and the seed of the Roman Empire take root in the form of Gaius Iulius Caesar Octavianus (Octavian or Augustus hereafter). During Virgil's lifetime, Rome experienced a radical change in its political and social structure, largely resulting from expansionist activities begun in earnest at the end of the third century BCE. By the first century BCE, the authority once enjoyed by the Republic's oligarchy had shifted into the hands of only a few men. Through political machinations, civil war, and mass bloodshed, individuals including Gaius Marius (c. 157-86)

and Lucius Cornelius Sulla (c. 138-78) and later Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (c. 106-48) and Julius Caesar (c. 100-44) amassed vast personal fortunes while gaining unprecedented personal political power. Following Julius Caesar's assassination at the hands of dissatisfied senators in early 44 BCE, the Senate-backed Octavian, adopted son of Caesar, formed the *tresviri reipublicae constituendae* with Marcus Antonius and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. The alliance soon crumbled, and out of the chaos of yet more warfare, Octavian emerged as victor. Following his triumph marking his triple victories at Illyricum (35-34 BCE), Actium (31 BCE), and Egypt (30 BCE), Octavian turned his attention to the political and social problems of Rome, retooling the city's political structure and relieving the populace through grain doles and entertainment. For the first time in nearly three generations, civil war in Italy had ceased, and Octavian was credited for having "brought the world back from chaos" (Hainsworth 88). Romans were relieved that the wars were finally over, and although many members of the oligarchy resented Octavian and his political measures, the Senate heaped honors and titles upon him, including the title *Augustus* in 27 BCE. Additionally, "his achievements were acknowledged by public holidays and thanksgivings that were to become fixed celebrations in the religious calendars (Miles and Allen 25). In the year 23, he was given *imperium maius* and *tribunicia potestas* for life. Augustus, known as the *princeps* or "first citizen" of Rome, was "the undisputed master of the Roman Empire," an autocrat operating behind a façade of democracy and senatorial rule (Shelton 232).[4]

In this political arena, marked by unprecedented political and social change since Rome's expulsion of the Etruscan kings in 509 BCE, Virgil composed the *Aeneid*. Already well known for his previous works, the *Eclogues* (completed in 37 BCE) and the *Georgics* (completed in c. 29 BCE),[5] Virgil devoted the last years of his life to writing his great national epic. In 19 BCE, he traveled to Greece, where he intended to spend the next few years revising his draft; however, in the autumn he agreed to cut his trip short and return to Rome with Augustus. En route, he fell ill and died in Brundisium. Although Virgil's dying wish was to have the unpolished epic destroyed, his friends Lucius Varius Rufus and Plotius Tucca, by order of Augustus, completed it and made it public soon after.[6] The *Aeneid* enjoyed an enthusiastic reception, both for its sophistication as a literary text and because of its political nature. Indeed, ancient critics were quick to note the political aspects of the epic, particularly Virgil's praise of Augustus. Tiberius Claudius Donatus commented that Virgil "had to depict Aeneas as a worthy first ancestor of Augustus, in whose honour the poem was written" ["*talem enim monstrare Aenean debuit, ut dignus Caesari, in cuius honorem haec scribebantur, parens et auctor generis praeberetur*"] (Proem. *Aen. I*, qtd. in Williams, "Purpose" 21) and Servius asserted that Virgil intended

to "praise Augustus by means of his ancestors" ["*Augustum laudare a parentibus*"] (qtd. in Williams, "Purpose" 21). Virgil added this political dimension to his epic by creating a network of obvious references to historical events and figures, while incorporating into his text subtle allusions to the actions of Augustus in his role as *princeps* and his own desire to construct a heritage for Rome. To help him achieve such ends, Virgil uses the rhetorical trope of *translatio studii et imperii*.

In his *De Oratore*, Cicero discusses how *translatio* (or metaphor) is used for linguistic adornment ["*ornatum*"] and dignity ["*dignitatem*"] (3.38.155): "The explanation is that when something that can scarcely be conveyed by the proper term is expressed metaphorically, the meaning we desire to convey is made clear by the resemblance of the thing that we have expressed by the word that does not belong" ["*Quod enim declarari vix verbo proprio potest, id translato cum est dictum, illustrat id quod intellegi volumus eius rei quam alieno verbo posuimus similitude*"] (3.38.155).[7] He then maintains that "if a thing has not got a proper name and designation of its own…necessity compels one to borrow what one has not got from somewhere else" ["*si res suum nomen et proprium vocabulum non habet…necessitas cogit quod non habeas aliunde sumere*"] (3.40.159).[8] Similarly, the anonymous author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* defines it as occurring "when a word applying to one thing is transferred to another, because the similarity seems to justify this transference" ["*Translatio est cum verbum in quandam rem transferetur ex alia re, quod propter similitudinem recte videbitur posse transferri*"] (4.34.45). One century after Cicero, Quintilian defines *translatio*—"the most beautiful" ["*pulcherrimus*"] of tropes—as taking place "when a noun or verb is transferred from the place to which it properly belongs to another where there is either no literal term or the transferred is better than the literal" ["*Transfertur ergo nomen aut verbum ex eo loco in quo proprium est, in eum in quo aut proprium deest aut translatum proprio melius est*"] (*Institutio Oratoria* 8.6.4-5). This transference of ideas and meaning that these rhetoricians discuss can be achieved only through a vehicle, an image or thing that "carries" an idea from one linguistic arena to another.

The meaning of *translatio* as metaphor has changed little since classical Greece and Rome.[9] In his analysis of the figure of speech, Terence Hawkes defines metaphor as referring to "a particular set of linguistic processes whereby aspects of one object are 'carried over' or transferred to another object so that the second object is spoken of as if it were the first" (1). *Translatio studii et imperii* also clearly involves a figurative carrying over. In this sense, what occurs is the transferal of one civilization's culture and knowledge (*studii*) and empire or political authority (*imperii*) to another. *Translatio* in this sense, therefore, is clearly a type of transferal that is public and political. Within a literary context, it typically involves the borrowing from,

adaptation, and reinvention of ideas, beliefs, and authority from an older culture into a new one, as symbolized by the founding of a city or nation or developed by a poet's appropriation of another culture's literary themes, characters, and ideas. As later historiographers and poets—including Geoffrey of Monmouth, Chrétien de Troyes, Geoffrey Chaucer, the poet of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*—would adapt and transform elements of Virgil's epic to draw a connection between their own British and French cultures and those of Rome, so Virgil transfers certain elements from Greek civilization and culture, particularly from the works of Homer, to achieve his political ends.[10] Necessary to Virgil's use of *translatio* is his hero, Aeneas, whom he fashions into a mirror image of Augustus Caesar.

The central concern of the *Aeneid* is Aeneas' destiny in refounding Troy. Virgil underscores this purpose of his quest through his narrator's constant references to heroes (present and future) founding cities: Antenor builds the Trojan city of Patavium (1.247-49); Helenus, son of Priam, erects Pergamus, an exact replica of Troy (3.333-51); and the future Lavinian heroes Procas, Capys, Numitor, and Silvius Aeneas, will all (the audience is told) found the cities of Nomentum, Gabii, Fidenae, Collatia, Pometii, Fort Inuus, Bola, and Cora (6.760-76), while Romulus will become the eponymous father of Rome (1.275-78). Other characters build cities as well: Dido builds Carthage based on the customs and laws of her Tyrian homeland (1.418-449) and King Evander gives Aeneas a tour of his Arcadian city of Pallanteum built upon the ruins of two ancient Italian cities, Saturnia and Janiculum (8.355-58), and the future site of Rome (8.313). In all these instances, the characters base their new cities on those of past civilizations: Troy, Tyria, and Arcadia. Such descriptions of the founding of new cities based on older cultures anticipate and reinforce, through echoes and parallels, Aeneas' own several attempts at constructing a new Troy, first the city of Aeneadae in Thrace (3.13-69), then Pergamum in Crete (3.132-139), then Acesta in Sicily (5.746-761), and finally Lavinium in Italy. In making Aeneas' destiny the motif of his text, Virgil makes Aeneas' transferal of the city of Troy take precedence over the conventional themes of personal αρετη [excellence and virtue], τιμαω/τιμη [honor], and κλεος [fame] found in the great heroic epics of Virgil's predecessors, particularly in the works of Homer. Therefore, the poet emphasizes his hero's duty in carrying on the tradition of his *patria*, placing greater emphasis on his hero's fulfillment of his public destiny and downplaying his personal glory.[11]

Aeneas' transferal of his culture is symbolized by the Trojan household gods. On the night the Greeks besiege the city of Troy, Aeneas dreams of his dead cousin Hector, who informs him of his destiny in carrying on the culture of Troy: "Troy entrusts to you her holy things and household gods; take them to share your fortunes: seek for them the mighty city, which, when you have wandered over the deep,

you shall at last establish!" ["*Sacra suosque tibi commendat Troia penatis; / hos cape fatorum comites, his moenia quaere / magna, pererrato statues quae denique ponto*"] (2.293-95). To Virgil's Roman audience, references to the gods of the household would immediately bring to mind the pre-Hellenic gods of their nation. In the epic, Virgil's narrator refers to them by name, calling the household gods *di Penates* (e.g., 1.68, 1.378), while referring also to Vesta and Lar (5.744). Before the gods of the Greeks were absorbed into their own religion, the Romans believed in spirits of nature or the environment. Similar deities also existed in the home, including Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, and *di Penates*, gods of the cupboard. Each home also possessed its own Lar that would "protect the household if properly propitiated" (Shelton 362-363). All three deities came to be included in the state religion of Rome, the more famous being Vesta, whose temple was cared for by the Vestal virgins.[12] That Hector commands Aeneas to transport the household gods out of Troy and found for them a city places more importance on them than on any other aspect of Trojan culture.

Moreover, Aeneas serves as the vehicle by which the culture is transferred. As he flees the burning Troy, Aeneas carries his household gods on his shoulders. He also carries his father Anchises, while holding the hand of his son Ascanius. Aeneas thereby takes with him not only the gods representing his culture, but three generations of Trojan heroes past (Anchises), present (Aeneas), and future (Ascanius). Through such actions, Aeneas himself comes to be associated with the whole of Troy. In his dream-vision of Hector, the dead hero not only shows Aeneas the materials he will need to eventually found his city, he also passes on to the hero the heritage of Troy that hitherto had been linked to his own valor and fame as Troy's greatest hero. His entrusting the fate of Troy to Aeneas signals Hector's relinquishing of his role as champion of the city. Virgil makes this association between Aeneas and Troy more evident at the end of the epic, when Evander recognizes Aeneas as the personification of Troy itself, telling the hero, "mightiest captain of the Teucrians—for while you live, I will never admit that the power and realm of Troy have been vanquished" ["*maxime Teucrorum ductor, quo sospite numquam / res equidem Troiae victas aut regna fatebor*"] (8.470-4). As the embodiment of his lost *patria*, Aeneas becomes not only the vehicle for the transferal of his culture, but, along with the household gods, a symbol of the culture itself.

While the running motif of the *Aeneid* is of Aeneas' re-establishment of his culture in Italy, Aeneas nevertheless shows no intentions of creating an exact copy of Troy like Helenus. Instead, he creates a different kind of nation. Following a battle against Turnus (instigated by Juno through Allecto, fury of the underworld), King Latinus and Aeneas make a pact in which they agree to fight again to determine

the future of the Latins and Trojans. According to the agreement, if the Latins win the battle, Aeneas and Ascanius will retire to the land of Evander. If the Trojans win, however, Aeneas promises a mixed nation comprising both Latin and Trojan races. As he announces:

> I will not bid the Italians be subject to Teucrians, nor do I seek the realm for mine; under equal terms let both nations, unconquered, enter upon an everlasting compact. I will give gods and their rites; Latinus, my father-in-law, is to keep the sword; my father-in-law is to keep his wonted command. The Teucrians shall raise walls for me, and Lavinia give the city her name.
>
> [*non ego nec Teucris Italos parere iubebo*
> *nec mihi regna peto: paribus se legibus ambae*
> *invictae gentes aeterna in foedera mittant.*
> *sacra deosque dabo; socer arma Latinus habeto,*
> *imperium sollemne socer; mihi moenia Teucri*
> *constituent urbique dabit Lavinia nomen*]. (12.189-94)

In this speech, Aeneas reveals his intent to build his city according to divine providence (7.96-101; 12.834-840) without destroying the kingdom of Latium (as his own *patria* was destroyed by the Greeks). He declares that King Latinus will command the armies while he will attend to the gods and their rites. By agreeing to mingle the two cultures, Aeneas truly intends to create a new civilization composed of both Trojan and Latin elements, thereby reshaping two great cultures (rather than simply copying Troy, as he had done in the past) in the hopes of bringing about a greater and more noble nation than either Troy or Latium.

This portrait of Aeneas as both the founder of the new and improved Troy and the living icon of Troy itself reflects Virgil's political agenda in drawing similarities between Aeneas and Augustus in their roles as founders of great civilizations. R.G.M. Nisbet refers to Aeneas as the "proto-type of Augustus, carrying the destiny of his nation on his shoulders" (378), just as Augustus, in his role as *princeps*, would lift up Rome from the ashes of the republic and into the glory of the Empire. As Aeneas constructs a new city based on the elements of two older civilizations, Augustus sought to create a new state politically, socially, and physically, based on a solid foundation of Roman tradition laid since the early days of the republic. Augustus' success lay largely in his outward deference to the ideals of the republic. Miles and Allen note that "Augustus, while expressing full respect for tradition in government, religion, and morality, succeeded in creating a new state and society" (30), what Wells refers to as the *princeps*' "new order" (30). While he radically transformed the political structure of the state, he did so within the context of the republic of Rome's past, constructing a façade of democratic rule while retaining sole and absolute power. As

Augustus is careful to assert in his *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* [*The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*], "the senate and people of Rome agreed that I should be appointed supervisor of laws and morals without a colleague and with supreme power, but I would not accept any office inconsistent with the custom of our ancestors" ["*senatu populoque Romano consentientibus ut curator legum et morum summa potestate solus crearer, nullum magistratum contra morem maiorum delatum recepi*"] (6). While he did assume absolute and unprecedented control of the state, he adopted the traditional titles of consul, *princeps*, and tribune. On a social level, Augustus attempted to renew the decaying morals of Rome by stressing the virtues of the Roman people of the past. Horace refers to the *virtutes* of Rome's ancestors, including "Faith, peace and honor, ancient chastity and long-neglected virtue" ["*Fides et Pax et Honos Pudorque / Priscus et neglecta redire Virtus / Audet*"] (*Carmen Saeculare* 57-59) that Augustus tried to encourage through enacting such laws as those designed to promote marriage and discourage adultery. He also claimed in his *Res Gestae* to set the standard for Romans to imitate: "By new laws passed on my proposal I brought back into use many exemplary practices of our ancestors which were disappearing in our time, and in many ways I myself transmitted exemplary practices to posterity for their imitation" ["*Legibus novis me auctore latis multa exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro saeculo reduxi et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi*"] (8). He placed considerable emphasis on placating the plebian sector of society by issuing grain doles—one of which he personally financed (*Res Gestae* 5)—paying the plebs on several occasions (15), and providing them with public entertainment (22-24). Finally, Augustus sought to rebuild Rome's physical appearance, repairing temples that had fallen into decay (19-22) while financing new buildings as well. In drawing such similarities, Virgil effectively constructs a dual image of Aeneas as founder of a new Troy (that will pave the way to the eventual building of Rome) and Augustus as the founder of a new order, the Roman Empire.

Virgil cements the connection between Aeneas and Augustus by creating a common ancestry for both. While stories of Aeneas as founding father or ancestor of Rome had been in circulation since at least the fifth century BCE (Galinsky, "Aeneas" 93), another Roman tradition, since before the fourth century, held that Rome's eponymous founder was Romulus, son of Mars and a Vestal virgin. According to the historian Livy, the Vestal virgin's name was Rhea Silvia, daughter of King Numitor, descendant of Aeneas (1.3.10). Virgil makes this familial connection explicit in the *Aeneid*. In Book Six, the shade of Anchises in Elysium states that Romulus is "of Assaracus' stock" ["*Assaraci…sanguinis*"] (6.778) who, the narrator reminds the audience, was a Trojan: "here is Teucer's ancient line…Ilus, Assaracus, / And Dardanus, who founded Troy" ["*hic genus antiquum Teucri…Ilusque Assaracusque*

et Troiae Dardanus auctor"] (6.648-50). Virgil strengthens Romulus' blood bond with Troy by changing his mother's name from Rhea Silvia to Ilia. Not only is the name Virgil gives her reminiscent of "Ilium," as D.C. Feeney has noted (356), it is also the feminine form of two Trojan heroes' names, Ilus, Aeneas' great-great-grandfather (6.650), and Ascanius, Aeneas' son, whose second name before the fall of Troy is "Ilus" (1.268). This transformation of Rhea Silvia's name to Ilia unites the seemingly disparate traditions of both Aeneas and Romulus as founding fathers of Troy, while it associates Romulus more directly with Trojan heroes.

This changing of Rhea Silvia's name also supports a historical link between Aeneas and Augustus. According to ancient sources, Julius Caesar claimed descent from Venus and Anchises. In *Historiae Romanae* (c. 30 CE), Velleius Paterculus describes the handsome Caesar, who "sprung from the noble family of the Julii…tracing his descent from Venus and Anchises, a claim conceded by all investigators of antiquity" ["*Hic nobilissima Iuliorum genitus familia…quod inter omnis antiquitatis studiosos constabat, ab Anchise ac Venere deducens genus*"] (2.41.1). Suetonius also mentions Caesar's claim to divine ancestry. In his *De Vita Caesarum* [*The Lives of the Caesars*], the historian reports that in a eulogy dedicated to his deceased aunt, Caesar spoke about his aunt's paternal and maternal ancestry which was also that of his father (and, of course, his own): "The family of my Aunt Iulia is descended by her mother from the kings, and on her father's side is akin to the immortal gods: for the Marcii Reges (her mother's family name) go back to Ancus Marcius, and the Julii, the family of which ours is a branch, from Venus" ["*Amitae meae Iuliae maternum genus ab regibus ortum, paternum cum diis inmortalibus coniunctum est. Nam ab Anco Marcio sunt Marcii Reges, quo nomine fuit mater; a Venere Iulii, cuius gentis familia est nostra*"] (*Julius Caesar* 1.6). Virgil emphasizes this supposed ancestral connection linguistically with Ascanius' surname, changed by divine decree with the fall of Troy. When Jupiter tells Venus of Ascanius' future state of Alba Longa (transported from Lavinium), he changes Ascanius' surname from Ilus—"Ilus he was while the Ilian state stood firm in sovereignty" ["*Ilus erat, dum res stetit Ilia regno*"]—to "Iulus" (1.267-8). In the same speech, Jupiter tells Venus of the "Trojan Caesar": "from this noble line shall be born the Trojan Caesar…a Julius, name descended from great Iulus!" ["*nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar / …Iulius, a mango demissum nomen Iulo*"] (1.286-8). Here, Virgil reminds his audience of the tradition established by the Iulii of their descent from Venus and Anchises; with Jupiter's mention of the "Trojan Caesar," he also recalls the familial relationship between Aeneas and Augustus.

On a more subtle level, Virgil shows the connection between past and present heroes through manipulating the narrative flow of his text. When Aeneas visits his father's shade in Elysium, Anchises describes the "glorious souls waiting to inherit

our name" ["*inlustris animas nostrumque in nomen ituras*"] (6.758), members of the royal line of Dardanus who will be reborn as heroes in Aeneas' (yet unfounded) civilization. In the long list of figures, Anchises first mentions Silvius, son of Aeneas and Lavinia, followed by four others: Procas, Capys, Numitor, and Silvius Aeneas. He then pauses to describe Romulus, under whose "auspices…shall that glorious Rome extend her empire to earth's ends, her ambitions to the skies" ["*auspiciis illa incluta Roma / imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo*"] (6.781-2). Rather than continue the long list of heroes in chronological order, from the time of Romulus to Augustus (and thereby retain the linearity of the historical narrative) Anchises conflates time, telling Aeneas to gaze upon "the Romans that are yours" ["*Romanosque tuos*"] (6.789), specifically Augustus Caesar, "son of a god, who will again establish a golden age in Latium amid fields once ruled by Saturn" ["*divi genus, aurea condet / saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arva / Saturno quondam*"] (6.792-794). Such a rhetorical strategy creates the literary illusion of a direct connection between Romulus, eponymous hero of the distant past, and Augustus, hero and leader of the present. It was no coincidence that Octavian had seriously considered taking on the name Romulus early in his career.[13]

Importantly, Virgil emphasizes the glorious past of Rome. Following the disastrous attempt at building a new Troy in Thrace (Aeneadae), Aeneas travels to Delos, where he asks Apollo to grant his people a home. In reply, the oracle tells Aeneas "the land which bore you first from your parent stock shall welcome you back to her fruitful bosom. Seek out your ancient mother. There the house of Aeneas shall lord it over all lands" ["*quae vos a stirpe parentum / prima tulit tellus, eadem vos ubere laeto / accipiet reduces, antiquam exquirite matrem. Hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris*"] (3.94-97). Although the oracle hints at their land of origins by addressing them as "long-suffering sons of Dardanus" ["*Dardanidae duri*"] (3.93), Anchises misinterprets the oracle's words as meaning Crete, where Teucrus built a kingdom before settling in Pergamum. It is only after the plague destroys Aeneas' city in Crete that Apollo sends him a vision of the household gods themselves, who instruct the hero to found new Troy in Italy: "A place there is, by Greeks named Hesperia.…There dwelt the Oenotrians; now the rumour is that a younger race has called it from their leader's name Italy. This is our abiding home; hence are Dardanus sprung and father Iasius, from whom first came our race" ["*est locus, Hesperiam Grai cognomine dicunt, / terra antiqua…Oenotri coluere viri; nunc fama minores / Italiam dixisse ducis de nomine gentem. hae nobis propriae sedes, hinc Dardanus ortus / Iasiusque pater, genus a quo principe nostrum*"] (3.163-68). Through Aeneas, then, the history of Rome has come full circle: on a literary level, Aeneas is able to claim Italy as his *patria* though his ancestor Dardanus (Henry 63) while on a historical

level, Virgil creates a history for the Romans that is even more ancient that that of Troy and as ancient as that of the Greeks.

This ancient history is underscored by the Greek literary, structural, and thematic elements Virgil incorporated his epic. As scholars have noted since the *Aeneid* was written, Virgil modeled the form and content of his epic after the works of Homer. In his analysis of Homeric and Virgilian epic, J.B. Hainsworth discusses Virgil's "careful mosaic of Homeric elements" (101), noting that "Homer determined the architecture of the *Aeneid*" (99): "Homer likewise determined the apparatus and…the principal episodes" (100), including general themes (such as the journey motif and the hero's search for identity in relation to his search for his home) as well as specific references to Homer (from the island of the Cyclops and of Circe to the sacking of Troy). While Virgil borrows from Greek culture as treated primarily in Homer, he self-consciously transforms that material to suit his own needs, mainly through Aeneas. With the exception of his heroic action on the night of Troy's downfall and his battle against Turnus at the end of Book Twelve, Aeneas' actions lie in his founding of cities. Indeed, rather than centering his epic on the physical qualities of his hero (as Homer does with Achilles in the *Iliad*) or his mental abilities (as Homer does with Odysseus in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*), Virgil focuses on the destiny of his hero in founding a nation based on older cultures, a hero who is guided by prophecy, visions, and dreams. He is at once "the incarnation of destiny and of Roman and epic values" (Hainsworth 103) as shaped within the parameters of Greek epic. By blending Homeric tradition into his own epic, Virgil shows his debt to the Greek traditions that had helped shaped his nation while reworking them to serve his own, nationalistic purposes.

Virgil transformed the Greek material at hand to construct a heritage for Rome. Not only did he create a literary monument for the Roman people, he also constructed an identity for them through his hero Aeneas that is as glorious as that of Greece. Through the *translatio* topos, Virgil draws parallels between the actions of his hero in founding a nation and the *princeps* Augustus, who rebuilt Rome following generations of civil unrest. Although perhaps not intended, the epic appropriately ends with Aeneas' new city of Lavinium still unrealized but hoped for in the prophecies of Jupiter. Such a literary open-endedness reflects upon historical reality. In the year of Virgil's death, the future state of Rome under Augustus was also unrealized. Indeed, Augustus had nearly died in 23 BCE, and in the year 19 BCE, another attempt was made on his life. At this point during Augustus' rule, the plan for the Empire had been drawn; however, the plan would only be brought to fruition in the years after Virgil's death. ❊

[1]For two theoretically divergent historical overviews of the reception of Virgil's *Aeneid*, see Thomas, *Virgil* and Nadeau.

[2]Scholars have in particular noted those references to Actium found on Aeneas' shield and in the procession of Rome's ancestors in Elysium. See, for instance, Williams, "Purpose," "Shield," and "The Sixth Book"; West; and Alvis, *Divine Purpose* (137-171).

[3]See also, for example, Nappa, Stahl, and Adler.

[4]For excellent overviews of the events leading to the downfall of the Republic and rise of the Empire, see especially Wells and Crawford.

[5]For an analysis of the political and historical significance of these works, see Miles and Allen (15-29).

[6]This incident is recorded by Suetonius in his life of Virgil (from *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus*). The scholarly consensus is that Virgil's epic was complete or very nearly so when he died. See Putnam, who argues that it was, indeed, finished.

[7]The term *translatio* derives from the Greek μεταφορα, a poetic topos Aristotle defines in his *Poetics*: "Metaphor is the application of a strange term either transferred from the genus and applied to the species or from the species and applied to the genus, or from one species to another or else by analogy" [μεταφορα δε εστιν ονοματος αλλοτριου επιφορα η απο του γενους επι ειδος η απο του ειδους επι το γενος η απο του ειδους επι ειδος η κατα το αναλογον] (21.1457b). Stanford, in *Greek Metaphor* (4-14), discusses some problems with Aristotle's definitions.

[8]Cicero emphasizes the pleasure derived from such figurative language for both speaker and audience (e.g., 3.39.155 and 3.40.159-61).

[9]In the Middle Ages, it took on the additional meaning of translation, whereby the sense of a text in one language was carried over to another language. For studies on the medieval use of *translatio studii et imperii*, see especially Freeman, Gertz, Gumpert, and Jongkees.

[10]See, for example, the opening to Geoffrey of Monmouth's c. 1138 CE *Historia Regum Britannie*, in which Geoffrey makes Brutus, the fictional eponymous founder of Britain, a descendent of Aeneas; he thereby makes a case for Britain's being as ancient and glorious not only of Rome but of Troy as well.

[11]R.O.A.M. Lyne also argues that Aeneas' aims as an epic hero differ from those of the Greek hero: "not for him [is] the paramount claim of his own individual glory and honour"; rather, "His role is Stoic and imperial, Stoically imperial" (191).

[12]Shelton goes on to say that "the same deities who were asked by the family to provide good weather, bountiful harvests, or protection from marauders were later, as the community grew, asked also by the state to provide these blessings for the community as a whole" (361). Augustus also mentions his construction of temples dedicated to both the *Lares* and the *di Penates* (Octavian, *Res Gestae* 19).

[13]According to Dio Cassius, "Caesar [Octavian] was exceedingly desirous of being called Romulus, but when he perceived that this caused him to be suspected of desiring the king-

ship, he desisted from his efforts to obtain it, and took the title of 'Augustus,' signifying that he was more than human" [ο Καισαρ επεθυμει μεν ισχυρως Ρωμυλος ονομασθηναι, αισθομενος δε οτι υποπτευεται εκ τουτου της Βασιλειας επιθυμειν, ουκετ αυτου αντεποιησατο, αλλα Αυγουστος ως και πλειον τι η κατα ανθρωπους ων επεκληθη] (*Roman History* 53.7-8).

Works Cited

Adler, Eve. *Vergil's Empire: Political Thought in the Aeneid*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.

Alvis, John. *Divine Purpose and Heroic Response in Homer and Virgil*. London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1995.

Anderson, William. "Virgil's Second *Iliad*." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 88 (1957): 17-30. Rpt. in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*. Ed. S.J. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. 239-252.

Aristotle. *Poetics*. Trans. W. Hamilton Fyfe. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Berry, D.H. "The Criminals in Virgil's Tartarus: Contemporary Allusions in *Aeneid* 6.621-4." *Classical Quarterly* 42.2 (1992): 416-420.

Cassius, Dio. *Historia Romanae*. Trans. Earnest Cary. Vol. 6. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960. 9 vols.

Cicero. *De Oratore. Cicero in 28 volumes*. Trans. H. Rackham. Vol. 4. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942.

[Cicero]. *Rhetorica ad Herrennium*. Trans. Harry Caplan. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964.

Crawford, Michael. *The Roman Republic*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Feeney, D.C. "The Reconciliations of Juno." *Classical Quarterly* 34 (1984): 179-194.

Freeman, Michelle A. *The Poetics of Translatio Studii and Conjointure: Chrétien de Troyes's Cligés*. French Forum Monographs 12. Lexington: French Forum, 1979.

Galinsky, Karl. "Aeneas at Rome and Lavinium." *The Two Worlds of the Poet: Perspectives on Virgil*. Ed. Robert Wilhelm and H. Jones. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990. 93-108.

_____. "Vergil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as World Literature." *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*. Ed. Karl Galinsky. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 340-360.

Gertz, SunHee Kim. *Poetic Prologues: Medieval Conversations with the Literary Past*. Analecta Romanica 56. Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann Verlag, 1996.

Gumpert, Matthew. *Grafting Helen: The Abduction of the Classical Past*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001.

Hainsworth, J.B. *The Idea of Epic*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

Harrison, E.L. "*The Aeneid* and Carthage." *Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus*. Ed. Tony Woodman and David West. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. 95-115.

_____. "Divine Action in *Aeneid* Book Two." *Phoenix* 24 (1970): 145-51. Rpt. and rev. in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*. Ed. S.J. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. 46-59.

Hawkes, Terence. *Metaphor*. London: Methuen, 1972.

Henry, Elisabeth. *The Vigour of Prophecy: A Study of Virgil's Aeneid*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989.

Homer. *The Iliad*. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.

_____. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.

Horace. *Carmen Seculare. The Odes, Carmen Seculare, and Epodes*. Commentary by E.C. Wickham. Rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891.

Horsfall, Nicholas. "The Aeneas-Legend and the *Aeneid*." *Virgilius* 32 (1986): 8-17.

_____. "Numanus Remulus: Ethnography and Propaganda in *Aeneid* 9.598ff." *Latomus* 30 (1971): 1108-1116. Rpt. in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*. Ed. S.J. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. 305-316.

Jongkees, A.G. "*Translatio Studii*: les avatars d'un thème medieval." In *Miscellanea Medieaevalia in Memoriam Jan Frederik Niermayer*. Groningen: Walters, 1967. 41-51.

Livy. *Ab Urbe Condita* [From the Founding of the City]. *Livy in 14 Volumes*. Trans. B.O. Foster. Vol. 1. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.

Lyne, R.O.A.M. "Virgil and the Politics of War." *Classical Quarterly* 33.1 (1983): 188-203.

Miles, Gary B. and Archibald W. Allen. "Vergil and the Augustan Experience." *Vergil at 2000: Commemorative Essays on the Poet and his Influence*. Ed. John D. Bernard: New York: AMS Press, 1986. 13-41.

Nadeau, Yvan. *Safe and Subsidized: Vergil and Horace Sing Augustus*. Brussels: Editions Latomus, 2004.

Nappa, Christopher. *Reading After Actium: Vergil's Georgics, Octavian, and Rome*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005.

Nisbet, R.G.M. "*Aeneas Imperator*: Roman Generalship in an Epic Context." *Proceedings of the Virgil Society* 18 (1978-1980): 50-61. Rpt. in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*. Ed. S.J. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. 378-390.

Octavian. *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*. Intro. P.A. Brunt and J.M. Moore. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*. Trans. H. E. Butler. Vol. 3. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958. 4 vols.

Putnam, Michael. "Vergil's *Aeneid*: The Final Lines." *Poets and Critics Read Vergil*. Ed. Sarah Spence. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001. 86-104.

Shelton, Jo-Ann. *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Stahl, Hans-Peter, ed. *Vergil's Aeneid: Augustan Epic and Political Context*. London: Classical Press of Wales, 1998.

Stanford, W. Bedell. *Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice*. New York: Johnson Reprint, 1972.

Suetonius. *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus (De Viris Illustribus)*. [On *Grammarians and Rhetoricians (The Lives of Illustrious Men)*]. Suetonius in Two Volumes. Trans. J.C. Wolfe. Vol. 2. Loeb. London: William Heinemann, 1928.

_____. *De Vita Caesarum*. [*The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*]. *Suetonius in Two Volumes*. Trans. J.C. Rolfe. Vol. 1. Loeb. London: William Heinemann, 1928.

Thomas, Richard F. "The Isolation of Turnus." *Vergil's Aeneid: Augustan Epic and Political Context*. Ed. Hans-Peter Stahl. London: Classical Press of Wales, 1998. 271-302.

_____. *Virgil and the Augustan Reception*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Velleius Paterculus. *Historiae Romanae*. [*Compendium of Roman History*]. Trans. Frederick W. Shipley. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961.

Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Random House, 1983.

_____. *Aeneid V-XII*. Ed. and trans. H. Rushton Fairclough. Vol. 2. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967. 2 vols.

_____. *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid I-IV*. Ed. and Trans. H. Rushton Fairclough. Vol. 1. Loeb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967. 2 vols.

Wells, Colin. *The Roman Empire*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

West. D.A. "*Cernere erat*: The Shield of Aeneas." *Proceedings of the Virgil Society* 15 (1975-1976): 1-7. Rpt. in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*. Ed. S.J. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. 295-305.

Williams, R.D. "The Purpose of the *Aeneid*." *Antichthon* 1 (1967): 29-41. Rpt. in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*. Ed. S.J. Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. 21-36.

_____. "The Shield of Aeneas." *Virgilius* 27 (1981): 8-11.

_____. "The Sixth Book of the *Aeneid*." *Greece and Rome* 11 (1964): 48-63.