

## The Theme of Variety in the Georgics

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### I.

In the Georgics, as in the fourth Eclogue and the Aeneid, the idea that the golden age will recur in Rome is presented \*1. This theme is especially strong in the so-called Praises of Italy (2.136-176) and the Praises of Rustic Life (2.458-542) \*2. The Theodicy (1.118-159) \*3, however, explains why Jupiter put an end to the Saturnian age, which is similar to the golden age described by Hesiod \*4. This passage, together with the description of civil war (1.463-514), gives an impression that the Jovian age can be compared with the traditional iron age\*5. But here arises a simple question: how can Virgil proclaim the arrival of a new golden age, while he describes the conditions of human life as quite like those in the iron age? We may conclude that there is a conflict of thought in the poem \*6. Johnston, however, asserts that there is a synthesis in Virgil's concept of the golden age. The golden age of the fourth Eclogue is too fanciful to be considered a serious possibility. However, in the Georgics, Virgil evolves a concept based on an agricultural economy which could happen again in his own time \*7. Her view may lead us to feel that Virgil only wishes to emphasize that our contribution to civilization is labor \*8. However, the description of the community of bees (4.149-227), for instance, throws doubt on such a simple viewpoint \*9. Therefore, to present a new perspective, I would like to consider the theme of variety \*10. This is an important theme that suggests Virgil's new interpretation of the traditional golden age theme.

## II.

In the fourth Eclogue, spontaneity of the earth \*11 is characteristic of the new golden age (37-41); every land will give us everything (40 *omnis feret omnia tellus*), so there will be no labor, commerce, or conflict. In the Georgics, on the other hand, we find a phrase suggesting that productivity of the earth is restricted by region:

Nec uero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt. (Geo. 2.109)

Adding "Nec" to the phrase "*omnis fert omnia tellus*" (Ecl. 4.40), Virgil apparently denies the golden age described in the fourth Eclogue. In the theodicy (1.118-159), he declares the spontaneously beneficent world (cf. 1.127-128 *ipsaque tellus / omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat*) is gone, replaced by the reality of toil and failure \*12. Thus 2.109, recalling the harsh condition which Jupiter imposed on human beings, is similar to the Theodicy \*13. However, this line also reflects the theme of variety \*14. Just as different trees grow better in different localities, so different countries have their own special products (110-135).

This theme first appears just after the proem of the first book (1.50-63), where the variety of nature and the need to learn its rules are more strongly maintained; before farmers cleave untried land with iron, they must learn "*et quid quaeque ferat regio et quid quaeque recuset*" (1.53). This phrase (1.53), together with 2.109, forms a clear contrast to "*omnis feret omnia tellus*" (Ecl. 4.40) \*15. In short, Virgil suggests here and at 2.109ff. that nature's variety also characterizes the Jovian age \*16. At 1.56-59, he generalises this theme from agriculture to the entire world, just as he does at 2.114ff. \*17. Thus not only nature's diversity but also the variety which civilization has brought about is emphasized

here. Viewed in the poem as a whole, 1.50ff. anticipates the Theodicy, with a brief reference to the Flood and Deucalion's creation (1.60-63), suggesting the transition from the Saturnian to the iron age \*18. On the other hand, 2.109ff., recalling 1.50ff. and the Theodicy, prepares for the Praises of Italy, where the mention of various countries (2.136-139) introduces the idea that Rome is unique. Thus, the theme of variety, along with labor, seems to be central to Virgil's reinterpretation of the golden age theme. But, as seen in the following, the deep influence of Lucretius is reflected \*19.

### III.

Line 2.109, which I have just compared with "omnis feret omnia tellus" (Ecl.4. 40), is also an obvious echo of De Rerum Natura 1.166 \*20:

sed mutarentur, ferre omnes omnia possent. ( DRN 1.166)

Nec uero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt. ( Geo.2.109)

The line of Lucretius reflects his fundamental idea that nothing can be created from nothingness (DRN 1.155-156). If this were not so, all kinds of things could be produced from all things, nothing would require a seed (1.159-160) \*21. A series of "adynata" showing disorder of nature follows; men could arise from the sea, from the earth scaly tribes and birds. Cattle and beasts might burst from the sky. Trees would not be constant in bearing the same fruit, but they would interchange. All would be able to bear all (1.161-166). Here the emphasis is on natural order under which all living things preserve their kind (1.167ff.). Lucretius deals with nature's

variety in a manner which reinforces his atomic theory, particularly on birth and death. After confirming that nothing could be created from nothingness (1.155-156), and that nature does not reduce things to nothingness (1.215-216), he concludes that things do not utterly pass away, since nature recreates one thing from another, and does not allow one to be born unless aided by another's death (1.262-64). This view recalls the proem of the first book of *De Rerum Natura* \*22, where the principle of reproduction is attributed to the power of Venus, who causes all creatures to beget generations after their kind (1.20 *efficis ut cupide generatim \*23 saecula propagent*).

This view of Lucretius seems to have influenced the variety theme found in the *Georgics*. After enumerating various species of trees (cf. 2.9 *Principio arboribus uaria est natura creandis*) which grow spontaneously (2.11 *sponte sua*), Virgil sums up this section in the following way:

*hos natura modos primum dedit, his genus omne  
siluarum fruticumque uiret nemorumque sacrorum: (Geo.2.20-21)*

The thought that "natura" governs the variety of plants recalls that of Lucretius \*24, while "uiret" symbolizes the fruitful vitality in nature, also reminiscent of the Lucretian expression (cf. DRN 1.18 *virentis*, 1.252 *virescunt*) \*25. However, just after speaking of the natural growth of plants (2.9-21), Virgil discusses several methods of propagation which human experience (22 *usus*) has discovered (22-34), contrasted with the "modi" (20) of "natura". This contrast between "natura" and "ars" reappears at 47ff. (cf. 48 *natura*, 52 *artis*), where he speaks of the possibility that man can change nature as he wishes with the proper application of "ars":

... tamen haec quoque, si quis  
inserat aut scrobibus mandet mutata subactis,

exuerint siluestrem animum, cultuque frequenti  
in quascumque uoles artis haud tarda sequentur. (Geo. 2. 49-52)

Such a view contrasts well with that of Lucretius, who concludes that all things grow from a fixed seed and preserve their own kind (1.189-190). He definitely denies the possibility of transforming nature in the following way:

Nam si de nilo fierent, ex omnibu' rebus  
omne genus nasci posset, nil semine egeret.

. . . .

nec fructus idem arboribus constare solerent,  
sed mutarentur, ferre omnes omnia possent. (DRN 1.159-166)

In the Georgics, the effect of grafting is described in the following ways:

et saepe alterius ramos impune uidemus  
uertere in alterius, mutatamque insita mala  
ferre pirum et prunis lapidosa rubescere corna. (Geo. 32-34)

nec longum tempus, et ingens  
exiit ad caelum ramis felicibus arbos,  
mirataque nouas frondes et non sua poma. (Geo. 2. 80-82)

The verbal correspondence between "mutarentur" (DRN 1.116) and "mutatamque" (Geo. 2.33) or "mutata" (Geo. 2.50) suggests strongly that this contrast is very deliberate. For Lucretius, the word symbolizes a catastrophe of nature, while in the Georgics, "ars" has actually "changed" nature, always bringing about something "new" and "miraculous" (cf. Geo. 2.82) \*26 (As for the motif of "miracle", it will be discussed later). However, this should not

be considered a rejection, but a development of Lucretian ideas on nature's variety \*27. Virgil, accepting the motif of regeneration, emphasizes nature's power by which plants flourish without man's care (cf. Geo. 2.9-21, 47-49), while he also praises the much wider variety which human "ars" has added to the natural settings.

#### IV.

In the second book of *De rerum Natura*, Lucretius develops the theme of variety by noting that appearances are very different. He explains that there are many diversities among atoms (333-337). It is due to this principle that there are variations within species which are superficially alike (342-348):

praeterea genus humanum mutaeque natantes  
squamigerum pecudes et laeta armenta feraeque  
et variae volucres, laetantia quae loca aquarum  
concelebrant circum ripas fontisque lacusque,  
et quae pervulgant nemora avia pervolitantes;  
quorum unum quidvis generatim sumere perge,  
invenies tamen inter se differe figuris. (DRN. 347-348)

Farrel compares these lines with *Georgics* 2.83-88, pointing out that the theme of both passages is the same, variety within species \*28:

Praeterea genus haud unum nec fortibus ulmis  
nec salici lotoque neque Idaeis cyparissis,  
nec pingues unam in faciem nascuntur olivae,  
orchades et radii et amara pausia baca,  
pomaque et Alcinoi silvae, nec surculus idem  
Crustumis Syriisque piris grauibusque volemis. (Geo. 83-88)

The phrase "genus haud unum" , altered deliberately from Lucretius' "genus humanum" , emphasizes the common theme, that might need a careful observation \*29.

Virgil stated earlier that various trees grow in various ways (2.9-34) \*30, but here the variety of trees extends even to sub-species. Behind this development we perceive the influence of Lucretius as well as Virgil's particular high regard for "ars" , mentioning different methods of cultivation (47-72) \*31 and even variations on a single method, such as the different grafting techniques (73-82) \*32. But the problem is still left unsolved: what is the role of this theme in the Georgics as a whole, which Virgil surely derived from Lucretius \*33 ?

There is a hint in Lucretius. After mentioning the principle of variety within species, he goes on to say, "Nor is there any other way by which the young could recognize the mother or the mother her young" (2.349-350). Then he introduces a moving vignette of a cow searching in vain for her calf, which has become a victim of human religion (352-366) \*34. Here the very fact that the child is the only one in existence for the mother is emphasized: the sight of other calves (364 vitulorum aliae species) does not divert her mind or diminish her concern; so she persistently seeks for something of her own that she knows well:

nec vitulorum aliae species per pabula laeta  
derivare queunt animum curaque levare:  
usque adeo quiddam proprium notumque requirit. (DRN. 2.364-366)

The motif of uniqueness found here emphasizes the tragedy of the calf's mother. In the Georgics, on the other hand, after the catalogue of wines, Virgil tells that there is no meaningful number for the many kinds and names, and that attempting to comprehend them with a number is worthless (2.103-104):

sed neque quam multae species nec nomina quae sint  
est numerus: neque enim numero comprehendere refert;

The enumeration of various kinds of olives or vines emphasizes the affection or pride which people have toward each kind. In fact, it would be nonsense to regard this section as merely a factual list of names. By contrast, Virgil is showing that different kinds appeal to different tastes, and each has its virtues. In short, the "unique" character of each vine has "unique" value, just as Lucretius, who expresses the "unique" value of the lost calf. But there is a great difference. Virgil never suggests that each particular existence is different from another. Strictly speaking, the Virgilian theme of variety within species, connected not so much with the uniqueness of each tree as with each subtype within the species, is on a different level than Lucretius. Another important difference may lie in the fact that Lucretius introduces the motif of mother and child. The affection people have felt for each kind of vine is, of course, quite different from feelings between mother and child (the influence of this motif on the Georgics will be discussed later). However, it is very probable that Virgil was well aware of this difference, and knew quite well how Lucretius developed this theme by introducing the emotional story about the cow.

## V.

As has been seen, the phrase "Nec uero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt" (Geo. 2.109), reflecting the Lucretian theme of variety, introduces the catalogue of special products of Eastern nations, and then the Praises of Italy \*35. In the list of the various Italian vines, Virgil praises the good points of each kind. In the same way, he takes advantage of this motif in the Praises of



Italy to express the excellence of Rome \*36. It is suggestive that he begins this eulogy by "comparing" the glory of Rome (2.138 *laudibus Italiae*) with the East's wealth (cf. 136 *ditissima terra*). Such preeminence of Rome is the product of human labor (cf. 2.155 *adde tot egregias urbes operumque laborem*) \*37, but the variety of nature should also be considered an important contribution to the history of Rome. In fact, if it were not for this principle of variety in nature, the name of Rome would be meaningless; in a golden age when every land produces everything (cf. *Ecl.* 4.40), it would be impossible to distinguish one nation from another, still less the motif of Roman glory. In the *Georgics*, however, by declaring that every land cannot produce everything (2.109), the poet suggests that under this condition of nature the "unique" character of each nation can be cultivated, hence the excellence of Rome.

Lucretius emphasizes the tragedy of the cow with the motif of uniqueness, while Virgil employs it to praise Rome. However, we should also remember that in Lucretius this motif is closely connected with the principle of regeneration. The contrasting poetic effects between the Lucretian passage of the cow and the Praises of Italy rest on the reflection of different views regarding birth and death \*38: the former passage reminds us of a harsh recognition of reality that death is the end of life, while the latter reflects the opposite view that death is the beginning of new life, the very Lucretian principle of regeneration. This principle is one of the basic conditions that guarantees "eternal Rome" \*39. But, we should also understand that these two views concerning life and death do not contradict, but complement each other. In truth, Lucretius tries to reject the fear of death based on the idea of death as the beginning of new life (cf. 3.830ff.). For him, understanding the principle of regeneration means attaining "ataraxia", the ultimate goal of life \*40. Virgil, however, leads us to realize

the fact that "ars", making full use of this principle, has brought about and will bring about the prosperity of Rome. His firm belief that she will flourish for ever is confirmed by this principle, while the theme of variety, as seen above, is employed to emphasize the supremacy of Rome.

There is another influence of Lucretius that we should not miss. The motif of mother and child found in Lucretius also plays an important role in the Praises of Italy; Virgil glorifies Italy because she is his "mother" country. He makes this point clear particularly in the following lines, the climax of this eulogy:

salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus,  
magna uirum: (Geo. 2.173-174)

The motif of identifying one's native country as the mother may not be unique, but the word "parens" \*40 becomes noteworthy when compared with "mater" (DRN 2.349, 350) in Lucretius. After enumerating the wealth of the East, Virgil mentions the glory of Rome. But this comparison should not be taken literally; it involves Virgil's intention of expressing a sense of patriotism. The poet's love for Rome is "absolute" in its nature, quite different from the affection that he feels for Italian wines. It is incompatible with any sort of comparison, since Rome is "mother", herself. Here we are reminded of the Lucretian passage of the mother cow whose maternal love is expressed as "absolute". To sum up, this theme of variety, along with the motif of mother and child, had much influence on the Praises of Italy; these Lucretian themes and motifs are used to emphasize one of the main themes—the eternal prosperity of Rome. But is this all Virgil does with them? In my view, the Praises of Italy, together with the Theodicy, further reveal the poet's reinterpretation of the Lucretian theme of civilization.

## VI.

The analysis above is quite in harmony with the Theodicy, where the need to discover various arts is explained as the will of Jupiter (cf. 1.133). Lucretius, on the other hand, deals with nature's variety to reject the religious assumption that many things happen by divine power (cf. DRN 1.151-154). Furthermore, the Theodicy itself shows Virgil's reworking of the second half of DRN 5 \*42, in which Lucretius fully details the growth of civilization. Although the two poets share the basic idea that man's active mind (cf. DRN 5.1455 ratioque, Geo.1.133 meditando) caused civilization to progress, the fundamental difference is that Virgil attributes the motivation to divine will (Geo.1.118-121). The close relationship between the Theodicy and the Praises of Italy makes it clear that Virgil has Rome in mind when explaining the will of Jupiter, while Lucretius neither justifies the development of high civilization as the realization of divine will nor connects it with the theme of the Roman prosperity.

Regarding civilization, Lucretius suggests that "ataraxia" can be achieved without concern for it, even implying the possibility of its collapse \*43. He further predicts the collapse of the earth on the basis of his atomic theory \*45. According to his theory, the earth was created by "natura" (2.1058), so it cannot avoid decaying (2.1087-1089; 1105ff.). As evidence, he says that fertile land once produced everything abundantly, but now the yield decreases and man is compelled to work to cultivate it (2.1150-74). Lucretius thus interprets the traditional golden age theme in a way that would never contradict with his atomic theory.

Furthermore, Lucretius suggests there is no "center" in the universe (1.1070), because no limit can be found (1.958ff., 2.1048 ff.). He even asserts that there are other worlds in other regions (2.1064-1066; 1074-1076), saying that "there is no one thing in the

whole sum which is created unique, and grows up unique and alone, not belonging to some species and to be one of many like it " (2. 1077-1079). By contrast, Virgil suggests in the Praises of Italy that Rome is "unique" as the "center" of the world\*46, where a new golden age is about to begin. He might not be able to accept the idea that there are other worlds where nations like Rome are to be found and that they will collapse into crumbling ruin. Virgil, taking full advantage of such Lucretian themes of variety and regeneration, displays original viewpoints on the golden age theme.

Many scholars have paid attention to the theme of labor suggested in the Theodicy. But the character of the Jovian age can be summarized in the phrase "Nec uero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt " (2.109). If we compare this line with "omnis fert omnia tellus " (Ecl.4.40), the theme of labor is emphasised. However, if compared with the expression "ferre omnes omnia possent " (DRN 1.166), it reminds us of Virgil's acceptance and refinement of the Lucretian themes and motifs, making use of them to assert his original stance as a Roman "vates " \*47. In our interpretation, therefore, Jupiter should no longer be regarded as a mere force that compels man to work hard, but as a guarantor of the fundamental conditions of Rome's perpetual prosperity. It may be ironic that Virgil justifies the Jovian age by using the very principles with which Lucretius denies "religio " .

## VII.

Lastly, I'd like to supplement the above discussion with another glance at the motif of "miracle " in the Georgics. We have seen that "ars " is shown to have the potential of changing nature, always creating something "new " and "miraculous" (cf.2.82). In Lucretius, on the other hand, this motif appears in a peculiar context. For him, any miraculous phenomena can be understood intellec-

tually. In the second book, for example, after considering variations in atoms, Lucretius declares "this is no wonder" (2.338 nec mirum). Then the "nam" clause (338ff.) explains this on the basis of the atomic theory referred to above. Another example can be found in the same book, where Lucretius gives the following advice prior to giving his interpretation of the universe:

Nunc animum nobis adhibe veram ad rationem.  
nam tibi vehementer nova res molitur ad aures  
accedere et nova se species ostendere rerum.  
sed neque tam facilis res ulla est quin ea primum  
difficilis magis ad credendum constet, itemque  
nil adeo magnum neque tam mirabile quicquam,  
quod non paulatim minuant mirarier omnes. (DRN 2.1023-1029)

Here, the motifs of "novelty" and "miracle" are found where Lucretius is diminishing the "wonder" of nature. According to him, the spectacle of the sky, the moon, and the sun must have been "wonderous" (1037 miranda) when they were revealed for the first time to mortals, but now familiarity has diminished the awe (1030ff.) \*48. Then he advises us not to allow mere "novelty" (1040 novitate) to overwhelm our reason, but rather ponder it with keen judgement (1040-1042). In short, Lucretius seems to emphasize that a thorough understanding of nature, which he believes possible with his theory, could diminish man's awe of the mysterious existence of the universe and dispel terror from the mind. He maintains that those who do not understand "rerum natura" tend to ascribe phenomena to divine power and suffer great dread (1.151-154):

quippe ita formido mortalis continet omnis,  
quod multa in terris fieri caeloque tuentur  
quorum operum causas nulla ratione videre

possunt ac fieri divino numine rentur.

Virgil, on the other hand, confesses his wish to understand the science of nature, but if it is intellectually too difficult, he will be satisfied with an unsophisticated love of her marvels. In the following lines, he suggestively contrasts his beatitude with that of Lucretius \*49:

felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,  
atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum  
subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis auari:  
fortunatus et ille deos qui nouit agrestis  
Panaque Siluanumque senem Nymphasque sorores. (Geo. 2. 490-494)

For Lucretius the motif of "miracle", linked with that of religion, has a negative connotation. Mysteries of nature will diminish if one is able to "know" (cognoscere) the cause of things. Virgil proclaims that he "knows" (nouit) rural gods, that is to say, he admits "divinum numen" working behind the natural phenomena. This is the very stance that Lucretius criticizes intensely. In the Georgics, the motif of "miracle" can be related not only with the development of civilization, but also with the workings of divinity \*50, thus making a clear contrast to the Lucretian interpretation.

As we have noticed, Lucretius introduces the theme of variety to confirm his atomic theory, which denies divinity and compels the fear of death. From this comes "ataraxia", which is described as the essence of a "golden life" (cf. 3. 12-13).

omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta,  
aurea, perpetua semper dignissima vita.

He suggests here we could actually enjoy the golden age life again,

if only we understand the words of Epicurus (i.e. the atomic theory), however harsh external conditions might be. This may be another Lucretian interpretation of the golden age theme; he believes firmly that life without "cura" or "labor" (i.e. the golden age life) would be possible with the working of "ratio". According to Virgil, however, Jupiter didn't permit human society to be "inactive" (1.121ff.):

...pater ipse colendi  
haud facilem esse uiam uoluit, primusque per artem  
mouit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda  
nec torpere graui passus sua regna ueterno.

If all Romans were too keen on dispelling "cura" from their heart to privately achieve the Lucretian goal of "ataraxia", would it not be possible for Rome to become "inactive"? Or would man himself become "inactive", once he attains "ataraxia"? Paradoxically, the more one uses "ratio" to diminish the "wonder" of nature, the more interest man may lose in the outer world \*51. Giving a different interpretation of the motif of "miracle", Virgil states emphatically that the Jovian age could not be regarded simply as a harsh age, but also as a "wonderful" age, when man's creative mind can always be activated to contribute in some way to the prosperity of Rome.

## NOTES

- \*1. Cf. *Ecl.* 4.6: *redeunt Saturnia regna*; *Aen.* 6.791ff.
- \*2. Cf. *Geo.* 2.173: *Saturnia tellus*; 2.536-538.
- \*3. On the Theodicy, see L.P. Wilkinson, *Virgil's Theodicy*, CQ n. s. 13, 1963, 75-84.
- \*4. For the similarity between the two ages, see P. A. Johnston, *Vergil's Agricultural Golden Age*, Leiden 1980, 15ff.
- \*5. *Ibid.*, 52.
- \*6. Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, 82-84, for example, admits that the country life praised at the end of Book 2 is similar to the life of the Golden Age, but he concludes that this passage seems out of place. He suggests that Virgil may have been prompted by Hesiod, who dwelt for once on relief and pleasure (*Erga* 582-96). He conjectures that Virgil was anxious to adjust what might otherwise have seemed a too discouraging over-all effect.
- \*7. Johnston, *op. cit.*, 2.
- \*8. Johnston's interpretation (*ibid.*, 129) seems to be rather historical. She is allegorizing the reality with the Golden Age theme. She concludes that the new generations of farmers will transform war-torn fields into billowing plains of golden wheat.
- \*9. Cf. C. Segal, *Orpheus and the fourth Georgic: Vergil on Nature and Civilization*, *AJP* 87, 1966, 310; C. G. Perkell, *A Reading of the Fourth Georgic*, *Phoenix* 32, 1978, 212; J. Griffin, *The Fourth Georgic, Virgil, and Rome*, *G&R* 26, 1979, 63.
- \*10. J. Farrel, *Vergil's Georgics and the Traditions of Ancient Epic*, Oxford 1991, 169ff., argues that the theme of variety in the *Georgics* reflects that of Lucretius.
- \*11. Cf. *Ecl.* 4.18-20: *nullo munuscula cultu...tellus...fundet*. The new Golden Age in the fourth Eclogue is consistent with that of Hesiod, an age characterized by freedom from toil. Cf. *Erga* 117-118.
- \*12. Cf. Thomas, *Virgil: Georgics*, Cambridge 1988, ad 1.118-46.



- \*13. Ibid, ad 2.109.
- \*14. Cf. Farrel, op.cit., 193ff.
- \*15. Cf. Thomas, op.cit., ad 1.53.
- \*16. Cf. Wilkinson, op.cit., 82.
- \*17. Cf. R.D.Williams, *Virgil: The Eclogues and Georgics*, New York 1979, ad 1.56; Thomas, op.cit., ad 1.56-9. On the movement from the agricultural to the universal, see D.O.Ross, *Virgil's Element: Physics and poetry in the Georgics*, Princeton 1987, 40ff.
- \*18. Cf. Thomas, op.cit., ad 1.60-63.
- \*19. Cf. Farrel, op.cit., 169ff.
- \*20. Cf. Thomas, op.cit., ad 2.109.
- \*21. Translations from *De Rerum Natura* are mainly based on those of W.H.D.Rouse in the Loeb Classical Library series.
- \*22. For the interpretation of this proem, see J.P.Elder, *Lucretius 1.1-49*, TAPA 85, 1954, 88-120.
- \*23. Farrel, op.cit., 196, points out the verbal correspondence with "generatim" (*Geo* 2.35).
- \*24. The same idea is already exhibited in 1.60-63.
- \*25. We are also reminded of the Praises of Spring, where the myth of the sacred marriage between the sky father and the earth mother can be looked upon in such a way as will recall *De Rerum Natura* 1.250-253.
- \*26. Cf. Thomas, op.cit., ad 2.80-82, 82.
- \*27. Virgil regards this power of nature as the manifestation of divinity. Cf. 1.21-23:
- \*28. Farrel, op.cit., 196-197.
- \*29. Cf. Farrel, op.cit., 197.
- \*30. Cf. 2.9 : *Principio arboribus uaria est natura creandis.*
- \*31. Notice also 2.35: *Quare agite o proprios generatim discite cultus.*
- \*32. Cf. 2.73: *Nec modus inserere atque oculos imponere simplex.*
- \*33. Farrel, op.cit., 191, draws a conclusion that Virgil designs

the two central books of his poem as an "imitatio cum variatione" of Lucretius' two final books.

\*34. Farrel, op.cit., 198, compares this episode with the end of the third Georgic.

\*35. According to Miles, op.cit., 118, line 109 enforces a sense not so much of confinement and limitation as of alternatives and possibilities, thus leading to the eulogy.

\*36. Miles, op.cit., 119-129, interprets that Virgil's praise must be seen as an idealization of Italy and its people, a portrait of them at their best. For the idea of the excellence of Rome, the influence of Cicero might be traced.

\*37. Cf. Cicero, De Officiis 2.14.

\*38. Cf. W.Liebeschuetz, The Cycle of Growth and Decay in Lucretius and Virgil, PVS 7, 1967-68, 30-40.

\*39. For the idea of "eternal Rome", cf. Aen. 1.278 his ego nec metas rerum nec tempore pono. In relation to this idea, it is noteworthy that in the Georgics, nature's law is regarded as "eternal". Cf. 1.60-61: continuo has leges aeternaque foedera certis/imposuit natura locis,.... "Foedera" also has a Lucretian ring, cf. DRN 1.586 foedera naturai.

\*40. In the passage of the cow, the true stress is on the stupidity of "religio" (2.352-354).

\*41. Cf. 2.116 diuisae arboribus patriae.

\*42. Cf. Williams, op.cit., ad 1.133.

\*43. Cf. Farrel, op.cit., 200ff.

\*44. Cf. F.Solmsen, Epicurus on the Growth and Decline of the Cosmos, AJP 74, 1953, 34-51.

\*45. Cf. Johnston, op.cit., 28-33.

\*46. The repetition of the word "extremus" (2.114, 123, 171) emphasizes the idea that Rome is the center of the world.

\*47. This stance of Virgil is well expressed in 2.174-176: tibi res antiquae laudis et artis/ingredior sanctos ausus recludere fontis, /

Ascraeumque cano Romana per oppida carmen.

\*48. Cf. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 2.95.

\*49. For the interpretation of these lines, cf. F. Muecke, *Poetic Self-Consciousness in Georgics 2---Ramus Essays on the Georgics---*, Bristol 1979, 87-107; T. Yamashita, *The Orininality of the Georgics*, *JCS* 39, 1991, 88-90.

\*50. In the description of the society of the bees, for example, Virgil states how they reproduce without sexual coitus (4.197ff.):  
illum adeo placuisse apibus mirabere morem, / quod neque concubitu  
indulgent, nec corpora segnes / in Venerem soluunt aut fetus nixibus  
edunt. He explained earlier that such "miraculous" nature of the bees was first given by Jupiter as a reward (4.149-152).

\*51. We are reminded of the famous phrase "nil admirari".