Paradoxically, if one word had to be found to indicate the method by which Vergil became a great, or even the greatest, lord of language, that word would be 'compromise'. Compromise seems a dull, or even a mean, method. Right-minded people, and people of spirit, can be expected to say that they hate compromise. Yet compromise was Vergil's way to the unique Vergilian Latin, the tones of human grandeur's most exalted voice.

Vergilian compromise is easier to accept as a principle when two other principles or tendencies of Vergil's mind are remembered, the tendencies to alternation and reconciliation. Vergil liked to give close attention to one thing or one character or one interest, and then equally close attention to its opposite. When such attentions are repeated in turn, they alternate. When, eventually, claims are balanced, and some constructive equilibrium is found for them, there is progressive reconciliation. This mechanism is to be expected in any artist; but it is peculiarly characteristic in Vergil. He shows its operation on many scales, from the arrangement of letters, words and verses to the manipulation of great tragic forces. What happens is much more than mere compromise; but compromise is the start, and the method for part of the way. At the far end of the way is Vergil's 'universality'.

Vergil remained himself, and characteristically himself, in every phase and aspect of his immense artistic activity. This sounds obvious; but it can be forgotten, and if it is, mistakes follow. Nor is it a fact which is easy to remember in full, and understandingly. The number of considerations which Vergil held in view and harmonized is so vast that our intellect and imagination are strained.

This characteristic operation of Vergil's mind seems to be the result of his moral nature. He was shy, doubtful and meditative, and afraid of being over-confident. With humility, however, he combined the highest integrity. Therefore he wished to be thorough, and not to act unfairly or allow anything that he did to be below standard or shabby. These propensities might well have paralysed his self-expression; but fortunately he had other advantages, including a will-power strong even by Roman standards, and a force of intellect scarcely to be imagined.

None of this is irrelevant to the complex and elusive question of Vergil's language. The finished mastery of his poetry is deceptive, and obscures the intricacies of its origins.

1 This article could be described as a few reflections peripheral to two works of Professor T. J. Haarhoff, F.I.A.L., The Stranger at the Gate, Oxford, 1947, and Vergil the Universal, Oxford, 1948; to some extent developing conceptions of R. S. Conway and J. C. Smuts.

2 I have made very free use of J. Marouzeau, Traité de Stylistique Latine, Paris, 1946, to which I refer in the notes as M, and also A. Cordier, Études sur le vocabulaire épique dans l'Énéide, Paris, 1939. To them I owe many references and some conclusions. They should be consulted for the bibliography of the subject. Since independence was impossible, and I needed to argue from material presented by them, I have gratefully followed their presentation. Closely relevant to the present subject is Andrew J. Bell, The Latin Dual and Poetic Diction, London and Toronto, 1923, a provocative but instructive work with much concerning 'the figures'. The observations of L. A. S. Jermy, Greece and Rome XX, 1931, pp. 26—37, 49—59, seem to me indispensable.
The basis of Vergil’s Latin is Ciceronian practice. Indeed, his Latin is perhaps fundamentally nearer to the Latin of Cicero’s prose and verse than to any other kind of Latin known to us. 3 Being rational and logical, Vergil preferred to start with a Latin of such resource and lucidity that no outline of thought need be obscured, and no rational relationships need be misrepresented. Latin has not quite the precision of Greek; but Cicero’s best prose comes near to the ideal. Accordingly, Vergil on the whole accepted as a substratum Cicero’s judgement on the accidence of nouns and verbs, the syntax of moods and tenses, and to some extent the choice of vocabulary; and Cicero could sometimes even furnish him with a metaphor capable of poetic use. Lucretius, though his Latin has even been thought not altogether unlike the Latin spoken at Rome in his own day, and Catullus, with his inclination to rather reckless experiments, could never have accepted so much of Cicero’s Latinity.

Vergil compromised from the start. For one thing, he perpetually compromised between Greek and Latin. At any time a phase derived from or affected by a passage in Cicero or any other Latin writer might be changed by the influence of a Greek writer or Greek writers. That was continually happening, and it has to be assumed. For example, when Vergil writes rampit uocem he recalls Greek phrases such as φαντάζω δύναμιν. Servius is therefore wrong, or incomplete, in saying that what Vergil did was merely to invert a correct expression such as rampit silentium. 4 Again, sensis medius delapsus in hostis is not less a Greek construction because, besides its occurrence in Catullus and Horace, it is also old Latin; Plautus wrote dixit datum. 5 The Greek background can never be safely forgotten, and all ancient and modern scholars who compare Vergilian expressions exclusively with Latin antecedents run a serious risk, a risk which must always be recognized even if it cannot always be avoided.

Apart from Greek, Vergil had plenty of other Latin to balance with Cicero’s, even if Cicero’s was his substratum; and it is a serious probability that he tried to read it all, and did read a great part. When he was writing the Eclogues, the Greek of Theocritus and other Hellenistic poetry gave him most of the necessary material, but he was already making use of early and classical Greek poetry including lyric and tragedies, and Latin poetry also, especially poetry of Catullus and Gallus, and perhaps several other ‘neotics’. The Eclogues already show Vergil hard at work according to his characteristic method. He was already ‘compromising’ between opposites, and especially combining and compressing together derivations from different passages of earlier literature. One result is the comparative frequency even in the Eclogues of phrases and sentences hard

3 Eduard Fraenkel, Atti e Memorie della reale Accademia Virgilliana di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti di Mantova, N.S. Vols. 19—20, 1926—7, pp. 217—227, stresses the parallel and comparable importance of Vergil and Cicero — to Petrarch ‘gli occhi della lingua nostra’, and considers them to have been mutually sympathetic. He does not say very much about their similarity of language, but his observations are constructive, not least on Catulepton X as a highly skilful and characteristic exercise by Vergil in developing and parodying Catullus IV. Some small agreements of conscience, if that is the word, between Cicero and Vergil are worth noticing; for both equidem must mean ‘I indeed’, not simply ‘indeed’, and igitur must not stand first in a sentence. Cf. also Karl Büchner, RE s.v. Vergilus.

4 Serv. A II 129.
5 A II 377.
6 Plaut. Asin. 634.
to translate according to one exclusive sense or to any received Latin usage. Vergil could perfectly easily have given us plain sense and a thin stream of meaning. But he had a different conception of his art.

The *Georgics* required the use of Hesiod, perhaps Aristotle, certainly Theophrastus, Hellenistic didactic poets, Caro, Lucretius and countless others, including Cicero's Latin translations of Greek poetry and both poetry and prose by Varro. All or nearly all affected Vergil's Latin. Among the compromises which now strained his language was the very arduous adjustment of it to both literary material of many ages and direct, familiar knowledge of the country and the farm.

Material for the *Aeneid* came from literary works in Greek and Latin, in poetry and prose, and numerous beyond all computation. Among them, in particular, were Latin poems in the Roman epic tradition, in which the *Aeneid* was to take a place. Vergil duly accepted their influence, but without neglecting other influences. There are here good examples of his compromises, and of his careful and sensitive judgement. He had to decide how much to accept, and how to use the material provided by the tradition, such as rare and archaic words, epic formulae and long compound adjectives. These questions have been elaborately investigated, and lists and statistics published. Vergil learned from Hellenistic innovations, but diverged. He accepted the Hellenistic practice of hard thinking in the choice and vital use of words, but not to the extent of abandoning epic tradition or even some epic formulae. He purified the epic style which Ennius, Lucretius, Cicero in his poetry, and others offered for his use. He even admitted expressions more appropriate to Latin drama, not only tragedy but also comedy. But he remained traditional, and an epic poet. He did not carry classicism to the degree of purification reached in Horace's Odes, and perhaps later emulated by Lucan; he did not normally allow, as even Ovid was inclined to allow, old, obscure or unexpected forms and expressions to creep into the verse without strong reasons for their admission, and, as Quintilian would have advised, he was carefully moderate in his archaisms. To reach his destination in an extreme of power, Vergil travelled by countless middle ways.

Archaic and formal usages, familiar from old Latin epic, sometimes set Vergil's Latin in obvious contrast with the Latin of Cicero's prose. Macrobius, agreeing with Quintilian and perhaps going farther, was right to insist that old Latin can very often explain Vergil's apparent innovations. Vergil no doubt liked the traditional flavour, and agreed with Quintilian's belief that the sense of antiquity adds a certain majesty. But as always, Vergil's motives are subtle and even elusive. His habit of compromise was a means, not an end. To achieve it to his own satisfaction, he needed three other principles of art. His poetry must be musical, and musically expressive. He must also be visual and tactile. Vergil normally wrote concretely of solidly imagined people, things and actions, avoiding the loose play of abstract ideas. Finally, but no less important, the meanings must be compressed and condensed into a short space and few words.

Vergil's tendency to compromise, which might also be described as a willingness to consider everything and despise nothing, gave him great freedom to be

8 Quintilian I, 6, 39.
expressive. It led him to diverge from his predecessors in small matters and in great. For the sake of musical sound he allowed many old genitive forms in -\textit{um} instead of -\textit{orum}, such as \textit{deum}, \textit{uirum} and \textit{magnanimum}. When, at the death of Turnus, -\textit{orum} stands at the end of both the first and second halves of a single verse, it is unique. Virgil nowhere else allows the syllable to occur in exactly these places. Ovid was characteristically more tolerant, and used such impressive sound-effects more freely and less thoughtfully, so making them less impressive. Virgil wanted his poetry to present and emphasize the concrete; accordingly, he used far fewer verbally formed nouns ending in -\textit{men} -\textit{minis}, -\textit{tura} and -\textit{tus} than Lucretius. The nouns ending in -\textit{tus} were favoured by Livy, who seems to have learnt much from Virgil, and afterwards affected Virgil in his turn. The nouns in -\textit{men} -\textit{minis} were of course a great help to versification, as Ovid found; he used them in immense numbers and variety. Interestingly enough, Virgil was more ready to use them if they had, or could have, a concrete meaning, as \textit{gestamen} and \textit{tegimen} or \textit{tegmen}. Like other Latin poets he developed the use of nouns, especially, but not only, eloquent short nouns which may almost personify qualities and actions, to express what prose might express by verbs. Another revealing practice is Virgil’s care to substitute other verbs, with richer and more vital visual content, for \textit{est} and \textit{sum}, as \textit{iacet}, \textit{ibat}, \textit{illecundus}, and most of all \textit{stat}, \textit{stant}. Virgil did not invent the practice, but he extended it. As for compression of meaning into a short space, examples are everywhere.

Most often, when Virgil writes unusual Latin, this desire for compression is the reason, or one of the reasons. He was always trying to compress; ‘\textit{ut verba in compendium cogeret},’ as Servius well described it. Virgil used the word \textit{pone}, ‘behind’. It was not contemporary literary Latin, but old, and possibly in Virgil’s time a rustic survival. But it was very much shorter than \textit{a tergo}. Still shorter, for its wealth of meaning, is \textit{ilicet}. Virgil uses it with enormous tragic effect to mean something like ‘all was lost’, or ‘no hope remained’. It was not fashionable. It belongs to old Latin, especially the Latin of the law courts and comedy. In Terence it means something like ‘the court rises’; all can go home. What is astonishing is that Virgil should have drawn from

\begin{itemize}
  \item A XII 648–9:
    \begin{quote}
      \textit{sancta ad uos anima atque istius insicia culpae}
      \textit{descendam magnorum haud unquam indignus anorum.}
    \end{quote}
  \item Similarly unique is A XII 903–4:
    \begin{quote}
      \textit{sed neque currentem nec se cognoscit euntem}
      \textit{tollentemue manus saxumue immane mouentem.}
    \end{quote}
  \item Close, but different, are A III 549, A VII 18, A XI 361.
  \item Bell, pp. 155–9; Virgil should be carefully compared with other writers in his exploitation of \textit{cor}, \textit{fatum}, \textit{fides}, \textit{horror}, \textit{lit}, \textit{mens}, \textit{mor}, \textit{nomen}, \textit{spes}, and other such nouns; a new use of nouns was one of the many lessons learnt by Tacitus from Virgil (‘in some sense Virgil touched off the Silver Age’ — J. R. T. Pollard).
  \item M p. 146.
  \item Serv. A I 639.
  \item Serv. A II 424: \textit{ilicet} — confestim, max. sane apud ueteres significabat sine dubio \textit{‘actum est’}; Terentius, Adelphi: resciunt omnes rem; id nunc clamant, \textit{‘ilicet’}; Eunuchus: \textit{actum est, ilicet, peristi}.\end{itemize}
such a word such overpowering tragic and poetic force. He also used magis atque magis, a despised expression, with high poetic success. He even went so far as to adapt the very informal ecce tibi, writing en perfecta tibi, at a moment of high intensity 17; but, as usual, the artistic gain is great.

Vergil’s humility and readiness to compromise led him to such daring and such achievement. Indeed, it sometimes looks as if his unwillingness to call anything common or unclean caused him to become not only capricious and unconventional, but positively provocative, if not impertinent. However, even so his poetry does not fail, and the price paid is nothing compared to the profit in compression and explosive poetic power.

There are some examples of Vergil’s receptive catholicity which, though they show no great distortion of normal Latin, are sufficiently instructive to be specially mentioned. Writing of a thoroughbred horse, Vergil says that he ‘replaces soft legs’, or ‘feet’, ‘on the ground’, or ‘replaces his legs’ or ‘feet’, ‘softly’, the proleptic adjective being beautifully expressive, mollia crura reponit 18. The meaning of mollis in this context has of course been discussed. It is more important to look at the adjective in another context. For Ennius uses the same words, mollia crura reponunt, but of cranes, grus: perque fabam repunt et mollia crura reponunt 19. The birds, walking about and picking up beans, are comic; the thoroughbred is not, but exquisitely beautiful in form and action. What exactly Vergil has done, why his daring choice of a derivation has enabled him to express the very nearly inexpressible, and how he has altered Latin to do so, would need a long enquiry. But Vergil’s daring gave him, as usual, success. No one can really fail to see the picture presented.

In such examples Vergil sometimes makes use of meanings and suggestions, appropriate in an older context but less obviously appropriate in his own, new, context, to make his own intended meaning more exactly clear. Again there is paradox. Vergil writes of Juno, ‘an incessant affliction for the Trojans’, as Tencris addita Juno 20. The verb is unexpected. Perhaps it suggests Socrates, ‘applied’, like a gadfly, to the Athenian democracy. But it is known where Vergil found it. It was in Lucilius, who wrote si mibi non praetor siet additus atque agitet me, non male sit 21, ‘If, with all the rest to put up with, I had not the Praetor, too, on my hands, tormenting me, it would not be so bad.’ This is not the only rather surprising Lucilian echo in Vergil. The very inappropriateness of the old associations is made to add force and precision to Vergil’s poetry. Again, conventional Latin is very lightly altered.

By being reconditely allusive Vergil made his poetry defiantly direct. He was praised in antiquity for excelling in all the styles of rhetoric, even though he wrote poetry, not rhetorical prose. It does not follow that he always obeyed the expressed and authoritative rules for good writing.

Quintilian has a rule against mixtura verborum, which roughly means ‘too many words out of the natural place in a sentence’, and he accuses Vergil of disregarding it when he wrote saxa vocant Itali mediis quaie in fluctibus arae 22.

17 A VII 545.
18 G III 76.
20 A VI 90.
21 Lucilius XIV 469—70 Marx; Macrobius Saturn. VI, 4, 2.
22 Quintilian VIII, 2, 14; A I 109—10; M p. 322.
This is not very terrible, especially if it is the only bad case which Quintilian could find. There is here, however, a notable case of Vergil's care in choosing the middle way. Quintilian's *mixtura* is a fault which often beset many good Roman poets, though usually in tolerable measure; but it is not unlike that 'interlacement of word order' which is praised as a practice valuable to Vergil for the enrichment of meaning, as of course it is. He could, however, dispense brilliantly with the practice of interlacement as he could, apparently, with every other device; and so achieve the sweet, heavenly power of his verses beginning *deuenere locos laetos...*, where Aeneas at last reaches the homes of bliss.

There was an amusing difference of opinion concerning the repetition of words. Quintilian noted that the best writers did not greatly worry to avoid repetitions, though some people were quite childish in their efforts to find synonyms. The Auctore *ad Herennium* had already observed that synonyms were regularly used by writers to avoid repetitions, but he himself liked repetitions and classified their uses. Cicero to some extent concurred. As usual, Vergil himself partially agreed with both sides. His repetitions are sometimes exquisitely artistic according to many classifiable schemes, as *sidemus Italian. Italiam primus conclamat Achates, Italiam...* in three verses, *ab Ioue... Ioue... Iouis* in two verses and *nocte... nocte... nocte... noctes* in four.

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23 J. W. Mackail, *The Aeneid of Vergil*, Oxford, 1930, Intro. p. lxxiv; 'It is in the manipulation of language that Vergil stands apart from other poets. His sensitiveness to language is unique, more especially the way in which he perpetually — it might almost be said, in every line of the Aeneid — gives words and phrases a new colour by variation, sometimes obvious, sometimes so delicate as to escape notice, of the normal or classical diction. Language always remains with him a fluid medium, and he handles words so as to make them different. The interlacement of word order, to which a highly inflected language like Latin lends itself, is carried by him to the utmost limit, and the phrase, within which no division by punctuation is possible, may extend over several lines. Words which are logically or syntactically inseparable may be at long distances from one another, and his cross-patterns of language, while they seldom fail to convey the effective meaning desired, almost defy analysis. It was this that led his detractors to say that he did not write Latin; and there is this much of truth in the criticism, that his Latin is a language of his own, and one in which he was, up to the last, perpetually experimenting.'

Cf. however Fraenkel p. 226 and especially notes 1 and 2 for Vergil's freedom from such awkward arrangements as Catullus LXVI 18 non, *ita me diui, uera gemunt, iuuereint; Vergil shows a slight tendency to such writing in the Eclogues, but scarcely any after them. A thorough inspection of hyperbaton throughout Vergil might reveal secrets concerning his mind and thought.

24 A VI 637—8: *deuenere locos laetos et amoena uirecta fortunatorum nemorum sedesque beatas.*

cf. M p. 335. 'C'est là un des exemples les mieux faits pour montrer le rôle que peuvent jouer les bons écrivains dans la défense de la langue, en réagissant contre ceux qui par l'abus des procédés de style aboutissent à la négation même du style.'

26 Quintilian VIII, 3, 51; X, 1, 7.
28 Cicero, *De Or.*, 3, 206; *Orator* 133.
29 A III 522—4.
30 A VII 219—20.
31 G I 287—90.
32 A II 756.
and, to us, rather offensively; as *solemus... solebam... solent* in five verses. Meanwhile, his care to find synonyms is often very thorough and successful, as when in eleven verses ten words mean water in some form, and eight of them are different.

Vergil freely used parataxis when constructing clauses, though a simple sequence of statements was accounted *sermo inliberalis*. Vergil could write elaborate paragraphs. But on the whole he inclined to a narrative structure nearer to Caesar’s habit than to Cicero’s or Livy’s, with many connectives meaning ‘and’. Poets, of course, are not expected to write in prose periods, though Lucretius and Catullus both exhibit long and elaborate paragraphs. But there is a special interest here. Vergil tended to return to old Latin structure, even to the use of present participles in the nominative to end sentences, and in word-order which approached modern English. It is indeed probable that, by organizing sentences in this way, Vergil altered the course of the literary future, and even helped to decide the shape of mediaeval Latin and the languages of modern Europe. There is here another example of Vergil’s attention to both of two extremes. This time he was inclined to favour both, in different passages.

There was apparently a rule discouraging the excessive use of pronominal words, and words lacking a solid content of meaning. Latin is rich in such words, and perhaps especially forms and derivatives of the relative pronoun. They are useful for emphasizing, with brevity, the rational organization of a sentence with an almost mathematical logic, and that is something which Latin likes to do. The free use of such words belongs apparently to old Latin, and especially old legal Latin. It was not considered good in literary Latin or artistic oratory in the classical period. Vergil has not much of this fault, but he did not always try to avoid it. There is the famous *quaæ cüique est fortuna bodie, quam quisque secat spem...* As usual, that which, occurring elsewhere or used by another, might have been a fault, is turned to high poetic effect. There may be no great merit in *nos tamen haec quicumque modo tibi nostræ vicissim...* But Vergil’s practice represents a restriction of the practice of Ennius, as *quae quam quisquam (quemquam), quemque, quisque conueniat, neget?* a verse admittedly from a drama, not epic; and even when he meant to echo Ennius he never went as far as Ennius would freely go.

When Vergil wrote strangely, he apparently obeyed his own judgement, for all his diffidence, without much caring for pedantic critics. He used the adjective *cuimus-a-rum; die age, Damaeta, cuium pecus? an Meliboei?* A reply came in the form of a parody: *cuimum pecus? anve Latinum? non, uerum Aegonis: nostri sic rare loquantur.* It is a foolish complaint. The adjective *cuimus* was good old Latin, had probably survived outside Rome, and was indeed used by Cicero. Vergil used *hordeum* in the plural, otherwise not known. The
answer offered, 'by Bavius and Maevius' as Servius pleasantly says, was hordea si dicit, cur non et tritica dicit? It seems rather childish to us. Vergil may well have had Latin authority for hordea. But he was probably more or less thinking in Greek, as he often did, and using the plural as Greek used it for more than one type of grain, as τὰ ἄλφας.

Poetry, in Vergil’s day, had advanced farther than poetic criticism. There certainly seems to have been much rather pedestrian appreciation going on in antiquity, and in later antiquity. Macrobius, however, has passages which, from our point of view, are appreciatively in the right direction, even if some secrets of classical poetry had been lost before the later writers lived.

A list, partly taken from Servius, which Macrobius gives shows the kind of Vergilian phrase which seemed to other Romans unusual, but also well, bene, pulchre, contrived. Examples are: recentem caede locum, ‘none dictum’; caeso sparsurus sanguine flammar, that is, ‘qui ex caesis uidelicet profundium’; corpora tela modo atque oculis uigilantibus exit, that is, ‘telae nitat’; exesaevque arboris antro, ‘antro’ for ‘cauerna’; frontem obscoenam rugis arat, ‘arat non nimio sed pulchre dictum’; and nir gregis for ‘caper’. Macrobius exclaims: ‘et illa quam pulchra sunt: ‘aquaee mons’; ‘telorum seges’; ‘ferreus imber’; ut apud Homerus λαυον ἐσος γιτώνα. He likes dona laboratae Cereis, oculis aut pectore noctem accipit, ‘nocisque offensa resulat image’, pacemque per aras, and paulatim abolere Sychaum incipit. On the verse discolor unde aura per ramos aura refulsit he writes: ‘quid est enim aura auris, aut quem ad modum aura refulget? sed tamen pulchre ussurpavit’. Of simili frondescit virga metallo he says ‘quam bene usus est ‘frondescit metallo’

Macrobius' list and comments may seem simple and obvious. But they show how Vergil's language appeared to intelligent readers in antiquity, and help to indicate what seemed, or indeed were, at least some of the differences between

43 Macrobius, Saturn. VI, 6, 1—9.
44 A IX 455—6.
45 A XI 82.
46 A V 438.
47 G IV 44.
48 A VII 417.
49 E VII 7.
50 A I 105.
51 A III 46.
52 A XII 284.
53 A VIII 181.
54 A IV 530—1.
55 G IV 50.
56 A IV 56.
57 A I 720.
58 A VI 204.
59 A VI 144.
60 A X 714.
61 A XII 813—4.
the Latin of Vergil and the Latin of others. The list shows Vergil never letting anything alone without hard thought and at least some act of originating will. Occasionally there is perhaps an appearance, deceptive or not, of change for the sake of change and no more. More often in these and other such instances there is compression of meaning, a clear enrichment of content, and an access of emotion, drama, music, or colour, due to an unexpected word or usage.

The practice is something like a great extension of the normal figure of

\[ \text{abnusio, variāgnoce,} \]

that is, the sudden use of an unexpected word. Caesar advised writers to avoid an abnormal or unusual word, \textit{insensum et insolens verbum}, like a dangerous rock at sea. Fronto was not content with usual and ordinary words, \textit{solitis et usitatis verbis}. He advised out-of-the-way words, \textit{verba non obvia}, and disagreed with Cicero, who thought that in the best orators very few unexpected and improbable words, \textit{insperata atque inopinita verba}, could be found. These writers were thinking mainly of vocabulary and words in themselves unfamiliar, the true \textit{abnusio}, rather than words unexpected in their context. But the interest is not the less for that. There was clearly, and had long been, a useful difference of opinion. One of the points at issue was whether we should write smoothly, or surprisingly, administering shocks. Characteristically, Vergil took everything into consideration, and might almost be said to have devised a way to secure the advantages offered by both the opposing doctrines. It is as if he had set before himself the ideal of compression and then, subject to that ideal, had worked out his compromise of usual words, unusually manipulated.

This policy led to a great number of small divergences from Ciceronian Latin, many of them indicated by Servius, and many, too, revivals of old Latin practice. When Vergil uses a mood or tense which would not be expected in Ciceronian prose, for example an indicative in indirect question, as \textit{ne quaere docer} \ldots \textit{quaer forma viros fortunaeque mersit}, or \textit{viden ut geminae stant vertice cristae} or a very sharply significant perfect tense, as \textit{ven res rapissse licebit}, there are usually antecedents in old Latin. Other variations, as \textit{quem dat Sidonia Dido} (for \textit{dedisset}), and ‘mixed conditional clauses’, are no doubt Vergilian, but most of them are near to the general tradition of Latin expression, and some are Vergilian in the sense that Vergil exploited constructions which, like other parts of the Latin language, had already achieved a compression of complex meaning. This, as a general tendency of Latin, can be seen in other matters, including a number of single words; the adjective \textit{lentus} is almost a poem in itself.

A few of Vergil’s genders were noticed in antiquity as irregular. He was apparently alone in making \textit{damna}, usually meaning ‘doe’, masculine; this was

\[ \text{62 M p. 197—9.} \]
\[ \text{63 Gell. I, 10, 4.} \]
\[ \text{64 Fronto p. 50 Naber.} \]
\[ \text{65 Fronto p. 98 Naber.} \]
\[ \text{66 Fronto p. 63 Naber.} \]
\[ \text{67 A VI 614—5.} \]
\[ \text{68 A VI 779.} \]
\[ \text{69 A X 14.} \]
\[ \text{70 A IX 266.} \]
\[ \text{71 Bell p. 14 and passim.} \]
apparently because he wanted the sounds of timidi dammae, without a rhyme. The genitives of Greek names, as Achillei or Achilli, were said to be inventions of Vergil, created to give the right sound. But his third-declension datives in -e, fourth-declension datives in -n, and perhaps a fifth-declension genitive in -e are from old Latin; so, directly or indirectly, are the syncopations direxit, repostas. None are very startling, except perhaps asris for asperis. So probably are some usages of the gerund which might seem strange. Servius, explaining ardestique tuendo 72, calls the gerund 'passive', as also in frigidus in silvis cantando rumpitur anguis 73; this is in contrast to cantando tu illum (sc. superabis)? 74, which he calls 'active'. Of course, cantando rumpitur might be a retention from some expression cantando rumpas or rumpere potes after a Vergilian adaptation. The best parallel from another writer is from the Bellum Hispaniense, erumpendo naves incidunt 75; some such source may have influenced Vergil. No principle seems to be infringed by voluenda dies 76, and inter agendum 77 is correct; both may perhaps be called old-fashioned. Vergil's extended use of cases, especially the dative and ablative, and his omission of prepositions, are particularly characteristic and important, but no more can be said about them here.

Miscellaneous details are plentiful. Old-fashioned are Vergil's active verbs which might normally have been deponent, such as popular for populatur, and perhaps some intransitives which might have been transitive, as siliqua quassante, noluentia planstra, and noluentibus annis; other unusual forms are recens as an adverb; multa, plural, adverbiale, for mulsum; ambo and duo as accusatives; adeo meaning something like 'indeed', and atque involving some such sense as 'suddenly'; proprius meaning 'appropriate' or 'correct' rather than 'his own'; puto in an old Latin sense, 'ponder'; and such old forms as stridunt for strident and stetremunt for steterunt.

Vergil preferred to treat Latin as timeless, and as still fluid, that is, still more fluid than it actually was in his own time. He was not only using language, but also creating language, as a poet should. He was perhaps capricious and self-willed; but to a poet quidlibet audendi semper fuit aequa potestas. The main thing was to have the greatest possible volume of material to use, and the most extensive resource. Vergil used old Latin as he used contemporary Latin. There were two words for 'son', natus, poetical, and filius, prosaic. He used both; but each only in contexts which were appropriate. He similarly used the more dignified proelium and the less dignified pugna both appropriately, and not far apart 78. But he used the prosaic fluminus very freely, and did not clearly distinguish it from the more poetic synonyms; a word may be useful for itself, apart from any associations. At, or near, the opposite extreme, are such phrases

72 A I 713.
73 E VIII 71.
74 E III 24.
75 Bell. Hisp. 36.2.
76 A IX 7.
77 E IX 25.
78 M p. 167.
as *Anchisa generate*, which seem to be principally valued for their *Ennian* quality. They are occasionally used in considerable numbers, and contribute importantly to some elaborate Vergilian passages.

Ellipsis is part of the reason for many Vergilian irregularities. Sometimes it may count as the whole reason. On *ocumbere morti* Servius says *nouae locationis forma et penitus remota*, rather strong language, and quotes Ennius,

Professor Palmer writes: 'Vergil's archaisms are used with delicate and deliberate artistry. As with Lucretius, they are dictated by the theme. It is noteworthy, for instance, that the form *fust* occurs in Vergil only in a speech of Jupiter (I.c.) a passage worth examining in the present context. The words of the *Pater Omnipotens* are introduced by the archaism *infit*. The scene is sketched with alliteration of *Ennian* intensity:

The speech itself opens with an impressive "dicolon abundans":

His judgement, which begins with the majestic polysyllable *quandoquidem*, "in as much as" (never used by Cicero in his speeches, nor by Caesar), has the balanced binary structure rooted in the language of religion and law. In the last line we sense the *dolo malo* of the *leges saevae* and the *sinister* of the language of augury. Thus the archaism *fust* finds its setting in a majestic context where the father of gods and men sits in the judgement seat.

'Marouzeau has pointed out a number of instances where such archaisms colour the language spoken by the gods: *quianam* (Ennian) is used by Jupiter (A X 6), *moerorum* by Venus (A X 24), *avit* by Juno (A 1 46). No better illustration could be found of Quintilian's dictum, "verba a uetustate repetita ... adferunt orationi maiestatem aliquam" (1, 6, 39).

'The Sibyl, too, speaks a language not of this world:

*Leucaspim et Lyiae ductorem classis Oranten* (334).

In this passage we may note, further, the *Ennian* reminiscence *nada narrant* and *vestigia pressit*; the patronymic expressions *Anchisa generate, Anchisa satus*, which were a feature of Latin epic style from Livius Andronicus on; the syntactical Graecism (this a "gloss") *iurare numen*; and finally the un-Latin *-que ... -que*, which is a 'calque' coined by Ennius as a convenient hexameter ending on the lines of Homeric expressions such as *διογον τι φιλον τε, πιθεμοι τε μέγαν τε*.

I hope so long a quotation will be forgiven. Professor Palmer's comprehensive and rounded commentary is particularly valuable here since my treatment in the text is selective and fragmentary.

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morti occumbant obtiam. It is hard for us to realize that the Romans felt that the loss of obtiam, though there is still an ob- in the verb, made so much difference. Even in this phrase, apparently, Vergil was quite audacious in his continuous and insistent search for brevity and compression.

There are three adjectives which, differentiated in classical Latin, had all according to Servius meant 'large' or something like it in old Latin. They are dirus, indignus and saeius. Servius may well be inexact. But if the words did once have wider meanings, it may be that Vergil took advantage of a certain ambiguity when he wrote indigno cum Gallus amore peribat, or when he applied saeius to Juno. The adjective dirus is more interesting. It is thought to have come to Rome from Umbrian and Sabine neighbours of the Romans, so that it may not have been fully understood. Vergil noticeably used it to mean neither 'terrible' nor 'large', but something nearer to 'excessive' or 'exaggerated', tending to 'uncanny', 'grotesque', 'unnatural', as in dira cupidō, an 'excessive', perhaps even 'impertinent', desire. It is possible that in these three instances Vergil used antiquity and obscurity to increase his freedom, just as he used simple verbs in preference to compounds, for instance the older form tendere, which has necessarily more possible meanings than contendere, so that his art of ambiguity, light allusion, and penumbral meanings could be helped. But Vergil was equally capable of finding contendere in an old passage and adapting it as tendere. It is hard to keep pace with the constructive agility of his mind.

Servius does not apparently quote Sallust when he comments on Vergil's gerundives such as ardescitque tuendo; but elsewhere he cites more parallels from Sallust than from any other writer. It is unnecessary to suggest that he does so because Sallust was in particular use as a school text. More probably Vergil admired Sallust's artistic treatment of the Latin language, and joined him in enterprise and experiment. Cicero complained of historians whose only merit was their brevity; Vergil thought that there was much to be said for that quality, and certainly sympathized with Sallust in his liking even for Cato's Latin. Servius, or Daniel's Servius, quotes Sallust for requierrunt, intransitive, the meaning of culuis in qui culuis habendo (two quotations from Sallust), the fifth-declension genitive in -e (die), the use of forens for essent, falsus meaning 'deceptive', a possible form minus (olvoc).

80 Serv. A II 62; Enn. Sr. 135—6 Vahlen; but cf. also Enn. Ann. 398 Vahlen occumbunt multi lētum ferroque lapique; perhaps even in this small matter Vergil struck a balance between two Ennian phrases. In general ancient criticism tends to overlook the double parenthood accountable for many, or most, Vergilian inventions.
81 Serv. ad G I 37, E VIII 29, A I 4 and A II 226.
82 E X. 10.
83 A I 4 et al.
84 Serv. A III 235.
85 A VI 373; cf. G I 37 and A IX 185.
86 I owe this interpretation to the kindness and insight of Mr. John D. Christie.
87 Serv. E VIII 4.
88 E VIII 27.
89 G I 3.
90 G I 208.
91 G I 260.
92 G I 463.
instead of *ninum* 93, the meaning 'untruthful' for *namus* 94, *certos* meaning 'reliable men' 95 (two quotations from Sallust), *fidius animi* 96, *foedanius funere noltus* 97, and *vos agitate fugam* 98.

This is a selection from notes in the earlier part of Servius' commentary; a full list would be long. There cannot be serious doubt that Vergil, from the *Eclogues* onwards, worked in sympathy with Sallust's experiments, and learnt from him procedures which were important in determining his own treatment of language throughout his lifetime, especially his choice of words, and of contexts for them. Sallust helped to teach Vergil the extension of the figure of *abusio* which was to become characteristic of all his work.

Agrippa's famous criticism of Vergil's Latin 99 is of course hard on Vergil, but it seems to have been an honest reaction to carefully observed facts; too carefully observed, perhaps, for passivity might have allowed receptive sympathy to grow. Others too have been misled, including Byron and Shelley. However, Agrippa helps to show that Vergil's Latin seemed very peculiar to at least some contemporaries, and to confirm our own conception of what Vergil's peculiarities were.

By far the greater number of Vergil's first hearers and readers accepted him with whole-hearted acclaim. Latin was still, even then, experimental. There was scarcely yet a standard Latin, as there has been a standard English for two hundred and fifty years. But Vergil's contemporaries, if well read, must have noticed echoes of many periods and many writers, almost continuously. The less well-read probably found his Latin about as remote and strange as we find the Authorised Version of the Bible, or a little less so; and perhaps sometimes it seemed to them about as artificial and elaborate as Gerard Manley Hopkins' poetry seems to us.

But all alike, and at all times, could and should have been captivated by the Vergilian music; and most have been. The music depends on the Latin, and the Latin would not have all its music if Vergil's artistic mind had not been so capacious.

After all, to judge of Vergil's Latin it is not so necessary to read Servius and other commentators as to read Vergil himself, and other Latin poets for comparison. If we do so, and look out not for oddities but for the ordinary, regular, personal quality of the text before us, we notice something in Vergil which sets him apart from the rest, and which can be called part of his universality. The other poets are always themselves, and perhaps even a little self-conscious sometimes. Each has a style, and sometimes it seems an exaggeratedly individual style.

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93 G II 97; Servius has apparently misunderstood Vergil, but that is irrelevant here.
94 A I 392.
95 A I 576.
96 A II 61.
97 A II 286.
98 A II 640.
99 Donat. *Vit. Verg.*: 'M. Vipsanius a Maecenate eum suppositum appellabat nouae μακονθίαν; repertorem, non tumidae neque exilis sed ex communibus urbis atque ideo latentibus.' There is very little at all offensive in this famous notice except the words *suppositum* and *maco'nθia*. There is even a pleasing suggestion of the middle way in *nec tumidae neque exilis*, and the remaining words might almost be taken as an acknowledgment of Vergil's success.
Vergil, of course, leaves fingerprints everywhere. But they are less important. What is important is the catholicity, the intellectual capacity, the patience which enabled him to amass all the resources which his vision required, and the economy and variety with which he used them. Being so greatly gifted, he could, with a small vocabulary and under fairly rigid rules, do something different every moment. Variety of expression is one of his great secrets of success. He had the full power of rare genius to break the rules and 'snatch a grace beyond the reach of art'. Sheer resource, and abundance of material at his immediate command, gave him immense flexibility, even though he often seems formal. He needed all of it, because in his art not only syllables but even single letters counted; not only vowels but also consonants; not only quantities but also accents; and so on, beyond the limits of our knowledge. Pauses must not be too regular. They can, however, be regular in the right place for a short passage which is poetically, dramatically and emotionally such as to require just such pauses. Dactyls, spondees and elisions must match the iridescent flash of the many-sided systems of thought, which they must follow, and in their turn engender. Comedy and tragedy must co-operate to create truth within a two-word phrase. Elemental forces must conflict and crash about us in the story, and the whole life of worlds must seem to us tangibly at stake. Yet the artist himself must keep something in reserve and never lose control, but coldly check himself against excess in strengthening or protracting or repeating any single note. It is, oddly enough, the end of the way of which compromise was the beginning. But it was always a compromise composed of fairness and honesty, a sympathy for finding a value in all things, a courageous will to pay any price, however high, and unrelenting effort, never withheld, until everything needed, everything that could conceivably be needed, and needed for a task never imagined before, had been acquired. Tantae molis erat.
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