

XV.—Repetitive Style in Virgil

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Probably nearly all poetry is in one or more senses repetitive. Many kinds of repetition are evident in Latin poetic style; their importance, and their effective part in the creation of the poetry, have been enlightened by recent work on Latin poets. It is here suggested that the development of Virgil's style can be usefully traced in its relation to different repetitive principles; and that Virgil first used some of them consciously, but later, after a conscious restriction of them, employed them more spontaneously and in great freedom as an intimate part of his mature language, most of all at moments of passion and immediate creation.

Of the development of Virgil's style much has been said, but a little thought will convince anyone that the question remains very obscure. A style so elusively unique and personal, and yet so elusively comparable in single aspects to the styles of so many other poets in the same tradition, must, if only for these reasons, be difficult to describe precisely; and difficulties increase as, through Virgil's life, the style changes, and yet the essential Virgilian quality remains.

Among all the many possible approaches to the subject, one in particular is recommended by certain recent researches,¹ which have emphasized and clarified the strongly repetitive qualities of Latin poetry. One writer virtually identifies lyric style with self-repetition, a provocative suggestion which raises the question whether one of the most useful methods of describing and distinguishing the styles of poets may not be the examination of their different repetitive practices.

In one sense, poetry might almost be called repetitive speech. The more familiar poetry of the world is almost universally repetitive in one way or another, or in many ways at once; and even

¹ Jan van Gelder, *De Woordherhaling bij Catullus* (The Hague, 1933); Rosamund E. Deutsch, *The Pattern of Sound in Lucretius* (Bryn Mawr College Diss., 1939); W. F. J. Knight, *Accentual Symmetry in Vergil* (Oxford, 1939); works which I shall cite here by the author's name and by page numbers only. (I cite in full other work of my own. I must apologise for referring to it so much. My excuse is that several small pieces of research have been converging to form a general view. The present article is one of them. The general view has been expressed in a book, which was already in the hands of the publishers when the present war prevented publication.)

prose, when it becomes to some degree poetic, usually becomes also to some degree repetitive. In this there is something fundamental.² It is known that people under stress of emotion tend spontaneously to repetitive speech, and that repetitive speech or other sound has an energizing effect on thought and perception, and also on action. Poetry and music make the spirit's eye see clear; and work goes the better for a song.

Repetition, of course, must be comprehensively understood; and indeed it is obvious enough that metre, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, assonance, anaphora, parallelism of thought, and symmetrical structure are all forms of it. The metre of blank verse is a kind of repetition; so are the parallelism of the Psalms, the stress-system of Chinese verse, the compound alliterative schemes of Welsh poetry,³ the organisation of the hexameter and of the Pindaric ode, the vast structural "pattern of the *Iliad*," the Lucretian and Catullan technique of dynamic word-repetition, and the Virgilian verse group, period or movement. There is repetition within a line of verse, within a poem, within a poet's life-work, when the tones and themes from an earlier poem recur in another poem, years later, and indeed within a whole poetic tradition, when poetry is made by vital integrative derivation from other poetry or even prose, recent, not so recent, or of long ago.⁴

Whatever the forms may be, the beginning was, I suppose, a fundamental tendency of human or even pre-human psychology. Activity in the organism creates repetition, of sound or of something else; and is in turn stimulated by the repetition. We find it so today; for example the rhythmic movement of a train enlivens thought. Savages are still more sensitive to repetition; I believe that some can apprehend a primary rhythmic unit of thirteen beats, whereas most of us cannot go beyond the three or four beats of the conventional musical bar.

But if this fundamental tendency was enough to start repetitions, other things helped. A jingle may be liked for its own sake; or it may be introduced for another reason. One such reason is ritual

² Knight, 99-107.

³ H. I. Bell, *The Development of Welsh Poetry* (Oxford, 1936), esp. 35-6, on the alliterative and assonantal principle of *cynghanedd*, which, as Father Ivo Thomas, O.P., to whom I owe knowledge of this book, explained to me, is remarkably like some practices of early and classical Latin.

⁴ Cf. W. F. J. Knight, "Poetic Sources and Integration," *Vergilius*, May 1940, 7-16, with references.

repetition, in prayers and chants composed by people who hope to be heard for their much speaking, and want to make sure. Another such reason is the nature of languages, which at some stages of development often provide the same sounds in many words, such as the similar inflexions of verbs and nouns; when this happens, the rhythmic instinct takes advantage of the possibilities.

Such, and no doubt many others, were the opportunities and impulses which Latin, perhaps more than most languages, used. From the Iguvine Tablets, if they may be counted, and the Arval Hymn, down to the dark ages when Latin dictated the repetitive form of rhymed mediaeval and modern lyric, emotional Latin literature was intensely repetitive. That applies most obviously to poetry; but also to the Asianic and Rhodian styles of Latin prose, by which Latin poetry was influenced.

Latin literature, at what is for us the beginning, had metre, which when we first detect it is still predominantly accentual though quantity seems to have already begun to affect it.⁵ At the beginning, too, Latin literature had alliteration, rhyme and assonance, already controlling the choice of words and therefore, to some extent, the thought. This is important; progress is stopped by the old-fashioned theory that poets always just think of what to say, and then, preserving their intentions entire, decide how to say it.⁶ Again at the beginning or near it, Latin literature had a tendency to rhythmic balance, dividing speech into word groups corresponding in form and meaning.⁷

Clearly, metre alone did not satisfy the instinct or the desire for repetitions. Otherwise, for instance, Naevius would not have handled sound as he did, and there would not have been so much assonance and rhyme between the ends of half-verses and whole verses in Plautus and Ennius.⁸ That the nature of the language accounts fully for these phenomena is, of course, out of the question. Already, therefore, in early Latin poetry sound-repetition, besides other forms such as metre and rhythm, was a principle of style.

⁵ Augusto Rostagni, *La Letteratura di Roma repubblicana ed augustea* (Bologna, 1939) 39-45.

⁶ Cf. Paul Valérie, *The Annual Zaharoff Lecture* (Oxford, 1938); cf. Knight, 99-107, and F. W. Shipley, "Problems of the Latin Hexameter," *TAPhA* 69 (1938) 134-160.

⁷ T. J. Haarhoff, *The Stranger at the Gate* (London and New York, 1938) 169-188, esp. 174-176, with references.

⁸ Cf. W. B. Sedgwick, "The Trochaic Tetrameter and the *Versus Popularis*," *G&R* 1 (1932) 96-106.

Most scholars would agree that it was in varying degrees "intentional" and consciously adopted, and that sometimes it guided and controlled the poets; also that, in comparison with later Latin poets, the earlier Latin poets allowed their repetitions to become excessive.

They could, of course, write without these repetitions; and I suppose that already in Lucilius Latin style has begun a much less repetitive phase. I suggest that the less repetitive kinds of poetry are more inclined to restrict the free play of emotion, and to give greater freedom to reasoned statement; whereas in the more repetitive and more emotional kinds the reasoning is more often fused and compressed in emotional and symbolic forms. Such a suggestion fits the facts, in general; and also in special application to Virgil.

The situation becomes much more complicated in the middle of the first century B.C. Repetitive style is intensified. Cicero did much to refine and rationalise Latin versification, but he appears to have made considerable use of repetitions, which was of course in harmony with his taste for the moderate Asianic and the Rhodian styles of prose. More important are Cicero's two great contemporaries; all the more, because recent work, on both Catullus⁹ and Lucretius,¹⁰ has at last made the inquiry into the repetitive style of Latin poetry fully scientific.

Earlier Latin poets had preferred to depend on old, classical Greek poetry, and had on the whole neglected later and contemporary work, except, of course, that the dramatists used the New Attic Comedy. But early in the first century Alexandrian work came into fashion. Among the results of this were new kinds of repetition in Latin poetry. There is no need to examine them all closely. A few forms only need be noted.

The grand structural "pattern of the *Iliad*,"¹¹ an elaborate symmetry of incidents and motives having the rhythm of geometric art, and the subsequently discovered and comparable pattern of the Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*,¹² are undeniably real, even though no word is said of them by ancient authorities. If this silence could still be taken as an argument to contradict the ascertained facts, it

⁹ Van Gelder, *op. cit.* (see note 1).

¹⁰ Deutsch, *op. cit.* (see note 1).

¹¹ J. T. Sheppard, *The Pattern of the Iliad* (London, 1922); J. L. Myres, "The Twenty-Fourth Book of the *Iliad*; its Place in the Structure of the Poem," *JHS* 52 (1932) 264-296.

¹² R. M. Cook, "The Date of the Hesiodic Shield," *CQ* 31 (1937) 204-214.

could be met by another argument from a very remarkable discovery elsewhere, a discovery which is not yet published, but which I have generous permission to describe.¹³ It is the discovery of a very similar structural pattern in the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*, where, as in the Greek poems, there is an elaborate structure of alternations and of returning symmetries. Again, so far as I am aware, there is no evidence that the structure was noticed till the last few years. Alexandrian poetry is known, of course, to have something of this structural pattern, but it is very doubtful whether that pattern was consciously derived from old Greek poetry. It occurs in the characteristic form of "a plot within a plot within a plot," and Callimachus and his friends might have invented it by following their natural taste for the decorative. It remains, however, an important principle of symmetry; and it is a form of repetition on a large scale, which Catullus in particular adopted for hexameter poems written under strong Alexandrian influence. Lately it has been well shown how exact the returning symmetry of structure is in at least one of his poems, the sixty-fourth.¹⁴ It is in sharp contrast with the annalistic form of early Latin narrative poems. And it is one of the ways in which Catullus satisfied his intense appetite for symmetry and repetition. He satisfied it by other means also in these same hexameter poems, and on a smaller scale.

Alexandrian poetry had achieved a light-handed organic coherence or "internal regularity" ¹⁵ by developing its own kind of verbal repetition. A word just used is repeated, and leads to another, which is repeated in its turn. A passage of Callimachus' *Hymn to Zeus* is a good example.¹⁶ The result is something like an

¹³ I owe this remarkable parallel to my friend Mr. E. A. Slade of University College, Exeter, who will, I hope, publish the discovery himself soon. Meanwhile, it is his wish that I indicate it shortly here.

¹⁴ Clyde Murley, "The Structure and Proportion of Catullus LXIV," *TAPhA* 68 (1937) 305-317.

¹⁵ Van Gelder, 87-136, esp. 107-120 and 168-174, develops this conception for Catullus.

¹⁶ Call. *Jov.* 91-96:

Χαῖρε μέγα, Κρονίδη πανυπέρτατε, δῶτορ ἐάων,
δῶτορ ἀπημονίης· τεὰ δ' ἔργματα τίς κεν αἰεδοί;
οὐ γένητ', οὐκ ἔσται· τίς καὶ Διὸς ἔργματ' αἰεσει;
χαῖρε, πάτερ, χαῖρ' αἰθι· δίδου δ' ἀρετὴν τ' ἀφενός τε.
οὐτ' ἀρετῆς ἄτερ ὀλβος ἐπίσταται ἄνδρας ἀέξειν,
οὐτ' ἀρετῇ ἀφένιοιο. δίδου δ' ἀρετὴν τε καὶ ὀλβον.

Though a discussion would be outside the scope of this article, it is worth while to

organic period or group of several verses. In his hexameter poetry Catullus did not carry the principle so far as that; but he used it to give intense organic unity to single verses. This influence, with his own instinct for repetition, helped him to find his own characteristic hexameter, with its schematized word-order, and especially the "golden line." Much less organic are his verse-groups; their antecedents are to be found not so much in passages such as the opening of Callimachus' *Hymn to Zeus* as in the many Greek Sibylline oracles which were becoming well known in Italy during his life-time. Such poetry, and perhaps, among the rest, the pastorals of Theocritus, helped him to evolve not a period but a kind of neat stanza, of about three to seven verses.

A new principle of repetition was now becoming available. The conflict between stress-accent and quantity in Latin was being intensified by a similar conflict in Greek; for Greek was already pronounced according to stress-accent, though of course it continued to be scanned and composed according to quantity.¹⁷ Catullus certainly listened for the stress-accent in verse. Some of his informal poems are composed so that they scan almost equally well according to stress or quantity,¹⁸ stress and ictus coinciding in what I call homodyne. There is also his notable pair of lines in which words are repeated with contrasting relations between stress and ictus.¹⁹ But, though he noticed accent, he did not exploit it far.

suggest a comparison, for many kinds of repetition, including parallelism of thought, with Ov. *Met.* 6.346-357:

accessit, positoque genu Titania terram
 pressit ut hauriret gelidos potura liquores.
 rustica turba vetat. dea sic adfata vetantes:
 "quid prohibetis aquis? usus communis aquarum est;
 nec solem proprium natura nec aera fecit
 nec tenues undas; ad publica munera veni.
 quae tamen ut detis supplex peto. non ego nostros
 abluere hic artus lassataque membra parabam,
 sed relevare sitim. caret os umore loquentis
 et fauces arent, vixque est via vocis in illis.
 haustus aquae mihi nectar erit, vitamque fatebor
 accepisse simul; vitam dederitis in unda."

¹⁷ E. A. Havelock, *The Lyric Genius of Catullus* (Oxford, 1939) 166-173.

¹⁸ Havelock, *op. cit.* (see note 17) 169.

¹⁹ Catull. 62.214f.:

qui natam possis complexu avellere matris,
 complexu matris retinentem avellere natam, . . .

I acknowledge here the kindness of Mr. L. P. Wilkinson, of King's College, Cambridge, in indicating to me the relevance in this context of this familiar and interesting couplet.

He rather let it exploit him, and thus satisfy his instinct for repetition by a monotonous coincidence with the ictus in the fourth feet of most of his hexameters.

But the Catullan repetition is far more interesting and organic in the more or less informal lyrics, written in other metres than the hexameter. Here it has been brilliantly explained that the verbal repetition creates the poetry,²⁰ and "internal regularity" *is* or *almost* is the lyric style.²¹ The great examples are the eighth and nineteenth poems. A word suggests a thought, which returns on itself to a repetition of the original word, meanwhile initiating further systems of returning symmetry, not unlike the structural symmetries, on a far larger scale, in the hexameter poems. In the lyrics, the words and their sounds and rhythms take control, and create poetry which is authentic and organic on account of the repetitions. It is not a matter of either careless work or extrinsic embellishment, but something that is near the secret source and the very mystery of poetic creation. This rhythmic thought and feeling made unhappy love easier to bear, as a sea-chanty can mitigate the toil of turning a capstan. Both kinds of song leave humanity the richer.

A very able piece of research, apparently independent of the earlier work on Catullus, has now disclosed accurately and perhaps startlingly the conditions and extent of repetitive style in Lucretius.²² Again repetition is organic, and superficially Catullus and Lucretius might appear alike in regard to it. But certain differences emerge. Lucretius has sometimes a very long repetitive span or cycle, up to forty verses, even, knitted together with verbal repetitions. This he may have derived from the long periodicity of some Greek metres, but that is far from certain. Otherwise, he seems in closer relation than Catullus with the early Latin poets, especially Ennius. He has little inclination to restrict the repetitions, either of words or sounds, especially in alliteration and assonance. He freely allows the same word to end two consecutive lines. He appears to indulge a naïve taste for jingles. Further analysis might shew that he is in some sense less lyrical, tasteful, and artistic

²⁰ Van Gelder (see note 1), *passim*; cf. Deutsch 154–171.

²¹ Van Gelder 118–120, 173.

²² Deutsch (see note 1). I refrain from the attempt to describe Professor Deutsch's impressive results, and even from giving detailed references, in the hope that all who are interested in such matters have her book readily available.

than Catullus, though in this analysis precision would not be easy. More clear and certain is the conceptual origination of repetitions in Lucretius. That would have been expected. He introduces words required by his argument, and returns to them as the argument proceeds, and again at his conclusion. There is an appearance that he is only hammering his argument home, as Greek philosophers do, but perhaps with more emphasis. In reality he does more than this, and admits many repetitions, which are not positively necessitated, through his delight in repetitive style, which he had inherited from the Latin tradition and its domination over him. But he does not regularly, like Catullus, let an emotional word start a system of emotional association, controlling the whole creation of the poetry.

It was characteristic of Virgil to neglect no resource, but to adopt nothing without making some change in it. That is how he treated available principles of repetition.

He began as a neoteric. It is possible of course to find plenty of Catullan repetitions, and Lucretian repetitions also, in the *Appendix*; but here it is better to leave the *Appendix* aside as controversial.

The *Eclogues* are highly repetitive in the Alexandrian and especially the Theocritean manner. Like Catullus, Virgil at first used a kind of Alexandrian stanza of hexameters. Like Catullus, he used the Theocritean refrain. Less like him in this, he knitted his hexameter verse-groups together by verbal repetitions,²³ as Callimachus did in his *Hymn to Zeus*, and to some extent as Catullus knitted his lyrical lines; but Virgil's *Eclogues* are not so entirely created by repetition as are some of the lyrics of Catullus, although some passages of the *Eclogues* might almost seem to be so created.²⁴ I would suggest, however, that Virgil retained some contact with earlier Latin, through something like the method of Lucretius. For Virgil allowed, for instance, personalities with proper names to lead and control his creation by repetition,²⁵ as Lucretius allowed concepts to lead and control his; and in this way too Virgil used other words, often small words such as pronouns and negatives,²⁶ but also sometimes verbs and nouns.²⁷ There is, I think, a blend

²³ E.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 3.76-79, 7.1-5.

²⁴ E.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 4.58-63; 8.47-52, both quoted by Deutsch, *op. cit.* 170f.

²⁵ E.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 1.1-5, 6-10; 2.31-39; 3.60-107; 4.55-59; 5.27-31; 10.1-6, 37-41.

²⁶ E.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 4.53-63; 6.29f.; 9.60f.; 10.12-14.

²⁷ E.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 2.63-69; 3.104-6; 4.50f.; 10.73-76.

of the "modern" Latin style of Catullus, the styles of Hellenistic Greek, and the style of early Latin also, possibly sometimes in reminiscence of its development by Lucretius.

But already in the *Eclogues* things that are more exclusively Virgilian begin to appear. Among them we find the two great Virgilian principles which have been identified as alternation and reconciliation.²⁸ Both had been to some extent employed by the dramatic form of the Theocritean *Idyll*. There is alternation between characters who speak, and there is reconciliation at the end. Virgil adds something, of course; for example, new contrasts, as in colour imagery, and a richer reconciliation, because his poems are more universal. But that is too long a story to explain here. More strictly relevant is the rhythm of the verse group.

The *Eclogues* have unitary verses including golden lines; there are Theocritean stanzas, and, in the fourth *Eclogue*, stanzas of Sibylline quality and balance.²⁹ But Virgil had already begun to take sharp unity away from the verse,³⁰ and to transfer it to the verse-group or period.³¹ This he did sometimes by making successive verses different, so that the monotonous Catullan hexameter was either avoided, or, perhaps, used only to give rhythmic punctuation at the period's end.³² Here a specially Virgilian practice appears. The Catullan verse, characteristically homodyned in the fourth foot, may succeed several verses, all heterodyned; that is, verses without coincidence of stress and ictus in the fourth foot. There will then, if the passage has unity, be a "released movement," perhaps the most typical of Virgil's rhythmic forms, and neatly expressive of the principle of reconciliation itself.³³ There are many released movements in the *Eclogues*. The other principle, also, is expressed there by the same means; for many rhythmic alternations occur, verses of fourth foot homodyne and heterodyne alternating.³⁴ This variation of rhythmic "texture" helped immensely to give

²⁸ Knight, 98, citing the discovery of the late Professor R. S. Conway.

²⁹ R. G. Austin, "Vergil and the Sibyl," *CQ* 21 (1927) 100-105.

³⁰ Arthur M. Young, "Schematized Word Order in Vergil," *CJ* 27 (1931-2) 515-522, who well analyses the process by which Virgil adopted the "golden line" and progressively devolved it.

³¹ J. W. Mackail, *The Aeneid of Virgil* (Oxford, 1930), Introd. lxxv-lxxviii, where verse-groups of Catullus, Lucretius, and Virgil are compared for rhythm, movement, and unity.

³² E.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 2.45-50; cf. 4.11-14, 15-17, 18-20.

³³ Knight, 47-59.

³⁴ Knight, 59-66.

Virgil his full, organic verse-group or period; it also gave play to his instinct for repetition, which he now began to discipline, partly denying to it other kinds of freedom.

The *Georgics* stand in sharp contrast with the *Eclogues* in "style"; in sharper contrast even than the *Aeneid*, where there is some return to the manner of the *Eclogues*. The *Georgics* are less repetitive and symbolic than the *Eclogues*, and more descriptive and intellectual; they are more conscious work, perhaps, and less "surrealistic."³⁵ The change is apparent immediately at the opening of the first book. The Virgilian period, never fully achieved till now, appears in its exquisite elaboration. Art is unmistakably seeking and gaining perfection by the concealment of art. "Nothing too much" is the guiding rule. Excess is avoided; even excess of metrical accuracy, for there is a positively defiant hiatus.³⁶

How the periodic unity is gained is not entirely mysterious. Verse merges into verse by means of a wide range of variation in pauses. Pace is kept steady by the avoidance of shocks; strong syllables are not excessively quick, nor too often strengthened by the proximity of weaker syllables. Vowels and consonants exercise mutual discipline and control, allowing nothing to seem too emphatic. Heterodyne predominates. The period is "rounded," an old cliché which is more intelligible than it appears, for it means that repetition within the period is strongly controlled, so that parts of the period have no obtrusive recurrences. Rhythm belongs to the whole. All this may legitimately be stated in these general terms, and will probably be admitted, though, in its proper place, a full, even a mathematical, analysis would be possible and enlightening. The point here is that all sorts of repetition are sternly disciplined, as they are not disciplined in the *Eclogues*, where the repetitive modes of earlier and contemporary Latin and Greek are freely accepted.

Yet the *Georgics* have their repetitions, some in the manners of the *Eclogues*, though they may be inspired rather by early Greek poetry than by later work.³⁷ There is always of course the repetition inherent in the metre, though it is mainly softened. More elusive and characteristic is the subtle rhythm, itself in some sense

³⁵ Cf. W. F. J. Knight, "*Cretae Oaxen*," *CR* 51 (1937) 212f.

³⁶ *Virg. Georg.* 1.4.

³⁷ E.g., *Virg. Georg.* 2.408f., 416f., 514f.; cf., on Virgil's "repetitions" generally, Deutsch, 154-171.

repetitive, of each whole period, a rhythm which might be said to owe its main quality to the periods of classical Latin prose, even when the more obvious repetitions of prose style are more emphatic than any in the verse.³⁸ There are in the *Georgics* large scale repetitions, especially in the balance between practical instruction and the richly imaginative passages which intervene. Then too, there is derivation within the tradition, as in the "repetition" of ideas from earlier poetry, which in the *Georgics* is already richer than before. One mode remains, the patterns of fourth-foot texture, which now become increasingly elaborate.³⁹ I suggest that this was mainly a spontaneous release for the repetitive instinct, repressed in other forms.

Even if it is hard for poetry to exist entirely without repetition, it will scarcely be maintained that repetition is inevitable in poetry. Sound values and imagery are not exactly repetitive, though they are repetitive in a sense, since they refer to something already known for their emotive force, and thus involve repetition to this degree. Many other parts of the poetic medium could be estimated as more, or as less, repetitive in this weak sense. Among them is something very noticeable in the *Georgics*—the minute, intrinsic metaphor, with a rich intellectual content, interlacing suggestions of past thought in symbolic words.⁴⁰

This closely knit, intellectual poetry, resulting from earlier processes of thought, but in appearance spontaneously created by a flash of perception, makes a direct appeal, without need of the dream-consciousness in which repetition is most at home. One of its branches is humorous statement,⁴¹ so exquisite in the *Georgics*, and another is oxymoron.⁴² The etymological meanings of words can play an important part, a resource which Virgil exploits more, probably, than any other poet.⁴³ Pathos is another of these count-

³⁸ Cf., e.g., Virg. *Georg.* 1.1–12 with the first period of Cic. *Arch.*, so famous in antiquity for its rhythmic balance.

³⁹ E.g., Virg. *Georg.* 2.161–176, 184–199; cf. Knight, 67–70.

⁴⁰ E.g., Virg. *Georg.* 1.187f.:

quo se nux plurima silvis
induet in florem. . . .

Cf. 1.99; 2.195, 454; 4.225f., among countless examples.

⁴¹ E.g., Virg. *Georg.* 1.155–159, 335–389; 2.82, 268, 236–245.

⁴² E.g., Virg. *Georg.* 1.92f.; 2.42–46, 132f.; 3.294f.; 4.83.

⁴³ Esp. Virg. *Georg.* 1.461–3; cf. W. F. J. Knight, "*Clarus Aquilo*," *CR* 48 (1934) 124f.

less poetic things which are not closely connected with repetition. It may be said that, as Virgil's style deepened and broadened, his repetitive tendencies, as they had been at first, were on the whole and for a time obscured.

The opening period of the *Aeneid* is not unlike the opening period of the *Georgics*. Again an elaborate analysis would be profitable; but, until that can be done, it is satisfactory to say that both the periods are "periodic" and rhythmic in similar ways; although the opening of the *Aeneid* has, perhaps, a depth of tone not found in the *Georgics*, except at the end of the fourth book; and although the extreme of fastidious care, characteristic of the *Georgics*, has already begun to pass. For that, I suggest, is an important distinction between the "style" of the *Georgics* and the "style" of the *Aeneid* in its existing state. As usual, the question remains whether Virgil would have altered the *Aeneid*, if he had had the chance. Quite probably he would have refined it down, till it became more like the *Georgics*. He might well have filed it away, till "art" encroached more on "inspiration." All this may be rather hypothetical; but I cannot drop the subject before expressing the personal opinion that, if Virgil had acted so, I am by no means sure that I should have liked the *Aeneid* so much. As it is, the tragedy of Dido is not the only part that "ran away with Virgil"; and poets, especially Coleridge whose creative process was so very much like Virgil's, notoriously misunderstand themselves when they are in a critical mood.⁴⁴

In the *Aeneid* the dream world, and spontaneity, and the repetitive, early style come back, but changed. The consciously practised technique of the past becomes the spontaneous poetic detonation of the present. There is usually a difference: the verbal repetition that positively creates verses may be called rare in the *Aeneid*, where verbal responsions tend to occur at long range, a word,⁴⁵ or a system of words or sounds,⁴⁶ being significantly repeated sometimes after many pages, or even many books. Assonance and internal rhyme, and also alliteration, sometimes very elaborate, become highly important. They represent principally a revival, mainly unconscious and spontaneous, of Virgil's old, consciously en-

⁴⁴ Cf. W. F. J. Knight, *Vergil's Troy* (Oxford, 1932) 46f., with reff.

⁴⁵ Knight, 103f.

⁴⁶ W. F. J. Knight, "Virgil, Aeneid I.193 and VIII.18-30," *PAPhA* 69 (1938) xlii. (no. 20).

tertained interest in the manipulation of sound values, as practised by Catullus, Lucretius, and other contemporary and earlier writers and speakers of Latin. My main point in this article is the way in which this, with much more besides, all happens at once in certain particularly powerful passages. But the more general question needs a few remarks.

When the *Aeneid* opens, the periodic structure is more stern and less soft than in the *Georgics*. There is a succession of forceful released movements, with a sense of set purpose, effort, and conflict.⁴⁷ There is a use of vowels, and still more of consonants, more violent than hitherto.⁴⁸ Whatever else there is here, already there is a return to repetition, in the more stanza-like recurrences of the periods, in the rhymes, and in the duplications of consonants in the new forcefulness of their use. Virgil's instinct for "closed circuits" and rhythmic definition was no longer so easily satisfied with the softly-rounded period, in which the repetitive principles, real though they yet might be, remained even more obscure than in periods of Asianic and Rhodian prose. On the other hand, Virgil retained what in the *Georgics* he had won for his art. He accepted his own period as a norm from which to depart, either by recapitulating the indulgence of the *Eclogues*, or otherwise. He continued to use minute intrinsic metaphors, packed with rationality behind their façade of picturesque immediacy.⁴⁹ Long-range repetition is carried further still; the alternating panels of the *Georgics*, the practical and the imaginative taking turns, lead to the alternation of so-called "epic" and "tragic" books in the *Aeneid*.⁵⁰ More than ever, of course, Virgil now used repetition within the whole poetic tradition, for in the *Aeneid* his derivations, and his integration of the derivations, became more than ever cogent, creative, and rich.

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil had it both ways. Connected with the retreat from the perhaps naïve and imitative repetitions of the *Eclogues* there had been the full Virgilian period, and also some intellectualization of the poetry, and some elaboration of rhythmic

⁴⁷ Knight, 58f.

⁴⁸ E.g. Virg. *Aen.* 1.17–18, where the theme of Juno's hate is expressed by hard consonants, as it is also at Virg. *Aen.* 7.287, 291, 292, 298, 321, 323, 511; and Virg. *Aen.* 2.585–587, what Aeneas thinks of one woman, compared with Virg. *Aen.* 4.603–606, what another woman says of Aeneas.

⁴⁹ E.g. Virg. *Aen.* 1.342; 4.88f.; 5.20; 6.3f.; 7.118f.; 8.267; 9.63f.; 10.771; 11.283f.; 12.104.

⁵⁰ R. S. Conway, *Vergil's Creative Art* (Oxford, 1931), *passim*.

texture. All this was now retained, and even developed. And meanwhile the lyricism of the *Eclogues*, and its associated repetitions were revived.⁵¹ There is a change, though. The lyricism became more responsible and tragic, subservient to great structural ends; and the repetitions were now less than ever extraneous, imitative, and naïve, and had come to be an organic, spontaneous part of the Virgilian language. Imitations, experiments, interests, curiosities, calculations, images, and tones, had all sunk unconsciously into Virgil's mind, and were increasingly delivered, fully organised, not so much to conscious thought and judgment, as directly to the poet's voice, and thence to his secretary's page. A sign of this is the return in the *Aeneid* of the "surrealism"⁵² already apparent in the *Eclogues*, but excluded from the *Georgics* by more conscious art.

Another sign is the fervid, self-dependent, unitary splendour of the supreme passages, where power and force combine. When these moments approach, all the resources come into play; rhyme, assonance, alliteration, anaphora, periodicity within the spontaneous unity of a characteristic rhythmic span, and also elaborate texture-patterns.⁵³ Often the material is acquired from a great number of sources, and is delivered, fully organized, by unconscious integration. Art has almost ceased to be art; if it is still art, it is not the art which conceals art, but something which has nothing to conceal, for it reaches down to the depths of rhythm in which all mankind live together in a life that is one.

⁵¹ E.g. Virg. *Aen.* 4.28f., where a mood of the *Eclogues* is remarkably recalled by words and rhythm for a tragic end; cf. *Aen.* 4 *passim*, and for repetition, mainly in the form of rhyme, many of the more impassioned parts of that book.

⁵² Cf. W. F. J. Knight, "*Caeli convexa per auras*," *CQ* 34 (1940) 129f.

⁵³ E.g. Virg. *Aen.* 2.199-233, 526-558, 567-623; 4.584-705; 6.495-534, 752-892; 7.286-640; 8.370-453; 12.614-649, 843-952.