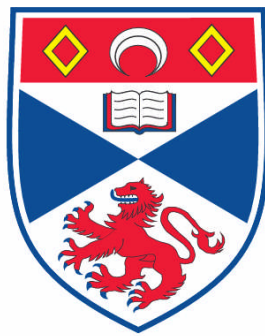


**TRANSLATION AS CREATIVE RETELLING : CONSTITUENTS,
PATTERNING AND SHIFT IN GAVIN DOUGLAS' *ENEADOS***

Gordon McGregor Kendal

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews**



2008

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Gordon McGregor Kendal

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

17th June, 2008

ABSTRACT

The Thesis analyses and evaluates how Gavin Douglas (*Eneados*, 1513) has refocused Virgil's *Aeneid*, principally by giving more emphasis to the serial particularity inherent in the story, loosening the narrative structure and involving the reader in its retelling.

Chapter I pieces together (from the evidence not merely of what Douglas explicitly says, but of what his words imply) what for him a "text" in general is, and what accordingly it means for a translator or a reader to be engaged with it. This sets the scene for what follows.

The next four Chapters look in turn at how he re-expresses important (metaphysical) characteristics of the story. In Chapter II his handling of *time* is discussed, and compared with Virgil's: the Chapter sets out in detail how Douglas consistently refocuses temporal predicates, foregrounding their disjunctiveness and making them differently felt. In Chapter III spatial position and distance are analysed, and Douglas' way of dealing with *space* is found to display parallels with his treatment of time: networks are loosened and nodal points are accentuated. In Chapter IV the way in which he presents *individuals* is compared with Virgil's, and a similar repatterning and shift reveals itself: Douglas provides his persons with firmer boundaries. Chapter V deals with *fate*, where Douglas encounters special difficulties but maintains his characteristic way of handling the story. The aim of these four Chapters is to characterise formally how Douglas concretises and vivifies the tale of Aeneas, engaging his readers throughout in the retelling.

Finally, Chapter VI looks at certain general principles of translation theory (notably connected with the ideas of faithfulness and accuracy) and argues for a way in which Douglas' translation can be fairly experienced by the reader and fairly evaluated as a lively retelling which (albeit distinctive) is fundamentally faithful to Virgil.

DECLARATIONS

I, Gordon McGregor Kendal, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September, 2005 and as a candidate for the degree of Ph. D. in September, 2006; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2005 and 2008.

date

signature of candidate

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Ph. D. in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

date

signature of supervisor

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the electronic publication of this thesis:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been indebted in many ways in the preparation of this work, but I should like to register special gratitude to three people.

First, to Dr Christopher MacLachlan for the friendly supervision - sensitive but firm - which he has provided throughout the last three years. His warm encouragement and gentle prodding, and the opportunities he has given me in discussion to see Douglas as part of a broader narrative phenomenon, have been of great help in clarifying the subject of the present Thesis.

Secondly, to the late Dr Ian Robb. His Thesis on Gavin Douglas (St Andrews, 1991), which I first read some years ago, was like a cold douche and was instrumental in sending me back to the Latin and to translation theory, and in turning what had been an informal affection for Douglas' translation, with some interest in its cultural setting, into something (I hope) more focused and critical. The position which the present Thesis takes, though, is quite different from that of Robb's.

Thirdly, to my wife Patricia: (a) for essential help in meeting the challenge of electronic submission, (b) for help in proof-reading and in collating the statistical data which lie behind the discussion, towards the end of Chapter II, of how Douglas sets the tempo of his narrative, (c) for a lifetime of conversations about things to do with language and stories and meaning, and (d) not least for her skilful housekeeping over the years, which made it possible for me to tackle this research project full-time.

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CHAPTER I

ENCOUNTERING THE TEXT

1. *Introductory*

The bulk of this Thesis (Chapters II-V) will be an analysis of what Douglas makes of the *Aeneid* - his mixture of faithfulness and change - and what implications this has for how we are to read and assess his translation. Primarily I shall be examining how he deals with four key features radically and comprehensively present throughout the poem: time, space, individuality and fatefulness. The various ancillary remarks he offers, especially in Prologue I, about Virgil's handiwork and about what he (Douglas) reckons he has been trying to do in translating it - and with what measure of success - are lucid and lively and they demonstrate a fair measure of learning, but they are sketchy, even commonplace, and not altogether coherent. If we expect to find in *Eneados* what Douglas suggests he has been trying to put there, we can seriously misjudge him. To some extent his remarks fall within Dorothy L. Sayers' strictures about a translator who offers reflections on the nature of his task:

He tackles the job in whatsoever manner seems good to him, and formulates a theory afterwards, if at all, with the twin hope of forestalling criticism, and telling the world exactly what he thinks of his rival translators.¹

Still, the ancillary remarks give us a starting-point, and on closer inspection they reveal more than they say. In this Chapter I shall try to disentangle and clarify Douglas' assumptions about two related questions which will prove to be important in the way his version of the *Aeneid* is shaped: what sort of entity it is that he is translating (the object of his attention), and what sort of connections exist between him

¹ Dorothy L. Sayers, "The Translation of Verse", in *The Poetry of Search and the Poetry of Statement* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1963), pp. 127-53 (p. 129).

- and readers in general - and it (how it is present, and what sort of engagement there is). On closer inspection an attitude emerges from his rather haphazard remarks which - tidied up, supplemented, rendered more coherent - is close to the actual hermeneutical thrust we find in his translation. Later Chapters will I believe substantiate the tentative analysis I give here. In the following four Sections I argue that Douglas takes the *Aeneid* to be given in some sense as physical (object and event), to be rich in content, to be puzzling and versatile in the meanings it offers, and to require readerly engagement.

2. *The text as physical*

Towards the close of Prologue I Douglas says that he expects there will be critics of his work, and he does not mind this:

Thocht sum wald sweir that I the text haue vareit,
Or that I haue this volume quyte myscareit,
Or threip planlie that I com neuer neir hand it,
Or that the werk is wers than evir I fand it,
Or zit argew Virgile stuide wele befoir,
As now war tyme to schift the wers ouer scoir; ... (II.18.25-30)²

The words he chooses here to designate what he has been working upon are revealing: “text”, “volume”, “werk” and (by familiar metonymy) “Virgile”. Earlier in the Prologue he had mentioned Virgil’s “werkis” (II.3.10), “this mast excellent buik” (II.5.28), “Virgilis volume” (II.5.29). He had been asked by Lord St Clair, his cousin, to translate “Virgill or Omeir” (II.6.4). Laurentius Valla, he tells us, had spent many years studying “Virgill” (II.7.16). We hear of the “text of Virgill” (II.11.1), of “Virgillis versis” (II.11.24), of wrong-minded men who want to “amend Virgyle”

² References are to volume, page and lines in J. Small (ed.), *The Poetical Works of Gavin Douglas*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: Paterson, 1874). Occasionally reference is made to David F. C. Coldwell (ed.), *Virgil’s Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1957-64). There is nothing to choose between the two editions in terms of textual authority, but Small is easier to come by, and his orthography is less fussy than Coldwell’s.

(II.12.11), of “Virgillis text” (II.12.25). We are reminded that “His werk remanis” (II.12.28). In Prologue III Douglas affirms “I follow Virgile” (II.117.12); in Prologue VII he looks at his bookstand and sees “Virgill” (III.78.25); in Prologue XIII he confesses wryly the length of time he has spent staring upon “Virgillis volume” (IV.171.23) but says of his task that he is relieved “Virgill is at ane end” (IV.172.1). In the “Dyrectioun” we have mention of “buike” and “volume” (IV.224.17,19), and he calls his version - available to a new generation - simply “Virgill” (IV.227.3).

Whatever else it turns out to be, then, what Douglas is translating is a physical object (the book in front of him, with its back and front and edges and dimensions and weight and appearance), related through physical events in space and time to another physical object, the man Virgil. This “Virgyll hes his volum to me lent” (IV.229.3). He *was* real - “thou was bot a mortall man sum tyme” (II.18.14) - and through writing, copying, speaking, printing,³ reading (all physical phenomena) he is real for Douglas now. Occasionally Douglas will use words that are relatively non-physical in concept - e.g. “storye” (II.7.31) and the title “Eneadon” (II.8.22); and notice “This text is full of storyis euery deill” (II.117.10). But not often.

Correspondingly, we hear his own engagement with it described in physical or near-physical terms. In the passage quoted earlier (II.18.25-30) there are references to his “varying” the text, “miscarrying” the volume, “coming” - or not coming - near it; he “finds” the work, and his Virgil might be argued to have “stood” all right beforehand. All this has strong physical resonances. Douglas will also sometimes insert a word or two about his own performance of the task in hand. In winter’s time (Prologue VII) he gets on with it:

And, as I bownit me to the fyre me by,
Bayth wp and downe the hous I did aspy;
And seand Virgill on ane lettrune stand,
To writ anone I hynt ane pen in hand,
For tyll performe the poet grave and sad, ...

(III.78.23-7)

(Here “performe the poet” is interesting in this connection.)

³ The *editio princeps*, though not precisely dated, is assigned to 1467.

Again:

And for hys [St Clair's] saik do scharp my pen all new,
My maste renownyt author to ensew, (III.208.7-8)

and when it is all over ("Conclusioun") he tells us:

Thus vp my pen and instrumentis full 3oyr
On Virgillis post I fix for evirmore, ... (IV.223.12-13)

That is the post, namely "Virgillis text", to which he has been "ybound" (II.12.25).

Language which likens a text, and engagement with it, to physical objects and operations is of course "a manner of speaking", difficult for embodied language-users to avoid. It is not to be taken too seriously. Nonetheless, implicit in conceiving something as physical (especially when the metaphor is insisted on, as it is with Douglas) lie suppositions which can, and evidently do, spill over into neighbouring areas of meaning: affinities which lie somewhere between logical necessity (which this seepage is clearly not) and purely random psychological leaps (which it is clearly not quite either).

A determinate physical object is (in principle) identifiable; it is distinct (from other physical objects, including its causes and effects, and from its percipients); it has boundaries; it has a significant degree of fixity; it is (by presumption at least) single, whole and complete. By a natural association of conceivings these features can attach themselves to what further significance the physical object has, and we find ourselves naturally thinking of the story in the book as possessing structural qualities like those of the book itself. If that transference gets out of hand then what was a legitimate starting-point for an analysis of the nature of a "text" turns into a misleading end-point; as if Virgil's tale were like a stone moving along a hill-side, interacting with what it encounters but essentially untouched, and constant in itself. If we further stress in the metaphor the notion of moving down-hill we can come to suppose (like good neo-Platonists) that each stage necessarily takes us further away from the *real* nature and meaning of the *Aeneid*. Martindale gives us, tongue in cheek, a version of this idea, of

... what is still, for many classicists, the holy of holies, the reified text-in-itself, its meaning placed beyond contingency. Produced in an apocalyptic moment of creation (like the emergence of Athena out of the head of Zeus) the text comes forth, fully armed with the intentions of its creator, and available and present to at least the wiser readers of the day. Unfortunately, during the intervening years, it suffers depredations from the follies, incompetences and sheer ignorance and naivety of our nearer ancestors (particularly those unfortunate enough to live in the Middle Ages, as we quaintly call the thousand years from St Augustine to Dante). Luckily modern classical philology is at hand, to roll back the years and reveal to us the original in all its gleaming, pristine purity.⁴

It is an attractive (and popular) metaphor, reinforced in the case of Virgil by the fact that the *Aeneid* has relatively few textual variants (so it is not felt to be inchoate, needing things to be done to it).⁵ The metaphor certainly attracts Douglas. What keeps him from overdoing it is that he has additional ways of thinking about the text (see the next three Sections), but also that he does not present his musings as a theory. He is thinking aloud, somewhat casually, about being a translator. On the other hand, it is doing him a disservice to ignore his choice of vocabulary altogether. It sets a tone and suggests an ambience in which spatio-temporality and the physical emphatically matter. This has three important implications.

First, for Douglas, and presumably for the general run of his readers, the content of the *Aeneid* - having something of the definiteness of its physical correlates - is not to be played with indefinitely.⁶ It furnishes its own criterion and parameters. It tells us which story it is, and roughly within what limits it can legitimately be retold. At one important level at least it is a *datum*, to which the appropriate response of reader and translator alike is something like *deference*, acknowledgement of the fact. (In the next Section I shall discuss another kind of deference: before the quality.) For Douglas this would be an essential third prong to add to Derrida's recognition of

⁴ Charles Martindale, *Redeeming the text: Latin poetry and the hermeneutics of reception* (Cambridge: University Press, 1993), p. 4.

⁵ Mackail's judgement still holds good: "There can be no reasonable doubt that we possess with substantial accuracy, and subject only to such minor errors or variations as are inherent and all but unavoidable in a manuscript tradition, the text of the *Aeneid* as it was published after Virgil's death by his executors." J. W. Mackail (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. xlvii.

⁶ Compare Douglas' concern for the intactness of his *own* text, e.g. II.18.23-4 and IV.231.24-5.

difference and deferral (*différance*).⁷ For all the versatility and indeterminacy which Douglas also finds in Virgil's text, and the difficulties in establishing an unequivocal authorial intention, there is for him an element of non-negotiable earthedness in the content as Virgil intended it. It possesses an identity, a nature, even a mind, of its own: what Steiner calls "organizing contiguities and orientations".⁸

Secondly, this focus on physicality is reflected in how Douglas arranges the various layers that are present in the story. The *Aeneid* is of course more than a story of things happening in space and time, but that is an important constituent, and arguably the least equivocal part (because people will often argue about what a sequence of events means, while in general agreeing upon what externally they find them to be).⁹ I shall be arguing (particularly in Chapters II and III) that Douglas' version is throughout emphatically physicalised; which is just what closer inspection of his prefatory remarks would lead us to expect, though he does not himself make the connection. The projection might even have gone further. The (physical) text is a spatio-temporal product of somebody's (Virgil's) mind and purpose. That might in turn have involved Douglas in highlighting not simply the physicality of the events in the story, but their being themselves outcomes of something more than just another event, some determining purpose (analogous to that of an author writing a book). Douglas, I shall

⁷ "It is because of *différance* that the movement of signification is possible only if each so-called present element, each element appearing on the scene of presence, is related to something other than itself, thereby keeping within itself the mark of the past element, and already letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element, this trace being related no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past, and constituting what is called the present by means of this very relation to what it is not: what it absolutely is not, not even a past or a future as a modified present." Jacques Derrida, "La Différance", in Peggy Kamuf (ed.), *A Derrida Reader: between the blinds* (Columbia: University Press, 1991), pp. 61-79 (pp. 65-6).

⁸ George Steiner, *After Babel* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 428. See also footnote 54 (p. 31) below (quotation from Octavio Paz) for a different but complementary angle on this, concerning specifically how poet and translator alike need to handle form and signification.

⁹ Jakobson expresses this point thus: "In its cognitive function, language is minimally dependent on the grammatical pattern because the definition of our experience stands in complementary relation to metalinguistic operations ...". Roman Jakobson, "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation", in R. A. Brower (ed.), *On Translation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 232-9 (p. 236).

argue (in Chapter V), struggles with that level of transference: his treatment of “fate” is less successful than his treatment of the ordinary *superficies* of what is going on.

Thirdly, the finitude and determinateness that a story borrows in this way from the physical object (book) and the events (writing, reproducing, reading) through which it makes its presence felt constitute a tension of their own. Broadly speaking, it is the tension between saying about the story (as we might of the book) “here it is” and saying about it “there it is”. Its distinguishability can bring it near (like us, it is in space and time, we possess it intimately, it feels familiar: content as well as book) or it can set it at a distance: there are so many convolutions of time and space in between that continuity can be obscured, and insofar as the story represents itself as in “epic time” it claims in addition an absoluteness of its own. This tension between accessibility and strangeness recurs frequently in the translation, and I shall return to it particularly in Chapters II and III.

3. *The text as filled*

Prologue I begins with effusive praise of Virgil. He is “Mast reuerend Virgill, of Latyne poetis prince” (II.3.3). Helplessly, Douglas asks:

Quha ma thi versis follow in all degre,
In bewtie, sentence, and in grauite? (II.5.1-2)

As Coldwell remarks,¹⁰ this is conventional stuff, with its aureate diction and the modest contrast with Douglas’ own “dull forhede and wane, ... ruide engine and barrand emptive brane” (II.3.18-19). But it is a conventionalised *somewhat* and may reveal something of Douglas’ sense of Virgil: the qualities he possessed and the features now embedded in the poem he made. Earlier I distinguished deference before fact from deference before quality; but quality is really another kind of fact.

¹⁰ Coldwell, vol. 1, p. 144.

It is - not surprisingly - the beauty of the *Aeneid* that is most apparent to Douglas. What is less clear is what exactly he means by “bewtie”, in the sense either of what the concept signifies or (if this is a different question) of what constitutes or contributes to it. It might be simply the mellifluousness of the words that he has in mind in speaking of the “scharp sugurat sang Virgiliane” (II.4.9), or of the “bewtie of his ornate eloquence” (II.15.29), but something further is suggested too. His remarks on the elusiveness of Virgil’s “ornate bewtie” occur while he is discussing difficulties in capturing Virgil’s *sense*. For Douglas the beauty of words is, in part at least, their capacity to carry meaning, delicately and tellingly. Hence:

Besyde Latyne our langage is imperfite,
 Quhilk in sum part is the caus and the wite,
 Quhy that of Virgillis vers the ornate bewtie
 Intill our tounge may nocht obseruit be; ... (II.14.27-30)

With “style” too the connotation is deceptive and goes well beyond sound or appearance. When Douglas tells us in Prologue V that Virgil “alteris his stile sa mony way” (II.221.13), we might suppose that he is thinking about the manner in which he expresses himself. But the next line spells out the “mony way”: “Now dreid, now strif, now luf, now wo, now play”. These refer to subject-matter. Similarly, his discussion in Prologue IX of the “ryall style, clepyt heroycall” (III.205.21), the “knychtlik stile” (III.206.9), might suggest that the question is how verbal choices are to be made appropriately for particular occasions. So indeed, in part, it is. But it is clear that “style” is also - and crucially - a matter of choice of subject-matter. The nobleman offended by inappropriate style will be upset in part by what that style is depicting: “scroggis, broym, haddir, or rammale” instead of “lawrer, cedir, or the palm triumphale” (III.206.15-16). Of course, style is not exactly the same as subject-matter; and when Douglas, coming around to the idea of including Mapheus Vegius in his book, acknowledges a difference in style between Vegius and Virgil - “thocht hys stile be nocht to Virgill like” (IV.174.5) - he really does seem to mean just characteristic expressiveness. But the two (subject and manner) for him go intimately together.

We find a similar hinterground in the way Douglas elaborates his praise of Virgil's particular stylistic qualities. His word "grauite", quoted at the outset of this Section, is perhaps too ambiguous at this distance of time for us to pin much to it, though its sense would almost certainly have owed as much to the Latin "gravitas" - which (like its cognates "gravis" and "gravidus") could convey figurative weightiness or ladenness as well as physical weight, and even "pregnancy"¹¹ (and see below on fecundity) - as it would to nascent Scots ideas of seriousness or solemnity (which do not seem quite to fit Douglas' context here). Whatever it meant to him, to others it might legitimately suggest something important *within* or *behind*: like "beauty" and "style", "gravity" might initially focus upon the outward phenomenon, but it could also suggest something more than what met the eye or ear.

So with the word "eloquence", of which Douglas makes repeated use. Virgil is "fluide of eloquence" (IL.3.4, 13.4). But again: What is "eloquence"? Primarily a way of expressing oneself, no doubt; yet in the mainstream of *elocutio* it was a commonplace that words alone, however attractively arranged, do not themselves add up to proper, responsible eloquence. For that, grounding is essential. Quintilian (*editio princeps* 1470) stresses that

... the verb *eloqui* means the production and communication to the audience of all that the speaker has conceived in his mind, ...¹²

This is the power to which "we devote the energies of a lifetime"; but this is not to be taken to mean "that we should devote ourselves to the study of words alone": it is subject-matter ("rerum") that is the "backbone of any speech". He offers the analogy of a healthy body, where grace ("species") and strength ("vires") go essentially together:

Healthy bodies, enjoying a good circulation and strengthened by exercise, acquire grace from the same source that gives them strength, for they have a healthy complexion, firm flesh and shapely thews.¹³

¹¹ In the *Aeneid* we find e.g. "sacerdos Marte grauis" (priestess pregnant by Mars), 1.274-5. References to the *Aeneid* will be in this form throughout the Thesis, and according to R. A. B. Mynors (ed.), *P. Vergili Maronis Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

¹² Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, Loeb Library, 4 vols., trans. by H. E. Butler (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976-80), vol. 3, p. 185.

¹³ Quintilian, p. 187.

“Eloquence”, then, presupposes a two-fold background: one that runs through the effectiveness of the words as actually delivered, and one that has contributed over time to its acquisition and development. If Quintilian on eloquence seem too *recherché* for Douglas, here is Augustine (pursuing Cicero’s remark that “eloquence without wisdom is often extremely injurious and profits no one”)¹⁴ on how to preach with integrity as well as effectiveness:

For a man speaks more or less wisely to the extent that he has become more or less proficient in the Holy Scriptures.¹⁵

And he will do well not only to be knowledgeable about the ultimate subject-matter (Scripture), but

... eagerly engage in reading or hearing the works of the eloquent and in imitating them in practice ...¹⁶

Hence even characteristics that are emphatically sensed outwardly may rest on other important layers that make their presence felt through them. What Douglas finds attractive about Virgil, the impressiveness to which he responds, is in part this elusive weightiness, this interlacement of great riches lodged more deeply within the poem.¹⁷

The idea is more evident in another word Douglas applies to Virgil: his “fecundity” or fulness. Virgil is a “springand well” (II.3.8), his “sentence” (probably “meaning” or “content”) is “facund” (II.4.19); his “copiose flowith or plenitud” means the poem is like a container for liquid (a “tone”, II.5.6-7; and cf. his claim that, unlike Caxton’s, his own translation is not “jawyn [dashed] fra tun to tun”, II.222.3; also IV.227.1-2); he has “facund rethorik” (IV.227.5). His “sentence” is indeed both “hie”

¹⁴ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. by D. W. Robertson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), p. 121.

¹⁵ Augustine, p. 122.

¹⁶ Augustine, p. 122.

¹⁷ Note the expression (applied to Livy) “mylky flud of eloquens” (II.289), and the expression (applied to Chaucer) “Mylky fountane” (II.14.10): these must refer to nutritious content, not colour. There is a similar linkage of eloquence and matter in the Prologue of Octavien de Saint-Gelais’ French translation of the *Aeneid* (1500, first printed 1509): “... quant j’eu par quelques heures refraischy ma memoire du hault stille et matiere eloquente dedans traictee ...”; reproduced in Thomas Brückner, *Die erste französische Aeneis: Untersuchungen zu Octavien de Saint-Gelais’ Übersetzung* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1987), p. 136.

and “profund” (II.5.19); he possesses “hie wisdom and maist profound ingyne”

(II.221.8); there is a “profund and copys plenitude” (IV.225.32) in Virgil; he is:

Surs capitall in veyne poeticall,
Soverane fontane, and flume imperiall: ... (IV.226.1-2)

With images like this in mind, no wonder we are assured by Douglas:

Als oft as 3e him reid, full wele I wait,
3e fynd ilk tyme sum merye new consait. (II.14.5-6)

There is much to be delved into in the *Aeneid*.

I turn now to another group of words which reinforce the same idea, as Douglas praises Virgil for his poetic skill in “crafting” his product. The poem is valued by Douglas as something beautifully put together, and its many marks of skilful authorial construction suggest quite naturally in turn the richness of the contents thus constructively combined. The skill is apparent on the surface, in the way Virgil’s words hang together, but in this weighty and fecund literary work it also goes deeper, to his way with sources. Douglas praises Virgil’s “ingine” (II.3.4: “ability, skill”). He speaks of his “crafty werkis” (II.3.10: the adjective means “wrought with skill” rather than “cunning” in its modern sense) and of his “crafte in poetrie” (II.5.4). He tells us the poem was “wyslie wrocht” (II.4.10). It is “slee poetry” (II.6.24: Coldwell in his Glossary gives “skilfull” and “able” as two possible equivalents for “slee”). He says that Virgil is unexcelled in his “quent [i.e. elaborated] and curious castis poeticall” (II.11.13), and that he evinces a “lusty cast [i.e. device] of oratry” (II.13.2). All these terms suggest a master-mind, not just putting things together well but garnering them well in the first place, and making a poem that feels creatively put together: a work of profound synthesis.

Relevant here is another way Douglas has of describing the *Aeneid*.

Anticipating critics, he urges them not to dip randomly into his translation (and what he says of his own rendering of Virgil applies *a fortiori* to Virgil’s master-work) and to make hasty judgements on that basis:

Bot first, I pray 3ou, grape the mater clene,
 Reproche me nocht quhill the work be oursene. (II.19.5-6)

This might recall to the reader the earlier warning:

Considdir it warlie, reid oftair than anis,
 Weill at ane blenk slee poetry nocht tane ys; ... (II.6.23-4)

Virgil's creative activity has built an overarching unity. To grasp it in its particulars we need to be aware of what it is that they are particulars *within*.

Douglas provides a few indications - though not many, and not very explicit - as to kinds of constituent contents. In what exactly, apart from words chosen to give the best expressive effect, is the *Aeneid* fecund? The answer is, first, philosophical ideas, about divinity and humanity mainly. This is a key part of the "sentence", and for some of Douglas' predecessors it became - through allegory especially - by far the most important part: virtually the *raison d'être* of the poem. Douglas is not that way inclined, but he has this to say of Virgil in Prologue VI:

He is ane hie theolog sentencius,
 And maist profound philosophour he hym schawis. (III.4.3-4)

That was how a post-Virgilian reader was to begin to make sense of the references to pagan gods, to recognise double meanings, different layers of significance interpenetrating without necessarily cancelling one another:

And, wnder the cluddes of dirk poetry
 Hid lyis thair mony notable history.
 For so the poetis be ther crafty curis,
 In similitudis, and vnder quent figuris,
 The suthfast mater to hyde and to constrene; ... (II.9.15-19)

I shall explore this in detail in Chapter V.

Secondly, Virgil's constituents consist not simply in ideas, including ideas about the "stait of man, gif thow list onderstand" (III.2.18), but in real and rich experience of human life. Virgil is understood as someone who knows about people and places. Prologue V, where moods shift from solemn to glad, then back again, emphasises this capacity of Virgil to enter into what people are undergoing and feeling, and to make this practical wisdom available to his reader:

Langer in murning, now in melody,
To satisfy ilk wichtis fantasy;

Lyke as he had of every thing a feill,
And the willis of every wycht did seill;¹⁸
And therto eik sa wislie writis he
Twiching the proffet of the commond weill,
His sawis bene full of sentence every deill,
Of morale doctryne, that men suld vicis fle;
Bot gif he be nocht joyous lat ws se;
For quha sa list seir glaidsum gemmis leir,
Full mony mery abaitmentis followis heir. (II.221.15-25)

Aeneas in particular becomes for Virgil a central point around which to weave moral lessons for the reader, Aeneas the prince

That, for his fatale cuntre, of behest
Sa feill dangeris sustenit on land and see,
Syk stryfe in stour sa oft, with speir in rest,
Quhill he his realme conquest bath west and est:
Sen all this dyd he for a temporall ryng,
Pres ws [urges Douglas] to wyn the kynryk ay lestyng,
Addres ws fast for till optene that fest. (IV.7.16-22)

Behind the poem lies also (thirdly) Virgil's knowledge of geography. This is a thorny question for Douglas, who devotes twenty lines (II.10.11-30) of Prologue I to taking Caxton to task for getting the name of the river "Tiber" wrong, confusing it with some other river; though Douglas' reading of Caxton is itself puzzling.¹⁹ Geography vexes Douglas particularly as he approaches Book III, which relates the itinerary of the Trojans:

This text is full of storyis euey deill,
Realmes and landis, quharof I haue na feill
Bot as I follow Virgile in sentence;
Few knawis all thir coistis sa fer hence; ... (II.117.10-13)

Geographical positioning, as we shall see in Chapter III, is paramount for Douglas as translator.

What we do not find in any of Douglas' ancillary pieces is an acknowledgement of the vast importance to Virgil of his literary predecessors, Greek and Latin. Richard Jenkyns says:

¹⁸ In Coldwell's edition, based on the Cambridge MS, this is "feill".

¹⁹ See Coldwell, vol. 1, p. 147 (commenting on the lines his edition marks as 222-40).

The whole of Roman literature was written under the shadow of Greece; from the Greeks the Roman poets derived their genres, metres, mythology, figures of speech, and much more besides. The idea of imitation was well understood and accepted: ...²⁰

and the two-volume commentary of R. D. Williams,²¹ from which examples in the paragraph following this one are taken, shows many detailed parallels - at virtually all syntactical levels - between Virgil and his Latin as well as Greek forebears. This was accepted practice, and, though hostile critics were hard on Virgil from the earliest days for what they took to be his plagiarism, it would be much more common to condemn a poet - particularly one venturing to offer an epic work - for not absorbing earlier ideas, words, scenes, characters, themes, forms of expression. Virgil is said (by Suetonius) to have replied to accusations of pilfering from Homer that his detractors should try the technique themselves: they will find it easier to steal a club from Hercules than a line from Homer. It is not that he does not do it: it is that doing it well is extremely hard. As Heinze says:

... it naturally never occurs to Virgil to attempt to disguise his dependence on the works of his predecessors, any more than his Hellenistic and Roman forebears had done.²²

Knight describes the approach as “integration”, by which Virgil

... built phrases out of words, lines out of phrases, incidents out of other incidents, by isolating and reassembling the attributes and actions of former characters, and, next, large dramatic situations, and finally whole books and poems, all from older elements, redistributed and recombined.²³

This, he argues, is not the opposite of creativity: it is a particularly striking way of being creative. Readers attuned to this epic way will want to hear echoes and allusions and to find where the later writer has consciously diverged from his models.

²⁰ Richard Jenkyns, *Classical Epic: Homer and Virgil* (Bristol: Classical Press, 1992), p. 53.

²¹ R. D. Williams (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1972).

²² Richard Heinze, *Virgil's Epic Technique*, trans. by Hazel and David Harvey and Fred Robertson, 2nd edition (Bristol: Classical Press, 1999), p. 198. Heinze also gives the story from Suetonius, on p. 215.

²³ W. F. Jackson Knight, *Roman Vergil* (London: Faber and Faber, 1944), p. 85.

Macrobius' *Saturnalia* lists copious points of contact between Homer and Virgil;²⁴

Douglas knew of this work (II.5.15) but in a different connection.

Williams points to the kind of resourcing involved, in the significance of the very opening words, "arma virumque" (arms and the man):

... the first word, indicating war as the subject matter of the poem, challenges a comparison with Homer's *Iliad*; the second challenges comparison with the *Odyssey*, ... Throughout the *Aeneid* Virgil sets his Roman theme in tension with the heroic world of Homer; Aeneas has to leave the one world and enter the other.²⁵

Particular episodes are redone with enough reminiscences to make them familiar, and enough differences to make them stimulating. The scenes in Troy in Book II have something of the dramatic quality of Greek tragedy. The "marriage" of Dido and Aeneas in Book IV has similarities and contrasts with that of Jason and Medea in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* 4.1130 f. The Sicilian games in Book V are reminiscent of Homer's account of the games in honour of Patroclus in *Iliad* 23. Words and phrases often bring particular resonances with them, as when the phrase "dium pater atque hominum rex" (1.65, from Ennius: father of gods and king of men) brings - with its monosyllabic ending - something archaic and formulaic that Virgil wants to stress at this point. Sometimes Virgil appears to have given a strange twist to an older line, as when Aeneas says to Dido in the underworld that it was against his will that he had left her coast ("inuitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi", 6.460) - a solemn line almost identical with one in Catullus (56.39) which comically reports a hair from Queen Berenice's head explaining to her that it had not wanted to leave. Lucretius and Catullus figure largely in the incorporated hinterground, but chiefly it is Homer. Knowing the predecessors helps to identify this, of course, but even on its face the *Aeneid* bears evidence that it is a construct out of antecedents, and not pure creation without pedigree. In Chapter VI, I shall look at how the presence of consanguinities in Virgil might affect how we should evaluate Douglas' translation.

²⁴ In Book V.

²⁵ Williams, vol. 1, p. 157.

Douglas appears to know nothing of all this, or not to be concerned. (I leave out of reckoning the section which appears only in the 1553 edition, and in which we are told that Virgil follows the *Odyssey* in the first six books and the *Iliad* in the last six.)²⁶ He is not without some sense of the historical dynamic of Virgil and Latin poetry generally. He knew Macrobius, as we have seen. He has a sense too of Virgil's place in history: the poem is called "wark emperiall" not just because of its intrinsic qualities but because it was

Endyte onto the gret Octauiane,
The Emperour excelland and maste souerane
By quham, the gospell makis mensioun,
The hail world put was to discriptioun,
To nomyr all the pepill tharin suld be,
So, but rebelloun, alquhar obeyit was he. (III.207.2,3-8)

He knew of Virgil as a poet with a past of his own: the "Buikolikis" and the "Georgikis" both receive mention (III.3.27 and 4.29). He understands that the Latin language has inherited Greek terms: "in Latyne bene Grew termes sum" (II.7.1), though his understanding of this is unlikely to have stretched to a competence in Greek, notwithstanding the statement that St Clair had considered he might translate Homer (II.6.4).²⁷ Douglas' grasp of the patronymic genitive and such-like epithets in Greek names is shaky - which suggests that any knowledge of Greek he might have had was quite rudimentary. Virgil's "Panthus Othryades" (Panthus, Othrys' son) becomes in Douglas "Panthus Otriades sone" (II.87.20; 2.319); Virgil's "Iapyx Iasides" (Iapyx, Iasus' son) becomes "Iapis, that was son of Iasydes" (IV.123.10; 12.391-2) - though at least Douglas does not do what the Irish *Aeneid* does and turn the unfortunate physician into two separate individuals.²⁸ Douglas also gives us "Thamantis douchtir" for "Thaumantias" (daughter of Thaumias - referring to the goddess Iris, III.209.12; 9.5).

²⁶ Reproduced in Small, III.73.

²⁷ See Coldwell, vol. 1, p. 145, on his line 88.

²⁸ George Calder (ed. and trans.), *Imtheachta Aeniasa: The Irish Aeneid* (London: Irish Texts Society, 1907), p. 189. We must be fair to Douglas: he usually gets the construction right.

I am not sure that we can attach much significance to the following words,
addressed to Virgil:

For thou art al and sum, quhat nedis moir,
Of Latyne poetis that sens wes or befoir. (II.5.13-14)

The “al and sum” is more likely to be qualitative grading than a reference to how Virgil took in earlier poetry. On the other hand, the words do appear immediately before a mention of Macrobius’ *Saturnalia*: “his grete volume clepit Saturnail” (line 16); which however picks up a different point in Macrobius. Any inkling of Virgil’s “integration” is certainly not developed.

More to the point perhaps is Douglas’ general way of writing: with disciplined verve and an easy control of his material. How one person addresses another, or comports himself or herself in his or her company, will often illustrate what the first thinks about the second. We sense in Douglas’ own fulness and capacity to impart structure, brought here into easy proximity with Virgil (despite protestations of literary inferiority), a recognition on Douglas’ part - the more telling for being undeliberate - that this is the sort of thing that poets might fairly aim at, and something that in the Latin poet was gloriously achieved.

4. *The text as versatile*

For Douglas the sheer beauty of Virgil’s verse presents an impossible challenge. He says he can no more think of competing with his author in that respect than a marigold or daisy could match the sweet smell of a rose in June (II.3.16-17). Virgil deploys “polyte termis redemyte”, Douglas has only “rurale wlgar gros” (II.4.14,23). In fact he is not always so modest. He is extremely proud of Prologue XII, for example:

The lusty crafty preambill, perll of May
I the entitill, crownit quhill domisday;

And al wyth gold, in syng of stayt ryall,
Most beyn illumnit thi letteris capital. (IV.89.29-90.2)

And the confident manner of his work in general betokens a man with a good conceit of himself. But for attractiveness of expression Virgil, he acknowledges, is in a class of his own.

What Douglas does aim to reproduce in Scots is at least “sum savoring” (II.4.24) of Virgil’s meaning, his “sentence” or *sententia*. His standard assumption is that a stable meaning runs through the poem, and it was put there by Virgil. The “sentence” of the text is otherwise expressed as “quhat he ment” (II.7.16); it is eminently (witness quotations early in Section 2 of this Chapter, as well as the fact that Douglas ignores the contribution of pre-Virgilian matter to the finished product) “Virgillis text” (II.12.25). He generated it, and it carries his ideas. The job of a translator, then, is to establish what this meaning is (and *ipso facto* what it was for the author) and to put it into the vernacular. Before looking into the twin difficulties of establishing meaning and transmitting it interlingually, though, we need to consider the question of what measure of success Douglas is setting himself.

Does he aim to translate “word-for-word” or not? It seems from Prologue I that he does not. Referring to Chaucer’s claim, in *The Legend of Good Women* (line 1002),²⁹

That he culd follow word by word Virgill,
Wisare than I [says Douglas] mycht fail in lakar stile; ... (II.14.13-14)

After rehearsing the different sorts of problems which make “word-for-word” rendering impossible, he points to the authority of Gregory the Great and Horace:

Sanct Gregour eik forbiddis ws to translait
Word eftir word, bot sentence follow algait; ... (II.15.31-2)

Otherwise, we shall be likely to miss “the verite of the sentence” (II.16.2). As for Horace:

²⁹ Chaucer, “The Legend of Dido”, in *The Complete Works*, ed. by Walter W. Skeat (Oxford: Clarendon Press, no date), p. 372.

Preis nocht, sais he, thou traist interpreter,
Word eftir word to translait thi matar. (II.16.5-6)

Yet in the “Dyrectioun” near the end of the work (though that does not mean that it was written much later or earlier than Prologue I - both are addressed to St Clair and have the same “task just finished” air about them) he says this:

For quha list note my versys, one by one,
Sall fynd tharin hys sentens euery deill,
And almaiste word by word, that wait I weill. (IV.225.20-2)

The “almaiste” clearly does not offer enough scope to embrace the divergences which Douglas elaborates in Prologue I. So what does he mean? Priscilla Bawcutt thinks the two accounts are consistent: “As a translator, he rejected the extremes of literalism yet tried to stay close to his text.”³⁰ There is certainly pragmatism in Douglas, but I believe there are two other factors at work in what seems like a confusion. The first springs from ambiguity in the very phrases he uses. The second is that in a perfectly legitimate sense Douglas’ approach really is thoroughly (and not “here and there” or “up to a point”) “word-for-word”; though it may be misleading rather than helpful for us now (with many centuries of debate behind us) to continue to describe it in that way.

On the first issue, as Rita Copeland shows in some detail,³¹ the age-old debate about “word-for-word” translation took different forms according to the cultural contexts in which it was pursued. The rise of Scripture translation in particular complicated the situation. Where an important part of the objective of translating was to enhance the status of the target language, to be a “faithful interpreter” might well require some imaginative rearranging of word order, to secure a better sense of the original and to avoid the impression that the target language was essentially inferior. Where, in contrast, the text possessed a sacral authority of its own, it was more desirable to stick as closely as possible to its every tiny nuance and to move in the sequence of the original words, even at the cost of oddities of expression. That was

³⁰ Priscilla Bawcutt, *Gavin Douglas: A Critical Study* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1976), pp. 110-11.

³¹ Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), especially ch. 2.

Jerome's view, and it meant a different criterion of "faithfulness", which could in turn react upon a translator's practice when tackling a non-sacral text. In Copeland's words:

... Jerome's inversion of the *fidus interpres* formula to advocate fidelity to the textual signified could also be inverted again to represent a standard for literalism.³²

She goes on to quote Boethius, defending himself for translating the (non-Scriptural)

Isagoge of Porphyry word for word:

This second work, a readily accessible exposition, will clarify the text of my translation, in which I fear that I have incurred the blame of the "faithful translator," as I have rendered it word for word, plainly and equally. And here is the reason for this procedure: that in these writings in which knowledge of the matter is sought, it is necessary to provide, not the charm of a sparkling style, but the uncorrupted truth. [Boethius *In Isagogen Porphyrii*]³³

That, compared with Cicero, suggests a very different basis for understanding the relationship of source and target texts:

For Cicero, to iterate is not to conserve, but to resignify, in the sense of a currency exchange, where to achieve equivalence is also to enforce difference through transposition into a new system.³⁴

The cultural imperatives are different in the two cases:

... Cicero's sense-for-sense method, ostensibly directed to serving meaning, actually leads to a rhetorical contest in which the re-creative and interpretive powers of discourse play an important role.³⁵

So there is no single, unequivocal meaning available to the phrases "word-for-word" and "sense-for-sense". The variance in the surrounding debate seeps into the connotation of the phrases used. A word, moreover, is a complex phenomenon, as is the configuration of marks or sounds which represents it (especially when they are formally identical: "word" signifying word); and this can easily induce in the language-user delicate shifts among the various meanings available, from (at one extreme) something physically colliding with an ear to (at the other extreme) some attribute of the thing signified - intrinsically part of its character. So when Douglas (with a mixture of detachment from and reverence for the *Aeneid* - itself arguably semi-sacral) uses a

³² Copeland, p. 52.

³³ Copeland, p. 52.

³⁴ Copeland, p. 45.

³⁵ Copeland, p. 46.

word like “word” it need not be clear either to us or to him what precisely he means it to imply. That Douglas in one place alleges, and in another place denies, that he has aimed to render word-for-word is therefore unsurprising.

There is however (this is the second issue) a proper sense in which he *does* attempt and even achieve a “word-for-word” translation (though the phrase has to be unnaturally stretched, to our understanding). A good point of entry for appreciating this is his criticism of Caxton.³⁶ Caxton had played around with the plot so much, perverting the story (II.7.31) through devoting disproportionate space to Dido³⁷ while leaving out not merely entire episodes but entire books, that the end-product could scarcely, in Douglas’ estimation, be called a rendering of Virgil at all:

The last sax buikis of Virgill all in feris,
 Quhilk contenis strang batellis and weris,
 This ilk Caxtoun sa blaitlie lettis our slip,
 I hald my tounge, for schame bytand my lip.
 The greit efferis of ayther oist and array,
 The armour of Eneas fresch and gay,
 The quent and curious castis poeticall,
 Perfyte similitudis and examplis all
 Quhairin Virgill beirs the palme of lawde,
 Caxtoun, for dreid thai suld his lippis scawde
 Durst neuer tuiche: ...

(II.11.7-17)

He is not here criticising Caxton for failing to reproduce Virgil’s beauty: the “castis poeticall” are here under consideration as ingredients in the narrative, part of the criteria identifying it as *this* story and not another. Caxton’s deficiency (leaving out what Virgil put in) is also distinct from such particular mistakes as he makes (e.g. giving the wrong name to the Tiber or to the Sibyl; II.10.13,32). He does plenty of that, according to Douglas. But his basic conception of the story is completely out of joint.

³⁶ Caxton has already been mentioned in passing. His version is *Eneydos*, Early English Text Society, ed. by W. T. Culley and F. J. Furnivall (London: Oxford University Press, 1962). The culprit of course was not Caxton himself but the “noble clerke of fraunce” whose version he has followed closely (pp. vi,xxxiii). It is strange that Douglas does not properly acknowledge this, and seems indeed disinclined to believe it (II.7.27).

³⁷ The tradition continues. In David F. C. Coldwell (ed.), *Selections from Gavin Douglas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964) about two-fifths of the space devoted to *Eneados* is given over to the Dido story.

He has effectively misidentified it. Douglas, in contrast, has aimed at a different strategy:

Quhilk did my best, as my wit mycht attene,
Virgillis versis to follow, and nathing fene. (II.11.23-4)

That is an important part of faithfulness to the text: making sure one follows it in detail, keeping a close watch on the events and sequence of the narrative, and reproducing them in Virgil's order and in Virgil's proportions. This (we might prefer to say) is "point-by-point" translation. In much the same way that Douglas in other connections (see Section 3) uses a word that initially seems to connote outward means of expression but that also covers what those means express (e.g. "style" and "eloquence"), his vacillation between "word-for-word" and "not-word-for-word" really demonstrates a concern to keep himself closely tethered to the story Virgil tells while acknowledging the impossibility of doing justice to all of Virgil's crafted ramifications. At *that* level Douglas cannot possibly offer "word-for-word"; but at the level of what is going on in Virgil's narrative (the story, the spatio-temporal agenda) he can, and by and large does.³⁸

Here we can turn from the question of what measure Douglas had set himself to the distinct, and twofold, matter of establishing and of transmitting Virgil's meaning. It is clear that Douglas had no illusions about the fissures and dislocations that make meaning elusive. Greater men than he had been foxed:

The worthy clerk hecht Laurence of the Vail,
Amang Latynis a greit patrour sans fail,
Grantis quhen twelf 3eris he hed bene diligent
To study Virgill, scant knew he quhat he ment;
Than thou or I, my freind, quhen we best wene
To haue Virgill red, understand, and sene,
The richt sentence perchance is fer to seik; ... (II.7.13-19)

There were always difficulties in establishing what Virgil meant, quite apart from the challenge of putting him into another language. The very existence of commentators -

³⁸ Hence the misunderstanding, common in the century after Douglas, that he had translated "ea dexteritate, vt singulis latinis versibus singuli scotici respondeant" (Bishop Leslie) is at least partly intelligible. See L. M. Watt, *Douglas's Aeneid* (Cambridge: University Press, 1920), p. 11.

Douglas is aware of Servius, Landino and Ascensius particularly - was testimony not just to the availability of guidance but also to its necessity and inconclusiveness. Some difficulties were presumably not part of the author's plan (inconsistencies, duplications, allusions rendered obscure by the passage of time, puzzling half-lines - virtually all of them render some sense, but is it the intended sense?) but others sprang from

... Virgil's design, his disposition of it, his manners, his judicious management of the figures, the sober retrenchments of his sense, which always leaves somewhat to gratify our imagination, on which it may enlarge at pleasure; ...³⁹

In radical contrast to Douglas' characteristic style, as we shall see, Virgil's draws force from its self-containedness, his use and re-use of the same words, moving around in circles and letting them draw light and shade from other (used and re-used) words. This way of writing calls for a special discipline of the imagination, and is not to everyone's taste.

Whether Douglas consciously recognised this "sober retrenchment" is unclear. His remark in Prologue I about the need sometimes to expand upon Virgil is *probably* not relevant in this connection:

Sum tyme the text mon haue ane expositioun,
Sum tyme the colour will caus a litle additioun,
And sum tyme of ane word I mon mak thre, ... (II.14.15-17)

This appears to be a response to a difficulty in *transmitting* rather than in *understanding* the meaning (and I shall come to that shortly). But what about the following tantalising remark in Prologue VI? Douglas is trying to validate Virgil's credentials as a poet fit for Christians to read, and he has been setting out parallels between the pagan theology of the *Aeneid* and Virgil's earlier works, and Christian orthodoxy.

Till write 3ow all his tryit and notable vers
Almaist impossible war, and half in vane:

³⁹ John Dryden, "Dedication to the Aeneis" (1697), in S. Johnson (ed.), *The Works of the English Poets from Chaucer to Cowper*, 21 vols. (London: J. Johnson and others, 1810), vol. 19, pp. 327-57 (p. 351).

For me behuivit repeting and rehers
In seir placis the samyn wordis agane. (III.5.19-22)

I cannot make much sense out of this. It does not quite feel as though he is thinking along Dryden's lines; and Douglas' many references elsewhere to the copiousness (rather than the exiguiousness) of Virgil would perhaps support this supposition. Yet there is a hint lurking there somehow, that to stick really closely to what Virgil says would entail some due restraint of vocabulary on the translator's part. The idea that proper semantic coordination between Virgil and Douglas might issue in sparseness of words rather than prolixity is never developed by Douglas. There is a similar obscurity in what he says about the need to unpack - sometimes at length - the words Virgil uses:

To follow alanerlie Virgillis wordis, I wene,
Thar suld few onderstand me quhat thai mene; ... (II.15.27-8)

Here the difficulty he has in mind appears to lie generally in the connotation of the words available in Latin, that "mast perfyte langage fyne" (II.15.18), rather than specifically in what use Virgil makes of them; but again Douglas *might* be hinting at a peculiar verbal intransigence in his author, whose words often appear to want to keep themselves to themselves.

What is less contestable is that Douglas went to commentaries for help. Since Coldwell's edition, which gives many examples, it has been accepted that the commentary of Ascensius was particularly important to Douglas. Coldwell acknowledges that at least one earlier writer on Douglas had noticed the fact,⁴⁰ but Bawcutt re-emphasises the point:

It would be difficult to over-state the importance of this work to Douglas; without it his translation would be very different, and might well have not come into existence. ... Ascensius's influence upon the *Eneados* is continuously apparent, and ranges from single-word glosses to the adoption of whole sentences.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Coldwell, vol. 1, p. 138, note 39. (Coldwell's references to Ascensius are by no means exhaustive.)

⁴¹ Bawcutt, p. 111.

I have had Ascensius by me⁴² in working through Douglas, and - while I agree with Bawcutt's estimate of its importance - I believe that three qualifications are needed.

One is that Ascensius' commentary (of course) is entirely in Latin; which means that, however full and helpful it will be to a reader looking for clarification or for ways of expressing the matter *within Latin*, it will still require transposing into the language to be used by the translator. It helps up to a point.

Secondly, an extremely common word in Ascensius is "aut" (or). Sometimes this functions inclusively (amplifying a single sense) but often it functions disjunctively ("it could be this, or it could instead be that"), when the reader has to make a decision.

Thirdly (and this is something that is not clear from Coldwell), Douglas will often disregard Ascensius' interpretation - and sometimes, though not always, "go wrong" as a result. From Book IV, chapter 5 (where Jupiter sends Mercury to summon Aeneas out of Carthage) here are five examples of Douglas' relative independence: (a) "declair and cleirlye tell" for Virgil's "proderet" (Ascensius explains this as "porro dederet, hoc est propagaret": Knight⁴³ has "transmit", II.189.24; 4.231). (b) "Thiddir on our message" for "hic nostri nuntius esto" (Ascensius has "in hac re", on this matter: Knight has "that is to be my message", II.190.4; 4.237). (c) "with greit fard and swyft flicht" for "rapido ... flamine" (Ascensius says "flamine" is "vento", wind: Knight says "winds' swift blast", II.190.10; 4.241). (d) "with evynly schyning wyngis" for "paribus nitens ... alis" (Ascensius explains "nitens" as "conans descendere", striving to descend - Douglas apparently has in mind "nitere", to shine: Knight has "poised on balancing wings", II.190.30; 4.252). (e) "tred on the streit" for "tetigit magalia" (Ascensius explains "magalia" as "Poenorum domos humileis", lowly dwellings of the Carthaginians: Knight has "the hut-villages of Africa", II.191.10; 4.259). I have noted

⁴² P. Virgilii Maronis *Opera nunc recens accuratissime castigata cum xi acerrimi iudicii virorum commentariis* [Servius, Ascensius, etc.] (Venice, 1544; facsimile, 2 vols., New York: Garland, 1976). The passage discussed below is in vol. 1, leaves 276-7.

⁴³ W. F. Jackson Knight (trans.), *Virgil: The Aeneid* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1956). See the closing pages of this Chapter for an explanation of the choice of this translation.

well over a hundred divergences like this, and there are no doubt more. On the other hand, I acknowledge that some are difficult to interpret, and it does not follow that in some particular case what Douglas eventually writes is altogether without influence from Ascensius. Perhaps an adjacent phrase sways him. Under (a), for example, it is true that Ascensius subsequently adds the word “portenderet” (presage, declare), though not as the cardinal point in the interpretation. It is also possible that Douglas misunderstands Ascensius sometimes: perhaps he thought “propagaret” meant “give out information”.⁴⁴ But even with these reservations what is indicated is more a complex manoeuvring between Douglas and his commentator than a simple one-way dependence. To the versatility and impenetrabilities of the text (and the versatility of the commentators) this translator brings a measure of *chutzpah*.

So much for the task of establishing (as distinct from that of transmitting) Virgil’s meaning. Just how distinct the two phases actually are is unclear. Steiner prefers on general theoretical grounds to minimise the distinction:

... translation proper, the interpretation of verbal signs in one language by means of verbal signs in another, is a special, heightened case of the process of communication and reception in any act of human speech. The fundamental epistemological and linguistic problems implicit in interlingual translation are fundamental just because they are already implicit in all intralingual discourse.⁴⁵

Every transmitting is in effect a sharing of, or at least a proposal to share, a reading: an invitation to someone else to pass through the process which the translator is (still) passing through as he⁴⁶ communicates how he takes the text. And every reading, arguably, is already an implicit transmission of meaning from text to reader: any conceivable reader, not just the first. To make something of a text for ourselves is already to make something of it in potency for other people. The stock picture of a translator making sense of a text in one language, drawing a deep breath, switching

⁴⁴ Surely not impossible, by a trickling into Latin from an English figurative sense, though the earliest case attested by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition, 20 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) is 1588; s.v. “propagation”, 4.

⁴⁵ Steiner, p. 414.

⁴⁶ Or “she” of course, but I am thinking of Douglas.

over to a different language, then transmitting what he has grasped does not fit the situation: not theoretically perhaps, but certainly (in Douglas' case) not empirically. Douglas was, like many of his contemporaries, heavily Latinised linguistically, and the language he deploys in his translation has many characteristics (particularly lexical) that are as Latin as they are Scots. In turn, the linguistic compound he would bring to reading the Latin was already qualified by his (part-Latinised) Scots. Gregory Smith concludes:

To the sixteenth-century Scot Latin was really a living language, in that it served not merely the purposes of literature and ceremonial but even of the ordinary business of life. There is ample evidence that it was the familiar medium of all classes above the poorest and most uneducated, and that it was used with such ease that we must believe that it frequently took the place of the vernacular in thinking as well as in writing.⁴⁷

If we take this to include the use within broadly Scots sentential frameworks of words of Latin or Latin-French derivation, the case is plausible. Douglas the translator is imbued with a strong antecedent cross-linguistic sense.

His intention with the *Aeneid* is to "mak it braid and plane", to stick to Scots as far as he is able:

Kepand na sudroun bot our awin langage,
And speikis as I lernit quhen I was page. (II.6.26-8)

If using the language he learned as a child were taken to include being limited to the vocabulary and syntax familiar at that stage, he might have his work cut out. But, as he confesses, and as even a superficial reading of his translation confirms, he frequently does what Roman writers would often do when translating from Greek - naturalise words from elsewhere:

Quhar scant war Scottis I had na wther choiss. (II.7.4)

He is ready - though undoubtedly disingenuously - to take the blame for this necessitousness upon himself:

Nocht for our tounge is in the selfin scant,
Bot for that I the foutht of langage want, ... (II.7.5-6)

⁴⁷ G. Gregory Smith (ed.), *Specimens of Middle Scots* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1902), p. lxi.

But later he is speaking of “our tongis penurite” (II.15.16). Whether the outcome ranks as “proper” Scots or not, and what criteria we might apply to the question, I shall leave to one side. Corbett makes a significant point:

It would simply have been impossible for Douglas to restrict himself to ‘Scottis’ in a linguistic environment where there was not yet a fully developed standard language, either in England or Scotland. The concept of a ‘standard’ language is a relatively modern one - I use it here to mean a variety of language whose spelling, vocabulary and grammar has been codified by dictionaries and other reference books, which has been widely accepted by society as the ‘natural’ form of written discourse in formal and public situations, and which is disseminated as such through a mass education system.⁴⁸

Here what particularly concerns us is the recalcitrance of Virgil’s text to transmission. In addition to the constraints of poetic form (“to liklie [embellish] my ryme”, II.7.10) the translator needs to be flexible in how he applies equivalents or near-equivalents, to deal with the difference in resources available:

For thar bene Latyne wordis mony ane,
That in our leid ganand translatioun hes nane,
Les than we menis thar sentence and grauite,
And zit scant weill exponit; ... (II.14.31-15.2)

He instances words such as “animal”, “homo”, “genus”, “sexus”, “species”, “obiectum”, “subiectum”, “arbor” and “lignum”; though the fact that of these only “genus” and “homo” figure much in the *Aeneid* (and without Aristotelian-logical overtones there) indicates that Douglas is thinking of a general difficulty, not of particular intransmissibilities within Virgil’s text.

But how general? How deep-rooted does he sense this semantic versatility to be? For many literary theorists establishing *the* meaning of a text is not merely *de facto* difficult or even often impossible, but *de jure* inconceivable. Insufficiency of knowledge, ineptness with the target language: these are not the fundamental issues. A passage is bound, rather, to be taken in more than one way because it already “exists” (and the word now seems unsuitable) in more than one way. Martindale, thinking specifically of the classics, explains:

⁴⁸ John Corbett, *Written in the Language of the Scottish Nation: A History of Literary Translation into Scots* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1999), p. 44.

The meaning of a word or a text is never completed, but always contains a supplement. The signifier is so charged with an excess of energy that it generates further fictions, fictions which serve to answer unanswered questions, fill 'gaps', explain perceived 'contradictions', provide sequels and allow for appropriations in view of new circumstances.⁴⁹

It would be too much to expect Douglas to be *au fait* with structuralism, and to have much to say about author-functions or fictive confluences of forces. His attitude is more conventional, and he would be more likely to agree with an earlier remark of Martindale's:

Like people, books would have their reticences, their partial disclosures, their resistances to complete appropriation; they would invite us to respect their otherness.⁵⁰

But he is not completely blind to the issues. He recognises that one linguistic item needs to be grasped in its wider context: he asks the reader to be sure to "reid oftair than anis" and "grape the mater clene" (II.6.23; 19.5). Much of the power of Douglas' translation, I shall argue, lies in the way he builds words together in ways that reciprocally enhance their significance, and draw the reader into the process of re-creation. This comes short of denying the existence of a stable - if sometimes undecidable - meaning; but often in practice Douglas will sit light to that notional limit and we find him exercising his skills with confidence and a hearty, healthy conscience that he plainly feels authorises him in determining a meaning for himself, even when not fully convinced (and not needing to be fully convinced) that this is *the only* meaning. Notice his summary of the translator's difficulty:

Eik, wele I wait, certane expositouris seir
Makis on ane text sentence diuers to heir,
As thame apperis, according thair entent;
And for thair part schaw resounis euident.
All this is ganand, I will wele it sua be,
Bot ane sentence to follow ma suffice me, ... (II.14.19-24)

Do we catch in this an allusion to Ascensius? Douglas will bring the versatility to a point of decision, however tentative.

⁴⁹ Martindale, *Redeeming the text*, p. 37.

⁵⁰ Martindale, p. 32.

That the late-mediaeval Douglas is not more explicit about reciprocal interfusion of meaning, with things rich in possible purports even while functioning with the apparent definiteness of a unique point, is more likely to be because he takes the idea for granted than because he is unfamiliar with it. It was commonplace, for instance, in traditional expositions of Scripture that a historical event would on analysis divulge levels of meaning over and above its mere factuality. As with Christians afterwards,

Jewish understanding of their nation's mission in the world, of course, led them to understand their own history as a tangible sign of God's intentions for humanity. Each event in their history was therefore subject to study for possible signification. The natural result in Scriptural scholarship was a tendency toward modes of multiple interpretation.⁵¹

Versatility being of the essence of things in history, it might not unnaturally be seen as of the essence too of the words that express them. Douglas might also notice that his own involvement in the translation of the *Aeneid* was (avowedly) multi-faceted. He offers many reasons - scattered here and there - for having undertaken the task: to gratify a friend and relation, to win fame, to try out his abilities, to help students, to give pleasure, to introduce people to great men and great ideas, to make Virgil available to non-Latinists, to defend him against detractors, to bring the Scots language into play, even to fulfil a vow made to Venus when he wrote *The Palice of Honour*.⁵² But there was only the one Gavin Douglas of whom all these purposings were simultaneously true, a Douglas who in translating would - we suspect from his tone and attitude - warm to the sentiment which Culler finds in Derrida's approach: that it "tries to replace the anguish of infinite regress by the pleasure of infinite creation".⁵³

The topic of "versatility" is clearly closely connected with that of "fulness" and that of the "physically given": both have appeared in the present Section in the

⁵¹ James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 279-80.

⁵² The following passages contain all these (sometimes mixed up): II.5.27-6.20, 7.32 f., 19.1-2; IV.223.10-11, 225.12-24, 226.29-30, 227.31-228.4, 230.19-27.

⁵³ Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 248.

attempt to clarify how far, and in what ways, flexibility might for Douglas extend.⁵⁴ As Douglas wrestles with the task of establishing and transmitting the meaning of the *Aeneid*, Virgil's disciplined fecundity takes him both backward - to what has been gathered together in the story he encounters - and forward - to what the poem demands be made of it for other readers. And all three need in turn complementing by the fourth: the text as "engaging".⁵⁵

5. *The text as engaging*

The same roll-call of commentators which witnesses to ambiguities in the *Aeneid* witnesses to something else about it: its "need" - in some sense of that word - to be read. From a standpoint in modern theory, Martin McQuillan says:

A text only becomes meaningful when it is read, when a reader interacts with the words on the page to produce meaning. What we call reading is an active participation on the part of the reader to construct meaning from a piece of writing. Reading is therefore something which the reader has a role in and something which takes place over a period of time.⁵⁶

The words "interact", "produce", "participate" and "construct" admittedly are susceptible of a range of interpretations, ascribing less or more to the text itself. Saying the reader has a "role" in reading might by itself commit us to little, but in modern literary theory the requirement for a reader can be a matter of logical necessity. Text is only "text" insofar as it is read. Without that engagement it is simply a physical object - marks on paper.

⁵⁴ The interaction between what Octavio Paz calls the "mobility and ambiguity" of meanings and the "immobility of signs" in a poem is, he suggests, crucial in both literary composition and literary translation: "The meanings of a poem are multiple and changeable; the words of that poem are unique and irreplaceable." "Translation: Literature and Letters", in Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (eds.), *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida* (Chicago: University Press, 1992), pp. 152-62 (p. 159). See also my footnote 8 (p. 6).

⁵⁵ Unfortunately English does not permit a formation that bears the right gerundival force here: that a text is not only inherently attractive but "requires to be engaged with" too. Perhaps the word "engaging" has just enough of that sense in its common meaning.

⁵⁶ Martin McQuillan, "Introduction: There Is No Such Thing as Reader-Response Theory", in Julian Wolfreys (ed.), *Literary Theories: A Reader and Guide* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1999), pp. 139-48 (p. 139).

While Douglas does not take up the question at that level, he comes in practice quite close to it. This is partly through his infectious enthusiasm (which comes out even in his ancillary remarks), but partly through how he engineers his version in detail (vividly and collaboratively, as we shall see). He is convinced not only that the *Aeneid* is in fact there for people to read if they want (and that is one of the imperatives driving him to translate it), but that it positively demands and deserves to be read. It has, we might say, “readability” written all over it, including the gerundival senses which (see footnote 55) English struggles to express concisely.

Without that engagement the *Aeneid* is barely alive at all, and - Douglas believes - the poem itself indicates as much. Its qualities are more than informative: they essentially induce, invite, attract engagement. The narrative is “quik, lusty, ... Plesable, perfyte, and felable in all degre” (II.3.11-12). That says as much about the anticipated role of the alert, sensitive reader as about the poem’s internal qualities. Like Douglas’ own version (as he hopes) its capacities include those of allurement, offering “solace” over and above any of the utilitarian or moral advantages implied in the adjacent word “profitabill” (IV.225.15,13). And what these inherent qualities elicit are love and loyalty - actively reciprocal characteristics - in the reader, the

... naturall luife and freindfull affectioun,
 Quhilkis I beir to thi werkis and endyte, ... (II.4.16-17)

Inducements to enjoy the story can even - for other poets and of course the translator - function as inspirations to try to emulate it: Virgil is a “lamp of day ... and shynand mone”, so that in the world of poetry “All wtheris on force mon their lycht beg or borow” from him (II.5.8-9). Asking Virgil for pardon, he says:

In caice I fail haue me not at disdenze,
 Thocht I be lawit [unlearned],⁵⁷ my leil hart can nocht fenze,
 I sall the follow, suld I thairfor haue blame, ... (II.18.15-17)

To “follow” here is both a matter of faithful attention to the text and of faithful adherence (a loyal heart) to its author. The latter makes the text’s presence into

⁵⁷ Coldwell’s edition (based on the Cambridge MS) has “lewit”.

something personal, something whose inducing qualities can elicit love as well as artistic admiration; though the task of translating could be irksome enough (e.g. the metaphor of yoking himself to the plough, III.79.8). That particularly concerns translators, naturally, but up to a point what a poet or a translator experiences when encountering something like the *Aeneid* is in essence what any reader should experience: active engagement with the story, redoing it for himself or herself.

Though some of the suggestions Douglas makes about the importance of readerly engagement are predominantly individualistic, having in mind plainly the lone man or woman who might pick up his Virgil, in other places he envisages something more corporate; for example, groups of people sharing in the reading experience:

That Virgill mycht intill our langage be
Red lowd and plane be 3our lordschip and me,
And othir gentill compan3eonis quha sa list: ... (IV.226.29-31)

That is from the “Dyrectioun”. In the “Conclusioun” there is a further suggestion of socialising, with friends presumably gathered about a manuscript copy, and somebody deputed to lead:

Red sall I be, and sung with mony one. (IV.223.11)

Literary affections might well merge with other sociable activities:

Nane ar compellit drynk not⁵⁸ bot thai haue thyrst; ... (IV.226.32)

In the “Exclamatioun” there is a hint of something more extensive; to his translation he says:

Now salt thou with euery gentill Scot be kend,
And to onletterit folk be red on hycht,
That erst was bot with clerkis comprehend. (IV.230.25-7)

That alerts us, alongside mention of the new, to an already existing community (to communities, in fact) of Virgil readers, extended through space and time; communities long practised in generating distinctive readings of the *Aeneid* but - by and large - not accorded much explicit notice in Douglas’ account of the joys and tribulations of a translator. I shall argue (particularly in Chapter VI) that the wider presence of Virgil -

⁵⁸ This “not” seems superfluous, metrically as well as syntactically.

Aeneis magna - features significantly in Douglas' practice, but we have to move outside the expository boundaries he sets himself to do justice to its nature and importance. In his understanding of the symbiosis between reader and text Douglas stands unmistakably much nearer the end of the spectrum at which it is the text that is accorded chief status and substance. Virgil demands readers, but even more do readers need Virgil, and it is Virgil chiefly who gives his work content. If asked where the *Aeneid* is, Douglas would point to the volume in front of him.

Discussion of the implications of the wider presence has to be pursued elsewhere. Comparetti's *Vergil in the Middle Ages*, first published in 1872 in Italian, and recently re-issued in its 1895 English version, is still a standard work.⁵⁹ He traces the different ways in which Virgil was present, and in which people received him: as grammarian, rhetor, philosopher, historian, stylist, Christian prophet, even magician and miracle-worker. We need also to see Virgil within the context of Latinity in general, in what Farrell calls

... the power of latinity [*sic*] to establish its sway over non-Latins. Throughout history this power has been linked to the role of Latin as a civilizing force: an instrument for ordering the disorderly, standardizing the multiform, correcting or silencing the inarticulate.⁶⁰

Martindale, defining a "classic" as "a text whose 'iterability' is a function of its capacity ... for continued re-appropriations by readers", links a work's internal qualities to "the authority vested in its reception".⁶¹ Baswell examines different scholarly approaches, pedagogical and allegorical, but makes the interesting point (interesting because it points to more extensive literary territories within *Aeneis magna* than the purely scholarly) that

... the most complexly achieved "Virgil" of the high Middle Ages, and one that was to have considerable ongoing influence in the secular realm, was not Latin, but rather the mid-twelfth-century vernacular *Roman d'Eneas*.⁶²

⁵⁹ Domenico Comparetti, *Vergil in the Middle Ages*, trans. by E. F. M. Benecke, with new introduction by Jan M. Ziolkowski (Princeton: University Press, 1997).

⁶⁰ Joseph Farrell, *Latin Language and Latin Culture* (Cambridge: University Press, 2001), p. 1.

⁶¹ Martindale, *Redeeming the text*, p. 28.

⁶² Christopher Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England* (Cambridge: University Press, 1995), p. 15.

He offers the notion of a “magnetic field” or “field of signification” stemming from Virgil and making him present in ways that had often ceased to be even identifiable or traceable to him, much as has happened with Shakespeare or Freud.⁶³ So complex had this presence become by the fourteenth century that he can say that

... the *Aeneid* as inherited by Chaucer’s culture ... had become so densely figured, so multiply interpreted and redacted, as to elicit either a frustrated refusal to understand it coherently, or a readership almost heroic in its complexity.⁶⁴

Boitani⁶⁵ offers an analysis of the major options available generally: religious, comic, romance, dream or vision, and narrative collections. Each is characterised by a distinctive cluster of mixtures: of subject-matter, purpose and style. Religious narrative, for example, “purposely ignores any aesthetic functions or intention; its aims are those proper to ecclesiastical teaching - conversion and edification”.⁶⁶ Comic narrative “aims primarily at satire and parody, ... Its essential elements are earthly - carnal love, hunger, thirst: to these all men are subject, including clerics, and from them the stories invariably take their point of departure”.⁶⁷ Romance ranges widely from chronicle to fairy-tale, but perhaps centrally “in the contemporary mind the romance was associated with certain characters or certain historical periods: classical antiquity in its most heroic dimension, Carolingian Europe and the Arthurian world”.⁶⁸ The setting of dreams or visions was a way of representing “a penetration of the human spirit into a realm beyond the confines of ordinary experience”.⁶⁹ The context of narrative collections could be “purely abstract and doctrinal”,⁷⁰ as in some collections of sermons, or much more closely integrated with the substance of the stories included. The matrix is broad and deep. It constitutes what Boitani in a footnote suggests we might call a “horizon of expectations”:

⁶³ Baswell, pp. 16-17

⁶⁴ Baswell, p. 229.

⁶⁵ Piero Boitani, *English Medieval Narrative in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: University Press, 1982).

⁶⁶ Boitani, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Boitani, p. 28.

⁶⁸ Boitani, p. 40.

⁶⁹ Boitani, p. 71.

⁷⁰ Boitani, p. 114.

A work of art is inserted within a complex system of needs, expectations, tastes, readings and models of behaviour, which together constitute the audience's *Erwartungshorizont*.⁷¹

Field, matrix, horizon: what we call it, and what we call the various categories of literary understanding that contribute to it, is relatively unimportant.

The *kinds* of literature go under many aliases (genres, species, forms, types, modes). They have been defined, irrespective of alias, according to the literary works' setting, subject, time, theme, attitude, content, structure, origin, history, purpose, occasion, psychology (correspondence with faculties of the mind), or sociology (correspondence with aspects of society).⁷²

Varied and variable themselves, and capable of interconnecting in many ways, genres might themselves carry traces of Virgil (distinctly, overtly, identifiably; or faintly and inconspicuously) or they might rather bring to an encounter with the *Aeneid* less specific casts of mind, proclivities of feeling, predispositions. Diverse ways of experiencing rhetoric could also bring their own contributions to the

Erwartungshorizont:

With the single very important exception of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, elements of Aristotelian, Ciceronian, sophistic, and grammatical traditions of the ancient world found some kind of public recognition up to at least the fifteenth century.⁷³

(And Quintilian, as we saw earlier, was to arrive again in 1470.) But Virgil's poem, and other poems whose pre-experience might go on to affect what we make of Virgil in due course, have been enjoyed by people quite innocent of literary traditions, but fond of a good story. What about Douglas as a child (we might wonder), picking up at his nurse's knee a sense of narrative rhythm, of what a story is, told in "haymly plane termes famyliar" (IV.227.6)?

This Thesis is not concerned with literary - or other external - influences, only (at this point) with the existence of different ways in which Virgil and the *Aeneid* could be "present" and make themselves felt within any particular encounter with the text. I

⁷¹ Boitani, pp. 183 and 284 (footnote 60).

⁷² Allan Rodway, "Generic Criticism: The Approach through Type, Mode and Kind", in Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (eds.), *Contemporary Criticism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1970), pp. 83-106 (p. 83).

⁷³ Murphy, p. 89.

have been alluding to mediaeval examples, but the process continues. A good way of grasping characteristic eighteenth-century ways of thinking has been to read the translations of Dryden and Pope. In modern times, Ziolkowski refers to the period between the two wars, when

... the response, including the preference for specific works, varied from country to country and from individual to individual, depending upon political, social, and even religious orientation. Virgil's texts, almost like the *sortes Virgilianae* of the Middle Ages, became a mirror in which every reader found what he wished: populism or elitism, fascism or democracy, commitment or escapism.⁷⁴

Culler offers a concise way of describing the fact:

To assimilate or interpret something is to bring it within the modes of order which culture makes available, and this is usually done by talking about it in a mode of discourse which a culture takes as natural.⁷⁵

The variables, within and outside the text, being so complex, to predict how one person will engage with a work like the *Aeneid* (because that person belongs to such-and-such a culture at such-and-such a period; and so on) is no substitute for looking at what actually happens when text and reader coincide. To that extent the distinction between a lone reader encountering a text and a reader indissolubly merged in some immensely complex - and complexly conditioning - community is, practically, negligible. In Chapters II-V, I offer an analysis (but non-biographical) of one personal act of hermeneutical alchemy.

What I have been doing in this Section is seeing how far we can detect in Douglas' ancillary remarks on translation a sense of the importance of the reader in any encounter with Virgil. Although Douglas comes short of treating reader-engagement as essentially constitutive (so that the *Aeneid* would not exist without it), his own engagement with the story and his enthusiasm for engaging his own readers have the effect of signalling that the *Aeneid* is (perhaps only *de facto* rather than theoretically *de jure*, but nevertheless in some deeply undislodgeable way) *practically nothing* unless

⁷⁴ Theodore Ziolkowski, *Virgil and the Moderns* (Princeton: University Press, 1993), p. 26.

⁷⁵ Culler, p. 137.

and until readers take it on themselves to become intimately and creatively involved in retelling the story themselves.

6. Conclusion

Taking as my departure-point in this Chapter Douglas' rather sketchy remarks about the terms and conditions of a reader's encounter with the *Aeneid*, and applying to them a certain amount of creative (but I hope disciplined) imagination, trying to detect the attitude behind the words and to elicit the ambience which underlies them and him, I have attempted to prepare the way for what follows, in a way that we might fairly suppose Douglas to be happy with: opening up the terrain where Douglas practises his metaphysical atmospherics (Chapters II-V) and where we need to decide how to evaluate him. I have tried neither to take Douglas at face value nor to impose a full-blown literary theory of my own. Claims that for Douglas the text is physically there (Section 2), that it has a greater reservoir of meaning than it overtly displays (Section 3), that the meaning it does present is complex and versatile (Section 4), and that all this comes alive only with the engagement of readers, themselves complexly constituted (Section 5): these are claims expressible with more than one specific theoretical slant, supposing differing degrees of reification at every stage of the process - author, text, reader. We might pursue either of the alternatives starkly outlined by a contemporary classical scholar:

A good translation selects and arranges, in an effective way, elements which are 'there' in the original, and in doing so may give us a different reading of a poem from the one we previously entertained which we may, on particular grounds, prefer. On an alternative model, involving a more radical untying of the text, translations determine what is counted as being 'there' in the first place, and good translations thus unlock for us compelling (re)readings which we could not get in any other way.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Martindale, *Redeeming the text*, p. 93.

We might try to fuse them somehow. That doyen of an earlier generation of British classical scholars, J. W. Mackail, was judicious:

Indeed it may be said of the masterpieces of poetry that they actually grow in vitality and significance with the process of time, as they absorb and incorporate into themselves an added volume of intermediate imagination and experience. For they come to us now not only with their original and essential virtue, against which time is powerless, but with the accumulated associations of all the ages through which they have passed. ... The masterpiece places itself with a background and a foreground. It has become for us not a mere detached work of art which has been preserved from the past, but a focus of the multiplex human movement, a lamp whose rays stream out over the whole integrated fabric of human life.⁷⁷

There is something there for almost everyone: structuralist, formalist, historicist, even (with allowances for the terminology) post-structuralist.

However, like a post-Copernican who still speaks of the sun rising, I shall for the main part continue to use pre-deconstructionist language about the reader/translator's encounter with the text, and the author's responsibility for it. Inverted commas can be imagined, if necessary. To try to cover every theoretical option all the time would be clumsy, it would add little if anything to the clarity of exegesis, and it would take us too far from Douglas, who manages to wrestle (perhaps more radically than he realises) with different dimensions of meaning while sticking to a broadly conventional terminology in describing what he is up to.

Virgil's textual ambience, for Douglas and like Douglas' own, is one of "crafted fecundity". Each poem is what it is because of a synthesis among diverse, fluctuating and reciprocally interlacing layers of significance, reaching backwards and forwards and outwards and inwards. With every definite particularisation (by a writer or a reader), with every particular act of focusing (sensing the layers in a distinct perspective, resolving tensions - if only for the moment), there is an exercise either of freedom or - on another kind of theory - of something impersonal akin to it. Without that, there would either be nothing "there" to read, or - on the other kind of theory - no distinctive nexus of projections among the confluent significations that have taken the

⁷⁷ Mackail, pp. lxxxvii-lxxxviii.

place of a real subject. Each time a story is retold, creativity, or something akin to it, is at work. In the phrase “telling a story” the accusative functions both objectively and internally.

In the following four Chapters I shall examine how Douglas (consciously or unconsciously) refocuses Virgil’s narrative in a distinctive and broadly coherent way. I have taken time, space, individuals and fate as the four themes for examination because they are at work radically, comprehensively and recognisably throughout the poem, effecting [*sic*] how the world of the *Aeneid* is shaped as a whole and in its details: they are macrostructurally and microstructurally evident.⁷⁸ Further justification of my focusing on this level - and on the concept of “shift” associated with it - will be offered, in retrospect, in Chapter VI.

One aspect of the matter needs a few words of explanation now, however. I frequently compare Douglas’ translation with “Virgil” or “what Virgil says” or “the Latin text”. That sounds as if there is an absolute meaning available in Virgil, to which Douglas and everybody else is obliged to approximate; and that in turn is liable to give an impression quite different from the idea of *creative synthesis among multiple layers of signification* which runs elsewhere through my examination of Douglas. What I am doing is setting beside Douglas another version, the outcome of another’s engagement with the text, to clarify Douglas’ by comparison; but without implying that there is a “correct meaning” and that this other version has reproduced it. Showing by comparison that (e.g.) Douglas’ version is at one point more concrete than another English version based on Virgil is not to say that there is a definite level of

⁷⁸ The pithiest account I have found of this distinction (though it unaccountably omits the important level of “metaphysics”) is by Cok van der Voort: “This memorial synthesis [i.e. the macrostructural unity composed out of isolated microstructural elements] can be considered a structured semantic abstract, not only of the textual surface structure, but also of a variety of contextual and extratextual elements, as for example the implicit and explicit poetics of the author, the historical and socio-cultural background of the text, and the active part played by the reader himself.” “Narratology and Translation Studies”, in Kitty M. van Leuven-Zwart and Ton Naaijken (eds.), *Translation Studies: The State of the Art* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991), pp. 65-73 (pp. 66-7).

concreteness embodied in Virgil, or that this English version has reproduced it exactly.⁷⁹

On the whole, the English version I use is the prose rendering of W. F. Jackson Knight,⁸⁰ since it sticks closely to the order of words and phrases in Virgil; it is also a fair representation of a long scholarly consensus driven by the objective of uncovering Virgil's "true" meaning (a consensus, however, consistent with differences, mainly as to the overarching thrust of the *Aeneid* - for instance, how its "pathos" and its "imperialism", or its "darker" and "lighter" sides, ought to be weighted). This is not to say that Knight was himself uncritical about that quasi-objective way of approaching the *Aeneid*, but his translation serves it well.⁸¹ So we can get a sense of Douglas' distinctiveness, relatively not only to another set of words but to another sort of hermeneutical approach embedded in them. Knight says of his translation:

All this [the aesthetic qualities] must be lost in a prose translation, but a great deal, far more in fact, ought not to be lost; for what counts most of all is the story, the drama, and the meanings which the story and the drama reveal. Therefore it need not be altogether unfair to Virgil's poem to read it in a version which is content to tell in plain prose Virgil's tale. This, of course, is not easy to arrange. Such a version must not, if it can be avoided, leave out anything which really matters, and it must not add anything which might alter or distort any of Virgil's more important meanings. ... In translating Virgil ... there are unusually sharp conflicts between the necessity to express enough and the fear of expressing too much, and also between the primary need to keep the narrative clear and fluent and the continuous responsibility for discovering or deciding, as well as possible, what is the exact meaning of the original.⁸²

A merit of this particular scholarly approach is its respect for the text. Douglas would approve, in principle at any rate.

⁷⁹ Similar reservations would of course have to be applied *mutatis mutandis* to our readings of "Douglas" and "*Eneados*".

⁸⁰ W. F. Jackson Knight (trans.), *Virgil: The Aeneid*. I do not indicate on every occasion that Knight is being used, or where I have made minor changes of my own, especially when the passage is very short, or where a more piecemeal rendering is required. And sometimes I explicitly use Williams instead.

⁸¹ e.g. "There seems no end to the blending in Vergil's method, and the superimposition of form on form; anything but vacant spaces, or a thin stream of simple meaning." Knight, *Roman Vergil*, p. 189.

⁸² Knight, *Virgil: The Aeneid*, p. 21. Knight's version was popular (and useful) among schoolboys tackling Virgil in the 1950s and 1960s. (Personal reminiscence.) To give the "consensus" a broader base I sometimes refer to earlier scholars, e.g. Glover and Mackail.

CHAPTER II

DOUGLAS AND TIME

1. *Time in Virgil*

Virgil's story is not only set in time but also saturated with it. Aeneas and his people are on the move, looking back to Troy and ahead to Rome. At every stage of their enterprise they are confronted by reminders of what has been (in Troy and elsewhere) and encouraged to embrace what is going to be. Reminiscence plays a vital part in the story: Venus and Dido giving a historical context to the rise of Carthage (Book I), Aeneas telling Dido about what happened in the last hours of Troy and what his journey so far has involved (Books II and III), Latinus and Evander in Italy describing what things were like there before Aeneas appeared (Books VII and VIII). Every place, every person, has a story. And the Trojans bring with them a sense of the future too. As Heinze says, "Virgil intends us never to lose the feeling that the action is *moving forward*".¹ Dreams and prophecies underline the onward direction of time, particularly in the first eight books, and again towards the end, when Juno and Jupiter are reconciled.

Though the chronology in Virgil is not always clear, the radical importance to the story of this basic category of historicity is plain. Even an allegorical reading of the *Aeneid* (e.g. Fulgentius, Bernard Silvestris, John of Salisbury) will not be able to get away from the notion of time, represented as stages in human life, or - like the journey of Aeneas - as an "Argonautic quest" or "Odyssean wandering".² In Pöschl's words,

¹ Richard Heinze, *Virgil's Epic Technique*, p. 251.

² Philip Hardie, *Virgil* (Oxford: University Press, 1998), pp. 59-60

... [Aeneas'] actions spring from memory and hope. He is under the responsibility of history: ...³

Glover illustrates this from the difference between the pictures on Homer's shield of Achilles and on Virgil's shield of Aeneas. Homer's gives a general depiction of human life, whereas

... the shield of Aeneas serves a different purpose. Its pictures are not ornament; they are to be prophecy, inspiration, history.⁴

The time-frame includes everyone, even (by epic convention) the gods and goddesses. It points backwards and forwards to a potential infinity, from primaeval events like those of pre-Saturnian Italy⁵ and the creation of the straits between Sicily and the Italian mainland⁶ to an everlasting future, underpinned on the personal level by a metaphysics which takes us not out of time but perpetually beyond any conceivable limit.⁷ Jupiter's phrase about the destiny of Rome, "nec metas rerum nec tempora" (no boundary in space or time),⁸ could be applied to the way in which Virgil handles temporality within his story.

Furthermore, it is "significant time",⁹ layered through the presence of author (actual or implied) and reader (actual or implied), pulling together familiar and important areas of experience and giving a powerful sense that this time-frame is not merely extensive but deep: offering not just a linear chronicle but what Tolkien called

... the constant presence of a sense of many-storied antiquity, together with its natural accompaniment, stern and noble melancholy.¹⁰

³ Viktor Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid*, trans. by Gerda Seligson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 38.

⁴ T. R. Glover, *Virgil*, 5th edition (London: Methuen, 1923), p. 137.

⁵ e.g. Evander, 8.314-20.

⁶ e.g. Helenus, 3.414-9.

⁷ e.g. Anchises, 6.724 f.

⁸ 1.278.

⁹ K. W. Gransden, *Virgil's Iliad: An essay on epic narrative* (Cambridge: University Press, 1984), p. 40.

¹⁰ J. R. R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics", in Christopher Tolkien (ed.), *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1983), pp. 5-48 (p. 46). He contrasts this with "Homer's flatter, if more glittering, surface". Stephen Medcalfe traces this structural time-feature, common (supposedly) to the *Beowulf*-poet and Virgil, in an underlying Virgilian mood of civilising gentleness: "Virgil at the Turn of Time", in Charles Martindale (ed.), *Virgil and his Influence* (Bristol: Classical Press, 1984), pp. 215-44 (p. 229).

This convergence of perspectives gives to the *Aeneid* a pervasively concentrated quality. Style and content combine to secure the effect. Virgil's hexameters make the most of the rich possibilities Latin offers for displacing predicates to suggest we are being caught up in something that overrides the merely "serial, out there" character of what is going on; as if we are seeing *into* events. This was memorably characterised by Nietzsche:

This mosaic of words in which every word, as sound, as locus, as concept, pours forth its power to left and right and over the whole, this minimum in the range and number of signs which achieves a maximum of energy of these signs - all this is Roman and, if one will believe me, *noble par excellence*.¹¹

Again, we constantly feel "rounded-off": technically by what Pöschl calls "the unrolling of the wave",¹² a special resolving line which Virgil employs periodically to leave his reader with a sense of unity in what has just been said. And we find ourselves "detemporalised" by Virgil's flexible use of past and present tenses:

Virgil switches from past tenses to present and back again indifferently, often in the same paragraph. ... 'When' things happened becomes less important than 'that' they happened and 'how' they happened.¹³

The content of the poem reinforces this, both formally and materially: formally by its cohesion, so that every moment seems to stand for the whole enterprise. What we are told (by Suetonius)¹⁴ about Virgil's manner of composition corresponds to this: a preliminary draft of the whole work in prose, divided into twelve books, then moving back and forward to build up the story from within instead of working consecutively from beginning to end. It is not remarkable that the story stops suddenly at the death of Turnus, because in a sense no further rounding-off is needed: the entire poem has been contained - "concluded" - at each stage by the imaginative readiness of the reader, primed by the author.

¹¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* (with *The Anti-Christ*), trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 105. The words apply directly to Horace but also make a general point about the nature of Latin. See Joseph Farrell, *Latin Language and Latin Culture*, pp. 115-17.

¹² Pöschl, p. 160.

¹³ Gransden, p. 76 (including footnote).

¹⁴ Summarised in Heinze, pp. 208-9.

The author and (original) reader are reciprocally cohesive in a material sense too: thoroughly Roman. The *Aeneid*, whatever else it is, is unmistakably a *Roman* poem. In Mackail's words it deals with

... the splendours of past history, the majesty of actual Empire, the limitless future decreed for it,¹⁵

and although Mackail goes on to insist that it deals with universal themes of

... sorrow and suffering, disastrous love, human impotence and frailty, the infinite pity of things ... passionate craving and the glimmering hope for 'the future shore',¹⁶

the poem as we have it from Virgil presupposes a readership able to enter into its Roman provenance. It requires pre-knowledge (details and allusions are left unexplained), but even more it requires a particular repertory of memories and hopes, a particular imagination, if it is to yield the emotional charge it contains. The poem unmistakably (as Glover says)

... interests, it expresses the Roman people, ... it is the poem of the birth of a great people, of a great work done to found a great race, of a spirit and temper brought into the world which should in time enable that race to hold sway over the whole world and be to the whole world, with all its tribes and tongues, the pledge and the symbol of its union and its peace.¹⁷

It follows that

... we shall not understand Virgil and his poem until we begin to feel with him something of what he felt for Rome.¹⁸

The story is *about* time (then, now, still to come); but it also *within* time. Hardie says that in all Virgil's poetry "there is a strong sense of being located at a critical point in history".¹⁹

A major challenge posed by a poem like this to a translator working in another language at another period is to compensate for various feelings, interests, resonances, echoes, ways of interpreting events, that may have become unavailable to later readers, or available only with a degree of struggle and displacement that itself undermines the

¹⁵ J. W. Mackail (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil*, p. xxxii.

¹⁶ Mackail, p. xxxii.

¹⁷ Glover, p. 83.

¹⁸ Glover, p. 128.

¹⁹ Hardie, p. 1.

desired immediacy of engagement. Sheer vividness in the retelling might persuade us into the story, suspending our disbelief and taking on ourselves a different identity for the nonce: pretending to be Roman. Douglas offers something along these lines (see Chapter III). It might help, too, to be reminded that (for all our difference) we still stand broadly within a Virgilian cultural tradition - so it is still in a sense “our” story. Douglas offers something there too (familiarity with ideas and personages out of the past; see Chapters IV and V). But I argue that what Douglas principally offers is a reshaping of some fundamental categories of human experience, unhitching them from the distinctively compact synthesis which Virgil gives them, and making the poem appropriable in a different way without infracting its essential identity. In this Chapter I examine how Douglas deals with aspects and perspectives of temporality.²⁰

2. *Movement in time: fast and slow*

Again and again Douglas is concerned to spell out and emphasise speed or slowness. Virgil usually leaves it to be assumed, though sometimes Douglas will reinforce a reference already given in Virgil. For instance, when Gregius meets Aeneas and his men in the streets of Troy and (thinking them to be fellow-Greeks) wants to know why they are so slow off the mark, Virgil has him saying:

‘festinate, uiri! nam quae tam sera moratur
segnities? alii rapiunt incensa feruntque
Pergama: uos celsis nunc primum a nauibus itis?’

(Knight: Make haste, my comrades! Why are you late, and idling along like this? Are you only now arriving from the tall ships, when already the centre of Troy is afire and the rest are looting and pillaging?)

²⁰ Only a small selection of illustrative examples is possible, throughout the next four Chapters. I concentrate on picking out contrasts with Virgil, since these indicate best Douglas’ characteristic approach and are more significant for their contribution to the overall effect than cases of tacit acquiescence. In fact, few passages are untouched in some way by Douglas’ distinctive “spin”.

The words “festinate” and “sera moratur” already suggest speed, but Douglas builds on the idea with his “fute hait” and “spedis” for the less explicit “rapiunt” and “itis”:

Haist zou, matis, quhat sleutht taryit zow this lait?
 Our othir feris rubbis, tursing away, fute hait,
 The spreith of Troy, quhilk now is brynt to gledis,
 And ze, first frome zour schippis now zou spedis. (II.90.25-91.2; 2.373-5)

But when Dido kills herself, Virgil says simply that “ensemque recludit” (she draws the sword); Douglas says “And furth scho drew the Troiane swerd, fute hait” (II.216.9; 4.646). Of course “fute hait” (hot-foot) is a filler, but even fillers (like stock epithets) can alter an effect. When Aeneas meets Dido in the underworld Virgil says “prosequitur” (he pursues her); Douglas says that he “fast eftir hir furth sprent” (III.40.14; 6.476). Deiphobus tells Aeneas in the underworld of what happened to him when Troy was taken, and refers to the way the Greeks rushed into his room. Virgil has him saying Odysseus was there simply “comes additus” (with them as a companion); Douglas makes him say he “spedis” (III.44.3; 6.528).

So intensification can be applied at different narrative levels (by author or by characters), and in different areas. It can be applied to something as inanimate as sleep. For example, when the people of Troy are abed, on the fateful night prior to the invasion of the Greeks, Virgil says simply that “sopor fessos complectitur artus” (sleep embraces their weary limbs), but Douglas elaborates:

... soft vapour of sleip
 Apone thair very lymmis *fast*²¹ doith creip. (II.83.7-8; 2.253)

By transfer of predicate, even a day can be fast. Virgil tells of the “atra dies” (dark day) on which youngsters were prematurely killed. In Douglas this becomes “hasty and blak duleful day” (III.37.9; 6.429). A common sign of the systemic quality of Douglas’ metaphysical shifts is that they are often applied where we might scarcely expect them, and even where they make little sense. The Sibyl warns Virgil:

Heir is the place quhair our passage *in haist*
 Departit is, and sched in stretis twane. (III.45.4-5; 6.540)

²¹ My italics, as on similar occasions throughout this Chapter.

Slowness can be foregrounded too, again either by intensification or by pure addition. A word like “mora” (delay) often seems to Douglas to need beefing up. So when Mercury urges Aeneas: “rumpe moras” (cancel delays), Douglas expands this into “speid hand, and mak na mair delay” (II.211.11; 4.569). Aeneas demands of Turnus towards the end: “quae nunc deinde mora est?” (why this delay?), and this becomes:

Quhat menis this langsum delay 3e mak?
 Quhy tary 3e for schame, Turnus, all day? (IV.161.16-17; 12.889)

“Langsum” is an intensifier²² he uses frequently. So Dido’s “longumque ... amorem” is “langsum luife” (II.65.3; 1.749); the passing years of the siege of Troy (in Virgil “tot iam labentibus [slipping by] annis”) become “sa mony langsum 3eir” (II.68.2; 2.14); the Trojans’ grief (for Virgil’s “longo ... luctu”) is “langsum duile and murnyng” (II.69.5; 2.26); their labour in Crete (“longum”) was “langsum” (II.128.23; 3.160); and when Anchises explains that the souls preparing to return to earth drink long forgetfulness (“longa obliuia potant”) Douglas expands this into “Forsetting pane by past and langsum syte” (III.57.30; 6.715).

Pure additions include the following. When after the ship-race Sergestus brings back his damaged vessel “sine honore” (without honour), Douglas adds “scho cumis hame full slaw” (II.240.8; 5.272). Aeneas withdrawing from battle after his injury is, according to Virgil, “alternos longa nitentem cuspide gressus” (leaning at every second step on a long spear); Douglas says they are “steppis slaw” (IV.122.19; 12.386). He can even override the evident meaning of what Virgil says in favour of what he takes to have been the underlying fact. When Dido sends her old nurse to convey a message, the woman (for Virgil) “gradum studio celerabat anili” (hastened her step with an old

²² It seems fair to treat it as an intensifier, though it does not always in the early sixteenth century have the fuller sense of “tedious”.

woman's eagerness).²³ For Douglas this is "Hichit on furth with slaw pace lyke ane trat" (II.215.30; 4.641).

I am not claiming that Virgil's sense of the process of time is unclear, or that Douglas must have thought it was, or that one way is better than another; simply that Douglas (either instinctively or deliberately) makes a difference.

3. *Appearance in time: how often, how long*

Another feature of temporal process is recurrence, with its extreme case continuance (in dynamic terms, recurrence without gaps). By inserting words and phrases like "oft" and "mony a day" Douglas changes our focus, and by suggesting pluriformity among or within the temporal events he in effect dismantles them for the reader, and reconnects them in accordance with a different pattern: one more particulate, more reciprocally externalised. This gives experienced time an altogether looser texture than Virgil does. Again, the modification can apply directly from the author/narrator, or at levels of narrative *within* the story.

The modulation starts early in the poem. Of Juno's behaviour towards the Trojans we are told by Douglas, not just that "arcebat longe Latio" (she kept them far from Latium), but that:

Scho thame fordriuis, and causis *oft* ga will
Frawart Latium, ... (II.24.6-7; 1.31)

To his listeners in Carthage, Aeneas (in Virgil) explains that the Greeks were "fatisque repulsi" (beaten back by the fates); in Douglas they were "*oft* rebutit by fataile destany" (II.68.3; 2.13). Describing an attack in Troy, Virgil simply says in a general way that the gate "labat ariete crebro" (sinks under the constant ramming); Douglas expresses this as: "*Oft* with the ram the port is shaik and duschit" (II.97.19; 2.492).

²³ "Celerabat" (hastened) is evidently how Douglas (like Ascensius) read the word. Mynors prefers here an alternative reading, "celebrabat" (intensified).

Giving them guidance for the next stages of their journey, Helenus tells them (in Virgil) that “lentandus remus” (oar-straining will be needed); for Douglas this is:

3our airis first into the Cecile see
Bedyit wele and bendit *oft* mon be; ... (II.143.1-2; 3.384)

As to continuance rather than mere repetition, here are a few examples. The hapless Dido’s love, after the death of her first husband, was “desueta” (out of use); Douglas expands: “Had bene disvsit fra luif that mony 3eir” (II.63.12; 1.722). When Aeneas encounters the figure of the dead Hector, he addresses him as “exspectate” (longed for); in Douglas it is “quhame we desirit mony a day” (II.85.4; 2.283). Andromache’s explanation of the slavery her people endured after the fall of Troy speaks simply of “seruitio”; Douglas turns this into “By force sustenit thraldome mony a day” (II.139.7; 3.327). And the sarcastic description of Aeneas given by Turnus, “crinis uibratos calido ferro murraque madentis” (Knight: ... that hair crimped with curling-tongs and oiled with myrrh), becomes in Douglas (stressing recurrence *and* continuance):

... hys crysp and zallow hayr,
That are mayd creis, and curlis now sa weill,
Yplet *ilk nycht* on the warm broch of steill,
Dekkyt and donk, on his wyfly maner,
Of fragrant myr and other envnctmentis seyr. (IV.99.18-22; 12.99-100)

4. *Position in time*

Douglas often brings into stronger focus, in a variety of narrative perspectives, the “when” of what is (or was or will be) happening. We can distinguish “trans-referential” instances of this (where some objective time-frame is supposed, as if there is an imaginary clock or calendar) from “inter-referential” instances (where temporal positioning is fixed relative to other events in the story). The distinction is not intrinsically firm, but there are examples of both.

In these first examples an objective framework is supposed, and also a projected reference away from the narrator to what is being located in time. Aeneas tells Dido that “*oriturque miserrima caedes*” (a terrible slaughter began); Douglas makes him say specifically: “A miserable slauchter ther begouth *that nycht*” (II.92.28; 2.411). Dido speaks, in Virgil, to Anna of “*arma uiri thalamo quae fixa reliquit impius*” (Knight: ... arms of the false man, which he left hanging from a wall in our bridal room). In Douglas she is more specific:

3one manis swerd, quhilk that wickit wycht
Left stikkand in our chalmer *this hyndir nycht*, ... (II.206.21-2; 4.495-6)

Virgil has on another occasion:

... Troes et armis
alta tenent ...

(the Trojans held the heights with their armour).

Douglas makes the position in time clearer:

And baith wyth armour and with wappynnis brycht
The tour hedis thai stuffit *all that nyght*; ... (III.222.7-8; 9.168-9)

Sometimes more than one perspective on the time-frame seems to become caught up with Douglas' shift, as when Virgil describes a meeting between Evander and Aeneas.

Virgil's words are:

hospitis Aeneae sedem et secreta petebat
sermonum memor et promissi muneris heros.

(Knight: He was going to the separate house which was occupied by his guest Aeneas, for, as a true man should, he remembered their talk and the favour which he had promised.)

Douglas adds a phrase, and perspectives cross-fertilise - Virgil's, Evander's, Aeneas', even ours:

Furth haldis this heyr the secret privay way
Toward the steyd quhayr as Eneas lay,
His Troiane gest, remembring all at rycht
His help and promiss grantit *sister nycht*. (III.183.19-22; 8.463-4)

This trans-referential positioning can also point forward, as when Aeneas predicts better days ahead for his men: “*o passi grauiora, dabit deus his quoque finem*” (you

have suffered worse things: God will bring these to an end too). The “also” is too weak for Douglas, apparently, and he makes it:

3e have sustenit gretar dangeris vnkend,
Lyk as heirof God sall mak *sone* an end. (II.33.13-14; 1.199)

In the above examples the reference within an objective time-frame was to a disjunct point in time, but often Douglas’ adjustment has rather the effect of pulling together one event with its own internal ramifications: not so much a “then as distinct from some other observed time” as an “emphatically *that* then” - objectivised simultaneity, so to speak. Thus, Juno plots with Venus to bring about a marriage between Aeneas and Dido. In Latin this is simply “tua si mihi certa uoluntas” (if I can be sure of your will); for Douglas it is: “Gif thi mind be ferm therto *the ilk day*” (II.182.32; 4.125). Looking ahead in Sicily to the games he is planning to have, Aeneas says (in Virgil) simply “cuncti adsint” (let everybody be there); in Douglas this becomes:

Lat every man adres hym to this place,
And mak him redy agane *the sammyn day*, ... (II.227.22-3; 5.70)

These are both prospective in reference. The following are retrospective. Looking back (narratively) to Aeneas’ search for the golden branch and the moment when he spots the doves who will guide him to the place, Virgil says:

... tum maximus heros
maternas agnouit auis ...

(the great hero recognised his mother’s birds).

Douglas says:

This rial prince, *als sone as he thaim saw*,
His moderis birdis knew, ... (III.21.12; 6.192-3)

Similarly, for Virgil’s “haud secus accenso gliscit uiolentia Turno” (such was the hot-headed violence of Turnus) we get Douglas’:

Nane other wys ferd Turnus *the ilk day*,
Smytyn so brym in fervent violens, ... (IV.92.2-3; 12.9)

And in some cases we have Douglas reinforcing what amounts to present simultaneity.

Entellus the elderly fighter says:

... sed enim gelidus tardante senecta
sanguis hebet, ...

(my cold blood is dull through the slowness of age).

Douglas has:

Bot certanlie the dasyt bluid, *now on dayis*
Walxis dolf and dull throw myne vnweildy age; ... (II.247.10-11; 5.395-6)

And towards the end Turnus says “quaecumque est fortuna, mea est” (the fortune, whatever it be, is mine); Douglas turns this into:

Quhou evir the fortoun standis *at this tyde*,
The chance is myne, the fayt I mon abyde. (IV.146.11-12; 12.694)

In all these cases - and some can admittedly be relocated quite easily from one category to another, depending on how we interpret the situation's varied perspectives, while some are quite border-line “trans-referential” (such as Aeneas' “mak sone an end” and the narrator's “als sone as he thaim saw”)²⁴ - there is some implication of a given time-scheme into which events can be slotted. Often, though, positioning is offered relatively. Key words for this are “afor”, “laitly”, and “sone”; and Douglas spreads them liberally.

Thus Virgil speaks (though the passage is introduced by “it is said”, so the perspective is interestingly ambiguous) of one Telon who

... iam tum dicione premebat
Sarrastis populos ...

(he subdued the Sarrastians under his authority).

For Douglas this becomes:

That *lang afor* to his obeysans he
Subdewit had the peple Sarraste, ... (III.135.3-4; 7.737-8)

²⁴ The reference of the adverb “soon” can vary in context from objective-specific to relative-general functions. I return to it ... soon.

And we hear, near the end of the story, of “Pallantis pueri, uictum quem uulnere Turnus strauerat” (the young Pallas, whom Turnus had defeated and brought low with a wound). Douglas times it relatively to what is going on now:

Quhilk by this Turnus *laitly* venquyst was, ... (IV.165.24; 12.943-4)

As Hercules threatens to capture Cacus, the monster

... inuoluitque domum caligine caeca
prospectum eripiens oculis, glomeratque sub antro
fumiferam noctem commixtis igne tenebris.

(Knight: ... he filled his den with opaque and blinding darkness, and massed a night of spouting fumes with fire mingling in the murk.)

Douglas adds “sone” and “a litill thraw”, so we get:

And all the hous involuit wyth dyrk myst,
That *sone* the sicht wanyst, or ony wyst,
And reky nycht *within a litill thraw*
Gan thikin our all the cavern and ourblaw,
And wyth the myrknes mydlit sparkis of fyre. (III.168.1-5; 8.253-5)

Relative - like objective - positioning can be external, or close, to the initial point of reckoning. An example of the latter is the passage describing how Anchises tells his son he is going to show him the future of Rome. He says he will do this (in words added to the Latin) “or thow depart away” and (a few lines later) “or thow go” (III.61.10,18; 6.759). Sometimes (an example from a different angle was the passage about Telon earlier) there can be a fusion of temporal distances. When the orator Drances reproaches Turnus in council for trusting to flight in his earlier encounter with the men of Aeneas (“fugae fidens”), the Scots is “stall sa sone away” (IV.36.16; 11.351); the “soon” could refer to the experience of Turnus or that of Drances, or both.

One suspects that sometimes we are being given little more than a verbal tic, simply to remind us that (even when there is no particular question of fixing or relating an event) “time rules”. Thus for Virgil’s:

... praecipitem, cum prima in proelia iunctos
conscendebat equos, ...

(when he first mounted his newly-harnessed horses in headlong haste to begin battle),

Douglas' "at the ilk thraw" adds nothing in the way of explicit time-reference to "Quhen he first ruschit in hys cart in hy" (IV.149.30-1; 12.735-6).

Often what is foregrounded by Douglas is *sheer* temporal distance: just "then", when things were very different from "now". A favourite phrase is "on ther gise", which in Scots - particularly when given a verbal form ("as tho was the gys") - carries a stronger connotation of distance than Virgil's "de more": that can often mean simply "regularly, properly". Sometimes the phrase is as redundant as "at the ilk thraw" above (except as a stock reminder that time permeates). Approaching the land of the Strophades the Trojans see "uoluere fumum" (rolling smoke); Douglas has "The smoky vapour wpcastand on ther gise" (II.131.12; 3.206). It is not clear how Strophadic smoke is any different from other kinds. In a flashback to how Apollo is greeted by his supporters, Virgil says simply "fremunt" (they shout); Douglas has them "Schowtand on ther gise with clamour and vocis hie" (II.184.15; 4.146). As part of the farewell ceremonies when leaving Sicily, Aeneas offers sacrifices:

tris Eryci uitulos et Tempestatibus agnam
caedere deinde iubet ...

(Knight: Then he ordered a sacrifice of three calves to Eryx and to the Storms
a lamb; ...)

For Douglas - and there is rather more point to his adjustment here than there was in the last two examples - this is:

Thre velis tho, as was the auld maneir,
In wirschip of Erix he bad doun quell,
And a blak 3ow to god of tempestis fell; ... (II.270.16-18; 5.772)

Sometimes crediting an "in those days" phrase to a particular character *within* the drama produces odd results (another symptom of the systemicity in Douglas' practice). So Dido calls for help on the divinities - simply "ululata" in Virgil. In Douglas:

And thow Proserpyne, quhilk, *by our gentile lawis*,
Art rowpit hie, and zellit lowd by nycht,
In forkit wayis, with mony mudy wycht; ... (II.213.30-2; 4.609)

When the Sibyl, instructing Aeneas to carry out sacrifices, says (fairly redundantly, and with nothing corresponding in Virgil) this will be “as efferis”, “as is the gise”, and “eftir 3our seremonis”, we sense the translator’s presence (III.18.28-32; 6.152-3). This becomes more prominent when he gives us linguistic particulars. Sometimes this is done quite modestly, as in taking Virgil’s description of a weapon, “teretes sunt aclydes illis tela” (their weapons are rounded clubs), and elaborating:

Round casting dartis or macis wyth pykyt heidis,
 Quhilk, *in thair lede*, is clepit ane aclyde: ... (III.134.16-17; 7.730-1)

That could still be Virgil speaking, or even a putative contemporary within the story (though then the distancing would be more geographical than temporal).

But the self-distancing of the translator (with linguistic commentary for his readers) can be more conspicuous. In connection with a legend about Picus, Latinus’ ancestor, we hear that “fecit auem Circe sparsitque coloribus alas” (Circe made him a bird and speckled his wings with colours); Douglas fills this out:

... in ane byrd him turnit, fut and hand,
 Wyth sprutlit wyngis, clepit a Speicht wyth ws,
 Quhilk in Latyne hecht *Pycus Marcyus*. (III.93.20-2; 7.191)

For “magnis Circensibus actis” (i.e. the games depicted on Vulcan’s shield) Douglas gives us:

The gret gammis Circenses for to se,
 Quhilk iusting or than turnament clep we. (III.196.19-20; 8.636)

And in the account in Book XIII of the destruction of Turnus’ city Ardea, when a bird arises from the ruins, Vegius gives us:

Tum vero e mediis visa est consurgere flammis,
 Percussisque ales volitare per aera pennis,
 Indicium nomenque urbis versae Ardea servans;

(i.e. the bird rose from the flames, clapping its wings, and retaining the city’s name).

This is rendered in Scots:

And tho amyde the flambis furth withall
 Ardea the fowll, quham a heron clepe we, ... (IV.192.18-19; 13.234-6)²⁵

It is as if Douglas is at pains to dismantle - radically, over a range of aspects and perspectives - Virgil's careful fusion of different layers of temporality, loosening not merely the points and interstices within the temporal field of the drama but the link between that temporal field and the translator, and between both and the reader.²⁶

5. *Processes within phenomena*

Events are temporal through the circumstance of when they happen, but also through particular empirical characteristics they possess, either in themselves or (and the dividing-line is clearly an indistinct one) in connection with other events. In the next two Sections I shall show how Douglas shifts the contours here too.

Glover rightly says of Virgil that

... the same detachment from the immediate concern which we feel in Virgil's battle-scenes is to be felt more or less in all his work. He looks before and after, sees this and that, weighs things and ponders them, and when he comes to present either temper or action he is apt to be disconcerted by the multitude of his reflections. He looks at his object, but he looks beyond it, and there is something in his description which tells us he is dreaming. There is apt to be vagueness in his characters and halting in their actions.²⁷

Douglas seems always, in contrast, to be asking - or imagining the speaker in the story to be asking - "yes, but what is actually going on?" He goes into details. He brings the process up to the surface so that the reader may engage with it.

²⁵ References to Book XIII follow the numbering in Anna Cox Brinton, *Maphaeus Vegius and his Thirteenth Book of the Aeneid* (Stanford: University Press, 1930). Other instances of overt translatorial presence are II.106.17-18, 276.21-3; III.172.23, 174.31-2; IV.159.21-2.

²⁶ All this is compounded, in a manner which it is unfortunately not possible to explore here, by Douglas' own linguistic apparatus and choices: writing in a language which he learned as a child (i.e. thirty years or so earlier); a language which in a number of ways represents an "older" variant of English, and which is profoundly charged with earlier Romance and Germanic features. His idiolect of Scots brings its own redolent "pastnesses" right into the translation.

²⁷ Glover, p. 51.

This can mean spelling out more starkly what some action involves, as when Virgil has the African king Iarbas complaining about how his generosity to Dido has been repudiated. She had, by his help, “*urbem exiguam pretio posuit*” (built a small city for a price). Douglas sets out the process implied:

... that by price bocht the ground
A litil village to big, ... (II.188.20-1; 4.211-2)

Virgil says of the horses of Mars that:

... illi aequore aperto
ante Notos Zephyrumque uolant, ...

(they fly ahead of the south and west winds on the open plain).

Douglas unravels this a little:

Quhilk fleis furth sa swyth with mony a stend
Owtour the planis at large quhar thai wend,
That thai forryn and gois befor alway
3ephirus and Nothus, ... (IV.118.25-7; 12.333-4)

Shortly afterwards Virgil describes Turnus' horses: “*spargit rapida ungula rores sanguineos*” (the flying hoof sprinkles a bloody dew). Douglas introduces (as in the previous example) a preliminary clause:

And sik deray has maid in the melle,
That his swyft stedis houis, quhar thai went,
Spangit vp the bludy sparkis our the bent, ... (IV.119.8-10; 12.339-40)

This insertion of a causal or consequential construction, “so ...” or “so ... that”, is a favourite technique with Douglas, either for unfolding the internal ramifications of a phenomenon or - see the next Section - for underlining the relation between one event and others. Another example:

... illa incluta Roma
imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo, ...

(Knight: ... Rome shall become illustrious, and extend her authority to the breadth of the earth and her spirit to the height of Olympus.)

Douglas renders this:

That gloriu ciete Rome sall so incret
 Till hir ympir be with the erd maid evin,
 And virtuus curage equale to the hevin. (III.63.8-10; 6.781-2)²⁸

In these cases Virgil has himself indicated an action, and Douglas unfurls it. In other cases, where a particular state of affairs is encapsulated in a word or two, Douglas supplies a behavioural context, showing what the few words given pragmatically or conatively entail: what had or has to be done for the predicate to make sense. So, when Dido goes out to hunt, Virgil has “crines nodantur in aurum” (her tresses are gathered together with gold, i.e. with no explicit mention of what she actually has *done*); Douglas leaves us in no doubt:

Hir brycht tressis envelopit war and wound
 Intill a kuafe of fyne gold wyrin threid; ... (II.183.24-5; 4.138)

When later Ascanius shoots at a deer “curuo ... cornu” (with curved bow) Douglas, mindful of the associated activity, expands this into “Wyth nokkit bow ybent all reddy bowne” (III.116.20; 7.497). Camilla is in pursuit of “captiuo ... auro” (captured gold); Douglas tells us what this behaviourally implies:

Or than desyrit this wantoun hunteres
 In goldyn attyre hir selwin to addres,
 Quhilk scho in feyld bireft hyr aduersar; ... (IV.69.17-19; 11.779)

Turnus’ sword lets him down - it was “mortalis mucro” (a mortal blade). Douglas gives the pragmatic background:

This ontrew temperit blayd and fyckill brand,
 That forgit was bot wyth a mortal hand, ... (IV.150.11-12; 12.740)

Animals too have their relationships to temporal process enhanced. When the Sibyl speaks to Aeneas of “grege de intacto” (from a virgin herd), Douglas unfolds this into:

Sevin 3oung stottis that 3ok buir nevir nane,
 Brocht from the bow, ... (III.11.3-4; 6.38)

²⁸ There is a spate of this sort of thing in Book IX, e.g. III.265.9, 12-13; 269.13-14, 18-19, 20-1.

For Virgil's "pecus mutum" (dumb flock) we get "dar nother bleyt nor steyr" (III.235.12; 9.341); and for "feras ... fugacis" (fleeing beasts) we get "The wild bestis, quhilkis cowth do nocht bot fle" (III.253.23; 9.591).

Places receive the same treatment. Virgil's "apricis statio gratissima mergis" (a most pleasant place for sunny gulls) becomes:

A standand place quhar skarthis with ther beikis,
Forgane the son, glaidlie thaim pronze and bekis. (II.231.13-14; 5.128)

The non-committal "Argiuaque castra" of Virgil (Greek settlement) is turned by Douglas into:

... thai strenthys by thame of Arge in deid
Vpbeildit in the boundis of Italy; ... (IV.27.30-1; 11.243)

- so that we can grasp what happened to explain their being called "Argive".

Pictures get the treatment too. Aeneas is looking at the representation of the death of Androgeus at the temple of Apollo at Cumae: "in foribus letum Androgeo" (on the gate Androgeus' death: i.e. the end-product merely). Douglas reminds us that it was the handiwork of Daedalus - something had been *done*:

Apon the portis did he carve and grave
Androgyus slauchter, ... (III.9.23-4; 6.20)

Even smells: for Virgil's "taetrum ... odorem" there is (adding here what a putative smeller would find) "sa corruppit flewir mycht nane byde neir" (II.132.32; 3.228).

It is a consistent trend in Douglas, then, to supply active, practical, time-based clusters of predicates for Virgil's virtually atemporal ones. It is another way of refocusing and altering the profile that time presents. It can lead him into technicalities, most famously in matters of shipping. Of the steersman Palinurus Virgil tells us:

... primusque rudentem
contorsit laeuas proram Palinurus ad undas;
laeum cuncta cohors remis uentisque petiuit.

(He first turned the groaning prow to the waves on the left, and the whole company went for the left with oars and winds.)

In comparison with Douglas, Virgil seems like an innocent (though we recognise that he has other artistic ends in view):

Hard halis the scheit on syde, and fast gan thrist
 The foirschip to the wallis and the tyde,
 Saland on bawburd towart the left syde;
 Towart the left, with mony heis and haill,
 Socht all our flot fast baith with routh and saill. (II.154.4-8; 3.561-3)

The same happens with Virgil's "obliquatque sinus in uentum" (sets the sail aslant to the wind); Douglas gets closer to the process with a technical phrase: "Himself infangis the le scheit of the saill" (II.224.12; 5.16). And compare Virgil and Douglas in the following. Virgil:

... iubet ocius omnis
 attolli malos, intendi brachia uelis.
 una omnes fecere pedem pariterque sinistros,
 nunc dextros soluere sinus; una ardua torquent
 cornua detorquentque; ...

(He commanded all the masts to be raised quickly and the yard-arms to be spread with sails. They all together set the sheets and together unfurled the sails on left and right, and together turned back and forth the high ends of the yard-arms.)

There is some technicality there, but Douglas' folk really know their business:

Heis heich the cros, he bad all maik thaim boun,
 And fessyn bonettis beneth the mane saill doun.
 Than all sammyn, with handis, feit, and kneis,
 Did heis thar saill, and trossit doun ther teis;
 Now the lie scheit, and now the luf, thai slak,
 Set in a fang, and threw the ra abak,
 Baith to and fra all did thar nokkis wry: ... (II.274.11-17; 5.828-32)

Virgil is apt to sound as though someone has told him what happened, and he (Virgil) has then gone away and produced a (somewhat fastidious) summary for people other than those immediately concerned.

Pragmatic enrichment comes from the mouths of particular characters too. The nymph Cymodocea says to Aeneas: "uelis immitte rudentis" (let out the ropes on the sails); Douglas has: "Takyll thy schippis, and thy schetis sclaik" (III.296.33; 10.229) - more technical.

The sheer physical nitty-gritty of fights and injuries is brought out, as in relation to Virgil's:

... dedit obuia ferro
pectora, nec misero clipei mora profuit aerei.

(He presented his chest to the steel and his shield was of no use to the wretch in stopping the bronze.)

Douglas inserts a line - and note the consequential sub-clause:

Bot at his breist with the steill poynt is met,
That thyrlit hes throu all, and hym doun bet,
That nother scheild nor obstant plait of steyll
This cativis breist hes helpit neur a deill. (IV.134.21-4; 12.540-1)

Douglas is also keener to sort out the actual sequence of behaviour in the running-match. Euryalus is pursued by Helymus, but what happens is extremely difficult to visualise:

... quo deinde sub ipso
ecce uolat calcemque terit iam calce Diores
incumbens umero, spatia et si plura supersint
transeat elapsus prior ambiguumque relinquat.

(Williams: Then just behind him, look, Diores flies along, grazing his very heels now, right up to his shoulder; if there were more of the course left, he would shoot in front and pass him [and] leave the issue in doubt. [Williams, like other translators, tidies up Virgil's difficulty - the "anatomically impossible" manoeuvre of "calcemque terit iam calce" (heel rubbing against heel) - and he further adopts an alternative reading of "ambiguumve" ("or leave the issue in doubt") in the last line.])²⁹

Douglas likewise gives us more than is in the Latin, and a clear picture of the action:

... quhamto held euir neur
Diores, quhidderand at his bak fute hate,
His tais choppand on his heill all the gait,
Wrythand with his schuldir to haue thrungin him by,
And had he anis wonn mair rowm, tho in hy
He suld full sone haue skippit furth befoir,
And left in dowl quha first coyme to the scoir. (II.243.6-12; 5.323-6)

Finally, here is an example from military strategy. Turnus is rampaging about the Trojan enclosure, and has been shut in:

et si continuo uictorem ea cura subisset,
rumpere claustra manu sociosque immittere portis,
ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuisset.

²⁹ See R. D. Williams (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil*, on 5.323-6.

(Knight: ... and, if the victor had then immediately conceived the idea of smashing the bolts with a blow from his hand and letting in his comrades through the gates, that day would have been the last day of the war, and the end of the Trojan nation.)

In expanding this (the key connecting phrase is “so that”) Douglas might be producing a manual of strategy for would-be escapers:

And gif Turnus had than incontinent
 Ramembryt hym, and kaucht in mynd to rent
 The lokkis vp, and oppyn the zettis wyde,
 So that his feris without the port that tyde
 Mycht haue entryt, and cummyn in the cite,
 The last day of the batale that had be,
 And lattyr finale end to the remanis
 Of Phrigiane folkis and pepyl Troianis. (III.265.19-26; 9.757-9)³⁰

6. *Processes among and between phenomena*

The distinction between a process within one complex phenomenon and a process linking one phenomenon to another is to some extent arbitrary, but it is important to show Douglas at work on a wider scale. Here I shall be particularly concerned with how he deals with coordination and sequence. Virgil’s fondness for connectives such as “et” and “que”, for hendiadys and the ablative absolute, and for inversion, will often (for us) obscure the empirical order of events, or the precise way in which one phenomenon conditions another. Douglas likes to spread out the meaning causally, to straighten out the syntax, to insert words which make the order of events clearer.

One way is to insert mention of a cause. Thus when Achates is struck Virgil says “magnique femur perstrinxit Achatae” (it grazed the mighty Achates’ thigh); Douglas expresses the situation thus:

³⁰ Other examples of technology unfurled are: III.180.9-10, 214.6; IV.98.15-18, 101.4, 108.14, 214.11-12. At III.115.21-3 Douglas turns a few Latin words into a veritable job description of Silvia’s father.

3yt *with the dynt* the gret Achates thee [thigh]
 He hurt and strenzeit has a litill wee. (III.305.23-4; 10.344)

While Virgil tells us merely that in the course of the battle Mezentius was “trepidanti” (agitated), Douglas insists (what is fairly obvious) that it was because he had been struck: “Quhilk, for the dynt, sum deyll astonist was” (III.341.10; 10.788).

Sometimes the causality is implicit in a short phrase, but we have to filter it out for ourselves. Douglas obliges. Where Virgil uses an ablative in describing how Pyrrhus attacks a gateway, “iamque excisa trabe firma cauauit robora” (the beam being cut out, he has hollowed the strong wood), Douglas sets the two phases of the process before us in sequence:

Be that in twa the maistir bar ilk deill
 Is all to fruscht; syne the hard burdis he hackis, ... (II.96.30-1; 2.481-2)³¹

Evander tells of how the passage of time rescued his people by Hercules’ coming on the scene: “auxilium aduentumque dei” (help and arrival of the god). Douglas has:

And send ws help, as we full lang desyrit,
 Be cuming of the mychtfull goddis presens; ... (III.164.14; 8.201)

When Camilla is killed, her comrades flee. Virgil says “domina amissa” (ablative absolute). Douglas highlights the link: “For thai had lost thar lady and capitane” (IV.76.1; 11.868).

On other occasions causality (and therefore temporality) is foregrounded by taking the statements in the order in which Virgil supplies them (using “et” or “que” or two sentences separated by a stop) but giving them a stronger connective. During the fighting in Troy Virgil makes Aeneas say:

... armorumque ingruit horror.
 excutior somno ...

(The horror of battle breaks in. I am shaken from sleep.)

³¹ Sidgwick’s comment on this episode is revealing. “It is difficult to say whether this is meant to be a *precise* description with full and natural details of breaking open a door: or whether the phrases are varied and forcible expressions for the general notion.” He thereupon *assumes* - Virgil being a true artist - that it must be the former; but (as with much in Virgil) the act of faith is misconceived. A. Sidgwick, *P. Vergili Maronis Opera* (Cambridge: University Press, 1899), vol. 2 (Notes), on 2.480.

Douglas makes it explicitly causal:

So busteous grew the noyis and furious fray,
And raitling of thair armour on the streit,
Affrayit, I glistnyt of sleip, and stert on feit; ... (II.86.8-10; 2.301-2)

At another place Douglas turns three cognate accusative participles into a serial process in describing the light the fugitives saw before their departure from Troy. Virgil says:

illam summa super labentem culmina tecti
cernimus Idaea claram se condere silua
signantemque uias; ...

(We saw it sliding over the tops of the dwelling, bright, hiding itself in the forest of Ida and showing the way.)

Douglas says:

Quhilk on the top of our lugeing, but weir,
First saw we lycht, *syne* schyning *went away*
And *hid it* in the forest of Iday,
Markand the way quhiddir at we suld spur; ... (II.109.12-15; 2.695-7)

The italicised words bring out the fact that the light's process is progressive, causal, and even (with the reflexive verb-form "hid it") conative. A little later, Aeneas tries to embrace the image of his lost wife: Virgil says, in two successive sentences, that she

... tenuisque recessit in auras.
ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum; ...

(She departed into thin air. I tried three times there to put my arms round her.)

Douglas says in one sentence:

For sche sa lichtlie wanyst in the air,
That with myne armes thrise I pressit thair
About the hals hir for to haue bilappit, ... (II.114.23-5; 2.791-2)

Evander speaks of how Hercules tackled the monster:

... angit inhaerens
elisos oculos et siccum sanguine guttur.

(He held him tight, choking his starting eyes and his throat dried of blood.)

Douglas brings out the causal sequence:

And so strenzeis his throt, furth chirt his ene,
His hals worth dry of blude. ... (III.168.15-16; 8.260-1)

The nymph-dolphin grips the boat and rises above the water: “dextra puppim tenet ipsaque dorso eminent” (she grasps the stern with her right hand and rises up with her back). In Douglas this has to be more than simply consecutive - one action is an effect of the other:

And with hir ryght hand can the eft casteill
Do gryp anon, that all hir bak ilk deill
Abuf the sey watir dyd appeir. (III.296.23-5; 10.226)

Overt causalising in these ways is frequent in *Eneados*. But often we get something more radical, and Douglas inserts an entire clause of his own. When Virgil describes Turnus preparing for battle, he moves immediately from mentioning the horses to saying of Turnus:

ipse dehinc auro squalentem alboque orichalco
circumdat loricam umeris, ...

(Knight: Then Turnus drew over his shoulders a corslet stiff with gold and pale golden-bronze.)

But Douglas wants to lead us from one stage in the process to the next, so he inserts:

“Fra thens onto hys chalmer went he syne” (IV.98.19; 12.87-8). Similarly, when Aeneas is led from battle, wounded, Virgil says simply that his friends “castris statuere cruentum” (set him, bloodstained, in the camp). Douglas is more explicit and he inserts an intermediate stage: “Hes led the bald Eneas of the pres” (IV.122.16; 12.385).

Summaries retrospectively or prospectively attached to a portion of narrative can have the same effect of bringing out logically the dynamics of the process.³²

Douglas adds a final line to Book IX, chapter 9: “Thus gret slauchter was mayd fra hand to hand” (III.253.20; after 9.589). And he anticipates the action described at the beginning of Book XII, chapter 4 (about the kings coming to witness the duel) with his own pre-summary:

In the mene tyme, the kingis of athir rowt
From thar citeis and strenthis ischis owt. (IV.104.9-10; 12.161 f.)

³² Though formally analogous to Virgil’s “unrolling of the wave” (see footnote 12 above, p. 44), the effect of these is clearly very different, owing to the different way in which Douglas sets the contours of temporality.

In Virgil we have to wait some time (line 169) for “*procedunt castris*” (come out of their camps).

Favourite words in this general context are “*almaist*” and “*syne*”. The former tidies up the common-sense plausibility of some of Virgil’s statements, for example when Opis revenges Camilla’s death by shooting Aruns. In Virgil:

... *curuata coirent*³³
inter se capita ...

(the bow-ends met)

and “*dextra neruoque papillam*” (i.e. the string came to her breast); in Douglas this is qualified:

Syne halis vp in ire and felloun haist,
 Quhill that the bow and nokkis met almaist:
 ...
 The stryng, vp pullyt with the rycht hand in feir,
 Went by hir pap almaste ontill hyr eir. (IV.75.9-10,13-14; 11.860-2)

In the final Book, the crowd of ladies accompanying Lavinia is termed (by Vegius) “*matrum innumera nuruumque caterva*” (a numberless crowd of matrons and young women); for Douglas it is “*Innumerabill almaist*” (IV.209.30; 13.466).

“*Syne*” is a particularly useful word, punctuating the narrative and marking time. Examples above include the passages about Pyrrhus attacking the gateway, about the light moving over Mount Ida, and about Turnus preparing for battle. There are dozens of similar cases.

Finally, Douglas will often reprofile the temporal sequence by turning around the order of Virgil’s clauses, so that it approximates more closely to what one would actually experience if one were there in real time. Very early in the poem he shows his hand, turning around Virgil’s

... *dum conderet urbem*
inferretque deos Latio; ...

(till he could found a city and bear the gods to Latium)

³³ Arguably this subjunctive has already something of a tacit “almost-ness” in it; but Douglas spells it out.

into

Or he his goddis brocht in Latio,
And belt the ciete, ... (II.22.8-9; 1.5-6)

Later in Book I, Virgil says that the Trojans, on landing, had busied themselves in roasting the corn and grinding it (apparently in that order):

... frugesque receptas
et torrere parant flammis et frangere saxo

(they prepare flames to roast the grain they had rescued and grind it with a stone).

Douglas is uneasy about this (though Servius and Ascensius might have reassured him; and see Page on 1.179)³⁴ or at least he feels that his readers might think this is the wrong way round. So he reverses things:

For skant of victuall the cornes in quernis of stane
Thai grand, and syne buik at the fire ilkane. (II.32.13-14; 1.178-9)

In Carthage, Aeneas tells Dido how in Crete he had reported a vision he had to his father. Virgil had written “Anchisen facio certum remque ordine pando” (I give Anchises assurance and lay the matter before him). Douglas turns it round:

To my fadir per ordour all I said
As 3e haue hard; quhat nedis tell agane?
And of this mater maid him full certane. (II.129.24-6; 3.179)

Dido turning away from Aeneas “seque ex oculis auertit et aufert” (removes herself from his sight and goes away). Douglas reverses this: “Turnis frawart hym, and wiskit of his sycht” (II.199.17; 4.389). The Sibyl explains to Aeneas that Charon cannot take souls across the river until due rites have been observed. Virgil has:

nec ripas datur horrendas et rauca fluenta
transportare prius quam sedibus ossa quierunt.

(It is forbidden to carry them over the dreadful banks and the rough streams till their bones are at rest.)

Douglas turns the two items around:

³⁴ T. E. Page (ed.) *The Aeneid of Virgil*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1967). The same order appears in *Georgics* 1.267. Apparently the corn might be heated first to make it easier to grind. Servius, like Ascensius, is in P. Virgilii Maronis *Opera nunc recens accuratissime castigata cum xi acerrimi iudicii virorum commentariis* (Venice, 1544).

It is nocht to hym lefull, he na may
 Thame fery our thir rowtand fludis gray,
 Nor to the hidduus zondir costis haue,
 Quhill thar banis be laid to rest in grave. (III.30.13-16; 6.327-8)

People, Virgil tells us, might see Ismarus “uulnera derigere et calamos armare ueneno” (aiming wounds and coating reeds with poison). But this is chronologically inauthentic, so Douglas renders it thus:

Invnctand venemus schaftis the ilk tyde,
 Addres dartis, and wyrk wondis full wyde; ... (III.289.13-14; 10.140)

In one of the battle episodes, Virgil says that

... rursusque Latini
 clamorem tollunt et mollia colla reflectunt;

(the Latins raise a cry and turn the [horses'] smooth necks around).

Douglas gives us:

Thar weill dantit hors nekkis quhelyt about,
 Syne gaue a cry, and on thame wyth a schowt: ... (IV.57.13-14; 11.621-2)

This pattern of causal straightening-out is not invariable. For example, where Virgil unobjectionably says (of Evander's gifts to Aeneas and his party) “dantur equi Teucris” (the horses were given to the Trojans), Douglas has “The horsis syne war gevin and furth brocht” (III.190.5; 8.551). It would be more Douglasian to say “brocht furth and gevin”. Instances of this are very unusual, however. We are back to the normal pattern in the next chapter when Venus brings her own gift to Aeneas and Douglas is able to turn Virgil's “talibus adfata est dictis seque obtulit ultro” (she addressed him thus and came before him) into the impeccably logical

Off hyr fre will tyll him apperis sche,
 And wyth sic wordis to him spak, saying: ... (III.194.24-5; 8.611)

Throughout, Douglas is highlighting the pluriformity and particularity of what happens: interactively, sequentially and directionally, in time.

7. *Narrative positioning*

I showed in Section 4 how the translator, the author/narrator, individual speakers within the poem, all have ways of positioning themselves and particular events by reference to some time-frame or to other events. But they also - by a diversity of cross-references - locate points and phases in their own narratives. What Gransden calls “a kind of vertically stacked structure of temporalities”,³⁵ which we experience in reading a poem like that of Virgil (and which Douglas, we notice, loosens up), affects too the authorial manoeuvrings - and the subsidiary manoeuvrings of speakers within the story - that bring the story to life and make the temporality of the telling as complex as the temporality of what is told.

So Dido speaks - and takes both Aeneas and ourselves back in time - of “This ilk Tewcer” for “ipse” (II.57.7; 1.625); Aeneas speaks of “this ilk king of Trace” for “ille” (II.121.13; 3.53); Charon speaks of “this ilk Hercules” for “ille” (III.35.1; 6.395); Evander speaks of “this ilk zong Priamus” for “ipsum Laomedontiaden” (III.161.11; 8.161-2).

Douglas’ interventions as narrator (with “forsaid” and “ilk” mainly) are sometimes modest enough, but by adding to Virgil a word or two he is able (as primary narrator) to encourage readers to participate in the flow of the story-*telling* as well as to immerse themselves in the flow of the events which the narrative recounts: appropriating the story, making themselves free of it, finding their way around the diversity of narrative perspectives there are in it, tasting authoriality for themselves in company with the persons involved. Here are a few examples, none of them explicit in the Latin:

The mychty God of fyr down from the hevin
Into this *forsaid* ile descendit evin, ... (III.181.1-2; 8.423)

Bot forthir eik this *forsaid* Camylla,
With mynd onfrenndly, can thir wordis sa: ... (IV.61.27-8; 11.685)

³⁵ Gransden, p. 90.

This *forsaid* Aruns liggyng at the waite,
Seand this maid on flocht at sik estaite, ... (IV.69.25-6; 11.784)

Twychand this *forsaid* trefy and convyne, ... (IV.100.16; 12.112)

Bot to our purpos: this forsaid Eumedes
As Turnus did behald 3ond in the pres, ... (IV.120.11-12; 12.353)

Thamantis douchtir knelys hym befor,
I meyn Iris, this ilk *fornamyt* mayd, ... (III.209.12-13; 9.5)

These last two examples (with their “to our purpos” and “I meyn”) are taking us further in the direction of authorial self-consciousness, and sometimes the back-reference (or, occasionally, forward-reference) can be quite blatant, if not overweening. All of the italicised expressions below are Douglas’ additions:

Leucaspis and Orontes, baith tuane,
Quhilum masteris of the schip Liciane;
Quham baith yfeir, *as said before haue we*,
Saland from Troy throwout the wally see,
The deidlie storm ourquhelmit with a quhiddir, ... (III.30.29-31.1; 6.334-6)

For eftyr that fra kyng Evander he
Departit was, *as heyr abufe said we*,
And entrit in amynd the Tuscan tentis,
The kyng he socht, and tald hym hys ententis, ... (III.289.28-31; 10.148-9)

... for, belyve eftir this,
To athyr of thame thar deydy fatis, I wys,
To ane far grettar aduersayr remanis,
As heyr anon doys follow vnder anis. (III.313.5-8; 10.438)

Within his armour, *schortly to conclude*,
Furth bruscht the sawle with gret stremys of blude. (III.350.21-2; 10.908)

And this ilk swerd was sufficient a lang space,
Quhill that he followit the Troianis in the chais,
That gaue the bak, *as we haue said or this*; ... (IV.150.5-7; 12.738-9)

The belt or tysche of the child Pallas,
Quhilk by this Turnus laitly venquyst was,
As we haue said, and wyth a grevus wound
Slane in the feld, bet down, and brocht to ground; ... (IV.165.23-6; 12.942-4)

An instance of fused or fluctuating perspectives comes in the use of “forsaid” in the following passage. The Latin ambassadors are being given their instructions before going to try to enlist an ally in the person of Diomedes. They are to tell Diomedes about the Trojan invasion. Venulus will deliver the message, but it comes

from his king Latinus, and we can sense Diomedes and Virgil and even Douglas his translator hovering in the wings, each having a use of his own for this “forsaid”, and each supplying the creatively involved reader with another edge on which to gain some narrative purchase on the story.

And that he suld eik to Dyomedes schaw,
That mony peple war adjonit and draw
Onto this ilk forsaid strangear knycht, ... (III.150.7-9; 8.13-14)

There is little in Douglas of the prim narrator who occupies one sole firm position and perspective: carefully, coherently, consistently crafted, and held to unambiguously. He shifts about, rather, like a sensitive and mobile story-teller, adjusting voice and vision for the reader as the events unfold. This is yet another aspect of his comprehensive unlacing of the story from its Virgilian compactness.

8. *Chapter summaries*

Brief mention needs to be made of Douglas’ chapter summaries: both what they say (and how) and the sheer fact that they are there at all. It is characteristic that every summary picks out something about movement or action. None of them muses on the significance of what is going on, or steps back from the sequence of events to offer some time-transcending viewpoint. Book IX can be taken as a random example. If we glanced down the chapter summaries to see what we were being offered, it would be quite unequivocal. Juno sends her helper Iris to tell Turnus to attack the Trojans. He does this and sets their ships on fire, though by a miracle most of them are saved by being turned into sea-nymphs. Next Nisus and Euryalus concoct a plan “till ondertakane aventour” and break out of the siege to let Aeneas know what is happening. They are given permission, so off they go, creating havoc in the Latin camp. An enemy captain, Volscens, deals with them. When news comes to Euryalus’ mother she is grief-struck, just as the Rutulians attack the Trojan encampment. Turnus sets a tower

on fire “and maid gret slauchter”. The young Ascanius kills the boastful Numanus, the brothers Pandarus and Bitias defend the gates, Turnus kills Pandarus and rages within the camp, until eventually he is driven back by the defenders. That is the story, as encapsulated in the summaries.

My point is not that the summary is selective (obviously every summary is), but that what it focuses upon is emphatically *doings-in-time*: a picture of movement and excitement, activity and cause, events strung out one after the other. And just by *being* interposed summaries, they predispose a reader to tackle the story as essentially something episodic and phasal. For Virgil the book was the natural unit: for Douglas, it is the chapter. Breaks in stories are important - whether they are supplied, where, how often. As Gransden says,

The space, the turning of the page, the break in transmission, articulate an interval in which the reader will have the sense both of an ending and of a fresh start. He has a choice: to go on, or to pause.³⁶

The staccato effect is of course muted by the very length of each chapter. We are not thrown about every few minutes. There is room enough to settle and ponder. Nonetheless, the narrative focal length is significantly altered, from noumenon to phenomena, from the introverted affinities of “significant time” to the surface seriality of this, that and the next particular event. The overall texture, and the reader’s sense of what is being expected from him or her, is subtly affected.

9. *Discursiveness and length*

James O’Hara sets Virgil’s distinctive style in historical context by contrasting it with Cicero’s prose:

In Virgil’s youth Cicero perfected the ‘periodic’ style for prose oratory, with sentences about the length of four hexameters, and information arranged in complex ‘hypotactic’ structures with main and subordinate clauses, and key

³⁶ Gransden, p. 31.

information held until the end of the sentence. Many of Virgil's sentences are that long, but he prefers a 'paratactic' style, with related clauses juxtaposed rather than subordinated; he often uses parentheses, connectors meaning 'and' rather than subordinating conjunctions, and rhetorical questions or exclamations. He also has many short sentences.³⁷

This overt grammatical structuring is nonetheless put at the service of a closely centred way of telling the story, as Mackail describes it:

The interlacement of order to which a highly inflected language like Latin lends itself is carried by him to its utmost limit, and the phrase, within which no division by punctuation is possible, may extend over several lines; words which are logically or syntactically inseparable may be at long distances from one another, and his cross-patterns of language, while they seldom fail to convey the effective meaning desired, almost defy analysis.³⁸

Douglas, with a different approach to rhyme, a different syntax, a different sense of *démarche*,³⁹ an inclination towards stress rather than quantity (though neither the importance of stress in Latin⁴⁰ nor of quantity in Scots-English, particularly when spoken, should be underrated), could not emulate this, even had he wished to. His sound effects, and prosodic intentions, are different. It is possible to approach Douglas unfairly. He has indeed an unfortunate history of leading people to anticipate his doing something different from what actually emerges. Hence (presumably because of remarks in Prologue I) even very able early writers on his translation took it to be literal, even line-by-line.⁴¹ In prosody too we might look for the wrong thing and express disappointment when we fail to find it. Again this may be in part Douglas' "fault": his steady adhesion to a scheme of rhyming couplets, the fact that he enshrines his translation among a number of carefully crafted prologues, and the fact that we know him as the author of *The Palice of Honour*. (The bewitchery that context and expectations can exert is illustrated in a modern anthology of translations of Virgil into

³⁷ James J. O'Hara, "Virgil's style", in Charles Martindale (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (Cambridge: University Press, 1997), pp. 241-58 (p. 247).

³⁸ Mackail, p. lxxxiv.

³⁹ Defined by Kelly as "the expressive priorities of phrase or sentence as signalled by word order, grammatical linkage, rhythm and semantic t[h]rust". L. G. Kelly, *The True Interpreter* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), p. 158. (Kelly has "trust", but I think this is a Freudian slip.)

⁴⁰ "Modern research has shown that the supposedly purely quantitative Latin prosody was, in practice, considerably modified by attention to accent and to the limits of words." René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature*, 3rd edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. 172; following Eduard Fränkel, *Iktus und Akzent im lateinischen Sprechvers* (Berlin, 1928).

⁴¹ L. M. Watt, *Douglas's Aeneid*, pp. 11-17. See Chapter I, Section 4 above.

English. The editor makes the startling claim that Douglas' translation is in rhyme royal.)⁴² Hence we might expect that prosodic regularity would be important to him - integral to his metaphysical atmospherics - and ought therefore to be important in his readers' judgement of the outcome. Tillyard, accordingly, says:

Douglas's prosody, admirably expressive in some passages, often collapses into incoherence; leaving the reader doubtful how to read lines, and having no particular point on any reading.⁴³

He quotes:

The sky is oft lychtned with fyry leven;
And schortlie baith are see and hevyn, (II.27.13-14)⁴⁴

and challenges the reader to say whether this is decasyllabic or octosyllabic. As it happens, his example is vitiated by the omission of a comma after "are" (i.e. air), though both Small and Pound,⁴⁵ from whom he says he is taking the passage, have it.

The comma makes it clear that "are" is a substantive that might naturally attract more weight in the reading. More serious, though, is whether Tillyard's general claim is not simply missing the point. Tillyard admits that often when Douglas

... appears to err by breaking the taut, packed, yet exquisite quality of his original, he compensates by infusing his own special vigour through greater amplitude and circumstantiation.⁴⁶

In the light of this, to describe his practice as "queer prosodic uncertainty"⁴⁷ may indicate a wrong focusing. "Prosodic versatility" might be fairer.

Analysis of Douglas' way with temporality has already revealed how he is constantly unpacking Virgil's taut depiction of time, dismantling the ingredients of the process, and hitching them together in a relationship more piecemeal and linear. That is how he *feels* the matter, and how he invites his readers to feel it. We might then

⁴² K. W. Gransden (ed.), *Virgil in English* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996), p. xx. I mention this *faux pas* with some reluctance because I have benefited greatly from Gransden's book on the second half of the *Aeneid* (quoted several times in this Chapter). And, after all, it is not much worse than the curious remark that Douglas was exiled to *France*: Colin Burrow, "Virgil in English translation", in Martindale, *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, pp. 21-37 (p. 23).

⁴³ E. M. W. Tillyard, *The English Epic and its Background* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1968), p. 338.

⁴⁴ Tillyard, p. 339. His spelling is slightly different from Small's.

⁴⁵ Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), p. 117.

⁴⁶ Tillyard, p. 340.

⁴⁷ Tillyard, p. 340.

reasonably expect (turning from lay-out to sound-effect) that his verse too will reflect something of that linear drive, moving us along by the felt irregularities of the syntax of the narrative as much as, if not more than, by reinforcements and patterned symmetries in the rhythm. Otherwise, the sound of the story will be at odds with its sense, and that would point to some lack of integrity (which *prima facie* does not seem to exist - *Eneados* does not seem unsuccessful in that particular way) in the translator's handling of the matter.

In fact Douglas' tonal concern is overridingly discursive. Not only did he, in Pound's words, have "his mind full of Latin quantitative metre",⁴⁸ but he was also full of the tonal and accentual flexibility of everyday speech: crucially, in a polytonal environment (the synchronic parallel of the diachronic Great Vowel Shift, when the same words might be heard and spoken - and therefore spoken because expected to be heard - in different ways).⁴⁹ "Irregularity" (if we choose to call it that, rather than "vigorous versatility") permeates the entire translation; but as a strength rather than as a weakness. Douglas' language is essentially "on the move". Coldwell calls this "colloquial ease",⁵⁰ Bawcutt "vigour",⁵¹ and Watt says:

As with Chaucer there are found lines in Douglas which can only be counted regular by use of elision, or taking the steep bits at a gallop.⁵²

The translation - and not just the "steep bits" - probably needs to be read quite quickly, and aloud, with a lively awareness of the pauses, the variations in syllabic lengths, in tempo, in volume, in tone of voice, that characterise confident everyday speech. It is a story: the medium has to be matched to the message. In Barfield's terms, it is meant to be taken as "fluid" rather than as "architectural".⁵³ The rhyme-scheme is

⁴⁸ Pound, p. 115.

⁴⁹ A good example of the need for flexible pronunciation is in the various *y* or *ie* sounds in II.40.15-22. What seems to work best is a variance of sounds hovering about Aitken's vowel no. 1 (*ei*, developed from early Scots *i*: and turning into later Scots *ae* or *əi*). See the table in John Corbett, J. Derrick McLure and Jane Stuart-Smith (eds.), *The Edinburgh Companion to Scots* (Edinburgh: University Press, 2003), p. 140.

⁵⁰ David F. C. Coldwell (ed.), *Virgil's Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse*, vol. 1, p. 72.

⁵¹ Priscilla Bawcutt, *Gavin Douglas*, p. 152.

⁵² Watt, p. 176.

⁵³ Owen Barfield, *Poetic Diction*, 2nd edition (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), pp. 96-9.

not something by which Douglas measures his strides: it is something he *takes in* his stride.⁵⁴

Elements in how Douglas' prosody achieves its effects (e.g. alliteration and onomatopoeia) are discussed by Coldwell and Bawcutt, and I have also found particularly helpful Edmund Schmidt's very schematic Dissertation, based on Books I, II, IV and VI.⁵⁵ Here I want to look at two macrostructural features of Douglas' expressive resources: discursiveness and length.

For much of the *Eneados* the rhyme-scheme is fairly inconspicuous. There is little of the lilting symmetry that we find in Chaucer, or of the architectonic patterning that we find in Dryden. Both have their own vigour, but it is not the same as Douglas'. What drives Douglas' verse is his engagement with the story, and with the readers whom he wants in turn to engage with it. It moves on, line by line and paragraph by paragraph, following its natural syntax, which in turn follows the natural unfolding of events.⁵⁶ So places where the couplet-form *does* obtrude are usually those where nothing particularly is happening (in the sense of taking events forward there and then: this does not mean that these places have no importance dramatically). Rhyming couplets work well where people are squaring up, or taking stock: where there is something like ritual antithesis, as in the boxing-match in Book V (which Douglas represents as a fight with clubs, II.249-52); or the conversation in Book VIII between Aeneas and Pallas when the Trojans arrive at Evander's Rome (III.158-62); or the

⁵⁴ George Bruce's remark in his Introduction to William Neill's translation of parts of the *Odyssey* has relevance here: "... there is a demand in the Scots ... that it be spoken out loud ... Poetry in Scots, and certainly as it presents itself in William Neill's translation, expects to be told as a tale." William Neill, *Tales frae the Odyssey o Homer owreset intil Scots* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1992), p. 14. I discuss the relevance of Homer in Chapter VI, Section 5.

⁵⁵ Edmund Schmidt, *Die Schottische Aeneisübersetzung von Gavin Douglas* (Borna-Leipzig: Noske, 1910).

⁵⁶ Compare Nowottny on the importance of syntax for poetic effect: "Of all the elements necessary to make an utterance meaningful, the most powerful is syntax, controlling as it does the order in which impressions are received and conveying the mental relations 'behind' sequences of words. And ... its operation as a cause of poetical pleasure is often the last cause we recognize, if indeed we recognize it at all. The result is that syntax is important to poet and to critic because it produces strong effects by stealth; these remain 'inexplicable' so long as the power of the syntax goes undetected." Winifred Nowottny, *The Language Poets Use* (London: Athlone Press, 1975), p. 9.

rhetoical debate between Juno and Venus in Book X, where each is stating her position (III.279-86).

There is an instructive contrast between the feel of Dido's remarks to Anna in Book IV, chapter 9 and the feel of her remarks to herself in chapter 10. The remarks to Anna (where the queen is deliberately keeping herself calm and simply reporting something) I set out in prose form to underline how easily it can fit. Capitals have been removed from the beginnings of lines, but that is all.

Sister germane, quod scho, away 3our smert, beis of 3our sisteris weilfair glaid in hert. I haue the way fundin, quhareby 3on syre sal be to me renderit at my desyre, or me deliuer from his luif all fre. Neir by the end of the gret occiane see, thar as the son declynis and gois down, at the far syde of Ethiop regioun, a place thar is, quhare that the huge Atlas on schuldir rollis the round speir in compas, full of thir lemand sternis, as we se: thar dwellis, sistir, as it is schaw to me, ane haly nun, a full gret prophetes, born of the peple of Massylyne, I ges, and wardane of the riall temple, thai say, set in the gardyngis hecht Hesperida, and to the walkryf dragon meit gaif sche, that kepit the goldyn apillis in the tre, strynkland to hym the wak hony sweit, and sleipryfe chesbow seid, to quickin his spreit. This woman hechtis, with hir enchantmentis, from luiffis bandis to lous all thair intentis quham so hir list, and bind other sum also in langsum amouris, vehement pane and wo: the ryning fludis thar wattir stop can scho mak, and eik the sternis turne ther cours abak; and on the nycht the deid gaistis assemble; ondir thi feit the erd rair and trembill thow most see, throw hir incantatioun, and from the hillis treis discending down.

(II.205.9-206.12)

Apart from the first sentence, where the early full stop makes it difficult to ignore the rhyme of "smert" and "hert", and a few unobjectionable inversions (which even where not strictly compelled by the movement of the verse are hardly "poetic") such as "me deliuer", "meit gaif sche", "from luiffis bandis to lous", "stop can scho mak" (that certainly is poetic licence), and "rair and trembill thow most see", this reads not too badly as prose. Contrast it with a passage - much less typical of Douglas - from the following chapter, which is less discursive, more emphatically end-stopped. Dido wonders to herself what she should do:

For neuir mair may scho sleip a wynk,
Nor nychtis rest in ene nor breist lat synk:
The hevy thochtis multiplyis euir onane;
Strang luif begynis to rage and ryse agane,
And felloun stormis of ire gan hir to schaik:
Thus fynaly scho out bradis, alaik!

Rolling allane sere thingis in hir thocht.
 Ha! quhat do I? quod scho, all is for nocht.
 Sall I thus mockit, and to hething drive,
 My first luiffaris assay agane belyve?
 Or sall I laulie sum lord Numydane
 Pray and beseik of mariage now agane,
 Quham I sa oft lychtlyit to spous or this?
 Na, will I nocht: quhat? sall I than, I wis,
 Follow the Troiane navy in strange landis,
 And redely obey all thar commandis?
 I hoip it sall proffit, na litill thing,
 My gret help done thaim and suppowelling;
 For amang kynd folkis this is na dreid,
 Weil is remembrit the auld thankfull deid.
 But thocht, in cace, to do this war my will,
 Quhay wald me suffer my purpois to fulfill,
 Or in thir prowde schippis me rasaue?
 Thus drevin to hething, and all thi grace bywaif,
 Tynt woman, allace! beris thow nocht 3it in mynd
 The manswering of fals Laomedonis kynd?
 And mairattour, quhat ettill I for to do?
 Ane Queyne, allane to steill away thus, lo! (II.208.23-209.26)

Generally Douglas lets normal linear syntactical order carry the rhythm: more like Aristotle's "running" than his "compact" style.⁵⁷ Even inversions that lie outside the (fairly generous) boundaries permitted in sixteenth-century speech are thrown in with such insouciance that we easily overlook them. And the effect of the closed couplets that there are is often significantly moderated (this is true even of selected examples of antithesis, like Dido's soliloquy above) by factors such as the displacing of sense and sound by one line; or their being often only "semi-closed" (i.e. while they *may* be read as self-sufficient pairs, they belong integrally to a larger sense-unit: a verse paragraph, say); or the fact that coagulations of rhyming couplets are soon followed by longer passages which are more prose-like; or the indeterminateness (in Douglas' polytonal environment) of some of the rhymes; or finally (and as important

⁵⁷ "By a 'running' style I mean one which has no end in itself, until the sense comes to an end." Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III.9; quoted in L. P. Wilkinson, *Golden Latin Artistry* (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), p. 167. The 'compact' style "has a beginning and an end in itself, and is of a size to be taken in at one view" (p. 168).

perhaps as any other consideration) the sheer vividness of the subject-matter, moving us on in leaps and bounds.⁵⁸

Douglas' average sentence length is around six lines. If we reckon lesser stops (primarily colons or semi-colons) the average length between periods is about three lines. For Virgil the approximate measures respectively are three and two, so Douglas' sentences appear not only longer but less fractured. This is based on a count through Small's and Mynors' editions.⁵⁹ Inevitably it is rough-and-ready, and subject to important reservations. Editors are not expected to apply with consistency through an entire text whatever criteria they may have determined on for marking breaks. (The manuscripts obviously are of little help.) Particular punctuation signs can carry different weights in different contexts, for different writers and different readers; sometimes, for example, a colon or an exclamation mark may be equivalent to a full-stop, sometimes to a comma. And the "average" that emerges from such a diverse range naturally fails to convey the diversity of Douglas' or Virgil's practice.⁶⁰ But the quantitative measure arrived at does correspond, I believe, fairly closely to what we intuitively sense Douglas' natural span of lines to be.

This is not to say that the rhyme-scheme is redundant. It reflects Douglas' sense of the poem as a physical entity, with structural integrity and boundaries. It reminds us that even for Douglas there is more to time-experience than linear interaction. The background presence of rhyme (as something there to be spilled out of and over) gives his discursiveness quite a different effect from that of Virgil's hexameter verse-units, even when those verse-units are - as not uncommonly happens - of much the same length as Douglas' average. And perhaps it curbs his garrulousness.

⁵⁸ This is why, in quoting from Douglas, I have defied the *MHRA Style Guide* recommendation that "long quotations should normally end with a full point; even though the original may use other punctuation, there is no need ... to preserve this at the end of a quotation". (2002 edition, 8.4). But that would give a distorted impression of Douglas' narrative manner.

⁵⁹ Brinton's, in the case of Book XIII.

⁶⁰ A measure of the most frequently occurring length might be more useful (i.e. the "mode" rather than the "mean") ... had we but world enough and time. But the best way of assessing the situation is probably still just to read the poems with an attentive ear.

For Douglas is not only deeply discursive, he is inclined to be deeply diffuse, and lengthy.

Discursiveness is not the same as length, but (as Aristotle feared) the one can lead to the other. As a matter of fact, Douglas' translation is long too: roughly double the length of Virgil. That in itself is not remarkable, or necessarily a sign of diffuseness:

The fact is that the translator from the Latin ... is bound to use more words than the original. It seems like such a minor point, that Latin has no articles, whether definite or indefinite! ... Latin can express a subject and predicate in one word, Latin does not have to use all those miserable little space-taking pronouns, articles, prepositions - he, she, it, the, an, a, of, to - words that, before you know it, creep in, like the termites they are, to eat away the whole fiber of a line.⁶¹

And Steiner points to the "exponential effect" of *all* translation:

The translator seeks to exhibit 'what is already there'. Because explication is additive, because it does not merely restate the original unit but must create for it an illustrative context, a field of actualized and perceptible ramification, translations are inflationary.⁶²

There may however be a particular risk inherent in a strategy of temporalising a narrative - letting things emphatically appear to be "going on" - that they will appear to be "going on ... and on ... and on". What *is* significant in Douglas is that his ratio of Scots to Latin actually increases steadily as the work proceeds. This requires further research some time. (His average sentence length is increasing meanwhile, but not so dramatically and not quite *pari passu*.) In Book I there are approximately 1.7 lines for every one of Virgil's; by Book VI there are approximately 2.1; by Book XII there are approximately 2.4. Why this should be so is unclear. It might have been because the texture of Virgil changes (though this does not seem to be the case, and other translations I have measured, for example Dryden's, Day Lewis' and the sixteenth century Italian translation by Caro, stay more or less constant throughout). It might just be because the translator was tiring. It might be (and personally I favour this

⁶¹ Rolfe Humphries, "Latin and English Verse - Some Practical Considerations", in R. A. Brower (ed.), *On Translation*, pp. 57-66 (p. 61).

⁶² George Steiner, *After Babel*, pp. 423, 277.

explanation, though I cannot defend it here) because Douglas is gradually finding his feet, and developing a personal way of being discursive: not simply responding to the semantic dimensions and prosodic tempo of his original, but (from the outset, but more evidently with practice) declutching himself from Virgil's content and form.

What the ratio measures is only *relative* (semantic) diffuseness: Douglas compared with Virgil. It does not measure intrinsic diffuseness: the texture of the Scots taken in its own right. We need to be fair to Douglas here. It is quite possible to take longer to say what the text being translated says, and yet - by dint of giving full value to the extra words we use, ensuring that they work to the full - produce something that feels just as taut and satisfying in its own way as a briefer rendering might. (We expand, in effect, by filling up rather than by stretching out.) The fact that, while becoming more expansive in relation to Virgil, Douglas keeps (comparatively) nearer to his own average sentence length (which is considerably longer than Virgil's) suggests perhaps - what we may sense as we read *Eneados* for ourselves - a narrative impulse (conditioned in part by familiar speech patterns) that is independent not only of Virgil's rhythms but of Douglas' own hermeneutical interest. It certainly discounts any notion that he slavishly extrapolates his raw material or that he is dominated by rhyming couplets. Douglas negotiates his own periodicity and prosodic framework. But the function of length and diffuseness in the translation (how it might serve discursiveness) can be properly assessed only when we look at what Douglas makes of it, and why. That takes us (in Chapter III) from time to space.⁶³

I have argued in this Chapter that Douglas brings into play a distinctive mixture of resources (syntactical and prosodic) which reshape the way time is

⁶³ The figures for the Scots-Latin ratio in each Book (with Douglas' average sentence, and sentence-part, lengths in brackets) are as follows: I: 1.7 (6.5/3.3); II: 1.8 (5.6/2.9); III: 1.9 (6.0/2.9); IV: 2.0 (5.3/2.7); V: 1.9 (5.5/2.8); VI: 2.1 (5.9/3.0); VII: 2.3 (6.7/3.2); VIII: 2.3 (6.8/3.5); IX: 2.3 (6.1/3.0); X: 2.4 (6.4/3.3); XI: 2.3 (6.3/3.2); XII: 2.4 (6.8/3.3); XIII: 2.3 (7.4/3.8). Virgil's corresponding sentence lengths are: I: 3.2/2.1; II: 2.8/2.0; III: 2.6/2.1; IV: 2.8/2.0; V: 3.1/2.1; VI: 2.9/2.1; VII: 3.7/2.5; VIII: 3.2/2.4; IX: 2.9/2.0; X: 2.8/1.9; XI: 3.1/2.2; XII: 3.2/2.1; XIII [Vegius]: 4.6/2.1. The figures conceal some necessarily subjective judgements, to deal with the reservations expressed above.

experienced in his story. While Virgil deploys a concentrated mode of expressiveness to match his concentrated rendering of the story, for Douglas the approach is linear and mobile, offering the reader different points of entry, different points of creative choice, different ways of sounding the events for himself or herself. We are encouraged to work out the story from a different experiential basis in time from that assumed in Virgil, a basis that is less provenance-specific: not *Roman* time but time in general, our sense of what it means to remember, to anticipate, to act, and to understand cause and effect. Douglas modulates each nuance, each narrative perspective, laying it on thick and confidently risking dramatic solecism or literary pedantry - in the interest (it seems) of a good story.

Erich Auerbach uses words that capture Douglas' approach well. I close this Chapter with them.

The separate elements of a phenomenon are most clearly placed in relation to one another, a large number of conjunctions, adverbs, particles, and other syntactical tools, all clearly circumscribed and delicately differentiated in meaning, delimit persons, things, and portions of incidents in respect to one another, and at the same time bring them together in a continuous and ever flexible connection; like the separate phenomena themselves, their relationships - their temporal, local, causal, final, consecutive, comparative, concessive, antithetical, and conditional limitations - are brought to light in perfect fullness; so that a continuous rhythmic procession of phenomena passes by, and never is there a form left fragmentary or half-illuminated, never a lacuna, never a gap, never a glimpse of unplumbed depths.⁶⁴

In fact (and I return to the implications of this in Chapter VI) he is referring to Homer.

⁶⁴ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Princeton: University Press, 1971), pp. 6-7.

CHAPTER III

DOUGLAS AND SPACE

1. *Geography and physical space*

In this Chapter I examine how Douglas deals with spatial position and with distance (both topographical and epistemological). The world in which Aeneas' journey takes place is by and large coherent and intelligible: more so than, say, the *Odyssey* or even the *Argonautica*, and certainly much more so than the later Greek romances (e.g. the *Aethiopica* of Heliodorus), of which Bakhtin says that while their world is "large and diverse ... this size and diversity is utterly abstract":

All adventures in the Greek romance are thus governed by an interchangeability of space; what happens in Babylon could just as well happen in Egypt or Byzantium and vice versa.¹

Bakhtin describes this sort of world as "*abstract-alien*":

... the spaces of an *alien world* are filled with isolated curiosities and rarities that bear no connection to each other. These self-sufficient items - curious, odd, wondrous - are just as random and unexpected as the adventures themselves: they are made of the same material, they are congealed "suddenly," adventures turned into things, offspring of the same chance.²

If "suddenly" is a favourite word for these romances, for Virgil a favoured word is "meanwhile", and this indicates spatial no less than temporal coherence.

But while the spatial orientation which Douglas takes from Virgil makes sense and is not "alien" in the Greek romance sense, it is not immediately "our" world. In this Section I discuss its geographical or topographical aspect, and in Section 2 its epistemological aspect.

¹ M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 100.

² Bakhtin, p. 102. The phrase "abstract-alien" appears on p. 101.

Events in the *Aeneid* take place in locations with which new generations of readers are likely to be unfamiliar. Over and above their “fictitiousness” (which is in any case qualified by multiple points of contact with genuine places which exist on a map and give the narrative actuality) there is an inevitable sense of otherness in that we are shown a network of places which are understood to be continuous with places with which we *are* familiar (*we* live in Europe too), but whose continuity cannot be felt by us in the same way or in the same degree as places that we *do* directly know. Aeneas’ world is concretely real and particular, but it is “there” rather than “here”. Furthermore, some of its places, and the things that go on there, are strange in another sense. They are *qualitatively* unfamiliar. There are gods with extraordinary capacities of negotiating spatial features such as distance and copresence, and miraculous situations in which spatial categories are transmuted.

These two sorts of strangeness interact in a complex way. Because “that” world is already geographically distanced, and because Virgil - and, following him, Douglas - aim to weave natural and supernatural together, keeping the underlying coherence of the picture intact, “spatial outrage” is in some degree ameliorated: we recognise we are off our usual beat, in foreign parts, so we can be ready for almost anything. At the same time, geographical and qualitative otherness can reinforce one another too, putting readers “off”. In Chapter V, I examine how Douglas tries to keep the supernatural credible. It is a tricky problem for him, since - as I have already argued in relation to time, and shall here argue in relation to space - his tendency is to change focus, dismantling Virgil’s way of keeping the world together; so he has if possible to replace it with something which does not make the overall dislocation worse.

He certainly works hard to make the world of Aeneas intelligible. He substitutes better known names for places: instead of Virgil’s “Poeni” he gives “folkis of Cartage” (II.38.27; 1.302); instead of “Tyria ... urbe” he gives “Cartage cietie” (II.53.27; 1.568); for “urbem Sidoniam” we get “ciete of Cartage” (II.60.15; 1.677-8);

for “Punica ... gloria” we get “gloir of Cartage” (II.177.14; 4.49); for “Pergama” and for “Iliacos ... muros” we get “wallis of Troy(e)” (II.48.3; 1.466 and II.48.29; 1.483); for “Rhoeteia” there is “Troiane” (II.262.24; 5.646); for “Laurentisque ... populos” there is “Latyne land” (III.71.26; 6.891); and for “Ausoniam” there is “Italy” (IV.187.3; 13.158).

Sometimes he keeps Virgil’s term but adds one of his own: “Latium, quihilk now is Italie” (“Latio”, II.24.7; 1.31), “Crete and Gnosia” (“Cnosia regna”, II.125.20; 3.115), “Awsonia or Itaile” (“Ausoniae tellus”, II.148.19; 3.477). At times this device sounds odd in context (a sign that the manoeuvre is narratively deep-rooted in him), as when Dido, speaking to the captured Trojans, glosses her reference to “Hisperia” (“Hesperiam”) with the words “quhilk now is Italy” (II.53.29; 1.569), or when Latinus refers to the failed attempt to secure help from Diomedes and his people “Quhilkis in Napillis with Dyomed remanis” (there is nothing corresponding to the phrase in the Latin: we are merely told of the Aetolians, IV.33.12; 11.308).

Sometimes a problem is averted by omitting a name altogether: “Hadriacas ... undas” (Adriatic waves) becomes simply “the sey” (IV.40.30; 11.405).

In other places Douglas gives the unfamiliar Virgilian term but attaches a sort of apology to it: “which is called”. Juno’s “native land” Samo is “*Callit Samo*”³ (II.23.9-10; 1.16). The mountain Ida on Crete is “the first hill, *iclepit* Ida” (“mons Idaeus”, II.124.31; 3.105). After leaving Sicily the Trojans arrive at length “Apon the cost, *that hait* Ewboica” (“Euboicis ... oris”, III.8.3; 6.2), and soon afterwards Virgil’s account of Daedalus and Minos is enriched with “The kingis cetie *thar hecht* Gnosya” (“Cnosia tellus”, III.10.1; 6.23, with an additional indication of position two lines earlier, of Douglas’ own making: “Forgane Athenes”, 9.31) and with “The naimcouth hous, *that Laborinthus hait*” (though here there is not even a proper name in the Latin, only “domus et inextricabilis error”, the insoluble winding of the palace, III.10.9;

³ My italics, as on similar occasions throughout this Chapter.

6.27). Behind “river ... That vtherwys is *clepyt* Cereta” lies Virgil’s plain “Caeritis amnem” (III.193.13,16; 8.597).

Whereas quiet substitution or linking of a more familiar name can take some of the strangeness out of reading (only some, because it is the name that is thereby rendered less alien-seeming, not necessarily the place itself), the use of an explicit authorial device like “which is called” can have an opposite effect. It reminds us that the world confronting us is a different one (it needs explaining), “there” rather than “here”; so not “ours”. This can be worse when the translator exaggerates the standpoint, as in the blatant addition of “That now on days Apulze clepin we” to Venulus’ report of where Diomedes lives (in Virgil “Iapygis agris”, IV.28.8; 11.247); or when he puts modern terms into the speaker’s mouth. Anchises, for example, is made to say of Caesar’s advance through the Alps (where the Latin has “Alpinis” and “Monoeci”):

With his gret rowtis our the Frensche montans
Discending doun Lumbardy throw the planis; ... (III.67.1-2; 6.830)

(And see Latinus’ “Quhilkis in Napillis with Dyomed remanis”, already quoted above.)

Another technique has this potential for estrangement, when Douglas clarifies a situation by telling us what *sort* of place such-and-such is. Thus “Myce” is a “regioun” (II.37.27; 1.284) or a “realm” (II.69.3; 2.25); “Zacynth” is an “ile” (II.135.14; 3.270); “Delos” is both “land and ile” (II.184.10; 4.144); “Cynthus” is a “mont” (II.184.16; 4.146); “Aulyda” is a “port” (II.201.30; 4.426); “Archade” and “Ida” are both “wod” (and “Archade” is itself an addition to help locate “Erimanthus”: II.250.30,31; 5.448-9); “Tibris” is “the gret flude” (III.14.16; 6.87); and the hellish “Stix” likewise is “the flude” (III.38.9; 6.439): we need geographical assistance even in “hell”, Douglas’ usual term for Virgil’s “Orcus” (e.g. II.92.7; 2.398 and III.249.6; 9.527). The extra labelling puts us in the picture, but it also makes it obvious that it *is* a picture, and we are as much outside it as within it. (A story which spoke of “Ben Nevis, the mountain” and “Inverness, the city” would not be for people living there.)

Clarifying particular locations is only part of Douglas' strategy to make spatiality more intelligible. He also firms up relative position in space. When souls in Virgil are said to move "ad caelum" (to heaven), Douglas adjusts this to "Onto the world abuf or erd ascend" (III.58.8; 6.719). When Juno resolves to seek help from the underworld, her cryptic "Acheronta mouebo" (I shall move Acheron) becomes:

... I sall seik forthir syne
To thame that far downe into Achiron duell,
And sall commove that deipest pyt of hell. (III.102:28-30; 7.312)

When Aeneas outlines to Evander the ambitions of the Italians who are resisting him, he says (in Virgil) "et mare quod supra teneant quodque adluit infra" (and hold the sea which flows above and below - a reference to the Adriatic and Tyrrhene seas respectively). Douglas keeps the (unfamiliar) idea of up and down but adds the (more accessible) notion of east and west:

And occupy thai boundis orientall
Quhair as the our se flowis allhaill,
And eik thai wester partis, traistis me,
Quhilkis ar bedeit wyth the neder se. (III.160.11-14; 8.149)

Points of the compass are useful indicators, to characterise physical phenomena such as sunrise or the winds, but also where particular peoples live or come from. Early in the story the

... wyndis thre,
Eurus, Nothus, and the wynd Aphricus,

(directly from the Latin, though Douglas specifically adds that the names refer to winds) are further explained: "Quhilkis eist, south, and waist wyndis hait with ws" (II.27.4-6; 1.85-6). In the pictures on Vulcan's shield we are informed of the Bactrians ("ultima ... Bactria"), who are not just "zondermaist pepill" but those "Quhilk neyr the est part of the world remanis" (III.200.27-8; 8.687-8).

Douglas will sometimes add to what Virgil says an extra indication of where something is in relation to other events or people. Thus for the bare "litus in Hesperium" (onto the Hesperian shore) we get "Onto the schoir of Hesperia *fast by*" (III.8.10; 6.6). For Virgil's

pars calidos latices et aëna undantia flammis
expediunt, ...

(some prepare warm water and cauldrons seething with the flames),

Douglas gives us:

Sum spedis to graith hait wattir besely
In caldrouns playing on the fire *fast by*; ... (III.23.1-2; 6.218)

Latinus remembers how Dardanus once departed “Corythi ... ab sede” (from Corythus city): in Douglas from “Corith citie [which] standis our cost *hard by*” (III.95.10; 7.209). In a scene on Vulcan’s shield, when Agrippa is said to be “parte alia” (in another part), he is for Douglas “weill by neyr” (III.200.14; 8.682).

Sometimes changes are made to clarify a topographical feature, either a general property (some shape or design, say) or a property specific to a particular situation. Thus the distinctive design on one of the gifts awarded at the games in Sicily is, in Virgil’s words, “maeandro duplici” (doubly wandering). Implicit here is the name of a river, so Douglas spells it out:

And all byrunnyn and lowpit lustely,
As rynnys the flude Meander in Thessaly; ...

(where “Thessaly” is another addition; II.238.23-4; 5.251). Similarly, the geometry of “theatri circus” is made evident in:

... in maner of circule round,
A playing place wes markit on the ground,
Sic as that clepit bene a theatry; ... (II.241.5-7; 5.288-9)

Two of the more specific instances are when Virgil says that the serpent who attacks Amata does this “attactu nullo” (without touching), but Douglas wants to suggest something of the *nature* of the movement here, as well as its inconspicuousness, hence he writes “nane felt quhair scho glydis” (III.106.1; 7.350); and when Virgil’s vague “opportuna loco” (convenient as to place) is rendered as “ane neydfull place neir by the 3et” (III.249.13; 9.531).

More radical modification is needed sometimes to ensure spatial coherence. (Douglas’ concern to straighten out space is obviously very close to the concern I

earlier showed he has to orient actions in time: space is where people do things temporally - “orientation” covers both - and the following examples could easily have been included in Chapter II, Sections 5 and 6). The lines in Latin 3.684-6, describing the course Aeneas’ men take after escaping from the Cyclops, are notoriously unclear, and Mynors’ reading is only one of several possible:

contra iussa monent Heleni, Scyllamque Charybдинque
inter, utrimque uiam leti discrimine paruo,
ni teneam cursus: certum est dare lintea retro.

Knight translates this as:

But Helenus had given a very different counsel, not to steer between Scylla and Charybdis, since the passage between them came within a narrow margin of disaster on either hand. So we decided to trim our canvas and put back.

Williams comments on the Latin:

... I do not think that any interpretation or emendation of [these lines] ... produces a sentence which would have satisfied Virgil. They represent jottings of metrical phrases which would have been shaped later into a final version.⁴

He settles upon something similar to Knight’s version. Douglas’ text appears to have had a comma between “cursus” and “certum” and he follows a suggestion which Ascensius gives as a possibility, that the men *do* head for the dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, despite the warning Helenus had given them, because otherwise (and here Douglas inserts something that has no existence in the Latin) they will be sailing back to the even more terrible Cyclops:

Aganis the consall of Helenus, oure feris
Perswadis to hald furth evin the way that steris
Mydwart betuix Caribdis and Scilla,
A littill space fra deid by ather of twa;
For, bot we hald that cours, forowtin faill
Bakwartis, thai said, on Ciclopes mon we sail. (II.161.19-24; 3.684-6)

Anyhow, at all costs geographical coherence and intelligibility must be preserved.

On another occasion, Evander is saying how he remembers hearing that Dardanus had travelled from Italy and founded Troy. The sequence of events in the Latin is complicated:

⁴ R. D. Williams (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil*, vol. 1, pp. 327-8.

Dardanus Idaeas Phrygiae penetrarit ad urbes
 Threiciamque Samum, quae nunc Samothracia fertur.
 hinc illum Corythi Tyrrhena ab sede profectum ...

(Dardanus ... had penetrated to the Idaean cities of Phrygia and Thracian Samos, which is now called Samothrace; having journeyed there from his Etruscan home, Corythus.)

As Knight himself tidies up the itinerary I have not used his translation here. Note what Douglas makes of it:

Off this cuntre Schir Dardanus yboir
 Throwout the see socht fer and forthirmoyr
 Till Samo, *fyrst*, in Trace, the *nerrest* gait,
 Quhilk Samothracia now to naim is hait;
 Syne socht he to the land of Phrygia,
 And citeis sett in the wod of Ida.
 ... that wucht,
 That wmqhile socht fra hyne of Tuscany,
 And Corith citie standis our cost *hard by*, ... (III.95.1-6, 8-10; 7.207-9)

Douglas, then, is constantly standing back, dismantling, reconstructing, repositioning, clarifying the ingredients of Aeneas' unfamiliar world (unfamiliar either because it is basically foreign terrain to us or because Virgil's way of expressing it is less than lucid) and giving us a clearer vantage-point. It becomes under Douglas' different focus more particulate spatially, and more detached - within itself and in relation to the reader. As in the parallel process of time, we are given access but denied immediacy. Instead we get a series of opportunities to engage with it constructively for ourselves.

2. *Immediacy and distance for the reader*

Spatial distance is compounded by epistemological distance. In real life witnessing phenomena involves the exercise of perception, the senses in general and (usually) the sense of sight in particular. With a fictitious story, particularly one in empirical form (in which predominantly things are going on before our very eyes, in contrast to a more reflective narrative concerned with ideas), something like perception

comes into play, and the question for a narrator - and a translator - is how this epistemological dimension is to be represented in the way the story is handled. Can we just be left to look at things, or shall we be firmly reminded that “looking at things” is emphatically what we are doing? Douglas inclines to the latter. There are two sides to this: he makes scenes more visual (or sensory),⁵ and he brings out more forcibly the *fact* of their visuality.

For both these developments there is some basis in Virgil. It is true that Heinze speaks rather slightly of Virgil’s “basic lack of the intuitive ability to conceive things in visual terms”⁶ and says:

Place as the scene of the action has the same unimportant role in Virgil as in ancient narrative poetry in general.⁷

He instances the description of the arena where the games are held in Book V, and the layout of the Trojan camp beside the Tiber in the later books.⁸ But, for all his indirectness, Virgil can produce descriptions that are outstandingly visual: for example, the description of the harbour at 1.159 f. He will also sometimes highlight the very fact of the witnessing, by real or imaginary spectators: the epistemological aspect of a situation (e.g. “mirabile visu” and “cernere erat”). The obvious places are when Aeneas is observing pictures, on temple walls or on a shield.

But Douglas greatly intensifies both features. His version is more visual, *and* it makes us more aware of the underlying epistemological relation. As to visual

⁵ Augustine had discussed the use of the concept of sight (“videre”) for describing the senses in general, in his discussion of concupiscence in *Confessions*, Book 10, ch. 35. Heidegger takes this as a starting-point for his own discussion of the priority of “seeing” (or beholding) in knowledge and Being: “Being is that which shows itself in the pure perception which belongs to beholding, and only by such seeing does Being get discovered. Primordial and genuine truth lies in pure beholding.” Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 215. Brewer says that Chaucer’s account of the *Aeneid* in his *The House of Fame* “with its non-naturalistic, but quite natural synaesthetic blend of reading and seeing, hearing and remembering, suggests how the story was held in mind”. Derek Brewer, *Chaucer: The Poet as Storyteller* (London: Macmillan, 1984), p. 67. The metonymy seems allowable, therefore.

⁶ Richard Heinze, *Virgil’s Epic Technique*, p. 204.

⁷ Heinze, p. 269.

⁸ Heinze, pp. 270-1.

intensification, it is such a thoroughgoing feature of his translation that I can only touch on it in passing. C. S. Lewis' remark is fair:

To read the Latin again with Douglas's version fresh in our minds is like seeing a favourite picture after it has been cleaned. Half the 'richness' and 'sobriety' which we have been taught to admire [in Virgil] turns out to have been only dirt; the 'brown trees' disappear and where the sponge has passed the glowing reds, the purples, and the transparent blues leap into life.⁹

Few gainsay Douglas' competence at the *superficies*. Thus, in a simile in Book VI, evoking Aeneas' mood, Virgil uses words relatively bare in themselves - "peruolitat" (flies about), "erigitur" (rises), "ferit" (strikes):

sicut aquae tremulum labris ubi lumen aënis
sole repperit aut radiantis imagine lunae
omnia peruolitat late loca, iamque sub auras
erigitur summique ferit laquearia tecti.

(Knight: ... like the quivering light from water, swaying in a basin, struck by the sunlight or reflecting the moon's rays from its surface, and flitting everywhere and ranging far, till at last it leaps into the air and hits the panels in the ceiling overhead.)

Douglas gives us:

Lik as the radius sonnis bemys brycht,
Or than the glymmerand monis schaddowis lycht,
Reflexit from the brasin veschell, we se,
Fillit wyth watter to the cirkill on hie,
Our all the hous reboundis and dois spreid
Schynand, and sersis euery steid on breid,
Quhill in the ayr vpgois the tuynkilland lycht,
Glytterand on euery spar and ruf on hycht. (III.150.31-151.6; 8.22-5)

It is not that one description is better than the other; but they are different. Douglas will add colours to a description, as when Cleopatra's vessel is said to have "purpour sail abuf hyr payntit barge" (III.202.16; 8.708) while the waves are "haw" (dullish blue, III.202.21; 8.710). Neither of these details is in the Latin. Other senses can be expanded too, as when Virgil's rather sober description of the welcome given to Caesar (in a scene on the shield) is made louder by Douglas:

at Caesar, triplici inuectus Romana triumpho
moenia, dis Italis uotum immortale sacrabat,

⁹ C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 84.

maxima ter centum totam delubra per urbem.
laetitia ludisque uiae plausuque fremebant; ...

(Knight: Next appeared Augustus Caesar as he drove in a threefold triumph past the buildings of Rome and made to the Gods of Italy his solemn, deathless vow to build three hundred mighty shrines throughout his City. The streets were roaring with joyful merry-making and applause.)

Douglas gives us:

Wythin the wallis syne of Romis citie,
Cesar, ressaut wyth triumphis thre,
Thou mycht behald thar, offerand on his gys
Till Itale goddis immortell sacrifys:
Our all the citie, in maist singular joy,
The blythfull feist thai making, man and boy,
So that thre hundreth riall tempillis ding
Off riot, rippett, and of reveling
Ringis, and of the myrthfull sportis seir
The stretis sounding on solacyus maneyr. (III.202.29-203.6; 8.714-7)

And there are “cross-sensory” examples of elaboration. The notion of an unpleasant *taste* is added to the description of hell: for “senta situ” (ragged with neglect) Douglas has “welsche savorit, mist, and hair” (III.39.21; 6.462); and to the idea of leaping into the water -

... sese omnibus armis
in fluuium dedit. ...

(he plunged into the river with all his armour) -

is added “with a plasch” (III.269.30; 9.815-6).

In Section 3 I discuss two of the techniques that underlie this sensory accentuation. More relevant at present is that Douglas’ version is throughout more epistemologically self-conscious. He will sometimes mention (using first or second or third person forms), where Virgil is silent, that a character within the story is *witnessing* what is going on. Aeneas tells Dido that in the streets of Troy “ignis ... uento uoluitur” (the fire was rolled by the wind); according to Douglas what he says is:

Belife the fyre all waistand *I aspeit*
Bleis with the wynd; ... (II.112.18-19; 2.758-9)

Later the reconfiguring of perspective is extended to include Dido herself, and instead of saying that the Greeks “litora complent” (fill the coasts) Douglas says:

3e mycht haue sene the costis and the strandis
 Fillit with portage and peple thairon standis. (II.122.19; 3.71)

The erstwhile companion of Ulysses came forth from the bushes: “procedit”. Douglas translates:

We se a strange man, of form vnknaw;
 A lenar wycht, na mair pynit, I ne saw, ... (II.156.1-2; 3.591-2)¹⁰

In the Sibyl’s prophecy, for Virgil’s impersonal “defuerint” (will [not] be missing) and “partus” (will be provided), we get “Sall thow [not] mis” and “find”:

Nor Exanth nor Symois in that steid
 Sall thow *mis*, nor zit the Grekis army.
 Thow sall befor the *find* in Italy
 Ane vther Achill, born als of a goddes: ... (III.14.18-21; 6.88-9)

When Aeneas and Achates are preparing to enter the underworld, the fact is made explicit that what happens is witnessed by them. Where the Latin is simply:

... et iuga coepta moueri
 siluarum, uisaeque canes ululare per umbram
 (the wooded ridges began to move and dogs were seen howling through the shade),

Douglas renders it:

... and woddy toppis hie
 Of thir hillis begyn to mufe *thai se*;
 Among the schaddowis and the skuggis mark
 The hell houndis hard *thai* 3oull and bark, ... (III.25.21-4; 6.256-7)

Notice how “uisaeque” (seen) is sensorily straightened out by Douglas to “hard *thai*”: “ululare” (howling) strikes - strictly speaking - on the ear.

Virgil tells us on another occasion that Aeneas saw (“prospicit”) a wood, and Douglas quite properly renders this as “Ane large semely schaw beheld Enee”; but whereas Virgil continues with the neutral “prorumpit” (broke forth) to say that the Tiber made its way into the sea, Douglas insists on repeating the epistemological notion:

¹⁰ It is true that Virgil follows with a “respicimus” (we look), but that has a different application and it is translated separately a few lines later by Douglas as “We him beheld”. In the present passage, Douglas’ “I ne saw” is a further epistemological addition.

Amyddis quham the fluid *he gan espy*
 Of Tybir flowand soft and esely, ... (III.82.10-12; 7.30,32)

In a description of Mezentius in battle, for Virgil's "cunctatur" (is surrounded) we have Douglas':

He, onabasyt, abowt on euery side
Behaldis, gyrnand full of propyr tene, ... (III.336.2-3; 10.717)

When Jupiter asks Juno to become reconciled, he pleads with her not to continue grieving, "ne ... mihi curae... recursent" (lest [your] anxieties come back to me).

Douglas builds this up:

That I na mar sik wofull thochtis *se*
Schyne nor *appeir* in thy sweyt face, ... (IV.155.9-10; 12.801-2)

Turnus' father (IV.190.22; 13.204) does not realise the tragedy awaiting him: in Latin it is simply "superesse" (remaining), but for Douglas it is explicitly that he "suld remane *to se* sik duill and wo". There is an earlier "inscius" (unaware) but Douglas has already translated that separately.

Sometimes the witness-perspective within the story is given a wider spread, to encompass not just the characters immediately involved but the reader as well, or instead. This is the case, for example, when Aeneas is revealed in all his glory before Dido: "His crisp hairis war plesand *on to se*" (Virgil says merely that Venus had given him beautiful hair), pleasant first to the immediate witnesses but in theory to anyone who might have been at the scene, including us (II.55.5; 1.589-90). Virgil's "inter tuta domorum" (amid the safety of the houses) becomes "howsis quhar sovir *semyt* thame be" (IV.76.32; 11.882) - a perception of safety (in the event spurious) which we might conceivably share, though the primary reference is still the immediate witnesses. The marker-place for the boat-race in Virgil simply "attollitur" (is raised up). Douglas supplies a dispositional "is sene":

And, in the calm or lown weddir, *is sene*
 Abuf the fludis hie, a fair plane grene,
 A standand place ... (II.231.11-13; 5.127-8)

where the idea is not just that contestants and spectators see it, but so might anyone at all. When the god of sleep appears on the ship, Virgil's "consedit" (alighted) is rendered as "did ... appeir"; more than one perspective can be read into this, from Palinurus the helmsman to potentially anyone (II.275.11; 5.841). Again, Virgil's "stat ... turris ad auras" (the tower rose in the air) is rendered - the scene is hell - as:

... wondir hie,
 Quhilk *semyt* for to reik up to the sky: ... (III.46.3-4; 6.554)

Then there is the description of the two mighty brothers, Pandarus and Bitias. Virgil says they are "abietibus iuuenes patriis et montibus aequos" (young men equal to their native pines and hills). Douglas makes this:

Sa big 3ong men thai war, sa gret and wycht,
 That equale *semyt* thame to be of hycht
 With fyr treis of thar landis and hyllis; ... (III.260.7-9; 9.674)

But seeming equal to whom? To the people there, to any conceivable bystander, to us?

Sometimes the generalised application is clearer. As word gets around about the conduct of Aeneas and Dido, Fame enters the situation. Virgil gives us some general thoughts about her: "parua metu primo" (small when first feared). Douglas' "Litill, for feir, the first tyme *semys sche*" (II.186.13; 4.176) is barely intelligible but he wants to include an emphasis on people's perception - implicitly everyone's, since the truth about fame is universal. Similarly, a universal source of pleasure lies behind the whirling top which amuses children; in Virgil "exercent" (they are doing it), in Douglas "we see" (III.108.6; 7.379-80).

Sometimes the reader will be directly drawn in, as in the description of pictures in Latinus' temple. Virgil says simply what was there, but Douglas adds the perspective:

And forthir eik per ordour *mycht 3e knaw*,
 Wythin the cheif deambulatour on raw
 Of forfaderis gret ymagis did stand,
 Of auld syddir carvit wyth crafty hand; ... (III.92.23-6; 7.177-8)

In a description of troops approaching Virgil says they did not *make* a sound: "sonant", Douglas brings in the reader dispositionally with:

Amangis all thir peple na brycht arming
Mycht thou heyr sound, nor scheyld our schulder hing, ...
 (III.130.25-6; 7.685-6)

When epistemological markers are embedded in longer passages we can easily forget their (often complicated) significance, even when they are formally addressed to the reader. There are a number in the account of Vulcan's shield in Book VIII, chapters 10-12 (III.193-204) - "most thou behald", "mycht thou se", "thou mycht knaw" - where the primary general reference does not of course stand alone, but is narratively sharpened by the presence and interaction of persons there on the scene. Douglas' rendering of the welcome given to Caesar (quoted above, p. 94) has, inserted in the third line, "Thou mycht behald thar" (III.202.31).

Finally, in tracing the different layers of witness-perspective which Douglas adds, we come virtually full circle when Turnus, urging Latinus to let the battle continue, says of Aeneas that on this occasion (unlike the war in Troy) "longe illi dea mater erit" (his goddess mother will be far away). Douglas turns this into:

To sonder provd Troiane, clepit sa stowt,
 Hys moder at this tyme sal be *far to seik*, ...
 (IV.95.10-11; 12.52)

The impersonal passive construction can cover virtually all potential witnesses, from Aeneas (and Turnus), through the Italians and Trojans, to the gods of heaven even; and not least to us readers taking part in the recreation of the story. *Esse* has virtually become *percipi*.¹¹

So throughout a double process is at work. On the one hand Aeneas' world is held before us as clearly as the translator can manage. On the other hand, this new focus itself entails a sharpened sense of distance between reader and story-world, as it does among the elements of the story-world itself. Unpicking its spatiality has created room: including room for manoeuvre on the reader's part. In the following two Sections I move from the relatively formal-structural questions of Sections 1 and 2, to

¹¹ The phrase "clepit sa stowt" is also an addition, with further epistemological creases of its own.

examine how Douglas refocuses in detail the *particles* (events, objects, scenes) that constitute this particulate world he sets before us .

3. *Concretising scenes: amplification and rearrangement*

At the hermeneutical “coal face” Douglas’ descriptions depict scenes (applying amplification and rearrangement), and they also engage readers (nurturing their appropriativity). They concretise, and they vivify. Overlap is inevitable in expounding what in Douglas are virtually two aspects of the same process (he does each in the other), but the present Section will deal with the concretising of content, and Section 4 with the building up of readers’ appropriativity.

First, *amplification*. Douglas frequently amplifies Virgil’s account of a scene in the interest of turning something relatively abstract into something relatively concrete, either offering a narrower specification of Virgil’s general terms or supplying particular items to instantiate them. So Virgil’s “ferro” (steel) becomes “drawin sweirdis” (II.51.20; 1.527); “fusi” (stretched out) becomes “to bed” (II.83.6; 2.252); his “urbis iter” (town’s way) becomes “master streit” (II.89.29; 2.360); “auro” (gold) becomes “fyn gold threyd” (III.161.26; 8.167); “tenebrae ramorum” (darkness of branches) becomes “myrknes, thik buskis, branche, and breyr” (III.238.27; 9.384); “praedas” (booty) becomes “catale in spreth” (III.284.19; 10.78); “pacem” (peace) becomes “syng or takyn of pece” (III.284.26; 10.80). An example of what seems at first to be the reverse procedure - from particular to general - demonstrates in fact the same concern for empirical definiteness: Virgil’s “dente tenaci ancora” (anchor with firm tooth) is turned into “bewchit ankerris, ferm of grip” (III.8.6; 6.3-4).

Often several ingredients replace one in Virgil. So “stridorque rudentum” (grating of cables) becomes “The takles graislis, cabillis can freit and frais” (II.27.8; 1.87); “pocula” (cups) becomes “coupes, goblettis and eweris” (II.62.14; 1.706);

“mensaeque” (tables) becomes “voduris and fat trunscheouris” (II.63.14; 1.723); “sternimus” (we lay low) becomes “Hewit, hackit, smate doun, and all to fruschit” (II.91.14; 2.385); “siluae” (woods) becomes “aik, elme, and fir” (II.93.8; 2.418); “uberrima” (very plenteous) becomes “maist plenteous of wyne, oile, and quheite” (II.125.1; 3.106); “remigium” (rowing) becomes “rowaris and marenaris” (II.148.7; 3.471); “nauis” (ships) becomes “schip, ballingar, and bark” (II.200.2; 4.398); “mugire” (bellow) becomes “rummys, croyn, and ring” (III.25.20; 6.256); “saeuasque” (harsh, cruel) becomes “felloun, scherp, and gair” (III.66.4; 6.819); “spumis” (froth) becomes “reky froth ... skum ... bellis [bubbles]” (III.114.6-7; 7.465); “arma” (arms) becomes “wappynnis, harnes, armour, and sic geyr” (III.178.2; 8.383); “uenatu” (hunting) becomes “Hunting wyth hundis, hornis, schout, and cry” (III.254.32; 9.605).

If Virgil’s starting-point already has two ideas, Douglas may then inflate them to three or more. So “muro fossisque” (wall and ditches) becomes “wallis, fousy, and trynschis” (III.297.19; 10.236); “galea clipeoque” (helmet and shield) becomes “hys scheild, his hewmet, or hed geyr” (III.304.28; 10.330); “arma exuuiasque” (arms and armour) becomes “harnes, cote armour, and spulze” (III.311.29; 10.423); “germana ... coniunx” (sister ... spouse) becomes “systir ... feyr ... spous” (III.327.3-4; 10.607); and “clipeumque iubasque” (shield and helmet crest) becomes “scheild, and helm, and tymbret” (III.329.28; 10.638).

Sometimes the amplification has less to do with particularising, or with specifying what something is, and more with clarifying its internal qualities and placings. Hence Virgil’s “uinctus ... post tergum” (bound behind his back) is turned into “Behind his bak hard bund his handis tway” (II.38.17; 1.295-6); “uiridi ... euinctus oliua” (bound with green olive) is turned into “The greyn olive about his foirheid schane” (II.253.16; 5.494); “mediam ... gemina inter tempora frontem” (between his temples in the midst of his forehead) is turned into “Amyd his forheid, hard betwix his ene” (III.265.6; 9.750); and “inter ... caua tempora” (between the temple-cavities) is turned into “In the forhed, betwix the horsys eyn” (III.349.14; 10.890-1). (This is a

different effect from the one I examined in Section 1, which concerned spatial positions *of* places or things.)

Sometimes Douglas elaborates from his own imagination. (Again, the distinction between genuine internal amplification and supervenient amplification of this kind is often difficult to determine.) Venus is made to explain what Carthaginian maidens out hunting wear: “*purpureo alte suras ... cothurno*” (purple hunting-boot high on their calves); “*rede botynis on thair schankis hie*” is Douglas’ elaboration of it (II.40.31; 1.337). Dido sends twenty oxen to the ships of the Trojans: they were “large, greit and fyne”, adds Douglas (II.57.23; 1.633-4). The detail of “*marbill stane*” is Douglas’ addition to the description of the temple of Venus (II.269.16; 5.759). His translation of “*ensem ... eburnum*” (ivory sword) as “*suerd with evor scawbart fyne*” improves on Virgil in the sense that presumably only part of the sword would be ivory, not all of it (IV.10.7; 11.11). Extra details can often be justified in this common-sense way, or by saying in effect “this is the sort of thing you could expect, from what we know about such matters”.

Some pick up clues and cues from the surrounding matter, or from a mood running through a scene. This last is evidently what is happening in the free expansion applied to the feast at Carthage to celebrate Aeneas’ arrival. The Latin is:

*cum uenit, aulaeis iam se regina superbis
aurea composuit sponda mediamque locauit,*

which Knight translates as:

When he arrived, the queen had just composed herself, proudly curtained on her golden seat in the centre.

Douglas describes the scene thus:

And as thai come, the quene was set at deis,
Vndir hir gloriis stentit capitale;
Amang prowde tapeitis and mich riche apparale
Hir place sche tuik, as was the gise that tyde,
Ourspred with gold amynd a beddis syde. (II.61.18-22; 1.697-8)

Another case of letting a prevailing mood enrich the details of a picture is when Douglas deals with Virgil's account of Aeneas and the Sibyl, their journey to Anchises in the underworld almost completed. In Virgil the passage is:

deuenere locos laetos et amoena uirecta
fortunatorum nemorum sedesque beatas.

Here is Douglas:

Ontil a *plesand grund* cumin ar thai,
With battill gers, fresche erbis, and *grene*¹² *suardis*,
The lusty orchartis and the hailsum *zardis*
Of happy saulis and *weill fortunat*,
To *blissit* wightis the *placis* preparat. (III.52.14-18; 6.638-9)

There are four ingredients in Virgil's extremely condensed report: (i) "locos laetos" (happy places), (ii) "amoena uirecta" (pleasant green fields), (iii) "sedes beatas" (blissful seats) and (iv) "fortunatorum nemorum" (of the blessed groves - which could go with either of the two previous phrases). Douglas has included all the details of Virgil, but as well as shifting them around a little (I deal later with his practice of rearrangement) he has put in more pictorial background (the luxuriant grass and fresh herbs and lusty orchards), and introduced an explanatory procedure (following perhaps a suggestion of Ascensius),¹³ so that we see the relationship between the blessed situation and the people who inhabit it: *it is blissful because they are, and vice versa*.

And what about the very greatly expanded scene towards the end of the work, when we suspect Douglas may be growing "demob-happy"? Six lines of Latin are turned into a gallimaufry of twenty in the Scots, beginning with "Tharwith the bruyt and nois rays ..." (IV.215.1-20; 13.529-35). Plainly he is there getting into the spirit of things. Sometimes, though, the supervenience can be more gratuitous (though not necessarily revisionary): e.g. the addition (twice) that the sea off Sicily during the games was "chill" or "cauld" (II.236.14, 237.20; 5.212,233), and the phrase "zallow

¹² The Cambridge MS (in Coldwell) has "beyn" (pleasant) here.

¹³ "... nemorum fortunatorum, id est in quibus sunt fortunati, seu beati: [et] sedes beatas, id est in [quibus] resident beati ...".

lokkis brycht” where the Latin says only that Lausus’ hair was “comptos” (trimmed, III.344.15; 10.832).

Another common sort of amplification in Douglas is to fill out demonstrative terms such as “tantus” (so much) and “talis” (such), spelling out explicitly what the basis of the proportion or manner alluded to is. Thus “talem” becomes explicitly “sa faynt a man” (II.189.18; 4.227) and “tanto ... agmine” (such a great company) is turned into “sic number ... sua gret fard” (III.57.21-2; 6.712) - this is a double epexegetis, since in addition to explicating it in terms of quantity it gives it a two-fold application, to number and to force. Again, when the narrator asks a rhetorical question “tantos ratibus quis depulit ignis?” (who turned such great flames from the ships?) Douglas makes this:

... quha sa *vehement* fyre
Drave from thar schippis, *thus wys byrnand schyre?* (III.215.13-14; 9.78)

And when wise Alethes comments on the good prospects facing the Trojan people, if men like Nisus and Euryalus are still around, he refers to “talis animos” (such spirits): in Douglas “sa stout myndis” (III.228.18; 9.249).

In all these cases Douglas’ recharacterisation can be seen as a re-presenting of the scene before us. But in other cases there is a rather different slant, and what seems to be offered is some suggestion or suggestions for the reader of how the situation might be alternatively expressed (in words). So “siluae” (woods) becomes “wildirness wnplane, Or vilsum forest” (III.17.22-3; 6.131); “nodisque grauatum robur” (heavily knobbed club) becomes “wechty burdoun, or his knorry mays” (III.165.27; 8.220-1); “arcis” (citadel) becomes “brouch or palice” (III.172.18; 8.313); “valle reducta”¹⁴ (secluded valley) becomes “ane holl cleuch, or a dern valle” (III.194.23; 8.609); “hastile” (spear) becomes “gevilling, or a casting dart” (III.240.2; 9.402); “iaculum” (dart) becomes “dart or flane” (III.325.8; 10.585); and “glauco ... amictu” (grey veil) becomes “haw clayth or blew” (IV.161.8; 12.885). It is not that the object is

¹⁴ The consonantal “v” is a slip in Mynors’ edition; elsewhere he has “u”.

empirically ambiguous: it is more that we might be uncertain what to call it, and welcome a choice.¹⁵

Even pleonasms have their use. Sometimes Douglas' expansion appears quite vacuous: "of ladyis and wemen" for "femineis" (women's, II.97.9; 2.488); "Cessis and is stoppit" for "interrupta" (broken off, II.180.19; 4.88); "still, but othir noyis or sown" for "tacet" (is silent, II.208.14; 4.525); "women and the matronys" for "matres" (mothers, III.190.16; 8.556); "gemel brether twa" for "gemini" (twins, III.309.17; 10.390); "baith tuo" (a pleonasm entirely of Douglas' making: the Latin just has the verb "occumbes", sink down, addressed to Mezentius' horse: III.347.14; 10.865); and that supreme example of overkill, "lyfles corps ... deid" for "corpus" (body, IV.11.18; 11.30). Their objective contribution to the layout of the scene may be nil, but for an active reader/experient they can (like stock epithets and fillers, as I argue in Section 4) play a minor but useful role.

Next, *rearrangement*: concretising Virgil by retaining his ingredients but putting them in a different order. Often the difference is quite trivial, a change between subject and object, between active and passive, with sense and impact left barely changed. When Achaemenides tells of how he kept himself alive, in the Latin it is the bushes and herbs that are the grammatical subjects:

uictum infelicem, bacas lapidosaque corna,
dant rami, et uulsis pascunt radicibus herbae.

(Williams: The trees afford me a wretched existence on berries and stony cornels, and the vegetation keeps me alive on the roots I pull up.)

In Douglas we get:

My wrechit fuid wes berreis of the brymmil,
And stanit heppis, quhilk I on buskis fand,
And rutis of herbis I holkit furth of land. (II.159.10-12; 3.649-50)

¹⁵ It is not possible to examine here the important facts that Douglas' "older Scots tongue" was in flux; that this meant linguistic flexibility (and freedom) on his part; and that many different ways and degrees of access to Douglas' usage have emerged in the five hundred years since. But these constitute three further layers of "looseness" inherent in any narrative synthesis that might come about, then or now.

We are told of Atlas that “glacie riget horrida barba” (his shaggy beard is stiff with ice); in Douglas:

... stif ische schoklis cauld
Doun from his sterne and grisly berd hingis. (II.190.28-9; 4.251)

In Sicily Virgil says of the serpent that gives a friendly sign at Anchises’ grave:

caeruleae cui terga notae maculosus et auro
squamam incendebat fulgor,

which Williams translates, following closely Virgil’s syntax, as “blue flecks mottled its back, and a sheen of golden markings lit up its scales”, pointing out that we need to supply a verb like “distinguebant” to the nominative “notae”. Douglas makes the back (“terga”) the subject and puts the participle in the second line:

Of freklit spraiklis all hir bak schone,
As golden mailzeis hir scalis glitterand brycht, ... (II.228.24-5; 5.87-8)

When lots are to be drawn for one of the sports, Virgil says “sortem accepit galea” (the helmet receives the lots) while Douglas says “Thair cavillis haif thai cassin” (II.253.10; 5.490-1).

It might be too much to say that absolutely *no* change is produced by rearrangements of this kind, but it is slight. Sometimes there is more, when a predicate is shifted from one item to another though the general mood and dynamic are retained. So Douglas has Aeneas and Achates exploring after their arrival in Africa:

... in atheris hand yfeir
The braid stele heid schuik on the hunting speir. (II.39.15-16; 1.313)

In Virgil it is Aeneas, not the spear, that is “crispans” (shaking). (Douglas complicates the picture by pluralising the subject.) At a meal with Helenus in his “new Troy” the Latin tells us that “impositis auro dapibus, paterasque tenebant” (the feast being set out on gold, they held the cups); Douglas moves the concept of gold from one item to another:

The meisis and the danteis thik did stand,
And goldin cowpis went fra hand to hand. (II.140.27-8; 3.355)

Dido in the underworld is “recens a uulnere” (fresh from her wound); in Douglas it is the wound that is fresh: “greyn wound gapand in hir breist all new” (III.38.31; 6.450). Where Virgil has “formae magnorum ... luporum” (figures of great wolves) Douglas has “greit figuris of wolfis” (III.81.19; 7.18). Virgil has “tecta ... pauperis Euandri” (lodging of poor Evander) while Douglas has “Evandrus pur lugeing” (III.176.4; 8.359-60). And when a warrior is left on the field - “ignoto camporum in puluere linquunt” (they leave him on the unknown dust of the plain) - Douglas shifts the idea of being “unknown” from dust to field:

... in ane vnkouth feld hes left him deid,
Bedoif in dust and puldyr, will of reid: ... (IV.75.21-2; 11.866)

The following examples illustrate the practice of dispersal on a larger scale.

The conflict of winds - “aduersi rupto ceu quondam turbine uenti confligunt” (like winds in conflict when a storm breaks) - is translated as “Contrarious blaw thair busteous bubbis with birr”. Here “aduersi” and “confligunt” are condensed into “contrarious”, and “rupto turbine” is dispersed among “contrarious”, “busteous”, “ferce” and “birr” (II.93.7; 2.416-7).

Handling Virgil’s description of Acheron - “tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso” (the dark marsh where Acheron wells up) - Douglas produces:

... laik dirk
Of Acheron, gorgit with fludis myrk; ... (III.15.31-2; 6.107)

Here “tenebrosa” appears as “dirk” and “myrk”, enclosing the pericope, and “palus” appears as “laik” and “fludis”.

Where Virgil has “uastoque immanis hiatu” (huge with wide yawning) for the cave where Aeneas is to sacrifice with the Sibyl, Douglas has “Ane hiddouis hole, deip gapand and grisly”. Here - insofar as it is possible to fix the correspondences clearly - his “hiddouis” and “grisly” go mainly with “immanis”, “hole” and “gapand” go mainly with “hiatu”, and “deip” goes mainly with “uastoque”, though that word transpires through “grisly” and “hiddouis” too (III.24.8; 6.237).

Sometimes the mere presence of the ingredients, regardless of syntax, is enough for Douglas. Notice the description of the pestilence in Crete, where Virgil has:

... subito cum tabida membris
corrupto caeli tractu miserandaque uenit
arboribusque satisque lues et letifer annus

(when suddenly there came with the infected expanse of air a corrupting, pitiable pestilence on our limbs, and on the trees and crops, and [there came] a death-bearing season).

Douglas turns this into:

Quhen sudanlie ane cruell pest and traik,
So that cornis and fruitis gois to wraik,
Throw the corruppit air and cours of hevin,
A deidlie 3eir, fer wers than I can nevin,
Fell on our membris with sic infectioun,
Was na remeid, cuire, nor correctioun. (II.127.3-8; 3.137-9)

That was never going to be a straightforward task of translation, and Douglas almost, but not quite, reaches syntactical coherence by turning Virgil's "et" in the last line into an apposition between "cruell pest" and "deidlie 3eir". What he does emphatically do is cram everything in, and indeed more (e.g. "fer wers than I can nevin", "na remeid, cuire, nor correctioun").

On the madness of Amata, Virgil says:

quam super aduentu Teucrum Turnique hymenaeis
femineae ardentem curaeque iraeque coquebant

(with the Trojans' arrival and Turnus' wedding, a woman's anxieties and anger kept her ablaze).

Douglas has:

Quhilk, all inflambit in ire and wyfly thochtis,
Of this new come of Troianis all on floucht is,
The byssy curis of Turnus mariage
Skalding hir breist and mynd all in a rage. (III.105.13-16; 7.344-5)

So there is a shift in subject from "feminae ... curaeque iraeque" (woman's anxieties and anger) to Amata herself. And we are taken through the various exhibits, so to speak, in a different order: first the inflammation ("inflambit" - the corresponding Latin is in the second line: "ardentem" and "coquebant", burned), then the anger ("ire") and womanliness ("wyfly") and cares ("thochtis"), then the arrival of the Trojans

(“new come”), then Turnus’ marriage; but the cares (as “byssy curis”) and the inflammation (as “Skalding”) and the anger (as “rage”) make supplementary appearances at the end; “breist and mynd” and “all on floucht” are compound ideas, independently visualised rather than lifted from Virgil, but clearly incorporating data and mood from the original.

This reordering of items within a scene is very common in Douglas, and quite consistent with his broadly “point-by-point” approach to the text. Ian Robb writes of the “phenomenally large number of misapplied adjectives”¹⁶ in *Eneados*, but I prefer the term “redistributed”. It is common practice, in a rather different way, in Virgil himself. Knight points to a

... very Vergilian extension of a natural Latin figure of speech, hypallage or transference. Vergil sees the whole ideal complex in a single blended view. Accordingly an adjective may be attached to an unexpected noun. It does not matter much, since the point is the presence of some quality in the whole complex.¹⁷

The practice can involve for Douglas expanding some particular idea, or condensing several ideas into one, or dispersing an idea into more than one place in the description. It points to a powerful intermediate visual phase in his approach (he experiences the scenes for himself) in addition to the enhanced visuality of the outcome which I discussed in Section 2. What makes it different from Virgil’s approach (his “single blended view”) is the stronger sense we get in reading Douglas of collaborativeness, tentativeness, open-endedness (he encourages his readers in turn to experience the scenes for themselves). Here, in the microcosm of particular scenes, is the same process we found at work at the macrocosm of topographical and epistemological positioning: Douglas stands back, takes a fresh look, picks out the details, sets them free from one another and from himself and the reader, and (with an eye to an engaged fellow-reader) suggests ways of faithfully repatterning them.

¹⁶ Ian S. Robb, “Latin into Scots: Aims and Methods in Translation with particular reference to Gavin Douglas’s translation of the Aeneid of Virgil”: Ph. D. Thesis ThPR2253.A6R7 (St Andrews, 1991), p. 96.

¹⁷ W. F. Jackson Knight, *Roman Vergil*, p. 257.

4. *Enlivening scenes: epithets, images and word-clusters*

Stanzel reminds us that narrated space

... is always a 'schematic structure' which is only partially determined. It contains many 'areas of indeterminacy' which are blanks for the reader. Their realization or 'concretization' is left to a large extent to the reader's imagination.¹⁸

In Section 3 I concentrated on the objective aspect of this process. I believe that we need to distinguish (objective) "concretising" from (inter-subjective) "vivifying", and to be aware of how Douglas encourages the latter. Merely concretising a scene does not make it "vivid", nor does merely vivifying a scene necessarily make it "concrete". Authorial vivifying is an art, and I believe Douglas is good at it (so good that we are apt to overlook what is going on): pitching things at the right level of empirical flexibility for readers to engage constructively in retelling the story. I shall look now at several ways in which he enables readers to exploit the room for manoeuvre which his hermeneutical stance makes possible, putting them to work and keeping them at it.

Among the additions which Douglas brings to many scenes are stock epithets. Things or people are "brycht" or "stout" or "schene" or "semlie" or "lustie" or "reid" or "gret" or "cald" or "bald" or "cleir" or "fair" or "schire" or "dym" or "fayr" or "hie". These words regularly correspond to nothing in the Latin. They sometimes reflect wider moods or facts implicit in a particular passage, but often they appear quite random. The artistic deficiencies in the device are obvious enough. Still, it reveals something about Douglas' dynamic. Though conventional, stock epithets do bring *some* connotation to the story at the particular point where they occur. It is fairer to say that they are general, multi-purpose, "off-the-peg", pre-owned, rather than empty. And their frequent presence in the narrative reminds us (more graphically than predicates which seem to emerge from actual scenes) that within the descriptive situation are writers or readers, actively predicative and furnished with locutionary impulses of their

¹⁸ F. K. Stanzel, *A Theory of Narrative*, trans. by Charlotte Goedsche (Cambridge: University Press, 1984), p. 116.

own. Stock epithets, by the very fact of their semantic looseness, underline the essential freedom in the story of the describer: either individually or as part of a tradition. The story is being touched tangentially by some other plane. Brewer has discussed (in reference to Chaucer) the relationship between different contexts impinging upon each other in traditional narrative:

Traditional story may be said to establish two kinds of context in narrative. One is horizontal, referring to the sequence of events. The other, which is multiple, may be described as vertical, cutting across the sequential horizontal line in many ways and referring variously to traditional topoi, to the audience, to the general point of the whole sequence.¹⁹

There is clearly something akin to this at work in Douglas' way of handling events. His "random" epithets, punctuating the narrative and defusing its intensity, act as "breathers", simultaneously loosening and reuniting the reader with the world of Aeneas. They do this even when their connotation is negligible or irrelevant to the context; indeed they do it especially in these circumstances. "Stock" is tantamount to "standing back a little".

The same applies to stock interjections, where such extra meaning as they contribute usually lies in the emotional or rhetorical positioning they suggest on the part of the describer. Phrases like "I wis", "I ges", "but les", "sans fail", "but dowt" - while almost redundant in respect of what the narrative is saying at a particular moment - jog us into recognising that another plane is interacting with the plot. This is a story that is being *told* (and therefore a story to be *attended to*).

In the remainder of this Section I shall examine Douglas' way with metaphors, and with synonym-clusters (usually doublets).

A curious fact about our translator, especially given the concreteness and vividness of his style, is his tendency to downplay or temper Virgil's metaphors. Metaphors are extremely common in Virgil - "hardly a sentence in the *Aeneid* without a metaphor", claims Pöschl²⁰ - but not in Douglas.

¹⁹ Brewer, p. 68.

²⁰ Viktor Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil*, p. 2.

On occasion he completely abandons one and supplies a literal expression of his own. Where Virgil has “defixit lumina” (fixed lights/eyes: a double metaphor) Douglas turns it into “beheld graithly” (II.34.26; 1.226); where Virgil has “foedare” (defile, disfigure) Douglas has “rent out” (II.70.25; 2.55); where Virgil has “uocat iam carbasus auras” (the canvas invites the winds) Douglas has “the wind blawis weill to saill away” (II.201.16; 4.417), with a similar repudiation later when “si quando aduersa uocarent” becomes “Gyf so betyd ony aduersite” (III.222.21; 9.172); Virgil’s “ferit aethera clamor nauticus” (the seamen’s shout hits the sky) becomes:

Vpsprang the clamour, and the rerd furth went,
Heych in the skyis, of mony maryner. (II.232.4-5; 5.140-1)

The metaphor of “classique immittit habenas” (gave over the reins to the fleet) is lost in “leit his flot go large” (III.8.1; 6.1), as it is later when Latinus “rerumque reliquit habenas” (let go of the reins on things); in Douglas this is:

Of all sic thingis gave our the cuir and charge,
Sen na bettyr mycht be, to go at large. (III.123.25-6; 7.600)

Virgil’s “pedemque aduertere ripae” (turning the foot to the bank) becomes “draw nerer the bra” (III.34.8; 6.386); “dextramque amplexus inhaesit” (stuck as he embraced his hand) becomes “A weill lang quhyle his rycht arm embrasand” (III.158.20; 8.124); “uiduasset” (widowed) becomes “desolat and denudit” (III.191.17; 8.571); “fundeat” (poured out) becomes “spak” (III.192.15; 8.584); “effundat” (poured out) becomes “Mak thame to ische” (III.214.23; 9.68); “causas nequiquam nectis inanis” (you tie vain causes together) becomes “for nocht thou says sik wordis vane”: the word “Ingyrand” in the next line appears to mean “pressing on the attention”, so it does not pick up the metaphor either (III.226.14; 9.219); Virgil, addressing the victim, says that Larides’ amputated hand “te decisa suum, Larida, dextera quaerit” (cut off, it seeks its owner), but in Douglas this is reduced to “lyis the besyde” (III.309.32; 10.395).

At times he keeps the figurative idea but makes it into a simile rather than a metaphor, as if wanting to dilute the imaginative directness of a metaphor with something of the detachment and mediateness of a literal expression. Virgil tells us that

the place where the Trojans land in Africa has a cave which is “Nympharum domus” (a nymphs’ house): for Douglas this is:

... as it ane hous hed bene
For nymphes, goddes of fluidis and woddis grene, ... (II.31.23-4; 1.168)

The Virgilian metaphor “sed grauitur gemitus imo de pectore ducens” (drawing forth a sigh from deep in his breast) is turned into:

... with ane hevy murmur, as it war draw
Furtht of the bodum of his breist wele law: ... (II.85.13-14; 2.288)

The “Aetnaeos ... ignis” on Turnus’ helmet become flames “Lik byrnand Ethna” (III.138.24; 7.786); the metaphorical “tonant” (thundered) applied to the caverns of the Cyclopes becomes “rumling, as quha did thunder heyr” (III.180.25; 8.419); the fair hair of the Gauls depicted on the shield (“aurea caesaries”) becomes “Thair haris schane as dois the brycht gold wyr” (III.198.15; 8.659); and, as Turnus grows increasingly angry, “ignescunt” (caught fire) becomes “vpkyndyllis hait as fyre” (III.214.16; 9.66).

(Turnus, to be sure, burns quite a lot metaphorically, being an old-style epic hero:

Virgil’s later “implacabilis ardet” becomes in Douglas “byrnand hayt as fyre”,

IV.91.10; 12.3.) The compact metaphor of “cristaque hirsutus equina” (hairy with equine crest) is turned by Douglas into:

Abuf the quhilk his tymbret buklyt was,
Lyke till a lokryt mayn wyth mony fas. (III.347.25-6; 10.869)

Virgil’s “inundant” (flooded) becomes “as a spait of flud” (IV.114.13; 12.280), and his “trabali” (wooden) becomes:

... that was als rude and squair
As it had beyn a cabyr or a spar, ... (IV.115.18-19; 12.294)

while his metaphorical “arboreum” (arboreal!) is turned into “Quhilk semyt rude and squair as ony tre” (IV.161.14; 12.888).

Not objecting to similes, Douglas adds a number of his own. Thus “or son beyme” is added to Virgil’s comparison of the insubstantiality of the image of Aeneas’ wife to wind or a dream (II.114.27; 2.794); where the Latin has Iris simply “celerans” (hastening) Douglas adds “as a vyre [bolt]” (II.260.12; 5.609); where Virgil says of the

boatman Charon that “cruda deo uiridisque senectus” (a god’s old age is fresh and green), Douglas adds “Als fery and als swippir as a page” (III.28.24; 6.304); and this is Douglas’ figurative rendering of “sed rami ... alebat” (but branches [and hunting - hence the singular verb in Latin] sustained them):

Bot, as thir beistis, or the doillit as,
Thair fuid of treis did in woddis fet; ... (III.173.8-9; 8.318)

He expands “lautis ... Carinis” (splendid Carina) into:

Quhilk sum tym hecht Caryne, fair and large,
Quhair the housis war lik a turnit barge. (III.176.9-10; 8.361)

(This is a particularly complex refiguring, bringing in first a mention of houses and then attaching the simile to them.) Virgil says some soldiers are “uinoque ... fusa” (laid out by wine), but Douglas says they were “als drunk as swyne” (III.233.18; 9.316-7); “truncumque” (cut off) becomes “Lyke a ded stok” (III.234.23; 9.332); “candentem” (white) “quhyte as snaw” (III.256.19; 9.628); “coniciunt” (throw) acquires the addition “forcy as fyry levin” (III.304.26; 10.330); “fugiens” (fleeing) the addition “fers as flynt” (III.310.16; 10.403); descriptions of Haemonides’ pendants and headgear the additions, respectively, “lyke to a mytyr” and “as the schene son” (III.321.20,21; 10.538-9); “ruit” (rushes) is expanded to “as he war chaist” (IV.44.6; 11.448); “uolat” (flies, referring to Tarchon, already described in a transmuted metaphor as “ardent as the fyry levin” [“igneus”, fiery]) becomes “swyft as a fowle vp towart hevin” (IV.66.25-6; 11.746); and “caligine ... atra” (dark mist) becomes:

... in a stew
Als dyrk as myst ... (IV.76.19-20; 11.876)

In the simile applied to Turnus’ sword, Douglas reproduces Virgil’s comparison (“ceu”) but expands it. In Virgil this is:

mortalis mucro glacies ceu futilis ictu
dissiluit, fulua resplendent fragmina harena.

(Knight: ... the mortal blade as it struck flew in splinters like brittle ice, and now its fragments gleamed back at him from the yellow sand.)

In Douglas the sword

In flendris flaw, and at the fyrst clap,
 As brukkyll ice, in litill pecis lap,
 Quhil the small partis of the blaid brokin in twa
 As glas gletand apon the dun sand lay. (IV.150.13-16; 12.740-1)

The first three lines here, plus reference to sand at the end, cover what Virgil says but Douglas has added an extra simile from glass (perhaps triggered by the sound of the Latin,²¹ in this case the word for ice, “glacies”).

A further device is retaining Virgil’s metaphor but accompanying it with a literal version of what it means. Thus the metaphor is kept from “ea frena furenti concutit” (shook the reins over her as she raged: describing how Apollo subdues the priestess), but it is given literal form as well:

For on sic wise Appollo hir refrenis,
 Bridellis hir spreit, and, as hym list, constrenis, ... (III.15.19-20; 6.100-1)

The metaphor in “non ipse suo premit ore” (he did not press in his mouth) is kept (more or less) but supplemented by a literal description: “Ne hydys nocht, nor closis in his mouth” (III.87.21; 7.103); the metaphor of “tempestas” is reproduced and expanded into “tempest of batale and debayt” (III.96.1; 7.223). We get for “uipeream ... animam” (viper’s spirit) “felloun greif or curage serpentyne”, taking up the image and explaining it (III.106.4; 7.351); similarly with the metaphor of “ignem” (fire): “rage or byrnand fury” (III.106.15; 7.355). For “noctemque diemque fatigant” (they weary night and day: said of the Trojans rowing up-river to Evander’s place) we get “nycht and day ... spend in routh wyth irksum lauboring” (III.156.4-5; 8.94). For “dextrae coniungere dextram” (to join hand to hand: Evander reminiscing about a meeting with Aeneas’ father) we get:

To be acquentit, and joyn hand in hand,
 Cunnand to knyt, and bynd fordward ane band: ... (III.161.17-18; 8.164)

²¹ There are other examples of this echo-effect, e.g. “mene” [i.e. mean], echoing “mene” (me, II.275.24; 5.848); “of full sobyr extent”, echoing “subere” (cork tree, III.135.17; 7.742); and “pail and wan”, echoing “palantisque” (scattered, III.267.8; 9.780).

In the hymn to Hercules, the metaphor of “dexter adi pede ... secundo” (be present propitiously/aright with benign foot), which supposes knowledge of an ancient custom, is rendered as:

We pray the vissie, that thou may cum heyr
Wyth prosper presens and full happy fute,
In our helping for to be our bute. (III.171.21-3; 8.302)

For “dato uertit uestigia tergo” (turned its footsteps with back revealed) we get “gaif the bak and fled” (III.330.16; 10.646); for plain (but ambiguous) “dextras” we get “rycht handis and promis” (IV.22.1; 11.165); for “cordi est” (to your heart) we get “in hart ... to the sa deir” (IV.38.3; 11.369); and for “omnis effundit habenas” ([figuratively] cast off all restraint) Douglas gives us:

All kynd of wreth ...
Leyt slip at large, but brydill, with renzeis fre. (IV.131.11-12; 12.499)

There are cases of his staying within a metaphor of Virgil’s and indeed extending it. So Virgil’s “aeterno ... deuinctus amore” (“bound in eternal love”) becomes in Douglas “Lokit in the eternall chene of luf” (III.178.26; 8.394). He occasionally substitutes a metaphor of his own, as when Virgil’s “inrigat” (watered) becomes “sweit vapour ... keist” (in reference to Venus taking care of Ascanius, II.61.7-8; 1.692); or when “nodum” (knot) becomes “as a ball” (in reference to Hercules wrestling with the monster Cacus, III.168.14; 8.260); or when “cucurrit” and “percurrit” (runs) become “Persand” (describing warmth moving through Vulcan’s bones, and by comparison the lightning through the clouds, III.178.18,22; 8.390,392); or when “per ora” (from mouth to mouth) becomes “Fra hand to hand” (IV.32.7; 11.296). Very occasionally he will turn Virgil’s expression from literal to metaphorical: “diuinum ... amorem” becomes “fyr Of devyne luf” (again in the tête-à-tête between Venus and her husband, III.177.9-10; 8.373); but this is very unusual.

Why this reluctance to embrace ready-made metaphors, or to create his own?²²

It clearly cannot be because he objects to images: he writes vividly, pictorially. The

²² In striking contrast to Prologue I, for instance.

answer lies, I believe, in his narrative intent, which is not merely to offer a redescription of a scene, but to engage the reader with him in revisualising it. From this point of view, the difference between a metaphor and a simile is that the former binds in a way that the latter does not. It has “physical immediacy”.²³ It takes away some degree of freedom, stepping into the limelight and fixing the reader’s visual attention, while a simile stands helpfully alongside us, available as an interesting option: something with which we can negotiate. With a metaphor we more or less *have* to see through it, on its terms. With a simile we can choose whether and how to bring it into play. Through its “like” and “as” it offers suggestions.²⁴ That at least is the force with which it seemingly functions in *Eneados*. Douglas’ treatment of metaphor and simile is in line with his general tendency to deconstruct and leave options, to offer enough vividness to ensure that the reader is willing to engage in visualising, but not to be so prescriptive that the reader has simply to take what is given.

We find this also in Douglas’ love of multiplying near-synonyms. Every reader quickly notices the translator’s fondness for doublets or triplets or even quadruplets. Even without knowing the Latin we might suspect there to be only one Latin word behind them. Sometimes indeed there is none: he generates them by instinct. They are so ingrained in Douglas’ style that we come to miss them if more than half a dozen lines pass without yielding an example. Douglas’ words in Prologue I - “sum tyme of ane word I mon mak thre” (II.14.17) - were clearly an understatement.

Before examining what lies behind the practice, it is important to notice how variegated it is. In form, the linked words may have “and” or “or” as a connective, or no explicit connective at all. They can occur in twos or threes or even fours. They can involve couplings of words, or of longer phrases. The words can be immediately adjacent to one another, or set at some little distance. They can be coordinated,

²³ Winifred Nowotny, *The Language Poets Use*, p. 59.

²⁴ Northrop Frye’s remark that turning a metaphor into a simile can be thought of as “the working of a low mimetic discursive prose conscience” (“low mimetic” being the category that covers realistic narrative) is support for this, particularly since he makes it in quite a different connection. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: University Press, 1957), p. 124.

subordinated, or interwoven in other more complex ways. The words themselves can be relatively generic or specific in relation to one another. The second (or more) can complement the first, or displace it (i.e. “on second thoughts this is better”). They can be examples of the same, or different, parts of speech. They may be onomatopoeic or alliterative, but usually they are not. They can include a manifestly Latin word together with non-Latin Scots formations, or not. They can be orientated chiefly by the Latin behind them, or by one another: their semi-synonymity may be illusory, a “line-of-sight” effect, when in fact they are no more semantically linked than two similar-looking children have to be always really “twins”. They can be objectively orientated (i.e. aiming to do something to the way the scene is described) or subjectively orientated (i.e. aiming to do something for the reader), or both. They can reflect different textual readings, with Douglas hedging his bets.²⁵ They can reflect different possible meanings in something unclear in the Latin. They can represent different ways of expressing one meaning which is nevertheless clear enough in itself. They can be there to clarify the Latin, or refine it, or expand it, or explain some allusion. They can be virtually empty, to the point even of bathos. They can bear clues as to which way they should be taken, but they need not. Many roles and functions can be wrapped up by Douglas (or unwrapped by us) in one doublet. I believe this diversity would defeat any attempt to list the phenomena in categories, or even to exhaust the significance implicit in any particular example.

Book X, chapter 1 (III.278-82; 10.1-62) is a particularly rich hoard, but even it covers nothing like all the types and applications that are possible. As the phrases follow one another thick and fast with scarcely more than a line or two here and there without an example - apart from the passage 281.1-17 (corresponding approximately to 10.36-45) - I have not given particular references to the Latin. Here is what we find:

²⁵ e.g. [a doublet of longer phrases] “lynnynng valis or lyke apronis lycht” perhaps covers “limo” (cloak, according to Servius) and “lino” (linen) (IV.101.13; 12.120); and “chekis walxin leyn ... Quharon the soft berd newly dyd furth spring” perhaps covers two possible readings: “pubentes” (at puberty) and “tabentes” (wasting away) (IV.109.15-16; 12.221).

“warp and mayd patent” for “Panditur” (278.1): nothing additional conveyed; the second word sounds like the Latin;

“consale or a sessioun” for “conciliumque” (278.4): the first word sounds like the Latin, while the “or” indicates a user-perspective rather than an object-perspective - “what word should we be using?”;

“sterrit hevyn and mylky set” for “sideream” (278.6): explains a metaphor;

“behalde and se” for “aspectat” (278.8): rhetorical, nothing additional conveyed;

“begouth, and ... sayd” for “incipit” (278.12): brings out a latent sense in the Latin;

“of gret power and mycht” for “magni” (278.13): nothing additional conveyed;

“decreit fatal and sentence hie” for “sententia” (278.15): echoes and expands the Latin;

“dredid or reuerence” for “metus” (279.3): the Latin contains both, but other English words might be used as well (fear, awe) - the “or” suggests user-perspective;

“provoike nor prevene” for “arcessite” (279.7): alliteration;

“huge myscheif and gret quhalm” for “exitium magnum” (279.11): an interlacing;

“rug and reyff” for “rapuisse” (279.14): alliteration;

“leyf and desyst” for “sinite” (279.15): two senses implicit in the Latin;

“fresch goldyn” for “aurea” (279.19): adds to the emotional connotation; no explicit connective;

“maieste ... ne glor” for “aliud” (279.23): no specific Latin word at all here;

“bost and felloun feyr” and “derray and steyr” for “insultent” (279.25-6): two pairs of words for one Latin word;

“orpit and proudly” for “tumidusque” (279.29): adjective and adverb together;

“muralzeis and pail” for “portas” (280.1): an inner amplification of the sense;

“ost and sege” for “exercitus” (280.10): the “sege” suggests more specifically what the “ost” is up to;

“blude ... get ... douchter” for “progenies” (280.15): triplet;

“thoil ... sustene” for “demoror” (280.16): pleonastic;

“punyst and thar cryme aby” for “luant” (280.20): two stages of the process brought out;

“kynd help nor 3it supple” for “iuueris auxilio” (280.22): shades of a doublet already in the Latin;

“admonitiouns, charge, and redis” for “responsa” (280.25): has a legalistic sound; it says more in particular and with more specificity, but arguably conveys less than the multi-layered Latin word;

“caus or ressoun” (280.27): the Latin is simply “cur” (why);

“pervert or 3it bewry” for “uertere” (280.28): “3it” implies that a definite addition to the sense is on its way, but it turns out that it is not;

“brynt ... lost” for “exustas” (280.32): brings out two stages of the process;

“subuersioun ... pyne” for “excidia” (281.18): two stages;

“Salf [fra all wapynnys]... fre” for “[ab armis] incolumem” (281.20): the first word goes explicitly with a Latin noun, the second has no corresponding correlate in the Latin;

“drive, and warpit” for “iactetur” (281.25): pictorial amplification;

“[follow furth in] dangeyr ... dout” for “sequatur” (281.26): no Latin corresponding to the complements;

“cours and went” for “uiam” (281.27): no significant addition of meaning;

“fors and mastry” for “dicione” (282.5): arguably the former is less personal than the latter;

“resist nor ganestand” for “obstabit” (282.7): together they suggest *personal* resistance;

“Tyre or Affrik” for “Tyriis” (282.8): user-perspective - “choose which term you like”;

“proffeit ... or auantage” for “iuuit” (282.9): the alternative suggested is probably spurious, suggesting user-perspective but within the narrative - the speaker is Venus;

“bywent and ourdrive” for “exhausta” (282.13): enhanced personal;

“assys ... isillys” for “cineres” (282.18-19): drawn by sound to each other perhaps;

“Troy or Ilion” for “Iliacos” (282.28): user-perspective - “choose which term you like”.

This is not intended as an exhaustive analysis of the phenomenon: merely enough to indicate its formal and material diversity. There are (allowing for border-line cases) around forty in this chapter; thirty-eight are listed above. The chapter is 144 lines long, so we have a doublet (or triplet) roughly once every three-and-a-half lines.

Since they vanish almost completely from the passage (281.1-17) where Venus recalls what has happened and says she is reconciled to further disaster, the frequency can be at times much more pronounced. In some other parts of *Eneados*, needless to say, the practice is less frequent; but once in every six or eight lines is quite normal.

One variety only slightly represented in this chapter is that of the coupling of Latinised with non-Latinised words. This is not uncommon elsewhere. A rough count in Books X-XII produces about thirty examples. They include “onfrendly ... inimicall” for “inimicam” (III.302.16; 10.295), “invaids and ourset” for “inuasit” (III.303.17; 10.310), “dowr and stalwart” for “durum” (III.304.2; 10.317), “wapynnys nor armyng” for “arma” (III.304.6; 10.319), “reyll abak ... expell” for “expellere” (III.306.17; 10.354), “form and symilitude” for “simillima” (III.309.21; 10.391), “remeid, And succur” for “succurrere” (III.319.6-7; 10.512), “Agit cannos hayr” for “canitiemque” (III.322.17; 10.549), “trublit ... inimicall” for “inimico” (III.323.10; 10.556), “fervour ... felloun tene” for “feruore furentis” (with some overlap, III.324.26; 10.578), “instant perrellus” for “instantibus” (III.328.21; 10.624), “appreif and ratyfy” for “rata” (III.329.5; 10.629), “torment and pennans” for “poenas” (III.332.2; 10.669), “gret fors and laubour bellicall” for “belline laborum” (IV.19.3; 11.126), “trophe and rich spulze” for “tropaea” (IV.22.17; 11.172), “corpsis ... that war deid” for “corpora” (IV.23.22; 11.185), “inoportune, quhilk is onganand” for “importunum” (IV.33.4; 11.305), “accus nor argu” for “incuso” (IV.33.21; 11.312), “drowry ... rich gift dotall” for “dotalis” (IV.38.2; 11.369), “Large and to mekill” for “larga” (IV.38.24; 11.378), “return ne regres” for “regressum” (IV.41.19; 11.413), “garment or pall” for “pallae” (IV.53.31; 11.576), “vyssy and aspy” for “inuise” (IV.54.24; 11.588), “Diuidit ... and disseuerit” for “diuidit” (IV.94.25; 12.45), “It is conuenient, and we grant” for “conuenit” (IV.106.13; 12.184), “fell mortal ... inimycall” for “inimica” (IV.156.2; 12.812), and “happy wedlok and felicite” for “conubiis ... felicibus” (IV.156.24; 12.821).

The frequency is not insignificant, but not *so* significant that it suggests on Douglas’ part a deliberate policy. More likely it is just one of many particular modes in

which his general inclination happens on occasion to fall out. The same is true of alliteration. It occurs from time to time, but does not by itself explain why he couples words in the preponderating way he does.

Edmund Schmidt's summary of why Douglas behaves like this is as fair and as succinct an expression of the common view as we are likely to have. He says that, while Douglas often uses this device to give a more precise translation of his original, or enhance its vividness, it is for the most part a matter simply of gratifying a tendency to verbosity, encouraged by a common tendency of his time, as evidenced by documents, legal and other.

Oft ist es offenbar dem Dichter nicht gelungen, durch *ein* Wort seine Vorlage treffend zu übersetzen, oft will er auf diese Weise die Anschaulichkeit erhöhen, meistens handelt es sich aber hier um die bloße Befriedigung eines Hanges zur Weitschweifigkeit. Dieses Schwelgen in Worten ist nicht nur auf D.'s Beruf als Kanzelredner zurückzuführen ... man braucht nur Urkunden jener Zeit zu lesen, um überall auf gleiche Fülle des Ausdrucks zu stoßen.²⁶

That Douglas strung together words to make his meaning more precise seems to me unlikely. Piling up words (none of which is supposed adequate on its own to do the trick) is more liable to cloud a picture than to clarify it. And if one word *is* able to get to the point, why cumber it with partners? An exception to this caveat might be where (as in traditional definitions *per genus et differentiam*) we need both words to indicate a general area of meaning and a specific point within it. But that implies contrast of some sort rather than additivity - taking the words as complementary coordinates, or filtering out a shared element from the rest of the dual meanings, or saying something like: "it is this, rather than that". But Douglas' clusters do not, and arguably could not, work in that way. I am not sure that there is so much as one example throughout the whole of the *Eneados* where the linking of two or more words in this way is strictly necessary, if the object is to convey more precisely what is being expressed. The picture they produce is fuller rather than clearer.

²⁶ Edmund Schmidt, *Die Schottische Aeneisübersetzung von Gavin Douglas*, pp. 30-1.

Bawcutt points to the history of the practice, in rhetoric and in the commentaries:

Douglas's taste for piling up words in groups of two, three and even four ... is rooted both in the commentator's practice of multiple glossing and in the fondness of the medieval poet, and particularly the alliterative poet, for such balanced phrasing. It is possible that Douglas's legal experience had a further influence on this aspect of his style.²⁷

Coldwell suggests practical advantages for the poet:

It appeals to him, presumably, for two reasons: as a means of making weight in a line, and as a means of preserving the sense against the decay of a perpetually changing language.²⁸

What these explanations miss is the function of near-synonyms (like dismantled metaphors) in stimulating readerly collaboration. They do not concretise so much as vivify - keeping things relatively loose, and encouraging the reader to concretise by fresh visualising and by the deployment of his or her own choice of language. Unlike "mere" amplification and rearrangement, this vivifying essentially throws words not so much at the object (events or scenes in the story) as at the percipient subject. They are for the *describens*, rather than for the *descriptum*. Imagine pruning them, and having only one word each time. The effect upon the narrative (what sort of activity it is intended to be, not just what its overt content is) would be striking: much more monologically authorial, one-sided, much less engaging and collaborative.

There is a "take your pick" (not to say "pick your own") quality in Douglas' language, and it is intrinsic to his narrative reshaping.²⁹ It manifests itself directly in the way he manages figurative language and words of similar meaning, but it runs throughout his retelling at every level, from formal-structural topographical and epistemological orientations to the way he fills out particular pictures through adding

²⁷ Priscilla Bawcutt, *Gavin Douglas*, p. 159.

²⁸ David F. C. Coldwell (ed.), *Virgil's Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse*, vol. 1, p. 69.

²⁹ Interesting light is cast on Douglas' predilection for a particular way of telling a story by this comment from Erich Poppe: "The characteristic feature of this Irish narrative style [i.e. before 1400] is a generous use of alliterating phrases and of doublets or triplets of synonyms. It could be argued that this highly ornamented, rhetorically charged style is literary, not functional. It is indeed found in many texts which would be classified as 'literary' from a modern point of view. But it was considered appropriate for texts which would be classified as fundamentally historical and propagandistic in outlook ...". *A New Introduction to Imtheachta Aeniasa: The Irish Aeneid* (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1995), pp. 19-20.

and moving around empirical details. He reshapes spatiality by opening it up to the creation of new syntheses on the part of his readers. In the next Chapter I examine how he deals with the special case of individual persons; who of course are temporal, spatial beings - but, normally, something more.

CHAPTER IV

DOUGLAS AND INDIVIDUALS

1. *Individuality in Virgil*

Douglas' treatment of individuals (including divinities, animals and personified natural features as well as humans) is in line with his treatment of time and space: loosening networks, creating interstices, accentuating the nodal points, and encouraging readers' collaboration. Once again, my argument is cumulative. He does this so often, so consistently, so confidently and spontaneously, and in such a variety of contexts, that it is hard to resist the supposition that a radical *conatus* is at work.

Virgil is different. He runs together the thoughts and feelings of his characters with *his* feelings as narrator and with the feelings he aims to evoke in the *reader*; and integrates all of them with the structure and movement of the *plot*. Brooks Otis contrasts Virgil's "subjective" or "empathetic-sympathetic" style with the more "objective" style he finds in Homer or Apollonius:

The 'subjective' style of Virgil is necessarily associated with a continuous narrative because he wants to maintain a single feeling-tone, expound a single moral and point of view which will dominate the reader, and cause his empathy and sympathy to run on the single track that he (Virgil) has carefully laid out. He is not, like Apollonius, concerned with more or less objective or 'real' characters seemingly enacting their own drama. It does not really matter so much to the story when Apollonius shifts from Medea to the Argonauts and back again. But such shifts would be quite fatal to Virgil's style since it would destroy the feeling-tone and break the empathetic-sympathetic identification of reader and character, reader and author. Virgil's style is, so to speak, all of a piece and has to be so.¹

So Heinze remarks:

¹ Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 69-70.

Not a single person is depicted with a unique set of characteristics as a man who once walked on this earth, once and once only; nor is any of them drawn from real life.²

And Glover's terse comment is that in Virgil "outbreaks of individuality are rare".³

Douglas shifts the focus. We are more aware of personal boundaries, manifested especially in three ways: through reciprocal interaction (persons being "set among" one another), through their standing out as distinct particulars (being "singled out"), and through their possessing inner resources (being "filled in"). These three aspects naturally merge with one another but I shall look at each in turn.

2. "Set among"

Through active juxtaposition and contrast individuals take on more prominence in Douglas' version. Notice the busy plurality he brings to the account of the death of Priam (II.98-101; 2.506-58). Virgil has fused together the personal and transpersonal layers in such a way that things move quietly, relentlessly and tragically forward under a powerful sense of fate: the initial privacy of a family scene removed from the general slaughter; the crisis of impingement as Pyrrhus enters, breathing bloodshed and killing Priam's son before turning on the old king himself; the dread altar under an open sky, with terrible things happening all around. Everything is aligned in such a way that we never forget that this scene is part of a densely textured whole, made up of events past and future as well as copresent. Douglas changes the tone. It becomes less unequivocally sombre as he sharpens the outlines of the participants, foregrounds what is actually happening before one's eyes (rather than the latent forces that have already decreed that Troy shall fall), and generally agitates things more.

² Richard Heinze, *Virgil's Epic Technique*, p. 227.

³ T. R. Glover, *Virgil*, p. 140

Small details have a telling effect in sharpening outlines. The definite article turns Priam from “senior” to “The ald gray” (II.98.22; 2.509) and simply to “The auld” (II.100.31; 2.550); added incidental details, such as that *every* gate of his palace was broken (II.98.20; 2.508), prepare us to adjust our focal length for the persons involved too; and Douglas adds a number of personal details - that Hecuba drew Priam back to the altar “with sic sembland as mycht be, ... [and] but ony threte” (II.99.22-3; 2.525), that the wounded Polites had returned “to seek reskew” (II.99.29; 2.529), that Pyrrhus dragged Priam to the altar in anger (“tene”, II.100.30; 2.551): here are autonomous participants interacting. Even the dead Priam (“sine nomine corpus”, nameless body) is energetically particularised into:

A corps, but life, renowne, or wthir fame,
Vnknawin of ony wycht quhat was his name. (II.101.13-14; 2.558)

Douglas gives the characters, and the circumstances with which they are grappling, a graphic mimetic extension.

As to foregrounding the *superficies*, Douglas keeps fatefulness in the background more than Virgil does. Virgil repeats “nequiquam” (in vain) several times, so that even when it principally relates to a particular action - Priam arming himself (II.98.22; 2.510), Hecuba crowding with her daughters about the altar (II.99.7; 2.515), Priam’s sword dangling from Pyrrhus’ shield (II.100.24; 2.546) - we pick up echoes of the hopelessness of the entire situation. Douglas translates the word differently each time (“all for nocht”, “all in vane” and “But ony harme or wthir dammaging”) and thereby mutes the general idea. His translation of key words like “dira” (“fulich”, II.99.12; 2.519), “tristia” (“cruell”, II.100.28; 2.548), and even “fata” (admittedly “fait” but preceded by “How tyde the chance”, II.98.18; 2.506) and “tempus” (“tyme”, but in a clause which suggests something more like “on this occasion” than “at this point of crisis”, II.99.16; 2.522) has the same effect. The fateful context is introduced in the chapter heading (“the fatale end”), and we revert to it at the end (II.101.9-14; 2.554-8), but in between it moves off-stage. Virgil too conveys more of darkness than Douglas

does: symptomatically, Douglas omits “atra” (dark) from the simile of the doves in a storm (II.99.9; 2.516).

And there is more agitation: things are busier and more interactive. When Hecuba and her children move to the altar, Virgil says “sedebant” (they sit, settle); Douglas says they “about the altair swarmis” (II.99.7; 2.517). Where Virgil’s Hecuba asks her husband “quo ruis?” - with connotations of ultimate outcome - Douglas’ asks “Quhidder haistis thou?” - with connotations of present activity (II.99.14; 2.520). Where Hecuba in Virgil states that the altar will protect them all (“haec ara tuebitur omnis”), in Douglas this is an exhortation: “lat this altair salf ws all togiddir” (II.99.20; 2.523). In Virgil Priam’s son falls (“concidit”) and sheds his life with much blood (“multo uitam cum sanguine fudit”); in Douglas Pyrrhus “Smate him doun deid, in thair sycht quhar he stude” (II.100.3; 2.532).

If he can do this with sombre scenes, it is no surprise that scenes already in Virgil implicitly lively are often made more so. Take the account of the Carthaginian hunt party:

postquam altos uentum in montis atque inuia lustra,
ecce ferae saxi deiectae uertice caprae
decurrere iugis; alia de parte patentis
transmittunt cursu campos atque agmina cerui
puluerulenta fuga glomerant montisque relinquunt.

(Knight: When the hunters had reached a pathless tract high in the hills, they started a flock of wild goats which came galloping down the slopes from a rocky crest straight in front of them; and, farther round, a herd of stags massed their ranks in a cloud of dust and fled away from the hill-country and across the open moors.)

Here is Douglas, with elaborations italicised by me (as throughout this Chapter):

And eftir thai ar cumin to the chace,
Amang the montanis in the wild forrest,
The rying hundis of cuplis sone thai kest,
And our the clewis and the holtis, belyf,
The wild bestis doun to the daill *thai drive.*
Lo! ther the rais, *rynning swyft as fyre,*
Drevin from the hychtis brekkis out at the swyre;
Ane vther part, *syne zonder mycht thow see*
The hirdis of hartis with ther heidis hie,

Ourspynnerand with swyft cours the plane vaill,
 The hepe of dust wpstouring at thair taill,
Fleand the hundis, leiffand the hie montanis. (II.184.24-185.3; 4.151-5)

We get more about what the men are up to, about how the animals behave, and a reminder (“sonder mycht thow see”) that the scene is being retold for lively would-be spectators and readers.

During the ship race in Sicily, when Menoetius is thrown overboard to the amusement of all, Virgil has:

illum et labentem Teucris et risere natantem
 et salsos rident reuoluentem pectore fluctus.

(Knight: The Trojans had laughed at him as he fell and again as he swam, and they laughed at him yet again as he choked the salt waters from his chest.)

Douglas gives us:

The Troianis *lauchis fast* seand hym fall,
 And, hym behaldand swym, thai *kekkit all*;
 Bot maist thai *maiking gem and gret riot*,
 To see hym spout salt wattir of his throt. (II.234.17-20; 5.181-2)

For “risere” and “rident”, the same word, Douglas builds up the effect with “lauchis” and “kekkit” and “maiking gem and gret riot”: the witnesses are positively falling about themselves at his predicament. Even the little word “all” contributes to the scene’s livelier tonality.

Douglas’ way with conversation is particularly instructive.⁴ Heinze says that Virgil’s speeches are rarely *conversational* - he does not use them in that way:

The purpose of conversation is to bring the characters nearer to the reader by depicting relationships, and by developing, establishing and altering these relationships before the reader’s eyes. Conversation is the best means of showing traits, individual qualities, and the differences between people. However, Virgil is not primarily interested in these two advantages: ... Homer shows us countless relationships between his characters; Virgil’s characters almost all stand alone.⁵

⁴ The account of Priam’s death is itself strictly part of a conversation, between Aeneas and Dido, and Douglas had accentuated that by adding to Virgil’s “Forsitan et Priami fuerint quae fata requiras” (perhaps you want to know of Priam’s end) the words “gif 3e list, heir” (II.98.18; 2.506).

⁵ Heinze, p. 319.

But Douglas is forever underlining - through interjections by speaker or narrator, and shorter or longer rephrasings or additions - the fact that interlocution is taking place.

A word or two can make a significant difference. When Aeneas and Achates are scanning the scenes of the Trojan war, depicted on Dido's temple at Carthage, Aeneas urges his comrade to take heart:

solue metus; feret haec aliquam tibi fama salutem.

(Dispel all fear. The knowledge of you shown here will help to save you.)

This becomes in Douglas:

Away with dreid, and tak na langar feir;
Quhat! *wenis thou na* this fame sal do the guide? (II.47.26-7; 1.463)

The essential reciprocity, the responsiveness, of the situation is evoked. Shortly afterwards, Aeneas makes his dramatic appearance before Dido and announces himself:

*tum sic reginam adloquitur cunctisque repente
improvisus ait: 'coram, quem quaeritis, adsum,
Troius Aeneas, Lybicus ereptus ab undis. ...'*

(Knight: Then suddenly, to the surprise of all, he addressed the queen: 'Here am I, in your presence, the one for whom you all look. I am Aeneas the Trojan, rescued from the African sea. ...')

In Douglas "here I am" becomes "look!":

Or evir thai wist, befor thaim all in hy,
Onto the quene thus said he reuerently:
Hym quhame 3e seik *behald* now present heir,
Enee the Troiane deliuerit frome dangeir
Of storme and wallis of the Libiane see. (II.55.13-17; 1.594-6)

(The interactivity of "behald" is reinforced by the change from the narrator's "repente" and "improvisus" [suddenly, unexpectedly] to "Or evir thai wist"; see p. 137.)

Querying the oracle of Apollo at Delos, Aeneas says, in the Latin:

*'da propriam, Thymbraee, domum; da moenia fessis
et genus et mansuram urbem; serua altera Troiae
Pergama, reliquias Danaum atque immitis Achilli. ...'*

(Knight: Apollo, grant us a home of our own. We are weary. Give us a walled city which shall endure, and a lineage of our blood. Let there be some new citadel for us; henceforth preserve it as a remnant of Troy saved from the Greeks and from merciless Achilles.)

Note Douglas' conversational additions:

We the beseik that schaw also thou wald
 To ws irkit sum strenth and stalwart hald,
 And at thou grant ws eik successioun,
 And for to duell in ane remanand toun.
 Salue ws lattir wardis of Troy, that we ne spill,
 Leuingis of Greikis and of the ferce Achill.
Gif ws thine ansueir quharon we sall depend; ... (II.123.25-31; 3.85-7)

Celaeno the Harpy prefaces her warnings with the words "Italiam cursu
 petitis" (you are set for Italy); in Douglas this becomes:

I knaw 3e set 3our cours to Italie; ... (II.134.15; 3.253)

Helenus utters a prophecy about the white sow and her litter:

is locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum.

(Knight: ... that place shall be the site for your city, and there you shall find
 sure repose from your tribulations.)

Douglas inserts the words "I the tell". (II.143.16; 3.393)

Aeneas asks Palinurus how he comes to be dead when apparently Apollo had
 promised that he would survive the sea voyage:

dic age. namque mihi, fallax haud ante repertus,
 hoc uno responso animum delusit Apollo,
 qui fore te ponto incolumem finisque canebat
 uenturum Ausonios. ...

(Knight: Tell me. For this is the only time that an oracle of Apollo, whom I
 never before found to be a deceiver, has misled me. He prophesied that you
 would come unscathed from the sea and would reach Italy's bounds.)

Douglas' version has colloquialising additions, referring to the present (first and third
 lines) and to the past (last line):

How tyde that cais; declair me, *I pray the*.
 For certis, brycht Appollo neuir or now
 Was fals to me; bot *I wait neuir quhow*
 Of his answeir tuiching the he ravit,
 And hes my mynd tharin all hail dissaut,
 That schew thou suld hailskarth our the see,
 Onto the ground of Itail cum, *quod he*. (III.31.14-20; 6.343-6)

Pandarus challenges Turnus, enclosed in the Trojan encampment: “castra inimica uides, nulla hinc exire potestas” (you see a hostile camp: there is no possibility of escape). Douglas puts in an extra imperative:

Thou seys thy fays strenth and wallis wyde;
3eild the forthy, thou may eschaipe na syde. (III.264.15-16; 9.739)

Camilla asks to be given a leading part in the battle: “me sine prima manu temptare pericula belli” (let me set my hand [or my company?] to the opening perils of war). In Douglas this becomes (and he characteristically hedges his bets over “manu”):

I the requir, suffyr me to assay
 With my retenew and thir handis tuay
 The first danger in battell, or I stent: ... (IV.48.25-7; 11.505)

Turnus outlines how they can divide the task. Douglas inserts the following line:

Hark, I sall schaw 3ou myne avys, quod he: ... (IV.49.9; after 11.510)

Later, Amata tells Turnus her own fate is bound up with his:

qui te cumque manent isto certamine casus
 et me, Turne, manent; ...

(Knight: Whatever fortune awaits you in the fight which you plan, that same fortune, Turnus, is also in store for me; ...)

Douglas has her adding a characteristic clause:

I the assuyr, and certifyis tharfor,
 Quhat aventour in this ficht sall happin the,
 The selfin chance, Turnus, sall betyd me: ... (IV.96.10-12; 12.61-2)

Brief conversational additions are thus not necessarily “conversational” in tone. They can be quite solemn, as in that example, and as when Diana is explaining to Opis how dear Camilla is to her; she says she is “cara mihi ante alias” (dear to me before others). Douglas inserts a few key words:

I the declar and certyfyis, quod sche,
 Abuf all vther full deir is sche to me: ... (IV.51.9-10; 11.537)

When the physician charged with making Aeneas fit for battle tells him that there has been some supernatural involvement in his cure, he says:

‘non haec humanis opibus, non arte magistra
 proueniunt, neque te, Aenea, mea dextera seruat: ...’

(Knight: No human powers produced this glad result, nor any guidance of human skill; nor is it my hand, Aeneas, which brings you healing.)

Douglas adds a clause:

O Eneas, quod he, *I mak zou suir*,
 Throw mannis mycht was neuer wrocht this cuir,
 Nor be na maister craft of medycyne;
 Thou art nocht helyt by this hand of myne, ... (IV.125.31-126.2; 12.427-8)

Jupiter, towards the end, asks his wife what she thinks about the situation:

‘quae iam finis erit, coniunx? quid denique restat? ...’

(Knight: What, my Queen, shall now be the end? What at this final hour is still left for you to do?)

Thus spak and said: O my deyr spous quhat now?
 Quhat end sal be of this mater, *or quhou?*
 Quhat restis finally now at all? *lat se.* (IV.154.11-13; 12.793)

The interjections emphasise that this is a genuinely responsive interchange. The word “deyr” is an important intensifier too; it brings out the relationality inherent not just in this particular context but in the longer-term status of those engaged in it.

One technique of Douglas’ to make speeches more manifestly conversational is to shift words around from indicative to imperative to interrogative, though he has no settled preference - other than what accentuates a sense of reciprocity. The Sibyl, for instance, rhetorically demands of Aeneas:

... ‘cessas in uota precesque,
 Tros’ ait ‘Aenea? cessas? ...’

(Are you still not vowing or praying, Aeneas of Troy?)

Douglas makes it a command, heightening its urgency:

Blyn [cease] *nocht*, *blyn nocht!* thow gret Troiane Enee,
 Of thi bedis nor of thi prayeris, quod sche; ... (III.12.1-2; 6.51-2)

According to Evander, the oracle had told the Etruscans they were to seek a leader from outside their own land: “*externos optate duces*” (choose outside leaders); Douglas turns this into

3ow behuffis to seyk a strange cheiftane. (III.186.20; 8.503)

As an act of pity and generosity, Aeneas refuses to strip the arms from the body of the young Lausus: “arma, quibus laetatus, habe tua” (have/keep the arms in which you took delight). Douglas turns this into:

Thyne armour, quharof sumtyme thou reiosit,
With the I leif, for ay to bene eniosyt. (III.343.31-2; 10.827)

When Turnus has killed Eumedes, he taunts him:

‘en agros et, quam bello, Troiane, petisti,
 Hesperiam metire iacens: ...’

(Knight: See, Trojan! Lie there, and measure your length in the fields of our Western Land which you sought to gain by war.)

Douglas changes this to:

Now *may thou myssour* the feild at thou has found; ... (IV.120.26; 12.359-60)

Another technique is to add personal or demonstrative pronouns or adjectives.

Schmidt gives a number of examples⁶ including Ilioneus’ words to Dido, “Thidderwart *our* cours was laid” for “hic cursus fuit” (II.51.32; 1.534) and Deiphobus’ words to Aeneas,

My trasty suerd fra ondir *my* heid away
 Stal scho, ...

for “fidum capiti subduxerat ensem” (III.43.27-8; 6.524). I add to these examples the beginning of the Sibyl’s description of the entry to hell, which is supplied generously with demonstratives: “3ondir may thow se”, “the entre heir”, and “3one hell” (III.47.17-22; 6.574-9) are all Douglas’ expansions. The interlocutors are thereby more decisively placed, in relation to each other and to their circumstances.

Sometimes something longer is required, to establish a sense of the colloquy’s ramifications: its historical background and its emotional underpinning (and I return to this second aspect in Section 4). Words at the end of Book III, when Aeneas laments the loss of his father, have undergone considerable expansion and emotional heightening:

⁶ Edmund Schmidt, *Die Schottische Aeneisübersetzung von Gavin Douglas*, pp. 42-3.

hinc Drepani me portus et inlaetabilis ora
accipit. hic pelagi tot tempestatibus actus
heu, genitorem, omnis curae casusque leuamen,
amitto Anchisen. hic me, pater optime, fessum
deseris, heu, tantis nequiquam erepte periclis!

(Knight: At last I found a harbour at Drepanum, but there was no joy for me on that shore. For here, after all the persecution of the ocean-storms, O bitterness! I lost my father, lost Anchises, my solace in every adventure and every care. Yes, here, in my weary plight, you, best of fathers, forsook me, after I had brought you so far and through so many dire perils in vain.)

In Douglas' version I italicise the main additions and alterations:

Thar the port of Drepanoun, and the raid,
Quham to remember mi hert may neur be glaid,
Rasauit me, quhar that, *allace, allace!*
I leis my fadir, all comfort and solace,
And all supple of our travale and pane.
Thair, thair, alaik! sa feill dangeris bygane,
And tempest of the see, O fadir most *deir*,
Anchises, desolate *quhy left thow me heir*
Wery and irkit *in ane fremmyt land?*
O weillaway! for nocht wes all, *I fand*,
That thow eschapid sa mony perrellis huge. (II.163.1-11; 3.707-11)

Here is complex manoeuvring of questions and vocatives and interjections and self-references and reminders of the poignancy of the whole situation.

When Vulcan is explaining that there is no difficulty about preparing arms for Aeneas at Venus' request, and that indeed he might have done so if she had requested it in Troy, Douglas' version is longer and more interactive. Virgil gives us:

... similis si cura fuisset,
tum quoque fas nobis Teucros armare fuisset;

(Knight: ... had your anxiety been so great as now, I could without wrong have armed your Trojans ...).

Douglas heightens the interchange, and gives us more sense of both *its* history and the history of the subject with which it is concerned:

Gyf siklik curis *and desyr* had bene
Into thi mynd that samyn tyme, *I meyne*
During the subversioun of Troyis ring,
To ws it had bene bot a lesum thing
Troianis till haue enarmyt *at thi request*; ... (III.179.1-5; 8.396-7)

Juno, debating with Venus, says (and she is repeating what Venus has already said) that Aeneas is away and unaware - "Aeneas ignarus abest" - so let him remain

away and unaware! - “ignarus et absit”. Douglas amplifies the conversational interface and spells out its earlier stages:

Thy son Ene, mysknawying *this deray*,
As thou allegis, is absent now away:
 And *quhat iniuris*, absent mot he remane,
 And ignorant *for ay* of this bargane? (III.285.5-8; 10.85)

It sounds more like an authentic interchange: less stagey.

When Turnus is wondering how he can face the shame of being whisked away from battle (Douglas’ conversationalising extends to soliloquy too), the Latin is already fairly highly charged, but Douglas heightens it further:

... quid ago? aut quae iam satis ima dehiscat
 terra mihi? ...

(Knight: But what am I about? Ah, cannot some profoundest chasm of earth yawn deep enough to engulf me?)

Quhat sal I do? *allace the wofull stond!*
 Or quhilk land, *thocht a thousand tymys I stervit*,
 May swelly me sa deip *as I haue servit*? (III.332.16-18; 10.675-6)

The personal feelings are laid out more overtly, not to say hyperbolically, and there is a hint too of Turnus’ tacit reasoning. He becomes more vivid to himself, more *internally* interactive, as it were. So too Aeneas’ apostrophe to the dead Pallas (another extended case of interlocutoriness, with Pallas’ father in a manner present) is expanded in the dual interest of accentuating feeling and clarifying context:

hi nostri reditus expectatique triumphi?
 haec mea magna fides? at non, Euandre, pudendis
 uulneribus pulsum aspicias, nec sospite dirum
 optabis nato funus pater. ei mihi quantum
 praesidium, Ausonia, et quantum tu perdis, Iule!

(Knight: Is this, after all, to be the triumphant return on which our hopes had been set? Is this how my solemn promises have been fulfilled? Ah, but, Evander, you will look on no defeated soldier-son, bearing wounds of shame; you will never be that father who prays for an accursed death because his own son has come safe home. Ah, Italy! Mighty was the protector whose loss you mourn; and great is your loss too, Iulus.)

This sal be our triumphe thou lang abaid,
To se thy a son on his beir tre laid!
 Ha! quhat, is this my promys and gret faith?
 Bot, O Evander, *beis nocht with me wraith*:
 Thou sall nocht se thy son was dryve abak

With schamefull woundis *that he caught in the bak*:
 Ne thou his fader, wer he alive this day,
 Suld nevir haif lak of hym, ne for hym pray
 For his desert he deit a schamefull deith:
And now with honour hes he zald the breith.
Both netheles, quhat harm, full wayis me!
 Quhou large support, hey! quhat beld or supple
 In hym hes tynt Ausonya the ryng,
 And quhou gret deill hes lost Ascanys 3yng! (IV.13.7-20; 11.54-8)

On a later occasion, Aeneas is explaining his new plan, to besiege the city of Latinus.

‘ne qua meis esto dictis mora, Iuppiter hac stat,
 neu quis ob inceptum subitum mihi segnior ito.
 urbem hodie, causam belli, regna ipsa Latini,
 ni frenum accipere et uicti parere fatentur,
 eruam et aequa solo fumantia culmina ponam. ...’

(Knight: Let my commands be obeyed without delay. Jupiter is with us [literally, “here”]. And I would have none move the more slowly because my change of plan comes without warning. To-day I shall tear up this city, the cause of the fighting, the very capital of Latinus’ kingdom, and lay its smoking rooftops level with the soil, unless they acknowledge their defeat and obediently accept our sway.)

Douglas expresses it thus:

Heir I command no tary nor delay
 Be maid of my preceptis, *quhat I sal say*,
 Nor se that na man be sweir nor slaw to ryn.
 Till our hasty onset we will begin,
 Sen Jupiter assistis *onto our syde*.
Now harkis quhat I purpos do this tyde:
 This day I sal distroy and clene bet down
 Of Lawrent hail the cite and the tovn,
 Quhilk is the caus of *all our* werying,
 And quyte confund the King Latinus ring,
 Les than thai wil ressaue the bridill at hand,
 Be at obeysans, and grant *my* command;
 And *3on* hie turrettis, and tha toppis hie
 Of rekand chymnais *3ondir, as we se*,
 I sal mak plane and equale with the ground. (IV.136.21-137.3; 12.565-9)

Aeneas is stressing here not just *what* he is planning but *that* he is planning (in Section 4 I return to this aspect of individuality), and that he is taking his men into his confidence. He will speak, they are to listen. It concerns *those* buildings over there.⁷

⁷ Two other passages markedly enhanced in this way are Anchises’ welcome to Aeneas in Elysium (particularly III.55.22-56.11; 6.684-9) and Ascanius’ charge to Nisus and Euryalus (particularly III.229.6-24; 9.257-62).

Often the *narrator's* contribution is enhanced, in the way a conversation is framed or through some alteration to its contours and context: a suggestion being inserted to emphasise that conversational engagement between individual interlocutors is taking place. An example was given on p. 129. Another is when Aeneas learns from Evander about the early history of Rome:

miratur facilisque oculos fert omnia circum
Aeneas, capiturque locis et singula laetus
exquiratque auditque uirum monimenta priorum.

(Knight: Wonderingly, Aeneas turned his alert eyes all about him, attracted by what he saw, and with much enjoyment asked questions about the relics of earlier generations, ...)

Douglas amplifies this by insertions:

Eneas awondrys *of that he did say*,
And kest his ene about deliuerly,
Thai steidis all to serchyn and espy;
Sa fayr placis to se and vissie tite,
This strange knyght caucht plesance and delite,
And glaidly can inquiring euey thing,
And hard the ansuer of the agit king,
Quhilk teching hym per ordour to him tald
Memorialis of seyr forfaderis auld. (III.172.8-16; 8.310-12)

Later, Iris has brought a message to Turnus, to urge him to take the initiative now that Aeneas is out of the way; then “dixit, et in caelum paribus se sustulit alis” (she spoke and rose into the sky on evenly balanced wings). Douglas as narrator will not have us forget Turnus:

Quod sche; and tharwyth, *in his presens evin*,
With equale weyngis flaw vp in the hevin, ... (III.210.13-14; 9.14)

Sometimes there is a more complicated conversational restructuring. Anna takes a message to Aeneas, and brings back to Dido news that her request has been unavailing:

Talibus orabat, talisque miserrima fletus
fertque refertque soror. sed nullis ille mouetur
fletibus ...

(Knight: Such was Dido's entreaty; and her poor, unhappy sister carried the tearful messages between them. But all these appeals left Aeneas quite unmoved.)

Douglas puts the outcome of the attempt explicitly into the content of what she reports:

Hir supplication, with teris full vnglaid,
 Reportis hir sister, *and answeare brocht agane*,
How all hir prayeris and desyr war in vane:
 For all thair weping mycht him not anis steir; ... (II.202.24-7; 4.437-9)

In all these ways Douglas enhances individuality by setting the characters interactively in contexts.

3. “Singled out”

Here I deal mainly with Douglas’ use of names for persons. He is more generous with proper nouns than Virgil is, often for intelligible narrative reasons such as fixing a geographical feature (Chapter III) or helping readers to find their way through the story. So “Venus” is added to “suspenderat arcum” (she had hung a bow, II.39.23; 1.318); likewise we have “This ilk Tewcer” for “ipse” (II.57.7; 1.625), “Cupide” for “ille” (II.62.29; 1.715), “Pirrus” for “ipse” (II.96.27; 2.479), “Mercurir” for “ille” (II.190.5; 4.238), “Eneas” appended to the objectless verb “temptare” (work on, II.201.8; 4.413), “this hutit monstre, this Cacus” for “huic monstro” (III.164.7; 8.198), “This Helenor” for “isque”, followed shortly afterwards by “this ilk zong Helenor” for “iuuenis” (youth, III.250.27, 251.5; 9.549,554), and “this ilk Arcens” for “ipse” (III.253.15; 9.587). There are many, many more examples of pronouns and verbs reinforced in this way throughout the poem.

The practice is particularly helpful in battle scenes, where Virgil’s “hic” and “ille” leave the picture often unclear. Gransden wonders whether that was not perhaps intentional:

... often the reader cannot quickly identify the killer, either by the *hic* or *ille* which designates him, or by the undifferentiated catalogue of victims ...
 Suppose that, ultimately, it does not matter who kills whom?⁸

⁸ K. W. Gransden, *Virgil’s Iliad*, p. 205.

If so, then - conversely - to reinstate proper names is to make the matter personal again. So in Douglas' treatment of how Aeneas and Turnus go on the rampage through the hosts (IV.132.18-134.15; 12.513-36) "ille" becomes "Eneas" (132.18; 513), "hic" becomes "This othir chiftane, Turnus" (132.26; 516), "hic" becomes "The tane of thame, that is to knaw, Enee" (133.25; 529), "hunc" becomes "this Murranus" (134.1; 532), and "ille" becomes "Turnus" (134.9; 535).

Sometimes personal names replace genitival or adjectival patronymic forms: e.g. "strang Hercules the guid" replaces the genitival "Alcides" (III.64.18; 6.801), while "this worthy Hercules" stands for "Alcidae" (III.165.21; 8.219) - and in this latter case it is (in accordance with a common practice in Douglas) supplemented elaborately by the Latin/Greek form too:

Alceus nevo, the douchty Alcydes,
That so oft sys was clepit commonly, ... (lines 22-3)

A little later we are given "Hercules" for the adjectival "Tirynthius" (III.166.9; 8.228). When later we get "Agamemnon" for "Mycenaeus ... ductor" (IV.29.29; 11.266), Douglas again supplements this with "The kyng of Myce" (30).

Sometimes Douglas' concern is to give historical information, or to ensure a fuller personal feel for the narrative at some point; so he inserts a proper name where Virgil (assuming the reader to gather it either from the run of the story or from knowledge gained elsewhere) gives none. In the account of the shipwreck Virgil's "magister" becomes "the skippair clepit Lewcaspis" (II.28.31; 1.115). Where the Latin speaks of Daedalus "magnum reginae sed enim miseratus amorem" (pitying the queen's great love), Douglas gives the woman a name:

Bot, netheles, Dedalus caucht piete
Of the gret luif of *fair Ariadne*,
That wes the kingis dochtir, ... (III.10.11-13; 6.28)

In his description of the underworld, he supplies (from Servius perhaps) two proper names to fill in the impersonal "forma tricorporis umbrae" (form of the triple-bodied shade):

Of thrinfald bodeis gaistlie formes did grone,
Baith of Erilus and of Gerioun. (III.27.25-6; 6.289)

He supplies names for the twin brothers who had made an assault on Jupiter's kingdom

- in Virgil "hic et Aloidas geminos ... uidi", in Douglas:

Thair saw I eik Aloeus twynnis twane,
Othus and Ephialtes, brethir germane, ... (III.48.1-2; 6.582-3)

Among the kings alluded to in Anchises' account of what is to come is one who

appears in the Latin without a name:

quis procul ille autem ramis insignis oliuae
sacra ferens? nosco crines incanaque menta
regis Romani primam qui legibus urbem
fundabit ...

(Knight: But who is that, apart, wearing the emblem of an olive-spray, and carrying implements of worship? I recognize [the] hair and white-bearded chin [of that] King of Rome who will give to our city its first foundation on law; ...)

Bot quhat maner of man be 3one, quod Anchise,
With olive branche on sic gudlie wise
Arrayit, and eik beris mony a sing
Of sacrifice and ritis of offering?
I knaw his kannos hair and lyard berd
Of the wysast Romane king into the erd,
Numa Pompilius, quhilk sall in his dais
Begyn and statut with lawis and haly layis
The cheif cetie of Rome; ... (III.65.1-9; 6.808-11)

And where the two great adversaries of the Civil War are identified in Latin simply as

father-in-law and son-in-law ("socer" and "gener"), in Douglas they are named:

aggeribus socer Alpinis atque arce Monoeci
descendens, gener aduersis instructus Eois!

(Knight helpfully puts in proper names too [as he does actually in the examples immediately above and below]: One, Caesar, the father of the bride, shall march from the fortress of Menoecus down over the Alpine mass, and her husband Pompey shall stand marshalled with the East to confront him.)

Cesar, the eldfader, by the strait wayis
With his gret rowtis our the Frensche montans
Discending doun Lumbardy throw the planis;
His maich *Pompey* sall strecht agane hym went
With rayit hostis of the orient. (III.66.32-67.4; 6.830-1)

Virgil mentions another hero:

ille triumphata Capitolia ad alta Corintho
victor aget currum caesis insignis Achiuis.

(Knight: Over there is one ... who shall triumph over Corinth and drive his chariot to the towering Capitol in glorious victory after the slaying of the Greeks.)

Douglas tells us who it is:

And he that standis zondir, *Lucyus*,
Ontil his surnaim clepit *Mummyus*,
Eftir he vencust haif Corinthe toun,
And in battelle the worthy Grekis bet down,
His chair, with meikle gloir tryvmphall,
Sall steir furth to the hie Capitoll wall. (III.67.13-18; 6.836-7)

And the next hero (in Latin merely “ille”) is named too:

And he zone vthir, *Quintus Metellus*,
Full gret honour sall conques onto ws: ... (III.67.19-20; 6.838)

(Douglas apparently takes the suggestion of the name from Ascensius. More recent commentators such as Page and Williams suggest it should be Aemilius Paullus, the Roman general who defeated King Perseus of Macedonia at the battle of Pydna in 168 B.C.)

Occasionally the justification for a proper name is elusive: “filius Auni” (Aunus’ son) becomes “Awnus son, quhilk also Awnus hait” (a suggestion from Ascensius which at least gives him reality on his own account, IV.62.27; 11.700).

Coyne about proper names allows Virgil to secure some powerful effects which Douglas cannot reproduce. Throughout the section of Vulcan’s shield representing the Battle of Actium, Cleopatra is referred to three times, but (by Virgil) never by name. This gives her presence in the story a terrible namelessness: she is too dreadful to be dignified personally. She is “Aegyptia coniunx” (Egyptian wife), “regina”, “ipsa ... regina” (the queen). But in Douglas she is (respectively): “His spous Egiptiane, queyne Cleopatra”, “Cleopatra queyne”, and “Cleopatra the queyne” (III.200.30, 201.17, 202.12; 8.688,696,707). At a distance of fifteen hundred years the emotional resonances which meant so much to Virgil’s readers have gone, and for Douglas’ contemporaries it is more important to highlight her as a distinct person.

Another effect of Virgil's is to delay mention of a proper name, but Douglas usually (not always) inserts it at the earliest appropriate point. The great exception is where, with Virgil, he leaves out mention of the hero of the story until the storm scene in Book I (II.27.17; 1.92): until then we are just meant to know that "the man" is "Eneas". There is another exception, when he delays mention of Lavinia's name, following Virgil and rendering the first reference, "sola ... filia", as "All hir alane ane douchtir" (III.84.4; 7.52). On the other hand, he anticipates Virgil in giving a name to the king's wife: "regia coniunx" becomes "king Latinus spous, queyne Amata" (III.84.13; 7.56), whereas in the Latin we have to wait until the queen is visited by Allecto (7.343) before her name is given. Similarly, the first mention of Turnus' divine sister is in Virgil simply "soror alma" (kind sister), but Douglas makes her personal right away: "The haly nympe, clepyt Juturna" (III.313.10; 10.439). In Virgil we have to wait until well into Book XII (12.146) before her name is given.

Amidst these various narrative motives, a common effect is detectable: sharper contouring in the way persons are presented. Having a name endows them with individuality. They are not merely "someone" but "*a* someone", with personal singleness and boundaries, the focus of interactivity and inner weight, a point of view and capacity for autonomy. Until a name is conferred the person is apt to carry more than a hint of instability, of epiphenomenality, and what dominates our fictive perception is rather his or her characteristics or role, or some associated issues or themes or facts. A proper name sets up a proper focus.

One final symptom of Douglas' underlying tendency can be noted briefly. In Chapter II, I claimed that Douglas' chapter summaries (with their overwhelmingly temporal language) reinforce the sense that his story is charged with purposeful activity: things happening or being done. By the same token, they reveal the story to be a lively network of interactive persons. The great majority of chapter summaries (155 out of 170) contain proper names.

4. “Filled in”

Much of what might be applied here has already been discussed in Chapters II and III (the enhancement of concrete particularity in time and space), so I shall concentrate on Douglas’ manner of adding predicates that imply an inner life of feeling or thought or purpose, and on his manner of characterising individuals in ways that bring out something of moral significance, in them or about them. The two kinds of augmentation are closely linked, and perhaps not ultimately distinguishable.

When Aeneas comes to a resolution about leaving Carthage, he commands his men to prepare for departure. They “imperio laeti parent ac iussa facessunt” (obey the command gladly and carry out the instructions); Douglas builds in a little more interiority:

At his command thai all glaidlie furth went,
And besely begouth speid *his entent*. (II.193.15-16; 4.295)

(And notice the heightened interactivity of “besely”.) They set out to sea, and look back and see the flames of Dido’s funeral pyre. Virgil reports:

... quae tantum accenderit ignem
causa latet; ...

(Knight: Why that terrible blaze had been kindled was obscure.)

Douglas tells us of the feelings accompanying the recognition:

Quhay had this gret fyre maid, and to quhat end,
Thai marvalit, for the causis war vnkend; ... (II.223.7-8; 5.4-5)

After the boxing-match in Sicily, Dares is led away “iactantemque utroque caput” (shaking his head to and fro); Douglas adds “For sorow” (II.252.6; 5.469). When Aeneas in Italy spots the doves who will lead him to the golden branch, necessary to secure entrance to the underworld, he asks them to be his guides; in Latin: “este duces, o, si qua uia est” (if there is a way, be leaders). Douglas reminds us that Aeneas is a man of purpose:

O haly foulis, gif the way may be went,
Be 3e my gydis *to compleit my entent*. (III.21.15-16; 6.194)

Then in the early stages of that visit Virgil describes those who have committed suicide as:

... qui sibi letum
insontes peperere manu ...

(who, being innocent, brought about their death with their own hand).

Douglas is interested that, to get to that state, they would have had things going on in their minds:

Giltles folk, that *for disdene, wo, or feid*,
With thair awin handis wrocht thair self to deid, ... (III.37.25-6; 6.434-5)

Much later, Lavinia, accompanying her mother to the temple, has her beautiful eyes cast down: “oculos deiecta decoros”. Douglas says why: “doun *for schame* did cast hyr lusty eyne” (IV.46.28; 11.480). And later, hearing her mother vow never to accept defeat from the Trojans, “accepit uocem lacrimis Lauinia matris” (Lavinia heard her mother’s voice with tears); Douglas fills it out a little:

Lavinia the maid, wyth soir teris smert,
Hir moderis wordis *felt deip in hir hert*, ... (IV.96.17-18; 12.64)

When Aeneas has to withdraw from battle, Virgil tells us “saeuit” (he is furious);

Douglas goes further:

Wod wroth he worthis, *for dysdene and dyspyte*
That he ne mycht his feris *succur als tyte*: ... (IV.122.21-2; 12.387)

Cases of an individual spelling out his or her own purpose, or having it spelled out by Douglas, or even just having it mentioned that he or she *has* purposes and feelings, are legion. It almost seems that Douglas is unable to let a description of behaviour go by without some reference, however fleeting, either to what is specifically going on in the person’s mind, or to the more generalised fact that an active mind, with feelings, is present. Sometimes an inner aspect is already clear from Virgil, and then what Douglas may do is give it some extra complexity. Thus, after Aeneas has been visited and reprimanded by Mercury for his sojourn in Carthage, he is struck dumb: “ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras” (he was already ardently

wanting to flee from and leave the sweet land). Douglas suggests inner debate and turmoil - in Virgil the problem is merely (!) how to break the news to Dido, not how to resolve Aeneas' conflicting desires:

Sair he langis to fle and to depart;
And that sweit contre, *on the tother part*,
To leif full laith was hym, or go at large. (II.192.13-15; 4.281)⁹

A sign that some tendency in Douglas is systemic is that it manifests itself in contexts where it feels slightly inappropriate; as if for a moment he has let himself be carried away. So he "fills in" not just humans and divinities but animals and inanimate things. When Jupiter speaks in the discussion about the fate of the mortals, Virgil says "tremefacta solo tellus" (the earth deep down was set trembling); in Douglas this is "The erthis grund schuke trymling *for feyr*" (III.286.21; 10.102). Later, in Italy, Turnus responds sarcastically to Drances with "amnis et Hadriacas retro fugit Aufidus undas" (Knight: The river Aufidus flows backwards pursued by Adriatic waves); Douglas amplifies:

And Aufidus, the swyft flowand river,
Rynnys contirmont frawart the sey *for feir*. (IV.40.29-30; 11.405)

A statue has feelings too. Sinon tells how, when the image of Pallas was set in the Greeks' camp, "arsere coruscae luminibus flammae arrectis" (flickering flames shone in its staring eyes); Douglas says: "Hir ene glowit as ony gleid *for ire*" (II.78.3; 2.172-3).

Less inappropriate, but still suggestive of the deep infixedness of the tendency, is its application to animals. When the broken-backed ship at the games in Sicily is likened to an injured snake, Virgil tells of the snake's "sibila colla" (hissing neck); it was angry, says Douglas: "in tene" (II.240.18; 5.277). In a simile referring to swans Virgil says:

ceu quondam niuei liquida inter nubila cycni
cum sese e pastu referunt et longa canoros
dant per colla modos,

⁹ Servius at this point says we should imagine "quamquam" (although) qualifying "dulcisque". Perhaps Douglas gets the extra layer of uncertainty from this suggestion.

(Knight: ... like snow-white swans which sometimes, as they return from pasture through yielding clouds, extend their necks and chant their measured music, ...).

Douglas fills in with:

Sic wys as sum tym in the skyis hie
 Throu the moist air dois snaw quhite swannis fle,
 Quhen thai fra pastur or feding dois resort
To seyke thair solace, and on thair gys to sport;
 Weill soundand wriblis throu thair throttis lang
 Swouching makis in maneyr of a sang, ... (III.131.29-132.2; 7.699-701)

Turnus is likened to a stallion set free from his stall who heads for the mares: “aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum” (Knight: ... hastening towards the pastures where herds of mares are feeding). Douglas puts emotion into it, of a specific kind (i.e. what Turnus is experiencing): “And haldis towart the studys *in a rage*” (IV.48.3; 11.494).

Lions and ants get the treatment too. Turnus is likened to a lion:

... Poenorum qualis in aruis
 saucius ille graui uenantum uulnere pectus
 tum demum mouet arma leo, gaudetque comantis
 excutiens ceruice toros fixumque latronis
 impavidus frangit telum et fremit ore cruento: ...

(Knight: ... as some strong lion of the African desert, gravely wounded in the breast by huntsmen, gives battle at last; and, joyously tossing his luxuriant mane from his neck, snaps off, undaunted, the spear which some stalker has planted in him, opens a blood-smeared mouth, and roars.)

This is Douglas:

Fers as a wild lyoun 3ond in Trace,
 By the huntar wondyt in the chaice,
 Quhen the smert straik in his breist all fast is,
For ire the lokkerris of his nek vpcastis;
 Than *first begynning to rays hys stern moyd*,
Reiosyt of the batall, fers and wod,
 Onabasytly raschand the schaft in sundir,
 And on the man liggand at wait thar vndir,
Hym to revenge, with bludy mouth dois bray; ... (IV.91.13-92.1; 12.4-8)

Clearly a lion who knows his mind, and feels strongly. As for ants, here is the Latin of a section of Book XIII:

Ac veluti cum nigra cohors posuere sub alta
 Arbore, et infix a radice cubilia longo
 Formicae instantes operi, si dura securis
 Incumbat, versoque infringat culmine paruas

Saeva casas, mox certatim sese agmine sparso
Corripiunt, maestaeque fuga trepidaeque feruntur: ...

(Robb: And just as when ants, a dark company, have placed their nests at the foot of a tall tree, its roots well established, and are pressing on with the lengthy task, if the relentless axe falls upon it, and savagely demolishes the roof and shatters the tiny dwellings, presently they eagerly move off in a well-spaced column, and sadly and fearfully hurry away in flight: ...) ¹⁰

Douglas' additions suggest their feelings, and the mixture of purposefulness and panic:

And lyke as that of emottis the blak rowt,
That ithandly laubouris and byssy be,
Had beildit, vnder the ruit of a heych tre,
Intill a clyft thar byke and duellyng steid,
To hyd thar langsum wark and wyntry breid:
Gyf so betyde *thai feill* the ax smyte
Apoun the treis schank, and tharon byte,
So that the crop down weltis to the grund,
That with the felloun rusch and grysly sound
Thar small cavernys all to brok and rent is;
Than spedely this litill rowt furth sprentis
All will of reid, fleand *thai wait nocht quhair*,
Tursand thar byrdyngis affrayitly heir and thair. (IV.191.20-32; 13.220-5)

I turn now to the second sub-category mentioned at the start of this Section. In emphasising, as he often does, that a character has a particular *moral* characteristic, Douglas brings him or her in effect into another sort of ambit of relationships, in which others (including ourselves) expect not just to *encounter* individuals but to *evaluate* them. Often the words he adds are as stereotyped as the stock epithets listed in Chapter III, Section 4; but sometimes they go further and underline an individual's position in some genuine network of moral debate.

His off-the-peg additions can usually be justified from elsewhere in the story, or they are simply uncontroversial reflections of what the translator could take to be plain moral common-sense. So, very early, the narrator muses on how considerable the birth-pangs of the Roman empire were: "tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem" (Knight: Such was the cost in heavy toil of beginning the life of Rome). In Douglas this is:

¹⁰ Ian S. Robb's careful and accurate translation of Book XIII is unpublished. It was prepared at the time of his Ph.D. thesis at St Andrews (1991).

Lo how greit cuir, quhat travel, pane, and dowte,
Was to begyne the *worthy* Romanis bluide! (II.24.10-11; 1.33)

When the Trojans are captured and brought before Dido, their spokesman says: “*rex erat Aeneas nobis*” (Aeneas was our king). This becomes: “To ws was king the *worthy* Eneas” (II.52.17; 1.544). Aeneas announces the result of the ship race; for Virgil he is simply “*satus Anchisa*” (Anchises’ son) but Douglas gives him a name and an epithet: “Anchises son Eneas, than, *full wise*” (II.238.11; 5.244). There is friendly competitive hyperbole where Turnus and Lausus are mentioned together:

*filius huic iuxta Lausus, quo pulchrior alter
non fuit excepto Laurentis corpore Turni; ...*

(Knight: Close by [Mezentius] marched his son Lausus, exceeded in beauty by none but the stalwart Laurentine Turnus.)

Douglas says:

The gyder of his army and his rowt
Was his son Lausus, *vailzeand and stout*;
Abuf all vthir the maist semely wycht,
Except the persoun of Turnus the *gentill knycht*,
Quhilk was the flour of all the Laurenteis. (III.128.3-7; 7.649-50)

Camilla is a focus of admiration:

*illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa iuuentus
turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,
attonitis inhians animis ...*

(Knight: A gathering of mothers and all the young men who were streaming from houses and fields looked forth admiringly at her as she passed, in open-mouthed astonishment ...)

Douglas says:

All 3oung folkis, on hir for to ferly,
Furth of feildis and houssis flokis in hy.
Litill childring and matronis awundring
On far behaldis hir stout pais in a ling:
So manfully and baldly walkis sche,
With spreit abasit thai gofe hir for to se, ... (III.140.29-141.2; 7.812-4)

Aeneas is approached to agree to a truce. He is “bonus Aeneas” to Virgil; to Douglas

he is: “Eneas, *heynd, courtes, and gud*, ... As man that was *fulfillit of bonte*”

(IV.17.13,15; 11.106). The physician Iapis is in Latin “*ille ... senior*” (that old man).

Perhaps taking a cue from Ascensius (“*senior, ideo peritior*”, older, therefore more

skilful, more experienced), Douglas gives us: “this Iapis sage and auld of 3eris” (IV.123.32; 12.400-1). Aeneas is determined to bring Turnus to a duel, as had been agreed. Virgil says: “solum in certamina poscit” (he seeks only him for battle).

Douglas has the notion that Aeneas is a stickler for agreements, so he adds a phrase:

Only Turnus went to seik and aspy,
And hym allane, *according the tretye*,
He askis and requiris into melle. (IV.128.26-8; 12.467)

For a *tour de force* in the heightening of moral and quasi-moral predicates we should go to Douglas’ translation of Book XIII. Earlier (Chapter III, Section 3; p. 102) I suggested there is a flavour of “demob-happiness” in this final book. Arguably that makes it more rather than less revealing of his underlying proclivities: the more relaxed he becomes, the more openly his true colours emerge. The time of Aeneas’ marriage to Lavinia is approaching, and the Latins are eager to have a good look at their new leader:

Ante omnes magnum Aenean, cupidoque notabant
Altum animo genus, et praestantem frontis honorem, ...

(Robb: Above all they enthusiastically observed great Aeneas, the high-born, and the outstanding charm of his modest¹¹ face, ...)

Douglas expands, weaving together exterior and interior characteristics: Aeneas is great in body, great in mind.

Bot specialy, and first of all the laif,
The gret capitane Enee notat thai haif,
Attentfully behaldand euery wycht
Hys stowt curage, hys byg statur and hycht,
And in thar mynd comprysit his kyn maiste hie,
His plessand vissage, and knyghtly large bonte;
And, glaid and joyfull, extoll and loif thai can
The gret apperans of guid in sik a man, ... (IV.208.13-20; 13.451-2)

Several times Juno is singled out for moral evaluation. She is the evil presence in the story, as when, wanting to disrupt the Trojans’ plans after their apparent successes at the time of the games in Sicily, she sends Iris from heaven to create havoc: “Irim de caelo misit Saturnia Iuno”. Douglas wants to be sure we know where Juno

¹¹ I am not sure about “modest” here. There is no corresponding adjective in the Latin; perhaps Robb is “doing a Douglas”.

(always) stands, and inserts: “That gan of wraith and malice neuer ho” (II.260.6; 5.606). When at Latium she intervenes to open the gates of war, Virgil calls her simply “Saturnia” (Saturn’s daughter); for Douglas she is “This cruell dochtyr of the auld Saturn” (III.125.23; 7.622). Later she stops Pandarus’ spear harming Turnus:

... uulnus Saturnia Iuno
detorsit ueniens, portaeque infigitur hasta.

(Knight: ... Saturnian Juno deflected the speeding danger, and the spear flew on into the gate.)

Douglas reminds us here again about the goddess:

For *wikkit* Juno, the auld Saturnus get,
Choppyt by the schaft, and fixt it in the 3et. (III.264.27-8; 9.745-6)

Ulysses receives similar treatment, though in his case through what others say.

Sinon describes (deviously) how Ulysses had planned to destroy him “et quaerere conscius arma” (Williams: he sought assistance for his conspiracy against me).

Douglas builds this up into a major moral charge:

And, *knawand himself gylyt*, by his consait
Grathit his wapynnys *of slycht and fals dissait*; ... (II.73.13-14; 2.99)

Later, Deiphobus is telling Aeneas how he was attacked in Troy by Menelaus and other Greeks, including Ulysses the “urger of crimes”:

... comes additur una
hortator scelerum Aeolides. ...

(The descendant of Aeolus was there too, the urger of crimes.)

Douglas adds an epithet:

Amang all vtheris samyn thidder spedis
That schrew prouocar of all vickit deidis,
Eolus nevo, *cursit Vlixes sle*. (III.44.3-5; 6.528-9)

Here the underlining owes more to historical or legendary precognisance, since Ulysses scarcely figures in the *Aeneid* at all; but there was a Roman tradition about him.

A more favourable instance of bringing pre-judgement into the story is the picture of Cocles on Vulcan’s shield - Cocles who ventured to pull down the bridge: “pontem auderet quia uellere Cocles”. Douglas emphasises his quality and purpose:

For that the *hardy* Cocles, *derf and bald*,
Durst brek the bryg *at he purposyt to hald*; ... (III.197.21-2; 8.650)

Or there is Cato, issuing laws: “his dantem iura Catonem”. For Douglas it is:

And the *wys man*, *ensorius* Cato,
Gevand thair *iust rewardis* till all tho. (III.199.11-12; 8.670)

Moral properties can be attributed more indirectly, reflected off the attitude of someone other than narrator or subject, as when Aeneas seems (in Troy) to be addressing Hector:

...ultro flens ipse uidebar
compellare uirum et maestas expromere uoces: ...

(Knight: I dreamed that I spoke first, weeping and forcing myself to find words for this sad meeting: ...)

Douglas touches on another dimension in the encounter:

Methocht, I first, weping and nathing glaid,
Rycht reuerentlie begouth to clepe this man,
And with sic dolorus wourdis thus began: ... (II.84.30-2; 2.279-80)

Compare the later address to Helenus:

his uatem adgredior dictis ac talia quaeso:
‘Troiugena, interpretes diuum, ...’

(Knight: Therefore I spoke to Helenus, who had the power of prophecy, and asked him questions: “You, Trojan-born, are Heaven’s interpreter. ...”)

Douglas calls attention again to the reverence:

And with sic wordis besocht him *reuerently*:
O *gentill* Troiane, diuine interpretetur, ... (II.141.6-7; 3.358-9)

In cases like these there is a double unfolding of moral attributes: that A reveres B tells us something good about both. Later, when they leave and Anchises makes offerings from the ship, the focus is shifted. Douglas adds a line, “With full devoit reuerence and worschip” (II.152.2; after 3.525): this magnifies the gods but gives credit to Anchises too.

The dividing-line between the earlier examples I gave of “filling-in” (indicating more of an inner life) and these later ones (indicating value) is necessarily indeterminate: Aeneas’ “purposiveness”, for instance, might be regarded either quite

natural-descriptively or morally, depending on point of view. But it is the very flexibility of this narrative “point of view” that especially matters for us, and Douglas’ tendency to highlight at will a moral context gives his individuals extra fullness.

For the most part his moral elaborations faithfully follow what the story already contains (albeit sometimes tacitly or at some remove from the particular event). The different effect he produces in particular cases has more to do with his underlying formal-structural shift (his metaphysics) than with some specific re-evaluation of the person in question. Attempts to see Douglas’ version as tendentious are unjustified. Marilyn Desmond, for instance, is surely reading too much into *Eneados* when she concludes that:

Douglas’s reading of *Aeneid* 4 and his interpretive approach to Dido’s story illustrate the extent to which antifeminist discourse - along with the epideictic rhetoric of the humanists - shaped his translation practices.¹²

(Long before Douglas, of course, there was a history of moral engagement with the Aeneas-Dido narrative.) Douglas himself took a conventional line in *The Palice of Honour*: Aeneas was Dido’s “fals lufe Enee” (I.22.27). But in Prologue I he is taking issue with Chaucer and maintaining that if we read Virgil’s Book IV it is clear that Aeneas was innocent:

Thair sal 3e fynd Enee maid neuir aitht,
Promit, nor band with hir for to abyde; ... (II.17.10-11)

The picture he gives in his translation of Book IV, of Dido as a woman in love and headed for a tragic death, is without doubt considerably enhanced, but the effect is to make her more interesting in being much the same, rather than something different. In the early stages, when she is trying to secure peace of mind through ritual offerings, Douglas gives an expanded version of Virgil’s:

heu, uatum ignarae mentes! quid uota furentem,
quid delubra iuuant? est mollis flamma medullas
interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus.

¹² Marilyn Desmond, *Reading Dido: Gender, Textuality, and the Medieval Aeneid* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), p. 193.

(Knight: But how pitifully weak is the prescience of seers! There lay no help for her infatuation in temples or in prayers; for all the time the flame ate into her melting marrow, and deep in her heart the wound was silently alive.)

This is Douglas:

O walaway! of spamen and diuinis
 The *blind myndis*, quhilkis na way diffynis
 The *force nor strenth of luif with his hard bandis!*
 Quhat awalit thir sacrificise or offerandis?
 Quhat helpis to vesy templs in *luiffis raige?*
Behald onhappy Dido of Cartage
 In this meyne sessoun birnyng *hait as gleid;*
 The secret wound *deip in hir mynd gan spreid,*
 And of *hoit amoris* the subtell quent fyre
 Waistis and consumis merch, banis, and lyre. (II.179.3-12; 4.65-7)

The emotional temperature (beginning with the narrator himself) has been raised, but that is all. Then much later, when the theme is Dido's rage and sense of betrayal, Douglas secures the same intensity. Twice the Latin "furens" is translated as "amorous" (II.192.20, 193.23; 4.283,298) - though Douglas misses a chance by translating as "dissauit" (II.195.21; 4.330) the Latin "capta" (i.e. "in love's snare", according to Ascensius' suggestion); "moribundam" is expanded into "Reddie to de, and my selfin to spill" (II.195.5; 4.323); "quid moror?" into "Bot quhairto suld I my deid langar delay?" (II.195.9; 4.325), with the additional "ha God! quhow all thing now in vane is" (II.195.7); she speaks "in feble estait" where the Latin is simply "Dixerat" (she spoke, II.195.22; 4.331); "pudor" and "fama" (honour and reputation) had been earlier expanded into "womanheid ... and worschep" and "fame, lawde, and renownye" (II.195.2-3; 4.322-3); while "per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos" (by our union and marriage rites begun) is carefully translated - with perhaps something of the deliberate ambivalence which some commentators, but not all, have found in the Latin¹³ - as:

... be our trouth plychting eik,
 And be our spousage begunnyn, ... (II.194.23-4; 4.316)

There is sympathetic editorial generalisation too: to Virgil's "quis fallere possit amantem?" (who can deceive a lover?) Douglas first adds "day or nycht" (II.193.18;

¹³ See, e.g., T. E. Page (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil*, on 4.316.

4.296), but then stands back and comments on the ambiguous “omnia tuta timens”

(fearing all things that are safe) with his own sentiments, and the words:

Dreding all sovir thing, as is the gise
Off every luffar all time to stand in feir; ... (II.193.20-21; 4.298)

This puts Dido’s feelings into another intelligible context.

All of this is in line with Douglas’ tendency to refurbish from within the sketch; as if redrawing Virgil with a thicker nib. He certainly has little use for soft-focus, and his lighting effects can sometimes be disturbing, but he treats everyone like that. Any argument that Douglas is “anti-feminist” would need to tackle his metaphysics - just conceivably “masculinist” (all that knockabout disconnectedness and thrust) in contrast to Virgil’s “feminine wholeness” - or his style (which in an earlier generation might, like Dryden’s, have been described as “masculine”).¹⁴

Less famous examples of Douglas’ practice of trenchantly spelling out moral characteristics are Camilla and Ascanius. There is a remark occurring in the course of Camilla’s *aristeia*:

illa etiam, si quando in tergum pulsa recessit,
spicula conuerso fugientia derigit arcu.

(Knight: And sometimes too, when compelled to fall back, she would aim sharp arrows in her retreat, turning her bow to shoot behind her.)

Douglas makes an interesting adjustment to this, as if to ward off any supposition that such a glowing heroine could be guilty of retreat:

And gif that so betyd into that fycht
Hyr feris gaue the bak and tuke the flycht,
Into the chais oft wald scho turne agane,
And, fleand, with hir bow schuit mony a flane. (IV.59.17-20; 11.653-4)

¹⁴ The Scots description of Dido (by Juno) as a “silly woman” for Virgil’s “femina” (II.181.7; 4.95) is not derogatory. Douglas inserts the epithet often, to characterise variously men and women and animals and spirits and towns (e.g. “silly Troy” for “Troiae”: II.271.17; 5.787). It means principally “pitiable”, with a suggestion of simple innocence; and is (paradoxically) often interchangeable with another epithet found in Douglas, “onsilly”. Conversely, when Douglas turns Helenus’ word for the Sibyl - “insanam” - into “godly ... Full of the spreit divine” he is not upgrading her, merely focusing on the inherent idea of supernatural frenzy (II.146.13-14; 3.443).

Ascanius, in everyday human terms (leaving aside Juno and Allecto), was responsible for the outbreak of hostilities in Latium when he killed Silvia's pet stag:

ipse etiam eximiae laudis succensus amore
Ascanius curuo derexit spicula cornu; ...

(Knight: [Ascanius was] aflame with a passion for this special glory. Bending his bow he aimed a pointed arrow.)

Notice Douglas' unobtrusive addition:

Ascanyus the child him self alsua,
Birrand in desyr of sum notable renowne,
Wyth nokkit bow ybent all reddy bowne,
Wenand hym wyld, leit sone ane arrow glyde. (III.116.18-21; 7.496-7)

That lets him off the hook, morally. But it is a natural interpolation, not a re-evaluation.

There *may* be a parallel to the above instances in the reference to the Trojans' uprooting of the sacred olive tree "nullo discrimine" (without realising? without paying due attention?). Douglas comes down on the side of their innocence: "mysknawand it hallowit was" (IV.152.23; 12.77). Whatever the particular ambivalence, Douglas' point here matches the broader attitude to Aeneas' men at this stage of the narrative.¹⁵

Occasionally guilt is accentuated, as when the murder of Dido's first husband, Sychaeus, by her brother Pygmalion, is prefaced in Virgil simply by the words "quos inter medius uenit furor" (anger came between them); Douglas expands this and says of Pygmalion:

Quhilk, but offence or occasioun of greif,
For blynd cuvaticke of gold throw his mischeif, ... (II.41.17-18; 1.348)

Sometimes he safeguards an individual's status by changing to a verb that suggests devolvement (i.e. "he caused such-and-such to be done"). Aeneas, spotted by Mercury, is (for Douglas) not actually himself building the city, as he is in Virgil: "Aenean fundantem arces ac tecta nouantem conspicit" (Knight: ... he saw Aeneas engaged on the foundations of the citadel and the construction of new dwellings).

Douglas says:

¹⁵ Douglas is also in no doubt that the consul Brutus was a good man, despite sacrificing his two sons, though the Latin can be taken in more than one way (III.66.10-16; 6.822-3).

Eneas foundand towris he did espy,
And *garrand beild* new lugeingis besyly: ... (II.191.11-12; 4.260-1)

To honour Misenus, Aeneas - according to Virgil - sets up a sepulchre: “at pius Aeneas ingenti mole sepulcrum imponit”; in Douglas he gets others to do it:

Eneas tho *gart* vp errekit be
A sepulture of full huge quantite, ... (III.23.29-30; 6.232-3)

And when Tullus Hostilius is said to inflict punishment - “raptabatque uiri mendacis uiscera Tullus” (Knight: Tullus was ... dragging the lying chieftain’s remnants) -

Douglas makes it more dignified:

This faythles wychtis entralis war outdraw,
By *command of* Tullus Hostilius, ... (III.197.6-7; 8.644)

In ways like these individuals are enhanced by incorporating them within a moral framework, with the translator/narrator actively intervening in the characterisation and opening up possibilities for the reader’s engagement in turn.

5. Conclusion, with excursus

The greater clarity of personal boundaries which Douglas secures for his individuals - more evident interactivity, more distinct particularity, more inner content and overt moral significance - releases them in some degree from the web of events in which Virgil embeds them. They become more strikingly “real” for us, in three important ways. First, they feature in the story as familiar presences, with lineaments of action and thought and value which we can readily recognise and understand. They look and sound more like the beings with whom we are acquainted in life outside the *Aeneid*. Secondly, they possess lives of their own, what Ker calls “solidity”,¹⁶ so that we feel they could materialise and do things in other contexts. They have the requisite

¹⁶ Writing of Chaucer’s *Troilus* (and by extension of Henryson) he says, “... one may think of the personages as living in other scenes besides those which he has presented in the poem”. W. P. Ker, *Form and Style in Poetry*, ed. by R. W. Chambers (London: Macmillan, 1929), p. 86.

substance and autonomy. Thirdly, they have a capacity to be talked about. Like human beings we know who become topics of conversation, they *mean* something to others, they can be discussed and debated, perhaps endlessly.

In these three ways Douglas' individuals become important points of access for the reader, familiarisers or mediators - "role models" even - through whom we can come to terms with the narrative as a whole, and lessen its distance. They also qualify the way in which our relationship with the narrator/translator is shaped. The interactivity, singleness and fulness which Douglas gives to his individuals is projected from (and retrojected upon) himself, with lively implications for the reader's engagement. The whole work, in effect, becomes interlocutory, a personal conversation involving Douglas and ourselves as well as the network of individuals in the story. This is Douglas' radical, comprehensive way with the story: a retelling that draws his readers into collaboration.

To close this Section and - by a comparison - to underline the Douglas-effect I shall look briefly at two mediaeval versions of the *Aeneid*: the French twelfth-century *Roman d'Eneas*,¹⁷ and an Irish version of contested date, but evidently before 1400, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*.¹⁸ Both can be seen as reworkings in the direction of greater personal particularity, but they accomplish it very differently. My purpose here is not to trace literary influence, though it is very possible that Douglas would be aware of the French version and not impossible even that he was aware of the Irish version (Douglas territory in the fifteenth-century included Gaelic speakers). It is virtually certain that he would be aware of the literary tradition represented by the French version, and more than merely possible that the narrative characteristics of the Irish version had reached him somehow, however informally.

There are superficial resemblances between the translatorial thrusts underlying *Eneas* and *Eneados* respectively: a concern with circumstantiality and the demands of

¹⁷ J.-J. Salverda de Grave (ed.), *Eneas, Roman du XII^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Champion, 1964-8).

¹⁸ George Calder (ed. and trans.), *Imtheachta Aeniasa: The Irish Aeneid*.

cause and effect, a shift of focus from grand themes to everyday human behaviour, sometimes achieved by amplifying Virgil and producing a story more particulate, less “holistic” than Virgil’s. John A. Yunck mentions a criticism made of Virgil by those who prefer Homer:

... lovers of Homer have long complained that Vergil’s epic hero is irretrievably pallid in comparison with those of Homer, that Aeneas lacks the freedom, spontaneity, and personal magnitude of an Achilles, a Hector, an Agamemnon, an Ajax. Throughout Vergil’s epic, but especially after Book vi, they insist, Aeneas is theme-ridden, overburdened by his household gods, by his submissiveness to duty, until the *Aeneid* becomes a sort of secular saint’s life in lofty, sensitive hexameters, with Aeneas exemplary, rather than heroic, more symbol than character. ... [In *Eneas*] its hero is much more nearly a free agent.¹⁹

But in the French version we are in a different world from Douglas’. *His* radical overhaul still respects the parameters of the original, in outline and in detail. The French writer expands grotesquely, particularly in the love story of Lavinia:

From Vergil’s shadowy symbol of cultural union, Lavinia was transformed into one of the great lovers of the Middle Ages.²⁰

The Lavinia episode is exceptional - more like a lengthy codicil than an internal expansion - but the same process occurs throughout. Muscatine explains the detail:

... elaborate and fantastic descriptions; rapid, stichomythic conversations; long, introspective monologues imitated from Ovid, but peculiarly altered; dialogues within monologues. It adopts a physiology and etiquette of love from Ovid and the troubadours, and can deal with this subject, along with other wonders and miracles, with a length and minuteness which bespeak a nearly insatiable interest on the part of its aristocratic audience.²¹

Hence the description of Camilla at the end of Book VII, which takes up 15 lines in Virgil and 36 in Douglas, takes 147 in *Eneas*, ranging over such diverse topics as her interests, the state of her teeth, her wardrobe, and the unusual horse she rode.²²

Replicating typical courtly narrative, the French writer also accentuates “subjectivity” through *introspection*:

¹⁹ John A. Yunck (trans.), *Eneas: A Twelfth-Century French Romance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 16.

²⁰ Yunck, p. 9.

²¹ Charles Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 12.

²² Virgil: 7.803-17; Douglas: III.140.9-141.12; *Eneas*: lines 3959-4106.

Monologue is used to promulgate fashionable psychological theory, to represent the highest reaches of passion, and to magnify and dissect the most private motions of the soul.²³

So while in Virgil Nisus' realisation that he has unwittingly abandoned his friend occasions a brief remark (9.390-1), in *Eneas* this stretches to forty lines of soul-searching (5145-84). That is not Douglas' way of "filling-in".

Nor is the French author's technique of jerky factuality at all like Douglas' modest *pari passu* interactivation. Yunck says of the French writer:

His narrative tends to separate into its constituent parts, to move jerkily along by passages of hasty, almost factual, reportage, interspersed with complete halts, while he indulges himself in the details of a marvel, the description of a building, the delivery of a speech, or the recounting of an amusing legend. He is thus digressive rather than synthetic, and in this he has the support of literary theoreticians of his time.²⁴

Although the French version sticks broadly to the gist of the plot, it offers detours, omissions and replacements rather than a steady retelling.

The Irish prose version is a more sober offering. In Erich Poppe's words, it ... follows quite closely the structure and sequence of events in the *Aeneid*, but manipulates them at the same time in a characteristic way to suit the needs and expectations of its own time and audience.²⁵

And he quotes another commentator as saying:

The substantial additions the translator made to the original are [...] not new themes or content, but native elaborations on content which he encountered there.²⁶

It avoids Virgil's rich use of epithets and similes, but makes "a generous use of alliterating phrases and of doublets or triplets of synonyms".²⁷ But while heightening particularity it too turns out very differently from *Eneados*. Two examples will show this, redescriptions of Turnus and Ascanius respectively.

Turnus is described in the Latin thus:

Ipse inter primos praestanti corpore Turnus
uertitur arma tenens et toto uertice supra est.

²³ Muscatine, p. 24.

²⁴ Yunck, pp. 19-20.

²⁵ Erich Poppe, *A New Introduction to Imtheachta Aeniassa: The Irish Aeneid*, p. 1.

²⁶ Poppe, p. 17; the reference is to an article by Edgar Slotkin.

²⁷ Poppe, p. 20.

(Knight: Turnus himself moved to and fro among the foremost, splendid to see, weapons in hand, and towering by a full head above the rest.)

Douglas renders the passage in this way:

Turnus hym self, of weyr the cheif capitane,
 Amyd princis and gret chyftanis ilkane
 Enarmit walkis, turnand to and fro,
 Wyth corps of statur elegant, that so,
 Quhair as he went throu out the routtis on hie,
 Abuf thaim all his heid men mycht weill se, ... (III.138.13-18; 7.783-4)

The Irish version goes thus:

Tainic *and dono* in righmilid .i. Tuirrn mac Duin ceand gaili 7 gaiscidh arai
 crotha 7 aillechta 7 mine 7 maccæmachta .i. rind agha 7 anratachta na huile
 Edalta. Ord esairgni catha 7 bruiti bidbad eside. Sciath dhidin 7 imdeghla
 crichi 7 ceniuil na Rudullta, 7 ni bai a samhail isin uile Edalta do bruth *no* do
 brig *no* do borrfadh *no* do mhed *no* do mhaisi *no ar* maine *no ar* mordacht *no*
ar maccæmhdacht *ar* chruth *no ar* ceniuil *ar* gail *no ar* gaiscedh, 7 is amhlaid
 tainic co morshluagaib Rudullta imalle fris.

(There, too, came the royal soldier, to wit, Turnus, son of Daunus, flower of
 valour and prowess, as regards form, beauty, refinement, and youth - the point
 of battle and of heroism of all Italy. A hammer he of battle-breaking and
 crushing foes, a shield of defence and protection for the territory and race of
 the Rutulians; and his like was not in all Italy for spirit or for might, or for
 pride, or for size, or beauty, or riches, or majesty, or youth, or form, or race, or
 for valour, or for prowess; and thus came he, having great hosts of the
 Rutulians along with him.)²⁸

As to Ascanius:

ipse inter medios, Veneris iustissima cura,
 Dardanius caput, ecce, puer detectus honestum,
 qualis gemma micat fuluum quae diuidit aurum,
 aut collo decus aut capiti, uel quale per artem
 inclusum buxo aut Oricia terebintho
 lucet ebur; fusos ceruix cui lactea crinis
 accipit et molli subnectens circulus auro.

(Knight: In the thick of them was the young Dardan prince himself, fit indeed
 for Venus' especial love. His handsome head was uncovered, and he glittered
 like a jewel set against dark gold to be an ornament for neck or head, or like
 gleaming ivory skilfully inlaid in boxwood or in terebinth from Oricum; his
 hair was clasped by a circlet of pliant gold, and streamed down from it over his
 milk-white neck.)

The Dardane chyld, the 3ing Ascanyus,
 Principall thocht and cuir of Dame Venus,
 Amyd the rowtis, in covert quhar he 3eid,
 Thair mycht be sene in hys fresch lustyheyd,

²⁸ Calder, pp. 112-3; lines 1771-9.

Lyke as ane gem, wyth his brycht hew schynyng,
 Departis the gold set amydwart the ryng,
 Or in the crownell pycht, or rych hynger
 Quhilk dois the nek array, or the hed geir;
 And mair semely than evir bane to se,
 Craftely closit within the box of tre,
 Or than amynd the blak terebynthine
 Growis by Orycia, and, as the geit dois schyne:
 Hys curland lokkis hyngis down weill dek
 About hys schuldris our hys mylk quhyte nek;
 Ane circulet of plyabyll gold sa brycht
 Abuf hys haris apon hys hed weil pycht. (III.288.27-289.10; 10.132-8)

*Tic dono etaru sin isin cath in mæthoglach an urdiric allata 7 in maccæm 7 in
 mertretill 7 in rind agha 7 imghona iarthair .i. Asgan mac Ænias meic Anachis
 meic Ilois meic Trois meic Erectonius meic Dardain meic Ioibh meic Saduirnd
 int Asgan isin, fer suairc sochraid seghaind særcheniuil in mac sin, bunudh
 oirechus 7 ardflaith[i]usa in domain uili eside, ar is uada rogenetar airdrigha
 in domain.*

(Moreover, amongst these there came into the battle the tender stripling,
 splendid, renowned, famous, the youth, the furious darling, the point of battle,
 and man-slaying of the west, to wit, Ascanius, son of Aeneas, son of Anchises,
 son of Ilus, son of Tros, son of Erichthonius, son of Dardanus, son of Jove, son
 of Saturn, was that Ascanius, a man gentle, comely, stately, free-born was that
 lad, the origin of the supremacy and over-lordship of all the world was he; for
 from him sprang the emperors of the world.)²⁹

The Gaelic version undoubtedly individualises, but it does so on the basis of a quite
 different set of matrices. Its refocusing draws on assumptions about prestige, impact,
 appearance and family connections which give it an altogether different quality from
 that of Douglas, as indeed from that of Virgil.

²⁹ Calder, pp. 148-9; lines 2363-9.

CHAPTER V

DOUGLAS AND FATE

1. *Fate in Virgil*

Given Douglas' tendency to loosen and particularise we might predict that he will have special difficulties in dealing with Virgil's representation of fate. I argue in this Chapter that he does in fact come unstuck, partly because his distinctive metaphysical refocusing is inappropriate to the sort of reality that "fate" is (I analyse this difficulty in Section 3), but partly through another factor, of a more existential nature (to be discussed in Section 2), which aggravates the problem. Douglas in this area is peculiarly unsure of himself. Fortunately for the overall effect, however, his deficiencies in rendering fatefulness directly are in some degree made good by "seepage" from other layers of his story-telling: intimations of destiny inherent in the way the story in general is constituted and retold. These I discuss in Section 4.

Richard Jenkyns makes a telling remark about Aeneas:

We can perhaps say that Aeneas is 'out of his depth' not only in his dealings with Dido but throughout much of the poem.¹

He contrasts Aeneas with his Greek antecedents:

Homer's heroes, Achilles and Odysseus, are at the mercy of the gods, but they are none the less at home in their own world; they are, in some important sense, in control of their own experience and both express themselves in superbly articulate speeches. Aeneas, we feel, is different.²

Within the *Aeneid* itself Aeneas is contrasted with Turnus, who represents the old way: heroic and relatively uncomplicated.

¹ Richard Jenkyns, *Classical Epic: Homer and Virgil*, p. 63.

² Jenkyns, p. 63.

Turnus is allowed a long speech of passionate, articulate argument on the Homeric model (11.378-444); Aeneas is not. Instead, he is a listener, a man under instruction; he learns from dreams and visitations, ... Aeneas has to cope with a world which has become in some ways incomprehensible; ...³

Aeneas is out of his own depth because he is lodged and moved along in a greater depth, for which the commonest single word in Virgil is *fatum*. Fate, or destiny, is the ultimate reason and ultimate cause behind everything that happens in the story. Its role is complex and puzzling and the reader can never be sure how it is supposed to relate to the activities of the gods (in particular of Jupiter, who is in some ways a guardian of destiny, in some ways its author), or to the free decisions of human beings (who can resist it or promote it, and recognise or fail to recognise it). But while, in Camps' words, "the texture, so to speak, of the ordinances of Fate is loose",⁴ it is supreme. From the earliest mention of Aeneas as a man "*fato profugus*" (exiled through fate, 1.2) to his last encounter with the enemy, when "*telum Aeneas fatale coruscat*" (Aeneas shakes his fateful spear, 12.919), destiny is the mainspring.

The paradox of its workings, and of who works it, is already evident in an early conversation between Venus (alarmed at the troubles which Juno has been bringing on Aeneas) and Jupiter,

... qui res hominumque deumque
aeternis regis imperiis ...

(ruling by eternal decrees all human and divine affairs). (1.229-30)

Jupiter reassures Venus:

'parce metu, Cytherea, manent immota tuorum
fata tibi; cernes urbem et promissa Lauini
moenia, sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli
magnanimum Aenean; neque me sententia uertit.
hic tibi (fabor enim, quando haec te cura remordet,
longius, et uoluens fatorum arcana mouebo)
bellum ingens geret Italia populosque ferocis
contundet moresque uiris et moenia ponet, ...'

(Knight: Spare your fears, Cytherean. You have your people's destiny still, and it shall not be disturbed. You shall see your city, see Lavinium's walls, for I

³ Jenkyns, p. 63.

⁴ W. A. Camps, *An Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 42.

have promised them. And you shall exalt to the stars of Heaven our son Aeneas, the great of heart. There is no thought changing my will. But now, because anxiety for him so pricks you, therefore shall I speak of the more distant future, and, turning the scroll of the Fates, awake their secrets. Know, then, that Aeneas shall fight a great war in Italy and overthrow proud peoples. He shall establish for his warriors a way of life and walls for their defence; ...

(1.257-64)

Everything will be all right eventually (though there will be a lot of suffering on the way, with battles to be fought), and there will be a divine outcome for Aeneas himself, but for his people not a merely, or even a mainly, otherworldly one. What fate determines is something mighty upon earth, an *imperium*: “urbem” and “moenia” (city, walls) and “moresque uiris” (way of life). But what exactly is the relationship between destiny (“fata”) and Jupiter’s will (“sententia”)? What sort of causality is implied in “therefore shall I speak of the more distant future, and, turning the scroll of the Fates, awake their secrets”? Is Jupiter speaking of what he is going to do, or of what is going to happen; or both? Douglas’ translation takes it in a weaker sense:

My sentence is not alterit, as thou traistis;
Bot I sall schaw the, sen sic thochtis the thraistis,
And heir declair of destanyis the secreit,
Full mony zeiris tofoir thai be compleit: ...

(II.36.19-22)

His “schaw” and “declair” imply a role of witness and reporter for Jupiter, rather than of originator and implementer. This may be because he is following a reading itself weaker - “monebo” (I shall tell) rather than “mouebo” (I shall move).⁵ Probably that is all the Latin means at this point, though on a later occasion (see p. 182) the associated image of “turning” the fates has a more active connotation (II.142.17-18; 3.375-6); and even in the present passage the earlier “There is no thought changing my will” hints at something more than reporting. So too, and clearly, do some later lines in the same conversation:

his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:
imperium sine fine dedi. ...

⁵ Ascensius mentions both (“movebo [i.e.] excitabo, aut monebo”), though even on the more activist reading he refers the “excitation” or “awakening” to Jupiter’s reporting the secret content of fate rather than to his making it come about.

(Knight: To Romans I set no boundary in space or time. I have granted them dominion, and it has no end.) (1.278-9)

Jupiter's reassurance moves to its end with the enigmatic words "sic placitum": but agreeable ("placitum") to whom precisely? Douglas gives his slant on the authority involved: "This is determit, this likis the goddis, I wis" (II.37.23; 1.283).

So fate and its workings are in themselves deeply intractable, even without the added complication of having to make effective poetic drama out of them. As to this further difficulty, Heinze, after quoting Seneca's summary of how necessity and God's will are related ("an irrevocable course of events carries along human and divine actions equally: even the founder and controller of all things did write down what is fated, but he follows it; he always obeys it, he ordained it only once"), continues:

An all-powerful and all-knowing god, without whom and in opposition to whom nothing can happen, and who has himself relinquished his freedom to decide about anything and everything, is - perhaps - just about conceivable, but is completely unusable in an epic poem. Concessions must inevitably be made; ...⁶

This will include building up gods as individual personalities with limitations and weaknesses, and with relationships (through dreams, visions, prayers) with human beings who have themselves some measure of freedom. But Virgil keeps the elusive, transpersonal, mystery alive by also integrating associations, perspectives and resonances in ways that centre the story and its readers. They *feel* that something is going on beyond what meets the eye. In particular he can exploit the more-than-geographical concept of "Rome" which he and his readers share.

Destiny, then, in the *Aeneid* figures as a reality of a different order from the particular phenomena which embody it and in which it may be detected. For all its nearness to the action, it is ultimately transcendent, asymmetrically related to particular items in the story in the sense that it can do things to them which they cannot do to it, and it can baffle them while they cannot baffle it. It functions in the narrative as a kind of Platonic universal, with the important difference that in the *Aeneid* it is "piety"

⁶ Richard Heinze, *Virgil's Epic Technique*, p. 237.

rather than “reason” that is required for establishing contact with it. This suggestion is different from a claim sometimes made, that Virgil’s world-view is - in some respects at least - essentially Platonist.⁷ Whether that be true or not is not relevant here, but in his poem he meets the dramatic challenge in a manner for which a Platonist understanding of universals provides the readiest way of doing justice to its importance. I shall suggest that part of Douglas’ problem is that he cannot bring himself to be quite Platonist enough to do justice, in a Virgilian way, to fate in the story of Aeneas.

2. *The dilemma facing Douglas*

We need to distinguish three factors in Douglas’ handling of fate: a deep-rooted personal and religious incertitude, which affects him in a way difficult to identify on specific occasions but nonetheless significant in general (and I discuss this now); the application to it of his standard practice in dealing with any phenomena (Section 3); and the way in which other features of his story-telling can be considered as coming to the rescue (Section 4).

When Douglas claims to give a more accurate translation (point-by-point) of Virgil than Caxton did, he singles out as notably weak Caxton’s reason for not including Book VI (that it is “fenzeit, and nocht for to beleif”)⁸ - because of course the *whole* of the poem is fictitious:

Sa is all Virgill perchance, for, by his leif,
Juno nor Venus goddes neuer wer,
Mercur, Neptune, Mars, nor Jupiter.
Of Fortune eik, nor hir necessite,
Sic thingis nocht attentik ar, wait we;

⁷ e.g. T. R. Glover: “Virgil, filled with the thought of the divine life pervading all things, hardly seems to conceive of the Olympian gods as sharing that life. ... he has Platonized them as far as he could; ...” *Virgil*, p. 301.

⁸ Caxton’s words are in his *Eneydos*, p. 120. His French source was blunter: “ce fut mensonge” (p. 206, note on 120/18-19).

Nor 3it admittis that quent philosophy
 Haldis saulis hoppis fra body to body,
 And mony thingis quhilkis Virgill did rehers,
 Thocht I thame write furth followand his vers. (II.9.1-10)

That seems clear enough. A writer of one time weaves into his story personages and events which someone of a different time might be indisposed to accept as real or true. Perhaps the original writer did not think they were real or true either. But they are part of the furniture of the story and a translator need feel no awkwardness about reproducing them in another language for another public. Virgil's world is a made-up world. Like all fiction, or part-fiction, it requires some suspension of disbelief.

The trouble is that for Douglas the issue of objective truth in this area is extremely important, both theologically and existentially. It will not let him go. Either Virgil's divinities (in their role of mediators of destiny)⁹ represent something real, or they are untrue and therefore misleading, if not harmful. Even if they are "real" they may be less than innocuous. As a Christian translator Douglas has a responsibility to establish an acceptable status for them and, on that basis, give them a proper artistic credibility. It was a personal no less than a theoretical and an artistic challenge: essentially the one ambivalence throughout.

In a dream in which Douglas is confronted by Maphaeus Vegius, author of Book XIII, who is annoyed that the translator might be planning to ignore his supplement, Douglas defends himself as follows:

Mastir, I said, I heir weill quhat 3e say,
 And in this cace of perdon I 3ou pray:
 Nocht that I haue 3ou ony thing offendit,
 Bot rathyr that I haue my tyme mysspendit,
 So lang on Virgillis volume for to stair,
 And laid on syde full mony grave mater,
 That, wald I now write in that trety more,
 Quhat suld folk deme bot all my tyme forlore? (IV.171.19-26)¹⁰

⁹ There is less of a problem in depicting them as quasi-humans, mingling with other characters in the story.

¹⁰ The passage continues with reference to Jerome's dream, in which he was reproved for too much attention to "gentilis bukis" (IV.172.2-10).

Douglas returns to this thought more than once. In the “Dyrectioun of his Buik” he pleads with his friend and cousin Henry, Lord St Clair, whose idea it was that he should undertake the task, to stand up for him when he is maligned not just for errors but for having spent his time unwisely. People will ask “quhy I dyd this buike translait”:

3e [St Clair] cawsyt me this volume to endyte,
 Quhairthrow I haue wrocht myself syk dispyte,
 Perpetually be chydit with ilk knak [taunt],
 Full weill I knaw, and mokkyt behynd my bak.
 Say thai nocht, I myne honeste haue degraid,
 And at my self to schuite ane but [target] hes maid?
 Nane othir thyng thai threipe, heir wrocht haue I
 Bot fenzeit fabillys of idolatry,
 With sik myscheif as aucht nocht namyt be,
 Oppynand the gravis of smert iniquite,
 And on the bak half writis widdirsinnis
 Plentie of lesyngis, and ald perversit synnis. (IV.224.17,19-225.6)

Defensively, and movingly, he half concedes that there may be something in the criticism, though he might plead extenuation in virtue of the value of the end-product:

Quhar that I haue my tyme superexpendit,
Mea culpa, God grant I may amend it,
 With grace and space to vpset this tynsell [i.e. make amends for this loss].
 Thocht not be far sa largely as thai tell,
 As that me semys, 3it offendit haue I;
 For weill I wait, our wark to mony a wy
 Sall baith be plesand and eik profitabill,
 For tharin bene seir doctrynis full notabill. (IV.225.7-14)

But the feeling cannot be shaken off, and in “Tyme, Space, and Dait, of the Translatioun” he writes again from the heart. Though the work had taken eighteen months altogether, it had had sometimes to be set aside because of other duties:

Quhilk, for othir gret occupatioun, lay
 Onsterit clos besyd me mony ane day:
 And nethes, quhidder I serve thank or wyte,
 Fra tyme I tharto fyrst set pen to wryte,
 Thocht God wait gyf thir bundis war full wyde
 To me that had syk byssynes besyde, ... (IV.231.5-10)

As much as two months went by when he

Wrait neur a word, nor mycht the volum steyr
 For grave materis and gret solitud,
 That all sik laubour far besyde me stud. (IV.231.14-16)

Translation takes precious time and uses up precious intellectual and moral energy. Douglas' conscience is important as part of his hermeneutical quandary, and we may miss a distinctive quality in the fissuredness to which the quandary gives rise unless we keep this personal aspect in mind. There is a radical shakiness at the heart of his translation in this area.

He says (II.9.1-10, quoted on pp. 166-7) that there is really nothing in pagan divinities. But almost at once he is looking for ways of making what Virgil says about them credible. He has in mind particularly Book VI:

Bot traistis wele, quha that ilk saxt buik knew,
 Virgill therin a hie philosophour him shew,
 And, vnder the cluddes of dirk poetry
 Hid lyis thair mony notable history.
 For so the poetis be ther crafty curis,
 In similitudis, and vnder quent figuris,
 The suthfast mater to hyde and to constrene;
 All is not fals, traste wele, in caice thai fene. (II.9.13-20)

The position is less clear now. We are not simply to bracket off Virgil's divinities in story-land: they have substance in them, of a sort. In Prologue VI Douglas develops this idea and Virgil becomes virtually *anima naturaliter Christiana*. Look carefully at the story, and you find a view about human life and how the divine intersects with it: moral and theological truth for those with eyes to see.

In all his werkis Virgile doith describe
 The stait of man, gif thow list onderstand;
 Baith life and deid in thir first buikis five;
 And now, into the saxt, we haif on hand,
 Eftir thair deid in quhat plite saulis sall stand.
 He writis like a philosophour naturall;
 Twichand our faith mony clausis he fand,
 Quhilk bene conforme, or than collateral. (III.2.17-24)

There are intimations of the capital sins, everlasting punishment of the wicked, purgatory for venial sins, limbo for unbaptised children, rewards for virtue, the difficulty of gaining heaven, the ease of going to hell. Augustine had noted this:

How oft rehersis Austyne, cheif of clerkis,
 In his gret volume of the Cetie of God,
 Hundreth versis of Virgile, quhilk he merkis
 Agane Romanis, till vertu thaim to brod!

And of this sax buik walis he mony a scoir:
 Nocht but guid ressoun; for, thocht Crist ground our faith,
 Virgilis sawis ar worth to put in stoir. (III.3.17-23)

Thus in *Eclogue* IV there was what might be an announcement of the Incarnation (III.3.27-8). Then all the plurality built into Catholic theology (its Trinitarianism, its concept of a God who imparts grace and godliness to beings of different orders, human and angelic) might suggest interesting parallels with the multiplicity of divine beings in Virgil's world:

We trow a God, regnand in personis thre,
 And zit angellis hevinlie spritis we call;
 And of the hevinlie wychtis oft carpis he,
 Thocht he beleiffit thai wer nocht angelis all. (III.4.9-12)

Ane mover, ane begynnar puttis he,
 Sustenis all thing, and doith in all remane;
 And be our faith the sammyn thing grant we. (III.5.24-6)

Of course there are limits:

At thar bene mony Goddis I will nocht sane;
 Thocht haly scripturis just men, Goddis, clepe.¹¹ (III.6.3-4)

But what more natural than to furnish nominal Christian equivalents?

Sibylla, til interpret propirly,
 Is clepit ane maid of Goddis secrete priue,
 That has the spreit divine of prophecy.
 Quha bettir may Sibilla namyt be,
 Than may the gloriis modir and madyn fre,
 Quhilk of hir natur consavit Criste, and buir
 Al hail the misteris of the Trinite,
 And maist excelland werk had ondir cuir. (III.6.7-14)

Correspondingly, the Pluto of Book VI is the Devil:

Sathan the clepe I, Pluto infernale,
 Prince in that dolorus den of wo and pane,
 Nocht God tharof, bot gretast wreche of all. (III.6.20-2)

This is not rejection, but "christening". The change in mood is unmistakable.

But the position is unstable. Prologue IV began with an address to Venus and Cupid as "Fosteraris of birnyng, carnale, hait delite" (II.164.4), implying some interaction with (and therefore independence of) "love" in the sense of a general reality

¹¹ A reference probably to Psalm 82.6 and John 10.34.

in the world; but, as the argument proceeds, the divine beings dissolve more and more into what they were supposed to “foster” and we get simply “love”: that force within human life which - in accordance with standard mediaeval treatments of the subject - is capable of being inordinate or defective or properly accordant with our duties to God and our neighbour. Bacchus and Proserpine and Victory, on the other hand, at the end of Prologue V, seem real enough and the question is not whether they exist, but whether they *matter*:

Bacchus of glaidnes, and funerall Proserpyne,
 And Goddes of triumph clepit Victory,
 Sall I 3ow call, as 3our naim war divyne?
 Na, na, it suffisith of 3ow full small memory;
 I bid nothir of 3our turmentis nor 3our glory;
 Bot he quhilk may ws glaid perpetually,
 To bring ws till his blis, on hym I cry. (II.222.5-11)

But in Prologue X, a passage redolent of the generous multiplicity of the God of Catholic theology, which might suggest possibilities of linking Virgil's deities with elements in the Catholic world-view, the argument takes a negative turn. The following lines are typical of its general tenor:

Thow haldis court our cristall hevynnis cleyr,
 With angellis, sanctis, and hevynly spretis seyr,
 That, but cessing, thy glor and loving singis:
 Manifest to the, and patent, bene all thingis;
 Thy spous, and queyn maid, and thy moder deyr. (III.277.9-13)

Some objective equivalence, then? Apparently not. Go back a few lines:

From the, begynning and end be of my muse:
 All other Jove and Phebus I refus.
 Lat Virgyll hald his mawmentis to hym self;
 I wirschip noder idoll, stok, nor elf,
 Thocht furth I wryte so as myne autour dois.

 Is nane bot thou, the Fader of Goddis and men,
 Omnipotent eternal Jove I ken.
 Only the, helply fader, thar is nane vther:
 I compt nocht of thir paygane Goddis a fudder,
 Quhais power may nocht help a haltand hen. (III.276.21-277.3)

The “Comment” written probably later than any of this (and reproduced only in the Cambridge MS) keeps us swinging back and forward too. As the status of this

ancillary work is unclear I need to say a little about it to justify making use of it.

Towards the end of the “Dyrectioun of his Buik” Douglas says:

I haue alsso a schort comment compild
To expon strange historeis and termes wild; ... (IV.228.21-2)

The only *declared* candidate (leaving aside the possibility that Prologue I is what he means) is the series of notes attached to the Cambridge MS, and Priscilla Bawcutt is in no doubt that this is what is referred to. She speaks of “ample internal evidence”:

The hortatory tone - ‘Now I beseik 3ow, curtas redaris’ - resembles that of Douglas’s more didactic Prologues; and phrases such as ‘my Palyce of Honour’ (I.i.13 n), ‘my proheme’ (I.iii.92. n), or ‘my proloug of the x buyk’ (I.v.2 n) bear the mark of the author not of a scribe or later reader.¹²

She concedes that there is a problem with two of the notes (on Prologue I.425 and 437) where Douglas appears in the third person, but suggests these may be an interpolation, or even “showing Douglas engaged in debate with himself”.¹³ The latter is not impossible, particularly since the point at issue is precisely that which has bemused Douglas in the ways indicated above; and his relapse into the third person might well be a symptom of his inability to declare himself plainly in one or other way.

Against the belief that the Cambridge notes are the “Comment” is that “having compiled a short comment” appears to suggest something brief and compendious, but above all complete. The notes attached to Prologue I and the first seven chapters of Book I straggle along and peter out. The strongest argument *for* the belief is one which I have not seen rehearsed anywhere, and which might go as follows. It is evident from our analysis of time, space and individuality that Douglas’ primary narrative concern is not (as often supposed, including perhaps by himself) pedagogical but to tell a story vividly and in a way that engages the reader in creative revisualisation on his or her part. He is a story-teller to the core. What we might expect, then, is that he should begin an explicatory comment but soon think better and give up. And that - if the

¹² Priscilla Bawcutt, *Gavin Douglas*, p. 108. The notes may of course be Douglas’, but not be his actual “schort comment compild”.

¹³ Bawcutt, p. 108. The lines in question are in Small II.16.29 and 17.9; the “Comment” notes are on pp. 280-1.

“Comment” is his - is precisely what happens. Ironically, it is the very *failure* of the exercise that supports the attribution.

One of the matters dealt with in the “Comment” is whether Aeneas broke faith with Dido: Chaucer felt he did, but Douglas defends Aeneas (in the body of Prologue I), first by alleging that - since Aeneas was following destiny - any charge would have to lie against the gods, not him:

Certes, Virgill schawis Enee did na thing,
 Frome Dido of Cartaige at his departing,
 Bot quhilk the goddes commandit him to forne;
 And gif that thair command maid him mansworne,
 That war repreif to thair diuinite,
 And na reproche vnto the said Enee. (II.16.29-17.2)

But (in commenting on this) Douglas sees this argument will not do:

This argument excusis nocht the tratory of Eneas, na his maynsweryng,
 considering quhat is said heirafoir, in the ij. c. of this prolog; that is,
 Juno nor Venus goddes neuer wer,
 Mercur, Neptune, Mars, nor Jupiter.
 Of Fortune eik, nor hir necessite,
 Sic thingis nocht attentik ar, wait we.
 [II.9.3-6] It followis than, that Eneas voucht not be command of ony goddis,
 bot of his awyn fre wyl, be the permission of God, quhilk sufferis al thing, and
 stoppis nocht, na puttis nocht necessite to fre wyll. He falit than gretly to the
 sueit Dydo; quhilk falt reprefit nocht the goddassis diuinite, for thai had na
 diuinite, as said is befoir. (II.280-1)¹⁴

In the Prologue Douglas subsequently moves his ground - though obviously without at that stage acknowledging the weakness of the first part of the argument - and maintains that there never was a marriage compact made, and indeed Dido had been given fair warning that Aeneas had something much bigger on his mind:

Als in the first, quhair Ilioneus
 Spekis to the quene Dido, sais he nocht thus,
 Thair cours by fait was set to Italy?
 Thus mycht scho nocht pretend ane just caus quhy,
 Thocht Troianis eftir departis of Cartage,
 Sen thai befoir declarit hir thair vayage.
 Reid the ferd buik quhar quene Dido is wraitht,
 Thair sal ze fynd Enee maid neur aitht,
 Promit, nor band with hir for to abyde; ... (II.17.3-11)

¹⁴ I follow Small's text of the “Comment”.

On this Douglas as commentator (if it is truly he) remarks “Heir he argeuis better than befoir” (II.281); and better - we might add - than he had then proceeded in the Prologue to argue, when he returned to the matter of the responsibility of the gods (who some pages earlier in the Prologue¹⁵ were deemed to be non-existent):

Thus him to be mansworne ma neuer betyde,
Nor nane vnkyndnes schew for to depart
At the bidding of Jove with reuthfull hart,
Sen the command of God obey suld all,
And undir his chargis na wrangus deid may fall. (II.17.12-16)

A curious - and revealing - remark is this one about Ilioneus:

... sais he nocht thus,
Thair cours by fait was set to Italy? (II.17.4-5)

Actually, no, he doesn't. Neither in the Latin nor in the Scots (the speech is at II.51.11-53.11; in Virgil 1.522-58) is there mention of “fate” as the impulse behind their journey: from Ilioneus it is a story about setting off on a journey but being driven aside by natural disasters. We are already of course primed to read fatefulness into events, but Ilioneus does not remark on it.¹⁶ His only mention of “fate” is as a hoped-for agency in keeping Aeneas alive, “quem si fata uirum seruant, si uescitur aura aetheria”:

Quham gif the fatis alive conseruit haith
To tak this hevinlie air and draw his braith, ... (II.52.21-2; 1.546-7)

For words from Ilioneus about fate in the requisite sense and application we have to wait until his much later interview with Latinus (Book VII).¹⁷ Douglas' difficulty in determining what sort of presence “fate” should have in his rendering of Virgil's narrative clearly disturbs not just his capacity to synthesise effectively, but his memory too.¹⁸

¹⁵ e.g. II.9.3-6.

¹⁶ Dido ought to have gathered it later from references in Aeneas' account; e.g. “quo fata ferant”: “quhidder the fatis wald we suld ga” (II.118.14; 3.7).

¹⁷ III.95.15-97.30; 7.212-48. Note especially 96.4-6 (223-4); 96.29-30 (234) and 97.9-11 (239-40).

¹⁸ Interestingly, the twelfth-century *Eneas* does have Ilioneus saying that Aeneas travels by the gods' protection and command:

lo [Eneas] garantirent bien li deu; ...
Par lor comandement vait querre
Itaille, une loigtaine terre; ... (lines 576,579-80).

Behind Douglas' musings lie mediaeval debates about how to make sense of the language of pagan mythology.¹⁹ He is aware of Boccaccio's *De Genealogie Deorum Gentilium Libri*, where identities were suggested between the "gods" and distinguished human beings (e.g. the three figures behind "Jupiter", II.288), and of Landino, where deities were linked with particular characteristics in human nature (e.g. II.286). There were also allegorical rewritings. But Douglas is unable to synthesise this into a consistent approach with the success that he achieves in relation to time, space and individuals. And his inability is a complex one: emotional and cultural, as well as technical. Destiny is "half fenzeit", and for him it is extremely difficult to be clear and firm as to what that implies for refocusing, or for encouraging readers to collaborate with him in telling the story afresh. The impression we get from his Prologues and "Comment" is of a man thinking aloud about issues of responsibility and dramatic credibility, knowing that in reading a story we are situated for the time being in two worlds - the "real" one shaped by our experience and beliefs, and the "fictitious" one generating contents and principles of its own. Destiny matters (to Douglas as to Virgil), but there is no decisive approach that suggests itself to Douglas as a credible replacement, able to do in his translation what destiny - emotively as well as cognitively - does in Virgil's poem. In that respect it is in a different category from the areas I discussed in Chapters II-IV.

It is in a different category too from other "personal" aspects of Douglas' situation, such as his reasons for translating in the first place, or even his musings about what makes a good translation. We could quite well sit lightly to all of these and still encounter the translation satisfactorily, on its own terms. But the dilemma of this Section is not "merely personal" in those ways.

In the first place, his embarrassment reflects an objective dynamic in the issue itself. How is something now incredible but still poetically powerful to be responsibly

¹⁹ Coldwell has a useful summary of the possible approaches available to Douglas: *Virgil's Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse*, vol.1, pp. 48-50.

retold? Maurice Bowra has shown how the same difficulty presented itself to three poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who aimed to produce a Virgilian epic on what were essentially Christian themes. He describes, for example, how Camões in *Os Lusíadas* (1572) tells of the heroic journey of Vasco da Gama to India in 1498, and dovetails into the narrative an account of Portuguese history “on a truly Roman scale”,²⁰ wielding a wealth of classical allusions and literary techniques. Among the difficulties he had to face was that his readers expected more than Virgilian echoes in the treatment of people and natural phenomena:

He must also follow his model in relating his human events to some scheme of things and provide a metaphysical or theological background. In other words, he must have divine personages in his poem, as Virgil and Homer had before him.²¹

Camões evidently enjoyed incorporating the antique gods in his story:

In them he found figures of delight and beauty, brilliant contrasts to the world which he saw about him. They are powers of the spirit which give light and glory to human achievements and grant an unreckonable reward to those who honour them; they are the forces which have created the best elements in European life as Camões knows it.²²

But the poet was a devout Catholic. How was his artistic strategy to make Christian sense? According to Bowra he followed two lines of justification, mutually incompatible. One is to claim that the divine constituents he depicts (for instance in the course of a vivid picture of the “Island of Loves” in Canto IX, where the sailors receive sensuous rewards for their tribulations) are purely allegorical:

... the Island is only an emblem of glory and ... the gods and heroes of the ancient world are nothing but human beings whom fame has immortalised: ...²³

The reality behind the actions of the gods rests ultimately on human experience, and theistic language is just a vivid way of underlining how important it is. A second kind of justification, which Bowra believes is “more profound and more satisfying” and which is “Camões’ real explanation” is that

²⁰ C. M. Bowra, *From Virgil to Milton* (London: Macmillan, 1945), p. 98.

²¹ Bowra, p. 109.

²² Bowra, p. 116.

²³ Bowra, p. 117.

... his divinities are symbols for different activities of the one supreme God, subordinate powers to whom various special functions are allotted.²⁴

They are

... neither fictions nor allegories nor famous men and women of the past but celestial powers who in their several spheres carry out the commands and will of the Supreme Being. They are even aspects of Him, and their powers are His.²⁵

And Bowra argues that Camões successfully worked his divinities into the action of his poem along these lines, making good use of Christian as well as earlier connotations of the word “god” to link one level of the narrative (the overt phenomena) with another (the underlying divine, and Christianly intelligible, mainspring). The result, he believes, has integrity and is poetically successful as well as existentially convincing to Christian readers. But that is not to deny the intrinsic dilemma; and Camões had the advantages over Douglas that he was crafting a poem of his own, and that he was writing for a people who had close (national and cultural) affinities with the narrative matter in hand.

The dilemma is not “merely personal”, in the second place, because it directly impacts upon how the matter of the story is shaped and how readers are brought into it. Douglas’ incertitude means in effect unclarity within the narrative and insecure points of access for the reader. Ideally, the translator needs to have settled upon his own presence and *modus operandi* within the story. Unless that is done, there is a kind of looseness in the enterprise which is essentially different from *both* the disciplined coordination of constituents, contoured differently but convincingly by Douglas in the case of particular events and entities in time and space, *and* the structured openness to readerly creativity and collaboration which we see to be an important aspect of his strategy throughout.

I have dealt at some length with this dilemma, and its potential for dislocating the narrative beyond the limits that Douglas’ strategy of repatterning implies, because

²⁴ Bowra, p. 118.

²⁵ Bowra, p. 119.

of its importance²⁶ - but also because of its elusiveness. Trying to find traces of it in the translation is tantamount to looking for what is not there, namely a firm, coherent refocusing. Any evidence of shakiness in particular passages might be the result rather of his general hermeneutical approach, and I am not sure that we can ever in practice distinguish with certainty (in particular examples) between what is the result of his primary tendency to break up and reconnect, and what is the result of his hesitancy over what to make of destiny in general. Suspicions that the latter is at work are more evident on the wider scale: a feeling (which presumably a reader either has or imagines, or does not) that in certain matters - in the “higher reaches” mainly - Douglas’ grip is weakened. The reader’s uneasiness in these areas is, I believe, qualitatively different from the sense (which comes elsewhere and can taste of exhilaration even) of being creatively dislocated and set to work to build the story anew. Tracking this guess, that something is amiss, to a specific authorial cause would be difficult if we had not already made ourselves acquainted with the underlying dilemma.

3. *His characteristic approach*

Now I turn to how Douglas applies himself in detail to the treatment of fate. His major difficulty is this. To take constituents which Virgil had patterned in one way, and then to repattern them in such a way that they remain broadly recognisable: that is one thing, and Douglas does it (I believe well) with most of the story. But to take an underlying pattern and repattern *it*, while retaining *it* in a manner broadly recognisable: that is something quite different, perhaps logically impossible, certainly requiring a very high degree of deftness in the execution. Fate in Virgil is more a pattern (or a

²⁶ Coldwell’s expression, “unimaginatively over-anxious”, p. 48, is untypically imperceptive.

patterner) of particular items - and a pattern comprehensive and elusive and riven with paradox, as we have seen - than just one more particular, patterned item.

After visiting Delos Aeneas and his company make for Crete, convinced that this is where they are meant to start their new life. But things go wrong and it is apparent that they need to check their understanding of their destiny. As they are planning to return to Delos, to the shrine of Apollo, Aeneas has a dream or vision in which the Trojan household gods explain the mistake he has made. It is a passage about the uncertainty of knowledge of fate, and about the ways in which destiny is communicated to imperfect mortals wondering what they should do. The gods explain that they have supported the Trojans hitherto, and will bring about great things for them. In Virgil it goes thus:

nos tumidum sub te permensi classibus aequor,
idem uenturos tollemus in astra nepotes
imperiumque urbi dabimus. tu moenia magnis
magna para longumque fugae ne linque laborem.

(Knight: ... in your care we traversed the heaving ocean with the fleet. And we shall exalt your grandsons to the stars and give dominion to your city. So make ready her walls, great walls for your Great Gods, and never shrink from the long effort of your exile.)

In Douglas:

Wnder thi gard to schip we ws addres,
Ourspannand mony swelland seis salt,
And to the sternis eik we sall exalt
The childring for to cum of thine ofspring;
Thi citie sall we gif empire to ring
Our all the erd; thairfor to goddis grete
Begyne to graith grete wallis and riall sete;
Leif nocht thi langsum labour, bot flee away; ... (II.128.16-23; 3.157-60)

But they have landed in the wrong place:

‘... Dictaea negat tibi Iuppiter arua.’

(Knight: Jupiter denies you Mount Dicte’s fields.)

In Douglas:

For the feildis in Crete neir Dicitus
Jupiter denyis to granting onto ws. (II.129.9-10; 3.171)

Aeneas comes to, he offers sacrifices, then takes the news to his father, who realises he had misinterpreted the original message, forgetting that there were two strands in the ancient people, one connected with Crete but the other - more relevantly - with Italy:

tum memorat: 'nate, Iliacis exercite fatis,
sola mihi talis casus Cassandra canebat.
nunc repeto haec generi portendere debita nostro
et saepe Hesperiam, saepe Itala regna uocare. ...'

(Knight: [Then he says] O my son, you who bear the burden of Troy's destiny, nothing like this was ever foreseen by any one except Cassandra. I remember now that one of her prophecies foretold this destiny for our race and that she often invoked Hesperia and Italy as our future realm, calling them by these names.)

In Douglas:

Syne said he: Son, thou irkit art algatis
By the contrarius frawart Troiane fatis;
Now I ramembir onelie how Cassandra
Full oft maid mentioun of Hesperia,
And oft als of the realme hait Italy,
Thir materis me declarand by and by.
That land now knaw I destinate to our kyn; ... (II.129.31-130.5; 3.182-5)

Then he gives the command:

'...cedamus Phoebo et moniti meliora sequamur.'

(Knight: Let us trust Apollo, accept his warning, and follow a better course.)

In Douglas:

Lat ws obey Phebus, and wend away,
As we bene monest, follow our chance, but pleis [contentions].

(II.130.10-11; 3.188)

The differences between Virgil and Douglas in representing this scene are subtle but significant. The household gods have in Douglas more to say about the nature and extent of the authority which is to come to Romans in the future: "Our all the erd" is an addition. They speak of more solidarity between themselves and Aeneas ("ws" instead of "you"). They alter the connection between labour and flight, making flight in Douglas' version a particular manoeuvre to be engaged in at this moment, rather than (as suggested in Virgil) the underlying character of the Trojans' whole experience. Anchises too elaborates on the nature of the Trojans' fates - in his case

looking back more than forward (“contrarius frawart” is an addition). He also accentuates personal solidarity by specifying that what Cassandra was saying was said *to him*; and also that it went further than just mentioning the names of Hesperia and Italy: it was their *meaning* (“Thir materis”) of which she told him. (Here Douglas is apparently taking a cue from Ascensius.) And the significance is spelled out as something that has just now dawned on him (“now know I”), whereas in the Latin the focus is on the original context of Cassandra’s utterances. Finally Anchises urges the company to “wend away” (like the household gods’ “bot flee away” this is a particularised tactic, whereas “sequamur” suggests a more general attitude or strategy) and to follow their “chance”, a rather weak word for the fate which (though not spelled out in the Latin) lies behind “meliora” (better course).

So there are some of the usual Douglas changes: making things more explicit, so that we know where we are (the gods explaining in passing about the “feildis in Crete”); foregrounding particulars rather than underlying states and conditions; heightening conversational intimacy (between the household gods and Aeneas and his folk, and between Anchises and Aeneas). Something of the brooding atmosphere and quiet cohesiveness of Virgil is undoubtedly lost.

At a later stage in their journey, Aeneas asks the prophet Helenus for advice. The omens have been good, with the exception of some frightening words from the Harpy Celaeno. Helenus replies:

‘Nate dea (nam te maioribus ire per altum
auspiciis manifesta fides; sic fata deum rex
sortitur uoluitque uices, is uertitur ordo),
pauca tibi e multis, quo tutior hospita lustris
aequora et Ausonio possis considerare portu,
expediam dictis; prohibent nam cetera Parcae
scire Helenum farique uetat Saturnia Iuno. ...’

(Knight: Son of the Goddess, it is clear and it is certain that you traverse the deep by sanctions from the Greater Powers. So are the lots of destiny drawn by the King of Gods; so does he set events to roll their course; so does he turn the pages of history to come. I shall speak, in my words to you, out of many truths a few only, that you may voyage the more safely over foreign seas and succeed in reaching repose in an Italian harbour. For the rest, either the Fates allow not Helenus to know, or Saturnian Juno forbids his prophesying.)

In Douglas:

Son of the goddes, sen traist is manifest
 That throw deip seis thi viage is adrest,
 And eik, of fortune by the boundis hie,
 The purviance divine wil so it be;
 The king of goddis so distributis the fatis,
 Rolling the chancis, and turning thame thusgatis:
 Of mony wordis, schortlie, a quhene sall I
 Declair, at thou mair sovirlie thairby
 May seik out throw the strange stremis onkend,
 And at ane port of Italie arrive at end;
 The remanent heirof, quhat euir be it,
 The werd sisteris defendis that suld be wit,
 And eik the dochter of auld Saturne, Juno,
 Forbiddis Helenus to speik it, and cryis, ho! (II.142.13-26; 3.374-80)

Signs are given, so that they will know they have reached their appointed destination;

nor need they worry about the prophecy that they will have to eat their tables:

is locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum.
 nec tu mensarum morsus horresce futuros:
 fata uiam inuenient aderitque uocatus Apollo.

(Knight: ... that place shall be the site for your city, and there you shall find sure repose from your tribulations. And be not appalled by the fear of gnawing your tables; Destiny will find a way for you, and if you call on him Apollo will be there to aid.)

In Douglas:

... thair, I the tell,
 Is the richt place and stede of 3our citie,
 And of 3our travell ferme hald to rest in lie.
 Nor the nedis nocht to gruich, in tyme to cum,
 The gnawing of 3our tabillis every crum,
 Destany sall fynd thairfor ane ganand way,
 And Phebus sall 3ou help, quhen 3e list pray. (II.143.16-22; 3.393-5)

Notice three occurrences here of phrases used elsewhere. Earlier (in Section 1, p. 164) I noted another instance²⁷ of the idea of “turning” the fates (here “uoluitque uices”, “Rolling the chancis”), which there seemed to mean primarily declaring what they intend, but here definitely suggests effectuation. Secondly, the god of the Tiber, speaking to Aeneas after he has landed in Italy, says:

²⁷ II.36.19-22; 1.260-2.

hic locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum, ...²⁸

(Knight: This spot shall be the place for your city, and there shall you find sure rest from your toils.)

In Douglas:

That is the place to set vp thi ciete,
Quhilk of 3our labour sovir rest sal be; ... (III.152.15-16; 8.46)

Thirdly, the phrase “fata uiam inuenient” (“Destany sall fynd thairfor ane ganand way”) is echoed when Jupiter in Book X is declaring his neutrality:

‘... rex Iuppiter omnibus idem.
fata uiam inuenient.’ ...

(Knight: Jupiter is impartially king over all alike. The Fates will find the way.)

In Douglas:

King Jupiter sal be to all equale.
The fatis sal provid a way mair habil. (III.287.12-13; 10.112-13)

In the second and third cases Douglas characteristically produces a quite different form of words each time the passage is translated.²⁹

In the third case he (also characteristically) adds a word or phrase to the idea of the fates’ finding a way (“ganand”, “mair habil”); this has the effect of bringing their influence down among the relativities of time and space, and to an extent demystifying them. Compare two similar examples of this practice. First, in a line in the speech by the god of the Tiber in Book VIII, Virgil’s words “tumor omnis et irae concessere deum” (all the commotion and anger of the gods have subsided) are modified by

Douglas into:

The rancour all of goddis, I the tell,
And boldinand wreth appesit ar almaist. (III.152.6-7; 8.40-1)

²⁸ Mynors brackets this line as spurious.

²⁹ “Characteristically” but not universally. The translations (e.g.) on two occasions of “et meministis enim, diuiae, et memorare potestis” (7.645 and 9.529, though Mynors omits the latter altogether) are virtually identical in Douglas (III.127.19-20 and - with minor changes in spelling and the omission of “All” - 249.9-10):

“3e blyssit wichtis forsuith remembris weyll
All sic thingis, and, quhair thou list, may reveill, ...”

The modest word “*almaist*” (which is logical enough, since there was still plenty of life left in the rancorous Juno) hints at a major shift in perspective: even destiny has to wait its turn. Secondly, Jupiter’s query (at the Council) whether it is owing to the Italians’ fates that the Trojan encampment is now besieged (“*seu fatis Italum castra obsidione tenentur*”) Douglas renders thus (note the words I have italicised):

Quhidder so the fatis hes determyt *of new*
Troianys to be assegit wyth Italianis, ... (III.287.4-5; 10.109)

And in a similar vein notice how the phrase “And eik”, added by Douglas in the first extract from Helenus’ speech above (the third line), changes the relationship between what has been happening to them (i.e. voyaging through deep seas) and what ultimately it means (i.e. destiny wills it). We have - with Douglas - in effect two distinct aspects of the situation. In Latin they are united through an ablative and the subdued connective “*sic*”, ensuring that any transition of thought is smooth; Douglas separates them and makes it harder to feel the mysteriously absorbing way in which destiny functions.

Nor does it help much to throw a handful of more or less complementary predicates at the phenomenon, including abstract or semi-technical terms. Under his handling, Helenus’ “*auspiciis*”, “*fata*” and “*uices*” become, directly or indirectly, “fortune”, “purviance divine”, “*wil*”, “*distributis*”, “*fatis*”, “Rolling”, “chancis”, “turning”, and “Destany”. I shall return later to the question of diversity of vocabulary, and what effect it has, but here are two more examples (from the heavenly Council scene) specifically of an over-use of abstractions:

Jupiter reprimands the other deities:

‘*caelicolae magni, quianam sententia uobis
uersa retro tantumque animis certatis iniquis? ...*’

(Knight: Majestic dwellers in the skies, why has your decision been reversed?
Why do you engage in so fierce a conflict of opposing wills?)

Douglas has:

O hevynly wychtis, of gret power and mycht,
Quhou is betyd 3our myndis bene sa lycht,

That 3our decreit fatal and sentence hie
 Retretit thus and turnyt bakwartis suld be?
 Or quhy wyth frawart myndis, now of layt,
 Aganis 3our ressonabyll oraclis 3e debait? (III.278.13-18; 10.6-7)

Virgil's "sententia" (decision) and "animis" (wills) splurge out into "myndis", "decreit fatal and sentence hie", "myndis" (again) and "ressonabyll oraclis".

But this is almost prim compared with what Douglas makes Venus say later. She concedes that the Trojans should certainly suffer if they had acted contrary to the destiny revealed to them, but - since that was not the case - why are they in the situation in which they find themselves? Virgil expresses it thus:

... sin tot responsa secuti
 quae superi manesque dabant, cur nunc tua quisquam
 uertere iussa potest aut cur noua condere fata?

(Knight: If however they were in fact led here by all those oracles from the High Gods and the Nether Spirits, why should any one now have power to annul your command, and start a quite different destiny for them?)

Douglas has:

Bot gif thai followit haue for thar behufe
 Sa feyll responsis of the Goddis abufe,
 With syndry admonitiouns, charge, and redis
 Of the infernal wychtis and spretis that ded is,
 Than wald I knaw the caus or ressoun quhy
 That ony mycht pervert or zit bewry
 Thy commandmentis? how, or quharfor, may thai
 New fatys mak, and the ald do away? (III.280.23-30; 10.33-5)

Virgil's "responsa" (oracles) becomes "responsis" and "syndry admonitiouns, charge, and redis [i.e. advice]"; "manes" (Nether Spirits) becomes "infernal wychtis and spretis that ded is"; "uertere" (annul) becomes "pervert or zit bewry"; and in a wonderful *tour de force* the Latin "cur" (admittedly employed twice by Virgil) turns into "caus or ressoun quhy" and "how, or quharfor". So destiny-words and causality-words (two key categories in representing the mystery of fate) get the full treatment. In passing, we can see that the (added) phrase "for thar behufe" characteristically turns more light on the *human* aspect of the situation, while the final (added) phrase "and the ald do away" brings us firmly down from the transcendent mainspring into the relativities of a world where things alternate in time.

Anchises' speech about the transmigration of souls in Book VI (III.58.19-60.31; 6.724-751) is a particularly striking example of how Douglas can make heavy weather of something lying (for him) too near the religious-philosophical heart of the poem. Additions and expansions are numerous. Because of the tortuous movement of the speech (it is not altogether lucid in the Latin either) it is difficult to be sure just where an addition begins or ends, but the following seem to be due to Douglas rather than to Virgil: "all thing less and mair" (III.58.19), "hie wisdom dyvne" (59.1), "clepit vniuersall" (4), "this infusioun, and thir elementis seir" (5), "quhilk we saulis call" (12), "Nocht tareis thaim tharfra, nor doith withhald" (14: there is something of this in the Latin, but Douglas has expanded it), "Nor withdrawis from souerane hevinlie kind" (15), "and eik thair irksom mynd" (16), "thar curage and thar spretis godlyk" (18), "Of thir vile bodeis" (22), "saulis thar clene nature may attend" (23), "fra the body" (25), "fra wrechit saulis" (27), "come of the body late" (28), "Contrakit in the corps" (31), "on seir wonderfull wise to say" (32), "By pvnycioun satisfacioun to mak" (60.3: the explicit idea of purpose is inserted by Douglas), "ganand purgatory" (9), "But ony purging" (14), "hardynit in the spreit" (17), "For that it fand sum tyme the body sueit" (18), "Thir vthir saulis quhilk bene pvrgit all" (22: the Latin is simply "has omnis", all these), "Baith of plesour and auld panis, all and sum" (28), and "Langing agane the world abuif to see" (29).

The whole speech has on average nearly two-and-a-half Scots lines for every one in the Latin, and - as well as some of the usual fillers, which I have not noted as they have no particular relevance here - it is peppered with expansions, of a semi-technical kind, to help to keep the argument flowing. There is a *gaucherie* about Douglas here which is quite unlike his attitude when he is, say, describing some ancient religious ceremony. *There* he is in his element. There are details to highlight graphically and interconnect for the reader's visualising. However "outlandish", something is visibly going on and being done, and we can get a proper empirical grasp of the situation. The account can be framed with a phrase like "in those days" or "in

accordance with their custom”, and the translator can proceed with depicting it in all its outward particularity. *That* sort of approach works for much of Aeneas’ visit to Elysium, but much less well once Anchises begins his philosophical discourse. And the reason for the awkwardness, I believe, is simply that at this point Douglas is faced not with clear events, and not even just with ideas, but with some reference to a different kind of reality: profound, elusive, general, transcendent, and (for Anchises and Aeneas, and in some way for Virgil and his Romans too) intimately meaningful and motivating. To encounter that adequately, and engage narratively with it, one would need to be something of a non-Christian Platonist, and perhaps Stoic too. Without that experiential grounding, and the confidence that goes with it, the outcome is likely to be long-winded, didactic, alienating, and abstract. Douglas cannot quite “get it”. His standard hermeneutical equipment is not up to the task. So he either focuses on some particularities and relativities *associated* with the unfathomability of fate (rather than on the unfathomability itself) or he distances himself (and us) from it by using abstract terms, or terms that are little more than repetitions of Virgil’s own words: as if at these points the translator - instead of retelling the story himself - is simply letting us know in passing that this is what Virgil said. (See the discussion of “fatal” below.)

Another technique which tends to weaken the sense of fatefulness is taking a word that in Virgil is kept and repeated in different connections, like a constant ground-bass, and supplying for it a variety of Scots or semi-Scots words. An example is Douglas’ treatment of the word “numen”, which Virgil uses about sixty times. We need to be careful not to read into this word all the connotations that it has acquired in modern English, particularly in religious and literary studies, and particularly since the publication in 1917 (and in English in 1923) of *The Idea of the Holy* by Rudolf Otto. This took the “numinous” (a word which, through his translator at least, he claimed to have coined,³⁰ though it was actually in use in English as early as 1647, according to

³⁰ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. by John W. Harvey (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959), p. 21.

the *Oxford English Dictionary*)³¹ to refer to a unique category of value connected with a unique (and non-rational) experience of the divine. In Latin the connotations are often more humdrum, and dictionaries suggest English equivalents like “will”, “command”, “power” (usually divine though not necessarily so); or more abstract equivalents like “deity”, “godhead”, “majesty”; or they make it simply another word for “god” or “goddess”. Still, in Virgil, the word does manage to take on a deeper aura, partly at least because of its repetition: it echoes and deepens.

What does Douglas do? A quick check through his equivalents gives us a bewildering diversity. “Numen” becomes “power” or “mycht”³² or “fors” or “will” or “authorite” or “maiestie” or “charge” or “supple” or “leif” (i.e. permission)³³ or “respons” or “ansuer” or “orakle” or “reuelationis” or “divinationis” or “statue”³⁴ or “deite” or “godhead” or “divyne power” or “hie power deificait” or “promys”.³⁵ Sometimes the translation is more tangential, as when “multo suspensum numine” (Knight: in high fervour, so strong was the divine power) becomes “on seir materes musand”.³⁶

Something similar happens to “fatum”, a word that in Virgil occurs again and again: roughly on average a dozen times in every book. Douglas pours out its innards, rendering it variously as “weird” (a word that in his time had not yet acquired the meaning of “uncanny”: according to the *Concise Scots Dictionary* that is a nineteenth-century development)³⁷ or “fatis” or “aventur” or “fortoun” or “destany” or “ansueris”³⁸ or “will” or “chance”. Sometimes a longer phrase is given: “fatale ordinans, Thar destyne, and Goddis purvians” (IV.100.13-14; 12.111) or “travale, pane

³¹ The 1647 reference is to a mark of the will of a king.

³² At its first appearance, in 1.48, where Juno is speaking, Ascensius suggests “divinam potestatem”: arguably that suggests more of the inward capacity, underlying the outward effectiveness, than “mycht” does.

³³ II.29.26; 1.133. (I give references only where the case seems particularly surprising or interesting.)

³⁴ II.46.28; 1.447.

³⁵ IV.219.14; 13.584. Here - and possibly elsewhere - we may have to reckon with an alternative reading: “nomine” (name); Ascensius’ commentary assumes “nomine” at this point.

³⁶ II.142.10; 3.372.

³⁷ *Concise Scots Dictionary*, ed. by Mairi Robinson (Aberdeen: University Press, 1987).

³⁸ III.11.19; 6.45. The Latin is “poscere (to ask) fata”.

and curis” (in Dido’s “quibus ille iactatus fatis”, tossed about by what fates, II.175.8; 4.13-14). The word “fatale” (as near to non-translation as he can come) is used widely, as in Drances’ reference to the “new Troy” (“fatale massy wall” for “fatalis murorum ... moles”, IV.19.12; 11.130), and as in describing Aeneas’ weapon during his last encounter with Turnus (“fatale deidly speyr” for “telum ... fatale”, IV.164.3; 12.919); also in phrases such as “fatale systeris” for the Latin “Parcae” (e.g. III.311.19, 343.3; 10.419, 815) - though “weird” is more common in this particular connection.

We find the same tendency in the handling of the human counter-image of destiny: “pius” and “pietas”. For Douglas the noun is often enough the barely translated “piety” (compare “fatal”); but we are as likely to find words such as “peteous” (which can mean just as readily “pitiable” or “pitiful” as “devout” or “pious”: connotative slippage between a fate-related meaning and a human-related meaning) or “meik” or “cheritable” or “gentill” (i.e. noble) or “curtas” or “compacient”. The “amore pio” between Nisus and Euryalus is rendered by Douglas as

... for quhais freindschip
And tendirnes come Nisus in fallowschip; ... (II.241.19-20; 5.296)

while the “pios” depicted on Vulcan’s shield are

The rychtwys folkis that levyt devoutly, ... (III.199.9; 8.670)

Virgil’s “hic pietatis honos?” (Venus protesting to Jupiter about Aeneas’ misfortunes) becomes in Douglas:

Is this reward ganand for thame ar meik?
Is this the honour done to thame bene godlik? (II.36.6-7; 1.253)

Phrases can be expanded. We get “pietie, and godlie religioun” for the “pietas” of Panthus (II.93.30; 2.430), while when Diomedes says that Hector and Aeneas were the reason why the attack on Troy lasted ten years - both outstanding in courage and martial prowess but Aeneas “pietate prior” - Douglas renders this:

Bot this Ene was first, all out, expres
Of reuth, compassioun, and of gentilnes. (IV.31.27; 11.292)

In his “Comment” Douglas seems to incline almost exclusively to the moral, even political, interpretation of the concept:

And for that Virgill clepis hym swa all thro this buyk, and I interpret that term, quhylys, for *rewth*, quhils, for *devotion*, and quhilis, for *pyete* and *compassion*; tharfor ye sall know that pyete is a vertu, or gud deid, be the quhilk we geif our dylligent and detfull lawbour to our natyve cuntre, and onto thaim beyn conionyt to vs in neyr degre: and this vertu, pyete, is a part of justyce, and hes ondyr hym twa other vertws; amyte, callyt frendschip, and liberalyte.³⁹

But his practice does not exactly bear this out. Charles Blyth stresses the knightly dimension behind Douglas’ choice of words, particularly “gentill” and “curtas”, and claims that:

... Douglas’ use of adjectives belonging unmistakably to the tradition of medieval courtly and chivalric literature provides finally convincing evidence that he wasn’t interested in restoring Virgil’s hero. Instead, he gives us an Aeneas who is a model Christian knight, courageous in battle, courteous with ladies, compassionate in his behavior to others, and (therefore) eliciting our sympathy as we observe him humbly accepting the suffering to which he is subjected. The pressure of Destiny and of Roman history are scarcely felt by the reader except as pressure, the cause of his suffering.⁴⁰

This probably exaggerates the significance of “curtas” and “gentill”, words which Douglas uses himself to address his (not necessarily knightlike) readers,⁴¹ but it nonetheless illustrates a change in emphasis between Virgil and Douglas in exactly the direction we might expect.

The concepts of “fas” and “nefas”, like “fatum” and “numen”, carry in Virgil undertones (albeit difficult to measure) of something outside the reach of usual human devising. For Douglas either word, depending on context, can be rendered as “onlesum” or “wnlefull” or “lefull”; “fas” can be “faith and frendschip” or “resoun, and ganand euermair” or “forbodin” or “fatis and goddis decreit” (an attempt to

³⁹ II.294-5.

⁴⁰ Charles R. Blyth, *The Knychtlyke Stile”: A Study of Gavin Douglas’ Aeneid* (New York: Garland, 1987), p. 263.

⁴¹ e.g. II.11.21 and IV.223.23. Blyth also overdoes the significance of “page” (which is what Douglas says he was when he learned Scots, II.6.28): in his translation it almost always means simply “child” (e.g. “man, wyff, and page”, III.117.10, where all are peasants).

reinstate it as a concrete noun with the verb “obstat” [hinders]);⁴² “nefas” can be “fals” or “forbodin” or “myscheif” or “schame to say the harm, sa wikkitley”.

The effect of all this is mild semantic chaos. We *feel* plurification all around, affecting not merely the story (where the fateful mainspring and its incarnations are dissociated) but our own engagement with it. Douglas is not giving us the secure grasp we want, and which he provides in relation to the *superficies*. In his version of the death of Priam (see Chapter IV, Section 2) we saw how translating “nequiquam” (in vain) in a number of ways depotentiated the scene; that was another indication of what happens when Douglas applies his standard treatment.

Even his use of the word “god” (which in principle ought to act as a unifier) carries too much particularisation. So Virgil’s “sic placitum” (uttered by Jupiter early in the poem)⁴³ becomes in Douglas “This is determit, this likis the goddis”, and loses the general mysteriousness of agency which the indeterminate term insinuates. When Aeneas says that “religio” (Knight: pious observance) has given him encouragement, this becomes in Douglas “all devote godlie wychtis” (II.141.21; 3.363); Celaeno’s “tristis ... iras” (Knight: grim wrath) becomes “vengeance from the goddis” (II.142.3; 3.366). When Aeneas makes his solemn oath before the duel, Virgil’s “religio” (Knight: [every] Majesty, so Knight too is taking it concretely, though with him the general connotation lingers) becomes “reuerend Goddis seir” (IV.106.6; 12.182). Even *divine* particulars, with Douglas, split things up.

There is however one use of the term “God” which in some degree has a countervailing effect. This is Douglas’ insertion of theistic expletives. Measuring the force and significance of an expletive is notoriously difficult, even among contemporaries; much more so where centuries have elapsed. Sometimes in *Eneados* they are little more than fillers; though, like stock epithets, they can still keep alive a sense of the interlocking layers in the reader-experience (see Chapter III, Section 4).

⁴² III.38.5; 6.438.

⁴³ II.37.23; 1.283.

But in some places they can inject extra feeling into a scene, emotionally qualifying its content, inciting a reader to experience the matter differently and find something in it requiring more than mere outward recognition of what is going on. Used expressively (rather than descriptively) they offer a momentary signal of transcendence.

There are in *Eneados* roughly thirty examples of this kind of expletive, usually spoken by characters within the narrative, though occasionally the narrator/translator voices the feeling for himself. The forms - with some variations in spelling - are “O God”, “God wait”, “wald God”, “God grant” and “ha God!”; also “O Lord” and “Lord”. (I have not listed non-theistic expletives because they are less germane here.) Interestingly, there are no theistic expletives throughout Book XIII. Is this because Douglas is winding down? or because this book has something of a second-hand feel to it?⁴⁴ or (what I believe most likely) because “fate” has ceased in Book XIII to function in the way it did throughout the first twelve books? The journey is over, Aeneas has won, and only the mopping-up operations remain.⁴⁵ If this last theory were true, it might add some weight to the view that theistic expletives do have a link with the expression of fate: when fate recedes, the expletives recede with it.

The only way to distinguish between “mere fillers” and expletives with a specific narrative point is to ask whether the words ring true as a possible expression of this speaker (including the narrator) in these circumstances. By this measure I believe four can be rejected as sterile. Dido has uttered her curse against Rome:

Thus [,]⁴⁶ said scho, and with that word, God wait,
Hir faynt spreit in all partis writhis sche, ... (II.215.10-11)

Aeneas is giving instructions about a regular commemoration of his father’s death:

Ask prosper windis, and beseik every 3eris
That my fadir wald eftir this ressave
This sacrifice quhilk I begunnyn haif,

⁴⁴ See Craig Kallendorf, *In Praise of Aeneas* (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1989), ch. 5 for the extent of verbal parallels and general similarities between Maphaeus Vegius and Virgil.

⁴⁵ It is *fait accompli*, so to speak. The only other Book with none is XII: perhaps that strengthens the argument.

⁴⁶ The comma must be a mistake in Small. It is not in Coldwell.

Within our cetie quhilk we mon beild, God wait,
In thai tempillis onto hymn dedicait. (II.226.32-227.4)

Later, Aeneas vaunts it over Lucagus:

Bot lo now, of thy fre will, as thou skyppis
Owt our the quhelys of thy cart, God wait, ... (III.325.28-9)

Finally, Camilla's father, Metabus - devoting her to the service of Diana - says:

Ressaue hir, lady, and testyfy, God wayt,
As thyne, alhaill onto the dedicate, ... (IV.52.25-6)

Other expletives seem not to hang loose in quite this way. Most have a certain appropriateness, though they are still inevitably "free-range", syntactically and semantically. I list them here without special comment, except to mark narrative redundancy.

"O God":

Aeneas on seeing the image of Hector (II.84.15)
Aeneas to his father, protesting he cannot leave him in Troy (II.107.3)
Dido to Anna, lauding Aeneas (II.175.2)
Anchises to Aeneas, welcoming his son in Elysium (III.56.17)

"God wait" (with other spellings):

Virgil/Douglas commenting on Dido's infatuation (II.180.10)
Dido (mere filler - see above)
Aeneas (mere filler - see above)
Virgil/Douglas commenting on Gyas (II.234.2)
Sibyl to Aeneas (III.14.26)
Amata to Latinus (III.106.30)
Virgil/Douglas describing scenes on the shield (III.200.26 - arguably a filler)
Nisus to Euryalus (III.225.12)
Virgil/Douglas describing the return of Aeneas by ship (III.290.24)
Aeneas to Lucagus (mere filler - see above)
Juno to Jupiter (III.327.19)
Diomedes to the legates (IV.29.9)
Camilla's father to Diana (mere filler - see above)

"Wald God":

Dido to Ilioneus and the other Trojans (II.54.8)
Sinon to the people of Troy (II.71.20)
Sinon again (II.74.4)
Achaemenides to the Trojans (II.157.16)
Dido in soliloquy (II.213.18)
Dido again (II.213.20)
Menestheus to his crew (II.235.14)
Aeneas in search of the golden branch (III.21.4)
Juno to Jupiter (III.329.10)
Evander lamenting Pallas' death (IV.21.25)
Turnus to Latinus (IV.41.23)

“God grant”:

Aeneas to Helenus (II.150.5)

“ha God!”:

Dido to Aeneas (II.195.7)

“Lord”:

Andromache at Aeneas’ departure from Delos (II.140.4)

Juno to Venus (II.181.5)

Virgil/Douglas describing the departure from Sicily (II.270.4)

Aeneas to Anchises (III.69.32)

We can try the experiment of removing an expletive and seeing how the result sounds. Here are two examples, taken at random. (I have filled up the metre.) Aeneas remonstrates with his father (II.107.3-4):

And laif the heir? O God! quha euir couth
Sic cryme to me be said of faderis mouth!

And laif the heir [alane]? Quha euir couth
Sic cryme to me be said of faderis mouth!

Mnestheus encourages his crew (II.235.14):

Howbeit, wald God, that war a gloir to se!

Howbeit that war [in truth] a gloir to se!

Some intensity is lost - not much, but perhaps enough to lead us to speculate whether Douglas could profitably have made a little more use of the technique ... perhaps a dozen expletives per Book, strategically located.

4. *Synthesis-in-general to the rescue*

When he confronts fate head-on in his translation, Douglas - I have argued - is only imperfectly successful. This is partly because of the limitations of his general approach in this area of the story (where hiddenness and unity should be paramount) and partly because of the dilemma he faces in trying to devise a form of dramatic credibility for entities with which he is fundamentally uneasy. He sidesteps the mystery, foregrounding particulars or clouding scenes with abstractions.

Eneados, however, is awash with syntheses and synthesisings: different in quality from Virgil's, often unobtrusive, but pervasively conditioning the whole retelling, holding together the tale with its proliferation of particulars, its complex narrative networks, and the complex of interlacing perspectives in which Douglas and his readers alike are collaboratively engaged. In this Section I argue that fate is a beneficiary of glancing blows from other, more securely exercised, aspects of Douglas' refocusing. I shall examine five ways in which this reinforcement occurs. Each influences the others, and in combination they enhance a feeling (which Douglas' direct handling of the subject often seems to lose) that in some shape or form a radical mainspring is at work in the story.

First, there is Virgil's story, the primary *datum* with its own inherent unity and treatment of destiny. Douglas respects his source and, whatever transpositional manoeuvres he brings to his translating, always sticks fairly firmly to the subject-matter before him. That (not literal word-for-word translation) is the truth in his remark in Prologue I: "Richt so am I to Virgillis text ybound" (II.12.25).⁴⁷ At the very least he can reproduce its vocabulary (sometimes quite minimally, with his "fait" and "fatale") or even (by just saying broadly what Virgil says about the progress of events and the forces at work in them) ensure a place for destiny at some level of consciousness in his own version. It may have lost some vigour in the transference, and fail to supply all the satisfying cognitive clues that Virgil's readers could pick up, but it keeps the rumour of destiny alive, even if only as a fossil or in a state of suspended animation.

Secondly, although in his general approach Douglas finds himself happier at the empirical *superficies*, that does not mean that his focusing excludes further ranges of meaning altogether. Events, people, actions, things: these clearly *mean* (amount to) more than can be spotted at an instant. There is nothing "superficial" about Douglas' representation of the world. Although he favours foregrounding the circumstantiality and extrinsicity of phenomena, he does not thereby lose a sense of their "quiddity", the

⁴⁷ See Chapter I, Section 4.

suggestion of other layers within (a sort of deeper surface) or of identities shaped by interaction with other phenomena. They have form and substance and dynamism, reciprocal similarities and dissimilarities, capacities to interact and develop and differentiate themselves, to take their bearings from one another and from their own past, and to *realise* (make real) what they latently are. Douglas' metaphysical uniplanarity (comparatively speaking) is more Aristotelian than Platonist, and if this were a thesis about cultural and literary influences upon Douglas it would be important to spend some time on the neglected matter of his philosophical (and his pastoral - see below) formation. The Thomism (like the homiletics) of his Christian world was a key source of structural archetypes. Aquinas, mainstay of much mediaeval Catholic theology, explained the difference between Plato and Aristotle as follows:

Plato thought that the forms of natural things existed apart without matter and were therefore thinkable: because what makes something actually thinkable is its being non-material. These he called *species* or ideas. Corporeal matter, he thought, takes the forms it does by sharing in these, so that individuals by this sharing belong in their natural kinds and types; and it is by sharing in them that our understanding takes the forms it does of knowledge of the different kinds and types. But Aristotle did not think that the forms of natural things existed independently of matter, and forms existing in matter are not actually thinkable. Nothing passes from potentiality to actuality except by something already actual, as sense-perception is actuated by something which is actually perceptible.⁴⁸

This philosophical shift from Plato to Aristotle in regard to how the substance of things relates to their phenomenality, and how each is experienced, replicates closely the shift which, throughout his translation, Douglas has been applying to Virgil. (I am not saying that Virgil is a Platonist.) Even surfaces unveil themselves. In their conformation and interrelationships they harbour more than readily meets the eye, and the empirical syntheses implicit here lie very close to the heart of Douglas' hermeneutical approach. They contribute to a general climate in *Eneados* of "things-

⁴⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I.79.3; quoted in (and translated by) Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas* (Oxford: University Press, 1980), p. 69.

being-held-together”, a combinatorial surplus which spills over into the way everything may be felt, including the representation of destiny.⁴⁹

Thirdly, the story in general under Douglas’ handling moves, and moves vigorously. I have shown in Chapter II how Douglas enhances the discursive linearity of the story and gives it a different kind of power and coherence from Virgil’s. That might seem to threaten to obscure a sense of destiny (because the focus is drawn down among particulars), but - because he manages to make its directionality felt so effectively - something like relentlessness, even predestination, emerges simply through the way his account hangs together. Like a Bach fugue it seems to know where it is going. This is partly a result of Douglas’ sheer masterliness, and partly because of what readers’ creative engagement brings to the experience (and I deal with these factors shortly). But it is also because of the way in which the empirical phenomena (the surface level of events) are woven together and taken forward. The translator may be weak in presenting the idea of some antecedent purpose, separable in principle from the actual course of events, but the very character of the narrative itself - with its heftily ingrained teleology - compensates by making that purpose felt.

James Murphy, in his account of mediaeval sermonising, describes the specifically *homiletic* approach to Christian preaching as “based ultimately on nonform or anti-theory”.⁵⁰ What made a homily different from more systematic discourses was that it would retell a passage of Scripture without theoretical elaborations, but in such a way as to carry hearers along and prompt insights from what they in a sense already knew. Augustine was an important figure in the development of this approach, which theologically hinged on a strong view about the operation of grace. It involved a

⁴⁹ “Aristotelian” is shorthand for a characteristic way of viewing reality. There is a *Dialogus* attached to John Major’s Commentary on the First Book of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (1510), in which Douglas features as someone attacking scholastic philosophy and the prominence of Aristotle (see Bawcutt, p. 28). But one might still be basically “Aristotelian” while disliking the impact of Aristotelianism on theology.

⁵⁰ James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, p. 298.

different perspective on how meaning is conveyed, less hierarchically, less explicitly, more diffusedly:

The possibility of grace also tends to derogate the human skill derived from rhetoric, since God's message is so powerful that its mere utterance will be persuasive.⁵¹

Hence simply telling a story effectively could evoke what would in other circumstances need to be overtly spelled out. The temporality of a narrative, conveyed effectively (earnestly and appropriably, in a way that brought teller and hearer together in a shared consciousness of what they held in common and knew to be important), could itself accentuate awareness of the mainspring generating the temporality.

Where "Aristotelian" was shorthand for the suggestion of substance within and among particulars, the word "homiletic" can be shorthand for this distinctive way of bringing out a deeper meaning: serially, through the unmediated representation of the passage of time. Both function in some measure as felt substitutes for the sense of destiny which Douglas manifestly struggles to depict frontally.⁵²

Fourthly, in the difficulties over fate Douglas' central masterliness, the persuasive narrative power that permeates the way the entire story is told, carries him through. Even when shaky he takes his job seriously. We come to acknowledge that. We come to trust him as he carries us along, to take his confidence and competence elsewhere as a warranty for the less tractable credibility which he has been trying to build into fate. His partial incertitude is at least honest. And ironically, while it makes access to the story in this respect more refractory, it makes access to the story-teller more natural. Like us, he wrestles to make sense of the tale: to make something out of it. We pick up a sense of his authorial presence, his *auctoritas*.

⁵¹ Murphy, p. 282.

⁵² "Homiletical" meant chiefly until the eighteenth century "social, conversible" (*sic*: under "conversable" Johnson says the "i" spelling - which he has used himself - is improper); see Dr Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London: J. and P. Knapton and others, 1755), where it is the only meaning given. Behind the Greek word lie principally ideas of conversation and familiar intercourse.

Fifthly, the translator-reader relationship is two-sided. An essential element in Douglas' strategy is to enlist the reader, who has his or her own experiences, and who has capacities for putting things together and seeing in them more than meets the eye. Making sense of destiny - as of everything else in the poem, but most strikingly in the case of destiny because the lack of a clear template is the more obvious there - is our responsibility too. Jonathan Culler outlines one of the conventions that govern what a reader has to expect of a work of fiction, the "expectation of totality or coherence". He goes on to say that

... even if we deny the need for a poem to be a harmonious totality we make use of the notion in reading. Understanding is necessarily a teleological process and a sense of totality is the end which governs its progress.⁵³

Whatever in our experience has some analogy with fatefulness can be legitimately brought into play, assisting in the remaking of the story (at every reach) for ourselves: particular feelings or ideas, but also the sheer fact that we are here and now grappling with the story, acting out the part - however haltingly - of mainspring to the story of Aeneas.

In these five ways Douglas' imperfect success in representing fate is disguised, or made good, by processes of displacement, echoing and infiltration from other areas. The retention of the unity of Virgil's plot, the synthesis that lies behind the way particulars are substantiated, the cohesive linear drive of the action, the radical masterliness of the translator, and finally the involvement in all these layers of the synthesising capacity of the reader: these compensate - and in passing remind us of the vast reservoir of synthesis lying there for the reader to share in.

⁵³ Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, pp. 170-1.

CHAPTER VI

EVALUATING THE TRANSLATION

1. *Douglas' "shift"*

How are we to tell whether Douglas' is a good translation or not? What is "good"? What is "translation"? Douglas tells the same story as Virgil, but he "swings" it differently. The same characters appear, doing the same things. To that extent Douglas "defers" to the work he is translating, and we know we are reading (albeit in translation) the *Aeneid* and not some other story. But, as it emerges from Douglas, the story has a very different "feel", and in the last four Chapters I have shown how Douglas in effect refocuses Virgil's material, while engaging the reader in the collaborative task of retelling. In relation to time and temporality, for instance, we find in Douglas more emphasis on the serial and sequential quality of events, their particulate distinction from one another, their implication with causality and the reader's own experience of activity and purpose; all foregrounded out of what a modern commentator has called Virgil's "dense and highly wrought manner".¹ In relation to space and spatiality, Douglas lays more emphasis on the geographical apparatus of distance and location (relative and absolute), on plurality of places, on the vividness and concreteness of individual scenes. In relation to individuals, he is more concerned with indicating personal boundaries, releasing persons from the suffused network of events in which Virgil embeds them, and giving them more inherent fullness. And fate (the active generality that runs through the story) is handled in much the same way: broken up, laid out, reconnected piecemeal. In each category we are

¹ R. J. Tarrant, "Aspects of Virgil's reception in antiquity", in Charles Martindale (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, pp. 56-72 (p. 66).

given for the setting of the story a world which is (and is felt to be) more particularised, more concretised, more loosely textured, than a standard reading of Virgil suggests. Douglas' retelling focuses rather at the *superficies*, compensating for the loss of felt depth by supplying more illustrative detail and explication, and taking more pains to involve the reader (who can perhaps supply some depth and three-dimensionality from his or her own experience): trading depth for breadth.

This represents a shift at a quite basic level, radical and comprehensive, and I have characterised it sometimes as "metaphysical". It is clearly not the only level at which an analysis might have been conducted. It would have been possible instead to examine ways in which certain motifs and concepts have perhaps slipped into Douglas' translation from contemporary culture (mediaeval courtliness, for instance,² or sixteenth-century politics,³ or anti-feminism);⁴ or to approach the translation through the Prologues, as Canitz does,⁵ and see them as offering a focus of their own, shaping the reading of the story from a distinct viewpoint - still Douglas' own, but applied (as it were) externally. More abstractly, Bakhtin has suggested analysis of narratives in terms of their "chronotopes", whereby "spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole".⁶ This sort of analysis, like Northrop Frye's theory of modes,⁷ concentrates particularly on how the content of narratives is shaped artistically. I have tried to take a step further back and, in as culture-neutral, as plot-neutral, and even as language-neutral⁸ a way as possible, to get to the heart of Douglas' way of retelling the story: its "lay-out" and "feel". In retrospect I believe the approach I

² e.g. Charles R. Blyth, "*The Knychtlyke Stile*": A Study of Gavin Douglas' *Aeneid*.

³ e.g. Bruce Dearing, "Gavin Douglas' *Eneados*: a Reinterpretation", *PMLA* 67 (1952), pp. 845-62.

⁴ e.g. Marilyn Desmond, *Reading Dido: Gender, Textuality, and the Medieval Aeneid*.

⁵ A. E. C. Canitz, "The Prologue to the *Eneados*: Gavin Douglas's Directions for Reading", *Studies in Scottish Literature* 25 (1990), pp. 1-22. Despite the title, this article deals with *all* the Prologues.

⁶ M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 84.

⁷ Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, ch. 1.

⁸ So I have not pursued the sort of analysis (by "cryptotypes" - "a submerged, subtle, and elusive meaning, corresponding to no actual word, yet shown by linguistic analysis to be functionally important in the grammar") which Whorf has offered of how a language carries certain metaphysical assumptions. (Quoted in George Steiner, *After Babel*, p. 91.)

have taken works well (not least because Douglas sticks fairly consistently to his approach throughout, handling the story in a way that is strikingly pervasive and collaborative), and is significantly different from any of these alternatives. It identifies the underlying condition or *conatus* of the translation, and opens up (I believe) a useful way of considering in what sense Douglas' translation represents a "shift".

The word "shift" is ambiguous. It can function grammatically as a verb (transitive or intransitive) or as a noun (to denote a process or an outcome). It need not even always imply change, or - if it does - it may be only some minor fluctuation of position or aspect which can leave the substance of the matter much the same as before. Nevertheless (or "Therefore") the concept of "shift" has become especially important in recent translation studies. Anton Popovič's article on "The Concept 'Shift of Expression' in Translation Analysis" (1970) is an influential *point de départ*, particularly in dealing with the different ways in which translated works reflect the cultural norms of their receptor communities.⁹ The article is brief and rather gnomic, and can be understood in more than one way, but a key principle is this:

Each individual method of translation is determined by the presence or absence of shifts in the various layers of the translation. All that appears as new with respect to the original, or fails to appear where it might have been expected, may be interpreted as a shift. The fact that the process of translation involves shifts in the semantic properties of the text does not mean that the translator wishes to underemphasize the semantic appeal of the original. The very opposite is true. He strives to preserve the "norm" of the original. He resorts to shifts precisely because he is endeavouring to convey the semantic substance of the original in spite of the differences separating the system of the original from that of the translation, in spite of the differences between the two languages and between the two methods of presenting the subject matter.¹⁰

Bassnett¹¹ summarises the different types of shift which Popovič has in mind (and which he sets out in his *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*):

constitutive (a result of the differing language-systems), generic (where the translation appears in a different literary form), individual (due to characteristic ways in which the

⁹ Anton Popovič, "The Concept 'Shift of Expression' in Translation Analysis", in James S. Holmes (ed.), *The Nature of Translation* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 78-87.

¹⁰ Popovič, pp. 79-80.

¹¹ Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, revised edition (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 139.

translator might experience and express things), negative (i.e. mistakes), and topical (where particular references are handled differently to make them relevant to the experience of the new reader).

Two points are worth noting. The first is that the list covers a rather confusing mixture of ways of classifying particular shifts: by causes, by intrinsic qualities, by outcomes. The second point is that it is difficult to see how Douglas' radical recharacterising (according to the analysis attempted in my earlier Chapters) would itself be classified according to this system: possibly as a version of "individual", but that really fails to do justice to the different layers and levels at which modifications can come into being through an individual translator. The truth is that Popovič appears to see shifting as a tactical manoeuvre, an essential part of the process of "checks and balances" which keep the translation on track and give it a faithful equilibrium despite the intransigence of the original. Shifting is something we do in order to produce a good translation: an acceptable (and inevitable) substitute for some (he argues, impossible) notion of equivalence. As in many recent theoretical discussions of translation (as Gentzler, himself a sympathetic commentator on the translation studies movement, alleges), Popovič tends to suppose that in translating there is a determinate starting-point and a determinate end-product. This is what Gentzler calls the "epistemological strait-jacket":

To date, all translation theories have made rigid distinctions between original texts and their translations, distinctions that determine subsequent claims about the nature of translation.¹²

So "shifting" is chiefly a matter of replacing one mode of expression with another, in order that the new mode can take the place of the old one. For Popovič shifts are therefore plural, partial, and contributory to an effect.

Douglas' "shift" is different. In Douglas (as I have been analysing him) the fundamental shift just *is* the translation at its innermost determining point. Taking in

¹² Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories*, 2nd edition (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2001), p. 145.

practice for granted the versatility of Virgil's story (whatever he says officially in his Prologues), he offers an active refocusing. This leaves the original material in one sense substantially untouched (it is still there after the refocusing), but it generates a new atmosphere (single, uniform, diaphanous) and set of perspectives.

His version is not perfectly "deferential", of course. In the handling of destiny we found some negative interference (Chapter V). There are (arguably) more positive interactions, where the shift brings out more forcefully what was already in some degree evident in Virgil. Examples might be the way in which Douglas' tendency to dislodge particulars from one another, and to give them a looser reciprocal relationship, reinforces the theme of contingency and risk that runs through the *Aeneid*; or the way in which puzzlement in Virgil's narrative (a constantly recurring motif) is reinforced by Douglas' focus on the epistemological dimension in many of his scenes; or the way in which his heightened evocation of reader-engagement, the lively narrative pitch of his translation, accentuates another significant motif in the *Aeneid*: people telling their stories to one another. There are material side-effects of this kind, but they are impartially spread around, and the central dynamic in Douglas is still crucially different from what Popovič has in mind. Implicit in how he has handled time, space, individuality and fate is a way of "re-atmospherising" things. Only some kind of metaphysical analysis, tracking the new atmosphere to its source, can do justice to this. When we speak about Douglas' "shift", therefore, we should for present purposes understand it according to the analysis of Chapters II-V. His translation is to be evaluated as a whole, and at its heart.

2. *Varieties of translation*

Throughout his translation Douglas - we have seen - is in effect inviting the reader's cooperation in the construction of the story. He prompts particular responses

through this or that use of language, this or that sound-effect; and he also encourages (through his underlying attitude) a more general commitment to the task. The story is inherently set up in that way. But the invitation has itself more than one layer, and interlaced with the presentation of the story (intact, though formally - and in some areas materially - modified) is a tacit invitation to us - while we read it participatively and recreatively - to evaluate the¹³ retelling *as a retelling*. Whether we suppose that Douglas put it there, or that it arises inevitably through the context in which we come upon *Eneados*, does not matter. It is as if there is a *sotto voce* proposition running throughout Douglas' poem: "This is a way of retelling Virgil's story, a legitimate and worthy way of doing the job. What do you think?".

We of course already know it is a translation. If we did not (and many translations are not recognised as such), we might fail to pick out that layer of invitation and - if we passed judgement on the story at all - do it simply on the basis of its qualities as a story: is it interesting, plausible, worth reading? Again, if we knew it was a translation but had no access to the primary text, we might wonder about the relationship between them (and if we knew of other translations we might measure Douglas' against them - as we might imagine a sixteenth-century reader setting *Eneados* against the French version of Saint-Gelais); but perhaps we might not. (Douglas' ancillary remarks about his translation sometimes presuppose readers who know the Latin, sometimes readers who do not.) But young children can appreciate the difference of layers when they hear a familiar tale being retold: the distinction between the story as they independently know it and what this new reteller has done to it (the practical hermeneutical shift); and even between both of those and a new way in which the hearer may be finding the story being reprocessed in his or her own mind. They can say whether they feel easy or uneasy about the transposition, the new tone and colour, whether or not they can detect any departure from the familiar subject-matter and plot.

¹³ Is this "his" or "ours"? I return to this question in Section 6.

Another kind of focus, therefore, suggests itself within the whole experience of reading: not within the story's content, nor within the way in which the content is narrated, but within the relationship that exists between the story in general and this particular retelling of it.¹⁴ Responding to this aspect of the invitation - the invitation to evaluate - calls in turn for decisions about a further kind of focus: how to select an appropriate standpoint from the (complex) theoretical apparatus that goes with the (also complex) phenomenon of translation.

At this point I propose setting Douglas to one side for a while, in order to deal with some general theoretical issues on their own terms. I want to try to straighten out certain assumptions which are apt to get in the way of a reader's coming to a fair accommodation with what Douglas - and others like him - are doing. I shall come back to *Eneados* in Section 5 below.

"Translation", like "shift", is a word with high transitional probability. Jakobson provides a useful preliminary distinction between intralingual translation (rewording in the same language), interlingual translation (which he calls "translation proper" and which involves interpreting verbal signs by means of some other language), and intersemiotic translation (when verbal signs are transmuted into some non-verbal system of signs).¹⁵ But even this distinction is shaky at the edges. Words ("verbal signs") have non-verbal characteristics (they appear and they make sounds) which can play important roles in conveying meaning. Some languages are very close to one another, so that it might be unclear where the division between them lies. This is true in some measure of *Eneados*, with its often heavily Latinised Scots, or Scots designed for appropriation by readers reared in linguistic frameworks that are as much French or Latin as northern English.

¹⁴ It is common in current narrative theory to distinguish between "story" and "narrative", with the latter telling the former, but (as Duncan Kennedy points out) the relationship is much more complex; there is what he calls a "shuttle effect" between them. Duncan F. Kennedy, "Modern receptions and their interpretative implications", in Martindale, pp. 38-55 (p. 47).

¹⁵ Roman Jakobson, "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation", in R. A. Brower (ed.), *On Translation*, p. 233.

Even within the bounds of interlingual translation, we find a bewildering diversity of ways of doing it, describing it, assessing it. Is translation an art¹⁶ or a science¹⁷ or a craft¹⁸ (whatever these ambiguous terms mean)? or is it all three in various proportions, or none of them? Is the idea to produce a literal crib, or something by way of creative homage? or something in between - perhaps a paraphrase, or a metaphrase, or an imitation, or an interpretation, or a version, or a rendering, or a retelling, or a copy, or a transcript, or a decoding, or a matching, or a refocusing? or perhaps some mixture of these, sometimes literal, sometimes free, sometimes close, sometimes loose? Is it all right to integrate commentary or explanation with the rendering of the meaning, or is that not strictly “translation” at all? What are the criteria we are we to follow and apply: reproductive accuracy, some kind of equivalence (formal or functional, perhaps), some kind of isomorphism, some kind of correspondence (whatever any of these terms means)? What is the fundamental aim: to leave it unchanged, to transform it, to transmute it, to transfigure it, to metamorphose it? For that matter, what *is* it precisely that we are translating: the text, what the text is “about”, the words, the spirit, the meaning? (and if it is the “meaning”, in which of Ogden and Richards’ sixteen senses are we taking “meaning”?),¹⁹ or some combination (but what)?

More broadly, to what is translating a response, and what needs does it meet? (Surely this will internally affect how we approach the task and how we understand it?) What is the role of the reader: passive, active, something in between? Is the translator taking the reader to the text, or bringing the text to the reader?²⁰ What lee-way is permitted - or encouraged - or inevitable? No wonder translation studies burgeons.

¹⁶ e.g. Theodore Savory, *The Art of Translation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957).

¹⁷ e.g. Eugene A. Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964).

¹⁸ e.g. Eric Jacobsen, *Translation a Traditional Craft* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1958).

¹⁹ C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, 10th edition (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), pp. 186-7. In fact, with sub-categories, there are twenty-two.

²⁰ The classic statement of this distinction is by Friedrich Schleiermacher, “On the Different Methods of Translating” (1813); reproduced in André Lefevere, *Translation/History/Culture: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 141-66 (p. 149).

This diversity of terminology for expressing the “how”, the “why”, the “what” of translation - all of the above terms, and many more, appear in the literature - severely understates the complexity of the case, since virtually every word has several possible meanings. Critics can mean the same thing by the word but value it differently, or they can use different words on different occasions but retain the same value-judgement. Dryden, for example, thought “paraphrase” was desirable in 1680 but less so in 1697.²¹ But his basic view about the kind of translation he wanted was much the same. Outside English, Schleiermacher’s distinction²² between “dolmetschen” (interpret: to do with commerce) and “übersetzen” (translate: to do with art and scholarship) is reproducible in English, but our “interpreter” (in one sense) will need to be careful not to go in for too much “interpreting” (in another sense), or she will lose her job.

The importance of metaphor in shedding light on the activity of translation has been noted by Susan Bassnett.²³ It can be particularly important in revealing what translation means within different cultures, and how translated works are taken over and reinterpreted. Translators can perceive themselves, or they can be perceived by others, as following in the original author’s footsteps, borrowing garments, reflecting light, searching for jewels, painting a picture, inheriting and disposing of wealth, exercising mastery or being dominated. More recent metaphors have come from sexual relationships, from imperialism and post-colonial experiences, and from social anthropology. Some are old as well as new - traditional family metaphors, for example²⁴ - while some have a more predominantly contemporary ring - exploitation,

²¹ Compare his “Preface to Ovid’s Epistles” (1680) in S. Johnson (ed.) *The Works of the English Poets from Chaucer to Cowper*, vol. 9, pp. 121-6 (p. 123) [where “paraphrase” is the favoured intermediate approach between the literal “metaphrase” and the freer “imitation”] with the later “Dedication to the Aeneis” (1697) in Johnson, vol. 19, pp. 327-57 (p. 353) [“... I thought fit to steer betwixt the two extremes of paraphrase and literal translation ...”].

²² See Lefevere, p. 142.

²³ Bassnett, pp. xiii-xvii.

²⁴ Rita Copeland: “In all of these intra-cultural contexts, imitation is figured as a patriarchal pattern of transmission through kinship and legacy, through proximity or contiguity, rather than through difference. ... This idea of receiving an ‘impression’ or impress is expressed figuratively in Roman theory as the quality of paternal-filial resemblance, so that likeness, or

cannibalism, even the breaking of the hymen.²⁵ In a famous image, Walter Benjamin likens translating to enlarging an amphora by joining pieces along the broken line.²⁶ The dividing-line between metaphorical and non-metaphorical is itself insecure. How should we take concepts like “inspiration” and “influence”, or even “equivalence” and “correspondence” (which have surely not completely shed their metaphoric potency)? One particularly vexatious term (not altogether unmetaphorical, either), to which I shall return, is “accuracy” (Latin: “accurare”). A common metaphor throughout this Thesis has been that of focal length.

It is more likely that this multiplicity of terms and connotations reflects real diversity in the facts than that so far, sadly, nobody has quite hit upon the correct way of viewing, and doing, translation. One important consequence is that any translator who faces a judgement that seems unfair, or misconceived, is often able to counter it by claiming that the critic either has misjudged the *kind* of translation that was offered, or is bringing to it expectations (and criteria) that, at the very least, need defending - and that (given the proliferation of standpoints possible) are unlikely to get this defence in a manner universally convincing. This was the case with Ezra Pound’s *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, which critics have found notoriously difficult to “place”. Taken as a standard academic translation from Latin it exposed him to charges of gross inaccuracy and carelessness. It was not always clear to critics, despite the dazzling array it incorporated of tonal reverberations, re-imaginings, even parody of other styles of translation, that the work was meant to be taken in a different spirit. (A comparison might be made with Johnson’s *Vanity of Human Wishes* [after Juvenal], though in that case the literary convention was strong enough to alert readers to the fact that something different from a “literal equivalent” was being offered.) Pound has been

‘impress,’ is that which is perceived or understood to inhere in both original and new, a paternal legacy of quality rather than of mere shape or form.” *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*, p. 27.

²⁵ This last one is from Derrida, naturally.

²⁶ Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator”, trans. by Harry Zohn, in Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (eds.), *Theories of Translation*, pp. 71-82 (p. 79).

eloquently defended by, among others, J. P. Sullivan²⁷ - and of course by Pound himself.

The defence is relevant to how we understand and judge translations generally (I return to it in Section 4), and it is one that can be used on particular occasions with integrity. But it lends itself to disingenuousness, and even teeters on the brink of vacuity, with in principle every conceivable attempt at translation being justifiable by the device of classifying it as an instance (perhaps the sole instance) of a specific genre of translation which carries its own criteria and is therefore impeccably self-validating. It is not invulnerable. In the first place, a translation is never *just* an instance of translating, particularly if it is a literary translation. Its translating-quality may well be its primary, defining character but it sets about this through the exercise of words framed in certain ways, and these in the end-product open up - if only secondarily, in passing - further material for criticism: aesthetic infelicities, for example, or structural anomalies, in the form or the matter. If we insist that this is quite extrinsic to the translating-quality, we are imagining we could filter one from the other. Could we, though?

In the second place, every translation is the handiwork of a writer,²⁸ with attendant, longer-term, personal (or quasi-personal) characteristics; and these almost inevitably spill over into what we are judging: perhaps a measure of carelessness here, of ignorance there, of awkwardness in the craft of writing there. Many a translation is censured more for its underlying traits than for what lies on the page; and perhaps reasonably so, if the association is close enough.

In the third place, granting freedom to a translator to tackle the job in whatever way he or she chooses, we can still reasonably ask that the choice be suitable to its context. There will often be some exterior circumstances that make demands upon a

²⁷ J. P. Sullivan, *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius: A Study in Creative Translation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965).

²⁸ ... or a “fictive authorial function”, I suppose we should add; hence, too, the “quasi” in the next line.

translation, and quite properly require from it certain characteristics. A straightforward description of an empirical state of affairs, for example; or a series of instructions to operate a piece of equipment; or the acknowledged place this particular work occupies within a genealogy of works of similar purport; or some specific challenge (such as - traditionally a very influential prescriptor - the need to demonstrate mastery of a foreign language to a schoolmaster): all of these prescribe, through the context, some quite particular specification, some quite proper limiting in how it is meant to be understood. No amount of resignalling disclaimers on the translator's part can liberate him or her altogether from this requirement, which is strongest perhaps where the subject-matter or language are non-literary.²⁹ The translator behind a poorly presented list of instructions for installing a DVD player will hardly justify himself to the customer by saying that he was pursuing a different idea of "meaning". With poetry, the potential for legitimate alternative expectations, and understandings of what the work amounts to, is much greater. For that reason literary translation is arguably an exceptionally fruitful field for examining the ambiguities inherent in all translation, and not something to be left (as in so many books on translation it is) to a brief later chapter, as if it is a "special case".³⁰ In poetry, meaning moves over the face of the waters, before short-cuts have become second nature.

With such a vast diversity of translation in theory and practice, it looks as though matters of judgement are left largely to negotiation between practitioner and consumer, with certain constraints in the context, and with some values perhaps transferable from other aspects of the exercise: aesthetic or moral, say. But is there no objective criterion? I now turn to this question.

²⁹ This category might well include classroom sentences, plucked away from any genuine context and requiring the pupil merely to substitute words and patterns according to dictionary and grammar-book.

³⁰ "The translation of poetry and, with it, the translation of verse form a *distinct, isolated* and extremely important *section* of the art with which we are concerned." Savory, p. 76. (My italics, including the page number.)

3. *Translation: an impossible ideal?*

Is there some ideal which can be applied to “translation” in general, to distinguish a “good” from a “bad” representation? If there is, what is it, and what angle of incidence does it have to the translator’s task? Or are we left with blank cheques, a free-for-all, anarchy, and chaos?

One form the discussion takes is that of whether there can be “perfect translation”. Such an ideal need not be humanly achievable, but without a conceivable standard of some sort it is difficult to see what sense can be made of valuing one translation (*as a translation*) against another. If something is inherently impossible, how can one instance come nearer to accomplishment than another?

Setting out “principles of translation” (i.e. what a translation should aim at) was a hall-mark of translation theory until the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in Tytler’s *On the Principles of Translation* (1791, third edition 1813) they were summarised as deductions from what he took to be the essential character of translation:

That, in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language, as to be as distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is by those who speak the language of the original work.³¹

Accordingly, the “laws of translation” were:

- I. That the Translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work.
- II. That the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original.
- III. That the Translation should have all the ease of original composition.³²

Words such as “complete” and “same” and “all” are hostages to fortune, but Tytler’s version is important (it is also expressed clearly) for the fact that it represents an approach generally held still. Translation is seen as a process of matching one textual

³¹ Alexander Fraser Tytler, *On the Principles of Translation* (London: J. M. Dent, 1907), pp. 8-9.

³² Tytler, p. 9.

reality with another textual reality, in such a way that the gulf between them - linguistic and cultural - is transcended. Steiner tries to identify what is wrong with the idea underlying this project, and his discussion of the subject is helpful as much for the hesitations that emerge in his way of expressing himself as for the critique itself:

A 'perfect' act of translation would be one of total synonymy. It would presume an interpretation so precisely exhaustive as to leave no single unit in the source-text - phonetic, grammatical, semantic, contextual - out of complete account, and yet so calibrated as to have added nothing in the way of paraphrase, explication or variant. But we know that in practice this perfect fit is possible neither at the stage of interpretation nor at that of linguistic transfer and restatement. ... Understanding is always partial, always subject to emendation. Natural language is not only polysemic and in process of diachronic change. It is imprecise, it has to be imprecise, to serve human locution.³³

There are really two major logical problems in the Tytler approach. One - with which Steiner is dealing at this point - is the indeterminateness of texts. They cannot (logically cannot) be perfectly reproduced because (both as source texts and as target texts) they lack that definiteness, that finality of meaning, which successful translating in the Tytler sense presupposes. There is always going to be more to be said. Texts (this was a topic dealt with in Chapter I) are inherently versatile; and indeed it is only through translation of some kind that a determinate sense is given to the polyvalent data, the translation itself determining what it was actually translating.³⁴ But Steiner then curiously goes on to confuse the problem by seemingly surrendering his insistence on the impossibility of a "perfect fit". He introduces an epistemological consideration.

And although the existence of a 'perfect translation' or 'perfect exchange of the totality of intended meaning' between two speakers are theoretically conceivable, there could be no way of verifying the actual fact. For how would we know? By what means except an alternate formulation and explicative rephrasing could we demonstrate that the case in point was indeed 'perfect'? Yet such demonstration would necessarily reopen the question. In other words: to demonstrate the excellence, the exhaustiveness of an act of interpretation and/or translation is to offer an alternative or an addendum. There are no closed circuits in natural language, no self-consistent axiomatic sets.³⁵

³³ Steiner, p. 407. The statement of the argument in his second edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1992) is unchanged.

³⁴ Thus giving the argument an extra twist. Even if in one sense translation is "impossible", each translation *must* (in another sense) be correct - since it determines its own reference.

³⁵ Steiner, p. 407.

This is a different reason, and while it has some force it is for present purposes secondary, and much weaker. The reason why we cannot recognise a perfect translation is that a perfect translation is impossible, and it is putting the cart before the horse to suggest it is impossible because we could not ever recognise it. Why might we not conceivably recognise it, however unlikely, if it is possible? (We might acquire enhanced cognitive powers.) In any case, even if we could never identify a “perfect translation” we might well be content with trusting it to be conceivable. That would do. We could on that basis get on with the job, with integrity, and not trouble ourselves overmuch with whether we could positively know when we had accomplished perfection. At least the enterprise would make sense. But without that idea of an ideal, there seems little sense in preferring one translation to another. (The argument is not that the ideal is “out of reach”, but that it has no substance: it is a self-contradiction.) That is the strength of Steiner’s argument, and he weakens it by bringing in the matter of recognition.

A second aspect of the problem of the “perfect translation”, and one with which Steiner does not deal explicitly, is this. Even if we could make sense of a fixed starting-point and a fixed outcome, and measure one against another, the transition itself (implied in translating) is very odd. In translating we try to turn one entity into something different but to keep it simultaneously essentially the same. But how can it be “the same” when we have turned it into “something different”? This is not a verbal quibble. Of course we commonsensically get around it by distinguishing different sorts of identity and difference, so that a translated version can be “different” (say) in respect of language but “the same” in respect of meaning. But the distinction is itself questionable (even apart from Catford’s familiar and widely-held view that, because meaning is a property of a language, transfer of meaning from one language to another is impossible);³⁶ and in any case it simply moves the logical tension to another area.

³⁶ J. C. Catford, *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 35.

Whatever “meaning” is - here supposedly implicit in the original and then shifted from the writer to a new set of readers, for appropriation by them - its moving will inevitably entail some recontextualising, some new shapings and colourings. So we find ourselves having to distinguish between “meaning in its actual ramifications” and “the essential meaning”, with the latter staying unchanged while the former is sucked into the relativities involved in being available to people in different circumstances. But, in that case, how has the “essential meaning” been translated? It looks as though it escapes the contradictions latent in translating by simply not taking part in the process at all. It functions as transcendent, a permanent reality to which successive sets of people gain access but which stays self-identical. Conceivably, some kinds of significance may fit this revised paradigm - mathematical truths, say; or timeless ideas of various kinds; or, superlatively, the Word of God.³⁷ For these a different phenomenology is needed, in terms perhaps of the reorientation of the reader rather than of a process carried out on the (self-identical) subject-matter. But within the ordinary world of change and textual reformulation, the dialectic of translation (implementing meaning afresh but staying the same) is unavoidable; and - like the indeterminateness of texts - its incoherence undermines the very conception of a “perfect” translation, and therefore of any criterion applied universally and objectively.

These are logical difficulties, but they make themselves felt experimentally too, as translators try day by day to actualise meaning afresh. The intransigence that exists between one language and another (each with its linguistic and cultural frameworks), and the consequent unreality of aiming to offer in one language what a foreign writer might have produced, had he or she been writing in it now (or some such “might-have-been”),³⁸ may not have quite the recalcitrance of squaring the circle, but the obstacles to translation can be well-nigh insurmountable. Whether in the end we

³⁷ It is perhaps no accident that much of the recent support for the idea that translating involves reaching down into deep universals of significance has come from the field of Bible translating.

³⁸ “How would Virgil have told the story, if he had been born in England, and in this present age?” C. Day Lewis (trans.), *The Aeneid of Virgil* (London: New English Library, 1962), p. 316. Day Lewis’ translation is a fine one, notwithstanding.

call the impossibility “logical” or “contingent” may not perhaps matter. Jakobson’s view that everything can in principle be said in any language is only moderately comforting, since it covers only the “cognitive” use of language, and it is also clear that the devices we use to secure this will affect - if not *what* is communicated - at any rate *how* it is said; and that may be just as bad for a translator:

All cognitive experience and its classification is conveyable in any existing language. Whenever there is deficiency, terminology may be qualified and amplified by loanwords or loan-translations, neologisms or semantic shifts, and finally, by circumlocutions.³⁹

The only way to ensure “perfect translation”, we might conclude, is to leave the text as it is. But even that strategy, in a world of Heraclitean flux, will guarantee nothing. We seem no nearer reining in the happy-go-lucky translator.

4. *Translation: a proper attempt?*

But the fact is that people do work hard at their translations, and some translations are commonly held to be better or worse than others. Either we have here a refusal to face logical facts or - surely more likely - there is another way of approaching the question of the ideal in translation, and of how it relates to what translators do. After rather shakily questioning the possibility of perfect translation, Steiner goes on (quite properly) to say:

But if ‘perfect’ translation is no more than a formal ideal, and if great translation is rare, there are, none the less, examples which seem to approach the limits of empirical possibility. There are texts in which the initial commitment to the emotional and intellectual risks of unmapped, resistant alterity continues vital and scrupulous even to the finished product. There are translations which are supreme acts of critical exegesis, in which analytic understanding, historical imagination, linguistic expertness articulate a critical valuation which is at the same time a piece of totally lucid, responsible exposition. There are translations which not only represent the integral life of the original, but which do so by enriching, by extending the executive means of their own tongue. Lastly, most exceptionally, there are translations which restore, which achieve an equilibrium and poise of radical equity between two

³⁹ Jakobson, in Brower, p. 234.

works, two languages, two communities of historical experience and contemporary feeling. For a translation to realize all four aspects equally and to the full is, obviously, 'a miracle of rare device'.⁴⁰

Here he is building on his argument that the "hermeneutical motion, the act of elicitation and appropriative transfer of meaning, is fourfold".⁴¹ There is the leap of faith, in which we assume at least for the time being that there is meaning to be got out of our text; an assumption that may be refuted by experience. There is the assault we make into that meaning, "incursive and extractive",⁴² "invasive and exhaustive",⁴³ bringing value out of it but leaving it in some sense poorer; as if translation is a sort of despoliation (another metaphor to add to the earlier list). Then there is the incorporation of this meaning into the translator's own structure of words and values, which can be as dangerous to the translator's world as the second aspect of the hermeneutical motion is to the world of the original text. Finally, there is the aspect of compensation, a difficult notion but one that refers to the way in which a responsible translation will deal with imbalances in how it has been representing its original: filling gaps, emphasising the translation's inadequacies, reinstating what has dropped out, qualifying what has been overlaid. The intention is somehow to maintain the original's status as intact as possible. According to Steiner, it is through whole-hearted, skilful adherence to this dialectic that translations could come to be judged as "of rare device".

What is happening is that the debate about the ideal is being moved from some abstract (and unattainable) correspondence between two ends of a process - the "original" and the "translation" - to the internal complexity of the human process that links them. Steiner is still expressing himself in a way that suggests, lingeringly, that perfectibility might be possible (with one end-product absolutely better than another); but that can be taken out of the argument without any material loss. (We can also

⁴⁰ Steiner, pp. 407-8.

⁴¹ Steiner, p. 296.

⁴² Steiner, p. 297.

⁴³ Steiner, p. 298.

simplify the discussion by setting aside the fourfoldness he argues belongs to good translation practice.) The focus has changed. Translation is being considered descriptively (as something people do), rather than normatively (as something ideally accomplishable). In Louis Kelly's words, "translation is as social an act as language, and as individual".⁴⁴ It is a down-to-earth attempt to bring hermeneutical order into the relativities and tentativities of human understanding.

This is a safer starting-point in the search for a criterion. It establishes at the outset that *every* attempt at translation will be specific in some way. In Section 2 above specification was introduced as a possible ground for exoneration: something a translator might emphasise - perhaps quite reasonably - in order to evade hostile criticism. It needed watching, and factors such as context of expectations, and the quality (in other respects) of the work, should be taken into account. But if every attempt at translation is necessarily specific (a particular *specifying*) we are able to venture further, and to strengthen the status and role of this reference to specifics. Being empirically practised, and empirically available for judgement, no translation can be subjected to some *merely* abstract, universal criterion (even supposing such a criterion were possible). The place to look for norms - on this argument - is within the activity itself, to see whether it is (in some sense) being true to itself (since the notion of being true to anything else is evidently problematic).

"What aspirations and aims is this particular translation setting itself?" is a different question from "To what ideal pattern is this particular translation trying to conform?" and even from "With what qualifications and allowances should we be judging this translation, given it has been characterised in this particular way?" And the first question is an intelligible, as well as an important, one. There are features of any specific translation which inherently imply a standard, but an inherent standard: being conative and specific, it acts up to a point as its own regulator. That is how it keeps itself on track and persistently defines itself. Kant makes a distinction between ideals

⁴⁴ L. G. Kelly, *The True Interpreter*, p. 227.

of this sort, functioning regulatively within an action, and ideals projected beyond us and then supposed (illusively) to bind us from outside:

... they [i.e. the former] have an excellent, and indeed indispensably necessary, regulative employment, namely, that of directing the understanding towards a certain goal upon which the routes marked out by all its rules converge, as upon their point of intersection. This point is indeed a mere idea, a *focus imaginarius*, from which, since it lies quite outside the bounds of possible experience, the concepts of the understanding do not in reality proceed; none the less it serves to give to these concepts the greatest [possible] unity combined with the greatest [possible] extension.⁴⁵

The metaphysics with which Kant accompanies this discussion can perhaps be left to one side, but his *prima facie* distinction is important in understanding how translation can be simultaneously free to follow the dictates of its specific task, *and* bound by certain defining requirements (in fact these very same “dictates” which constitute it the particular kind of translation it is). To judge a translation we ask questions about how it is set up. What claims does it make (tacitly perhaps; univocally or confusedly, perhaps; with disclaimers too, perhaps) as to the kind of translation it is? How consistently are these claims upheld in the attempt itself? Where does it belong in relation to other attempts, other retellings of the story?⁴⁶ What relationships does it engage in with the reader? These are facts, but they function as internal ideals which the attempt may succeed or fail in adhering to. We judge, first of all, by “getting the *point*” of the translation. What is it up to, and how coherently does it realise itself and offer a clear sense of doing what it sets out to do?⁴⁷

Thus, instead of hankering for a “perfect translation”, we are looking to see - and this is the first stage of the enquiry, to be supplemented in Sections 5 and 6 - whether we have a “proper” attempt, a genuine exercise in producing something identifiable and specific, something that hangs together with integrity. Acknowledging

⁴⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1964), p. 533. The passage is from the “Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic”. Only the first set of square brackets is added by me.

⁴⁶ This is where Steiner’s supplementary argument (about the necessity for cross-referencing among different renderings), which earlier I claimed muddied the water in his critique of “perfect translation”, comes into its own.

⁴⁷ This idea will need qualifying in the light of Section 6.

the *focus imaginarius* stemming from the specific translation liberates translator and critic from the *ignis fatuus* of an absolute ideal. Translation - this is the upshot of this part of the argument - is actualised in many different ways, and the critic's first responsibility is to be aware of what is going on in this particular case (taking cues not just from what the translator claims but from what is actually offered), and to approach it with an open mind, granting to the translator as much right to freedom of manoeuvre as the critic should claim (and the translator admit) in return; each properly concerned with identifying what sort of translation the translation is before measuring it. This is being appropriately *kritikos* (discerning).

But we cannot escape generality altogether, only now we are to apply a general criterion for the purpose of identifying, or classifying, something as a translation (or not) rather than of assessing how well (as a translation) it meets some objective standard. While all actual translation is specified translation, all specified translation is also (in addition to the characterisation it offers of itself) *definably* "translation". A particular attempt may be playing in a particular way, but is it playing the game of "translation"? This is a more general consideration (and by approaching it from the specific level, as we are doing now, we are less likely to confuse it with a discredited external ideal). It requires us to see whether a specific translation exhibits the characteristics essential to its being put in the category of "translation" at all. (Like the question as to specification, this is not fundamentally a question about authorial intent or motive: it is about an orientation or *conatus* running through the way the work is framed and expressed.)

It is important to try to express this defining concern as broadly as we can. It has to be definite enough to include and exclude examples at the outer margins, but not so definite that it functions as merely a way of giving priority to one particular sort of translation over the others. I suggest the following. Every translation of a text is in

some sense avowedly⁴⁸ *of* something, and in some sense *for* someone. That is its Janus-like dialectic. It displays what I call “consanguinity” and “life”. It would be hard to be vaguer than that without failing altogether to say something. It is not offered as a definition, and as such it would obviously not withstand rigorous analysis. For evidence of its usefulness I refer to the use which will be made of it in the last two Sections of this Chapter. But a translation does characteristically refer both backwards and forwards, and while what lies at each end may be ultimately indeterminable or indeterminate (a story with manifold polyvalences, a readership that may be anything from the author himself to the infinite expanse of posterity) each acquires some specific focus in the actual process of translation.

The polarity is expressed in different ways by different writers. For Steiner, translation involves “a radical tension between impulses to facsimile and impulses to appropriate recreation”;⁴⁹ for Tillyard, regarding them in reverse order and taking issue with the view that we should judge a translation through its details, “better tests of a long work are whether the translator has a durable rhetoric and whether he can follow the main undulations of his original”;⁵⁰ for Tytler the principles of translation range from “a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work” to “all the ease of original composition”;⁵¹ in the centuries-long debate within classical rhetoric the duality was represented by those, on the one hand, who aimed to reproduce the sense of the text (“elementary translations produced under the guidance of the *grammaticus*”) and those, on the other hand, who aimed to make something new out of it for a different audience or readership (“more advanced or self-consciously aggressive translations to be carried out when the student reaches the stage of rhetorical training or

⁴⁸ If we omitted “avowedly” then everything might be translation: in Steiner’s words (see Chapter I, Section 4 above) “... a special, heightened case of the process of communication and reception in any act of human speech.” Steiner, p. 414. Perhaps it is. That would be a not ignoble default position for the present argument, at any rate.

⁴⁹ Steiner, p. 235.

⁵⁰ E. M. W. Tillyard, *The English Epic and its Background*, p. 502.

⁵¹ Tytler, p. 9. Bassnett (p. 63) misquotes the final idea as “all the ease of *the* original composition”, giving it quite a different sense.

expertise”).⁵² But, in some way or other, every translation represents a concern with past (and present) consanguinities and also a concern with onward life. The first concern is the *fides* of “fidelity”, the second is the *fides* of “live confidence”.⁵³ In Section 5 I shall say something about the first of these, and in Section 6 something about the second. We can now bring back Douglas and his *Eneados*.

5. *Consanguinity*

Showing in detail how Douglas maintains consanguinity in his translation is matter for another thesis, but it is possible to say enough to clarify what the concept means and to indicate lines along which evidence might be gathered. Most obviously his translation is consanguineous in that it reproduces the plot of the *Aeneid* without significant deviation: point by point. But does his radical shift - the distinctive narrative pitch and “*superficies*-enhancement” he provides - detract from this? Ian Robb⁵⁴ examines *Eneados* on the supposition of a clear Virgilian starting-point, and with a traditional concept of “accuracy”, and he is able to demonstrate numerous “mistakes”. Within its chosen frame of reference this makes a significant contribution to the debate about Douglas, but it is only one possible focus among the range of readings and criteriological options available. I suggested in Chapter I that Virgil’s text, like any other, is essentially (even - though haltingly - by Douglas’ own understanding) versatile, so that in encountering it we are bound to find more than one layer of meaning. Hence the notion of *Aeneis magna*, a broader territory or family network, with a correspondingly broader concept of “consanguinity”, and indeed a more

⁵² Copeland, p. 95.

⁵³ With some stretching of etymology, the mark of well-realised specificity - discussed earlier - might be a third *fides*, that of “compact confederacy” (coherent and “with its act together”); the Latin *foedus* (bond) is apparently related to *fides*.

⁵⁴ Ian S. Robb, “Latin into Scots: Aims and Methods in Translation with particular reference to Gavin Douglas’s translation of the *Aeneid* of Virgil”.

generous concept of “accuracy”. This last word has not always meant impersonal exactness, and it might still be used - just - to refer to personal qualities. In Latin “accurare” has connotations of caring, tending, refreshing, invigorating. The “accuracy” which Douglas brings to the story of Aeneas is a strong, coherent love of the subject, a degree of fellow-feeling with its Roman narrator, an urge to “love, honour and obey” author and text alike, to pick up the tale and pass it on in a way that would not displease Virgil. Rolfe Humphries - himself a translator of Latin verse - imagines consulting his author when he feels he needs to express something in a different way if he is to get across its sense: “Would you mind if I tried it this way?” He goes on:

On the other hand, I know I must not do things that would make my author, in so far as I can understand him beyond the text, in so far as I can, with my imagination, enter into his spirit, cringe, wince, or look for the nearest exit. I know I can never do him complete justice; if there are rare moments when I think I can improve on him, and not violate his spirit, I must not, out of modesty, refrain, for I shall already have weakened so many passages that the debt is still all on my side.⁵⁵

The application of this to Douglas is not straightforward, because Douglas continues to assert officially that he is just following Virgil’s “sense” (i.e. that he is playing precisely the game which Ian Robb assumes him to be playing); though we now know better.⁵⁶ The question his macro-transposition raises here is whether the way he radically retells the story can be reconciled with the need in some sense to have a regard to consanguinity, as one of the two describing characteristics of a proper translation. It is a question about “pre-Virgilian” and “post-Virgilian” constituents and their presence in diverse readings of the *Aeneid*, a question - if we were discussing literary influence - about Virgil’s literary dependence (on Homer, on Apollonius Rhodius, on Lucretius, on Greek tragic drama, on Catullus, on Ennius, on many more), and about the routes along which subsequent writers colonised *Aeneis magna* and were

⁵⁵ Rolfe Humphries, “Latin and English Verse - Some Practical Considerations”, in Brower, p. 66.

⁵⁶ i.e. in the light of Chapters I-V.

able to produce differently focused, but arguably no less authentic, readings of the story.

Our obvious starting-point is Homer:

The *Aeneid* is alive to the whole of the epic tradition, but it looks back continuously to the origins of that tradition in the poems of Homer.⁵⁷

In two quite general respects it is difficult to resist the feeling that what Douglas is *in effect* (the reservation is important) doing is bringing out a Homer-like quality which Virgil's particular treatment had absorbed and in part concealed. The first concerns the language-type, the second the role of dominating theme in the *Aeneid*.

Homer's language is a syncretism:

... a mixture, an amalgam of different dialects and different periods. The predominant component is Ionic, but there are many Aeolic forms and a relatively small number of words that belong to the so-called Arcado-Cypriot dialect.⁵⁸

Bowra speaks of Homer's copious vocabulary, simple syntax and relatively unsubtle nuances.⁵⁹

Homer's language has the simplicity and elasticity of young speech. He can say the same thing in many ways because he is not unduly hampered by rules or the complications which time adds to syntax.⁶⁰

He finds resemblances with post-Virgilian narratives:

... parallel cases where single poems combine different dialects and even languages. *Beowulf*, though largely written in Northumbrian, has a considerable admixture of Mercian and even of Kentish words. Chaucer wrote a language formed of the English of the East Midlands and of medieval French.⁶¹

Homer also makes considerable use of formulaic phrases and conventional decorative epithets, giving his poems a powerful sense of oral delivery (albeit considered and disciplined oral delivery).

Douglas' language also was syncretistic. That is one of the narrative levels at which he brought things together. Hofmann points to the variety of linguistic

⁵⁷ Philip Hardie, *Virgil*, p. 54.

⁵⁸ G. S. Kirk, *Homer and the Epic* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), p. 76.

⁵⁹ C. M. Bowra, *Tradition and Design in the Iliad* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 130 f.

⁶⁰ Bowra, p. 131.

⁶¹ Bowra, p. 139.

influences impacting on Douglas in the east of Scotland, giving him the ability to draw not just on his native roots and the language of the Court but on the tongues available through international personal contact as well as through literature. This makes his language rich and versatile, but not strained or inaccessible. He draws a parallel with Chaucer: we might draw it with Homer.

Er war also in einer ähnlich günstigen Lage wie Chaucer. Die Literatursprache war für ihn keine angelernte Umgangssprache, sondern war die Sprache seiner Kindheit und zugleich die Sprache des ihm anvertrauten Volkes, sodaß er um so leichter aus dem lebendigen Quell der Sprache schöpfen konnte. Andererseits bot sich ihm gerade am Zentrum reiche Gelegenheit dem von allen Seiten zusammenströmenden Volke gar manches kernige, seinem Dialekt fremde Wort abzulauschen und so im Gegensatz zu anderen, die sich mehr einer "gewählteren" befleißigten, seinen farbenprächtigen, echt volkstümlichen germanischen Wortschatz um ein Wesentliches zu bereichern.⁶²

In contrast Virgil writes with careful, crafted tautness, using a language that depends heavily on the artistic effects of syntactic inversion, and that uses a relatively small vocabulary but gives to a single word the possibility of many shades of meaning, depending upon its relationships with other words surrounding it. Virgil tightens where Homer was loose. Douglas loosens where Virgil was tight. He offers in effect a formal unfocusing from Virgil to Homer.

Secondly, underlying the entire subject-matter of the *Aeneid* is a unifying theme, the destiny of Rome. C. S. Lewis maintains that Homer - like all "primary epic" - lacks a "great subject":

That kind of greatness arises only when some event can be held to effect a profound and more or less permanent change in the history of the world, as the founding of Rome did, or still more, the fall of man. Before any event can have that significance, history must have some degree of pattern, some design.⁶³

There are great themes in Homer, of course - love, life, death, suffering, treachery, glory, and so forth - but Virgil was able to unite these not simply by bringing them into a particular story with a particular climax but by evoking within readers personally close to the historical issues a sense of the importance of what had happened and what

⁶² Josef Hofmann, *Die Nordischen Lehnwörter bei Gavin Douglas* (Munich: Druckerei Studentenhaus, 1925), p. 4. Charles Blyth, p. 130, makes the comment - relevant here - that Douglas uses language "polystylistically".

⁶³ C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 29.

would happen in future. He could write from within significant time, and pull together the destiny of Rome and the destiny of its people. In Homer (and of course the difference should not be exaggerated, nor its implications for Douglas' translation) the greatness lies in "human and personal tragedy" set against a "background of meaningless flux".⁶⁴ There is thematic looseness in Homer. He is without the peculiarly poignant compositeness that Virgil can offer: Homer is pre-Virgilian. Douglas, as we saw, lacks a certain concentratedness of effect too: he is post-Virgilian.

These two points of comparison are fairly abstract, but there are other characteristics - evident rather in the actual spinning of the story - which (for those with eyes to see and ears to hear) echo earlier or later writers, and fairly suggest wider kinship and affinity. I now indicate a few, where we see Douglas broadly retaining focal direction but altering focal length.

Where Douglas enhances and lingers on some individual event or scene, while Virgil would strictly subordinate it to the onward movement of the enterprise as a whole, Douglas is behaving in effect Homerically:

Reading Homer, one so often has the impression that the narrator has lost sight of the point of each episode; as A. W. Schlegel put it, 'he lingers over every detail of the past with total attention, as if nothing had happened before or would happen after, so that everything is equally interesting as a living present time'.⁶⁵

The way in which Douglas loosens time and temporality is Homeric too, rather than strictly Virgilian:

The "historical" attitude of Aeneas expresses the moral change in Vergil's world and its difference from that of Homer's. Unlike Homer's heroes, the figure of Aeneas simultaneously comprises past, present, and future.⁶⁶

Matthew Arnold⁶⁷ summarised the four chief characteristics of Homer as rapidity, plain directness in words as well as in ideas, and nobleness of thought. Three of these are evident in Douglas. Douglas' emphasis on the attractiveness of particular

⁶⁴ Lewis, p. 31.

⁶⁵ Richard Heinze, *Virgil's Epic Technique*, p. 251.

⁶⁶ Viktor Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil*, p. 38.

⁶⁷ Matthew Arnold, "On Translating Homer (1861-2)", in *Essays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), pp. 245-424 (p. 250).

scenes, on their concrete vividness, is a feature of Virgil's Alexandrian predecessors, of Apollonius Rhodius; or of Catullus. What in Virgil was taken and sublimated through what Glover called the "strong sad tone" of his mind⁶⁸ has found itself again in the lively sixteenth-century Scots of Gavin Douglas.⁶⁹ Douglas' vigorousness of movement might be in effect a recapturing of the intensity of Greek drama, which lies behind Virgil.⁷⁰

Douglas' way of handling metaphor and simile we found less emotively charged, more rational and everyday, than Virgil's. What was Homer's approach?

Homer is different. He aims at illumination of visible relations while Vergil aims to establish moods, interpret states of mind, and to intimate impending fate. Accordingly, the Homeric similes are more severely outlined, often surprisingly rational, and often strangely cold and seemingly insensitive. On the other hand, the Vergilian similes have fluid, flexible contours which allow them to be more felt than observed. Homer strives to make an event explicit. Vergil strives to explain and interpret it.⁷¹

Homer's choice of similes is often quite earthy - Ajax compared to an ass, Menelaus to a fly, Odysseus to a haggis, and so on.⁷² Virgil tones down this colloquiality in Homer: Douglas picks it up again.

If Douglas' individuals have clearer personal boundaries and a somewhat fuller inner identity, that is more like Apollonius Rhodius, or indeed Homer, than Virgil:

... Virgil's characters do not stand out as individuals, as real people in a real society, to anything like the same degree as do those of Apollonius or Homer. ... The speeches of Dido and Aeneas [in Virgil] are abstract, rhetorically structured, generalized: ...⁷³

As to narrative style, in Apollonius and Homer there is (as there is in Douglas) "greater naturalness or spontaneity".⁷⁴ Douglas' concern, too, to underline causal

⁶⁸ T. R. Glover, *Virgil*, p. 64.

⁶⁹ "Homer's vivid intelligence found interest in many different things, and this wide curiosity accounts for one of his notable characteristics, his freedom from melancholy." Bowra, p. 248.

⁷⁰ "The influence of tragedy on the *Aeneid* is pervasive, and arguably the single most important factor in Virgil's successful revitalization of the genre of epic." Hardie, p. 62.

⁷¹ Pöschl, p. 81.

⁷² Pöschl, p. 99.

⁷³ Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry*, p. 89.

⁷⁴ Otis, p. 90.

connections might remind us of a special favourite of Virgil's: Lucretius, whose *De natura rerum* is an extended hymn in praise of the enquiring intellect.⁷⁵

Consanguinity can be traced more indirectly through later as well as earlier literary manifestations, for example in Ovid and Lucan. Bawcutt has drawn attention to parallels between Douglas and Ovid in *The Palice of Honour*:

Words like 'translatit' (324), 'transformit' (316), or 'transfiguratioun' (774) are pointers to Douglas's own preoccupation with metamorphosis.⁷⁶

Knight tells us that

... Ovid's poetry is really the opposite to Vergil's. It is full of Vergilian phrases; but Ovid writes on one level, not many, and without the penumbra of secondary suggestions on which the Vergilian depth relies.⁷⁷

Douglas (like Ovid) characteristically stretches out what Virgil makes deep. As to Lucan, Coldwell makes an interesting suggestion about Douglas' initial choice of subject:

He might have been happier translating the demonic and feverish rhetoric of the *Pharsalia*. His enthusiasm catches fire in what must seem to most readers the less Vergilian passages, and his ardour is reflected in the alliterating vigour of his vocabulary.⁷⁸

These brief indications are simply meant to suggest a more generous notion of consanguinity, taking it in relation to *Aeneis magna* rather than a supposedly fixed and finite *Aeneid*. I am not claiming that there is literary influence, that Douglas deliberately draws material from Virgil's predecessors or successors (much of it was probably a closed book to him), or that the shift his version gives the story is a matter of deliberate policy. I am not claiming that the refocused and repatterned constituents are in some sense really "there" in Virgil, "embedded" or "implicit" or "potential": waiting - as it were - to be unearthed; or (as Gransden expresses it) "like the traces of an earlier text on a palimpsest".⁷⁹ The issue is simply whether there are evident lines of

⁷⁵ Douglas might have taken his cue from Virgil's line in the *Georgics*: "felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas" (2.490).

⁷⁶ Priscilla Bawcutt, *Gavin Douglas*, p. 59. The lines in Small are I.14.15, 14.7 and 31.3.

⁷⁷ W. F. Jackson Knight, *Roman Vergil*, p. 305.

⁷⁸ David F. C. Coldwell (ed.), *Virgil's Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse*, vol. 1, p. 70.

⁷⁹ K. W. Gransden, *Virgil's Iliad*, p. 100.

accordance between the overt Virgil - the Virgil of the standard consensus, the plot which everyone follows - and the new narrative framework of “lay-out” and “feel” with which Douglas supplies it. It is not necessary to have a theory about how relations are begotten (how the artistic process of creative integration works) before constructing a family tree. Hence I conclude that Douglas’ freedom with the story is not a neglect of faithfulness, but faithfulness on a larger scale.⁸⁰

6. *Engagement and life*

But it is also *this story for others*. A proper translation will evince and in turn elicit “confidence” as well as “fidelity”. In this Section I shall argue that there are two further ways in which a translation may quite properly move beyond the narrower bounds set by traditional “accuracy” (in the sense of producing some form of words which - as well as being true to the original - makes the meaning available as unproblematically as possible to a new reader’s understanding); and indeed that, for some specific purposes of translation (including the kind represented by *Eneados*), these two extensions are not merely permissible but essential.

In *David Copperfield* the narrator tells of how he helped his friend Steerforth to a knowledge of good stories. Copperfield had made some reference to *Peregrine Pickle*.

He [Steerforth] said nothing at the time; but when I was going to bed at night, asked me if I had got that book?
I told him no, and explained how it was that I had read it, and all those other books of which I have made mention.
‘And do you recollect them?’ Steerforth said.
Oh, yes, I replied; I had a good memory, and I believed I recollected them very well.
‘Then I tell you what, young Copperfield,’ said Steerforth, ‘you shall tell ’em to me. I can’t get to sleep very early at night, and I generally wake rather early

⁸⁰ The analogy between family members and translations would repay development: what sort of comparison-questions make sense, and what do not.

in the morning. We'll go over 'em one after another. We'll make some regular Arabian Nights of it.'

I felt extremely flattered by this arrangement, and we commenced carrying it into execution that very evening. What ravages I committed on my favourite authors in the course of my interpretation of them, I am not in a condition to say, and should be very unwilling to know; but I had a profound faith in them, and I had, to the best of my belief, a simple earnest manner of narrating what I did narrate; and these qualities went a long way.⁸¹

A "profound faith" in the stories and a "simple earnest manner of narrating" are the prerequisites this story-teller singles out for creating interest on the hearer's part. (They also hint again at the inherent polarity of translation, its intake and its uptake, though the two poles are distributed here differently: "faith" and "simple earnest manner" could each suggest shades both of past consanguinity and of onward life.)

From a different perspective, that of scholarly structuralism, Culler highlights the challenge facing a story-teller, and ways of dealing with it:

... the different rhythms of reading, which affect the structuring of the text, appear to result from that most compelling of imperatives: the desire to escape boredom.⁸²

Rolfe Humphries remarks that "one of our obligations to the original author is not to bore his audience".⁸³ He points out that Virgil is himself not uniformly absorbing, and instances 10.747-54; a quick comparison with Douglas' rendering of these lines (III.338.5-24) suggests that Douglas may have been more aware of the compelling obligation than Virgil was - just.

The point is that in telling, or retelling, a story the requirement to be interesting is something intrinsic to the very exercise of translation. However gaily or soberly it manages the task (and that will clearly depend on the nature of the story), the outcome needs to be enlivening. In terms of "accuracy" this extension calls up personal connotations (just conceivably present in the Latin) of meeting a need for sustenance and invigoration, and it rests ultimately on translation's being - however else we regard it - a human activity. A narrator putting across a meaning is handling more than

⁸¹ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, ch. 7. I have taken this extract from the Everyman's Library edition (London: Random, 1991), pp. 92-3.

⁸² Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, p. 263.

⁸³ Humphries, p. 63.

physical objects (words, shapes, noises in the air): he or she is taking part-responsibility for an interpersonal relationship among beings who usually expect to do more with a story than merely identify it and take note of its contents. They reasonably expect somehow to be set sentiently in motion by it.

This enlivenment begins conventionally⁸⁴ at the translator's end, even before pen is put to paper. Certainly in the case of stories an engaging retelling depends on some charged affinity, ideally perhaps a temperamental matching-up with the chosen text. Renato Poggioli makes a suggestion about how this "fit" should be conceived:

It may well be an error to believe that the translator has nothing to offer but an empty vessel which he fills with a liquor he could not distill by himself.⁸⁵

Instead, he offers a "contrary hypothesis" and a different image (although it will not do to pursue it too far):

... that the translator himself is a living vessel saturated with a formless fluid or sparkling spirit, which he cannot hold any longer in check; when the spirit is about to fizzle, or the liquid to overflow, he pours it into the most suitable of all the containers available to him, although he neither owns the container nor has he molded it with his own hands.⁸⁶

Thus "what moves the genuine translator is not a mimetic urge, but an elective affinity".⁸⁷ The "life" of the translation will be in part the "life" of the translator. And the translator in turn will be drawing life from the author (or from some function in the work that carries author-like, quasi-personal qualities), and not from the words alone. Some sense of a well-spring, of the originativeness underlying the work, needs to emerge:

The original reads like an original: hence it is only right that a translation of it should do so too.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ This qualification is necessary in the light of the second "extension", which I discuss later.

⁸⁵ Renato Poggioli, "The Added Artificer", in Brower, pp. 137-47 (p. 140).

⁸⁶ Poggioli, p. 140.

⁸⁷ Poggioli, p. 141. But the use of "affinity" needs modifying in the light of the availability of different layers of focus within the "same" poem. So do suggestions that Douglas ought to have translated someone else.

⁸⁸ Savory, p. 52.

When translation is specifically shaped in this way - as the telling of a story - the personality of a translator (which might well in other kinds of translation be a hindrance) plays a crucial part. W. P. Ker says of effective story-telling:

... a good deal of the attraction comes from the spell of the story-teller, from something in the eye of the Ancient Mariner, from the manner that will wile a bird from the tree. People listen because of the tones, the gestures of the artist who holds his audience in market-place or chimney-corner.

He instances a poem of Burns:

One is not listening so much to the story of Tam O'Shanter as to the movement of the mind of Burns, a mind running like the stream now in the shallows, now in the pools, now in the falls.⁸⁹

In Chapters II-V, I showed in some detail how it is Douglas' interest in crafting a vivid narrative for his readers that lies behind his radical "re-atmospherising": the felt impact he gives to matters of time, the powerfully visual quality he brings to scenes, the clarity and interactive liveliness he builds into descriptions of individuals, and even (though more indirectly) the sense he brings of something unifying and elusive running right through the story. Tillyard's assessment of the result begins unfavourably:

Some people may have read Douglas's *Aeneid* right through with pleasure in his own day. But how many of those who have praised it recently have read and enjoyed the whole? The knottiness of Douglas's language, admirably effective for certain passages and in small doses, does not make for intelligible narrative and wearies the reader after a few hundred lines.⁹⁰

But as he moves on, through selected passages, he finds himself bestowing muted praise on Douglas for his "ardent spirit" (doing his best with a story that was not quite cut out for him). His natural mode of expression was really "Homeric" rather than "Virgilian". Like his consanguinity, this style is in fact rooted in a single radical *conatus* or shift:

Douglas must always be on the spot; he lives quite in the present. Virgil holds past, present, and future together in his mind. Douglas would have kept far nearer his original if he had translated the *Iliad* instead. But that does not mean that he was any less alive in translating someone more distant from his own temper. It merely means that he had to force things more.⁹¹

⁸⁹ W. P. Ker, *Form and Style in Poetry*, p. 284.

⁹⁰ Tillyard, p. 338.

⁹¹ Tillyard, p. 341.

There are certainly awkwardnesses, infelicities, refractorinesses, points at which we feel shut out or closed down, where the narrative fails to come alive for us; and these imperfections are inevitably compounded by the difficulties caused by a lapse of several centuries. As Lewis says:

Its greatness easily escapes modern eyes. The public for which it was intended no longer exists; the language in which it was written now awakes false associations or none; its very original has been obscured first by classicism and then by the decay of classicism. An effort is required of us.⁹²

In fact, two efforts: the prior effort to gain access to what Douglas has for us, and the enduring effort of engagement in recreating the story ourselves. This brings me to the second extension.

Douglas' version is determinedly collaborative. I have argued that many of his specific translation techniques arise from his wish to engage readers in retelling the story with him for themselves. Reading it rightly, with the grain, means getting into the participatory spirit. That expectation (I argued in Chapters II-V) is woven into the very way in which Douglas expresses time or space or individuality or fate: his narrative style, its literary-informal-colloquial character, the way he draws our attention to the *superficies*, to the *passage* of events or the *appearance* of things, rather than to their deeper significance, the way he pulls the reader along, inviting us to complement and create on our own account. We are to be fellow-creators, not merely passive recipients (however much enlivened). Whereas I wrote earlier, therefore (in Section 4, p. 219), of needing to "get the point" by attending carefully to the specificity of the translation, it now needs to be made clear that - for a translation like *Eneados* - "getting the point" involves also a practical response on the reader's part. It is not just a case of detecting the "point" to which it appears Douglas has brought his material for us, but of bringing *ourselves* to a point of focus through which we can apprehend the story and make something distinct of it ourselves, giving it a new "point" in the light of our own specific engagement with the material now. There is as much synthesising for us to do

⁹² C. S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama*, p. 81.

as there was for Douglas. The invitation to read is an invitation to take the strings (which Douglas has obligingly loosened for us) and weave them afresh, doing our own repatterning (perhaps even re-tightening them in a “Virgilian” direction), *making something out of what we take Douglas to have made out of what he took Virgil to have made ...* and making it afresh.

This has implications for how we suppose we should “evaluate the translation”. In the first place, there is - strictly speaking - no “the translation”. That was always a suspect notion (because of indeterminateness and versatility), even without taking into account the fact of creative uptake at the hands of each reader. Now it is plain that every time anyone reads the text something different is being realised, and that on each occasion a new translation in effect emerges. Every reader is as fluctuating, as indeterminate, as versatile as any story. So we are not just grasping something “there” but genuinely making something, each time: we are all “makars” in this enterprise.

It is plain too, then, that if there is to be a proper evaluation of what is going on it can take place only from within that experience, and that it will be more a matter of feeling our way into it and seeing what is happening (to the story, to us) than of standing back and assessing it by some (now discredited) external measure. We have necessarily renounced that viewpoint (which was always spurious anyway) in accepting Douglas’ invitation and taking on us the task of collaboratively retelling. If there is something “good” or “bad” about the story, it will be something good or bad in a retelling which we are - in the very act of “evaluating” it - ourselves managing through our encounter with Douglas and Virgil (and by extension all the other constituents that figure in the territory). But the criteria governing that (like the criteria governing other interpersonal enterprises, like friendship and musical improvisation) are radically different from those belonging to a traditional “accuracy” approach. Different questions are relevant. Does it “click”? Does it feel right? Does it bring events and ideas alive for us (and for others)? Does it enable us to place ourselves in a

narrative stream where we feel we belong? Does it take us fruitfully into *Aeneis magna*? Does it enhance our minds, our imaginations, our moral well-being? Does it do what we might hope for from *any* literary work? Are we able to *value* it? If not (in some particular respect, or in general), that is a matter for practical resolution, for rediscovering hidden affinities, trying out further ways of engaging with Douglas' attempt; or alternatively for conceding that - however much we might try to make something out of it - it is just too disaffiliated from us at present to hold out any prospect of creative collaboration.

When we evaluate *Eneados*, therefore, we are properly evaluating ourselves. That, at least, I believe is the upshot of taking Douglas' kind of translation seriously - *his* translation particularly, but also any other literary translations that set themselves to be engaged with in a broadly similar way.

Is *Eneados* a "good translation"? Which *Eneados* do we mean? Like every translation of the story, in every one of its unique remanifestations, it is a bid for membership of the broader family with which it is associated. It actualises the consanguinity and the life that it finds there, and offers its distinctive ways of focusing to the mercy of future relativities and future appropriations. Readers will make of it what they will, detecting (or overlooking) its lines of accordance, its opportunities for enrichment. No single, definitive way of taking our bearings is remotely conceivable on this side of eternity (the matter is too big); and (if the very idea is incoherent) it is not conceivable even then: only a hope perhaps of being ultimately at ease with the rich indeterminability of the matter. But (*pro tempore*) Douglas, I believe, is worth having as a companion on a foray into *Aeneis magna*.

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