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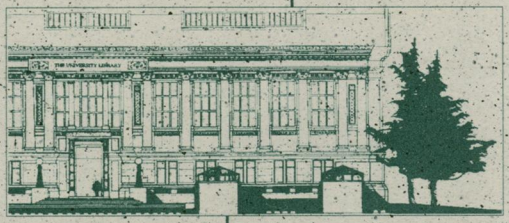
The Faith of Achates:
Finding Aeneas' Other



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Preface

The goal of this series is to foster scholarship on campus by providing new faculty members with the opportunity to share their research interest with their colleagues and students. We see the role of an academic library not only as a place where bibliographic materials are acquired, stored, and made accessible to the intellectual community, but also as an institution that is an active participant in the generation of knowledge.

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The Faith of Achates: Finding Aeneas' Other

My subject today is the most shadowy figure in Vergil's *Aeneid*: Achates, Aeneas' companion and, it is often asserted, *alter ego*. The noun-epithet combination "faithful Achates," *fidus Achates*, which appears to be the most consistent thing about him, has long been proverbial for a trusted companion and male confidant. If the Internet be any guide, this is still current, or is supposed to be, for the first "match" that appeared when I searched for "Achates" was a citation from a handbook of Greek and Roman mythology. For all our friends in Cyberland, Achates is "a companion and friend of Æneas. His fidelity was so exemplary that '*fidus Achates*/faithful Achates,' became a proverb," in support of which our source cites "Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his 'fidus Achates.'" The encyclopedia cited dates from 1884,[1] and the citation is from Sir Walter Scott, which just goes to show that the more modern we get, the more tralatitious.

To the question "What is Achates like?," we might answer that he is not merely faithful but also strong and swift, but these epithets do little to distinguish him from other military heroes whom epic poets wish to characterize positively.[2] As I will discuss below, he is unknown from Vergil's standard set of Greek heroic subtexts or their offshoots. Again, as I shall rehearse at greater length, even in the *Aeneid* he leads a come-and-go existence; while he is named twenty-one times, these are not distributed evenly throughout the epic, appearing in only six of the twelve books.[3]

Perhaps Achates is simply a recurring minor character. If so, it would be odd that he is so often alleged to be Aeneas' *alter ego*, at least by those who mention him at all. Most modern commentators, in tacit embarrassment, say little or nothing about Achates. Look up "Achates" in the index of recent books on the *Aeneid:* the absence of even an entry can strike one as quite scandalous.[4] Indeed, it is this very interpretive scandal that makes our meditations today so interesting. Of course, given the density of work on Vergil, somebody will have published a book on Achates, and in 1988 there appeared Thomas Weber's *Fidus Achates: Der Gefährte des Aeneas in Vergils Aeneis*, a competent if pedestrian Heidelberg

doctoral dissertation that reviews Achates' rôle in the epic.[5] I mean not to disparage; Weber's study is a helpful control and his dissertating zeal some guarantee that the scholarship on Achates really is as thin and uninspired as it has long appeared to me. And as we will also see, Weber represents a modern and surprisingly vigorous version of a long-standing tradition of Aeneid interpretation: allegorizing.

First, however, permit me to give you that promised overview of Achates' rôle in the *Aeneid* so that you can have his part in the whole clear in your mind from the start. Both Weber and Pietro Perotti, who devotes a few pages to him in a 1985 article, in Latin,[6] work through his appearances, or at least the points at which he is mentioned in the text. What such a survey tends to do is perforce keep Achates before our eyes, while the *Aeneid* itself slips away. Let me attempt an equally superficial summary but one that at least registers when Achates is absent, or is not provably present. Though this obviously adds a bit to its length, there seems no other way to give a fair sense of Achates' actual rôle in the *Aeneid*.

After the proem, Juno has Aeolus stir up the seas into a terrible storm, and Achates' name first appears — a name, we must recall, no one would have been expecting, since he was hitherto unknown in Trojan or Greek history — as one of several of Aeneas' captains whose ships were being battered, Ilioneus, Achates, Abas, and Aletes (1.120). Nor would there be any reason to believe we'd hear his name again; for example, while Vergil uses Abas as the name of three individuals, the Trojan Abas appears here and nowhere else,[7] and Aletes is mentioned only twice again. But once the Trojans have made landfall, Achates becomes steadily more prominent. He is the first to strike fire from a flint (1.174), and as early as 1.188 we learn that "fidus Achates" — the epithet here for the first time — is bearing weapons for Aeneas as the Trojan leader surveys the sea from the highland.

Though Achates is not mentioned for some time, we not implausibly infer that he is with Aeneas as he encourages his followers (1.198-207, including the famous *forsan et haec olim meminisse*

iuuabit of 203; more below, however, on even plausible inferring). We do not know whether Achates has any insight into the fact that, as the narrator tells us, Aeneas is simulating his high hopes (209), for we still might not expect Achates to be more than a trusted ensign. When we return to the Libyan coast after the council of the gods, we learn that Aeneas has decided to prospect the nearby countryside. At 312, we hear that it is Achates who will be his sole companion. No sooner do we learn this, and what weapons he is bearing in his hands, than Aeneas' mother Venus appears and greets the two youths, she in virgin-huntress guise so implausible that Aeneas himself suspects that she is some goddess, likely Diana. She acknowledges Achates' presence in her opening words — "hey, fellows," perhaps even "hey, guys," or "hey, boys" — *heus...iuuenes* (321) — but after a few more plural verbs, Achates might as well not be there, since it is Aeneas who does all the talking, and it is to him alone that Venus says, and I paraphrase, "whoever you are, you are, I think, hardly hated by the gods" (*Quisquis es, haud, credo, inuisus caelestibus auras/uitalis carpis...*, 387-88).

Now one could well imagine either the "real" Venus or the Tyrian girl whose disguise she has adopted responding to Aeneas' evidently preeminent position; he speaks for the couple, he's the leader, he's the one who counts. It is no doubt for his sake that Venus encloses both men in her protective cloud (*gradentis*, 411; *eos*, 413), as they make their way together to the city and ascend the hill that overlooks it (*corripuere*, 417, *ascendebant*, 418). We are now quite accustomed to Achates' presence as a subordinate. It is only Aeneas' wonder at the city abuilding that the narrator feels is worth recording (*miratur molem Aeneas..., / miratur portas*, 421f.), just as he details only Aeneas' reactions at the remarkable images in the temple of Juno, images that depict scenes from the siege and sack of Troy (e.g. *uidet*, 456). But Achates nonetheless has a critical rôle here. While Vergil does not describe his reactions, it is to Achates that Aeneas directs his impassioned question:

> "What place", he said, "Achates,
> what region in the world is not full of our travail?
> Here's Priam! Here too glory has its own rewards,

there are tears for things and the human condition touches
the mind.
Loose your fear. This fame will bring, you see, some safety."

"quis iam locus," inquit, "Achate,
quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?
en Priamus. sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi,
sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.
solve metus; feret haec aliquam tibi fama salutem (1.459-63).

I have expressed elsewhere my agreement with those who wish Aeneas had been more skeptical; why should he assume he will receive particularly good treatment from a people who seem to be celebrating the triumphs of his enemies, indeed, their very triumph over him?[8] If Achates thought something like this through his silence, Vergil gives no indication, although it is hard not to ascribe some sort of divergent reaction to anyone who fails to respond to so ardent an outburst as Aeneas'. But perhaps we are too hasty already in giving the name "Achates" to the resistant position in and skeptical reader of the text. In any event, after the *ekphrasis* or description of the pictures has concluded, the narrator again insists on the fact that these objects appeared wondrous (*miranda,* 494) to "Dardan Aeneas," neither adding "alone" nor telling us what Achates thought. At least we can be fairly confident he observes with Aeneas, and still from the safety of invisibility, the entrance of Dido and then, surprisingly (*subito,* 509), the arrival of Antheus, Sergestus and Cloanthus, Trojans whom Aeneas and Achates thought were lost at sea. Though Vergil again only describes Aeneas as seeing this (*uidet,* 510), after the speech of the other Trojans to Dido and her generous response, it is Achates who prompts Aeneas to step forward. Here Vergil describes both as burning to escape from their cloud (579f.), and this is the one and only time Achates' *ipsissima verba* are quoted:

Goddess born, what sentiment now rises up in your mind?
You see all in safety, your fleet and comrades hospitably
received.
One alone is absent, whom we ourselves saw sunk
beneath the waves; all else corresponds to your mother's
words

nate dea, quae nunc animo sententia surgit?
omnia tuta uides, classem sociosque receptos.
unus abest, medio in fluctu quem uidimus ipsi
submersum; dictis respondent cetera matris (1.582-585).

No sooner does Achates speak than the cloud dissolves, just as Achates does from our immediate prospect. It is Aeneas who is described shining in the light, in appearance like unto a god (*restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit/os umerosque deo similis*, 588-89). Of course, he is the hero, and the narrator explains that Venus has worked this transformation. She was hardly compelled to give her son's chance companion a make-over too. Our gaze is focussed on Aeneas, and so is Dido's. Achates is there, yes, but suddenly in the shadows. He is not described as rushing to embrace the newly recovered comrades, nor is he addressed by Dido, not even acknowledged by her. For Aeneas, when need presses, Achates is once again the handy factotum. He is sent to fetch Aeneas' son Ascanius from the ships. Indeed, his epithet here, "swift" (*rapidum...Achaten*, 644), suggests that Achates takes his very qualities from the task Aeneas calls on him to fulfill at any given moment.[9] So instructed, and told exactly what significant gifts he is to bring back, Achates trots off (656). As we then discover, Venus prevents him from fulfilling his errand, at least in all particulars, for she arranges for Cupid to assume Ascanius' form, while Ascanius himself is whisked off to Ida. But for all he can tell, he has done his duty, and, satisfied, "happy Achates" (*laetus Achates*, 696) escorts the false Ascanius back to the palace.

Books two and three together comprise Aeneas' after-supper narration to Dido and the assembled Trojans and Tyrians. To hear Aeneas' narrative of Troy's destruction which comprises book two, as Achates presumably did, too, *fidus Achates* had no part whatsoever in Troy's defense, at least not any part visible from Aeneas' perspective during that event. Aeneas' narrative continues in book three, in which he relates the travels of his fleet from Troy across the eastern Mediterranean, as the Trojans seek to establish a new homeland. Achates' one and only appearance is at 3.523, where, significantly, he is named as the first to hail Italy, when its

Adriatic coast first appears to the Trojans who sailed on from Epirus in book three (*Italiam primus conclamat Achates,/Italiam laeto socii clamore salutant...*, 3.523-24). Now it is possible to invent plausible explanations for his relatively lesser importance in these books; at Troy, Aeneas will have had many other friends, indeed, family members, and may hardly have known Achates; it was only among the remnant of Trojans he was guiding into exile that Achates had any prominence, and particularly among the subset that with him survived the storm and landed on the Libyan coast. And we can also say that until the end of book three and the death of Aeneas' father, Anchises, Aeneas had in his father a nearer and dearer companion.

Plausible, yes, but, as usual, these are stories interpreters tell themselves in order to solve problems. Even if we convince ourselves that there are good reasons to explain the disparity between Achates' prominence in book 1, on the one hand, and his absence in book 2 and near invisibility in book 3, on the other, what are we to make of the fact that he doesn't appear once in book 4? I don't know how to answer this question. Others have had ideas. While I do not wish to demean the conjectures of a careful scholar, one who has offered some strikingly original ideas, an example of interpretive over-reaching is Pietro Perotti's suggestion "Vergil did not wish to produce on his stage four characters — in Italian, un *quartetto* — two stars and two comprimarios, to borrow the language of opera — at once two similar pairs, which might diminish the poetic power of the love of Aeneas and Dido."[10] While it is probably impossible to judge why the craftsman Vergil did or did not do something, Perotti is right that if Achates were present and involved with Anna, this would be a very different plot. Is it *Cosi fan tutte, Die Entführung aus dem Serail,* or *Le Nozze di Figaro*? Whatever, it is not the *Aeneid*. Is Perotti justified in advancing the less daring speculation that Aeneas didn't need warnings from *fidus Achates* once he had been reminded of his divine responsibility and had resolved to leave (*ibid.*, 22)? Perhaps, but this much is sure: "Achates" has somehow drawn us into trying to guess at motivations of characters and an author we can never know.

Achates' absence in book 4 is odd enough, but it is yet more remarkable in book 5. Goodness knows, in the elaborate funeral games celebrated in Sicily on the anniversary of Anchises' death, we learn the names of Trojans we never hear before or after; yet Achates is not mentioned, nor can one be long satisifed with Perotti's blithe assertion that when not mentioned by name, Achates is silently present (*ibid.*, 21). Achates doesn't reappear in the poem until book 6, when he enters with the priestess to interrupt Aeneas' inspection of the depiction of the story of Daedalus and Icarus in Apollo's temple. Only at the point of his reentry do we learn that Achates had been sent on this task (*ni iam praemissus Achates/ adforet...*, 6.34-35). Achates remains outside Sibyl's cave while our hero receives her instructions, and is there for him when he reemerges; we see them walk together and learn that they discussed Sibyl's still unclear references to a dead comrade (6.158-62). That mystery is soon solved, and it is clear that, though unnamed, it must be Achates who assists in the burial of Misenus. But already Achates is receding into plurals that soon seem to denote multiple comrades.

We would not expect him to accompany Aeneas in the great traversal of the underworld that occupies most of book 6, but we might well expect him to be prominent when Aeneas' band finally lands on the Italian peninsula, which he was the first to sight. Aeneas appears with his *primi duces* (7.107); surely, we say, Achates is one of them, but he is not named. We lose clear sight of him until book 8, when as Aeneas and Evander prepare to enter into a formal alliance, Pallas accompanies his father Evander and Achates accompanies Aeneas (*filius huic Pallas, illi comes ibat Achates*, 8.466), a "quartetto" of a different opera with at least potentially different erotic undertones (Benjamin Britten rather than Mozart). Aeneas and Achates are described as having similarly somber reactions to Evander's long speech (*Aeneas Anchisiades et fidus Achates*, 8. 521), and Achates fittingly rides out directly after Aeneas (586). We then lose sight of him until book 10, when suddenly at verse 332 — battles and maneuvers have been raging for nearly two books now — Aeneas addresses Achates, whom we hadn't even realized was

present, and asks for his arms. Aeneas casts, but the returning fire misses Aeneas and strikes Achates in the thigh (344). At this juncture Achates drops out of sight for another two books, reappearing as third to Ascanius and Mnestheus, though still marked by the epithet *fidus*, to support the wounded Aeneas as he limps along at 12.384. We see him last in battle, striking an otherwise unknown Rutulian named Epulo (12.459), and then he is gone forever, at least from the *Aeneid*.

As our survey has just made clear, and has been often noted, Achates' certain appearances are unevenly distributed. In case you weren't keeping careful tally, he is named eleven times in book 1, once in book 3, twice in book 6, three times in book 8, and twice in each of books 10 and 12 (cp. n. 3 for verse numbers). Given the fact that Vergil did not give the *Aeneid* its final polishing, one might well advance the hypothesis that Achates was a feature of early compositional drafts and was on his way out when Vergil's revisions were cut short. Of course, one might also propose the opposite, namely, that Achates was added later in Vergil's conception and was on his way in. One can play — and some scholars have played — at more advanced levels, correlating Achates' presence or absence with purported signs of lack of revision, such as the half-lines (which are at least objectively identifiable, even if their significance is debated), or other more subjectively identified elements. But this way lies madness. For my part, I have long since resigned myself to working on the *Aeneid* we have rather than on any number of *Aeneid*'s we don't.[11] My point would be that the very spottiness of his presence points to that "other *Aeneid*," the finished, polished, perfect *Aeneid* we do not have.

As the title of my talk indicates, this is likely to be the first of several "others" to which, or whom, Achates points the way. I would also like to highlight my methodological perspective. The Achates problem, the scandal he presents interpreters, is just what interests me. What is the scandal he constitutes and how do interpreters cope with it? Scandal... *skandalon* ... stumbling block. In my view, the interpretive stumbling block can prove quite valuable.

For if one is on the wrong path, meeting up with a stumbling block is actually a good thing. "Achates" can serve, diagnostically, to test interpretations — stumbling block as touchstone, so to speak. But his manifold fungibility is already paradigmatic in the *Aeneid*. Just as Aeneas readily employs a seemingly willing Anchises to fulfill a variety of functions — bearer of arms, look-out, messenger, fire-starter, companion — so we can deploy him to various ends in our own interpretive enterprise. I will seek to use the "Achates" of Vergil's text and of other hermeneutic texts as an interpretive tool that can be wielded on (against?) both the *Aeneid* and the interpretive operation itself. If this is in one sense a form of the old philological ideal of *Homêron ex Homêrou saphênizein*, "explicating Homer from Homer," it puts a peculiar new critical twist on it.

The interpretive tradition around Achates has long dealt with him, on several levels, by allegorizing, so that the next "other" I will adduce here is the "other" in "allegory," that notorious "other-speak." Today I can give only a small sample of the senses drawn from Achates via various interpretive maneuvers. The tradition goes back at least as far as Servius, who, as a commentator, must find something to say about everything. His note on *Aeneid* 1.312 reveals that the mystery of Achates had sparked considerable puzzlement already in his day:

> "Accompanied by Achates." We have said it is asked why Achates is Aeneas' companion. Now many different things are said, but it is better imagined that the name is derived from a Greek etymology. For *akhos* means "anxiety," which is ever the companion of kings.[12]

Given the absence of any accessible literary tradition, Servius turns to etymology as ground for his allegorizing "Achates" as the "care" that accompanies kings. This kind of exegesis, however, is notoriously productive of excess meanings, itself producing an interpretive instability and shiftiness to match Achates' own. In fact, this is not the first explanatory suggestion he makes. Already on 1.174, the point at which Achates had "struck a spark from the flint" (*silici scintillam excudit*), Servius noted,

> "Achates": he [i.e., Vergil] plays on the name, for "achates" is a kind of stone. Well then does he say that he struck fire. Whence it is that he calls his [Aeneas'] comrade "Achates." For one reads in Pliny's *Natural History* that if anyone has this stone in his ring, he will be more attractive.[13]

Over centuries this link between "Achates" and the agate-stone, as well as a particular river in Sicily where the stone was found, is mentioned frequently, but though there might be more to draw from it — I can hardly resist pointing to the stumbling block and touchstone now become agate, the stone the dappled coloring of which is itself reflective of my own dappled "Achates" — I wish to emphasize ethical rather than minerological associations.

Fulgentius combines the two, deriving "Achates" "as if from the Greek '*aconetus*', that is, the habit of sadness," and continues with the more universalizing comment "For from infancy, human nature is conjoined with troubles."[14] This is of course a piece of his larger allegorization of the first six books of the *Aeneid* as the story of every man's moral development. Bernardus Sylvestris follows in the Fulgentian tradition, not only echoing Fulgentius' phrase "tristis consuetudo" (though via a different tripartite Greek etymology) [15] but equating it, in another move, with "study," "for study is itself both a habit and dreary." This in turn serves as the basis for his own explanation of why Achates is not present in book 4:

> Achates: it is noteworthy in this place that Achates is withdrawn from Aeneas' society from the time when he begins to be with Dido. For as long as he cohabits with Dido, Achates is not present. When, however, it is time to go to the underworld, Achates returns as a comrade. For this it is clearly figured that while Aeneas is detained in license and luxury, study is given up; but when he attends to the conceptualization of things, he once again takes up study.[16]

You are perhaps not surprised to find such comments in Fulgentius and Bernardus Sylvestris, authors who can be dismissed as medieval, or even to learn that no less a humanist as the platonizer Landino indulged in similar moves. It is perhaps more surprising that J.C. Scaliger (1561) writes that Vergil has assigned

Aeneas a "Genius" named "Achates"; via yet another etymology [ἄχος ἄτης] he interprets Achates' companionship of Aeneas as a spur for the hero "amidst so many troubles to be inspired to perpetuate the highest virtue (...*sed quod inter tot aerumnas ad summam virtutem perpetuandam excitetur*; cited from Weber, p. 14). Yet later, in 1591, Antonio Ricciardi, in his *Comentari(o) symbolica,* explicates Achates as the principal of self-sufficiency requisite for a prince. And in 1613 de la Cerda, now once again with recourse to gemmology, turns Achates into a literal *speculum principis* because the familiars of kings should be wise (Weber 14-15).

I omit a variety of simple political allegories that seem to have had intermittent popularity from the eariler nineteenth century into the first half of our own — Achates plays Agrippa to Aeneas' Augustus (Weber, 17-18) — to remind you of the currency of the ethical allegorization. Father M. Owen Lee, often in a Jungian mode, links him to both the "the influence of the mother-figure in the poem" and "the hero's shadow side...". The shadow, Lee informs us, "is that part of the personality which an individual has repressed, but which nonetheless remains attached to him." Expanding on the two men's most characteristic epithets, Lee then gives a full-blown allegoresis worthy of Bernardus Sylvestris, even, like Bernard, allegorizing Achates' notable absence from book 4:

> *Fidus* Achates is the silent, constant companion to *pius* Aeneas. Here I think Virgil acted with full consciousness of what he was doing. *Fidelitas* and *pietas* are, he suggests, complementary virtues. ... Without *fidelitas* the man who is *pius* succumbs to all-too-human passions (Aeneas gives way to sexual desire in Book 4 and to desire for vengeance in Book 10); without *pietas* and an ideal to attach himself to, the man who is *fidus* has no identity at all.[17]

M. Lossau, seeking a symbolic pattern, connects Achates with land and thus the representative of the Iliadic in the *Aeneid* — in contrast to Palinurus who represents the sea and thus the Odyssean (1987, after Weber 19). And Weber himself makes of Achates a link to Aeneas' social obligations, calling him "Aeneas' aspect of social anchoring" ("*Moment gesellschaftlicher Verankerung des Aeneas*," p. 76).

Satis superque you will say. Enough is enough. Among all these interpretations, there are, of course, nuances which include allegorical personifications, *Qualitätenallegorese,* and creative etymologizing. In my survey here, I wish only to establish that there are differences not of kind but merely of degree among the ideal princely companion, the "Genius," the "shadow," and the social "alter ego." Speaking *grosso modo*, they all partake of the allegorical. Nor by that label do I mean to dismiss them. Through Landino, at least, our commentators would pride themselves on their rôles as allegorists, and Ricciardi emphasizes the symbolic nature of his commentary. I cannot read their minds, but I suspect that recent interpreters would be more abashed, at least at the name. I don't see why they should be.They need to come out of the closet as allegorists. The allegorical tradition, certainly as it has been and continues to be applied to "Achates," has the distinct merit of undercutting — even against the intent of some of its proponents — the assumption that this figure in the epic is a continuous, coherent, in some sense "verisimilar" character. In line with Aeneas' employment of Achates, likely Vergil's, and certainly mine, "Achates" is a function, not a person.

As I read it, the *Aeneid* often invites us, indeed seduces us, into letting our sympathies round out various characters, so that — a classic readerly response — we are deeply engaged in their very creation. We should be very aware of the complicity in which our response involves us. As I have argued, it is precisely this danger that Vergil showed us in the Trojans' response to the persona that is Sinon;[18] more troubling, to play this note a tad longer, would be Dido's own response to the narrative in which the Sinon episode is set, in other words, Aeneas' story of the fall of Troy and his Trojans' wanderings. The fates of Sinon's and Aeneas' audiences are themselves scandals, stumbling blocks that should slow all subsequent readers, perhaps stop them dead in their tracks. Less dramatically, but in some ways in a yet more interesting fashion, Achates' functionality in the text seems to point up the comparable problematic of overly enthusiastic character creation on the receiver's part. The discontinuity of Achates' presence in the text

and his on-again, off-again involvement in the situations we imagine lie behind it — another seduction — challenge our very sense of the continuity of his personality. And should do so. By extension, the discontinuity and incoherence of a figure like Achates undercuts, or at least puts into question, the psychologizability of the poem's other figures, their very "subjectivity."

One final remark addressing the self-consuming nature of allegorical interpretation. Even those interpretations of Achates which describe him as representing this element or side of Aeneas' nature, while they may set out to serve some great and grand idea of constructing Aeneas' character, simply render impossible the mapping of epic figures or actants onto coherent persons. Once we have shadows or *alter ego*'s running about cheek-by-jowl with the figures they in part represent, we have a text not unlike *Le roman de la rose*, where Amant can interact in the same narrative universe, with the beloved, the beloved as Rose, and with representatives of aspects of the beloved's being, such as *Daunger*. A text like this can do a certain kind of work, but my argument would be that we need to be aware of what kind, perhaps what other and othering kind of *Aeneid*, we are thereby entering.

I wish now to nod in the direction of yet another well-established interpretive mode, which we might call the literary historical, before advancing towards yet more foreign territory. When working on traditional epic, above all Vergilian epic, scholars are accustomed to calibrating Vergil's turns on established epic precedents and subtexts. As I have indicated, part of the "mystery" of Achates is that he appears in neither the *Iliad* nor the *Odyssey* nor provably in any other earlier epic, Greek or Roman.[19] One late Homeric scholion purports to identify him with an otherwise unnamed character, but let's leave that identification for now. I promise to adduce it later.

Does he, then, fit any type of figure known to us from epic, say the hero's friend? Achates certainly is the hero's companion. Lossau may be on to something when he juxtaposes Achates and Palinurus (cited above), but more often than not, com-

mentators have looked quite quickly from Aeneas and Achates of the *Aeneid* to Achilles and Patroklos of the *Iliad*, the poem with which the *Aeneid* was compared before it was even completed (cp. Propertius 2.34.65-66). Perhaps we should no longer be surprised if we discover that this enterprise is not ultimately satisfying, for Achates does not easily fit into the sequence of "heroes' pals," to use David Halperin's phrase for the couples Gilgamesh and Enkidu, Achilles and Patroklos, and David and Jonathan he has studied.[20] The first of each of these pairs loses the second. To the extent that sort of relationship appears in the *Aeneid*, it seems to be filled by Aeneas and Pallas, though with the major homoerotic charge of such couples shifted to Nisus and Euryalus, where it is made fully explicit. And in their case, both die. Achates is Aeneas' companion, to be sure, but his character and rôle pale beside either Patroklos' or Enkidu's. For one thing, in the *Aeneid* the functions of the Patroklos/Enkidu character are divided, as it were, between *fidus Achates* and young Pallas, who falls in combat with Turnus. When Achates is struck by the enemy weapon intended for Aeneas (10.344), he is in some sense playing *therapôn* to Aeneas' Achilles, and yet on a small, even insignificant scale. There is no wearing of Aeneas' arms; it is an accident, and the wound is but to the thigh and not fatal, at least not immediately. In other words, this is another "typical scene" from Homeric-style battle-epic. That Turnus here plays Hector to Pallas' Patroklos while he is elsewhere more often an Achilles figure is not only a comment on Achilles' own complicity in the death of Patroklos, but typical of the universe of the *Aeneid*, in which the walls that are supposed to separate figures from the "other side," particularly another people, so frequently break down. Trying to look back through such pairings in the *Aeneid* to pairs well known from the *Iliad*, for example, only further undercuts the coherence of characters in the *Aeneid* as it highlights the contingency of their natures. They are bundles of functions that are as analyzable and recombinable as strands of DNA. Whether they are more than the sum of their functions or qualities is the question.

The description of Achates as Aeneas' *alter ego* both highlights the functionality of the figure and pierces any kind of walls we might imagine separating the two characters and guaranteeing either a semblance of subjectivity. Vergil frequently introduces doubles and *alter ego's* into his text, and in various ways. For example, thanks to Vergil's evocation and reworking of historical and poetic traditions, his Dido both continues and departs from the exemplary Dido of traditional moral tales as the chaste and wise ruler. This "ghost imaging" leads to a dilemma comparable to the one posed by Helen and Helen's *eidôlon* known from Stesichorus and Euripides: Which of the two is the original, which the copy? This question confronts us as readers of the *Aeneid* as it did Menelaus in Helen's case.

Deploying these figures, these bundles of functions, as I argue we should, as tools in our interpretive strategies, we can expand the field of *alter ego's* or "prefigures". In an earlier study (cp. note 8), responding to Dido's explicitly Punic background I considered a set of Semitic prefigures for her rôle: rapacious "man-eating" goddesses like Ishtar and Anat. The point of this move was not to create clear identifications, to hypothesize sources, and certainly not to demonize Dido in any simple sense. Rather, this was a tactic, a calculated shift into an alternate interpretive universe, in order to gain purchase on a perspective from which one could critique the workings of the Roman nationalist/imperial machine, workings, I argued, the *Aeneid* at once reproduces and reveals.

Another of Dido's doubles within the tradition and text is her own sister, Anna (e.g., *exstinxti te meque, soror*, 4.682), and not to be outdone by the likes of Servius, Fulgentius, and Bernardus in creative word association, I pointed out that Anna has a name, however Roman it sounds to us, with Semitic reflexes and possible echoes of Anat herself (art. cit. [see n. 8], p. 349). I repeat: my aim is not to establish one-to-one correspondences. The acid of my interpretive method is calculated to dissolve authorial intention and eat away at the singular subjectivity of individual characters. Figures named in the text are foci of narrative functions,

and just as the functions of hero's friend can be split between, say, Achates and Pallas, so functions can circulate between pairs of characters. So Dido and Anna can be mixed as reflexes of Anat along with more traditionally established prefigures — the Circe of the *Odyssey* (of whom Calypso is already a double) and the Cleopatra of contemporary history, the Medea of Apollonius' *Argonautica* and the Ariadne of Catullus' epyllion (64) for portions of the narrative. Even more important, please note that despite the use of a term like "prefigure," I do not aim to posit historical sources. Just as etymology in the allegorical school, many of whose tactics I argue we should deploy as strategic counters to the current interpretive dominant, was "inventive" in the rhetorical sense of the word, creating interpretive links,[21] so its *a(b)*, the "from" or "out of" of its explanations, marks a potentially powerful figure.

I now want to turn to Achates to see what my solvent can do to his agate-like hardness. I have already instanced the Ishtar of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* as a monstrous prefigure of Dido, and the pair of Enkidu and Gilgamesh as fitting in that set of heroic pals in which Achates and Aeneas fit rather less well. Gilgamesh and Aeneas have a good bit in common; in addition to being brave, strong, and handsome, Gilgamesh is, like both Achilles and Aeneas, the son of a goddess and a mortal.[22] And Achates?

No little part of the mystery of Achates is that he has no patronymic, belongs to no family, otherwise *de rigeur* for all epic actors of stature. In this he is like Enkidu, except that in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the very lack of family and mortal origins is thematized: Enkidu is a wild man, created by Aruru in the hope that Gilgamesh's wildness could be restrained. It does not constitute a textual mystery or gap.[23] What about, then, my promise of rhetorical, even guerilla, etymology, or at least a creative name game like the one I indulged in with Anna and Anat? Even I am not bold enough to go directly from Achates to Enkidu, though I must admit the temptation is great. But why bother, when there is another hero whose name is even more suggestively close? Like Anat, he is most prominent in Ugaritic texts. And like Anat, some of whose characteristics are more suggestive of Vergil's Dido than his Anna, so this hero

may prefigure Aeneas more than his friend Achates. His name is Aqhat or, as some scholars write, Aqht.

Who is Aqht? Of course, our sense of him depends on the particular fragmentary remains of the epic.[24] Even in its current incomplete and lacunose state, it contains a tremendously exciting story. While it shares motifs with Gilgamesh and other Near Eastern stories, the Aqht epic exhibits quite a number of details, and puzzles, suggestive for our purposes.

When the series of fragments begins, the pious Dan'el is sacrificing to the gods in the hope that they will grant him a son. (In my plot summary I will omit most ceremonies and the many accounts of feasting which, along with the verse, make the text stately, noble, even sublime.) On the seventh day, Baal intercedes for him with El, and Baal reports to Dan'el El's promise of a son. With appropriate ceremony, Dan'el impregnates his wife (Dnty).

The next portion of the text reveals Aqht already an adolescent, indeed on the verge of some coming-of-age ceremony. Kosher-Hasis (comparable to Hephaestus) is making the marvelous (composite) bow that he will bring to the party for Aqht. From the moment another guest, Anat, sees this bow, she covets it. Aqht refuses to barter the bow for wealth or even for immortality, rebuffing Anat not without rather provocative language (he does not believe her offer of immortality, adding that bows are for soldiers, not women).

Anat goes to El, first asking, then demanding (as only Anat can, threatening even the gods) that Aqht be destroyed. El agrees. She then seems to make an assignation with Aqht, but in the meantime arranges for the mercenary Ytpn to kill Aqht. (She transforms Ytpn into a falcon for this mission.) After his death, Anat takes the bow (which breaks).

Dan'el observes but does not know the cause of drought in his land, though Aqht's sister, Pughat, seems to divine it. Indeed, messengers confirm the death of Aqht at Anat's hand. With Baal's help, Dan'el inspects the entrails of several birds and finally finds some

of Aqht's remains in the "mother of hawks" (Margalit [see n. 24], p. 162). Dan'el initiates lamentations. After seven years Pughat proposes to avenge Aqht's death. She dresses as a warrior, with a dagger, but over this puts on a dress. She is welcomed by Ytpn. When the last (currently extant) fragment breaks off, she is serving him intoxicating beverages which are already having their effect. We can have no doubt that Pughat, like Jael or Judith, kills Ytpn.

The rôle of the sister, Pughat, in avenging the death of her brother, is itself a striking example of the powerful part females, mortal as well as immortal, can take in Semitic myths. But our concern is with Anat and Aqht. Anat's intense desire to have Aqht's bow may seem puzzling. No doubt special, divinely constructed arms are highly prized. The composite bow was a wonder when it first was introduced, and the story here figures a revolution in armaments as a singular weapon. (Odysseus' marvelous bow seems to represent a comparable case, and bow.) Then again, arms make the man, and it has seemed to some, probably the majority of scholars writing in English on the poem, that what Anat wants of Aqht is a sexual liaison; the bow is a mere metaphor.

Margalit is right to point out that the parallel to Ishtar and Gilgamesh is not exact: a bow plays no part there (nor I might add in the case of Aphrodite and Anchises in the *Hymn* [cp. n. 22]). Must every confrontation between goddess and young man be a sexual come-on? Can't a bow be simply a bow? Even if it can (and Margalit should probably be followed for the Epic of Aqht), one can hardly deny the potential of the bow to symbolize masculinity. Aqht himself links the bow with (he claims) exclusively male pursuits. Hillers believes that the bow serves primarily as a symbol of masculinity, not "simply because war is a masculine activity" but because of "the phallic symbolism of the arrow"; he further cites examples of passages, including several curses, in which Ishtar is abjured to take away the bows of enemy warriors and to turn them into women.[25]

It has often been remarked, and not merely by Fulgentius and Bernardus Sylvestris, that once captivated by Dido, Aeneas is effectively unmanned.[26] But that she actually has taken his arms

we learn when she prepares to destroy her memory of Aeneas by destroying what he has left behind, his sword included (4.507-508, esp. *ensem... relictum,* 507). Of course, this too is a ruse: it is by this sword that she will die (664).

Now if Aeneas fills the role of Aqht, is there anything of Aqht left in Achates beyond the vague echo of a name, just as the Anat in Anna seems fully transferred to Dido (in Vergil's version, at least)? In other words, is there the slightest reason to link Achates and Aqht at all? As I indicated above, outside of Vergil and his immediate followers and epigones, Achates is otherwise unknown to classical antiquity. But I also promised one Homeric *scholion*. Let us see if it constitutes an exception. Homer, describing the death of Protesilaus, the first man who jumped ashore at Troy, says only that "a Dardan man killed him" (τὸν δ' ἔκτανε Δάρδανος ἀνὴρ, *Iliad* 2.701). The most recent commentary says that this "has a timeless ring,"[27] but one ancient comment reports that the killer of Protesilaus was none other than Achates (Σ *Il.* 2.701). This is generally regarded as a complete shot-in-the-dark on the scholiast's part, although one would be foolish indeed to deny the possibility that it represents a tradition of which we are otherwise unaware.

And there is, or may be, a way in which Achates is more essentially a "Dardan man" than the other Trojans. Many etymologies for both Dardanoi and Danaoi have been proposed. At least one Semiticist has suggested, tentatively, that it is possible to analyze the name

> "Dardan" ...into the prefix *dar*, and the stem *dan*. The group of sea people known under various forms of "Dan" is widespread. The tribe of Dan is associated with navigation in Judg. 5:17. The Greeks were long known as **Danaoi**.... The prefix **dar-** is known to us from Chronicles (II Chron. 16:2; 24:23, 38:5, 23)... It is hard to say whether this place name is of pure Semitic origin. There is reason to think it is rather a Semitized name of non-Semitic derivation. To a Semitic ear **dar** means "dwelling place"... and Dar-dan would mean "dwelling of Dan." This implies that the Trojan tradition preserves a memory of a Semitic founder, coming immediately from Crete, but ultimately from Italy.[28]

I do not wish to follow the last thought, nor engage historical linguists. Let us return to Dan and Dar-dan. One might be particularly Dardanian if one were the son of Dardan, or Dan. Even, perhaps, if one makes allowance for garbling across time and over various linguistic boundaries, the son of Dan'el. Of course, the son of Dan'el is none other than Aqht himself. That the Homeric scholiast had any knowledge of this is utterly inconceivable. But again, it would be foolhardy to deny out of hand the possibility of his knowing, at however many removes, of some version of some tale in which Aqht or Achates appeared as the Dardan man.

Have we stumbled onto a "source"? Am I suggesting, as Gordon does above, "a Semitic founder," along the lines either of the old *lux ex oriente* school or more recent revisionists? No. As I have throughout this paper highlighted the rhetorically inventive aspects of etymology, so I propose any such historical hypotheses as "lures."[29] As always, the challenge before us is to examine the fallacies of such genetic discourse and as well as to meditate on its (often fatal) attraction for us, as if fixing a source or cause could relieve us of the need to think, especially morally and politically. The *Aeneid*, itself modeling a certain type of "Eastern" genesis for Rome and thematizing the Italianization of Trojan roots, constantly reveals the creaky machinery of such "westering" and all such originary fantasies.

To conclude, I wish to turn back to Achates and let his figure again serve as a model for the kind of interpretive unconcealing I seem to find at every turn in the *Aeneid*. Again trailing the lure of foreign origins, I would argue that we can attach at least one more set of Punic associations to Achates, one for which recourse to obscure Homeric scholia is not needed. Significantly, for my interpretive parable, these are fully textualized, and indeed have been displayed before our eyes from the very beginning, like the famous purloined letter.

As I indicated at the outset, no epithet is more closely linked with Achates than *fidus*: *fidus Achates* he is called six times (cp. n. 2) and ever will he be "faithful Achates." What is Punic about "faith"? For

Romans, precisely its absence. *Punica fides*, "Punic faith," was, according to widespread social prejudice, a contradiction in terms, that which is not. The reputation of Carthaginians, though it included imputations of voluptuousness and effeminacy (the standard charge of every upstart people against every more settled and more cultured group with whom they compete), could best be summed up in the phrase *fides Punica*: in Roman eyes, all Carthaginians and Phoenicians were shifty, treacherous, and deceptive.[30]

Logically, of course, by calling Achates "faithful," *fidus*, he is rendered as unPunic to Roman minds as it is possible to be. He is a good Trojan, a proto-Roman. And that is indeed one aspect of Achates, an aspect on which the moralizing allegorists have expanded for now some 2000 years. But what if as interpreters we imagine Achates as Aqht, a hero from an oriental tradition dragged into the net of Roman signifying practices. Suddenly the term *fidus* fits in an equally apposite way — in negation.[31] Of course all linguistic signification, indeed all signification, takes place within, and by means of, a network of differences, which the system of double-signifying I am trying to describe here exemplifies by squaring. From the self-congratulatory perspective of Roman self-perception, *fidus* is appropriate for a proto-Roman precisely because it is the opposite of the unfaithfulness of Rome's Punic enemies, and it is appropriate as a sarcastic epithet, an anti-epithet, for the non-Roman because it is the opposite of what is a Roman virtue. The irony is already deployed in the unequal relations of Dido and Aeneas: Dido, the Phoenician, hurls *perfide* at Aeneas (4.366; cp.also *perfidus*, 421).

The application of this epithet to Achates, the very way *fidus* can shift back and forth depending on the context, that Achates appears both truly faithful and faithless from instant to instant, mirrors the way Achates is textualized in the *Aeneid*. Vergil plays up the Cheshire-cat-like nature of Achates: he's there and he's not there. Or we think he is. One cannot be sure. Sometimes he leaves behind no more than his smile. Of course, students of Vergil from Servius through Richard Heinze have often explained this as Vergil's admirable "narrative economy," letting the readers supply what in

their view "goes without saying." The particular tone of insistence on this vaunted Vergilian narrative virtue, while it is so evidently a principle formulated by commentators to save the phenomena of traditional plot and character, exemplifies another of Anne Carson's brilliant observations, namely, that "economy is a trope of esthetic and moral value" (cp. n. 31). I might add that it is the god of commerce and exchange, Mercury, who tells Aeneas that "woman is ever a fickle and changeable thing" (*varium et mutabile semper/ femina*, 4.569-70). Mercury manages this with a straight face; Aeneas leaves; Dido dies. I too regard Vergilian narrative economy as admirable, but I of course value rather different aspects of the work it does, even represents. I do not regard it as some morally superior, indeed masculine spareness, where "we readers" — all equally male and representatives of dominant cultures — share the knowledge of what goes without saying, the definition of hegemonic ideology if ever there was one. Instead, for me and my faithful Achates — should I say "my own private Achates?" —, Vergilian narrative economy is an open lattice work, a network of shifting and unstable spaces.

For me, Achates' mystery, instability, shiftiness, and unverifiable absences and presences, constitute his most sublime function. Like a number of other puzzles I have explored elsewhere, this too is a textual feature that always points back to the interpreter. The clearer we become about Achates, the more he becomes a mirror. Odd, isn't it, that there exists a very traditional allegorization of Achates as *speculum principis*? I have perhaps only shifted the terms somewhat, for he is still a mirror. Interesting, also, that the Greek term Servius uses to describe the so-called "narrative economy" of Achates' unstated presence is *kata to siôpômenon*, or, as Servius auctus translates it, *secundum taciturnitatem*, "in silence." [32] Silence is one of the hallmarks of Achates' faith, the faith he so silently bears Aeneas, whether there or not there; the silent response he gives to Aeneas' rhetorical question about the universality of the Trojan story; and above all, the silent witness he bears to Aeneas' other, Aqht. His function is both to reveal and conceal it, a function he, in my view, faithfully performs.

Footnotes

1. William A. Wheeler, *An Explanatory and Pronouncing Dictionary of the Noted Names of Fiction; including also familiar pseudonyms, surnames bestowed on eminent men, and analogous popular appellations often referred to in literature and conversation.* 19th edition (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1884); cited at http://www.njin.net/~flopez/html/english/a/achates.htm.

2. Achates' epithets highlight his faithful companionship (*fidus* 6 times [1.188, 6.158, 8.521 and 586, 10.332, 12.384]; *comes/comitatus* 3 times [1.312, 8.466, 6.159]), physical strength (*fortis* twice [1.120 and 579]), and swiftness twice [1.644 *rapidus* and 656 *celerans*]), although the last is no epithet but a mere descriptor. See also, below, note 9.

3. 1.120, 174, 188, 312, 459, 513, 579, 581, 644, 656, 696; 3.523; 6.34, 158; 8.466, 521, 586; 10.332, 344; 12.384, 459. Being named is not the only index of importance, of course, but it does have something to do with textual presence. "Achates" appears considerably less often than "Turnus," "Pallas," "Dido," "Anchises," and either "Ascanius" or "Iulus"; the frequency of his name is comparable to that of the most prominent "featured characters" (e.g. Camilla, 19; Nisus, 21; but Euryalus, 24), but occurrences of their names are concentrated in only one or two segments of the epic.

4. It would be absurd to attempt a list of studies that don't discuss Achates, nor is the omission in all cases unreasonable. Silence is surprising in, for example, so compendious a recent handbook as Nicholas Horsfall, ed., *A Companion to the Study of Virgil* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

5. Studien zur klassischen Philologie, 37 (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York and Paris: Peter Lang Verlag, 1988). Consider Weber's characteristic summary of the three functions Achates fulfills in Book One: "1. to confirm objectively what Aeneas has experienced and seen and thus to protect him from subjective reaction and error; 2. as representative of the community to uphold

the norms of the community, against which what has been seen is to be judged, to cover Aeneas, at the same time to control and guard over him; 3. more or less as a recorder who, according to the principle of a second witness, can subsequently render that which has been seen credible to a third party" (106-107; my translation).

6. "Vergiliana," *Latinitas* 33 (1985) 13-25.

7. A Greek Abas at 3.286; an Etruscan Abas at 10. 170 and 427.

8. "Sidonian Dido," in *Innovations of Antiquity,* ed. with Daniel Selden (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1992), pp. 332-84, esp. pp. 354-57.

9. Servius, commenting on the epithet *rapidus* in 1.644 denies this has anything to do with Achates' own speediness: *praerapidum, quod ex adfectu patris <, id est eius qui mittit,> intellegendum est, non ex Achatae velocitate* (ed. Thilo-Hagen, 1.186 <with Servius auctus in angle brackets>). Though presented as a local stylisic observation, this already exemplifies the tradition of interpreting Achates as an extension of Aeneas, or a projection of portions of his mental state.

10. "*Conicere possumus Vergilium non voluisse in scaenam producere quattuor persons (It. un quartetto) — duos monodiarios totidemque 'comprimarios', ut musici dramatis vocabula mutuemur — prorsus obvie bini similes, quae fortasse amorem Aeneas Didonisque poetice minuissent*" (art. cit. [n. 6] 21-22).

11. Not that I dismiss careful detection and analysis of signs of imperfection, i.e., non-completion. Cp. the recent, highly intelligent account of Hans-Christian Günther, *Überlegungen zur Entstehung von Vergils Aeneis*, Hypomnemata 113 (Göttingen, 1996), with ample reference to earlier work in this vein. One of Günther's great strengths is that he refrains from guessing what a complete *Aeneid* would look like.

12. *COMITATVS ACHATE diximus quaeri, cur Achates Aeneae sit comes. varia quidem dicuntur, melius tamen hoc fingitur, ut tractum nomen sit a Graeca etymologia.* ἄχος *enim dicitur sollicitudo, quae regum semper est comes* (ed. Thilo-Hagen, 1.113).

13. *ACHATES adlusit ad nomen, nam achates lapidis species est: bene ergo ipsum dicit ignem excusisse. unde etiam Achaten eius comitem dixit. lectum est enim in naturali historia Plinii, quod si quis hunc lapidem in anulo habuerit, gratiosior est* (ed. Thilo-Hagen, 1.69). The passage from Pliny is *Natural History* 37.139-42.

14. *Acates enim Grece quasi aconetos* <ἀχῶν ἦθος>, *id est trititiae consuetudo. Ab infantia enim erumnis coniuncta est humana natura* (Helm, ed., 92,13ff.; cited from Weber, p. 13).

15. *Achates quasi a chere ethis interpretatur, id est tristis consuetudo. A enim sine, chere leticia, ethis mos vel consuetdo. Hoc autem est studium quia ipsum est consuetudo et tristis* (J.W. and E.F. Jones, *The Commentary on the first six books of the Aeneid of Viergil commonly attributed to Bernardus Sylvestris. A new critical edition* [Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1977], 31, 17ff., quoted from Weber, p. 14).

16. *Achates: Notandum est in hoc loco Achates a societate Enee subtractum ex quo cum Didone cepit esse. Quamdiu enim cohabitavit cum Didone, Achates non interfuit. Dum vero ad inferos itur, Achates comes redditur. Per quod evidenter figuratur quod dum Eneas in luxuria detinetur studium relinquitur; cum vero ad cogitationem rerum tendit, studium recipit* (again from Weber, p. 14).

17. *Fathers and Sons in Virgil's Aeneid.* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1979), p. 108; also cited in Weber 17. To the remark "Here I think Virgil acted with full consciousness of what he was doing," one may well respond, "As opposed to elsewhere?" Perhaps he means contrast in cases where Virgil "acted with full subconsciousness"!!

18. "What Was The Trojan Horse Made Of?: Interpreting Virgil's *Aeneid*," *Yale Journal of Criticism* 3.2 (Spring, 1990) 109-31.

19. My colleague Charles Murgia has pointed out that Achates might have appeared in Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*, now in tattered fragments. He might have. And if he had appeared there or in any other work now lost to us, he would have had for Vergil's first readers a literary pedigree. That there is no reason to think he did and that Servius doesn't seem to know, directly or indirectly, of

any earlier literary incarnation, are weak arguments. But even if he played some rôle in a work known to Vergil, it is still the case that Vergil treated him in precisely the fashion he did.

20. "Heroes and their Pals," in David Halperin,*One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 75-87.

21. A point well made, for a later period in the Western commentary tradition, by Suzanne Reynolds, *Medieval Reading. Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univesity Press, 1996), esp. pp. 81-84.

22. Gilgamesh's parents are the goddess Ninsun, consort of the god Lugalbanda, and an unnamed "mortal whom the Sumerian king list calls 'the high priest of Kullab,' a district in the city of Uruk" (Alexander Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949; rptd. 1963), p. 4). Achilles' parents are the sea nymph Thetys and the mortal Peleus. Aeneas' are Aphrodite (Venus) and the mortal Anchises. For Aphrodite's deceptive seduction of Anchises, see the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*.

23. Attempts to work out parallels between Gilgamesh and Aeneas' journeys to the underworld seem strained. Gilgamesh makes the journey after the death of Enkidu, while Aeneas has suffered not the loss of Achates but of two minor characters, Palinurus and Misenus, (the latter of whom he didn't even know he had lost). Gilgamesh seeks the wisdom of Utnapishtim in the hope of finding a cure for his own mortality which Enkidu's death has brought home to him. In some very vague way this is comparable to Aeneas' journey to his father from whom he receives a vision of Rome's future. Of course, the elements (and likewise the point) of a journey to the afterlife are standard motifs. Thus like Sibyl, Siduri guides Gilgamesh to the boatman who will take him across the water to land of blessed, where Utnaphistim now lives. The underwater plant, the source of rejuvenation, he pulls up is not, however, a functional parallel to the golden bough; Gilgamesh's loss of it (to a serpent who thereby sheds his skin), however, en-

tailing as it does the seeming failure of his mission, might remind some of Aeneas' emergence from the "wrong" gate, i.e., the gate of ivory, of "false" dreams.

24. For text, English translation, extensive notes and a detailed survey (read critique) of secondary literature to 1986, see Baruch Margalit, *The Ugaritic poem of Aqht : text, translation, commentary,* Beihefte zur Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 182.(Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1989). Other English translations — which, due to vexed problems of understanding the fragments, may present a story that differs in significant details — include M.D. Coogan, *Stories from Ancient Canaan* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), and *The Tale of Aqhat,* trans. by Francis Landy (London: Menard Press, 1981).

25. Delbert R. Hillers, "The Bow of Aqht: The Meaning of a Mythological Theme," in Harry A. Hoffner, ed., *Orient and Occident Essays Presented to Cyrus H. Gordon on the Occasion of his Sixth-fifth Birthday*, AOAT 22 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1973), 71-80, here pp. 73-74. N.b.:" [w]hen the Hittites wish to destroy the prowess of their enemies, they appeal in ritual and prayer to Ishtar of Nineveh: 'Take from (their) men masculinity, prowess, robust health, swords (?), battleaxes, bows arrows, and dagger(s)! And bring them to Hatti! Place in their hand the spindle and mirror of a woman! Dress them as women!" (p. 74, citing Harry Hoffner, "Symbols for Masculinity and Femininity: Their Use in Ancient Near Eastern Sympathetic Magic Rituals," *JBL* 85 (1966) 326-334, here p. 331). On the following pages (75-78), Hillers adduces a wide range of analogous stories in which the beloved male is killed or castrated: to Gilgamesh and Ishtar, Adonis and Aphrodite, Attis and Cybele, Hillers adds less familiar tales of Eshmun and Astronoe, Anubis and Bata, and Lucian's brilliant story of Stratonice and Kombabus (*de syria dea* 19-27). Hillers' article is critiqued by Margalis (cp. n. 24) pp. 49-55, who denies not only a sexual motivation on Anat's part but even the existence of such a wider pattern.

26. Iarbas, in his prayer to Jupiter, describes Aeneas as "that Paris with his troop of halfmen, a Phrygian bonnet tied round his

chin and perfumed locks" (*ille Paris cum semiviro comitatu,/Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem/subnexus*, 4.215-17); this is indeed part of a poetic image of "Aeneas unmanned," but of course, logically, this is what Iarbas (here a typical "Westerner") imagines all Trojans to be essentially. Mercury's *uxorius* (4.266) is more to the point; interestingly, the Aeneas he is dressing down has just been described as wearing a sword, but significantly, it is a sword for show, not for war — "a sword studded with tawny jasper" (*stellatus iaspide fulva/ensis*, 4.261-62) — and moreover, a gift of Dido (263). His sword is once again operational when Aeneas pulls it from its sheath and cuts the hawsers that hold the fleet (*dixit vaginaque eripit ensem/fulmineum strictoque ferit retinacula ferro*, 4.579-80).

27. G.S. Kirk, *The Iliad: a commentary. Volume I: books 1-4* (Cambridge, 1985), on 2.699-702, p. 231. — I thank Maurizio Bettini for sharing with me yet other ancient versions of the death of Protesilaus, part of his own highly suggestive work on the *mnêmon*, a figure that is little more than a function, and who fulfills his function in the story by failing to fulfill the function assigned to him. So the interpretive tradition, with Talmudic inventiveness, creates a figure "Dardanos" whose duty is to remind Protesilaus *not* to be the first off the ships at Troy, else he will be killed. Dardanos, the *mnêmon*, "forgets" and "fate will find its way," ironically, by "a Dardan man" (= *Dardanos*). Though Bettini did not urge the parallel on me, Achates seems like a ghost of a *mnêmon*; like many a *mnêmon*, he is a minor *armiger*.

28. Cyrus H. Gordon, "Vergil and the Bible World," in I.D. Passow and S.T. Lachs, eds., *Gratz College Anniversary Volume on the Occasion of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the College* (Philadelphia, 1971), 111-30, here p. 130; a slightly earlier version of the article, "Vergil and the Near East," in *Ugaritica VI*, Mission de Ras Shamra, 17 (Paris, 1969), 267-88, here p. 288.

29. I thank my colleagues and other questioners for backing me (in the gentlest possible way) into the corner from which I first elaborated this argument.

30. R. Vicenzi, "Cartagine nell'*Eneide*," *Aevum* 59 (1985) 97-106; Luisa Prandi, "La 'fides punica' e il pregiudizio anticartaginese," in Marta Sordi, ed., *Conoscenze etniche e rapporti di convivenza nell' antichità* (Milan, 1979), pp. 90-97; Erich Burck, "Das Bild der Karthager in der römischen Literatur," in J. Vogt, *Rom und Karthago* (Leipzig, 1943), pp. 297-345. For a more general survey, see J.P.V.D. Balsdon, *Romans and Aliens* (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1979). Of course that cultural stereotypes admit exceptions is no argument against the currency of the stereotype; it is only against the background of an active stereotype that the exception has its point.

31. Or to borrow the much more elegant phrase of Anne Carson, "the negative is a peculiarly linguistic event" ("Economy (Reading Simonides Against Celan)," a lecture delivered to the Berkeley Classics and Comparative Literature Departments on April 24, 1997).

32. Servius: *PRAEMISSVS ACHATES* κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον *intellegimus* [now Servius auctus:], *id est secundum taciturnitatem,* on 6.34 (ed. Thilo-Hagen, 2.11).

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