

BOOK REVIEW

Finding Italy: Travel, Colonization, and Nation in Vergil's Aeneid. By K.F.B. FLETCHER. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014. Pp. viii + 290. Hardcover, \$75.00. ISBN 978-0-472-12044-4.

KF.B. Fletcher focuses his attention on the theme of directions and travel in Vergil's *Aeneid*. Building on recent publications regarding Roman identity in the *Aeneid*, Fletcher emphasizes directions not just to Italy as a place but directions to Italy as a nation. As Fletcher clearly states on page 1, this book “examines the process by which Aeneas falls in love with Italy before even arriving there and what this love means for both Aeneas and Vergil's audience” (1). Fletcher's main argument is that Aeneas forms his new identity as an Italian through his wandering (which takes him through) Roman territory under Augustus). While it is beyond the scope of this review to highlight every insightful moment Fletcher explores as instants that lead Aeneas towards loving Italy, I will focus on the main themes of each chapter.

After the Introductory chapter, which lays out the purpose for Fletcher's focus, each subsequent chapter follows the order of the *Aeneid*'s books with the seventh and final chapter continuing the examination of directions throughout the second half of the poem. Chapter One sets the stage for the drive of Aeneas' travel—and means of travel—to a new land, identifying the poem as a *ktisis* (foundation / colonization narrative) in addition to a *nostos* (journey home). While themes of fate and destiny are expected topics in a book about Aeneas, Fletcher instead concentrates on the theme of love—love for family and love for Italy, which is formed during his travels and fueled by the directions he receives along the way.

Chapters Two through Four clearly reflect the titular intention of the book in an organized and well-written manner. Chapter Two includes the first examples of the directions Aeneas receives: from Hector (to flee Troy) and from Creusa (to found a new home in Italy), both of whom are familial relations to Aeneas. These “directions” are more general commands delivered by spirits via dreams. Chapter Three is the longest chapter since Book 3 contains the majority of “directions” Aeneas receives while at sea: descriptions about his final destination. Fletcher argues that these “directions” instill an emotional connection be-

tween Aeneas and his future home, drawing further on the idea that Aeneas falls in love with Italy before he gets there. Chapter Four demonstrates how Book 4 is the definitive moment where Aeneas forms a national identity as an Italian, though he spends all winter helping rule the newly formed successful colony at Carthage. Fletcher demonstrates how Aeneas develops a love for Italy that is stronger than his love for Dido, strong enough that he leaves her for it. Fletcher adds to Aeneas' growing need to reach Italy not just for love of country but love of *gens*, a notion that Fletcher continues throughout the rest of his book.

The central themes of both Chapters Five and Six are similar: the 'transition' from the end of Aeneas's journey to the beginning of his adventures in Italy. Chapter Five is transitional as Aeneas and his crew leave their Trojan identity—and the women—behind in Sicily, forcing the necessity for a whole new national identity. Chapter Six examines the parade of future Roman heroes in the Underworld as the final "directions" which Aeneas receives from his father: images of the future glory that will be Rome. In addition, Aeneas' crew grants new names to places they find in Italy, thus forming a personal attachment to their new home.

Fletcher devotes his final chapter to the culmination of the hero's journey as it takes place all in Italy. Since the hero has already reached his destination, Fletcher highlights key scenes "that resolve central issues raised by the journey" (32) throughout Books 7–12 (i.e. Aeneas' trip on the Tiber to the site of future Rome, a history of Italy that makes it seem open to all people, and Jupiter and Juno's final compromise regarding Italian names and language which grants them permanence). Though the hero has reached Italy, Fletcher demonstrates how these scenes serve as further "directions" towards Aeneas loving Italy, and how they solidify the formation of a unified Italian identity in the second half of the poem.

While Fletcher's new reading of the poem is a welcome companion for any student of the *Aeneid*, he provides only a single definition for the term "directions" early on as "the way people talk about place" (29). Such "directions" serve to form a new national identity for Aeneas rather than simply to get him to a specific geographic location. Fletcher supplements his arguments with references to recent scholarship on the subject of identity and nationality in Italy during the early.

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