

VIRGIL AND MARCELLUS' EDUCATION

On Virgil's lines *excudent alii...* (*Aen.* 6.847–53) there have been two recent studies,¹ and further items of bibliography from the last five years or so may be added.² Nevertheless, there remains a good deal of uncertainty, even controversy, over Virgil's choice of Greek and Roman cultural achievements and over the literary antecedents of that choice.

It has long been recognised³ that Virgil knew Augustus' own funeral *laudatio* for Marcellus: notably, the movement from M. Claudius Marcellus, five times consul, to his descendant was first used by the *princeps*.⁴ Eduard Norden, moreover, in his commentary laid a strong and proper emphasis on the many similarities between Virgil's epicedion and Menander Rhetor's analysis of orators' practice on such occasions.⁵ Now that it is so easy and pleasant to study Menander Rhetor (ed. D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson [Oxford, 1981]), the formal aspects of Virgil's lament become ever clearer, along with a familiar problem: the funeral speech has certain inescapable affinities with encomium and panegyric (Men. Rhet. 413.10, 420.9Sp., Ps. D.H. 278.15f. Us.–Rad.) and in the case of those who die young, praiseworthy achievements are necessarily fewer, entailing the deployment of consolatory generalities and over-emphasis on the topics (e.g. education) already available for encomiastic commemoration (Men. Rhet. 371.23ff., 413.15ff., 420.21, Ps. D.H. 282.6ff.). For the education of a prince and possible heir,⁶ Roman precedents did not exist. Marcellus and Tiberius were born six months apart; Marcellus was entrusted to two Greek tutors, an Academic philosopher, Nestor of Tarsus, who also taught Tiberius,⁷ and Athenaeus, the siege-warfare expert.⁸ Both Marcellus and Tiberius went on campaign in Spain in 26 B.C., aged 16 or so.

Leave sculpture, astronomy, even oratory aside for the Greeks – and by implication a good deal else too; Marcellus from his mid teens was committed to a direct and personal role in the mission of *regere imperio populos... parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*. Tiberius, however, clearly had some early rhetorical training and spoke in court *aet.* 17/18;⁹ it is not as clear to me as it is to Miss Levick¹⁰ that the young princes necessarily both went through the full normal Roman education before their campaigning years started. Tiberius held out for further studies.¹¹ Marcellus died.

Aen. 6.847–53, though formally addressed by Virgil to 'Romane', is therefore

¹ H. Hine in *Homo Viator...* ed. M. Whitby, etc. (Bristol, 1987), 173ff., noticed in *CR* 39 (1989), 184, and F. Stok, *Percorsi dell'Esegesi virgiliana* (Pisa, 1988), 7ff., noticed in some detail in *Riv. Fil.* 116.4 (1988).

² J. Griffin, *Latin Poets and Roman Life* (London, 1985), pp. 169f.; D. Feeney, *PCPhS* 32 (1986), 14f.; Horsfall, *Anc. Soc.* (Macquarie) 12 (1982), 15; cf. also G. Brugnoli, *Enc. Virg.* s.v. *Marcello*.

³ Serv. Dan. *ad Aen.* 1.712, *Aen.* 6 ed. E. Norden⁴ 341f., Horsfall, *CR* 32 (1982), 37. The objections advanced by G. Highet, *The Speeches in Vergil's Aeneid* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 94f. are captious and unhelpful; of course Virgil was properly acquainted with the main heads of an epicedion; of course 6.875–7 does not represent Augustus' own view of the succession; Norden never claimed this; no more do I!

⁴ Fr. xiv Malcovati = Plut. *Comp. Pelop. cum Marc.* 1.7.

⁵ Cf. W. Kierdorf, *Laudatio funebris* (Meisenheim, 1980), pp. 54ff.

⁶ The problem of how to educate the future Edward VII furnished an interesting comparison; cf. C. Woodham-Smith, *Queen Victoria* (paperback repr., London, 1975), pp. 340ff.

⁷ (Lucian) Macrobi., 21; G. W. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 34f., Susemihl, *Gesch. gr. Lit. in der Alexandrinerzeit* ii (Leipzig, 1892), p. 243.

⁸ Bowersock, 34f., after C. Cichorius, *Röm. Studien* (Leipzig, 1922), pp. 271ff.

⁹ Suet. *Tib.* 8, B. Levick, *Tiberius the Politician* (London, 1976), p. 230 n. 30.

¹⁰ Levick, p. 16.

¹¹ Levick, p. 17; Bowersock, p. 35, etc.

perfectly appropriate as a description of the character and intent of the education that Marcellus actually received; that education was a necessary part of Augustus' *laudatio*, which was known to Virgil, and I suggest that Virgil was sufficiently impressed and affected by it to have lifted it out of the formal epicedion to be used, much altered of course, as a transition from Roman heroes in general to the valiant and tragic Claudii Marcelli in particular. Addenda to H. Malcovati's collection of the fragments of Augustus' writings are still emerging: in 1970 L. Koenen published part of his *laudatio* on Agrippa, in a Greek version;¹² I myself found a small and spurious fragment of his table-talk;¹³ perhaps we should now contemplate the possibility that we have also a majestically transmuted version of his view of the education of a Roman prince.

Rome

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¹² *ZPE* 5 (1970), 217–83; cf. Kierdorf, 71f., Horsfall *BICS* 30 (1983), 89.

¹³ *Anc. Soc.* (Macquarie) 17 (1987), 16–18; Ptol. Chennus ap. Phot. *Bibl.* p. 151a27.

PASTORALEM PRAEFIXA CUSPIDE MYRTUM (AENEID 7.817)

At the end of the catalogue of Italian troops comes Camilla, the warrior-maid, leading her columns of Volscian cavalry. In a passage reminiscent of *Il.* 20.226ff. (the powers of the horses of Erichthonios) Vergil illustrates her seemingly superhuman speed and lightness of foot, before passing on to the impression she made upon the watching population who have swarmed out of their homes and fields to mark the finery of her appearance and equipment:

illam omnis tectis agrisque effusa iuventus
turbaque miratur matrum et prospectat euntem,
attonitis inhians animis ut regius ostro
velet honos levis umeros, ut fibula crinem
auro internectat, Lyciam ut gerat ipsa pharetram
et pastoraalem praefixa cuspidē myrtum.

(812–17)

The exact nature of the weapon which Vergil elusively describes as the 'pastoraalem praefixa cuspidē myrtum' has been a source of disagreement. The oldest interpretation, which is preserved in the commentary of Servius (whence it made its way into the commentaries of Heyne and Page) considers the weapon to be an iron-tipped javelin ('praefixa cuspidē myrtus') which is described as 'pastoralis' since javelins of this type were supposedly employed by herdsmen in defence of their flocks (no supporting evidence is provided).¹ A more modern interpretation represents the weapon as a herdsman's staff ('pastoralis myrtus') which has been converted into a javelin by the fixing of an iron head ('praefixa cuspidē').² Conington considers this possibility.³ It

¹ Servius Danielis *ad loc.*: 'quia hac pugnare pastores solent', Heyne *ad loc.*: 'de iaculo, quo pastores utuntur', Page *ad loc.*: "'pastoraalem" seems to denote that javelins so made of myrtle were commonly used by shepherds'. N. Horsfall, *Aeneid vii, Notes on Selected Passages* (Oxford D.Phil thesis, 1971) *ad loc.* believes that Servius' comment may be an inference drawn from the text.

² This interpretation probably developed from an idea in Henry's *Aeneida ad loc.*: "'pastoraalem" ... because shepherds used to make their crooks of myrtle [on this point, see below note 18]. If they fought with them sometimes, as Statius tells us they did, *Theb.* 4.300: "hi Paphias myrtos a stirpe recurvant, et pastorali meditantur proelia trunco", it was only by accident and the myrtle was equally "pastoralis" whether they did or not.'

³ *ad loc.*: 'It is not clear whether a pike of myrtle-wood was a pastoral weapon, or whether