Virgil the "Renaissance Man" and his Medieval Antecedents

A paper given to the Virgil Society on 20 May 2006

One of the most enduring myths in that elaborate concatenation of myths known as the Renaissance is that of the Renaissance man, or *uomo universale* – the supremely cultivated individual who could turn with equal facility from statecraft to philosophy; from horsemanship to painting or the dance; and from the stratagems of the battlefield to the gentler arts of love. For Jacob Burckhardt, in his classic study *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, 'The fifteenth century is, above all, that of the many-sided men'. His analysis of the phenomenon is worth quoting at length:[1]

> When this impulse to the highest individual development was combined with a powerful and varied nature, which had mastered all the elements of the culture of the age, then arose the 'all-sided man' – *l'uomo universale* – who belonged to Italy alone. Men there were of encyclopedic knowledge in many countries during the Middle Ages, for this knowledge was confined within narrow limits; and even in the twelfth century there were universal artists, but the problems of architecture were comparatively simple and uniform, and in sculpture and painting the matter was of more importance than the form. But in Italy at the time of the Renaissance we find artists who in every branch created new and perfect works, and who also made the greatest impression as men. Others, outside the arts they practised, were masters of a vast circle of spiritual interests.

Whether or not we believe this ideal was ever fully realised in the humanist culture of Italy during this period, and irrespective of whether we accept the aspiration to universal competence as one exclusively confined to or even principally characteristic of this historical milieu, it is very clear that a high value was set on the virtue of versatility by the educators and cultural authorities of the age. In Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, that manual of etiquette and accomplishment for the Renaissance gentleman published after a long gestation in 1528, we hear that the perfect courtier will have the ability to keep his sovereign engaged 'now with music, now with arms and horses, at other times with verse or with conversations about love';[2] and the list of desirable qualities prescribed by Castiglione's characters

becomes sufficiently exhaustive that one of his interlocutors is moved to exclaim, 'I don't think one could discover anywhere in the world a vessel big enough to hold all the things you want to put into our courtier'.[3] Enea Silvio Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius II, recommending in his treatise of 1450 *On the education of boys* grammar, elocution, astronomy, geometry, music, arithmetic and orthography among numerous other branches of learning fit for the instruction of the young, defends his curriculum against an imaginary critic as follows:[4]

> Someone may perhaps inquire how these things are to be learned and whether they can be taught and understood at the same time. Some will deny that this is possible because the mind is confused and wearied by so many studies tending in different directions. But these people do not sufficiently appreciate how great is the power of the human mind, which is so busy, so active and so universally curious that it is impossible for it to limit its activity to one thing only; rather it expends its whole power on many subjects, not only in the course of a single day, but even in a single moment of time.

For Piccolomini, then, a figure of no mean stature in the humanist movement of the mid-Quattrocento, the universality of his syllabus is to be a source not of exhaustion, but of exhilaration.

Not least among the myriad disciplines advocated by the teachers of the Renaissance was the study of literature, and in particular the literature of classical antiquity. Castiglione's Count Lodovico maintains, 'I should like our courtier to be a more than average scholar, at least in those studies which we call the humanities; and he should have a knowledge of Greek as well as Latin, because of the many different things that are so beautifully written in that language';[5] that the narrator of the dialogue found himself in agreement on this point is suggested by his tribute to Duke Guidobaldo of Urbino, who was, he says, 'very well versed in both Latin and Greek, and possessed as well as an affable and charming nature, an infinite range of knowledge'.[6] And chief among the authors of antiquity – notwithstanding intermittent nods to the primacy of Homer or Cicero – the Italian humanists were united in their commendation of the works of Virgil. Battista Guarino's influential *De ordine docendi et studendi* (1459) cites the authority of St Augustine to demonstrate 'that one should begin with Vergil' (*a Vergilio...inchoandum esse*) (24), and Guarino encourages his pupil to memorise Virgil's poetry in order to inculcate the principles of Latin scansion (15).[7] The six-book treatise *De educatione liberorum et eorum claris moribus* of Maffeo Vegio, written slightly earlier,[8] had already used Augustine to point to Virgil's pedagogical primacy, recommending that 'not undeservedly will boys in their earliest years take up Virgil, as being the most elegant and most weighty of all poets, to be read as much as possible'.

Those features of Virgil's poetry – at least in the case of the *Aeneid* – that most appealed to his Renaissance readers can be partly deduced from the supplement to the *Aeneid* composed by Vegio in the late 1420s.[9] Vegio's selection of material for his Virgilian imitation and the emphases he gives to it tell us a great deal about the author's own tastes in reading Virgil, and the immediate popularity of Vegio's thirteenth book, which appeared as an appendix to Virgil's poem in numerous editions of the *Aeneid* after the completion of the supplement in 1428, suggests that these tastes were largely shared by his contemporaries. Virgil's speeches, his pageantry and ceremonial, his memorable similes, his etymologies, his pathos, his sense of history – these are the favoured characteristics of Vegio's master as mirrored in his disciple's 'completion' of the fortunes of Aeneas. Both in broad outline and in the details of custom and ritual,[10] these interests accord neatly with what can be inferred of Renaissance attitudes to literature in more expressly theoretical works of the period. Of particular interest is the prominence given by Vegio to speech and oratory: his meticulous recreation of Virgilian speech-patterns, his conspicuous inclusion of *oratores* (311; cf. *Aen.* 7.153, 8.505 etc.) in the embassy sent by Latinus to Aeneas to sue

for peace, and his insertion of Turnus' prowess in *eloquium* (273) among the various attributes of his son lamented by the aged Daunus, a detail introduced '*umanisticamente*', as Zabughin observes.[11]

This concentration on the cultural importance of rhetoric in Vegio's continuation of the *Aeneid* reflects a cardinal virtue of the educated élite in Renaissance society, the need for eloquence, and reminds us that Virgil himself was constantly exalted in humanistic circles as a model of correct and appropriate speech. Piccolomini tells his youthful audience that 'Among the epic poets your teacher shall prefer Vergil above all, whose eloquence, whose glory, is so great that it can be neither augmented by praise nor diminished by censure';[12] for him, as for others, there is to be found in Virgil a model for every kind of style. Indeed, for the theorists of the Renaissance, Virgil and eloquence were to become practically synonymous: Cristoforo Landino, in an introductory lecture on Virgil delivered at the academy in Florence in the 1460s, declares that Virgil must be the first port of call for those who seek 'the choicest principles of good speaking' (*bene dicendi exquisitissimas rationes*), and that his own task in teaching the poet's *œuvre* is 'the office of instructing the youth in eloquence' (*erudiendae adolescentiae in eloquentia munus*).[13] 'From here', he concludes, 'you will receive the elegance of the grammarian's art, from here the power and adornment of the orator's'.[14] In his later *Disputationes Camaldulenses*, the same Landino, prior to embarking on a Platonising exegesis of the allegorical content of the first six books of the *Aeneid*, asserts that 'no-one, though he be imbued with only moderate learning, has ever doubted that this man [that is, Virgil], by his force and fullness of speech, surpasses eloquence herself, so to speak', again avowing that the pattern for every variety of speech is to be found in the works of the poet.[15] It is this aspect of Virgil's achievement, appropriately enough, that is dwelt on by Marco Girolamo Vida in the rapturous hymn to Virgil with which he ends his versified treatise *De arte poetica*, the final version of which was issued in 1527.[16] And at the very dawn of the humanists' revival of antiquity, the acknowledgement of Virgil's eloquence forms a constant thread in Petrarch's dealings with the poet whom, in a letter to his ancient avatar, the author of the *Africa* addresses as 'shining light of eloquence, other hope of the Latin language, illustrious Maro, whom Mantua, happy in so great an offspring, rejoices at having produced as the glory of Rome through the ages' (*eloquii splendor, latie spes altera lingue, | clare Maro, tanta quem felix Mantua prole | Romanum genuisse decus per secula gaudet*, *Fam.* XXIV.11.1-3).

But it was not just the eloquence they perceived in Virgil that attracted his Renaissance devotees to the poet of the *Eclogues*, *Georgics* and *Aeneid*. The allegorical tradition of Virgilian commentary, exemplified in this period by the interpretations of Virgil's epic put forward by Petrarch (in *Seniles* IV.5), by Salutati, and especially by Landino in the *Disputationes*, found in Aeneas the model of the perfect man, endowed with every virtue, whose arduous voyage towards the promised land of Italy represented the progress of the soul from bodily taints and temptations to the perfection of enlightenment.[17] Thus Virgil was for his allegorising interpreters a philosopher, in Landino's reading an outright (neo-)Platonist (*platonicus omnino ex[s]titerit*), whose poem – if correctly understood – would lead its readers towards virtue and away from vice, as Craig Kallendorf has demonstrated.[18] For the orator of the Renaissance, as for his Ciceronian predecessors, rhetoric went hand in hand with moralising – so we find Landino, in his inaugural lecture in praise of Virgil, maintaining that 'our divine Maro, observing all these things, and desiring to encourage us not only to good speaking but to upright living, that he might advise the human race as best he could', therefore fashioned Aeneas as 'a model for living' (*tanquam vivendi exemplar*).[19] Anchises' discourse on the purification of souls at *Aeneid* 6.724-51 did much to confirm this image of Virgil as philosopher, as no doubt did the information in the ancient *Lives* of the poet (and the *Appendix Vergiliana*, still at this date attributed to Virgil) that he had studied in his youth at the Epicurean school of Siro at Naples.[20] Leonardo Bruni, the chancellor and historian of Florence, quotes the opening of Anchises' speech in his tract *De studiis et litteris*, addressed to Battista Malatesta, with the exclamation 'let us consider the great value

of our Vergil's wisdom', before going on to observe, 'Can we esteem the philosophers at such a rate when we read passages such as this? Which of them ever laid bare the nature and essence of soul with such knowledge?'.[21]

If Aeneas, moreover, was to be seen as the embodiment of all good qualities, as the template for human action, then it followed that the accomplishments exhibited by the hero of the *Aeneid* could be projected back on to the poet, whose multifarious knowledge enabled him to instil in his character the various merits and expertise that he was thought to represent. The passage of Landino's inaugural oration quoted above continues as follows:[22]

> Has anyone ever governed a state with better laws and regulations? In what commander have you heard or read that there was ever more discipline in the art of war? And since we cannot all be leaders of the state, or be put in command of armies, and far more live as private citizens than in a position of power, does he not very frequently advise them too in what way they should act in themselves, with their household, with citizens and with foreigners? Doesn't he not only order that caution should be exercised, piety observed, justice maintained, fortitude preserved and restraint applied in all things, and that decorum should be upheld in civic life – but finally, exalting his Aeneas above humankind, does he not bring him through that class of virtues that the Platonists call 'purgatorial', all the way to those which do not exist except in the soul that has been purged, and by which blessedness is made perfect?

The notion of Aeneas, and through him Virgil, as *exemplum* is here combined with Landino's interest in Platonic allegory; but this is a comparatively late development. Virgil's credentials as a constitutional consultant had been affirmed as early as Dante, whose use of the *Aeneid* in his *De monarchia* established an antique legitimacy for the divinely ordained authority of the Holy Roman Empire. The respect accorded to the poet in political circles is further reflected in quotations and adaptations of Virgil's works in the decorative schemes of Italian civic buildings of this period – perhaps most notably the quotation of *Aeneid* 6.853, *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*, below the personified figure of the virtue Magnanimity in Taddeo di Bartolo's frescoes for the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, executed in 1413-14.[23] The same text appears in a fresco cycle of *uomini famosi* in the Palazzo Comunale of Lucignano, between Siena and Arezzo, where *Aeneid* 6.851-3 – with the significant alteration of *Romane* to *ratione* in line 851 – are displayed on the open pages of a book held by Virgil himself, one of the series of 'famous men' held up for the viewer's edification in this central venue of communal decision-making **(fig. 1)**.[24] Here *Virgilio poeta*, the advocate of government by rational principle, is portrayed as a respectable citizen of the Quattrocento, and as a figure of learning, his ermine-lined robes suggesting the doctoral mantle (*habitus magistralis*) identified by Zabughin as one of the two main types of Virgilian iconography current in this period.[25] We find a similar thing in (for instance) the learned and secular figures of Sallust and Varro in Hartmann Schedel's *Weltkronik* printed at Nuremberg in 1493 **(fig. 2a,** ***overleaf*****)** – though the accompanying Virgil, while no less learned, is rather more hieratic in character.[26]

How Virgil might have been appropriated to impart instruction in the art of war, the second discipline mentioned by Landino, requires little imagination to conjecture: the last four books of the *Aeneid*, after all, provide an account of the manœuvres and counter-manœuvres of the Trojans and Italians in their struggle for supremacy in Ausonia. Bruni offers his pupil a similar analysis of Homer shortly before the passage on Virgil's philosophical acumen cited above, setting this in the context of a more general assertion of the universality of Homer's learning:[27]

Figure 1
Virgil, c.1430s, anonymous Sienese artist,
Palazzo Comunale, Lucignano,
Sala del Consiglio

Figure 2a
Sallust, *Varro* and *Virgil*,
from H. Schedel, *Weltkronik*
(Nuremberg, 1493), fol. 92v

> Does Homer lack any sort of wisdom that we should refuse him the repute of being most wise (*in omni sapientia sapientissimus*)? Some say that his poetry provides a complete doctrine of life, divided into periods of peace and war. And indeed in the affairs of war, what has he not told us of the prudence of the general, of the cunning and bravery of the soldier, of the kinds of trickery to be allowed or omitted, of advice, of counsel? ... And he has ten thousand more such counsels which I would gladly speak of, did I not fear being too prolix.

Again, despite the fact that the meeting of Dido and Aeneas was by this date widely acknowledged as one of the more extreme examples of historical cradle-snatching, Virgil was recognised by his Renaissance readers as a consummate historian. In a passage from the *Disputationes Camaldulenses* partly repeated verbatim from his inaugural oration on Virgil, Cristoforo Landino adds the poet's antiquarian interests to his mastery of rhetoric, and adumbrates yet more fields of erudition – in some cases quite arcane – that fall within Virgil's competence:[28]

> Add to this his awareness of history, add how very painstaking an investigator of antiquity he was, and not only of our affairs, but also of Greek history and that of all nations, how extremely fond he was of archaic words, how elegantly he devised new words himself, how he controlled the force of all of them as his own. I pass over the civil law, I leave out the pontifical law, I say nothing of the law of the augurs, with which he was so conversant that he seems not to have received them from others, but to have devised them himself.

This view of Virgil as universal historian can once more be easily traced back to the poet's own works: the *Aeneid* looks back, on the one hand, to events before its own narrative begins, to the Homeric legends of the Trojan War, and forward, on the other, to Aeneas' founding of Rome, through all subsequent periods of Roman history (including the Punic Wars, in Dido's prayer for an avenger to rise from her ashes, *Aeneid* 4.625), to Catiline, Cato and Augustus' most recent triumphs (8.666-70, 714-16), to the untimely death of Marcellus (6.860-86), and further still, to a Roman empire without bounds in space or time (1.278). The *Georgics* move from the world's first spring (2.336-42), to Caesar's thunderous progress beside the Euphrates (4.560-1), to a distant future when the farmer will turn up with his plough the bones of those who died in Rome's civil wars and wonder at their size (1.493-7). And the *Eclogues* relate the creation of the world from chaos (in the song of Silenus, 6.31-40), celebrate the appearance of the *sidus Iulium* (9.46-9), and anticipate the birth of a child in the consulship of Pollio, which will inaugurate a new Golden Age (*Ecl.* 4).

Indeed, an awareness of this tendency in Virgilian criticism of the period helps to account for a curious mistake in one of the most important Renaissance manuscripts of another classical author. In modern texts, lines 5-7 of the opening poem of Catullus, addressed (as the vocative *Corneli* in line 3 makes clear) to one Cornelius – later identified by Antonio Partenio as the historian Cornelius Nepos[29] – read as follows: 'even then when you dared [*ausus es*], alone of Italians, to unroll all history in three volumes – learned tomes, by Jove, and laborious'. Beside line 5, in the fourteenth-century Oxoniensis manuscript of the poet,[30] which has the reading '*ausus esT*' ('even then when one of the Italians dared to unroll all history...'), the scribe has added 'I take this to refer to Virgil, and by "three volumes" I understand his three books, namely the *Eclogues*, *Georgics* and *Aeneid*'). This extraordinary misunderstanding – even allowing for the textual variant – can only have been triggered by an automatic response to the combination of *tribus...chartis*, *omne aevum* and laborious learning, illustrating how deeply the association of Virgil with universal history had permeated into the consciousness even of a copyist of little learning and less patience (there are very few annotations in the manuscript after this first poem, which sets this initial intervention in even starker relief).[31]

But to demonstrate that Virgil was regarded as an authority in the fields of rhetoric, warfare, constitutional affairs and historical writing is merely to scratch the surface of Renaissance ingenuity when it comes to the uses to which this poet could be put. Even the notion of Virgil as theologian, as conscious or unconscious prophet of Christ,[32] can be unearthed without excessive excavation of the text of *Eclogue* 4.4-7: the theory was already subject to doubt by the time of Petrarch, in any case, although Bruni refers to it immediately after his exposition of Virgil the philosopher, and by the late fifteenth century Virgil's lines could still appear alongside the Cumaean Sibyl in the marble pavement of the Duomo at Siena, as well as in contemporary woodcuts. His poetry was also mined for precept and example by theorists of the visual arts:[33] Leon Battista Alberti – himself Burckhardt's favoured candidate for the title of *uomo universale* – makes frequent allusion to the *Aeneid* in his *De pictura* of 1435, using Virgil's text as a sourcebook for the student of painting in the fitting depiction of the emaciated Achaemenides, the companion of Odysseus rescued by Aeneas from the land of the Cyclops in *Aeneid* 3 (cf. 3.590-4), and in the representation of the attributes of Diana the huntress, to whom Dido is paralleled at *Aeneid* 1.498-502. Virgil's description of Dido herself at *Aeneid* 4.134-9 is also held up by Alberti as a model for emulation by the aspiring artist; and in his later *De re aedificatoria* the Florentine adduces the temple crafted by Daedalus at Cumae, the sculptural programme of which is described by Virgil at the beginning of *Aeneid* 6 (6.14-33) as an example of 'moralising' architecture, bringing the ancient poet within the remit of the plastic arts. Even more remarkably, as Zabughin notes, Pomponio Gaurico's treatise *De sculptura* (1504) finds in Virgil instances of the different varieties of perspective, while Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, in his *Trattato dell'arte della pittura* (1584), sets out guidelines for the proper representation not only of Virgilian scenes, but also of the poet himself.[34]

Zabughin points also to the appearance of Virgil in theoretical works on music from this period (the poet's account of the performance by the long-haired Punic bard Iopas at the banquet which concludes *Aeneid* 1 seems to have been particularly influential), though we have to wait a little longer for the first Virgilian operas.[35] Two further departments of Virgil's presumed expertise emerge from the life of the poet accompanying his portrait in Schedel's *Weltkronik* **(fig. 2b)**, taken from the popular humanistic compilation known as *Donatus auctus*, which records that 'when he had paid the most earnest attention to Greek and Latin literature, finally he immersed himself with all diligence and all studiousness in medicine and mathematics [or 'astrology']. When he was more learned and more skilled in these fields than anyone else, he made his way to the city...'.[36] Virgil's proficiency as a physician is no doubt connected with his account of the activities of the surgeon Iapyx in the twelfth book of the *Aeneid*, whose unsuccessful attempts to heal Aeneas' wound are assisted by Venus' intervention with a more esoteric remedy (12.391-421). The foundation for the biographer's depiction of the poet as an accomplished mathematician – or, perhaps more likely, astrologer – is less easy to identify; it may possibly be related to a conception current at the time that Aeneas' first words in the *Aeneid*, *O terque quaterque* (1.94), refer to the Pythagorean theory of numbers – but this is no more than a guess.[37]

This picture of Virgil's versatility, his learning and accomplishment in an exhaustive range of different disciplines, is beginning to exhibit distinct similarities to the portrait of the many-sided 'Renaissance man' we encountered above. Is it legitimate, then, to claim that for at least some of his Renaissance readers, the poet of the *Aeneid* embodied an ideal of the 'universal man'? That his work was regarded at least as a repository of every kind of wisdom emerges from a source that is neither a practical treatise nor a direct engagement with Virgil's own work. In his commentary on Dante's *Commedia*,[38] in which Virgil famously serves as the protagonist's guide through the circles of Hell and along the winding ledges of Mount Purgatory, Cristoforo Landino is able to exploit the tension between Virgil as a character – the personification of human reason, according to the earliest commentators on the *Commedia* – in Dante's

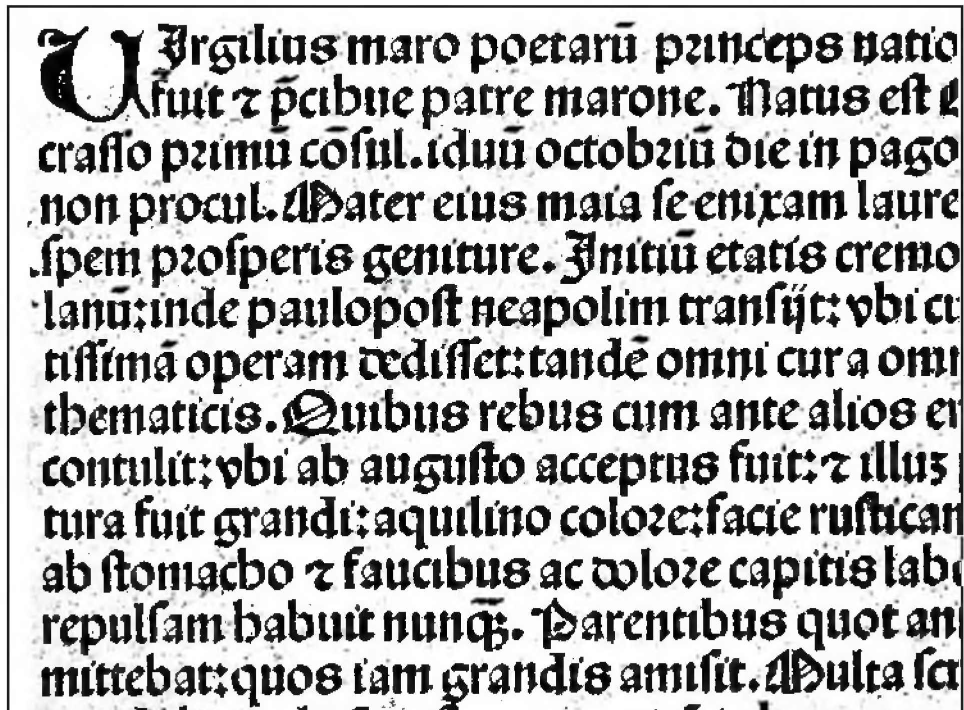
Virgilius maro poetarū princeps natio
fuit ⁊ pcibus patre marone. Natus est
crasso primū cōsul. iduū octobriū die in pago
non procul. Mater eius maia se enixam laure
spem prosperis geniture. Initiū etatis cremo
lanū: inde paulopost neapolim transijt: vbi cu
tissimā operam dedisset: tandē omni cura om
thematicis. Quibus rebus cum ante alios e
contulit: vbi ab augusto acceptus fuit: ⁊ illus
tura fuit grandi: aquilino colore: facie rustican
ab stomacho ⁊ faucibus ac dolore capitis lab
repulsam habuit nunq̃. Parentibus quot an
mittebat: quos iam grandis amisit. Multa sc

Figure 2b
Opening of *Life of Virgil*, from H. Schedel, *Weltkronik* (Nuremberg, 1493), fol. 92v

poem and Virgil as historical figure and literary model, in order to represent Dante's portrayal of his ancient predecessor as an endorsement of his own reading of Virgil's poetry. So when Dante introduces Virgil in the first canto of the *Inferno*, Landino gives a brief, conventional biography of the Roman poet (including his supposed qualifications in medicine and mathematics), before adding a further observation alien to the ancient biographical tradition: 'it would be very prolix to recount the divers learning and the supreme eloquence of this poet, nor can the pen get close to my desire, nor does the place call for it, and the fact by itself is evident to every scholar' – that is, the Renaissance appreciation of Virgil's oratorical skill and multi-faceted wisdom is sufficiently widely known that it calls for neither repetition nor explanation.[39]

Again, when the *Inferno*'s narrator addresses his guide as 'you who honour both knowledge and art' ('O tu che onori e scienza ed arte', IV.73), his Renaissance commentator observes: 'undoubtedly all learning is honoured by its own nature, but when it is adorned with the eloquence of poetry it is honoured much more greatly. It is therefore a fitting tribute to so great a poet, whose poems are packed full of all manner of learning. And deservedly one could say of him that as gold adorns the gem set in it, so he makes all knowledge that he handles yet more illustrious.'[40] And perhaps most telling of all is Landino's comment on Dante's characterisation of Virgil as 'that gentle sage, who knew everything' ('quel savio gentil, che tutto seppe', *Inferno* VII.3): here it is not human reason that comprehends all; rather this is 'great praise of Virgil, worthy of him, inasmuch as whoever reads his poem carefully sees that it is packed full of such great and so varied things, that he understands easily that Virgil was universal in all the disciplines of the ancients...'.[41]

Here we have, it seems, something approximating to Virgil the 'Renaissance man' – the adept in every branch of learning, the master of every discipline of his time: a further illustration, if it were needed, that (as Kallendorf puts it) '[t]he *Aeneid*...served for almost two thousand years as a vehicle through which the powerful elites of Europe visualized the culture they wanted and brought that culture into being'.[42] A Virgil for the age of the humanists, then, fashioned in the image of the universal scholar, or the perfect courtier. But once we turn to the question of why Virgil in particular was subjected to this interpretative treatment, and begin to locate this Renaissance Virgil within the context of previous receptions of the

poet, the picture becomes considerably more complicated. For Landino, as for other theorists, poetry encompassed the entirety of the liberal arts[43] – indeed, by the time of the *Disputationes* he was arguing that it transcended the arts, being 'res quaedam divinior' (*Disputationes* [n.15], 111) – and Virgil, *divinus Maro*, as supreme representative of poetry, could naturally be expected to supply this conception with its most comprehensive expression. But no reading exists in a cultural vacuum, and the belief in Virgil's universal wisdom, which seemed to fit so neatly into our template of the 'Renaissance man', turns out to have an extremely distinguished, and highly persistent, critical heritage.

Let us take as our point of departure the scholarly tradition on Dante with which we concluded the investigation of Virgil's fortunes in the Renaissance. The notion that Dante's attribution of all-embracing knowledge to his guide and master reflects the Florentine poet's own reading of the works of the historical author did not originate with Landino: over a century earlier Guido da Pisa, commenting on the characterisation of Virgil as 'the sea of all wisdom' ('[i]l mar di tutto il senno') at *Inferno* VIII.7, claims that 'the author calls his master "sea of all wisdom" because truly he was a man most deeply versed in all wordly knowledge'.[44] That this was not an unreasonable deduction for a scholar of this period to make is suggested by an etymology of the poet's name from the ninth-century Codex Gudianus, quoted by Comparetti: 'he was called *Maro* from *mare*, for as the sea abounds in water so did he abound in wisdom more than any other man'.[45] The association between Virgil and the metaphorical 'sea of wisdom' had thus been established five centuries before Dante and his earliest commentators. Another etymology of the same date derives *Vergilius* from *vere gliscens*, on the grounds that he was 'a most illustrious teacher of great philosophy and multifarious, like the produce of spring'.[46] It has even been suggested that in Byzantine hagiographical texts the transliterated form of the poet's name, Βιργίλιος, came to be synonymous with the adjective or noun *sapientissimus* (most learned).[47]

In his great work on European literature and the Latin Middle Ages, E. R. Curtius observes that – as we have seen in the case of Landino and his fellow theorists of the Renaissance – 'The arts of poetry of the period...demand encyclopedic knowledge of the poet'.[48] It has already been noted that the *Aeneid* served as a major source for Dante's constitutional theories in the *De monarchia*, but the association between Virgil and political philosophy goes back much further. In the twelfth-century treatise of John of Salisbury, the *Policraticus*, we find the contention that republican forms of government are modelled on the social organisation of bees illustrated by extensive quotation from the fourth *Georgic* of 'the most learned poet Maro' (*poetarum doctissimus Maro*); and shortly afterwards the reader is told 'You may be confronted by the Mantuan poet, who under the pretext of fiction expressed all the truths of philosophy'.[49] There is even an anticipation of Landino's simile of the gold and the gem in the assertion that 'Virgil was permitted to acquire the gold of wisdom from the clay of Ennius' (itself an echo – with the significant addition of the word *sapientiae*, wisdom – of one of Virgil's own supposed sayings, reported in the *Vita Donati aucti*).[50] The related iconography of Virgil as civic benefactor can be traced back at least to 1227, the date recorded in an inscription below a seated effigy of the poet that still surveys the passing populace from the façade of the Palazzo Broletto at Mantua.[51]

The image of Aeneas as 'an ideal prince and object for worldly imitation', as an ethical example for the instruction of youth, had also enjoyed a widespread vogue in the Middle Ages before its apotheosis in the humanists' elevation of virtue and excoriation of vice.[52] A late fourteenth-century commentary in a Norwich manuscript of the *Aeneid* analysed by Baswell draws from Virgil's text precise instructions for conduct in a variety of different situations, including the proper use of prayer, means of approach to friends and enemies, the importance of self-help and avoidance of danger, and appropriate veneration of the saints.[53] The common tendency to envisage the poet as actually engaged in the activities he describes results in a number

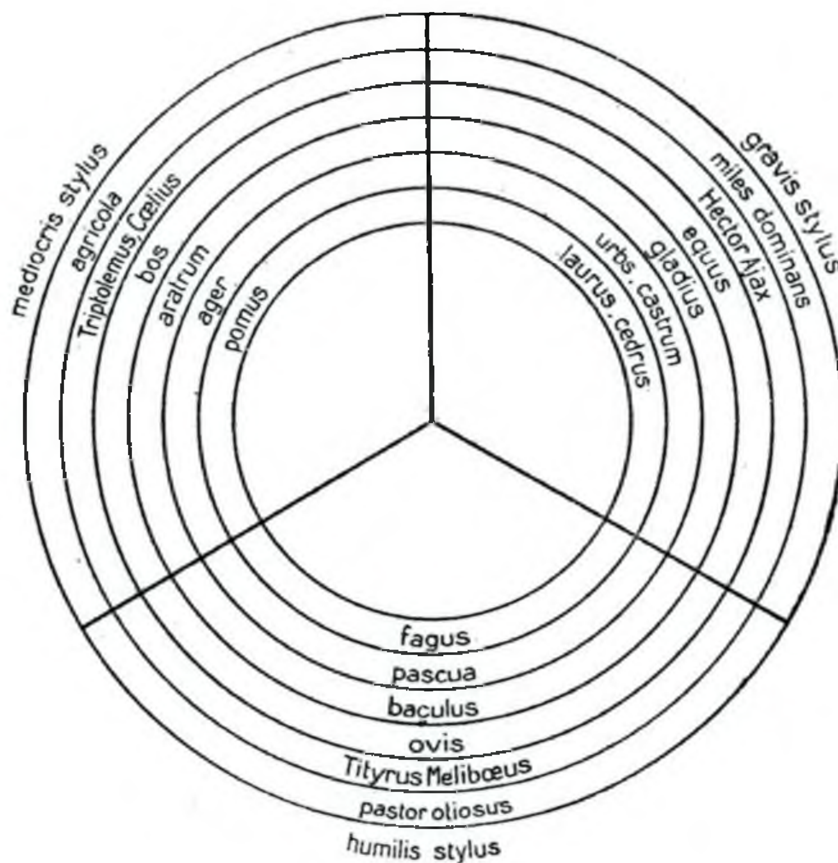

Figure 3
Rota Virgilii, after E. Faral (n.56), p.87

of Virgilian epitaphs that depict the poet as shepherd, farmer and soldier, as for example in the following lines reported by Curtius: 'As shepherd, farmer, knight, I pastured, tilled, conquered goats, the soil, foes, with leafage, mattock, hand'.[54] A twelfth-century English manuscript of the *Aeneid* later owned by the humanist John Free has a similar, if less elaborate, couplet: 'A shepherd, I marshalled sheep; a ploughman, fields; and a soldier, battles – Maro, renowned in everlasting honour',[55] and Petrarch situates himself in this tradition when he talks in *Bucolicum carmen* X.46-7 of 'a single Venetian...shepherd, farmer and warrior by turns'. The rhetorical theorists of the Middle Ages found, like their successors, a model in Virgil for every kind of style, a conception that assumed diagrammatic form in 'Virgil's wheel' **(fig. 3)**, where the three styles represented by *Eclogues*, *Georgics* and *Aeneid* respectively are associated with their own characteristic objects, landscapes and literary personalities, in most cases derived from the poems themselves.[56] And the thirteenth-century French poem *Dolopathos*, derived from traditional legends of the Seven Sages, depicts Virgil imparting to his pupil instruction in all the liberal arts, distilled into a single small volume.[57]

Virgil's authority in the field of historical narrative, praised in all its fullness by Landino, had already gained a hold over the mind of medieval readers via the *Roman d'Eneas* and the early thirteenth-century *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, the popularity of which extended well into the Renaissance.[58] The numerological interpretation of *Aeneid* 1.94 mentioned above makes an appearance in the influential twelfth-century commentary attributed to 'Anselm of Laon';[59] while the allegorical approaches to Virgil championed by Petrarch in his youth and Landino throughout his career built on the investigations of the poet's *integumenta* by scholars of earlier centuries, and Platonic interpretations of the hidden depths of Virgil's poem had been pioneered long before the age of Marsilio Ficino and the Florentine school.[60] It was no doubt the corruption of these attestations of the Roman poet's 'unfathomable store of universal wisdom' that resulted in the bizarre legends of Virgil's magical powers and superhuman achievements that enjoyed some currency in medieval Italy, the most memorable (and most notorious) feature of Comparetti's monumental work of historical synthesis.[61]

Can Virgil the *uomo universale* of the princely court and the humanist lecture hall ever be wholly separated, then, from the encyclopedic intellect of the cloisters? We shall not find the poet used to illustrate the principles of perspective before the sixteenth century, it is true, and definitions and tastes in rhetoric are not necessarily constant, but it can scarcely be doubted that – as Kallendorf contends – 'The medieval Virgil...did not disappear overnight'.[62] As so often in the study of the Renaissance, an acknowledgement of the essential continuity of certain cultural phenomena is the precondition for identifying possible developments and shifts in emphasis. But we should note that this medieval view of Virgil's comprehensive competence was itself founded on a critical tradition extending back much further, and already firmly ingrained in the Virgilian studies of late antiquity.[63] The summary of the poet's recondite learning so eloquently expounded by Landino is itself little more than a variation on a famous passage from the early fifth-century commentary of the grammarian Servius, which retained its popularity as an exegetical tool throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.[64] Servius opens his commentary on the sixth book of the *Aeneid* with a declaration of the wonders that await the reader of this book, and an indication that the limitless variety of Virgil's wisdom had already been the subject of separate studies by earlier scholars, even closer in time to the poet himself:

> The whole of Virgil, indeed, is full of knowledge, in which quality this book holds first place; the larger part of it is from Homer. And some things are said simply, many things from history, many things through the profound knowledge of the philosophers, the theologians and the Egyptians – to the degree that very many people have written entire treatises on these individual points of this book.[65]

One of these previous commentators was Aelius Donatus, whose surviving *Life* of the poet appears to preserve even more ancient material derived from the life of Virgil in the second-century biographer Suetonius' *De poetis*.[66] To Donatus we owe the account of Virgil's education appropriated by the humanist compilers of the *Vita Donati aucti* mentioned above, with one possibly significant alteration: here we learn that 'among the rest of his studies he also paid attention to medicine and particularly to mathematics/astrology' (*Vita Donatiana* 15) – but the detail in the fifteenth-century recension that he became better at them than anyone else is a later addition, no doubt based on the assumption that Virgil could not have failed to excel in whatever he turned his hand to.

The acclamation of Virgil's versatile accomplishments and monumental erudition reached its zenith around the turn of the fourth and fifth centuries with Macrobius, in whose dialogue the *Saturnalia* Servius himself (described as 'far the greatest of all literary critics') appears as a character.[67] Some impression of the approaches to Virgilian criticism adopted in this eclectic compendium can be gained from a passage in Book I in which Macrobius' speakers set out the features of the poet's work on which they will expatiate in the forthcoming discussion (*Sat.* I.24.16-18, tr. Davies):

> Of all the high qualities for which Vergil is praised, said Vettius, my constant reading of his poems leads me, for my part, to admire the great learning with which he has observed the rules of the pontifical law in many different parts of his work. One might well suppose that he had made a special study of this law, and if my discourse does not prove unequal to so lofty a topic, I undertake to show that our Vergil may fairly be regarded as a Pontifex Maximus.
>
> Flavianus was the next to speak. I find in our poet, he said, such knowledge of augural law that, even if he were unskilled in all other branches of learning, the exhibition of this knowledge alone would win him high esteem.

I, added Eustathius, should give the highest praise to his use of Greek models – a cautious use and one which may even have the appearance of being accidental, since he sometimes skillfully conceals the debt, although at other times he imitates openly – did I not admire even more his knowledge of astronomy and of the whole field of philosophy, and the sparing and restrained way in which he makes occasional, and everywhere praiseworthy, use of this knowledge in his poems.

And so on. Who can suppose that Landino, whom we saw ostentatiously passing over Virgil's learning in pontifical and augural law in the *Disputationes*, was unfamiliar with this epitome of the lost parts of Macrobius' work, whether he knew the text directly or had encountered some echo of its contents in an intermediate source? Again, Landino's comment on the gentle, all-knowing sage he found in Dante, that he was 'universale in tutte le discipline degli antichi', looks rather like Macrobius' reference to *Maro omnium disciplinarum peritus* ('Vergil, who is an authority in every branch of learning', *Sat.* I.16.12). The judgement is repeated in Macrobius' commentary on Cicero's *Dream of Scipio* (*Vergilius nullius disciplinae expers*),[68] where the late antique devotee takes his enthusiasm one step further down the path of Virgilian infallibility, calling his hero 'Virgil, a poet who has never been caught in error on any subject' and 'a man admittedly above error' (*Comm.* II.8.1, 8, tr. Stahl): our Renaissance appreciations of Virgil's intellectual universality begin to look judicious and restrained by comparison.

Yet another of Servius' successors, the sixth-century commentator Fulgentius,[69] attributes to the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* an (almost) equally wide range of competences, before launching into the allegorical reading of the *Aeneid* that occupies the main body of his *Expositio Virgilianae continentiae*. Medieval assessments of Virgil's mastery of the various *artes* may well have taken a hint from Fulgentius' observation, 'I have left out the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, in which such mystical *rationes* are imbued, whereby in these same books Virgil has touched on the inner core of almost every single art [*nullius pene artis...interna Virgilius praeterierit viscera*]' (*Exp. Virg. cont.* 738 [p.83 Helm]). For all Comparetti's fulminations against 'the abortive offspring of a barbarism as deficient in taste as in knowledge' (p.112, on Fulgentius' Latin), Fulgentius' exposition of Virgil was undoubtedly influential in later ages, and may have provided one more stimulus for the subsequent attribution to his subject of authority in every discipline known to man. It certainly laid – or perhaps rather secured – the foundations for the allegorical tendency that was to dominate Virgilian criticism in subsequent centuries.

Finally, Vegio and Guarino were by no means the first educationalists to set Virgil at the head of their syllabus: the ancient rhetorician Quintilian, prescribing the epic poets of antiquity as the foundation for the study of oratory just as his humanistic successors were to mine the *Aeneid* for illustrations of practical eloquence and exemplary virtue, begins his reading list for the budding orator as follows:[70]

The other aspects of reading require important cautions: above all, these tender minds, which will be deeply affected by whatever is impressed upon them in their untrained ignorance, should learn not only eloquent passages but, even more, passages which are morally improving. The practice of making reading start with Homer and Vergil is therefore excellent. Of course it needs a more developed judgement to appreciate their virtues; but there is time enough for this, for they will be read more than once.

Quintilian's words (attributed merely to *veteres*, the ancients) are quoted verbatim in Piccolomini's treatise, and the future pope's curriculum of approved authors displays a number of other points of convergence with that proposed by his antique precursor some thirteen hundred years earlier.[71]

By this time it may seem that I have constructed an edifice only to pull the foundations from under it and thereby send the whole building crashing down around the Neapolitan egg on which it was so precariously balanced.[72] But I think some general and positive conclusions can be drawn from our hurried tour through centuries of Virgilian universality. Virgil's Renaissance readers could scarcely help viewing the works of Rome's greatest poet at least partly through the lens of past perceptions of his literary achievement – for no age has sprung fully formed from the head of Zeus, and no historical moment is hermetically sealed from the messy continuum on either side. But these readers did not have to adopt their predecessors' vision of Virgil's multifarious interests and accomplishments. Unless we attribute the persistence of Virgil's popularity solely to pedagogical inertia, the fact that the educated élite of the Renaissance chose to retain and perpetuate this aspect of the Virgilian critical inheritance, and to build on the pre-existing foundation of ideas of Virgil's comprehensive intelligence, can tell us much about the tastes and aspirations with which the Italian humanists approached their reading of the poet's work. Kallendorf maintains that 'most reactions to the poem confirm the assertion that the *Aeneid* reinforced the educational, religious, and political values that its elite readers found reflected there',[73] and the readers of this period are no exception. It would be rash to claim that the traditional picture of Virgil as universal teacher played any part in formulating a concept of the many-sided 'Renaissance man'. But when the humanists came to look for what they felt to be the necessary historical endorsement and ancient authority for their own emphasis on the value of versatility, the long-established reputation of Virgil's consummate proficiency in all disciplines will have furnished a readily applicable means of accommodating this pre-eminent classical author to their own cultural projects. Castiglione, with whose reflections on the ideal courtier we began our survey, expresses the need for guidance and instruction as follows in the final dialogue of his book:[74]

> Therefore, as with other arts and skills so also with the virtues, it is necessary to have a master who by his teaching and precepts stirs and awakens the moral virtues whose seed is enclosed and buried in our souls and who, like a good farmer, cultivates and clears the way for them by removing the thorns and tares of our appetites which often so darken and choke our minds as not to let them flower or produce those splendid fruits which alone we should wish to see born in the human heart.

Given what we have seen of the Virgilian traditions inherited by the scholarship of the Renaissance, to whom would the studious minds of the age more naturally have turned in their quest for this master than the 'good farmer' who had sung his Ascraean song through Roman towns (*Georgics* 2.176), and the moralist who had represented in Aeneas the man endowed with every virtue, enclosing within the golden soil of his poetry the gem-like seed of all wisdom? It was not only Dante – whose own treatment of Virgil now inevitably coloured his descendants' perceptions of the literary and historical figure behind his guide and mentor – who could look to the poet of Rome and say, 'Tu se' lo mio maestro e il mio autore' (*Inferno* I.85).

University College London **L. B. T. HOUGHTON**

NOTES

I am very grateful to Professor M. D. Reeve, Miss A. C. Dionisotti and Professor R. G. Mayer for their helpful observations on a previous draft of this paper.

1 J. Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, tr. S. G. C. Middlemore (Penguin Classics; Harmondsworth, 1990) 101; see ibid. 101-4.

2 Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, tr. G. Bull (Penguin Classics; Harmondsworth, 1976 [rev. edn]) 288.

3 Castiglione (n.2) 94.

4 Piccolomini, *De liberorum educatione* 95, in C. W. Kallendorf (ed./tr.), *Humanist Educational Treatises* (I Tatti Renaissance Library; Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2002).

5 Castiglione (n.2) 90.

6 Castiglione (n.2) 42.

7 Guarino, *De ordine docendi et studendi*, in Kallendorf, *Humanist Educational Treatises* (n.4).

8 Vegio, *De liberorum educatione et eorum claris moribus libri sex* II.18-19 (ed. M. W. Fanning [I-III] and A. S. Sullivan [IV-VI], 2 vols, Washington, 1933-6).

9 For Vegio's supplement, see now *Maffeo Vegio: Short Epics*, ed. M. C. J. Putnam with J. Hankins (I Tatti Renaissance Library; Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2004). Also C. Kallendorf, *In Praise of Aeneas. Virgil and Epideictic Rhetoric in the Early Italian Renaissance* (Hanover and London, 1989) 100-28; B. Schneider, *Das Aeneissupplementum des Maffeo Vegio* (Weinheim, 1985); A. Cox Brinton, *Maphaeus Vegius and his Thirteenth Book of the Aeneid* (Stanford, 1930; repr. London, 2002); and see Anne Rogerson's piece in the present volume.

10 For resemblances between marriage and funeral ceremonies in Vegio's epic and those of Renaissance Italy, see V Zabughin, *Vergilio nel rinascimento italiano, da Dante a Torquato Tasso* (Bologna, 1921-3; repr. Trento, 2000) I.282-4.

11 Zabughin (n.10) I.284. On Vegio's speeches, see Kallendorf (n.9) 106-7: 'Speechmaking was an important part of fifteenth-century life, and humanists found many opportunities to mark public events...with demonstrations of their oratorical skill. It is logical to assume that the same audiences who enjoyed Filelfo's panegyric of Filippo Maria Visconti or Landino's "Praefatio in Virgilio" would also enjoy the speeches in Vegio's *Supplement*'.

12 Piccolomini, *De liberorum educatione* 69, tr. Kallendorf.

13 A. Field, 'An Inaugural Oration by Cristoforo Landino in Praise of Virgil (from Codex «2», Casa Cavalli, Ravenna)', *Rinascimento* ser. II 21 (1981) 235-45 at 240, lines 5, 10.

14 Field (n.13) 244, lines 143-4.

15 Cristoforo Landino, *Disputationes Camaldulenses*, ed. P. Lohe (Studi e Testi VI; Florence, 1980) 116-17.

16 Marco Girolamo Vida, *De arte poetica* III.554-92 (tr. R. G. Williams: New York, 1976).

17 Kallendorf (n.9).

18 Kallendorf (n.9) passim.

19 Field (n.13) 243, lines 81-5. See also Landino's proemium to his Virgil commentary of 1488: Cristoforo Landino, *Scritti critici e teorici*, ed. R. Cardini, 2 vols (Rome, 1974) I.211-25 at 215-16 (esp. 216 line 1 '*exemplar ad vitam degendam*').

20 *Vita Focae* 87-8 (Brugnoli/Stok); some manuscripts of *Vita Donati aucti* 79 have *Syrone*, but G. Brugnoli and F. Stok, *Vitae Vergilianae antiquae* (Rome, 1997) 119 print *Silone*. See also [Virgil], *Catalepton* 5, 8.

21 Bruni, *De studiis et litteris liber ad Baptistam de Malatestis* 22, in Kallendorf, *Humanist Educational Treatises* (n.4); note also Landino, *Scritti critici* (n.19) I.216 lines 1-3 (*Ac nescio an melius multo apud hunc quam apud philosophos huiuscemodi omnia assequaris*).

22 Field (n.13) 243, lines 85-96; cf. Landino, *Scritti critici* (n.19) I.216, lines 11-19.

23 R. Funari (ed.) *Un ciclo di tradizione repubblicana nel Palazzo Pubblico di Siena. Le iscrizioni degli affreschi di Taddeo di Bartolo(1413-1414)* (Siena, 2002) 67 with pl. IVb.

24 See L. B. T. Houghton, 'A Fresco Portrait of Virgil at Lucignano', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 66 (2003) 1-28; E. Hlawitschka-Roth, *Die 'uomini famosi' der Sala di Udienza im Palazzo Comunale zu Lucignano* (Neuried, 1998) 40-3, 140-5.

25 Zabughin (n.10) II.387-91 with illustr. facing I.152; Houghton (n.24) 18-19. On Virgilian portrait types, see also G. Zippel, 'Il culto e gli studi Virgiliani nel Rinascimento', in *Studi Virgiliani, volume primo* (Rome, 1931) 235-53 at 251-2.

26 I am very grateful to Mr Michael Halsey for supplying me with the relevant folio (92) of this work.

27 Bruni, *De studiis et litteris* 21, tr. Kallendorf; on Homeric universality, cf. Politian, *Ambra* 481-589 (*Angelo Poliziano: Silvae*, ed./tr. C. Fantazzi [I Tatti Renaissance Library; Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2004]).

28 Landino, *Disputationes* (n.15) 117; cf. Field (n.13) 244, lines 132-40; also Landino's later Virgil commentary (*Scritti critici* [n.19], 217 lines 4-8). On Landino's poetics in the *Disputationes*, see P. R. Hardie, 'Humanist Exegesis of Poetry in fifteenth-century Italy and the Medieval Tradition of Commentary' (unpublished M.Phil. thesis; London [Warburg Institute], 1976) 36-69; R. Cardini, *La critica del Landino* (Florence, 1973).

29 See J. H. Gaisser, *Catullus and his Renaissance Readers* (Oxford, 1993) 88.

30 Catullus, *Carmina. Codex Oxoniensis Bibliothecae Bodleianae Canonicianus class. Lat. 30*, pref. R. A. B. Mynors (Codices Graeci et Latini 21; Leiden, 1966) fol. 1r.

31 For the possibility that these annotations were inherited from an earlier stage in the tradition, see Gaisser (n.29) 19 with 285 n.86.

32 For the Renaissance, see esp. C. Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice. Books and Readers in the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford, 1999) 91-139. In general, S. Freund, *Vergil im frühen Christentum* (Paderborn etc., 2000); P. Courcelle, *Lecteurs païens et lecteurs chrétiens de l'*Enéide, 2 vols. (Paris, 1984-9); S. Benko, 'Virgil's Fourth Eclogue in Christian Interpretation', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.31.1 (1980) 646-705; D. Comparetti, *Vergil in the Middle Ages*, tr. E. F. M. Benecke (London, 1895; repr. Princeton, 1997) esp. 96-103, 309-17, 360-1; R. D. Williams and T. S. Pattie, *Virgil. His Poetry through the Ages* (London, 1982) 85-9.

33 Zabughin (n.10) II.29-33.

34 Zabughin (n.10) II.30-2 (Gaurico) 32-3 (Lomazzo).

35 Zabughin (n.10) II.32, 33-4 (for Virgilian operas, II.383-4).

36 *Vita Donati aucti* 7-8 (Brugnoli/Stok; cf. also 26). F. Stok, who dates this Life to between 1426 and 1437, observes that in it 'Virgil... becomes a sort of gentlemanly court intellectual and advisor to the prince, in terms that evidently reflect the sociocultural reality in which the Humanists were operating' ('Virgil Between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 1 [1994], 15-22 at 21). For *mathematica* as 'astrology', see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* VIII.471-2 s.v. *mathematicus* IB, IIB 2b; *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (Oxford, 1975-) VI.1734 s.v. *mathematicus* 5c, 7b.

37 Cf. e.g. Badius' commentary in the Juntine edition of Virgil (Venice, 1544; repr. New York, 1976) fol. 161r, citing Macrobius (see n.59 below); for a later discussion of the idea, see Sir Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (6th ed., 1672) IV 12 (p.337 Robbins). Note also Landino's calculation of the mathematical (astronomical) 'accuracy' of *Eclogue* 4: Zabughin (n.10) I.196.

38 Cristoforo Landino, *Comento sopra la Comedia*, 4 vols, ed. P. Procaccioli (Rome, 2001). On Landino's Dante commentary, see S. A. Gilson, *Dante and Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge, 2005) 163-230; Kallendorf (n.9) 129-65; M. Lentzen, *Studien zur Dante-Exegese Cristoforo Landinos* (Cologne & Vienna, 1971).

39 Landino, *Comento* (n.38) I.313; Landino's 'nè può la penna andar presso al volere' seems to be an allusion to Petrarch, *Canzoniere* 23.91. For Sebastiano Regolo's Aristotelian Virgil (influenced by Landino), '*quem omnes divinum, & Poetarum Principem, aureum eloquentiae flumen, fontem omnium scientiarum esse testantur*', see Zabughin (n.10) II.81-2 with 109 n.92.

40 Landino, *Comento* (n.38) I.420.

41 Landino, *Comento* (n.38) II.490.

42 C. Kallendorf, 'Virgil's Post-classical Legacy', in J. M. Foley (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Epic* (Oxford, 2005) 574-88 at 577.

43 See Landino, *Disputationes* (n.15) 118-19; Hardie (n.28) 11-13 (also ibid. 13-15 on the idea of the omniscient poet).

44 Guido da Pisa, *Expositiones et Glose super Comediam Dantis, or, Commentary on Dante's Inferno*, ed. V. Cioffari (Albany, 1974) 152.

45 Comparetti (n.32) 147.

46 Comparetti (n.32) 146-7.

47 For discussion see V Peri, 'Βιϱγίλιος = Sapientissimus. Riflessi culturali latino-greci nell'agiografia bizantina', *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 19 (1976) 1-41.

48 E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. W. R. Trask (London, 1953) 207; for Virgil's universal knowledge, see ibid. 206-7.

49 John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, tr. C. J. Nederman (Cambridge, 1990) VI.21, 22.

50 *Policraticus* V prologue, tr. Nederman; cf. *Vita Donati aucti* 71.

51 See W. Liebenwein, '*Princeps Poetarum*: Die mittelalterlichen Vergil-Bilder in Mantua', in V. Pöschl (ed.), *2000 Jahre Vergil: Ein Symposion* (Wiesbaden, 1983) 109-51; Houghton (n.24) 21-3 with 22 fig.12.

52 C. Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the* Aeneid *from the twelfth century to Chaucer* (Cambridge, 1995) 20, 78, 151-4, 167.

53 Baswell (n.52) 151-2.

54 Curtius (n.48) 286 (=*Anthologia Latina* 800 Riese): '*Pastor arator eques pavi colui superavi | capras rus hostes fronde ligone manu*'.

55 Cambridge, Jesus College 33 (Q.B. 16) fol.103r (cited by Baswell [n.52], 294): '*Pastor oves, et arator agros, et prelia miles | Instruxi, eterno clarus honore Maro*'.

56 E. Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XII et du XIII siècle* (Paris, 1924) 86-9; A. T. Laugesen, 'La Roue de Virgile. Une page de la théorie littéraire du Moyen Age', *Classica et Medievalia* 23 (1962) 248–73; P. R. Hardie, *Virgil* (*Greece & Rome* New Surveys in the Classics No. 28; Oxford, 1998) 1 n.1.

57 See Comparetti (n.32) 232-8, 292.

58 Baswell (n.52) 11, 28.

59 Baswell (n.52) 67 – cf. also Macrobius, *Comm. Somn. Scip.* I.6.44. For the medieval Virgil as 'mathematician', see also Comparetti (n.32) 262, 272, 290-1 (as astrologer, 272-3, 290-1, 355-6).

60 Baswell (n.52) 84-135, 136-9; P. Dronke, 'Integumenta Virgilii', in *Lectures médiévales de Virgile* (Collection de l'école française de Rome 80; Rome, 1985) 313-29; Comparetti (n.32) 104-18.

61 Comparetti (n.32) 239-376; J. W. Spargo, *Virgil the Necromancer Studies in Virgilian Legends* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934); Williams and Pattie (n.32) 89-93.

62 Kallendorf (n.9) 8.

63 For the idea of the universal poet in antiquity, see P. R. Hardie, *Virgil's* Aeneid*: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford, 1986) 22-5.

64 On Servius, see esp. Comparetti (n.32) 57-61; A. Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Berkeley, 1987) 19-42; R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1988) 169-97; D. Fowler, 'The Virgil Commentary of Servius', in C. Martindale (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (Cambridge, 1997) 73-8; R. F. Thomas, *Virgil and the Augustan Reception* (Cambridge, 2001) 93-121; A. Pellizzari, *Servio* (Florence, 2003).

65 For the possible impact of this passage on medieval readings of *Aeneid* 6, see A. Laird, 'The Poetics and Afterlife of Virgil's Descent to the Underworld: Servius, Dante, Fulgentius and the *Culex*', *PVS* 24 (2001) 49-80 at 53-60. See also Servius ad *Aen.* 2.148: Virgil 'implants varied knowledge in his poem' (*variam scientiam suo inserit carmini*).

66 For the *Vita Donatiana*, see Brugnoli and Stok (n.20) 9-56; Suetonius, vol. 2, ed./tr. J. C. Rolfe, (Loeb Classical Library No. 38; rev. edn, Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1997) II.442-59.

67 Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, tr. P. V. Davies (New York, 1969); on Macrobius, see Comparetti (n.32) 63-9.

68 Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* I.6.44, tr. W. H. Stahl (New York, 1952).

69 On Fulgentius, see Comparetti's famous comments ([n.32], 107-16); more positively, Laird (n.65) 60-7 ('a text which had a fundamental and dynamic role in shaping the reception of Virgil until well into the eighteenth century', 60).

70 Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* I.8.4-5, tr. D. A. Russell (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2001).

71 Piccolomini, *De liberorum educatione* 61, tr. Kallendorf.

72 For the allusion, see Comparetti (n.32) 303, 347.

73 Kallendorf (n.42) 578.

74 Castiglione (n.2) 291.