

or ‘paternal’ virtues, which are imagined as the instruments of power (17). Among the hearers, Pollio, of republican faith, would be unlikely to be either deceived or amused. Images of new divinity might find ready recognition and acceptance in those more extravagant and ambitious. Not unlike Virgil in the eclogue, Julius Caesar’s heir appropriated traditional names and institutions for new schemes, disguising innovation with a show of solemn returns, capitalizing on the old legends of the family’s divine origin and the new pretense that the assassinated Julius became a god.

B. Looking again at the whole work also reemphasizes the importance of the *Parcae*. The motif of their weighty *pronunciamento* stands out more clearly as closing a whole development in prophecy that goes back through what we have chosen to call the ‘Embassy’ into the ‘Preamble’, where it begins with the motif of ‘Cumaean song’. Thus rereading is drawn to compare and contrast what look like beginning and ending motifs within the poem. ‘Cumaean song’ appears nakedly and abruptly, taken for granted, with no elaboration beyond the theme, ‘last age’. No individual name of a Sibyl or text of prophecy is reproduced, as we saw in Chapter one. Virgil seems to have wanted a generic motif, thematic coloring, capable of evoking a popular cult and historical function, to lead off the vividly contemporary image of the *kairos* (4-10). He thus communicates effectively to a broad public while establishing his literary membership in Hesiodic tradition. By contrast, the *Parcae* bring a different set of resonances. At the level of generic thematic color, they add the gravity of ‘fate’ which reinforces the public image of prophetic authority and new myth. In literary terms, as we have seen, this caps a series of reversals of Lucretius while summing up and confirming Virgil’s appropriation and revision of Catullus. What we have not seen, however, is something that emerges only from the process of integrating the poem and reconstructing the fictive situation as a whole: Virgil introduces the *Parcae* at an imaginary juncture just after birth but before growth, thus a turning point in his embassy to the child as he gears up to move from the *captatio benevolentiae* of the praise into the closing exhortations to act. Inserted into such an imaginary context, the reported utterance of the *Parcae* evokes a mythic function ascribed to them by Varro.

According to Varro, the *Parcae* intervene at a crucial moment in a child’s life: when a child makes a first significant utterance (*fatum*, ‘a thing spoken’), then, at that moment, they, too, speak, determining the child’s destiny (*fata*, ‘things said’):¹ (*Ling. lat.* 6.7.52)

Fatur is qui primum homo significabilem ore mittit uocem. ab eo, ante quam ita faciant, pueri dicuntur infantes; cum id faciunt, iam

¹ Cf. Ennius, *Scaen.* 58: ¬me (Cassandram) Apollo fatis fandis dementem inuitam ciet., and *Ann.* 19, cited in Chapter two.

fari; cum hoc, uocabulorum a similitudine uocis pueri ac fatuus fari id dictum. ab hoc, tempora (Popma, *tempore* mss) quod tum pueris constituent Parcae fando, dictum fatum et res fatales.

Someone speaks (*fatur*) who for the first time as a human being emits from his mouth a meaningful utterance. From that, before they do so, children are called unspeakers (*infantes*). When they do it, they are said now to speak (*fari*) at last. Along with this, from the words' likeness to a child's utterance, also to speak as a divinity (?) / imbecile (?) is so called (*fatuus fari*). From this, fate (*fatum*, 'the spoken') is so called and fated events (*res fatales*, 'things of the spoken'), because then at that moment the Parcae are believed to determine life and times for children by speaking (*fando*).

As Varro tells it, the first significant thing a child does, his first deed, is an act of speech: Varro writes \neg ante quam ita faciant... *infantes*; cum id faciunt, iam fari. with a sense of the similar sound (*fa-*, in spite of differing quantities in the vowel) that relates the idea of action (*fac-*) and the specific act (*far-* / *fat-*). In the light of Varro's account, Virgil appears to have calculated the situation in the eclogue to span the imaginary time of birth itself and the moments leading up to the child's first significant act, when his 'fate' gets set. The preamble, as we saw, represents the child as 'being born' (\neg nascenti, 4.8) and refers to him in the third person ('he will rule', 4.17). The praise, however, represents him as a present audience, hence in the logic of the fictive situation he is newly born. Summing up the praise, then, Virgil says, 'Such centuries the *Parcae* have told', where \neg dixerunt. (4.46) must reflect the situation Varro describes: the *Parcae* determine 'by speaking' (\neg fando.) life and times for a child. Meanwhile, however, in the scenario created by Virgil, the newborn child has done nothing. Virgil represents him as still what Varro calls an 'infant', an 'unspeaker', not yet having made his own first significant utterance. The moment when he should do so is what Virgil envisions next: \neg adgredero magnos aderit iam tempus honores. (4.48), 'Approach o great honors, soon now it will be time', time, that is, Virgil implies, for you to take your first significant action, to live up to what the *Parcae* have said.² The energy and the theme of Virgil's exhortation gain new point in the light of the mythic paradigm.

If this reconstruction of the scenario is correct, Virgil has imagined a very delicate role for himself. The rhetoric of his 'Embassy' is charged with persuading the child to act in way that will be consonant with 'fate', that will signify the right thing in the right way, getting the future off on the right foot. Given the magnitude of the assignment, the rhetorical elaboration of the 'Embassy' gains new point: first the long praise through gifts,

² The temporal adverb *iam* occurs here for the tenth and last time in the poem, having marked each stage in the praise and sig~nal~led the immediacy of the *kairos*, where it occurred three times in the first four lines: see discussion in Chapter four.

where honor is implied by the rich enumeration, then the confirmations, starting with the urgent citation of authorities and insistent commands, ‘Run’ and ‘approach..., look..., look’, *–currite.* and *–adgredere... aspice... aspice..* The sequence reaches a high point of rhetorical increment in the terms of the final command: ‘Look how all things rejoice in the century to come,’ *–aspice uenturo laetantur ut omnia saeclo.* (4.52). ‘All things’ takes the topic of the material world as far as it can go, yet the theme of coming growth provides the occasion for a still greater increment, allowing a leap in time to imagine the future when the child’s growth will have been achieved, followed by the further leap of imagining the implications of his growth for poetics. Here Virgil continues the praise convention of the whole ‘Embassy’, maintaining the fiction that the more exceptional the projected offering, in this case poetry, the greater the honor reflected on its subject, the child. Earlier we noted how Virgil built the poetics with the ideas of equaling prophetic tradition and surpassing bucolic. On rereading, now, the final image of victory invites particular scrutiny, since our analysis of rhetorical increment suggests that it must be a new kind of climax, something even greater than the motif of ‘all things’ which capped the previous increment: (4.58-59)

Pan etiam Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,
Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice uictum.

Pan even, with Arcadia as judge, if he compete with me,
Pan, even with Arcadia as judge, would call himself defeated.

The idea of a poetic contest is a basic ingredient of the bucolic genre, but the challenge to legendary poets and divinities, above all to the founder, Pan, breaks new ground. Challenging the founder of the genre in which one is working constitutes an extreme. Rhetorically it achieves a new high point by using terms of poetic authority and ancient time: a contest with Pan would recover the earliest moment in the genre and reenact it in the most distant future. An esoteric poetics seems implied, like the salvation of Gallus in eclogue six or his debacle in eclogue ten, and like the meeting of poets in the seventh idyll of Theocritus, which Virgil echoes twice in this poem, as we saw in Chapter four.

In keeping with the exceptional theme, the language assumes a form unprecedented in the eclogue. The two lines are nearly identical in composition, so that a change of only ten letters makes the difference in meaning. The style suggests either a jingle or an incantation, either child’s play or sorcerer’s deadly work. Again the stylistic force of Catullus comes to mind, his emphatic apostrophe, ‘I often you, often I you with my song’, *–uos ego saepe meo, uos carmine compellabo.* (64.24), where the style recovered the archaic connotation of *carmen* as ‘magical formula, spell’.

Such a style fits the rhetorical function of the passage in at least two respects. The archaic, even hieratic, manner suits the

notion of return to the very origins of the genre. The earliest speech might well be imagined as having the form of an old rhythmic formula, an oracle, prayer or charm. Such language would suit, too, the role of *uates* preserved in popular tradition, as we saw it reflected in Lucretius in Chapter three: the spell-binder, seer and magician, low style and low themes, while Lucretius claimed the high road in a philosophically purified prophetic-didactic tradition. In response, Virgil might be said to redeem that kind of language, with the concept of *uates* itself, in the framework of his whole plan. Rhetorical strategy might suggest, too, at this point in the ‘Embassy’, after so many other forms of persuasion have been tried (including copious illustration, flattery, intense pointing and pleading, large claims), recourse to a style like this that might charm through sheer form. The jingle might entice the infant, or the spell enchant, beyond inferred praise. In either case, the new high point has been achieved by implications of lower and older style.

After pushing rhetorical crescendo to such extremes, further increment seems hard to imagine. Virgil achieves it, however, by using a motif that reaches beyond the capacity of words, which is one object rhetorical increment is supposed to achieve: to get ‘beyond the top, where words fail’, ‘supra summum... (ubi) verba deficere’, as Quintilian says.³ To achieve this extra margin of growth, Virgil turns back in the imaginary scenario to focus for one last time on the imminent future and to urge at last that the infant produce his first significant utterance, *uocem significabilem*. Yet what Virgil conjures up for the infant to do by way of a first sign is not speech, although it resembles speech in being produced by mind and lips. Arguably Virgil may have struck on the perfect notion of a signifier for the case at hand. A smile would avoid the risks of speech, which might not communicate adequate or correct significance. Paradoxically, in Virgil’s imagination, ‘song’ preempts normal speech, leaving the infant only to move lips in a gesture of recognition and reconciliation. An inference may be invited that any other beginning would be too limited, too specific, might restrict or compromise the largeness of voice that represents itself as encompassing the *Parcae*’s ‘fates’, the presentiments of the cosmos, the joy of ‘all’, and mounting a challenge to Pan.

C. Although rereading brings out the movement of persuasion from praise through calls to act, and the rhetoric appears integrated with a mythic scenario in time, a further glance backwards also discovers that the rising drama moves by discrete segments that fall into a symmetrical and concentric pattern distinguished by strict thematic and structural recurrence, even to formal returns of the identical numbers of lines. How this apparently static configuration relates to the rhetorical thrust forward and upward invites further inquiry in an effort to reintegrate what we have seen.

³ *Inst. orat.* 8.4.4. 6.

In length and theme the prophecies of the ‘Preamble’ and ‘Embassy’ progress in an orderly manner, from the *kairos* (4.4-10: 7 lines) through ‘Pollio and Coming History’ (4.11-17: 7 lines) to the end of the ‘Praise through Gifts’ (4.18-45: 28 lines), yielding a coherent series, -7-7-28- (with the further note of apparent coherence that $28 = 7 \times 4$). Following this sequence, come the confirmations and exhortations, with the extraordinary rhetorical increments we have just retraced: yet these comprise two passages each with seven lines, which looks like a formal return in a concentric pattern as follows: -7-7-28-7-7-. In view of the demonstrated increment, yet apparent symmetry, one wonders whether the passages that are parallel in form have any comparable relatedness in theme.

Both ‘Cumaean song’ and the ‘fates’ of the *Parcae* begin the seven-line segments in which they occur and both enhance the prophetic aura of the poem. Yet we have seen that each also contributes quite specifically different values, suited to their different positions in the fictional scenario. ‘Cumaean song’ heads the *kairos*, which Virgil envisaged as a present moment, characterized by ongoing processes concomitant with birth; the moment of the *Parcae* is conceived as coming a bit later, after birth, and directed beyond itself to the desired moment when the infant would begin. Also, the very paradigm of a time after birth but before the first signifying is supplied by the myth of the *Parcae*.

An even greater shift in temporal perspective marks the next pair of passages. The sequel to the *kairos* projected the effects of the child in Roman history up to and including his entrance into mythic society and future rule (4.11-17). The praise through poetics sums up those projected reforms in the conventional formula, ‘your deeds’, which become the imagined subject of the amplified bucolic contest and final return to refashion bucolic origins.

What we have integrated thus far might be called the prophetic core of the poem. Around it, the opening and closing passages, with respectively three but then four lines, offer further evidence for concentric patterning. The close resembles the start in insisting that something be done: only a shift occurs here, too, as in the parallels just examined. In the close, the action is to be taken no longer by the poet and Sicilian Muses but by the child. It is he who must make a start, and it will no longer be enough to make an effort in ‘song’: mere language ‘a bit greater’ will not suffice; with something a bit greater than language the infant is urged to start, that is, with the smile.

A further intensifying shift occurs in the final mingling of promise and threat, that those who do not smile miss the pleasures associated with a heroic fate .. the bed of goddesses and the board of gods: ‘whoever has not smiled at a parent,/ him worthy neither god of board nor goddess deems of bed’. The theme of worthiness, *dign-*, defined poetics in the opening, ‘let woods be consul-

worthy'. Here it is woven into the fabric of myth, certainly no mere return to the somewhat abstract poetic ambition to be consular. Instead Virgil introduces the more full-bodied themes of a reclaimed heroic mythology,⁴ part of the potential subject for the epic song of deeds⁵. Almost as if keeping pace with these thematic intensifications, even the final passage is longer, if only by one line.

Within the concentric pattern, thematic growth and fictional time can be codified as follows:⁶

3-7-7-28 / **7-7-4**:

3: 'a bit greater': present growth in poetry (1-3).

7: 'now new': *kairos*, birth now, growth to be in history (4-10).

7: growth: action to be in history (11-17).

28: growth: action to be in nature & society (18-45).⁷

7: 'soon now': action urged just beyond present (46-52).

7: 'then tell your deeds': beyond action, further poetry (53-59).

4: 'begin smile': action urged just beyond present (60-63).

In the pattern, formal return implies not repetition but enhancement, increment. The scenario might almost be plotted on a graph. It moves from present growth in poetry, through the motifs

⁴ In *indignata est*. (4.63) of potential divine mingling with the new hero he envisages restoration of a mythic state like that lamented by Catullus as lost with the iron age: 'nor do gods any longer deign to visit such assemblies', *quare nec tales dignantur visere coetus*. (64.406).

⁵ With specifically Roman coloring, since the table of Hercules and bed of Juno figured in Roman birth rites according to Warde Fowler, *HSCP* 14 (1903), 29., cited in Chapter two, n. 31.

⁶ Cf. *RE* 2.15.1196.3-40, 1202.53-66: diverse arrangements are possible, but numerology is subject to formal interpretation like any other part of the poem, hence not all combinations, though in themselves ingenious, will be meaningful in the sense that they can be linked to themes in the text, such as, e. g. *concordes stabili... numine*. or *magni menses*,. and certainly *mundum*.: such concepts could hardly be represented in a poetry lacking in some system of numerical perfection, consonant with the mythical music of the spheres, cf. the hints of poetic cosmography *B.* 3.40-42 and *B.* 6.82-86. We have deliberately not entered into the recent controversy about Virgilian numbers, preferring insofar as possible to consider first the poem, for it offers sufficient complexity and reason of its own.

⁷ The 'Praise' recapitulates the three part organization of the 'future history', beginning, middle, end, expressed in a metaphor of growth as 'infancy, adolescence, adulthood'. At the same time, the middle divides into the 'progress' and the 'survival / return', as argued in Chapter two, so that the whole 'Praise' is articulated as follows:

8: infancy, bucolic miracles (18-25).

5/6: adolescence, literacy and georgic miracles (26-30).
adolescence, iron survivals, heroic recurrence (31-36).

9: adulthood, iron vanished or reabsorbed (37-45).

The total length, 28, equals 4 x 7, while the section lengths are the numerals surrounding seven (viz 5-6-[7]-8-9).

of birth and growth in history and nature, building a comprehensive conception that the poet identifies as 'fate' and urges on the child, who is conceived as the agent of this poetic conception in the world. What is more, further extending the imagined range of time, Virgil envisions the great contest, with the past of bucolic origin used to suggest the most distant imaginable future. Topping this, he closes with the image of his idea implanted in the world. He has created the poetic role of *uates* and pointed it well beyond even the scope of an *Aeneid*.⁸ The outline is capacious, logic ambitious, outcome stupendous, if only certain contingencies were met.

D. The victory envisioned is terribly contingent. It depends on acceptance of Virgil's version of 'fates' by others, as suggested by both \neg te duce. and \neg tua facta.. He portrays it as dependent, too, on his own human mortality. Although he has just enunciated the vision of joy in 'all things'(4.52), even as he capitalizes on it to envision his own triumph, he qualifies the hope: (4.53-54)

O mihi tum longae maneat pars ultima uitae
spiritus et quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!

O to me then remain the last part of a long life
and breath that will be enough to tell your deeds!

The exclamatory 'O' and pronoun 'to me' inject an unprecedented personal note, which is amplified by the emphasis on the poet's own mortal span: the temporal adverb \neg tum, 'then', with 'long' and 'last' makes the desired moment of greater song seem especially distant, and the effect is intensified by the echo of \neg tum. in \neg quantum, which quantifies and underscores the physical, mortal dimension of inspiration. The whole effect is to suggest a very distant goal, uncertain of realization. The ensemble suggests a nostalgic desire as grave as that with which Catullus focused on a decisive moment in the heroic past: 'then Thetis..., then Thetis..., then Thetis...' (64.19-20). The language might justify talk of the gravity of Virgil's longing for an ideal rather than of any unshakable faith in the future.⁹ The child's exuberant

⁸ T. S. Eliot, \neg Virgil and the Christian World, *On Poets and Poetry* (London, 1957) 128, \neg Certainly the love of Aeneas for Dido has great tragic force. There is tenderness and pathos enough in the *Aeneid*. But Love is never given, to my mind, the same significance as a principle of order in the human soul in society and in the universe that *pietas* is given; and it is not Love that causes *fatum*, or moves the sun and the stars.. Dante, who was moved by Love to speak, had perhaps a better sense of Virgil than Eliot: the *Aeneid* leads to Parnassus, eclogue four to the Light, *Purg.* 22.55-61; Virgil at \neg currite. a par~a~dox~i~cal~ly still point, is as close to the origins of Christian symbol as he ever came; here *fatum* and the poet's desire meet: contrast Aeneas, \neg fato profugus.. Eliot's remark, \neg But the loves of the shep~herds represent hardly more than poetic convention... merely reveals an elderly blindness.

⁹ Unlike *RE* 2.15.1213.21.36: cf. Dante, *Inf.* 4.32-42, of classical poets, philosophers, heroes in Limbo, \neg lo buon maestro a me: i... semo perduti, e sol di tanto offesi/ che senza speme vivemo in disio.. The fourth eclogue grows in desire and hope, falls back finally into desire and nostalgia.

prospect momentarily is shadowed by a pathos like that of other eclogues. . . O where are the fields? One contingency is the symbolic old age of the poet, which was a motif in eclogue one, where Tityrus, too, spoke as an old man. Another contingency lies in the toil and troubles of production, suggested also by \neg fastidia. (4.61) or the lost songs and exiled singers of eclogues one and nine. The life of poetry depends upon a dual history: of making and doing, poet and Roman world. At this innermost point of poetic vision, the inevitability of circumstances shows most nakedly: no ultimate poetic triumph without 'your deeds'.¹⁰ Pollio and in the background the young Caesar may proffer a world as ideal as matter can hope to be; and in this alone eclogue four differs from the others, seizing the uniquely favorable occasion. The risks of worldliness are more apparent in other poems. The radical rejection of history and erotic displacements of six and eight, forced departures of nine, Love's victory in ten, will come to overshadow the hopes and desires of four. Compelled finally by themes of defeat, death and winter dark, Virgil will leave pastoral. Yet the pastoral he leaves will be Arcadian, which implies eventual progress by the Sicilian Muses towards the match with Pan at home, which was the culminating vision of poetics in eclogue four. Alongside the intimations of mortality looms a scenario in poetics: song about deeds, i.e. epic, and refounding the bucolic genre on its original Arcadian grounds.

E. The idea that began as 'growth in poetry' exhausts the conventional reach of language with 'all' (\neg omnia, . 4.52) and Pan (4.58-59). It stands on the edge of another medium, looking across to a second beginning. The last four lines represent an extraordinarily high point for poetry, yet for the world very slight indeed. The smile is untypical heroism in either classical poetry or the classical world, more appropriate to another culture, a limiting case for this. The imperatives, alliteration, theme of \neg fastidia. from erotic talk, bring to mind comedy if not erotic poetry, low style conventions again, though not the incantatory mechanism of the lines on Pan. In the image of mother and child, with the cajoling, counseling manner of address, commentators see a diminuendo, after the crescendo to Pan. Yet far from obscure, the smile attracts the most persistent attentions, like some other smiles in art. It evokes other themes in the eclogue, like universal joy (4.52) or the specific laughter of miraculous plants (4.20). Its meaning beyond the poem can be determined with some moral, spiritual, formal,¹¹

¹⁰ E. E. Beyer, \neg Vergil: Eclogue 7 .. A Theory of Poetry, *AClass* 5 (1962) 38-47, esp. 40.

¹¹ Formally or ideally, eclogue four may be said to bridge the extremes of heaven and earth, Jove and a mother or, as suggested in Chapter three, form and matter; but these symbols can be translated yet further into poetic terms: \neg As with other products of divine activity, the father of a poem is much more difficult to identify than the mother. That the mother is always nature, the realm of the objective considered as a field of communication, no serious criticism can ever deny... (Poet at best a mid-wife...). The true father or shaping spirit of the poem is the form of the poem itself, and this form is a manifestation of the universal spirit

but little documentary force. The smile is more a result than a condition of the poem.

Avuncular speech and the tableau of child with mother invite comparison with comedy. The scene turns on the recognition and reconciliation which mark the new comic ending, though what estranged this mother and child was not the usual wandering and trickery of comic plots but the discomfort of gestation. The child would properly take up where comedy leaves off, after recognition, realizing the happily-ever-after in the world. Virgil's command, 'begin', is in its way no more audacious than the comedian's closing 'applaud' nor comedy's expressed desire that the mores of the audience be improved. But the comedian's command is to the general, the republican crowd, while Virgil's is more close and absolute. Indeed in its focus on the single figure and his potential action, it suggests other genres, higher than comedy on the social scale. The earnest argument of the didactic poet remains a prototype, as we argued in Chapter three. But beyond that, the promise of honorific gifts and the plea for benefit to the community by an action that only the hero can perform strangely resemble the 'Embassy' of the Achaian heroes to Achilles, seeking to move him to overcome his rage and return to save his friends. Likewise and in some ways even closer is the 'Embassy' of Athena, in the guise of Mentos, to the young Telemachus, encouraging him to learn of his father and begin to know himself. The lines of argument, the figures and topics, would require more analysis than can be undertaken here. The hint remains of a nucleus, which will expand in the Homeric recoveries of the *Georgics*, where Achilles and his Mother stand behind Aristaeus and his, also the *Aeneid*, where the relations of the hero and his Mother frame the tale.

The family picture lends itself to comparison with other cultures or with popular elements of the same epoch. Images of sacred families were already diffused and became important Christian symbols, as did the eclogue in time.¹² Beyond these historical coincidences, the beatific smile of bride and mother, recognition, opening of paradise, the flow of milk and honey, reconciliation with Mother Earth, the end of lengthy questing, all are familiar motifs. Their attraction to the poem suggests that here Virgil achieves as wide a scope as any other classical work.

Beyond the smile as the imaginary *principium* for a heroic life, the motifs of the divine bed and board actually close the eclogue. They would make a fitting climax for a highly civilized, romantic comedy: parallel to Catullus' heroic *Wedding*. To be sure, central mysteries of Christianity turn on matters of bed and board,

.....
of poetry, the 'onlie begetter' of Shakespeare's sonnets, who is not Shakespeare himself, but Shakespeare's subject, the master mistress of his passion, Northrup Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, 1957) 106: the child is yet another *dulcis Musarum fetus*.

¹² On religious developments of the time, see M. P. Nilsson, 'The High God and the Mediator', *HarvTheolRev* 56 (1963) 1201, quoted in Chapter four.

but Virgil, after touching boundaries where his style and culture meet that one, has drawn back into the classical and specifically even Roman.¹³ His final theme and its stylistic variant, with the compression of proverbial wisdom, might make a reader smile in tranquil recollection; for proverbs belie their name and sentence speaks clearly only to the expert. Such language distills after the fact, does not impart. Proverbs are incomprehensible to children, though easily enough remembered because of their concise and pithy form. Through form only, like the lines on Pan, might they get a hold on a child before being understood? Not as real charm or prayer, but as formal speech, myth, they close the case.¹⁴

Bucolic battle at the farthest stretch of imagination, pushing Pan, peace now: the extremes close and dominate the poem: one for Virgil, one for the world. Very far from any actual poetry or history, they represent the war and politics of an ideal commonwealth. In them Virgil has transmuted Rome's historical experience into a symbol of higher, perfect harmony, what Blake called the Reign of Literature and the Arts.¹⁵ The self-created *uates* sees in Rome's particular instant of hope the idea of a universal order in which all manner of things would be well. For the moment he grasps at a hint of constructive *Amor* in *Roma*, giving us the first symbol of the Augustan empire, the rebirth of ancient strains in Roman poetry, and ultimately also the precursor to the papal cloak.¹⁶

Virgil's child has no name nor history, nor past of its own except in the context of the whole. As a formative idea in poetry, the child brings to mind a rhetorical *incrementum* characterized by Quintilian as succeeding *non nisu sed impetu*,¹⁷ 'enter none who strive there for, on the sudden it is won.. In Virgil's fancy, the increment would succeed *risu*, although *fastidia* intrudes as a hint of material travail and 'traces of our crime' remain to be undone. Homiletic imperatives, the contest, exuberant language achieve new reach, taking old means to new extremes. They themselves are the miracle. They do not so much describe a *miraculum* as enact a *miramentum*, a poetic *incrementum* of historical moment. They incorporate a concerted joy and power of poetic creation, springing

¹³ Cf. Warde Fowler, above note 5.

¹⁴ Plato invokes the image of a child's attention to a story before telling the myth of the world's growth, *Pol.* 268d.

¹⁵ 'In 1801, perhaps in a hopeful mood because of the peace with France then about to be concluded, he (Blake) wrote 'The Kingdoms of this World are now become of God and His Christ, and we shall reign the Kingdom with him for ever and ever. The Reign of Literature and the Arts commences., cited by K. Raine, 'Blake's Debt to Antiquity,' *Sewanee Rev* 71 (1963) 419.

¹⁶ '(The *Aeneid*) helped to create not only the conception of the Roman Empire as a spiritual force, but its long extension into medieval Europe, and so played its part in the cohesion of Christendom.' G. R. Levy, *The Sword from the Rock* (London, 1953) 216; cf. Dante, *Inf.* 2.10-27 and also 1.106-08.

¹⁷ In this manner Cicero carries off a successful rhetorical *incrementum*: 'hic in sublime etiam cucurrit et ad summum non peruenit nisu sed impetu,' Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 8.4.8-9.

up as for its own sake.¹⁸ New language and form, prophetic in fact as well as theme, they pose and resolve the question of a new Roman, what will become Augustan, poetry and poet,¹⁹ the *uates*, at a time when the political question was far from resolved. They are progeny to be seen and heard.

As Virgil appropriates and recasts, readers may read and reread, perhaps even coming from time to time to feel, as Valéry says, like authors of the eclogue and know thereby that it is fine.²⁰ Materials, traces, consul, heroes, would become then working symbols, no longer just problems or objects known, but cases, how things are felt and seen. Readers might take a childlike, practical interest in the matter. Prelude, play. *Paulo*, a word little noticed, *myricae*, or *puer*, too much discussed, *quo*, *ridere*, *redire*, any whatsoever may take on a new, communal meaning, being reborn in form.²¹

.. Incipit ..

¹⁸ –The chief thing in a work in verse, a thing proclaimed by the very use of verse, is the *whole* (sic), the power resulting from effects compounded of all the attributes of language,. Paul Valéry, –Variations on the Eclogues,. *The Art of Poetry* (Bollingen,, 1958) 307, finding an analogue for Virgil’s *Bucolics* in his own youth in poetry.

¹⁹ Valéry, (op. cit.) 300-01, speaks of the makings of poetry: –...a host of successively tested combinations. The poet chooses among these, not the one which would ex-press his ‘thought’ most exactly... which would there-fore repeat what he knows already, but the one which thought by itself cannot produce, and which appears to him both strange and a stranger, a precious and unique solution to a problem that is formulated only when it is solved.. Cf. the remark by Northrup Frye (above note 11) that the form of the poem itself is its true father, and the poet poet a kind of midwife.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 307.

²¹ –Here language is no longer an intermediary annulled by understanding once its office is accomplished; it acts through its form; and the effect of form is to be immediately reborn and recognized as itself,. Valéry, *ibid.*