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What's Love Got to Do With It?
The Invocation to Erato, and Patriotism in the *Aeneid*

Katharine Toll

This re-evaluation of the burden of the *Aeneid*'s second invocation, the appeal to Erato at *Aeneid* 7, 37 ff., does not finally seek to alter the general opinion first expressed by Servius and much concurred in since, that Erato there stands for a muse's inspiration generally rather than in her particularity as a muse of erotic poetry¹. I intend to follow out the interpretive implications of the chief difficulties of this view, which are that the name Erato and her position at the beginning of the second half of the work inevitably call to mind the invocation of Erato by Apollonius Rhodius, for whom her relation to love poetry is both appropriate and three times iterated, and that it is not Vergil's practise to make such citations without consequence. I begin by showing the impossibility of taking Vergil's Erato to be, like Apollonius', erotic². Second I will discuss a proposal that she be taken, instead, as patriotic. And finally, having disclosed the awkwardness of this alternative too, I will fall back upon Servius' position that she is generic, and evaluate the significance of this generalization for Italy's ability to see herself as she is reflected in the poem.

¹ Servius said, *Pro Calliope vel pro qualicunque Musam posuit*. That Vergil was free to invoke a specific for a general muse is clear from Horace's invocation of Thalia at *Carmina* 4, 6, 25 without reference to comedy, for example, or from Ovid's appeal to Clio at *A.A.* 1, 27 without designating his poem as history. Servius is followed, among modern scholars, by Klingner ("der Name der Muse seine bedeutsamkeit verloren hat"), *Virgil: Bucolica Georgica Aeneis*, Stuttgart 1967, p. 497, and W.P. Basson, *Pivotal Catalogues in the Aeneid*, Amsterdam 1975, Chapter 3, pp. 95-115 (this is the fullest modern study conducting a review of the problem).

² This is the other common reading of the second invocation. Its ancient originator is Ovid: *femina Troianos iterum nova bella movere / inpulit in regno, iuste Latine, tuo, Amores*, 2, 12, 21-2. I shall mention its modern adherents below.

First, feel the strangeness of the invocation's first impression. Into an atmosphere modulated from warning to appreciative warmth during the passage up the coast from Circei to Tiber, the crackle of the second invocation explodes.

Nunc age, qui reges, Erato, quae tempora rerum
quis Latio antiquo fuerit status, advena classem
cum primum Ausoniis exercitus appulit oris,
expediam, et primae revocabo exordia pugnae.
tu vatem, tu, diva, mone. dicam horrida bella,
dicam acies actosque animis in funera reges,
Tyrrenamque manum totamque sub arma coactam
Hesperiam. maior rerum mihi nascitur ordo,
maius opus moveo.

Its deferral from the book opening makes this invocation surprising ³. *Age...actos...coactam* (36-43) impels it and makes it tight. The size and severity of the last sentence, with its allusion to the fourth *Eclogue*'s cosmic pivot ⁴, claim and constitute a grand design. But the whole of this impression is also sickened, awful. The counterweight to grandeur starts in the first line and tracks the invocation through its sweep. Its first element, the address to Erato, is the less disturbing at first, but waxes. Its second, the adjective *advena*, is the more shocking at first. The jerk of alienation *advena* administers is the more radical by succeeding to the ecphrasis of Tiber. That immediately preceding passage was seen through Aeneas' eyes, shared his gladness with the reader, expressed a common view — which the adjective snatches into alarm. He does *not* belong here; these are *our* shores, not his ⁵. He has come, as the invocation's alarum shouts, to conquer and to kill. As the Sibyl's words echo (*horrida bella* is from 6, 86), *advena* joins grimly into the inversion of

³ On this "glaring asymmetry" see Eduard Fränkel, 'Some Aspects of the Structure of Aeneid VII', *Journ. Rom. Stud.* 35, 1945, 1ff.

⁴ *Magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo* (*Eclogue* 4, 5).

⁵ In this essay, the pronoun 'we' refers not to me and my readers but to the original Latin readership. Since it is specifically *that* collective identity, that sense of 'ourselves' as a nation, which I see as the focus of the poem, this minimum rhetoric of the collective subject for the particular collective subject under scrutiny is inevitable.

For the theme, mostly as it is anticipated in the first half of the poem rather than as it is deployed in the second half, see William R. Nethercut, 'Invasion in the *Aeneid*', *Greece a. Rome* 15, 1968, 82-95. He does not discuss this passage.

their effect here; she spoke them to Aeneas, and the first shiver was his. Now they are said to us readers, and it is he who brings the horror. The adjustment affects the force of the invocation's close.

Maius opus: bigger because this half of the epic is to fulfill high poetic ambitions, bigger because it is to present at last the promised matter of the poem's first word and because the first half has moulded a man and delivered him to Italy but now he must begin to do his work and *Romana condere gentem*, and bigger, too, for the Roman poet and his Roman audience because this work is finally ourselves and the *maius opus* is the act of our origin. It is bigger because it is more dangerous, too. As the matter of the poem turns to what is more narrowly the Italians' own story, our reading is likely to become more narcissistic; sympathies and prejudices will be fed by the self-image of Augustan Italy, and self-interest at stake in sustaining that image. The poem has already done much to subsume and articulate that self-image. The battle books will be engaging a particularly crucial and intractable aspect of it, ideas of the character and importance of Rome's military. To prevent the battle books from being only congratulatory and eternizing mirrors for received ideas about *virtus* and *gloria*, to give the poem's discourse the opportunity of continuing to shape the self-recognition it summons, the second proem throws out a disturbing question: Whose story *is* this Italian half? *Advena* is one move in framing this question. The distinction it expresses between Italy and Aeneas, between 'us' and 'him', is, however, belied by apparent support in another move, which is much more deeply troubling.

When Vergil chose to open the second phase of his epic with an invocation to Erato, inevitably, as was noted above, he called to mind Apollonius' second invocation (*Argonautica* 3, 1-5). Here Apollonius repeats three times — appropriately to his matter — a connection between Erato and love:

σὺ γὰρ καὶ Κύπριδος αἴσαν
ἔμμορες ἀδμήτας δὲ τεοῖς μελεδήμασι θέλγεις
παρθενικάς· τῷ καὶ τοι ἐπήρατον οὔνομ' ἀνῆπται.

We cannot simply ignore this reference. We are compelled to try to explain why the battle books should be presented as under the monition of a muse of love. From whose point of view, then, is the Italian *Aeneid* a love story⁶?

⁶ Ward W. Briggs is appropriate but not stimulating: "Virgil may be alluding to the

Certainly not Aeneas. To him, Lavinia is an alliance and a foothold in Italy, not a girl. He never sees her; he does not need to; he negotiates with her father. We have a tantalizing inkling in her blush of 12, 64-70 that she has strong feelings which might have something to do with him⁷, but there are no signs of feeling for her in him. To this extent, Erato's presence disestablishes these books as his story just as *advena* disestablishes Italy as his place. But this apparent similitude is actually a covert reversal, for the two people for whom the second half of the *Aeneid* is a love story are Amata and Turnus. It is Amata and Juno who interpret the Troy paradigm by casting Aeneas as Paris and Lavinia as Helen the stolen bride⁸, who construe the *Iliad* as a love story and their own situation as its grim repetition. Turnus, too, holds this view of the paradigm in his intimation of 7, 579, *stirpem admisceri Phrygiam*, with its undertone allusion to Paris, and at 9, 138-139, *nec solos tangit Atridas / iste dolor*. Also, for Turnus the battle is over *conubium et quaesitas sanguine dotes* (7, 423). For the Trojans, on the other hand, the war is for *dis sedem exiguam patriis litusque* (229); the marriage Latinus proposes is an excellent means proffered them to this end, but not (or not in the *Aeneid*) desirable for reasons of love.

Looked at this way, as sponsoring Amata's and Turnus' view of the second half of the poem, the invocation to Erato is ominous. First, since their belief aligns them with the other great figure of the *Aeneid* who recognized in it *veteris vestigia flammae* (4, 23), Erato's magistracy portends — for Amata, with dire accuracy — a renewal of the passion, misrepresentation, distraction and suicide of Dido. Book 4, which might properly have been inscribed to Apollonius' Erato⁹, sets a sad and terri-

Apollonian passage, not in terms of the erotic content but because at both places in their respective poems, the heroes have arrived at their destinations and the second part of their story is about to begin", 'Virgil and the Hellenistic Epic', *Aufstieg und Niedergang* II 31, 2, 1981, 977. Michael C.J. Putnam finds the invocation ironic: "The love, then, over which Erato is called upon to preside, is perverse, not creative. Its beginnings are rooted in war, not peace, compulsion, not gentleness. If the *maior rerum ordo* to which Virgil alludes at 44 is Rome, the remark is made with bitter stress — the rebirth of Aeneas is the 'birth' of war. If it refers specifically to the catalogue of horrors that follows in the next six books, it is a begetting that leads to funerals, not lives", '*Aeneid* VII and the *Aeneid*', *Am. Journ. Philol.* 91, 1970, 418.

⁷ Although the blush could equally well express feelings about Turnus, or even embarrassment at her mother's histrionics.

⁸ 7, 321, 363-364.

⁹ Both as a muse of love and as signalling impending disaster.

ble precedent for the books now to follow under her monition. Secondly, Juno and Amata, in their reading of Aeneas as Paris, have been anticipated by yet another figure of Book 4, Iarbas: *et nunc ille Paris cum semiviro comitatu* (4, 215). Are they thus identifiable with him too as the proximate agents who unleash tragedy, and is the second half of the poem to be again a situation where this reading of Aeneas leads on to disaster? Thirdly, in construing the *Iliad* as a love story paradigmatic for their own, Amata and Turnus not only misread Aeneas but also misrepresent the *Iliad*. The rape of Helen is one focus, certainly, of the *Iliad*'s preoccupation with personal and social bonds and their rupture, but it is not at all the primary one. The reduction of the *Iliad* to the story of the face that launched a thousand ships is as old as Herodotus or older¹⁰, but it is still a trivialization. Amata's and Turnus' interpretive judgment is scanty, and this too is ominous, because they are going to need it. Whereas the Trojans have themselves had many interpretive problems in the first half of the *Aeneid*, in the second half they frequently become problems for interpretation¹¹. Since the second half belongs to Erato, and since the characters for whom the Apollonian inscription seems right make one interpretive mistake in assigning the *Iliad* to her and another in applying the result to Aeneas, the whole "Iliadic" *Aeneid* could be under the signature of interpretive inadequacy. Erato is a

¹⁰ *Histories* 1, 3.

¹¹ It is worth noting that the people in Italy who apply the Iliadic paradigm this way (construing the Trojans as Homer's Trojans, Aeneas as Paris) — Turnus, Amata, Numanus (9, 598-620), and Liger (10, 580-583) — all die; it is a misunderstanding always linked with ruin. W.S. Anderson remarks about the identification of Aeneas with Paris, "In all cases, the context implies the fallacy of the comparison", *The Art of the Aeneid*, Englewood Cliffs 1969, p. 66. See also his discussion in 'Vergil's Second Iliad', *Trans. Am. Philol. Ass.* 88, 1957, 20-23. His concern here is to bring out a certain self-seeking element in this reading of the Troy paradigm: "there is a factual pattern of events in the origin of the war, which is one thing, and an alleged pattern, which is quite another" (p. 23). The essay demonstrates how the Iliadic *Aeneid* in fact gradually reverses the paradigm, to identify the Latins with Homer's Trojans, and the Trojans with Homer's Greeks. So also a paper of Michael Wigodsky, which redraws the increasing affinity between Vergil's Trojans and Homer's Greeks, between Aeneas and Achilles, as a 'demonization' of both: 'The Arming of Aeneas', *Class. et Mediev.* 26, 1965, 217. On this point I must differ from Sara Mack: "Our sense of Aeneas here is not complete unless we see that circumstances have forced him into the role of a second Paris as well as into his other roles", *Patterns of Time in Vergil*, Hamden 1978, pp. 80-81.

mysterious signal, and part of what she signals is the possibility of being destructively wrong in reading.

We, Vergil's audience, are the people whom it most concerns to reduce interpretive inadequacy. It is for us that the double threat of misreading and disaster in the invocation most presently bodes. For the twentieth century reader the scent of danger in misinterpretation may be less sharp; the interpretive issues of who Aeneas is and what his arrival in Italy signifies are less pressing, and the war raised by settling the issue under the advisement of Apollonius' Erato is long ago and in another country. But *we*, the Roman readers, *are* the conclusion to that problem, and our blood, let in continuing battles to solve it and to determine where the foundation of Rome should lead, will fatten the fields of the provinces for generations yet ¹². The pertinence of the problem and the dread of an answer we Italians cannot harmoniously trust sharpens the threat of misreading. This is not just a literary question. We turn to the search for another way to read Erato's governance of the rest of the poem sensible that the issue involves who we may be and whether at peace, as well as whether the signature damns us to misread, or not to read enough. The second half of the *Aeneid* and its invocation raise these things to consciousness with the prickle of fearful recent memory to bespeak the dangers of suppression or failure. We have got to confront them for our own sakes as well as the poem's, and frame an understanding we can all share, and not fight over. To the extent that this invocation is to Apollonius' Erato ¹³, these dangers lower. Does the *Aeneid* have an Erato of its own?

¹² *Quis non Latino sanguine pinguior / campis sepulcris impia proelia / testatur auditumque Medis / Hesperiae sonitum ruinae*, Horace, *Carm.* 2, 1, 29-32.

¹³ That Erato is indeed erotic, in an Apollonian vein, is accepted by F.A. Todd, 'Virgil's Invocation of Erato', *Class. Rev.* 45, 1931, 216-218. At first he seems to have averted the unpleasant consequences of taking this view; he says "the limits of the invocation have not been recognized. ...Erato's task is limited to the *reges* and *tempora* and the *primae exordia pugnae*" (p. 217). But he then concludes that for Turnus, the war *was* a war for love, which throws open the door again to the difficulties I have been examining. Even if he had stopped sooner, though, I think the effort to divorce the *maius opus* from Erato's monition constitutes a wrenching, however shrewdly intentioned. For an interesting argument to the effect that Vergil "is dramatizing...the erotic basis for all war", see Eugene Vance, 'Warfare and the Structure of Thought in Virgil's *Aeneid*', *Quad. Urb.* 15, 1973, 111-162. He treats the invocation on p. 142. His case depends on identifying concupiscence and wrath and so fails at last, but it is full of good points. Another failure is Ciro Monteleone, 'Eneide 7, 37: L'Invocazione di Erato come segnale', *Anti-*

Suppose it does. First mentioned at 4, 237, in contrast to erotic *amor*, is the *Aeneid*'s other great love motif, *amor patriae*: when Dido appeals to Aeneas' love for her, invoking her generosity to him and the dangers his departure leaves her to confront, he says to her, about Italy, *Hic amor, haec patria est* (4, 237) ¹⁴. Perhaps she calls upon him by the *Argonautica*'s Erato and he answers her with the *Aeneid*'s? Could it be *amor patriae* under whose monition the *maius opus* proceeds ¹⁵? The phrase from Book 4 re-echoes soon in Book 7, as Aeneas accepts the *kleidon*: *hic domus, haec patria est* (122). And whereas *patria* referred to Italy only five times in the first half of the poem ¹⁶ (and three of these instances are for foretold Italians, in Book 6) ¹⁷, in the second half it means Italy seventeen out of twenty times ¹⁸. The Trojans never use it of Troy again.

The *amor patriae* theme is closely bound to other major concerns in the *maius opus*. Awe, delight in Italy and relish for its place-names spotlight this half, and the themes of homecoming and of patriotic alle-

quité class. 46, 1977, 184-191. He catalogues echoes of the 'erotic' theme in the second half of the *Aeneid* from Catullus' and later epithalamia, and takes the invocation to be a salute to the neoteric tradition. *Aeneid* 6-12 is hardly Vergil's most neoteric poetry; and Monteleone remains oblivious to the problems with Erato's governance that I am discussing here.

¹⁴ See the splendid discussion of this speech by Sara Mack, *Patterns of Time in Vergil*, Hamden 1978, p. 64.

¹⁵ For a similar sort of conclusion worked out along very different lines, see Madeleine Bonjour, *Terre Natale: Étude sur une composante affective du patriotisme romain*, 1975, p. 577: "Dans l'inspiration virgilienne la terre italienne s'est substituée à la femme. ...Énée aime et désire la terre italienne comme Turnus aime et désire Lavinia. La rivalité amoureuse qui anime leur duel dépasse donc de loin la banalité et n'est pas déplacée dans l'épouse désirée par Énée. De cette union naîtra la race romaine, race rendue puissante par la vertu de sa mère, la vertu italienne".

¹⁶ *Patria* occurs twenty-three times in Books 1-6. It refers seven times to Troy (2, 241; 291; 576, 3, 10; 325, 5, 624; 632, 6, 508), four times to Greece (2, 137; 159 — Sinon; 2, 573 — Helen; 3, 613 — Achaemenides), twice to Sidon (1, 357, 4 633), once to Carthage (1, 540), once to Aeolia (1, 51), and twice means 'one's native land' (6, 621; 660). The other time it refers to Italy is 1, 380: *Italiam quaero patriam*. This point is missed by Robert Lesueur, 'Civitas et Patria: Unité ou dualité du message virgilien dans l'*Énéide*?', in *Présence de Virgile*, Actes du Colloque des 9, 11, et 12 décembre 1976 (Paris E. N. S., Tours), R. Chevallier pub., Paris 1978, 35-47.

¹⁷ Tullus 6, 813, Brutus 823, Caesar and Pompey 833.

¹⁸ The exceptions are Juno (7, 299, *patria excussos* of the Trojans), Venus (10, 59, *cineres patriae insedisce*), and Evander (8, 333, *me pulsum patria*).

giance and duty come forward. The evaluations that turn round the problem of the justifiability of war constantly engage with *amor patriae*. The deliberation on Roman national character, on original precedent, on the interleaving of Trojan, Italian, Etruscan and Greek in the binding of Rome's thesaurus, together with the sense of dynamic continuity from past to present and future — all these draw energy and unity from the *Aeneid's* Erato. *Pietas* and *gloria* too are involved with *amor patriae*, here coordinating and countenancing it, there subjected to the same stern investigation into fanaticism and heartbreak.

For love of country is counterbalanced, too. Against the beauty and pride of Italy commending her to our love is set the danger for those in whom *amor patriae* grows so exigent as to extinguish other values. Think of what Anchises says of Brutus: *infelix utcumque ferent ea facta minores; / vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido* (6, 822-823). Love of Italy and times when love of country pushes the patriot, by choice or by force of circumstance, past limits he would have been happier if he could have respected — these two accompany each other through the second half of the poem, in the *Aeneid's* characteristic relation of dynamic counterbalance, to the moment of their dramatic and emblematic fusion in the dreadful victory of its final tableau.

Love of country is unique among the epic's counterbalanced issues in being the only one to whose center of gravity the poem explicitly points. It is not that the counterbalance is resolved: its stresses and perplexities continue to operate. The rhetoric of irresolution is not relaxed. But we are, once, shown a place where for all the difficulties simple-heartedness is safe not silly, and simple self-expression can say what it means.

The only other place in the poem where the phrase *amor patriae* appears is at 11, 892, where the Laurentian matrons who have gone up to the ramparts to watch the course of the battle are moved themselves to join it (11, 891-895):

Ipsae de muris summo certamine matres
— monstrat amor verus patriae ut videre Camillam —
tela manu trepidae iaciunt ac robore duro
stipitibus ferrum sudibusque imitantur obustis
praecipites, primaque mori pro moenibus ardent.

These lines climax and close the passage of havoc that follows Camilla's death (11, 868); between Opis' departure for Olympus and

the matrons' volley, all Latin initiative is lost in confusion and catastrophe, to which the matrons' sincerity and resolve offer relief even as their ineffectuality supplies pathetic culmination¹⁹. The women are drawn into manifesting their patriotism by the death of Camilla, as if the vacancy left by the wonderful girl-warrior had the power to reorient the lines of address and responsibility in Latin society in such a way as to draw the matrons toward the function she has now departed from. The peculiarity of their reaction is presented in *trepidae* and *ferrum...imitantur*; but the fears and secondariness which their inexperience of fighting import are overborne by the reality of *monstrat amor verus patriae*. Inexperience limits the effectuality of their expression, but their firmness of feeling and spirit urges and permits them to challenge the limits of expression. The innocence and justification of their zeal are clear in its explicit identification with the rally of the Latin farmers to Sylvia's cries in Book 7 by the echo of 7, 523-524, *non iam certamine agresti / stipitibus duris agitur sudibusve praeustis*.

That passage is worth looking at because in it the innocence and justification can be more fully explicated. Take Sylvia's stag as an eloquent figure for the Saturnian community that made him. Latinus has said that his people are just without laws, by custom and 'natural' continence: *haud vincolo nec legibus aequam, / sponte sua veterisque dei se more tenentem* (7, 202-204). It is emphasized that the stag, similarly, is self-regulating by habituation (*adsuetum imperiis* [487], *mensaeque adsuetus erili* [490]). He has the community's peace, its beauty, and its self-controlled, acquiescent freedom. Cohesion and confidence in a community like this depend on believing the connection between expectation and fulfillment to be natural or necessary, that is, on accepting habituation's very qualified guarantee as something stronger. It is not that Latin

¹⁹ I agree with John Zarker ('Vergil's Trojan and Italian Matres', *Vergilius* 24, 1978, 21) that Quinn mistakes the tone when he calls this "a thrust of laconic irony", *Virgil's Aeneid: A Critical Description*, Ann Arbor 1968, p. 251. The women are treated with the *Aeneid's* usual compassion for the unavailingly engaged. See V.S. Anderson, for example: "Vergil is after all a poet who particularly responds to the loser, the doomed" in 'Vergil, the Best in the World for the tragical-comical-historical-pastoral', *Vergilius* 26, 1980, 11. Or Francis A. Sullivan: "All the works of Virgil...make it clear that he was preoccupied with the problem of pain in the world", in 'Virgil and the Mystery of Suffering', *Am. Journ. Philol.* 90, 1969, 161. Or Wendell Clausen: the *Aeneid's* "larger structure enlists our sympathies on the side of loneliness, suffering, defeat" in 'An Interpretation of the *Aeneid*', *Harv. Stud. Class. Philol.* 48, 1964, 143.

society makes a mistake in founding itself in *mos* and spontaneous fulfillment of expectations²⁰. There is a nobility in their innocence, which is recapitulated in the stag. It is, rather, that a system of reliances and reliabilities so founded has to run on trust; doubt and its object, unreliability, break the reinforcements down. The society's innocence is willed, and practical: it *cannot* admit doubt. But that makes it vulnerable. Amata has been an example of the fragility of its confidence from within. Ascanius, by mistaking a stag for a stag (*erranti* [498] is both for his aim and for his notion of what he is aiming at), demonstrates its fragility from without. The equivalence of habituation and nature, which the Latins have a practical need to regard as unquestionably guaranteed, is revealed by Ascanius' deconstruction to be perfectly unreliable.

The Laurentians' reaction to his unwitting encroachment is consistent with their proud courage (*populosque ferocis* [384]²¹, and see Numanus' boast, 9, 603ff.), and its degree of intensity is both inevitable and justifiable, since the threat to their community is far deeper and more insidious than just the loss of an animal member. Effective practical unanimity is exactly the right answer to a threat they have good cause to fear.

The unanimous concomitance of this communal *auxilium* and the fighting of the Latin matrons are the *Aeneid's* two moments of simple patriotism. That pikes are the emblematic weapons of just simple-heartedness points to the center of the counterbalance that tests patriotism against happiness for Brutus and Aeneas. For all the *Aeneid's* insistence on the aching labor not to distort what is difficult with a false simplification, the poem admits our yearning for simplicity, and finds these figures, the farmers and the women, to solace it. For some people and at some times, in the crises of their sense of community, the plain act that expresses the community's vitality for them and in them can be adequate, fulfilling, secure from distortion. In the *Aeneid*, to act out of passion is mostly perilous and sad, but where the passion is *amor patriae*, it seems its authority can shrive the simple-heartedness to express and sustain it in action.

Has Vergil allowed sentiment to supersede evaluative judgment in these two scenes? It would seem disturbing that a poem otherwise so

²⁰ Here I differ from Eugene Vance 'Sylvia's Pet Stag: Wildness and Domesticity in Virgil's *Aeneid*', *Arethusa* 14, 1, 1981, 127-138.

²¹ On the sense of *ferox* here, see Fordyce's note *ad loc.* p. 133.

earnestly devoted to preventing us from simple judgments of value should offer, for its two moments of simple value, moments of feeling rather than of judgment. These pure and simple acts of community are heart-felt, but not thought through, and this seems to be a lapse in the *Aeneid*'s project to exercise its readership in careful, complex, and subtle evaluative judgments. Is the poem not able to instantiate judgmental value? Why not?

It is because these scenes are, not a lacuna in discourse about values, but an imaginary hypothesis about that kind of discourse. The farmers and the women represent a stage before discourse about values needs to begin. For them the question is "Do you love your country or not?" — an emotive question, no judgment needed. But when the mythical community of 7, 204 where *mos* and motive were enough to insure the right behavior is gone, the emotive question, once answered, has to be followed by deliberation, discourse about values. "What are your country's interests? How can you serve them without compromising other moral ends?" and so forth. *Amor patriae* is still necessary but no longer sufficient. And the *Aeneid*'s value discourse measures its distance from that imaginary sufficiency by pointedly including it as sentimental, not judgmental, as well as by representing it in the moment when its imaginary sufficiency is lost. Simple value, in other words, can be presented only in a "retrospect" which is not so much chronological as conceptual; the poem devoted to deferred evaluative judgment has this limit. It is Vergil's way of signalling that the value of patriotism is not a given, but must be sought, through evaluative judgment and the action that proceeds from it. The *Aeneid* cannot, in fact, contain Erato as *amor patriae*. Hence, Servius was probably right²², but his conclusion is not to be jumped to. The point of this paper thus far has been to suggest that this circuitous route, or something like it, was the purpose of invoking Erato and quoting Apollonius in the first place.

Vergil invoked Erato as a 'generic Muse'. By doing so in such a way as to provoke us to reflect on the difference between his generality and the specific muse of Apollonius, he derived a new significance from the citation. As Jason's arrival in Colchis revealed Medea's previous identity to have been unstable, as Aeneas' arrival in Italy threw presumed Italian values into confusion, so the *Aeneid*'s arrival into the lives of its readers

²² See note 1 above.

is to test the security of our national self-understanding, to induce us compare our specific sense of Italy with the poem's large but unrealizable one. Erato stands for the *Aeneid's* alertness to this lesson: that the value of the poem's study of patriotism depends at last, and must depend, on how its readers choose to enact themselves.

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