

When Mary Douglas started investigating pollution as a problem of classification and anomaly, she borrowed William James' phrase describing dirt as "matter out of place" (Douglas 1966.44; James 1987.126). Carson memorably uses eggs to explain this idea: "the poached egg on your plate at breakfast is not dirt; the poached egg on the floor of the Reading Room of the British Museum is" (Carson, 1990.158). In this paper, I analyze "matter out of place" in terms of pollution, geography, and memory in the *Aeneid*. The poem most emphasizes issues of contamination in the books that are most concerned with the location of the Trojans' eventual settlement: *Aeneid* 3, 6, and 7. The word *sedes* forms a pivot between a ritual and a geographical sense of place. So *sedes* (in both singular and plural) refers to the home granted a corpse, avoiding unnecessary pollution (6.152) and commemorating the location of death (7.3); the homes in the underworld allotted according to a person's mode of life and death (6.431); and the home for which the survivors of Troy yearn (1.205, 3.88, 3.161, 3.167, 3.190, 7.158, 7.229).

On one level of the poem's rhetorical structure, the convergence between the avoidance of pollution and the search for a proper *sedes* embeds Rome's imperial destiny in the order of the cosmos. A sequence of events that would keep Aeneas from founding Lavinium becomes as disorderly as the allocation of a virtuous soul to Tartarus, and as messy as the pollution caused by an unburied corpse. Yet the *Aeneid* entangles the assertion of order in the messiness of pollution. In Book 3, the Trojans are driven forward by portents that foul their attempted settlements (and even their rest-stops); they are guided towards Italy as much by the need to escape from defilement as by a positive quest for their fated home. Echoes of this pollution resurface upon the Trojans' arrival in Latium in Book 7. When the Trojans find themselves fulfilling a foundation prophecy by eating "tables" (7.112-129), Aeneas claims Anchises as the prophet, while the narrative's vocabulary recalls the harpy Celaeno's words in Book 3; Celaeno caps the harpies' defilement of a Trojan feast by making furniture-eating the precondition for their Italian settlement (3.245-257). In Book 6, the Sibyl guards the distinctions that order the world of the dead; she links this order with commemoration above ground, rebuking Palinurus when he hopes to cross Acheron without burial, but consoling him with the thought of how he will be remembered in the Italian landscape. But in helping Aeneas descend into the underworld, the Sibyl violates basic systems of classification that divide the living from the dead, and mortal from immortal. Palinurus' hope of getting a ride across the Styx is inspired by the anomalous presence of a living man in the realm of the dead (6.363-371).

This kind of anomaly lies at the heart of epic, where lasting *fama* arises from exceeding ordinary human limits. From Book 7 on, the *fama* generated by the *Aeneid* stems from the fury Allecto's contamination of Italy. Like the disorderly order enforced and embodied by the Erinyes of Greek tragedy (discussed as "animate agents of pollution" by Parker 1983.107-8), the out of control *furor* disseminated by Allecto is both a transgressive madness and a force that sustains the ordered excess of mourning and memory. The fury's polluting disorder, alongside Juno's mindful anger (1.4; cf. 1.8), reaches across time to supply the energy by which epic *fama* links past, present, and future.