

## 5 Mourning Glory: Ritual Lament and Roman Civic Identity

IN GREECE AND ROME, WOMEN SERVE AS ARBITRATORS OF DEATH rituals, responsible for burying and lamenting the dead. Yet in both societies the state takes pains to regulate and control these female practices, as they can potentially harm the interests of the larger community. In the *Aeneid*, in particular, women's excessive display of grief on such occasions serves as a foil to Aeneas' role as a leader and the responsibilities he has to ensure the progress of his mission. Two episodes where women practice rituals associated with death display complementary notions of the dangers that excessive passion brings to the state. At one end of the spectrum is Andromache, whose grief seals her identity as wife of Hector, perpetuates the loss of Troy, and does not allow her to adjust to new circumstances and assume a new identity. Andromache is portrayed as a double for Aeneas and thus represents an attitude toward the past that presents obvious obstacles to the success of his mission. A second aspect of the problem of grief is explored in the episode of the Trojan women in Book 5. This time, the women's excessive passion over the losses they have suffered transforms into action that turns against their community. The women's rage is linked to funeral ritual, since their decision to act, though divinely inspired, occurs during the ritual act of lamentation. That the women's ritual acts have implications for public life is underscored both in the case of Andromache and in that of the Trojan women. As a result, women's death rituals often transgress the norms prescribed by ritual custom and thus threaten the progress of Aeneas' mission.

## I. LESSONS IN RITUAL MOURNING

## I. Andromache

The episode of Aeneas' stay at Buthrotum in Book 3 displays the necessity for the hero to move beyond his Trojan past on to his Roman future.<sup>1</sup> Of all the prominent figures in the episode, the tension between past and future, loss and empire finds its best expression in the figure of Andromache. As is the case with most women in the *Aeneid*, ritual serves as a vehicle through which these problems come into sharp focus.

Andromache is the first person Aeneas encounters as he enters Buthrotum. He finds her deep in mourning, conducting a funeral in the cenotaphs of Hector and Astyanax:

progredior portu classis et litora linquens,  
 sollemnis cum forte dapes et tristia dona  
 ante urbem in luco falsi Simoentis ad undam  
 libabat cineri Andromache manisque uocabat  
 Hectoreum ad tumulum, uiridi quem caespite inanem  
 et geminas, causam lacrimis, sacrauerat aras. (300-305)

I set forth from the harbor, leaving ships and shore,  
 just when, as it happened, in a grove outside the city,  
 by the waters of a false Simois, Andromache was performing  
 the solemn feast and gifts of mourning to the shades,  
 and offering wine to the ashes and calling the ghost  
 to Hector's tomb, the empty mound of green turf  
 and twin altars she had consecrated, the cause for her tears.

Andromache's rites transgress the spatial and temporal limits of death ritual. She is performing libations at a cenotaph, long after Hector and her son have died. Despite the fact that cenotaphs were not unusual in ancient death ritual practice<sup>2</sup> and that regular commemoration of the dead is important for the affirmation of life, the excess and futility of

<sup>1</sup> See Grimm 1967; Storey 1989; West 1983; and Quint 1993: 53-65.

<sup>2</sup> Toynbee (1971: 54) notes that cenotaphs were used when the body was not available for burial, whether the person had drowned or died in battle. References to cenotaphs in literature emphasize the idea of futility. For examples, see Williams 1962: 119.

Andromache's actions permeates the passage: she offers libations to the ashes, yet there are no ashes in the tomb; the surrounding landscape and the tomb itself are described with the adjectives *falsus* [fake] and *inanis* [empty], thus poignantly underscoring the ironic contrast between the individual's desire to dwell in the past and the harsh necessity of adjusting to the future.

Andromache's funeral rites to her lost husband and child express her choice to live in the world of her dead loved ones. While mourning is a transitional period for the survivors, marked by withdrawal from society and ending with a ritually articulated return (Van Gennep 1960: 147; Seaford 1994: 86), Andromache clearly has not undergone the process of reintegration: a perpetual mourner, she longs to be united with her dead husband and child but is forced to exist in the world of the living. The narrative highlights her special connection with the dead in her reaction when she sees Aeneas:

ut me conspexit uenientem et Troia circum  
 arma *amens* uidit, magnis *exterrita* monstris  
*deriguit* uisu in medio, *calor ossa reliquit*,  
 labitur et longo uix tandem tempore fatur: (306–10)

When she caught sight of me coming, and saw, *beside herself*,  
 the arms of Troy around, *distraught* by these great marvels  
 she *stiffened* as she was looking, and the *warmth left her limbs*.  
 She collapses and hardly at last she speaks:

The description of her demeanor underscores her affinity with the dead, as she progressively grows stiff and her limbs become cold. It is not a surprise, therefore, that when she finally musters the strength to address Aeneas (*uix tandem* [hardly at last]), we see her more prepared to assume that he is a ghost, a more vivid projection of her world (Grimm 1967: 155), than willing to accept that what she sees is real. At the same time, the excessive nature of her grief is evident in her deep emotional turmoil (*amens* [beside herself]), which jeopardizes her judgment, compromises her rationality, and has the potential to lead her to actions that can be dangerous for herself and others.

Andromache's liminal existence between the living and the dead is also eloquently displayed in her response to Aeneas' questions about her

fortunes after the fall of Troy, an account she begins with a wish to have shared Polyxena's fate. For Andromache, death is far preferable to a state of permanent mourning:

'o felix una ante alias Priameia uirgo,  
hostilem ad tumulum Troiae sub moenibus altis  
iussa mori, quae sortitus non pertulit ullos  
nec uictoris heri tetigit captiua cubile! . . .'

(321-24)

'O happy beyond all others, maiden daughter of Priam,  
bidden to die at an enemy's tomb, beneath  
the lofty walls of Troy, who never bore the drawing of lot,  
nor as a captive touched the conquering master's bed! . . .'

By introducing the example of Polyxena, Andromache expresses a longing for the permanence of real death, which will put an end to the perpetual deathlike liminality of her mourning and will bring about the desired unity between her as a mourner and the mourned, Hector and Astyanax.<sup>3</sup> Unlike Andromache, Polyxena, who died as a sacrificial offering at Achilles' burial, was never forced to leave Troy, incur the humiliation of slavery, or suffer the indignity of living as an enemy's wife. Polyxena's permanent virginity in death contrasts sharply with Andromache's changing identities, from Trojan wife and queen to various stages of slavery.<sup>4</sup>

In Euripides' *Hecuba*, Polyxena's sacrifice as a burial offering at the tomb of Achilles is one of the play's focal points.<sup>5</sup> Although Polyxena does not earn more than a passing reference in Vergil, her fate is nevertheless related to some of the episode's most important themes: Andromache's liminal position between the living and the dead; her inability to negotiate her changing identity from princess to slave and the transition from

<sup>3</sup> See, similarly, Seaford 1994: 167 on Achilles as a mourner of the dead Patroclus in the *Iliad*.

<sup>4</sup> On Andromache's self-definition as a Trojan and wife of Hector, see Grimm 1967 and West 1983. In Euripides' *Troades*, Andromache compares herself to Polyxena three times (630-31, 641-42, 677-80), and each time she finds the latter more fortunate than herself.

<sup>5</sup> Catullus' rendition of the sacrifice of Polyxena in 64.366-74 is testimony to the power of Euripides' scene.

past to future; the theme of corrupted rituals, and of sacrifice in particular; and the problematic nature of excessive grief, which can lead to revenge and destruction.

In Vergil's passage the main point of comparison between Andromache and Polyxena is that the latter never became a slave. This is also central in Polyxena's speech in *Hecuba* where she eloquently declares (342–79) that to die as a free princess is preferable to slavery in the hands of her foes. Unable to bear life in different terms (357–68), she chooses death. At the same time, this choice renders her a permanent virgin. Polyxena laments her fate as deprived of marriage (ἀνυμφος ἀνυμέναιος ὦν μ' ἐχρήν τυχεῖν [without the bridegroom and wedding I should have had], 416). Her sacrifice symbolically enacts her wedding, as she is married to Hades (368; 482–83), a fact that her mother confirms after her sacrifice: Hecuba describes her daughter as a bride who is no bride, a virgin who is no virgin (νύμφην τ' ἀνυμφον, παρθένον τ' ἀπάρθενον, 612; Loraux 1987: 39).

The theme of marriage and sacrifice – indeed of marriage as sacrifice – is a pervasive motif in Greek tragedy. Scholars have repeatedly pointed out that Euripides appropriates the scene of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* as part of a larger allusive schema linking *Hecuba* with *Oresteia*. The erotic aspects of Polyxena's sacrifice have been amply noted by critics,<sup>6</sup> while the brutality of her death constitutes an instance of perverted sacrifice, despite the fact that she offers herself willingly. At the same time, Polyxena's death is closely linked with the theme of burial, which is paramount in the play (Mitchell-Boyask 1993: 122). The sacrifice of Polyxena and the death of Polydorus, the two dead children of Hecuba, act as catalysts for the unleashing of her powerful vengeance. The figure of Polydorus constitutes yet another connection between the Vergilian narrative and Euripides' play: just as *Hecuba* opens with the appearance of the ghost of Polydorus requesting burial (47–50), so Book 3 of the *Aeneid* begins with Aeneas violating the tomb of Polydorus. The episode ends with Aeneas and his comrades honoring their fellow Trojan with complete funeral rites and erection of a burial mound (62–68).

The themes of marriage<sup>7</sup> and perverted sacrifice, so prominent in the tragic versions of the myth, are also manipulated in this episode of the

<sup>6</sup> Segal 1990: 112; Zeitlin 1996: 172–216; and Loraux 1987: 36–39.

<sup>7</sup> On the theme of marriage in Euripides' *Andromache*, see Storey 1989.

*Aeneid*, alongside the theme of revenge and retribution. As Andromache tells Aeneas about her fate, she recounts the death of Neoptolemus:

ast illum ereptae magno flammatus amore  
coniugis et scelerum furiis agitatus Orestes  
excipit incautum patriasque *obtruncat ad aras*.

(330–32)

But Orestes, burning with great love for his raped wife and driven by the Furies for his crimes, catches him unawares and *slays him at his father's altar*.

Neoptolemus' death at the hands of Orestes at the altar in Delphi is enacted in Euripides' *Andromache*. The scene portrays Neoptolemus' death in terms of perverted sacrifice: the hero goes to the oracle unarmed (1119) to ask for forgiveness and perform expiation; while still a suppliant, Orestes kills him at the altar.<sup>8</sup> Neoptolemus' perverted "sacrifice" is directly linked with the problem of revenge in the play, since Orestes kills him as punishment for the loss of his betrothed, Hermione. The notion of revenge is therefore rendered problematic, since it is exacted by means of a "sacrificial" death. The ritual order, however, though disrupted by the perverted "sacrifice" of Neoptolemus, will eventually be restored, since the play ends with an appearance by Thetis, who promises burial for the slain hero. Yet Thetis also proclaims that his tomb will serve as a reminder of the sacrilegiousness of his death (1240–42). Furthermore, Neoptolemus' perverted "sacrifice" is a symbolic extension of the general disruption and crisis of marriage and *oikos* in the play. All marriages depicted in the drama are measured against the ideal marriage of Andromache to Hector, a standard they fail to attain (Storey 1989: 18). The restoration Thetis seems to provide is only in terms of Peleus' *oikos* (she promises burial for Neoptolemus and immortality for Peleus), while Andromache is still identified as a captive wife (*γυναικα αιχμάλωτον*, 1243), and her eventual union with Helenus underscores her unbreakable link with her Trojan past.

The issue of the captive woman's fate in slavery is central to Andromache's concerns in the *Aeneid*, as well as in Euripides' *Hecuba*,

<sup>8</sup> Orestes' sacrilegious behavior toward Neoptolemus would have been even more poignant for the Athenian audience if this sympathetic portrayal of Achilles' son is an innovation of Euripides. On Euripides' innovations regarding the character of Neoptolemus, see Stevens 1971: 5–6, 14–15.

*Troades*, and *Andromache*. The close link between Andromache's social identity as a captive and a slave and her status as a mourner is also evident in the way she describes her fate after Troy: she was a captive of Pyrrhus (*captiua*, 324); she was his slave when she bore him a child (*seruitio enixae*, 327); and her marriage to Helenus was a transferral of one slave to another (*me famulo famulamque Heleno transmisit habendam*, 329; West 1983: 260–61). The mirroring of Aeneas' and Andromache's attitudes toward the past becomes evident when Aeneas addresses her as *Hectoris* [wife of Hector] (319),<sup>9</sup> while Andromache's own last word in her response is *Hector* (343; see also Grimm 1967: 158).

The problem of Andromache's new identity after the fall of Troy is central in Euripides' *Troades* and *Andromache*. In the former play, Andromache considers Polyxena as more fortunate than herself. Polyxena's permanent virginity attests to her loyalty to her natal family, whereas Andromache is the wife whose loyalty to her husband is complete (Scodel 1998: 148). Her new status as a slave in the household of her husband's murderer is stressed poignantly in *Troades* 660, where *δάμαρ*, the term for the legitimate wife, is followed by *δουλεύσω*, a word denoting slavery (Scodel 1998: 148). Hecuba goes on to advise Andromache to adjust to her new situation because this is ultimately what will serve the interests of her earlier family, although the play dashes these hopes as Talthybios' entrance announces the Greeks' decision to murder Astyanax. Euripides' *Andromache* can be seen as presenting Andromache's future from the perspective of *Troades* (Scodel 1998: 149). The play opens with the heroine recounting her past and present, but, as her narrative progresses, the audience becomes increasingly aware that her present situation echoes her past: once again she is besieged by Greeks; a Greek woman (Hermione) is the source of her troubles; and her son (Molossus) is in danger (Sorum 1995: 377). Yet by the end of the play, Andromache has proven successful in adapting to new circumstances: she has caused disaster in the victor's family, and in marrying Helenus she returns to her first family (Scodel 1998: 150). The problem of transcending the past is a primary theme in *Andromache*; ironically, in that play, Andromache is the only character who proves capable of adjusting to the demands of her new situation, as her new son pulls her toward the future (Kyriakou 1997: 24).

<sup>9</sup> See Grimm 1967: 156. On Aeneas and Andromache as mirror images, see West 1983: 259 and the discussion following here.

In the *Aeneid*, by contrast, Andromache's perpetual status as a mourner extends beyond her private tragic fate to the entire community. Just as Andromache cannot live her life as other than Hector's wife and Astyanax' mother, so the whole city of Buthrotum is described as a sad replica of Troy, a symbolic burial ground for Andromache's dead kin:

procedo et parvam Troiam simulataque magnis  
 Pergama et arentem Xanthi cognomine riuum  
 agnosco, Scaeaque amplector limina portae. (349–51)

I go on, and recognize a little Troy, with a copy of great  
 Pergamus and a dry brook named from Xanthus,  
 and embrace the portals of a Scaean gate.

For the people at Buthrotum, remembrance of the lost Troy points to their common past and affirms their bonds of kinship and identity as Trojans. Regular commemoration of the dead is critical for every community because it is a very effective means of affirming social solidarity and collective identity. The beneficial effects of commemoration are evident in the practice of public funerals and hero-cult, as well as in the establishment of festivals and games. Yet such commemoration is also necessarily removed from the intense emotions that accompany the processes of mourning (Loraux 1998: 83–109).

Commemoration therefore goes hand in hand with the need for a gradual alleviation of pain that allows the reintegration of the mourners into the world of the living and enables the community to overcome the blow that has been inflicted upon it by death. This kind of necessary oblivion cannot easily be imposed upon the grieving, particularly upon mothers who have lost their children. That is why we see the state in both Greece and Rome at pains to establish rules and regulations that will control the excesses of mourning (Loraux 1998: 9–34). Yet in the case of Helenus and his people, as in the case of Andromache, the community does not seem able to overcome the loss incurred by the destruction of Troy. Aeneas' description of Buthrotum repeatedly makes mention of its small size, which contrasts sharply with the grandeur of the old city: a reminder that the past cannot be recreated, that memory will always fall short of the real thing.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> On the size of Troy and memory, see Saylor 1970: 26–27.



The dangers that the passions stirred by memory and mourning can present for others are evident in Andromache's excessive display of grief, which affects Aeneas profoundly:

...dixit lacrimasque effundit et *omnem*  
*implevit clamore locum. uix pauca furenti*  
 subicío et raris *turbatus uocibus bisco*... (312-14)

... She spoke, and shedding a flood of tears *filled*  
*the entire place with her cries.* To her *in frenzy* I can scarcely  
 make a brief reply, and *disturbed* I *gasp* with broken words...

Andromache's previous distraught state (*amens*, 307) is now transformed into uncontrollable frenzy. Aeneas' reaction all but mirrors that of Andromache: he is disturbed to the point that he can barely speak, just as Andromache earlier was rendered speechless upon seeing him. This mirroring of Aeneas and Andromache symbolizes the contagious power of grief, with its potential to spill over into the larger social and political spheres. Aeneas' status as a leader is important as he becomes a living example of the dangerous contagiousness of Andromache's excessive mourning. What is more, the entire community, which is captive in the same state of mourning, embraces death. The numerous and striking *katabasis* elements present in the episode<sup>11</sup> attest to the problems inherent in Andromache's passion and Helenus' inability or unwillingness as a statesman to control it.

Excessive grief leads to rage, and rage can lead to fresh acts of violence that may threaten the entire community. The episode at Buthrotum showcases with subtlety the problems inherent in this situation: the heroine's account of the death of her captor husband, Neoptolemus, occurs at an altar, which constitutes a replication of his slaying of King Priam. Euripides' *Andromache* also dramatizes this particular instance with great emphasis on the inappropriate locale for such a killing (1156). Killing someone at the altar is an act of pollution. As such, it cannot constitute an acceptable means of retribution. When Helenus thus offers the armor of Neoptolemus (3.469) among parting gifts to Aeneas and Ascanius, he gives them a symbol of that particular line of justice, its inefficiency

<sup>11</sup> See Quint 1993: 58-60 and Paschalis 1997: 131-33.

marked by the presence of pollution as a symbol of this community's inability to extricate itself from the realm of the dead.<sup>12</sup>

Andromache's state as a perpetual mourner thus demonstrates the inability of funeral ritual to bring relief. Through the repetition of the act of burial and lamentation, Andromache seeks to find comfort for her loss, but all her efforts are doomed to failure. This ineffectiveness of ritual is due to the fact that the rites Andromache practices transgress social norms, since they deprive the mourner of a return to the world of the living.<sup>13</sup> The point of the episode, therefore, is that Aeneas must learn from the negative example of Andromache the appropriate ways of mourning, which allow the living to look toward the future. That he should have to learn this at this juncture in the poem is rather surprising, given that Creusa, his lost wife, had taught him this very lesson earlier in Book 2.

## 2. Creusa

The pairing of memory and mourning so poignantly demonstrated in the episode just examined and the central role of women in this process also figure prominently in the episode of the disappearance of Creusa in *Aeneid* 2. In this instance, Aeneas is taught the correct attitude vis-à-vis loss and mourning. Significantly, this instruction is provided by his lost wife, Creusa. She advocates the need for selective memory as the only means by which a devastating loss can be borne and eventually overcome. Yet the lesson that Aeneas appears to learn so successfully in Book 2 is soon forgotten when he meets Andromache in Book 3. The poem thus offers a standard by which one can evaluate the processes of mourning as they unfold over the course of the poem.

<sup>12</sup> Hardie (1993: 17) notes that Aeneas realizes the constraints imposed upon the citizens of Buthrotum, doomed to live in the past, when his words to Helenus and his people (*uiuete felices* [live happy], 493) combine the language of farewell with the language of funerary epitaph. On the significance of the theme of retribution in this scene, see my discussion in Chapter 1, pp. 41–43.

<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the tenuousness of the boundaries between proper and perverted ritual is a pivotal theme in this episode: the death of Polyxena as a funeral offering at the tomb of Achilles and the killing of Pyrrhus at the altar by Orestes both transgress correct ritual practice (*Aen.* 3.330–33).

Although ritual mourning is a practice usually ascribed to women, the lines describing Aeneas' reaction once he realizes that his wife is lost cast him as a mourner:

quem non incusavi *amens* hominumque deorumque,  
aut quid in eversa uidi crudelius urbe? (745–46)

What man or god did I not blame *in my frenzy*?  
what sight more cruel did I see in the overthrown city?

Much as in the case of Andromache, so in this instance the overwhelming power of grief takes over the mourner's senses: he is *amens*, just as Andromache is *amens* when she sees Aeneas (3.307). The series of questions that Aeneas utters evokes the mourner's initial anxiety that he may fail to express his grief adequately: a series of questions to this effect usually begin a formal lament (Alexiou 2002: 161). Aeneas, however, expresses the opposite of this convention: in reproaching men and gods for taking his wife away and in equating the loss of Creusa with the loss of the city, he is anxious to establish the propriety of the contours of his lamentation. Aeneas concludes by rushing to look for his lost wife; as his search proves vain, he resumes his mourning:

ausus quin etiam uoces iactare per umbram  
*impleui clamore* uias, maestusque Creusam  
nequiquam ingeminans iterumque iterumque uocauī.  
quaerenti et tectis urbis sine fine ruenti... (768–71)

I even dared to cast my cries in the night;  
*I filled* the streets *with shouts* and in my misery  
repeatedly called Creusa again and again in vain.

As I rushed and sought [her] endlessly among the buildings of the city...

Aeneas' lamentation here again resembles Andromache's in Book 3 (*impleuit clamore locum* [filled the place with her cries], 313), while the vanity of his efforts is closely akin to Andromache's futile preoccupation with death and mourning. The emphasis in Aeneas' language on triple repetition, marked by the use of *iterum* and *ingeminans*, displays the hero's agony and grief as well as the repetitive endlessness of the act of lamentation. It also points to the funeral practice of calling the name of the dead three times (*Aen.* 6.506). At the same time, Aeneas' violent

movement in search of his wife is an indication of the violence and fury of the grief he suffers. The emotional turmoil associated with grief is only one step away from wrath and rage. This association may also be seen in the alternative reading *furenti* provided by M. The good authority of this manuscript adds force to the reading, especially since the fury of the mourner is one of the standard features of lamentation, also seen in Andromache's case of frenzied grief (3.312–14). Aeneas' actions can thus equally be describing a mourner.

Creusa's phantom also instructs Aeneas as to the appropriate forms of lamentation.<sup>14</sup> When she reproaches him '*quid tantum insano iuuat indulgere dolori...*' ["why does it please you to indulge so much in frenzied grief..."] (776), she acknowledges the manic state that pain inflicts upon the mourner and calls attention to the problem of excessive grief, which can be particularly destructive. Her words point to the paradoxical phenomenon of the mourner finding pleasure in the process of mourning, while the close semantic connection of grief and anger in the word *dolor* suggests the complexities of a state that may otherwise appear as harmless. Yet the special link between the mourner and the mourned established through lamentation renders the former eager to prolong that state as long as possible. Creusa here identifies a well-attested fascination with lament, an obsessive component of mourning, because it keeps the memory of the lost one alive and immortalizes the past in the present (Loraux 1998: 100). This, however, is precisely the state that does not allow the reintegration of the mourner into the world of the living, as is the case with Andromache and the people of Buthrotum. As such, it can also prove dangerous because it may excite wrath and a desire for revenge that will lead to a continuation of the cycle of death and suffering, as is so often the case in Greek tragedy.

Female mourners are dangerous, often depicted as "indulging" in grief, while men attempt to control and regulate the women's potential excesses. In this instance, however, Aeneas assumes the feminine characteristics of the mourner, while Creusa recognizes the dangers of dwelling in grief and the past. Her words to Aeneas look forward to his future; she

<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, Aeneas' reaction upon seeing Creusa is almost identical to his reaction upon seeing Andromache (3.313–14). This link between Creusa and Andromache once more confirms Andromache's depiction as a living dead.

prophesies the long wanderings awaiting him but also points to the happier days ahead and orders Aeneas to put an end to his mourning: '*illic res laetae regnumque et regia coniunx | parta tibi; lacrimas dilectae pelle Creusae...*' [happy events await you there, a kingdom and a royal wife; banish the tears for your beloved Creusa...] (783–84). Nevertheless, in acknowledging that her husband loves her, she also calls attention to the paradox of her request: how can a bereaved husband desist from mourning the loss of a dear wife? Creusa's strategy is therefore not in keeping with the usual feminine behavior in mourning, which encompasses all that is excessive and dangerous. On the contrary, in depicting her disappearance as part of a larger, divinely sanctioned scheme, she asserts the precedence of Aeneas' mission over the integrity of their family. This contrasts with her earlier attempt to convince Aeneas to defend their (Trojan) household (675–79), a plea whose potential success is implied in the narrative by the subsequent appearance of an omen affirming the decision to flee.<sup>15</sup> As a result, Creusa's disappearance suppresses an otherwise clear dichotomy between the interests of Aeneas' mission and those of their household.

Creusa's association with the interests of Aeneas' greater mission is also underscored by her association with the goddess Cybele: '*sed me magna deum genetrix his detinet oris. | iamque uale et nati serua communis amorem*' [but the great mother of the gods keeps me to these shores. Now fare well and guard the love of the son we had together] (788–89). Throughout the *Aeneid*, Cybele is consistently depicted as protecting Aeneas' mission. In *Aeneid* 6.781–87, in particular, we encounter the striking comparison of the city of Rome and the vast expanse of its empire to the Great Mother embracing her divine offspring. The city thus appropriates the very qualities of fertility and motherhood that the goddess represents. Creusa's contributions to the new city are also associated with her role as wife and mother. Her last words to Aeneas are about their child, whose significance for the future of Rome hardly needs mention. Yet Cybele is also associated with excess and barbarism, emasculation and effeminacy.<sup>16</sup> Aeneas' assumption of the role of a mourner consumed by

<sup>15</sup> Perkell (1981: 360–61) notes the contrast between Creusa's priorities and those of Aeneas.

<sup>16</sup> On the different attributes of Cybele and Roman attitudes toward the goddess, see Beard 1994.

grief and Creusa's concerns with the interests of the new state both indicate the kind of reversal of gender roles attested in Cybele's relationship with her priests.

Creusa's voice thus appears assimilated to the voice of the state, and as such she advocates oblivion as a means to dissolve Aeneas' mourning. She does not suggest that Aeneas forget her completely; her memory will live through the love for their son. She thus proposes a kind of selective memory, one that allows for both a link with the past and the necessity to look forward to the future. The "disappearance" of Creusa is thus a literal expression of the need for selective memory. But her final words to Aeneas leave no doubt that her loss is as permanent as that incurred by death: the phrase *iamque uale* is also found in a very similar scene in Book 5 (738) where Anchises' ghost in the Underworld has just finished giving Aeneas instructions.<sup>17</sup>

As Creusa's phantom disappears, Aeneas' lament continues:

haec ubi dicta dedit, lacrimantem et multa uolentem  
dicere deseruit, tenuisque recessit in auras.  
ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum;  
ter frustra compressa manus effugit imago,  
par leuibus uentis uolucrique simillima somno.  
sic demum socios consumpta nocte reuiso.

(790-95)

After she spoke these words, she abandoned me weeping and wishing to tell her much, and drew back into thin air.  
Three times there I tried to throw my arms about her neck;  
three times the image, clasped in vain, fled from my hands,  
equal to the light winds, and most like a winged dream.  
Thus at last, when night is spent, I revisit my companions.

The use of the present participles (*lacrimantem, uolentem*) reveals the continuous nature of Aeneas' grief, his desire to prolong their contact as long as possible. His efforts to embrace her, repeated three times, point to funeral ritual practices and are symbolic of the mourner's need to be connected with the lost one, while Creusa's lack of corporeality and her

<sup>17</sup> See also 11.827, Camilla's final words before she dies. A similar phrase is found in Catullus' farewell at his dead brother's tomb (*ae atque uale*, 101.10, a poem that is part of or a substitute for burial rites).

comparison to a dream signals her permanent separation from the world of the living. The narrative dwells on Aeneas' acts of mourning, which take place in the night, the symbolic realm of the dead. Yet Aeneas' return to his comrades in the morning presents his return to the world of the living, ready to face his future. He thus appears to have completed the various stages of mourning successfully. Although Aeneas reunites with his companions, the narrative is strikingly silent about the process of return. And when he meets Andromache, we see that he still has much to learn about putting the past behind him. Creusa has provided him with the standard that will allow him to control the intensity and excess of grief, but he is far from having internalized this lesson.

Aeneas with his rescued Trojans gather at the mound of Ceres when the hero remembers that his wife was not with them (741-43). The goddess, a mother who lost her daughter, exemplifies the dangers of excessive mourning. The story, however, concludes with the reunion of mother and daughter as symbolic of life triumphing over death. The mound of Ceres thus stands as a reminder of insufferable loss, and as such it triggers Aeneas' memory. Moreover, the figure of Ceres embodies the most important themes of the episode: death and mourning, on the one hand, and the successful control of grief, which eventually benefits humanity, on the other.

Having explored the problems of passive grieving, the poem continues to explore the theme of mourning in Book 5, where the transition "from sorrow to wrath, from wrath to secession" (Loraux 1998: 43) becomes tangible. Women's engagement with funeral ritual, with memory and loss, will provide Aeneas with the final lesson in mourning.

## II. RITUAL LAMENT AND CIVIC IDENTITY

In *Aeneid* 5, the theme of the dangers of funeral lamentation reaches its climax. Women in their ritual role as mourners work up a rage that leads them to invade public space and turn against their own community. Women rebel at Juno's instigation; yet her intervention is effective precisely because it capitalizes on the emotions of grief and rage at work during the ritual ceremony. Women's rites are both embedded within the larger framework of Anchises' commemorative celebration and juxtaposed to those performed by the men. Male and female rites

are thus portrayed differently: female mourning is depicted as divisive and potentially destructive, whereas the men's celebration of Anchises' funeral promotes social solidarity and the formation of a new civic identity for Aeneas and his Trojans. This is achieved through a transformation of the tragic pattern of ritual corruption-restoration: while in many Greek tragedies violent conflict is ultimately settled through the foundation of hero-cult, in *Aeneid* 5 the reverse is the case. Hero-cult elements abound in the description of the commemoration of Anchises' burial and the games that follow. But unlike what happens in Greek tragedy, in Vergil we first witness the positive function of hero-cult that benefits the community; then the renewed unity and hope that the community establishes through the ritual celebration of the games is threatened by the women's performance of corrupt rituals that endanger and destabilize the entire mission.

### 1. Anchises' Funeral and Hero-Cult

Death and commemoration are central concerns in Book 5. It opens with the flames of the funeral pyre of Dido and ends with the drowning of Palinurus, a "sacrifice" to Neptune for the successful completion of Aeneas' journey to the Underworld. As they arrive in Sicily, Aeneas, as befits the son of the deceased, presides over the ceremonies commemorating his father's death. Yet we are immediately aware that this is not a private funeral but a public celebration. Although the obvious model for this episode is the funeral games for Patroclus in *Iliad* 23, in this description we witness an amalgam of Greek and Roman ritual elements: the Roman *ludi funebres*, games held after the death of important citizens (Williams 1960: 48), and the ritual of *parentatio*, which serves here as a foundation myth for the ritual of *Parentalia* (Bailey 1935: 291; Williams 1960: 53).<sup>18</sup> These funeral rites and games are cast as public events that help establish a new identity as a new nation for Aeneas and

<sup>18</sup> Beard and colleagues (1998: 31) suggest that the *Parentalia* is similar to the cult of heroes in Greece, though not as individuals but as a generalized group under the title *di Manes* or *diui parentes*. They argue (1998: 50) that the *Parentalia* were "essentially domestic festivals focused on family ancestors, though there was also a public element when, on the first day of the *parentalia*, a Vestal Virgin performed the rituals for the dead." On the *parentalia*, see also Wissowa



his comrades. Although the games in honor of the dead Patroclus in the *Iliad* extend to the entire community and represent the integrative virtues of public funeral over the disruptive power of death ritual (Seaford 1994: 187), they do not aim at creating a new identity for the Greeks fighting at Troy. In the *Aeneid*, however, the funeral rites in honor of Anchises and the games enacted within their framework help create a new sense of belonging among Aeneas' comrades, who are in the process of making the transition from Trojans to Romans. In this respect, the function of the funeral tributes to Anchises resembles the use of hero-cult in Greek tragedy, where it also serves to cement Athenian civic identity by transferring loyalty from individual households to the city. Before I go on to discuss in detail how the text highlights issues of unity and collective identity, a few words on hero-cult and its role in Greece, and in Greek tragedy in particular, are in order.

In the Greek world, hero-cult is defined as worship performed at the hero's grave or what is imagined to be his grave. The tomb is in a special precinct, set apart from other burials. Sacrifices and other gifts are offered, and occasionally a special grave monument is erected (Burkert 1985: 203). It appears that the spread of hero-cult is linked with the formation of the city-state (Burkert 1985: 204; Seaford 1994: 110). Hero-cult in the polis replaces the extravagant funeral games for noble lords with institutionalized *agones* of the sanctuaries, honoring a hero. As a form of death ritual, hero-cult eliminates the potential divisiveness of private funeral. The importance of an individual family gives way to events that involve the entire community. Hero-cult thus promotes among nonkin members or the whole citizen body the same type of unity that funerary ritual confers upon kin members. This unity is expressed by the belief in a common descent from the hero (Seaford 1994: 109, 111).<sup>19</sup> In the collective celebration of the hero's death, all distinctions, individual and familial, social and economic, are abolished (Seaford 1994: 107). Other benefits arising from the worship of the hero are more obvious: he may

1912: 232–33. Toynbee (1971: 63–64) notes that the last day, the *Feralia*, was a public celebration.

<sup>19</sup> A prime example of funeral ritual used as a means to enhance communal belonging is Pericles' funeral oration in Thucydides (34–46), where praise of the dead fallen in battle serves as a manifesto of Athenian civic identity (Seaford 1994: 106).

be a model for emulation, and morale may be heightened by a belief in his active presence (Seaford 1994: 120).

In hero-cult, the dead receive blood offerings and are imagined as sharing feasts with the living, while laments are sung for the heroes as for the ordinary dead (Burkert 1985: 204–5; Seaford 1994: 114). Three elements expressing the social significance of hero-cult are the centrality of the tomb within the city, the participation of nonkin, and the perpetuation of observance (Seaford 1994: 117). Hero-cult also much encouraged the participation of *epheboi*, the new generation, thus connecting it with the world of the dead and the traditions it represented (Burkert 1985: 208). Contests were also part of these celebrations, but by the time of the formation of the polis they had dropped out of funerary practice. They were, however, still held for the war dead or for an exceptional individual honored by the entire community (Seaford 1994: 120–21). Just as in the funeral proper, the institution of contests provides a controlled outlet for aggressive anger at the death of an important individual. By the same token, when contests are held at regular intervals, in the cult of a hero or god, they can be socially integrative, especially where the dead man was a king or had been killed fighting for the whole community (Seaford 1994: 122–23). Richard Seaford argues that in Greek tragedy the integrative powers of hero-cult can be seen in full force. Hero-cult in tragedy appears able to transform the destructive reciprocal violence that drives the plot into benefit for the whole *polis*. In other words, in tragedy, death ritual is an instrument for the proliferation of reciprocal violence, while hero-cult is an instrument for the promotion of communal solidarity (Seaford 1994: 138).<sup>20</sup>

The main elements of hero-cult operative in the description of Anchises' funeral in *Aeneid* 5 were noted by Bailey: Aeneas addresses his father as *sancte parens* [holy father] (80), a term repeated at the end of the celebration of the games (630), thus pointing to Anchises' status not as a divinity proper but rather as a hero.<sup>21</sup> The altars of his tomb are named

<sup>20</sup> Vergil's contemporaries would have been able to relate the author's appropriations of the function of hero-cult in Greek tragedy to instances from their own experience, as hero-cult practices continued in the Hellenistic world. Romans might have been able to relate especially to various cult practices surrounding Homeric heroes, which seem to have enjoyed a resurgence in the Hellenistic era. On this resurgence and its significance, see Alcock 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Compare the earlier *divinique ossa parentis* [bones of my divine father] (47).

*altaria* (54, 93), a word used, according to Servius, only of the altars to the *di superi* [gods of the upper world].<sup>22</sup> Among Aeneas' offerings to his father are milk and wine, which are normally offered to the dead. He also makes blood offerings, however, which are more appropriate to a divinity.<sup>23</sup> Similar offerings (i.e., blood sacrifices, food, and libations) are part of hero worship (Burkert 1985: 205). We also witness weeping and lamentation for the dead Anchises, but only later on, when the narrative turns to the actions of the women (613–14). The main event of hero-cult, the communal feasting in the company of the hero, is also observed here, albeit implicitly: we are only told that the Trojans light a fire and roast the meat (102–103).

The elements that help construct the public nature of Anchises' funeral are signaled from the very opening of the episode, when Aeneas speaks to his fellow Trojans from a mound (5.44), in the manner of Roman generals addressing their troops (Williams 1960: 49). The first part of the speech (44–54) focuses on Aeneas as a son eager to perform his duty toward his father. Feelings of loss and grief are prominent (*maestasque . . . aras* [altars of grief], 48; *iamque dies . . . adest, quem semper acerbum, / semper honoratum . . . habebo* [the day is here, which I shall consider, always a day of grief, / always a day of honor], 49–50). Yet as the speech continues (55–71), we witness a pronounced shift from private duty to public tribute, initiated by Aeneas' invitation to his companions to participate in the funeral rites and engage in supplication:

*ergo agite et laetum cuncti celebremus honorem;*  
*poscamus uentos, atque haec me sacra quotannis*  
*urbe uelit posita templis sibi ferre dicatis.* (58–60)

Come then, *one and all*, and let us solemnize *the sacrifice with joy*;  
*let us pray for winds* and may he grant that *year by year*  
*when my city is founded* I may offer *these rites in temples consecrated to him*.

<sup>22</sup> Servius on *Ecl.* 5.66 and *Aen.* 5.54; Bailey 1935: 293.

<sup>23</sup> Offerings are made twice because the rites were interrupted by the appearance of the snake. Two oxen are sacrificed for every ship, while Aeneas bids his comrades to bring their *penates* and those of Acestes (61–63). The second time he slays two sheep, two swine, and two black heifers (96–97), a sacrifice described as *honores* to his father (94), a term normally used for a sacrifice to a divinity (cf. 1.49). See also Bailey 1935: 294.

The suggestion that Anchises may provide help for all Trojans evokes a belief, crucial to hero-cult, that the hero has the power to benefit the community. Aeneas' words further imply that the whole community has an interest in honoring Anchises. Propitiation of the "hero" directly aids in achieving the communal goal, since the ghost of Anchises is envisaged as capable of ensuring favorable winds for the continuation of Aeneas' journey. At the same time, the act of paying tribute to Anchises unites the Trojans (*cuncti*). In appropriating Anchises as one of their own, the Trojans rejoice in the celebration, while the perpetuation of the observance, proclaimed by Aeneas once the new city is founded, guarantees their continuing solidarity. The placement of Anchises' temple within the new city points to hero-cult, since the hero's sanctuary was centrally located, while the yearly observance affirms the hope that Anchises will continue to bestow his favor upon the community (see also Bailey 1935: 294).<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the feelings of joy (*laetum . . . honorem*) expressed here and throughout this episode (34, 40, 58, 100, 107)<sup>25</sup> connote the effects of the communal ritual celebration, namely, solidarity and hope for success in the future, and sharply contrast with Aeneas' earlier (private) grief at the death of his father.

The transition from private funeral to public celebration reaches its climax with the description of the games. The close connection between games and funeral is indicated by the fact that they take place on the ninth day of the funeral rites, that is, on the day of their conclusion. In addition, Aeneas initiates the ceremony by using formulae that evoke the words of a priest before the onset of ritual to ensure purity: *ore fauete omnes et cingite tempora ramis* [be silent all and wreath your brows with leaves] (71) (Williams 1960: 55).<sup>26</sup> Elements of hero-cult once again surface as Anchises' spirit, in the form of a snake tasting the offerings at the tomb, seems to be sharing in the feast. The appearance of the snake stuns Aeneas (90), who is unsure as to the significance of the portent (95–96). In narratives of hero-cult, physical encounters with the hero are

<sup>24</sup> Before he leaves Sicily, Aeneas finds the temple of Venus of Eryx but also assigns to the tomb of Anchises a priest and a sacred grove (759–61).

<sup>25</sup> The word is also often repeated during the games as well as during the narrative of the *lusus Troiae* (183, 210, 236, 283, 304, 515, 531, 577, 667).

<sup>26</sup> The offerings presented at the tomb of Anchises evoke the Roman sacrificial ceremony of *suonetaurilia*. See Bailey 1935: 294 and Williams 1960: 63. Hellenistic elements of *apotheosis* are also at work here (see Williams 1960: 48).

always rife with fear and danger. The appearance of a snake in particular, always a terrifying creature, is often taken to be a manifestation of the hero (Burkert 1985: 206). Moreover, the strengthening of the communal bond being forged through the ritual is also evident in the narrative's emphasis on the effacement of socioeconomic distinctions among the participants. We see stress placed on the act of participation and not on the type of offerings contributed by each (*quae cuique est copia* [as each can afford], 100).<sup>27</sup>

As a number of scholars have pointed out, at the games we observe an imitation of the contests enacted on the battlefield. Within the controlled space of ritual contest, the threat of violence among the members of the community is averted by the distribution of prizes to all contestants, even when it may seem inappropriate, as in the case of Nisus and Euryalus (335–61). Aeneas thus emerges eager to impose unity, even if at times this unity may appear artificial. His actions cultivate among the contestants a sense of belonging to the community that is required by those ready to die for it in battle. Yet the potentiality of violence among members of the group is strikingly present, though eventually averted by sacrificial substitution, as becomes apparent in the case of Entellus, who sacrifices a bull in the place of a human victim.<sup>28</sup> The themes of unity, solidarity, and continuity are also manifest in the concluding segment of the games, the *lusus Troiae*. We are told that the skill displayed by the boys as they execute their mock battle formations gives joy to the spectators:

excipiunt plausu pauidos gaudentque tuentes  
Dardanidae, ueterumque agnoscunt ora parentum. (575–76)

The Dardans welcome the anxious boys with applause and rejoice, as they gaze, to recognize in them the features of their old fathers.

Once again, the feelings of joy are grounded in the recognition of the continuity between fathers and sons. The importance of this continuity between the new generation and the world of the dead and the tradi-

<sup>27</sup> The fact that funerals can be a site of competition among members of the community is amply attested. See, in particular, Ovid's description of the *Parentalia* in *Fast.* 2.533–46, where he advocates the necessity of presenting humble offerings to the dead, the implication being that excessive offerings were common.

<sup>28</sup> On the complexities of the use of sacrifice and sacrificial substitution in *Aeneid* 5, see Hardie 1993: 32–33, 52 and Feldherr 2002.

the recreation of Troy, contrasts strongly with Aeneas' forward gaze to the new city and its new institutions. It is thus obsession not with private loss but with communal loss and suffering that causes the women to articulate their own plan over that of the men. The women are then propelled to violent action that leads to perversion of the rites they had so faithfully observed:

'...quin agite et mecum infaustas exurite puppis.  
nam mihi Cassandrae per somnum uatis imago  
ardentis dare uisa faces: 'hic quaerite Troiam,  
hic domus est,' inquit 'uobis.' iam tempus agi res,  
nec tantis mora prodigiis. en quattuor arae  
Neptuno; deus ipse faces animumque ministrat.'

(635-40)

'... Come and burn with me these accursed ships.  
For in my sleep the ghost of the prophetess Cassandra  
seemed to give me blazing firebrands: 'Here seek Troy,'  
she said 'here's your home.' Now is the time to act;  
nor delay befits such portents. Here, four altars  
to Neptune; the god himself lends the firebrands and the courage.'

Interfering with the burning of the fire at the altars outside the framework of ritual ceremony (*infensum ui corripit ignem* [seized with force the deadly flame], 641) is a defilement of normal ritual practice. It is precisely the sacrilegious nature of the act that stuns the women (*arrectae mentes stupefactaque corda / Iliadum* [startled are the minds of the Trojan women, their hearts bewildered], 643-44), causing Pyrgo to intervene and inform them that the woman inciting them to violent action cannot be Beroe.<sup>31</sup> Yet Iris' flight to heaven (657-58) ignites the hearts of the women as well as the ships:

tum uero attonitae monstris actaeque furore  
conclamant rapiuntque *focis penetralibus* ignem;  
pars *spoliant aras*, frondem ac uirgulta facesque  
coniciunt. *furit* immissis Volcanus habenis  
transtra per et remos et pictas abiete puppis.

(659-63)

<sup>31</sup> In her speech she reminds the women, and the reader, that they are in the process of performing funeral rites (651-52).

Then indeed stunned by the marvels and driven *by frenzy*,  
 they cry aloud, and some snatch fire *from the hearths within*;  
 others *strip the altars*, and throw on leaves and twigs  
 and brands. With free rein Vulcan *rages*  
 amid thwarts and oars and hulls of painted pine.

The women's fury is a result of their intense grief over the losses the community has incurred during the quest for Italy. The goddess fuels this grief so that it becomes rage, which leads to destruction as they set fire to the ships. The women's rage also results in sacrificial corruption, as they now follow Iris' sacrilegious example. The women's frenzy becomes one with the frenzy of the fire that consumes the ships, the uncontrollable fire being a concrete manifestation of the women's lack of self-control. The language describing the women's frenzied state bears great resemblance to that used to describe the more specifically bacchic rage of Amata and her followers in *Aeneid* 7 (*attonitae Baccho . . . matres* [the mothers . . . frenzied by Bacchus], 580).<sup>32</sup> More distinctly maenadic characteristics surface in the description of the women's flight after Ascanius chastises them:

ast illae diuersa metu per litora passim  
 diffugiunt, siluasque et sicubi concaua furtim  
 saxa petunt; piget incepti lucisque, suosque  
 mutatae agnoscunt excussaue pectore Iuno est. (676-79)

But the women scatter in fear over the shores this way and that,  
 and stealthily seek the woods and the hollow rocks anywhere  
 they can find them; they loathe what they began and the light of day;  
 now changed, they know their kin, and Juno is shaken from their breasts.

The women's movement recalls that of bacchantes who abandon the civilized world for the world of the wild. Their flight comes at the moment of sanity, however, which is incongruent with standard maenadic practice, where women flee to the wild in their madness only to return to their homes after the frenzy has subsided. Maenadic flight signals the

<sup>32</sup> The Trojan women's bacchic behavior as a result of Iris' interference is not surprising given the many similarities between her and Allecto, on which see Putnam 1965: 88-90.

abandonment of the female space and marks a transgression of the women's roles as wives and mothers. In this particular instance, however, it is the women's traditional role as ritual mourners that encroaches on public space. Through their lamentation they express their collective will to oppose the plans of the men. The use of bacchic imagery to express the women's return to sanity rather than their madness emphasizes their transgression, because it describes their rage as the product of distorted female rites. Their bacchic flight symbolizes the fact that they have lost their place in the community once they have turned against it. The women are thus permanently delegated to the wild; their ties to the community are severed, and their flight prefigures their subsequent exclusion from Aeneas' Rome. Their exclusion is thus a result of both their attachment to the past, exemplified by their ritual status as mourners, and their inability to understand and share in the positive effects of public death ritual.<sup>33</sup>

The women's encroachment on the public sphere is vividly captured by Ascanius:

primus et Ascanius, cursus ut *laetus* equestris  
 ducebat, sic acer equo *turbata* petiuit  
 castra, nec exanimes possunt retinere magistri.  
 'quis *furor* iste nouus? quo nunc, quo tenditis,' inquit,  
 'heu miserae ciues? non hostem inimicae castra  
 Argium, *uestras* spes uritis. en, ego *uester*  
 Ascanius!' galeam ante pedes proiecit inanem,  
 qua ludo indutus belli simulacra ciebat.

(667-74)

And first Ascanius, as *joyfully* he led the equestrian  
 course, eagerly sought with his horse the *bewildered*  
 camp, nor can his breathless masters hold him back.  
 'What strange *madness* is this?' he says, 'Where now, where are you going,  
 my wretched *citizens*? It is not the foe, not the hostile Argive  
 camp you burn, but *your own* hopes. I am *your own*  
 Ascanius! And before his feet he tossed the empty helmet  
 which he was wearing as he roused in sport the imitation of battle.

<sup>33</sup> This inability is, of course, as we have noted, also a result of their exclusion from the life-affirming, positive rituals.



The public nature of the women's actions is evident in Ascanius' appeal to them as *ciues* and his effort to reestablish the connection between the women and the rest of the community by the repetition of *uestras* and *uester*.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, Ascanius' description as *laetus* evokes the earlier episode of the games and the emotions of joy and solidarity that ritual generates among the members of the community. By contrast, the women's perversion of their role as ritual mourners negates the beneficial effects of properly executed ritual.

That the women's collective action is critical to the future of Aeneas' mission is evident in Aeneas' emotional reaction:

at pater Aeneas casu *concussus* acerbo  
 nunc huc ingentis, nunc illuc pectore curas  
 mutabat uersans, Siculisme resideret aruis,  
*oblitus fatorum*, Italiasne capesseret oras. (700–704)

But father Aeneas *stunned* by the bitter blow  
 now this way, now that, within his heart turned over  
 his cares, whether, *forgetful of fate*, he should settle  
 in Sicilian fields, or aim for Italian shores.

Aeneas here resembles much more the women stupefied by Iris' words and actions than the leader who earlier in the book had showed a deft ability to ease tensions among his people. Aeneas' reaction also eloquently and poignantly demonstrates how communal unity, reinforced through the elaborate description of the commemoration of Anchises' death, is always fragile. The earlier sentiments of joy now forgotten, Aeneas contemplates doing what the women want. It takes the intervention of Nautes and Anchises himself to convince him otherwise and thus to undo the damage the women have done. The outcome of these deliberations is the abandonment of the women in Sicily along with the elderly men.<sup>35</sup> Yet this city, like Buthrotum, is chained to the past: it is a new Troy (756).

<sup>34</sup> Nugent (1992: 280) notes that Ascanius' gesture demonstrates the divide between men and women: the male in his armor is unrecognizable in the domestic space. On Ascanius as Euripides' Pentheus within the maenadic context, see Oliensis 2001: 58–59.

<sup>35</sup> On the decision to leave the women in Sicily, see also Nugent 1992: 283. Interestingly, the women are granted civic status: *transcribunt urbi matres*, 750.

The women appear limited in their capacity to understand the collective mission and are therefore denied participation in it. What is more, their traditional role as ritual mourners is shown to endanger communal unity and the success of Aeneas' mission.

In Book 9 (473–502), the Trojan army displays a reaction similar to that of Aeneas as a result of the lament of Euryalus' bereaved mother.<sup>36</sup> In this instance too, female grief exhibits bacchic attributes: the woman is said to be mad (*amens*, 478), and her cries (*femineo ululatu*, 477) appropriate the maenadic cry so frequently used by maenads. She abandons the female space and its attendant activities (476) and moves to the ranks of battle (*agmina . . . / petit*, 478–79), while bemoaning the fact that the reality of war prevents her from performing burial rites for her son (485–89). The great impact of her lament on the Trojan army is recorded in detail: the soldiers' spirit is shaken (*concussi animi*, 498), and sorrowful moaning arises among all (*maestusque per omnis / it gemitus*, 498–99). Euryalus' mother, however, far from stirring the men's grief into action and revenge, undermines their ability to continue the fight. We are told that their strength for battle diminishes (*torpent infractae ad proelia vires*, 499), while the woman kindles lamentation like fire among them (*incendentem luctus*, 500) before she is removed. Once again we see that female lamentation can be pernicious, diminishing men's effectiveness to fulfill the common goal.

In conclusion, in Book 5 Vergil employs the use of hero-cult in Greek tragedy but inverts and transforms it in order to expose the cracks at the seams of communal unity and the new civic identity it seeks to affirm. In Greek tragedy, according to Richard Seaford, the violence that often ensues as the result of death ritual, in the form of reciprocal vengeance, is eventually replaced by hero-cult. As a form of funerary ritual that eliminates the divisiveness caused by death, the institution of hero-cult transfers the emotions of private funeral to a collective participation in

According to Servius *ad loc.*, *transcribere* is a technical term denoting citizenship. See Williams 1960: 184.

<sup>36</sup> On Euryalus' mother's appearance despite the statement that all of the women stayed in Sicily, see Nugent 1992: 272–74. On her lament, see also Nugent 1999: 254–56. Note that here too, as in the case of Dido, Fama helps spread female lamentation (see Hardie 1994: 159–60).

the lament over a hero and thus promotes civic unity. Vergil inverts this pattern from Greek tragedy: the greater portion of the book celebrates the positive, unifying effects of death ritual, cast as a tribute for the dead Anchises, whose spirit is able to benefit the community. As a common *pater* to all, he provides a renewed strengthening of communal bonds under the shared vision of a future in Italy. This unity, however, appears to be incomplete because it excludes other groups from the community, namely, the women. As a result, communal unity is shown to be threatened not by loyalties to autonomous households (as is the case in Greek tragedy) but by the women, whose opposition takes the guise of a transgression of their role as ritual mourners. Violence thus erupts at the conclusion of the funeral games, a violence that divides the community into male and female and destabilizes Aeneas' (and, by implication, the community's) resolve to fulfill their mission. The inversion of the Greek tragic pattern underscores the fragility of the new civic identity and its ability to stop reciprocal violence. Aeneas' final act, the killing of Turnus, cast as an act of memory and grief for the loss of Pallas (*saevi monimenta doloris* [reminders of savage grief], 12.945) may thus be seen as yet another confirmation of the problematization of public death ritual in the *Aeneid*.

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