

Virgil, *Aeneid* 9

1. Consider the *Aeneid* as a whole:
 - What, in your own view, is the place of Book 9 in the *Aeneid*?
 - What is its purpose?
 - Is it in any way unusual or exceptional?
2. With reference to verses numbers, what are the major events and episodes?
Who are the most prominent characters in the book?
What are the bases for your answers to these questions?
3. What are the principal themes of Book 9?
4. Are there any precedents for the episodes and incidents Virgil relates? (i.e. on what models does Virgil base the events he describes?)
5. Are there as many obvious sources for Book 9 as there are for other books of the poem (e.g. Books 2, 3, 6)? What does your answer indicate about Virgil's strategy in conceiving this book?
6. Fictional techniques:
 - (i) Can you find evidence of 'realism' in Book 9 in terms of:
 - (a) concrete detail
 - (b) mundane or lowly themes as opposed to what is elevated or noble
 - (c) verisimilitude and realistic narration?
 - (ii) Does the structure of the work and movement from one episode to another (i.e. narrative transition) reveal anything about the poem's attempt to be plausible?
 - (iii) What are the elements of the fantastic or marvellous in the book? How are they handled?
 - (iv) Can you find examples of psycho-narration?
 - (v) How far does Virgil take responsibility for what he narrates?

Very Helpful Reading

- Hardie, P. R. (1993) *Virgil. Aeneid* 9 (Cambridge), 'Introduction'
- Fowler, D. (2000) 'Epic in the Middle of the Wood: Mise en Abyme in the Nisus and Euryalus Episode', in A. Sharrock and H. Morales (eds.) *Intratextuality: Greek and Roman Textual Relations* (Oxford), 89-113