# Proceedings

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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE VIRGIL SOCIETY

## 1964-65

(Editor: H. MacL. Currie, M.A., Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, London, E.1.)

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## LECTORIBUS EDITOR

The past twelve months have been calamitous for the Society with the loss of no fewer than three former Presidents, T. S. Eliot, O.M., W. F. Jackson Knight and Sir John Lockwood, as well as of E. Wynne Hickie, for many years Chairman of the Council. Obituary notices appear elsewhere in this issue.

To commemorate his long and devoted service to Virgil studies and to the Society this issue also includes a list of W. F. Jackson Knight's published works. We are very grateful to a group of his friends and in particular to his brother, Professor G. Wilson Knight, for generous financial assistance towards the cost of thus augmenting The Proceedings and to our Hon. Treasurer, Dr. J. G. Landels, for compiling the bibliography.

On 31st March this year Dr. A. J. Gossage resigned as Hon. Secretary after holding office for ten years. His assiduity and skill in directing our affairs have been most notable; during his incumbency the Society has steadily grown in numbers and influence. Fortunately we shall continue to have the benefit of Dr. Gossage's wisdom and experience since he now becomes Chairman of the Council. The new Hon. Secretary is Mr. H. MacL. Currie, M.A., Dept. of Classics, Queen Mary College (University of London), Mile End Road, London, E.1.

For helping to make possible the change to lithographic reproduction (a process whose results we hope readers of The Proceedings will find satisfactory) the Society's warm thanks are due to the President and Fellows of the British Academy who liberally responded to our application for a subsidy.

To publish The Proceedings is expensive; with about 600 members the Society is comparatively small; and our subscription rate of 7/6 *per annum* is with ever rising costs barely economic, though it will be kept at this for as long as possible in the interests of members. The generosity of private persons and of a public body has this year greatly strengthened our material position, but members are earnestly requested to assist in the task of keeping the Society solvent and healthy for the future. This they can do by paying their subscriptions regularly and on time, by contributing if possible something more than the minimum "according as each has prospered", and by introducing friends to the Society. A campaign launched earlier this year to increase the membership has been quite successful, but we still need more recruits!

Lastly, the Council and Office-bearers wish to express sincere gratitude to all members at home or abroad who have faithfully supported the Society during the year.

# APOLLONIUS RHODIUS AND VIRGIL

A lecture delivered to the Virgil Society
24th October 1964

by J. D. M. Preshous, M.A.

The propositions that I wish to examine are first, that Virgil in creating his own poetic image very often fused together a number of his sources into what is sometimes a most intricate pattern, and secondly, that among these sources, Apollonius Rhodius was often prominent.

Most of the accepted facts of Virgil's youth and upbringing are to be found in the Vitae Vergilianae, short biographies written by post-classical authors. Of these the most important is that which was for a long time attributed to Donatus but which is now more generally ascribed to Suetonius. The other two Lives - those by Servius and by Valerius Probus (the latter no more than a brief preface) - seem to draw largely for their material upon Suetonius.

A few passages only are relevant to a study of Virgil's method of composition. To begin with, Suetonius records that Virgil's poetry required considerable time for its completion (Life of Virgil, 25):

> Bucolica trienno, Georgica septem, Aeneidea undecim perfecit annis.

This is further emphasised later (22):

> cum Georgica scriberet, traditur cotidie meditatos mane plurimos versus dictare solitus, ac per totum diem retractando ad paucissimos redigere, non absurde carmen se ursae more parere dicens et lambendo demum effingere...
>
> "When he was writing the Georgics, he is said to have been in the habit of writing daily a very large number of verses, thought out early in the morning, and throughout the day of reducing these to a very few by a process of reshaping; saying, not inappropriately, that he produced a poem as a bear her cub and licked it at last into shape..."

This is very important. Virgil would write or dictate lengthy drafts and by a process of reshaping (retractando), he would reduce these to a few perfect verses by evening.

Suetonius' Life has this to say of the Aeneid (21):

> Novissime Aeneidem incohavit, argumentum varium ac multiplex et quasi amborum Homeri carminum instar, praeterea nominibus ac rebus Graecis Latinisque commune et in quo, quod maxime studebat, Romanae simul urbis et Augusti origo contineretur.

Clearly the Aeneid was intended to be a new kind of epic, comprehensive enough, as Suetonius suggests, to match the main themes of both the Iliad and the Odyssey, and to include the theme Virgil most wished to present, the origins of Rome and Augustus.

The two important ideas then, are first, Virgil's use of *retractatio*, and secondly, his concept of an epic poem which was to absorb and mould existing ideas and material into his new creation. It would seem clear - indeed it has never been disputed - that Virgil's sources cover an unusually wide range. And surely if the first draft of a passage of Virgil's poetry contained allusions to other works of literature, his final (compressed) draft would itself in all likelihood contain a number of such allusions, themselves compressed and interwoven.

This compression and fusing of sources in Virgil has been noticed by scholars from Servius onward, but it has risen to prominence in Virgilian studies since the publication in 1931 of E.K. Rand's *The Magical Art of Virgil*. Much work to substantiate Rand's important theory has been carried out by Mr. Jackson Knight, who sometimes calls this aspect of Virgil's technique "Integration of Sources".

In order to test the validity of this theory of integration, I have chosen to consider a number of passages from the *Aeneid* which seem to have one common source, the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius. In doing this, I hope to suggest that Virgil's debt to the Alexandrian epic poet was rather greater than is sometimes suggested.

Apollonius Rhodius was born about 280 B.C. and lived during the heyday of the Hellenistic Age when, under the patronage of the first three Ptolemies, the cultural centre of the world was in Alexandria (that is to say, from approximately 285-221 B.C.) It was in this age of scholarship that, flouting the contemporary preference for poetry in small measure - and incurring the bitter enmity of his erstwhile teacher Callimachus - Apollonius produced his epic poem, the *Argonautica*. It is a chronological and minutely detailed account of Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece, in four books, some 6700 verses in length.

Opinions concerning the poetic merits of the *Argonautica* vary greatly, but are generally lukewarm at best. Callimachus' famous remark that a 'big book was a big mistake' — μέγα βιβλίον, μέγα κακόν — may well refer directly to the work of Apollonius, and some modern authorities compare his work with the more dreary Hollywood epics, for example, the recent offering, appropriately entitled "Jason and the Argonauts".

However, Apollonius Rhodius is not on trial this afternoon, and perhaps before continuing, we should allow his shade the benefit of E. V. Rieu's sympathetic description:[1] "A young poet, full of zest and conscious of his talent but at the same time diffident of his reception, and in the end committing his work to the world in the trembling hope that 'as the years go by, people may find it a sweeter and yet sweeter song to sing'".

Servius at the beginning of his commentary on *Aeneid IV* writes:

> Apollonius Argonautica scripsit et in tertio inducit amantem Medeam; inde totus hic liber translatus est.

It is in the Dido episode and perhaps there alone that the influence of Apollonius upon Virgil has been appreciated, and it is to this episode that we may turn to see the ways in which Virgil used the Alexandrian poet's ideas and material.

When the shipwrecked Aeneas meets Dido in Carthage in <u>Aeneid I</u>, the queen is compared in a simile with Diana (<u>Aen. I</u>, 498-502):

> qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi
> exercet Diana choros, quam mille secutae
> hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades; illa pharetram
> fert umero gradiensque deas supereminet omnis;
> Latonae tacitum pertemptant gaudia pectus:

> "She was like Diana when she keeps her dancers dancing on the banks of Eurotas or along the slopes of Cynthus, with a thousand mountain-nymphs following in bands on this side and on that; she is taller than all other goddesses, as with her quiver slung from her shoulder she steps on her way, and a joy beyond words steals into Latona's heart." [2]

Later, when Aeneas rides forth in the Royal Hunt, he is compared with Apollo (<u>Aen. IV</u>, 143-149):

> qualis ubi hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta
> deserit ac Delum maternam invisit Apollo
> instauratque choros, mixtique altaria circum
> Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi;
> ipse iugis Cynthi graditur mollique fluentem
> fronde premit crinem fingens atque inplicat auro,
> tela sonant umeris;

> "He was like Apollo when in winter he leaves Lycia and the river Xanthus and visits his mother's isle Delos to start the dancing anew, while around his altar Cretans, Dryopians and tattooed Agathyrsans mingle and cheer; Apollo himself paces on the slopes of Cynthus, with his clattering bow and arrows slung from his shoulder and his flowing hair pressed into neatness by a soft wreath of leaves and held by a band of gold."

These similes are alike in their language - <u>qualis</u> (<u>qualis</u>), <u>iuga Cynthi</u> (<u>iugis Cynthi</u>), <u>exercet (instaurat) choros</u>, <u>umero</u> (<u>umeris</u>), <u>gradiens</u> (<u>graditur</u>) - but their conception may be due to the integration of some six Greek sources.

In <u>Iliad VII</u> Homer compares Ajax with Ares (208-210):

> "he sallied out like the monstrous Ares when he joins embattled armies, hurled at each other by the Son of Cronos in soul-destroying hate."

but this simile, though close in spirit to the similes in Virgil, is in detail quite different. A much closer parallel is to be found in <u>Odyssey VI</u> where Nausicaa is compared with Artemis (102-108):

> οἵη δ' Ἄρτεμις εἶσι κατ' οὔρεος ἰοχέαιρα,
> ἢ κατὰ Τηΰγετον περιμήκετον ἢ Ἐρύμανθον,
> τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείῃς ἐλάφοισι·
> τῇ δέ θ' ἅμα νύμφαι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,
> ἀγρονόμοι παίζουσι· γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ·
> πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἥ γε κάρη ἔχει ἠδὲ μέτωπα,
> ῥεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι·

"It was just such a scene as gladdens Leto's heart, when her daughter Artemis the archeress, has come down from the mountain along the high ridge of Taygetus or Erymanthus to chase the wild boar or the nimble deer, and the Nymphs of the countryside join with her in her sport. They too are heaven-born, but Artemis overtops them all, and where all are beautiful there is no question which is she."

There are four passages in Apollonius which may have found their way into the two similes of Virgil; three are similes and the fourth is a passage of direct narrative. First there is a brief simile, comparing Jason with Apollo (Ap.Rh.I, 307-309):

οἷος δ' ἐκ νηοῖο θυώδεος εἶσιν Ἀπόλλων
Δῆλον ἀν' ἠγαθέην, ἠὲ Κλάρον ἢ ὅγε Πυθὼ,
ἢ Λυκίην εὐρεῖαν, ἐπὶ Ξάνθοιο ῥοῇσιν.....

"...like Apollo when he issues from some fragrant
shrine in holy Delos or Claros or maybe at Pytho
or in the broad realm of Lycia, where Xanthus flows..."

which is echoed a little later (536) where the poet compares the Argonauts as they row with:

"young men bringing down their quick feet on the earth
in unison with one another and the lyre, as they dance
for Apollo round his altar at Pytho or in Ortygia or
by the waters of Ismenus."

A third reference to Apollo is in the narrative where the Argonauts witness an impressive 'fly-past' by the god himself (Ap.Rh.II, 674-679):

τοῖσι δὲ Λητοῦς υἱός, ἀνερχόμενος Λυκίηθεν
τῆλ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα δῆμον Ὑπερβορέων ἀνθρώπων,
ἐξεφάνη· χρύσεοι δὲ παρειάων ἑκάτερθεν
πλοχμοὶ βοτρυόεντες ἐπερρώοντο κιόντι·
λαιῇ δ'ἀργύρεον νώμα βιόν, ἀμφὶ δὲ νώτοις
ἰοδόκη τετάνυστο κατωμαδόν.....

"Here they had a vision of Apollo on his way from Lycia to visit the remote and teeming peoples of the North. The golden locks streamed down his cheeks in clusters as he moved; he had a silver bow in his left hand and a quiver slung on his back;"

Finally there is an extensive simile comparing Medea with Artemis (Ap.Rh.III, 876-884): οἵη δὲ λιαροῖσιν ἐφ' ὕδασι Παρθενίοιο
ἠὲ καὶ Ἀμνισοῖο λοεσσαμένη ποταμοῖο
χρυσείοις Λητωὶς ἐφ' ἅρμασιν ἑστηυῖα
ὠκείαις κεμάδεσσι διεξελάῃσι κολώνας,
τηλόθεν ἀντιόωσα πολυκνίσου ἑκατόμβης·
τῇ δ' ἅμα νύμφαι ἕπονται ἀμορβάδες, αἱ μὲν ἐπ' αὐτῆς
ἀγρόμεναι πηγῆς Ἀμνισίδος, αἱ δὲ δὴ ἄλλαι
ἄλσεα καὶ σκοπιὰς πολυπίδακας· ἀμφὶ δὲ θῆρες
κνυζηθμῷ σαίνουσιν ὑποτρομέοντες ἰοῦσαν·

"Like Artemis, standing in her golden chariot after she has bathed in the gentle waters of Parthenius or the streams of Amnisus, and driving off with her fast-trotting deer over the hills and far away to some rich-scented sacrifice. Attendant nymphs have gathered at the source of Amnisus or flocked in from the glens and upland springs to follow her; and fawning beasts whimper in homage and tremble as she passes by."

It would appear that Virgil composed his two similes with these various sources in mind, for details from them appear in his descriptions of Diana and Apollo. Generally, however, he seems to have used the simile from the Odyssey in describing Diana, and the three passages from the Argonautica concerning Apollo in his Apollo simile.

From the Odyssey Virgil took the general picture of Diana sporting with her train of nymphs or Oreades on the hills - Cynthus in Virgil, Taygetus or Erymanthus in Homer. From this source also comes the reference to the superior stature and beauty of the goddess and the joy that this inspires in Latona's heart. To all this Virgil adds a reference to Eurotas' banks, perhaps from the picture of Amnisus in Apollonius' simile of Artemis; and mentions the quiver of the goddess which may be an adaptation of the descriptions of Artemis' brother Apollo who is very frequently depicted as quiver-bearing, (as in his brief appearance to the heroes in Argonautica II).

The simile about Apollo in Aeneid IV is subtly woven from the three passages in Apollonius. The Greek poet made his Apollo journey to Delos and Lycian Xanthus; Virgil reverses this, or half of it, and makes the god journey from Lycia and Xanthus to Delos. 'Instauratque choros' was perhaps inspired by the simile of the Pythian dancers in Argonautica I; while the binding of his locks and his quiver can be found in the description of the god in Argonautica II, although the picture is a conventional one.

These two similes by no means stand alone, for Virgil's methods of adapting sources can be seen clearly in many others. In Aeneid VIII (407-414) the poet describes, in a simile, a devoted housewife rising early to work in order to keep her home together. It is a picture rightly acclaimed for its own sake, and so the origins of it have received scant attention.

The elements of Virgil's picture come from two similes in Homer, (Od.V. 488-490 and Il.XII 433-435) and two in Apollonius Rhodius, (Ap.Rh. III 291-295 and IV 1062-1065). The details Virgil needed for the completion of his simile are not to be found in any single source, but are derived from a combination of all four. It seems here that Virgil again preferred a method of fusing and reshaping scraps of existing material.

Markus Hügi[3] has considered a number of similes from the Argonautica showing how Virgil often used the material in the creation of his own similes, and it is possible to select a list of some twenty of Virgil's similes which have their parallels, if not always their sources, in Apollonius.

To revert to the Dido episode, the banquet given by the Queen for Aeneas contains the interesting song of the minstrel Iopas (Aen.I 740-746). The scene set for this by Virgil is close in detail to the scene in Alcinous' palace in Odyssey VII, and it is probable that Iopas was to some extent modelled upon Homer's Demodocus.

Odysseus was moved to tears by Demodocus singing of the Fall of Troy in Odyssey VIII (499-520) - an idea borrowed by Virgil earlier in Aeneid I when Aeneas, on seeing scenes from the Trojan War depicted on the walls of Dido's temple, is moved to utter the famous words (461-462):

> En Priamus! sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi;
> sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.

But Virgil makes Iopas sing a rather different, philosophical strain, considerably compressed in form and content, but suitably dignified for the occasion. The subject-matter (the moon, the stars and the seasons) is profound, but allusive rather than explicit. Virgil did not wish to overload this dramatic and fateful scene with too ponderous a digression.

The song of Silenus in the Sixth Eclogue (31-86) is the immediate source of most of Virgil's material for Iopas; for this, a much longer passage, is in similar vein. Silenus sings of the making of the earth, of the myths of Hylas, Gallus, Pyrrha and Pasiphaë; Iopas sings only the first section of Silenus' song - the elements, the moon, the stars, the beasts of the earth, and the seasons. But where Virgil may have used his own early writing here, it is almost certain that the ultimate source of the song of Iopas is the song of Orpheus in Argonautica I (495-511). Orpheus there sings of the creation of the earth and of life, and his song is very like that of Iopas in the brevity and allusiveness with which it is described.

Here then, Virgil seems to have taken at least two sources and, adapting these along with one of his own youthful works, produced a result that has all the power and dignity of its precursors and the quality of brevity appropriate to its entirely new context. The language of Iopas' song, incidentally, is strongly reminiscent of Lucretius, and Virgil may well have been considerably influenced here by the author of De rerum natura.

Early in Aeneid IV (96-128), Venus and Juno discuss the situation - and contrive to involve the love-sick Dido still further with Aeneas. Their interview here and the passage in Aeneid I (657-695) where Venus sends Cupid to strike Dido with the flame of love, are derived from the opening scene of Argonautica III, where Hera, Athena and Aphrodite plan to make Medea fall in love with Jason. Further to this, many of the details of the wedding of Dido and Aeneas in the cave recall the wedding of Medea and Jason in Phaeacia (Ap.Rh.IV 1128-1222), in particular the cave setting, the contriving of the ceremony by Hera, and the description of the nymphs as witnesses.

The three speeches (two by Dido and one by Aeneas), which follow Mercury's admonitory appearance to Aeneas, are rich in allusions to Apollonius - especially to the dramatic conversation between Medea and Jason in Argonautica IV (350-420) where Medea fears treachery on the part of the hero.

When Medea leaves the palace of Aeetes to elope with the Argonauts, Jason pledges himself to marry her, with a customary clasping of right hands (Ap.Rh.IV 99-100):

> Ὣς ηὔδα, καὶ χεῖρα παρασχεδὸν ἤραρε χειρὶ
> δεξιτερήν·

This is echoed at the opening of Dido's first, reproachful speech (Aen.IV 307-308):

nec te noster amor nec te data dextera quondam
nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?

and Dido's next words:

quin etiam hiberno moliris sidere classem
et mediis properas Aquilonibus ire per altum,
crudelis?

are close to Medea's in Argonautica IV, (388-389):

μάλα γὰρ μέγαν ἤλιτες ὅρκον,
νηλεές·

The emphasis placed upon crudelis and its Greek equivalent νηλεές suggests that Virgil had Medea's distraught speech very much in mind as he built up his picture of Dido's abject misery.

Dido blames Aeneas for leaving her to face the wrath of Pygmalion and Iarbas (wrath which she has incurred because of him) (Aen.IV 320-323):

te propter Libycae gentes Nomadumque tyranni
odere, infensi Tyrii; te propter eundem
exstinctus pudor et, qua sola sidera adibam,
fama prior...

So in Apollonius, Medea makes a long and scathing speech to Jason when she fears he will give her back to her brother Apsyrtus (Ap.Rh.IV 355-390). In this she emphasises the cruel fate that will await her at home, and refers to her plight as being (364) σῶν ἕνεκεν καμάτων ("all because I saw you through your troubles"), which is essentially the same as Virgil's te propter. Euripides' Medea also states that she has made enemies of her friends (508) σοὶ χάριν φέρουσα.

The irony of the phrase exstinctus pudor is important in Dido's speech. Dido is conscious of the oath of chastity sworn to the shade of her late husband, Sychaeus, an oath she vowed never to break (Aen.IV 25-27):

vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
pallentis umbras Erebi noctemque profundam,
ante, Pudor, quam te violo aut tua iura resolvo...

but has indeed broken (Aen.IV 54-55):

His dictis incensum animum inflammavit amore
spemque dedit dubiae menti solvitque pudorem.

Medea too has feelings of shame, for in helping Jason, she is betraying her father's house. She at first fears to help the hero (Ap.Rh.III 742):

† τὴν δὲ μιν † αὖτις
αἰδώς τε στυγερόν τε δέος λάβε μουνωθεῖσαν...

"But Medea, left alone, fell a prey once more to shame and horror..."

but gradually she overcomes this shame (III 785-787):

> ἐρρέτω αἰδώς,
> ἐρρέτω ἀγλαΐη· ὁ δ' ἐμῇ ἰότητι σαωθεὶς
> ἀσκηθής, ἵνα οἱ θυμῷ φίλον, ἔνθα νέοιτο.

> "Away with modesty! Away with my good name! Saved from all harm by me, let him go where he pleases..."

And finally she is freed from it altogether (III 1068):

> ...δὴ γάρ οἱ ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοὺς λίπεν αἰδώς·

> "For now shame had left her eyes".

Dido's pudor and Medea's αἰδώς are different emotions but it is hard to believe that Virgil was not thinking of Apollonius here.

Dido concludes her speech with a poignant wish for a child by Aeneas (Aen.IV 327-330):

> saltem si qua mihi de te suscepta fuisset
> ante fugam suboles, si quis mihi parvulus aula
> luderet Aeneas, qui te tamen ore referret,
> non equidem omnino capta ac deserta viderer.

So Hypsipyle, Queem of Lemnos, as Jason prepares to leave the island in Argonautica I (897-898):

> ...λίπε δ' ἧμιν ἔπος, τό κεν ἐξανύσαιμι
> πρόφρων, ἢν ἄρα δή με θεοὶ δώωσι τεκέσθαι.

> "But tell me what I am to do if the gods allow me to become a mother; and I will gladly do it."

Virgil skilfully changes Hypsipyle's hopeful remark into Dido's pathetic and vain wish, thus deepening the tragedy of the situation. There is a similar contrast between the kindly and gentle reassurance of Jason to Hypsipyle (Ap.Rh.I 900-909), which begins:

> Ὑψιπύλη, τὰ μὲν οὕτω ἐναίσιμα πάντα γένοιτο
> ἐκ μακάρων·

> "Hypsipyle, may the happy gods grant all the prayers that you make on my behalf..."

and the cold reply of Aeneas (Aen.IV 333-361). Virgil is making the tragedy as trenchant as possible and, consequently, his treatment of the episode is quite different from that of Apollonius.

Aeneas weakly admits his debt to Dido and says that he will never forget her (Aen.IV 334-337):

ego te, quae plurima fando
enumerare vales, numquam, regina, negabo
promeritam, nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae
dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.

This is an idea emphasised at least once in the Odyssey - where Nausicaa tells Odysseus to remember her (VIII 461-468), and five times in the Argonautica (I 896-897; III 1069-1071; 1079-1082; 1109-1117; IV 383-387), notably in the conversation between Medea and Jason in Argonautica III. Medea says (1069-1071):

Μνώεο δ', ἢν ἄρα δή ποθ' ὑπότροπος οἴκαδ' ἵκηαι,
οὔνομα Μηδείης· ὣς δ' αὖτ' ἐγὼ ἀμφὶς ἐόντος
μνήσομαι.

"But do remember, if you ever reach your home. Remember the name of Medea, and I for my part will remember you when you are far away."

to which Jason replies (1079-1080):

Καὶ λίην οὐ νύκτας ὀΐομαι, οὐδέ ποτ' ἦμαρ
σεῦ ἐπιλήσεσθαι, προφυγὼν μόρον, εἰ.ἐτεόν γε
φεύξομαι ἀσκηθὴς ἐς Ἀχαιΐδα ...
"Of one thing I am sure. If I escape and live to reach Achaea...never by night or day shall I forget you."

Virgil transforms this conversation into the lame apology of Aeneas, which provokes Dido's terrible curse (Aen. IV 382-387):

spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt,
supplicia hausurum scopulis et nomine Dido
saepe vocaturum. sequar atris ignibus absens
et, cum frigida mors anima seduxerit artus,
omnibus umbra locis adero. dabis, improbe, poenas.
audiam et haec Manis veniet mihi fama sub imos.

"But I still believe that, if there is any power for righteousness in Heaven, you will drink to the dregs the cup of punishment amid sea-rocks, and as you suffer cry 'Dido' again and again. Though far, yet I shall be near, haunting you with flames of blackest pitch. And when death's chill has parted my body from its breath, wherever you go my spectre will be there. You will have your punishment, you villain. And I shall hear; the news will reach me deep in the world of death."

Apollonius provided Virgil with details for this passage. Medea, begging Jason to remember her, threatens (Ap.Rh.IV 1109-1117):

"But oh, at least remember me when you are back in Iolcus; and I, despite my parents, will remember you. And may there come to me some whisper from afar, some bird to tell the tale, if you forget me. Or may the Storm-winds snatch me up and carry me across the sea to Iolcos, to denounce you in your face, and remind you that I saved your life. That is the moment I would choose to pay an unexpected visit to your house."

and much later, in the face of desertion, she curses Jason (Ap.Rh.IV 383-387):

> "I hope that you will think of me some day when you yourself are suffering. I hope the Fleece will vanish like an idle dream, down into Erebus. And may my avenging Furies chase you from your home and so repay me for all I have endured through your inhumanity."

However, the closest parallel to Dido's curse is the outburst of Chalciope to Medea when she is begging her sister to help Jason for the sake of her son Argus who was rescued by the Argonauts on their voyage to Colchis and is now pleading unsuccessfully with King Aeetes on their behalf. The passage is in <u>Argonautica III</u> (703-704):

> .... ἢ σοίγε φίλοις σὺν παισὶ θανοῦσα
> εἴην ἐξ 'Αΐδεω στυγερὴ μετόπισθεν 'Ερινύς.

> "...may I die with my dear sons and haunt you afterwards from Hades like an avenging Fury."

What is perhaps significant above all is how Virgil combines all this material from Apollonius' poem and recasts it into two speeches - the lame assertion by Aeneas that he will not forget his debt to Dido, and the ominous curse on Aeneas and the Trojans, later elaborated by Dido in her prayer (625):

> Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor.

James Henry in his <u>Aeneidea</u> (Book II), quotes a remark of Charles James Fox:

> "If there is an Apollonius Rhodius where you are, pray look at Medea's speech (<u>lib.IV</u>, vs.355) and you will perceive that, even in Dido's finest speech - <u>nec tibi diva parens</u> ... that he has imitated a good deal and especially those expressive and sudden turns - <u>neque te teneo</u>, etc; but then he has made wonderful improvements and, on the whole, it is perhaps the finest thing in all poetry."

From the dramatic point of view there is undoubtedly much in common between the two speeches, in the fluctuations and turns of mood and emphasis: Dido speaks of the falsehood of Aeneas; her hopeless plight; her folly; the malevolence of the gods; and, finally, curses Aeneas. Medea speaks of her own folly and despair; the need for justice on Jason's part; her pitiable plight; and, finally, curses Jason.

Dido's bitter and tragic expression of disillusionment (<u>Aen.IV</u> 373-375):

> nusquam tuta fides, eiectum litore, egentem
> excepi et regni demens in parte locavi;
> amissam classem, socios a morte reduxi;

> "No faith is left sure in the wide world. I welcomed him, a shipwrecked beggar, and like a fool I allowed him to share my royal place."

is the same as Medea's reproachful speech in <u>Argonautica IV</u> (356-358/366-367):

> "Has your splendid success destroyed your memory? Have you forgotten all you said to me when you were forced to seek my help? ... And then the Fleece, for which you crossed the sea. You got it through my own folly."

Each emphasises what she has done to help her lover in his hour of need, and grieves bitterly at the predicament in which she is so ironically involved.

Virgil's deep feeling for the tragedy unfolding around Dido finds voice in the passionate outburst (Aen.IV 412):

> improbe Amor, quid non mortalis pectora cogis!

This has its direct parallel in Argonautica IV, in the passage beginning (445-449):

> Σχέτλι' Ἔρως, μέγα πῆμα, μέγα στύγος ἀνθρώποισιν ....

> "Unconscionable Love, bane and tormentor of mankind, parent of strife, fountain of tears, source of a thousand ills, rise, mighty Power, and fall upon the sons of our enemies with all the force you used upon Medea when you filled her with insensate fury."

Dido, having failed to effect any change in Aeneas' determination, is assailed by visions and dreams (Aen.IV 452-473). She sees the holy waters upon the altar turned black and the wine changed into blood, and her dream is a nightmare: Aeneas is hounding her, she is wandering alone, and the Furies are in pursuit.

In Argonautica IV, Circe entertains the Argonauts on their return journey and is frightened by nightmares (IV, 664-667):

> "She saw all the rooms and walls of her house streaming with blood, and fire devouring all the magic drugs which she used to bewitch her visitors."

Medea too has a nightmare (Ap.Rh.III 616-632), when she dreams that Jason has come to take her away, that she chooses to go with him, and that her parents are enraged by this.

Both Virgil and Apollonius show a certain psychological understanding of dreams - the distortion of reality and the onset of secret fears. Facts and fears become subconsciously confused and lead to a fantasy of foreboding. The Hellenistic delight in probing into psychology in this way seems to have interested Virgil. And if the details of the passages differ, this is only because the situations differ also.

When Dido at last resorts to magic and tells Anna the story of the charm given to her by the priestess of the temple of the Hesperides (Aen.IV 480-493), we find several allusions to Hellenistic literature - notably to the Second Idyll of Theocritus, and to the Argonautica. Magic was of great interest to the Alexandrians, a manifestation, one might say, of their taste for the exotic, and it is accordingly from writers of that period that the details of this episode seem to come. The introduction of the priestess of the Hesperides and her serpent is probably a reminiscence of the visit by the Argonauts to the Hesperides in Argonautica IV (1396-1409) where they view the body of the serpent Ladon, slain the previous day by Heracles. But more probably it echoes the description of the serpent guarding the Golden Fleece, charmed by Medea and Jason (Ap.Rh.IV 156-158):

> "But Medea, chanting a spell, dipped a fresh sprig of juniper in her brew and sprinkled his eyes with her most potent drug; and as the all-pervading magic scent spread round his head, sleep fell on him."

This reminds us of Virgil's beautiful line - *spargens umida mella soporiferumque papaver*.

Argus' account of Medea's power as a sorceress (*Ap.Rh.III* 532-533):

> "With these [herbs] she can put out a raging fire, she can stop rivers as they roar in spate, arrest a star, and check the movements of the sacred moon."

is clearly a model for Virgil's *sistere aquam fluviis et vertere sidera retro*. And the description of Medea's charm made from a root (*Ap.Rh.III* 864-865):

> μυκηθμῷ δ' ὑπένερθεν ἐρεμνὴ σείετο γαῖα,
> ῥίζης τεμνομένης Τιτηνίδος·

> "The dark earth shook and rumbled underneath the Titan root when it was cut"

calls to mind Virgil's ... mugire videbis
sub pedibus terram ...

Dido is reluctant to use magic (*Aen.IV* 492-493):

> testor, cara, deos et te, Germana, tuumque
> dulce caput, magicas invitam accingier artes

like Medea, who agrees to do so only for her sister Chalciope's sake (*Ap.Rh.III* 772-783; 714-717).

Dido now prepares to die, invoking Hecate and other infernal spirits. These may here be a reminiscence of Odysseus' rites when he calls upon the shades of the dead in *Odyssey XI* (23-26) and also of Jason's invocation of Hecate in *Argonautica III* (1207-1224). The details of the love-charm and herbs Dido prepares are (*Aen.IV* 513-516):

> falcibus et messae ad lunam quaeruntur aenis
> pubentes herbae nigri cum lacte veneni;
> quaeritur et nascentis equi de fronte revolsus
> et matri praereptus amor.

> "Herbs, reaped with bronzen sickles by moonlight and bursting with a black poisonous milk, were gathered there, and with them a love-charm ripped from the brow of a baby foal before the mother could take it."

There are two apparent sources for these "herbs with black poisonous milk". First there is the charm MOLY given by Hermes to Odysseus before he meets Circe (*Odyssey X* 302-306) - a charm that was "black at the root, but its flower was milky white." Secondly, there is Medea's charm in *Argonautica III* (851-859) "the root looked like flesh that had just been cut, and the juice like the dark sap of a mountain oak." From these two descriptions Virgil, with customary economy, produced his short account of Dido's herbs.

If Apollonius gave Virgil the ideas for his description of the herbs, it was perhaps Theocritus who gave him the idea of a love-charm torn from a foal, for in

Idyll II Simaetha says (48-49):

> ἱππομανὲς φυτόν ἐστι παρ' Ἀρκάσι, τῷ δ' ἔπι πᾶσαι
> καὶ πῶλοι μαίνονται ἀν' ὤρεα καὶ θοαὶ ἵπποι.

> "Coltsfoot is an Arcadian weed that maddens the young stallions and fleet-footed mares on the hills"

The charm is different, but the spirit of the passage is the same; and from the same Idyll comes Simaetha's command to her maid (18-19):

> ἀλφιτά τοι πρᾶτον πυρὶ τάκεται· ἀλλ' ἐπίπασσε,
> Θεστυλί ...

This sprinkling of holy meal, an essential part of magic rites, is echoed in Virgil's description of Dido (Aen.IV 517):

> ipsa mola manibusque piis altaria iuxta....

Virgil now contrasts the calm of the night with the distracted state of the queen (Aen.IV 522-532):

> Nox erat et placidum carpebant fessa soporem
> corpora per terras, silvaeque et saeva quierant
> aequora, cum medio volvuntur sidera lapsu,
> cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes pictaeque volucres,
> quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aspera dumis
> rura tenent, somno positae sub nocte silenti
> (lenibant curas et corda oblita laborum).
> At non infelix animi Phoenissa, ....

> "It was night, and tired creatures all over the world were enjoying kindly sleep. Forests and fierce seas were at rest, as the circling constellations glided in their midnight course. Every field, all the farm-animals, and the colourful birds were silent, all that lived across miles of grassy mere and in the wild country's ragged brakes, lying still under the quiet night in a sleep that smoothed each care away from hearts which had forgotten life's toil. But not so the Phoenician queen...."

In Classical times there were relatively few descriptions of nature - except in similes and other brief figures of speech - and it is therefore possible here to locate with relative certainty the sources of Virgil's imagery. There are four relevant passages - one in Alcman, one in Theocritus, and two in Apollonius Rhodius.

A fragment from Alcman (Lyra Graeca I, p. 76. Loeb Classical Library), quoted in the Homeric Lexicon of Apollonius Sophista, reads as follows:

> εὕδοισιν δ' ὀρέων κορυφαί τε καὶ φάραγγες
> πρωονές τε καὶ χαράδραι,
> φῦλά θ' ἕρπετα τόσσα τρέφει μέλαινα γαῖα,
> θῆρες τ' ὀρεσκῷοι καὶ γένος μελισσᾶν
> καὶ κνώδαλ' ἐν βένθεσσι πορφυρέας ἀλός.
> εὕδοισιν δ' οἰωνῶν
> φῦλα τανυπτερύγων.

"Asleep are the peaks and ravines of the mountains, the ridges and the torrents; the species of animals that the dark earth brings forth, the wild animals of the mountains and the race of bees. The beasts in the depths of the purple sea, and the races of long-winged birds are asleep."

As this is only a fragment, quoted for philological reasons, it is impossible to judge whether the description of nature asleep was given for its own poetic value, or as in the passage from Aeneid IV, to serve as a contrast with some restless human being.

Alcman's imagery is bold and has a strongly personal flavour. It is easy to imagine him as being inspired to write these lines by the majestic peaks of the Taygetus mountain range which dominates the Vale of Lacedaemon. Possibly the imagery was too bold for Virgil, whose description is much gentler and more pastoral. However, the basic idea of the countryside and its denizens asleep must have come from a knowledge of Alcman.

The picture in Alcman is a local one - only a brief reference to the sea takes the reader beyond the sleeping mountains. Virgil, on the other hand, has made his picture a more general one - the peace of night covers the countryside, the sea, and even extends into the heavens. Here there seems to be more than a hint of Theocritus, Idyll II (37-41):

Ἴυγξ, ἕλκε τὺ τῆνον ἐμὸν ποτὶ δῶμα τὸν ἄνδρα.
ἥνιδε σιγῇ μὲν πόντος, σιγῶντι δ' ἄηται·
ἁ δ' ἐμὰ οὐ σιγῇ στέρνων ἔντοσθεν ἀνία,
ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τήνῳ πᾶσα καταίθομαι, ὅς με τάλαιναν
ἀντὶ γυναικὸς ἔθηκε κακὰν καὶ ἀπάρθενον ἦμεν.

"Magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love! Lo! silent is the deep and silent the winds, but never silent the torment in my breast. Nay I am all on fire for him that made me, not wife but shameful girl, no more a maiden."

Although the details of expression are not quite the same as Virgil's, the feeling of universal calm, so strong in the second line of Theocritus' description, brings the two passages close together.

Moreover, Theocritus uses the brief description of night as a contrast for Simaetha's restless and tortured mind. This is an idea directly repeated by Virgil - his night sequence affords a contrast for the love-stricken Dido. But it cannot be said that Virgil derived the idea from Theocritus alone; for, although there is much other evidence for his familiarity with Idyll II, there are two passages in Apollonius Rhodius which can equally well have been in Virgil's mind.

The first is Argonautica III (744-751):

Νὺξ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἄγεν κνέφας· οἱ δ' ἐνὶ πόντῳ
ναῦται εἰς Ἑλίκην τε καὶ ἀστέρας Ὠρίωνος
ἔδρακον ἐκ νηῶν· ὕπνοιο δὲ καί τις ὁδίτης
ἤδη καὶ πυλαωρὸς ἐέλδετο· καί τινα παίδων
μητέρα τεθνεώτων ἀδινὸν περὶ κῶμ' ἐκάλυπτεν·
οὐδὲ κυνῶν ὑλακὴ ἔτ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν, οὐ θρόος ἦεν
ἠχήεις· σιγὴ δὲ μελαινομένην ἔχεν ὄρφνην.
ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὐ Μήδειαν ἐπὶ γλυκερὸς λάβεν ὕπνος....

> "Night threw her shadow on the world. Sailors out at sea looked up at the circling Bear and the stars of Orion. Travellers and watchmen longed for sleep and oblivion came at last to mothers mourning for their children's death. In the town, dogs ceased to bark and men to call to one another; silence reigned over the deepening dark. But gentle sleep did not visit Medea."

and the second is probably a recollection of this, altered and abbreviated by Apollonius for its new context (*Argonautica IV*, 1058-1061):

> στρευγομένοις δ' ἀν' ὅμιλον ἐπήλυθεν εὐνήτειρα
> Νὺξ ἔργων ἄνδρεσσι, κατευκήλησε δὲ πᾶσαν
> γαῖαν ὁμῶς· τὴν δ' οὔτι μίνυνθά περ εὔνασεν ὕπνος,
> ἀλλά οἱ ἐν στέρνοις ἀχέων εἱλίσσετο θυμός.

> "In the midst of the alarms, Night with her gentle ban on man's activities descended on the company. She put the world to sleep; but not Medea. For her there was no rest, her heart was wrung with pain."

In both examples, it is clearly the contrast that is being sought and not merely pictorial decoration.

Since Virgil's Dido owes so much to Apollonius' Medea, it is more than likely that these two passages from the *Argonautica* influenced Virgil's description of night, even if points of exact comparison are limited to the last two lines of the second piece. Apollonius makes his first picture (*III* 744-751) rather unhappy and ill-boding, whereas Virgil's is peaceful and almost soothing, the effect of the contrast being thus considerably heightened. Doubtless Virgil turned for his details to Alcman and Theocritus because he felt that the first passage in Apollonius was too restless, and the second rather trite.

Macrobius (*Saturnalia V*, 17,4) comments:

> "Virgil made good use of whatever material he found worthy of imitation, so that he shaped almost the whole of *Aeneid IV* from Apollonius' *Argonautica IV* by transferring to Dido and Aeneas the passionate love of Medea for Jason."

This is a half-truth, as Servius' remark that Virgil exclusively used *Argonautica III*. There is ample evidence to show that material for the Dido episode was drawn from both books, as well as from other sources (e.g. Homer's Nausicaa in *Odyssey VI*, Apollonius' Hypsipyle in *Argonautica I*, and Euripides' *Medea*). Nor must we forget R.M. Henry's remark[4] that there were available to Virgil translations of the *Odyssey* (by Livius Andronicus), of Euripides' *Medea* (by Ennius), and of the *Argonautica* (by Varro Atacinus), as well as Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*, which is reputed to have linked for the first time the names of Aeneas and Dido.

Another remark of R.M. Henry[4] is worth quoting here:

> "We shall not appreciate Virgil's art, nor indeed understand his work, unless we keep in mind not only his inspiration as a great poet, but his conscious ambition to be the pattern and teacher of his age ... he was a member of a great artistic guild with a common store, upon which he might freely draw, not only of general lessons, but even of particular episodes and phrases."

Many of these "particular episodes and phrases" can be found to have come from Apollonius, to be altered and often improved by Virgil in his search for perfection. But in some longer episodes as well, Virgil draws material directly from the Argonautica.

Time here permits only a provisional list of comparisons:- the Song of Orpheus (Ap.Rh.I 496-511) with the Song of Iopas; the love of Hypsipyle for Jason (I 653-909) with that of Dido for Aeneas; Cyzicus and Cleite, king and queen of the Doliones (I 961-1077) with the ill-starred Latinus and Amata; the boxing match between Amycus and Polydeuces (II 1-97) with the boxing match in Aeneid V; Phineus and the Harpies (II 178-499) with Virgil's Harpy Episode in Aeneid III; the conversation between Hera, Athena and Aphrodite (III 6-110) with the conversation of Venus and Juno in Aeneid IV; Medea's love for Jason (Ap.Rh.III and IV passim) with Dido's love for Aeneas; and the encounter of 'Argo' with the Nereids (IV 922-965) with Cloanthus' victory in the boat-race in Aeneid V (239-243) and with the Cymodocea sequence in Aeneid X (219-257).

The 16th Century scholar Scaliger asserted that the Aeneid was far superior to most of its sources, and provoked Jeremy Hoelzlin to remark:[5]

> neque enim Aeneis Vergiliana esset quod est si nullus fuisset Apollonius.
>
> "For Virgil's Aeneid would not be what it is, if there had been no Apollonius."

This heated exchange achieved nothing either for Virgil or for Apollonius, and H. de la Ville de Mirmont neatly sums up their disagreement:[6]

> "Apollonius suffers less from the telum imbelle sine ictu aimed by Scaliger than from the bear-hug inflicted by Hoelzlin."

In his review of Mirmont's Apollonius de Rhodes et Virgile, R.C. Seaton writes:[7]

> "Between Homer whom he imitates, and Virgil by whom he is imitated, Apollonius resembles an earthenware pot between two brazen vessels."

This is Mirmont's conclusion also, and there can be little doubt that it is essentially justified. Nevertheless, Virgil saw a good deal in the Argonautica which he could usefully adapt for his Aeneid. Indeed, the evidence goes against another of Seaton's remarks:[7]

> "Virgil only makes use of Apollonius to enrich his poem by certain elegances and refinements of thought and expression."

There are many occasions when Virgil borrows an idea from Apollonius and adds "elegances and refinements" from elsewhere. It must be emphasised that Virgil always adapts the material he borrows.

The strength of Apollonius lies, perhaps, in his precision and attention to detail, although from an aesthetic standpoint, these are often also his weaknesses. In details he often achieves great beauty and shows exceptional flights of imagination,

but these are too rarely sustained. Longinus[8] described him as ἄπτωτος (flawless) which is not altogether a kindly (or correct) remark. Yet Virgil appears to have admired this precision, for many of the smaller details of the Argonautica find their way into the Aeneid.

F.A. Wright in his History of Later Greek Literature says that:[9]

> "Balancing merits against defects, the verdict commonly given is that the Argonautica is a magnificent failure."

The influence of this "magnificent failure" upon Virgil is apparent throughout his work - in minute details and sometimes in episodes embracing several hundred verses. Apollonius was, of course, less important to Virgil than Homer, as a primary source of the Aeneid. On the other hand, his importance in this respect is not so very much less. To deny him a degree of importance is to reject what seems the only tenable theory regarding Virgil's technique, the theory that seeks to show how, again and again, Virgil's genius fuses poetic art and inspiration with learning. As Goethe said:[10]

> "There is, through all art, a filiation. If you see a great master, you will always find that he used what was good in his predecessors, and that it was this which made him great. Men like Raphael do not spring out of the ground. They took their root in the antique and in the best which had been done before them. Had they not used the advantages of their time, there would be little to say about them."

Notes

1. The Voyage of Argo, Penguin Classics, p.12.

2. The translations used in this paper are by E.V. Rieu (Odyssey; Iliad; and Argonautica), and W.F.J. Knight (Aeneid), all in Penguin Classics.

3. Markus Hügi: Vergils Aeneis und die hellenistische Dichtung, Bern, 1952.

4. R.M. Henry: Medea and Dido, Classical Review XLIV, July 1930, pp. 97-108.

5. Jeremy Hoelzlin: Argonautica I-IV, Leiden 1641.

6. Henri de la Ville de Mirmont: Apollonios de Rhodes et Virgile.

7. R.C. Seaton: Classical Review IX, 1895, p.175.

8. Longinus: On the Sublime, 33, 4.

9. F.A. Wright: A History of Later Greek Literature, Chapt.II.

10. Goethe: Conversations with Eckermann, 4th January, 1827.

# INVIDIOUS SUCCESS : SOME THOUGHTS ON AENEID XII

A lecture delivered to the Virgil Society
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by Miss Rhona Beare, M.A.

Book IV is not the only book in which Virgil has risked alienating our sympathies from Aeneas. He takes the same risk in Book XII, not by forcing him into what seems a dishonourable action but by recounting his most glorious military exploit from the point of view of the defeated. As Conington says, till Turnus is dead we can spare no thought for the conqueror and the fruits of victory. Virgil intended this; that is why Juturna is brought into the story, and why Virgil describes in such detail the changing moods of Turnus who, to increase the pathos of the story, is made to foresee his doom.

This is not the first time that Turnus has been in great danger but it is the first time that he has felt fear. In Book IX when trapped inside the Trojan camp he appeared as a hardened warrior who actually enjoyed fighting against odds. The Trojans, seeing the light in his eyes, the nodding plume and the flashing shield (731-733), are as frightened as cattle with a tiger in their midst(730).

> adgnoscunt faciem invisam atque immania membra
> turbati subito Aeneadae (734,735).

When threatened by the gigantic Pandarus, whose brother he has slain, Turnus is not only bold, he is cool and confident:

> olli subridens sedato pectore Turnus
> 'incipe, si qua animo virtus, et consere dextram:
> hic etiam inventum Priamo narrabis Achillem.' (740-742)

One would have thought that the man who could face an army, alone, could face any single opponent, whatever his prowess. Yet on the morning fixed for his duel with Aeneas he is pale and silent; with downcast eyes he offers a humble prayer at the altar (219-221).

The previous day he had insisted on meeting Aeneas, and had spoken of him with contempt:

> 'nulla mora in Turno; nihil est, quod dicta retractent
> ignavi Aeneadae, nec, quae pepigere, recusent.
> congredior.' (XII 11-13)

What has produced this sudden change? Perhaps Virgil intended to insert some description of an evil dream that troubled him on the night before the combat. It was partly dreams and omens that drove Dido to despair. We can hardly suppose him to be the sort of soldier who boasts loudly when danger is a long way off but loses his nerve when it draws near; we know that he has fought in many campaigns, and Book IX teaches us that in the face of danger he is more likely to be rash than timid. Why should he fear Aeneas when he can face a whole army undismayed? He is not the man to calculate the risks of any encounter, but when he thinks of Aeneas I believe

he is troubled by a premonition of death. It is not rational but intuitive, like the despondency that attacked Antonio before he made his bargain with Shylock. Juturna does not tell him what she learnt from Juno, that Aeneas was fated to kill him, nor would he have guessed it simply from her anxiety to prevent a meeting (XII 480-485, 623-630); yet somehow he knows it (XII 636, 646, 678) and this is what so dismayed him at the solemnising of the truce.

In a weaker form this dread had attacked him before, but he had succeeded in smothering it. At the debate in Book XI his eagerness to defend himself suggests that there was some truth in Drances' accusation that he was afraid of Aeneas (XI 373-375). War he desires (415-433); single combat he will face if Latinus wishes it (434-437). Then the debate is interrupted by news that Aeneas is marching on Laurentum, and Turnus seizes the moment (arrepto tempore 459) to abandon talk of single combat and to prepare an ambush.

Again at the beginning of Book XII though he burns with eagerness to fight Aeneas (ultro implacabilis ardet), is it not partly because the Latins, like Drances, have stung his pride by doubting his courage?

> Turnus ut infractos adverso Marte Latinos
> defecisse videt, sua nunc promissa reposci,
> se signari oculis, ultro implacabilis ardet
> attollitque animos. (1-4)

His pride demands that he should fulfil his promise, because the course that he himself advocated - full-scale war - has again proved unsuccessful. He had asked the Latins to trust in Camilla and the Volscian cavalry (XI 432,433); the cavalry are routed and Camilla slain. Therefore he insists on a truce and a single combat. The word "sedatus" is now used of Latinus (XII 18) and Turnus by contrast is turbidus (10). He is driven on by violentia (45), a passion so strong that at times it chokes him (47). He bolsters up his confidence by speaking as if it were Aeneas who is afraid (XII 11, 12; 52; 75,76; 99) and arranges the duel for the earliest possible moment, in order to give himself no time for reflection. He fails however; at the solemnising of the truce his old fears return, stronger than ever because he is now in the presence of his enemy. Aeneas seems to overawe him, as Achilles, though unarmed, overawed the Trojans. For it is not only because Aeneas has fate on his side that Turnus fears him; in years, in strength of body and strength of will, Aeneas is clearly superior.

For a second time the arrangements for the duel are interrupted: Aeneas, wounded by an unseen hand, is forced to retire.

> Turnus, ut Aeneas cedentem ex agmine vidit
> Turbatosque duces, subita spe fervidus ardet. (324-325)

The armies have now engaged, in defiance of the truce, and Turnus leads on his men like the god Mars with Panic, Wrath and Treachery at his side. The reprieve however is only temporary; Aeneas returns to the field of battle and Turnus eventually must face him with the knowledge that this means his own death.

> 'stat conferre manum Aeneae, stat quidquid acerbi est
> morte pati.' (678, 679; cf. 636 and 646-649)

It is at this point that we see Turnus at his best. In Book IX we admired him because he cared nothing for danger. Before the breaking of the truce we pitied him because he was afraid. This pity might have been tinged with contempt if he did not here show courage of a different and far more moving sort: the courage that a man may show when waiting to be hanged. It is not the rashness that refuses to see the danger. It is not the unshakable resolution, the nerves of steel, that enable a man to take risks in cold blood and with his eyes open. Virgil has given us an example of that: Sinon, who is not the less brave for being treacherous. He had to watch all his friends sail away, and wait on the beach to be seized by the Trojans. They might have killed him without listening to his story. They might have listened and believed, yet still thought him better dead. These risks Sinon ran, unarmed and friendless:

> fidens animi, atque in utrumque paratus,
> seu versare dolos, seu certae occumbere morti. (II 61, 62)

Sinon only <u>risked</u> death; Turnus faced a certainty. The only advantage Turnus has is that his hands are not tied; he can die fighting. So Coroebus died, and so Aeneas hoped to die, when Troy was captured by the Greeks. That night Aeneas awoke to find the city burning and men dying in the streets. He armed hastily, (nec sat rationis in armis, 314) - had he meant to escape from the city his conduct would have been rational, but he was mad with anger and meant to fight. Any hopes he may have had of recapturing the city were dashed by Panthus, who told him that though fighting was still going on the issue was no longer in doubt. Aeneas was not dismayed. He put himself at the head of a band of young Trojans, telling them that the gods had deserted Troy and that there was nothing left but to die fighting:

> 'moriamur, et in media arma ruamus.
> una salus victis nullam sperare salutem'. (353,354)

This is great stuff. It reminds one of Corneille's heroes. But there is no pathos in it because there is no fear. Turnus, just because his heart sinks as he faces the inevitable, is more human.

For a short while his fears leave him, driven out by other emotions. Juturna, bent on saving his life, has kept him from fulfilling his duties as a general, and now a message arrives that the Trojans will storm Laurentum if Turnus does not come to the rescue.

> aestuat ingens
> uno in corde pudor mixtoque insania luctu
> et furiis agitatus amor et conscia virtus. (666-668)

Instead of fear to hold him back from his duty here are strong passions to spur him on. He means to make the most of them before they fade; hence his words to his sister:

> Hunc, oro, sine me furere ante furorem. (680)

This time he does not go with downcast eyes pale and silent to meet his enemy; he is compared to a boulder crashing down a mountain-side (684-690). The fight begins, and Turnus seems to be holding his own. Virgil does not say here, as he did earlier (218) that the combatants are clearly ill-matched; Aeneas is no longer an eagle fighting a swan (247-250) but a bull fighting a bull (715-724). This simile may be intended to show us how the fight appeared to Turnus, as well as how it looked to the watching armies.

It is only for a few moments however that they fight on equal terms. As Jupiter weighs their fates in the balance, the sword breaks in Turnus' hand. No sooner has Juturna given him another than Jupiter sends a Fury to drive Juturna away and paralyse Turnus' will and strength. The outcome of the combat cannot now show us that Aeneas is the braver or the stronger or the more skilled in arms, for Jupiter has disabled his opponent. This Turnus understands:

> 'non me tua fervida terrent
> dicta, ferox: di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis'. (894,895)

No man can avoid his fate, not even Oedipus. We have already learnt to feel for Turnus because Fate is against him: here in a new way we are made to feel that he is not allowed a chance. I do not mean the hostility of Jupiter, for Jupiter's will and Fate are synonymous terms in the Aeneid. I mean that just as his sword broke when he most needed it so now his strength gives way; he loses even himself. Aeneas did not suffer this experience at the capture of Troy, nor Hector in his fight with Achilles; we are reminded rather of Patroclus whom Apollo struck so that he should not be able to defend himself against Hector:

> τὸν δ' ἄτη φρένας εἷλε, λύθεν δ' ὑπὸ φαίδιμα γυῖα,
> στῆ δὲ ταφών·
>
> (Iliad XVI 805-806)

Virgil wished to turn Aeneas' victory into a tragedy by making us pity the victim, and he has succeeded. How does this affect our attitude to Aeneas? His strength is not attributed, like Turnus' sudden weakness, to the gods; we are not even told that they guided his spear. Virgil does not risk turning him into a puppet. Aeneas is formidable: but we cannot admire a victory unless it is hard-won. If the Greeks had outnumbered the Persians at Salamis we should not admire them for winning. From Horatius to Jack the Giant-killer, all popular heroes fight "facing fearful odds". Aeneas this time has the odds in his favour, and it is not likely to be popular. For who that feels any sympathy for the underdog can admire the strength and ferocity of the brute on top of him?

Let us test this argument by comparing the death of Turnus to the death of Hector. Hector also is unfairly treated by the gods; Athena tricks him into facing Achilles by disguising herself as his brother and offering to stand by him. When Achilles casts his spear, and misses, she hands it back to him, which gives him an advantage over Hector. Achilles is also the more deadly fighter; otherwise Hector would not have run three times round the walls of Troy to escape him. In spite of these advantages, Achilles' victory does increase his glory. He is cruel and revengeful - far more so than Aeneas - yet he is still worthy to be the central figure of the Iliad. What makes him worthy? What gives him his half-divine splendour? The intensity of his emotions, especially grief and hate, make him more alive than other men. He is invincible in war and has killed so many that he inspires awe, like an earthquake or a whirlwind. Perhaps it is this awe that prevents us from censuring him, as it prevents us from censuring the gods. The more dignified and terrible a god appears, the more cruel he can be without losing our respect. Remember the vision in which Aeneas sees the gods destroying his native city. Remember what a magnificent figure Juno is throughout the Aeneid. The Olympians do not need to fight against odds in order to win our admiration; for the quality we admire in them is not courage but power. Achilles is not unlike a god. Though mortal, and fated to die young, we admire him like the gods because he is invincible.

Now this is not the case with Aeneas. Though the son of Venus, though destined to become a god, he has experienced toil, failure, hope deferred. He has not suffered one bereavement, like Achilles, but many: his city, his wife, his father. He does not remind us of Apollo, or an earthquake, or a whirlwind. We do not expect chivalry of Apollo, but we expect it of Aeneas. We dislike Aeneas' revenge on Turnus, but not Poseidon's on Odysseus. Conington, talking of the Italian war, says "Our feelings are shocked when we see Aeneas plunging his hands in blood as deeply as a Homeric warrior". He is not shocked when he reads the Iliad. In the same way you can admire Robin Hood and Dick Turpin, yet not wish Mr. Pickwick to steal. Becky Sharpe may ruin the tradesmen, but Elizabeth Bennett must pay her bills. Therefore Sir Maurice Bowra (From Virgil to Milton, Macmillan 1945) who admires the "heroic qualities" (p.46) of Turnus, admires in Aeneas not "his outbursts of heroic fury" (p.68) but the moments when "he sees past the fury of the fight to some higher end of unity and harmony" (p.84).

Almost everywhere in Book XII except at the solemnising of the truce we see Aeneas as a destroyer. We begin with his arming (XII 107-109):

> nec minus interea maternis saevus in armis
> Aeneas acuit Martem et se suscitat ira,
> oblato gaudens componi foedere bellum.

This follows a description of Turnus' lust for slaughter, but that does not grate upon our nerves as this does. 'Maternis in armis' reminds us that Aeneas has a big advantage over his enemy; his spear will pierce Turnus' shield and corselet, but Turnus' sword will merely break on the shield that Vulcan made. It is almost as if Aeneas were fighting an unarmed man. Then 'saevus' and 'se suscitat ira'; how unattractive Aeneas is when angry! Especially when his bitterness prompts him to taunt a fallen foe. In Book X for instance after cutting off the head of Tarquitus he says:

> istic nunc, metuende, iace! non te optima mater
> condet humi,patrioque onerabit membra sepulchro:
> alitibus liquere feris, aut gurgite mersum
> unda feret, piscesque impasti vulnera lambent. (557-560)

Virgil intends us to see in these taunts the effects of Aeneas' grief at the death of Pallas (cf.X 532,533), and to remember how Achilles, also seeking vengeance for a friend, flung Lycaon's corpse into the river saying "Go and feed the fishes; your mother will never bury you" (Iliad XXI 120-125). How far these heroes fall below the standard set by Odysseus, who rebuked Eurycleia for triumphing over the dead suitors (Odyssey XXII 410,411):

> ἐν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυζε·
> οὐχ ὁσίη κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάασθαι.

Though Odysseus calls it impiety, Virgil does not make the impious Mezentius behave in this way but instead Camilla (XI 686-689) and Turnus (XII 356-361). In the Iliad exulting over the dead or dying is common practice and reflects no discredit on the speaker. Odysseus himself ἐπεύξατο (Iliad XI 449) after dealing Socus his death blow. Virgil allows one such boast to Turnus and one to Camilla; only Aeneas utters more than one (X 557, 592; cf. 897).

We are meant to excuse Aeneas because it is grief for Pallas that has embittered him; Turnus and Camilla have no excuse but their natural ferocity. They both enjoy killing, and the glory they win makes them arrogant, prompting them to triumph over the fallen. They have not enough self-restraint or respect for the proprieties to abstain. The same lack of control leads them to take unnecessary risks; if they had not been blinded by battle-fever (IX 757-761; XI 781), Turnus could have captured the Trojan camp and Camilla could have escaped death. Whatever ferocity they display they will not forfeit our sympathy because we know that each is about to die and because we have not been led to expect gentleness from them.

Virgil expected that we should forgive Aeneas too, knowing that it is grief that makes him savage; if we do not, it is because he demands to be judged by a higher standard. He is fully adult; he has a highly developed sense of responsibility; his self-control enables him to think clearly and act according to his conscience on all occasions. If this was not wholly true of his conduct in Book II or Book IV, it has been the case ever since his visit to the Underworld. That is why he alone tries to restore order when the truce is broken (XII 311-317). Consequently the smallest act of injustice would seem more shocking in him than a serious offence committed by a hot-head like Turnus.

It is not justice, however, it is mercy in which Aeneas falls short. After the death of Pallas he not only refuses to spare enemies who ask for quarter (X 523-536); he prepares to honour the funeral of Pallas with human sacrifice (X 517-520). Yet mercy is normally one of his more attractive virtues, and pity can move him deeply (I 453-493. Mercy is perhaps a Trojan characteristic; Priam spares Sinon II 147 and Anchises spares Ulysses' comrade III 590-691).

Aeneas still shows these qualities after Pallas' death, but not consistently. When Lausus comes to the rescue of his father Mezentius, Aeneas admires his _pietas_ and tries to avoid hurting him. Lausus however continues to rain blows on Aeneas' shield, until Aeneas grows angry and kills him with a single blow.

> At vero ut vultum vidit morientis et ora,
> ora modis Anchisiades pallentia miris,
> ingemuit miserans graviter dextramque tetendit,
> et mentem patriae subiit pietatis imago.
> 'quid tibi nunc, miserande puer, pro laudibus istis,
> quid pius Aeneas tanta dabit indole dignum?
> arma, quibus laetatus, habe tua; teque parentum
> Manibus et cineri, si qua est ea cura, remitto.
> hoc tamen infelix miseram solabere mortem:
> Aeneae magni dextra cadis.' increpat ultro
> cunctantes socios, et terra sublevat ipsum
> sanguine turpantem comptos de more capillos. (X 821-832. The translation is by W.F. Jackson Knight).

> "But at the sight of his dying face and the mysterious pallor of death on his countenance, Anchises' son sighed heavily in pity as he discerned this reflection of his own love for his father. He stretched forth his right hand and spoke: 'O piteous boy, what shall Aeneas the True give to you to match your high feat of arms and your great goodness? Keep for yourself the arms which gave you so much joy; and I release you to join the spirits and ashes of your ancestors, if such a freedom can concern you. But even in

> disaster you at least have some consolation for your grievous death in knowing that you died by the right hand of mighty Aeneas'. He then set to chiding Lausus' comrades who were hanging back; and it was he who lifted Lausus from the ground where he lay defiling with blood his well-trimmed hair".

Here at least Virgil successfully engages our sympathy simultaneously for the slayer and the slain, and he does it by making the slayer himself feel pity. We may compare the scene in the Underworld, where it is the depth of Aeneas' pity for Dido that enables us to feel for both of them at once (Book VI 450-476).

It is his mercy that impresses the Laurentian ambassadors, who come in Book XI to ask for the bodies of the slain:

> 'pacemne exanimis et Martis sorte peremptis
> oratis? equidem et vivis concedere vellem'. (110,111)

This is the same man who, seeing the wounded Lucagus fall from his chariot, said (and even here Virgil calls him *pius*):

> 'Lucage, nulla tuos currus fuga segnis equorum
> prodidit, aut vanae vertere ex hostibus umbrae;
> ipse rotis saliens iuga deseris.' (X 592-594)

I find it quite revolting, and am not reconciled to it by the knowledge that Patroclus made a similar comment after killing a Trojan (Iliad XVI 745).

Aeneas then is merciful and ruthless by turns in books X - XII. Nowhere does he change so abruptly and yet naturally as in the last fourteen lines of the epic. Up to this point he had meant to kill Turnus as soon as he had the chance, but now seeing him wounded, helpless, admitting defeat, he hesitates until his eye falls on the sword belt which Turnus had stripped from the body of Pallas:

> ille, oculis postquam saevi monimenta doloris
> exuviasque hausit, furiis accensus et ira
> terribilis: 'tune hinc spoliis indute meorum
> eripiare mihi? Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas
> immolat et poenam scelerato e sanguine sumit'. (945-949)

What is the effect on the reader of that moment of hesitation? Does it make one say 'How different Aeneas is from Achilles, on whom Hector's plea had no effect at all"? Or does it by contrast heighten the ferocity of the following lines? Whatever Virgil intended, the effect in my case is that the Aeneas I can sympathise with is transformed by hate into a man I cannot like at all. And it is at this point that the epic ends, with Aeneas literally hitting a man when he is down:

> hoc dicens ferrum adverso sub pectore condit
> fervidus. ast illi solvuntur frigore membra
> vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras. (950-952)

> "Aeneas' eyes drank in the sight of the spoils which revived the memory of his own vengeful bitterness. His fury kindles, and terrible in his rage, he said:

'Are you to be stolen hence out of my grasp, you who wear spoils taken from one whom I loved? It is Pallas, only Pallas, who by this wound which I now deal makes sacrifice of you; he exacts this retribution, you criminal, from your blood'. Saying this and boiling with rage he buried his blade full in Turnus' breast. His limbs relaxed and chilled; and the life fled, moaning, resentful, to the shades".

Virgil has chosen to end at the climax instead of following it with quieter scenes free from bloodshed. In this the Aeneid resembles not the Iliad but the original Μῆνις which according to W. Leaf ended with Achilles dragging Hector's body to the camp. It was to correct the harshness of this ending that the last two books of the Iliad were composed. Virgil chooses to end at the moment of highest tension.

The last twenty-two lines of the Aeneid, like Book XII as a whole, are designed to secure our sympathy for Turnus. There were several possible ways of doing this. If Aeneas had thought of Turnus' youth and his love for Lavinia he might have felt more forgiving. He might even have regretted that he was bound (by his promise to Evander) to kill him. The death of Turnus would then more closely have resembled the death of Lausus: while we pitied him we should be sharing the feelings of Aeneas. Alternatively Turnus might have won our admiration by the courage with which he faced death. If when Turnus fell wounded to the ground Aeneas had said "You shall pay me now for the death of Pallas" and Turnus had replied "Do what you please. It was Fate that defeated me, not you" the epic would have ended on the same note at Book X. There it is Mezentius who falls to the ground.

advolat Aeneas vaginaque eripit ensem,
et super haec: 'ubi nunc Mezentius acer, et illa
effera vis animi?' contra Tyrrhenus, ut auras
suspiciens hausit caelum mentemque recepit:
'hostis amare, quid increpitas mortemque minaris?
nullum in caede nefas; nec sic ad proelia veni;
nec tecum meus haec pepigit mihi foedera Lausus.
unum hoc, per, si qua est victis venia hostibus, oro:
corpus humo patiare tegi. scio acerba meorum
circumstare odia: hunc, oro, defende furorem;
et me consortem nati concede sepulchro.'
haec loquitur iuguloque haud inscius accipit ensem,
undantique animam diffundit in arma cruore. (896-908)

"Aeneas flew to Mezentius, whipped sword from scabbard, and spoke over him: 'Where is now the old fiery Mezentius and all the fury of his madman's will?' The Etruscan looked up to heaven and drank in the air; and recovering consciousness he made answer: 'Pitiless enemy, why mock me, why threaten me with death? There is no wrong in slaying; with no such belief did I come to do battle and Lausus my son made no such compact between you and me. But, if there can be indulgence for conquered enemies, I make you one request. Allow my body its covering of soil. I know that my people's bitter hatred pens me round. Keep, I entreat you, their mad fury away from me, and admit me to share a sepulchre with my son'. So he spoke, and deliberately gave his throat to the point; and in waves of blood he scattered his life upon his arms."

Notice that Mezentius asks for burial, as Turnus does. Though Aeneas gives no promise and Book XI tells us nothing except that Mezentius' armour was used for a trophy, we can hardly doubt that Aeneas did bury him with Lausus as he requested. Virgil does not tell us whether Turnus' request also was granted and he received immediate burial, or whether the story ended like the Iliad with king Daunus coming as a suppliant to ask for the body of his son. When Hector asked Achilles to let his parents ransom his dead body, Achilles replied (Iliad XXII 345-348):

> μή με, κύον, γούνων γουνάζεο μηδὲ τοκήων·
> αἲ γάρ πως αὐτόν με μένος καὶ θυμὸς ἀνείη
> ὤμ' ἀποταμνόμενον κρέα ἔδμεναι, οἷα ἔοργας,
> ὡς οὐκ ἔσθ' ὃς σῆς γε κύνας κεφαλῆς ἀπαλάλκοι...

Virgil was not prepared to let his hero talk like that. If Turnus, like Mezentius and Hector, had simply asked for burial, Aeneas would not have refused it. But he asks that alternatively he should be spared altogether, and it is this request that Aeneas is turning over in his mind when he notices Pallas' sword-belt. Nor do Aeneas' last words suggest that the vengeance he desires is anything more than the death of his enemy. Five minutes later he may have been directing the Rutulians to take up the body. Even if at the time he meant to leave the body unburied, he surely could not have persisted in this resolution; after all, he was going to marry Turnus' cousin.

Virgil encourages no such speculations. Had he told us that Turnus received burial he would have given an illustration of Aeneas' magnanimity, but the story of Turnus' death would have lost some of its power. Virgil wants us to see Turnus as a lonely and helpless figure. First Juno abandons him; then Juturna is driven from his side. He must not now find a friend in Aeneas.

This then is the right ending for the tragedy of Turnus. Is it the right ending for the story of Aeneas? Suppose the epic had ended like the Odyssey, with Aeneas happily married to Lavinia and establishing a lasting peace with the Latins and the Rutulians. This would have involved making the Aeneid about two books longer. Turnus' death may end the war, but it cannot immediately end the mistrust and hate that have sprung up between Trojans and Italians. In the speech in which he proposes to storm Laurentum Aeneas shows that he now feels little good will even towards Latinus. (Earlier he had said: non ego nec Teucris Italos parere iubebo, nec mihi regna peto (XII 189, 190)). Now instead: urbem hodie causam belli regna ipsa Latini ni <u>frenum accipere</u> et <u>victi parere</u> fatentur eruam (XII 567 - 569). If his marriage to Lavinia were to follow closely on such a speech as this, it would resemble the wedding of Agamemnon and Cassandra in the Troades. Lavinia's mother has hanged herself and her cousin has been killed by Aeneas. Unless the wedding is postponed for at least a year it will be what Mackail called it: "a wholly political or dynastic arrangement ... for him, as for her, only one more sacrifice to duty" (Introduction to Mackail's Aeneid, page LXV).

It may be objected that this was normal; neither in Virgil's day nor in Priam's was a princess expected to choose her husband. True, but she was not normally expected to marry a foreigner who had just inflicted a crushing defeat on her native land. Yet even such a wedding as this can be represented as a cheerful, even a romantic, occasion: Shakespeare does so in Henry V. But then the French princess has not been gravely upset by the invasion of France and her mother has not committed suicide. Lavinia - though we are told little of her feelings - seems to be a timid and sensitive girl who can have known little happiness or peace of mind from the moment when her parents first disagreed over the choice of a husband for her.

From Book VIII to Book XII the events follow swiftly upon one another; the effect would be extremely lame if the last book had to begin "so the seasons passed, and old griefs were forgotten, and at length Latinus arranged glad marriage for his daughter". There would not be the same objection to ending with the reconciliation of Aeneas and Latinus the day after Turnus' death. The marriage would make a happy ending, the reconciliation would be tinged with sadness and hope. A happy ending is not improper in an epic. The Odyssey ends happily; but then no part of the Odyssey aims at tragic grandeur. The Aeneid, full of narrow escapes and ending in a victory, could have been an adventure story, but Virgil has made it tragic throughout. Book II is the tragedy of Troy, Book IV is the tragedy of Dido. Nisus and Euryalus die in Book IX, Pallas in Book X, Camilla in XI. Moreover the individual calamities of the second half of the Aeneid are incidents in a war that is itself calamitous, a war by which the Italians achieve nothing but bloodshed. To such a story a tragic ending is most appropriate.

I called Book XI tragic because of the death of Camilla, though she is Aeneas' enemy. This sympathy with both sides is another Homeric touch and the most significant in making the whole poem tragic. Sometimes we are asked to feel for Trojan and Italian simultaneously, as at the death of Lausus; sometimes to feel for first one and then the other. Camilla holds the centre of the stage for the second half of XI; the reader is not meant to take great interest in her opponents Tarchon, Arruns and the rest. If she were not a little too bloodthirsty there would be a risk that by the end of the book we should have become wholly Italian in our sympathies.

The Iliad does not contain as many separate tragic episodes as the Aeneid; it does not need to, because the tragedy lies in the heart of the story and directly involves the three principal characters, Achilles, Patroclus and Hector. In the Aeneid there is one central character who achieves success and many of secondary importance who meet with disaster. Aeneas' story is touched with sombre colours; we see his toil, weariness, despondency; we do not see him enjoying the fruits of victory. The calamities that befall others do not leave him unmoved. The death of Pallas for instance caused him great sorrow, not that Pallas was as dear to him as Patroclus to Achilles, but he liked the boy and he knew what it would mean to Evander. He is far more deeply involved in the terrible events recounted in Book II. The death of Priam and the burning of the city will haunt his dreams when Pallas has been quite forgotten. Dido's suicide was a shock, and I think he was more distressed at being unintentionally the cause than at the ending of a brief period of happiness.

Book IV shows clearly the risk Virgil ran in Book XII. In each Aeneas suffers, but someone else suffers much more, and Aeneas is the cause of the suffering. We admit that he did not intend to hurt Dido; we admit that in the Italian war he shows himself just, brave and frequently merciful. Nevertheless our liking for him wanes as he becomes the cause of tragedy to others. Perhaps this is inevitable. Virgil could have given him a better speech than that unfeeling and legalistic bit of rhetoric in Book IV (333-361); after all, Racine in Bérénice was dealing with a very similar situation and did not make the emperor Titus seem unfeeling. This is the speech that corresponds to 'ego te, quae plurima fando enumerare vales' (Bérénice Acte IV scène V).

> N'accablez point, Madame, un prince malheureux.
> Il ne faut point ici nous attendrir tous deux.
> Un trouble assez cruel m'agite et me dévore,
> Sans que des pleurs si chers me déchirent encore.

Rappelez bien plutôt ce coeur, qui tant de fois
M'a fait de mon devoir reconnoître la voix.
Il en est temps. Forcez votre amour à se taire;
Et d'un oeil que la gloire et la raison éclaire
Contemplez mon devoir dans toute sa rigueur.
Vous-même contre vous fortifiez mon coeur:
Aidez-moi, s'il se peut, à vaincre sa foiblesse,
A retenir des pleurs qui m'échappe sans cesse;
Ou si nous ne pouvons commander à nos pleurs,
Que la gloire du moins soutienne nos douleurs,
Et que tout l'univers reconnoisse sans peine
Les pleurs d'un empereur et les pleurs d'une reine.
Car enfin, ma princesse, il faut nous séparer.

I do not say that this appeal would have pacified Dido. It did not even satisfy Bérénice; she plans to commit suicide, and is only dissuaded in the last scene when Titus convinces her that he still loves her by saying that he will commit suicide unless she swears solemnly not to do so. What interests me in the speech I have quoted is not its effect on Bérénice but its effect on the audience. There is nothing brutal or unfeeling in it, though Titus does not waver in his resolve. He begs the queen to help him do his duty. Aeneas instead tells Dido that he has a perfect right to leave her.

Suppose Aeneas had spoken more like Titus; suppose that instead of justifying himself he had tried to comfort her; what difference would this make to the effect of the book if it still ended with Dido's suicide? I fancy the difference would be small. Aeneas' tactlessness jars on us at the time, but it does not linger in our minds as we read of Dido's growing despair. On the other hand the knowledge that Dido is going to kill herself is never far from our minds at any stage in the story.

ille dies primus leti, primusque malorum
causa fuit. (IV 169, 170)

If Bérénice had killed herself, we should blame Titus in spite of his pathetic speeches. If Dido had not, if she had resigned herself like Calypso, we should read of the Royal Hunt and Storm in a radically different frame of mind. Who blames Odysseus for trifling with the affections of Circe?

Similarly, however nobly Aeneas behaved after the death of Turnus, we should still be more moved by Turnus' death than by Aeneas' nobility. After the death of Brutus in Shakespeare's play, Antony speaks very generously of his virtues and Octavian promises him honourable burial. We like him the better for it, but the effect of the last act would be little altered if these two speeches were cut out of it. So with Aeneid XII. No alteration to the last twenty lines would seriously have altered the book as a whole, unless Aeneas actually spared Turnus' life; and this, besides being an anti-climax and a breach of his promise to Evander would also have killed our interest in Turnus - whose faults we forgive only because he is doomed to die.

Virgil's reason for ending the epic on a tragic note must be that though a happy ending (like that of the Odyssey) is more enjoyable a tragic ending is more moving. (Many of Shakespeare's comedies have a love interest, but his most famous love stories are tragedies, like Romeo and Juliet). I do not doubt that Virgil was right to make the Aeneid tragic. I am not nearly so sure that he was wise to give Aeneas the role of

Achilles. His role ought to bring out his most attractive qualities and set him in a favourable light. These qualities are for instance his affection for his son and his pity for the unfortunate. As for setting him in a favourable light, consider the points of the story at which we like him best.

At the beginning of Book VIII he is troubled by the news that Turnus is preparing for war:

> quae Laomedontius heros
> cunta videns magno curarum fluctuat aestu
> atque animum nunc huc celerem nunc dividit illuc. (18 - 20)

He spends much of the night sleepless with anxiety, turning over different possibilities:

> cum pater in ripa gelidique sub aetheris axe
> Aeneas, tristi turbatus pectora bello,
> procubuit seramque dedit per membra quietem. (28-30)

I like this passage because it illustrates his sense of responsibility, and his over-anxious temperament.

Next morning he found the white sow with thirty piglets, the sign that in thirty years Ascanius would found Alba Longa.

> quam pius Aeneas tibi enim, tibi, maxima Iuno,
> mactat sacra ferens et cum grege sistit ad aram. (84, 85)

Juno's fierce hatred and Aeneas' meek persistence make an amusing contrast. His attempts at placating her have no visible effect, but he continues as scrupulous and respectful as ever.

When Aeneas seeks an alliance with Evander and is offered in addition the command of the Etruscan army, he and Achates stand for a moment in doubt:

> multaque dura suo tristi cum corde putabant,
> ni signum caelo Cytherea dedisset aperto. (VIII 522, 523)

Another sign of his over-anxious, desponding temperament. Without reassurance from prophecies and omens, he cannot be sure that he is carrying out the will of heaven.

Of course if he desponds too easily, as perhaps he does in the storm at sea in Book I, we shall despise him. He must be brave and wise, as well as anxious and weary, if he is to be what Mackail calls him (Introduction p. LXV) "a pathetic and heroic figure". Now towards the end of the Aeneid his character alters; he seems more self-assured, more confident that he will perform his appointed tasks worthily (XII 187-194). He no longer says "Italiam non sponte sequor". Once, obedience to the gods had been costly, as when they commanded him to leave Troy and Carthage. Now that his will is fully aligned with theirs, obedience is easy. In Book III the quest for Italy had seemed almost hopeless (arva Ausoniae semper cedentia retro: III 496), now his feet are firmly on Italian soil. There was a stage at which it was easy to feel a little sorry for Aeneas, because though the gods offered him immortal glory it was at the price of present happiness.

> me si fata meis paterentur ducere vitam
> auspiciis, et sponte mea componere curas,
> urbem Troianam primum dulces que meorum
> reliquias colerem. (IV 340-343)

The lines are moving, if we forget to whom they were spoken. Even the ruins of Troy are dearer than the wealthy city of Carthage or the future kingdom in Italy. The gods do not care that Aeneas would rather have Creusa than an unknown Italian princess. They give him glory in war when he would have preferred peace. They promise him deification though (for all I know) he would rather have joined Anchises in Elysium. This is the irony of Aeneas' situation, and this is why no <u>invidia</u> attaches to his success. In the final books however Aeneas appears to adapt himself; he has forgotten Creusa and his thoughts turn less often to Troy. This is natural enough, but it makes him less attractive. I should have preferred to suppose that though he adopted the toga and the Latin language and ceased to call himself a Trojan he would rather have been helping Helenus to build his little city in Chaonia, with its citadel, gate and stream so pathetically named after the Trojan Pergama, Scaean gate and Xanthus. The Aeneid must end with Aeneas victorious, and yet since this means tragedy for his enemies (whom we are meant to like) Aeneas is more likely to keep our sympathy if it is to some extent a tragedy for him. It would be admirable (from this point of view) if like Epaminondas or Lord Nelson he had died in the hour of victory. This is Livy's version: Aeneas was killed in the battle in which he defeated Turnus, and buried by the river Numicus. It would be even better - because more in keeping with the way the gods have treated Aeneas so far - if it was Ascanius who was killed. Jupiter would explain to Venus that it was more fitting for the future kings of Alba Longa to be descended from Lavinia's son, since Ascanius is a relic of Troy and has no more place than Creusa in Aeneas' new home.

Why, you may ask, do I engage in the unprofitable speculations? Is not Virgil artist enough to find the appropriate ending to his own epic? One would have thought so, and yet T.E. Page writes (in the introduction to his edition, footnote 2 page xxii. This edition appeared in 1894) 'Although Aeneas is Virgil's hero, still his natural feeling seems to be with Turnus, and, almost in spite of his will, he makes him the more interesting figure'. Why should this be, unless Virgil is one of those who prefer the underdog, the lost cause, the forlorn hope? In which case he might have been glad if Maecenas had suggested a twist to the story that would give his hero the glamour of failure. Or would this have seemed tactless, since Augustus is meant to see his own career mirrored in that of Aeneas? I fear that the attempt to glorify success because Augustus was successful has led Virgil to lose sympathy with his own hero, with the result that the epic carries an implication equally unflattering to Augustus, that his victory also was won at too high a price, and that the avenger of Caesar is as hard to admire as the avenger of Pallas.

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## MEZENTIUS AND THE ETRUSCANS IN THE AENEID

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by P.T.Eden, M.A.

Mezentius is the very first entry in the Catalogue of the Latin Allies at the end of *Aeneid* VII (647-654); he is Turnus' most important ally. "First to enter the war is harsh Mezentius from the Etruscan borders, the despiser of the gods (*contemptor divum*)" - and in this sense the prime antagonist of *pius Aeneas*. With him is his son Lausus leading a thousand men from Agylla, Virgil's learned Greek equivalent for Caere, the site of which was very near the modern Cerveteri. When Turnus makes his feverish declaration of war, Mezentius is active conscripting levies of farmers on the plains of Latium (A.VIII, 7f.). His previous history and fortunes are left for Evander's narration to Aeneas later on in *Aeneid* VIII (470 ff.), and this is for us a crucial passage. Evander tells Aeneas that his people's manpower is no match for its fame ... "but I am ready to unite with you mighty nations and a camp rich in royal forces ... You arrive here at the call of Fate. Not far from here is the site of the city of Agylla, still inhabited ... For many years it flourished, then Mezentius ruled it with tyrannical sway and cruel arms. I need not recall the unspeakable slaughter and savage deeds of this despot ... He even used to bind dead bodies with living ones, fitting hands to hands and faces to faces (what a torture!), and so he used to slaughter them by a protracted death, dripping with blood and gore in that terrible embrace. But at last the citizens at the end of their patience took up arms and surrounded the monstrous madman and his house, cut down his followers, and hurled fire on his roof. During the massacre he escaped and fled to the territory of the Rutulians and was protected by the weapons of his guest-friend Turnus. So *the whole of Etruria* has risen in righteous fury: they demand to have the king back for punishment under threat of immediate war ... Of these thousands, Aeneas, I will make you leader." For, as Evander explains, the Etruscans are forbidden by an oracle to choose a leader of Italian stock and he himself is too old to accept the leadership offered by their chief Tarcho. He did not lack good reason for enmity, for Mezentius had attacked his little settlement on the Palatine causing cruel destruction and loss of life (A. VIII, 569 ff.). Eventually Aeneas and his forces go to meet Tarcho and the Etruscans who are encamped in a grove sacred to Silvanus, not far from Caere (an interesting detail, for Silvanus has an Etruscan equivalent *Selva*: see M. PALLOTTINO, *The Etruscans*, p. 165); (A.VIII, 585 ff.). Aeneas' overtures meet with the expected success, and Tarcho and the Etruscans embark under his leadership; details of the forces are given in the Catalogue of the Etruscan Allies (A. X, 146 ff.). Meanwhile Mezentius has taken an energetic part in the attack on the Trojan camp (A. IX, 521 f., 586 ff.), but it is at the end of *Aeneid* X, after Aeneas has landed with the allied Etruscans and Turnus has been removed from the battle through Juno's intervention, that Virgil presents us with Mezentius' *Ἀριστεία* (689 ff.). He first withstands alone the *combined* hatred and attacks of the Etruscans and is made the subject of three magnificent similes. He kills Orodes in hand-to-hand combat, and when the dying man predicts a similar fate for him, he replies with an angry smile

> nunc morere. ast de me divum pater atque hominum rex
> 'viderit. (A. X, 743 f.)

"Die now. As regards me, let the father of gods and king of men see to it" (except

that the tone of viderit is more like the English "it's his look out".) When he at last confronts Aeneas he prays

> dextra mihi deus et telum, quod missile libro,
> nunc adsint! voveo praedonis corpore raptis
> indutum spoliis ipsum te, Lause, tropaeum
> Aeneae. (A. X, 773 ff.)

"May this right hand, my god, and this javelin which I poise to hurl, now aid me. I vow you yourself, Lausus, clothed in the spoils stripped from this brigand's body, as my trophy of victory over Aeneas". Note that the trophy is dedicated not to Mars, like the one Aeneas dedicates at the beginning of Aeneid XI, but to Mezentius' god, his right hand and spear. But Mezentius' god fails him; his spear misses Aeneas and kills Antenor instead. Aeneas is more successful: he wounds Mezentius and has the advantage, but as he raises his sword to strike, Lausus interposes. The disabled Mezentius retires to tend his wound and rest, fusus propexam in pectore barbam (838), "letting his beard, combed down in front, flow over his chest". Lausus' gallantry leads to his destruction, and Mezentius seeing his lifeless son is filled with bitter self-reproaches for having allowed him to intercede, and for having disgraced his name with his own guilt:

> idem ego, nate, tuum maculavi crimine nomen,
> pulsus ob invidiam solio sceptrisque paternis. (A. X, 851 f.)

"It was I too, my son, who stained your name with my guilt, driven out in hatred from the throne and sceptre of my fathers". He then speaks to his war-horse Rhaebus: together they will either avenge Lausus or perish. He challenges Aeneas, who prays to Jupiter and Apollo: to this Mezentius' reply is

> nec mortem horremus, nec divum parcimus ulli. (A. X, 880)

"I have no fear of death, nor regard for any of the gods". In the following duel Aeneas triumphs; Mezentius accepts the death-blow fearlessly, begging only that his body be buried with that of his son.

At dawn of the following day Aeneas lops the branches off a huge oak and dresses it in Mezentius' armour as a tropaeum to Mars. The breast-plate is pierced in twelve places (A. XI, 9 f.): this is obviously not the result of the last combat, and why twelve so specifically? We have seen that Virgil insists that the whole of Etruria was banded against Mezentius (A. VIII, 494), and that he had had to withstand their combined onslaught (A. X, 691 f.); there can be little doubt that the twelve holes in the breast-plate symbolise the twelve cities of the Etruscan Confederation: a timely reminder that Virgil sometimes alludes to facts which he nowhere explains or even mentions.

Aeneas dedicates his tropaeum and then cheers his men: the way to Latinus and his city is now open, the greatest obstacle, Mezentius, now exists no longer:

> haec sunt spolia et de rege superbo
> primitiae manibusque meis Mezentius hic est. (A. XI, 15 f.)

... "these are the spoils and the first-fruits (primitiae, an unexpected word in such a context) from the proud king, and this (trophy) is Mezentius, the work of my hands".

## The canonical version of the role of the Etruscans

When Virgil consulted the sources, perhaps simply to refresh his memory of what he had learnt at school, what would he have discovered about the part played by Mezentius and the Etruscans in Aeneas' early struggles in Latium? Whether Fabius Pictor or Ennius mentioned the Etruscans we do not know, but certainly one of the oldest and most respected versions of the saga was to be found in the first book of Cato's Origines, and the main outlines of his account can be reconstructed from scattered notes of Servius.[1]

1. Latinus grants a piece of land to the Trojans for settlement, but further encroachments by the Trojans lead to war against the Latins and their allies, the Rutulians led by Turnus. In the first engagement in which Aeneas is involved Latinus is killed.
2. Turnus then flees to Mezentius and renews hostilities with his support; in the second engagement Turnus falls and Aeneas "disappears" (non comparuit is Cato's (or Servius') curious expression (Servius on Aeneid IX 745)).
3. Ascanius inherits the war and eventually kills Mezentius in single combat. Aeneas' disappearance is accounted for more explicitly in a version of uncertain origin which once again can be put together from scattered notes of Servius.[2] From this it emerges that in the second engagement, in which the Rutulians with Etruscan support fought against the Latins (presumably reallied with the Trojans), Turnus was the first to fall, but then Aeneas was driven to flight by Mezentius. A fearful thunderstorm broke out, darkening the day, and swelling the stream of the river Numicus: Aeneas in his flight fell into the river and was drowned or disappeared.[3]

Substantially the same account is given by Livy (I, 1-3) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I, 57 ff.), except that they both lay stress on the initial peaceful settlement between Aeneas and Latinus, the marriage of Aeneas and Lavinia immediately after, the founding of Lavinium, and the uninterrupted alliance of Trojans and Latins; they also both report a peaceful settlement between Ascanius and Mezentius.

In all these accounts Latinus is an early victim of the fighting and Mezentius outlives Aeneas. But the point of most interest to us is that all three authorities agree in reporting a defeat of the Rutulians, an appeal to Mezentius, and a renewal of warfare with Etruscan assistance. Cato (Servius on Aeneid I 267) says that Turnus fled to Mezentius (Turnum postea ad Mezentium confugisse, eiusque fretum auxilio bella renovasse), and so does Livy (I, 2, 3: inde Turnus Rutulique diffisi rebus ad florentes opes Etruscorum Mezentiumque regem eorum confugiunt). Dionysius of Halicarnassus, roughly contemporary with Virgil, differs from this canonical account of the episode only in saying (I, 64) that Turnus was killed before the remaining Rutulians allied themselves with Mezentius. (Dionysius, incidentally, calls Turnus Τυρρηνός "the Etruscan", which is more likely to be an important clue than a scribal error, for the basic kernel of truth in the whole saga is no doubt a reminiscence of early wars between a settlement on the Latian plain and two Etruscan princes, Mezentius and Turnus, who were at least united in hostility to what they considered their natural subjects).

As far as the extant evidence allows us to judge, Virgil was the first to reverse the traditional situation completely and make Mezentius flee to Turnus and eventually die before him; most probably he himself originated this version, and if he did not, he must have been in a distinct minority in preferring it to the other.

## The point of Virgil's innovation in the legend and its residual problem

It is well known that Virgil both condensed and modified the material and the time sequence of some of the early sagas when he came to construct the second half of the *Aeneid*. The ways in which he did this have been sensitively analysed by R.HEINZE[4], and his analysis endorsed by KARL BÜCHNER.[5] His object clearly was to make the drama of "Aeneas in atium" culminate in Aeneas' marriage with Lavinia, the founding of a city, and the synoecism of immigrants and natives. This scheme naturally precluded any early and complete alliance with the Latins, and the telescoping of the chronology ranged them and Turnus and Mezentius simultaneously against Aeneas. Such a situation left Virgil's hero embarrassingly short of troops; and troops there must be for the Iliadic Aeneid. The solution which Virgil chose to remedy the deficiency was not an obvious one, for the legend which makes Aeneas visit Caere and there form an alliance with Tarcho (and Tyrrhenos) is tenuous and ill-attested (it is reported by Timaeus, *Geogr. des Westens* 44, and is alluded to in the dark and riddling words of Cassandra in Lycophron 1232 ff., where she is reported as saying that a certain kinsman of hers, the son of Castnia (= Aphrodite) ... after considerable wanderings ... will be received by Pisa and "the glades of *Agylla* rich in flocks". A friendly army will be united to him by Ulysses and the two sons of the king of the Mysians, Tarchon and Tyrsenos. He will then find his company devouring the tables on which they have eaten, and be reminded of an ancient prophecy). It is not beyond the bounds of probability that the solution he chose was prompted in part by a wish to present the Etruscans in a sympathetic light as from the very beginning the supporters of the founders of the Roman Empire. The hundred-and-one hints in the *Aeneid* that Virgil was deeply versed in Etruscan lore and appreciative of their past glory point in this direction, as also does his own early contact with the still living Etruscan traditions in the commune of Mantua. However this may be, Virgil's solution leaves us with one very important question: was the estrangement of Mezentius from his people which it necessitated purely an *ad hoc* invention of Virgil's (of the kind he was, as we have seen, entirely capable of making), or is it a vestige of a true tradition? For Virgil did not simply reverse the canonical roles of Turnus and Mezentius: there is no tradition that Turnus was expelled by the Rutulians, whereas Virgil makes of Mezentius a deposed outcast.

## The evidence for a Sacral Kingship of the Etruscans

(a) At the present stage one must keep an open mind, but if it were a true fact that Mezentius was deposed and expelled and under threat of death, he would in this respect be like those sacral kings or king-gods of whom FRAZER found abundant evidence in primitive societies, whose reign likewise ended in expulsion or death because the tribe thought that its own prosperity was commensurate with the power and virility of its chieftain; a decline in manhood (Virgil does say that Mezentius' beard was flowing down over his chest) spelt doom for the sacral king.

At first sight it seemed to me that this resemblance was entirely fortuitous. Further investigation convinced me that this is indeed the kind of anthropological background against which an early - one might almost say prehistoric - Etruscan king must be viewed. The sacral king of savage societies has other characteristics: he is not merely temporal ruler, but an incarnate god; not only is his word law, but it is obeyed and enforced with all the selfless passion that superstitious dread even in times much nearer our own has worked up in the cause of some "religious" belief or other. And he is also a weather-magician, for he is credited with complete control of

the conditions that produce fertility of crops and hence the very existence of the community. Virgil's account gives the hints, and a small amount of other evidence gives corroboration, for believing that Mezentius' credentials for having fulfilled these offices are very good indeed.

(b) We have seen that when dedicating the trophy of Mezentius' arms, Virgil makes Aeneas use the word primitiae, "first-fruits". The meaning would most naturally seem to be that Mezentius' arms are the first-fruits of the harvest of war and so dedicated to Mars; and this is sufficient for an understanding of the passage. But Virgil, I suspect, knew more about the previous legend of Mezentius than suited him to incorporate into his picture, and this word primitiae is the first indication of it. For as Macrobius tells us (Sat. 3, 5, 10), any diligent reader of the first book of Cato's Origines (no longer extant) will remember that Mezentius commanded the Rutulians to offer to himself the primitiae, the first-fruits, which they were in the habit of offering to the gods, and through fear of a similar command all the Latins made the following vow: "Jupiter, if it is more pleasing to you that we should give them to you rather than to Mezentius, make us the victors". Macrobius adds that this was the reason for Virgil's giving the label contemptor divum to Mezentius, not his lawlessness towards men. This version of Cato's is of course the oldest: later versions substitute for primitiae, the first-fruits of all crops, simply the whole of the wine produce, and link this up with the institution of the Vinalia, the Wine Festival on the 23rd April. Moreover, three of six transmitters (and adapters!) of this version[6] say that the imposed tribute of wine was annual.[7]

So far then we have a story of annual tribute of one or more species of the fruits of the earth paid to a man who arrogated to himself the position of a god, and who had some kind of power to enforce his demands. Parallels to the individual parts of the story easily suggest themselves - one might think of feudal tithes paid to oppressive barons, or on the other hand of the megalomaniac Caligula posturing as an incarnate deity, or the "lord-god" Domitian: all, I think, misleading clues. One's first thought would perhaps not be of Tooitonga, the sacred chief of the Tonga Islands, but Tooitonga is, I believe, the parallel we are looking for.[8] The most important points are these: Tooitonga is himself regarded as divine, a sacred religious chief; he receives a yearly tribute of yams at the grave of the last Tooitonga or another member of his family; the people are informed that in return for performing the ceremony, continuing to observe the rites and to pay respect to the gods, the gods (= spirits?) will protect them; the day ends with festal activities, eating, drinking, wrestling, boxing, dancing; and "we are informed, the quantity of provisions distributed was incredible and the people looked upon it as a very heavy tribute" (J. G. FRAZER). FRAZER (op.cit. p. 132) has established beyond doubt that offerings of first-fruits of this kind to a chief or king are made to him in his religious rather than his civil capacity. Nothing that is known of early Etruscan religion (and precious little is in fact known) is inconsistent with a view that it passed through a phase which could produce a sacred chieftain or king-god, as it seems Mezentius was; and what we know of Etruscan/Roman prehistory tells us unambiguously of a considerable period of Etruscan domination south of the Tiber over Rome and Latium, when the native population would have to obey Etruscan overlords. Such a view of Mezentius' status is indirectly supported and complemented by the fairly well-established theory of the original powers of the lucumones, the rulers of the individual city-states of Etruria. For it seems highly probable that the character assumed by a victorious Roman imperator in the dazzling hour of his triumph

derives, changed of course and diluted, from the usual and permanent status of a lucumo. The lucumo wore a cloak of heaven, embroidered with stars, and was on occasions identified with Tinia, the Etruscan Jupiter; he performed sacrifices and ordained festivals in accord with various happenings of the solar system, and appeared at regular periods to the people to receive their sacrifices and to transmit the will of heaven.[9]

More however remains to be extracted from Virgil's own account, not to give further support to Mezentius' title to a divine kingship, but to clarify the social ethos and atmosphere in which he moved.

## The Torture and the Spear

(I) tormenti genus (A.VII, 487)

The practice described here was ascribed to the Etruscans by Cicero (a citation from the lost Hortensius in Augustine contra Pel. 4):

> qui quondam in praedonum Etruscorum manus incidissent, crudelitate excogitata necabantur, quorum corpora viva cum mortuis, adversa adversis accommodata, quam aptissime (v.l. artissime) colligabantur.

"Formerly those who had fallen into the hands of the Etruscan brigands were slaughtered with calculated cruelty: their bodies still living were bound with bodies of the dead with the corresponding parts fitted to each other to match as much as possible."

This was the custom of Etruscan praedones; praedo, curiously, is the word used by Mezentius to describe Aeneas (A.X, 774). In Roman law (Digest 49, 15, 24) the word designates not a person with whom there exists a formally declared state of war, but an enemy brigand. Among the Etruscans, as among many other primitive peoples, inter-community raiding was a common and accepted thing, bringing honour and prestige to the successful.[10]

What of the custom itself? It would be grossly anachronistic to see here a prototype of Belsen, caused by the same factors. Fairly evidently we are here dealing with some kind of human sacrifice: to understand it we should work backwards from the little we know of Roman practice. Discounting various ritual survivals in the historical period which can only or most satisfactorily be explained as vestiges of human sacrifice, because the token sacrificed is clearly a substitute (e.g. in the rite of the Argei), actual instances of ritual human slaughter in the history of Rome are very rare. The best known is undoubtedly the burying alive of a male and female Gaul and a male and female Greek in the Forum Boarium, first in 228 B.C. and then again in 216 B.C. This was not a sacrifice in any usual sense: it was not offered to any god. At first sight one would guess that it was a magical war sacrifice, the foreign couple representing the whole of the nation it was desired to exterminate or vanquish. Unfortunately the dates do not coincide with any period when the Romans were in any significant sense at war with Gauls or Greeks; there were admittedly Celtic auxiliaries among Hannibal's troops in 216 B.C., but why not choose Carthaginians? The dates do coincide however with times of burying alive a Vestal Virgin found guilty of incest: this would certainly explain the method of slaughter of the Gaul and Greek pairs, but still leaves their nationality problematic. The theory now generally accepted (e.g. by LATTE RGG 257) is that of Cichorius (Röm.

Studien 1923). The incest of a Vestal Virgin was a very serious matter, doubly serious in times of war, when the good-will of the gods was so vital; it no doubt enhanced the already panic-stricken atmosphere of war-hysteria caused by Rome's critical position in these years; in such a state of extreme concern recourse was had to a very old (and perhaps no longer completely understood) piece of ritual, basically a magical war ritual as we originally suspected, ultimately derived from the nation which was for a long time threatened and eventually overthrown by Greeks from the south and Gauls/Celts from the north - the Etruscans.

But if human sacrifice was virtually unknown to the official state religion of historical times, in the context of Roman social life it was a common and familiar occurrence. For the gladiatorial combats which eventually became the opium of the people started as funeral rites for the aristocratic dead. As Servius says (on A. X, 519): "It was the custom for prisoners of war to be slaughtered at the graves of brave men; after this was considered cruel, it was decided that gladiators should fight in front of the graves." We are not now concerned with the dramatic element, the spectacle of combat, but with the sacrificial element: the slaughter was certainly intended to placate the unappeased spirit or ghost of the dead man, and it is equally certain that this ritual was Etruscan in origin. It can hardly be coincidental that the first gladiatorial combat in Rome was traditionally located in the Forum Boarium, the scene of the ritual burial of the Gaul and Greek substitute sacrifices.[11] Thanks to the survival of a most tangible and exciting piece of archaeological evidence, we can penetrate even further backwards to what is fairly certainly a representation of the very origin of the custom.

Some of the best known tomb-paintings in the necropolis at Tarquinia are those in the so-called Tomb of the Augurs, so-called because two of the figures appear to be, but are not, practising divination by the flight of birds. The tomb is dated to about 530 B.C. or a little later, and it is interesting that the expert M.PALLOTTINO[12] believes that striking features of artistic execution derive from an art current typically represented at Caere, the once capital of Mezentius. To quote his own words:[13] "A mysterious world of atavistic beliefs and dark sanguinary rites, charged with primitive, starkly physical ferocity, is revealed to us in the paintings of this small, lavishly decorated tomb... On the sides, fierce, bloodthirsty funeral games are depicted with an almost overpowering realism." The picture which most concerns us is of a gruesome combat: a hairy-chested man wearing nothing but a loin-cloth and blindfolded by a twisted white cloth is trying to use his club to ward off a fierce dog; the dog has already bitten deeply into various parts of his body and blood is running from his wounds; his attempts at self-defence are futile and doomed to failure because he is entangled in a rope; one end of the rope is attached to the dog, the other is manipulated by the torturer, a figure wearing shorts, a short red tunic, a high conical cap, and also a mask and a long black beard: he bears the name phersu = Latin persona, "a mask". I believe that in this Etruscan painting we see the twin embryo of Rome's most popular spectacles, the drama and the gladiatorial show. To trace their evolution would be another, no less fascinating, story. For us, this picture throws a completely new light on Mezentius' method of torture, and makes it very rash to dismiss it merely as a fiction. I suggest that the most feasible explanation is this. Etruscan warriors, praedones, engaged in the by no means dishonourable pursuit of robbery with violence against alien or even other Etruscan communities, were careful to recover their own dead and also quite naturally took prisoners. Their own dead would of course be objects of great respect and awe; their spirits were clamouring for revenge, appeasement and nourishment; unsatisfied they

might become fearful and malevolent. How better could a primitive, savage,materialist mind offer appeasement than by binding to the dead a still living prisoner to give his atoning blood and life-spirit?

Such seems to be the most likely explanation of this custom, the actual historicity of which, as attested by Cicero and Virgil, there is no good reason to doubt. Whether Mezentius himself enforced it is another question. For Virgil may have seized on it gratefully to account for the estrangement of Mezentius from his people which Virgil's new version of the saga postulated. If Virgil's account contains any vestige of the truth, Mezentius' connection with the custom will probably have been due to some kind of overlordship he exercised over the Etruscan Confederation. This body has often been compared with a Greek Amphictyony in that the ties of union were almost exclusively religious; offensive and defensive alliances of the Confederation as a whole are never heard of, and anything so sophisticated as commercial alliances hardly comes into question. Mezentius as religious head of the Confederation, probably its sacred chieftain or king-god, will not have originated but enforced a long-standing feature of the cult of the dead.

(II) _dextra mihi deus et telum_ (A. X, 773)

Against this background of physical violence, primitive superstition and divine power, what, if anything, are we to make of Mezentius' address to his right-hand and spear as his god? (A. X, 773 ff.). To the god-fearing this must seem blasphemous, and must have seemed impious even to those who for purely political and civil reasons gave their tepid support to the Augustan state religion. It fits in of course perfectly with the general attitude of the _contemptor divum_, as Virgil sees him, and commentators are ready with parallel expressions in Greek literature which Virgil may have had in mind. CONINGTON-NETTLESHIP _ad loc._ cite Aeschylus _Septem contra Thebas_ 529 ff., where the messenger speaking about Parthenopaeus says: "He swears by the spear he holds, bold to revere it more than a god and beyond his eyes, to sack the city of the sons of Cadmus in spite of Zeus." And Idas in Apollonius of Rhodes, _Argonautica_ I, 467 ff. says: "Bear witness now, my darting spear, with which I win far more honours than others in war, nor does Zeus aid me as much as my own spear..." But I would like at this point to enter a general word of caution about "literary reminiscences" of this kind in Virgil. It is rather too often assumed that the finding of such a "parallel passage" is all that is needed to understand Virgil's words fully. The truth of the matter is that Virgil was so drenched in literature and so respectful of previous literary tradition that many ideas presented themselves to him already invested with associations, the whole process being at least as often a subconscious reminiscence as a conscious imitation: it would be an error to mistake the associations for the idea. Even so, we might think that the present passage needs no further elucidation than the points already mentioned, and I would be inclined to leave it at that, were it not that a hint, nothing more, of a deeper meaning seems to emerge from a curious note of Servius on _Aeneid_ VIII, 3. This note informs us that it was a ritual practice at Rome for whoever had charge of beginning a war to enter the shrine (_sacrarium_) of Mars, and to shake first the _ancilia_, the shields mysteriously fallen from heaven, and then the spear of the statue itself, saying "_Mars vigila_", "Mars, keep watch". Varro, giving the same information, speaks only of a spear, and the primitiveness of the custom does indeed suggest a period long before the introduction of statuary.[14] Without investigating the extremely problematic origins of Mars-worship and the connection of the Salii with it, we may, simply from Servius' note, infer a very primitive regard for the spear as a sacred, almost a taboo object;

the spear was a fetish, or perhaps it would be better to say that the god or spirit was thought of as immanent in the spear. In this connection we may remember, without necessarily holding it as an article of faith, the theory that Quirinus, often identified with Mars, owes his name to quiris = "a spear".[15] Mezentius' spear may also have had the same awesome status; it would fit in very well with the background to which he properly belongs; but the evidence is of course too tenuous for it to be anything but an interesting possibility.

In briefly summarising I would like to draw a sharp contrast between the first and second parts of this paper. In the first Virgil's complete reversal of the traditional account of the role of Mezentius and the Etruscans I take to be a proved case. By its boldness it illustrates much more dramatically than, for instance, the subtle modifications and shadings which he introduced into his account of Troy's last night, how far Virgil would go, and how far the canons of epic allowed him to go, in confronting his contemporaries with a new and unfamiliar version of the hallowed saga of their nation's origins.

The second half of this paper, where I have maintained that Virgil is the unconscious transmitter of details of great anthropological significance, is admittedly speculative and my approach has been frankly comparative. Recently, in Studies in the History of Religions IV (1959), The Sacral Kingship, pp. 371 ff., The Evidence for Divine Kings in Greece, the late Professor H.J. ROSE expressed severe scepticism of previous views (represented in A.B. COOK's Zeus), and denied that anything in the literary or material remains of mainland Greece warrants the assumption that Greek society passed through a phase of sacral kingship. In passing, he raps classical scholars severely over the knuckles for "a naïve misapplication of the Comparative Method", for assuming "that all civilised peoples have in their past any and every savage custom or belief, which can be shown to exist, or lately to have existed, among backward cultures". His strictures are of course perfectly justified: details which are superficially similar but drawn from two distinct societies may belong to entirely different contexts in each, and any one detail only acquires significance as part of a coherent whole. In Etruscan prehistory there is depressingly little evidence for anything to cohere with. Still, Etruscan studies are as yet in their adolescence; as they grow they will undoubtedly cast a most valuable light on the beginnings of Roman civilisation, and may provide a more precise context for the activities of early Etruscan leaders and kings. If they do, my guess is that they will move in the direction I have indicated, and make more of Mezentius than Virgil's belligerent tyrant. Should they corroborate his position as a sacral king, we would have another and very significant indication of the wide cultural rift not only between the Etruscans and the mainland Greeks, but also between the Etruscans and the Romans themselves, who seem not to have undergone a phase of sacral kingship in their evolution.[16] In fact, the position of the Etruscans in this respect would be much more analogous to the state of affairs in the Near East, than to anything certainly known or even probable among their nearest civilised neighbours; and scholars who still interest themselves in the ethnic origins of the Etruscans can make what they will of that.

I hope that members of the Virgil Society will not think I have been too disrespectful to the poet they celebrate. I have after all maintained that when there was an established tradition, he misrepresented it, and when he told the truth

he did so unwittingly. I should perhaps end by saying that to my mind Mezentius remains one of Virgil's most impressive literary characterisations, gaunt, massive, arrogant and fearless, without love for anybody or anything except his son Lausus, his war-horse, and his right hand and spear; above all a monster of inhuman cruelty, a violent offender against god and man alike. And Virgil's creation was remembered: in the time of Apuleius (Apol. 56), Mezentius was a nickname for an ostentatiously irreligious person, a contemptor divum. Not the least significant point which has emerged is the enormous gulf between the facts as I have tried to recover them and Virgil's interpretation of them. Anthropologists do not make moral judgments it's not their business. Virgil does, and the judgment he makes marks a cheering progress in civilised values.

Notes

1. See PETER HRF pp. 44 ff.

2. On Aeneid I 259, and Servius auctus on Aeneid I 259, VII 150, XII 794.

3. So also Cassius Hemina (PETER HRF p. 69); Sisenna (PETER HRF p. 177) appears to have said that Aeneas was hacked down on the banks of the Numicus.

4. Virgils Epische Technik, especially Part I, chapter 5.

5. P. Vergilius Maro, Der Dichter der Römer, column 424.

6. Verrius Flaccus, Praenestine Calendar C.I.L. I[2] pp. 236, 316; Dion. of Hal., Antiq. Rom. 1, 65, 2; Plutarch, Quaest. Rom. 45.

7. For references to other authorities and a discussion of the whole topic,cf. J.G. FRAZER, Ovid Fasti IV, 879 ff.

8. Information about him can be obtained from W. MARINER's Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands[2] (London 1818) II, 78, 196-203, quoted extensively in J.G. FRAZER's Golden Bough, Spirits of the Corn and Wild II, 128 ff.

9. Cf. VON VACANO, The Etruscans pp. 127 ff.

10. Cf. VON VACANO, The Etruscans pp. 137 ff.

11. Cf. K. SCHNEIDER RE Suppl. Ill, col. 760 f.

12. Etruscan Painting p. 38.

13. op. cit. p. 37.

14. See WARDE FOWLER, The Religious Experience of the Roman People pp. 142 f.; WISSOWA, RuK[2] p. 144 and notes; LATTE, RRG p. 114 and notes.

15. Cf. WARDE FOWLER, op. cit. p. 143.

16. Cf. Studies in the History of Religions IV, G. DUMEZIL, Le Rex et les Flamines Maiores, p. 414, "... le roi romain ne paraît pas avoir été du tout un roi-dieu."

V.S. Lectures, No. 71

## SOME LITERARY DESCENDANTS OF THE "GEORGICS"

A lecture delivered to the Virgil Society
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by Professor D. R. Dudley, M.A.

"The best poem of the best poet." I suppose that all members of the Virgil Society will subscribe to at least one half of Dryden's verdict on the Georgics. But "best" implies at least two other terms in the comparison: and the Aeneid and the Eclogues belong poetically to different orders of being. And if we cannot fairly compare the Georgics with Virgil's other poems, where, in the whole of classical literature, are we to look for something to judge it by? In spite of all that Virgil says about the Ascraeum carmen, it is clearly something much more than the Works and Days of Hesiod.Lucretius, then? But the De Rerum Natura is on an altogether different scale: we may properly compare the two poems in detail, but not as completed works of art. Nor does any other surviving didactic poem in Greek or Latin seem to me to be of a stature to challenge comparison. Yet the Georgics is no phoenix - no 'sole Arabian bird' - it has had a numerous progeny, in English, French, German, and, notably, so Professor Highet tells us - in Polish. For the Polish Georgics I cannot answer. But I thought that if we examine a few of the English poems that owe kin to the Georgics, it might help to a better understanding of Virgil. That is my sole claim to be heard on this subject. I am paid to teach Latin. I have no licence at all to teach the literature of England, as any of my English colleagues would be quick to inform you

That the success of the Georgics promoted the growth of didactic poetry in Latin is not to be doubted. But, so far as we know, its theme was only repeated once, and then as an afterthought, an addendum to a larger work. Columella wrote in the reign of Nero: belonging to a family of great landowners in Spain, he possessed estates in Italy, and was shocked at the decline of agriculture "in this Saturnian land." To arrest this decay he wrote the most comprehensive treatise on agriculture that has survived in Latin - twelve books, of which the tenth only is in verse. This treats of gardens, obedient to the command of his friend Junius Graecinus, but mainly out of deference to Virgil, who had stressed the importance of the subject but left it to others. Columella has no illusions about his task. It is like that of the Greek proverb, "trying to make a rope out of sand." Nor, indeed, of his own talents: but he writes "ex voluntate vatis maxime reverendi:" And the result? Well, it scans. Indeed - if we can forget the Georgics - it was no small feat to have got all those leeks and cucumbers and cabbages into hexameters, while the lists of flowers would do well enough for a versified florist's catalogue. But his muse is determinedly pedestrian: she takes alarm at the slightest risk of becoming airborne. He has a spring passage, of course, but no sooner does it get under way than she warns him that such themes are for Lucretius and Virgil, hers is the narrower scope "such as the pruner might sing leaning over the bushes, or the gardener in his green plot".

> me mea Calliope cura leviore vagantem
> iam revocat parvoque iubet decurrere gyro
> et secum gracili conectere carmina filo,
> quae canat inter opus Musa modulante putator
> pendulus arbustis, holitor viridantibus hortis. (X. 225-9)

But English gardeners, from my observation, do not sing: no doubt Italians do, but would they choose a didactic gardening-theme rather than an air from opera? And while Columella's muse can warn him against the sublime, she cannot protect him from the ridiculous. It is simply not true to say that the best way of getting rid of a plague of caterpillars is to induce a menstruating girl to walk three times round the plot, whereupon all the caterpillars fall writhing to the ground.

'volvitur in terram distorto corpore campe'. Nor does Book X have the occasional happy phrases that enliven Columella's prose works - as when he says, apropos of the drift from the land 'conrepsimus inter urbes'. One sees the squirming heap. Yet I would not imply that Book X of Columella is without value. By showing what happens when the theme of agriculture is handled for a purely didactic purpose, and by a versifier rather than a poet, it helps to a truer appreciation of the real stature of the Georgics.

From Rome I turn to England. The heyday of the Georgic tradition in English literature is, of course, the eighteenth century - the English-Roman century, as it has been called. The reasons are obvious. There was, to begin with, an immense improvement in agriculture. Specialised breeds of horses, cattle, and sheep were evolved, matched by fine apples, pears, strawberries and vegetables, as well as new strains of wheat, barley and oats. Again, and of no less importance, there was the extraordinary growth of country-houses - the legitimate descendants of the Roman villa - with their parks and gardens and landscapes. The Squire Westerns in their Tudor manors were not extinct - indeed, they are with us still - but the new eighteenth century houses reflect the tastes of a cultured aristocracy, patrons of literature and the arts, improving their minds as well as their grounds. They knew Virgil and Horace better than they knew Shakespeare and Milton: they went on the Grand Tour, a major aim of which was to see at first hand the scenes the Latin poets had described. Addison s 'Remarks on Italy' will show what I mean: they have the same diligence as the pursuit of literary associations that we now remark in American graduate students, hot on the trail of Dylan Thomas or Joyce's 'Ulysses'. And Addison's journey, be it recalled, was undertaken as early as 1699, on funds provided by Lord Chancellor Somers who, "thinking it no waste of public treasure to purchase politeness for his country," gave him a Crown pension of £300 a year - surely one of the earliest instances of a travelling fellowship? And, lastly, there was the towering reputation of the Georgics and of Virgil himself. We have quoted Dryden, who ruled taste at the beginning of the century. We can supplement him with Addison, whose brilliantessay "on Virgil's Georgics" appeared in 1693. It ends with these words "The Aeneis, indeed, is of a nobler kind, but the Georgic more perfect in its kind. The Aeneis has a greater variety of beauties in it, but those of the Georgic are more exquisite. In short, the Georgic has all the perfection that can be expected in a poem written by the greatest poet in the flower of his age, when his invention was ready, his imagination warm, his judgement settled, and all his faculties in their full vigour and maturity." I have objected to this comparison, I know, but it was accepted when Addison wrote. By 1700 then, the soil was well prepared for the appearance of an English Georgic.

In 1707 came the first shoots, with the publication of John Philips' 'Cyder, a poem that received the extravagant praise sometimes accorded to those writings that are lucky enough to meet exactly the needs of the hour. "Cyder" wrote Johnson "was received with loud praises, and continued long to be read, as an imitation of Virgil's Georgics which needed not shun the presence of the original." Incidentally, it earned its author forty guineas. Philips was a Herefordshire man who had gained considerable

reputation at Oxford for his Latin verse. He wrote at a time when his native county was beginning to win that distinction in agriculture which marks it now: it was already famous for its cider apples and for the Rylands sheep - "Lemster Ore" - the white-faced Hereford cattle were yet to come. In the Pomona, published in 1644, it was said that "by the noble example of my Lord Scudamore, and of some other public-spirited gentlemen of those parts, Herefordshire has become but one immense orchard;" in 1657 a work appeared with the title "Herefordshire Orchards, an example to England." Such was, certainly, the example that Philips made it in his poem. On his frontispiece appears a Virgilian quotation "Honos erit huic quoque pomo," and the opening lines of the poem state his theme.

> "What soil the Apple loves, what care is due
> To Orchards, timeliest when to press the Fruits
> Thy gift, Pomona, in Miltonian strain
> Adventurous I presume to sing, of verse
> Not skilled nor studious: But my native soil
> Invites me, and the subject yet unsung."

The debt to Milton especially to L'Allegro and Il Penseroso should be noted: it is valid for all the other Georgics of the eighteenth century, and of course reinforces the influence of Virgil. Philips' debt to the Georgics, whether by paraphrase or expansion, is very great - the Happy Farmer, the Wine-Harvest, the Distant Clime, the late Civil Wars, are transported from Italy and made domestic in Hereford. At the end of his first Book, when he is praising the life of the Honest Man, it is to Virgil that he turns first

> "Thus sacred Virgil lived, from courtly vice
> And Baits of pompous Rome secure: at Court
> Still thoughtful of the rural honest life
> And how to improve his grounds, and how himself:
> Best Poet! fit Exemplar for the tribe
> Of Phoebus ...

Two more quotations are all that space allows - the first, a laudes Herefordiae to set beside the praises of Italy in the Second Georgic.

> Why should the Chalybes, or Bilboa boast
> Their harden'd iron: when our mines produce
> As perfect martial ore? can Tmolus head
> Vie with our saffron odours? or the fleece
> Baetic, or finest Tarentine, compare
> With Lemster's silken wool? where shall we find
> Men more undaunted, for their country's weal
> More prodigal of life? In ancient days,
> The Roman Legions, and great Caesar found
> Our fathers no mean foes: and Cressy plains
> And Agincourt, deep ting'd with blood, confess
> What the Silures vigour unwithstood
> Cou'd do in rigid fight ...

The second, the exordium of the poem, shows that in patriotic ardour Philips yields nothing to Virgil. The union of England and Scotland had only just been concluded:

the poet sees it as a firm warrant for the future triumph of Britain, and of the cyder of his native land.

> And now thus leagu'd by an eternal bond
> What shall retard the Britons bold designs
> Or who sustain their force; in union knit
> Sufficient to withstand the powers combin'd
> Of all this globe? ......................
> ..........................................
> .................. Where-e'er the British spread
> Triumphant banners, or their fame has reach'd
> Diffusive, to the utmost bounds of this
> Wide universe, Silurian cyder born
> Shall please all tastes, and triumph o'er the vine.

My next poet - John Dyer - is a more considerable figure, but, like Philips, he found inspiration in the flourishing agriculture of Wales and the Marches, and in Virgil. To quote the Preface of the 1770 edition of his works, "His poems are steeped in Virgil, and proceed, in their lesser way, to the same kind of ordered development that make the sequence Bucolics - Georgics - Aeneid." First, Grongar Hill, a poem descriptive of nature, easy and charming in its final form, but this was only after two earlier versions had been discarded, one of them an absurdly pompous Pindaric ode. In the wide prospect from Grongar Hill the eye falls on the ruined castle of Dynevor above the Towy: its desolation prompts the lines:

> A little rule, a little sway
> A sun beam on a winter's day
> Is all the proud and mighty have
> Between the cradle and the grave.

The theme of the transience of earthly power is amplified in his next poem, The Ruins of Rome, the fruit of his travels to Italy. He depicts the Rome of Piranesi's drawings, before the science of archaeology - Roma Sparita. One passage we cannot overlook.

> Suffice it now th'Esquilian mount to reach
> With weary wings, and seek the sacred rests
> Of Maro's humble tenement: a low
> Plain wall remains: a little sun-gilt heap
> Grotesque and wild .......................
> Here let me lie, with pleasing fancy sooth'd:
> Here flow'd his fountain: here his laurels grew
> Here oft the meek good man, the lofty bard
> Fram'd the celestial song, or social walked
> With Horace, or the ruler of the world ....

I know nothing of this "House of Virgil" thus spuriously displayed to the Grand Tourist of the day! No doubt demand created supply. The ruins of Rome prompt to fears for Britain.

> O Britons, O my countrymen, beware
> Gird, gird, your hearts: the Romans once were free
> Were brave, were virtuous ...

And the thought of Britain's happy liberty and the prosperity by which it was sustained leads on to his Georgic proper, the four books of 'The Fleece.' Of 'The Fleece' it may be said that its reach exceeds its grasp. Prefaced by a quotation from Columella, it sets out to describe the care of the various breeds of British sheep, then sheep-shearing, spinning, cording, weaving, the manufacture of woollen goods of every kind, their marketing and distribution, and the export of British woollens to all parts of the globe. Included in it are the legend of the Golden Fleece, the voyage of Drake, the search for the north-west passage, a description of the principal wool towns of England, and a proposal for canals to link the Trent, Severn, and Thames. It is permeated in that peculiar optimism of the eighteenth century that finds good in everything: think of all the virtues described in their epitaphs, they can't have been as good as that! It has, of course, its laudes Britanniae, truly a happy land, where even the nascent Industrial Revolution is greeted with approval and a Virgilian parallel.

> Such was the scene
> Of hurrying Carthage, when the Trojan chief
> First view'd her growing turrets. So appear
> Th'increasing walls of busy Manchester,
> Sheffield and Birmingham ...

And should you doubt, ladies and gentlement, that there is a passage of English verse where Manchester, Sheffield, and Birmingham appear within two lines, look up The Fleece, Book III, lines 340-1.

The success of Dyer and Philips led to a spate of minor Georgics - on hops, on the sugar-cane, on tobacco, and so forth. The young Oliver Goldsmith had his first lessons from a village schoolmaster, Paddy Byrne, who had composed Georgics in Irish. On 21st March, 1776, when Johnson and Boswell were staying at Stratford-upon-Avon, Johnson fired one of his heavier broadsides at the whole genre.

> "He had spoken slightingly of Dyer's Fleece, and said the subject could not be made poetical. "How can one write poetically of serges and druggets?" And yet, he said, you would hear many people talk of "that excellent poem, The Fleece". He also spoke slightingly of Grainger's Sugar Cane, and said that Grainger did not consider how few could be interested by that subject. I mentioned the circumstance .... of that poem, when produced in manuscript at Sir Joshua Reynolds, making all the assembled wits laugh at a passage 'Now, Muse, let's sing of rats' which had mice originally written, rats being put in as more dignified."

It is to be noted that one name does not come under Johnson's fire. For there is one outstanding success in this English Georgic tradition, an example of that kind of creative transformation in which Virgil himself excelled. This - need I say it - is James Thomson's Seasons, a really great poem which everyone knows, but, nowadays, few people read. My undergraduate friends tell me that they do not like Thomson because of his artifical, Latinate English: they prefer to take their nature from Wordsworth and the Romantics. Our English colleagues should find someone to recall Thomson, as Mr. Wilkinson has recently recalled Ovid. Douglas Grant, in his biography of the poet, points out that to Thomson English was a foreign language: he was born in the Scottish border country, a son of the manse, and spoke the Scots of Burns. He knew Latin and Scots when he left Edinburgh, at the age of twenty-five,

never to return to Scotland. When, shortly before his death in 1748, he tried to address the London actors rehearsing one of his plays, the company could not understand what he said. I cannot here trace the stages in the growth of the *Seasons* to their final length of more than five thousand lines, nor give any systematic account of the contents. My concern is what Thomson takes from the *Georgics*, and how it is used. Virgil, though a major source, is only one of many in this erudite poem. Lucretius, Ovid, Horace, Lucan, Silius Italicus and Manilius are other Latin poets used: Milton is as important as Virgil: behind a lengthy array of contemporary geographers, travellers, poets and divines towers a gigantic figure which is, to Thomson, almost what Epicurus was to Lucretius - the figure of Newton. To this aspect of the *Seasons* I shall return. As for Virgil, Thomson in his preface acknowledges that Virgil is his model. "It was the Devotion to the Works of Nature that, in his *Georgics*, inspired the rural Virgil to write so inimitably: and who can forebear joining with him on this Declaration of his, which has been the rapture of the Ages" - the Declaration being the passage from the Second Georgic:

> Me vero dulces primum ante omnia Musae
> Quarum sacra fero ingenti percussus amore ...

To Virgil, then, Thomson no less than Dante owed '*il bello stile, che m'ha fatto honore*.' More than that, many passages of the Georgics, long and short, are translated and embedded in the *Seasons*: sometimes in a context like that of the original: at others transformed to a new use. Thus Virgil's description of a fire in an olive grove is changed by Thomson to a fire in a tropical forest. Again, frequently Thomson will start from a Virgilian passage as a base and work it up. Virgil's haunting and melancholy lines (from his Aeneid, in this instance) on the migrating birds of autumn,

> ad terram gurgite ab alto
> quam multae glomerantur aves, ubi frigidus annus
> trans pontum fuget et terris immittit apricis

are expanded into some forty lines, ending with a description of the great migratory flocks among the western isles of Scotland:-

> "Where the Northern Ocean in vast whirls
> Boils round the naked melancholy isles
> Of farthest Thule, and the Atlantic Surge
> Pours in among the stormy Hebrides,
> Who can recount what transmigrations there
> Are annual made? What nations come and go?
> And how the living clouds on clouds arise,
> Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air
> And rude resounding shore are one wild cry?"

A still more striking example is the passage on Lapland. Its genesis is the description of the northern shepherds in the Third Georgic; making merry in their winter retreats with their beer and fruit drinks:

> Ipsi in defessis specubus secura sub alta
> otia agunt terra, congestaque robora totasque
> advolvere focos ulmos ignique dedere.
> hic noctem ludo ducunt, et pocula laeti
> fermento atque acidis imitantur vitea sorbis. (iii 376 ff.)

But Thomson, using geographers' accounts which had awakened a new interest in the Far North, and with echoes of Virgilian descriptions of the Golden Age, devotes a longish verse to these noble savages of the Polar wastes.

> "Not such the Sons of Lapland: wisely They
> Despise th' insensate barbarous Trade of War;
> They ask no more than simple Nature gives,
> They love their Mountains and enjoy their Storms.
> No false Desires, no Pride-created Wants,
> Disturb the peaceful Current of their Days;
> And thro' the restless ever-tortured Maze
> Of Pleasure, or Ambition, bid it rage.
> Their Rain-Deer form their Riches. These their Tents,
> Their Robes, their Beds, and all their homely Wealth
> Supply, their wholesome Fare, and chearful Cups.
> Obsequious at their Call, the docile Tribe
> Yield to the Sled their Necks, and whirl them swift
> O'er Hill and Dale, heap'd into one Expanse
> Of marbled Snow, or far as Eye can sweep
> With a blue Crust of Ice unbounded glaz'd.
> By dancing Meteors then, that ceaseless shake
> A waving Blaze refracted o'er the Heavens,
> And vivid Moons, and Stars that keener play
> With doubled Lustre from the radiant Waste,
> Even in the Depth of *Polar Night*, they find
> A wondrous Day: enough to light the Chace,
> Or guide their daring Steps to *Finland*-Fairs."

Yet the contrasts between the *Seasons* and the *Georgics* are even more striking. There is some vivid local colouring in the *Seasons*, such as the episode of the shepherd lost in a blizzard in the Cheviots, or the eloquent plea that the Border farmers should put out food for their sheep in the violent snow storms of late winter. But Thomson had that eighteenth-century preference for the general rather than the particular. Moreover, the farmers and their works have become subsidiary to the vast pageant of nature in every part of the globe. Above all, there are long expositions, almost on a Lucretian scale, of religious and philosophic themes. For the same awe and delight that Lucretius felt because the Universe could be understood in the light of Epicurus' philosophy was aroused in Thomson and many of his contemporaries by the discoveries of Newton. To understand the Universe is to be at home in it, and such an understanding, according to a populariser of Newton, was now easily reached.

'Every Gentleman, who has a moderate Degree of Literature or Politeness, may by this Assistance form a comprehensive View of the stupendous Frame of Nature, and the Structure of the Universe, with the same Ease he now acquires a Taste of the Magnificence of a Plan of Architecture, or the Elegance of a beautiful Plantation; without engaging in the minute and tedious Calculations necessary to their Production, which he leaves to the Artists themselves.' Contemplation, that is one of the key words to the age. Some of its choicer spirits found it so engrossing that they looked forward to practising it through eternity.

'We may with ease conceive, that a constant Progression and Encrease of Knowledge from the Contemplation of an endless Diversity of wonderful Objects presented to the

Mind, may feed and keep alive the highest Admiration and Delight; and thus, tho' the Happiness is the same, it may be continu'd by successive Discoveries of the Divine Perfections in the Works of Creation and Providence.

The Mind in a State of Happiness can with ease survey the Wonders of the Earth, and dive into the Depths and Secrets of the Sea, can unfold the various Appearances of Nature, account for the hidden Causes of Things, and unriddle the obscure and insuperable Difficulties, that in this Life confounded the wisest Heads, and eluded the Search of the most penetrating Philosópher.

If this be allow'd, what an immense Field of ravishing Contemplation is open'd? What Opportunities will continually be presented, of improving their intellectual Endowments in the Works of Creation, as well as Providence? Fresh Scenes of Wonder and Delight, in an endless Series, will be disclos'd to their View. Their Knowledge will encrease by the Observation of new Worlds, and the surprizing Variety of the Inhabitants, the different Forms of their Bodies, and the various Capacities and Dispositions of their Minds; of the different Nature of the Soil and Air, and the Diversity of Vegetables and Animals, distinguish'd by their peculiar specifick Characters; and after they have furnish'd their Minds with a vast Number of new and delightful Ideas, from the Observation of the Appearances in one World, they may be sent on the like Messages to another, and be directed to continue there for the same Ends. Thus successively they may reside in innumerable Orbs, where still progressive Accessions of Knowledge and fresh Discoveries of the Infinite Wisdom and Power, and Fruitfulness of the Unexhausted Fountain of Beauty, will feed eternal Rapture and Admiration.'

Meanwhile, in training, as it were, for this infinity of contemplation, Thomson and his friends lost no opportunity of intellectual practice in some favourite scene of wild nature, or the retreat of a country park. Such was the habit of George Lyttelton at Hagley -

"Courting the Muse, through Hagley Park you stray -
Thy British Tempe ...
And pensive listen to the various voices
Of rural peace - the herds, the flocks, the birds
From these abstracted oft
You wander through the philosophic world
Where in bright train continuous wonders rise
Or to the curious or the pious eye ... "

The influence of Thomson and thus indirectly of Virgil on the landscape-gardening of eighteenth century England is acknowledged to be profound, as indeed it is on the painting of Turner and Constable. You will find it if you go to see the superb exhibition now at the Royal Academy.

It was at Hagley that Thomson met William Shenstone, another *homo Virgilianus*, in a minor way. Shenstone's poems, which no critic has described without using the word 'elegant', are distinct echoes of the *Eclogues*: but in him the influence of Virgil is best seen in his elaborate landscaping of his small estate, the Leasowes, near Halesowen. As the climax of all his terrace and avenues, walks and groves and purling brooks, was the famous "Virgil's Grove", "a beautiful gloomy scene" described

with rapture by many visitors to the Leasowes. It contained an obelisk dedicated to Virgil, and, later, after his death, an urn dedicated to Thomson. Industry and the tentacles of Birmingham have spoiled the Leasowes beyond recall but it is not unfair to say that one senses something aetiolated about Shenstone. Something, perhaps, like those willowy young men who emerge from Bernard Berenson's villa to drift about Florence? Not altogether apt, for Shenstone was large and unwieldy in person. But his friend Richard Graves found his affectations comic, and satirised them none too gently in his book "The Distress'd Anchoret", where Shenstone appears as Columella.

'This is how his friends found Columella:- "On opening the garden gate they discovered their philosophical friend running across the lane, with a faggot-stick in one hand, and a book in the other, his hair about his ears, and one stocking about his heels, in a most violent paroxysm of rage. "D-mn 'em," says Columella, the torrent of his passion getting the better of his politeness, and even of his surprise at the sight of his old friends. "D-mn 'em," says he, "these pigs have routed up all my primroses and periwinkles, which were planted in my shrubbery but last week, and just began to take root." His wrath soon subsided on sight of his friends. He had been reading Seneca on 'Tranquillity of Soul', Lucan on 'Happiness', and Hurd's elegant 'Dialogue on Retirement'.'

Here is another incident of the same kind:-

"The man Peter said the farmer's heifers had got into the young plantation at the bottom of Aaron's Well. "Aaron's Well! you blockhead," says Columella, "Arno's Vale, you mean." "No, no," quoth Peter, "I know as how the right name of it is Tadpole Bottom, but Madame Leonora charged me, the very last time she was home, always to call it Aaron's Well or Arno's Vale, or something, I suppose there is no great difference." "Well, well", says Columella, "It's no matter what you call it; but go and drive out the devilish cows, and tell the farmer, if they get in any more I will put the hellish toads into the pound.""

Shenstone made a garden, like the old man of Tarentum in the Fourth Georgic. But that old gardener made his to give him a living: Shenstone, for pleasure. The old man did get his living, and, says Virgil, "was as happy as a King." Shenstone suffered from that eighteenth-century disease, the Spleen, he was the Distress'd Anchoret: in a moment of despair he used Swift's terrible phrase, "I die of rage." This same note of melancholy pervades the last important work in the Georgic tradition in that century - The Task, by William Cowper, which appeared in 1785.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since: with many an arrow deep infix'd
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades."

The metaphor is taken from Virgil: the shades are those of Olney, to which the poet retired in 1767 after the mysterious breakdown that forced him from the world. The poem is, formally, in the Georgic tradition, the acknowledgement to Virgil is explicit: the borrowings are many, and sometimes ingenious. Thus, the ice-palace of Catherine of Russia is likened to the glassy underwater palace of the Fourth Georgic, where Aristaeus finds Cyrene. There is still a pretence of the didactic: a passage on growing cucumbers under glass is more like Columella than Virgil. And there is a

passage on the laudes Britanniae, but, if compared with the Second Georgic, in a very minor key. As between

> 'Salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia Tellus,
> magna virum'

and 'England, for all thy faults, I love thee still!' the rapture is something abated. The chill, it seems, is partly due to our climate, for Cowper proceeds

> "Though thy clime
> Be fickle, and thy year most part deformed
> With dripping rains and withered by a frost,
> I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies
> And fields without a flower for warmer France
> With all her vines: nor for Ausonia's groves
> Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bowers."

This is part of the trouble - January, February and March bore hard on these contemplatives in their sequestered shades. They fostered an introspection that turned sour. After the somewhat tepid declaration of loyalty, England receives a severe scolding for her faults. The American colonies are lost, Chatham and Wolfe are dead, the manhood of England is effete and dissipated, the universities lack discipline, the church all zeal. Nor were the country-folk any better: they were a long way from Virgil.

> "Would I had fallen on these happier times
> That poets celebrate: those golden times
> And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings ...
> Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts
> That felt their virtues ..."

But, round Olney, the country girls were tarted up in London fashions: it was no longer safe to leave your door unbolted at nights or to walk in the woods: the magistrates were afraid to convict offenders. Even the gypsies were not children of nature, but verminous ragamuffins feeding on dead dogs. All around people were hunting foxes, chasing hares, treading on snails, and generally jarring on the now hypersensitive nerves of poor Cowper. Nor should we be deceived by the title of the poem. The Task is not a description of the tasks of the farmer's year. It was, in fact, a task imposed by a young lady who asked Cowper "for a poem on the theme of the sofa." This could have been the occasion of a Hellenistic trifle; but no, it launched Cowper into a long philosophic-descriptive poem of six books and more than five thousand lines. For the sofa was the contemplative's retreat from England's fickle winter clime: from it he surveyed the world and the universe and himself, and he did not much like what he saw.

It might be thought that the Georgic tradition in England had worked itself out with Cowper: and that, in any case, it could not survive the urbanisation and industrialisation of the last hundred and fifty years. But in fact it survives and is vigorous in this century, if we allow for changes of taste and form. I will close with a recent example: not explicitly in the tradition of Virgil, but I am concerned to claim for the Georgic tradition the poems written in our time by the Welsh poet, R.S. Thomas, whom no doubt many of you know. If you don't, let me urge you to make

his acquaintance. They are all short poems, but several are linked by a common theme; whether Thomas had Virgil in mind, I don't know: he is an educated man and could well have done so. But they have all the dignity and pathos of Virgil in their description of the decaying hill-farms of mid-Wales. Who could deny that this poem is a Georgic?

THE FARMER

And the wars came and you still practised
Your crude obstetrics with flocks and herds.
You went out early under a dawn sky,
Savage with blood, and turned the patience
Of your deep eyes earthward. The crops grew,
Nursed by your hands, to be mown later
By the hot sickle of flame: no tears
Thawed your bleak face with their salt current.
Instead you waited till the ground was cool,
The enemy gone, and led your cattle
To the black fields, where slow but surely
Green blades were brandished, the old triumph
Of nature over the brief violence
Of man. You will not do so again.

The wild moors around Plynlimmon are no Saturnia Tellus: it is a hard land in which man can barely write his name.

HYDDGEN

The place, Hyddgen;
The time, the fifth
Century since Glyn Dwr
Was here with his men.
He beat the English.
Does it matter now
In the rain? The English
Don't want to come:
Summer country.
The Welsh, too:
A barren victory.
Look at those sheep,
On such small bones
The best mutton,
But not for him,
The hireling shepherd,
History goes on;
On the rock the lichen
Records it: no mention
Of them, of us.

As a symbol of that hard unremitting life Thomas created the figure of Iago Prytherch, the very antithesis of Virgil's happy gardener by the Galaesus. Towards Prytherch, Thomas feels the Odi et Amo of Catullus - hatred for his loutishness, his utter insensitivity to the life of the mind: love for his patience and endurance. In the end he asks Prytherch his forgiveness in moving words.

Iago Prytherch, forgive my naming you.
You are so far in your small fields
From the world's eye, sharpening your blade
On a cloud's edge, no one will tell you
How I made fun of you, or pitied either
Your long soliloquies, crouched at your slow
And patient surgery under the faint
November rays of the sun's lamp.

Made fun of you? That was their graceless
Accusation, because I took
Your rags for theme, because I showed them
Your thought's bareness; science and art,
The mind's furniture, having no chance
To install themselves, because of the great
Draught of nature sweeping the skull.

Fun? Pity? No word can describe
My true feelings. I passed and saw you
Labouring there, your dark figure
Marring the simple geometry
Of the square fields with its gaunt question.
My poems were made in its long shadow
Falling coldly across the page.

Finally, Thomas can offer us this poem - as a Georgic especially for our time.

Power, farmer? It was always yours.
Not the new physics terrible threat
To the world's axle, nor the mind's subtler
Manipulation of our debt

To nature: but an old gift
For weathering the slow recoil
Of Empire with a tree's patience
Rooted in the dark soil.

I end where I began, with Virgil. Even from this superficial survey of a few of its progeny, I think, one comes away with a new respect for the harmony and proportion of the Georgics. The farmers' works, the descriptions of nature and the seasons, the praises of Rome and Italy, philosophical speculation, are organised and controlled in such a way that there is nothing in excess, save perhaps the Aristaeus-Cyrene: Orpheus-Eurydice myth at the end of the Fourth Georgic, which presents special problems I cannot consider here. Above all, how wise it was of Virgil in the Second Georgic to express for Lucretius his warm admiration and complete dissent. For intellectual insight, feeling for nature, vividness of description, richness of imagery, moral purpose and sincerity, he can be matched at one point or another by his British progeny. None of them unites these qualities at so high a level of poetry, or keeps his material under such firm control. The Divina Commedia and Paradise Lost challenge the Aeneid. Lycidas, The Scholar Gypsy, and Thyrsis stand in the company of the Fourth Eclogue. The Georgics find no such rival among their descendants. That, in its way, is the highest tribute to their excellence.

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# HUMOUR IN VIRGIL

## A lecture delivered to the Virgil Society
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by M. D. Macleod, M.A.

Perhaps the most striking quality of Virgil's poetry is his 'sadness at the doubtful doom of human kind': yet not every passage in Virgil is tinged with melancholy. He does in fact have a sense of humour, though he keeps it strictly in control and subordinates it to his artistic purpose. One must not, however, go as far as M. P. Richard, whose booklet entitled 'Virgile, Auteur Gai', greatly exaggerates the gaiety of the Aeneid, which is actually regarded as a succession of comic adventures.

Other studies of Virgilian humour to which I am indebted are H. J. Rose's Chapter on 'molle atque facetum' in his Sather lectures on the Eclogues, A. Sidgwick's remarks on the humour of the Georgics on pp. 39 - 40 of his introduction and particularly 'Le Sourire de Virgile', a recent article[1] by M. E. de St. Denis, who reacts against Richard's exaggerated views. I have also been helped by commentaries on individual books by Professors Austin and Maguinness and Mr. R. D. Williams.

One hears so much about the 'gravitas' of the Romans that one can easily underestimate their sense of humour. However even the most superficial acquaintance with authors such as Plautus, Cicero, Catullus, Horace, Ovid and Martial is sufficient to convince one that the Romans did have a sense of fun. No doubt the humour of the early Italians was unrefined and perhaps seldom in evidence except on holidays which might provide an occasion for Fescennine verses, 'saturae' and Atellan farces. Plautus' success on the comic stage must have owed a great deal to native Italian humour as well as to Greek models. However, as Rome became more Hellenised, her citizens began to acquire a greater and more refined sense of fun, even if Terence's comedies met with but mixed success. By 91 B.C., the dramatic date of Cicero's De Oratore, humour had become so much a part of the standard equipment of the advocate that a leading exponent of humour in the courts is made by Cicero to discourse at great length on various aspects of 'risus' in that dialogue[2]; in other words the Roman knights who formed the juries at that time could be relied on to appreciate an advocate's wit. A generation later Cicero's famous humour, though distasteful to Cato Uticensis, was appreciated by Julius Caesar and many others. About this time too, the time of Virgil's boyhood, Catullus of Verona, Virgil's fellow countryman, was producing poetry full of wit and humour. Virgil was about 30 when began his close friendship with Horace, who is with good reason described by E.K. Rand[3] as 'Rome's foremost expert in laughter'.

One might therefore reasonably expect Virgil to have had a sense of humour, and indeed Suetonius in his Life of Virgil bears witness to it in two passages. He tells us that, when Virgil was writing the Georgics, he composed a large number of lines in the morning and spent the rest of the day reducing them to a very small number. This, says Suetonius, Virgil wittily called 'producing after the manner of a she-bear and licking into shape'. Later Suetonius gives Virgil's retort to those who accused him

of borrowing from Homer. 'Why don't my critics try the same thefts? They'll find it easier to steal his club from Hercules than a line from Homer'.

Let us now examine the humour of Virgil's poetry.

A word first about the minor poems. There is humour in the Culex ('The Song of the Gnat') and the Moretum ('The Song of the Salad'), as both poems can be called mock epics and devote noble hexameters to humble themes, though it is doubtful whether either poem is by Virgil. Nor is the coarse humour of the Priapea likely to have emanated from the poet who was nicknamed Parthenias for his virginal purity. The poems of the Catalepton proper can be described as epigrams. They are clearly modelled on Catullus and show a certain amount of wit. One attacks a rhetorician who uses strange Greek forms. Another seems to be a defence of the reputation of a dead man who, it is claimed, did not die of drink. Another, attacking one Noctuinus and his father-in-law, aptly quotes Catullus' line[4] about Caesar and Pompey,

'Gener socerque perdidistis omnia'.

The most amusing poem of the collection is the parody of Catullus' 'Phaselus ille'. Catullus' yacht is replaced by 'Sabinus ille', a local upstart who began his career by driving mules. Virgil knew his Catullus[5] well. The poet of Verona must have been all the rage at Mantua, Virgil's birthplace, at Cremona, where, Suetonius tells us, Virgil spent his early years and at Mediolanum, where he moved when 15, according to Suetonius. The epigrams of the Catalepton could, therefore, have been by Virgil; to say that they are is another matter.

The Eclogues do not of course have the humour of Theocritus, whose shepherds show on the whole a greater wit and sharpness in repartee[6]. The Eclogues are however not without humour, though most of it is concentrated in three poems.

In Eclogue 2 the unsuccessful lover Corydon is modelled on Theocritus' amusing Polyphemus. Perhaps Corydon's best touch is when he applies city standards to himself and decides 'Rusticus es, Corydon', 'you're nothing but a country bumpkin, Corydon'.

In Eclogue 3 Damoetas and Menalcas end their singing match with amusing riddles. Damoetas bids Menalcas

Dic quibus in terris - et eris mihi magnus Apollo -
Tres pateat caeli spatium non amplius ulnas.

Menalcas retorts with his riddle:

Dic quibus in terris inscripti nomina regum
Nascantur flores et Phyllida solus habeto.

The answer to the second riddle was clear enough to the ancients; the flower referred to was what Theocritus calls ἁ γραπτὰ ὑάκινθος [7] which was thought of as having petals marked with AI to denote AIAI (alas) or AIAS (Ajax) or perhaps with Upsilon to signify Hyacinthus. Damoetas' riddle, however, has puzzled the commentators. The best suggestions are that one has to be looking at the sky or its reflection from the bottom of a well, or that Caelius is a name, perhaps of a man who owns no more than six feet of earth, in which he is or will be buried. Palaemon, with charming Socratic

irony, refuses to give a verdict, saying,

> non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites.
> et vitula tu dignus et hic - et quisquis amores
> aut metuet dulcis aut experietur amaros.

Perhaps, as Rose suggests, he has been preoccupied with his own problems, no doubt those of love. In any case he hasn't bothered to find out what the stake is. Before his arrival the competitors have agreed to compete for a pair of drinking-bowls, but[8] Palaemon assumes it is a calf, which he says both men deserve and indeed anyone else who fears love when sweet or who finds it bitter, and perhaps includes himself in one or other of these categories.

In Eclogue 5 Menalcas suggests to Mopsus that they should both sing a song. Menalcas compliments the younger man, Mopsus, by saying that his only rival in these hills is Amyntas. This annoys the conceited young Mopsus, who retorts that Amyntas will be rivalling the songs of Phoebus next. Mopsus is not a Theocritean name, but has, I suggest, been chosen by Virgil to mean something like Shakespeare's 'Sir Oracle'; Mopsus was the name of two legendary seers, both of whom came to an untimely end despite their prophetic skill, but Virgil is probably thinking of the one who was the seer of the Argonauts, and making a learned joke, as Apollonius describes the Argonaut Mopsus as a protegé[9] of Apollo's. In any case Mopsus now says he will sing a song that Amyntas will never be able to rival. Menalcas then says

> lenta salix quantum pallenti cedit olivae
> puniceis humilis quantum saliuncula rosetis,
> iudicio nostro tantum tibi cedit Amyntas.

Menalcas must surely have his tongue in his cheek to indulge in such fulsome flattery. Suitably mollified, Mopsus then favours Menalcas with his lament for the death of Daphnis. Menalcas immediately bursts into paeans of praise.

> tale tuum carmen nobis, divine poeta,
> quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per aestum
> dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere rivo.

This effusive praise from Menalcas is reminiscent of the stream of ironical compliments[10] paid by Aeschylus' Clytemestra in welcoming Agamemnon back to Argos, though of course Menalcas, unlike Clytemestra, speaks with a smile.

These passages excepted there is little humour in the Eclogues and small wonder when one is reminded by Eclogues 1 and 9 of the background of land confiscations against which the poems were written. Virgil could in the Fourth Eclogue[11] hope for better things to come, but just then he had little heart for joking.

In <u>Satires</u> I, 10 Horace praises Virgil with the words

> molle atque facetum
> Vergilio adnuerunt gaudentes rure Camenae.

As this satire was published about 35 B.C., when Virgil was only just beginning to write the Georgics, Horace must almost certainly be referring to the Eclogues which were published about 39 B.C. The natural translation of 'molle atque facetum' is 'gentle humour', and this, as we shall see, is precisely what Virgil shows in the

Georgics. Horace may be thinking of Virgil's personal qualities rather than those which he shows in the Eclogues, or his affection for Virgil may have led him to exaggerate the humour of the Eclogues; it is also just possible that he is referring to the 'Culex' or the 'Moretum', always assuming that they are by Virgil. Quintilian, however, is probably right in his interpretation of the passage, when he says[12] that the word 'facetus'[13] need not only apply to what raises a laugh, but that Horace uses it here rather to refer to 'grace' and 'polished elegance'. Quintilian then quotes a lost letter of Cicero who records Brutus as giving the epithets 'faceti' and 'molles' to a lady's feet as she goes daintily on her way. One could also quote Horace, Satires 1.2.26, where 'facetus' is applied to a man who thinks it elegant to wear his shirt very short. Horace is probably praising Virgil's style; he could, however, be referring to Virgil's metrical skill. Brutus' epithets are used of human feet; the application of the same adjectives to metrical feet is not impossible, when one thinks, for instance, of the various terms used to describe limping iambics, and 'mollis' is in fact used of a metrical foot in Ciris 1.20

> et gracilem molli libeat pede claudere versum.

On the evidence of the Georgics, M. Richard's description of Virgil as 'auteur gai' is fully justified. Many passages of the Georgics are full of playful wit, because Virgil as a patriot and lover of the countryside is able to write about what he loves - Italy. He has to curb his enthusiasm,

> singula dum capti circumvectamur amore. (3.285)

His reference (3.41) to the Georgics as the 'haud mollia iussa' of Maecenas is playful, whether it means difficult task' or 'stern bidding' as it does in Aeneid 9, 804. One of the Latin words[14] for 'humour' is 'sales', salt, the seasoning which makes food taste better. Virgil, realising that the fare served by Hesiod, Aratus and presumably Nicander in his lost work on Bee-keeping, was not particularly palatable, wisely seasons his poem with humour, even though his intention is quite as serious as Hesiod's and far more so than that of the Alexandrian dilettanti.

Much of the humour of the Georgics stems from Virgil's application of terms from the world of men to animals and insects. Take for example Georgics 1, 181-6:

> tum variae inludant pestes: saepe exiguus mus
> sub terris posuitque domos atque horrea fecit,
> aut oculis capti fodere cubilia talpae,
> inventusque cavis bufo et quae plurima terrae
> monstra ferunt, populatque ingentem farris acervum
> curculio atque inopi metuens formica senectae.

The mouse has his own apartments, and his own granary: the ant, like humans, takes out an insurance policy against old age. Note too the humorous effect of 'exiguus mus' with the heavy monosyllable at the end of the line; this gave Horace the idea for his more famous line (A.P. 139)

> parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

Cattle are described like humans; they too have their romances (venus), and wedding-days (hymenaei); the bullock, when charging, 'signa movet'; the crows are an army

in marching order. In particular, the bees are human in everything except size. They like men have their 'patria', their 'urbs', their 'penates' and their 'thalami'; the bee citizens are 'Quirites', obedient to mighty laws and governed by a 'rex'. They too have their spell of sentry duty, they too are beset by civil war and have to follow 'magnanimi duces' into battle, spurred by 'Martius ille aeris rauci canor'. When battle is joined, the bees

ingentes animos angusto in pectore versant.

Virgil has a literary precedent for the 'Battle of the Bees' in the Greek mock epic 'The Battle of Frogs and Mice', but Virgil's humour is seldom unkind or derisory; this is because he really does sympathise with all living creatures, just as though they are human. One of his most touching references to the hardships of this life is introduced without preamble in a passage about cattle (3. 66-68)

optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi
prima fugit, subeunt morbi tristisque senectus
et labor et durae rapit inclementia mortis.

Here Virgil is saying that the farmer must let his bullocks have access to the heifers as soon as possible, before it is too late. 'Mortalibus' in this passage must mean 'all creatures liable to death' and must certainly include cattle as well as men. Again, when discussing disease among bees, Virgil says

casus apibùs quoque nostros
vita tulit.

Compare Robert Burns'

'The best-laid plans of mice and men gang aft agley'.

Burns like Virgil knew the hardships of a farmer's life, and could sympathise with the sufferings of men, animals and flowers. 'The Cottar's Saturday Night' is similar in spirit to the Georgics. Burns too had a sense of humour; but I must not press my comparison too far; Burns was no 'Parthenias'.

Virgil tells us that battles among bees are easily stopped.

haec certamina tanta
pulveris exigui iactu compressa quiescunt.

Sidgwick takes this as a humorous reference to a storm in a teacup. Such humour would, I think, be too unkind for Virgil. Rather are the lines full of pathos and sympathy. 'Pulveris exigui'[15], 'a handful of dust', makes the reader think of burial and death. The great efforts of the bees are all to come to nothing. Quite the most amusing passage in Georgics 4 is the playful simile likening the heavy manual labour of the tiny bees to that of the giant Cyclopes in their forge under Etna.

fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella.
ac veluti lentis Cyclopes fulmina massis
cum properant, alii taurinis follibus auras
accipiunt redduntque, alii stridentia tingunt
aera lacu; gemit inpositis incudibus Aetna;

illi inter sese magna vi bracchia tollunt
in numerum, versantque tenaci forcipe ferrum.
non aliter, si parva licet componere magnis,
Cecropias innatus apes amor urguet habendi,
munere quamque suo. (169-178)

The tradition of the epic simile permitted it to be realistic[16]; it was often commonplace, e.g. flies buzzing round a milk-pail, or even coarse, as when Odysseus is likened to a man impatiently cooking a black pudding, but it was not deliberately used for comic effect, as it is here. Virgil therefore, still with his tongue in his cheek, adds the words

si parva licet componere magnis,

as he pokes fun at the traditionalists who will be offended at such a piece of literary sacrilege. Pope missed the point when he defended the passage against the charge of exaggeration.

Despite the humorous effect here, Virgil was so pleased with his description of the forge of the Cyclopes that he decided, and rightly, to use several lines again in a serious passage in Aeneid 8, 449 seq., when Aeneas' shield is being forged. He also used the description of the eager activity of the bees again, when, in Aeneid I 430 seq., the bustle of the Tyrians building Carthage is likened to that of bees.

One of the most attractive passages of the Georgics is 4. 125 seq., the description of the old Cilician who settled at Tarentum and made a most successful garden out of the poorest of soil. His roses were the first of the spring, his apples the first of the autumn, and he was able to pick the 'hyacinthus' from his garden, while winter's frosts were still cracking the rocks and the rivers were still frozen solid; but even this was not good enough, for he would still complain that summer was late that year and the Zephyrs slow in coming.

Georgics 3. 294

nunc, veneranda Pales, magno nunc ore sonandum

is an amusing mock-heroic line. Pales is the goddess of flocks and this line occurs early in Virgil's description of sheep-farming and goat-farming. In the previous lines Virgil has been saying that he realises the difficulty of his task in putting this topic into Latin verse and in lending honour to so humble a theme. He then goes on to claim originality in traversing virgin areas of Parnassus. All this is an echo of Lucretius' claim to fame, as having overcome the 'patrii sermonis egestas', in reproducing Greek philosophy in lucid Latin verse and in being original. I take these lines as an echo rather than a parody of Lucretius, whom Virgil holds in the greatest respect in all except his lack of religion. No real disrespect to Pales is intended; Virgil merely smiles at the humble province of Pales, rather than at the goddess herself, who is asked to share in the joke. This passage need not contradict the impression I for one have that Virgil was a deeply religious man who rejects the Epicureanism of Lucretius and Siro when he says

felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas

and expresses his own religious convictions in the next line

fortunatus et[17] ille deos qui novit agrestes.

'Felix' could be a polite way of saying 'no thank you, not for me', like the Greek ἐπαινεῖν or Virgil's own 'laudato ingentia rura'.

Before leaving the Georgics, we must pause to consider an apparent inconsistency in Virgil's attitude. In many passages he is gay and light-hearted; yet elsewhere he is melancholy and depressed. Virgil, like Horace, is a poet of mood; he isn't really inconsistent but takes his mood from his subject matter. He is often gay in the Georgics, because he loves the Italian country-side and believes in a divine providence. He cannot, however, help showing his tender sympathy for the farmer whose 'labor actus in orbem' is never done, except perhaps at the Bacchanalia and other festive occasions. He does, nevertheless, realise that providence is being cruel to be kind. As a result of his unremitting toil, the farmer, unlike the sophisticated city-dweller and man of affairs, does at least gain 'secura quies et nescia fallere vita'. Italy is 'iustissima tellus' and rewards 'labor improbus' with 'facilem victum' (an uncomplicated, unworried life), so that Virgil can, in all sincerity, say,

o fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
agricolas.

Yet, when he comes to describe the hard work of the farmers, his tender heart sympathises with them more than is really necessary. Nor can Virgil's kind heart properly understand why providence permits unnecessary or undeserved suffering; that is why in his description of the cattle plague he cries out in protest

quid labor aut benefacta iuvant? quid vomere terras
invertisse gravis?

and stresses that these were no dissolute city dwellers.

We turn now to the Aeneid. Virgil's purpose in composing the Aeneid was to produce a patriotic, religious and artistic epic poem, to combine the literary qualities of Homeric epic with the spirit of Naevius and Ennius. Clearly the Aeneid is poetry with a purpose, and equally clearly humour has no large or obvious part to play in fulfilling that purpose. M. Richard's statement that the Aeneid is a series of comic adventures is therefore to be rejected at once. It is closer to the Pilgrim's Progress than to the adventures of Don Quixote or Baron Münchhausen. Virgil had an instinctive feeling for what is appropriate, τὸ πρέπον, the 'decorum', and realised that gratuitous, pointless comedy was out of place in a serious, didactic epic.

Humour does, however, occur when appropriate. There is broad humour of a Plautine type in the Games in Book 5, because the occasion is suitable, and, no doubt, also because its literary precedent, the Funeral Games of Patroclus in Iliad 23 is so full of comedy. Elsewhere the humour of the Aeneid is subtler and based on careful characterisation. Virgil's first aim is to make his characters realistic, to make them act naturally in any given situation. He has no objection to their acting humorously, provided they act in character. For this reason I think the humour of the Aeneid is akin to that of Terence, who, you will recall, was awarded first prize by a Roman critic for his characterisation. This realism in characterisation extends also to the anthropomorphic Olympian gods; Venus is a devoted mother, Juno a woman with a grudge, and Jupiter a kind, but rather overworked 'paterfamilias'. They are

not meant to cut a particularly comic figure, but only to act in character. I shall also discuss the cruel taunts and jeers which Virgilian warriors hurl at each other. These may simply be a legacy from Homer; I prefer to think of them as Virgil's commentary on the ugly effect which war has on human character. I shall also say something about the irony of fortune, the cruel jokes which she plays on men in the Aeneid.

The broadest humour of the Aeneid occurs where it is most appropriate, in the games of Book 5; the accounts of the boat race and the foot race are particularly amusing.

In the boat-race, Gyas' craft, the Chimera, shoots into the lead, closely followed by Cloanthus, who, by steering close to the rock round which they had to double, overtakes Gyas, who, angry with his steersman Menoetes for taking too safe a course, throws him overboard. The Trojans laugh instinctively, as men do, at this dangerous cruel act, but go on laughing with a clearer conscience when they see that the old Menoetes can swim. Needless to say, Gyas' efforts at the helm are anything but an improvement and he soon drops to third place. Meanwhile Menoetes' caution is partially vindicated by the fate of Sergestus, who steers too close to the rock, runs aground, but finally brings his ship limping home amid derisory jeers. Cloanthus just wins from Menestheus, because he remembers to pray to the deities of the sea, so that Portunus and the Nereids push his ship on faster. Compare this harmless intervention by gods in answer to a prayer with the events of the chariot race of Iliad 23, where Apollo, smarting over a past grievance, dashes the whip from the hand of Diomede who is overtaking the leader, Eumelus. Athena however restores his whip to her favourite Diomede, and, for good measure, wrecks Eumelus' chariot.

There is humour too in Virgil's footrace. Nisus is leading Salius by a long way, when he slips on a patch of blood where oxen had been sacrificed. But he remembers his dear young friend, handsome Euryalus, who is in third place, and deliberately fells Salius, enabling Euryalus to win. After the race Salius complains so vociferously that Aeneas gives him an extra prize. Then of course Nisus complains as well, and the sight of his limbs covered in filthy slime is too much for Aeneas, and he laughs for the one and only time[18] in the poem, and gives Nisus a prize too. Compare this with the footrace of the Iliad. Ajax is leading, closely followed by Odysseus, when Athene, in answer to Odysseus' prayer, makes Ajax slip on cattle dung. After the race Ajax grabs second prize, spits out the dung and exclaims (I quote Rieu's racy translation)

> 'Damnation take it. I swear it was the goddess tripped me up, the one who always dances attendance like a mother on Odysseus'.

Once again we see Homer's gods in a much less favourable light; Virgil's gods don't interfere in his footrace. As we shall see, the gods of the Aeneid, though amusingly human at times, are, with the possible exception of Juno, much less capricious and much more respectable than their Homeric prototypes.

Though amusing, Aeneid 5 has considerably less comedy than Iliad 23. One reason is that Virgil's gods are staider, but another is that Aeneas has to be the centre of interest in this book as throughout the Aeneid. The Iliad on the other hand is not really an Achilleid, and many heroes besides Achilles figure prominently in Iliad 23, heroes whom we have already grown to know and love. In particular there is Nestor,

that Polonius of the Iliad, who gives his son, Antilochus, a long briefing before the chariot race, wise though Antilochus was, says Homer. Antilochus deprives Menelaus of second place by dangerous driving and also by threatening his horses with death. Antilochus goes on to show himself a briefer and more effective speaker than his father. First he resists Achilles' suggestion that the second prize which he had earned should go to Eumelus whose chariot had been wrecked; he tactfully suggests an extra prize for Eumelus. Then he placates Menelaus, who is angry at his dangerous driving, by flattering him and offering him second prize. However, Menelaus, now that his wounded pride is healed, allows Antilochus to keep his prize. Then, after the footrace, Antilochus talks his way into an extra prize by flattering Achilles and saying that only he could have beaten Odysseus. This is in sharp contrast to his loquacious father Nestor, who, on being awarded an extra prize by Achilles, made a long speech recalling the athletic feats of his youth. Then there are Idomeneus and the lesser Ajax who quarrel over a bet. These illustrations from Iliad 23 will suffice to show that Virgil, by making Aeneas overshadow the other Trojans so completely, left himself less scope for humour. However humour, though appropriate in Aeneid 5, was not one of the primary purposes of the poem as a whole.

We turn now to Virgil's subtler, more Terentian humour, the humour which arises out of characters acting in a natural but amusing way.

First let us examine Virgil's favourite character, young Ascanius. Just before the momentous hunting expedition which ends with the meeting of Dido and Aeneas in the cave, we have a light humorous sketch of young Ascanius:

> at puer Ascanius mediis in vallibus acri
> gaudet equo, iamque hos cursu, iam praeterit illos,
> spumantemque dari pecora inter inertia votis
> optat aprum aut fulvum descendere monte leonem. (4, 156)

He wishes to join in the hunt, and fancies himself as a big game hunter. Any young boy would act in this way. The chronology of the Aeneid is confused and inconsistent, lacking the poet's 'ultima manus', but Ascanius is presumably eight or nine, as this is the seventh summer since he was a toddler escaping from Troy, when

> dextrae se parvus lulus
> implicuit sequiturque patrem non passibus aequis.

Imagine the scene. Aeneas has Anchises on his back, and Creusa is following behind. Whether 'non passibus aequis' refers to 'uncertain' or 'tiny' steps, the picture is most realistic. In other circumstances such a description of a toddler could be humorous; here it touches the heart. Aeneas is not speaking to Dido with a twinkle in his eye, but is renewing an 'infandum dolorem'. I once heard a cynic remark that Aeneas renews an unspeakable grief for two whole books; 'infandum' at the beginning of Aeneid 2, however, means not 'unmentionable' but 'unspeakably great, indescribable'. Ascanius, then, is quite a big boy, when at Carthage. We don't hear very much about Cupid's impersonation of him. Probably Cupid does his damage to Dido at the end of Book 1, and then departs unsung. Presumably we hear so little about Cupid, because he was the half-brother of Aeneas and must not be allowed to disgrace the 'gens Iulia'. Remember how in Apollonius' Argonautica, Book 3, Aphrodite describes him as a mischievous, disobedient boy quite out of her control. When Dido is distraught with love (4.83), she sees and hears Aeneas even when he's not there,

aut gremio Ascanium genitoris imagine capta
detinet.

Notice the word 'detinet'; such a big boy who likes hunting wouldn't want to sit on a lady's lap. He has to be kept there by force. This description too could be humorous but for the circumstances; this particular passage is full of pathos, whether the forcible detention happens in reality or only in Dido's fevered imagination. Ascanius cannot be very much bigger when he takes part in the 'lusus Troiae' in Sicily along with the other boys. They are understandably nervous, but the onlookers encourage them and say to each other, 'Isn't he like his father?' or 'He takes after his mother'.

excipiunt plausu pavidos gaudentque tuentes
Dardanidae, veterumque agnoscunt ora parentum. (5. 75-6)

Shortly after they have reached Italy, Ascanius makes a momentous jest. Food is short; they eat fruit off cakes of meal, and then eat the cakes too, whereupon Ascanius exclaims

heus etiam mensas consumimus! (7. 116)

and Aeneas realises that this is the promised land.

Now we turn to Dido. The end of Book 1 is amusing, when she keeps asking questions about Troy long into the night. Then in 4. 133, when all are mustering for the hunt, Virgil describes Dido as 'thalamo cunctantem'. This could be humorous; she could be exercising a woman's prerogative of keeping everyone waiting[19], as she lingers before her mirror; or she could be showing something like a bride's hesitation on her wedding day. Perhaps Virgil deliberately leaves the meaning ambiguous[20]. Dido, like her patron, Juno, has a sarcastic tongue. After Aeneas has told her that he must leave Carthage at the gods' bidding, she snarls at him

scilicet is superis labor est, ea cura
quietos sollicitat. neque te teneo neque dicta refello.
i, sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas. (4. 379)

'A likely story!', she says. 'Of course we all know the gods don't concern themselves with human affairs'.

Dido's epicureanism contrasts unfavourably with the 'pietas' of Aeneas. It also illustrates something else. Even if Virgil's gods are rather comical, the poet does not make them so with an Epicurean motive. He isn't in other words making his picture of gods who interfere in human affairs so ridiculous as to be incredible. Nor yet is he a Platonist believing that god should be perfect, and for that reason introducing with a superior smile ridiculously wicked gods who are not to be taken seriously. Richard says that Virgil has made Olympus 'une scène de comédie', a comic stage. I admit that Virgil's gods are realistic humans, that in Olympus, as in New Comedy, we have a mirror of life. But there is one essential difference between the Aeneid and a play of Menander or Terence; the comic poet, unlike Virgil, produces a plot specifically designed to place the characters in comic situations. This Virgil does not do.

To me the significant thing is not that Virgil's gods are rather comical at times,

but how much less comic, how much more respectable and responsible they are than Homer's gods. The author of the treatise On the Sublime remarks with much justification that Homer has made his men gods and his gods men. The gods of the Iliad are indeed greater scoundrels than the men and are often quite ridiculous. Zeus of the Iliad is irresponsible. He allows the gods to take part in the fighting, and sits back to enjoy the fun. He is a violent bully, who strings Hera up in mid-air with anvils round her ankles. He throws Hephaestus out of heaven for coming to his mother's help. He allows himself to be beguiled by Hera who is an unscrupulous liar. Aphrodite is wounded by Diomede and runs off in tears to Zeus, while in the Odyssey she is exposed to the gaze and ridicule of the gods as she lies adulterously in bed with Ares, a tale sung by the bard Demodocus and greeted with laughter by the men who heard it. The war-god himself is worsted by the mortal Diomede. Athene is a perpetual source of trouble, encouraging Diomede to fight gods and Pandarus to shoot his treacherous arrow.

Homer's Olympians had become part of the epic tradition, and Virgil had to accept them, particularly as they had figured in the epics of Naevius and Ennius. But he intended the Aeneid to be an exceedingly religious and moral poem about a hero renowned for his piety. And so Virgil had to compromise, making his gods imperfect, yet morally superior to Homer's gods. This would be in keeping with the idea I suggested that Virgil believed in a providence that is good but not perfect. Thus he depicts Jupiter as good but not ideally good, and his control of the other gods as satisfactory on the whole, but not perfect. He permits himself to ask early in the poem

tantaene animis caelestibus irae?

and in 12.503

tanton placuit concurrere motu,
Iuppiter, aeterna gentis in pace futuras?

Providence is good, but all is not 'for the best in the best of all possible worlds'.

Jupiter is, then, a good paterfamilias; he is indeed called 'Iuppiter optimus', but he has his faults and weaknesses and amusing they are at times. In particular he finds it difficult to control his womenfolk, the spiteful and sarcastic Juno and Venus, the doting mother of Aeneas. Jupiter seems to have let events at Carthage slip out of his control till his son Iarbas prays to him, 'Jupiter omnipotent, do you see what's happening? Dido prefers Aeneas to me, your son. All our prayers and offerings to you seem to be a waste of time'. Virgil then records that Jupiter omnipotent did something about it and sent Mercury down to bid Aeneas leave Carthage. Iarbas uses the words 'Iuppiter omnipotens' in his prayer out of sarcasm or perhaps flattery; but Virgil, I think, uses the term in all seriousness. Jupiter may have been rather remiss up till now, but now he acts for his own good reasons, and not simply because of what Iarbas has said. Despite Virgil's testimony, however, Jupiter is not quite omnipotent. Apart from his rather confused relationship with fate, which this isn't the time to discuss[21], he can't control Venus and Juno properly. An amusing instance of this is in Aeneid 10, where between a speech of ten lines by Jupiter and one of 45 lines by Venus, Virgil makes the explicit comment,

Iuppiter haec paucis, at non Venus aurea contra
pauca refert.

Venus' speech is followed by one from 'regia Iuno' who confines herself to a mere 33

lines. Virgil need not be sneering when he applies the epithets 'aurea' to Venus or 'regia' to Juno; 'regia' simply stresses the fact that Juno is a proud woman acting in character. 'aurea' could be taken as a sneer and imply that Venus is far from perfect; I prefer to think of it as a stock Homeric epithet, though rather an unfortunate one, which Virgil would surely have removed if he had lived to revise the passage and complete the following line. After hearing the long speeches of Venus and Juno, Jupiter is forced to admit that he will be impartial hereafter, and leave fate to take its course.

rex Iuppiter omnibus idem.
fata viam invenient.

Marouzeau and de St. Denis think that Virgil is smiling at a comic shirking of his responsibilities by Jupiter: it is better, however, to take the lines as serious. Jupiter would have like to facilitate the workings of fate; instead he is compelled by his bickering women to let things take a course which may be rather more unpleasant than necessary. Jupiter teases Juno rather gratùitously 'ultro' on one occasion (10.606), when she isn't getting her own way. Then towards the end of the poem, when he has expressly forbidden her to interfere any more, but she remains loyal in her defence of her Latins, he remarks with a kindly smile

es germana Iovis Saturnique altera proles;
irarum tantos volvis sub pectore fluctus. (12.830-1)

'You really are my own true sister; you have such a temper'. After teasing her, however, he does agree to a compromise. He is indeed a much kinder figure than Zeus, the bully of the Iliad, who laughs when Hera shivers at the memory of the time he strung her up in mid-air.

Juno is the villain of the piece. She is proud ('Me be stopped by the fates? Me give in? Me who walk in majesty as Jupiter's sister and wife?'); she indulges in constant sarcasm, sneering about 'Venus' peerless son' or the magnificent victory which two gods, Venus and Cupid win over one poor defenceless woman, Dido; she is spiteful, cunning and treacherous; she stoops to bribery, offering Aeolus fourteen beautiful nymphs in return for his help; she acts in fact just like a nasty woman with a grudge, and consequently is the most comical of the Olympians. Virgil doesn't want to make his gods bad, but, without Juno's bitter enmity, there could be no trials and tribulations for Aeneas, no Aeneid. With great economy, therefore, Virgil, concentrates most of the divine viciousness in one character, Juno, but even so allows her to retain a certain amount of the reader's sympathy as she struggles loyally in defence of her Italians, in her role of 'Saturnia Iuno'.

Venus, as one would expect from the foundress of the 'gens Iulia' emerges with a great deal more credit than Juno, but she is still a woman and an amusing one. She too can occasionally be sarcastic and proud, as when she resents the interference of Iuturna, a mere nymph. She is loquacious, as Virgil expressly tells us. She gets what she wants from Neptune by flattering him and insinuating that Juno has interfered in his realm. Perhaps her most amusing scene is when she asks Vulcan for a shield for Aeneas, her son by another. Vulcan at first hesitates, but then she shamelessly exercises her feminine charms on him and when Vulcan yields, Virgil archly comments

sensit laeta dolis et formae conscia coniunx.

One further reason why Juno and Venus are so ridiculous at times is that they are the major female characters of the Aeneid, and Virgil held a rather low opinion of women, though perhaps de Saint Denis goes too far in calling him a misogynist.[22]

We turn now to the cruel sardonic humour which Virgil puts into the mouths of his characters. We have already mentioned the sarcasm of Juno, Dido and even Venus; but males can be guilty of cruel, unattractive jests in the battle scenes. Virgil follows Homeric precedent in making his fighting men try to unnerve their opponents κερτομίοις ἐπέεσσι. One of the few reasonably certain things about Mycenean warriors is that they were less loquacious fighters than Homer makes them. However the talkative, jeering warriors of the Iliad and the Aeneid can be justified on the ground that they make the narrative more vivid. For example Liger from the chariot driven by his brother Lucagus taunts Aeneas

> non Diomedis equos nec currum cernis Achilli
> aut Phrygiae campos; nunc belli finis et aevi
> his dabitur terris. (10.581-3)

Liger apparently knows his Iliad and refers to two occasions[23] when Aeneas was rescued by divine intervention, but boasts that his horses and chariot are superior to those of Diomede and Achilles. Aeneas then sends Lucagus toppling down from the chariot with a mortal wound, telling him that the horses of which he has boasted haven't let him down, but that he himself has deserted his post. Then, despite Liger's pleas for mercy, Aeneas kills him too, saying

> haud talia dudum
> dicta dabas. morere et fratrem ne desere frater.

'You've quickly changed your tune. Die and remain loyal to your brother'. Aeneas' cruel jests[24] can perhaps be justified in that he is angered by the death of Pallas and that they are merely counter-jests.

Other vivid taunts against opponents are those of Turnus to the phantom Aeneas

> quo fugis, Aenea? thalamos ne desere pactos;
> hac dabitur dextra tellus quasita per undas. (10.649-50)

and that of Aeneas to a frightened Turnus

> quae nunc deinde mora est? aut quid iam, Turne, retractas?
> non cursu, saevis certandum est comminus armis. (12.889-90)

Even when their opponents are dead or dying, the Homeric and Virgilian warriors still continue their cruel taunts. For example, Turnus, as he kills a Trojan, gloats

> en agros et quam bello, Troiane, petisti
> Hesperiam metire iacens: haec praemia, qui me
> ferro ausi temptare, ferunt, sic moenia condunt. (12.359-62)

Aeneas, as he kills Mezentius, asks

> ubi nunc Mezentius acer et illa
> effera vis animi? (10.897-8)

Aeneas is still angry about Pallas, and has presumably a natural antipathy to the impious Mezentius, but one might have expected him to show some sympathy for the father who has just lost a dear son. Aeneas may also be indulging in a cruel joke right at the end of the poem when he tells Turnus that it is Pallas who is killing him.

Then there is Messapus, the Trojan, who angry at the treacherous violation of the truce, kills a Tuscan king at the altar with words reminiscent of the gladiatorial shows,

hoc habet, haec melior magnis data victima divis. (12.296)

But most savage and shocking of all is the humour of the sacrilegious Pyrrhus, who kills Priam's son, Polites, beside the altar and, terrible crime to Virgil, before his father's very eyes. When Priam tells Pyrrhus that he is a disgrace to his father Achilles, Pyrrhus kills Priam too, telling him to take the message of his son's degeneracy down to his father Achilles in Hades.

Cruel humour of this kind is hardly what one would expect from the gentle, kindly Virgil. As Professor Maguinness puts it 'These callous jibes at fallen enemies derived from Homer tend to jar on the reader of Virgil because of their contrast with the compassionate spirit that breathes throughout the work'. This is indeed so, but Virgil must have a purpose in introducing these cruel jests. He does not simply follow Homeric precedents without good reason. He may think it lends realism to the scenes. He is also, I suggest, showing the ugly effects which 'horrida bella' have on human behaviour, and registering a deliberate protest and warning against the grimness of war, now fortunately replaced by the 'pax Augusta'.

Then there is the irony of Fortune who, with cruel humour, can play nasty tricks on men. As in Homer there are the heroes whose divine ancestors cannot save them from death; the seers who cannot foretell their own doom or wrongly promise themselves a long life; the identical twins upon whom Pallas brought 'dura discrimina' by cutting the head off one, the hand off the other; there is Cretheus, the companion of the Muses, whose perpetual delight it was to sing of steeds, arms and battles, but here he is among steeds, arms and battles, falling a victim to Turnus. Dido with Cupid on her lap doesn't know how mighty a god she has sitting there. But above all there is the irony of Turnus' fate. He had taken the belt of the dead Pallas and, when he met Aeneas in the final conflict, he, in Virgil's words,

inimicum insigne gerebat.

In Turnus' eyes the belt is 'inimicum' in the sense that it belonged to an enemy, but the belt itself is also Turnus' foe, because it seals his death warrant.

In conclusion, though the most noteworthy feature of Virgil's poetry is his tender, melancholy sympathy for all creatures that suffer, though 'pius Aeneas' is a humourless character, Virgil himself has a highly developed and civilised sense of humour. The poet of the Eclogues, however, just like the hero of the Aeneid, had little enough to laugh about. Virgil was a happier man when he wrote the Georgics, which consequently have many gay passages. The Aeneid, however, was much too serious an undertaking to merit a playful approach, though occasionally, where it seemed appropriate, Virgil did allow himself a gentle, good-natured smile at the foibles of human nature, whether in men or gods, males or females. The humour of the Aeneid is

unobtrusive, and as gentle and refined as that of Terence; it has no 'vis comica'; what it does have is 'urbanitas' which Quintilian (6.3.107) defines thus:

> illa est urbanitas in qua nihil absonum, nihil agreste, nihil inconditum, nihil peregrinum neque sensu neque verbis... possit deprehendi.

All those qualities are to be found to the full in the Aeneid of Roman Virgil.

1. Latomus 1964, p. 446 seq.
2. De Oratore 2.216-290.
3. The Building of Eternal Rome, p. 81.
4. 29.24.
5. See C.J. Fordyce, Catullus, p. xxii.
6. e.g. 4.55, 5 passim.
7. 10.28; for its identity see Gow's note.
8. The text is doubtful, but this reading and interpretation seem to make the best sense.
9. Argonautica I, 65-66.
10. Agamemnon 895-901, and 901 in particular; she speaks with a sneer, but perhaps also hopes that her praise will excite the φθόνος of the gods against Agamemnon.
11. Some people, wrongly, I think, see humour in 11. 43-44.
12. Inst. Or. 6, 3, 19-20.
13. See H.J. Rose, op. cit., and W.J.N. Rudd, 'Libertas' and 'Facetus', Mnemosyne, 1957, pp. 319-336, and in particular pp. 328-332; I am grateful to Mr. Currie for drawing my attention to Rudd's article.
14. It is virtually impossible to draw adequate distinctions between the various Latin words for 'humour' and 'humorous'; see Cicero, loc. cit., Quintilian, op. cit., 6, 3, Rudd, loc. cit.
15. Cf. 'pulveris exigui ... parva munera' in Horace's (presumably later) Archytas Ode. All Archytas' mathematical studies are now as nothing, says Horace.
16. See M. Coffey, The Subject Matter of Virgil's Similes, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, 1961, pp. 63-75.
17. Reading 'at' for 'et' helps my interpretation.
18. Though he is 'laetus' on occasion.
19. Cf. Cicero, Pro Milone, 28.
20. Cf. the ambiguity of 'ulularunt vertice Nymphae' a little later (4.168).
21. See the chapter in C. Bailey, Religion in Virgil and H.L. Tracy, Fata Deum, Greece and Rome 1964, pp. 188 seq.
22. Against passages like 4.569-570 can be set e.g. 8.407 seq..
23. 5.311 seq., 20.290 seq..
24. The Aeneas of the Iliad is also a sardonic warrior; cf. 16.617.

An additional meeting of the Society was held on 6th March 1965, at which Professor Alexander G. McKay, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S.C., McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada, read a paper entitled "Vergil's Roman Monuments: the Imperial Facade". The following précis of the paper (which was illustrated with slides) has been kindly supplied by Professor McKay:-

Architectural background plays a major role in Vergil's ample canvas. Evander's Pallanteum is a medley of Arcadia and Augustan Rome. On the antique sites of Segesta, Troy and Carthage, Lavinium and Laurentum, and Cumae Vergil superimposes actual constructions of his own time. Aeneas is repeatedly presented as conditor, like Augustus, of a New City, a New Troy (Troia ambigua). The Campus Martius, the Palatine and Capitoline Hills, and the Forum Romanum are major areas of reference for Vergil's architectural allusions, all areas where Augustan and Agrippan monuments rose impressively during Vergil's life-time. Other contemporary constructions emerge sharply and meaningfully during Aeneas' adventures in the Phlegraean Fields: the religious architecture of Augustus on the Cumaean acropolis, and the engineering mastery of Agrippa and his architect Cocceius at Avernus-Lucrinus, Cumae, Bauli (Bacoli), and Naples.

The Augustan repairs and renovations to the Apollo temples and Sibyl's grotto at Cumae were part of his religious revival programme, but no less meaningfully were meant to centre public notice on the protective Apollo to whose saving grace Octavian and Daedalus attributed their successful issue from trouble, Daedalus from the vengeful Minos, Augustus from the menace of Sextus Pompey and Cleopatra.

## BOOK REVIEWS

BROOKS OTIS, VIRGIL, A STUDY IN CIVILIZED POETRY, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

1963. Pp. 436. Cloth, 45/-.

This is an extremely interesting and valuable book, compulsory reading for all students of Virgil, eye-opening for all students of literature. It owes its significance to two things: first, Professor Brooks Otis' critical creed is eminently sane (p. 147 "The present problem of Virgilian critics is to preserve a safe via media between what can only be called the obtuseness and crude literalism of most older commentary on the poem and a more recent tendency to find all manner of mystical meanings and numerical correspondences in it."). Secondly, although he is well-versed in the great works of Virgilian interpretation, he has abandoned the well-worn paths of classical scholarship, and applied to Virgil the methods of modern English and American criticism (p. 405). The result is a careful examination of the structure of the poems and their similarities and differences of episode, an examination which becomes the basis for a deeper interpretation of Virgil's meaning.

In the preface Otis tells us that the book is a condensation of part of a large bulk of material originally assembled for "imparting a little knowledge of the whole ancient world to a large group of undergraduates." Chapter 2, 'The Obsolescence of the Epic' is a good illustration of how such an eagle's-eye view can discover a new shape in the topography we are all familiar with at ground level. From Otis' skilful tracing of the main contours of epic-writing we realise (perhaps for the first time) how astonishingly improbable it was that anything like the Aeneid could have been

written in the face of prevailing discouragement from current literary theory and of a long tradition of failure in previous epic writing. We are reminded *inter alia* that both *Eclogues* and *Georgics* fall within the prescribed limits of the Callimachean literary programme; the *Aeneid* was an entirely new departure, going hand-in-hand with Horace's *classical* (i.e. reactionary) precepts in the *Ars Poetica*: a long-needed correction of the naïve Victorian view that Theocritus, Hesiod and Homer were simply chosen as Virgil's models in some ascending order of difficulty.

Virgil could so easily have foundered: everything suggested that neoteric sensibility and a broad Homeric canvas were proved incompatibles. But Otis shows how the essential greatness and novelty of the *Aeneid* were achieved by a synthesis of the two. By means of a detailed stylistic comparison (based on Heinze and in the manner of Marouzeau) of the Homeric and Virgilian foot-races, we appreciate how Virgil's subjective style is the vehicle of a sympathetic and empathetic attitude to the characters involved in his total recasting of this episode. But the following analysis and comparison of *Iliad* 23, 287 ff. (the chariot-race) and *Aeneid* 5, 114 ff. (the ship-race) sets Virgil's technique against the sharply objective, individually characterised, independent personalities of Homer, and helps to explain (a point made fully clear on p. 89) why to many readers (e.g. T. R. Glover) Virgil's characters appear 'through a glass darkly' (or as 'puzzling reflections in a mirror' as the New English Bible has it). For Virgil's subjective style puts us more closely in touch with the inner feelings and outlook of his characters; but in each one there lurks a little of Virgil himself, which makes them harder to grasp as individual personalities.

Otis develops Pöschl's work (pp. 70 ff.) in examining the coherent structure of *motifs* which are high-lighted by similes and integrally incorporated into the framework of the plot. A shrewd analysis of the complete transformation and mood-redirection of the similes inspired by Apollonius leads to a detailed study of Virgil's *leitmotiv* technique in the Dido episodes. Here Otis on Virgil reads like nothing so much as Ernest Newman on Wagner: the Day-Night symbolism of *Aeneid* 4 (p. 86) will come as no surprise to students of *Tristan und Isolde*. More important: lines and half-lines are not repeated by accident or in accordance with Homeric (oral) practice, but by design, with significant cross-reference to other occurrences.

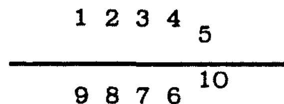
The incompatibility of Homeric material, neoteric artistry, and contemporary Augustan outlook and ideology was resolved by Virgil's style, whose component parts and provenance Otis analyses as follows:

(1) the 'subjective' or 'sympathetic-empathetic' style itself, deriving from earlier Roman poetry (it can be found in Ennius, although Virgil no doubt learned it chiefly from the *Roman* neoterics); but
(2) *narrative continuity* could obviously not have been learned from the purely static pathos of a neoteric epyllion like the Ariadne episode of Catullus' *Peleus and Thetis*. Otis' suggestion that Virgil was led to it by the autobiographical continuity of Catullus' Lesbia poems will not, I imagine, meet with unqualified acceptance (p. 102).
(3) *Symbolic structure* (i.e. a significant arrangement of material which adds another dimension to the narrative) can be seen in *Eclogue* 8 (Damon's song), where Virgil has freely adapted scattered ideas of Theocritus (who has no 'symbolic structure') into an elaborately organised whole. And the general progress of Virgil's art towards the continuous narrative technique of *Eclogue* 8 can be traced through *Eclogue* 2 and *Eclogue* 6 (lines 46-60, Silenus).

Otis' explorations into rhythm, prosody and the 'sound behind the sense' are

occasionally insecure. There is often a lack of precision in the evaluation of 'metrical effects' (e.g. p. 48, "Again line 331 expresses the triumphant feeling of Nisus"; but there is no indication of how this emerges from *sound* or *rhythm* over and above the *sense* of the words, and one cannot guess how it can). On *Eclogue* 8, 41 *ut vidi, ut perii, ut me malus abstulit error*, Otis speaks (p. 114) of "the 'tear-jerking' synaloephae of *vidi ut, perii ut*", but if the line is to scan there must, on the contrary, be a 'sobbing' hiatus between *perii* and *ut*.

In his chapters on the structural composition and its significance in each of Virgil's works, Otis is perhaps least happy with the *Eclogues*. The composition-patterns of the *Eclogues* have become so vexed a question as to be almost distasteful, and one wonders whether the "almost complete indifference to the whole scheme of the *Eclogue Book*" for which Büchner and H. J. Rose are censured (p. 134, note 1) was the result of wisdom or of boredom. Not all readers will be prepared to believe with Otis that before or during the writing of the Eclogues Virgil applied *three* different principles of arrangement. The most feasible (because the most evident) arrangement is the 'mirror-image pattern' first seen by Maury:




where contrasting or similar themes are reflected in 5 and 10, 1 and 9, 2 and 8, etc. Otis applies this view of the organisation of the book as a whole to the structure of *Eclogue* 4. This is a 'mirror-image' of *Eclogue* 6 in which Silenus' song is virtually an index to some of the major topics in a Hellenistic *Kollektivgedicht* as exemplified by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, from Creation-Paradise to various stages of decline and decay. Otis therefore examines *Eclogue* 4 as basically a *reversal* of this usual order. This is a stimulating approach, but *caveat lector*: how many correspondences are needed to make a *significant* resemblance Otis does not say, and Virgil will not abide the question.

What does emerge clearly from Otis' analysis of the *Eclogues* is Virgil's involvement in current affairs and his *innovation* in grafting Roman political themes onto the stock of conventions of bucolic poetry: Julio-Roman symbolism was the first step in the making of the Augustan poet.

In the structure of the *Georgics* Otis sees two great contrasts, both "almost self-evident": (1) the grim, hostile, destructive relations between Man and Nature which set the tone in books I and III are opposed to the pleasant, productive, cheerful co-operation between them in books II and IV; (2) in I and II Man's relations with Nature are looked at *sympathetically* from Man's point of view; whereas in III and IV the poet tends rather to present things *empathetically* from the point of view of the animals (especially of course the larger domesticated animals and the bees). These evident *structural* features are made the foundation-schema for interpretation which penetrates far behind the agricultural (-political) facade of the poem. Otis is of course much too wise to use his schema schematically; it serves rather as a spring-board for the critical imagination by which Otis brings out what is implicit in the poem: Man's ambivalent position as controller, victim and vehicle of a life-force which is itself both constructive and destructive.

According to Otis' schema, the structural 'stresses' of the *Georgics* converge on

the Aristaeus episode, and this is therefore given special treatment. A comparison of the Aristaeus-Orpheus with the Peleus and Thetis - Ariadne reveals that the points of similarity (e.g. in both the theme of the 'inset' is a reversal of that of the 'frame'; happy marriage : lover's desertion :: resurrection and regeneration : resurrection with tragic loss) are less important than the differences in narrative technique. The Ariadne is an 'expansion' of one frozen moment of pathos; the Aristaeus is an objective 'epic' style treatment of a series of events and pictures: the Orpheus is a forward-moving, sympathetic-empathetic narrative of emotional engagement. And the Orpheus is, in Otis' view, the keystone of the poem, for he sees it as an abandonment of animal allegory and a direct presentation of the human conflict of ars and amor against furor (the irrational and disruptive element in Man). This view of the Aristaeus-Orpheus rests on the assumption that its 'message' is an integral part of a carefully premeditated structure; it is unfortunate that Otis relegates to an Appendix (7) his reasons for believing that the whole episode was completed by 30/29 B.C. (i.e. before the Aeneid was begun), and that the laudes Galli were only a short encomium (not more than 20-30 lines including the immediate context) and were simply struck out after Gallus' death, entailing only minor adjustments in the surrounding poem.

In his analysis of the Aeneid (launched with the questionable assertion that Virgil had never before attempted narrative-epic verse) Otis succeeds in establishing two important factors which connect Virgil's earlier work with the Aeneid. The first is the important triad of ideas which formed the nucleus of Virgil's world-outlook: a pessimistic view of decline caused by violent irrational forces; death and resurrection; and an optimistic view of progress and fulfilment along the right lines. These three ideas, connected respectively with the dominant concepts of furor, fatum and pietas play an ever increasing role in Virgil's poetry, finding their greatest expression in the Aeneid. The second factor is the continuous psychological narrative technique. In Otis' view the Aeneid is the result of Virgil's transferring this outlook and technique from a pastoral or Man-Nature level to a heroic level; now for the first time Virgil needs to incorporate Homeric material, to reach the heroic level, for "essentially the real 'plot' of the Aeneid is that of the formation and victory of the Augustan hero" (p. 222). The Odyssean Aeneid is primarily a subjective narrative of an inner psychological struggle, after which Aeneas emerges triumphant over his own failings and passions (furor); the Iliadic Aeneid is a much more 'externalised', objective narrative of Aeneas' final vindication of his pietas by his triumph over the impii (and furentes); and through the whole poem runs the conflict of destiny (fatum-Jupiter) with counter-destiny (furor-Juno).

In the Odyssean Aeneid the great calatyst of Aeneas' coming to maturity is Anchises, on whose role Otis lays great stress in his analysis of individual books. In Aeneid II the total change from doubt and darkness to light and hope culminates in the resolute conversion of Anchises with its decisive influence on his dutiful son. From then on Anchises is the voice of Aeneas' pietas, his conscience, guiding with advice in Aeneid III, diminishing to a mere turbida imago during his son's temptation in Aeneid IV, re-emerging in full force in Aeneid V as the supreme directive influence in Aeneas' life. It is he who orders the journey down to the Underworld to meet his ghost, which, as the mouthpiece of Jupiter and the ordained order of things, finally becomes the prophet of Rome's future greatness.

All excellent interpretation of a very significant aspect of the poem, but Otis spoils his proven case with additional and dubious evidence: three words alone (and those of the commonest, hic me, deser-) which occur at both lines 616-8 and 710-1 of

*Aeneid* III are hardly sufficient proof that the whole point of the Achaemenides episode is to foreshadow the death of Anchises - one sympathises with commentators whose attention this meaning of the episode has escaped (p. 263). This of course does not invalidate Otis' basic principle that careful investigation will reveal highly significant cross-references between details which Virgil has subordinated to the main sweep of the narrative and partly 'disguised'; and his application of this principle is more often than not searching and stimulating: similarities of phraseology *do* suggest a connection of deeper meaning between the snake, Anchises' *genius* in *Aeneid* V and the flame on Ascanius' head in *Aeneid* II, and between the arrow-omen of *Aeneid* V and the comet-omen of *Aeneid* II.

Otis is not to be blamed if his critical method of structural analysis sometimes leads to results which need to be qualified or completed from our knowledge of ancient life and thought. To try and discover what makes the *Aeneid* great literature for all time is perhaps a more ambitious undertaking than investigating what it conveyed to a contemporary Roman; but a really convincing answer to the first cannot ignore answers to the second. Otis is no doubt right in saying (p. 285 note 1) that some commentators have not appreciated the fact that when Aeneas enters Apollo's temple and confronts his prophetess the Sibyl, his prayer is *not* for informative prophecy but for "the assent of the divine will". Assent to what? Should one not go further and suggest that the "assent" Aeneas prays for is that of Apollo *not* as god of prophecy at all, but as patron of immigration (cf. *Aeneid* VI, 59 *duce te*) and colonisation (lines 66 ff.)? Similarly, in the restricted terms of his own interpretation, Otis may be right in saying (p.286) "there is no antithesis or mixture of roles" in the Sibyl, but would a Roman reader with even a slight interest in religion have agreed?

Otis' general view of the Iliadic *Aeneid* is that its focal point is still Aeneas' character: we now see in actual battle the practical differences between Aeneas' mature humanity and *pietas* and the warrior ideals he has painfully outgrown flourishing in Turnus - narrow loyalties and destructive egotism. But not all difficulties can be resolved in terms of this character-contrast (Otis himself has doubts and reservations on p. 361) or of structural correspondences and contrasts (are the tenuous structural similarities between *Aeneid* VI and XII really sufficient to justify elucidations such as Otis makes on p. 372?). In particular, the attempts to explain away the eminently physical interferences of Juno and Juturna as acts for which Turnus is himself in the first degree responsible raise more difficulties than they solve. Perhaps the second half of the *Aeneid* is not only less exciting but critically more challenging than the first.

The book is unfortunately disfigured with more typographical errors than one associates with the products of the Clarendon Press. A selection: read *Juno* for *June* (p. 68); *pinus* for *pinos* (p. 118, correctly on p. 106); *vere* for *vero* (p. 161); *vi* for *via* (p. 166); *exclusus* for *excclusus* (p. 184); *Dryadum* for *Dryadem* (p. 206); *Stoic sage* for *Stoic stage* (p. 220 note 1); *who he is* for *who is* (p. 236); *caelicolae* for *calicolae* (p. 244); *iam propiore dei* for *iam propiore deo* (p. 285); *that the Sibyl* for *that Sibyl* (p. 287); *chime* for *gibe* (p. 292, a cold in the head when dictating?); *ut primum* for *ut primam* (p. 294); *Aeneadae* for *Aeneidae* (pp. 320 and 321); at the beginning of the second paragraph of p. 412 one should read: To suppose that the former (the *Aeneid*) preceded the latter (*Aristaeus-Orpheus*) ... Callimachus is mispunctuated (p. 103 read ὁ μὲν ), and Dante twice misprinted (p. 202 read *avrei mai* for *avessi*; p. 252 read *tanto* for *tanta* and *è* for *e*). The reader should beware that Otis uses different texts with different readings for the same passage (*Aeneid* V 327 f. on p. 42 and p. 49; *Aeneid* VI 806 on p. 302 and p. 304). The adoption of the

reading praeterlabere at Aeneid III 478 requires a repunctuation of the line (p. 260 note 2).

Such adverse comments as have been made on the subject-matter and presentation of this book cannot detract from its general excellence and brilliance; when its author is right he is exciting, when he is wrong or incomplete he is stimulating and challenging.

P. T. Eden.

F. J. WORSTBROCK, ELEMENTE EINER POETIK DER AENEIS, Aschendorff, Münster. 1963.

Pp. 268. Paper, DM 34.

V. PÖSCHL, DIE HIRTENDICHTUNG VIRGILS, Winter, Heidelberg. 1964. Pp. 154. Cloth,

DM 12.80.

Worstbrock's book belongs to the Aschendorff "Orbis Antiquus" series which has already given Virgilians Franz Beckmann's stimulating essay, "Mensch und Welt in der Dichtung Vergils" (1950; 1960[2]), and Heinrich Altevogt's interesting study, "Labor Improbus" (1952). Worstbrock seeks to identify special features of Virgilian epic, examining the poet's procedure in the Aeneid under three headings: (1) "Buchkomposition" (2) Verse and Syntax (3) Epithets, and then considers how these features have been perpetuated by the epicists Tasso and Milton. Discussions of various questions of structure in most of the twelve constituent books (pp. 26-79) lead up to some observations on the architecture of the Aeneid as a whole: besides the patent division into an Odyssean half (i-vi) and an Iliadic half (vii-xii) there is the "Dreiteilüng" (i-iv, v-viii, ix-xii) which Heinze, Stadler and Pöschl have supported (pp. 82-118). A long excursus on Hercules and Cacus (pp. 103-114) speculates on the symbolic meaning of the episode; it is not merely aetiological; there is a "typological connection" between Hercules (saviour and deified mortal) and Aeneas/Augustus. The section on versification and syntax succintly treats a good deal of useful material (sentence-structure in Ennius and Virgil, parataxis and hypotaxis in the Aeneid, enjambment etc.) while on Virgil's epithets (principally those describing colour, persons and size) Worstbrock writes instructively. Tasso's Virgilianism has over forty pages devoted to it, Milton's only eleven. Worstbrock's greater familiarity with the Italian poet probably accounts for this, but certainly the treatment of Milton seems to an English-speaking reviewer perfunctory. The book concludes with a lengthy bibliography in which the British Virgilian, Professor Richardson, is given the initials C.J.D. instead of L.J.D.

Pöschl is already well known as an enthusiastic and sensitive interpreter of Virgil. His book, "Die Dichtkunst Virgils" (1950), showed him to be a man possessed of a sense of literature, which is not every scholar's good fortune. It is now available in an English translation by Gerda Seligson under the title "The Art of Vergil" (Ann Arbor, 1962). In this latest work he offers a close study of Eclogues one and seven, believing that from these in particular there can be deduced Virgil's artistic creed as a writer of bucolic poetry. In the first chapter he carefully analyses Eclogue one, in the second he meditates on the idea of Classicism in Latin literature with illuminating references to art and architecture, and in the third he discusses the seventh Eclogue as an expression of Virgil's aims in this genre through the medium of the poetic contest. Thyrsis clearly yields to Corydon in style, matter

and metre, Pöschl states. Some of Pöschl's opinions are open to question, but the book as a whole merits Virgilians' serious attention.

H. MacL. Currie.

OBITUARIES

οἵη περ φύλλων γενεή, τοίη δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν

Eric Wynne Hickie (1892 - 1964)

E. Wynne Hickie's death on 9th September, 1964, has removed a staunch supporter of the Society. He had been Chairman of the Council for many years and was devoted in his attendance at our meetings. He was educated at Blundell's School and then took a degree in Classics at Cambridge. After some teaching experience at Blundell's and Winchester, he became an Inspector of Schools, a position he held until his retirement in 1952. He then became Organising Officer of the English Association, retiring in 1964 only a few weeks before his death. On that side he was particularly interested in the teaching of English in schools. At the same time his devotion to the Classics remained unabated. In addition to his fine abilities Hickie was a cheerful, friendly man whose presence guaranteed the smoothness of committee. He will be long missed by his friends particularly in the two societies to which he gave so much.

D. M. Low.

William Francis Jackson Knight (1895 - 1964)

... Gallo, cuius amor tantum mihi crescit in horas,
quantum vere novo viridis se subicit alnus.

It is strange how two people separated by thousands of sea-miles - Oceano dissociabili - can without actually meeting be drawn together. It was an article in the Classical Quarterly by J.K. that first made me write to him from Johannesburg. That was some time in the early thirties and since then our contact grew continuously right up to the time of his passing. There was a spontaneous enthusiasm and understanding on both sides:

dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,
Euryale?

Many were the Vergilian themes we discussed. Then came the opportunity of 1935 when I held the chair of Greek in Cardiff while Professor H.J.W. Tillyard took my place at the University of the Witwatersrand. Then we met for the first time and a joyful occasion it was.

Walking down the High in Oxford during this period, I met the late Dr. John Murray, Principal of the University College of Exeter (as it then was), and spoke to him about J.K. who seemed rather overwhelmed by his scholastic duties at Bloxham School. I pleaded that if he were given a university post he could do much valuable work. This happened and the predicted result followed.

Vergilian pietas combined with an extraordinary fund of humanitas was perhaps his outstanding characteristic. Nobody who needed his help applied to him in vain. He

took endless trouble to assist even very humble, and sometimes superficial, students, and he never made the student feel inferior. His students always testified that he treated their opinions with the greatest respect - maxima debetur puero reverentia - and made them feel that they themselves had contributed the solution, which was often his own entirely, illumed by his vivid personality.

He spent a great deal of time in helping all sorts of people and welcomed strangers with boundless enthusiasm - as I realised afresh when I introduced some relations of mine to him in 1962. His generosity took up so much of his time that his research work suffered, and even now much is left incomplete - work that should be finished in the interests of scholarship.

In 1950 I persuaded the students of the University of the Witwatersrand to invite him to be their visiting lecturer. He was a great success, although he was a difficult guest because he dissipated his energies in trying to help all sorts of people, including the Africans, and consequently overtaxed himself and lost documents and sat up till the early hours instead of packing. It was part of his essentially lovable humanitas.

During his Johannesburg visit we explored the laws of psychic science - a most hazardous and delicate undertaking. But we were fortunate in being able to work under exceptionally favourable conditions with a highly gifted person, Margaret Lloyd. Later J.K.'s brother, Professor Wilson Knight, the famous Shakespearean scholar, shared our investigations.

It needs a particularly sensitive and intelligent mind to understand Vergil and his relationship to the characters he created. Few realised, as J.K. did, how far the creative effort of Vergil extended and how deeply Vergil entered into the minds of his human characters and into the feelings of his animals: "Universal Nature moved by Universal Mind". J.K. had a fine ear for the full Vergilian music and his study of accentual pattern in Vergil is still valuable. He had a sound knowledge of linguistic values and he could sense the overtones of Vergilian verse. His "Roman Vergil" is perhaps the best general book on the poet that we have.

With all his scholarly sensitiveness, he had also the resolution and courage of the soldier. We remember how he gained distinction during the first World War as a despatch-rider. He gave his service and suffered, but he did so with a cheerful heart and without complaint.

Looking back at the association with him, I give thanks for the many bright pictures that come to me, and I feel grateful for the joint-broadcast in the African service of the BBC that he and I did in the first week of June, 1964. Together, too, we went to see J.K.'s former principal, Dr. John Murray, who was in hospital after the amputation of a leg. He also has gone now. So the scene shifts in this world, but the eternal values remain and the bond is not broken.

salve aeternum mihi, maxime Palla,
aeternumque vale!

Vale, we say, but also a rivederci!

T. J. Haarhoff.

## Thomas Stearns Eliot, O.M. (1888 - 1965)

T. S. Eliot was not present at the dinner which launched the Virgil Society towards the end of the Second World War, but he was quick to accept an invitation to become its President later. It is interesting to ask oneself why he did so. He was not a classical scholar and you will look in vain for any reference to Virgil in his earlier criticism. But he would not have spoken on Virgil as he did, in a memorable Presidential address, unless he had seen an opportunity to say something that he thought worth saying. Having once described himself as a "classicist in literature", he found in Virgil the ideal definition of a classic. Here was a poet of genius using language at a particular point of development in a civilisation which had reached a particular stage of maturity. What he saluted in Virgil was not only the poet but the citizen - one who shared his own civic concerns. The theme of the *Aeneid* is the destruction of one city and the founding of another; the Fourth Book is a passionate parenthesis important not only because the passion is indulged but because it is finally overcome. And just as Eliot would have been drawn to the *Aeneid* because it was concerned with the ordering of the City, so he would have been drawn to the *Georgics* because they were concerned with the ordering of the Land. Eliot was a great Londoner, but he had affective roots in Jefferson's Virginia as well. His social philosophy was sensibly agrarian. Moreover it was natural that so faithful a disciple of Dante should have been content to follow his master's guide; and that at a time when European civilisation was threatened as rarely before, he should have looked to the "Father of the West". We deeply mourn his loss, and are proud to have inspired his penetrating regard, for T. S. Eliot was the kind of Virgilian that many of us would like to be - readers, not scholars, ourselves but leaning on the scholarship that is in other men.

Robert Speaight.

## Sir John Francis Lockwood (1903 - 1965)

After the deaths of T.S. Eliot, Jackson Knight and E. Wynne Hickie, the Virgil Society has suffered another grievous loss by the death of its recent President, Sir John Lockwood. The tributes paid in the national press to this great scholar and University administrator will have made it clear that, dying as he did in middle age, he was one of the martyrs of the age, a scholar whose destiny would not leave him to end his days in quiet in the happy exercises of scholarship: his University and College, the underdeveloped lands and such problems as University planning in Northern Ireland finished him off before his time. He left great achievements as his memorial. We of the Virgil Society shall wish to think that his association with us, and the services that he rendered to us, were a solace and a relaxation to him rather than an additional burden. His learning and his academic eminence shed lustre upon us, his addresses to the Society gave us pleasure and illumination, and his universally recognised sweetness of character made it a joy to see him at our meetings. He was certainly one of those of whom our poet said -

sui memores alios fecere merendo.

W. S. Maguinness.

"J.K."

## W. F. JACKSON KNIGHT

### Selected list of published works

A complete list of J.K.'s writings would be a very lengthy document: his interests ranged widely, including the whole of classical literature, anthropology, archaeology, modern poetry and poets, psychic research and many other topics: and his writings, as a result, appeared in a wide range of journals. Professor G. Wilson Knight is devoting his time to the organization of the large collection of work in manuscript, with a view to publication of future volumes: it is hoped that there will also be a biographical study, including a complete bibliography.

The list which follows includes all the major works in the Classical field (with some others) so far as books and articles are concerned: but I have listed only a few of the many reviews he wrote, selecting mainly those of fuller length which contain expressions of J.K.'s own views as well as critical comment. Mr. John Glucker has prepared a bibliography to be published in "Pegasus" (University of Exeter) in the Autumn, which contains a complete list of reviews of classical works. Our lists were compiled independently, but have been cross-checked where they overlap.

University of Reading. J. G. Landels.

Abbreviations

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|---|---|
| A.J.P. | American Journal of Philology |
| C.J. | Classical Journal |
| C.J. Malta | Classical Journal of Malta |
| C.P. | Classical Philology |
| C.Q. | Classical Quarterly |
| C.R. | Classical Review |
| C.W. | Classical Weekly (later called Classical World) |
| G.& R. | Greece and Rome |
| J.H.S. | Journal of Hellenic Studies |
| T.A.P.A. | Transactions of the American Philological Association |
| T.D.A. | Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art. |

1929

Vergil and the Maze
C.R. XLIII 6 p.212-3
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1943 The Aeschylean Universe
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1944 ROMAN VERGIL
London, Faber & Faber 1944. 2nd ed. 1944. pp.viii,348
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1952 My conviction of the truth
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Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex. pp.361, 2 maps.
(First published 1956, reprinted six times: net sales to date (July 1965) over 700,000 copies)

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Chapter in Ovidiana: recherches sur Ovide, ed. N.I. HERESCU
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Also printed as appendix I in revised "Roman Vergil" (see under 1964)
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T.S. Eliot as a classical scholar
Chapter in "T.S. Eliot - a symposium", ed. BRAYBROOKE
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Preface to 1958 impression of "The Starlit Dome", by G. Wilson Knight

1959 De Nominum Ovidianorum Graecitate
Orpheus VI June 1959 p.1-4
(also in Atti del convegno internazionale Ovidiano, pub. Rome 1959, p.339-343)

1960 The value of a classical education today
(talk broadcast from Johannesburg, 5/9/1950)
Rivista di Cultura Classica e Medioevale II 2 p.199-203)
The use of the Classics
Tatec Times, August 1960 p.4-5
Litterae ad Editorem Missae (signed "P.Vergilius Maro")
Acta Diurna XLII May 1960

1961 The Communion of Saints
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Did Pythagoras return?
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1962 Virgilio, Plotino, Boezio
Orpheus IX 1 p.3-19
Poetic sources and integration, "continued" (!) (see 1940)
Vergilius VIII p.2-7
Vergil's Secret Art
Virgil Society Proceedings I (1961/2) p.1-14
(also in Rivista di Cultura Classica e Medioevale VI 2 (1964) p.102-16)
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Apollonius of Tyana - a medium in classical times?
Psychic News 1564/5/6 May-June 1962

1963 The origins of belief
Folklore LXXIV Spring 1963 p.289-304

1964 Article on VERGIL in COLLIER'S ENCYCLOPAEDIA (N.Y. 1964) Vol.23 p.87-91
Axiochus
Pegasus I (Univ. of Exeter) 1964

rev. of R.G. AUSTIN, edition of Aeneid II
Virgil Society Proceedings III (1963/4) p.44-7

Until shortly before his death, J.K. was involved with several other publications.

(a) He was Founder-Editor of the projected Penguin Classical Dictionary, and was supervising the preparation of articles.
(b) He had almost completed a new edition of Roman Vergil, extensively revised and supplemented with new material. This is being seen through the press by Professor G. Wilson Knight and Mr. J.D. Christie, and is to be published by Penguin Books (in the "Peregrine" series) early in 1966.

(c) He had written a substantial part of a book on ancient conceptions of the after-life, which is to be published under the title "Elysion".
(d) He left a study of Homer in typescript which for many years he had been working to amplify: it is hoped that a volume of Homeric Studies may be published, which will include this and other material.

It is also hoped that "Vergil's Troy", "Cumaean Gates" and a number of relevant articles may be re-issued under the general title "Vergil and Anthropology".

In November 1960 at King's College, Newcastle, J.K. gave a course of three lectures on "Vergil's Conscious Art": one of these is to be published in the series "Studies in Latin Literature and its influence", edited by D.R. Dudley and T.A. Dorey.

The article "My conviction of the truth" (see under 1952) is to be reprinted (with a few modifications) in Light LXXXV no. 3461 (summer 1965) p. 63-6. A lecture given to the College of Psychic Science in Nov. 1962 is to be published in the following issue of Light (3462, autumn 1965).

maxima res effecta, viri; timor omnis abesto
quod superest.