Fama and Fiction in Vergil's Aeneid

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Published by The Ohio State University Press

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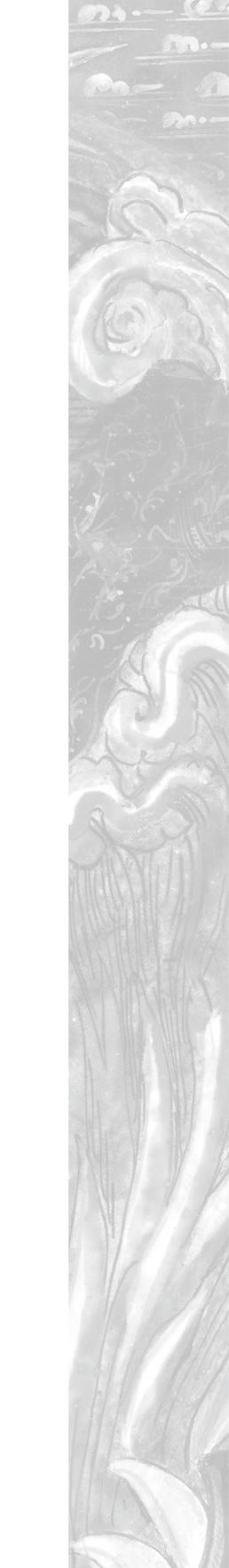
1

Introduction

Both Aeneas and his enemy Turnus are told "Look!" at pivotal moments in the *Aeneid*. A goddess issues each imperative; each drastically alters its recipient's mental state and sets the *Aeneid*'s story on a new trajectory. "Look," his mother Venus instructs Aeneas (*Aen.* 2.604), when she lifts the cloud that normally blunts mortal vision, so that he can see for himself the unrelenting hostility of the gods (*diuum inclementia,* 2.602), who are tearing apart his city.[1] "Look at these!" says the Fury Allecto to Turnus (*Aen.* 7.454), when she throws off her mortal disguise and demands that he look at her Fury's gear in all its contaminating, snaky force.[2]

"Look!" is an injunction familiar to novel readers. We are repeatedly asked to look at the world around us, and to blend that world—as we remember or imagine it—into the narrative's

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1. Hershkowitz 1998, 80–85 analyzes Aeneas' vision of the gods in relation to Turnus' madness—and Turnus' moments of clarity. She argues that Aeneas in 2.624ff. and Turnus in 12.665ff. "view the same fundamental chaos and darkness" (85).

2. For detailed discussion of these commands, see chapters 6.1 and 1.2. In 2.604 Aeneas tells the Carthaginians of Venus' orders: *aspice* is the first of a series of imperatives. In 7.454 Allecto directs Turnus, *respice ad haec,* telling him to "have regard for" the force of her hellish attributes; *bella manu letumque gero* ("wars and death I bear in my hand," 7.455).

particular creations. George Eliot's *Middlemarch* invites us to visualize this blending in the famous "parable" that reflects Rosamund Vincy's egoistic view:

> Your pier-glass or extensive surface of polished steel made to be rubbed by a housemaid, will be minutely and multitudinously scratched in all directions; but place now against it a lighted candle as a centre of illumination, and lo! the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles round that little sun.[3]

Eliot's "lo!" marks out the almost magical power of the narrator to bring such visions to the reader's inner-eye, as well as the power of the candle's viewer to etch with her gaze the concentric circles that turn the flame into a "little sun."

Over and over again mortal characters in the *Aeneid* are faced with unsettling words and strange visions, and are called to look to these for some kind of divine order. Readers too are invited to see a world structured (and thrown into disarray) by the gods' whims and plans, and a world where humans owe the gods not only their obedience but their interpretive skills. Not all divine communications in the *Aeneid* take the form of grammatical imperatives, of course. But those appeals to "look" at a world infused with the power of the gods—and to yield to that terrifying power—spell out explicitly a rhetorical gesture that permeates the entire narrative, giving a special cast to the fictive knowledge offered by the poem.

Does this rhetorical stance belong uniquely to epic, or is it shared by genres that do not summon the full panoply of divine violence to authorize the fictive knowledge they offer? A flippant version of my answer would be simply, "Yes." Or, to put it less frivolously: the very fact that it is so tempting to frame the question disjunctively points to two distinct advantages of analyzing the *Aeneid*'s rhetoric of fiction. We may sensitize ourselves to some of the most salient characteristics of the poem's fictive knowledge, *and* to the ways this knowledge overlaps with that of other genres.

"Fictive knowledge" refers to what imaginative texts and artifacts know, or invite their readers to imagine knowing. It is a pointedly inclusive term, which takes in forms of knowledge not always associated with fiction, like "historical" and "cultural" knowledge. The term's inclusiveness borders on paradox: can one "know" something that is made up? It leaves open the fertile question of what it means to assign the status of "knowledge" to the communications of epic *fama*.[4]

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3. Eliot 1994, 264.

4. Figuratively describing an epic as "knowing" something is also a way of acknowledging how

The word "fictive" itself is valuably ambiguous. The adjective in English maintains the breadth that suits its derivation from the Latin verb *fingere*: "shape," "form," "contrive," "imagine," "simulate," "make up."[5] It is less burdened with generic connotations than "fictional." The wide-ranging possibilities of what it means to be "fictive" are not—or not only—a historical and linguistic accident. These ambiguities evoke the more fundamental problems involved in setting conceptual, historical, or generic boundaries to the sphere of fiction.

The expression "fictive knowledge," in its instability and ambiguity, matches the epic's own central term in Latin for the poem's capacity to forge links between its story world and its readers' perceptions of their own world. *Fama* comprises both the memories made and transmitted by the epic (fame, renown, tradition) and the news (sometimes misleading, sometimes accurate) circulated within the story. *Fama* embraces the informative, imaginative, and deceptive possibilities of communication.

The poem repeatedly confronts both readers and characters with questions about how far *fama*'s unstable blend of imagination, information, and commemoration conveys divine knowledge and divine will. The sheer power of the gods often gives manifestations of their imaginative work the force of a uniquely forceful command. Yet even divine commands depend on human understanding for their realization. The gods exploit the communicative freedom of metaphor as a way of moving between the known and unknown.

Aristotle at different points in the *Rhetoric* identifies the moment of recognition of "this" as "that" as key to the pleasures of both metaphor and *mimesis*. The pleasure in *mimesis* is not just pleasure in the object represented: "but a deduction takes place that 'this is that,' so that some perception comes about."[6] Metaphor—unlike simile—provides the particular pleasure of connecting "this" with "that" which Aristotle ascribes to *mimesis*: "The simile, as was mentioned earlier, is a metaphor differing in the way it's

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texts bring together readers, authors, and varied linguistic and cultural expectations. Others have used the expression "fictive knowledge" rather differently, setting "fictive" against (e.g.) "historical" knowledge as a way to demarcate the work of fiction. My more inclusive use, by contrast, emphasizes the difficulty of drawing lines between different categories of knowledge.

5. The *OLD* entry for the Latin verb *fingo* effectively conveys this semantic flexibility. Hamburger 1973/1993 summarizes lucidly some of the ambiguities of the term "fictive"; they derive partly from the wide semantic range of *fingere*; in French and German "a second adjective, *fictif* (*fiktiv*) was formed (accompanying *feint*, *fingiert*) to denote the positive meaning of *fingere*, and this adjectival form has become more practicable in the theory of fine art than the substantive 'fiction' itself" (56). Hamburger advocates a restrictive literary sphere for the "fictive," but in my inquiry the value of these ambiguities lies precisely in the way they point to the artificiality of any such prescriptive attempt to limit the word's meaning.

6. *Rhetoric* 1371a–1371b: *alla sullogismos estin hoti touto ekeino, hôste manthanein ti sumbainei.*

stated. Therefore it's less enjoyable, because it's longer. And it does not say that this is that; so one's consciousness does not explore this" (*kai ou legei hôs touto ekeino: oukoun oude zêtei touto hê psychê*).[7] Latin equivalents of this vividly reductive expression pepper the *Aeneid* at decisive moments of discovery and recollection.[8] I explore in chapter 4, for example, Aeneas' cry of relief when he finds out that he and his followers have fulfilled a terrifying prediction that they would eat tables, "*This* was *that* hunger" (*haec erat illa fames,* 7.128). But though the direct echoes of Aristotle's pronouns are striking, the pronouns themselves interest me less than the way they pinpoint the extraordinary potency of a perceptual process that we experience routinely. Through this process, recognition becomes transformative—and a transformative perception is experienced as a moment of recognition.

Analyzing the transformative work of metaphor and recognition in the poem's narrative illuminates how the *Aeneid* merges the imagined force of divine power with its own poetic authority. How far are we as readers called upon to share the cognitive changes experienced by the epic's characters? Undergoing imaginatively the combination of violence and verbal power wielded by the poem's gods may illuminate the operations of rhetoric in human society, but this imaginative experience may also be exploited, more troublingly, as a way of mystifying both the material and rhetorical foundations of human power.

Divine communications are not only enacted through the recognition of "this" as "that." They also make full use of the anomalies that people sense when expected pairings of "this" and "that" are ruptured or mismatched. Mary Douglas' work on ritual pollution brings out the full importance of these conceptual ruptures. She has shown the intricacy with which metaphor and materiality are bound together so that the meanings of dirt and cleanliness take substance differently for different individuals and societies. What many cultures (and individuals) share is the impulse to clean things up and put them in order when faced with anomaly and category confusion.

In Roman culture, *pietas* calls for this kind of purification. *Pietas* in the *Aeneid* manifests itself above all through remembrance. The poem makes *pietas* central as the nexus of values that both drive its story and underpin

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7. *Rhetoric* 1410b.

8. Acknowledging the potency of *touto ekeino* need not entail full commitment to an Aristotelian view of representation. Such a commitment would in any case involve a necessarily selective and provisional adaptation of Aristotle's diffuse discussions of *mimesis*. Halliwell 1987, 71–73 and 2002, 152 succinctly express some of the complexity with which the term operates even in Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* (let alone its earlier uses in Plato and subsequent history in Western philosophy and literary theory—the bibliography is far too extensive even to begin summarizing here).

the workings of memory and imagination in poetic *fama*. The obligations of *pietas* connect the devoted and unceasing remembrance of fellow-mortals (one of *fama*'s most important functions) with obedience to divine commands (necessary for the enactment of fate).

The impossible demands of *pietas* set in motion many of the crises that call for epic storytelling and yield epic *fama*. Remembering with too much intensity (as Aeneas remembers Pallas in Books 10–12, for example) risks turning attention away from other responsibilities.[9] Remembering the expectations of the gods, or of one group of humans, may mean forgetting what is owed to others. Aeneas in Book 4 partly replicates Theseus' heedlessness in Catullus 64, for instance, as he first puts on one side the (divinely willed) expectations of his son and his followers. Later, when Mercury has goaded the Trojan leader into *pietas* towards his dependants, Aeneas seems—to Dido at least—to put out of mind what he owes her. Dido's curse in *Aeneid* 4 in turn inverts Ariadne's prayer (Cat. 64.188–201 and 246–48): instead of inducing Aeneas to forget his obligations to his father, as Theseus forgets his, Dido wills that she herself should be remembered by Aeneas and by future generations in their suffering.

But the imaginative role of *pietas* pervades the poem well beyond these moments of extremity. Kenneth Burke, in *Permanence and Change,* uses his gift for aphorism to renew inquiry into a *pietas*-like concept of "piety" as a "system-builder," defining it as "*the sense of what properly goes with what.*"[10] Burke describes a framework for looking at piety in terms of a symbolic order based on analogical thought, "a sense of the appropriate," which establishes moral and material cleanliness through a series of related interpretive processes, making piety "a response which extends through all the texture of our lives."[11]

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9. Though Dido and Aeneas in Book 4 dispute the exact nature of the ties between them, *pietas* clearly creates some obligations for Aeneas towards Dido and Carthage, as well as towards his own people and Troy's posterity. Generations of disagreement over the end of the poem, too, and over the outbreak of uncontrollable emotion that stirs Aeneas to kill the suppliant Turnus, have indicated that *pietas* would both endorse the revenge killing (motivating the *furiae* and *ira* that cause it) and condemn its pitiless perversion of sacrificial ritual. For a highly influential analysis of Augustan *pietas* and revenge, see Quint 1993, 76–79. Putnam 2011, 20–30 carefully explores "the *pietas* of vengeance" (20), observing how "Virgil poises us, and his hero, between two modes of *pietas* whose mutual incompatibility spills over into the contradictory ways in which the poet has us see Aeneas" (20).

10. Burke 1934/1984, 74 (italics in original). I owe to Garrison 1992, 19–20 my awareness of the centrality of this *pietas*-like "piety" in Burke's *Permanence and Change.*

11. Burke 1934/1984, 75. Burke fills out this sketch of "piety" and cleanliness: "If there is an altar, it is pious of a man to perform some ritual act whereby he may approach the altar with clean hands. A kind of symbolic cleanliness goes with altars, a technique of symbolic cleansing goes with cleanliness, a preparation or initiation goes with the technique of cleansing, the need of cleansing was based upon some feeling of taboo—and so on, until pious linkages may have brought all the details

So the symbolic systems at play in the *Aeneid*'s narrative are thoroughly entwined with the symbolic systems that organize—and occasionally undermine—attempts to maintain *pietas* through remembrance and through mourning. *Pietas* aspires to orderliness, urging "this" to be recognized as "that." But the pursuit of this aspiration also heightens awareness of material dirt and conceptual anomaly.[12] By calling its adherents to attend closely to aspects of existence that threaten an abstract hope of order, *pietas* acknowledges and sometimes even amplifies disorder and transgression.

In the *Aeneid*'s cosmological and ethical terminology, it may be tempting to align *fama* with disorder, and see fate as expressing or maintaining order. *Fama* and *fatum* are both linked with the verb *fari,* "to speak": *fatum* is its past participle, as many scholars, ancient and modern, have remarked. For Varro in his study of the Latin language the Parcae (Romanized versions of the Greek *Moirai,* the goddesses who spin out and cut off a person's life) produce *fatum* by speaking (*fando*).[13] The *Aeneid,* however, neither denies nor asserts—except indirectly through verbal play—that the fates (*fata*) amount to the things that Jupiter has spoken. Jupiter is portrayed both as the "author" standing behind the story and as one of the characters who invokes an authorless authority in the impersonal form of *fata.*

These *fata* are sometimes fixed and immutable, but are often open to reinterpretation and revision.[14] Jupiter and his spokespeople present these utterances both as laws ordering the structures of the cosmos and as the stories which gods and mortals enact in their lives and deaths. Yet the poem makes fully apparent the rhetorical foundations of such an "order" and its potential instability.

Fas ("right," "divinely sanctioned") and its opposite *nefas* ("wrong," "abomination," "sacrilege") are also associated with the verb *fari.* Pietas requires careful appraisal of how to adhere to what is *fas* and avoid *nefas.* It is tempting to class *fas* with *fata* as a form of order that is brought into

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of the day into coordination, relating them integrally with one another by a complex interpretative framework." Burke acknowledges some of the social, ethical, and rhetorical implications of this view, observing that "piety is a schema of orientation, since it involves the putting together of experience. The orientation may be right or wrong; it can guide or misguide" (76).

12. Separating "material" dirt from "conceptual" anomaly creates a problematic distinction that is necessarily provisional: for further discussion, see chapter 3, note 4.

13. Varro, *De ling. lat.* 6.7. See especially Commager 1981. This investigation is further pursued by Lyne 1987, 72–81; Feeney 1991, 139–40; Fowler, 1996, 43; Kennedy 1997, 145–54 at 146–50. Bettini, in his 2008 and 2006 articles, offers a rich account of the relationship between *fari, fama,* and *fata*, as well as examining differences between *fama* and *rumor*.

14. The elements of Jupiter's declared (or revealed) *fata* that are presented as most consistently immutable are, logically enough, those parts of Rome's past that are confidently known (such as Rome's Mediterranean conquests in the third and second centuries B.C.E.).

being by Jupiter's speech, or by what he regards as speakable. But as with *fata* and *fama,* the fact that *fas* is a noun rather than a verb separates the speaker from the speech.[15]

Through these verbal webs the *Aeneid* weaves its ethico-religious vocabulary together with the language of human imagination and remembrance. Analyzing the fictive knowledge generated by the epic requires us to examine the network of connections between rhetoric, memory, perception, and divine order—as well as divine disorder. Jupiter is imagined as appropriating the energy of *fama*—energy fueled by anomaly, resistance, and even madness—without altogether harnessing it.

1.1 The seams of fiction in epic and novel

The pier-glass parable in *Middlemarch* is quoted so often that its command to see Rosamund Vincy's egoism in the scratches reflected round a flame verges on cliché for students of the traditional English novel. Its exuberant quotability is due partly to the way the passage forms a tangible seam in the fabric of fiction.[16] Here it is once more, in full:

> An eminent philosopher among my friends, who can dignify even your ugly furniture by lifting it into the serene light of science, has shown me this pregnant little fact. Your pier-glass or extensive surface of polished steel made to be rubbed by a housemaid, will be minutely and multitudinously scratched in all directions; but place now against it a lighted candle as a centre of illumination, and lo! the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles round that little sun. It is demonstrable that the scratches are going everywhere impartially, and it is only your candle which produces the flattering illusion of a concentric arrangement, its light falling with an exclusive optical selection. These things are a parable. The scratches are events, and the candle is the egoism of any person now absent—of Miss Vincy, for example.[17]

There are passages in many or most fictional narratives where a situation within a particular story world is attached perceptibly to a fabric woven from

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15. But the gender of the nouns makes a difference: *fata* is neuter plural, *fas* neuter singular, while the feminine singular noun *fama* invites the kind of personification carried out by Vergil in *Aeneid* 4.

16. But see Price 2000 for a subtle analysis of how historical contingencies help decide what counts as quotable.

17. Eliot 1994, 264.

readers' existing knowledge and beliefs. Similes and generalizations typically form seams like this. They not only steer readers to a world outside that of the narrative and invite us to join our experience of that external world with the story world imagined in a given text.[18] Many kinds of figuration may steer us towards some version of this interpretive process. Similes and generalizations, however, also make a point of saying—either more or less overtly—that this is what they are doing.

The imaginative and perceptual interaction invoked by the pier-glass parable works in both directions to generate fictive knowledge. The analogy blends visions of Rosamund Vincy's self-regard as a "little sun" into its visions of candle light reflected in illusorily concentric circles. Many details of Rosamund Vincy's characterization in *Middlemarch* and the whole story of her marriage to Lydgate may become fused with the way we perceive the egoism "of any person now absent," just as our prior experience (not excluding our imaginative experience) informs the ways we respond to these characters and events in the novel.

How fully such fusions entwine themselves in our memories, and how they change us, will vary (of course) among individual readers, and depend on the particular circumstances of an encounter with a story or story fragment. Attention may flicker in and out of a story world while reading, so quickly and repeatedly that the transitions are barely conscious. It is normal for experienced readers to be fascinated to the point of full mental "lift-off" by a text, while at the same time observing analytically the technical devices that carry one away (or that threaten to impede this movement away from the here and now). Sometimes (perhaps distracted by some external situation, or unsatisfied aesthetically) we may find ourselves engrossed in a story world only after many pages of reading, listening, or viewing—or not at all. On the other hand, rereading a familiar text often shortens the journey. Sometimes even the most fleeting recollections may take us to a much-loved

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18. "Story world" approximates to Genette's *diégèse*, defined as a "*universe* rather than a train of events" (so, not the story or *histoire* in Genette's sense), based on the 1948 work of Souriau ("La structure de l'univers filmique et le vocabulaire de la filmologie"), not on Greek *diegesis* as contrasted with *mimesis* (Genette 1988, 17). "Story world" is valuable for its convenience as a way of talking about discursive relationships: it offers a provisional way of distinguishing the worlds that readers enter through texts (verbal, visual, musical) from a world we encounter directly through the senses (though those sensory experiences coalesce cognitively with perceptions based in story worlds). I do not wish to suggest by the term an ontologically discrete universe in which fictions would be self-contained. Keen 2003, 174 gives a clear account of why the English term may be preferable to the terms *diégèse* or *diegesis*. Laird 1993 analyzes Apuleius in terms of "story worlds" to consider how ancient narratives ask for a kind of belief that does not answer to conventional modern distinctions between fiction and "factual" narratives. "Story worlds" can be brought into being by many forms of communication, so the term avoids presuppositions about what "fiction" is or what fictions do.

story world. And these effects are not limited to verbal and visual means of building story worlds: hearing or recollecting a few bars of familiar music may temporarily transport one to the imaginative world of an opera, song, oratorio, or ballet.[19] Richard Gerrig (1993) uses the familiar metaphor of being "transported" into what he calls a "narrative world" to explore some of the variables involved in these processes. Partly through empirical research, he clarifies phenomenologically certain experiences that seem shared by many different kinds of imaginative encounters.

Most importantly, Gerrig explores how and why, after being transported, readers return "somewhat changed by the journey."[20] Gerrig states his aim as being "to make evident exactly how pervasive the experience of narrative worlds can be." But despite his term "narrative world," we do not need fully elaborated narratives to take us on these mental journeys.[21] As Gerrig observes, "It is a rare conversation among adults that does not depart from the here and now."[22]

This pervasiveness is one of the reasons I welcome the ambiguity of "fictive knowledge" as a term. It expresses the very great difficulty (perhaps the impossibility) of keeping apart, as ontologically distinct, the specifically fictional elements of what we learn from any text. Sometimes we separate the particulars of a story world from our vision of reality. We might say, for instance, that the statement "Dorothea Brooke planned model cottages for Sir James Chettam to build" is true only within the story world of *Middlemarch*. By contrast, we could test (outside the story world) the truth of the assertion that if one places in front of a randomly scratched surface "a lighted candle as a centre of illumination [. . .], the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles" round the light. But given the ease of movement between those worlds, the imagined particulars

19. These are just some obvious examples; there are many ways of approaching the question of what kinds of story world (if any) are offered by musical forms that are not explicitly tied to verbal and visual means of storytelling, or whose ties are more allusive and abstract (e.g. programmatically titled tone poems or jazz variations/meditations on familiar songs). Equally interesting problems arise from memories stirred by taste and smell.

20. Gerrig 1993, 16–17. Gerrig rejects "'toggle' theories of fiction," as he calls them, "which have suggested that readers perform some mental act [of switching a toggle] called 'the willing suspension of disbelief' that eviscerates the effects of fiction" (17). He argues that "information presented in fictions affects real-world judgments because it is initially accepted as true alongside all other types of information." Subsequently, Gerrig suggests, "even when readers actively try to discredit fictional information, they may have called to mind other beliefs that will persevere after the fiction itself has been unaccepted" (237). See further Gerrig, 201–41.

21. The term "narrative" in Gerrig's analysis is perhaps a distraction. Gerrig describes himself as using the term "quite promiscuously" to include representational artworks, television programs, etc., because it is "neutral with respect to the issue of fictionality" (1993, 7).

22. Gerrig 1993, 7.

of Dorothea's life (her cottage planning, for example) may take a full role in the network of beliefs, memories and perceptions that constitute, in some important sense, what we know.

The pier-glass passage is unusual for the explicitness with which it lays out the interaction between different levels of storytelling: "These things are a parable," Eliot's narrator tells us. The text pointedly builds the functioning of this parable into its layering of visual and imaginative perceptions. The "serene light of science," which shows us the illusion, is implicitly likened to the candle, just as the candle reflected in the scratched glass is explicitly likened to Miss Vincy's egoism.

The seams of fiction are important precisely because often it is not so easy to feel or see them. For the most part, narratives fully interweave the two cloths, or join them together so smoothly that readers find the seams only when consciously searching for them. This apparent seamlessness is one reason why it is so hard to understand just what readers do with fictions—how fictive knowledge interacts with knowledge in its various other guises. How do we consciously and unconsciously take up invitations to bring the story worlds of fiction into a world we see as primarily real rather than primarily fictive?

Generalizations and similes are by no means the only places where readers may find such invitations. Comparable problems surround depictions of particular places and people that readers are likely to know in another sphere, either from personal experience or through other forms of representation.[23] Pierre Bezukhov and Prince Andrei in *War and Peace* seem to most readers to have a different fictive status from that of Napoleon and Kutuzov. Beyond the difference in names, does the kind of fictive knowledge we accrue about "Milton" in Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* differ sharply from the fictive knowledge of "Manchester" offered us by *Mary Barton?*

Generalizing assertions within a fictional narrative instantiate in miniature broader problems about how imagined particulars relate to potentially familiar generalities.[24] These assertions also highlight uncertainties about

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23. Furst 1995, for instance, explores related questions about people, places, and problems of reference in realist fiction.

24. Gallagher 2005 analyzes the relationship between the imagined particular and the referential generality, situating this in the development of fictionality in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English novels. She shows through her reading of *Middlemarch* just how much subtlety there is to be found in these mechanisms for establishing a rhetoric of fiction. For a very different kind of inquiry into "fictive discourse," and a distinction between "non mimetic, theoretical [. . .] judgments" and "the logical singularity of mimetic sentences," see Martínez-Bonati 1981, 24. Walsh 2007, 30 rejects a notion of fictional "relevance" that depends on wholesale analogical thinking, but sensitivity to analogy sits well with Walsh's suggestion that relevance theory can help establish "a view of fiction in which

where readers are to envisage them as originating—in an implied authorial judgment of reality; in the viewpoints of particular characters within the story world; or in some common store of (unspecified) collective knowledge, a modern equivalent, perhaps, to Roman *fama?*

Often the narrative context itself emphasizes such uncertainties. Dickens' narrator in *Our Mutual Friend,* for instance, invites readers to move swiftly in and out of a specifically imagined story world. The recurrent invitations in one short passage raise the question of where these generalizing judgments originate:

> When the spring evenings are too long and light to shut out, and such weather is rife, the city which Mr. Podsnap so explanatorily called London, Londres, London, is at its worst. Such a black shrill city, combining the qualities of a smoky house and a scolding wife; such a gritty city; such a hopeless city, with no rent in the leaden canopy of its sky; such a belea- guered city, invested by the great Marsh Forces of Essex and Kent. So the two old schoolfellows felt it to be, as, their dinner done, they turned towards the fire to smoke.[25]

The present tense of the first two clauses seems to take us away from the specifics imagined by *Our Mutual Friend* and towards a general claim about overlong, light evenings. We are then steered back into the fully individu- alized story world by the naming of London in reference to a scene in the previous chapter of the novel ("the city which Mr Podsnap so explanatorily called London, Londres, London"). In the next sentence, with its vividly figurative description of how the weather, sights, sounds, and emotional experience of the city interact, the narrative seems at first to take us back towards a generalizing voice. This voice might belong either to the author or to some collective perception of how the city presents itself on these spring evenings. But the vaguely misogynist ears that hear the "shrill city" as a "scolding wife," the pessimism provoked by the unbroken "leaden canopy" of sky, and the dread of the nearby marshes as hostile military forces, are quickly attributed to the particular "old schoolfellows," Mortimer Light- wood and Eugene Wrayburn.

Perhaps even more exuberantly quotable (and even more frequently quoted) than *Middlemarch*'s pier-glass parable, is the opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice,* with its succinct yet multilayered, parodic generaliza-

fictionality is not a frame separating fictive discourse from ordinary or 'serious' communication, but a contextual assumption."

25. Dickens 1997, 147–48.

tion: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."[26] On one level, the marriage plot of the novel as a whole eventually reasserts this view. But the anonymous collective judgment (remarkably *fama*-like) that proffers this generalizing "truth" is swiftly individualized in the opening pages of the novel.[27] The very next sentence locates this judgment in the minds of "the surrounding families" in the neighborhood of "such a man." In the following sentence, we are with one particular family, the Bennetts, beginning to hear the gossip about a "young man of large fortune," soon afterwards named as Bingley, who has taken Netherfield Park.

In some respects, the *fama* of an epic like the *Aeneid* appears to offer a kind of fictive knowledge quite distinct from that of the traditional English novel. Instead of using generalizing schemas (for example) to invite readers to attend to the parallels between imagined individuals and types who may be instantiated in reality, epics establish communal memories, which carry the cultural authority of myth. They do this partly by refusing to distinguish between worlds new-born from story and knowledge received through the inheritance of tradition.

But both the classical epic and the more recent traditional novel typically claim a privileged relationship with truth and reality. In asserting this privilege, they share a reliance on eluding any attempt to distinguish decisively which elements of the narrative point specifically towards a newly created story world, and which take us to a world (or worlds) outside the text.[28]

Various traditional European novels of course pointedly intervene in the epistemological, historical, and ontological questions raised by conventions of genre and by a notional opposition between epic and (realist) novel. *Middlemarch*'s "Prelude," for instance, merges genre, plot, and character in the notion of an epic life (Saint Theresa "found her epos in the reform of a religious order"), which it sets against the lives of the "many Theresas" whose formless struggles have not found a narrative shape: "perhaps only a life of mistakes [. . .]; perhaps a tragic failure which found no sacred

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26. Austen 1990, 1.

27. Gordon 1996, 60 discusses this opening line as an example of the "illusion of a common understanding" which enables the "strategic decentering of narrative authority in the production of gossip"; Gordon argues, "Gossip is a kind of mass epic with its own storytellers in Jane Austen, but one which is invariably threatening to other kinds of stories being narrated."

28. They are not alone in this: several other literary forms make a similar claim (classical tragedy and Pindaric lyric offer two obvious examples), not to mention visual art. Plato's dialogues do this in a perhaps still more provocative way, incorporating the problems of their own fictive/commemorative status into their epistemological inquiries.

poet and sank unwept into oblivion."[29] *Middlemarch* sets in contrast with epic-style individual notoriety the novelistic potential for shedding light on generalities.

The pier-glass simile begins a chapter whose epigraph rejects divine themes: "Let the high Muse chant loves Olympian: / We are but mortals, and must sing of man."[30] But this overt rejection of sacred epic quotes the opening lines of the *Odyssey, Aeneid,* and *Paradise Lost,* reminding us that these epics too are as interested in the generality of manhood—perhaps even humanity—as they are in the singularity and godlikeness of an Odysseus, an Aeneas, or an Adam. Conversely, in both preface and epigraph, *Middlemarch* meditates on fiction's ability to create myth-like memories of individuals and their stories—though Eliot makes impermeable the boundary between human and mortal that both epic hero and epic poet typically treat as porous.[31] Eliot's memories would keep "man" mortal and earthbound, rather than lifting him to the stars or to Olympus.

As D. A. Miller has emphasized, gossip helps *Middlemarch* mark out what counts as worthy to be remembered—or created—in narrative.[32] The novel examines how a person's *fama* (or the English equivalent) can define an entire existence. Generalizing outward from Bulstrode, the narrator asks, "Who can know how much of his most inward life is made up of the thoughts he believes other men to have about him, until that fabric of opinion is threatened with ruin?" (Eliot 1994, 688). In Miller's analysis, talk in the community works normatively. Miller argues that "[the distribution of the narratable] marks the sites where an ideology feels itself in danger and has already begun to counterattack. Characters who are felt to threaten the ideology of social routine enter immediately into the network

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29. Eliot 1994, 3.

30. Eliot 1994, 264. Price 2000, 110–14 analyzes the sanctification of Eliot's secular work. After showing how critics regularly redescribed Eliot's novels in terms of other genres, Price notes how "by the end of the nineteenth century the tokenism which singled out a few novels by making them poems or tragedies or sermons *manqués* had become a defining feature of the genre itself" (111). Along with Price and with Lanser 1992, Allison 2009 examines maxims and generalizations, but Allison stresses the way these remain embedded in the narrative, so as to bring abstract thought to bear on the particularities that make up Eliot's fiction.

31. Christopher van den Berg has helped me better appreciate how this works; as he put it in an email conversation with me, it is "a brilliantly arch use of epic's own subject matter (*andra/uirum*) to reject epic itself."

32. Gallagher 1994 and 2006 give scandal a pivotal role in the whole development of novelistic fictionality. Related readings of gossip in *Middlemarch* may be found in Miller 1981, 110–29; Spacks 1985, 195–202; Gordon 1996, 237–94. Schantz 2008 also discusses the topic. Vermeule 2010 presents the relationship between gossip and fiction from a rather different perspective, building on work in evolutionary cognitive psychology (such as Dunbar 1996) to suggest that even fictive gossip answers an intrinsic human need that explains why "we care about literary characters."

of chatter and gossipy observation that promotes their eccentricities to a state of story-worthiness."[33] *Middlemarch* analyzes and at times condemns the imaginative limitations of the community that hedge in the burning passion of a Dorothea or a Lydgate, but the novel uses this chatter to drive its own narrative. It imagines lives as story-worthy just when they enter the intersection between the impassioned excess that generates talk and the conventions that redirect or utterly quench "ardour."

The protean versatility of Vergilian *fama* has something in common, then, with the rhetorics of fiction found in many realist novels. But generic categories themselves possess just such slippery protean characteristics— metamorphosing before our eyes. Peter Brooks has emphasized the pervasiveness of the ethical and aesthetic extremes of the "melodramatic imagination" within the realist discourses of Balzac, Dickens, and Henry James. Auerbach presented such extremes as fundamental to Balzac's "atmospheric realism."[34] Margaret Cohen and Sharon Marcus in turn note the problems with grouping together British and French "realism."[35]

"Traditional" novel conveys better than "realist" the sense of some shared characteristics of nineteenth-century western fiction against which modernist and postmodernist novelists have conceived their work. On the other hand, "traditional" is a problematic term for a genre that throughout its long history has so assiduously invented its own new traditions. Then there are the frustrations provoked by naive Eurocentric genealogies that leave aside other traditions of narrative fiction, and Anglocentric genealogies that exclude or ignore ancient prose fiction, along with many medieval and early modern romances.

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33. Miller 1981, 113. Talk in *Middlemarch* performs an ideological function very like the one assigned to gossip in ancient legal oratory, as Hunter has noted in her reading of fourth-century Athenian legal speeches. See Hunter 1994, especially chap. 4, on gossip as a means by which communities exercise social control and enforce their morality. Kuehn 2003 provides a careful account of *fama*'s legal operation in Renaissance Florence, with a subtly different perspective on legal *fama* from Wickham 2003 in the same volume.

34. Brooks explores the intermingling of sacred and secular spheres of imagination in canonical nineteenth-century novels by Dickens, Balzac, and others: "within an apparent context of 'realism' and the ordinary," Brooks observes, "they seemed in fact to be staging a heightened and hyperbolic drama, making reference to pure and polar concepts of darkness and light, salvation and damnation" (1976/1995, xiii). On this reading, the ethical disorderliness of the everyday is coerced into a more orderly set of ethical polarities; simultaneously, the orderliness that may appear in perceived "normality" is disrupted by the hyperbolic mode of melodrama. Here is Auerbach (1953, 416) on Balzac and the Pension Vauquer in *Le Père Goriot*: "the things and the persons composing a milieu often acquire for him a sort of second significance which, though different from that which reason can comprehend, is far more essential—a significance which can best be defined by the adjective demonic. In the dining room, [. . .] 'misfortune oozes, speculation cowers.' In this trivial everyday scene allegorical witches lie hidden [. . .]." White 1999, 92–93 looks at this section of *Mimesis* (Auerbach, 413–17).

35. Cohen 1999; Marcus 2002.

The vocabulary of "imagination," too, raises potential problems. The English terms "imagine" and "imagination" are central to my questions about the narrative dynamics of the *Aeneid,* but I do not examine the fraught history of this terminology and its relationship with ancient theoretical vocabulary.[36] So in this investigation I use all generic and generalizing vocabulary—terms such as "epic" (as noun or adjective), "novelistic," "traditional novel," or "realist novel"—provisionally and a bit tentatively. (They are themselves fictions of a sort, though certainly not the same sort as *Don Quixote* or *Great Expectations.*)

Categorizing or subcategorizing almost always means provisionally overstating how far any set can be usefully grouped together, and how far any grouping differs from other categories that are marked out with other labels.[37] This holds true also at the broadest level: categories like "narrative" or "not-narrative," "fiction" or "not-fiction"—nonfiction being something a bit different—readily break down.[38] In discussions of relatively recent novelistic traditions, there appears some frustration at how some postmodern theorists have "hijacked" (as Catherine Gallagher puts it) the term fiction.[39] Gallagher argues that "the novel is not just one kind of fictional narrative among others; it is the kind in which and through which fictionality became manifest, explicit, widely understood, and accepted."[40] But giving careful

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36. See, for example, Webb 2009.

37. Ryan 2007, 33 points out that attempts to define terms are useful for clarifying the questions one is asking; but as she says, there is no point in trying to police terminology, though attempting a definition can expose the "genealogy of the metaphorical uses" that "inflate" the term (22–23).

38. The language of fictionality and imagination poses some of the same problems as the language of sexuality, where many misunderstandings have muddied debates over the value of restricting words such as "heterosexual" and "homosexual" to the specific recent cultures in which these terms emerged as categories. It is important to avoid ahistorical accounts that obliterate differences between the questions that take on most urgency in different cultures and groups at different times. But it would be a pity to use linguistic difference to define conceptual continuities out of existence altogether. See, e.g., Halperin 2002, which clarifies a middle ground in these issues for the history of sexuality, reacting to the reception of Halperin 1990. Sedgwick 1990, 44–48 articulates a nuanced position on vocabulary and historicity.

39. Gallagher 2006, 336. Cohn 1999, 1–2 evinces similar frustration, arguing that when people apply the term "fiction" to anything other than a few specific nonreferential narrative genres (such as novel, novella, and short story) they are merely exploiting a homonymy. There are many interesting questions to be asked (though not by this book) about the overlap between genres that show what one might call "strong fictionality" and genres like oratory or historiography (see, for example, Woodman 1988; Moles 1993; O'Gorman 1999; Haynes 2003). See also Ricoeur 1984, who suggests that equating "narrative configuration" with "fiction" is justifiable, "inasmuch as the configuring act is an operation of the productive imagination"; but Ricoeur nevertheless reserves "the term 'fiction' for those literary creations that do not have historical narrative's ambition to constitute a true narrative" (3). To what extent the *Aeneid* has the ambition "to constitute a true narrative" in this sense remains endlessly debatable.

40. Gallagher 2006, 337.

attention to the particularities of this novelistic fictionality (perhaps exemplary in our era) need not mean excluding other genres from the category "fiction."[41]

Acknowledging a spectrum of fictionality may help. Positions on the spectrum may reflect the overlap between the story world of a text and the world viewed as "reality" by its readers. The extent of the overlap depends on the appraisals of reality made by different cultures and by individual readers, and the expectations that prevail among readers for particular texts and genres at the time of writing—as far as we understand those expectations today, at least.[42] Many ancient and medieval romances, for instance, might be envisaged somewhere near the far end of fictionality (the most emphatically fictive point). Most modern academic historiography and scientific writing, on the other hand, would place itself close to the other extreme, presenting story worlds that overlap as closely as possible with readers' views of reality. At various points in the middle we might put nineteenth- and twentieth-century realist novels, classical and early modern epics, lyric, satire, didactic, various examples of ancient historiography, oratory, and so on.

Both epic and novel are defined as genres partly by their resistance to categorization. In his famous essay "Epic and Novel," Bakhtin shows less concern with the ways epic resists categorization, but puts vividly the case of the novel:

> the novel is a multi-layered genre (although there also exist magnificent single-layered novels); the novel is a precisely plotted and dynamic genre (although there also exist novels that push to its literary limits the art of pure description); the novel is a complicated genre (though novels are mass produced as pure and frivolous entertainment like no other genre); the novel is a love story (although the greatest examples of the European novel are utterly devoid of the love element); the novel is a prose genre (although there exist excellent novels in verse). One could of course mention a large

41. See Morgan 1993 for a convincing argument that certain kinds of narrative (ancient Greek novels/romances) reveal an implicit but well-formed concept of fictionality even in eras when ancient theorists were not using any direct equivalent to our modern understanding of "fiction" as a label. Payne 2007 locates the ancient "invention of fiction" in the works of Theocritus; his readings of Theocritus' poems are elegantly persuasive and fruitful, but his view of what constitutes fiction seems unnecessarily restrictive. In different ways both McKeon 1987 and Doody 1996 emphasize the persistence of romance-based conventions in the history of the novel; McKeon limits his inquiry to the English novel, while Doody's analysis is more expansive in time and space.

42. Readers who are strongly habituated to finding pervasive allegorical equivalences, for instance, may see far greater overlap between a story world and their perceptions of reality than readers whose willingness to allegorize is more tentative or partial.

number of additional "generic characteristics" for the novel similar to those given above, which are immediately annulled by some reservation innocently appended to them.[43]

Richard Martin contemplates the genre of epic from a comparative, functional viewpoint that would cut across such specific formal markers as meter, and notes the parallels between epic's dual function as a genre and the dual status of the Greek word *epos,* which has given us "epic" in English. *Epos,* in singular and plural, is "both marked (in literary history) and unmarked (in Homeric diction)." Epic, too, "is as pervasive as everyday speech; [. . .] it can embody any matter and make it significant," while also serving as "a mode of total communication, undertaking nothing less than the ideal expression of a culture."[44] This duality conveys some of the most important characteristics of epic, but it could equally well be said of the novel, though for both genres a lot depends on what is meant by "ideal."

Both genres use their multilayered fictionality to present narratives that typically exceed what any one human could normally claim to know. Cohn has analyzed a form of knowledge that becomes accessible to an author precisely because it is fictional—knowledge of other people's minds. This is the "the singular power possessed by the novelist," whom she describes as "creator of beings whose inner lives he can reveal at will."[45] Few—if any—narrators either of epic or novel claim full omniscience either of their characters' interiority or other mysteries, but the almost paradoxical logic according to which a text's content is "known" to the author still applies. Whatever the *Aeneid*'s poet "knows" about the underworld, for instance, is known because this underworld is part of the *Aeneid*'s story world.

By a comparable logic of excess, Vergil's *Fama*-goddess-monster in Book 4 (who is at once a divinity and an allegory for human talk) has as many eyes and ears with which to acquire knowledge and beliefs as she has feathers to carry her in flight and tongues to sing her tales. The uncanny horror of the flying-*Fama* imagined by the *Aeneid* conveys something of the powerful fascination that fictions may exert. *Fama*'s excesses go beyond anything that may be fully realized, yet they are potentially as entrancing as they are terrifying to visualize.[46]

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43. Bakhtin 1981, 8–9.

44. Martin 2005, 18.

45. Cohn 1977, 4. This does not amount in any straightforward way to omniscience, of course, for either author or narrator; see Culler 2004. First person narratives (such as Aeneas' embedded narrative in *Aeneid* Books 2 and 3) raise particularly interesting questions about fiction's excess of knowledge.

46. Hardie 2009b, 95 emphasizes that despite (or perhaps because of) the precise balance of

Similarly, there seems something almost uncanny in the way that fictions often work their fascination precisely because of their capacity to exceed our everyday experience. Through this excess, fictions may find us (or some of us, at least) all the more willing to be carried away into their story worlds, and all the more ready to integrate those story worlds into our reality.

1.2 What Turnus sees

In *Aeneid* Book 7, we watch a scene of conflict between different modes of understanding that goes far beyond being a seam in the fabric of fiction: this is the Fury Allecto's attack on Aeneas' Italian rival, Turnus. This scene invites readers to confront the ways familiar and newly imagined perceptions may affect one another, and links this perceptual entanglement with unnerving visions of divine power. In chapters 6 and 7 I explore in greater detail the question of how far the poem makes use not only of the gods' power, but also the gods' brutality, for its presentation of fictive knowledge. For now, we will look at the pivotal scene in which Allecto aggressively takes control of Turnus' experience.

After Latinus, the king of Latium, has welcomed the Trojans as settlers in their destined land and has promised his daughter Lavinia in marriage to Aeneas, Juno summons the Fury Allecto from her home in the under-world. On Juno's orders, Allecto kindles war. She strategically spreads mad-ness among those most likely to contaminate the region with her frenzy, including the king's wife, Amata, and Lavinia's leading suitor, the Rutulian hero Turnus. Juno commits herself to prolonging the stuff of story, drawing out and adding delays to the great achievements fated for the Trojans (*at trahere atque moras tantis licet addere rebus,* 7.315). Juno provides a rebirth not so much of Troy as of Troy's self-destruction—a suitable way to remem-ber the city, in her thinking (7.319–22). When Juno stirs up Allecto from her shadowy home in the underworld, it is to assist her in the resolve that her own *honos* and *fama* should not be forced to withdraw in defeat as the Trojans set up home in Italy (7.332–33). She instructs the Fury to unleash to the full her creative powers. The poem connects Juno's personal *fama,* her status among gods and mortals, with the power of its own storytelling—its successful generation of epic *fama.*

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correlatives, *Fama*'s appearance is very hard to conceive visually: we know the proportions of her eyes, tongues, mouths, ears, and feathers, but not the number. So for the reader *Fama*'s prodigiousness lies above all in the fact that this sight is not fully seeable, even in the mind's eye.

Allecto's snakiness and mutability are essential to her power over people's minds. The narrator introduces the *Dira* by calling attention both to the effects of her terrible looks, and to her capacity for altering those looks so as to appear any way she chooses. Even her sister *Dirae* in Tartarus hate her as a prodigy, a *monstrum* (7.328)—something that communicates through sight—"so many are the faces she becomes, so cruel her appearances, with so many serpents does she teem darkly" (*tot sese uertit in ora, / tam saeuae facies, tot pullulat atra colubris,* 7.328–29).

Addressing her with a kind of prayer, which lists the Fury's destructive abilities, Juno delegates to Allecto the freedom to decide exactly how she should shake apart the peace made between Trojans and Latins.[47] Allecto does this through an infectious madness, poisoning the people and animals whose derailment will have the greatest effect on the Italian and Trojan communities, stealthily mimicking her surroundings so that she can contaminate the area without being noticed. Allecto shares with *fama*—and more specifically with Book 4's personification of *Fama*—her ability to infect communities by stealthily blending in with existing perceptions.[48]

On arrival at Turnus' place, Allecto takes off (*exuit,* 7.416) her Fury-looks.

> tectis hic Turnus in altis
> iam mediam nigra carpebat nocte quietem.
> Allecto toruam faciem et furialia membra
> exuit, in uultus sese transformat anilis
> et frontem obscenam rugis arat, induit albos
> cum uitta crinis, tum ramum innectit oliuae;
> fit Calybe Iunonis anus templique sacerdos,
> et iuueni ante oculos his se cum uocibus offert:

> Here Turnus in his lofty palace
> was already enjoying utter peace in the black night.
> Allecto takes off her grim appearance and Fury's limbs,

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47. 7.335–38: *tu potes unanimos armare in proelia fratres / atque odiis uersare domos, tu uerbera tectis / funereasque inferre faces, tibi nomina mille, / mille nocendi artes.* "You can arm like-thinking brothers for battles and upset homes with hatred, you can strike roofs with lashes and funeral torches; a thousand names are yours, a thousand arts for causing harm." Feeney 1991, 163 observes the narrative's emphasis on complexity in its imagining of the Fury; for instance, the poem itself uses several of her many names (Allecto, Erinys, *Cocytia uirgo*).

48. See further chapters 2.1 and 7.2. Hardie 2009b, 99–104 has shown in detail how closely related to Book 4's *Fama* is Allecto-*Discordia*, "with the difference that as a Fury Allecto is a fully mythological being tending to act in the mode of a personification, whereas *Fama* starts out as an abstraction, tending towards the mythological" (100).

> transforms herself into an old woman in appearance and
> furrows her brow to make it loathsome with wrinkles, and puts on white
> hair and a headband, then she twines in an olive bough;
> she becomes Calybe, the aged priestess of Juno's temple,
> and presents herself before the young man's eyes with these words:
>   (*Aen.* 7.413–20)[49]

When Allecto prepares to approach Turnus, and gets rid of "her grim appearance and Fury's limbs" (*toruam faciem et furialia membra,* 7.415), to turn herself step by step into an aged priestess of Juno, we might expect this visual persuasion to complement the verbal persuasion that she attempts on Turnus. Once she becomes Calybe she presents herself *ante oculos* ("before the young man's eyes," 7.420).[50] The detail with which her disguise has been recounted suggests that she expects her appearance before his eyes, the furrowing of her face with wrinkles and so on, to be as effective as the words she speaks in getting Turnus to do what she wants.

Why would it be reasonable for Allecto to assume that this disguise will help her? Commentators from Donatus through to Horsfall have suggested that her status as a priestess and her age should call for reverence from Turnus. In that sense, Allecto presents herself as someone who presumably exists in reality (within the story world), and whose words she can expect Turnus

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49. Translations are mine, except where noted, but I have taken a magpie's approach; most include borrowings and echoes (conscious and unconscious) from many published translations and commentaries. The historic present poses a special challenge for anyone translating Latin narrative. I have been persuaded by Fagles 2006, 389 that the shifts in perspective and mood created by shifting in and out of the present are too important to obscure by making the tenses uniform in English, though the relationship between tenses in English is so different from Latin.

50. Hershkowitz 1998, 89 n. 55 connects *ante oculos* with Feeney's observation (1991, 170) that the narration of this scene "forces us to keep readjusting to the level of reality we need to inhabit." As Feeney says, "Most readers, I imagine, assume that Turnus has woken up when he speaks to the disguised Allecto (435–44), but we are then told that he wakes up after having the torch thrust into his chest, so that we must reread the conversation with Allecto-Calybe, and see it as a dream-experience." Horsfall 2000 ad loc. notes that *Aen.* 2.270 and 3.150, both dream scenes, use the same phrase. Although Aeneas acknowledges his dream of Hector as a dream at the outset, Aeneas' audience needs to know that Hector was (in some sense) there before his eyes—look! *in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / uisus adesse mihi . . .* (2.270–71). Again, when the Penates appear to Aeneas, the tension between dream and reality is expressed by his near-juxtaposition of *somnis* with *ante oculos*: *uisi ante oculos astare iacentis / in somnis multo manifesti lumine* ("They appeared to stand there before my eyes as I lay in sleep, plainly visible in plentiful light," 3.150–51); after quoting the gods' speech, he tells his Carthaginian audience how overwhelming he found this apparition: *nec sopor illud erat, sed coram agnoscere uultus / uelatasque comas praesentiaque ora uidebar* ("And that was not a mere figment of deep sleep, but face to face I seemed to recognize their features and their garlanded hair and their mouths actually speaking in person," 3.173–74).

to take seriously.[51] She seems to intend not to use her divine power on him, but to operate within the terms of the mortal world as he knows it. But a manipulative goddess could well anticipate Turnus' revulsion towards the old woman, and his misogynistic scorn for her advice (distaste for the physical marks of old age in women is a familiar theme in classical literature).[52] In that case his reaction to her initial fiction would all be a part of her authorial plan, with her violent revelation built in from the start. The poem never pronounces whether the Fury designs this change of appearance as a mere precursor to the violent eruption that Turnus' resistance eventually provokes.[53] We are left free either to imagine that her original plan may simply be to persuade a perfectly sane Turnus to go to war, or to see her identity as a Fury (that is, as someone who generates *furor*—madness) as essential to the whole operation. The poem narrates Allecto's behavior, not her thoughts.

Even in her human disguise Allecto gives Turnus a chance to respond to a divine command. She pointedly tells him that Juno herself ordered her speech, and implies that this command is supported by the other Olympian gods (7.428, 432). These hints root Allecto's disguise in conventions that make it a recognizable fiction. But (with the irony that many literary disguise scenes employ) these qualities are much more obvious to readers of the poem than they are to Turnus within the story world.

Allecto initially creates as a fiction not only the characterization she adopts as Calybe, but also a characterization of Turnus as listener. In effect, she brings him two kinds of *fama,* telling him of current affairs as well as outlining his own personal reputation; she explains how his public character should direct his response to the latest turn of events. At this point she is telling a story about who Turnus is. Even the vocative at the start marks out this question as an invitation to Turnus to consider himself and what kinds of stories he wishes to be told about "Turnus."[54]

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51. Iris in *Aeneid* 5 and Apollo in *Aeneid* 9 use comparable strategies. Athena in *Odyssey* 6 takes on a similar disguise when she wants Nausicaa to do laundry so as to be ready to meet Odysseus. Nausicaa behaves as Athena had expected, so there is no need to find a more forceful and specifically divine way to make her do what Athena wants. On the other hand, in *Iliad* 3 Aphrodite presents herself to Helen as an elderly Lacedaimonian wool worker. Helen sees through the disguise, but at first she resists Aphrodite. This enrages the goddess, who threatens Helen; Helen is duly terrified and obeys. In the *Iliad* episode the disguise becomes almost irrelevant, but the recognition of Aphrodite as a goddess in itself is ineffectual; the crucial shift in Helen's will comes when Aphrodite threatens to exercise violently her divine power.

52. See especialy Richlin 1992, 105ff. Horsfall 2000 at 7.416 notes that "inherited expectations are conveniently ambiguous."

53. I owe this observation to James Tatum.

54. Horsfall 2000 at 7.421 refers us to other rare initial vocatives: 9.6 (Iris to Turnus), 320, 390 (both Nisus to Euryalus); 11.502, 12.56, 653 (all addressed to Turnus). Each *Turne* comes from a

Turnus is not the sort to put up with wasted effort and diminished power, she suggests. She constructs his past in terms that set up a distinct, and distinctively reductive vision of his motives: his military achievements have had the goal of purchasing a bride who in turn would bring him a king-dom (*Aen.* 7.421–25). "Go on, then, give yourself to unrewarded dangers, a laughing stock!" (*i nunc, ingratis offer te, inrise, periclis,* 7.426). If King Latinus is not going to keep his word, he should find out what it is like to have Turnus in arms against him (7.432–34).

Turnus takes up Calybe's invitation, though not in the way that the Fury expects, and responds to Allecto-Calybe's speech as something to be evaluated according to whether her words fit with the truth of the world as he sees it. As a reader of fiction might do, when deciding how to relate a particular story world to her own beliefs, Turnus treats the fiction he is offered as something altogether separate from his own existence—something that can be experienced without further consequences. Turnus' reaction to Calybe suggests that he either scorns or is ignorant of the conventions on which her chosen appearance depends, and that he is unwilling to step into the position her speech invites him to take.

If Turnus shared readers' awareness of his position within the story world of an epic, he would be ready to recognize Calybe's traditional mythic role. When seemingly marginal characters with marks of age and weakness give advice, they may well be gods merely pretending to be powerless humans.[55] Recognition of the immortals in mortal guise is nearly impossible, yet at the same time is somehow expected in this tradition. "Gods are hard for mortals to perceive" (*chalepoi de theoi thnêtoisin orasthai, Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 111), especially when the gods have taken great care to make themselves unrecognizable, but nonrecognition brings terrible consequences. Accusations are hurled at the mortals who fail in this endeavor to perceive the imperceptible. This troublesome expectation is justified—to the extent that justice has any place here—by the familiarity of the pattern in narrative, which reinforces certain social norms. Turnus ignores conventions that, as the poem's readers understand, should lead him to treat the aging priestess with as much reverence as if she were a goddess.

He counters the warmongering of the supposed priestess by accusing her of overimaginative fear: "don't make up such terrors for me" (*ne tantos mihi finge metus,* 7.438). His bluster keeps fear temporarily at bay. He refuses to

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speaker who is asking Turnus to make a decision at an important juncture. 9.6 is particularly striking, because Iris' speech is almost a replay of Allecto-Calybe's, except that that Iris presents herself without disguise.

55. See Murnaghan 1987, 69–70.

allow "Calybe" to bring him news, or to intervene in men's business. He also refuses to allow her to define the range of emotions to which he may be susceptible.

> Hic iuuenis uatem inridens sic orsa uicissim
> ore refert: 'classis inuectas Thybridis undam
> non, ut rere, meas effugit nuntius auris;
> ne tantos mihi finge metus. nec regia Iuno
> immemor est nostri.
> sed te uicta situ uerique effeta senectus,
> o mater, curis nequiquam exercet, et arma
> regum inter falsa uatem formidine ludit.
> cura tibi diuum effigies et templa tueri;
> bella uiri pacemque gerent quis bella gerenda.'

> At this point the young man, mocking the priestess, retorts:
> "The fact that the fleet is riding on the Tiber's wave is
> not, as you think, news that has escaped my ears—
> don't make up such terrors for me—nor does royal Juno
> forget me.
> But it is you, mother, whom an old age that's overcome by decay
> and truth-barren wears out pointlessly with worries and
> mocks as a prophet with deceptive fear amid the weapons of kings.
> Your task is to watch over the statues and temples of the gods;
> men shall deal with war and peace, men, whose job war is." (*Aen.* 7.435–43)

All in all his rejection of Allecto in her disguise may be seen by readers as a rejection of the persuasive dimensions of fiction.

Allecto reacts to Turnus' rejection by compelling him to look at her in an altogether new way. Though she enters his sleeping-vision in disguise, Allecto eventually orders Turnus to look at her in all her power. She confronts him with the instantly recognizable attributes of a goddess visiting the upper world from the home of the furies. At this moment of revelation, instead of directing Turnus towards his own familiar experience, she compels him to take in a shocking sight that sharply and brutally changes the way he knows the world. The attack on his perceptions is not entirely visual. Her equipment as a Fury includes not only the loathsome appearance of her snaky hair, but also a firebrand smoking with black light, which she plunges in Turnus' chest. The violence she employs in this attack is in turn bound up in the words she uses on Turnus.

The onset of Turnus' madness accompanies the acquisition of knowledge. Allecto reveals that "Calybe" was a fiction adopted by a powerful divinity. She teaches Turnus what it means to scoff at so powerful a figure; she shows him *who she is* in the fullest sense.

> ʻen ego uicta situ, quam ueri effeta senectus
> arma inter regum falsa formidine ludit.
> respice ad haec: adsum dirarum ab sede sororum,
> bella manu letumque gero.'
> sic effata facem iuueni coniecit et atro
> lumine fumantis fixit sub pectore taedas.

> "Look, I am the one, overcome with decay, whom a truth-barren old age
> amidst the weapons of kings mocks with deceptive fear.
> Regard these: I am here from the home of the dread sisters;
> wars and death I bear in my hand."
> So she spoke out, and hurled her torch at the young man and plunged
> deep into his chest the firebrand smoking with black light. (*Aen.* 7.452–57)

Allecto mockingly quotes Turnus' own description of Calybe: he had scorned her attempt at involving herself in the masculine business of war, using language that dismissed her verbal capacity along with her decayed fertility.[56] She shows him that behind the fictive appearance and words that she had (perhaps) expected to take persuasive effect, there was a power that gave a layer of truth to her words. She has not aligned her fictions successfully with his own preconceptions, but she has been telling the truth about the divine command that must drive him to war. Even the earlier disguise as a frail priestess turns out to have been an aspect of the metamorphic ability possessed by the goddess who changes minds with madness. It has proved counterproductive—or worse—for Turnus to sift through her words and self-presentation and pick out those that suit his view of reality.

Allecto's anger suggests that Turnus' mistake was to dare to judge the *words* of "Calybe" according to his norms of truth, when if he had perceived

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56. The gendering of Allecto-Calybe's endowment with truth is intriguing. Turnus associates Calybe's lack of persuasive authority with the inability to give birth: she is *ueri effeta, barren of truth* (cf. 5.396, however, where old age can cause *uires effetae* in a man, worn out strength). Keith 2000, 72–73 emphasizes how Allecto-Calybe upsets the gendered ideology of war epitomized by Turnus' "patronising advice that she confine herself to her religious duties and leave the conduct of war to men" (7.444: *bella uiri pacemque gerent quis bella gerenda*). Allecto neatly reverses that dictum, with her extension of the word *gero* to suggest that she herself carries war in her hands as well as wages it (*bella manu letumque gero*)—her *arma* are far more powerful than those wielded by mere kings.

the complex fictional status of the *speaker* he would have realized that their force stemmed not from the plausibility of the argument but from the power of the author.[57]

The fact that we soon learn that he had remained asleep during the whole conversation (he is awoken only by the intensity of his fear in 7.458) makes the boundaries between reason and irrationality even harder to perceive. The poem regularly uses the vocabulary of madness; it is much less explicit about rationality. *Insania* ("madness," 7.461) summarizes the full transformation; it does not describe the terror that immediately afflicts Turnus when he first sees Allecto (7.446–47).

But the very act of seeing divinities at work passes beyond the limits of human rationality, as Debra Hershkowitz has eloquently shown.[58] His physical reaction denotes the transformation of Turnus' state of mind. As he learns the truth about his visitor, his eyes stiffen, rather than his hair or his blood.[59] The effect on his eyes is in direct proportion to the sheer horror of Allecto's appearance as an Erinys (*tot Erinys sibilat hydris . . . ,* "with so many serpents does the Fury hiss . . . ," 7.447).

Allecto's own words, however, suggest that she shows herself to Turnus in order to teach him what she is: *en,* she says, "See!" referring back to his description of her Calybe-disguise, and *respice ad haec,* she instructs him. The imperative *respice* seems to enjoin him equally to take account of what she is about to say, to have regard for her as a goddess, and to look at her and her attributes. The way she represents herself in words cannot be separated from the way she defines herself through her physical revelation: *respice ad haec: adsum dirarum ab sede sororum*—"Take a look at these: I am here from the home of the fearsome sisters" (7.454).

Understanding "who she is" includes grasping the Fury's capacity for metamorphosis as a way to alter perceptions and memories. With Allecto's imperatives—and her attack with the pitchy light of her firebrand—the criminal madness of war (*scelerata insania belli,* 7.461) afflicts Turnus. He

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57. In terms of Austin's inquiry into "How to Do Things with Words," Turnus treats the content of Calybe's speech purely as a constative utterance to be assessed as true or false—and to be dismissed by him as false; he disregards its performative force as a command. Allecto's revelation forces him to recognize that the speech's force could not be measured by its "correspondence with the facts" (see especially Austin 1975, 145–46).

58. See Hershkowitz 1998, 80–85 on Aeneas' visions in Book 2.

59. Just a few examples of bodily rigidity as a response to divine (or seemingly inhuman) apparitions: the Trojans' blood congeals at 3.259 after the Harpy Celaeno finishes off the fight between Harpies and Trojans with a strange prophecy; Aeneas' hair stiffens with bristling dread on seeing Mercury in 4.280, as does Turnus' when he faces the *Dira*-owl in 12.868. By contrast, when Andromache goes rigid at the sight of Aeneas, the part of her body affected is unspecified—but it happens "in mid-gaze" (*magnis exterrita monstris / deriguit uisu in medio,* 3.307–8).

now adopts exactly the position that she had set up for him earlier when speaking as Calybe. He presents himself as slighted by ingratitude, an Achilles whose worth has been ignored by Agamemnon/Latinus, and an avenging Menelaus whose Helen/Lavinia has been snatched away by an outsider posing as a guest (9.136–42).

Whether Turnus' transformation is wrought *through* the teacherly aspects of Allecto's self-revelation, or whether that didactic enlightenment goes *alongside* the more obviously violent changes carried out by her maddening divine force, is left undetermined by the narrative. We must understand the two kinds of cognitive shift to be inseparable parts of the power wielded by the Fury.

So this confusion on the narrative level reflects the double action of Allecto's torch as both metaphor and weapon. When thrust at Turnus, it evidently embodies the sheer power of the malevolent goddess. The torch works both as a tool for divine violence and as a figure for dangerous knowledge, with its obfuscating light.[60] Persuasion and force—conventionally opposed in classical thought, but always in danger of assimilation—become completely indistinguishable in Allecto's attack.[61]

After a famous simile describing his passion for war and anger in terms of darkly boiling water, the poem narrates Turnus' preparations for attack:

> ergo iter ad regem polluta pace Latinum
> indicit primis iuuenum et iubet arma parari,
> tutari Italiam, detrudere finibus hostem;
> se satis ambobus Teucrisque uenire Latinisque.

> So a march against the king, since the peace has been polluted, against
>   Latinus,
> he declares to the leading fighting men, and orders preparations for war,
> the safeguarding of Italy, the thrusting of the enemy out from its borders;
> he is coming, enough to deal with the Trojans and the Latins, both together.
>   (*Aen.* 7.467–70)

The phrase *polluta pace* ("since the peace has been polluted") sits in a position in the verse that neither commits it to the rhetoric Turnus uses on the leaders of the soldiery (by 7.470 his orders for war have shifted into a truncated indirect version of a typical exhortatory general's speech) nor

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60. Hershkowitz 1998, 93; Johnson 1976, 146.
61. See, for example, Kirby 1990 on *peitho* and *bia.*

situates it firmly as part of the poet's outer frame of narration.[62] Its interruption of the words *regem . . . Latinum* serves both purposes equally well. If the phrase is part of the outer frame, it would imply that Turnus himself is an agent of Allecto's pollution, and would emphasize as a violation the act of attacking the king with whom he has been so closely allied. If *polluta pace* is part of Turnus' thoughts or speech, it explains the logic justifying (in his Allectified mind) the march against the king—Latinus has allowed the Trojans to defile Italy's peace. Poetic logic allows the ablative absolute, with its ambiguous economy of expression, to do both jobs.

At each decisive moment of Turnus' story thereafter, his awareness that he is generating material for storytelling becomes intrinsic to the *Aeneid*'s narrative structure. In Book 10, after being tricked by Juno into pursuing an Aeneas made of hollow cloud, Turnus desperately longs for death as an escape from the reputation he envisages as he floats away ignominiously from battle. Assuming that Jupiter is punishing him, he begs the winds to destroy the ship, to wreck it and take it to a place "where neither the Rutulians nor the awareness of *fama* may follow me" (*quo nec me Rutuli nec conscia fama sequatur,* 10.679). Readers know that Jupiter's role in this turn of fortune has not been to dispense justice and maintain order. Instead, he has been complicit in a renewal of story; he has conceded to Juno a negotiated delay to Turnus' fated death (10.613–32). This reprieve will extend and alter the complexion of Turnus' *fama,* without, as Jupiter affirms, changing the war in its totality.

The gap between divine plans and human perception—his own as well as that of the people he has inadvertently betrayed—becomes intolerable for Turnus. Turnus' phantom-led departure in Book 10 is strangely self-contained, but it paints in miniature Turnus' pattern of behavior from the moment of Allecto's attack until his eventual death at the very end of Book 12. Turnus simultaneously drives himself towards a decisive struggle with Aeneas, and avoids that moment of decision. His frequently resurgent *furor* leads him by its own impulses, and is kindled through further beguilement by Juno and her assistants (Allecto, Iris, the cloud-Aeneas, and Juturna).

Turnus is fully characterized for readers only after the Fury's transformation.[63] This divinely assaulted Turnus—when he pauses to reflect on his

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62. Influential translators of the last half century (Day-Lewis, Fitzgerald, Mandelbaum, Lombardo, and Fagles) are divided between the two options of making it part of the reported speech or part of the poet's outer frame. Surprisingly, all these translators make Turnus the implied agent: either the narrator asserts that Turnus is violating the peace, or the thought is included in Turnus' speech as a willful transgression, as in Lombardo's "peace be damned," despite the fact that in 7.471 he tries to get the gods on his side.

63. Hershkowitz 1998, 94.

actions at all—values *fama* above his own life (or other people's lives, come to that). Sensitivity to one's reputation is of course deeply rooted in the traditions of heroic epic. But one effect of the assaults by gods on human minds is to connect this value system closely with the madness with which the gods afflict humans. Dido's insanity, too, in Books 1 and 4, grows out of control when god-infused poison combines with her understanding of how her own *fama* is being altered.

At the same time, the *Aeneid*'s epic narrative needs this kind of *furor*. With Jupiter's complicity, *furor* is as deeply involved in the ordinances of *fata* as it is in *fama*. This involvement goes well beyond the fact that epic as a genre looks for extreme situations and heightened responses as the stuff of stories. More importantly, the fictive knowledge that the *Aeneid* offers readers and characters is structured by *furor* as much as by any more orderly force. The poem envisions a world permeated by forms of divine power: experiencing divine forces takes human perceptions so far beyond their everyday scope as to threaten with erosion any boundaries that might be set between madness and rational obedience to the gods.

In the *Aeneid*'s story world, unwanted or unperceived contact with divinity often expands human ignorance into a new form of cognition—knowledge of a sort, though not in any straightforward sense. These encounters repeatedly provoke madness and despair. As its representations of divine power coalesce with its own strategies for augmenting the power of its story, the poem's expansive rhetoric of fiction becomes as daunting as it is exultant.

The Fury's fierce mingling of violence with visual and verbal persuasion reverberates through the whole poem. If the *Aeneid* claims Allecto's power along with Jupiter's for the imperatives of its mythmaking *fama*—and there are good grounds for suggesting that it does—the epic's presentation of fictive knowledge is linked with the most terrifying embodiment of polluting madness.

1.3 Classifying *fama*

Though *fama* is a pervasive presence in the epic, it questions as much as it sustains the foundations of epic authority. *Fama* is not a Muse; *fama* is not a poet; *fama* is not a powerful individual of any kind—divine or human.[64]

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64. See Hardie 2012, 107 on the invocation to the Muses at the start of the catalog in Book 7. The Muses' power to remember and inform (invoked in 7.641–45) is contrasted with mortals' uncertain access to *fama* at 7.646: *ad nos uix tenuis famae perlabitur aura* ("to us the delicate breeze of *fama* scarcely glides").

The importance of *fama* lies in the hope of communicating some kind of knowledge. On one level the *Aeneid*'s discourse of *fama* suggests indifference as to whether this is transmitted or newly created.[65] Yet at the same time the poem reveals a persistent fascination with the way *fama* crosses social, temporal, and ontological boundaries by combining many different kinds of "talk," and many different kinds of story. The knowledge *fama* conveys comes from an unspecified grouping of voices and minds. Through its representations of *fama* the poem articulates many of the problems posed by collective knowledge both within the epic's story world and for epic as a genre.

James Tatum succinctly explains *fama* as "the relationship of the individual to the many."[66] This capacious definition is especially valuable because it makes room for the wide array of situations in which we see the relationship between one and "many" working. This relationship can span great stretches of time and place, as well as breaking down distinctions set by status-based hierarchies.

As users of contemporary English we have become alienated from the particular web of ideas that the Latin word *fama* weaves together. This is why I have avoided translating the word. *Fama* in classical Latin is closer to the word "fame" in its earlier and more expansive range of meanings than to any single word available in standard English today. If we think of the English word "fame" as it was used well into the nineteenth century, with its semantic range taking in meanings that are now mostly obsolete, we may grasp what it would be like to hear in one word the concepts of "reputation," "distinction," "talk," "rumor," "gossip," "scandal," "story," and "news."[67] *Fama* could be translated by any of these words and by many others too, depending on the context: "tradition" and "folk-memory" are among the other meanings that recur frequently in Roman narrative.

"Fiction" would not be found in a list of English translations for *fama*. But the discourse of *fama* has plenty to tell us about the *Aeneid*'s rhetoric of fiction. To diminish the risk of arbitrarily overemphasizing some of *fama*'s

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65. By "discourse" of *fama* I mean the whole network of ways that *fama* is both explicitly represented and implicitly established in the text. I use "language of *fama*" and "vocabulary of *fama*" in this book to refer to the particular words that explicitly denote *fama*-related concepts and actions.

66. Tatum 1984, 448.

67. See *OED* (2nd ed. 1989, online ed. 2012): "fame" n. 1, definitions 1a, 2a, and 3a. No Greek word has quite the same range as *fama*; *pheme* and *phatis* are akin linguistically, but raise different questions about speech, divine authority, fictionality, and memory; *kleos,* especially in the context of epic, also comes very close to *fama,* but as Nagy 1979, 16 emphasizes, *kleos* boils down to "that which is heard" rather than "that which is said." See also Nagy 1990, *passim*. For a broad exploration of *kleos* in Homer and Pindar, see Goldhill 1991, 69–166; for the Hesiodic opposition between *pheme* and *kleos,* see especially Hardie 2012, 50–57.

meanings (heroic reputation, for example) at the expense of others (such as gossipy scandal), I will continue to leave the word untranslated in this book. For similar reasons, I rarely translate the vocabulary of *pietas.* Admittedly, *fama* and *pietas* are just two of a vast number of Latin words that have no exact match in contemporary English to embrace the full range of meanings in different contexts. Usually we simply adjust the translation to suit each particular instance. These adjustments bring both gains (elucidating the way context affects meaning) and losses (obscuring the effects of repeated but varied uses of a word); for this project the losses would be critical.

In the vocabulary of *fama* I would include a variety of Latin words referring to memory, renown, and gossip, which are conceptually—though not etymologically—related to *fama:* verbs such as *memoro* ("to tell" or "call to mind") and *fero* (when it means "say" or "report"); nouns like *laus* (praise, distinction), *gloria* and *nomen* (name), as well as *rumor* and *murmur.*[68]

I find it hard to imagine asking any questions about *fama* and Latin poetry without the benefit of the questions and insights offered by Philip Hardie's inexhaustible close readings.[69] These range from *Cosmos and Imperium,* where he carefully analyzes hyperbolic *Fama* as a sustained allegorical "exploration of the ultimate limits, both up and down, of the universe," through to *Rumour and Renown*, which surveys representations of *fama* in ancient, medieval, and early modern literature.[70] My project in many ways builds on Hardie's earlier work, and complements his most recent inquiries. My own close readings in chapters 3–8 focus less on direct representations of *fama;* instead, I treat *fama* as one among a web of discursive threads that constitute what the *Aeneid* knows. *Fama* on one level brings together all these threads, and at times seems to serve as the poem's term for what I am calling its fictive knowledge. But at times it is explicitly marked out as an element that either threatens or reinforces (sometimes threatens *and* reinforces) the epic's ability to transmit knowledge.

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68. *Murmur* is less self-evidently grouped amidst the language of *fama,* but it is used at a few key moments in Latin poetry for the sound made by unauthorized, muttered, jumbled human talk. In 12.239 among the Rutulians *serpitque per agmina murmur* ("a murmuring sound slithers through the ranks"); cf. the *fremor* ("roar") of talk likened to the *murmur* of a blocked river channel in 11.296–99.

69. I also owe particular debts to Feeney's *The Gods in Epic,* Hershkowitz's *The Madness of Epic,* and not least to O'Hara's *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy,* with its explorations of repeated mismatches between prophecy and outcome in the *Aeneid.* The issues examined by all three have been vital in raising the questions about recognition, *mimesis,* and divine authority that inform my approach to epic *fama.*

70. Hardie 1986, 267; *Rumour and Renown: Representations of* Fama *in Western Literature* (2012) was published just as I was finishing this book. It reached me too late to shape my writing significantly, but I have tried to note where I cover the same ground, especially where my observations converge most strikingly with Hardie's.

If taken literally, the fact that I make the *Aeneid* itself the subject of a number of verbs which more often refer either to an author or a reader ("know," "imagine," "try," and so on) might suggest that I attribute a remarkable level of agency to the text. But deliberately using a metaphor that likens a text to a human subject is a way to emphasize that texts are the meeting grounds for authors, readers, and linguistic and cultural values from different places and historical periods. This figurative approach also acknowledges the indeterminate location of such meeting grounds, and ensures that no single one of those participants in the production of meaning receives undue emphasis.

I envisage the readings that result from this collaboration as formed in part through a dialogue between an imagined Augustan readership (this includes the writer, Vergil, and at least partly delimits the semantic possibilities of the Latin text), and our own contemporary perceptions, priorities, and presuppositions.[71] Ellen Oliensis vividly explains the reasons for thinking in terms of a "textual unconscious" as an enabling postulate: "'textual,' because not (simply) personal, and also because it is in the very texture of the text, its slips, tics, strange emphases, and stray details, that one discovers it at work."[72] I would apply a similar logic to thinking about the text as the bearer of memory, knowledge, and imagination.

In this book, I do not pursue the "story"/"discourse" opposition made famous in Anglo-American thought by Seymour Chatman and still favored by many narratologists. Instead I use "story" in a more comprehensive sense (common outside the field of narratology), which embraces the telling as well as the abstraction of what is told. "Story" in this everyday usage is well suited to the narrative poetics of the *Aeneid*, where the characters' awareness of *fata* and *fama* always integrates the potential for storytelling into events as they occur within the poem's story world.[73]

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71. In my case, for instance, these points of view derive partly from my position as a twenty-first-century Anglo-American reader steeped in the conventions of nineteenth-century English fiction and several other relatively recent representational traditions.

72. Oliensis 2009, 6–7. Although my approach is not psychoanalytic, it shares with Oliensis' readings in *Freud's Rome* a preoccupation with confronting what I would call the "both/and-ness" that is central to textuality, where seemingly opposed or even incompatible possibilities are held together in suspension. I would answer "both . . . and . . . " to many disjunctively phrased questions about the workings of the *Aeneid*, given its profound but profoundly destabilized polarization of opposed forces, both on the rhetorical level of the narrative and within the story world.

73. For a particularly clear analysis of the narratologically distinct terms "story" (*histoire, fabula*) and "discourse" (*récit, sjužet*) and their near-equivalents, see Brooks 1984, 12–13: "We must, however, recognize that the apparent priority of *fabula* to *sjužet* is in the nature of a mimetic illusion, in that the *fabula*—'what really happened'—is in fact a mental construction that the reader derives from the *sjužet,* which is all that he ever directly knows." Genette 1980 and 1988 emphasize that the terms are

Jupiter both articulates and umpires the discursive authority of *fas* and *fata,* keeping an equivocal distance from both. This detachment is paralleled, to some degree, by a comparable dissociation between the *Aeneid*'s poet and the epic discourse of *fama.* The speaker of the *Aeneid* is presented at times specifically as a poet. Sometimes he presents himself as a *uates* seeking prophetic knowledge (presumably "he," though this poet-*uates* is not given an emphatically gendered characterization), who looks to a Muse for help with telling the story. At other times, he points to *fama* or some other form of collective speech and knowledge as a source. Often, too, this poet's voice becomes particularly audible through figures of speech, speaking in apostrophe across the centuries to certain characters, or expressing horror or wonder at the sights called forth by the poem. When that speaker becomes most audibly individualized, I use the term "poet" to refer to the epic's principal narrator. The "poet" in this sense partly overlaps with but is not the "implied author" in Wayne Booth's understanding of the "implied image of the artist," which exceeds and is sometimes distinct from the text's main speaker, "who is after all only one of the elements created by the implied author and who may be separated from him by large ironies."[74] The term "poet" (instead of "narrator" or "speaker") marks out the depiction of that speaker specifically *as* a poet. This is especially important because of the layering of narratives crucial to many epics, such as *Aeneid* Books 2 and 3, where Aeneas narrates in dactylic hexameter but is not presented exactly as a "poet"—in contrast with the poet Orpheus in *Metamorphoses* Book 10, for instance.

Yet this central poetic voice in the *Aeneid* is remarkably disembodied compared with the voices we hear in other Roman literature, or indeed, compared with the fully animated *Fama* of Book 4. Many other Roman works that offer fictive knowledge of some kind are spoken by a precisely characterized author-figure. Sometimes this author-figure is pointedly distinct from the real individual who happened to do the writing—or most of the writing, uncertainties of textual transmission aside. Sometimes he (occasionally she) is closely identified with that writer.[75] To say that *fama*

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relative, promising at the outset of *Narrative Discourse* "not to convert into substance [. . .] what is merely a matter of relationships" (1980, 32). See also Walsh 2007, 52 for a helpful response to this problem.

74. Booth 1983, 73.

75. Such characterizations invite us actively to puzzle over the accessibility (or inaccessibility) of the author's intent, and the relation between the writer and the speaker in the text. On the other hand, many readers hear an invitation proffered all the more urgently in texts where author-figures are relatively obscure or where the main speaker lacks a biographically detailed persona. E.g., Tilg 2010, 241 analyzes Rumor (*pheme*) in Chariton both as deeply indebted to the *Aeneid*'s *Fama* and as an allegory for the novel's authorial voice. Different degrees of embodiment must partly be a matter

itself is the closest the *Aeneid* offers to an implied author (in Booth's sense) would be an overstatement. But even this overstatement touches on the way the epic poet's authorial role is displaced—inconsistently—onto a discursive abstraction.

FAMA both asserts and violates basic categories and modes of classification.[76] The *Aeneid*'s narrative structure never lets it appear a coincidence that the word *fama* can refer to an ordinary report—a report that may be accurate, mistaken, or deceptive, neutral, positive or scandalous—as well as to the crafting of transcendent fame. The word refers to "talk" in all its fleeting evanescence. But it also denotes speech-fueled memories of characters and their actions, which outlive any particular individuals or groups, through which poetry aspires to reach beyond mortal borders and lift humans to the stars. By means of *fama,* epic claims to break through two fundamental human constraints: limits in human knowledge, and the limited span of life enjoyed by any individual mortal.[77] It is no wonder that it became a genre-defining activity in the Western tradition of epic to seek prophetic insights into the past, present, and future through a visit with the dead.

Just as *fama* stands both for transience and unlimited longevity, so *fama* serves equally well as grounds either for believing or disbelieving something. Citing *fama* or tradition as a source for a particular story can either provide weight for the story in question or distance the poet from any assertion of personal involvement in transmitting that story. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* spells out this ambivalence in a parody of such citations. In the midst of describing how Deucalion and Pyrrha's stone throwing creates a renewed human race, "Who would believe this," the poet asks, "if it weren't for sheer antiq-

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of generic decorum (though that is complicated by questions about where to situate Hesiodic and Ennian traditions in the *Aeneid*'s implicit definition of epic). Even without getting into detailed consideration of the poet-figures constructed by—for instance—Catullus' poems, by Horatian (as opposed to Juvenalian) satire, or by Ovid's *Tristia* (as opposed to his *Amores,* say), it is easy to spot sharp differences among Vergil's speakers in different genres. The didactic poet of the *Georgics* takes a shifting set of authorial positions, and the *Eclogues* present many speakers, but both texts characterize these voices far more prominently than the main speaker of the *Aeneid.*

76. Hardie 2012 similarly notes the tendency for "*fama* to structure itself according to a series of unstable contrasts or oppositions" (3); as he puts it, *fama* "speaks with a forked tongue" (5). Hardie, 6–11 lists the most important "duplicities and dichotomies that characterize the structures and dynamics of *fama.*"

77. See Greene 1963 on "expansiveness" as an epic norm. This reveals itself in complex interactions between human ignorance and divine knowledge; Greene's analysis focuses on the descents into human realms by divine messengers.

uity standing in place of a witness?" (*quis hoc credat nisi sit pro teste uetustas?* 1.400).

When *fama* and its verbal kin summon a tradition, the vocabulary of *fama* invites readers to consider what kind of knowledge the poem claims. Phrases articulating the importance of tradition take many forms, including *dicitur* "it is said," *ut perhibent* "word has it," *ferunt* "they say." They occur at many pivotal points of explanation in the *Aeneid,* beginning in 1.15, where we are told that Juno "is held" (*fertur*) to have cherished Carthage beyond all other lands. Expressions like these simultaneously augment and diminish the poet's authority; they make a point of temporarily delegating the role of speaker to an unnamed source or tradition.[78]

In this way these phrases at once remind readers to assess the potentially fictive status of the story in question, and proclaim its significance as a tradition that belongs to collective memory rather than as the product of a single poet's imagination. Saying that a section of narrative is based on tradition informs readers that others have found the matter worth remembering. In a culture as self-consciously reverential towards its established customs as Rome's, the past provides its own weight.[79] It also serves as a disclaimer: "I'm not the one asserting this," points out the poet, "it's *fama*—you can make up your own mind what to make of it." But regardless of whether they cite talk or tradition as a source of doubt or of authority, these insertions weave the language of *fama* into the whole narrative texture of the *Aeneid.* As the counterpart to this, they also situate the poem in a still broader discourse of *fama.*[80] The word *fama* may refer to a report that brings fresh informa-

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78. Some of these phrases, however, by specifically citing *fama* (*ut fama est, fama est*), more pointedly invite readers to connect questions of fictionality with the weight of collective memory, and with all the complexities of what *fama* is and does in the *Aeneid.* Expressions such as *fertur* and *dicitur* are closer to the anonymous quasi-citations that Roman historians often use when referring to specific written sources. For further discussion and bibliography, see Hardie 2012, passim.

79. See especially Heinze 1993, 198 and Hinds 1998, 1–3 for discussions of how such expressions sometimes highlight an allusion to an earlier poem, and more generally express ambivalence about the relationship between creativity and tradition. Romans do not feel fettered by the *mos maiorum,* however: rather this is continually reassessed, or renewed through reinterpretation. For the difficulties of assessing what role tradition plays in fixing knowledge of cult, e.g., see especially Cicero, *Div.* 1.12–13; Ando 2008, 14–15.

80. Heinze finds a stronger pattern in the use of these insertions than I see. He describes this pattern, however, with some ambivalence. He argues that "when [the poet] calls upon the Muse to inform him about some particularly difficult and obscure point, this Muse is none other than *fama* itself," while also suggesting that "it is as though he is only willing to take responsibility for the truth of his own main narrative, and prefers to shift the responsibility for everything else onto others" (1993, 198). But "difficult and obscure points" often lie at the heart of the "main narrative." For instance, the poet asks Erato for help with the war narrative beginning 7.37; the situation in ancient Italy and the origins of war certainly count as "difficult and obscure" (contested in the legendary traditions available), but are equally certainly integral to the *Aeneid*'s main narrative. Of course, if we had access

tion to individuals or communities at decisive moments within the story. Sometimes *fama*'s communications serve the needs of characters in the circumstances they face at a particular crisis. In Book 11 when Turnus tells his people how their enemy Aeneas has shifted the position of his troops, he attributes his confidence in the information jointly to *fama* and to the scouts he has sent out (*Aeneas, ut fama fidem missique reportant / exploratores, equitum leuia improbus arma / praemisit, quaterent campos,* 11.511–13).

The news brought by *fama*-reports is often accurate, though not necessarily welcome. The *fama* that tells Dido of Aeneas' preparations for leaving Carthage is no less *impia* for being true (4.298). What it means for *Fama* to be *impia* (translatable here as "reckless," "heedless," or "brutal" perhaps?) can be understood from Dido's point of view: *fama* reports Aeneas' impious ingratitude, as he seems to be abandoning her in three roles at once, all of which demand reciprocity. She has been a generous host, ally, and wife. But *impia* also implies Aeneas' perspective. Thinking in Aeneas' terms, the emphasis would be on its uncontrollability: speech is getting away from proper hierarchies. After Mercury has told Aeneas that he must leave Dido and Carthage, Aeneas tells his lieutenants that he must be the one to work out the most gentle opportunity for speaking (*mollissima fandi / tempora*) to Dido and breaking off their love. Aeneas can give commands for discretion to his subordinates (4.288–295), but he cannot stop word getting round that the fleet is being equipped for departure.[81]

So concerns about how verbal authority may be shared between the "one" and the "many" appear even when *fama*'s reports are accurate. Near the start of Book 7 *fama* spreads through Italy the news of Latinus' discoveries about his fated son-in-law: here the poem implies that *fama* is Latinus' messenger (*haec responsa patris Fauni monitusque silenti / nocte datos non ipse suo premit ore Latinus, / sed circum late uolitans iam Fama per urbes / Ausonias tulerat, cum Laomedontia pubes / gramineo ripae religavit ab aggere classem,* 7.102–5). In this scene, where Latinus apparently wishes the gods' will to become widely known, he implicitly delegates his agency to *fama* in a way that foreshadows his subsequent abdications from governing his kingdom in Books 7 and 11.[82]

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to the complete range of Vergil's sources, we would have a more precise grasp of which insertions of *dicitur, ferunt,* etc. work as "Alexandrian footnotes" to signal allusions to other texts.

81. Feeney 1983, 208 highlights the close links between Fama's activities and other problems of perception when he emphasizes the connection between *Fama* (as *tam ficti prauique tenax quam nuntia ueri*) and Aeneas' *ne finge* (4.338), when he tells Dido (who accuses him of trying to run away from their marriage) not to distort things.

82. The poem highlights the similarities between "the father" Jupiter's complicity in Juno's actions and Latinus' series of abdications from his position as father and king. Later in Book 7 Latinus

There is no overt suggestion in 7.102–5 either that *fama* is either an unreliable or perverted means of communication or that here it generates lasting poetic remembrance. But the possibility of poetic immortality is never far away—the news transmitted by *fama* on Latinus' behalf includes prophecies of foreign sons-in-law exalting Italy's name to the stars.[83] Instances of accurate and opportune *fama* sometimes evoke directly the lasting remembrance granted by art. When Aeneas meets the Trojan prince Deiphobus in the underworld, he tells him that *fama* brought news of his death, allowing him to carry out the proper rituals and set up a cenotaph (6.502–10).[84] In *Aeneid* 9 *fama* informs Euryalus' mother of her son's death and incites her lament (9.473–75).[85] Soon after bringing Aeneas' ally Evander the news of his son Pallas' success in battle, *fama* warns the father that his son has died (11.139–41). On each of these occasions *fama* brings news—or *is* news—that stimulates mourning and commemoration.

In Book 3, unbelievable yet accurate *fama* fills the Trojans' ears, the astounding story that Priam's son Helenus has married Hector's widow and is ruling a Greek community (3.294–97). Aeneas' shock at hearing this is repeated for Andromache, like a reflection in a distorting mirror, leaving her so shaken that she confuses life with death when she sees Aeneas (*uerane te facies, uerus mihi nuntius adfers, nate dea?* "Is your appearance real, are you bringing me news as a real messenger, goddess' son?" 3.310–11). So the discourse of *fama* draws attention to the fallibility of human knowledge and memory, even as it celebrates poetry's power both to transmit knowledge and to establish new memories.

From the perspective of the aristocratic ideology that informs so much Roman literature, *fama* ushers in some disturbing incongruities. *Fama* can

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gives up any attempt to struggle against Juno's intent or rein back his people's desire for war (7.591–600). Latinus is named in 7.585; in the next line the pronoun *ille* picks up his name. In the rest of this passage (through 7.600), however, he is referred to simply as "the father" (*pater,* 7.593), a term often used of Jupiter. In 7.616–22, after learning about the "twin gates of war" (7.607), we hear how "Latinus was bid by custom to declare war on the *Aeneadae* and throw open the grim gates," but with a kind of impious purity "the father held off from touching them and turned away from the filthy duty, and hid himself in obscuring shadows," leaving the defiling task to Juno (*hoc et tum Aeneadis indicere bella Latinus / more iubebatur tristisque recludere portas. / abstinuit tactu pater auersusque refugit / foeda ministeria, et caecis se condidit umbris,* 7.616–19). In Book 11 the king is both *ipse pater* and *Latinus* in one line (11.469), as he gives up control over events yet again (11.469–75), and the harsh-sounding bugle gives its bloody signal as if of its own volition (11.474–75). But the poem imagines Latinus, unlike Jupiter, eventually claiming full responsibility for the war and its impiety (*arma impia sumpsi,* 12.31).

83. 7.98–99 (see also 7.79–80 on the prophecies about Lavinia *namque fore inlustrem fama fatisque canebant / ipsam, sed populo magnum portendere bellum*).

84. See Bleisch 1999 for detailed discussion of Deiphobus and his *fama* in Book 6.

85. This *fama* is *pennata,* an adjective that indicates its resemblance to the monstrous *fama* of Book 4, and is *nuntia,* like Book 4's goddess.

simultaneously denote beliefs sanctioned by tradition or by divine author-
ity, and unruly talk that emanates from the masses. Indeed, the unruly talk
of "the many" contributes to the formation of traditions that bridge divine
and human spheres of knowledge. The importance of *fama* in epic partly
reverses the hierarchies treasured by aristocratic thought.[86] It acknowledges
(directly or indirectly) the weight of communal approbation and disapproval
in ordering social and political life.[87]

　　The claims invoked by epic's language of *fama* are intrinsically diffi-
cult to wrap one's mind around. Commemorative *fama* demarcates indi-
vidual excellence but hints at the way such heroic exceptionalism depends
on the voices and actions of "the many." And it reaffirms what it means
to be human at just the moment that it aspires to make humans divine.
The nymph Juturna, whom Jupiter has made immortal against her will,
expresses this paradox when she speaks of her brother's imminent death:
*ille quidem ad superos, quorum se deuouet aris, / succedet fama uiuusque per
ora feretur* ("He indeed will mount, through his *fama,* to the gods above, at
whose altars he dedicates himself, and will be sustained alive on men's lips,"
12.234–35). She presents this death both as an act of self-sacrifice and as a
means to immortality. Turnus is the subject of the transformation she pre-
dicts (*ille quidem ad superos* [. . .] *succedet fama*), but he shares his agency
with *fama.* When Juturna elaborates how this *fama* is constituted, we find
that Turnus is to be a passenger on the voices of others (*uiuusque per ora
feretur*).[88]

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　　86. Though one should be wary of letting the abundance and brilliance of Cicero's writing over-
whelm one into taking him as spokesperson for his era and his—broadly defined—class, he gives
some beautifully clear examples of the aristocratic attitude. He expresses overtly his discomfort with
the "chatter of the mob" (*sermones uulgi*) as the arbiter of *gloria,* when he writes to Cato about his
hopes for a triumph: *si quisquam fuit umquam remotus et natura et magis etiam, ut mihi quidem sentire
videor, ratione atque doctrina ab inani laude et sermonibus uulgi, ego profecto is sum. testis est consulatus
meus, in quo, sicut in reliqua uita, fateor ea me studiose secutum ex quibus uera gloria nasci posset, ipsam
quidem gloriam per se numquam putaui expetendam* (Letter 110 [(XV.4)] 13, Shackleton Bailey 1977).
"If anyone was ever cut off both by nature, and still more (so it seems to me, at least) by reasoning
and education, from empty praise and the chatter of the mob, I am surely such a man. As witness
there stands my consulship, in which, as in the rest of my life, I admit that I zealously pursued the
things from which true glory might naturally be derived; but glory in itself and for its own sake I never
thought an object of pursuit." Clearly one benefit of the term *gloria* over *fama* for Cicero here is that
it helps him distinguish what aristocratic ideology regards as true, natural glory from mere reputation
among the *uulgus.* This distinction is explicitly theorized in *Tusc.* 3.3–4, which Hardie 2012, 24–26
discusses.

　　87. The crucial political component of *fama* and its conceptual kin (such as *gloria, laus,* Greek
kleos, etc.) can be seen abundantly in both Roman and Greek literature—Plato on *doxa* is just one
place to start—but receives relatively little explicit attention in the *Aeneid.* Book 11 is the great excep-
tion; see Hardie 1998, now expanded and significantly revised as chapter 4 in Hardie 2012.

　　88. I discuss this scene in detail in chapter 8; see also Hardie 2012, 68–70.

A comparable double logic appears in *fama* when the word points towards gossip that has lost its anchorage in any identifiable human or divine source. This "talk" transports knowledge in sometimes unfathomable ways—knowledge which may be mingled indiscernibly with untested beliefs or even outright lies. In their totality as collective *fama,* these human perceptions are sometimes pictured as divine, thanks to their power to exceed what any individual human could either know or communicate.

So perhaps the best remembered *fama* in the poem is the one embodied as a goddess—a foul and terrifyingly swift monstrous prodigy, born of earth, with eyes and tongues in quantities to match the feathers that carry her. Fittingly enough for one who sings her gossip, even this prodigious *Fama* is the embodiment of persuasive efficacy as much as narratorial instability. In the whole story of Dido and Aeneas, *fama* has the power to make things happen in the world, even while it is acknowledged as an unreliable blend of truth, supposition, and fantasy.[89] The *Fama* embodied by the polluting goddess plays as central a role in the talk constituting epic poetry as the praise-driven *fama* that is envisioned as the way to the stars (literally or figuratively) for mortal men and women.

The segment of narrative in Book 4 that immediately follows our introduction to the feathery *Fama* becomes a kind of rumor itself, just at the moment when the poem shows Dido's now hostile former-suitor Iarbas wielding gossip as a double-serving tool, of information and insult. She is notorious among scholars as a fiction maker of sorts: *tam ficti prauique tenax quam nuntia ueri* ("as prone to keep hold of what's made up and crooked as she is a reporter of truth," 4.188). This *Fama* conveys a troubling mixture of truth, pretense, and distortion, but at least some of the information she transmits about Aeneas' stay in Carthage is accurate—useful for Jupiter, though catastrophic for Dido. "She would sing without distinction things done and not done" (*pariter facta atque infecta canebat,* 4.190), we are told.[90] In the subsequent summary of sordid gossip about Aeneas' affair with Dido nothing is altogether irreconcilable with what we have heard elsewhere in the narrative.

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89. Another acknowledgment of *fama*'s unreliability occurs in 10.510–11, for instance, where it is not *fama* but a surer source that informs Aeneas of his troops' desperate situation (*nec iam fama mali tanti, sed certior auctor / aduolat Aeneae*).

90. The word "sing" does not adequately translate *cano* here, which is bound up in a complex network of traditions and expectations, and so expresses a far wider range of utterances than the English word. But we lack an equivalent in contemporary English, so "sing" is conventionally used in translations of the *Aeneid*'s first line (*arma uirumque cano*). Habinek 2005, 61 explains that "*cano* and its relatives [. . .] describe *speech made special* through the use of specialized diction, regular meter, musical accompaniment, figures of sound, mythical or religious subject matter, and socially authoritative performance context."

The *Aeneid* links *fama* with *fata* in several of its god-created works of imagination within the story world, most prominently in Jupiter's prophetic speech to Venus in Book 1, and in the shield Vulcan forges for Aeneas in Book 8.[91] These are among the ways the poem projects its storytelling forward into the lives of the poem's Roman readers.[92]

Like the gods, humans also build verbal conduits between past, present and future. The poem presents this mortal speech as deeply entangled with divine utterances. Dido's immortal *fama,* for instance, is partly constituted through her condemnation of Aeneas' failure in *pietas,* which she expresses in her prophetic curse on Aeneas and his descendants. The curse outlines a trajectory in which the future of Carthage merges with the Roman past, and evokes in readers' civic memories the series of wars between Carthage and Rome between the third and first century B.C.E. (4.607–29). When Aeneas visits Anchises in Elysium, his father sets him ablaze with passion for the *fama* that is on its way (*famae uenientis amore,* 6.889) by showing and describing figures of legend and history whom readers in Augustan Rome would immediately recognize.[93]

Scenes like this have raised many questions, of course, about exactly how visions of the *fama* to come in Augustan Rome might have resonated politically for the poem's first readers. These questions have sometimes been grouped into polarized sides of a debate, with reductive labels: "optimistic" vs. "pessimistic," "Augustan propaganda" vs. "further voices," and so on.[94] Though of course different readers have emphasized different rhetorical and ideological strands in the poem, most have taken positions that are much more subtle and responsive than the caricatures implied by those opposed labels. W. R. Johnson, for instance, describes the poem as "polycentric": "every reader will find the center that suits him or her." As Johnson says, "in closing with evil as it presents itself in human history and in the lives of men, Vergil no more affirms the triumph of unreason and *ira* in the universe and in history than he affirms their defeat."[95]

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91. See Hardie 2012, 73 on 1.286ff. (*nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar, / imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris, / Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo*), and 104 on 6.889 and 8.731 (*attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum*).

92. Quint 1993 and Hardie 1993 explore some of the key ways that the *Aeneid* achieves this. Rossi 2004 considers this topic in terms of Bakhtinian polychrony, *enargeia,* and the *Aeneid*'s remarkable use of the narrative/historic present (Ennian and un-Homeric) to show how "anachronies within the primary narrative [. . .] bridge the gap between the tale of long ago and the Roman readers' collective experience and forge a continuum between the past retold and the present perceived" (148).

93. Book 8 also notably contains two overtly history-spanning segments: Vulcan's prophetic shield, and Evander's guided tour of Pallanteum (the town presented by the narrative as proto-Rome).

94. Kennedy 1992 explores this polarization.

95. Johnson 1976, 149, 148. See also Spence 1988 (especially chap. 2, "Juno's Desire") for a view

Fama both relies on and helps construct a particular social and political order. But Latin literature—and the *Aeneid* in particular—generally does its utmost to unmoor *fama* from anchorage in the perceptions and values of any one society at one particular moment. *Fama*-memory neither belongs to the workings of an individual mind, nor is it quite "social memory." I would link *fama*-memory with Alon Confino's view of memory as the "outcome of the relationship between a distinct representation of the past and the full spectrum of symbolic representations available in a given culture."[96] So this is not to say that the *Aeneid* is detached from the language, values, and political problems of Augustan Rome. Rather, these concerns are felt within a rhetoric of fiction that positions itself as belonging to a far more diffuse temporal and cultural blend. My investigation seeks to understand some of the conceptual premises that enable such a blend in this text.

1.4 Chapter previews

In the rest of this book each chapter reads closely scenes in the *Aeneid* where gods and humans are shown together—either in conflict or collaboration—shaping the way things are known.

Chapter 2 ("Monstrous *Fama*") considers three scenes that implicate manifestations of divine will in the prodigious qualities of *Fama.* The chapter starts with Book 4, where the narrative correlates with extreme precision the attributes that empower the defiling goddess *Fama,* evoking a kind of equilibrium of excess. This reflects the balanced excess in the interaction of *fama* and *fata,* not only in Dido's sufferings but also in their effect on the course of history for Rome and Carthage. In Book 10 we find another programmatic depiction of *fama.* Here Jupiter responds to Hercules' grief over the imminent death of a cherished mortal, Evander's son Pallas. Jupiter integrates the endeavors of *uirtus,* which stretch out *fama,* into the anonymous rule of death. The chapter closes with a brief look at the opening of Book 2, where Aeneas explains how he and his fellow Trojans were beguiled into breaking open their defensive walls for the Greeks' gift horse. In Aeneas' account, human talk and divine authority are impenetrably confused through the combined efforts of *fama,* the Trojans as interpreters en masse, the stories

of the forces opposed to reason (instantiated most prominently by Juno) as something considerably more positive than the "necessary evil" Spence sees in Johnson's readings (23).

96. Confino 1997, 1391. For other recent discussions of the terms and concepts "collective memory" and "social memory," see the useful bibliography collected by the *Memoria Romana* project at http://www.utexas.edu/research/memoria/bibliography.htm.

told by the Greek "Sinon," and the horrendous serpents that attack the priest Laocoon. All three depictions of *fama* express in some way epic's quandary as a genre. By articulating a vision of how *fata* and *fama* work together, the poem promises to give voice to the collective knowledge and memories of a society. Yet these discourses of *fama* and *fata* intermingle human and divine knowledge and imagination in a way that overreaches any such social memory.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are grouped around the theme of perceptual and material contamination. For this analysis, I enlist the help of Mary Douglas's studies in ritual pollution. Chapter 3 explores how epic *fama* blends specific ways of imagining the past with readers' contemporary perceptions of the Italian landscape. The *Aeneid* embeds its myth in Mediterranean geography through its depictions of the order reasserted through death rituals that are performed for Misenus and Caieta and promised to Palinurus in Books 6 and 7. Rituals of remembrance are needed to clear up "matter out of place"—material "dirt" spread by the unburied bodies of Misenus and Palinurus. *Pietas* demands purification. But when taken to the extremes shown in *Aeneid* 6, even *pietas* risks becoming transgressive, sharing in the category-confusing violations that require expiation.

Chapter 4 builds on this analysis to see what happens when readers and characters recognize "this" as "that." I focus on the riddles posed and solved by the Harpy Celaeno's famous "table-eating" prophecy in Book 3 and its fulfillment in Book 7, mulling over the poetic work performed by this moment of recognition. Aeneas washes away the filth of Celaeno and her sisters by replacing Celaeno's prediction with a similar prophecy spoken by his father, Anchises. But details of the narrative texture make clear that both the material and the verbal "dirt" which the Harpies emit are as intrinsic to the *Aeneid*'s fictive knowledge as Aeneas' cleansing of that dirt.

Chapter 5 analyzes the fluid movement between metaphor and materiality which belongs to the substitutive logic of *pietas,* and which plays a key role in sustaining *fama.* In Book 9 Nisus, Euryalus, Ascanius, and the Trojan elders imagine measuring in the material form of gifts the *fama* they long to achieve and bestow. Their imaginative evaluation takes on its own creative momentum, and redefines the endeavor undertaken by Nisus and Euryalus. As a result, both young men are killed and their corpses mutilated. The narrative temporarily purifies the remembrance offered the "fortunate pair" in death, but gives the wildly grieving mother of Euryalus the last word. Euryalus' mother laments her estrangement from the corpse of her son in language that evokes the Trojans' alienation in the landscape of Italy. In this episode, the poem fulfills the expectations of *pietas,* on one level,

putting matter in its place through its imaginative ordering and reordering of remembrance. Yet the narrative acknowledges the work of *furor,* with its perceptual dislocations, in this ordering, and presents such *furor* as thoroughly entwined with—even intrinsic to—*pietas.*

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 form another group, examining the effects of divine communication and disguise on human understanding in the *Aeneid.* I probe latent analogies between these effects within the *Aeneid*'s story world and the rhetorical work performed by various forms of fiction. J. L. Austin's speech-act theory makes it easier to think through the poetic interactions between the seemingly interpretable force of ordinary language—how people do things with words—and the force of divine communications, unknowable except in the imagination of epic. All three chapters are interested in the contributions made to epic's fictive knowledge by the interplay of revelation and mystification. Divinities achieve their ends sometimes by revealing, sometimes by obscuring the mechanisms of their power. Recognition can operate as a mode of concealment as much as a way of observing authority or obtaining obedience.

Chapter 6 investigates the metamorphic commands given by Aeneas' mother, Venus, in Book 2 and the great mother, Cybele, in Book 9. In Aeneas' tale of Troy's fall, his mother reveals to him the relentlessness of the gods' attack on Troy by means that closely resemble a familiar rhetorical strategy, one that Aeneas himself uses for his Carthaginian listeners. Venus orders her son to look at the gods, and delineates exactly what he is to see. In the second half of this chapter, I turn to Cybele, who speaks her commands in Book 9 when Turnus threatens the Trojan ships with fire. In contrast with Venus' imperatives in Book 2, Cybele's orders rely altogether on divine power for their efficacy. She uses the force that permits gods in the *Aeneid* not only to change minds and perceptions with words but also to make man-made objects—the ships—into living, swimming sea nymphs. Before describing this transformation, though, the poem gives a retrospective account of much earlier negotiations between Jupiter and Cybele. This account explains the metamorphic force of the command by showing the gods carefully parsing the rhetorical logic that defines the status of Aeneas' ships as mortal or immortal. The flashback story of this rhetorical parsing is all the more remarkable, given that the miracle of the ships asks readers to imagine divine commands as endowed with a force that could never be claimed by "ordinary" language.

Chapter 7 turns its attention to the cloud or mist that ensures the obscurity of most divine activity in the eyes of humans, as Venus tells Aeneas in Book 2. How does the *Aeneid* imagine that vapor forming? One way of

grasping this obfuscation is by watching the transformations effected by the shape-shifting deities Cupid and Allecto. They allow themselves to be seen and touched, but in disguised forms that distort recognition. These offer intriguing parallels for the work of tropes in narrative. Metaphor and its kindred tropes may express—and perhaps intensify—the cognitive ruptures that occur in many forms of perception. This fundamental perceptual disorder underlies some of the continuities between the kinds of fictive knowledge offered both by classical epics and by traditional European novels, even when texts in these genres work with sharply distinct narrative conventions.

Chapter 8 asks "how to do things with birds." Here I feel out the seams of fiction in the nymph Juturna's machinations in *Aeneid* 12. Juturna shifts not only beliefs but also the sequence of events. She cites conventions that rely on her audience's sense of recognition to endow her (visual) speech acts with a degree of divine authority that she could not otherwise claim. Her misleading—but partly fulfilled—bird omen provides a fascinating analogy for the genre-blurring through which both epic and novel generate fictive knowledge and, as mythmakers, establish new memories.