FOUR SUGGESTIONS ON VERGIL

Buc. 1,67–69   *en unquam patrios longo post tempore fines*
                 pauperis et tuguri congestum caespite culmen
                 post aliquot, mea regna, uidens mirabor aristas?

In 69 *post* has always created unease. Is it a preposition or an adverb? If the former, it jarringly clashes with the use of the word as an adverb in 67. Moreover on this hypothesis it has been understood in two ways. First, it might be local; we then construe *fines et culmen, mea regna, mirabor uidens post aliquot aristas* and take it to mean that the returning Meliboeus, trying to escape notice, hides behind a screen of grain-stalks; this is so ridiculous that it refutes itself. Second, it might be temporal, similarly construed with *aristas* interpreted as 'harvests' and hence 'years'; but then *post aliquot aristas*, if it does not actually 'contradict' *longo post tempore*, as Clausen says, at least comes as an anticlimax. Moreover *aristas*, allegedly defended by Claudian's phrase *decimas aristas* in this sense, cannot even bear the desired meaning. As Conington puts it, "*aliquot* would naturally distribute *aristas*, whereas the equivalent to *messis* is the plural *aristae*, not the singular *arista*". What he means is that *decimas aristas* can quite naturally mean 'the tenth lot of corn-ears', hence 'ten years', but the true correspondent of *aliquot aristas* would be *decem aristas*, which can only mean 'ten ears of corn'. The Hellenistic use of ποίη to signify 'year' is irrelevant, since that word does not mean 'blade of grass'. So *post* cannot be a preposition and has to be taken as an adverb with the construction (misinterpreted by Coleman) understood as *fines et culmen, mea regna, uidebo et aliquot aristas mirabor* (to avoid any ambiguity I have made *uidens* finite), but it is then a feeble (not 'pathetic', as Page and Clausen have it) and unstylish repetition of 67. Clausen adduces the repetition of *ante* in Georg. 2,259–61, but shrinks from claiming explicitly that the 'parallel' is valid; in fact in that passage we have a perfectly orthodox anaphora, with each occurrence of the word in its own clause. No parallel can be cited for what we have in the *Bucolics*.

If then the word cannot be either preposition or adverb, it must be corrupt. I propose to substitute for it the exclamation *a!*. Haplography and a subsequent attempt to repair the now defective metre would easily account for the corruption. *A* appears at the beginning of the line in 6,77, and like most exclamations is entitled to stand in hiatus, as at Hor. *Epode* 5,71. We will then construe as in the second option.

Georg. 3,43–44   *uocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron*
                    Taygetique canes domitrixque Epidaurus equorum.

Vergil promises an epic on Caesar in the future, but in the meantime he is summoned to
fulfil Maecenas' request to write about countryside animals, out of which he here se-
lects those used in hunting as the most dignified to appear as representatives in this pro-
logue. The *clamor* will be mingled shouts of the hunters and barking (so [Ovid] Hal. 79
(*canes*) *produnt clamore feram*) of the dogs. But consider the combination 'Cithaeron
and Taygetus' dogs and Epidaurus'; I know about Vergil's habit of slight variation in
enumerations, but do not recall anything as lopsided as this. I propose to read *Tayge-
tusque canum* on the hypothesis that the corruption arose because it was not realised
that the last word depends from *clamore*.

Georg. 3,425   *anguis ...*
    428   *qui, dum amnes ulli rumpuntur fontibus et dum*
              uere madent udo terrae et pluuialibus Austris,
              stagna colit.

Richard Thomas deserves credit for the candour of the first part of his note on 428, "V.
otherwise uses *ullus* only with negatives, questions and conditionals (which indeed is in
effect the force of *dum*)", even if the second part does not merit the same praise. One
might try to defend the reading by suggesting that Vergil has in mind that no (*n-ulli*)
rivers will flow in summer because they will have dried up, but that SOME will flow in
spring, but the limitation implicit in the word *ulli* conflicts with the emphasis which the
passage puts on the abundant rains of spring. Ribbeck was justifiably so upset that he
thought of substituting *tumidi*, but *alti* would be easier.

Aen. 7,598   *nam mihi parta quies, omnisque in limine portus*
                funere felici spolior.

Latinus declares that Turnus will pay the penalty for his acts, whereas he himself, being
of advanced age, has nothing to lose except that his death will be overshadowed by
misfortune. The problem here is *omnisque*; however this is interpreted, no satisfactory
parallel has been or can be produced. Horsfall's references are perfectly futile, as if La-
tinus was emphasising that he was not just partially at the harbour mouth. Housman on
Manilius 2,303 proposes to read *somnique* (so C. Wordsworth) ... *postus*, while admit-
ting that the form *postus* is not found in Vergil nor in any post-Lucretian classical poet
except for once in Silius (though Vergil does use the syncopated form in compounds).
But more important is that this conjecture removes the allusion to the proverbial *nau-
fragium in portu* (see TLL portus 64,82), which carries on Latinus' metaphor *ferimur-
que procella* (594). I propose to remove the problem by altering *omnisque* to *summi-
que*, Latinus' 'final haven' (cf. Aen. 2,324 *summa dies*, 12,434 *summa oscula* at least as
interpreted by [Quintil.] Decl. 9,9 [p. 183,5 Håkanson] *suprema per galeam oscula*

[quoted by Conington]); I presume that haplography removed the initial *s* of this word, that its restoration put it in the wrong place to produce what an unthinking scribe took to intend *ummisque*, and that this was altered to a Latin word. Compare how at Aen. 2,164 *scelerumque* (which appears only as a correction in MP) acquired a prothetic *i*, which is misplaced in M to produce *scelerumi*, and also suffered the omission of *que* as in V and M and its restoration in the wrong place, so that P offers *queiscelerum*.

Charlottesville, Virginia   E. Courtney