
Professor Thornton examines a most important aspect of the *Aeneid*, the fact that the world of the poem is full of gods. 'This epic is... not composed to show the actions of men primarily, but to show the actions of the gods in their dealings with men' (p.157). She finds in the poem 'both (Virgil's) cosmic and religious conception of the world and the moral ideas which he felt to be adequate for his time, the two being ultimately not separable' (p.2); and she argues that one of his main objects in the poem was 'to educate the young Romans of his time towards the religious and moral convictions which seemed to him to be the truth and a guarantee of peace' (p.157).

She first describes the context of her interpretation of the poem (Part I). It was a common ancient opinion that the Homeric epics for good or ill educated the young; Augustus was interested in reforms of religion and morals, and Horace wrote of the poet as teacher of the young; everyone was familiar with allegorical and moral interpretations of Homer's gods (Pt.I, ch.1, Professor Thornton's article in *Prudentia* III (1971), with one or two alterations). An educated man's view of the cosmos in the first century B.C. emerges from Varro and from Cicero, and from writers of the first and second centuries A.D. In particular, Jupiter was the cosmos as a whole, and at the same time the highest element in the cosmos, mind, which pervaded all parts of the cosmos, making them divine, so that the other gods were parts of his spirit (one single cosmic divinity then, and at the same time a number of lesser divinities; with which Professor Thornton compares a coin whose two sides are alive and move in sympathy, the sovereign's head on one side and a number of figures on the other); but there were degrees of moral worth, from the highest part of the cosmos, the ether, which was free from disturbance, to the lowest, which was full of confusion (Pt.I, ch.2, Professor Thornton's article in *Prudentia* I (1969), with substantial revisions and additions).

Professor Thornton finds this picture of the cosmos in the *Aeneid*, in Anchises' account of the cosmos in Book 6 and in the rest of the poem (Part II). But while a lesser god sometimes does appear as a spirit that pervades his part of the cosmos (e.g. Juno as the air), it is harder to see in the poem that these spirits are parts of the spirit or mind of the cosmos. Final control is with Jupiter, but that is not the same thing. The calming of the storm accords with Jupiter's ultimate purpose, but Neptune's purpose is to defend his own prerogative. Again, some gods and spirits act counter to Jupiter's ultimate purpose; and it is one thing to say that they are allowed to act by Jupiter, another to say that they are part of him (see pp.27f).

Professor Thornton confronts some interesting problems in this chapter. Virgil has combined a number of conceptions of the world of the dead; and it is
not clear that he has reconciled them. In one or two places in the poem that world seems to be above the earth, between the earth and the moon; but Aeneas makes a descent, and Virgil refers to the world of the living above (p.60 and n.99). In the same lines in which he implies that the dead are purified between earth and the ether, Virgil says that when they are born again they return to the vault above (supera... convexa, 6,750). Professor Thornton suggests that Aeneas when he enters the cave has a vision, and that the journey is a dream journey. But that is not at all evident at the beginning of the journey (whatever one makes of the gates at the end); Plutarch’s account of Timarchus (Mor. 590Aff), which she cites (pp.62f), is much more explicit that Timarchus’ vision is a dream vision. Norden’s explanation seems more convincing (Aeneis Buch VI, 3 pp.46f).

From the structure of the cosmos Professor Thornton proceeds to the movement of it (Part III). The course of events is a series of changes in the cosmos, the movement of the cosmos, which is one world of divine and human, in which the divine permeates the human. Man is free only if and when Jupiter grants it (pp.72f). This conception ‘while not astrological, comes close to a determinism of an astrological kind’ (p.75). As the basis for the teaching of morals, that requires some hard thinking.

The action of the poem and the plot are determined by the opposition between Jupiter and Juno concerning the Trojan-Roman destiny. The action develops through five phases, in each of which Juno first intervenes to obstruct the Trojan-Roman destiny, and Jupiter then acts to counter her intervention: 1,1-1,656, 1,657-5,603 (Venus first, then Juno), 5,604-7,285, 7,286-12,133(215), 12,134(216)-end (pp74f). The shape of the plot is a b c b a, in which the second and fourth parts contain ‘insets’, Books 2 and 3, and 8 and 9 (p.151).

In each phase ‘each slice of cosmic living is imbued with and characterized by the nature of the divinity active in it and ruling it’ (p.75). So in the storm Aeneas thinks of Troy: ‘Juno’s attack on him through the storm has been successful: the call of fate has dropped out of mind’ (p.81). At Carthage Aeneas denies that he has entered into marriage with Dido: ‘under the double influence of Venus and Juno he is as ambiguous and dishonest as they are’ (p.95). But in the fourth phase Jupiter decrees in the council of the gods that men shall act independently, and Turnus and Aeneas are then free to display their own natures (pp.53ff, 122ff). Turnus’ character is complex, but he displays covetousness, treachery, and violence; while by the end of the phase ‘Aeneas has truly become Jupiter’s viceroy on earth’ (p.139). In the fifth phase the gods intervene again; but the fourth phase has prepared the outcome.

Professor Thornton adds two appendices, on ira and furor and on Nisus and Euryalus (the first is part of her paper in AULLA XIV Proceedings and Papers, 1972, with some additions).

The most interesting supernatural figures in the action are Venus and Juno.
Venus' role is rather odd. In despatching Cupid to Carthage she works in effect against Jupiter’s intentions. But Professor Thornton seems to suggest that here and in Book 4 she actually opposes Jupiter as Juno opposes Jupiter (pp.87f, 94). But Venus rather defers to Juno in the confidence that Jupiter will not allow Juno’s intervention to come to anything (Professor Thornton mentions this interpretation, p.94). Venus’ actions in Books 1 and 4 are perhaps irresponsible by human standards; but she is, after all, a goddess, and not the most responsible of the goddesses. Again, Professor Thornton describes Venus’ attitude in the council of the gods as a ‘betrayal’ of Jupiter’s will, in which ‘she has fallen even lower than when she sent Cupid to Dido and agreed to her marriage to Aeneas’ (p.124). But Professor Thornton adds the qualification ‘to the extent that she means what she says’, and later mentions the view, which seems more convincing, that Venus is attempting to provoke Jupiter to intervene for the Trojans (p.124).

Juno’s role is the most important for Professor Thornton’s interpretation of ‘the life or will of the One cosmic god Jupiter in his relationship both to Fate and to the Many’ (p.75) in the action of the poem. Jupiter’s will seems to be the same as fate. Fate includes some events that Juno brings about in opposition to fate. Jupiter rules Juno, ultimately. But all this falls short of the idea of one cosmic divine power (Jupiter) manifest in a number of particular powers (Juno and others), in Virgil’s account of the action. The basis of the relations between Jupiter and Juno in the *Aeneid* is the opposition of two distinct divinities (cf. Perret, *Virgile*, 2 pp.133ff).

Another question that suggests itself concerns the moral evaluation of Juno’s actions. Professor Thornton describes them as ‘evil’ (‘her anger is one of disobedience and rebellion and, therefore, evil’, p.78; cf. pp.154ff). But that seems rather too simple, in relation both to Juno’s role in the poem (e.g. in 12,819ff) and to her status in Roman religion. Lieberg’s discussion of the matter is worth mentioning (*A&R* (5) 11 (1966), 145ff), despite its shortcomings (Buchheit, *Gymnasium* 81 (1974), 499ff). Juno had had to be reconciled, and Virgil reflects that idea (cf. 1,279ff). But the change is rather from anger to favour than from evil to goodness. Jupiter dictating Rome’s role in the world dictates human values; but from the human point of view a divine power’s actions lie beyond judgment in those terms.

On the human level, Aeneas passes through an ‘education for leadership’, and he learns ‘what the gods reject and what they want in men’ (pp.157f). Professor Thornton’s view of the divine and the human in the poem thus differs, markedly, from Camps’s (*An Introduction to Virgil’s Aeneid*, ch.V); and some comment on his view would have been interesting. In her own analysis, what Venus in the short term and Juno want, and what they reject, is not consistent or calculable.
Professor Thornton herself recognizes that the coherence of the universe in the *Aeneid* 'is not rigidly systematic or logically flawless' (p.xi; and with reference to Jupiter and the other gods, p.71). But her work is a stimulating contribution in an area that needs more attention in English. The book is well produced; misprints are fairly numerous, but few cause any difficulty.

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