1. Tenses in the *Aeneid*: Discourse Modes and Bases, an Introduction

Example (1), 2.12 – 17

quamquam animus meminisse horret
incipiam. fracti bello fatisque repulsi
ductores Danaum tot iam labentibus annis
instar montis equum diuina Palladis arte
aedificant, sectaque intexunt abiete costas;
uotum pro reditu simulant; ea fama uagatur.

Though my mind shudders to remember and has recoiled in pain, I will begin. Broken in war and thwarted by the fates, the Danaan chiefs, now that so many years were gliding by, build by Pallas’ divine art a horse of mountaineous bulk, and interweave its ribs with planks of fir. They pretend it is an offering for their safe return; this is the rumor that goes abroad.¹

“I will begin”, says the Trojan Aeneas in response to questions of the Carthaginian queen Dido about the sack of Troy. And so he does: without delay he takes us to a different time and place where the Greeks are building a horse (*aedificant*). But how do we immediately know when and where this building takes place? Why do we not interpret *aedificant* as taking place in the same time in which Aeneas speaks and shudders (*horret*)? In other words, why do we have no trouble recognizing *aedificant* as a historical present?

My answer would be that we base this interpretation on the statement *incipiam*. First, Aeneas is talking to Dido, as her conversational partner. Then, the statement *incipiam* transforms Aeneas from Dido’s conversational partner into a story teller: Aeneas becomes a story teller by stating that he will begin his story. This story takes place in a different place and time, a story world, which means that we will interpret a verb form such as *aedificant* as referring to an event that takes place in this story world.

The next question then is why the historical present is used. This is one of the main questions of this study. For now, I suggest that Aeneas does not only tell Dido about his story world, but that he, by using the present tense, also *takes Dido to this story world*. The present time of the story world has become his and Dido’s present time. The present tense form *aedificant* indicates what is happening ‘now’ in this story world: the Greeks are building their famous Trojan horse.

From the above, we may conclude that two ‘switches’ occur in example (1):

1) Aeneas switches from being a speaker to being a narrator
2) He switches from the ‘now’ in which he shudders (*horret*) to a substitute – artificial – ‘now’ in which Greeks are building a horse (*aedificant*)

These two switches represent two types of switches that regularly occur in the *Aeneid* (and other narrative texts):

1) A switch in *discourse mode* (Smith 2003)

*Discourse modes* represent different ways in which the producer of a written text presents his material. Texts usually contain several discourse modes, e.g. the discourse modes ‘narrative’ and ‘description’ (§1.1).

2) A switch in *base* (Cutrer 1994)

The *base* is the vantage point, the *hic et nunc*, that a speaker or writer chooses. The base may coincide with what we could call the ‘actual *hic et nunc*’, but it may also be another point in time, for instance the time of a story (§1.2).

The *discourse mode* and the *base* are the two parameters that I will use in this study to describe the use of the tenses in the *Aeneid*. A (simplified) overview of the uses of the tenses

is given in this chapter. I will first introduce the four main *discourse modes* found in the *Aeneid*. The second section of this chapter will explain, by means of the concept of *base*, that the narrator does not only present his story from his own point in time, but that he has another point in time available for his presentation, to wit *reference time*. This insight will be used to show that each of the four discourse modes is used from two time bases: in addition to its regular use (base in time of narration), each discourse mode also has a *transposed* variant (base in reference time), resulting in a number of eight modes. One of these transposed modes, the *directing mode*, will be discussed in more detail. It is this mode that contains the use of the so-called historical or narrative present as the basic tense of the story, a characteristic use of the present tense in the *Aeneid*. In §1.3 I will briefly discuss how we may recognize a change of discourse mode.

This first chapter thus summarizes the ways in which the narrator of the *Aeneid* uses the tenses to present his story. This summary is based on my analyses of the Latin tenses, as presented in chapters 2 – 7. Chapter 8 will explain the functions of the discourse modes with respect to the structure, organization and presentation of the *Aeneid*. Together with chapter 1, chapter 8 provides an overview of how the *Aeneid* is presented with respect to tense usage.

The linguistic argumentation for the system of discourse modes and bases is given in chapters 2 to 7, which present my analysis of the individual tenses. The semantic value of a particular tense is the starting point of each of these chapters. I will argue that all interpretations of a tense are related to the semantic value of this tense, and that a particular interpretation is connected to a particular discourse mode. Chapters 2-7 might be helpful for readers interested in specific uses or even specific instances of a certain tense (see the index locorum). The chapters consider questions such as ‘should we speak of an *instantaneous perfect* (§3.4.2) or an *ingressive imperfect* (§4.7)?’ and ‘why are the actions of gods often presented in the perfect tense (§3.8.2)?’ (cf. Von Albrecht 1970).

The framework of discourse modes presented in this study is not designed solely for the purpose of an analysis of the use of tenses in the *Aeneid*. The discourse modes also provide an alternative for the somewhat vague distinction into the ‘foreground’ and the ‘background’ of a (narrative) text (see chapter 8). Apart from that, the framework of discourse modes is intended to be applicable to other Latin texts, both within and outside the epic genre. A demonstration of this applicability is given in chapter 9, in which the use of the discourse modes in part of Livy’s historiographical work is analyzed and contrasted with the use of discourse modes in the *Aeneid*. I hope to show that the concept of discourse mode is a helpful tool to compare texts, or even genres.

This study attempts to explain tense usage in the *Aeneid* by means of the parameters ‘discourse mode’ and ‘base’, and, hence, to gain more insight into the ways in which Vergil has presented and structured this epic. The presentational devices of the *Aeneid* have, of course, been subject of a vast amount of literary studies. Heinze (1915) is one of many who have mentioned the *Anschaulichkeit* (“showing rather than telling”) of Vergil’s style. These presentational devices have not yet been systematically investigated from a linguistic point of view. I aim to do so in this study (see chapter 8).

The main objective of this study is, however, to demonstrate that the interpretation of a certain tense form depends on the one hand on the semantic value of the tense, and the

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discourse mode and base on the other. The linguistic character of this study does not mean, however, that I will pass over the literary features and effects in the Aeneid. Literary devices such as apostrophe or similes will, of course, be discussed in this study, but not exhaustively and always from a linguistic point of view.

This approach can be illustrated with example (1) above, which is characterized by a sudden shift of discourse mode and base. This linguistic feature seems to emphasize the distress of Aeneas: when he has to tell his story, he wants to get it over with as quickly as possible and he plunges right into his story world without “wasting time over preliminaries” (Austin 1964 ad locum).

1.1 Discourse Modes

In her book Modes of Discourse (2003), Carlota Smith provides tools to analyze the different ways of presentation in written (English) texts by distinguishing several discourse modes. Discourse modes represent different ways in which the producer of a written text presents his material.

This study aims to prove that the interpretation of a particular tense form is closely connected to the discourse mode. A perfect tense form in a Latin text may be interpreted, for instance, as a so-called ‘narrative perfect’, representing an event in a story, or it may be interpreted as a so-called ‘present perfect’, representing an event or situation that is anterior to the moment of speech. In my approach, these two interpretations of the perfect tense are connected to two different discourse modes, one by the name of narrative and one by the name of report (see chapter 3).

It is a claim of the present study that the discourse modes as provided by Smith are an important means to categorize the interpretations of Latin tenses. Another claim of this study is that all interpretations of the tenses relate to the semantic value of the tenses, as described in Pinkster (1983, 1990). A short characterization of the discourse modes is given in the table below, which includes an overview of the most important tenses in these modes.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenses</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Short characterization</th>
<th>Discourse Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>Contemporaneous with time of narration, universal truths</td>
<td>The narrator presents the states of affairs in relation to his own point in time</td>
<td>Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect tense</td>
<td>Anterior to time of narration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future tense</td>
<td>Posterior to time of narration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>Contemporaneous with time of narration (only)</td>
<td>The narrator relates what he experiences in his immediate environment</td>
<td>Registering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect tense</td>
<td>Bounded in reference time (in past of narrator)</td>
<td>The narrator tells a story</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect tense</td>
<td>Unbounded in reference time (in past of narrator)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluperfect tense</td>
<td>Anterior to reference time (in past of narrator)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>Contemporaneous with time of narration</td>
<td>The narrator gives the visible characteristics of an object or location</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect tense</td>
<td>Unbounded in reference time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Smith (2003) also distinguishes the modes information and argument. The discourse mode argument is not used in the Aeneid and is, therefore, left out of consideration. As far as the information mode is concerned, I think that some instances of what Smith would call information might as well be taken under the narrative mode (‘narrated information’, see §4.2.1), whereas other instances of this mode can be seen as part of the report mode (‘reported information’, see §2.2).
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The ‘historical present’ does not occur in this table. This particular interpretation of the present tense will be discussed in §1.2.

Each of the discourse modes will be introduced in the sections below. The actual uses of the discourse modes in the Aeneid will be discussed in chapter 8, which also contains a more elaborate overview of the characteristics of the discourse modes (§8.5).

1.1.1 Narrative Mode

A typical mode in stories is the narrative mode. When a narrator uses the narrative mode he tells a story about his past. The actual story of the fable under example (2) is presented in the narrative mode.

Example (2), Phaedrus 1.XIII. Uulpis et Coruus

Qui se laudari gaudet uerbis subdolis,  
fere dat poenas turpi paenitentia.  
Cum de fenestra coruus raptum caseum  
comesse uellet celsa residens arbore,  
5 uulpes inuidit, deinde sic coepti loqui:  
'O qui tuarum, corue, pinnarum est nitor!  
Quantum decoris corpore et uultu geris!  
Si uocem haberes, nulla prior ales foret'.  
At ille stultus, dum uult uocem ostendere,  
10 lato ore emissit caseum; quem celeriter  
dolosa uulpes audidis rapuit dentibus.  
Tum demum ingemuit corui deceptus stupor.  
[Hac re probatur quantum ingenium ualet;  
uitute semper praeualet sapientia.]

He who takes delight in treacherous flattery usually pays the penalty by repentance and disgrace. When a crow, perched on a high tree, was about to eat a piece of cheese which he had carried off from a window, a fox who coveted the price spoke up as follows: “Oh, Mr. Crow, what a lustre your plumes have, how graceful your face and your figure! If only you had a voice no bird would rate higher.” Anxious to show that he did have a voice, the foolish crow opened his mouth to sing and let fall the cheese, which the crafty fox immediately snapped up with eager jaws. Too late the crow, betrayed by his own folly, moaned his loss. [This affair shows how much ingenuity can accomplish; cleverness is always more than a match for hardihood.]

The narrative mode is the subject of this section, but to facilitate the discussion about story telling in general and the narrative mode in particular, several linguistic concepts will be introduced first. These concepts are the time line of a story, reference time, boundedness (including a distinction into events and situations) and the advancement of reference time.

An important feature of the narrative mode is that we may construct a time line on which the states of affairs of the story are positioned. This may be illustrated by means of the fable under (2). The time line of this fable begins when a raven wants to eat his cheese and ends when he moans his loss. Apart from the beginning and end of this fable, we may discern three other time spans on the time line of this fable: the fox speaks, the raven drops the cheese and the fox takes it. The term for such a time span on the time line of the story is reference time (Kamp & Rohrer 1983). Thus, the state of affairs of the raven wanting to eat his cheese counts as the first reference time of the fable. The next state of affairs – inuidit – further elaborates this reference time by stating that a fox was jealous of the cheese. A second reference time is introduced when the fox starts talking. The advancement of reference time is

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6 The term state of affairs is used in this dissertation to refer to the entity represented by a verb form (“the thing that happens”). As Dik (1997:51) formulates: “a state of affairs is something that can be said to occur, take place or obtain in some world; it can be located in time and space; it can be said to take a certain time (have a certain duration); and it can be seen, heard, or otherwise perceived.”
7 See also Partee (1983) and Hinrichs (1986). Kamp & Rohrer derive the term from Reichenbach’s theory (Reichenbach, 1947). I use the term reference time in a strict sense: to refer to the time span that is under consideration in the story. Reichenbach (1947) uses it to refer to past, present or future orientation moments.
made explicit by means of the adverb *deinde*. When the fox has finished speaking, reference time advances to the point on the time line in which the raven drops the cheese (*emisit*). This state of affairs is explained by *uult uocem ostendere*, the fact that the raven wants to demonstrate his voice. In reaction to the mistake of the raven, the fox takes the cheese (*rapuit*) which again involves an advancement of reference time. The time line of this fable ends with the reference time in which the raven realizes his mistake and moans his loss.

Example (2) illustrates that, while a narrator continues his story, the reference time advances constantly to a next part of the story time (Partee 1983:254; Dry 1983; Almeida 1995). The advancement of reference time is a typical feature of the narrative mode. As I will explain later, tenses play an important role in the advancement of reference time. The common view in the literature about tense in relation to the advancement of reference time can be summarized as follows: perfect tense forms advance reference time and imperfect tense forms do not (e.g. Pinkster 1990: 238, see §4.10.5). In order to provide more evidence for this hypothesis – and adjust it to the use of tenses in the *Aeneid* – it is necessary to pay some attention to the linguistic analysis of the advancement of reference time.

1.1.1.1 Advancement of Reference Time and the Question of Foreground and Background

The narrative mode is characterized by advancement of reference time. Linguistic analyses of the advancement of reference time make use of the pair of terms *bounded states of affairs* and *unbounded states of affairs* (Depraetere 1995). In example (2), the state of affairs *uellet* is *unbounded* in that it seems to stretch out for an indefinite time: we do not know when the raven started wanting to eat this cheese, and we do not know when it will stop wanting to eat it. In contrast to the state of affairs *uellet*, the state of affairs *coepit* is *bounded*. States of affairs of which the start and end are demarcated are *bounded* (Depraetere 1995). The state of affairs *coepit* has clear boundaries since it lasts only one single moment. Bounded states of affairs are called *events*, and unbounded states of affairs are called *situations*.8

The distinction into events and situations is useful with respect to the advancement of reference time in the narrative mode. Earlier studies9 show that, in general, events advance reference time, whereas situations do not. The example below illustrates that two events following each other may indeed evoke the idea of progression of reference time. It is the first part of an example from Hinrichs (1986:68).

*Jameson entered the room, shut the door carefully and switched off the light.*

The event of *entering* is assumed to have taken place before the event of *shutting the door*, which precedes the *switching off the light*. These three events each indicate progression of reference time.10 The fable above also contains such a sequence: we assume that the state of affairs *emisit* in line 10, which is an event, precedes the state of affairs *rapuit*, which is an event as well. Finally, the state of affairs *ingemuit* denotes the event that follows *rapuit*.

Most situations are *stationary* with respect to reference time and do not advance it (Hinrichs 1986:68, cf. Depraetere 1995). Since situations are unbounded, they have no clear starting point themselves, and will, therefore, be interpreted as taking place within a previously introduced reference time, as *was shining* in the example below illustrates (an adaptation of the example above).

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8 Note that there are other definitions of *situations* and *events*. Dik (1997:107), for instance, distinguishes between situations and events on the basis of the parameter *dynamism*. In his terminology ‘the clock was ticking’ is an *event* since it “involves some kind of change, some kind of internal dynamism”, whereas in my terminology ‘the clock was ticking’ is a *situation* since it represents an unbounded state of affairs.


10 The semantics of these verbs also play a role in the advancement of reference time in this example, of course: one cannot shut a door while entering.
Jameson entered the room, shut the door carefully and switched off the light. The sun was shining brightly through the windows.

The state of affairs *the sun was shining brightly* is assumed to have been valid before the events of Jameson entering, shutting the door and switching off the light, which means that it does not advance reference time.

The distinction into bounded and unbounded states of affairs on the one hand and stationary and advancing states of affairs on the other is presented in studies on aspect in stories (see note 7 and 9). It is summarized in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Affairs</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advancing</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>seldom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>almost always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Boundedness in relation to the advancement of reference time

For my purposes, these distinctions are not sufficient. In addition to events and situations, the narrative mode also seems to contain the category of *starting situations*, and in addition to advancing and stationary states of affairs it contains *frames*.

*Starting situations* are unbounded with respect to their endpoint, but do have a clear starting point. They are presented, for instance, in combination with adverbs such as *and then* or *suddenly*, which indicate this starting point. Also when a state of affairs is incompatible with the previous state of affairs, we may speak of a *starting situation*, as in the case of the example below. This is the full quotation of the example in Hinrichs (1986:68).

Jameson entered the room, shut the door carefully and switched off the light. It was pitch-dark around him because the Venetian blinds were closed.

The situation *it was pitch dark around him* is in this example interpreted in another way than *the sun was shining brightly* in the example above. The situation of darkness is the result of the event of switching off the light and therefore a reader will assume progression of reference time on the basis of world knowledge (Boogaart 1999:104). As such, the state of affairs is not completely unbounded: it has a clear starting point. *Starting situations* generally advance reference time.

An example of a *frame* is the situation of *uellet* in the fable (2): *cum coruus caseum comesse uellet*. The situation *uellet* occurs at the start of the story and does not take place in the preceding reference time (there is none). Therefore, the situation *uellet* cannot be qualified as *stationary*. Situations at the start of a story or scene introduce a new reference time, but it appears to be inaccurate to analyze them as *advancing* reference time. Rather, they function as a *frame* for another state of affairs. In the case of the state of affairs *uellet*, the state of affairs *coepit* (*deinde sic loqui coepit*) takes place within the larger reference time that has been introduced by *uellet*. We might, therefore, consider the state of affairs *uellet* as a *frame* for the state of affairs *coepit*.

In sum, *events* and *starting situations* usually advance reference time, while *situations* are usually *stationary* or provide the *frame* for the next state(s) of affairs.

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11 For the exceptional cases in which events are stationary see chapter 3, for the exceptional cases in which situations advance reference time, see chapter 4.
Table 3: Boundedness in relation to the advancement of reference time\textsuperscript{12}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Affairs</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Starting situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advancing</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>quite often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>seldom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frames</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>quite often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The linguistic analysis of the advancement of reference time is often connected to a division of a narrative text into ‘foreground’ and ‘background’.\textsuperscript{13} I would contend that the opposition between foreground and background may be discerned at at least two levels in narrative texts (and in other text types, Smith 2003:35; cf. also Adema 2002). The first level is that of the global text structure, at which we may, for instance, distinguish between the story proper and background material such as comment or information. On this level, I would rather make a distinction into central and less central discourse modes than a distinction into foreground and background (Smith 2003), as I will explain in chapter 8.

The second level is that of the story proper or, rather, the level of the narrative mode. On this level, the division into advancing states of affairs, stationary states of affairs and frames may indeed be connected to the distinction between foreground and background. States of affairs that advance reference time can be seen as foreground, stationary states of affairs as background. In this section, I have proposed to discern a third group of states of affairs on the level of the story proper: states of affairs that introduce a new reference time, but only in order to create a background for the next state of affairs. Since these states of affairs set up a (time) frame for the next state of affairs, I call them frames. Within the narrative mode, frames and stationary states of affairs together provide the ‘background’ against which the ‘foregrounded’, reference time advancing states of affairs, take place.

1.1.1.2 Latin Tenses in the Narrative Mode in the Aeneid

The narrative mode consists of an alternation of all the types of states of affairs presented in the previous section: starting situations, advancing events et cetera. This alternation results in a steady progression along the time line of the story. This time line is in the past, and, therefore, the narrative mode is characterized by the use of past tenses. In the \textit{Aeneid}, the narrative mode consists of an alternation of the perfect, the imperfect, the pluperfect and the historical infinitive. The next chapters will show that the imperfect tense is used mostly for stationary and framing situations and the perfect tense for the advancing events in the narrative mode, as one may expect. The chapter on the historical infinitive (chapter 7) will show that this verb form is used within the narrative mode to express \textit{starting situations}.

The difference between the imperfect and perfect tense within the narrative mode is illustrated in the example below, which starts with a description of how and where the Italic peoples sought omens (see also §4.10.1). The imperfect tense forms \textit{mactabat} and \textit{iacebat} represent situations: their beginning and end are left implicit.\textsuperscript{14} The perfect tense form \textit{reddita est} refers to an event, as this state of affairs implies the coming to an end.

Example (3). 7. 91 – 95

\begin{quote}

hic \textit{et tum} pater ipse petens responsa Latinus centum lanigeras \textit{mactabat} rite bidentis, atque harum effultus tergo stratisque \textit{iacebat} uelleribus: subita ex alto \textit{uox reddita luco est}:

\end{quote}

Here then, also, King Latinus himself, seeking an answer, duly slaughtered a hundred woolly sheep, and lay couched on their hides and outspread fleeces. Suddenly a voice came from the deep grove: ...

\textsuperscript{12} The parameters that make an event stationary or a situation advancing will be explained in the next chapters (see also table 5 in §2.4.1.5).

\textsuperscript{13} See §4.10.5.

\textsuperscript{14} For \textit{iacebat}, see §4.1n138.
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In this example, *et tum* indicates the first reference time of this scene. The imperfect tense forms *mactabat* and *iacebat* are used to indicate what was taking place in this reference time, before the narrator relates the event of *subita uox reddita est*, by means of which he advances reference time.

1.1.2 Description Mode

The description mode is characterized by the absence of temporal progression (Smith 2003). Reference time does not advance in this mode, as the narrator takes his time to describe a particular part of the fictive world. Therefore, we only find unbounded states of affairs in description and, instead of adverbs that record temporal progression, we find words indicating location and spatial progression, such as *ante, contra, ex ordine, nec procul hinc* and *proxima* (cf. Ravenna 1985:184). A characteristic feature of the description mode is the imperfect tense. It is used to describe an object or location in the past, as is illustrated by example (4). The imperfect tense forms *condebat*, *surgebant* and *stridebat* denote unbounded states of affairs that are contemporaneous with reference time.

Example (4), 1.446 – 449

Hic templum Iunoni ingens Sidonia Dido
condebat, donis opulentum et numine diuae,
aerea cui gradibus surgebant limina, nexaeque
aere trabes, foribus cardo stridebat aënis.

Here Sidonian Dido was founding to Juno a mighty
temple, rich in gifts and the presence of the goddess.
Brazen was its threshold uprising on steps; bronze plates
were its lintel beams, on doors of bronze creaked the
hinges.

Although reference time does not advance while Dido’s devotional creation is described, this
description does involve movement: the narrator takes us up from the threshold and the stairs
to the bronze doors, adding sound to his description by means of *stridebat*. Reference time
stands still, but the gaze of the narrator clearly does not.

1.1.3 Report Mode and Registering Mode

The key characteristic of both the report mode and the registering mode is the important role
of the moment of speech, or the *time of narration*. Whereas in the narrative mode the states of
affairs of the story are presented in connection to each other, the report mode considers states
of affairs only from the perspective of the time of narration.

The registering mode is, in fact, a specific subtype of the report mode. The registering
mode consists of only those states of affairs which describe what the narrator experiences in
his immediate environment, i.e. the time and place of narration. An example of the registering
mode is the parenthetical clause *horresco referens* which interrupts Aeneas’ story about the
death of Laocoon:

Example (5), 2.203 – 205

ece autem gemini a Tenedo tranquilla per alta
*(horresco referens)* immensis orbibus angues
incumbunt pelago pariterque ad litora tendunt;
and lo! from Tenedos, over the peaceful depths – I
shudder as I speak – a pair of serpents with endless coils
are breasting the sea and side by side making for the
shore.

The registering mode is, as might be expected, not very frequent in the *Aeneid*. Nevertheless,
I include this mode because it will be helpful in explaining the directing mode, which I will
present as the most important mode of the *Aeneid* (see §1.2.1).  

15 The registering mode may be found more frequently in genres such as letters or diaries. Cf. the start of letter
V.16 by Pliny the younger: *tristissimus haec tibi scribo Fundani nostri filia minore defuncta* (*I am writing to
you in great distress: our friend Fundanus has lost his younger daughter.* Translation: Radice 1969 (Loeb)). In
More often, a ‘real’ present tense form is part of the report mode. Examples are the present tense forms dat and gaudet at the start of the fable given under (2), here quoted as (6):

Example (6), Phaedrus 1.XIII. Ulpis et Coruus
Qui se laudari gaudet uerbis subdolis, He who takes delight in treacherous flattery usually pays the penalty by repentance and disgrace.
fero dat poenas turpi paenitentia.

These present tense forms are part of the moral of the fable: ‘He who takes delight in treacherous flattery usually pays the penalty by repentance and disgrace’. The states of affairs gaudet and dat are part of a narrative text, but do not belong to the story proper. The present tense expresses the relation between these states of affairs and the time of narration: the states of affairs are contemporaneous with the time of narration.17

The importance of the time of narration in the report mode may be further exemplified by means of a construction typical for this mode: the combination of a verbum dicendi in the present tense and a perfect infinitive. This construction is used, for instance, to communicate that Iarbas prayed to Jupiter, when he heard about Dido and Aeneas:

Example (7), 4.196 – 206
protinus ad regem cursus detorquet Iarban
incenditque animum dictis atque aggerat iras.
Hic Hammone satus rapta Garamantide nymph
szaptae loubi centum latis immania regnis,
centum aras posuit uigilemque sacrauerat ignem,
excubias diuum aeternas, pecudumque cruore
pingue solum et uariis florentia limina sertis.

isque amens animi et rumore accensus amaro
dicitur ant ara media inter numina diuum
multa loun manibus supplex orasse supinis.

Fama tells Iarbas about Dido and Aeneas, and then we hear something about his background. After this information, the story does not continue with a present or perfect tense form representing the prayers of Iarbas as an event on the time line of the story. Instead, the event of Iarbas’ prayers is presented in relation to the time of narration: dicitur is a present tense form that refers to the time of narration. The event of praying is anterior to this moment, hence the perfect infinitive.

The time of narration also plays an important role in case of the perfect tense in the report mode. All that matters in case of the perfect tense in the report mode is that the state of affairs is anterior to the time of narration, as becomes clear from the instances of the perfect tense in example (8).

Example (8), 1.12 – 17
Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrii tenuere coloni,
Karthago, Italian contra Tiberinaque longe
osti, diues opum studisque asperrima belli;
quam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam
posthabita coluisse Samo; hic illius arma,
hic currus fuit;

There was an ancient city, the home of Tyrian settlers, Carthage, over again Italy and the Tiber’s mouth afar, rich in wealth and stern in war’s pursuits. This, ‘t is said, Juno loved above all other lands, holding Samos itself less dear. Here was her armour, here her chariot, …

Latin letters, however, the present tense is not regularly used to refer to states of affairs that were going on at the time in which the letter was written; more common is the imperfect tense (Kühner-Stegmann 1912 II.1,156ff).
17 Present tense forms which represent universal truths (as in (6)) are presented in the present tense since they are valid in the time of the speaker, and we interpret them as generally valid because of their content, e.g. 7.327ff. (cf. Pinkster 1998:61).
In this example, the states of affairs are presented in relation to the time of narration. The existence of the city is anterior to the time of narration and, in accordance with this, presented by means of a perfect tense form. The perfect tense is used here to present the mere fact that an ancient city, Carthage, existed in a time before the time of narration (see §3.3. and, for the difference with the imperfect tense, §4.10.4).

Both the registering mode and the report mode are modes that are not concerned with the story. As such, they are discourse modes that are atypical for a story: the narrator stops, as it were, being a narrator and becomes a ‘speaker’ (cf. example (1)).

1.1.4 The Historical Present?
Narrators may thus narrate, describe, report, and register, and the narrator of the Aeneid does all four. However, a division of the Aeneid into these four discourse modes does not yield a sufficient framework for the description of the use of tenses in this epic work, since it does not account for the extensive use of the present tense as the basic tense of the story. The discourse modes as provided by Smith seem to represent – as a result of her corpus – a speaker or narrator who is essentially based in his own point in time, whereas this is not always the case with the narrator of the Aeneid. In fact, he usually positions himself in the time of the story, using the present tense (the so-called praesens historicum or historical present) to inform his readers of what is happening there. That is, the narrator of the Aeneid often uses reference time as his base.

1.2 Bases
The base is the vantage point, the hic et nunc, that a speaker or writer chooses. The base may coincide with what we could call the ‘actual hic et nunc’, but it may also be another point in time, reference time for instance. In the examples above ((2) – (8)) the base is positioned in the ‘actual hic et nunc’ of the narrator, or the time of narration. Present tense forms in the report and registering mode are contemporaneous with this time of narration. Past tenses represent states of affairs that happened in the past of this time of narration.

However, present tense forms often do not refer to the ‘actual hic et nunc’ of the speaker: we find such present tense forms in recipes, stage directions, synopses et cetera (Langacker 2001: 269). The function of the present tense form is the same in all these environments: the speaker indicates that the state of affairs expressed by the present tense takes place in what he has chosen to be his base (Pinkster 1983, 1990; Cutrer 1994; Langacker 2001). This base may vary, according to the context. In recipes, for instance, the base can be seen as the point in time at which the addressee is supposed to prepare the food.18

In stories, the time of the story (reference time) is available as a base, and this is how I explain the historical present: in case of the historical present reference time functions as the base (Cutrer 1994, see §2.3). This may be illustrated by means of the following passage. A truce called earlier by Italians and Trojans is severely threatened and eventually broken. We enter the scene after a speech by Juturna, the sister of Aeneas’ main antagonist Turnus. The present tense forms serpit, uolunt, precantur and miserantur indicate what is going on in reference time.

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18 Or, even, the time at which the addressee imagines to prepare the food (Langacker 2001:269).
TENSES IN THE AENEID: DISCOURSE MODES AND BASES, AN INTRODUCTION

Example (9), 12.238 – 243

With such words the warriors’ [Turnus] resolve is kindled yet more and more, and a murmur creeps from rank to rank. Even the Laurentines, even the Latins are changed; and they who but lately hoped for rest from the fray, and safety for their fortunes, now long for arms, pray that the covenant be undone, and pity Turnus’ unjust fate.

The reference time is contrasted here to a time in the past of this reference time: the Rutulians now want to fight, whereas in the past they were hoping for a peaceful solution. The adverb nunc emphasizes this contrast. At the same time this adverb shows that reference time is indeed available as a substitute ‘now’, or, in more technical terms, it shows that reference time is available as a base.19

The imperfect tense form sperabant and the perfect tense forms incensa est and mutati take reference time as a base as well. The semantic value of the imperfect tense (as given by Pinkster 1983, 1990) is that it represents a state of affairs that is contemporaneous with an orientation moment in the past of the base (§4.1). In accordance with this, the imperfect tense form sperabant refers to a state of affairs that is contemporaneous with an orientation moment in the past of reference time (when everything was still relatively peaceful). Likewise, the perfect tense forms incensa est and mutati indicate anteriority to the reference time. That is, Turnus had already been kindled in reference time, and the Latins had already been changed.

The following chapters will provide more proof that the narrator of the Aeneid may indeed use reference time as his base in case of all Latin tenses. For now, it suffices to summarize that the narrator of the Aeneid uses at least two points in time as his base: the time of narration and the reference time of his story. He employs the Latin tense system and the aforementioned discourse modes from both bases, which results in a set of eight ways of presentation. These eight ways of presentation are represented in the table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base: Time of narration</th>
<th>Reference time</th>
<th>Short characterization</th>
<th>Tenses</th>
<th>Interpretation of tenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transposed Registering</td>
<td>Directing</td>
<td>The narrator relates what he experiences in his base</td>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>Contemporaneous with base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transposed Report</td>
<td></td>
<td>The narrator presents the states of affairs in relation to the base</td>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>Contemporaneous with base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perfect tense</td>
<td>Anterior to base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Future tense</td>
<td>Posterior to base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transposed Narrative</td>
<td></td>
<td>The narrator tells his story</td>
<td>Perfect tense</td>
<td>Bounded in past of base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Imperfect tense</td>
<td>Unbounded in past of base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pluperfect tense</td>
<td>Anterior to past of base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transposed Description</td>
<td></td>
<td>The narrator gives the visible characteristics of an object or location</td>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>Contemporaneous with base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Imperfect tense</td>
<td>Unbounded in past of base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the table, the directing mode (subject of §1.2.1) is the transposed counterpart of the registering mode. The counterpart of the other discourse modes are transposed report, transposed narrative and transposed description. The interpretation of the

19 See Risselada (1998) for this use of nunc. Other deictic adverbs take reference time as their base as well. Examples are procul (e.g. 2.42), ibi (e.g. 6.333), modo (e.g. 11.141) and nuper (e.g. 6.338).
tenses in these transposed modes is the same as in their counterparts, except that the tenses involved relate to a base in reference time instead of a base in the time of narration.

Whereas the other discourse modes used from a base in reference time simply get the addition transposed, the directing mode has been given a separate name. The reason is that it slightly differs from its counterpart, the registering mode, and, moreover, occurs far more often than registering, which is rarely found in the Aeneid. The directing mode covers the extensive sequences of present tenses in the Aeneid: those parts of the story in which the present tense has become the basic tense of the narrative.

1.2.1 Directing Mode: Registering from a Base in Reference Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse Mode</th>
<th>Time of narration</th>
<th>Reference time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Transposed Report</td>
<td>Transposed Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registering</td>
<td>Directing</td>
<td>Directing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Transposed Narrative</td>
<td>Transposed Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Transposed Description</td>
<td>Transposed Description</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The directing mode is the transposed counterpart of the registering mode. These modes have in common that they represent what the narrator experiences in his immediate *hic et nunc*, i.e. his base (see example (5)). As such, both the registering mode and the directing mode are characterized by the use of the present tense. The perfect tense and the imperfect tense also occur within directed sequences, when they indicate states of affairs that have happened or were happening immediately before reference time (see §3.4 and §4.6.1 respectively). However, instances of these tenses in the registering mode are not found in the Aeneid.

The narrator of the Aeneid rarely registers what he experiences in his own immediate environment. The counterpart directing, however, is the discourse mode that is used most often. In this discourse mode, the narrator registers what he experiences, or rather pretends to experience, in the reference time of his fictive world. This pretense of experiencing is important: the directing mode has an explicit artificial character in that it combines hindsight knowledge with the suggestion of a live report, as I will further explain below.

The time line of the story is of the same importance in the directing mode as in the narrative mode. The reference time advances as the narrator goes through his story both in the narrative mode and in the directing mode. In the narrative mode, however, the base of the narrator is fixed, whereas in the directing mode this is not the case. Specific for the directing mode is that, since reference time functions as a base, the base advances as well, like present time in real life: as one speaks, time ticks away. This particular type of temporal progression in the directing mode is best explained by means of an example in which the advancement of reference time is indisputable, such as the subsequent finishing of the three best contesters in the running contest in book 5.

20 See §1.3 for the notion sequence.
21 Past tenses in the registering mode may be found in, for instance, the genres of letters and diaries. An English example of a past tense in the registering mode is found on the first page of Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason (Helen Fielding 1999). While describing her current status in life (report mode), the main character and owner of the diary Bridget suddenly (“Ooh”) registers that Mark Darcy, who is sleeping next to her, has moved: “7.15 a.m. Hurrah! The wilderness years are over. For four weeks and five days now have been in functional relationship with adult male thereby proving am not love pariah as previously feared. Feel marvelous, rather like Posh Spice or similar radiant newlywed posing with sucked-in cheeks and lip gloss while everyone imagines her in bed with David Beckham. Ooh. Mark Darcy just moved. May be he will wake up and talk to me about my opinions.”
23 The progression of speech time or, rather, ‘writing’ time is hardly ever referred to in the registering mode in most genres, but is, of course, conceivable in the genres of letters or diaries (cf. Smith 2003:114).
Example (10), 5.337 – 339

Euryalus darts by and, winning by the graces of his friend, takes first place, and flies on amid favoring applause and cheers. Behind comes Helymus, and now Diores, third prize.

The reference time here advances from the time in which Euryalus emerges and finishes (emicat, tenet, uolat) to that in which Helymus completes the race (subit) and ultimately to the finish (nunc) of Diores. The present tense forms represent a base in reference time, and, therefore, it is not only reference time that advances: the base and the narrator are inextricably linked to reference time and, as a result, they move ahead as well.

The temporal progression in the directing mode seems similar to that in real life; reference time, base and narrator advance as story time is progressing, like time ticking away in, for instance, the sports commentaries of our own time. Nevertheless, there is a very important difference between the advancement of reference time and that of real time: whereas real time moves by itself, reference time does not. It is in all respects the narrator who makes time tick.24

It is possible to analyze the advancement of reference time in the directing mode in the same way as we may analyze it in the narrative mode (§1.1.1.1). The directing mode contains all categories presented in table 2, here printed as table 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Affairs</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Starting situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advancing</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>quite often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>seldom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frames</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>often</td>
<td>quite often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the directing mode, we find present tense forms in almost all categories in the chart. The advancement of reference time by means of present tense forms will be further discussed in §2.4.1. For now, it suffices to say that the narrator is responsible for progression of reference time as he advances along the time line of his story, since he chooses to relate an advancing event or stationary situation, for instance.

The narrator’s control of time progression is one of the features of the directing mode that show that it is, of course, an overtly simulated registration of what is happening in the story world. It is distinctive for the directing mode that the narrator explicitly refers to this artificiality when, for instance, he demonstrates his knowledge about the story as a whole while using reference time as his base (Quinn 1968:91). He may refer to the further course of events from a base in reference time (see §2.4.2). The narrator of the *Aeneid* may also add his own reflections on the current events when he uses the historical present in rhetorical questions and apostrophes. When he, for instance, relates how Pallas is carried away from the battlefield, he adds his own comment to this horrible event by means of an apostrophe, containing the present tense forms *aufert* and *linquis* (which are contemporaneous with reference time).

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24 See §2.4.1 for a more technical analysis of the time movement in this passage and in the directing mode in general. How we may distinguish between situations and events in the case of the historical present is discussed in §2.3.1.
But with many moans and tears his friends throng round Pallas and bear him back lying on his shield. O you who will go home as a great grief and yet great glory to your father, this day first gave you to war, this also takes you from it, the day when yet you leave behind vast piles of Rutulian deaths.

As is shown by the future participle rediture and the proximal pronoun haec, the narrator maintains a base in reference time while taking his time to comment. By keeping a base in reference time and commenting on Pallas’s death as he is taken from the battlefield, the narrator is able to enforce the picture of Pallas lying on his shield, thereby creating a powerful and striking effect.

As Chafe (1994: 208) points out, the present tense as used in stories is merely a pretense that the speaker perceives the state of affairs at the moment of speech (cf. also Pinkster 1990:225, Kroon 2002). Such a view on the present tense takes into consideration that the narrator combines the suggestion of a live report with hind-sight knowledge. Chafe’s theory provides an adequate term to describe this combination. His term displaced immediacy (1994:195ff) describes the possibility in written fiction to combine features of language which are ‘immediate’ (referring to the immediate time and place of a speaker), with features of language which are displaced (referring to other times and places than that of the speaker, e.g. the past or future). Immediate deictic adverbs such as ‘now’ and ‘today’ are for instance combined with displaced (= past) tense forms in English literature.25 In these terms, the narrator of the Aeneid combines the deixis of immediacy (both adverbs and tense) with the knowledge of displacement, hence creating an effect of displaced immediacy.26

The above describes two key characteristics of the directing mode, which can be summarized as follows:

1. simultaneous advancement of base, reference time and narrator
2. the combination of the deixis of immediacy (e.g. the present tense) with the knowledge of displacement (displaced immediacy)

When we want to explain this use of the present tense as a basic tense of the story by means of a metaphor, this metaphor should allow for these two characteristics. I propose to see the narrator of the Aeneid in the role of the director of a play, which is taking place in his mind and that of his reader (i.e. on a mental stage) not merely simultaneously to his directions, but exactly because of these directions (Bakker 2005:169, cf. Langacker 2001:269). The term directing mode (instead of for instance immediate or mimetic stance, terms used by Bakker 1997 and Kroon 2002) makes clear that the use of reference time as an alternative base is a presentational game of which both narrator and reader are aware (Bakker 1997:78).

Not only does the metaphor of a mental stage account for a narrator who is in explicit control of what is ‘now’ happening in the fictive world, it also leaves room for the long
recognized visual aspect of the style of the narrator of the *Aeneid* (e.g. Heinze 1915, Fowler 1997). Linguistic characteristics of this style are for instance the use of *ecce*, and verbs or substantives which represent the activity of seeing or showing, such as *imago* in the example below.\(^{27}\) Turnus is compared to a lion that rushes to the plain after seeing a bull (representing Pallas).

Example (12), 10.453 – 456

```
desiluit Turnus biuugis, pedes apparat ire comminus; utque leo, specula cum uidit ab alta stare procul campis meditantem in proelia taurum, aduolat, **haud alia est Turni uenientis imago.**
```

Down from his chariot leapt Turnus; he makes ready to close with the other on foot. And as, when from some lofty outlook a lion has seen a bull stand far off on the plain, meditating battle, on he rushes, no different seemed the coming of Turnus.

The last line of this example functions to conclude the simile and to mark the return to the story world. At the same time the narrator seems to invite his audience to picture Turnus according to the *imago* portrayed in the simile.

The metaphor of a stage also takes into account a third characteristic of the directing mode: the *three-dimensional* character that sequences of present tense forms seem to have in the *Aeneid*. The base is not only a *temporal* vantage point, but also functions as a vantage point for *spatial* adverbs. We could say that the narrator does not only use reference *time* as his base, but also ‘reference *place*’, i.e. the location in which the state of affairs takes place. This is illustrated in example (13), in which Nisus wants to save his friend Euryalus, who is captured by the Italian Sulmo and others. The reference times of this example are denoted by *conicit*, *diuerberat*, *uenit*, *frangitur* and *transit* respectively, whereas the ‘reference place’ remains the same throughout the example: we maintain the perspective of the hidden position of Nisus. It is from this position that the spear is followed as it flies away from Nisus, reaches Sulmo and *there* breaks (ibi).

Example (13), 09.410 – 413

```
… et toto conixus corpore ferrum conicit. hasta uolans noctis diuerberat umbras et uenit auersi in tergum Sulmonis ibique frangitur, ac fisso transit praecordia ligno.
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… and with all his straining body flung the steel. The flying spear whistles through the shades of night, strikes the turned back of Sulmo, there snaps, and with the broken wood pierces the midriff.

The fact that we may, as it were, follow the spear with our eyes, illustrates that the narrator of the *Aeneid* has made the effort to conjure up a full blown, three-dimensional story world, thus creating and always adjusting a mental stage on which his characters may perform under his direction.\(^{28}\)

### 1.2.2 Transposed Modes: presented from a Base in Reference Time

In the transposed modes, the tenses involved relate to a base in reference time instead of a base in the time of narration. In all other respects, the interpretation of a particular tense remains the same, however. This means that in *transposed report* the present tense refers to states of affairs that are valid in reference time because they are valid in the fictive world as a whole, whereas the perfect tense indicates anteriority to reference time. This may be illustrated by the following example, which is part of the catalogue of Etruscan peoples in

\(^{27}\) Cf. also the use of *imago* in 2.369, 8.557 and 10.456, that of *species* in 2.407 and the occurrence of the second person present subjunctive *cernas* in 4.401.

\(^{28}\) The ‘directing mode’ is not meant to cover *all* uses of the present tense as a basic tense of the story. The metaphor of a play is, for instance, not applicable to a few sequences of present tense forms in the *Aeneid* in which there is indeed simultaneous advancement of base, narrator and reference time, but in which we cannot speak of a three-dimensional mental stage. I will come back to this in §2.5, and in §9.1.
book 7. Within this catalogue the narrator gives elaborate information about the participating peoples, and this information is always valid from the point of view of the fictive world; the present tense *colunt* in line 714, for instance, is generally valid in its context, but not necessarily contemporaneous with the time of narration.

Example (14),  
7.711 – 716

*una ingens Amiterna cohors priscique Quirites, Ereti manus omnis oluiferaque Mutuscae; qui Nomentum urbem, qui Rosea rura Uelini, qui Tetricae horrendis rupes montemque Severum Casperiamque *colunt* Forulosque et flumen Himellae, qui Tiberim Fabarimque *bibilunt*, quos frigida *misit* Nursia, et Ortinae classes populique Latini,*  

With him came Amiernum’s vast cohort, and the ancient Quirites, the whole band of Eretum and olive-bearing Mutusca; those who dwell in Nomentum’s city and the Rosean country by Velinus, on Tetrica’s rugged crags and Mount Severus, in Xasperia and Foruli, and by Himella’s stream; those who drink of Tiber and Fabaris, those whom cold Nursia sent, the Ortie squadrons, the Latin peoples, …

This passage also exemplifies the use of the perfect tense in the transposed report mode: the perfect tense form *misit* in line 715 denotes a state of affairs that took place in the past of reference time. The city of *Nursia has sent* the people some time before ‘now’, i.e. reference time, hence the perfect tense form *misit*.

A sequence in the narrative mode consists of events and situations positioned on a time line in the past of the narrator or, rather, in the past of the base. Likewise, *transposed narrative* consists of events and situations positioned on a time line that lies, in the particular case of transposed narrative, in the past of reference time. Transposed narrative could contain perfect, imperfect and pluperfect tense forms. I would like to emphasize that transposed narrative does not contain historical presents. The base is positioned in reference time and we hear a story about the past of reference time and, therefore, past tenses are used, as in the following example. Dido has decided to commit suicide, not only because of Aeneas’ behavior, but also because of signs she has received earlier.

Example (15),  
4.450 – 456

*Tum  uero infelix fatis exterrita Dido mortem orat; taedet caeli conuexa tueri. Quo magis inceptum peragat lucemque relinquat, uidit, turicremis cum dona imponeret aris, (horrendum dictu) latices nigrescere sacros fusaque in obscenum se uertere uina cruorem; hoc visum nulli, non ipsi effata sorori.*  

Then, indeed, awed by her doom, luckless Dido prays for death; she is weary of gazing on the arch of heaven. And to make her more surely fulfil her purpose and leave the light, she had seen, as she laid her gifts on the altars ablaze with incense – fearful to tell – the holy water darken and the outpoured wine change into loathsome gore. Of this sight she spoke to no one – not even her sister.

The states of affairs of *uidit, imponeret* and *effata* together form a narrated sequence of events which is anterior to reference time. The narrator looks back on a separate time line on which these events took place while taking his base in the reference time of *orat, taedet* and the subjunctives *peragat* and *relinquat*. The narrator has thus stopped directing the states of affairs in order to narrate what happened in the past of reference time, while reference time still remains his base. That is, the discourse mode changes whereas the base remains the same.

Although the example above shows that transposed narrative is indeed used in the *Aeneid*, it is hard to find many examples that are unambiguously transposed narrative. This is why I have decided not to include transposed narrative in the quantitative overviews of this

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29 The ‘historical present’ occurs in the directing mode, in transposed report and in transposed description. That is, the ‘historical present’ occurs in those modes in which the present tense occurs when the base is positioned in the time of narration.

30 Of course, it is not only the narrator who looks back on these events: the subjunctives *peragat* and *relinquat* suggest that Dido herself is remembering them as well (i.e. focalisation, Bal 1985, De Jong 1987).
study. Sequences in the narrative mode are all treated as presented from a base in the time of narration.\textsuperscript{31} Transposed description contains present tense forms which denote unbounded situations in reference time, connected to each other by means of spatial rather than temporal adverbs (see Kroon 2007). The example below contains nine present tense forms, none of which advances reference time. However, adverbs do indicate spatial progression through the scenery (as in ‘normal’ description): first a description is given of how the waves break on the sand, then the narrator turns his and our eyes to the huge cliffs enclosing the scenery and proceeds to describe the part in the middle of these cliffs.

Example (16), 1.159 – 169

Est in secessu longo locus: insula portum efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.

Hinc atque hinc uastae rupes geminique minantur in caelum scopuli, quadrans sub uertice late aequora tuta silent; tum siluis scena coruscis desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra.

Fronte sub aduersa scopulis pendentibus antrum, intus aquae dulces uiuoque sedilia saxo, nympharum donus. hic fessas non uincula nauis ullæ tenet, unco non alligat ancora morsu.

There in a deep inlet lies a spot, where an island forms a harbor with the barrier of its sides, on which every wave from the main is broken, then parts into receding ripples. On either side loom heavenward huge cliffs and twin peaks, beneath whose crest far and wide is the stillness of sheltered water; above, too, is a background of shimmering woods with an overhanging grove, black with gloomy shade. Under the brow of the fronting cliff is a cave of hanging rocks; within are fresh waters and seats in the living stone, a haunt for nymphs. Here no fetters imprison weary ships, no anchor holds them fast with hooked bite.

Of course, present tense descriptions of scenery such as this one are ambiguous with respect to the base used: the narrator might be describing actual places from a base in his own point in time, and the reader is left wondering whether this place could possibly be found, somewhere in the real world (§2.7).

1.3 Changes in Discourse Mode and Base

In the sections above, I discussed the characteristics of discourse modes within a sequence that is presented in a particular discourse mode. A sequence is a chain of states of affairs that is presented in the same discourse mode, and a new sequence starts whenever the discourse mode alters. Usually, a change in discourse mode is not made explicit at the start of a new sequence. That is, a reader recognizes a certain discourse mode in the course of reading or hearing the sequence in which this discourse mode is used.\textsuperscript{32} Nevertheless, a change of discourse mode does not occur at random moments in the text. The discourse mode may alter, for instance, when the discourse topic, the time or the place changes, and such changes are usually marked in the text by means of, for instance, explicit indications of the new discourse topic, adverbial clauses or particles indicating a change in discourse topic such as \textit{at} (Kroon 1995).

An adverb worth mentioning in this respect is the spatio-temporal adverb \textit{hic} which often functions as a “pivot” between different discourse modes, as is illustrated in the example below (which contains example (4)). The discourse mode in this excerpt changes from the report mode to the description mode and the first describing clause starts with the adverb \textit{hic}.

\textsuperscript{31} Sequences that might be transposed narrative are discussed in §3.2 (example (5)), §3.8.1 (example (32)) and §8.3 (example (20)).

\textsuperscript{32} An exception to this claim is formed by the similes in the \textit{Aeneid}. The transition from the world of the story to the ‘world of the simile’ (which is a transition to the report mode, §2.2) is always made clear by means of words such as \textit{uelut} or \textit{similis}.
Lucius in urbe fuit media, laetissimus umbra, quo primum iactati undis et turbine Poeni effodere loco signum, quod regia Iuno monstrarat, caput acris equi; sic nam fore bello egregiam et facilem uictu per saecula gentem. Hic templum lunoni ingens Sidonia Dido condebat, donis opulentum et numine diuae, aerea cui gradibus surgebant limina, nexaeque aere trabes, foribus cardo stridebat aënis.

Amid the city was a grove, luxuriant in shade, the spot where first the Phoenicians, tossed by waves and whirlwind, dug up the token which queenly Juno had pointed out, a head of the spirited horse; for thus was the race to be famous in war and rich in substance through the ages. Here Sidonian Dido was founding to Juno a mighty temple, rich in gifts and the presence of the goddess. Brazen was its threshold uprising on steps; bronze plates were its lintel beams, on doors of bronze creaked the hinges.

The adverb *hic* is used to indicate that the narrator is still discussing the same place, but that he stops providing the reader with historical information and starts describing its physical features (cf. Bolkestein 2000: 121f for this use of the pronoun *hic*).

Short excursions to another discourse mode are often found in relative clauses, as may be observed from example (18).

Example (18), 5.116-123

Sergestus from whom the Sergian house has its name, rised in the great Centaur and in the sea-blue Scylla Cloanthus, whence comes your family, Cluentius of Rome!

The relative clause occurs within a directed sequence, but is itself reported. The relative pronoun, together with the content of this utterance, sets the clause apart from the sequence surrounding it. Such ‘asides’ of the narrator which briefly interrupt the directing of the events rather often take the form of a relative clause (see §4.6.2).

In short, a change in discourse mode may not always be apparent at the start of the first clause of this new sequence, but, as I will show in the chapters to come, signals such as the ones mentioned above always make the discourse mode clear in the course of a sequence. This is, as a matter of fact, also how I, during my investigation, recognized the discourse modes. The next section discusses my methods.

1.4 Material and Methods

In the above, I gave an overview of the system of discourse modes and bases on account of which the use of tenses in the *Aeneid* can be explained. Before I turn to the linguistic argumentation underlying this system (chapter 2 to 7), I will first define my research material and briefly explain the methods employed.

In the first phase of the research, a database was created containing all finite verb forms, infinitives and participles in the *Aeneid* (about 13,000 verb forms). This database is the source of the quantitative overviews in this study. Not all verb forms are, however, equally relevant for my specific research aims, and for reasons of time and transparency of the research I decided to concentrate only on the finite indicative verb forms and the historical infinitives in the database, with the exclusion of participles, embedded infinitives and most subjunctive forms. Participles were left out mainly because of the problem of distinguishing between participles presenting states of affairs and participles functioning as mere adjectives. The answer to this question seems worth a dissertation in itself.

Apart from this exclusion based on form, I excluded a large group of verb forms on the basis of their context: since I focus on tense usage in a narrative text, also verb forms in direct and indirect speech were filtered out of the material. In direct speech, the narrator
presents the speech of one of his characters. As these speeches usually do not have the form of a narrative, they fall outside the direct scope of this study.

In sum, the material on which this study is based is the collection of all finite indicative verb forms and historical infinitives in the Aeneid, with the exclusion of direct and indirect speech (in sum, about 6,000 verb forms). A complicating factor is a group of 100 ambiguous tense forms which can either be present or perfect. My way of approach in analyzing and classifying these ambiguous forms is discussed in chapter 3, on the perfect tense (§3.2n91, §3.3n95, §3.4.2n112).

The verb forms were all analyzed in terms of the system of discourse modes and bases. This system is closely related to the theory of Smith (2003), which I refined and expanded in order to fully account for tense usage in this particular epic corpus. This meant that I added an extra parameter (base) to Smith’s parameter discourse mode. As I explained above, discourse mode and base yield a specific interpretation of the semantic value of a tense. Conversely, the interpretation of a tense form is an important key to recognize a discourse mode or base. This would, of course, be circular, if there were no clues for establishing the discourse mode and base except for tense. As a matter of fact, the discourse mode and base can usually be established by a number of other linguistic and non-linguistic features of the sequence (see §1.3). In the narrative mode, for instance, we find sequencing adverbs, while in the report mode we may find elements like the adverb nunc, which explicitly refers to the time of narration. However, it is impossible to provide watertight criteria of the type ‘whenever you see nunc, the report mode is used’. Rather, it is always the combination of adverbs, tenses and content which leads the reader to a certain interpretation of these adverbs, tenses and content and, thus, to the identification of mode and base.

1.5 Conclusion

The main claim of this study is that the interpretation of a particular tense form in a text is always based on the semantic value of the tense on the one hand, and the discourse mode and base on the other. The narrator of the Aeneid uses at least four discourse modes and two bases, yielding eight ways of presentation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse Mode</th>
<th>Time of narration</th>
<th>Reference time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Transposed Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registering</td>
<td>Directing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Transposed Narrative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Transposed Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the present chapter I introduced this framework, and the terminology relevant for the narrative and the directing mode. The most important terms with respect to these modes are time line, reference time, advancing states of affairs, stationary states of affairs and frames. States of affairs on the time line of the story may be situations, starting situations or events.

The following chapters will provide the argumentation for the view that the framework of discourse modes and bases is a fruitful way to describe all known interpretations of the Latin tenses in a systematic and coherent way.