

Remembering the Death of Turnus: Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and the Ending of the *Aeneid**

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Most of the key episodes in book 1 of Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene (1590) replay famous passages in Virgil's Aeneid. However, the concluding canto, describing the Redcrosse knight's betrothal to Una, is based on Maffeo Vegio's fifteenth-century Supplementum to the Aeneid, while, surprisingly, the Aeneid's much-disputed ending appears in triplicate in early sections of book 1. This article examines the place and function of book 1's three imitations of the Aeneid's ending, while also relating them to Spenser's appropriations of the ending in later books of The Faerie Queene. It argues that, in making Redcrosse assume the position of Aeneas in largely negative contexts, book 1 opposes standard sixteenth-century interpretations of Aeneas's pietas, whereas later books of The Faerie Queene usually conform to prevalent early modern interpretations of the moral import of this powerful cultural memory.

1. INTRODUCTION

Edmund Spenser's (ca. 1552–99) complex engagement of Virgilian epic in *The Faerie Queene* has been the subject of critical discussion for a long time.¹ The poet himself famously acknowledges his dependence on his Roman predecessor both in the proem of book 1 of *The Faerie Queene* and in the letter to Sir Walter Raleigh (ca. 1554–1618) printed after book 3 in the 1590 edition. The proem is an amalgamation of two models. Its first four lines are an adaptation of Virgil's account, in a passage thought to be the opening of the *Aeneid* in Spenser's time but now considered spurious, of his progress from bucolic through didactic to epic poetry; it continues with

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¹The Variorum edition (Spenser, 1932–57) collects the findings and views of critics from the eighteenth century to the 1930s. Hamilton (Spenser, 2001) provides up-to-date information on specific passages with incisive, if necessarily short, comments. See also Hughes; Bush; Fichter; Kennedy, 1990b; Burrow, 1993 and 1997; Watkins.

an imitation of the first few lines of Lodovico Ariosto's (1474–1535) *Orlando furioso* (1516, 1521, 1532), which lines are in turn an adaptation of the genuine opening of Virgil's *Aeneid*. In the letter to Raleigh, Spenser states that it is "his general intention and meaning" to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle lore." This is to be effected by depicting "the historye of king Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person," in a manner reminiscent of Virgil's fusion of Agamemnon ("a good gouernour") and Ulysses ("a vertuous man") in "the person of Aeneas." In so doing, Spenser follows Ariosto, who "comprised them both in his Orlando," while Torquato Tasso (1544–95) "disseuered them againe, and formed both parts in two persons."²

Clearly, then, Spenser's imitations of Virgil are both direct and mediated through other poets' imitations. Many of them are reworkings of individual Virgilian phrases, lines, or passages, the introductory stanza of the proem of book 1 being only the first in a long series of such instances. But imitation, particularly of well-known passages familiar to a large number of readers, may also be nontextual, that is, thematic: both kinds will be studied in this essay. The basic function of imitation is usually to reinforce meaning, but imitation does not always result in complete agreement of sense between the texts involved: the meaning of an imitated phrase, line, or passage in its original context may clash mildly or violently with the meaning of the new context into which it is imported, and so qualify the meaning of that context. In addition, imitation may also occur on a structural level. Thus, in a chapter of his pathbreaking study of Spenser's reworkings of Virgilian material in *The Faerie Queene*, John Watkins has discussed how, in book 1, Spenser amalgamates portions of the Book of Revelation and the *Aeneid* (among other texts).³ As Watkins demonstrates, a number of significant episodes in book 1 are lifted from the *Aeneid*, roughly in the order in which they occur in the original, and made to serve new purposes in Spenser's Protestant poem.

Given Spenser's tendency to follow the narrative structure of the *Aeneid* in book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*, it would not have been surprising if the much-debated and much-imitated ending of Virgil's epic — describing Aeneas's defeat and summary killing of Turnus, his main opponent in Italy — had occurred at the end of the book, much as it occurs at the end of Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581). Instead, as Watkins shows, the Italian humanist Maffeo Vegio's (1407–58) thirteenth book of the *Aeneid*, which describes Aeneas and Lavinia's marriage, serves as a blueprint for Redcrosse's marriage with Una in the final canto of book 1 of *The Faerie*

²Spenser, 2001, 715. All subsequent quotations of *The Faerie Queene* will be from this edition.

³Watkins, 90–112.

Queene. It is of course possible that Spenser was planning to include an imitation of the *Aeneid*'s ending at the very end of his unfinished poem: but, as Spenser's text now stands, all that can be asserted is that on this point he differs from Ariosto and Tasso, who end their poems by describing their heroes' defeat of their enemies in ways that recall Aeneas's victory over Turnus. Arguably, Redcrosse's union with Una is more in line with the kind of well-defined closure that Spenser's teleological scheme requires than an adaptation of Aeneas's defeat of Turnus would have been. Furthermore, the prestige attached to the ending of the *Aeneid* and the moral meanings ascribed to it by ancient commentators and Renaissance poets alike are brought to bear on *The Faerie Queene* in other ways. As critics have long noted, the ending of the *Aeneid* serves as a model for a number of passages in the body text of *The Faerie Queene*, affecting the meaning of those passages in ways that have not yet been fully appreciated.⁴ In this article, I intend to examine Spenser's uses, especially in book 1, of this well-known Virgilian passage, paying attention to the close verbal and situational correspondences between Virgil's text and Spenser's (some of them so far unnoted); in the process, I will also examine how Spenser's appropriations of the concluding episode of the *Aeneid* interact with interpretations of it likely to have been prevalent in his time. Spenser's and his readers' familiarity with Virgil was pervasive, a result of their having committed large portions of Virgil's and his successors' poems to memory to an extent that is not often realized today: a subsidiary aim of this article will be to suggest that a discussion of the ending of the *Aeneid* must also take stock of the workings of the cultural memory of early modern England and Europe.

In order to pinpoint the nature of the meanings likely to be at play in Spenser's treatment of Virgilian material it is necessary first to observe that the Virgil imitated and celebrated by Spenser is, in many respects, a rather different figure from the various conceptions of Virgil promulgated by present-day classical scholarship. As is well known, the Virgil encountered by sixteenth-century readers was the author of a highly revered oeuvre, the meanings and undermeanings of which were explicated by commentators and interpreters whose views were transmitted through influential editions printed and studied throughout Europe. However, the object under discussion is not the text alone, but also the figure of the writer so named, a compound ghost whom we should perhaps refer to as "Virgil" rather than Virgil. Renaissance readers conceived of Virgil both as a figure and a text. As a figure, Virgil was envisaged as a *vates* — a prophet-like authority endowed with an insight into moral and ethical

⁴In this context, it is worth pointing out that at the end of *Muiopotmos*, a mock-heroic beast fable based on Virgil's *Culex*, Spenser imitates the closing lines of the *Aeneid*, placing his version of them at the very end of his poem: Spenser, 1999, 304 (ll. 435–40).

matters — which made him almost Christian. His works, which included some poems now considered spurious, were consulted equally for their poetic eloquence and their moral weight, and were also seen as repositories of geographical and scientific learning. If their status in this latter respect was diminished by the discovery of the New World, their moral significance continued to be highly valued, as is demonstrated by the high esteem in which the different commentaries were held and by his works being made available in annotated editions serving the needs both of schoolboys and learned adult readers.⁵ Finally, for prospective poets Virgil's progression from pastoral through didactic to epic poetry (the so-called *rota Virgilii*) provided a pattern that made him uniquely suited for imitation by poets aspiring, like Spenser, to produce a national epic.⁶ The views on the ending of the *Aeneid* promoted within this tradition will be commented on below and constitute, it will be argued, an essential ingredient in sixteenth-century cultural memory. As we turn to Spenser's poem, the meanings elaborated and preserved within this tradition must, however, also be complemented by meanings found in other poems that, much like *The Faerie Queene*, rework the ending of the *Aeneid*, notably Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*.

The method adopted in discussing Spenser's recontextualizations of Virgil is inspired by the work of a number of previous scholars. Important initial impetus was provided by Claes Schaar's study of how intensified meaning is created in John Milton's (1608–74) *Paradise Lost* by the interaction of intrinsic and extrinsic contexts as a result of the reader's recognition of striking verbal or thematic similarity between Milton's text and the underlying subtext(s).⁷ Another study of great importance to the argument here is Thomas M. Greene's *The Light in Troy*, in which the author explores texts that “come to us displaying the constitutive presence of a subtext within the verbal structure, insisting on its presence as an essential component.”⁸ Both Greene and Schaar emphasize the need for students of Renaissance texts to attend to the Renaissance meanings of ancient texts, and to the complex effects achieved by poets aware of the historical gap between themselves and previous periods. However, Greene specifically excludes Spenser from this company of historically conscious poets, making only some fleeting references to *The Faerie Queene*,

⁵For an instructive discussion of Virgil's position in early modern England, see Tudeau-Clayton.

⁶For a discussion of Spenser's career in relation to the *rota Virgilii*, see Cheney; and, for a brief survey of recent work on this topic, Helfer, 730–32.

⁷Schaar, 11–33.

⁸Greene, 37.

whose “historical self-consciousness seems sporadic and dim.”⁹ On this latter point Greene has been criticized, most recently and perhaps most incisively by Colin Burrow.¹⁰ A further aim, then, of this article is to argue, like Burrow, that Spenser’s recontextualizations of thematic and narrative segments of Virgil’s poem illustrate precisely the complex phenomenon of historically conscious recycling that Greene is interested in.

The ways in which imitation of this kind engages with a predecessor’s status as a classic or revered monument are remarkably close to the workings of cultural memory as described by Jan Assmann. Cultural memory, Assmann argues, “always relates its knowledge to an actual and contemporary situation . . . sometimes by appropriation, sometimes by criticism, sometimes by preservation or by transformation.”¹¹ The study of cultural memory concentrates on phenomena that derive their meaning and imaginative force from their association with *loci communes*, their negotiations of “socially constituted memories, narratives, and relations,”¹² and, in particular, their status as *lieux de mémoire*: specific places, objects, customs, and ideas deemed to possess extraordinary national or communal appeal.¹³ In the case of the *Aeneid* and *The Faerie Queene*, the process involves the inclusion and adaptation of certain key passages from a national epic (the *Aeneid*) as strands in a long and protean poem whose generic character has proved notoriously difficult to determine.

This article contends that, at least as regards certain earlier periods such as the sixteenth century, cultural memory must be assumed to include literary texts as well, many of which were committed to memory, quoted, and resorted to as repositories of wisdom and shared knowledge. To a sixteenth-century poet like Spenser, the works of such writers as Virgil, Ovid, Petrarch, and Ariosto — accompanied in *opera omnia* editions by learned expositions of considerable length — constituted communally established and preserved memories open to “word by word transmission . . . explication, exegesis, hermeneutics, and commentary . . . [and] retranslation of text into life through the institutions of education, upbringing, and initiation.”¹⁴ To put it differently: though many of these texts, or *loci*, were endowed with meanings elaborated over many centuries, they were nevertheless “amenable to individual acts of intervention” and to “revision and

⁹Ibid., 270.

¹⁰Burrow, 2001.

¹¹Assmann, 130.

¹²Bal, xii.

¹³See Nora, 1984–92 and 1996–98.

¹⁴Assmann, 131n22.

manipulation.”¹⁵ Hence, by including a particular passage in a new setting, the poet implicitly lends extra weight to the new context by appropriating the original meaning and, sometimes, modifying or reinterpreting it. At any rate, the imported context affects the meaning of the new context, and involves the reader in a complex act of shared memory, the effect of which is both intellectual — to enhance or qualify the meaning of the particular passage in question — and psychological — to elicit a reaction on the part of readers, which adds to their sense of complicity and community-making.¹⁶

This raises the question of *The Faerie Queen*'s first audience — the identity of the small group of readers whom Spenser hoped to reach, and who might exert decisive influence on his career as England's laureate poet. The most important reader was no doubt the poem's dedicatee, Queen Elizabeth (1533–1603), herself an accomplished poet and a versatile linguist, familiar with moral and political truths taking the form of dark conceits in painting as well as in poetry. As for the poem's general readership, the 1590 edition suggests that it was composed — at least in Spenser's and his publisher's view — primarily of two sets: first of all, the *cognoscenti*, Sir Walter Raleigh and Gabriel Harvey (ca. 1550–1631) among them, who most likely read the poem at various stages of its coming into being and thus were aware of, and sympathetic to, its aims and means, and who, significantly, contributed commendatory verses appended at the end of the 1590 volume; the aim of these poems was to guarantee *The Faerie Queen*'s artistic qualities but presumably also to establish Spenser as a national poet of great moral import, worthy of the interest of influential readers at court. The recipients of the dedicatory sonnets — ten in a first, fifteen in a second version — that were also printed at the end of the 1590 edition form a secondary, but politically more important, group of readers that included some very highly influential officers of state. These readers were less likely to have been familiar with Spenser's poetry and were, in some cases, thought to be suspicious of poetry in general, but they were in a better position to advance Spenser's cause as patrons should they be persuaded by the poem's qualities. The poems are printed in order of the recipient's status, beginning with Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor (1540–91), and Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Lord Treasurer (1520–98): the sonnet addressed to Hatton casts Spenser as a latter-day Ennius or Virgil, while Burghley is likened to Atlas. To these fourteen sonnets were added three sonnets to Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (1561–1621), Lady Elizabeth Carew (1552–1618), and “all the

¹⁵Bal, xiii.

¹⁶For the interaction of community-making and cultural memory, see Sell and Johnson, 1–2, 19–22.

gracious and beautifull Ladies in the Court.” Spenser’s intended readership, then, was carefully selected in its capacity as a learned and powerful audience — able to see in him a serious poet on a par with his Greek, Latin, and Italian predecessors — and, hopefully, willing and able to reward him in suitable ways.¹⁷

2. THE ENDING OF THE *AENEID* AND ITS COMBATANTS

Unlike the two Greek epics that it imitates and recycles to the extent that it is often described as an *Odyssey* followed by an *Iliad*, Virgil’s *Aeneid* famously does not provide unequivocal closure. While the *Iliad* ends with a single sentence summing up the momentous events of the latter half of book 24 — “Such were the funeral rites of Hector, tamer of horses”¹⁸ — and the last four lines of the *Odyssey* show Athena successfully admonishing Odysseus to spare some of his enemies, the *Aeneid* ends abruptly in violence and seeming confusion. As we reach the final stages of the duel that is to decide whether Turnus or Aeneas will rule Italy and marry Lavinia, there is no doubt about the final outcome, but other important issues — the combatants’ moral status at the end of their fight and the nature of the price to be paid for Aeneas’s victory — are left un glossed.¹⁹ Crucially, though the last eight lines show us Aeneas pondering whether he should spare the defeated Turnus, they do not elucidate the implications of the manner in which the situation is finally resolved; the anonymous narrator is content to report that Aeneas is seized with a fit of rage as he catches sight of the belt of his young comrade-in-arms, Pallas,

¹⁷For a discussion of the commendatory and dedicatory sonnets, and the printing of the 1590 edition of *The Faerie Queene*, see Black; Spenser, 2001, 718–35.

¹⁸Homer, 1966, 2:n.p. (*Iliad* 24.804).

¹⁹The poem provides contradictory information on Aeneas’s future. From Jupiter’s and Venus’s conversation at 1.257–66 it appears that Aeneas will defeat the Rutulians and then reign for three years, during which time he will civilize his defeated enemies and lay the foundations of the future Roman state; at the end of this period he will be transported to the stars. (Vegio repeats this narrative in his thirteenth book, which ends with Aeneas taking his place among the stars.) In contrast to this, Aeneas is told by Anchises at 6.673–75 that Lavinia will bear him a second son when he has reached an advanced age: “Silvius . . . your late-born son, whom your consort Lavinia will bear to you in your old age.” However, Servius (Virgil 1537a, fol. 197^v) erroneously takes this passage to mean that Silvius will be born posthumously (i.e., after Aeneas has died and been transformed into a god); on this reading, Jupiter’s plan as outlined in *Aeneid* 1 is not contradicted. Still, even if we read the ending of the *Aeneid* in the light of this narrative, as Spenser and his contemporaries are likely to have done, the events described at the very end of the *Aeneid* have an intensely dramatic and human quality. The end result of Aeneas’s mission may be clear from the beginning, but the poem ends by highlighting the human cost of fulfilling his imperial mission.

which Turnus (who has killed Pallas) is now wearing. That Aeneas concludes his victory with an act of uncontrolled revenge is merely recorded, and the entire 10,000-line epic ends with a laconic description of Turnus's soul descending into hell: "and his soul with a groan fled complaining to the shades below."²⁰

While the eight lines in question may be said to constitute the ending of the *Aeneid* insofar as they narrate the last phase of Aeneas and Turnus's duel and the resolution of the conflict underlying the second half of the poem, it is equally clear that they are only the climax of a larger chain of events. It might be argued that the eight lines under scrutiny actually constitute only the final stages of a more extensive narrative segment, a paragraph beginning at 12.919 when Aeneas hurls his spear at Turnus, wounding him fatally. Most modern editions, including that of R. A. B. Mynors, observe such a division of the text.²¹ This segment is part of an even larger chain of events beginning at 12.614, where Aeneas and Turnus engage in single combat: this duel is in its turn the outcome of previous events. In fact, the ending of the *Aeneid* is a complexly organized narrative, comprising not only the dramatic events of book 12, but also various earlier events that prefigure, and affect the meaning of, the single combat with which the poem ends. Similarly, passages in book 12 imitate and recall famous passages in earlier epics, particularly the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, making a Virgilian character such as Turnus assume the position and characteristics now of a Diomedes, now of an Achilles.²² The effect of such intertextual links is incremental, making Turnus the sum of all these various representations and different in kind from his epic predecessors. Again, it seems very unlikely that such strategies were lost on the *Aeneid*'s late sixteenth-century readers: at any rate, Spenser makes repeated use of similar techniques in *The Faerie Queene*.

Given the careful elaboration of the plot of the *Aeneid* and the poem's subtle play with its predecessors, notably the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the meaning of its surprisingly abrupt ending must be given close attention. The narrator of the *Aeneid* offers no explicit comment on Aeneas's final act of violence: the moral import of the ending has to be assessed by the reader alone. Aeneas himself refers to his killing of Turnus as a religious duty to his dead comrade-in-arms Pallas (12.948–49): "Pallas it is, Pallas who sacrifices you with this stroke, and takes revenge on your guilty blood."²³ However, as

²⁰Virgil, 1997, 2:163 (*Aeneid* 12.952): "vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras." All translations of Latin, Greek, and Italian texts in this essay are my own; all subsequent references to Virgil will be to the book and line numbers of the *Aeneid*.

²¹On this point, Mynors (Virgil, 1969) the most recent editor of Virgil's *Opera* for the Oxford Classical Text series, follows his predecessor F. A. Hirtzel's edition (Virgil, 1900).

²²Lyne, 134.

²³*Aeneid* 12.932–36: "Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas / immolat et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit."

pointed out, the poem links Turnus to a number of figures who, in different ways, represent difficulties, temptations, and tests that Aeneas must overcome before he is able to found the dynasty on which, according to official mythology and Anchises' visions in book 6, the future of Rome depends. It is clear that our judging of the killing of Turnus is colored by the way in which we interpret Aeneas's treatment of these other figures.

To gauge the import of these links it is necessary first to take a close look at Turnus, King of the Rutulians. Turnus makes his first appearance in the *Aeneid* at 7.55–57, where he is introduced as Lavinia's prime suitor, supported in his endeavor by Lavinia's mother, Amata; emphasis is placed on his good looks, "most handsome," and his nobility, "descended from powerful ancestors."²⁴ In the following books Turnus, the main obstacle to Aeneas's plans to settle in Latium, begins to loom larger. In book 10 he kills Pallas, and in book 11 it is agreed that the conflict should be solved by Aeneas and Turnus fighting a duel to determine which of them will gain the kingdom of Latium and the hand of Lavinia. After various complications the two antagonists finally face each other beginning at 12.679. However, before the actual fighting begins, a divine compromise is reached, unknown to the duelists: Jove orders Juno to refrain from taking measures against the Trojans, while at the same time stipulating that the Latins need not adopt the language and customs of the Trojan invaders. Although the exact implications of the agreement have been debated,²⁵ this reconciliation between former enemies must impact our understanding of the ending of the epic: Aeneas becomes the instrument effecting what has been decreed above by noticeably mirthful deities.²⁶

Nor is divine intervention limited to this agreement. As the duel enters its decisive stage after Jove and Juno's reconciliation, Jove sends a fury in the shape of an owl, which frightens Turnus and persuades his semidivine sister Juturna, who has assisted him so far, to leave the scene of the duel. Turnus is now clearly a doomed man. As the duel reaches its final phase, Turnus declares that he does not fear Aeneas, only the gods, but acts ineffectually, as in a dream. Aeneas fells him. Turnus, characterized as "implacable" and impetuous at the beginning of book 12 but now referred to as "humble" and "supplicating," at last realizes that he is mortal and must concede defeat.²⁷ He addresses the following plea to Aeneas: "I have earned it, and I do not complain, he said; use your chance. If any thought of a parent's grief can touch you, I beg you — in

²⁴*Aeneid* 7.55: "pulcherrimus"; 7.56: "avis atavisque potens."

²⁵Jenkyns, 673–74.

²⁶Jove is described at *Aeneid* 12.829 as "smiling" ("subridens"), and Juno at 12.841 as "joyful" ("laetata").

²⁷*Aeneid* 12.3: "implacabilis"; 12.930: "humilis supplexque."

Anchises you, too, had such a father — pity Daunus's old age and give me, or, if you prefer, my dead body back to my family."²⁸ Turnus's plea recalls the famous scene in the *Iliad* (22.342–43) where the defeated, dying Hector asks Achilles to render his corpse to Priam, his father, so that he can be properly buried by his family. Achilles refuses at first, tying his enemy's body to his chariot and dragging it through the dust, but when, in book 24, Priam comes to beg his son's body, Achilles is reminded that he, too, has a grieving father back in Greece and agrees to return Hector's corpse to Priam. The situation also recalls Anchises' advice to Aeneas in book 6: "spare those defeated and subdue the proud ones."²⁹ In response to Turnus's plea, Aeneas hesitates momentarily and is about to relent, when he suddenly catches sight of Turnus's belt and baldric, which used to belong to Pallas. Blinded by rage, Aeneas stabs Turnus with his sword: "So saying, he vehemently buried his sword in his enemy's breast. But Turnus's limbs were loosened by the coldness of death, and his soul with a groan fled complaining to the shades below."³⁰

Thus, while line 950 seemingly shows Aeneas (who "restrained his hand" eleven lines earlier) to be all too human, all too intent on revenge, the last two lines, which are also the last two lines of the entire poem, instead of commenting on or clarifying this aspect of his behavior, zoom in on the death of the one opponent who might have defeated Aeneas and whose passing is described in heroic terms: the very last line recalls the Homeric formula "lamenting his fate," used both of Patroclus at *Iliad* 16.857 and of Hector at *Iliad* 22.363.³¹ Homer, in contrast to Virgil, places great emphasis on the dying hero's physical vigor and youthfulness. J. D. Reed, who has drawn attention to the erotic dimension of the various death scenes in the *Aeneid*, notes the telling absence of any such qualities in the description of

²⁸ *Aeneid* 12.931–36: "equidem merui nec deprecor, inquit, / utere sorte tua. miseri te si qua parentis / tangere cura potest, oro (fuit et tibi talis / Anchises genitor) Dauni miserere senectae / et me, seu corpus spoliatum lumine mavis, / redde meis."

²⁹ *Aeneid* 6.853: "parcere subiectis et debellare superbos."

³⁰ *Aeneid* 12.950–52: "hoc dicens ferrum adverso sub pectore condit / fervidus. ast illi solvuntur frigore membra / vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras."

³¹ In fact, *Iliad* 16.855–57 and 22.361–63 are identical: "While he was speaking death darkened his sight, / his soul flew down to Hades, / lamenting its fate and the vigor and the youth that it left" (ὡς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτου κάλυψε, / ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ῥεθέων παμμένη Ἄιδόσδε βεβήκει / ὄν πότμον γοώσασα λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἦβην). Spenser may have been familiar with Jean de Sponde's (Spondanus) bilingual edition (Homer, 1583); however, the formulaic character of the lines is rendered less insistent in Sponde's Latin translation, as they are not translated in identical fashion. The last line, for example, is rendered as "Suam sortem lugens, linquens uirilem aetatem & iuuentam" in the case of Patroclus (*ibid.*, 311), while Hector's demise is described as "Suam casum lugens, linquens uigorem & iuuentutem" (*ibid.*, 393).

Turnus's demise.³² Still, despite its brevity and reticence, the line is not devoid of pathos. Nicholas Horsfall underlines, among other things, the semantic density of *indignata* (hovering between “angered” and “plaintive”), which, he claims, emphasizes the prematurity of Turnus's death, the cutting short of a life in its prime, an aspect of the ending that cannot go unnoticed.³³ Even though we might as readers speculate as to whether Aeneas will relent and perhaps deliver Turnus's body to his father in the manner of Achilles, the fact remains that the very last line of the poem highlights Aeneas's lack of control at the moment of complete victory. Or, if we interpret Aeneas as motivated primarily by a pagan sense of *pietas* — familial and religious duty, very different from the later Christian meaning of *pietà*, *pitié*, and *pity* — we may find his behavior consistent with his allegiance to his family, friends, and his destiny as the founder of a new empire in Italy.³⁴

As observed earlier, the nature of Aeneas's victory is further problematized by a number of verbal links that connect Turnus with two other characters, Dido and Camilla, who each stand in Aeneas's way. The most striking of these links is that the very last line of the *Aeneid* is identical to the line (11.831) describing the demise of Turnus's ally, the maiden-warrior Camilla, who is killed by the Etruscan Arruns at 11.768–835. However, while the passage describing Turnus's death is curiously detached, the poem's account of Camilla's death highlights its sorrowful aspects and is full of pathos: it might even be argued that the description of the spear “drinking Camilla's virginal blood” at 11.804 has overtones of sexual assault.³⁵

Turnus is associated with Dido, too. At *Aeneid* 12.5 Turnus is compared to a Punic lion said to be “wounded with a grievous stroke”;³⁶ the phrase recalls the fourth book of the *Aeneid*, where the lovelorn Dido is described as “long since wounded with a grievous love-pang.”³⁷ Turnus's death is associated with Dido's: *Aeneid* 12.871, which describes Juturna's grief at learning of Turnus's impending death, recapitulates word-by-word Anna's reaction on learning of Dido's death at 4.673. Similarly, a variety of textual correspondences link Camilla's death with Dido's: most strikingly, perhaps, Camilla addresses her confidante Acca in terms that recall Dido addressing

³²Reed, 44.

³³Horsfall, 215.

³⁴Burrow, 1997, 83. See also Wlosok, 405, for a definition of *pietas*: “appropriate [expected] behavior, which could also be defined as righteousness: it consists in reverence, deference, fulfilment of duty.”

³⁵Reed, 19: “virgineumque alte bibit alta cruorem.”

³⁶*Aeneid* 12.5: “saucius . . . gravi . . . vulnere.”

³⁷*Aeneid* 4.1: “gravi iam dudum saucia cura.”

her sister Anna.³⁸ The actual death scene dwells on the various phases of Camilla's agony until her death is reported through the same line that recurs at the very end, when Turnus dies at 12.952. Another significant link is her message to Acca, who is asked to tell Turnus that he must now "take over the battle" (11.826). Given this explicit line of succession, the poem ensures that the memory of the pathos of Camilla's death reverberates in the description of Turnus's death.

Nor is this the only intratextual link found at the end of the poem. The first half of the sentence describing Turnus's death corresponds to the passage describing Aeneas at his lowest point, in the storm in book 1.³⁹ As several critics have pointed out, the recurrence of this phrase, which is now applied to his defeat of his final and most difficult enemy — *frigore*, "coldness," now taking on a stronger and more sinister meaning — is an effective way of turning the tables; Michael C. J. Putnam calls this "one of Virgil's most bitter and cogent ironies," R. O. A. M. Lyne suggests that it "resonates victory," and Reed notes the "grim pun in *condit*: the goal of Aeneas' suffering is to found the Roman nation."⁴⁰

While the last two lines are laden with significant intratextual and intertextual meanings, other factors also affect the reader's perception of their import. In his study of the erotic coloring of heroic death scenes in the *Aeneid*, Reed claims that the verbal link between Turnus's and Camilla's deaths "potentially" recalls "all the Adonis-images" of the poem.⁴¹ However, although Turnus's beauty has been emphasized earlier in the poem, it is surely significant that this last portrayal of him is formulaic and devoid of any reference to his physical appearance. Insofar as this final combat scene evokes the previous ones, it does so only by implication, not explicitly.

These and other similar passages bolster the contention that Turnus is the very embodiment of the forces that Aeneas has to conquer: Aeneas's victory can only be won at the expense of his *clementia*. Putnam identifies the very point where Aeneas's animal side gets the better of him: this, he claims, happens at *Aeneid* 12.715–24, where Aeneas and Turnus are compared to two bulls fighting for mastery of the herd. Turnus's violence has been referred to on a number of occasions through various metaphors and similes but this is the

³⁸Reed, 83–84, lists no fewer than seven points of resemblance between the poem's descriptions of Dido's and Camilla's deaths.

³⁹At *Aeneid* 1.92 Aeneas's limbs are "numbed in cold fear" ("extemplo Aeneae solvuntur frigore membra") just as Turnus's are at 12.951 ("ast illi solvuntur frigore membra").

⁴⁰Putnam, 1965, 200; Lyne, 135; Reed, 54. It should be pointed out, though, that Virgil's use of the word *condo* is problematic. Thomas, 3–4, draws attention to the significant phrase *condere saecla*, which appears to mean one thing at *Aeneid* 6.792–93 ("found [ages of gold]") but the opposite in Lucretius at *De rerum natura* 3.150 ("lay to rest"; "bring to a close").

⁴¹Reed, 44.

first (but not last) time that Aeneas is associated with similar forces. A new example follows some thirty lines later, where Aeneas is likened to a dog chasing a deer: as Putnam observes, the comparison recalls the poem's earlier characterization of Dido as a hind unintentionally wounded by Aeneas the shepherd at *Aeneid* 4.69–73.⁴²

The parallels just marshaled are interesting for two reasons. First of all, it is reasonable to expect that Virgil's sixteenth-century readers may also have noticed the verbal similarities in question, and the recurrence of single lines. They were certainly encouraged to do so by Servius who, in his commentary, links 11.831 and 12.952, explaining on each occasion that the word *indignata* is appropriate, as both Camilla and Turnus die young.⁴³ If so, they also may have seen and pondered the affinity between the characters, who, admittedly for different reasons and in different ways, found themselves in the opposite camp to that of Aeneas. This in its turn may have induced them to modify their understanding and their own representations of the conflict between Aeneas and Turnus. In his discussion of Watkins's study of the *Nachleben* of the Virgilian Dido in the work of various Renaissance poets, including Spenser, Richard F. Thomas argues that extreme Augustanism vitiates our perception of the work Virgil's text does in Renaissance poetry.⁴⁴ Thomas's efforts were extended by Craig Kallendorf, whose 2007 study traces the tradition of "pessimistic" *Aeneiskritik* in the early modern period in a number of poetic imitations of the *Aeneid* written in the major European languages; however, Spenser is not among the authors examined.⁴⁵ The vistas opened by the intratextual links connecting Turnus with Dido and Camilla and explored by what W. R. Johnson has referred to as "counter-classical critics" deserve further discussion.⁴⁶

Secondly, whether or not we believe that Spenser was engaged in such interpretive activities, it is obvious that at least two of the heroes of *The Faerie Queene* — Redcrosse in book 1 and Arthur in book 2 — have to face no less than three adversaries who are connected to one another in similar fashion by intratextual links involving imitation of the very passages in the *Aeneid* drawn attention to here. We must not expect Spenser's reworkings of these passages and characters to be simple transferences of Virgilian material: they are complex recontextualizations of a revered cultural memory, materializing primarily as sophisticated technical innovations and perhaps also as deft evocations, and queries, of meanings supposedly inherent in the Virgilian text.

⁴²Putnam, 1965, 186–89.

⁴³Virgil, 1537a, fols. 346^v, 375^r.

⁴⁴Thomas, 154–56.

⁴⁵Kallendorf.

⁴⁶Johnson, 126.

3. CLASSICAL AND COUNTER-CLASSICAL READINGS OF THE ENDING

While there is reason to assume that such a spectacular ending as the *Aeneid*'s caused discussion, and perhaps even controversy, among its first readers, there is practically no evidence as to what these reactions were. Horsfall cites seven possible "keys" to the ending — stoicism, traditional Roman values, and the Augustan ethic among them — but finds no reason to favor any of them; he does state, though, that "real heroes . . . do not, upon rejection or defeat, go off to live in respectable retirement, deprived of their bride and of their (second) home," thus clearly seeing Turnus's death as a generic necessity.⁴⁷ Thomas does not specifically discuss the controversial ending, but brings up a host of other ambiguous passages in the *Aeneid* on the assumption that the *Aeneid* was written at a time when "speaking openly [was] unsafe" — one the three reasons for ambiguity given by Quintilian — and that the ancients were no strangers to ambiguity as a rhetorical device.⁴⁸ Thomas's conviction seems to be that many seemingly straightforward Augustan passages are perhaps better understood as informed by ambiguity.⁴⁹

Be that as it may, Lactantius (ca. 245–ca. 325 CE), who taught rhetoric at Nicomedia in the late third century, agrees that Aeneas is an *exemplum pietatis* — though from the Christian standpoint that he came to embrace, he deplores the pagan conception of *pietas*; however, he does not blame Aeneas so much as Virgil himself. Aeneas's *pietas* consists in his love for his father,

⁴⁷Horsfall, 198, 196.

⁴⁸*Institutio oratoria* 9.2.65–66 ("si dicere palam parum tutum est"), quoted by Thomas, 8.

⁴⁹Thomas, 7–14. Johnson, 8–9, speaks of "two quite distinct schools of Vergilian criticism": an optimistic European school, on the one hand, that has followed Donatus and Servius in seeing Aeneas as an exemplar of moral rectitude, and, on the other, the so-called Harvard school, which advocated a more pessimistic reading of the poem in the light of the Vietnam War. Heinze, 279, for example, has no doubts about the exceptional nature of Aeneas's heroic mettle: "not a man . . . but . . . an ideal"; Pöschl, 88–89, claims that Aeneas "is well on his way to becoming a Christian hero." Gransden, 201, thinks that "Aeneas's last act is an existential necessity," dictated by "the politically necessary elimination of a dangerous rival." Similarly, Wlosok, 412, sees Aeneas's killing of Turnus "as a necessary judgment," prepared over the course of several books. One of the most famous counterclassical articles was written by Adam Parry, who spoke about "the two voices of Vergil's *Aeneid*." Two influential studies, Putnam, 1965 and 1998, argue energetically in favor of the view that the ending of the epic is full of implicit reservations, suggesting that Aeneas's victory is bought at too high a cost. The basis for a pessimistic reading has been reexamined by Thomas, who, in the course of his study of the Augustan reception of the poem, refers to Servius's view that Aeneas's hesitation and revenge both testify to his *pietas* as an extreme but certainly "possible reading"; however, he adds that emphasizing Aeneas's *pietas* in this way disregards the claims of all other pieties.

according to Lactantius: “It is clear that he is called *pius* because he loved his father.” And yet when he is asked to spare Turnus in the name of his father and his son Iulus, he does not do so. This is Virgil’s fault, Lactantius argues; Aeneas was uneducated, “but you [i.e., Virgil] had studied, and yet you did not know what *pietas* is.”⁵⁰ The earliest surviving pagan commentaries concur with him in viewing Aeneas’s behavior as an *exemplum pietatis*, extending their interpretations in ways that may indicate that they were writing at a late stage when the worldview of the Augustan era — and indeed the worldview of pagan Rome as a whole — was already changing. Writing in the fourth century, Donatus resolutely solves the problem by suggesting that Aeneas demonstrates his *pietas* in two ways: “he is rightly unmoved; for it was better to deny Pallas’s killer the benefit of living than to leave the death of a close friend unavenged. So *pietas* is preserved in Aeneas because he wanted to forgive, and *pietas* toward Pallas is also preserved, since his killer did not get away with it.”⁵¹ Donatus’s fifth-century successor Servius follows suit: “The intention is all to do with Aeneas’s honor: for he is shown to be *pius* as he considers sparing his enemy, and he performs an act of *pietas* by killing him, for he avenges Pallas’s death out of deference to Evander.”⁵² Since the commentaries of Servius and Donatus were printed in nearly every important edition of Virgil’s works in the sixteenth century, we must assume that this interpretation was well known during the Renaissance.

While Aeneas is seen as the embodiment of *pietas*, Turnus is thought by some early commentators to be the embodiment of evil. Fulgentius (fl. late fifth–early sixth century CE), whose sixth-century *Expositio continentiae Virgilianae* is an attempt to expound Virgil in a manner acceptable to Christian readers, ventures the explanation that the name Turnus derives from the Greek words $\theta\omicron\upsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ (impetuous mind), whereas Aeneas is the embodiment of *sapientia* (wisdom) and *ingenium* (cleverness, genius).⁵³ Maffeo Vegio considers that Aeneas is a man “provided with all virtues both in adversity and prosperity,” and goes one step further than Fulgentius,

⁵⁰Lactantius, 472 (*Divinarum institutionum libri septem* 5.10.7–8): “Uidelicet ob hoc unum pius uocatur, quod patrem dilexit”; “qui cum esses eruditus, ignorasti tamen quid esset pietas.”

⁵¹Virgil, 1537b, fol. 375^r: “recte immotus est; praestabat quippe interfectori Pallantis negare uitae beneficium quam inultam relinquere familiaris mortem. Ecce seruata est in persona Aeneae pietas, quia uolebat ignoscere, seruata religio Pallanti, quia interfectori eius non euasit.”

⁵²Ibid.: “omnis intentio ad Aeneae pertinet gloriam: nam et ex eo quod hosti cogitat parcere, pius ostenditur, et ex eo quod eum interimit, pietatis gestat insigne. Nam Euandri intuitu Pallantis ulciscitur mortem.”

⁵³Helm, 105: “turosus, that is a raging mind” (“turosus, id est furibundus sensus”).

claiming that Turnus symbolises the devil: “Turnus, in other words the devil.”⁵⁴ Vegio’s thirteenth book was also included in most authoritative sixteenth-century editions of Virgil’s works. It was translated into Scottish by Gavin Douglas (ca. 1475–1522) along with the *Aeneid* itself in an edition first printed in 1513: Douglas’s translation was later circulated in manuscript and was printed a second time in London in 1553.⁵⁵ Thus there is a strong case for assuming that many late Elizabethans would have been encouraged to interpret the ending of the *Aeneid* as the victory of good over evil.

The secular writers of the High Middle Ages continued to treat the ending of the *Aeneid* as a comparatively unambiguous affair.⁵⁶ However, as we reach the late Renaissance, Aeneas’s refusal to spare Turnus becomes more problematic, as it was seen by some to clash with prevalent notions of honor, particularly as expounded in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. The matter was debated indefatigably by sixteenth-century Italian critics in the course of their ongoing critique of Virgil’s subject matter and diction.⁵⁷ The point at issue is under what circumstances, if any, it is justifiable to kill an enemy in single combat. If viewed in this light, Aeneas’s behavior might easily stand out as less exemplary.

The recycling of the ending of the *Aeneid* in *Orlando furioso* presents an intriguing case. Ariosto’s ironic distance from his subject matter and from his role as narrator — his *sorriso* — is familiar. In the last canto of the *Furioso*, Ruggiero, identified with Aeneas on a number of occasions earlier in the poem,⁵⁸ clashes with Rodomonte, whose behavior in some episodes in the *Furioso* is reminiscent of that of Turnus in the *Aeneid*.⁵⁹ At the very end of the poem Rodomonte challenges Ruggiero to engage in single combat by alleging that Ruggiero has been unfaithful to Charlemagne: the reason why the two fight is their sense of *onore* (*Orlando furioso* 46.105). The situation, then, in *Orlando furioso* is different in important respects from that in the *Aeneid*, and the duel does not at first bear any detailed resemblance to the battle between Aeneas and Turnus. However, in stanza 119 it turns out that Rodomonte is unable on this occasion to rely on his usual arms, much as Turnus had forgotten his best sword when about to do battle with Aeneas.

⁵⁴Allen, 141; Brinton, 28: “Turnus, id est diabolus.”

⁵⁵Although Douglas was “not certainly known to Spenser,” there is much — apart from the Vegio book — in his translation that might have “been congenial to him,” as Bawcutt, 223, notes.

⁵⁶For a useful study, see Comparetti.

⁵⁷For a detailed survey, see Weinberg.

⁵⁸His imprisonment by, and liberation from, Alcina in *Orlando furioso* 8 is full of reminiscences of Aeneas’s stay with Dido in *Aeneid* 4: see Rajna, 185–88.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 247–49.

Things go badly for Rodomonte, who responds by casting away his shield and landing a terrible blow on Ruggiero's head. Like Turnus, Ruggiero is temporarily dazed, but he collects himself, and pulls Rodomonte from his saddle. The fight continues on foot: Rodomonte is bleeding from a wound in the thigh and, as the duelists finally resort to wrestling, Ruggiero falls Rodomonte, kneels on his belly, and holds a dagger poised above his eyes. For a brief moment, Ruggiero, Aeneas-like, thinks of sparing Rodomonte, but the latter tries to free his hand so as to stab Ruggiero in the back; Ruggiero retorts by killing his opponent.⁶⁰ The final lines of the last stanza of the poem clearly identify the two antagonists in terms that recall Aeneas dispatching Turnus to the underworld, except that Rodomonte is described as an unmistakably proud and evil character. While Turnus's soul undertaking the journey to hell is described as *indignata*, Rodomonte's keeps cursing and blaspheming to the very end: "And raising his arm as high as possible, Ruggiero plunged his entire dagger into the terrifying face of Rodomonte two, three times and saved himself from his predicament. Swearing, Rodomonte's disdainful soul, freed from the body that was now colder than ice, fled to Acheron's bleak shores — his soul that was so insolent and so full of pride."⁶¹

It should be clear even from this cursory analysis of the final stanzas of *Orlando furioso* that the differences between the *Furioso* and the *Aeneid* on this count are not as "pronounced" as James Lawrence Shulman claims.⁶² The general, generic differences between Virgil's and Ariosto's poems are obvious, but Ariosto seems to have composed his poem with the *Aeneid* very much on his mind — although he operates by contrast as much as by similarity and places un-Virgilian emphasis on *onore*. Another question is whether Ariosto commits an aesthetic error by ending his open, ironic epic on a serious note that is arguably at variance with the tone of the rest of the poem. The issue has been debated by Joseph C. Sitterson and has been indirectly addressed by Daniel Javitch, the latter of whom is of the opinion that Ariosto's narrative oscillates between irony and seriousness:⁶³ in either case, the final stanza of Ariosto's long romance might be construed as the serious Virgilian conclusion

⁶⁰Ariosto, 1974, 2:1304 (*Orlando furioso* 46.137.3–4): "by threats he tries to make him surrender, and promises to let him live." All subsequent references to Ariosto will be to the book and line numbers of the *Furioso*.

⁶¹*Orlando furioso* 46.140.1–8: "E due e tre volte ne l'orribil fronte / alzando, più ch'alzar si possa, il braccio, / il ferro del pugnale a Rodomonte / tutto nascose, e si levò d'impaccio. / Alle squalide ripe d'Acheronte / sciolta dal corpo più freddo che ghiaccio, / bestemmiano fuggì l'alma sdegnosa, / che fu sì altera al mondo e sì orgogliosa."

⁶²Shulman, 52–53.

⁶³Sitterson, 10–13; Javitch, 56–76.

of a work that, after all, begins with a nonparodic imitation of the first lines of the *Aeneid*. The final episode of his long poem is a duel fought by a noble hero with features borrowed from Aeneas and an indisputably evil villain reminiscent of Turnus, whose overriding trait, *superbia* (pride), is stressed no less than three times in two lines.⁶⁴ Ariosto's appropriation of the most prestigious ending possible in an epic poem, the closing lines of the *Aeneid*, has a symbolic rather than a stylistic import, signaling that, narratologically and morally, the poem has reached its end.

Such an interpretation is given greater strength by Peter DeSa Wiggins's reading of the episode. In his view, by making Rodomonte lose chiefly because he breaks his sword, "Ariosto arranges it so that the man whose faith embraces others [i.e., Ruggiero] destroys the man whose faith denies their right to exist [i.e., Rodomonte]."⁶⁵ In other words, Ariosto's characters are not identical to Virgil's — Ruggiero does not have the strength of Aeneas, and Rodomonte is more powerful than Turnus — and the contrast between the two epics as far as the ending is concerned is indicative of the general difference in outlook between Virgil's and Ariosto's poems. Wiggins's reading should be related to the two dominant views of Rodomonte: whereas Italo Calvino sees him "as a colossus with a sensitive spirit," other critics, with Arnaldo Momigliano as their most noted representative, look upon him "as a combination of Achilles, Turnus, and Capaneus — an embodiment of sheer force."⁶⁶ Rodomonte conveys other associations as well. As David Quint has pointed out, the ancient myth of the Libyan giant Antaeus resounds in Ariosto's portrait of Rodomonte.⁶⁷ In characterizing Rodomonte at *Orlando furioso* 18.24.3–4, Ariosto treats him as the third member of a prestigious Libyan trio that also includes Antaeus and Hannibal: "O Africa, not one equal to him was born in you, though you boast of Antaeus and Hannibal."⁶⁸ All three are thus linked to Dido and to the cause of Carthage, and are seen as embodiments of "the autochthonous native par excellence, the native who must be literally uprooted from his elemental relationship to the land by his foreign conqueror."⁶⁹ In this context, it might be noted that in John Harington's 1591 English translation of *Orlando* (but not in Ariosto's original) Rogero is explicitly compared with Antaeus:

⁶⁴ *Orlando furioso* 46.140, 7–8: "sdegnosa . . . altiera . . . orgogliosa."

⁶⁵ Wiggins, 66.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 41–42.

⁶⁷ Quint, 112.

⁶⁸ *Orlando furioso*: "Africa, in te pare a costui non nacque, / ben che d'Anteo ti vantì e d'Anniballe."

⁶⁹ Quint, 112.

And by and by he heau'd him quite vpright,
 As strong Antheus was in time of old:
 Rogero notwithstanding sure doth stand
 And labord still to haue the vpper hand.⁷⁰

Wiggins's reading bears a certain resemblance to Girolamo Ruscelli's (1500–66) interpretation of the passage. In his famous commentary, included in major Renaissance editions of Ariosto's poem, Ruscelli compares Ariosto's and Virgil's endings in the following way: "Rodomonte's death and Ruggiero's final victory, with which the book ends, leaves the readers and the audience much more edified and calm than does Turnus's demise in Virgil, since Rodomonte came so wrongfully and so rashly to challenge Ruggiero, whereas poor Turnus had never offended Aeneas in any way whatsoever, and had even been bothered by him as regards his country and his wife."⁷¹

The true meaning of honor — a theme also noticeable in *Orlando furioso* — is an essential ingredient in Tasso's reworkings of the ending of the *Aeneid* in the *Gerusalemme liberata*. In Tasso's epic the question of what constitutes honorable behavior for duelists is brought to the fore on at least three occasions with a bearing on the end of the *Aeneid*.⁷² In canto 7 the Christian Tancredi and the pagan Argante are supposed to resume the duel they had begun in canto 6, but were forced to end because of nightfall. However, Tancredi, who is distracted by his pursuit of Clorinda, fails to turn up; an older warrior, Raimondo, offers to take his place. Raimondo is protected by a guardian angel whose diamond shield makes Argante's sword break into pieces. The episode has an analogue at *Aeneid* 12.739–41, where Turnus's sword (not his own, but a borrowed one) shatters in fragments when it hits Aeneas's shield, manufactured for him by Vulcan. The question Raimondo now faces is whether he should allow his opponent to find another sword; while debating this issue with himself (*Gerusalemme liberata* 7.95), he is attacked by Argante and is saved only through divine intervention. In canto 19, Argante and Tancredi finally get an opportunity to settle their dispute in single combat. Although they are both strong warriors, it becomes apparent as they begin to wrestle that Tancredi is the stronger: like Hercules, he lifts his Antaeus-like opponent off the ground, thus rendering him defenseless. Tancredi offers to spare him if he will only concede defeat: "Yield to me, strong man, either

⁷⁰Virgil, 1991, 572.

⁷¹Ariosto, 1573, 520: "Nella morte poi di Rodomonte, & nell'ultima uittoria di Ruggiero, & con che si finisce il libro, restano molto meglio edificati, & più sereni gli animi de' Lettori, & de gli ascoltanti, che in quella di Turno presso à Vergilio, poi che Rodomonte era uenuto con tanto torto & con tanta temerità à disfidar Ruggiero; la oue il misero Turno non hauea di nulla offeso gia mai Enea, anzi era da lui disturbato nello stato, & nella moglie."

⁷²Seem, 119–25.

acknowledge me or fortune as your conqueror.”⁷³ Argante proudly rejects the offer in terms reminiscent of Turnus’s: “Use your chance, for I fear nothing, nor shall I leave your imprudence unpunished.”⁷⁴ The fighting resumes: Tancredi gets the upper hand, and once more (19.25.5–6) offers to spare Argante, who, however, does not relent. Like Rodomonte, he remains proud to the end: “Ferocious, fearsome, and proud were his final gestures, his final words.”⁷⁵

Tasso’s treatment of Tancredi and Argante’s duel looks back to the endings of the *Aeneid* and of *Orlando furioso*, for, in addition to the general similarities just pointed out between Tasso’s poem and Virgil’s, there are several close verbal parallels between *Orlando furioso* and *Gerusalemme liberata*. Tancredi is portrayed as “a courteous knight battling another ‘uom forte,’” the first duty of an *uom forte* being not to kill another *uom forte*, according to the sixteenth-century code of honor.⁷⁶ His chivalrous behavior toward his opponent is apparent from his assurance that he does not seek triumph or spoils from him, nor does he wish to exert any rights over him.⁷⁷ This generous assertion is a variation on the sentiments expressed by Turnus in his very last words in the *Aeneid* — “do not go further in hatred”⁷⁸ — while Turnus’s admission of defeat — “use your fortune” — before pleading for mercy is transformed into Argante’s proud defiance of Tancredi’s offer of mercy: “make use of your luck, for I fear nothing and will not leave your impudence unpunished.”⁷⁹ Thus, Argante forces his opponent to make the ancient Roman code, passionately debated in Italy during the sixteenth century, take precedence over chivalric courtesy.

In the twentieth and final canto of the *Gerusalemme liberata* the topic is rehearsed once more. As this version occurs at the very end of Tasso’s epic it seems reasonable to guess that this is his final word on the matter, at least in the version known to Spenser.⁸⁰ In this canto, the defeated pagan Altamoro

⁷³Tasso, 578 (*Gerusalemme liberata* 19.21.1–2): “Cedimi, uom forte, o riconoscer voglia / me per tuo vincitore o la fortuna.” All subsequent references to Tasso will be to the book and line numbers of the *Liberata*.

⁷⁴*Gerusalemme liberata* 19.22.1–2: “Usa la tua sorte, ché nulla io temo / né lascieró la tua follia impunita.”

⁷⁵*Gerusalemme liberata* 19.26.7–8: “Superbi, formidabili, e feroci / gli ultimi moti fur, l’ultime voci.”

⁷⁶Seem, 123.

⁷⁷*Gerusalemme liberata* 19.21.1–2: “né ricerco da te trionfo o la fortuna; / né mi riserbo in te ragione alcuna.”

⁷⁸*Aeneid* 12.938: “ulterius ne tende odiis”.

⁷⁹*Aeneid* 12.932: “utere sorte tua”; *Gerusalemme liberata* 19.22.1: “Usa la sorte tua, ché nulla io temo / né lascieró la tua follia impunita.”

⁸⁰As is well known, Tasso kept revising his epic, to the extent that he republished it under a new title, *Gerusalemme conquistata*, in 1593.

offers the Christian Goffredo money in exchange for being spared (20.141–42) much as Magus asks Aeneas to spare him in exchange for silver and gold at *Aeneid* 10.522–29. However, whereas Aeneas mercilessly kills Magus after stating that Turnus has made such bargaining impossible by killing Pallas, Goffredo spares his defeated enemy without asking for anything in exchange. Although the direct verbal reference is to a passage in book 10 of the *Aeneid*, the situation cannot but recall the ending of the poem too, as Seem points out; furthermore, it is obvious that “Tasso doubly reverses Vergil’s text”: “First the final duel is displaced so that the epic will not conclude with the death of the Magus figure, but then Tasso’s poem goes on to spare the Magus figure that the *Aeneid* sacrificed.” (Seem concludes by noting that “there is a limit to Vergilian imitation.”)⁸¹ Another way of putting it is to say that Tasso imitates the *Aeneid* while infusing the imitated passage with new meaning.

The conundrum posed by the ending of the *Aeneid* was a matter of vital importance to Tasso. In the *Discorsi del poema eroico* — which he presumably began working on even as a student of Sperone Speroni’s at Padua but did not publish until 1587 — he claims that Aeneas’s behavior could be defended on three grounds: because Turnus would constitute a constant threat if left alive, because Aeneas had promised Evander to avenge Pallas, and because Roman religion compelled Aeneas to kill Turnus.⁸² In his poetic practice, he illustrates the impossibility of an easy answer, but appears eventually, as we have seen, to have preferred chivalric courtesy to Virgilian vengeance — at least in the version Spenser is likely to have had access to when composing the first books of *The Faerie Queene*.

To sum up: as Spenser decided to incorporate the ending of the *Aeneid* into the narrative and allegorical structure of *The Faerie Queene*, he could draw on a variety of readings of Virgil’s seemingly noncommittal account of the circumstances of Turnus’s death. These range from early attempts to see Aeneas’s pity and anger as equally justified and compatible with Christian notions of piety, to later interpretations informed by sixteenth-century ideas of chivalric honor. Underlying this cluster of conflicting views is the *Aeneid*’s ambiguous ending — enigmatic and terse, yet suggestively opened through its repetition of individual lines linking the fate of Turnus to Camilla, to Dido, and to Aeneas himself at an initial low point of his career, and thus indicative of new interpretive possibilities.

⁸¹Seem, 125.

⁸²Tasso, 1959, 611–12.

4. THE ENDING OF THE *AENEID* AND *THE FAERIE QUEENE* 1: SANSFOY, SANSLOY, AND SANSIOY

A discussion of the ways in which the ending of the *Aeneid* is appropriated in *The Faerie Queene* naturally begins with its not appearing as an ending but as an inset episode — or rather, a series of inset episodes — within the narrative of book 1. (Incidentally, this pattern recurs in later books of *The Faerie Queene* as well.) Spenser's practice is thus in striking contrast to that of the three poems that served as his main models — the *Aeneid*, *Orlando furioso*, and *Gerusalemme liberata* — and that together consolidated the ending's position as a powerful cultural memory, no doubt imprinted on Spenser even when he was a schoolboy. The issue we should address, then, is what the effect might be of using such an intriguing and semantically dense passage in such a strikingly unusual way.

To appreciate the effects of Spenser's recontextualizations of the ending of the *Aeneid* in book 1 of *The Faerie Queene* it is useful to recapitulate the situation at the outset of canto 2. In canto 1, the inexperienced Redcrosse knight and his traveling companion (and bride-to-be) Una are surprised by a rainstorm that forces them to seek shelter in the Wandering Wood, a labyrinthine place reminiscent of paradise but which in fact exposes them to their first serious test: an encounter with the monster Error.⁸³ After Redcrosse has defeated Error, he and his party happen upon Archimago, who poses as a devout hermit (and who has unmistakably Catholic leanings). The aim of the arch image-maker and deceiver is to separate Redcrosse and Una while they are asleep. To this end, he sends "the falsest two" spirits to Redcrosse, making him believe that he sees Una commit an act of fornication. As a result, Redcrosse flees from Archimago's hermitage at the beginning of canto 2. Spenser's description of his defection is interesting from a structural point of view, in that it casts him as Aeneas abandoning Dido, which seems to have escaped the poem's commentators so far (including Watkins). In his note on the stanza, A. C. Hamilton comments that Spenser employs "a pastiche of classical sources" to "associate the virgin Aurora and Una, the classical and Christian day-stars," adducing parallels in Homer, Virgil, and Ovid.⁸⁴ Though Spenser's skillful amalgamation of three different versions of the advent of dawn is certainly worth pointing out, the main function of this carefully designed *contaminatio* is to serve as a backdrop to the events narrated in the next few lines (1.2.6.6–1.2.7.9), which look back to the passage in the *Aeneid*

⁸³For a discussion of how the intertexts reinforce these dimensions, see Svensson, 2009.

⁸⁴Spenser, 2001, 45.

where the unsuspecting Dido wakes up to discover that Aeneas and his companions are sailing away from Carthage:

At last faire Hesperus in highest skie
 Had spent his lampe, & brought forth dawning light,
 Then vp he rose, and clad him hastily;
 The Dwarfe him brought his steed: so both away do fly.

Now when the rosy fingred Morning faire,
 Weary of aged *Tithones* saffron bed,
 Had spred her purple robe through deawy aire,
 And the high hills *Titan* discouered,
 The royall virgin shooke off drowsy-hed,
 And rising forth out of her baser bowre,
 Lookt for her knight, who far away was fled,
 And for her dwarfe, that wont to wait each howre;
 Then gan she wail and weepe, to see that woeful stowre.

The relevant passage in the *Aeneid* runs as follows: “And now first Dawn, leaving the saffron bed of Tithonus, was beginning to sprinkle the world with new light. As soon as the queen saw the light whiten from her high tower and the ships sail away with even sails, and found that the beaches and the port were without an oar, she struck her lovely breast three or four times and tore her golden hair, and said: ‘O God! Is he leaving?’”⁸⁵ Both passages depend for their effect on the contrast between the serenity of dawn and the desperation of the female protagonists upon finding out that their paramours have deserted them. After Dido has discovered the ships setting sail and has realized why the beaches and the port are empty, she bursts out into an impressive set speech that has no counterpart in *The Faerie Queene*. Spenser, for his part, crowns his imitation of Homeric, Virgilian, and Ovidian matter by the addition of the adjective “Weary,” so that Aurora, “the rosy fingred Morning faire,” who is tired of her aged lover, provides an ironic contrast to the “royall virgin,” who is certainly not weary of her suitor but begins to “wail and weepe” when she leaves the “baser bowre” (another contrast to Virgil’s *speculis*, “tower”) where she has had to spend the night. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas flees Dido by divine sanction — his decision to abandon his newfound love is supposedly another sign of his *pietas* — but any suggestion of a similarly noble motive on Redcrosse’s part is of course sadly lacking. Though he is described as being in

⁸⁵*Aeneid* 4.584–91: “Et iam prima novo spargebat lumine terras / Tithoni croceum linquens Aurora cubile. / regina e speculis ut primam albescere lucem / vidit et aequatis classem procedere veils, / litoraue et vacuos sensit sine remige portus, / terque quaterque manu pectus percussa decorum / flauentisque abscissa comas ‘pro Iuppiter! ibit / hic,’ ait.”

Aeneas's position, he has none of the prestige of his Trojan forerunner, who flees Dido to fulfill his dynastic mission: Redcrosse flees because he has been tricked by Archimago.

A few stanzas further on (1.2.12), Redcrosse (now so named by the narrator) discovers a knight who is courting his female travel companion, "A goodly lady clad in scarlot red." The lady is clearly a type of the great whore of Babylon, while her knight, dubbed "A faithlesse Sarazin" by the narrator, wears a shield identifying him as Sansfoy. The knight is one of three brothers, Sansfoy, Sansjoy, and Sansloy, serving as incarnations of faithlessness, joylessness, and lawlessness.⁸⁶ Redcrosse's encounter with Sansfoy results in his first real duel and his first actual test as a knight (his defeat of Errour serving a preliminary role). However, as Susanne L. Wofford points out, Sansfoy appears only after Redcrosse has abandoned Una; the duel is not a real test, but an aspect of the psychomachia going on inside Redcrosse.⁸⁷

The eight stanzas setting forth Redcrosse's fight with, and defeat of, Sansfoy at 1.2.12–19 describe their meeting as a duel fought in compliance with chivalric conventions. The lady incites her companion to engage his approaching opponent. No explicit reason for the duel is given, but it is clear that her combination of licentiousness, violence, and power makes her a desirable companion in the eyes of the two combatants, who are both driven by lust; Redcrosse is said at 1.2.12.4 to be guided by "will" and "griefe." The biblical and chivalric associations are, however, mixed with a number of Virgilian markers, the climactic one being the striking similarity between Sansfoy's death at *The Faerie Queene* 1.2.19.5–9 and Turnus's demise in the *Aeneid*:

He tumbling downe aliue,
With bloody mouth his mother earth did kis,
Greeting his graue: his grudging ghost did striue
With the fraile flesh; at last it flitted is,
Whither the soules do fly of men, that liue amis.

This is clearly modeled on *Aeneid* 12.950–52: "So saying, he vehemently buried his sword in his enemy's breast. But Turnus's limbs were loosened by the coldness of death, and his soul with a groan fled complaining to the shades below."⁸⁸ The correspondence between the two passages is signaled by the close

⁸⁶The three brothers are negative embodiments of some of the fruits of the spirit mentioned in Galatians 5.22–23: "ioye . . . faith . . . against such there is no Law."

⁸⁷Wofford, 1992, 266, 284–85; Wofford, 2001, 116–18.

⁸⁸"hoc dicens ferrum aduerso sub pectore condit / feruidus. ast illi solvuntur frigore membra / vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras."

verbal similarity between their descriptions of the soul leaving the body and passing to the underworld. However, the phrase expressing both complaint and, implicitly, sorrow used by Virgil to describe Turnus's dying moment has been simplified by Spenser into a single word, "grudging," consonant with Sansfoy's arrogance; at the same time, Sansfoy's death is contemplated in a way that evinces the narrator's Christian perspective: "his . . . ghost did striue / With the fraile flesh," and it flees "Whither the soules do fly of men, that liue amis." As a nonbeliever (or at least a non-Christian), Sansfoy is unlikely to be susceptible to the conflict between the spirit and the flesh as explicated by Paul in Romans 5–7 (incidentally a text of considerable importance to book 2);⁸⁹ yet the Christian narrator envisages his agony as precisely a combat between spirit and matter.

The force of Spenser's appropriation of the ending of the *Aeneid* is intensified in that the first battle between good and evil and the first human death in *The Faerie Queene* — indicative of Redcrosse's as yet fragile but undisputed status as champion of the Christian faith — is couched in words derived from the description of the last and most significant death in the *Aeneid*, symbolic of the historic change signaled by Aeneas's accession to power. This moment, which in Ariosto's and Tasso's poems exemplifies the transformation of pagan *pietas* into Christian forgiveness, or heroic punishment of infernal vengefulness, becomes the starting point of Redcrosse's spiritual education: as Hamilton notes, it marks "the beginning of significant action in [Spenser's poem]."⁹⁰ It is expressed in terms of a chivalric joust whose conventions are not taken at face value; however, as Wofford points out, the participants in Spenser's allegory do not appear to understand the game they are involved in.⁹¹

In this context it is also worth remembering that the line describing Turnus's death exactly repeats the line recounting Camilla's death at *Aeneid* 11.827–31: "With these words she dropped the reins, slipping helplessly to earth. Then, growing cold, she was slowly set free from her body, and laid down her drooping neck and her head, which Death had seized, letting fall her weapons, and her soul with a groan fled complaining to the shades below."⁹²

⁸⁹For a discussion of this topic, see Mallette.

⁹⁰Spenser, 2001, 47.

⁹¹Wofford, 2001, 116: "Spenser's characters lack what we might feel to be the most important piece of information that would allow them to proceed successfully in their world: that is, the knowledge that they are in an allegory." To this we might add the observation of Bergvall, 5, that the forces of evil do not collaborate — in fact, they do not seem to be aware of each other's activities and true identities.

⁹²*Aeneid* 11.827–31: "simul his dictis linquebat habenas / ad terram non sponte fluens. tum frigida toto / paulatim exsoluit se corpore, lentaque colla / et captum leto posuit caput, arma relinquens / vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras."

Some of the details concerning the manner of Camilla's death are relevant to Spenser's account of Sansfoy's death. Camilla is wounded while riding, in contrast to Turnus, who sustains his fatal wound while fighting on foot. After being hit by a spear below her naked breast, she falls to the ground at 11.805, supported by her fellow Amazons. She dies slowly, the various stages of her expiration being recorded in some detail, with time allowed for her to address five lines to Acca. The entire death scene is replete with sorrow and pathos, while her killer, Arruns, is viewed in a wholly unsympathetic light. Sansfoy's death also occurs while he is on horseback. However, no pathos or chivalric heroism is associated with his passing, which is described in factual, noncommittal terms: "He tumbling down aliue . . . his grudging ghost did striue . . . at last it flitted is." While in the *Aeneid* the pathos associated with Camilla's death is arguably synecdochically transferred to Turnus through the repetition of the final line,⁹³ the complete lack of any such qualities in *The Faerie Queenè's* description of Sansfoy's death is striking and emphasizes the utterly unheroic aspects of his demise.

This is not to imply that Redcrosse — the Aeneas of book 1 — lives up to expected heroic standards on this occasion either. Redcrosse's limitations are intimated by, among other things, the prominence of the Virgilian coloring of a preceding stanza (1.2.16) in which the two combatants are likened to two rams:

As when two rams stird with ambitious pride
 Fight for the rule of the rich fleeced flocke,
 Their horned fronts so fierce on either side,
 Do meete, that with the terrour of the shocke,
 Astonied both, stand senceles as a blocke,
 Forgetfull of the hanging victory.
 So stood these twaine, vnmoued as a rocke,
 Both staring fierce, and holding idely,
 The broken reliques of their former cruelty.

At *Aeneid* 12.715–24, Aeneas and Turnus are compared to two bulls that, fighting for the leadership of a herd, attack each other so fiercely that Jove has to consult his balance to find out which will prove the stronger one. In themselves these two motifs are commonplace in epic poetry: what makes the connection between the *Aeneid* and *The Faerie Queene* distinctive is their combination, and also that in Virgil (as in Spenser) the outcome of the weighing is not indicated — at *Iliad* 22.209, for example, we learn that "Hector's day of doom sinks down." However, this does not mean that there

⁹³Reed, 44.

is complete agreement between Virgil's and Spenser's versions. The particular detail of Jove resorting to his balance is changed in Spenser's version, where it is the two combatants themselves that are "Forgetfull of the hanging victory," and are said in 1.2.17.4 to possess "equal puissance." In fact, they are so "Astonied both" by their fighting that they "stand senceless as a blocke" (16.5). This description of the violence of the fight between the two rams looks back to the preceding stanza's statement that Redcrosse and Sansfoy are fighting so fiercely that their duel leaves them "Astonied with the stroke of their owne hand" (15.8). Clearly, the "shocke" that they both experience is not the result of a duel caused by anything like *pietas*, but by a mixture of Turnus-like pride and erotic ambition, the latter suggested by the Virgilian simile (and rendered even stronger by the bulls being replaced by rams). The trancelike state also has a counterpart in the semiconscious condition that Turnus finds himself in toward the end of his fight; the irony here is that both knights are equally dazed. They stand "holding idely, / The Broken reliques of their former cruelty," an ambiguous phrase that recalls "those spoils, the memorials of savage grief": Pallas's baldrick, the sight of which causes the hesitating Aeneas to spring into action.⁹⁴ However, while Pallas's baldrick is instrumental in making Aeneas act, the "Broken reliques" have no such function. Instead, it is only when Sansfoy suggests that the cross on Redcrosse's shield is a "charme" that Redcrosse becomes "wondrous wroth" and kills his enemy in an Aeneas-like manner.

That Sansfoy is a type of Turnus in his infernal aspect seems clear.⁹⁵ As if his behavior while alive were not enough, his death shows him to be associated with evil, or at least pagan, forces. He returns to "mother earth," elsewhere referred to as "mother of all," the origin of all fallen creatures. Sansfoy's kinship with "mother earth" marks him as related to Antaeus and the trio of Ariostan rebels — Rodomonte, Antaeus, and Hannibal — who embody the autochthonous forces that both Redcrosse and Ariosto's heroes have to struggle with. With regard to Redcrosse, his final function as Sansfoy's superior shows that his textual position as Aeneas is validated by his performance, though it would be impossible to claim that he is on a par with his Roman model. It might be argued that his combination of anger and "natiue vertue" forms a Christian replacement for Aeneas's final display of *pietas* activated by his being "ablaze with fury and terrifying / in his wrath."⁹⁶ However, although his victory appears to demonstrate his basic reliability as

⁹⁴ *Aeneid* 12.945–46: "saevi monimenta doloris / exuviasque."

⁹⁵ While Virgil's Turnus sheds his pride and becomes *humilis* during his last moments, the Turnus of later explicators remains haughty and is seen as a type of the devil.

⁹⁶ *Aeneid* 12.945–46: "furiis accensus et ira / terribilis."

a hero, he is clearly not yet at this stage a paragon of Christian piety: in fact, as Wofford points out, “many details in the episode hint at a very different story,” namely that Redcrosse’s victory, far from indicating moral progress, is a step in the direction of even greater tribulations.⁹⁷ In a manner reminiscent of Turnus’s behavior after defeating Pallas, he asks the dwarf to pick up Sansfoy’s shield and, worst of all, he is content to take up his opponent’s lady companion, who is of course a prominent representative of lust. Although such behavior is in principle consonant with chivalric convention, as Hamilton points out, it is also a clear indication that Redcrosse is “well within the grip of faithlessness” and base sexual desire.⁹⁸ Moreover, he permits Duessa to take him to the House of Pride, pride being the most salient of the infernal characteristics that Redcrosse should be fighting. Redcrosse’s victory over Sansfoy has paradoxically taken him even further away from Una and the path to holiness.

Clearly, the Virgilian echoes evoked by Spenser’s description of Redcrosse’s doings in canto 2 serve to point up and define his moral predicament. From the moment he makes his rash escape from Archimago’s hermitage Redcrosse cannot fail to be compared with Aeneas, though he consistently cuts a much less heroic figure. While Aeneas leaves Carthage after having been enjoined in a dream by Mercury to do so and to follow the rules of *pietas*, Redcrosse decides to leave Archimago’s hermitage, after having been tricked by a phantom vision devised by Archimago. Having escaped the phantom and abandoned the real Una, he becomes involved in another situation where once again he plays the role of Aeneas. However, whereas Aeneas and Turnus’s duel is primarily over the rule of Italy, Redcrosse and Sansfoy’s joust is explicitly about the lady whose favors both are seeking to enjoy. The sexual dimension is underscored by the emphatic foregrounding of the Virgilian simile of the rams fighting “for the rule of the rich fleeced flocks.” The effect of Spenser’s use of his Virgilian material is a result of his debasement of all those participating in it. Duessa, “clad in scarlot red,” is a licentious and devious woman, whereas Lavinia is a quiet, unassuming, and honorable lady; Sansfoy is a strikingly infernal version of Turnus; and Redcrosse himself, finally, defeats his enemy and dispatches him to the underworld without the compunction and the pity that make *pius Aeneas* hesitate in the first place. In the *Aeneid*, the moment when Aeneas finally kills Turnus has a very strong dramatic and emotional finality about it, which is reinforced by its position; in *The Faerie Queene*, the reader’s recognition that this moment recurs as the beginning, not the end, of the hero’s education is an indication of the poem’s pervasive Protestant ethos.

⁹⁷Wofford, 2001, 117.

⁹⁸Spenser, 2001, 48; Wofford, 1992, 285.

While Aeneas stands out as actively creating his position and fulfilling his historical mission, Redcrosse — who, as we have seen, can hardly be distinguished from his opponent — wins, but only to succumb immediately to the next temptation: by opting to take on Duessa as his lady companion and accepting to be led to the House of Pride, he fails to take charge of his own destiny, putting himself in a position from which he can only be saved by divine grace.

One element that is missing in *The Faerie Queene's* first adaptation of Aeneas and Turnus's duel is the motif of revenge. It appears a little later, as Sansfoy's brother Sansloy comes upon Una and Archimago at 1.3.33. Archimago has assumed the appearance of Redcrosse (1.2.10–11) and tricked the unsuspecting, overjoyed Una into believing that he is her champion. As the "full iolly knight" — as Archimago is called in parodic imitation of the introductory description of Redcrosse at 1.1.8 — and his lady are surprised by Sansloy, intent on "Cruell reuenge" (1.3.33.8) even before he has had time to identify the "gentle payre" before him, it becomes apparent that a duel is imminent. Fuming with anger, Sansloy decides to avenge his brother and makes a near-fatal attack on Archimago, who is saved only because his "staggering steede" shrinks for fear.

If in the episode involving Sansfoy and Redcrosse the Virgilian markers serve a serious purpose in identifying the heroic proportions of the duel, it is hard to read this rehearsal of the joust between evil and good as other than parodic. Sansloy, who appears to seek revenge for its own sake, is the incarnation of lawlessness. Redcrosse, as the many ironies of the description of him at the very beginning of the poem (1.1.1–3) make clear, is still too inexperienced to be a reliable defender of the cross, while Archimago is both a coward and an impostor who has neither the inclination nor the power to embody those virtues that Redcrosse is slowly acquiring throughout book 1. Una, finally, has permitted herself to be taken in by a sham knight whose unsuitability for his task as her champion is evident from the beginning.

There is another difference between this episode and the previous one. The first two stanzas contain nothing that suggests a parallel with the *Aeneid*: it is only when we get to 1.3.35.8–9 that a phrase from Redcrosse and Sansfoy's encounter (and ultimately from the *Aeneid*) presents itself. Just as Virgil links the fates of Camilla and Turnus by concluding his accounts of their deaths with the same phrase, so Spenser links the fates of some of his protagonists by repeating a particular phrase. Sansloy's attack on Archimago at 1.3.35.6–9 recalls the sentence describing Sansfoy's death (while implicitly evoking the Virgilian line underlying it):

Yet so great was the puissance of his push,
 That from his sadle quite he did him beare:
 He tumbling rudely downe to ground did rush,
 And from his gored wound a well of bloud did gush.

The words “tumbling rudely downe to ground,” which recall Sansfoy’s demise, alert us to the possibility of a Virgilian analogue. The associations are reinforced by the next line, but instead of a “grudging spirit” that “striue[s] / With the fraile flesh” and finally flits “Whither the soules do fly of men, that liue amis,” the last line of 1.3.35 contains a description of how “a well of bloud did gush” “from [Archimago’s] gored wound.” Sansloy dismounts, announcing his intention to kill his victim and revenge his brother (1.3.36.3–9):

Lo there the worthie meed
 Of him, that slew *Sansfoy* with bloody knife;
 Henceforth his ghost freed from repining strife
 In peace may passen ouer *Lethe* lake
 When mourning altars purgd with enimies life,
 The black infernall *Furies* doen aslake:
 Life from *Sansfoy* thou tookst, *Sansloy* shall from thee take.

As the episode unfolds, both the situation and the language emphasize its character as a parody of the combat between Aeneas and Turnus. Sansloy narratologically finds himself in the position of Aeneas but, being a champion of lawlessness bent on exacting revenge, is far from being a type of Aeneas. Nevertheless, in promising to revenge his brother — “Life from *Sansfoy* thou tookst, *Sansloy* shall from thee take” — he expresses himself in terms reminiscent of the anaphoric sentence Aeneas uses when stating his intention to kill Turnus — “Pallas it is, Pallas who sacrifices you with this stroke, and exacts retribution from your guilty blood”⁹⁹ — while the phrase “his ghost freed from repining strife / In peace may passen ouer *Lethe* lake” is analogous with “and his soul with a groan fled complaining to the shades below,” referring to the fate awaiting Archimago, who occupies the position of Turnus. The effect of Sansloy’s impersonation of Aeneas is to highlight mock-heroically the glaring contrast between Aeneas’s *pietas* and his own savage vengefulness.

Virgilian reminiscences are used again to emphasize the nature of Una’s intervention on Archimago’s behalf at 1.3.37.2–5. As Sansloy prepares to unlace Archimago’s helmet before dealing the final blow, Una, who believes that the knight lying on his back before her is “the truest knight aliue,” asks him to restrain his hand and be merciful in Aeneas-like manner: “O hold that

⁹⁹*Aeneid* 12.948–49: “Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas / immolat et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.”

heauie hand, / Deare Sir . . . Mercy not withstand.” When Sansloy discovers that the knight posing as Redcrosse is in fact Archimago, he decides to spare the old magician, who lies in a Turnus-like trance, dazed to the point that “the cloud of death did sit . . . on [his] guilefull dazed eyes.” The effect of these similarities is to reinforce the parodic nature of the episode, which is clear even before the Virgilian markers are introduced.

The Aeneas-Turnus matrix also serves as a structuring principle in Spenser’s account of the battle between Redcrosse and Sansjoy in the House of Pride (1.5.6–13). However, in contrast to the previous passages, the roles of Aeneas and Turnus are not consistently divided between the two combatants this time, but are assigned to them in a more fluid manner. When Sansjoy first appears, he is described as one for whom revenge is the very breath of life: “He seemd in hart to harbour thoughts vnkind, / And nourish bloody vengeaunce in his bitter mind” (1.4.38.8–9). The first tangible sign of this disposition occurs when he discovers Sansfoy’s shield that Redcrosse’s page is carrying (1.4.39.2). When Sansjoy tries to reclaim his brother’s shield, from Redcrosse, the two knights begin to fight but are ordered by Lucifera to settle their dispute by means of a regular duel the next day. Although there are no verbal reminiscences of the *Aeneid* in the text at this point, the situation and Sansjoy’s reaction carry a faint suggestion of Aeneas’s rage when discovering Pallas’s baldrick. Another subtle reference to Sansfoy’s predicament — a reference looking back both to 1.3.35, where Sansfoy was described as wandering by the banks of the Styx, and to various descriptions of the underworld in the *Aeneid* — is found in the speech Duessa makes when she visits Sansjoy the night before the duel, admonishing him to avenge his deceased brother: “Let not his loue, let not his restless spright, / Be vnreung’d, that calles to you aboute / From wandring *Stygian* shores, where it doth endless moue” (48.7–9).

During combat, Sansjoy, once more catching sight of his brother’s shield, cries out to Sansfoy’s ghost (1.5.10.1–9):

At last the Paynim chaunst to cast his eye,
 His suddein eye, flaming with wrathfull fyre,
 Vpon his brothers shield, which hong thereby:
 Therewith redoubled was his raging yre,
 And said, Ah wretched sonne of wofull syre,
 Doest thou sit wayling by black *Stygian* lake,
 Whilest here thy shield is hangd for victors hyre
 And sluggish german doest thy forces slake,
 To after-send his foe, that him may ouertake?

The situation, though not the exact words, recalls the moment near the end of the *Aeneid* at 12.947–49 when Aeneas discovers that Turnus is wearing

Pallas's belt and is incited to kill Turnus. In Virgil's poem, as we have seen, Aeneas presents revenge as a religious duty, as appears from his use of the word *immolat*, while the repetition of Pallas's name suggests his strong emotional attachment to his young comrade-in-arms: what enrages him is the idea that Turnus should be allowed to live even though he has killed Pallas. Sansjoy's desire for revenge is motivated by his wishing to kill his foe in order to liberate his dead brother's soul, doomed to wander on the banks of the Styx until his murder has been revenged (1.5.11.1–4):

Goe caitiue Elfe, him quickly ouertake,
 And soone redeeme from his longe wandering woe;
 Goe guiltie ghost, to him my message make,
 That I his shield haue quit from dying foe.

The mood in which these words are spoken represents Aeneas at his most uncontrolled and savage moment, and so reinforces the impression of Sansjoy as intent on "bloudy vengeaunce."¹⁰⁰

Sansjoy appears to be successful in his role as avenging Aeneas right up to the moment at 1.5.12, when Redcrosse hears Duessa call out "Thine the shield, and I, and all." Waking from his "swowning dreame," he mistakenly assumes that it is he who is being addressed, and casts off a "creeping deadly cold" reminiscent of that suffered by Turnus and Aeneas before him.¹⁰¹ In the next stanza, Redcrosse addresses his opponent in terms that explicitly recall Aeneas's words to the defeated Liger,¹⁰² thus taking over the role of Aeneas from his opponent:

Goe now proud Miscreant,
 Thy selfe thy message doe to german deare,
 Alone he wandring thee too long doth want:
 Goe say, his foe thy shield with his doth beare.

However, just as Redcrosse is about to kill his opponent, Sansjoy is covered by a "darkesome clowd" that saves him. The event is analogous to various passages in classical and Renaissance epics that describe how the gods save their favorites: however, none of the examples adduced by the commentators presents a close verbal parallel to the passage at hand in *The Faerie Queene*. Both Aeneas and Turnus are saved at different times by being concealed by

¹⁰⁰Cf. Kennedy, 1990a: "Intertextually the action echoes Aeneas' anger at the sight of Pallas' belt during his battle with Turnus in *Aeneid* 12, an allusion that both confirms Sansjoy's heroism and displaces Redcrosse's joyless heroism."

¹⁰¹*Aeneid* 12.951: "ast illi solvuntur frigore membra" ("his limbs grew slack and chill").

¹⁰²*Aeneid* 10.600: "morere et fratrem ne desere frater" ("die and do not desert your brother").

protecting clouds. At *Aeneid* 12.52–53 Turnus scornfully refers to the moment in the *Iliad* (5.345) when Aeneas is saved from Diomedes through the intervention of Aphrodite and Apollo, who cover him with a cloud: “His goddess mother will be far away from him, she who covers him by a cloud contrived by a woman and hides herself in unreal shadows.”¹⁰³ In *Aeneid* 10, as William J. Kennedy points out, Turnus is saved in precisely this way by a dark cloud, but the similarity of this passage to the present *Faerie Queene* situation is not as unequivocal as Kennedy claims, or at least not more striking than that of any of the other passages that might be adduced.¹⁰⁴ What matters here is that the cloud is “darksome” and is said by Duessa at 1.5.14.6 to be the work of “th’infernall powers / Couering [him] with cloud of deadly night.” If this statement is to be taken at face value, it is ominous for Redcrosse, who is deprived of his victory and shown to be still involved with Duessa. As Hamilton points out, “since faith is aroused by Fidessa/Duessa, he is unable to kill his enemy.”¹⁰⁵ “[T]h’infernall powers” turn out to be more powerful than the champion of holiness. Redcrosse is compared to Aeneas and his opponent to Turnus, but the passage only derives ironic force from its association with the *Aeneid*: Redcrosse does not really possess Aeneas-like qualities. His humiliation continues in 1.5.15.1–3, where, much like Aeneas at *Aeneid* 12.466–67,¹⁰⁶ he tries in vain to locate his enemy:

Not all so satisfied, with greedy eye
 He sought all round about, his thirsty blade
 To bathe in blood of faithlesse enemy;
 Who all that while lay hid in secreet shade.

Though constantly associated with Aeneas, Redcrosse in this canto falls short of the heroism and *pietas* with which Virgil invests his protagonist. Again, this seems to be in line with the Protestant outlook of Spenser’s poem, in which divine grace offers a more reliable hope of salvation than the strong individual action represented by Aeneas.

6. CONCLUSION

At the outset of this essay it was suggested that the ending of the *Aeneid* be envisaged, as far as the early modern period is concerned, as a powerful

¹⁰³ *Aeneid* 12.52–3: “longe illi dea mater erit, quae nube fugacem / feminea tegit et vanis sese occulat umbris.”

¹⁰⁴ Kennedy, 1990a, 626.

¹⁰⁵ Spenser, 2001, 74.

¹⁰⁶ “solum densa in caligine Turnum / uestigat lustrans, solum in certamina poscit” (“it is only Turnus he is looking for in the thick mist, only him he seeks to challenge”).

intertext and, indeed, as a cultural memory of transnational significance. As such, it must not only be thought to consist of five stanzas of Virgilian text, together making up some 160 individual lines, many of them firmly imprinted on the minds of many of the period's most important poets, critics, and students from early years on. It also subsumes, as a result of a number of intratextual links, a variety of earlier episodes in the *Aeneid*. The effect is to invite us to view Aeneas's final defeat of Turnus as narratologically and morally related to the demise of other characters, notably Dido and Camilla, who represent obstacles to Aeneas's imperial mission. While the intricacies of these intratextual links may or may not have been clear to readers in general, the sum total of the ending *qua* cultural memory must be thought of as a dramatic situation of great complexity, involving questions pertaining to religion and morality, notably issues to do with concepts such as pity and honor. To appreciate the workings of these phenomena we must remember that cultural memory is always open to interrogation and revision. Spenser's appropriations of the ending of the *Aeneid* are likely to have been colored by his views on matters of religious and moral importance — and, of course, by his artistic temperament — but one might also expect them to have been affected by his attempts to reach out to prospective readers, Queen Elizabeth among them — in other words, by his attempts at community- and career-making.

It is easy to see that his recontextualizations of the ending of the *Aeneid* are different in kind. Not surprisingly, in his mock-heroic poem *Muiopotmos* he complies with convention by making a parodic version of Virgil's ending serve as the ending of his own poem. In *The Faerie Queene*, however, he opts for novel solutions, perhaps more commensurate with the size and ambition of his poetic undertaking and certainly designed to express more complex meanings. Far from making use of Virgil's prestigious ending at the end of any of the completed parts of his long poem — as in Ariosto's *Furioso* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, and later in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where it occurs at the very end of book 4¹⁰⁷ — Spenser introduces it at a very early moment in *The Faerie Queene*, repeating it twice in passages that occur in the first half of book 1. This makes for a surprise of considerable proportions: the ending of the most famous and admired poem of his day is imitated, not where we might expect it to be imitated — at the end of a canto or a book — but very soon after *The Faerie Queene's* beginning: at the same time, dissonance is created by the very manner in which the prestigious model is put to new use. If the *Aeneid's* ending is a quintessential version of an epic hero's completion of his

¹⁰⁷Burrow, 1997, 89–90, draws attention to Milton's transformation of the Virgilian analogue; Fowler's 1998 edition of *Paradise Lost* (Milton, 1998, 280) surprisingly does not mention it.

historical task, an imitation of it at this early stage ironically suggests the enormity of the task facing Redcrosse, the protagonist of book 1 who, as Spenser makes abundantly clear, is inadequately prepared for his grand undertaking. Whereas Aeneas completes his mission by defeating and killing Turnus, by contrast, Redcrosse's defeat of Sansfoy is a pathetically inconclusive step on his way to holiness, as his behavior after his nominal victory indicates. In fact, as many critics argue, his defeat of his opponent is not really a victory, as it results in moral degradation.

Another striking aspect of Spenser's innovative emulation of his predecessors' appropriations of the *Aeneid's* ending is his choice to exploit his Virgilian model on repeated occasions and with different results. In book 1 alone he reworks the ending of the *Aeneid* on two other occasions, as Redcrosse faces the two remaining Sans brothers. Each time different aspects of Virgil's text are evoked. Triadic patterns are common in *The Faerie Queene* as a whole and usually carry numerological significance. Here, however, the function is different. Just as Turnus is associated with two other powerful obstacles to Aeneas's imperial mission, Dido and Camilla, the episodes making use of the ending of the *Aeneid* in book 1 of *The Faerie Queene* involve three evil brothers, clearly intended as participants in a theological allegory based on Galatians 5.22–23.

Nor is this all. Spenser's continued preoccupation with the battle between Aeneas and Turnus is apparent from his use of this powerful matrix in later books of *The Faerie Queene*. Though a detailed examination of the different ways in which the ending of the *Aeneid* recurs in later books is beyond the scope of this essay, some indication of its importance and the nature of Spenser's appropriations of it must be made. In book 2 Sir Guyon is implicitly compared to Aeneas on a number of occasions — for example, at 2.2.39–40, where he is presented as playing Aeneas to Medina's Dido — however, these are not related to the ending of the *Aeneid*, while Arthur is clearly associated with a heroic interpretation of Aeneas's fight against Turnus in canto 8. Here Arthur has to face the evil brothers Pyrochles and Cymochles — representing the irascible and concupiscible passions, respectively — whom he dispatches in terms strongly reminiscent of Aeneas defeating Turnus. Though Pyrochles is defeated first, it is actually Cymochles who dies first; the description of his demise at 2.8.45.5–9 replays the account of Sansfoy's death at 1.2.19:

He tombling down on ground,
Breathd out his ghost, which to th'infernall shade,
Fast flying, there eternall torment found,
For all the sinnes, wherewith his lewd life did abound.

Hamilton correctly notes the Christian perspective provided by “eternall torment,” but his characterization of lines 7–9 as “[a] classical motif used, e.g. in the death of Turnus” can be made even more explicit.¹⁰⁸ The entire passage is modeled on the previous description of Sansfoy’s death. The only Virgilian detail missing is an analogue of *indignata* or *complaining*: by contrast, the Christian reference in the earlier passage to “liue amis” is elaborated by the qualification “lewd life.” Pyrochles’ death a few stanzas later is prepared for by another reference to Turnus’s admonishment “use your chance” and is reinforced, as Burrow points out, by its evocation of Argante’s proud defiance of Tancredi in *Gerusalemme liberata* 19.26.¹⁰⁹ In a later episode, also recalling Aeneas’s duel with Turnus, Arthur defeats Maleger, the “cruell Capitaine” of the “raskall routs” (2.9.15) that attack the temperate body. Maleger is identified at 2.11.35–36 as Turnus by his picking up and throwing at Arthur “a great stone” resembling the one that Turnus hurls at Aeneas in *Aeneid* 12.896–98. Next, Maleger himself sustains a terrible blow that nearly kills him: the line “Yet nathemoree forth fled his groaning spright” cannot fail to recall Sansfoy’s and Cymochles’ deaths. However, Maleger is also another type of Antaeus: he regains his strength through contact with “his mother earth,” but in the end he is no match for Arthur.

A similar pattern is found at 3.5.22.1–4, where Timias, Arthur’s trusted squire, defeats a Foster in a way that smacks of Redcrosse and Sansfoy’s encounter:

He tomling downe, with gnashing teeth did bite
 The bitter earth, and bad to lett him in
 Into the baleful house of endlesse night,
 Where wicked ghosts doe waile their former sin.

Once more, the phraseology used — “tombling downe,” “bite the bitter earth,” “the baleful house of endlesse night,” and “wicked ghost doe waile their former sin” — describes the combatants as involved in a duel with clear similarities to that between Redcrosse and Sansfoy (and hence that between Aeneas and Turnus). In later passages, as, for example, at 5.2.18.6–9,

that tumbling on the strand
 It bit the earth for very fell despight,
 And gnashed with his teeth, as if he band
 High God, whose goodnesse he despaired quight,
 Or curst the hand, which did that vengeance on him dight

¹⁰⁸Spenser, 2001, 232.

¹⁰⁹Burrow, 1993, 931–32.

the originally Virgilian matrix seems to blend with, or perhaps rather develop into, new constellations of ideas. While Hamilton's observation that "the curse upon the serpent is that it shall eat dust (Gen. 3.14)" is indeed apt, his comment that the passage is "[m]ore than a classical detail, as it is in Virgil, *Aen.* 11.418" does not send the reader back to the passage's real origin: Spenser's reworking of the ending of the *Aeneid* as Redcrosse's fight with Sansfoy.¹¹⁰ It might be added that the phrase "bit the earth" has another classical analogue as well — Homer uses it, for example, at *Iliad* 2.418.

It is clear that in appropriating the ending of the *Aeneid* Spenser is in dialogue, not only with his model, but with himself. He is also clearly in dialogue with different ways of reading Virgil's prestigious passage. It seems significant that of all the appropriations of the ending of the *Aeneid* in *The Faerie Queene* — and in *Orlando furioso* and *Gerusalemme liberata* — the three in book 1 appear to be the only ones in which the characters finding themselves in the position of Aeneas are not helped by association with Virgil's protagonist. The implicit criticisms of Redcrosse are in fact strengthened by his identification with Aeneas. A possible — perhaps even likely — conclusion is that Spenser sometimes goes against what appears to be the received opinion of his day regarding the nature of Aeneas's *pietas* in killing his opponent.¹¹¹

The idea that Spenser's treatment of the ending of the *Aeneid* in book 1 is consonant with a counterclassical or pessimist reading of Virgil's poem is worth taking seriously. When Redcrosse, abandoning Una, sets out on the journey that will confront him with Sansloy, his behavior is implicitly compared with that of Aeneas abandoning Dido: the reader's sympathies are likely to be with Una (as they are with Dido). If Aeneas's behavior in the *Aeneid* can arguably be excused on the grounds that it is necessitated by divine decree, no such possibility is at hand in *The Faerie Queene*. Una does not distract Redcrosse from his ultimate goal, which is, of course, to marry her: it is her false double whose lewd behavior has fooled Redcrosse into believing that Una is not worthy of his affection. The effect of the reference to Aeneas abandoning Dido is to underpin the poem's criticism (implicit at first and spelled out in 1.2.8.9) of Redcrosse's hasty decision to leave Una, and to cast doubt on Aeneas as a role model.

While Aeneas abandons Dido by divine decree and because his sense of *pietas* is stronger than his passion for Dido, Redcrosse is led astray by "Will . . . and griefe" (1.2.12.4) and by his inability to distinguish Una from

¹¹⁰Spenser, 2001, 518.

¹¹¹The obvious analogue would be the *in bono* and *in malo* interpretations familiar from many branches of Renaissance hermeneutics. For an insightful account of this phenomenon, see Kaske.

her false double. For the next three stanzas, describing his encounter with Sansfoy and Duessa, he may seem less identifiable with Aeneas. In fact, the similarities between Redcrosse–Sansfoy and Aeneas–Turnus emerge only gradually: they are foreshadowed by the simile at 1.2.16 so that the final authentication is not provided until we have had opportunity to gauge — and question — Redcrosse’s heroism and wisdom. It would seem, though, that Redcrosse pulls himself together at the crucial moment in a way that invites further comparison with Aeneas. Whereas the latter finally acts, overcome by a fit of uncontrollable anger, Redcrosse is seized by “wondrous wrath” and “the sleeping spark / Of natiue uertue.” As Hamilton points out, it is this inherent virtue that helped him kill Error at 1.1.24.6.¹¹² Its appearance here is transitory, though: having defeated Sansfoy in a scene reminiscent of Aeneas’s victory over Turnus, Redcrosse immediately begins to pursue Duessa, whose champion he now wishes to be. The conclusion must be that just as Aeneas’s final victory can be seen just as an act of anger and physical prowess, so Redcrosse’s instincts are martial, not moral.

Nor does the second, parodic enactment of the ending point in another direction. Sansloy, who is put in the position of Aeneas, resembles Virgil’s protagonist in his lawlessness as he is intent on exacting revenge of a kind that is not sanctioned by the laws of courtesy. In the third and final version, the roles of Aeneas and Turnus are, as I have observed, assigned in a more fluid manner, indicating that Aeneas and Turnus are not, ultimately, very far apart ethically in the *Aeneid*. After all, while Turnus becomes more humble and appeals to his and Aeneas’s common humanity by asking Aeneas to pardon him or to return his dead body to his father, Aeneas’s response is an outburst of rage.

It seems, then, that Spenser has two ways of looking upon Aeneas and using him as a model in *The Faerie Queene*. Redcrosse’s qualities as a reliable Christian knight are very much in question throughout the early cantos of book 1. He appears in contexts that clearly recall Aeneas and Turnus’s combat, but behaves in a way that clashes violently with prevalent sixteenth-century notions of Aeneas as a role model but that is consonant with a negative or counterclassical understanding of Aeneas and the ending of the *Aeneid*. Arthur (and Timias), on the other hand, defeats his Turnus-like opponents in circumstances that make it abundantly clear that he embodies Spenser’s stated ambition to fashion a gentleman imbued with the virtuous and gentle lore that Virgil had illustrated in the person of Aeneas.

¹¹²Spenser, 2001, 47.

What Spenser is doing, then, in *The Faerie Queene*—given that cultural memory consists in communally preserved memories and narratives that are often subject to individual acts of revision, recontextualization, and manipulation—is to confirm, revise, and expand the meaning and uses of the ending of the *Aeneid*. While his Italian predecessors Ariosto and Tasso had employed it in ways that largely reduplicate the use made of it in the *Aeneid* (though with a striking emphasis on the notion of *onore*), Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* begins by making it serve emphatically innovative and dissonant ends in book 1. In later books we return to a more traditional appropriation as the moral fiber of Arthur, the English hero *par excellence*, is recognized and reinforced by identification with the most revered hero in European literature; at the same time, this is achieved by Spenser's use of a phraseological pattern that comes to us "displaying the constitutive presence of another context," that of the specific Spenserian appropriation of the ending of the *Aeneid* as first patterned in book 1.

It is tempting to speculate on the effect Spenser's innovations had on his first audience. That his deviations from his Virgilian and Italian models with regard to the position of the ending constitute an instance of emulation seems clear. That Virgilian *pietas* and Italian *onore* are transformed into a complex exemplification of the Protestant notion of holiness in book 1 is another striking innovation. Though we know tantalizingly little about the actual reactions of *The Faerie Queene's* first readers, it does not seem far-fetched to imagine that Spenser's appropriations of revered models such as Virgil formed an essential part of the "deeper sence" that he hoped skeptic readers such as Lord Burghley might detect in his poem.¹¹³ If so, they form part of his attempts to create a community of readers, with Queen Elizabeth and her ministers as leading members—a community willing to see poetry as an expression of shared religious, political, and artistic ideas expressed by means of communally preserved memories. At any rate, Spenser's skillful ways of imitating, adapting, and recontextualizing his classical sources reveals an artistic temperament profoundly aware of the historical gap between Virgil's world and his own.

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¹¹³Ibid., 727. The third quatrain of the sonnet reads: "Yet if their deeper sence be inly wayd, / And the dim vele, with which from comune vew / Their fairer parts are hid, aside be layd, / Perhaps not vaine they may appeare to you."

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