

## ILLE EGO QUI QUONDAM . . . ONCE AGAIN

Ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena  
carmen et egressus silvis vicina coegi  
ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono,  
gratum opus agricolis, at nunc horrentia Martis  
arma virumque cano . . .

'THE authenticity of the *ille ego* lines fails on every count' was the conclusion of an article by Professor R. G. Austin<sup>1</sup> on the lines of the *Aeneid* preceding *arma virumque cano*. The aim of the following discussion is to suggest that perhaps, after all, Virgil did write the lines. To avoid unnecessary repetition I adhere as closely as possible to Prof. Austin's arrangement of the points to be considered. It is not always the arrangement that I should have chosen myself but I have only had to deviate from it in as far as I have found it necessary to discuss part of the contents of section V 'Conclusions' along with section I 'The Ancient Evidence'. It will be understood that only the reader with Prof. Austin's article to hand will find the following fully intelligible.

### I. THE ANCIENT EVIDENCE (Austin, pp. 107 f., cf. 113 f.)

'(a) The lines are not in the early manuscripts' can be dealt with briefly. This has nothing to do with the authenticity of the lines, but is simply due to the fact stated subsequently: '(e) The canonical opening of the *Aeneid* was plainly *arma uirumque cano*.' This too contains only negative information; if the lines had been canonical, that would not have proved that Virgil wrote them, but it would have come very near to proving that Varius did *not* remove them (either because Virgil did write them or because they are a later addition). As it is, we can only say that the lines were not canonical *either* because Varius removed them *or* because they are a forgery; what becomes canonical from the beginning is not what happens to have been written, but what happens to be published.<sup>2</sup>

(b) It is necessary to look into the sense of the phrase (*scripta*) *summatim emendata*. Prof. Austin tells us (p. 113): 'Donatus states (41) that Varius

<sup>1</sup> *CQ* n.s. xviii (1968), 107-15. Prof. Austin's study cites most modern literature with direct bearing on the subject. In 1970 three relevant discussions appeared:

G. P. Goold, 'Servius and the Helen Episode', *HSCP* lxxiv. 101-68 (the *ille ego* lines are treated pp. 126-30; the special merit of the article is the careful assessment of the value and sources, or lack of sources, of Servius' statements).

E. J. Kenney, 'That Incomparable Poem the "Ille Ego"?', *CR* n.s. xx. 290 (For the contents of this note see my note 3, p. 143).

T. E. V. Pearce, 'A Note on *Ille Ego Qui Quondam*', *CQ* n.s. xx. 335-8 (Pearce tries to

find the sources of the phrases used by the alleged imitator; the point of departure is the view that Prof. Austin has said the last word in this matter: to one who does not share this view, the article seems a *petitio principii*, and accordingly its relevance for the present article is only slight).

<sup>2</sup> This was clearly stated by T. Fitz-Hugh, *TAPA* xxxiv (1903), p. xxxiii: 'The publication of the archetype would naturally fix the first line as *Arma virumque*, etc., for all earlier manuscripts, for all subsequent literary reference, and for all inscriptions and Pompeian graffiti' etc.

published Virgil's *scripta* . . . "summatim emendata"; he adds, to illustrate the respect with which Varius carried out his work, that the incomplete lines were left untouched.' Donatus' words are: *edidit autem auctore Augusto Varius, sed summatim emendata, ut qui versus etiam imperfectos sicut erant reliquerit*. This must mean: '. . . but he only emended them (Virgil's *scripta*) *summatim* since he has left even the unfinished verses as they were'. *Emendatio* is anything from the author's revision of his own work (cf., e.g., Ov. *Trist.* 4. 10. 62; Quint. 10. 4. 2), through similar revision done by someone else at the author's request (cf., e.g., Plin. *Ep.* 1. 2. 1) and corrections or alterations made on no authority (cf., e.g., Quint. 9. 4. 75 on the beginning of Livy's Proem; Augustine, *Ep.* 261. 5), to 'something roughly analogous to proof-reading' as Prof. Austin phrases it. Only the context determines the exact meaning of the word. Now, I agree completely with Prof. Austin when he says (p. 114) that Servius' words *ut superflua demerent, nihil adderent tamen* 'amount to no more than his own gloss on the meaning of *emendare* in the context of editorial responsibility' (cf. the end of section I of the present article, on Servius), and I consider that in Donatus an analogous interpretation must be applied to *summatim emendata*. The phrase would seem to be nothing but Donatus' own brief indication of what he expands in the following *ut qui*-clause, the exact sense of *emendata* being determined only by its context. Thus the statement boils down to Donatus' wanting to form an opinion on the character of Varius' editorial work and doing so by means of the unfinished verses. In other words, Donatus was no wiser than we are concerning the *emendatio*, and it is therefore not possible to argue that *summatim emendata* is incompatible with Varius' deletion of the initial verses.

Donatus links his statement concerning the *ille ego* verses with one concerning Varius' interchanging of two books by giving Nisus as the authority for both. Nevertheless, these two things need not stand or fall together. A statement concerning the order of the books is of exactly the kind that is bound to end up in general confusion, whereas the story of the removal of the *ille ego* lines is very simple and specific. Thus it cannot be used against the latter that the former is untrue; it is necessary for anyone who maintains that Nisus' story is worthless, to look for some other corroboration (external or internal) of his contention—especially as the addition of spurious verses, and subsequent invention of the tale that the verses were found in the manuscript and removed by Varius, is a fairly complicated matter that almost certainly requires a conscious and well-planned attempt at deception, quite different from the numerous compositions that were written in a given author's style with no view to deceiving anyone.

(c) There is no foundation in the texts quoted for the statement that 'Servius was evidently not entirely clear in his own mind' as to whether *ille ego* or *arma virumque* was the beginning of the *Aeneid* (Austin, p. 108); all we can speak of is a slight lapse, or rather simplification, in the phrasing. In making the point about openings of poems of the classical period, Servius is not concerned with the additional verses and the fact that he thinks that Virgil wrote them, but solely with the general issue about openings; it is not surprising that he slightly inaccurately generalizes when listing his examples so that he happens to say that Virgil began his poem with *arma virumque* instead of saying that the (canonical) opening of Virgil's poem was *arma virumque*. This is the type of simplification that can be found in, e.g., school-books of

all ages.<sup>1</sup>—However, if the extremely convincing picture of Servius and his commentary given by G. P. Goold (loc. cit. *passim*) is correct, it is, at least for the present purpose, of very little relevance to decide whether Servius was clear in his mind or not, and Donatus remains the only authority to be taken into consideration.

## II. THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE LINES IN AN EPIC PROOEMIUM

(Austin, pp. 108–10)

Prof. Austin shows that at various crucial points in the *Aeneid* where there are invocations 'Virgil employs the Homeric method', viz., of mentioning the deity in the first sentence of the passage. Thus the passage 7. 37 ff., which continues differently, *begins* with the invocation, and this is what marks it as belonging to the Homeric type. It will not do to say that the proem to the whole epic follows the pattern of 7. 37 ff. in reverse. When the invocation does not appear till verse 8, we have to recognize that, contrary to the practice of the rest of the *Aeneid*, it is not the Homeric type that is employed at the beginning of the poem. Starting with *arma virumque cano* we may say that Virgil used the same type of proem as the one used in the *Ilias Parva* (as no more than the first two lines of that poem exist, we are free to think that an invocation followed a few lines later). We can also maintain that Virgil used a mixture of the two types. Whichever solution we choose, it remains the case that Homer, Virgil's great example throughout the *Aeneid*, has, for the composition of the Proem, either been left out of consideration or been given second place. For Virgil to have written like this is somewhat incredible, *unless it serves some kind of purpose*; but what is the purpose if we start with *arma virumque*? If, on the other hand, we assume that Virgil's start was with *ille ego*, it immediately becomes possible to find some point in the deviation: lines 1<sup>a</sup>–7 are the preface, which mentions, first, the author's previous writings, and then his new genre and the contents of the epic he is commencing. (On the way in which this preface is built up see below under IV). After the brief exposition of the subject-matter, the epic *proper* begins, in accordance with the Homeric rules, in verse 8: *Musa, mihi causas memora . . .*<sup>2</sup> It is maintained that this breaks the rules of the genre, which I shall not deny, but it is strange to expect a great and original poet like Virgil to adhere to the 'rules' without deviation. It

<sup>1</sup> It should be mentioned here that the statement on p. 114, 'Servius has linked two quite different matters' etc. can only be valid if we have *already* established the nature of these matters: at this point the argument is going in a circle.

Further, a brief comment has to be appended on Austin, p. 114 note 1: 'Servius' language is odd: "semiplenos eius inuenimus uersiculos . . . et aliquos detractos": how could *inuenire* apply to what is *detractum*?' I shall not go into the possible reliability, and source, of Servius' statement, but only note that if an Englishman can write 'In this edition we find some passages omitted', with a lack of logic in the expression that will be noticed by very few, then it seems

that one should not try to build anything at all on the same slight error when committed in Latin by Servius.

<sup>2</sup> I here find myself in complete agreement with S. Chabert, *Annales de l'Université de Grenoble* xvi (1904), 420–2. It is unfortunate that Chabert linked his views on the beginning of the *Aeneid* with the Hadrumetum mosaic. This is hardly tenable, and it has only led to his remaining considerations carrying less weight than they ought. E. Brandt, *Philologus* lxxxiii (1928), 332, goes as far as to say that Chabert's calling 1<sup>a</sup>–7 a *préambule* 'bedarf keiner Widerlegung'. This is certainly not fair, and I would suggest that Brandt has not properly understood what Chabert meant.

should be noticed here that 'the distinction between poetic genres' did not prevent Virgil from repeating a phrase from the *Eclogues* (1. 1) at the end of the *Georgics*. No author who religiously and in all respects observes rules that he has not himself created can ever aspire to writing great literature.<sup>1</sup> If Virgil decided to put a preface containing some autobiographical matter in front of the beginning of his epic, there was nothing to stop him.

The most obvious explanation of Varius' omission of the verses is that he found some indication in the manuscript that they were unsatisfactory and accordingly were to be either improved or deleted.<sup>2</sup> But even if Varius excised the verses on his own initiative, this should cause as little surprise as Virgil's writing of them: Varius—like Prof. Austin and others—thought the beginning of the *Aeneid* better without the innovation and, in accordance with his own taste, which adhered to tradition, he removed the lines,<sup>3</sup> presumably on the reasoning that this was the safer thing to do, as it was impossible to discuss the matter with the author; one does not want to publish anything by a friend which in contents is not, to one's own taste, acceptable, and will thus, one thinks, impair the author's reputation.

If, on the other hand, we maintain that the author of the *ille ego* lines was not Virgil, we have the very considerable difficulty of explaining why the author, for whatever reason he wrote the lines (see below under V), should have shown the singular audacity of flagrantly breaking the rules of the genre.

It should be added here that the explanation advocated by De Witt and others (rightly rejected by Prof. Austin, pp. 108 f.), that the lines are 'an intentional link between the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics*, following on *G.* 4. 559–66',<sup>4</sup> is rather too specific, and even more so when they are at the same time understood as a *σφραγίς*. If one wants to use the phrase 'link', it would be better to say that the lines are simply meant to be a link between Virgil's previous work as a whole and the *Aeneid*.

### III. THE STYLE OF THE LINES (Austin, pp. 110–12)

The lines are thoughts stylistically inferior, particularly because the very first line is believed to have *sum* understood twice over, with *ille ego* and with

<sup>1</sup> 'Neither Lucan nor Valerius Flaccus nor Statius nor Silius begins with a personal advertisement' does not prove that another author could not possibly have ventured on such an innovation, and it squares excellently that a poet more original than all the ones mentioned should have been the one to do so. One reason that his innovation was not imitated is, of course, that it did not become canonical.

<sup>2</sup> A modern example (Landor's *Gebir*) of an author's removal of the poem from one of his works is quoted in M. M. Crump, *The Growth of the Aeneid* (1920), 6 f. Crump, for one, who thinks that the lines 'are decidedly Vergilian in style' (p. 104), accepts the explanation of Virgil's writing and subsequently rejecting the lines (see quotation p. 143 n. 4).

<sup>3</sup> This does not indicate that Varius

thought the start with *arma virumque* blameless epic style; but it was—in his opinion—the best he could do when he wanted to make the poem comply with the 'rules'.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot here abstain from reminding the reader that these lines, too, were at one point widely thought not to be by Virgil, precisely on grounds of their lacking appropriateness. I quote Heyne as a specimen (from the 3rd edn., Leipzig, 1800): 'Suspectum iam olim hunc, etsi ab homine satis ingenioso profectum, Epilogum habui, quia a poetarum more alienum est, talia adiungere suis carminibus; contra Grammaticos tali lusu delectatos esse . . . patet . . .' And still it is, I think, now universally accepted that Virgil himself wrote and published these lines. But who can tell whether Varius, if he had had to publish the *Georgics* too, would not have decided to excise them?

*modulatus*. It will be apparent from my comments in section IV below that I do not presume to make pronouncements as to the quality of the lines; a suitable deterrent is provided by the selection of opinions at the beginning of Prof. Austin's article.<sup>1</sup> I shall nevertheless tentatively suggest a syntactical interpretation that disposes of the need to supply *sum* twice in the first line. Further research may provide acceptable parallels for the suggestions under (a) and (b) below.<sup>2</sup> However, I consider that the question of the possible authenticity of the lines does not turn on whether my suggestions are accepted or not, since the only thing we do know for sure about the lines, is that Virgil—whether he wrote them or not—did not put his *imprimatur* against them, and that the lines may accordingly be bad but Virgil's for all that.<sup>3</sup>

(a) *ille ego . . . at nunc*

I would suggest an interpretation along the following lines. Verses 1<sup>a</sup>–7 are one sentence, the sense of which is: 'Although I have hitherto (only) written . . ., I am now writing an epic.'<sup>4</sup> The 'although' has not been included directly in the wording, but no other interpretation is possible if one considers it all one sentence. The indicative *coegi* in a concessive relative clause is faultless classical Latin.<sup>5</sup> As, at the same time, we find examples of main clauses beginning with *at* after *si*-clauses and clauses with concessive conjunctions, there is nothing startling in finding *at* used in the same way after a concessive relative clause. Prof. Austin points out that a contrast indicated by the phrase *ille ego qui* usually represents 'the new situation as a fall from grace'. Perhaps this observation helps to account for the intrusion of *at*: the author has pointed out that there is something special about his employment of the phrase by giving it emphasis with an adversative particle.<sup>6</sup>

If this interpretation is considered unacceptable, one must choose either to understand *sum* with *ille ego* or to assume an anacoluthon. Both solutions are stylistically inferior to the one I prefer, but—as already pointed out—this cannot be cited against possible authenticity.

(b) *modulatus . . . et egressus . . . coegi*

With considerable hesitation I propound the following tentative interpretation; I am aware that most readers will consider it over-subtle and prefer the

<sup>1</sup> A good addition to the selection can be made from Goold, loc. cit. 128: ' . . . the lines (which, let us confess, are superb) . . .'

<sup>2</sup> If it does not, I am, particularly with reference to my tentative interpretation of *ille ego . . . at*, inclined to say: 'muß alles in der Welt zweimal gesagt sein?' (Schneidewin–Nauck–Bruhn on Soph. *El.* 775).

<sup>3</sup> For a curious notion that Virgil never committed to writing an imperfect phrase, see Goold, loc. cit. 155. *A priori* it is most unlikely, and in addition it is flatly contradicted by Donatus 22–4. Kenney, loc. cit., finds it hard to believe that Virgil 'designed a national epic . . . to resound through the centuries as the *Ille ego . . .*' But Virgil, if he wrote the lines, may never have got as far as considering this point or he may have marked them for deletion taking into

account among other things precisely this point.

<sup>4</sup> For the '(only)' in my interpretation here and below cf. Crump, loc. cit. 105: 'On the whole these lines [1<sup>a</sup>–7] may be assumed to be early; the first four lines seem to have a slightly apologetic tone, as though the poet felt bound to lead up to his subject. Later, when he felt that the *Aeneid* needed no apology, he cut them out.'

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kühner–Stegmann, ii. 295, Anmerkung 5 (five Ciceronian examples, of which two have *tamen* in the main clause).

<sup>6</sup> A similarly unexpected instance of *at* beginning the main clause, viz. after a *quoniam*-clause, is found in Livy 1. 28. 9: *nunc quoniam tuum insanabile ingenium est, at tu tuo supplicio doce* etc.

simpler *modulatus* <sum>. It is however apparent from the preceding that it is not decisive for the question of authenticity which explanation is adopted. My suggestion is that *modulatus* and *egressus* are coordinate participles, and that the sense is, accordingly: 'After writing the *Eclogues* and then ceasing to write minor poetry, I have written the *Georgics*; although these things are what I have hitherto written, I am now writing an epic'; or: 'Although I have (only) so far first written the *Eclogues* and ceased to write minor poetry and then written the *Georgics*, I am now writing an epic.' The more straightforward way of saying this would certainly be: 'Although I have hitherto written (only) the *Eclogues* and, after ceasing writing minor poetry, the *Georgics*, I am now writing an epic.' But of course one can never assume that something will be said in the most straightforward way, whether there is a reason for a different phrasing or not. On the assumption that my interpretation of *ille ego . . . at nunc* be accepted, the references to Virgil's poems form, syntactically, a kind of Chinese box, in accordance with their importance: the *Aeneid* is mentioned in the main clause, the *Georgics* in the finite verb of the relative clause, and the *Eclogues* in a participle (or rather two participles) in the relative clause. No one will deny that Virgil must have considered the *Georgics* a much more important publication than the *Eclogues*, and why should this not be mirrored grammatically in the way in which he refers to the two things together?

(c) *coegi*

The sense of *coegi* etc. is, I think, pressed much too hard when it is stated that 'the writer draws attention to his own virtuosity, with incongruous and jarring effect' (Austin, p. 112). The whole clause amounts to little more than: 'I wrote a didactic poem on agriculture.'<sup>1</sup> A 'tone of self-advertisement' is added only with *gratum opus agricolis*, and that tone does not really seem particularly obtrusive, even if the interpretation suggested below is found unacceptable. Once again the syntactical problems treated under (a) and (b) and the exact degree of self-advertisement to be found in the lines cannot be cited against possible Virgilian authorship when Virgil perhaps himself rejected the lines or at least did not approve them for publication. If, however, it can be shown that the lines contain some *unpoetische* phrases, that is a different matter. The phrase quoted in this connection is *coegi ut*, which is 'essentially'—but not exclusively—'a prose usage'. But if this is indeed at all a lapse, it is certainly so minor that it provides no basis for saying that the lines cannot possibly be Virgilian, especially as no other phrase in the lines has been claimed as prosaic.

(d) *gracili . . . avena*

There is no sense in establishing the scarcity of the occurrences of *gracilis* in epic. Whether Virgil wrote the *ille ego* lines or not, they are not epic in style and should not be expected to adhere to epic vocabulary (for this see further under II above); there is no other objection to *gracili*. It is tempting but not

<sup>1</sup> On p. 112 note 1 of his article Prof. Austin considers that 'it could reasonably be argued further that the idea of "forcing" obedience is out of keeping with Virgil's feeling for the soil'. Although for other reasons Prof. Austin does not consider this

a valid argument in the present connection, it should be pointed out that the idea is very much in keeping with an expression like *imperat arvis* (G. 1. 99; compared to the present passage by Henry, p. 3).

necessary to imagine 'deliberate variation' on *E.* 1. 2; the phrase *gracili modulatus avena* may be interpreted as what one might describe as unconscious variation, i.e., similarity of phrase employed without conscious intention of recalling the other phrase in question. This *may* of course have been done by an imitator who had studied Virgil intensively, but it should be noticed that it is precisely what author is himself liable to do (see further below).

(c) *gratum opus agricolis*

Where is the ambiguity? Surely, no one will seriously take the phrase as anything but an 'apposition to *coegi*'. I have indicated above (under c) that it is rather hard to see why this phrase is so 'objectionable'. It can be added that there is the possibility that the author is indicating the *limitations* of the scope of interest of the *Georgics*,<sup>1</sup> and that, if he had not been too modest to put such a thing down, he might have proceeded to describe the *Aeneid* as a *gratum opus omnibus Romanis*.

Prof. Austin's section on the style of the lines starts with a list of similar phrases in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. The most instructive of the phrases mentioned is *carmina pastoris Siculi modulabor avena* (*E.* 10. 51) compared to *gracili modulatus avena* | *carmen*. Two further Virgilian phrases should be mentioned: *aspera Martis* | *pugna* (*Aen.* 12. 124 f.) compared to *horrentia Martis* | *arma*, and *nulli subigebant arva coloni* (*G.* 1. 125) compared to *avido parerent arva colono*.<sup>2</sup> If one considers, e.g., the last of these three pairs of phrases, one finds that the pattern and, in part, the words are the same (adjective belonging to *colon-*, verb, *arva*, *colon-*); at the same time there is a considerable difference between the two phrases. According to Prof. Austin '... there is nothing that could not have been produced by an imitator familiar with Virgil's language and method . . .'; however, as hinted above, this is the precise way in which Virgil himself varied a pattern. Compare, e.g., *tendebantque manus ripae ulterioris amore* (*Aen.* 6. 314) and *incenditque animum famae venientis amore* (6. 889). To hit Virgil's habits so exactly an imitator would have needed quite exceptional skill, and although Prof. Austin's explanation is certainly not impossible, from the point of view of probability one is inclined to opt for Virgil rather than his double.<sup>3</sup>

This is the place to mention one small piece of circumstantial evidence indicating that the lines in question and what follows are likely to have been composed by the same person. In line 12 we find *coloni*, and this is likely to be an unconscious repetition of *colono* in verse 1<sup>c</sup>. *Colonus* is not a word that one expects Virgil to have found very useful in the *Aeneid*, and as a matter of fact it occurs only six times, the four remaining ones being in 4. 626; 7. 63, 410, 422 (the last occurrence provides another instance of unconscious repetition). In the much lesser bulk of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* the word is likewise found six times, as it is more appropriate to the subject-matter of these poems. It would be an unlikely coincidence that the word should have been caused to appear twice within only fourteen lines through the grafting upon the poem of four alien lines. The objection to my reasoning will be that an imitator could have had the word in 1<sup>c</sup> suggested to him by reading 12; on second thoughts, however, one will realize that it is highly improbable, to say the least,

<sup>1</sup> Whether Virgil himself believed in the practical value of the *Georgics* as a manual of agriculture is irrelevant in this connection.

<sup>2</sup> Both comparisons to be found in

Henry, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> For considerations on the *ille ego* lines as a whole, tallying neatly with this line of argument, see Henry, pp. 7 f.

although of course not impossible, that *coloni* in 12 first suggested to the imitator the line in the *Georgics*, and that that subsequently suggested what should be written in 1<sup>c</sup>.

#### IV. THE EFFECT OF THE LINES ON THE PERIOD-STRUCTURE

(Austin, pp. 112 f.)

‘Auf die ästhetische Seite der Frage näher einzugehen, widerstrebt mir.’<sup>1</sup> But without becoming too deeply involved in statements that can only express personal taste, one can and must say a few things, just as it has already been necessary in the previous sections.

As we have found (above under II) that Virgil uses either a solely ‘cyclic’ opening or an opening which is a mixture of the ‘cyclic’ and the Homeric types, putting the Homeric element second, we should not beforehand expect to find in that frame a completely clear-cut acknowledgement to Homer. That both the proem of the *Iliad*, and that of the *Aeneid* (starting with *arma virumque*), consist of seven lines is as likely as not a coincidence. It is in the nature of the material of a proem that it (or certain parts of it) is likely to begin and end with the mention of important subjects. Therefore, in the one case we find the main persons mentioned in this way, in the other we find the two main localities mentioned. For the rest, I would simply suggest to the reader a comparison of the two pieces, and he will find that Prof. Austin’s division of both passages into 2+3+2 lines with similar subjects is very artificial, to say the least; I see no reason to show this in detail, when anyone can see for himself. If the beginning of the *Aeneid* resembles anything Homeric, the similarity is to the proem of the *Odyssey*. That ‘we are no longer conscious of the magnificent antithesis of Troy and Rome’ if something is added in front of this antithesis without interfering with it, seems a wholly emotional statement, and it can justly be answered with a ‘why not?’ When it is stated that the addition makes a marvellous period into ‘a burden to ear and breath alike’,<sup>2</sup> then we have gone so far into the realm of personal tastes that no rational support or contradiction is possible. It should, however, be pointed out that with the *ille ego* lines included the Proem is divided into three lines and a half describing the genres previously used by the author, with brief indications of their subject-matter, and seven lines and a half setting off the new genre and appropriately giving the contents of the following epic in a little more detail (cf. above, under II). Can the combination of verses resulting in this neat proportion really be described with the words: ‘The effect of adding these lines is disastrous’?

It is hardly wise to quote anything as personal as another’s aesthetic verdict in aid of one’s own cause, and when it is maintained that Quintilian ‘knew a fine period when he saw one’, one should keep in mind that Quintilian’s judgements on style include a lapse like his being taken in by the *Invectiva in Ciceronem* (4. 1. 68, 9. 3. 89). The much simpler explanation of Quintilian’s starting from *arma virumque* is that this was the canonical opening (see above under I).

<sup>1</sup> A. B. Drachmann’s phrase from a quite different context (‘Zur Cirisfrage’, *Hermes* xliii (1908), 425). I have already indicated my agreement with this attitude at the

beginning of section III.

<sup>2</sup> Contrast, e.g., Chabert, loc. cit. 416: ‘un début modeste et gracieux’.

As for Probus' *aurem tuam interroga*, it should be realized that the more familiar version will automatically be judged the better by such a procedure, and as the canonical beginning—in spite of Hirtzel and others—is still *arma virumque* that beginning is going to be chosen by most people. They are, to put it another way, biased because at school they had an early start on *arma virumque*.

But all this has really very little to do with the authenticity of the *ille ego* lines.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS (Austin, pp. 113-15)<sup>1</sup>

Whereas it is, as I hope to have shown above, not difficult to explain the existence of the *ille ego* lines if we believe Virgil to be their author, we are unable to provide an even vaguely plausible explanation for their having been written by someone else. Having rightly rejected Brandt's suggestion,<sup>2</sup> Prof. Austin states (p. 114): 'It is plain that quite soon after the publication of the *Aeneid* a fashion for producing Virgilian apocrypha began: witness the significant statement of Donatus about the unfinished lines, "multi *mox* supplere conati" . . .'<sup>3</sup> The attempt at filling in the unfinished lines was *bound* to become a fashionable pastime. To the ancient sense of what constituted hexametric poetry these lines were manifestly unfinished,<sup>3</sup> and an attempt at finishing them would provide the author of 'good' supplements with a certain literary reputation among his friends, while the job would require neither talent nor deep thought and concentration.

The addition of four lines in front of the Proem is quite a different matter, and it is a task that someone would hardly undertake unless he had a substantial reason. *Arma virumque* is admittedly a somewhat unbalanced beginning (since an adjective is missing with *arma* to balance the relative clause with *virum*),<sup>4</sup> but nothing like 'essentially and in itself a bad beginning' etc.<sup>5</sup> The objections against *arma virumque* are not of such weight that they could cause four additional lines to be written in accordance with 'the law of demand and supply';<sup>6</sup> moreover, someone feeling the need to supply something in front of *arma*

<sup>1</sup> Part of the contents of Prof. Austin's Conclusions has already been discussed above under I.

<sup>2</sup> As Prof. Austin says, it would indeed be odd for an inscription beneath a portrait to have been elaborately joined on to the beginning of the poem.

<sup>3</sup> In this connection the suggestion that Virgil may have meant to leave these verses unfinished is not relevant, but the reader may be referred to Crump, loc. cit. 8-15, and to Goold, loc. cit. 150-2.

<sup>4</sup> This consideration would not apply if *arma virumque* were understood as a hendiadys; but even so the phrase is slightly odd; Fitz-Hugh, loc. cit., for one, speaks of 'the abrupt hendiadys' ('abrupt' must be a borrowing from Henry). However, it is clear that the interpretation *vir armatus* does not cover the contents of the *Aeneid* nearly as well as the interpretation *vir* (cf. *Aen.* 1-6) *et arma* (cf. *Aen.* 7-12).

<sup>5</sup> Henry, p. 5 (quoted by Prof. Austin, p. 115). It must be remembered that one only does justice to a quotation from Henry if one bears in mind that it was his consistent habit to express himself in a very forceful and somewhat loquacious way. The feeling that there is something odd about the beginning of the *Aeneid* with *arma virumque* did not cease with the nineteenth century; cf., e.g., G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (1968), 36.

<sup>6</sup> Prof. Austin continues: 'Fraenkel has shown this law at work in connexion with the *Culex*.' In connection with the *Culex* the question is one of biographical interest resulting in a demand for early works, whereas here the supposed demand is for additions to the beginning of a well-known poem, to mend its imperfections. The cases are so different that there is no point in comparing them.

*virumque* to balance the expression would be much more likely to make his supplement as short as possible, one or at the very most two verses, and to keep it within the epic style (see further above under II).

Another slight oddity is found in *cano*, where one would expect *canam*.<sup>1</sup> The *raison d'être* of the present tense is provided by the *ille ego* lines. But exactly the same applies to *cano* as to *arma virumque*: the oddity is not sufficiently substantial to set 'the law of demand and supply' working.

It should be added that an imitator wanting to supply a reference to Virgil's previous writings in accordance with Virgil's own practice from *G.* 4. 563–6, would, it may be surmised, have tagged it on to the end of the *Aeneid*, in imitation of the pattern in the *Georgics*. To imagine that someone decided to add a reference to the previous writings and then discovered that he could kill two birds with one stone if he added his compilation to the beginning instead of to the end would be somewhat far-fetched.

## VI. SUMMARY

1. Nothing in the external evidence is incompatible with authenticity.
2. One's verdict on the quality of the lines is largely a matter of personal taste. As Virgil had, in any case, not put his *imprimatur* against them, the contention that they do not come up to Virgil's standard (even if it be true) cannot be cited against authenticity.
3. Only very considerable lapses (e.g. palpably prosaic expressions) would make authenticity impossible; the existence of any such has not been substantiated.
4. Whoever composed the verses, they were not meant to be epic in tone and should accordingly not have their phrases judged by epic standards.
5. There was nothing to prevent Virgil from devising an unprecedented beginning to his epic.
6. If Virgil started from *arma virumque*, three things remain unexplained: the unbalanced expression *arma virumque . . . qui*; the present tense in *cano*; the deviation from the Homeric pattern.
7. But none of these things is of such a character as to prompt the fabrication of an addition, which is furthermore both fairly long and un-epic. Accordingly, if the lines are a forgery, it remains unexplained why they were written, why they do not comply with the epic style, and why they are as many as four.

'Definitive sentence was pronounced on the "ille ego . . ." verses by Professor Austin . . . and has been duly executed by Professor Mynors . . . ' is the latest verdict on the state of the question.<sup>2</sup> I am well aware that no positive proof can be found for my personal belief that Virgil did write the lines, and that my defence of this view must, from the nature of the case, rest on circumstantial evidence. Perhaps I have not convinced the reader, but I am confident that I have shown that the case was not investigated sufficiently

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fitz-Hugh, loc. cit. I mention this only as a small additional point. It can be objected to my including it that Virgil may have been imitating ἀείδω of the *Ilias Parva*; this is possible, but I am inclined to think

that Virgil's own usage would have carried more weight with him than his desire to imitate the *Ilias Parva* in a question of as little moment as the choice of a tense.

<sup>2</sup> By Kenney, loc. cit.

before the passing of sentence, and that the trial, as likely as not, ended in judicial murder.<sup>1</sup>

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## A FURTHER NOTE ON TRIMALCHIO'S ZODIAC DISH

MUCH else was done by Rose and Sullivan<sup>2</sup> in their possibly conclusive attempt to restore sense to the rebus passage,<sup>3</sup> but the reading *super scorpionem locustam* was Gaselee's,<sup>4</sup> as Rose and Sullivan clearly acknowledge. This seems unluckily to have escaped B. Baldwin,<sup>5</sup> otherwise he would have noticed that Gaselee also fancied in his correction an allusion to the poisoner Locusta. For those who may have difficulty in obtaining Gaselee's colotype reproduction, I quote the relevant part: 'But what have lobsters to do with poisoners? Is it permissible to see a more or less open reference to Locusta, the queen of all poisoners? If so, we have here another little piece of evidence which will help us to date the *Satyricon*.'

This suggestion is still of course attractive, and highly entertaining to the modern punster, but it must be remembered that the lobster need no more be poisonous than the African fig gluttonous: the requirement of the rebus would be met by the scorpion's venomous sting.

If in fact there is a pun on Locusta, it may indeed provide another little piece of evidence and one more small argument for ascription, not to mention a correct reading in the text; but surely it is too unreliable, as a supposition, to help us also both to explain Eumolpus' glumness at the fare (he did not make a gloomy comment) and to put the dinner deaths of Claudius and Britannicus in context.

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<sup>2</sup> K. F. C. Rose and J. P. Sullivan, 'Trimalchio's Zodiac Dish', *CQ* n.s. xviii (1968), 180-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Sat.* 35. 1-5.

<sup>4</sup> S. Gaselee, *A Colotype Reproduction of . . . the Traguriensis . . .* (Cambridge, 1915), 17-18.

<sup>5</sup> B. Baldwin, 'A Note on Trimalchio's Zodiac Dish', *CQ* n.s. xx (1970), 364.