

## *Pater Familias in the Aeneid*

### **Introduction**

Aeneas's acceptance of personal responsibility for the welfare of the new Trojan state, Rome, comes as a direct consequence of the presence of Anchises in the role of prototypical *pater familias*. According to scholarship on the relationship between Aeneas and Anchises, the father impels the son to accept his responsibilities for present and future Trojans in the first six books of Virgil's *Aeneid*, but only after the sixth book does Aeneas assume these duties eagerly and of his own accord. Because the poem is set in Rome's distant mythical past, Anchises's strong influence on his son's behavior suggests that Virgil intends Anchises to display the attributes of a prototypical *pater familias*. In order to investigate this possibility fully, I will define in part the Roman father's legal duties and powers and delineate their historical developments, from which I will draw analogies between Roman fathers and political leaders. Based on this knowledge, I will point out strong similarities between the model *pater familias* and Anchises as well as between the model Anchises and Aeneas. In his role of prototypical *pater familias*, Anchises throughout the first six books of Virgil's *Aeneid* induces Aeneas to accept his mission and to become a true *pater familias* both to his own son, Iulus, and to all the Romans.

Lloyd provides a concise summary of Anchises's impact on Aeneas in the first six books as well as a basis for establishing the notion of the traditional *pater familias*. In Book 1, Anchises is absent from the action because he died on route to Carthage, and Aeneas gradually loses sight of his appointed purpose without his father's presence to remind him of it. Since Virgil arranges the narrative in such a way that those events

which occurred chronologically before the Trojans' arrival in Carthage are placed after their arrival in the text, Anchises's absence suggests that the poet intends to stress the importance of the father on the son's action.<sup>1</sup> In Book 1, Aeneas has lost hope of reaching Italy to found a new Trojan state and is devastated by the loss of his country and father, and, as a consequence, the Trojans' morale has fallen markedly. For, without his father to advise him, Aeneas entangles himself in an affair with Dido as Book 4 commences that endangers the entire divinely appointed plan for the future Roman state's establishment by the Trojans under the command of Aeneas.

By line 220 of Book 4, where Jupiter sends Mercury to chide him, Aeneas has wasted valuable time in Carthage on a union with Dido which the gods oppose and is adverse to the Trojans' best interest, and his sleep is disturbed on account of his irresponsible actions. As the hero earlier confides to Dido, the *imago parentis Anchisae* appears to him in his sleep (1.351), which shows that Aeneas is conscious that his actions disgrace his father and endanger not only his own son but also his entire people. In spite of Dido's protests and accusations of perfidy, Aeneas leads the dispossessed Trojans out of Africa toward Italy in order to complete his assigned task, to establish the future Roman state.

By contrast, we find Aeneas listening to his aged father and obeying his decrees in flashbacks which are in Books 2 and 3, since Anchises is *pater familias*<sup>2</sup> and, as such,

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<sup>1</sup> This introductory section dealing with Anchises as prototypical *pater familias* and his teaching Aeneas how to become a true *pater familias* in the first six books are based on Lloyd 47-54.

<sup>2</sup> It is worthwhile to note that though Anchises is dead in all of the twelve books of the *Aeneid*, he retains the duties of a *pater familias* and interacts with his son from beyond the grave in accordance with epic convention. A further word on the poet's adoption and adaptation of Homer: Virgil's epic features Anchises in a strong position of leadership in

entitled to obedience and deference not only from Aeneas, but also from the entire body of the Trojan people. Although one might make the mistake of taking Anchises's despondency at Troy's fall and refusal to leave the burning city for weakness or self-pity, the old man's behavior is consistent with the Roman martial disdain for retreat from the enemy and love of the fatherland. Aeneas himself only undertakes responsibility for the safe withdrawal of his father and son from Troy after divine portents encourage him to do so, from which we may understand that Aeneas acts in accordance with Roman familial virtue and piety with his own father here present in Aeneas's narrative to Dido. Anchises cannot meekly yield to his son here because he holds a position of authority among the Trojans, but he also cannot do so because Virgil intends him to hold the power of a *pater familias* over Aeneas and, by extension, over the people as a body. As *pater familias*, Anchises is obligated to defend his people, and retreating from the enemy onslaught would leave his dependants unguarded, render him an ineffective leader, and strip him of his right to the title *pater familias*.

In Book 2 and continuing in Book 3, Anchises assumes responsibility for interpreting portents. When a tongue of flame appears above the head of Ascanius and frightens both Aeneas and Creusa, Anchises correctly takes it as a sign that the gods want them to leave the city.<sup>3</sup> At the grave of Polydorus (3.28-96), Anchises sits at the head of a council assembled to interpret an omen and advises the Trojans to depart immediately for Crete, though he later calls for a second interpretation and commands the Trojans to

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the first six books that fades throughout the next six, whereas the *Odyssey* builds up to Odysseus's reunion with Laertes. Moreover, Anchises is dead and maintains a strong presence in the *Aeneid*'s narrative, but Laertes is alive and has a weak presence in the *Odyssey*.

<sup>3</sup> Motivations for Anchises's departure after his initial refusal are to be discussed later.

head for Italy. When he sights Italy, Anchises pours a libation and interprets the four horses seen on the shore as a portent of combat to be followed by peace (3.539-543). By 3.710, Anchises has died in the hero's narrative (*heu, genitorem, omnis curae casusque levamen,/ amitto Anchisen*<sup>4</sup>: "Alas, I lose my father, Anchises, the whole easing of my grief and misfortune."), an event which Aeneas terms a "turning point" (*meta*) in his life in 3.714, and in line 716, Virgil calls the hero "*pater Aeneas*" in order to mark the beginning of Aeneas's transformation into a *pater familias* after his father.

In Book 5, following the appearances of Anchises and Ascanius in his dreams, Aeneas assumes responsibility for leading the Trojans to western Italy, where the future Roman state will be established. Here, the text has returned to real time, and Anchises, though dead, is the center of attention once again, since all of the action takes place in his honor because he is still *pater familias* in an extra-legal sense to his people (because death is not a barrier to epic, as discussed in the note). Having earlier resolved to abandon Dido, Aeneas wanders back to Sicily and gives tribute to his father's memory by holding memorial games in his honor there. Nearing the book's end (722), a transfigured Anchises appears to Aeneas and orders him to find him when he visits Hades in Book 6.

When Aeneas descends to Hades, he learns that his father is in Elysium, and Anchises imparts to him stories of Rome's future dominion (756 ff.) to motivate him to become a worthy *pater familias*. Consequently, Anchises retains the duties of a *pater familias* even when dead, since he counsels his son and interprets the divine will for his son's and the Trojan peoples' sake, as he had done when alive on the voyage to Italy.

Following this encounter in the underworld, more devotion is observed in Aeneas

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<sup>4</sup> All translations from the Latin are mine.

than before: he has himself assumed the duties of a *pater familias* to the Trojans as a whole and to Iulus in particular from Anchises. Aeneas shows that he accepts his duty to his people as their *pater familias* first in Book 7, when he points out to the Trojans that they are fulfilling Anchises's prophecy by eating the cakes which they used as plates (120-127), with the effect that he is interpreting omens as Anchises had when alive. In Book 8, Aeneas allies his people with the Arcadians under Evander against the Latins under Turnus, and when he assembles the troops and horses for war, Virgil calls him "father" (606), since he has become a worthy *pater familias* to his people by taking this step toward establishing Rome. In Book 9, Aeneas is again fittingly called "father" (172) when he sets Mnestheus and Serestus in charge of the Trojan camp while he is away, since here he fulfills his duties to his people as *pater familias* in a managerial capacity. By killing Turnus in Book 12 (950-953), Aeneas eliminates a grave threat to himself, his son, and his people, a fact which illustrates his fulfilling a protective role to his people as *pater familias*. Though the hero appears to show brutality to Dido, Lausus, and Turnus, his behavior in fact accords with the Roman virtue, *pietas*, loyalty, since his *pietas* toward his own people in a leadership role as well as toward his son (that is, his maintaining the offices of *pater familias*) demands that he put their safekeeping before his own wishes and the welfare of the non-Romans.

### *Pater Familias*

Before demonstrating how Virgil intends Anchises to be prototypical *pater familias* to Aeneas, from which I will show that Aeneas becomes a worthy *pater familias* to Iulus and the infant Roman state, I will define the term according to law and custom. In order to substantiate the Roman notion of a *pater familias*, one might examine legal and extralegal texts in order to flesh out the figure. Once the rights, customary duties, and characteristic behaviors of a *pater familias* are found in Roman law as well as in non-legal prose, the definition will have become attainable and a close similarity between the ideal *pater familias* and Virgil's Anchises demonstrable, allowing a final analogy to be drawn between Aeneas and Anchises.

Modern scholars provide summaries of the term bolstered by references to primary Latin legal and extralegal texts. Rawson gives a brief and broad account of the Roman understanding of the term *familia*, noting that it includes the man, his wife and children, and any dependants, which itself includes slaves, freedman, and adopted children.<sup>5</sup> Radin lists the qualifications which a man must have to be a *pater familias*: he must be free, he must be a citizen, and he must be able to own property.<sup>6</sup> A *pater familias*, who is the oldest living male in the legal family, holds sole and absolute dominion over the unit until his death.<sup>7</sup> He is also understood to have autocratic authority

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<sup>5</sup> Rawson 7.

<sup>6</sup> Radin 74.

<sup>7</sup> Rawson 7.

over all of his dependants, regardless of their ages and conditions<sup>8</sup> at the time he becomes the oldest male member of the family until his death.<sup>9</sup>

Romans place a restraint on the legal rights of a *pater familias* only by limiting his authority to *vitae necisque potestas*, power of life and death, over other members of the family, though he rarely exercises such a power in practice and shows moderate severity toward the household.<sup>10</sup> In her chapter on the *patria potestas*, fatherly power, Gardner recognizes the practical limitations which law and custom impose on this power, terming it a difference of “formal severity versus humane implementation in practice.”<sup>11</sup> In fact, the Twelve Tables limit the father’s right to expose a newborn, explicitly stating that he may expose a *deformed* newborn; additionally, fathers are expected to refer to advisors, usually family and friends, or to the courts when exercising this power over grown children.<sup>12</sup>

If a model *pater familias* exercises his ultimate authority only in the most unusual cases, one is left to piece together how he normally behaves. Saller gives insights in this regard, offering some examples from non-legal literature to paint a picture of an ordinary *pater familias*: he appears as an estate’s manager when Cato defines him

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<sup>8</sup> Saller 187. According to Saller’s exploration of the same term, though the authority of a *pater familias* governs his children, wife, slaves, and property, the ability to hold property alone is the necessary condition for a man to be a *pater familias*, and fatherhood itself has no bearing on the question in a legal context. A child who is the oldest living male in a line or an impotent adult male might each rightly call himself a *pater familias*, so long as he can legally own property. In fact, a woman might hold the post of a *pater familias*, since legal texts do not explicitly demand that a *pater familias* be male, though only a male might hold *patria potestas* over his children.

<sup>9</sup> Rawson 17.

<sup>10</sup> Saller 185.

<sup>11</sup> Gardner 1993: 54.

<sup>12</sup> Gardner 1993: 55.

as a “man who pastures well and sows well,” and again when Cicero refers to the “*bonus pater familias*” as a man who is skilled in farming, building, and accounting for profits.”<sup>13</sup> In Nepos’s *Life of Atticus*, a *pater familias* is shown to be chiefly a responsible, prudent, and modest overseer of his own property rather than an unduly harsh master to his dependents, though the law would give him license to be precisely so.<sup>14</sup>

*Patria potestas*, fatherly power, receives lucid treatment from Gardner, who outlines its formal extent as well as the practical limits placed on it in domestic and political life. In addition to the power of life and death which a *pater* wields over his household, he holds the rights to any property which a child, slave, or other dependant acquires so long as he lives or until he emancipates the dependant.<sup>15</sup> This power, though, like the power of life and death, is tempered by law and other practical considerations: should a *pater* grant a dependant a *peculium*, or monetary allowance, to dispose at his own discretion, and should the same dependant default on a debt acquired with the *peculium*, the *pater* himself becomes fully liable<sup>16</sup> for repaying the amount of the *peculium* to creditors if he had not approved the dependant’s transaction, more if he had no knowledge or full knowledge of it.<sup>17</sup> Even though, according to Gardner, a *filius* might wield power over *pater* in a capacity as magistrate, the father retains his *potestas*

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<sup>13</sup> Saller 190.

<sup>14</sup> Gardner 1991: 10.

<sup>15</sup> Gardner 1993: 55.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Codex Iustiniani 4.13: “*Ne filius pro patre vel pater pro filio emancipato vel libertus pro patrono conveniatur.*” Translated: “Neither a son for a father nor a father for an emancipated son nor a freedman for a patron may be tried.”

<sup>17</sup> Gardner 1993: 56.

over the son in a private capacity.<sup>18</sup>

Lacey ventures to show how the *patria potestas* forms the basis not only of private affairs in Rome, but of Roman political life as well. In order to investigate his general claim, that the *potestas* typifies Roman political authority, Lacey proceeds to illustrate that the Roman state is nothing more than a large family, each of which shares the same gods; that unlimited power is delegated to individual consuls, since Roman men as *patres familiarum* are accustomed to ruling their own homes autocratically; that unequal relationships among free Roman men are allowed to persist, since Romans believe that unequal relationships are necessary; and that the *pater familias*, whose analogue is the consul, is expected to consult with a *consilium* of other *patres familiarum*, whose analogue is the senate, according to custom.<sup>19</sup> For evidence of the Roman religion's familial nature, Lacey cites the fact that Vesta's worship in the home at the hearth fire is translated into public worship in the Vestal Virgins' order.<sup>20</sup> Addressing the similarities between consul and *pater familias*, Lacey demonstrates that each has powers limited only by custom and a small number of legal tethers, as alluded to above; that the consul interprets the *auspicia* for the state as the *pater familias* does for the *familia*; and that each governs his respective domain, the home and the state, alone, since the two consuls hold office during alternate months.<sup>21</sup> Finally, Lacey demonstrates that, though neither the *pater familias* nor the consul is compelled to consult with their respective *consilia* in their respective *officia*, each is “*expected* (my italics) to seek advice and to

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<sup>18</sup> Gardner 1993: 81.

<sup>19</sup> Lacey 123-124.

<sup>20</sup> Lacey 126.

<sup>21</sup> Lacey 131.

take the advice of a clear majority if such [is] evident.”<sup>22</sup>

A brief summary of the prototypical *pater familias* according to his legal rights versus his expected behavior as well as a restatement of the analogy between the household and the state seems suited to this paper’s aim. A *pater familias* is understood to be the oldest surviving heir in a *familia*, who holds nearly unlimited power over members of his *familia* from the time when he acquires the title until he dies. Though he may act in as a harsh a manner toward his dependants, slave or free, as he so chooses, intimate contact with his children, slaves, dependents, and wife as well as certain legal measures give him pause before fully exercising his powers over them. His title does not necessarily refer to his fatherhood, though his children might fall under his *potestas*, but more closely approximates to an estate manager. A large part of his duty also consists in upholding the household gods for his family and taking responsibility for his dependents, even when they make errors in his name. Likewise, the consul is understood to have these same powers over a state during his alternate months in office as the *pater familias* does over his family from the time when he acquires the title until his death. The Roman *familia* under its *pater* is a microcosm of the Roman state, with family members accepting the father’s authority over themselves as citizens accept the consuls’ authority over themselves.

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<sup>22</sup> Lacey 133.

### *Pater Familias, Anchises, and Aeneas, and Iulus*

Having defined the scope of the power of a *pater familias*, I turn to show that Virgil's Anchises exhibits the qualities of a prototypical *pater familias*, since he behaves as a *pater familias* should according to Roman law and custom. Once I have shown that Anchises is a model *pater familias* to Aeneas, I can extrapolate those qualities governed by the definition of a *pater familias* from Anchises and apply them to Aeneas, the *pater familias* of both a new Roman state and Iulus. With this end in view, I will examine each of the first six books for signs of the qualities of the prototypical *pater familias* which Anchises exhibits, then passages in the last six for those signs which Aeneas exhibits.

In Book 2, Aeneas recounts for his Carthaginian hostess, Dido, his version of the events surrounding Troy's fall to the Greeks. Near the beginning of the final third of the Book, Virgil introduces Anchises in a scene at his home when the Greeks are sacking Troy, where the reader encounters him refusing to leave the falling city with Aeneas, preferring instead to die at the enemy's knife and remain unburied (2.645-646)<sup>38</sup>:

Ipse manu mortem inveniam; miseribitur hostis

Excuviasque petet. Facilis iactura sepulcri.

I myself shall find death by the hand; an enemy will pity me

And seek spoils. A loss of tomb is easy.<sup>23</sup>

Both Quinn and Lloyd caution against understanding this refusal to abandon the city as surrender, but each takes it as a final act of defiance to the enemy which enhances rather than diminishes the old man's reputation. Quinn asserts that this action springs from the "Heroic Impulse," by which he means "preferring death to retreat,"<sup>24</sup> and Lloyd goes so

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<sup>24</sup> Quinn 119.

far as to claim that such refusal to surrender is “consonant with every precept of courage, bravery, and patriotism that a Roman youth ever learn[s].”<sup>25</sup> Understanding the *pater familias* to be a competent manager of an estate on whom all of his dependants rely, Anchises manifests managerial competence when he refuses to abandon his home rather than incompetence when he is reluctant to venture from the city. Only when a flame dances around Ascanius's head (679-686) and a comet appears (692-698) does Anchises, acting as his family's chief priest and augur according to his office as *pater familias*, understand that the gods wish him and his son to leave the city.<sup>26</sup>

Book 3 features Anchises interpreting omens and gleaning from them the gods' will for the Trojans' course in accordance with his duties as *pater familias* both to Aeneas and to the rest of the Trojans. After the Trojans set sail at Anchises's command, they alight in Thrace, where they encounter the grave of Polydorus, the Trojan messenger sent to seek aid from the Thracians but who was murdered when he arrived there (45-46). When Aeneas pulls out bushes grown around the grave, blood trickles from the roots (*huic atro linguuntur sanguine guttae/ et terram tabo maculant*: “From this [bush] drops of black blood drip and stain the ground with gore.” (28-29)) and Polydorus's voice urges him to leave the place (*Heu fuge crudelis terras, fuge litus avarum: nam Polydorus ego*: “Flee these cruel lands, flee this shore of greedy men: for I am Polydorus.” (44-45)). When the Trojans form a council with Anchises at the head to consult the oracle concerning the omen, the oracle bids them *antiquam exquirite matrem*, “Seek your ancient mother (96).” Anchises wrongly takes this “mother” to be Crete; once the Trojans found a new Pergamum there, Pergameam (133), the land is racked with famine,

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<sup>25</sup> Lloyd 46.

and Anchises orders the Trojans to consult the oracle again (142). When the *penates* appear to Aeneas in a dream (147) ordering the Trojans to sail to Italy, he reports the vision to Anchises first of all (179), who commands the Trojans to sail for Hesperia (188). In Epirus, after the Trojans meet Helenus, ruler and himself a Trojan, and hear his prophecy, *ante et Trinacria lentandus remus in unda*, “first your oars must contend with Sicily’s waters, (384),” Anchises receives specific instructions for sailing from Apollo’s priest following this encounter (475-481), demanding that the Trojans settle in western, not eastern, Italy. Once the Trojans reach Italy itself, Anchises interprets the omen of the four horses seen on the shore as two symbols of war and peace, respectively (539-543), and leads the sacrifices on board the ship (543-547). As Sanderlin emphasizes, though, although Anchises remains this section’s focus, since he is *pater familias* to the Trojans, Aeneas included, Aeneas is understood to be his apprentice. When the hero himself who is narrating the story to Dido changes point the of view, from first person singular to plural, at those places where Anchises assumes his leadership role as *pater familias*, he in fact emphasizes his father’s importance to the business in relation to his own, since Aeneas “merges with the other refugees.”<sup>27</sup>

The absence of Anchises during Books 1 and 4 coincides with the hero’s deteriorating commitment to the establishment of a new Trojan state, Rome. Instead of leaving Carthage at his earliest convenience, Aeneas, without the guiding hand of his own father, remains in Carthage to have an affair with Dido. Not until in Book 5 does he remember the central role as *pater familias* which Anchises had previously played to him

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<sup>26</sup> Lloyd 47.

and which he must now play for Iulus and the rest of the Trojans. Both Lloyd and Holt take stock of Anchises's appearance to Aeneas in 5.719-745, the former noticing that the hero's failed attempt to embrace his father is similar to his failed attempt to embrace Venus in 1.407-409, with the result that Anchises has undergone an "apotheosis."<sup>28</sup> The latter takes this similarity as reinforcing the theory which divides the epic into thirds, with Book 5 anticipating the final third, where Iulus himself assumes leadership over the army from his father, who is away on diplomatic business, rather than plays a mock leader at his grandfather's memorial games.<sup>29</sup> This second insight provides crucial evidence of the son's taking up traditional leadership responsibilities from his father, as Aeneas earlier took them up when he carried his father and the *penates* from Troy. As for Aeneas himself, Holt notices that the hero has a newfound firmness in his mission evidenced by a "briefer, less protesting"<sup>30</sup> address to his father's shade in 5.80-83 than the one that appeared in Book 3:

Salve, sancte parens, iterum salvete, recepti  
nequiquam cineres animaeque umbraeque paternae.  
Non licuit finis Italos fataliaque arva  
nec tecum Ausonium, quicumque est, quaerere Thybrim.  
Farewell, holy father, again farewell, ashes  
saved in vain and paternal spirits and shades.  
It is not permitted me to seek the Italian borders and fated shores

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<sup>27</sup> Sanderlin 55. The author shows that there are 73 first person plurals and 28 occasions when the refugees demand a leader, on 14 of which Anchises acts, and 9 on which Aeneas.

<sup>28</sup> Lloyd 51.

<sup>29</sup> Holt 112.

with you nor with you to seek Italian Tiber, whatever it is.

In 3.707-715, by contrast, the hero's speech is starkly pathetic, made more so by its imposition in a catalog of the Trojans' stopping points, as here.<sup>31</sup> Both Holt and Pavlovskis notice Aeneas's disengagement with his "Trojan past"<sup>32</sup> and eagerness for his work in Italy, since he has a more dignified attitude about his father's loss. He is prepared for his encounter with his own father in Book 6, Latinus in Book 7, and Evander in Book 8 after Anchises appears to him in 5.719-745 and orders the son to seek him out in the underworld.<sup>33</sup> Even when dead, however, as Lloyd notes, Anchises performs his customary functions in the epic, "counseling, interpreting the divine will, and directing the course of the Aeneadae."<sup>34</sup>

Book 6 marks the final stage in Aeneas's development with respect to his willingness to commit himself fully to building a new state, where the reader once again meets Anchises, this time in the underworld. Even though the Sibyl warns him about the future wars which he must wage against the Italians in 6.77-97, Aeneas is concerned chiefly with his father's whereabouts (6.106-108)<sup>35</sup>:

Unum oro: quando hic inferni ianua regis  
dicitur et tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso,  
ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora contigat.  
I ask for one thing: since the infernal king's gate  
is said to be here and the dark swamp where Acheron

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<sup>30</sup> Holt 115.

<sup>31</sup> Holt 115.

<sup>32</sup> Holt 114.

<sup>33</sup> Holt 116.

<sup>34</sup> Pavlovskis 197.

is poured back, [I ask] to go to my father's sight and touch his face.

When Aeneas meets his father in the underworld, both father and son weep at the sight of one another (686), and Anchises shows a stronger commitment to the enterprise than Aeneas, as befits this *pater familias* to the Trojans. Even though Anchises shows deep affection for his son, he is also shown reviewing with zeal the future Roman dominion, as would befit a leader of his stature (681-683):

. . . omnemque suorum  
forte recensebat numerum, carosque nepotes  
fataque fortunasque virum moresque manusque.

. . . and by chance he was reviewing  
the whole number of his own people, dear descendents  
and fates and fortunes and customs and deeds of men.

Where Anchises gives his lengthy discourse on Rome's future majesty in 703-886, he plays not only the philosopher, but also the "traditional *pater familias*,"<sup>36</sup> as Habinek sees it, since he upholds particularly Roman values by treating Aeneas to a vision of future famous Romans and by succinctly stating the core competency of Roman rule, *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*, "to spare the vanquished and to crush the proud (6.853)". According to Habinek, one of his duties is to educate his children in Roman values, which Anchises accomplishes here by showing Aeneas Rome's future heroes in order to motivate his son to act. Anchises also chides his son for exhibiting a lack of resolve in the present business, through which he is failing as a *pater familias* to his people (6.806-807):

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<sup>35</sup> Lloyd 51.

et dubitamus adhuc virtutem extendere factis,  
aut metus Ausonia prohibet considerare terra?  
do we hesitate even now to extend excellence to deeds,  
or does fear restrain us from settling in the Ausonian land?

By the end of Book 6, however, Aeneas is eager to begin his work in Italy, since *Anchises . . . incenditque animum famae venientis amore*, “Anchises . . . kindled his heart with love of future glory (888-889),” as a consequence of which the hero “never again attempts to embrace his ghosts”<sup>37</sup>, but rather comes to terms with the business at hand.

In Book 7, Aeneas first carries out his duties as *pater familias* in his own right when he acts as chief augur, understanding the fact that they eat the cakes which they use for plates as being a fulfillment of a prophecy which his father uttered regarding the Trojans’ future home (122-126):

hic domus, haec patria est. genitor mihi talia namque

(nunc repeto) Anchises fatorum arcana reliquit:

“cum te, nate, fames ignota ad litora vectum

accisis coget dapibus consumere mensas,

tum sperare domus defessus, ibique memento

prima locare manu molirique aggere tecta.”

This is the home, this is the fatherland. My father, Anchises,

also left me (now I recall) secrets of the fates: “When,

son, famine compels you born to unknown

shores to consume tables after feasts are eaten,

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<sup>36</sup> Habinek 225.

then weary hope for homes , and there remember

to place with your hand and to build in a heap the first homes.”

Not long after, Aeneas designates the ground to be broken and himself takes the first steps toward Rome’s foundation for a martial future (157-159) before he makes an alliance with the Latins:

. . . Ipse humili designat moenia fossa

moliturque locum, primasque in litore sedes

castrorum in morem pinnis atque aggere cingit.

He [Aeneas] himself marks out a trench on the ground as a wall

and builds the place, and he surrounds the first foundations

with battlements and a mound in the manner of a camp.

In Book 8’s opening, Virgil takes care to call Aeneas *pater* (line 28) just before Tiberinus, the river’s own divinity itself, addresses the hero and gives him the opportunity to behave as a *pater familias* in first an augural, then a managerial capacity (41-48; 56):

Iamque tibi, ne vana putes haec fingere somnum,

litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus

triginta capitum fetus enixa iacebit,

alba solo recubans, albi circum ubera nati.

. . . hos castris adhibe socios et foedera iunge.

And now for you, lest you think that sleep paints

these idle trifles, a mighty sow found under ilex trees on the shore

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<sup>37</sup> Belfiore 26.

will lie having delivered a brood of thirty heads, a white one resting  
on the ground, white young around the teats.

. . . invite these allies [the Arcadians] to the camp and join pledges.

First, Aeneas fulfills his duties to his people in an augural capacity when he sights the  
sow and its brood and, subordinating his own feelings to his people's welfare, offers them  
up to Juno, his foremost divine adversary (81-85):

Ecce autem subitum atque oculis mirabile monstrum,  
candida per silvam cum fetu concolor albo  
procubuit viridique in litore conspicitur sus:  
quam pius Aeneas tibi enim, tibi, maxima Iuno,  
mactat sacra ferens et cum grege sistit ad aram.

But behold! a sudden and marvelous portent for the eyes,  
a white pig is seen through the woods on the green shore and  
it lies of like color with white offspring:  
which dutiful Aeneas indeed for you, for you, greatest Juno,  
slays with the flock and carrying the sacrifices sets at the altar.

Then, once he has recognized the omen and propitiated the gods, having met Evander,  
king of the Arcadians, Aeneas acts according to Tiber's second injunction consonant with  
his own paternal office over his people, as Virgil marks out for the reader when he  
invokes the name of Anchises (155-156):

. . . Ut verba parentis  
et vocem Anchisae magni vultumque recordor!  
. . . How I recall the words

and voice and face of your great father, Anchises!

Throughout lines 343-361, Evander shows Aeneas and Iulus a grove which Romulus afterward makes into an asylum, the Tarpeian rock, the Capitoline hill, and the site of the future Roman forum, each of which marks out the importance of the success of the hero's mission to Rome's later success. Next, in lines 528-540, Aeneas interprets another omen sent from Venus as a sign that the Latins have broken their treaty with Aeneas's people:

Arma inter nubem caeli in regione serena  
per sudum rutilare vident et pulsa tonare.  
obstipuere animis alii, sed Troius heros  
agnovit sonitum et divae promissa parentis.  
. . . "poscant acies et foedera rumpant."

They (the Arcadians and displaced Trojans) see arms glow red  
and beaten sound amid cloud in the sky's fair province throughout the  
bright heaven. The others were stunned in their hearts, but the Trojan  
hero recognized the sound and his divine mother's promises.

. . . "Let them seek battles and break pledges."

In lines 541-553, Aeneas offers sacrifice to Lares, the hearth god, and Hercules, and then chooses his best men for the fight. Then, once Aeneas receives the shield crafted by Vulcan, Virgil makes explicit the importance of Aeneas's coming actions to his descendants in line 731 (*attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum*, "lifting on his shoulder his descendants' reputation and fates").

In Book 9's opening third, Iulus makes plain to Nisus and Euryalus, who are about to make an unsuccessful attempt to report to Aeneas that their settlement is under

siege, his father's importance to his own welfare (*Immo ego vos, cui sola salus genitore reducto . . .*, "I, whose only welfare is with my father having been led back, [implore] you. (257)). In this section, Iulus first acts as leader to the Trojans, a clear sign that he is beginning to learn how to be an effective *pater familias* in a managerial role to his people from his own father, Aeneas, a point which Virgil reinforces in line 294 (*atque animum patriae strinxit pietatis imago*, "and the image of loyalty to one's father affects his [Iulus's] mind). When Apollo sees Iulus's courage in battle, he goes to him after he takes on the appearance of Butes, armor-bearer to Anchises, a fact which in itself marks out this section (647-656) as an instantiation of the transmission of the *pater familias* office from generation to generation, but which is magnified by the patronymic by which Apollo addresses Iulus, to tell him to leave off warfare(653-654):

"Sit satis, Aenide, telis impune Numanum  
 oppetiisse tuis; . . ."

"Let it be enough, son of Aeneas, to have met Numanus  
 with your javelins unscathed; . . ."

Here, Iulus not only interacts with divinities, as his father and grandfather have done before, but also is forced to subvert his own interest, to fight the enemy, to that of his people, to preserve his own life in order to lead them.

To return to the hero, Aeneas in lines 10.153-154 makes an alliance with Tarchon, an Etruscan king, in order to more successfully resist the Latin aggression (*Tarchon/ iungit opes foedusque ferit*, "Tarchon/ joins his forces and makes a pledge."). Aeneas encounters Cymodoce, a nymph, who orders him to fight the next day, in lines 228-245, a fact which Virgil marks out as another manifestation of the hero's fulfillment of his office

as *pater familias* in in augural capacity in line 250, where he is called *Tros Anchisiades*, “the Trojan son of Anchises.” Once battle is joined in line 310, Aeneas is first to the attack, in which action he lays low a heap of enemy combatants, including some who have insulted him, in accordance with his father’s injunction in the underworld, “to spare the suppliant and punish the proud.”

Book 11’s opening lines feature Aeneas thanking the gods for his people’s victory in line 4 (*vota deum primo victor solvebat Eoo*, “He sent the gods’ prayers at the first Dawn”) in accordance with his priestly role as *pater familias*. Aeneas not only preserves his dependents, but also spares the suppliant Latins in order to further his people’s interest, as is evident from Drances’s speech to Aeneas in lines 128-129 (*et te, si qua viam dederit Fortuna, Latino/ iungemus regi*, “and we shall join you to Latinus our king, if Fortune will have given some way.”).

Finally, in Book 12, when Aeneas kills Turnus in their duel (. . . *ferrum adverso sub pectore condit/ fervidus*, “he buried the sword under the enemy’s chest/seething” (950)), he eliminates the last remaining threat to his people’s establishment in Italy, again showing his qualification to be *pater familias* to the Romans in his capacity of guarding dependants against threats to their welfare.

### **Conclusion**

Aeneas’s acceptance of personal responsibility for the welfare of the new Trojan state comes as a direct consequence of the strong influence of Anchises in the role of prototypical *pater familias*. According to scholarship on the relationship between Aeneas

and Anchises, father must impel son to accept his duties as *pater familias* to present and future Trojans in the first six books of Virgil's *Aeneid*, but only after the sixth book does Aeneas assume these responsibilities eagerly and of his own accord.

A *pater familias*, a Roman citizen understood to be the oldest surviving heir in a *familia*, shows affection to his dependants, even though his power includes that of life and death over them. The Roman state must be viewed as an extension of the Roman family, since the Romans accept the consul's authority over themselves as a consequence of their natural acceptance of father's rule over the estate and religion at home.

Similarities between the model *pater familias* and Anchises as well as between the model Anchises and Aeneas are found. Anchises appears interpreting omens and directing the Trojans' course before his death, from which Aeneas learns to place his people's best interest before his own emotional state. In Book 1, when Anchises is absent from the action after his death on route to Carthage, Aeneas has lost sight of his appointed purpose without his father present to remind him of it.

Since Virgil arranges the narrative so that those events occurring chronologically before the Trojans' arrival in Carthage are placed after their arrival in the text, Anchises's absence indicates that the poet intends to show the importance of the father to the son. In Book 1, Aeneas has lost hope of reaching Italy to found a new Trojan state and is devastated by the loss of his country and father. Without his father to advise him, Aeneas entangles himself in an affair with Dido that endangers the entire divinely appointed plan for the future Roman state's establishment under his command. Also, Anchises is not found in Book 4, since Aeneas has continued to neglect his duty to the gods and to his own people in favor of a dalliance with the Carthaginian queen. In spite of Dido's

protests and accusations of perfidy, Aeneas leads the Trojans out of Africa toward Italy in order to complete his assigned task, to establish the future Roman state, which he will do in accordance with his role as *pater familias* to the Trojans once Anchises, the prototypical *pater familias*, has appeared to him.

Aeneas accedes to his aged father's decrees in Books 2 and 3, since Anchises is *pater familias* and, as such, entitled to obedience and deference not only from Aeneas but also from all the Romans. Beginning in Book 2 and continuing into Book 3, Anchises assumes responsibility for interpreting portents, one of the customary duties of a *pater familias*.

In Book 5, Aeneas in the role of *pater familias* assumes responsibility for leading the Trojans to western Italy, where the future Roman state will be established. Having resolved to abandon Dido, Aeneas gives tribute to his father's memory by holding funeral games in his honor on Sicily. Here Anchises remains the center of attention, and at the book's end Anchises appears to Aeneas in his dream to order him to find his shade when he visits Hades in Book 6. There, Anchises imparts to Aeneas important philosophical truths and stories of Rome's future dominion. Consequently, Anchises continues to fulfill the duties of a *pater familias* even though dead, since he counsels his son and interprets the divine will for his son's and the Trojan peoples' sake, as he had done before on the voyage to Italy, as well as educates Aeneas on Roman virtue.

After this encounter in the underworld, Aeneas displays less hesitation or irrationality than before, and he has himself assumed the duties of a *pater familias* on his father's death to the Trojans as a whole and to Iulus in particular from Anchises. The hero's apparent brutality to Lausus and Turnus is more accurately termed *pietas*,

devotion, since his devotion in the role of *pater familias* toward his own people well as toward his son demands that he put their safekeeping before his own emotional state.

## Appendix

I should point out that Virgil had to take care to avoid mentioning less wholesome aspects of both Anchises and Aeneas legends found in Greek literature as well as in the *Aeneid*, since the hero was born after his father's tryst with Venus, conducted himself less than heroically in the Trojan war, appears to abuse his enemies in Books 7 through 12, and abandons Dido in Book 4. First, one may confront Virgil's efforts to mold the established legend of Anchises and Aeneas to show that the office of prototypical *pater familias* passes from father to son. As Paschalis sets out to demonstrate, the gods' customary arbitrary behavior in myth does not suit the epic's purpose,<sup>38</sup> which is to show the fulfillment of their plans for a new Troy through Aeneas's heroic exploits after he becomes *pater familias* to his people in the mold of Anchises. Therefore, Virgil declines to make mention of Venus's affair with Anchises, an event which complicates her request to Vulcan in Book 8 to fashion armor for her love-child, but rather lays particular emphasis on her marriage to Vulcan in this scene.<sup>39</sup> Virgil also elevates Anchises's legendary tryst with the goddess in the *Homeric Hymns*<sup>40</sup> to a marriage in order to avoid degrading this focal figure, as in Book 3, when Apollo's prophet addresses Anchises before the Trojans leave Epirus:

*Conjugio, Anchisa, Veneris dignate superbo . . .*

Anchises, deemed worthy of proud *marriage* (my italics) to Venus . . .

Additionally, at no point does Virgil allow Venus and Anchises to meet one another in

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<sup>38</sup> Paschalis 25.

<sup>39</sup> Paschalis 27.

<sup>40</sup> Athanassakis 47-55.

the epic, nor does he make mention of the father's lameness after he is struck by Zeus's thunderbolt for having boasted of his affair with Venus. As for Aeneas himself, while some have interpreted the *Iliad* as portraying him as a "deserter who escaped Troy without putting up much of a fight,"<sup>41</sup> the same Aeneas in the *Aeneid* surpasses Homeric heroes by exhibiting extraordinary "civic virtue," which Achilles fails to show in his withdrawal from battle and Odysseus in his failure to protect his men in his wanderings.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Aeneas exhibits qualities of a prototypical *pater familias* in the public sense and Anchises as well as Aeneas are spared the more embarrassing aspects of the hero's birth in order to further the epic's aim.

As for the second consideration, that Aeneas is unsuited to assume leadership of his people and to groom his own son for this role on account of his unduly harsh treatment of Dido and of enemy combatants, like Turnus, Noonan and Gillis show that these apparent shortcomings are in fact necessary traits for a Roman leader. Even though one might understand the hero's furious murder of Haemonides, Apollo and Diana's priest (10.537-541); the suppliant Tarquitus, over whose headless corpse he vaunts by speaking of his grief-stricken mother (10.557-560); and the suppliant Lucagus, whom, having seen his own brother die, the hero tells to join his brother (10.597-601) as irrational outbursts following Pallas's death, an interpretation of this behavior as extending from the hero's *pietas* to his people's appointed task is equally valid.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, Noonan reasons, were Aeneas to spare such enemies as Mezentius, Lausus, and Turnus, they would either have to become counselors to the Roman hero or

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<sup>41</sup> Noonan 8.

<sup>42</sup> Noonan 9.

<sup>43</sup> Gillis 339.

independent leaders of their own defeated peoples, each of which might compromise the nascent Roman state, since their very existence would threaten the Roman leader's power.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, to spare Lausus when he seeks revenge for his impious father's wounds at Aeneas's hands in an emotional frenzy rather than with a view to his people's welfare would contradict a dominant theme in the epic, that the *pater familias* places his people's best interest before his own.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, though the hero's abandonment of Dido in Book 4 might be taken as a betrayal, it is more accurately termed a sign of his "communal devotion",<sup>46</sup> since such devotion does not necessitate kindness,<sup>47</sup> as evidenced by the deaths of Lausus and Turnus. Moreover, Dido and Aeneas underwent no ceremonial change when they had their affair, since no nuptials attended their dalliance, so that Aeneas cannot disgrace her whom he has not married when he abandons her, since he has no formal lawful Roman attachment to her as to his own people.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Noonan 27.

<sup>45</sup> Noonan 26.

<sup>46</sup> Noonan 26.

<sup>47</sup> Noonan 32.

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<sup>48</sup> Noonan 30.

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