

The Proem of the *Aeneid*

Lat311

Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris
Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit
litora, multum ille et terris iactatus et alto
vi superum saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram;
multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem,
inferretque deos Latio, genus unde Latinum,
Albanique patres, atque altae moenia Romae.

(Vergil, 1st c. BCE)

The batalis and the man I wil discrive,
Fra Troys boundis first that fugitive
By fait to Ytail come and cost Lavyne ;
Our land and sey kachit with mekil pyne,
By fors of goddis abuse, from euely steid,
Of cruell Juno throu ald remembrit fede.
Gret pane in batail sufferit he also,
Or he his goddis brocht in Latio,
And belt the cite, fra quham, of nobill fame,
The Latyne pepill takyn heth thar name,
And eik the faderis, princis of Alba,
Cam, and the wallaris of gret Rome alswa.

(tras. Gavin Douglas, 1513)

Arms, and the man I sing, who, forc'd by fate,
And haughty Juno's unrelenting hate,
Expell'd and exil'd, left the Trojan shore.
Long labors, both by sea and land, he bore,
And in the doubtful war, before he won
The Latian realm, and built the destin'd town;
His banish'd gods restor'd to rites divine,
And settled sure succession in his line,
From whence the race of Alban fathers come,
And the long glories of majestic Rome.

(trans. John Dryden, 1697)

I sing of arms and of a man: his fate
had made him fugitive; he was the first
to journey from the coasts of Troy as far
as Italy and the Lavinian shores.
Across the lands and waters he was battered
beneath the violence of High Ones, for
the savage Juno's unforgetting anger;
and many sufferings were his in war –
until he brought a city into being
and carried in his gods to Latium;
from this have come the Latin race, the
lords
of Alba, and the ramparts of high Rome.

(trans. Allen Mandelbaum, 1971)

Arms I sing – and a man,
The first to come from the shores
Of Troy, exiled by Fate, to Italy
And the Lavinian coast; a man battered
On land and sea by the powers above
In the face of Juno's relentless wrath;
A man who also suffered greatly in war
Until he could found his city and bring his gods
Into Latium, from which arose
The Latin people, our Alban forefathers,
And the high walls of everlasting Rome.

(trans. Stanley Lombardo, 2005)

Wars and a man I sing – an exile driven on by Fate,
he was the first to flee the coast of Troy,
destined to reach Lavinian shores and Italian soil,
yet many blows he took on land and sea from the gods above –
thanks to cruel Juno's relentless rage – and many losses
he bore in battle too, before he could found a city,
bring his gods to Latium, source of the Latin race,
the Alban lords and the high walls of Rome.

(trans. Robert Fagles, 2006)