

37. For example Venus at *Th.* 5.274–7.
38. *Th.* 12.184–6.
39. Statius appears to regard monarchs as a reflection of gods on earth and their behaviour as a translation into earthly terms of the malevolence of the universe.
40. *Th.* 12.422–3.
41. *Th.* 5.731, 6.378, 9.659.
42. *Th.* 6.378–83, 9.653–9.
43. *Th.* 1.243, 3.235.
44. *Th.* 3.575–97; cf. 7.137–8.
45. *Th.* 1.448, 1.467, 7.537, 11.110.
46. *Th.* 11.57–135.
47. *Th.* 11.315–402.
48. *Th.* 11.424–46.
49. *Th.* 11.457–96.
50. *Th.* 11.465–6.
51. *Th.* 11.462.
52. *Th.* 11.80–4.
53. *Aen.* 9.186–7.
54. *Aen.* 9.184–223.
55. *Aen.* 9.224–313.
56. *Aen.* 9.242–3.
57. *Aen.* 9.310–3.
58. *Th.* 10.347–50.
59. *Th.* 10.351–63.
60. *Aen.* 9.210–1, 9.282–3.
61. *Th.* 10.347.

DIGNA ATQUE INDIGNA RELATU: OBSERVATIONS ON AENEID IX

In this paper on the *Aeneid*,¹ I shall not be speaking about Aeneas, for the very good reason that he is absent throughout the book – the only book of the poem in which he plays no direct part. This absence of the hero may have presented the poet with special problems: it will at any rate be interesting to see how he uses it. In a general way, I shall be concerning myself with Virgil's art of construction – a subject which has been much

discussed. In particular, I want to consider one episode in the book: not the famous story of Nisus and Euryalus (though I shall have something to say about that later on), but the taunting speech of Numanus Remulus which was answered by the successful bowshot of Ascanius. This episode has sometimes been regarded as a rather tiresome irrelevancy: I shall seek to show not only that it illustrates the constructional art of Virgil in a very interesting way but also that it deals with an issue of fundamental importance to the *Aeneid* which it is the particular function of Book IX to develop.

I shall not be speaking about Aeneas, nor for that matter very much about Turnus, though, Aeneas being absent, Turnus holds the stage for a considerable part of the book. The transition from VIII to IX is in fact carefully designed. VIII ends with Aeneas receiving the god-made armour from his goddess-mother: it ends with Aeneas and a goddess in a sacred grove in a valley (597f. *lucus ... religione patrum late sacer*; 609 *in ualle reducta*). IX begins with Turnus and a goddess in a grove in a valley (3f. *luco ... sacrata ualle*). In terms of modern cinema technique, this might be regarded as a piece of effective "cutting".² It is of course more than a formal link, since it invites us to reflect upon the different divine protections accorded to the two heroes.³ The goddess who comes to Turnus is Iris — a mere emissary, and the emissary of Juno. How effective is Juno's support? Virgil will tell us by another device of formal symmetry. Just as the end of VIII and the beginning of IX are linked by goddesses, so the beginning and end of IX are linked by two missions of Iris. *2 Irim de caelo misit Saturnia Iuno / audacam ad Turnum*; 802 *nec contra uiris audet Saturnia Iuno / sufficere; aeriam caelo nam Iuppiter Irim / demisit*. The passages are linked not only by Iris and her downward missions but also by the theme of *audacia*. This is "ring-composition",⁴ as we find it in Greek poetry, for instance in the dramatists; and, as so often in the Greek dramatists, it is not a mere device of symmetry but a mode of emphasis, the form serving the content. Iris is nothing but a messenger, first of Juno, then of Jupiter; and Jupiter's message demonstrates the ineffectiveness of Juno's protection. Valid up to a point to sustain the *audacia* of Turnus, it ends by leaving him in the lurch: *nec ... audet Saturnia Iuno*.⁵

Turnus must be regarded as the leading figure of a book, which, while diversified with episodes, keeps returning to him as a rondo to its main subject. The analogy should not be pressed, nor should the "cult of personality" blind us to aspects of the book which relate to the collective rather than to the individual. For there is another principle at work, which is to maintain a certain balance between Italians and Trojans; and this, as we shall see, is important and explains certain features in the episodes, which are moreover related to one another in various ways. The scheme of the work is something like this, though there are obviously several ways of analysing it, all more or less valid.⁶ The first section is dominated by Turnus (1–158 or 175), but broken by the episode of the ships (77–125), which is however the occasion for a display of over-confidence on his part: *at non audaci Turno fiducia cessit* (126). There follows the story of Nisus and Euryalus (176–449 or 502),⁷ complete in itself, yet worked into the main structure of the book through the handling of certain motifs. The remainder of the book is to be mainly the Aristeia of Turnus (made possible, and made dangerous, by the absence of Aeneas), but

falls into three sections, of which the first is a preliminary scene (503–89). Turnus' entry into the battle is carefully prepared: from anonymous Rutulians⁸ we pass to Mezentius and Messapus and then to Turnus himself (the cult of personality at full blast, it would appear); there is an invocation to the Muse (525–58), echoes of Ennius, and the fighting begins. But the Aristeia of Turnus is interrupted by an episode – the taunts of Numanus and the answer of Ascanius (590–671), which, though less extensive, can perhaps be said to balance the episode of Nisus and Euryalus. Finally (672 or 691–818), we have the main Aristeia – though my very hesitation as to where it begins betrays that there is a partial diversion of interest towards the behaviour of two individual Trojans, Pandarus and Bitias.

It is no part of my intention to speak further of Turnus, about whom so many have written so well; and I shall have comparatively little to say – at least until later – about the story of Nisus and Euryalus, which certainly has not failed to attract attention. I am concerned, first, rather with that Cinderella among episodes – shorter, less famous, less attractive – the episode of Numanus and Ascanius; and, more particularly, with the speech of Numanus (or Remulus, if you prefer), which has perhaps received less attention than it deserves.⁹

The speech consists of two elements: praise of the Italians, abuse of the Trojans. When Virgil describes the cries of Numanus as being *digna atque indigna relatu* (595), he presumably means that the praises were *digna*, the taunts *indigna*. Still, he relates them both and must be supposed to have had his reasons for doing so. The taunts evoke, it is true, a spirited reply in word and deed from Ascanius, before this problem-child¹⁰ of Virgil's, after receiving a compliment from Apollo, is tactfully and honorifically suppressed. No doubt Virgil was pleased to find something active for Ascanius to do – something less harmful than shooting the pet deer in VII – but this may not be a fully adequate explanation of the introduction and handling of the episode. Indeed it has long been recognized to have links with wider themes important to the conception and construction of the *Aeneid*. It may be worth studying these links in some detail.

When Virgil chose a theme for his Roman epic, not least among the advantages which he saw in the story of Aeneas will have been the opportunity which it afforded of establishing relationships between Rome, on the one hand, and Carthage, Greece and Italy, on the other. The opportunity brought problems with it, for instance in connection with Greece. How Virgil handled that subject, particularly through the role of Evander, is not our present concern. That the Italian theme is of the first importance has always been recognized. Virgil was himself an Italian; Augustus, who was an Italian on his father's side, had an Italian policy which the *Aeneid* served, as the *Georgics* had served it already. Indeed, the self-praise of the Italians through their spokesman Numanus, brash though its tone and violent though its language may be, is not dissimilar to the praise which Virgil, in his own poetic person, accords to the hardy Italian stocks. Compare, for instance, *Georgics* II 167ff.: *haec genus acre uirum, Marsos pubemque Sabellam / adsuetumque malo Ligurem Volscosque uerutos / extulit* – before the great Roman heroes are mentioned.

(*Aeneid* IX 607 is only lightly adapted from *Georgics* II 472.) It is the same picture we get, broadly, from the muster-roll of *Aeneid* VII 641ff.¹¹ and from the last five books in general. A hardy valiant race, if perhaps a little primitive, a little in need of higher civilization. A little? Perhaps that is an under-statement: Brooks Otis¹² speaks of “unsophisticated primitives whose courage is put to a very bad use”. I do not want — or need — to argue the point, since it is quite clear that, in Virgil’s view, the Italians were capable of making a vital contribution to the new Rome. *sit Romana potens Itala uirtute propago*, says Juno at XII 827. And so it was to be. The final settlement is more than fair to the Italians, since Aeneas and his descendants are to rule a joint city in which Italian dress and customs will prevail. And this is historically correct, since, despite the Trojan legend, Rome was an Italian and not an Asiatic city.

It is not the praise of the Italians which is the really interesting feature in the speech of Numanus, but his taunting of the Asiatic Trojans. For this — the relationship of the new Rome to its Asiatic origins — was, I suggest, a theme requiring the most skilful and tactful handling on the part of the poet; and I suggest that we can see his skill and tact at work particularly in Book IX.¹³ In an interesting article in *Greece and Rome* for 1955,¹⁴ Dr. Gossage pointed out two features in the Trojan legend which were potentially embarrassing: that Aeneas was by no means the greatest of Trojan heroes, and that the Trojans were a defeated nation. But these features could, as he showed, be handled without too much difficulty. Far more embarrassing was the fact that the Trojans were Asiatics. In Homer, Greeks and Trojans, though at war, shared a common civilization, common gods and (as it appears) a common language. The post-Homeric tradition, however, as we see it from Herodotus onwards, regarded the Trojan War as the first round in a secular contest between east and west. The Greeks, most of them, and not always with good reason, had despised the oriental barbarians; and the Roman attitude was not dissimilar.¹⁵ Not only this, but there had been real danger during the civil wars that power would pass to the east, the pattern of government follow the semi-oriental monarchies of Egypt and Asia, Rome itself be swamped with oriental cults. Yet Aeneas, the founder of Rome, the ancestor of Augustus, was an Asiatic. Virgil might have evaded this issue by concentrating wholly upon the Homeric aspects of Aeneas and his followers, reaping all the advantages, moral and poetic, which they entailed, but he does not do so. The Trojans — and this is classical Greek usage — are Phrygians; and Phrygian was — or could be — a term of contempt and is so used, naturally by enemies, in VII: in Amata’s speech (363 *at non sic Phrygius penetrat Lacedaemona pastor*) and in the complaint of Turnus (579 *stirpem admisceri Phrygiam*). The issue is squarely put in the speech of Numanus.¹⁶

That he taunts the Trojans, wisely sheltering behind their rampart, with the twofold fall of Troy (598f. *non pudet obsidione iterum ualloque teneri, bis capti Phryges?*) amounts to little compared with the lines which follow his praise of the Italians (614ff.):

uobis picta croco et fulgenti murice uestis,
 desidia cordi, iuuat indulgere choreis,
 et tunicae manicas et habent redimicula mitrae.
 o uere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges, ite per alta
 Dindyma, ubi adsuetis biforem dat tibia cantum.
 tympana uos buxusque uocat Berecynthia Matris
 Idaeae, sinite arma uiris et cedite ferro.

The gibes are cheap, but they must have an answer; and an immediate answer is forthcoming, when the young Ascanius shoots his first arrow in war (590), with the suitable words: *bis capti Phryges haec Rutulis responsa remittunt* (635). But an answer is given, I would suggest, up and down the book, when the Trojans are shown, Asiatics though they be, behaving in a manner to refute the charges and the Italians in a manner to incur them. The consistency with which this is done must surely be deliberate.

The long-sleeved tunic and the ribboned headdress (616), ridiculous and effeminate by Roman standards, are features of that oriental costume which was not to prevail. We hear very little in the *Aeneid* of this characteristic Trojan dress. At III 483f. the embroidered robes and Phrygian chlamys are presents from Andromache to the young Ascanius (in a context which I shall mention later). Aeneas, in his role of a second Paris, is pictured by a rival (IV 216) as wearing the mitra.¹⁷ Only Chloereus (XI 768ff.)¹⁸ is described in the full detail of his oriental luxury, and for a specific purpose, that Camilla's eye may be caught by it and that she (an Italian) may, like Euryalus, bring about her own ruin by coveting pretty things.¹⁹ Should we then disregard the taunt as a triviality? Perhaps, but the stress – with the two words of colour in 614 (*croco, murice* – is upon ostentation.²⁰ Numanus, that is to say, attributes to the Trojans outward display in dress. It is not perhaps accidental, then, that – with two exceptions which prove the rule²¹ – there is in this book upon the Trojan side no colour or finery – or for that matter gold (associated with the Phrygian dress at III 483 and XI 774), whereas such descriptions of the Rutulians are common. The Rutulian army is *diues pictai uestis et auri* (26). At 50 we hear of the red crest upon the golden helmet of Turnus (*cristaque tegit galea aurea rubra*). The Rutulian guards are *purpurei cristis iuuenes auroque corusci* (163). At 270 Turnus is *aureus*, and we hear again of his ruddy crest (and again at 732f.). Among the things that Nisus and Euryalus leave behind, when they refrain from killing the comrades of Messapus (357ff.) are armour and bowls of solid silver, and beautiful carpets. But Euryalus did take the swordbelt of Rhamnes embossed with gold and the helmet of Messapus *cristis decoram* (365) – and it was fatal to him. Luxury everywhere, but not on the Trojan side. With two exceptions. The son of Arcens had an embroidered cloak of dark Iberian blue (582), but he was a Sicilian, not a Trojan! And there were Pandarus and Bitias (678, 707), to whom I shall return.

Numanus accuses the Trojans of *desidia* and an addiction to dancing (615). And how have these idle festive pleasure-loving people been behaving? With an admirable energy and discipline. That the Trojan camp was in confusion (13 *turbata arripe castra*)

was a false assumption conveyed to Turnus by Iris. They keep a look-out (34) and man the walls, in accordance with the parting instructions of their supremely competent leader (38ff.). To the Rutulians, because they will not fight, they seem to have *inertia corda* (55), but their inactivity is no *desidia* but rather a self-discipline which can control the emotions of *pudor* and *ira* (44–6). Their watch is well kept (174f.); and when Nisus and Euryalus leave their post, their places are duly taken by a relief. What, then, of the Rutulians? Messapus is put in charge of the sentries and the watchfires, with fourteen officers and a large force of men. The fires are lit and a watch is kept, but there is drinking and gaming (159–67). We are not surprised²² to learn a little later that: *lumina rara micant; somno uinoque soluti / procubuere* (189f.) – a picture which is repeated and amplified in Nisus’ speech at 236–40 (*Rutulii somno uinoque soluti / conticuere ... / interrupti ignes, aterque ad sidera fumus / erigitur*). The Rutulians are asleep like the whole animal world (224f.): contrast the Trojan leaders, awake and standing upright.²³ What Nisus and Euryalus find is what they expect: *passim somno uinoque per herbam / corpora fusa uident, arrectos litore currus, / inter lora rotasque uiros, simul arma iacere, / uina simul* (316–19); we hear of Serranus, who had played long, but not long enough (335ff., cf. 167); of Rhoetus, still awake, but hiding behind a mixing-bowl (345f., cf. 350); and then the crowning touch – Messapus, on whom the responsibility lay: *ibi ignem / deficere extremum* (351f.); his helmet is taken while he sleeps.

The last charge is that of effeminacy.²⁴ The Trojans come from Ida, and they are therefore like the eunuch devotees who worship the Great Mother with tambourines and double-pipes. Ridiculous, of course. Sufficient answer is given by the shot of Ascanius which evokes the traditional compliment from Apollo: *macte noua uirtute* (641). But here too we may look back as well as forward. Ida and *Berecynthia mater* were first introduced into the book through the episode of the ships. It may well be that the supernatural disappearance of the ships symbolizes the severance of the Trojan connection and the complete committal of Aeneas and his men to Italy.²⁵ But in the story the Great Mother plays a role of dignity and power.²⁶ Mother of the gods, she carries weight with Jupiter and wins a favour from him; and we remember she had been sent for by the Senate during the Second Punic War and made respectable with a Roman cult. But note that Ida has associations in this book other than those of an oriental worship. If Ascanius answered the taunt with a lucky shot, it had already been answered by the courage of Nisus and Euryalus. And Nisus came from Ida (176–8). And Ida is *uenatrix* (178), Nisus a huntsman as much as any Italian (605); bred to hunting on Mount Ida, it was through hunting (*uenatu adsiduo*) that he had learnt his way about in Italy (245).²⁷

These are the true answers to the cheap gibes of Numanus. But then Virgil goes on, very characteristically, to show us that there are black sheep even in the Trojan camp – and they too come from Ida (672). With Nisus and Euryalus it is pathetic, if not tragic, that their youthful heroism should be destroyed by an excessive lust for slaughter and by a young boy’s hankering after a splendid piece of armour. (I shall return to this.) But Pandarus and Bitias offend in every respect. As bad as Messapus, they betray the trust placed in them by their leader (675 *ducis imperio commissa*).

Relying on their arms, they invite the enemy gratuitously within the walls (676 *freti armis, ultro*) – with a *fiducia* worthy of Turnus. So we are not at all surprised to find that they make a display like the Rutulians (678 *crisis capita alta corusci*) or that the corslet of Bitias had scales of gold (707). The brothers are called *superbi* (695), elsewhere in this book used only of Rhamnes, the snoring drunkard (324). At 722ff. Pandarus shuts the gates, callously leaving his own men outside, madly shutting Turnus in; and *ultro* is repeated from 676. But Turnus will waste the opportunity through his own *furor* and insane lust for blood: *sed furor ardentem caedisque insana cupido / egit in aduersos* (760f.).

The speech of Numanus, telling of the real qualities of the Italians and the imaginary defects of the Trojans, focuses attention upon a theme that is developed in the book as a whole, in which the Trojans are shown behaving with no less courage, and with far more discipline, than the Italians – behaving, in fact, like Romans. This is indeed a main function of IX in the development of the poem, to emphasize that Troy has now come to Italy and that the Trojans are becoming Romans. As was suggested above, the disappearance of the ships may symbolize the severance of the Asiatic connection; and it may be observed that the abortive attempt of the Trojan women to fire the ships (V 603ff.) led itself to the foundation of a kind of new Troy.²⁸ Troy is in fact re-founded not once but three times. The settlement at Buthrotum, ruled over by Helenus and Andromache (III 294ff., 497ff.), is a Troy, a Pergama, complete with its famous rivers and its Scaean Gates, but a poor affair, a mere simulacrum of Trojan greatness;²⁹ Anchises is anxious to depart from it and Helenus blesses their departure. It is the ghost of Anchises that gives instructions to found a Troy in Sicily (V 722ff.), which is duly constituted by Aeneas under the rule of Acestes: *hoc Ilium et haec loca Troiam / esse iubet* (756f.). But it is a second-grade Troy for the less courageous spirits (*quos / pertaesum magni incepti* 713f.), for Trojans (one might say) unworthy to become Romans. The bravest go with Aeneas to Italy: *exigui numero, sed bello uiuida uirtus* (754). As Anchises said, *lectos iuuenes, fortissima corda, / defer in Italiam. gens dura atque aspera cultu / debellanda tibi Latio est* (729–31). It is the flower of the Trojans that fight in Italy, meeting and defeating the hardy native stock: so much more ridiculous the taunts of Numanus.

It is the flower of the Trojans that found there a new Troy. In IX Virgil has, for his purposes, tolerated a gross improbability. It is only a few days since the Trojans landed, yet the camp has elaborate fortifications; it has *muri, moenia*; it is not only *castra*, but an *urbs* (8, 48, 473, 639, 729, 784). It is in fact a new Troy, and so it is described, not in IX, but four times in X. Most significantly, it is *Troia nascens* to Venus (27) and no less to Juno (74f.), which is the point of contention between them.³⁰ In this point at least Juno's wishes are to prevail. Her prayer (XII 827f., 833ff.) is answered: *sit Romana potens Itala uirtute propago: / occidit, occideritque sinas cum nomine Troia*, and the name is not heard again.³¹ Thus, in IX, the camp must become a "city", not merely because it is the last re-foundation of Troy, but for a more important reason, because it is the first foundation of Rome. It is an *urbs* with *ciues* (36, 783), with *populus* and *patres* (192). It is Roman, like the courage and discipline of its defenders.

I have reached the point at which a sensible man might stop. One of my purposes has been to show how, in *Aeneid* IX, in the working out of the design, Virgil has made a controlled artistic use of formal patterning and leit-motiv. This is an art which he may have learnt in part from the Greek tragedians whom he obviously knew so well. Like them, he uses this art to promote the themes to which importance is attached. But it may seem that I have been taking a singularly orthodox, not to say simplistic, view of the purposes of Virgil's Roman epic, particularly when I have been speaking about the making of Rome and the transformation of Trojans into Romans. Did Virgil think that the truth was quite like that – the truth about Rome and the Romans and (by implication) about Augustan Rome and its imperial mission? Adam Parry, in an article on the *Georgics* which appeared in *Arethusa* after his death,³² says of Virgil's art that it has "its characteristic mode of taking back what it gives". I should like to spend a short time doing something of the same kind myself. And I shall do it by taking a quick look at the episode of Nisus and Euryalus which is such a striking feature of Book IX.

This episode is indeed the book's most memorable feature and should have a bearing on the themes we have been considering. And indeed I said a little earlier that the taunts of Numanus had been answered in advance by the courage of Nisus and Euryalus which rendered his gibes ridiculous. I believe this to be true. True, but too simple; or even too true to be good. True, not only because of what Aletes says at 247–50 (*non tamen omnino Teucros delere paratis, / cum talis animos iuuenum et tam certa tulistis / pectora*), but because of that remarkable apostrophe with which Virgil concludes – or appears to conclude – the episode. This is at 446–9:

fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt,
 nulla dies unquam memori uos eximet aeuo,
 dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum
 accolet imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.

This passage worried Mr. F.R. Dale:³³ "Fortunate indeed they are. Virgil's unmerited tribute has worked like a spell." And it has led Mr. A.J. Boyle, in an interesting article which has recently appeared in the first number of *Ramus*,³⁴ to speak of "the forceful irony of Virgil's extravagant eulogy". It worried Mr. Dale, because the behaviour of the young Trojans was so foolish and undisciplined; it seems ironical to Mr. Boyle, because their behaviour was so cruel and so bloody and rooted in emotions bound to lead to cruelty and bloodshed.³⁵ (And of course it raises the question of what *imperium* connoted for Virgil.) To examine the episode in detail is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is surely full of characteristic Virgilian ambiguities, and not least an ambiguity of motive in the youthful Trojan heroes. Nisus longs for glory (184ff.) and awakes a similar longing in Euryalus (197f.); and he sees his opportunity in the need for a message to be taken to Aeneas. *aut pugnam* (he had said at 186f.) *aut aliquid iam dudum inuadere magnum / mens agitat mihi*. But was a quiet efficient, if risky, passage through the sleeping Rutulians enough to satisfy this ardent young soldier? No, he longs to kill, and kill he does. But he knows what his mission really is; his conscience is restless, and his words betray it. 320f.: *Euryale, audendum dextra* (and that means killing); *nunc ipsa uocat res*

(which is ambiguous). *hac iter est* (but did it require them to kill?) Again, at 355f.: *poenarum exhaustum satis est* (which means killing in vengeance), *uia facta per hostis* (which did not need the killing). Nisus spoke so, because he knew what he was doing: *sensit enim nimia caede atque cupidine ferri* (354).³⁶ It is the younger lad, with his perhaps more venial lust for pretty spoils, who brings on the disaster (and the needle of Virgil's sympathy oscillates as usual upon the dial).

Does it not look as though Virgil has shown us a Nisus and Euryalus who are brave as the Italians but, like the Italians, still lacking the ideal Roman discipline: too much *audacia*, too much *furor*, too much lust for blood? Too like Turnus (760f.)?³⁷ And yet their story is followed by 446–9: *fortunati ambo*. It had been a glorious episode worthy of the traditions of Rome, of Roman *imperium*, immortalized by Virgil in his Roman epic. But we must look on a little farther.

446ff. read like the end, like a final valid comment on the episode. But they are not the end. They are followed by a most remarkable passage (450–58), introduced by two remarkable lines³⁸ in which the victors weep; and the spoils they have gained turn out to be the recovery of their own dead and of the spoils Euryalus had taken. The keynote is blood: we have the sequence *exsanguis, caede, caede, sanguine*. Then the dawn breaks. Surely it is over now. Two lines are repeated from IV 584f.:³⁹ *et iam prima nouo spargebat lumine terras / Tithoni croceum linquens Aurora cubile*. Beautiful, bland, conventional – with mythology, with reminiscence of Homer and Lucretius. Surely it is over now, the adventure of the night, romance or nightmare as one sees it. We return to normality, and to normal fighting; or so for a moment it seems. But no, the ghastly trophies of the night are carried past the walls. It was real, and its effects upon the survivors are symbolized by the lamentation of Euryalus' mother.⁴⁰

This is all very Virgilian, surely. What do we make of it? In particular, what do we make of *fortunati ambo*? For that is the problem. Not that Virgil has followed up his account of a martial exploit, refused to let it rest, gone on to show its appalling effects upon victors and vanquished alike. The problem, as I see it, is that Virgil has shown us a Nisus and Euryalus brave but bloodthirsty, brave but undisciplined, all too comparable with the *gens dura atque aspera cultu* that the Trojans were sent to Latium to “war down” (*debellare*). Why not? These are early days. But then comes this resounding eulogy, in terms of the future of Roman *imperium*. I think it is a problem.

Mr. Dale found the eulogy unmerited. Mr. Boyle finds it ironical. He finds it an essential part of the meaning of the *Aeneid* to contrast what he calls the ideology of empire with its reality, to bring out the disparity between the achievement and the cost. To me – and I speak with all hesitation – this seems to swing too far away from the old simple notion of Virgil as the propagandist of Augustan Rome. Irony? Of course there is irony in Virgil, but hardly an over-riding ironic purpose informing the whole work; and the lines do not *sound* ironical. But, if irony is the wrong word, to find the right words would involve a task of total interpretation beyond the scope of this paper and far beyond my competence. The remarks which follow are of the most tentative description.

I take it that Rome, for Virgil, was not an empty name or the making of Rome an empty thing or the attempt of Augustus to re-make Rome after the civil wars a mere illusion or a fraud. Virgil had lived through the traumatic experience of those wars, and the trauma was never to be cured: Augustus had brought peace. It is true that Virgil, who had not mingled in the world of action, was possessed of a certain innocence. But the pure in heart not only see God, but often see their fellow-men with a penetrating clarity. I take it, therefore, that Virgil was aware of the difference between ideology and reality and knew the cost of an achievement which was still in the realm of insecure hope; that he can scarcely have believed that Augustus and his associates had found the secret of making the world safe from the turbulent emotions of humanity; that Roman *imperium* can hardly have been for him a simple and uncomplicated ideal. Yet his grand theme was the making of Rome and the role – and glory – of its *imperium* (I 286ff.). I take it that, in developing this theme, he was not constrained to follow a brief, but that, despite all misgiving, despite his knowledge that the actuality was deeply flawed, he could without insincerity set out an ideal he knew had not been realised and might never be realised. Without insincerity, without irony, but not without conflict, not without tensions. There is, one might say, a rational structure, an ideal text (an ideology, if you like), but running continuously with it in the poetry a commentary – a critical sensitive emotional commentary. The tensions are part of the greatness of Virgil. Adam Parry⁴¹ says of the *Aeneid* that “its strange amalgam of triumph and sadness, of confidence and nostalgia, of the martial tones of Roman and Augustan achievement, and of the poignant notes of personal loss and renunciation, has hardly been fathomed by ancient or modern criticism”. Though how much more criticism can do than state and accept and expound this fascinating amalgam may be doubtful.

Categorize it we cannot, for it is *sui generis*. But we can speak – and are probably right to speak – of Virgil’s sense of tragedy (and no one has spoken better of the tragic spirit of the *Aeneid* than Professor Maguinness in his Presidential Address to this Society).⁴² Tragedy too deals essentially with tensions and contradictions, and often with tensions and contradictions inherent in a social system, a code or an ideal. I would suggest that Virgil learnt much of his tragic thought, as well as his constructional art, from the Greek tragedians. I said that I would not speak about Aeneas, and I will keep my promise, except to say that Virgil chose to end the *Aeneid* with his hero betrayed by human weakness into an act of that savagery it was his mission to terminate. So are ideals betrayed by what Mr. D.A. Little calls “the malevolent vagaries of the human mind”.⁴³ So in their small way – and with the excuse of youth – were Nisus and Euryalus betrayed by emotions closely bound up with the courage and energy that made them heroes. *Imperium* of its very nature is always at such risk.

FOOTNOTES

1. This is a version, slightly revised, of a lecture given to the Society on 20 May 1972. Many of the ideas contained in it were, however, first presented to an audience – a Virgil Discussion Class in the University of Manchester – as long ago as January 1934. Of all that has been written about Virgil since then I cannot claim to have

read more than a portion, but, since I have not noticed that Aeneid IX has been tackled from quite the same point of view as mine, I make no apology for reviving notions that have been suppressed for four or five times as long as Horace recommends.

2. "The poet's eye is like the edited shots of a cine-camera." So R.D. Williams, speaking of the method of presentation in the Catalogue (*CQ* n.s. 11 (1961) 147). The comparison has been developed independently by Fred Mench, "Film sense in *The Aeneid*", *Arion* 8 (1969) 380–97, who opens with quotations from Sergei Eisenstein, *The film sense* (which I have not seen). Eisenstein cited Milton as a poet who used essentially cinematic techniques "to give dynamic emphasis to scenes".
3. A. Cartault, *L'art de Virgile dans l'Enéide* 660, draws attention to the correspondence and interprets it correctly.
4. Another link between the beginning and end of the book is provided by the association of Tiber and Turnus, cf. V. Pöschl, *Die Dichtkunst Virgils* 165 n.2. F. Bömer, *RhM* 92 (1944) 333f., gives a few examples from other books. See also R. Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik* 451f., on the beginnings and endings of books. The Nisus and Euryalus episode is framed by 187 and its ironical echo at 445. See also n.38 below.
5. *Audacia* is also associated with Juno and her agents (or victims) in VII 300, 308, followed by 409, 475; in XII 152, 159 (*auctor ego audendi*), 786, 814. The value of *audacia* is of course relative to context, cf. VIII 110, IX 625, for commendable boldness. (Where do IX 281, 291, fall?)
6. Brooks Otis, *Virgil* 346, analyzes the book on rather different lines. See also Heinze, *op.cit.* 447, cf. 382. I doubt if Pöschl, *op.cit.* 176f., is right to see in the insertion of the Ascanius-episode a change of plan, though he could be right to see Numanus' praise of the Italians as (in part) a preparation for the *aristeia* of Turnus.
7. On the illusory impression of finality at 449, v. *infra*.
8. *audaces Rutuli* (519), but there is a limit to their *audacia*, unlike that of Turnus.
9. There is now an interesting, full and well documented examination of the speech by Horsfall, "Numanus Remulus: ethnography and propaganda in *Aeneid* IX 598f.", *Latomus* 30 (1971) 1108–16. See n.12 below.
10. "La principale ressource qu'un personnage de très jeune combattant offre à un poète, c'est le thème infiniment pathétique de sa mort" (L.–A. Constans, *L'Enéide de Virgile* 322). Euryalus, Pallas, Lausus, can die: not so Ascanius. Virgil was also able to use Ascanius in the early part of the Nisus and Euryalus episode: with what success I leave others to judge.
11. Cf. R.D. Williams, in the article cited in n.2.
12. Otis, *op.cit.* 329, stressing the element of *furor*. The reader is referred to Mr. Horsfall's article (n.9 above) for a full examination of this passage. He rightly

stresses the difference of tone between it and the *Georgics*: “the lack of warmth and charm in the picture in this speech makes it seem a most unattractive world, far from the happy and simple peasantry of *Georgics* II.” He therefore denies, rightly again, that it can be regarded as “propaganda for a united Italy of free peasant cultivators”, while admitting that “the old world is also in part desirable”. He refers to a dissertation by H.J. Schweizer, *Vergil und Italien*, which I have not seen.

13. The way is prepared in VII by the diplomatic exchanges of 205ff. “Vergil sought to eliminate the dichotomy between the *Troianus barbarus* and the *Troianus nobilis atque diuinus* by making Aeneas’ ancestor Dardanus a native of Italy, and thus rid the concept of Trojan descent of the *odium* with which it had been connected, especially since Antony’s activities in the East.” So G.K. Galinsky, *Aeneas, Sicily, and Rome* 222 (a work in which the reader will find much that is interesting and relevant to the themes of this paper). No doubt this was Virgil’s intention, but the alleged western origins of Dardanus are a highly artificial link, operating at the rhetorical rather than the poetic level. The argument of Ilioneus at 231–3 may be more significant.
14. “Two implications of the Trojan legend”, *GR* 2nd ser.2 (1955) 23–29, 72–81.
15. It is interesting to observe that, at *Aeneid* I 283–90, the Caesar who will be deified is both *pulchra Troianus origine* and *spoliis Orientis onustus*.
16. Cf. Constans, *op.cit.* 320: “Il a abordé ici le problème de front, avec une grande hardiesse.”
17. See also n.24 below. The Tyrian purple worn by Aeneas at IV 262 was the gift of Dido.
18. Cf. Constans, *op.cit.* 358.
19. But, in her case, *femineo praedae et spoliis ardebat amore* (XI 782)!
20. See Horsfall, *op.cit.* 1114 and notes.
21. Since we need hardly trouble about the gilded sword and ivory sheath which Ascanius presents to Euryalus (303–5)?
22. Though Cartault, *op.cit.* 668 n.8, 673 n.4, is astonished and finds in the negligence of Messapus “une disparate”.
23. 229 *stant longis adnixa hastis et scuta tenentes*, contr. 164, 190.
24. Repeated by Turnus, in a state of *furor*, at XII 99 (*semiuri Phrygis*), with the additional reference to an effeminate hair-style. Cf. IV 215ff.: *et nunc ille Paris cum semiuiro comitatu, / Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem / subnexus, raptu potitur*.
25. So that there is a germ of truth in what Turnus says at 128ff.
26. Cf. VI 784ff., where she is brought into close relation with Rome through a simile; and the prayer of Aeneas at X 252ff. Cf. Galinsky, *op.cit.* 176f., 224–6.
27. Improbably enough, but the point was worth making in defiance of probability.

28. For some close parallelisms between V and IX see Otis, *op.cit.* 273f. Note that both attacks upon the ships are introduced by a mission of Iris from Juno (IX 2 repeats V 606).
29. Cf. Otis, *op. cit.* 260f. N.B. *falsi Simoentis* (302), *simulata ... Pergama* (349), *effigiem Xanthi* (497).
30. The third reference (214) is followed by the episode of the nymphs and the prayer to Cybele. The fourth case is at 378.
31. Cf. William S. Anderson, *TAPA* 88 (1957) 30.
32. "The idea of art in Virgil's *Georgics*", *Arethusa* 5 (1972) 35–52.
33. "Character and incident in the *Aeneid*", Presidential Address to the Virgil Society, 1953, p.11.
34. "The meaning of the *Aeneid*: a critical inquiry", Part I, *Ramus* 1 (1972) 63–90, p.79.
35. Similar points have of course been made by other writers, e.g. Cartault, *op.cit.* n.5 (on the motif of imprudence in the book); Otis, *op.cit.* 349.
36. Conington – and others – are right (as against e.g. Mackail) to take *caede ... atque cupidine* as a hendiadys (cf. 760): the capture of spoils has not yet entered into the narrative. Nevertheless, *cupido* may well look forward to the fatal covetousness of Euryalus which immediately follows. When I say that spoils have not yet entered in, I am not forgetting the much discussed problem of 242 (*adfore cum spoliis ingenti caede peracta*). The transposition of 241 after 243 should be resisted. The mission to Aeneas is the primary concern of the Trojan leaders, and Nisus (whatever else is in his mind) must place it first. Nor are those leaders interested, primarily, in the return of Nisus and Euryalus but in that of Aeneas, who must therefore be the subject of *adfore*. Aeneas will not in fact return with spoils after much slaughter, nor could he rationally be expected so to return. But for Nisus is this the ideal picture of the return of a great military leader? In any case, by the language he uses, he shows what is in his own mind: the reference to slaughter and spoils falls between two references to his proper mission. Perhaps he has already betrayed his ambitions by the use of *insidiis* at 237, since this word implies a surprise *attack*.
37. *sed furor ardentem caedisque insana cupido / egit in aduersos*. The sentence is largely made up of words and notions to be found in the Nisus and Euryalus episode. The strong *perfurit* is used of Euryalus at 343. Boyle, *op.cit.* 65f., calls attention to the use of fire imagery to suggest "the ruinous and impassionate hot-headedness of the Trojan youths".
38. Remarkable in the way that 450 is contradicted by 451: *uictores by flentes, praeda ... spoliisque potiti by Volcentem ... ferebant*. Mackail is wrong to translate *potiti* by "regained" and so anticipate 457f., which not only round off the section but reveal that the spoils they gained were the spoils Euryalus had taken.