

Aeneas: the hero torn between forces inside out



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Aeneas: The Hero Torn Between Forces Inside Out Introduction

Virgil's Aeneid differs from the preceding epics Iliad and Odyssey of Homer in the sense that the epic hero Aeneas is a god-fearing man whose exploits are motivated by his desire to help others rather than by his personal need and interest. Whether the plot of Aeneid is driven more by the gods or by human characters is quite a tough issue to address. Moreover, could Aeneas have willed it to Italy or was he forced by the gods and the circumstances around him is another difficult thing to prove. However, it appears that the epic has given us enough hints that Aeneas has the will to pursue his mission as well as that the gods also play a vital role in the development of the plot.

Without Aeneas or without the gods' intervention, there would never be an excellent epic called Aeneid; one that would be transmitted from generation to generation and one that comes to us as a piece of inspiration, information and entertainment. Aeneid is seen as a man's journey and exploits under the divine guidance and intervention.

Man's Journey and Exploits

Aeneas is one of the survivors of the Trojan War. Humanly speaking, he must have questioned his fate why he was not one of those who died. Being left behind in the ravages of war and being summoned to leave and look for Latium and to found another country is a tall order for him. He must have missed his wife, his father, his family and friends. His mourning may have also increased with depression, for the Troy lies in ruins and hopelessness and that destruction abound everywhere. However, his deep sense of responsibility and accountability must have weighed greater, for he, along with the remnants of war, set out to seek for the unknown country.

His first destination, Carthage, became his first and one of his greatest tests.

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He has to face Dido and almost fall prey to her affection and the comforts and prestige she has to offer him. Besides, his men were deceived and lost their memory by eating the food that Dido's followers have fed them.

Leaving Carthage was indeed a very enormous task to do. He has to free himself from the clutch of Dido and he has to free his men from Carthage's intoxication.

Having passed the first test, Aeneas was able to overcome the later challenges in the journey on sea amidst the storm and waves that Juno inflicted on them. His strength of character, determination, and the help of Jupiter make him successfully reach Latium and marry Lavinia and triumphed over the other obstacles and enemies.

Divine Guidance and Intervention

Even at the onset of the epic, the act of the gods is already evident. Jupiter revealed to Aeneas his mission to found a country that is prophesied to be a great empire and that would rule the whole world. Without the prophecy, Aeneas would not have been guided as to what is best to do under the circumstances.

When they reached Carthage and when they left Dido's place, there was divine intervention. Juno intervened and favored Dido. Juno tried to prevent Aeneas from pursuing his mission because she favored Carthage more and the founding of another kingdom would be a threat to Carthage.

The obstacles that Juno hurled against Aeneas' journey on sea was too much that Jupiter had to intervene and argue with Juno to stop her from inflicting difficulties on Aeneas and his people. This time, it was Jupiter's turn to intervene on Aeneas' favor.

Divine guidance and intervention are both applied by the gods: Jupiter in

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favor of Aeneas and Juno against Aeneas' success in pursuit of the founding of Italy.

Conclusion

The founding of Italy is collaboration between man's exploits and divine intervention. It could not have happened without the presence of either party. Aeneid's plot is best developed because of the gods and the mortals making the incidents possible. With these elements put together, Aeneid has become one of the great master pieces of all time. Credit is due to both the gods and the mortals.

Work Cited:

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