# STYLE IN LATIN POETRY

*Edited by Paolo Dainotti, Alexandre Pinheiro Hasegawa and Stephen Harrison*

TRENDS IN CLASSICS

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# Style in Latin Poetry

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## Volume 159

# Style in Latin Poetry

Edited by
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# Preface

Most of the papers in this volume derive from a workshop held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, on Saturday 19 March 2022; we are most grateful to the conference staff of the college (especially Donna O'Sullivan) for enabling this in-person event to happen, not least after two years where such things were not possible, to the college itself for its generous research funding and to its Centre for the Study of Greek and Roman Antiquity for its academic support. We also thank those who attended the workshop and contributed to a lively discussion.

We are particularly grateful to Antonios Rengakos and Franco Montanari for accepting this book for the Trends in Classics series at De Gruyter, and to all those at De Gruyter who smoothed its way to publication.

Paolo Dainotti, Alexandre Hasegawa, and Stephen Harrison

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Alexandre Pinheiro Hasegawa and Paolo Dainotti

# The Style of Latin Poetry

## 1 Prefatory

This book is the result of a conference which took place in Oxford at Corpus Christi College in March 2022 on the style of Latin poetry.[1] We are grateful to the speakers there, to whose papers several more have here been added by subsequent invitation. Our intention with this volume is to complement and update (on a smaller scale) Adams and Mayer's edited book, *Aspects of the Language of Latin Poetry*, published by Oxford University Press in 1999, also derived from a conference, held in London in 1995. Although there have been extensive discussions about the style of Latin poetry since then, much of this material has been scattered throughout commentaries and treated in isolation. We believe that there is a need for a work that presents a lengthier consideration. Certainly, there is still much to say on this topic, and we hope this book will serve as a fresh starting point, as Adams and Mayer's work did.

To start from the beginning, the word 'style', as it is well known, is derived from *stilus* ('a pointed instrument for incising letters'). By a metonymic process, *stilus*, which means that instrument (*OLD* s.v. 3), also came to mean the activity of writing, the mode of composition (*OLD* s.v. 4b). This mode of composition necessarily involves imitation, as Latin poets most of the time take either Greek or Latin writers, if not both, as their models and rivals. A Latin poet always works in a certain tradition, which he/she hopes will be recognised by their readers, and tries to place himself/herself as *auctor* of a poetic genre to be imitated by their successors. Horace, for example, places himself as a Roman Alcaeus, among the *uates lyrici*, in order to be a model, just like the Greek poet. Imitation is a key concept in comprehending Latin poetry.[2] Therefore, stylistics plays a vital role in explaining how one poet imitates another, an aspect that receives a significant emphasis in many contributions to this volume.

Phaedrus, for example, clarifying the model of his third book of *Fables*, states at the beginning of its prologue (3, prol. 29): *librum exarabo tertium Aesopi stilo*

1 This prefatory part of the introduction is by Alexandre Pinheiro Hasegawa, the second section, 'Key concepts for a stylistic analysis', is by Paolo Dainotti, while the third section 'Contents', is by Alexandre Pinheiro Hasegawa. We would like to thank Stephen Harrison for all his corrections, suggestions, and invaluable pieces of advice.

2 On imitation in Latin and Greek poetry see Russell 1979.

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('I will write a third book with Aesop's stylus'). In this case, different authors share stylistic features in vocabulary and syntax. However, as they write in different languages and Aesop wrote in prose, Phaedrus' verses sometimes will sound Greek, like those of Virgil when he imitates Theocritus, Hesiod, or Homer. The influence of Greek is always an important aspect of the style in Latin poetry,[3] and the varying presence of Hellenic features in the verses also serves to distinguish one poet from another.

Although a poet may imitate another, he/she should not be a member of a *seruum pecus*, in Horace's words (*Epist*. 1.19.19), that is, the imitation must not be subservient. If it is correct to say that it is possible to recognise the style of the model in an author, it is even more correct to say that the educated reader recognises the style of the emulator.[4] Both Ennius and Virgil have Homer as a model in the same *genus sublime*, but how each of them incorporates his influence differs significantly, resulting in distinct and recognisable styles. Ennius is seen by the Augustans as unrefined in his composition, an author who lacks artistry (Hor. *Ars* 259–262; Ov. *Am*. 1.15.19). Besides, the Augustan poet has not just Homer as a model but also Ennius himself. However, in these layers of poetry, the *Maronianus stilus* stands out in the *Aeneid*, which will become 'lo bello stilo' (Dante, *Inferno* 1.86) for his successors, even when they claim to follow his footsteps from afar (Statius, *Theb*. 12.817).

Aulus Gellius says (3.3.11–13) that in his time there were around one hundred and thirty comedies attributed to Plautus, but only twenty-five were thought to have been actually written by him. However, the other plays, although written by ancient poets (*ueteres poetae*), would have been revised and reworked by Plautus himself and this would be the reason for recognising in them the flavour of the Plautine style (*propterea resipiant stilum Plautinum*). However, it is not merely an external perception; authors such as Aulus Gellius perceive a specific text as being in the style of Plautus. It seems that the poets themselves are aware of their own style and the characteristics that are peculiar to it. Statius, for example, appears to have had this self-consciousness when speaking of the audacity of his own style (*Silv*. 3 pr. *audaciam stili nostri*).[5]

In another occurrence of the word *stilus* (Ter. *An*. 12), we can see how the same author can have different styles: *dissimili oratione sunt factae ac stilo* ('they were done in a different language and style'). Terence, explaining two of

3 See Adams and Mayer 1999, 11–14.

4 On imitation as appropriation of the model, when the poet makes the thing 'his own', see Russell 1979, 12–14.

5 For more on the audacity of Statius' style see Bessone's chapter in this volume.

Menander's comedies, says that the Greek author wrote a *Woman of Andros* and a *Woman of Perinthos* in two different styles, although the plots are not very different. The Roman playwright could discern some peculiar features in one comedy which distinguished it from another, both written by Menander. The variation in style is not only a strategy to attract a larger number of readers / listeners (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 4.1–2), but also a demonstration of versatility and mastery of various poetic genres (Hor. *Epist* 2.2.58–60); for example, Horace is able to write both a lyric monument higher than the regal structure of the pyramids (*Carm.* 3.30.1–2) and *sermones* which make use of a pedestrian Muse (*S.* 2.6.17).

In the Latin poetic tradition, stylistic criticism, the concern with an author's style, seems to go back to Lucilius, according to Pliny the Elder (*NH*, praef. 7): *Lucilius, qui primus condidit stili nasum* ('Lucilius, who was the first to establish a nose for style'). In inaugurating criticism with his refined nose (Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.8: *emunctae naris*), he was targeted by another critic who sought to emulate him, the satiric Horace. He criticises Lucilius on the basis that Lucilius himself had criticised other poets, such as Ennius and Accius (Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.53–55). Poets, therefore, are attentive to the style of others and their own, whether in imitating what they judge to be distinguished, or in criticising what they think is faulty.

Ennius is known for his frequent and sometimes excessive use of alliteration, which was criticised in antiquity (*Rhet. Her.* 4.18), as in the famous holodactylic line (fr. 104 Sk.): *o Tite tute Tati tibi tanta tyranne tulisti* ('o Titus Tatius, you tyrant, what great things you took on yourself'). Virgil, in his imitation of Ennius' poetry, often removes what seemed to him excessive, as for example when in *Aen.* 9.503–504, recalling another well-known alliterative and onomatopoeic verse of Ennius (fr. 451 Sk.): *at tuba terribili sonitu taratantara dixit* ('but the trumpet, with a terrifying sound, said *taratantara*'), he eliminates the onomatopoeic word *taratantara*, making the alliteration smoother: *at tuba terribilem sonitum procul aere canoro / increpuit* ('and the trumpet resounded far away its terrifying sound through the melodious brass'). The substitution of the onomatopoeic word by 'melodious brass' (*aere canoro*) seems significant, in a possible criticism of the excessive repetition of /t/ in Ennius, perceived as faulty.

From these few examples (many others could be added), it seems clear to us, therefore, that style is a fundamental aspect of Latin poetry and stylistic criticism is a continual concern of the Latin poets themselves. To discern, however, what is proper to an author, what is a feature of the poetic genre, what is an imitation of a model, or whether, for example, a repetition is significant or not, imposes some methodological problems. How should we describe properly the stylistic characteristics of a poet? A relatively safe tactic seems to be the investigation of

how the poets themselves judged poetry, for the ruler with which one measures someone is used to measure oneself, as Horace suggests in *Sat.* 1.10.

Information on such judgements, however, is often scarce. It is therefore not an easy task to describe and comment on the stylistic characteristics of a poet, an aspect which seems to us to be well emphasised by Nisbet:

> 'The style of a poet is the most important thing about him, the element that cannot be translated, without which nobody but a scholar could endure to read him. But it is also the hardest part to characterize, which is why we all prefer to talk about other matters. Lists of vocabulary and metrical statistics provide useful raw material, but they may communicate very little; a count of dactyls does not tell us what the *Eclogues* are actually like. I believe that here as elsewhere the best approach is to concentrate on particular passages where the idiosyncrasy of the poet appears in its most undiluted form. Such passages give a flavour to the whole, but this quality is easily dissipated in a statistical treatment; after all, in most works of literature, including even the *Eclogues*, there are many lines that could have belonged somewhere else.'[6]

## 2 Key concepts for a stylistic analysis

It is clear from Nisbet's words that, in the absence of a certain method, the various tools of stylistics may appear inert, arid, even useless when confronted with the complex and prismatic reality of a text.[7] It therefore seems necessary to discuss, albeit briefly, some key concepts for a successful stylistic analysis.[8]

In our view, stylistics must have the text (and its forms of expression) at its centre,[9] because it is through the close, reiterated reading of the text that one can 'empirically'[10] attempt to reconstruct the style of an author; and it is again to the text that one should return to appreciate, with a greater awareness, its expressive

**6** Nisbet 1991, 1.

**7** This section is by Paolo Dainotti. Some observations are taken from a methodological discussion (with examples) in Dainotti 2022.

**8** For a first, clear approach on theoretical perspectives, issues, and terminology of stylistics see Jeffries and McIntyre 2010 and the up-to-date handbook by Burke 2023$^2$; for Latin stylistics, over and above the introductions to the style of single authors, Marouzeau 1946$^2$, Wilkinson 1963, Maurach 1983, the essays by W. Kroll, H.H. Janssen, and M. Leumann edited in Lunelli 2011$^4$, and especially Hofmann and Szantyr 2002 will give the reader a solid foundation.

**9** See Jeffries and McIntyre 2010, 15: 'the unavoidable basis of all stylistics remains the text itself, and the linguistic choices that have been made (albeit unconsciously) to arrive at a particular form of words'.

**10** I use the term in a positive sense, as a scientific principle which implies an inductive method based on the observation of the text and of its recurring patterns. See Jeffries and McIntyre 2010, 23.

peculiarities. Nevertheless, at the same time stylistics cannot and must not limit itself to the analysis, more or less convincing, of a selection of significant passages, because such an approach would lack a theoretical framework, an aspect that is indispensable for a reading that aims to rest on solid foundations. While it is true that theory should not suffocate the reader with terminology, which is often not immediately perspicuous (especially to classicists), and 'curb' the text in rigid categories, with the effect of making the reader lose the aesthetic pleasure of the text, it is also true that, in the absence of a minimum of theoretical framework, textual interpretation necessarily becomes extemporaneous and ultimately impressionistic. And this is what has certainly handicapped stylistics the most, making it appear, in some cases justifiably, as an unproductive discipline, soaked in easy sentimentality and excessive 'subjectivity'.[11] Some considerations of this discipline are therefore necessary.

First, it is necessary to clarify the open and hybrid nature of stylistics, which, usually considered ancillary to the more prestigious syntax or as a sub-discipline of linguistics, has a liminal, eclectic, interdisciplinary nature, open as it is to contributions from different disciplines.[12] In commenting on a passage of poetry, it will therefore be normal to analyse it in its various levels of reading and from various perspectives, employing notations of metrics, *métrique verbale* (the study of the relationship between words and metre), language, syntax, pragmatics and even anthropology or sociology, without thereby creating a confusing *coaceruum* of material.

In resorting to such diverse hermeneutic tools, there is in fact always a unifying objective, that of placing the text, or rather its stylistically relevant forms of expression, before the reader's eyes. A stylistic reading of a poetic text therefore consists, in other words, in identifying an *écart*, a 'deviation' from the 'norm'

**11** 'Subjectivity' and 'objectivity' in stylistics are often misunderstood concepts. An analysis that aims at being as objective as possible does not exclude the subjectivity of the reader but is an analysis in which the reader 'tries to be (a) clear, detailed, and open (so that one's position is unambiguous), and (b) ready to change one's mind if the evidence or a subsequent counter-argument demands it' (Short and van Peer 1999, 273). In other words, an objective analysis must be 'falsifiable' and 'replicable', namely clearly enough to be reproduced and challenged by other researchers.

**12** On the eclectic and open nature of stylistics seen as an 'interdiscipline' or as a 'bridge discipline' connecting linguistics and literary studies see Leech 2008, 1–2. On the various branches of stylistics, see Noørgaard et al. 2010, 7–48.

(a concept already clearly expressed by Aristotle)[13] with all the difficulties involved in first establishing that norm. A norm is a complex concept insofar as it is relative, since there is one norm for prose and one for poetry, a norm prescribed by the *consuetudo* of a poetic genre ('genre style') and a norm discoverable in the *usus scribendi* of an individual author ('authorial style') or even of a single work (think about the stylistic evolution within Virgil's poetry). The norm can only be identified, in our opinion, by means of repeated and in-depth reading of an author's work, a method that comes close to the consumption of the text by the ancient reader, who, as is well known, learned texts by heart. The educated reader, on the basis of his or her textual experience, therefore, mentally constructs the idea of a norm (both of a genre and of a specific author), that is, of a 'system of expectations' with respect to which and by virtue of which he or she is immediately able to perceive the deviation.[14] But the term 'deviation' — it has been observed — could, if misunderstood, imply a negative connotation.[15] It is perhaps preferable to adopt other terms, such as 'defamiliarisation'[16] (the reader's sense of 'estrangement'[17] before a deviation), which can be considered as the aim of any deviation, or, even better, 'foregrounding',[18] a term taken from the visual arts, which indicates the way in which a passage, by virtue of certain exceptional figures, 'stands out' from its context (classical scholars have used the equivalent French expression '*mise en relief*').

The idea of deviation is strictly connected with the concept of the stylistic 'figure', a term which can help us to understand the very function of a deviation

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**13** At *Rhet*. 1404b 8 Aristotle uses the verb ἐξαλλάξαι, which can be considered equivalent to 'deviating', 'moving away'. According to Aristotle, a deviation from normal diction has the function of making language more solemn and admirable.

**14** The deviation can be either 'internal', when a passage stands out from the context, or 'external', when a text appears different compared to other texts, especially those belonging to the same genre (Levin 1965). In the latter case, classical scholarship can refer to it as 'generic enrichment' (Harrison 2007).

**15** Conte 2007, 61.

**16** Defamiliarisation, as is well known, is a key concept of Russian formalism ('ostranenie'), firstly introduced by Shklovsky in his collection of papers entitled *O teorii prozy* (Moscow, 1929), translated into English only in 1990 (see Shklovsky 1990).

**17** A similar concept is already expressed by Aristotle in the passage from *Rhet*.1404b 8 quoted in n. 13 above. Russian Formalism is so profoundly indebted to Aristotle that Tomashevsky, in a famous letter to Shklovsky dating back to 1925 but published only in 1978 (cf. Tomashevsky 1978, 385–386), playfully observed, on his own book *Teoriia literatury. Poetica* (Moscow, 1925), that it was 'simply' Aristotle's old theory of literature'. See Liveley 2019, 110–111.

**18** On the concept of 'foregrounding', derived from defamiliarisation and firstly introduced by Mukařovský 1964, see Jeffries and McIntyre 2010, 30–31.

from the norm. 'Figure' (or *schema*) is in fact, as Quintilian (*Inst.* 2.13.8–11) reminds us, a term taken from the world of dance, where it indicates an unusual and artificial attitude of the body aimed at 'striking' the spectator and capturing his/her attention. If we consider deviation as a figure, then the text will not appear to us as a confusing congeries of deviations, but rather as a series of 'linguistic gestures' (another term to be preferred to 'deviation') that the poet adopts to signal to the reader the expressive vibrations of the text. From this perspective, stylistics is thus no longer a collection of linguistic *monstra*, a 'teratological' display of examples, but rather an interpretation of the linguistic gesture associated with the specific nature of the stylistic deviation.

We have deliberately employed the expression 'linguistic gesture', because a gesture, as a gesture, aims at indicating something, in this case at signalling to the reader the exceptionality of the form of expression. But the task of a stylistic reading is not only to detect, but also to explain a linguistic gesture in its 'effects' on the reader. In order to do so, one must analyse the semantics of the expression, because the poet adopts a certain linguistic form for the semantic content, to emphasise it, to reinforce it or even to 'stage' it.[19] In the latter case, the page almost acquires a visual value, inviting the reader to have a so to speak 'synaesthetic' experience of the text, to visualise the words on the page (as is evident in Hasegawa's chapter on Horace). Expressiveness in these cases becomes iconicity, 'form miming meaning'.[20]

Some might object, not without some reason, that ancient poetry is poetry for the ear and not for the eye, a poetry that was declaimed: Virgil was supposedly able to make his verses even more memorable and poignant with his voice.[21] But it is also true that a visual aspect is nevertheless inherent in writing (while writing one visualises the line on the page) and that, as Adams and Mayer also observe in their introduction, poets up to a point have a spatial conception of poetry.[22] In addition, the production of many authors implies the concept of the book in its physical structure, with numerical correspondences, such as in the case of some Horatian odes that share similar themes and are placed in similar positions within their respective books (e.g. the autobiographical satires 1.6 and 2.6). Finally, it should be observed that the visual aspect of poetry is not ascribable just

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**19** One should not necessarily think of a deliberate, 'intentional' use. In stylistics, in lieu of the questionable criterion of 'intentionality', we should adopt that of 'functionality' (see Traina 1991[2], 129, n. 22) or 'stylistic pertinence' (Calcante 2002, 238).

**20** I am here alluding to the effective definition of iconicity which is also the title of the book edited by Nänny and Fischer 1999.

**21** Suet. *Vita Verg.* 29.

**22** Adams and Mayer 1999, 17.

to modern sensibilities — think of Futurist experiments — but already to ancient ones, as the *technopaignia* of the Hellenistic age clearly confirm.[23]

Returning to our stylistic method, in many cases, scholars in commenting on a passage merely highlight the effects of a stylistic figure without really proving their interpretation with textual evidence, with the inevitable consequence that their reading appears too 'subjective'. To demonstrate with a certain degree of reliability the effect of a figure it is necessary to find parallel passages, a certain number of similar passages that can suggest that the poet perceives that figure as suitable for expressing a specific meaning. It is in this light that collections of material and metrical repertories, which previously appeared arid or even useless, constitute an indispensable tool for a serious investigation of style.[24]

With parallel passages we can infer the stylistic effect of a figure. It will happen, however, that in the same passage different readers will dwell on different aspects. This is not ascribable to the subjectivity of interpretation, but to the fact that different expressive factors may coexist in the same passage or even in the same verse. This is another key concept (not unfamiliar to ancient theory),[25] namely the 'convergence of expressive factors',[26] which can be formulated in this way: in a passage it is not a single figure but rather the convergence of several expressive factors (metre, rhythm, diction, semantics, syntax, etc.) that charges the text with expressiveness.

Another key concept of stylistics is the 'density' of a stylistic phenomenon, an aspect directly related to effect and perceptibility. It seems obvious, but it is perhaps useful to recall, that a stylistic figure, such as for instance alliteration (but the same will also apply to a prosodic phenomenon such as synaloepha), although rather common, can be stylistically relevant if repeated insistently in a passage or in a single verse.

A complementary concept is the 'rarity' of a stylistic phenomenon. A telling example is hyperbaton, a ubiquitous figure in poetry, which can nevertheless be expressive, especially in its boldest forms, as in vertical hyperbata (discussed in Stephen Harrison's contribution), or when it concerns very compact syntagms,

**23** Such as, for instance, the pseudo-Theocritean *Syrinx*. For a collection and analysis of this type of visual poetry see Luz 2010.

**24** Cf. e.g. Soubiran 1966 (elision in Latin poetry), Ott 1973–1985 (metrical repertory on Virgil's poetry), De Neubourg 1986 (*métrique verbale* of hexametric poetry), and Ceccarelli 2008 (diachronic analysis of Latin hexameter).

**25** Cf., for instance, Ps.-Long., *De subl.* 20, on the cumulative force of two or more stylistic figures.

**26** On this aspect of stylistics see among others Riffaterre 1959, 173, who speaks of 'convergence', noting the cumulative effect the stylistic figures of a passage. In Latin stylistics, see Marouzeau 1946², 339–340 ('conjonction des procédés') and especially Conte 2007, 99.

such as in the case of the hyperbaton which exceptionally splits the phrase *noctes diesque* (this is the only example in all classical Latin poetry) at *Aen.* 9.488 (discussed in Paolo Dainotti's contribution), translating the character's emotion into an exceptional form of expression.

We have spoken so far of stylistic effects and the perceptibility of a figure. These concepts involve a great absentee, the ancient reader, a reader profoundly different from us, with a different cultural background, a different repertoire of texts and even a different perception of emotions. This last aspect cannot be neglected, since in the last years many important advances have been made in the so-called field of 'history of emotions'.[27] In order to understand a figure in its stylistic effects, we must try to reconstruct as far as possible the linguistic and aesthetic sensibility of the ancient reader: it is indeed he or she, after all, not us, who is the 'implied reader' of ancient poetry.[28]

From a methodological point of view, it is therefore not only correct but desirable to cite ancient theory to confirm a stylistic interpretation. In short, if Aristotle, Pseudo-Longinus, Quintilian or late antique commentators make an observation about the stylistic effect of a figure, they provide us with an important clue as to how that particular figure was perceived by readers in antiquity. It should also be noted that these manuals of rhetoric, compiled from the *obseruatio carminis*, namely the study of the technique of the great poets, also exerted their undoubted influence on the poets themselves, who, especially from the imperial age onwards, were trained in the same schools as the rhetoricians.

But in a work on style it is also right to propose stylistic interpretations which are unknown to ancient theory, especially if they are already part of the set of knowledge shared by our community of readers. An emblematic example is the expressive use of synaloepha, an aspect that, as far as we know, is not found in ancient commentaries[29] but which we now take for granted in our studies. Jean Soubiran's book, *L'Élision dans la poésie latine* of 1966, a classic on the subject, devotes a large section to the stylistic interpretation of synaloepha, exerting a great influence on later criticism. A few decades earlier, in 1903,[30] however,

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**27** For an introduction to this topic see Plamper 2015.

**28** I am here clearly alluding to Iser' s seminal book (1974) and the reader's response criticism.

**29** It is indicative that the probably most famous textbook example of expressive synaloepha, namely *Aen.* 3.658 *monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum*, where the series of synaloephas translates 'a soul full of horror' at the sight of Polyphemus (Winbolt 1903, 180) or the monstrosity of the Cyclops (Müller 1861, 279; Soubiran 1966, 637), is not discussed by either Servius or Tiberius Claudius Donatus.

**30** In the same year Eduard Norden published the first edition of his monumental commentary on *Aeneid* 6, with an appendix on synaloepha (*Anhang* XI).

another seminal book, S.E. Winbolt's *Latin Hexameter Verse*, had already treated synaloepha with didactic clarity (it was, after all, a manual for Latin poetry composition) tracing its 'descriptive' uses.[31] Generations of distinguished classicists, especially in Great Britain, were trained on Winbolt's book,[32] with the inevitable consequence that many of his fine observations on the Latin hexameter found their way into the commentaries (especially on the *Aeneid*) published by Oxford and Cambridge. It is therefore right to take into account these critical acquisitions that are now part of the knowledge of our scholarly community, but *cum grano salis*, always remembering that when we advance hypotheses unsupported by ancient evidence we must feel the onus of proof even more, subjecting our interpretations to the scrutiny of our stylistic method.

Another aspect that should be taken into account is the relationship between style and emotions.[33] A stylistic figure, a form of emphatic expression, a convoluted or particularly daring syntactic construction is not an end in itself, but is presumably employed for a particular emotional function; it is an expressive vibration that translates into a form that is all the more daring and rare the stronger the emotion (and the identification with the facts narrated) of the writer.

If style is connected to emotions, those of the poet and those of the reader who identifies with and immerses themselves in the literary work, and if emotions are not just an ingredient but in some cases a constituent element of poetry (think of the *Aeneid*), then the function and importance of stylistics become evident: this hermeneutic discipline allows us to fully appreciate the text in all its expressive nuances, in all its 'deviations' that, as mentioned, are not ends in themselves, but rather the very form through which the poet's emotions are embodied and become communicable to the reader. Thus, stylistics serves as a hermeneutical tool for commentators, enabling them to explain the very reason why a particular form of expression is chosen over another. It appears clear that such profound understanding of the style of an author becomes an essential element also in textual criticism (as is evident in David Butterfield's chapter on Lucretius in this volume). In many cases, as is well known, textual corruptions arise from a trivialisation of an unexpected form or deviation from the norm, which is

**31** If we want to go further back, we can also cite Müller 1861 (a book known to Winbolt 1903, cf. e.g. 170), who devotes many pages (276–312) to synaloepha, also quoting (279) some examples of its expressive use in Virgil.

**32** And this cultural milieu also influenced Winbolt himself, if we consider that Page, who in his commentary to *Georgics*, dating back to 1898, offers some fine stylistic observations on expressive synaloepha (cf. *ad Georg*. 1.320), had contact with Winbolt and helped him in the revision of his book, as can be seen in Winbolt 1903, ix.

**33** For a first approach on this topic see now Hogan 2023, 577–594.

stylistically motivated but not recognised as such in its expressive value by the scribe. On this aspect the book by G.B. Conte, *Virgilian Parerga. Textual Criticism and Stylistic Analysis* (2021), offers a stimulating discussion by a philologist who, based on his experience as editor of the *Aeneid*, has demonstrated how stylistic criticism is not a negligible tool but rather a privileged device for textual criticism.

As already noted, a discussion on style cannot exclude allusion or intertextuality, that refined mechanism considered by many as a rhetorical figure, specifically metaphor (or even enallage).[34] Just as metaphor implies an effective comparison between a *comparans* and a *comparandum* on the ground of a *tertium comparationis*, so intertextuality implies the expressive, implicit juxtaposition of the text with its model which is recognised in the light of a common aspect. Intertextuality, being a figure of style, is not inert but serves a purpose, namely a stylistic effect on the reader (think of the title of the renowned book by Alessandro Barchiesi, *Homeric Effects in Vergil's Narrative*, 2015). However, intertextuality is linked to stylistics on another level as well. The *agnitio* of the model can also be triggered not, as usually, by evident verbal or thematic allusions but, in some cases, simply through the style itself (I would propose for this process the label of 'stylistic intertextuality' to highlight how it operates mainly at the level of style). In certain instances, a poet does not directly quote a specific passage from another poet but rather seeks to generically recreate his linguistic and expressive patina, to have their verses written in the manner of the model. Virgil, for example, does this in relation to Homer when, in passages that do not have a precise counterpart in the Homeric text, he employs forms of expressions that he perceives as 'Homericising', such as, for instance, syntactic coordination,[35] 'namelines'[36] or *hysteron proteron* (see Casali's contribution in this volume), to write *à la manière* of Homer; or when he evokes the atmosphere of Ennius' poetry by means of the triple alliteration at line-end[37] or the hypermetric verse.[38] The same is true obviously for other poets, such as the Flavian poets, who evidently seek to recreate Virgil's style, or for Terence, when he aims at giving the diction a Plautine patina (on this aspect see Giuseppe Pezzini's contribution in this volume).

It becomes evident that such a refined operation — in these cases it seems most appropriate to speak of 'art', more precisely 'allusive art' or 'art of reference'

**34** See, among others, Conte 2012, 171 and 179.

**35** See Conte 2018.

**36** i.e. lines wholly composed of proper names — see Knauer 1964, 48, n. 1.

**37** Austin 1963², on *Aen.* 4.29 with references.

**38** According to a judgement by Seneca reported by Gellius (*N.A.* 12.2.10), the hypermetre would be used by Virgil as an Ennian trait.

to quote the happy formulations by Giorgio Pasquali[39] and Richard Thomas[40] — requires the active collaboration of an educated reader, someone who has a deep familiarity with the texts to recognise their distinctive stylistic features. Stylistics once again constitutes a tool for modern readers to bridge, at least partially, the gap with the ancient reader and their reading competence, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the inherent complexity in the mechanisms of Latin poetry.

## 3 Contents

The texts in this book cover a wide arc of time from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD.[41] They sometimes discuss a specific poetic device, such as repetition (see Luigi Galasso's chapter), or focus on a stylistic feature of a particular author's work, such as paradox in Ovid and Statius (see Eleanora Tola's and Federica Bessone's texts) or a specific genre, like tragedy (see Gesine Manuwald's contribution). Our intention was not to produce a comprehensive work that covers all Latin poetry in antiquity, but rather to provide a broad sample of the most varied genres and periods within such poetry.

Gesine Manuwald addresses the issue of Republican Roman tragedy, which presents an initial methodological challenge: how can we describe the style of a tragic poet based on a limited number of fragments? The nature of the available material necessitates a cautious approach. Furthermore, many fragments have been transmitted by other authors, detached from their original contexts, and sometimes accompanied by unfavourable judgments regarding the ancient dramatists. Consequently, it is not uncommon to encounter descriptions of Ennius, Accius, and Pacuvius as rustic writers lacking artistic prowess. However, they were still considered exemplary in many respects and, as a result, were imitated. Tragedy is generally characterised as lofty, yet there are instances and testimonies indicating its utilisation of colloquial language. A significant characteristic observed in the fragments is the utilisation of sound figures, such as assonance, alliteration, and anaphora, which serve to emphasise passages of intense pathos.

Chiara Battistella also presents a contribution on Latin tragedy, but on the style of Seneca's tragic poetry, specifically focusing on his play *Medea*. The

**39** Pasquali 1942.
**40** Thomas 1986.
**41** This section is by Alexandre Pinheiro Hasegawa.

author argues that style serves as a powerful tool in shaping the ethos of the characters within Seneca's tragedies. Battistella's examination centres on the play's protagonist, exploring the distinct features of the tragic villain's language, what she calls 'the style of evil'. The author demonstrates how certain stylistic choices, such as hyperbaton, anaphora, and asyndeton, directly contribute to the destructive force of characterisation. Furthermore, Battistella stresses that Medea's ability to deliver speeches does not merely reflect her 'true' character; instead, she is depicted as capable of employing various styles of discourse, despite supposedly possessing the same *animus*.

Comedy is like the other face of tragedy and is here considered in a contribution by Giuseppe Pezzini, who discusses in particular the style of Terence. The aim of his text is not to be a systematic and complete study of Terence's style, but rather to offer some methodological guidelines for a more detailed study. According to him, the appreciation of Terence's language and style has been filtered through a biased perspective, above all the superimposed blueprint of Classical Latin (CL). In fact, some stylised archaisms (infinitive *-ier* or sigmatic subjunctive), for example, should not be considered as typical of Terence's style because CL authors and Plautus too occasionally use these stylised variants with the same purposes. However, Terence's language is more 'restrained' and 'standardised' than that of his comic tradition. A good example is that of diminutives, which Terence uses less frequently than Plautus: in Terence the diminutives are normally justified by semantic appropriateness, rather than by stylistic or phonic factors, as occurs in Plautus. Finally, he highlights a distinctive feature of Terence's style, that is, an elegant conversational patina, mimetic of real speech.

David Butterfield discusses some stylistic peculiarities of Lucretius' poem and the difficulties faced in editing the *DRN* for the Oxford Classical Text series. He addresses some problems in the areas of metrics, style, and language. In *DRN* 5.849, for example, we have a hypermetric hexameter, a unique example in the whole poem, which can only be scanned if it is elided with the beginning of the next verse. Is this a stylistic rarity in Lucretius or a corruption in the transmission of the text? Repetition is an important feature of Lucretius' poetic art, but repetitions also occur in manuscripts because of scribal error. At the very beginning of the poem we have *fera moenera* twice (1.29 and 32), two examples of the same phrase very close together. Is this deliberate repetition or accidental corruption of the text? Thus, one sees how style is a fundamental aspect for textual criticism, for establishing a text.

Luigi Galasso deals with some similar problems, discussing repetition, one of the main poetic characteristics, in Latin hexameter and elegiac poetry, from Ennius to Lucan. The author poses a series of methodological questions that we

must face when we deal with repetition. How is it possible to say that repetition has no rhetorical effect or no meaning at all? Galasso shows how some repetitions that were judged to be unmotivated, supposedly occasioned by corruption in the transmission of the text — because a given author could not repeat in such a way according to a modern taste — can be justified, for instance, by being imitations of Homer. The question, however, is not so simple, because it seems that we always have to explain any given passage. Therefore, Galasso concludes that our understanding of each author's style ultimately emerges as the crucial factor in dealing with these issues, which encompass the identification of possible textual corruptions.

Sergio Casali reviews the critique of the phenomenon of *hysteron proteron* in Virgil. In general, some critics view with suspicion and mistrust this stylistic resource that constitutes an archaising imitation of Homer. Indeed, some critics even deny its existence. Taking up the definition proposed by Luigi Battezzato — and comparing it with the interpretation given by T.E. Page — Casali considers several examples from Virgil's *Aeneid* in order to draw attention to two important factors: 1) many critics are unaware that the use of the *hysteron proteron* is an imitation of Homer; 2) in imitating Homer, what was a fact of Homeric language becomes a stylistic mark.

In a pair of essays, Marco Fernandelli deals with Catullus' poem 64, which had a major influence on the development of the Latin epos. In particular, he discusses the category of expressionism applied to Catullus' poem 64. First, he recalls some key aspects of historical expressionism (*mala tempora*, non-conformism and anti-traditionalism, criticism of naturalism, *synaesthesia*, subjectivism, etc.) to explain why it is possible to apply this category, in a metaphorical use, to Latin texts, as Antonio La Penna first did in 1963. According to Fernandelli, expressionism is a sign of both Romanity and Romanisation; it is therefore a specific characteristic of Latin poetry and in particular of the epic. Then, in the second paper, he turns his attention to the structure, themes, and style of Catullan epyllion to discuss this new trend of expressionist writing, which can be observed in both Virgil and Lucan, who had Catullus 64 as a model.

Paolo Dainotti provides an interpretation of Virgil's poetic technique as a 'pathetic technique', i.e. a *techne* essentially aimed at the reader's emotional response. The author, starting from the Aristotelian assumption that mimesis and pathos are two closely related elements, demonstrates how Virgilian *Pathetisierung* consists of a series of textual mechanisms that aim at effects of realism. This means creating the illusion of reality through *enargeia*, iconicity — especially in direct speeches — and expressionistic descriptions, in order to emotionally involve the reader by immersing him or her in the narrative. Dainotti also provides

a summary of the main pathetic themes and motifs (with the corresponding key words), and the stylistic figures Virgil employs to charge the text with pathetic expressiveness.

Damien Nelis discusses place-names in Virgil's *Georgics*, in particular passages in which we find them occurring in clusters. It is a relatively common feature in poetry to have lists of proper names, which are traditionally called 'catalogues'. Already in the second book of the *Iliad* we have the famous 'catalogue of the ships' and much of Hesiod's poetry has already been characterised as a list of names (Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.52). These casts of names have become a recurrent feature of didactic epic. Studies of such lists can take many forms, but Nelis concentrates on brief sections of the text in which many places are mentioned. In such groupings of place-names, it is sometimes difficult to decide whether Virgil uses them precisely or whether they vaguely evoke some unfamiliar locality. Starting with the first group (*Georg*. 1.56–59), right at the beginning of the poem and viewed as having programmatic force, he draws attention to the difficulty of understanding this feature of didactic epic and, in particular, of the numerous references to locations in the Roman empire in the *Georgics*. Finally, he suggests that such evocations of Roman spaces could be a response to Callimachus' poetic explorations in the *Aetia* when describing the Ptolemaic empire.

The two essays on Horace, both focusing on the *Odes*, deal with the placing of words in verse: the first discusses the vertical juxtaposition of words, a construction that sometimes works via alliteration, sometimes via rhyme, or via highlighting grammatical links or shared ideas. This characteristic was already briefly pointed out in Nisbet's piece on word order in Horace's *Odes*,[42] but is developed here by Stephen Harrison with an account of all the occurrences of this feature in the first book of the *Odes*. Alexandre Hasegawa's investigation firstly focuses on the recurrent separation of adjectives from their nouns, taking into account a word's place in the line. Next, he studies the postponement of the conjunction or the relative pronoun to the second position in subordinate clauses in order to convey how syntax reflects sense. Finally, he turns his attention to the position of words in the line. The paper offers a partial catalogue of syntactic expressiveness in Horace's *Odes*.

Finally, two contributions explore paradox as a fundamental device of the poet's style. The first, by Eleonora Tola, focuses on the Ovidian poems of exile, *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The second, by Federica Bessone, centres around Statius's *Thebaid*. Apart from the challenge of defining paradox in ancient literature, paradox proves to be an effective tool for studying style, as previously

**42** Nisbet 1999, 146.

observed in some contributions in the book edited by Philip Hardie, *Paradox and the Marvellous in Augustan Literature and Culture* (2009).

Eleonora Tola argues, through careful attention to the sonic aspects of alliteration, assonance, and rhyme, as well as to the positioning of words in the elegiac couplet, that Ovid employs paradox as a stylistic program to narrate the tensions involved in his exile. Firstly, paradox is manifested through lexical, semantic, and metrical fluctuations, compelling Ovid's readers to navigate back and forth in his works. Secondly, he uses paradox strategically to create ambiguity and protect his poetry in a potentially dangerous political landscape. This strategy of mischievous dissimulation blurs the boundaries between his true story and his (veiled) poetics, exploiting especially the tensions between the hexameter and pentameter in the elegiac couplet. By doing this, Ovid organises a deceptive poetics based on paradox as a key feature of stylistic consistency, despite the supposed dissolution of the poet.

After discussing some problems related to terms used to describe Statius' poetry, such as 'mannerism' and 'baroque', often employed to devalue the poetry of the Flavian period in relation to the Augustan, Federica Bessone argues that there is a poetics of paradox in Statius, already present in the Augustans, with, for example, the motif of *ego primus*, that is, the paradox of novelty as imitation. Thus, in rewriting the *Aeneid*, Statius explores the paradox as a programme in his own way. To describe the paradoxical style of Statius, present in all his works, Bessone proposes some categories, such as the investigation of figures (*schemata*). Here, for example, she explores, among others, the oxymoron, such as *dulces furias* (1.68) or *dulce nefas* (5.162). Finally, she uses the 'style of paradox' as a key to interpreting the episode of Capaneus, arguing that this sublime scene is also an exercise in paradoxical style.

If the proverb mentioned by Seneca (*Epist*. 114.1) and attributed to Socrates by Cicero (*Tusc*. 5.47) is true — *talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis uita* ('a man's speech is like his life') — let us hope that the life of this book will be fruitful and generate further discussion on the subject of style in Latin poetry. Many methodological problems in the analysis of the poets' style still deserve attention, as we pointed out above, and certainly further genres, works, and authors should be contemplated in future contributions: undoubtedly stylistic analysis remains alive and proves to be an important aspect for the understanding of Latin poetry.

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Gesine Manuwald

# Stylistic Features of Roman Republican Tragedy

**Abstract:** This contribution will look at a selection of fragments from all known Roman Republican tragic playwrights and aim to determine a description of the style of each writer as well as of this dramatic genre in general. As a result of the transmission situation little can be said about larger stylistic structures; thus, the study will focus primarily on aspects of word choice, use of particular forms and effects of word order. Despite the limited material available, some distinctive stylistic features of early Roman tragedy can be discovered.

## 1 Introduction

When one attempts to describe the stylistic features of Roman Republican tragedy, one is faced with the issue of the lacunose transmission (as in the case of many questions relating to the dramatic literature of this period); therefore, the approach to the analysis of style must be adjusted to the nature of the available material. That means that some aspects typically included in a study of dramatic style cannot be explored or only to a limited extent; consequently, any statements on frequency and trends must come with a substantial caveat.

Since the texts of Roman Republican tragedies survive in short fragments, it is almost impossible to identify and describe stylistic patterns extending beyond one or two lines. As most fragments are not assigned to a speaker or a specific section of a play, they provide only limited material on the question as to whether certain forms of expression might be linked to specific types of characters, individuals, or kinds of scenes. Also, because hardly any of the plays can be dated, there is not a sufficient basis for determining as to whether the style of a playwright changes over the course of their career. Further, the frequency of observable features has to be set in relation to the number and the length of lines preserved. This applies especially when one phenomenon seems to be more frequent in the works of one playwright than another; while tendencies might exist, it has to be borne in mind that the number of preserved fragments and the reasons for their survival vary.

This situation does not mean that one should not or could not explore the stylistic features of Roman Republican tragedy: in some areas details can be established, and even limited results lead to insights into the stylistic character of

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Roman Republican tragedy within the context of early Roman literature. What will be attempted here is an analysis of testimonia and fragments to identify aspects of the stylistic character of Roman Republican tragedy, drawing also on the views on the use of language inferred for the playwrights themselves and as emerging from later ancient authors commenting on the works of these dramatists. The survey will cover the period from the origin of the genre in Republican Rome in *c.* 240 BCE to the early first century BCE, concentrating on the five main playwrights known by name, Livius Andronicus (*c.* 280/270 – *c.* 200 BCE), Naevius (*c.* 280/260 – *c.* 200 BCE), Ennius (239–169 BCE), Pacuvius (*c.* 220 – *c.* 130 BCE), and Accius (170 – *c.* 80 BCE).[1] Cicero's characterisation of a song in Ennius' *Andromacha* as 'in content and words and rhythm mournful' (Cic. *Tusc.* 3.46 *et rebus et verbis et modis lugubre*) demonstrates the awareness that content, style/expression and rhythm/music combine to endow a section with a characteristic atmosphere[2] and that specific forms of language and style are therefore among the constitutive elements of tragedy.[3]

Later ancient authors often quote lines from the works of Republican writers because of 'archaic' words they contain; obviously, the playwrights of the Republican period use a version of early Latin. At the same time, unless occurrences of words or forms quoted are noted as peculiarities, these cannot be counted as distinctive stylistic features of a specific poet or genre since these words or forms have not been chosen for stylistic effect and instead are part of the standard language of the time.[4] Moreover, the first Roman playwrights could not build on an already established Latin literary language in general or a specific language for tragedy; instead, they contributed to developing a literary language on the basis

**1** For general information, testimonia, and bibliography on these tragic playwrights see the respective contributions by Suerbaum and Stärk in Suerbaum 2002; for the contents of individual pieces see Ribbeck 1875 (still useful in addition to modern commentaries and annotated editions); for overviews of Roman tragedy see Erasmo 2004; Boyle 2006.

**2** In modern terminology such a combination might be called 'convergence of expressive factors'. See the introduction to this volume.

**3** Passages not in spoken metres tend to be stylistically more elaborate. Still, since metre is a separate category to some extent, this aspect of the form of early Roman tragedy will not be considered here.

**4** In the works of the later Roman Republican tragic playwrights scholars have identified 'archaic' forms. As these poets will have continued a generic tradition established by the first Roman tragedians, it is plausible that they continued to use words and expressions becoming old-fashioned; identifying these linguistic peculiarities precisely in relation to the standards of their own time is difficult owing to the limited availability of comparative material.

of the contemporary language in use through the composition of their plays;[5] once certain features had been introduced, these could be identified by later representatives of the same genre as generic and therefore taken up, whereby they became recognisable and typical generic characteristics.[6] Across all preserved dramatic fragments one can observe that tragedy (*fabula crepidata*) tends to employ a more elevated language than comedy (*fabula palliata*) of the same period, so that there are fewer short and incomplete sentences, phrasal expressions, and colloquial words.[7] In fact, each literary genre in ancient Rome seems to have been associated with a generic style,[8] so that stylistic differences can be observed between works of different literary genres within the output of a single author. Thus, as most of the early Roman writers produced pieces in more than one literary genre, the evidence provided by fragments from works other than tragedies can provide a foil to what can be deduced from the tragic fragments.[9]

Accordingly, this study will look at a selection of phenomena in early Roman tragedy for which there is sufficient evidence to identify them and that, at least to a certain extent, can be deemed to be the result of deliberate decisions for certain options rather than of using generally available expressions and the language of the period.[10] These features include elements underlining the expected solemn character of tragedy, such as occurrences of alliteration, asyndeton, *figura etymologica*, synonyms, marked word order, specific terminology, different sentence length, paraphrase, and metaphor. Since this study is concerned with the style of a literary genre within a circumscribed period rather than with that of

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**5** Risicato (1966², *passim*) surveys how Ennius' literary output includes elements of both spoken and literary language and explores the links of this combination with the development of a Roman poetic language at the time.

**6** This aspect is highlighted by Lennartz 2003, who stresses that the Latin tragic language aimed for a highly wrought style from the start and incorporated elements from existing specialist discourses.

**7** For considerations on how to describe and define literary and colloquial styles for 'dead' languages see Happ 1967.

**8** Such distinctions are implied by Horace in an overview of the main topics and metres of different literary genres and the conclusion that poets are expected to observe these (Hor. *Ars* 86–87: *descriptas servare vices operumque colores / cur ego si nequeo ignoroque poeta salutor?*).

**9** To keep the study focused, it will look at Greek-style Roman tragedy on mythical subjects (*fabula crepidata*) and not include the fragments of Roman historical drama (*fabula praetexta*). While historical drama is equally distinguished from the comic genres by a more elevated style and the associated features, it forms a separate dramatic genre displaying, naturally, a higher percentage of Rome-specific vocabulary.

**10** Cancik (1978, 338) argues that differences in vocabulary, syntax, and style can still be observed between the different sections in Roman tragedies.

individual writers, it will be arranged according to phenomena rather than by playwrights, while characteristics of specific playwrights will be noted where relevant.[11] Moreover, this overview is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all examples of a given phenomenon;[12] instead, it aims to indicate which features can be recognised in the fragments and, where possible, to explore how they are used and what the effects on audiences might be.[13]

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**11** Cf. Stärk in Suerbaum 2002, 152–153: 'An die Stelle eines tragischen Gehalts tritt als auffälligste Erscheinung ein gemeinsamer tragischer Stil. Der Römer habe, erklärt Horaz, einen tragischen Atem. Er neige von Natur zu Erhabenheit und Pathos (T.1) [i.e. Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.161–7]. Dies schlägt sich zuerst in der Sprache nieder. Die rhetorisch-pathetische Ausdrucksweise verbindet die römischen Tragiker und trennt sie von der klassischen Tragödie'. {In the place of a tragic plot a common tragic style emerges as the most notable phenomenon. The Roman has, Horace explains, a tragic spirit. He inclines naturally to sublimity and pathos (text 1, i.e. Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.161–167). This is immediately expressed in language. A rhetorical-pathetic mode of expression unites the Roman tragedians and separates them from classical tragedy}

**12** Summaries of selected stylistic features and descriptions of the style of individual playwrights exist (for overviews of key features of the style of Roman Republican tragedy see e.g. Ribbeck 1875, 642–646; Cancik 1978, 338–341; on the style of Roman Republican tragedies with regard to their being 'translations' of Greek plays see Traina 1970; for a discussion of linguistic characteristics of Ennius' tragedies see Untermann 1972; for a summary of stylistic features of Pacuvius' plays see Schierl 2006, 30–34; on the style of Accius' tragedies see Casaceli 1976; D'Antò 1980, 33–46; Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1980, esp. 91–144; Dangel 1995, 57–68); these tend to be compilations of material rather than attempts at characterising the stylistic outlook of the literary genre and its impact on recipients (a brief summary of stylistic features in Manuwald 2011, 325–330). In the context of 'style' the focus will be on the usage and arrangement of words in a sentence rather than on word formation. Thus, for instance, the well-known propensity of at least later Roman Republican tragedians to create elaborate compounds, including abstract nouns, or the relative high number of *hapax legomena* (partly as a result of the nature of the transmission) will not be discussed (for examples of the use of compounds see e.g. Wills 1996, 441, 446; on the use of abstract expressions in early Roman comedy see Molsberger 1989, 174–205; on features of the language and style of early Roman dramatic poetry see Haffter 1934; on the connection between specific linguistic forms and the communicative function of language see De Rosalia 1983 [1985]).

**13** Fragments from Roman Republican tragedy will be quoted with the numbering of the editions of both O. Ribbeck (R.[2] [1871] / R.[3] [1897]) and E.H. Warmington (W. [1936]) as well that of *Tragicorum Romanorum Fragmenta* (*TrRF* [2012]) where that exists. Fragments whose transmission is corrupt or for which readings are disputed have been excluded from this study since it does not aim to give a comprehensive overview of potential instances of certain phenomena and rather to establish tendencies by means of a selection of clear examples. That means that the texts of the reference editions will generally be accepted and that textual discussions will be kept to a minimum.

## 2 Playwrights' reflections on language

That it is not inappropriate to look at early Roman tragedy from the point of view of style and language is confirmed by some tragic fragments including comments on the quality and character of language and its effect. Irrespective of the original context, such excerpts show that playwrights (and audiences) knew that speech may be manipulated and that the effect may depend on the type of speech.

The most obvious example is the description of speech (*oratio*) as mind-bending and powerful in one of Pacuvius' plays; the fact that the line is transmitted as an address to *oratio* might suggest a reaction by one of the characters to a display of eloquence or in anticipation of it (Pac. *Trag.* 177 R.$^{2-3}$ = 187 W. *o flexanima atque omnium regina rerum oratio*). Similarly, another fragment (where the reading is uncertain) indicates that prolixity of speech may influence the interlocutor (Pac. *Trag.* 124 R.$^{2-3}$ *oro: minime flectas fandi me prolixitudine* = 129 W. *oro, nive plectas fandi mi prolixitudinem*). Fragments from Ennius' tragedies demonstrate the perception of different types of speech, when an utterance is qualified as harsh (Enn. *Trag.* 265 R.$^{2-3}$ = 316 W. = F 110 *TrRF quam tibi ex ore orationem duriter dictis dedit*), and of the fact that it is not only the quality of the speech and the argument, but also the standing of the speaker that might influence its effect when speech is related to social status (Enn. *Trag.* 165–7 R.$^{2-3}$ = 206–8 W. = F 73 *TrRF haec tu etsi perverse dices, facile Achivos flexeris; / nam cum opulenti locuntur pariter atque ignobiles, / eadem dicta eademque oratio aequa non aeque valet*). A fragment of Accius shows an awareness of the fact that language can be employed purposefully and potentially deceitfully (Acc. *Trag.* 414 R.$^{2-3}$ = 405 W. *nisi ut astu ingenium lingua laudem et dictis lactem lenibus*). That one of Pacuvius' plays includes a riddle and the comment that this is not an open expression displays a high level of knowledge and artistry in the manipulation of language and the expectation that such thought experiments will be enjoyed by at least part of the audience (Cic. *Div.* 2.133 [Pac. *Trag.* 1–3, 6–7 R.$^{2-3}$ = 4–6, 9–10 W.] *Pacuvianus Amphio: 'quadrupes tardigrada agrestis humilis aspera / capite brevi, cervice anguina, aspectu truci, / eviscerata inanima cum animali sono.' cum dixisset obscurius, tum Attici respondent: 'non intelligimus, nisi si aperte dixeris.' at ille uno verbo: 'testudo'. non poteras hoc igitur a principio, citharista, dicere?*). In addition, Accius engaged with literature and specifically drama in his theoretical works *Didascalica* and *Pragmatica*: a fragment from the former again indicates familiarity with the concept of different types of speaking and the potential unreliability of speech (Acc. *Did.* 9–10 W. = 7–8 D. *ut dum brevitatem velint consequi verborum / aliter ac sit relatum redhostiant responsum*). If such a sophisticated use of language is

thematised by playwrights, it is likely that they employed it in a correspondingly reflective way when composing tragedies.

Because the early Roman playwrights based their dramas in Latin on Greek precedents and they all seem to have spoken more than one language (e.g. on Ennius see Gell. *NA* 17.17.1; Suet. *Gramm.* 1.2), they must have been familiar with the existence of different languages and the opportunities and constraints of each. Beyond reproducing specific Greek terms by Graecisms or by developing equivalent Latin expressions (as Cicero and Lucretius later also did),[14] these differences are voiced in some of the tragic fragments.[15] Pacuvius, for instance, has one character identify another as 'Greek-born' on the basis of their way of speaking (Pac. *Trag.* 364 R.$^{2-3}$ = *Trag. inc.* 14 W. *Graiugena; de istoc aperit ipsa oratio*). In another fragment by the same author a character contrasts the term *caelum* for 'sky', used by 'our people', with the Greek term *aether* (Pac. *Trag.* 90 R.$^{2-3}$ = 111 W. *id quod nostri caelum memorant, Grai perhibent aethera*).[16] Cicero, who transmits this line, comments on the perspective applied as being out of step with the dramatic scenario; for, within the context of the play a Greek person is speaking and, although they are speaking Latin, the audience is meant to assume that they are speaking in Greek (Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.91). Cicero rightly observes that the remark of the Pacuvian character breaks the dramatic illusion. That the playwright chooses to do so to enable a discussion on natural philosophy might indicate a readiness to reflect on properties of languages and the use of terminology in that area; it is in line with the prominence of philosophical discussions (and the corresponding language) at least in the tragedies of the later Republican playwrights.[17]

A similar framework, though within a single language, appears from a passage in one of Accius' tragedies (*Myrmidones*), where the speaker, possibly

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**14** On Graecisms in Accius (even more frequent in works other than tragedy) see e.g. Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1980, 93–109; Dangel 1995, 61–62.

**15** The explicit interaction with Greek material is different from the application of grammatical conventions for treating Greek words, where there seems to have been a development towards staying closer to Greek forms (Varro *L.* 10.70 *Accius haec in tragoediis largius a prisca consuetudine movere coepit et ad formas Graecas verborum magis revocare, a quo Valerius ait: 'Accius Hectorem nollet facere, Hectora mallet.'*).

**16** Similar statements appear in Ennius' epic *Annales*, where, however, they do not disrupt the narrative situation to the same extent (Enn. *Ann.* 147–148, 218–219 V.$^{2}$ = 151–152, 229–239 W. = 139–140, 211–212 Sk.).

**17** Pacuvius uses words that the quoting lexicographers define as 'Oscan', such as *ungulus* (instead of *anulus*, 'ring': Pac. *Trag.* 64, 215 R.$^{2-3}$ = 59, 224 W.). In this case there are no comments on the words in the fragments as transmitted; they are used like genuinely Latin words. Thus, they seem to have been incorporated as loanwords and not to have been regarded as requiring comment.

Achilles, agrees to be characterised by *pervicacia* ('steadfastness'), but not by *pertinacia* ('stubbornness'), with the two words also in alliteration and assonance and juxtaposed in a structure parallel in form and contrasting in sense (Acc. *Trag.* 4–9 R.$^{2-3}$ = 452–7 W. *tu pertinaciam esse, Antiloche, hanc praedicas, / ego pervicaciam aio et ea me uti volo; / nam pervicacem dici me esse et vincere / perfacile patior, pertinace nihil moror. / haec fortis sequitur, illam indocti possident. / tu addis quod vitio est, demis quod laudi datur*). Such definitions and distinctions of terms may reflect contemporary scholarly discussions.

When Roman and Greek terms are juxtaposed, the interaction between the two cultures and the role of language in this context become obvious. Frequently and without reflection or comment, Roman political or religious terminology is applied to describe activities or situations of Greek characters (e.g. Enn. *Trag.* 219–21 R.$^{2-3}$ = 266–8 W. = F 90 *TrRF*; Pac. *Trag.* 80–2 R.$^{2-3}$ = 101–3 W.; Acc. *Trag.* 119–21, 357–65 R.$^{2-3}$ = 83–5, 351–9 W.). The chosen wording is probably felt to be equivalent to the concept in Greek, to have been used to make it more comprehensible to Roman audiences and thus not to require discussion. In a number of cases this adjustment of terminology is not merely a linguistic element and, moreover, introduces terms linked to Roman values; thus, it enhances a play's expression of a Roman perspective relevant to contemporary audiences, for instance, when characters talk about supporting the *res publica* (e.g. Enn. *Trag.* 219–21 R.$^{2-3}$ = 266–8 W. = F 90 *TrRF*; Acc. *Trag.* 357–8 R.$^{2-3}$ = 351–2 W.). A comprehensible and accessible Roman setting as shown in the terminology seems to be more important than a consistent stylistic format reflecting the original Greek environment.

The structure of some of the longer fragments is in line with principles of rhetorical argument, and some extracts can be described as set speeches in dramatic speaking contests (e.g. Enn. *Trag.* 205–13 R.$^{2-3}$ = 253–61 W. = F 89 *TrRF*; Pac. *Trag. inc.* 366–75 R.$^{2-3}$ = 37–46 W.; *Trag. inc.* 49–54, Acc. *Trag.* 205–13 R.$^{2-3}$ = Acc. *Trag.* 103–8, 169–77 W.). The surviving instances are probably not isolated examples: for instance, Accius was allegedly asked why he did not plead in the Forum although his tragedies included forceful speeches (Quint. *Inst.* 5.13.43); thus, rhetorical showpieces in the plays are likely to have been a notable feature. And when the author of the *Rhetoric to Herennius* mentions Ennius next to the orator C. Sempronius Gracchus as a source for examples, the poetic texts must have been deemed to have a rhetorical quality (*Rhet. Her.* 4.2; cf. also Cic. *De or.* 1.154).[18]

**18** At the same time Cicero says about another tragic writer, C. Titius, that he employed the same features that he used in his speeches also in his tragedies, where they seemed 'scarcely tragic': Cic. *Brut.* 167 *eiusdem fere temporis fuit eques Romanus C. Titius, qui meo iudicio eo pervenisse videtur quo potuit fere Latinus orator sine Graecis litteris et sine multo usu pervenire. huius*

Along with the influence of Greek tragedy, a reflection of and engagement with contemporary oratory, developing at Rome since before the production of the first literary plays, is not surprising, as is also the case, for instance, for the prologues of Terence's comedies.[19]

## 3 Views on early tragic style by later ancient authors

In view of the limited amount of material available from the Republican playwrights, both for assessing the general stylistic shape of early Roman tragedy and for identifying specific features, comments by later ancient authors acquire more importance. If these are not descriptions of phenomena and rather assessments, they need to be treated with the appropriate caution, as these later authors speak from the perspective of their own times.

In summary, later ancient writers know that Roman dramas are based on Greek precedents, but they still assess them as works in their own right.[20] They agree that the Republican playwrights belong to an early phase of Roman literature and that therefore the language and the style of their works are different from what is common in their own times; they differ as to whether they therefore praise the playwrights as pioneers or describe their style as rough and obsolete. Ovid, for instance, characterises Ennius as lacking in art (Ov. *Am.* 1.15.19–20; *Tr.* 2.423–424).[21] Others criticise the artificial, overblown, and old-fashioned language especially of Pacuvius and Accius (e.g. Pers. 1.76–78; Mart. 11.90.5–6; Tac. *Dial.* 20.5; 21.7). Cicero, however, has an interlocutor in one of his dialogues claim that Ennius had already always found the most appropriate way of expression (Cic. *De or.* 1.154).

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*orationes tantum argutiarum tantum exemplorum tantum urbanitatis habent, ut paene Attico stilo scriptae esse videantur. easdem argutias in tragoedias satis ille quidem acute sed parum tragice transtulit. quem studebat imitari L. Afranius poeta, homo perargutus, in fabulis quidem etiam, ut scitis, disertus*. Such an assessment suggests that not all rhetorical features were regarded as fully appropriate in tragedy.

**19** For a list of standard rhetorical features identifiable in Roman Republican tragedy see Ribbeck 1875, 643–644.

**20** For Cicero's comments on 'translation' with respect to early Roman drama see Cic. *Fin.* 1.4–7; *Ac.* 1.10; *Opt. gen.* 18.

**21** Similarly, Horace observes a lack of elegance with regard to Ennius' use of metre (Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.54; *Ars* 258–262).

Most later authors, even if they do not approve of the results, since the poetic works of the early writers are not as polished as the products of their own time, appreciate the poetic talent of these playwrights and their achievements as early representatives of the genre within their own time: a speaker in Macrobius acknowledges that it is unfair to regard the early poets as rough just because their style is less polished, because that was the accepted style of their period and it took a long time for people to get used to a more refined version (Macrob. *Sat.* 6.3.9 *nemo ex hoc viles putet veteres poetas, quod versus eorum scabri nobis videntur. ille enim stilus Enniani seculi auribus solus placebat: et diu laboravit aetas secuta, ut magis huic molliore filo adquiesceretur*), and Quintilian notes that any lack of polish is due to their times rather than to the poets themselves (Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.97).

Comments by writers in other literary genre closest in time to the original production of the tragedies are those by the comic playwright Plautus (*c.* 250–184 BCE) and the satirist Lucilius (*c.* 180 – *c.* 102 BCE). Lucilius parodies and mocks the use of unusual words and the extensive descriptions of protagonists in dire plights (Lucil. 597–8, 599–600, 650, 653 M. = 729–30, 727–8, 675, 665 W.; cf. Gell. *NA* 17.21.49). Plautus too imitates overblown descriptions with ridicule.[22] The underlying view of tragic style becomes especially obvious in a scene in Plautus' *Pseudolus*: when the words of the eponymous slave imitate tragic language in an exaggerated and highly stylised fashion (Plaut. *Pseud.* 703–706), another character comments *ut paratragoedat carnufex!* (Plaut. *Pseud.* 707), thus identifying them as paratragedy and inappropriate in the context.[23]

When these (near-)contemporary writers criticise an exuberant and perhaps overblown use of language in tragedies, this must be a noticeable generic characteristic, while the negative assessment is due to the satiric and mocking perspective. Still, that tragedy uses more elevated language is probably a true impression; it is observed by other authors too, particularly for the last two playwrights Pacuvius and Accius (Gell. *NA* 6.14.6).[24]

Beyond generic features, it is noted, especially by Cicero, that at least the later three tragic playwrights, Ennius, Pacuvius and Accius, are characterised by different styles of writing, and Cicero adds that they are therefore liked by

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**22** For allusions to tragedy in Plautus see e.g. Plaut. *Cas.* 759–762; *Pers.* 11–12; 712–713; *Pseud.* 771–772: Pac. *Trag.* 20$^{a-b}$ R.$^{2-3}$ = 13–14 W.; Plaut. *Amph.* 232–233: Pac. *Trag.* 223 R.$^{2-3}$ = 264 W.; *Amph.* 1062: Pac. *Trag.* 336 R.$^{2-3}$ = 365 W.

**23** In this scene the combination of a comic plot and language in tragic style is highlighted as incongruous. Elsewhere, in the play *Amphitruo*, Plautus fuses elements of comedy and tragedy to create a 'tragicomedy' (Plaut. *Amph.* 50–63) and thus mixes typical characteristics of comedy and features reminiscent of tragedy for a different effect.

**24** Cf. e.g. Beare 1964$^3$, 71, 78; Stärk in Suerbaum 2002, 161 (on Accius).

different people, while the works of each of them are praiseworthy each in their own way (Cic. *De or.* 3.27; *Orat.* 36; cf. Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.55–59, Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.97; Fronto, *Ep. ad Ant.* 1.2 [133.11–134.1 van den Hout]). Although in view of the available evidence it is not easy to verify and specify these fairly broad characterisations, they suggest an increasing complexity, learnedness, and sententiousness in style towards the later Republican period.

Beyond that, Cicero does not comment on specific styles linked to individual characters or character types in the plays; yet he notes that the style may change within the writings of a single author, depending on context, so that even tragic style may approach colloquial language (Cic. *Orat.* 109).[25] Vice versa, other authors remark that comedy may include elements of tragic style, regarded as more or less appropriate (Hor. *Ars* 93–98; Gell. *NA* 2.23.21 [Caec. *Com.* 169–72 R.$^{2-3}$ = 163–166 W.]). These comments confirm that the styles of these two dramatic genres were seen as distinct, with tragic style viewed as operating on a higher level, but that each style was not restricted to its genre.

With respect to Pacuvius, Cicero on one occasion describes him as the supreme tragic poet (Cic. *Opt. gen.* 2 *summum ... poetam ... Pacuvium tragicum*) and elsewhere reports that his verses were regarded as 'ornate and elaborate' (Cic. *Orat.* 36); on yet another occasion he notes that Pacuvius (and the contemporary comic playwright Caecilius) spoke bad Latin (Cic. *Brut.* 258). These statements are probably not contradictory and rather reveal a distinction between the construction of a drama, style, and language: i.e., Cicero recognises that Pacuvius creates impressive and effective dramas and produces sophisticated lines, while he is aware that the verses are written in a stylised unnatural language, not agreeing with the pure Latin spoken by educated individuals of the period.

If there is variety between playwrights and potentially even within a single play, generalisations about style beyond broad tendencies on the basis of scattered fragments become even more problematic. Still, it is clear that a sophisticated and elevated use of language in tragedy was obvious already in antiquity.

## 4 Stylistic features

Some of the observations of later ancient writers can be confirmed from the evidence of the fragments. As is well known, typical stylistic features of early Latin are based on sound effects (e.g. alliteration, assonance), stylistic figures linked

**25** On Cicero's views on language of Republican drama see also Manuwald 2022.

to choice and arrangement of words (e.g. etymological jingles, anaphora, anadiplosis, tricolon, repetition, enumeration, climax, asyndeton, polysyndeton, sequences of short sentences, other types of artificial word order), or effects based on meaning and sense (e.g. antithesis, zeugma, metonymy, literal interpretation of common phrases, pun), often emphasised by a balanced distribution of correspondences over lines or parts of lines. Most phenomena of this kind can be identified in the space of short extracts.[26]

## 4.1 Sound effects

One of the most frequent stylistic sound features of early Roman drama is alliteration.[27] While for some instances of what are technically alliterations there might not be any design since they are accidental as a result of the use of common words, some seem to be intended to convey a sense of an elevated atmosphere and to highlight certain concepts. The intentional use is plausible especially when alliterations occur in connection with other stylistically marked forms of expression; this is frequently the case and applies, for instance, to versions of *figura etymologica* (Naev. *Trag.* 38/35 R.$^{2-3}$ = 49 W. = F 21 *TrRF ne ille mei feri ingeni atque animi acrem acrimoniam*),[28] double expressions (Enn. *Trag.* 4–5 R.$^{2-3}$ = 14–15 W. = F 5 *TrRF quo nunc incerta re atque inorata gradum / regredere conare?*; *Trag.* 338 R.$^{2-3}$ = 22 W. = 162 *TrRF Salmacida spolia sine sudore et sanguine* [with emphatic and pathetic repetition of *s*]), asyndeton (Acc. *Trag.* 592 R.$^{2-3}$ = 595 W. *egredere exi ecfer te, elimina urbe* [including a list of near-synonyms for emphasis and expressiveness]), combinations of (near-)synonyms (e.g. Naev. *Trag.* 4/3 R.$^{2-3}$ = 3 W. = F 11 *TrRF formam et faciem virginis*)[29] or expressions of contrast (Naev. *Trag.* 18/1 R.$^{2-3}$ = 19 W. *ne mihi gerere morem videar lingua verum lingula*; Pac. *Trag.* 85 R.$^{2-3}$ = 106 W. *magis audiendum quam auscultandum censeo*) or chiasmus (Pac. *Trag.* 143–5 R.$^{2-3}$ =

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**26** Sounds effects include onomatopoetic descriptions, for instance of waves (Pac. *Trag.* 417 R.$^{2-3}$ = *Trag. inc.* 6 W.; Acc. *Trag.* 569–73 R.$^{2-3}$ = 573–7 W.), noises on ships (Pac. *Trag.* 335–6 R.$^{2-3}$ = 363–5 W.), thunderstorm (Acc. *Trag.* 223–5 R.$^{2-3}$ = 183–185 W.), storm and shipwreck (Pac. *Trag.* 333–4 R.$^{2-3}$ = 361–2 W.), or rain (Enn. *Trag.* 2–3 R.$^{2-3}$ = 16–17 W. = F 2 *TrRF*).

**27** For a discussion of the range of definitions applied to 'alliteration' see Traina 1999, 11–17, 75–76 with n. 82, for a historical overview and different types see Leumann et al. 1972$^{2}$, II, 700–704.

**28** For examples of *figura etymologica* in tragedy see Wills 1996, 244. They are particularly frequent in Ennius' tragedies as well as in Plautus' comedies, in Greek tragedy and in Latin formal language (Jocelyn 1967, 173); hence, this stylistic feature is not limited to tragedy.

**29** On expressions involving asyndeton and accumulation of synonyms see Timpanaro 1988; Dangel 1994 (with further references).

138–40 W. *quid quod iam, ei mihi, / piget paternum nomen, maternum pudet / profari?*; Acc. *Trag.* 560 R.$^{2-3}$ = 568 W. *Phrygiam miti more esse, animo immani Graeciam*).[30] In many cases these stylistic features lead to more expressive, emphatic, and pathetic descriptions of strong feelings, extreme situations or sharp contrasts.

## 4.2 Organisation and repetition of words

A development of such sound figures is a structure involving the repetition of words or parts of words to emphasise certain concepts.[31] In some cases this feature underlines the focus on a specific idea, such as *ira* in a line from Naevius (Naev. *Trag.* 39/36 R.$^{2-3}$ = 48 W. = F 33 *TrRF cave sis tuam contendas iram contra cum ira Liberi*) or the relationship between *amici* and *hostes* (with double repetition) respectively in a verse from Accius (Acc. *Trag.* 132 R.$^{2-3}$ = 253 W. *qui neque amico amicus umquam gravis neque hosti hostis fuit*). In Ennius' famous statement *amicus certus in re incerta cernitur* the repetition emphasises the importance of certainty (Enn. *Trag.* 388 R.$^{2-3}$ = 216 W. = F 166 *TrRF*), or in *arce et urbe orba sum* (in a combination of words with similar sound and often connected in Latin literature) there is a stress on complete bereavement (Enn. *Trag.* 77 R.$^{2-3}$ = 97 W. = F 23 *TrRF*; similarly Enn. *Trag.* 81 R.$^{2-3}$ = 101 W. = F 23 *TrRF o pater o patria o Priami domus*), or a line from Naevius has an emphasis on the quality of *laus* (Naev. *Trag.* 17/15 R.$^{2-3}$ = 17 W. = F 14 *TrRF laetus sum laudari me abs te, pater, a laudato viro*). The repetition of similar words can emphasise contrasts (sometimes highlighted by contrastive asyndeton), most obviously in the phrase from Accius *virtuti sis par, dispar fortunis patris* (Acc. *Trag.* 156 R.$^{2-3}$ = 123 W.), or the relationship between different concepts (e.g. Acc. *Trag.* 296 R.$^{2-3}$ = 274 W. *sapimus animo, fruimur anima; sine animo anima est debilis*; *Trag.* 308 R.$^{2-3}$ = 295 W. *ut nunc, cum animatus iero, satis armatus sum*; *Trag.* 619–20 R.$^{2-3}$ = 625–6 W. *nam si a me regnum Fortuna atque opes / eripere quivit, at virtutem non quiit*; *Trag.* 621–2 R.$^{2-3}$ = 627–8 W. *nam is demum miser est, cuius nobilitas miserias nobilitat*).

List of synonyms or near-synonyms highlight the main idea and express the respective concept more emphatically (Naev. *Trag.* 46/43 R.$^{2-3}$ = 39 W. = F 40 *TrRF pallis patagiis crocotis malacis mortualibus*; Pac. *Trag.* 301 R.$^{2-3}$ = 328 W. *metus*

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**30** Similar observations apply to cases of homoioteleuton (e.g. Pac. *Trag.* 274–5 R.$^{2-3}$ = 299–300 W. *corpusque meum tali / maerore aegrore macore senet*; *Trag.* 365 R.$^{2-3}$ = *Trag. inc.* 21 W. *solatur auxiliatur hortaturque me*).

**31** On such features see e.g. Wills 1996, 192–193, 207, 457–458.

*egestas maeror senium exiliumque et senectus*; Acc. *Trag.* 468 R.$^{2–3}$ = 472 W. *vim ferociam animum atrocitatem iram acrimoniam*).

## 4.3 Expression of action and emotion vs background

How feelings or changes from one emotion to another were developed or demonstrated on stage cannot be inferred from the fragments, but the linguistic presentation of feelings in some of the fragments by means of elaborate descriptions points to an emphatic foregrounding of such situations for heightened impact. This effect may be achieved, for instance, by repetition and alliteration (e.g. Acc. *Trag.* 60–61 R.$^{2–3}$ = 26–7 W. *ut me depositum immerentem nuntio repentino alacrem / reddidisti atque excitasti ex luctu in laetitudinem*), by exclamations with an accumulation of terms (e.g. Acc. *Trag.* 80–80$^{a}$ R.$^{2–3}$ = 39–40 W. *o dirum hostificumque diem, o / vim torvam aspecti atque horribilem*), by a series of short sentences, producing a staccato effect and often including interjections or imperatives (e.g. Liv. Andr. 20–22 R.$^{2–3}$ = *Trag.* 20–22 W. = F 14 *TrRF da mihi / hasce opes quas peto, quas precor! porrige, / opitula!*; Pac. *Trag.* 202 R.$^{2–3}$ = 211 W. *age asta; mane audi! itera dum eadem istaec mihi*; 342 W. *te repudio nec recipio; naturam abdico; facesse!*; Acc. *Trag.* 191 R.$^{2–3}$ = 155 W. *ah! dubito! ah! quid agis? cave ne in turbam te inplices*; 304 R.$^{2–3}$ = 289 W. *age age amolire! amitte! cave vestem attigas!*)[32] or by a series of questions to express pathos (cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 4.2.4) and uncertainty (e.g. Enn. *Trag.* 75–7 R.$^{2–3}$ = 95–7 W. = F 23 *TrRF quid petam praesidia aut exequar, quove nunc / auxilio exili aut fuga freta sim? / arce et urbe orba sim. quo accidam, quo applicem*; 231–2 R.$^{2–3}$ = 284–5 W. = *Inc.* F 25 *TrRF quo nunc me vortam? quod iter incipiam ingredi? / domum paternamne anne ad Peliae filias?*; Acc. *Trag.* 231–2 R.$^{2–3}$ = 194–5 W. *egone Argivum imperium attingam ut Pelopia digner domo? / quo me ostendam? quod templum adeam? quem ore funesto adloquar?*).[33] The fact that feelings are often put into words suggests that performances are not relying only on the actor's expression of them or that these passages function as implicit stage directions, so that the stylistic shape of the utterances contributes to dramatic effectiveness.

At the other end of the spectrum there might be 'epic' descriptions by one speaker of a situation or scenery, for instance the approach of the Argo from the perspective of a shepherd who has not seen a ship before or the sketch of Philoctetes' abode in Accius, presumably to characterise the respective speakers and to

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**32** On the use of interjections in Accius see Casaceli 1976, 86–87.

**33** On this trope of the 'rhetoric of desperation' see Fowler 1987.

create a surprise effect for audiences (Acc. *Trag.* 391–406, 525–36; *Trag. inc.* 71–2 R.[2–3] = 381–96, 527–40 W.).

## 4.4 Effects based on meaning (paraphrase, metaphor, sententia)

A number of the surviving fragments have a sententious quality. While this impression may be enhanced by them being quoted as meaningful extracts of one or two lines, the fact that these kinds of excerpts are possible suggests that a certain tendency to phrase statements as memorable self-contained expressions was inherent in the complete plays, so that they could be extracted from those (cf. *Rhet. Her.* 4.7). These sententious statements include comments on maxims of conduct, moral guidelines, considerations on the impact of behaviour and the role of fortune, the effect of emotions and circumstances on conduct or the impact of divine activity (e.g. Enn. *Trag.* 388, 240 R.[2–3] = 216, 271 W. = F 166, 90 *TrRF*; Pac. *Trag.* 268–9, 279/80 R.[2–3] = 294–5, 304 W.; Acc. *Trag.* 109–10, 154–154[a], 159, 31, 422–3, 621–2 R.[2–3] = 68–9, 120–1, 126, 246, 411–2, 627–8 W.).

A style favouring sententious statements might be the result of a tendency towards elaborate phrasing, which also comes to the fore in the use of metaphor and paraphrase. A simple example is the occurrence of metonymy, in the sense of using names of gods for the areas they represent (e.g. Liv. Andr. *Trag.* 30 R.[2–3] = 31 W. = F 21 *TrRF*; Pac. *Trag.* 291 R.[2–3] = 314 W.; Acc. *Trag.* 321 R.[2–3] = 312 W.), a feature of poetry since Homer (e.g. *Il.* 2.426). More specific examples are instances such as ‘the floods of war’ to illustrate a great and turbulent war (e.g. Acc. *Trag.* 608 R.[2–3] = 609 W. *belli fluctus*).

Elaborate phrasing appears as complex paraphrases instead of simple words, when, for instance, dolphins are described as ‘the herd of Nereus’, along with various descriptive adjectives (Liv. Andr. *Trag.* 5–6 R.[2–3] = 5–6 W. = F 6 *TrRF tum autem lascivum Nerei simum pecus / ludens ad cantum classem lustratur*; Pac. *Trag.* 408 R.[2–3] = 352 W. *Nerei repandirostrum incurvicervicum pecus*),[34] or when both bodyguards and a naturally grown wood are indicated by descriptions rather than the use of brief words (Naev. *Trag.* 24–6/21–3 R.[2–3] = 27–9 W. = F 34 *TrRF vos qui regalis corporis custodias / agitatis, ite actutum in frundiferos locos /*

34 The compounds in this line were criticised by Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.5.67 *ceterum etiam ex praepositione et duobus vocabulis dure videtur struxisse Pacuvius: ‘Nerei repandirostrum incurvicervicum pecus’*). Cf. also what seems to be a parody in Lucilius: Lucil. 212 M. = 235 W. *lascivire pecus Nerei rostrique repandum.*

*ingenio arbusta ubi nata sunt non obsitu*). Such mannerist phrasing indicates the aim of poets to display poetic virtuosity.

## 5 Conclusion

While the extant material for Roman Republican tragedy does not reveal anything about the stylistic texture of such plays in their entirety, surviving lines and comments by other authors demonstrate stylistic features on a smaller scale. Some of these may have been adopted from the underlying Greek models; others, in line with the properties of the Latin language and also observable elsewhere in Roman literature, might have been emphasised or developed by the early playwrights.

Stylistic differences from other literary genres indicate that from the beginning playwrights conceived of tragedy as a separate literary genre with associated typical stylistic features. It was received as such by later ancient authors, who also observed characteristic tendencies for individual playwrights. Generally, tragedy is regarded as and can be shown to be using a more elevated and exaggerated language than, for instance, contemporary comedy, although there can also be sections approaching colloquial language; thus, a range of different styles may be represented in tragedy, some influenced by the technical discourse of other contemporary forms of speech (such as the languages of religion, law, the military, or politics). Naturally, Republican tragedy is written in the language of the period, which later came to be seen as archaic, old-fashioned, obsolete, and somewhat basic. Still, a number of sophisticated stylistic features, often based on sound effects (such as alliteration), accumulation of synonyms, or repetition of words for emphasis or contrast, can be observed in the transmitted fragments; often several of such features can be found in a single passage, especially if an aspect of the content or the emotional atmosphere of a passage is to be highlighted.

Accordingly, it is obvious that, despite the low regard for the style of early Roman tragedy in some quarters in certain later periods, the first playwrights established a generic style that influenced subsequent writers and prompted engagement with it. Therefore, it is worth exploring the language and style of the pioneers as an element of Roman literary history.

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Giuseppe Pezzini

# The Classical Style of Terence

**Abstract:** This piece argues that Terence's style is the foundation of classical Latin style, in contrast with the more evidently colourful and archaising style of Plautus, and should not simply be classified as 'archaic'. In early Latin, tonal and generic diversity are already more important than mere chronology in determining style. Lexically, Terence's language is highly classical and perceived as such in antiquity.

Terence's style was picked out already in antiquity, with contemporary detractors lambasting his *tenui … oratione et scriptura leui* (cf. *Ph.* 5), and a famous late Republican admirer praising (with some reservations) his *lenibus scriptis* and *purus sermo* (Caesar in Suetonius *Poet.* 11) — in a probable allusion to *Hau.* 45–46 *lenis est … pura oratio*. These apparently contrasting views are predicated on the same assessment about the 'elegance' and 'restraint' of Terence's diction, which is widespread in ancient sources (cf. Cicero in Suet. *Poet.* 11 *sedatis motibus*, Cic. *Att.* 7.3.10 *elegantiam sermonis*, Quint. 10.1.99 *Terenti scripta … elegantissima*; also Cic. *Brut.* 258, referring to the *locutionem emendatam* of Laelius and Scipio, i.e. Terence's supposed ghost-writers, and Gell. *NA* 6.14.6, reporting Varro's description of Terence's style as a model for the *genus mediocre*). This assessment was heavily influential, also because Suetonius' biographical excerpt was prefixed to Donatus' authoritative commentary (Wessner 1902, 1.3–10); it swayed Terence's general reception for centuries, explaining his long-standing status as a benchmark for correct, elegant Latin;[1] it is still widely popular nowadays, normally framed within a traditional contrast with Plautus' stylistic 'exuberance'.[2] This assessment has some foundation, but it can be misleading, especially in so

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**1** See Monda 2015, 109–111 (late antiquity) and Hardin 2007, 801–804 (Renaissance), quoting e.g. Sambuco in n. 54, *sit quamuis elegans, purus, et politus Terentius: Plautum tamen vere comicum esse dicemus.*

**2** Cf. Barsby 1999, 19–20. For previous discussions of Terence's language and style see esp. the concise overviews of Barsby 1999, 19–27, and Karakasis 2019 (with a useful bibliographical overview); also Palmer 1954, 74–94; Haffter 1969, 90–94 (and *passim*); Wright 1974, 127–151; Maltby 1976; Müller 1997; 2007; Bagordo 2001; Karakasis 2005; 2014; Vincent 2013; Barrios-Lech 2016.

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far as it risks blurring different layers and concepts (language, diction, register), and especially because it reduces Terence's style to a monolithic entity — which is patently not the case, as we will see. The aim of this short essay is not to provide a systematic and comprehensive overview of Terence's style but rather to offer some propaedeutic, methodological guidelines for attempting it, avoiding the rocks of simplifications and generalisations. These guidelines may also be applied to the stylistic study of other authors. In doing so, I will also present what I believe to be some key features of Terence's style, which makes him stand out from other mid-Republican authors, and Plautus in particular, with the ultimate aim to give a taste of the sophistication and originality of his stylistic project.

## 1 Overcoming the CL bias

It is difficult for the modern reader to have a fair appreciation of Terence's language and style, given the complexity of the variables involved. First, the situation is confused by problems of transmission, with extensive standardisation in manuscripts of Terence and other authors, which blur the picture at all levels of language, from orthography to syntax, from morphology to word order. In addition, there is the influence of long-standing biases, especially including the superimposed blueprint of classical Latin (CL) — an artificial variety, mainly based on a small selection of authors and texts dating from the late-Republican and early Imperial time (the 'classical period'). This partly began to be codified in antiquity, but is in fact mainly an invention of modern grammars.

The CL bias can operate in different ways, at different levels. For instance, there can be features in Terence that may look unfamiliar to the reader of CL texts, but are in fact well-attested also in late Republican authors. A patent case is that of orthographical features normally associated with early Latin (such as the diphthong *ei* for *ī* or the spelling *quo-* for *-cu*) which were in fact probably still common in Cicero's times (see Adams 2024). Another example is the phonotactic (rather than grammatical) alternation *quis/qui*: as in Plautus, before a word beginning in *s-* the standard form of the interrogative pronoun in Terence is *qui* (cf. *An.* 586 *qui siem*, *Eun.* 374, *Hec.* 571, 573, *Ad.* 177). In contrast, before a vowel or another consonant the form is *quis* (cf. *Hau.* 296, 517, 743); there are some exceptions, but only with forms of *esse* (*Eun.* 659 *nescio / qui fuerit*, *Ph.* 354, 356, *Ad.* 723). This prosodic distinction has often been described as an early Latin feature, but is in fact traceable also in CL texts (Löfstedt 1956, 84 n.1), despite the prescriptions of modern Latin grammars (Löfstedt 1956, 2.82–96, Adams 2016 on *Mil.* 426).

Another problem concerns the stylistic value of a given feature. There are many stylistic or linguistic features in Terence that may look peculiar to the modern CL reader, but are in fact well attested in the classical period, although only or mainly in lower-register texts and contexts (such as Cicero's letters, Pompeian inscriptions or Petronius). In most cases it is probably safe to construe them as conversational and/or low-register (see below § 6), but there are many caveats. In fact, in several cases one cannot rule out the possibility that the pattern was stylistically neutral in Terence and developed a low-register and/or conversational stylisation only in CL. I can exemplify this sort of problem with the case of the ablative form *qui*.

This is an old form of the ablative of the pronoun *quis*/*qui* (= CL *quo, qua*), originally an instrumental; it is used in Plautus and Terence as a relative (cf. *Hau.* 777–778 *argentum ... qui ... compararet*), interrogative (cf. *Hau.* 178 *quicum loquitur*) or indefinite (cf. *Ad.* 521 *siqui potis est rectius*). As especially shown by this last pattern, *qui* has often an adverbial force in comedy and a related tendency/ potential to fossilise as an adverb. This is also visible in its use as an indefinite reinforcing particle (= Gk. πως; cf. *Hau.* 701 *qui nolo mentiare*, *An.* 148–149 *ut qui se filiam neget daturum*; see OLD *qui* 6) and especially as an undeclined instrumental relative ('whereby'; cf. *An.* 511–512 *multa concurrunt simul* / *qui coniecturam ... facio*, *Hec.* 554–555), a use which is also found in CL. Quasi-adverbial *qui* is well attested in early Latin sources (e.g. Enn. *Trag.* 182 J. *ferrum qui me anima priuem*, 287 J. *qui illum di ... mactassint*, Acc. 418 R. *qui potis est refelli*; six examples of the undeclined instrumental in Cato's *Agr.*, cf. Adams 2016, 67) but in fact also survives in CL, but with a stylisation: it is common in Cicero in specific contexts (especially with *posse*; cf. Powell 1988, 106–107) and clusters in low-register texts (e.g. Cat. 24.7, 67.47, Horace's satires and epistles, Augustus' letters; see Adams 2016, 194–195). As a fossilised instrumental it is also found in substandard sources as late as the Vindolanda Tablets (2.234 *qui feramus tempestates*), which confirms that it was retained longer in speech than its rarity in CL high-literary sources might suggest. In sum, there is nothing stylistically unusual about ablative *qui*, despite CL biases.

Another complication is that it is often difficult to decide whether the apparently low-register nature of a given feature merely depends on the conversational nature of Terence's comic diction, and is thus stylistically neutral in the context, or it is rather used by Terence with a stylistic effect, for characterisation or other purposes. This problem, however, deserves a dedicated discussion, in the next section.

## 2 Neutral vs marked

Another important factor to consider is the distinction between neutral and marked features. In Terence there are in fact (a) stylistic features that are evenly widespread across his plays, and could be considered as being 'neutral' markers, characteristic of his literary style as a whole (for the concept cf. Adams and Mayer 1999, 3–4). More often, however, one finds (b) stylistic features that are restricted to particular contexts, characters, or registers and thus appear to be used in a 'marked or stylised' manner (for the concept cf. Chahoud 2023, 372).

For instance, in Terence we still find quite a few 'archaic' forms, including the genitive *-ai* (= CL *-ae*) and the genitive plural *-um* (= CL *-orum*); the passive infinitive *-ier*; the subjunctive *siem, sies, siet*; the sigmatic subjunctive (e.g. *faxint*) and future (e.g. *faxo*); the subjunctive of the type *duint*; the future *-ibo*(*r*) for verbs in *-ire*; the imperative *face*, and a few others. All these forms however are uncommon or rare in Terence, and coexist with corresponding CL forms, which are in fact much more common — often with a frequency higher than 7 vs. 1 (see nn. and figures in de Melo 2023, 101–112). Moreover, these old forms tend to appear in specific contexts, including especially at line-end. To give one example, in Terence there are 29 cases of the old infinitive *-ier* (vs. > 160 of *-i*), mainly with verbs of the first conjugation (24), and almost always found at the end of the line or half-line (exceptions at *An.* 500, *Ad.* 535), which is a favoured place for archaic or unusual forms (cf. Palmer 1954, 89; de Melo 2007, 226; Questa 2007, 31, 50–53, 80). Clearly, this is a stylised form, used by Terence as a metrical variant, providing a useful ending for an iambic line, and not distinctive of his style as a whole.

Other forms also appear in other metrical positions, but they cluster in the speech of particular characters. A good example is the old, inherited form *-um* of the genitive plural of the second declension (cf. Leumann 1977, 428; Meiser 2006, 134). This was replaced by the innovatory *-orum*, attested as early as the 3rd c. BC (cf. *duonoro* [=*bonorum*] in *CIL* 12.9), but was retained in fossilised formulae and compounds (e.g. *deum atque hominum fidem, in liberum loco, centuria fabrum, triumuirum*), in expressions of money, weight, and measure (e.g. *sestertium, nummum*), and as a poetic stylised variant (cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.704 *magnanimum ... equorum*). Cicero (*Orat.* 155–156) and Varro (*L.* 8.71, 9.85) state that in their time these forms were still standard in formulas but unusual in other contexts. In extant mid-Republican sources there are a few occurrences of the old genitive (e.g. Enn. *Var.* 70 V. *liberum*; cf. Courtney 1999, 31), but most of them are already restricted to the special contexts mentioned above or to high-style registers (cf. *socium* in the *Consultum de Bacchanalibus* [*CIL* 12.581], paralleled by the mock-heroic *nostrum socium* at *Men.* 134; see Gratwick 1993, 151 and cf. also the

fictional legal context of Plautus *Bacc.* 878 *tu aurum rogato; ceterum uerbum* [= *uerborum*] *sat est*). It is thus likely that these genitives had at the time of Terence the same archaising status they have in classical Latin, especially in non-formulaic contexts. In Terence, there are six occurrences of the genitive *-um*, six of which are of the formulaic genitive *deum* (e.g. *Hau.* 61 *pro deum atque hominum fidem*); the other three instances are all found in the prologue of *Heautontimorumenos* (24 *amicum*, 27 *iniquom* ... *aequom*), and are probably to be construed as stylistically marked, adding a (mock) old-fashioned patina to the old actor's diction.

Finally, there are stylistic features that are used by different characters, and in different metrical positions, but which are clearly stylised as high-register. A good example is the archaic sigmatic subjunctive (e.g. *faxint*), which is relatively common in Plautus (106 instances of 34 different verbs) but much less productive and more stylised in Terence (12 examples of only 4 verbs). Sigmatic subjunctives are more frequent in subordinate clauses (89 out of 106 instances in Plautus, 10 out of 12 in Terence), and in main clauses they have an even stronger stylistic value. This is patently the case of the two occurrences in Terence (*Hau.* 161, *Hec.* 354), both found in the fossilised auspicious formula *utinam* ... *di faxint*, already attested in Plautus (e.g. *Amph.* 632; cf. also *Aul.* 50 *utinam me diui adaxint*), and indeed also occasionally preserved in classical and late Latin, in the elliptic form *di faxint* (Cic. *Ver.* 2.3.8, *Mur.* 84 *di faxint ut* ..., *Fam.* 14.3.3, *Att.* 15.29.1, 16.1.5, *Hist. Aug. Alb.* 13.10, *Hist. Aug. Diad.* 7.7).

These three patterns (infinitive *-ier*, genitive *-um*, sigmatic subjunctive) and other similar stylised archaisms should not be considered as typical of Terence's style, but rather as secondary variants, used and as markers of high register, or because of their stylistic effect and/or metrical convenience in a particular context. They are normally also found in other Latin authors, both in drama and other genres, both contemporary and late Republican, and beyond. In fact, in this respect Terence's style does not significantly differ from that of CL authors, who occasionally use stylised variants of this kind with the same purposes (as seen above). All these stylised variants are also found in Plautus (apparently Terence's main model for Latin comic diction), who, however, normally uses them with greater frequency and relatively more freedom. This leads to the next section.

## 3 Comic and mid-Republican vs. Terentian

As mentioned, Terence displays a more restrained use of stylised archaisms than other contemporary authors (and Plautus in particular). This can be considered as a first important feature of Terence's *Kunstsprache*: Terence's language is more

'restrained' and 'standardised' than that of his contemporaries, avoiding or restricting variant forms that were probably perceived as non-standard (and thus stylised). Apart from the avoidance of archaisms, this effort at standardisation can be traced in morphology and word formation. For instance, Terence altogether avoids old variants such as the ablative in *-d* or the genitives *mis*, *tis*, (cf. Questa 2007, 62–84), in contrast with Plautus.

To illustrate this further, I can focus on the case of forms of the verb *aio*. As in early Latin, the third-person *ait* is also standard and unmarked in texts of the classical period (e.g. 209 occurrences in Cicero [38 in letters] and 10 in Petronius vs. 256 [25 in letters] and 6 occurrences of *dicit* respectively), with only some exceptions (including e.g. Caesar, who avoids all forms of *ait*). In contrast, other forms of this verb are less common and more marked (e.g. in Cic. *ais* 82 occurrences vs. 208 *dicis*; *aio* 7 occurrences vs. 398 *dico*; *aiunt* 128 vs. 421 *dicunt*; all three avoided by Petronius, except a single example of *aiunt*); their stylisation eventually becomes old-fashioned by the late empire, but is probably low-register in the late Republic, as suggested by Cicero's usage, who in his letters uses forms of *aio* (excluding *ait*) more frequently than equivalent forms of *dicere* (101 vs. 95), but avoids them in other texts (c. 205 vs. > 900). In contrast all these forms are common in Terence and Plautus (c. 90 occurrences in Terence [including 45 *ais*], 230 in Plautus vs. 72 and 230 of *dicere*; cf. 172 *aiunt*, 221 *ait*, 242 *ain*, 924 *aiebas*, 960 *aibas*, etc.); however, Terence is more restricted as regards morphological and prosodic variety, avoiding the subjunctive *aias* (*Rud.* 427, 1331) and the long forms *āis* and *āīn*, as well as limiting the use of the first person *aio* (only at *Eun.* 252, vs. 23 occurrences in Plautus) and the imperfect *ai*(*e*)*b*-. In this case Terence's avoidance of stylised optional variants is not related to his restriction of archaism: in mid-Republican Latin *aio* is clearly avoided by authors such as Cato (only 3 occurrences vs. 45 of *dicere*) or Ennius (only 2 occurrences vs. 18 of *dicere*) and this suggests a low-register stylisation as in CL.

A similar restriction can be traced in word-formation: optional variants of equivalent semantic items are generally avoided by Terence, in contrast with Plautus, with only a few exceptions (e.g. *Hau.* 414 *abitu* vs. 190 *abitio*, *Hau.* 90 *uociuom* vs. *An.* 706 *uacuom*). Normally the word form used by Terence is also the one later established in CL (a rare exception is *Hau.* 870 *cautim* vs. *caute*). In some cases, Terence appears to standardise morphology even more than CL authors: this is the case for instance of the syncopated form of the 1st conjugation past infinitive (cf. *Hau.* 23 *adplicasse*, *An.* 796 *habitasse*, etc.), which Terence seems to standardise, in contrast with Plautus, who uses the two forms (13 *-asse* vs. 11 *-auisse*), as some CL authors also do (e.g. 34 *-asse* vs. 7 *-auisse* in Caes.; for syncopated forms in Latin literary language cf. Coleman 1999, 39–40).

The standardisation of Terence's style can be related to a more general restriction, in both frequency and use, of a series of stylistic markers that appear to be typical of Plautine, comic, and/or mid-Republican poetic diction in general. A good example is that of diminutives, which Terence uses (115 occurrences of 44 different words) significantly less frequently than Plautus (512 occurrences of 214 words). Moreover, in Terence diminutives are normally justified by semantic appropriateness (cf. Minarini 1987, 83–101), rather than by stylistic or phonic factors, as is instead typical in Plautus. For instance, in *Heautontimorumenos* there are 26 diminutive forms, of 12 different words, most of which (15) are used in association with the 'goody' love pair Clinia-Antiphila, as if to direct the affection of the poet (and the audience) towards them. In almost all these cases the diminutive is found alone, in a context that is not phonically marked; finally, most of *Hau.*'s diminutives are also well-attested in CL — all in sharp contrast with Plautus. Other marked lexical items restricted by Terence include oaths (1360 occurrences in Plautus vs. 185 in Terence); explicit or graphic terms (cf. the obscene root *scort-*, used in Terence in only 4 cases [*Hau.* 206, *Eun.* 424, *Ad.* 102, 965] vs. 50 cases in Plautus); terms of abuse, which Terence uses in a more restrained manner than Plautus, as regards frequency, variety (254 different forms in Plautus, 76 in Terence), and clustering (figures and discussion in Lilja 1965; cf. also Barsby 1999, 21, noting the exceptional frequency of insults in the 'Plautine-like' *Eunuchus*); Graecisms, generally avoided by Terence (in sharp contrast with Plautus), and concentrated in the speech of low characters (discussion and figures in Maltby 1985).

Another typically Plautine pattern restricted by Terence is the rare intensified form, especially of verbs. This can be intensified by a suffix, as in the case of iterative verbs, which are common in Plautus (excluding the high-frequency *rogito*, more than 150 occurrences of c. 40 different verbs, including many *hapax legomena* such as *lutito, pinsito, placito, tonsitor*, etc.), whereas Terence is much more restrained (only c. 35 occurrences of only c. 15 verbs, of which the only *hapax legomenon* is *locito* at *Ad.* 949). More often, intensified verbs feature the addition of a prefix (a 'perseverazione prefissale' {prefixal perseveration}, according to Traina 1999, 83 n. 151): this is a pattern which is used lavishly by Plautus, normally in contexts with a strong phonic charge, to which they contribute (e.g. *Asin.* 702 *sic isti solent superbi subdomari*, *Most.* 143 *in pectus permanauit, permadefecit*; Antonio La Penna (1990, 66) referred to this particular type of alliteration as 'apprefissazione'). Plautus' fondness for this type of word formation is also shown by the number of such verbs that are only attested in his corpus (>75 examples; e.g. *consuadere*, *conuadare, conlutulentare*, *egurgitare*, *emussitare*, *exputescere*, etc.). This pattern was probably perceived as a standard feature of

comedy, as suggested by its frequency in the *fabula togata* (Minarini 1997) and other genres influenced by the *fabula palliata* (e.g. Lucil. 640–1W. [682–3M.] *depoclassere aliqua sperans me ac deargentassere, | decalauticare, eburno speculo despeculassere*). In contrast with this stylistic tradition, Terence's use of intensified, expressive forms is more restrained: in *Heautontimorumenos*, for instance, there are fewer than 20 forms of this kind, of which only 7 are first attestations (141 *conrasi*, 258 *conlocupletasti*, 370 *perspicax*, 762 *demulceam*, 806 *deambulatio*, 813 *excarnufices*, 838 *adposcunt*) and 2 are *hapax legomena* (471 *subsensi*, 473 *consussurant*).

The same came be said for a few other patterns of word-formation, which are distinctively common in Plautus, but rare in Terence; a good example is the suffix -*osus* (cf. 227 *sumptuosa*), which is much more frequent in Plautus (c. 160 occurrences of 60 different words) and mid-Republican Latin in general (see Pezzini 2023, 243), but is more restricted in Terence (32 occurrences of 15 different words).

Terence's restraint in the use of intensified and similar forms can also be related to another general trait of his style, which distinguishes him from Plautus and other mid-Republican authors, namely the avoidance of neologism. In Plautus one finds more than 800 words that are not attested in CL, including c. 335 *hapax legomena* (an average of 40 and 17 per play respectively); these figures should be related to Plautus' general fondness for humorous coinage (e.g. *Bacc.* 596 *dentifrangibula*, *Trin.* 171 *turpilucricupidum*), often featuring irregular patterns of word formation (*ferriterium*, *oculissimus*, *odiosicus*), as well as for intense sound patterns (see Traina 1999) and/or expressive lexicon (especially prefixal) in general (see above); in contrast, in Terence *Hau.* there only 25 such examples, or c. 45 also including only Terentian words used more than once (e.g. *Ph.* 82, 144 *citharistria*) and Terentian words only reappearing as revivals in archaising and/or late authors (e.g. 373 *screatus*, elsewhere only attested in a passage of Ambrose probably modelled on Terence, on which see Pezzini 2016, 20, 28–29); most of these are standard CL terms with a regular pattern of word formation (see Pezzini 2023).

There is one pattern of neologism, however, which seems not only to be accepted, but even favoured by Terence. This is the use of high-register abstract words, which is higher than in Plautus and mid-Republican Latin in general (see Mikkola 1964), and which may be related to (and indeed contribute to) the philosophical touches frequent in Terence's comedies. To focus on three patterns only, in Terence there are c. 130 different lemmata with one of the abstract suffixes -*tas*, -*tia*, or -*tio*, whereas in Plautus the figure is c. 225. Given the different size of the corpus, this means that in Terence there is almost double the amount of different abstract words. However, abstract words in Terence do not seem to be

evenly distributed, but rather gather in the speech of particular characters. I will discuss this in the next section.

# 4 Meaningful stylisation and linguistic characterisation

Terence's overall linguistic restraint is complemented by a restriction of stylistic markers to particular contexts and characters, and thereby a greater stylisation in their use. This can be considered another important feature of Terence's style, which distinguishes it from that of Plautus and other contemporary authors. To illustrate this, I will discuss in this section evidence from one of his plays in particular, the *Heautontimorumenos*, and start by focusing on the use of abstract words. In this play there are more than 25 different abstract words (cf. *Hau.* 56 *uicinitas*, 111 *pauperiem*, 307 *desiderium*, 566 *contumelia*, 646 *stultitiae*, 668 *infortunium*, 814 *proteruitas*, 962 *praesentia*, 963 *longitudinem*, 974 *amentia*, etc.), including several first attestations (13 *facundia*, 25 *arbitrium*, *existumatio*, 53 *notitia*, 184 *familiaritas*, 648 *facilitas*, 782 *simulatio*, 887 *calliditates*, 973 *prauitas*, 987 *delectatio*), which are only found in Terence before the 1st c. BC and were possibly added to Latin (literary) language by him. Most of these (17) are found in the speech of old characters, and especially the prologue speaker (3) and the *senex* Chremes (13), who are characterised in the play by a distinctively high-style diction, as appropriate, respectively, to their rhetorical persona and pompous, philosophising attitude (which may well be referred to in Horace *Ars* 94 *iratusque Chremes tumido delitigat ore*, on which see Brink 1971, ad loc. and 174–175; cf. also *Ars* 114–118 with Brink 1971, ad loc. and 190–192).

In fact, in *Hau.* the speech of old characters hosts many stylised markers, which it would be incorrect to associate with Terence's style as a whole. Apart from the already mentioned archaisms (see above § 2), I can refer to a series of high-register morphological or syntactic patterns, such as the future imperative (221 *facito*); the double negative (18 *non negat*); the double genitive (29 *nouarum ... spectandi copiam*); the supine of purpose (117 *militatum abiit*) and the supine in general (645 *natu grauior*), and the old optative use of the future (463 *sic me di amabunt*). All these are used by *senes*, and all should be considered as stylised markers, belonging to a particular (high) register.

In some cases, the nature of a high-register feature can be identified with more precision. There are a few features for instances that can be associated with the legal register, including the relative clause with repetition of the antecedent in

polyptoton (20–21 *exemplum quo exemplo*), jussive clauses with *ut* (79 *rectumst ego ut faciam, non est te ut deterream*), and individual words (570 *censeas*, 623 *edictum*, 626 *edicere*, 974 *ilicet*). Again, all of these are used by old characters, with a meaningful stylistic purpose (this is clearly the case for instance of Sostrata's legalistic exchange with Chremes at lines 623–667). Another register which is found in the play is the sacral one, especially including formulaic oaths (61–62 *pro deum atque hominum fidem*, 160 *utinam ita di faxint*, 308 *ita me di ament* (7 occurrences), 502 *di uostram fidem*, 592 *quantum … di dant*, 1030 *ita … sis superstes*, 1038 *di … prohibeant*). Again, the majority of these are found in the speech of old characters, and especially Chremes. Two exceptions are the more standard *ita me di ament*, also used by Clitipho and Bacchis (but still prominent in Chremes' speech, with 4 occurrences) and *quantum … di dant* (in a flattering addressing by the slave Syrus to Chremes).

Another important register which is used in a similar 'controlled' way in *Hau.* is that of rhetoric. *Prima facie* there are indeed plenty of rhetoric *figurae* in *Hau.*, including polyptoton (20–21 *exemplum, exemplo*, 49–50 *maxumum … maxume*, 58–60 *facit … facere*, 59–60 *tuam … tua*, 595 *egi egisti*); *figura etymologica* (27 *iniquom … aequom*); epiphora (28–29 *copiam … copiam*); hyperbaton (55 *rei … quicquam*); chiasmus (24 *amicum ingenio … natura sua*, 25 *arbitrium uostrum, uostra existumatio*); pleonasm and repetition (423 *augescit magis*, 870 *ut uti*); *asyndeton bimembre* (142 *ancillas, seruos*, 404 *disperii, perii*, 473–474 *consussurant / conferunt*, 643 *melius peius, prosit obsit*), and other stylised patterns of word order and coordination (cf. 430 *ualet atque uiuit*), including tricolon, whether asyndetic (252 *ancillas, aurum*, *uestem*, 592 *seruas castigas* mones, 877 *caudex stipes asinus plumbeus*) or polysyndetic (244 *audio … et uideo et ualeo*).

One might be tempted to refer to all these *figurae* to argue that Terence had a distinctive high-register, rhetorical style. This would be incorrect. In fact, these are not found in Terence's *Kunstsprache* in a uniformed way, but are rather mainly confined to Chremes' long-winded speeches (53–74, 470–490), or Menedemus' tirades (420–425), and especially the prologue's *oratio* (1–52) — a fictional plea, exhibiting signs of a formal rhetorical structure. There are only a few cases where *figurae* are used by other characters, and in most of these one can trace a distinctive stylistic effect, including in particular that of the Plautine mannerism. This is another important trait of Terence's style, which deserves a dedicated discussion.

## 5 Plautine mannerism

Most of the patterns and *figurae* listed in the previous section belong to different registers (rhetoric, legal, etc.) but should also be associated more broadly with mid-Republican poetic diction, and Plautine *Kunstsprache* specifically, which indeed appropriated many features from the rhetorical register and often overlapped with it (see on this Barsby 2007). A typical case in this respect is that of sound patterns, which are also occasionally found in *Heautontimorumenos*: these include homeoteleuton (28–29 *crescendi* … *spectandi*, 870 *cautim* … *paulatim*); homeoarcton (565 *indigne iniuriam*, 952 *deridiculo ac delectamento*); alliteration (25–26 *uostrum, uostra, ualebit, uos*, 53 *nos nuper notitia*, 56 *uel uirtus* … *uel uicinitas*, 57 *propinqua parte* … *puto*, 968 *uictus uestitus*). Sound patterns of this kind are distinctively common in Plautine style, and more generally appear to be a feature of Roman stylised diction, shared by rhetoric, poetry, law, and liturgy. In Plautus they usually occur within accumulative lists, usually asyndetic, and often feature the use of intensified, prefixed verbs, usually *hapax legomena* or first attestations. There are a few instances of intense sound patterns of this kind in *Heautontimorumenos* but they occur in particular contexts, where they normally evoke Plautine diction and situations (on this kind of 'stylistic intertextuality' see the Introduction to this volume). To illustrate this better I can focus on a short passage, *Hau.* 470–475:

> per alium quemuis ut des, falli te sinas
> techinis per seruolum; etsi subsensi id quoque,
> illos ibi esse, id agere inter se clanculum.
> Syrus cum illo uostro consusurrant, conferunt
> consilia ad adulescentes; et tibi perdere
> talentum hoc pacto satius est quam illo minam.

This is a crucial, plot-changing point of the play, in which the old man Chremes suggests that his neighbour Menedemus communicate with his son obliquely and by proxy (470 *per alium*), as he himself in fact does with his son (cf. *Hau.* 219 *per alium ostendit suam sententiam*). The passage is strongly meta-theatrical and allusive, and pivots on the evocation and (mis)application of a traditional (i.e. Plautine) comic plot, featuring Menedemus in the self-inflected role of the *senex* duped by his slave, who has devised a cunning trick to help the *adulescens* in love. The momentousness of the scene is appropriately highlighted on the formal level by a heavy stylisation, which is both (ironically) solemn and comically allusive, with many features typical of Plautine style, including Graecisms (417 *techinis*); intensified verbs (471 *subsensi*, 473 *consussurant*) — the only two *hapax*

*legomena* in the play; two semantically unmotivated diminutives in a row (471, 472 *clanculum*), and intense alliteration (*con-*) — all patterns generally avoided by Terence, as seen above. This is a good illustration of what one could call a Plautine mannerism: when Terence uses a stylistic feature that is typical of Plautine diction, but not common in his own style, he normally does it to allude to traditional, Plautine comedy. In this particular case, all these typically Plautine stylistic elements contribute to highlight the general *Plautinitas* of the situation evoked by Chremes (a cunning slave assisting a young man in love).

There are many cases of Plautine mannerism in Terence. To give just another example, in *Hau.* there are two cases of rare words with the suffix *-osus* (*sumptuosa*, *damnosus*), which (as seen above) is common in Plautus, but rare in Terence; both these rare Terentian cases are found in passages with a clear Plautine pedigree, featuring an asyndetic list of adjectives, evoking farcical *topoi* such as the description of the *mala meretrix* and the outburst of the *pater iratus* (227 *meast potens procax magnifica sumptuosa nobilis*, 1033–1034 *gerro iners fraus helluo / ganeo's damnosus*).

# 6 An elegant conversational patina

In the sections above I have mainly discussed Terence's style in negative terms, highlighting how Terence restricted the use of stylised markers, as regards both general frequency and distribution. It is now high time to overview some features that can be associated with and characterise Terence's style in positive terms. In this section therefore I will consider Terence's style as a comprehensive system, trying to identify features which seem to be distinctive of his *usus scribendi* or *Kunstsprache* as a whole, and which Terence does not seem to associate with specific characters, register, or contexts. Again, in this exercise the main *comparanda* will be Classical Latin on the one hand (a supposedly 'neutral' variety of Latin based codified by modern grammars, based on a selection of late republican and early imperial texts), and Plautus on the other hand, as the representative of 'traditional' comic diction.

The first, and perhaps most obvious feature of Terence's style is the overall abundance of linguistic markers typical of the conversational register, which are supposed to give the impression of a 'realistic', casual conversation (although, of course, within the boundaries of an artificial poetic code); these features usually characterise comic diction in general and may also appear in the classical period, especially in lower-register texts and contexts (such as Cicero's letters, Pompeian inscriptions, or Petronius), but in several cases they cluster in Terence with

distinctive frequency, at times with ever greater prominence than in other comic playwrights such as Plautus, as we will see.

These conversational markers include for instance polite modifiers (e.g. *quaeso*, *obsecro*, *amabo*, *sodes*); oaths (e.g. *Hercle*, *edepol*, *pol*) and imprecations (*malum*); primary interjections (e.g. *eheu*, *eho*, *heus*, *ah*, *em*, etc.); interlocutory formulas (e.g. *scies*, *men rogas*) and attention-getters (e.g. *uiden tu*?); asseverations (*probe*, *sic est*, *certe*, *recte*, *sane*). Apart from these, Terence's style is characterised by many features that can could considered low-register (whether conversational or not), as suggested by either their avoidance in mid-Republican high-register texts such as prose or tragedy, and/or by their frequency in CL low-register texts. These features are often syntactic in nature, and include, for instance, the indicative in indirect questions clauses and in deliberative questions (e.g. *An.* 315 *quid tibi uidetur? Adeon ad eum?*); elliptical questions (e.g. *Eun.* 898 *quor non?*); the indicative in *quom*-clauses with a causal or adversative nuance (e.g. *Hau.* 381–382 *fortunatam iudico, / id quom studuisti*); double connectives with *verba timendi* (e.g. *Hau.* 1017 *metuis ne non conuincas*).

There are also several low-register patterns of lexicon, idiom, or semantics including use of the deictic particle *eccum* and derivatives, yet more restricted than in Plautus (33 instances in Terence, of only 3 different particles, *eccum* [27 examples], *eccam*, and *eccos*, vs. 137 instances of 9 different particles in Plautus); the quasi-demonstrative use of *homo* (e.g. *An.* 425 *esse quoiquam homini fidem*, 663 *quis homo istuc*?); idioms, collocations, and uses such as *quam rem agis*, *dare operam*, *quid ais*, *uide = para* (e.g. *Hau.* 459), absolute *sino* (e.g. *Hau.* 637), the strong negation *minime* (13 occurrences in Plautus, 7 in Terence; see *TLL* 10.1584.62 ff.), the asseverative use of *faciam* (see Bagordo 2001, 107–109), *probe* (e.g. *Eun.* 768, see *TLL* 10.2.1488.64–1489.35) and *pulchre = bene* (e.g. 440 *pulchre instructa*); the intensifier *male* (e.g. *Hau.* 664 and see Hoffman and Ricottilli 1985, 201) and a large group of individual lexical items, many of which have figurative semantics, as common in low-register diction (e.g. *garrire*, *callere*, *conradere*). Most of these patterns and words are also attested in CL, but only or mainly in low-register and/or conversational contexts; in some cases they reappear in Late Latin and/or Romance, suggesting a continuity in normal speech. To give just one example, Terence (like Plautus) often uses the verb *adiutare*; this is a low-register variant of *adiuuuare*, whose higher stylisation (at least in comedy) is suggested by its frequency in formulae (e.g. *di adiuuant* or sim., never *adiutant*; cf. also *Hau.* 982 *adiuuas*, in a pathetic section in iambic octonarii; also the proverbial *Ph.* 203 *fortis fortuna adiuat* and the apparently solemn use at *Eun.* 363; elsewhere in Terence it only occurs in the speech of old men, who conversely never use *adiutare* except Chremes here and at 546). In later Latin *adiutare*

appears especially in low-register texts, including e.g. the letters of Claudius Terentianus (468.41, 471.24) and Petronius (and only in the *Cena* vs. *adiuuare* in the 'urban' sections). This is certainly a low-register variant, standard in speech, but given its occurrence in poetry (*Aetna* 436) and Cicero (fr. *Ad Q. Axium* 2) it seems an exaggeration to consider it inherently 'vulgar or lower-class' (cf. Clackson 2011, 524).

This list above is certainly too inclusive, and there are several features where the low-register character of a given item is only possible or probable, but it gives an idea of the heavy conversational patina of Terence's style. Most of these low-register and/or conversational features are also found in Plautus, but not always in the same proportion. There are in fact several features that seem to be commonly used by Terence, as markers of a mimetic conversation, but are less frequent in Plautus.

A good example is that of primary interjections, which are distinctively frequent in Terence (one every 13 lines vs. one every 40 in Plautus, cf. Haffter 1934, 127–129 with figures) and they are often placed in the final position in the line (1 every 5 cases, cf. *Hau*. 313 *heus*, 340, 517, 654, 706, 757, 906 *hem*, 397, 439, 913 *ah*, 606 *hui*, 1010 *oh*). Given their association with normal speech, where they serve as basic conveyors of emotion (Hofmann and Ricottilli 1985, 103–134), primary interjections have been rightly described as Terence's 'naturalistic way of adding a colloquial flavour to the dialogue' (Barsby 1999, 22).

Other low-register and/or conversational markers used by Terence with distinctive frequency include: addresses by name alone in the vocative; toned-down oaths (*di boni* vs. the Plautine *di immortales*); asseverative idioms (e.g. *ita me di ament*); the straightforward negation *non* in elliptical answers, also found in inscriptions (*CIL* 4.3494 with Ferri 2012, 107), which is favoured by Terence (23 occurrences, including reinforced or extended patterns, as e.g. *Hau*. 612 *non hercle uero*, *Ph.* 525 *non, uerum haec ei antecessit*), but is less frequent in Plautus (less than 10 cases; cf. e.g. *Cas*. 403, *Pseud*. 1023, 1067, *St*. 390); individual low-register terms, e.g. the verb *narrare*, distinctively favoured by Terence in comparison with Plautus (c. 73 occurrences vs. 58 in Plautus), in contrast with *dicere* (c. 465 occurrences in Terence vs. c. 1500 in Plautus) or *aio* (c. 115 occurrences in Terence vs. 280 in Plautus). Similarly, there are features that occur in both authors, but in Plautus are used in a manner that is more artificial and stylised, in contrast with Terence's mimetic use: this is the case, for instance, of interruptions (cf. Palmer 1954, 91), which in Plautus have an artificial character, featuring a codified pattern with a pun or joke (cf. *Cas*. 389 *deos quaeso... :: Vt quidem tu hodie canem et furcam feras*, *Aul*. 560 *tum obsonium autem ... :: Pol uel onate sat est* ) and/or humour extensions (cf. e.g. the vignette at *Poen*. 427–442).

A final element of style which is important to mention is Terence's attention to sociolinguistic conventions: masters and slaves, male and female characters, parents and sons do not address each other in the same way. Forms such as *sis* or *eho*, or the peremptory order *fac* and the already-mentioned straightforward negation *non* have a degree of forcefulness which is more appropriate to old men addressing their slaves or sons; similarly, the form *sodes* is normally used by socially higher characters addressing lower ones. In contrast, the polite *caue faxis* or sim. is normally used by low characters addressing higher ones, and the deferential *ere* usually opens the conversation of a good slave (e.g. *Hau.* 973, *Hec.* 430, *Ph.* 286, 471, with Barrios-Lech 2016, 338). More specifically, emotional endearments such as *mea Antiphila* (*Hau.* 381) are typically used by *adulescentes* addressing their sweetheart.

The sociolinguistic attention of Terence's style is also traceable in linguistic characterisation (on this see the study of Karakasis 2005 in particular). In section 5 above I mentioned some features that characterise the speech of old men, whom Terence provides with a more distinct idiolect. There are, however, other characters whose language Terence distinguishes with some idiosyncratic features, including especially different kinds of oaths. A good example is the interjectional oath *hercle*, common in Roman comedy (638 occurrences in Plautus, 101 in Terence), and universally used by male characters, with only one exception (*Cist.* 52, used by the dominant Gymnasium), as already noted by Gellius (11.6). Conversely, the forms *obsecro* and *edepol* (as in Plautus) but also *pol* (which is instead gender indifferent in Plautus) characterise female speech. As already noted in ancient scholarship (and especially Donatus' commentary), this kind of linguistic characterisation seems to be a distinctive trait of Terence's style, and should be related to his general concern for linguistic realism (see Pezzini 2021), which also explains most of the restrictions and tendencies discussed above.

## 7 Conclusions

In conclusion, the ancient, long-standing tradition of Terence as a master of elegant Latin style has been largely confirmed by this multi-layered overview, and yet nuanced and refined at the same time: Terence's Latin is overall more standardised, more 'restrained' than that of his comic tradition, and distinctly coated with a conversational patina, mimetic of real speech; at the same time it accommodates a variety of different stylised registers, but in a way that is more 'controlled', and usually subordinated to the purposes of characterisation and

linguistic 'realism'. In this sense Terence's style, in all its levels, could be described as 'classical' — something that paradoxically might be difficult to appreciate because of the influence of the CL bias.

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David Butterfield

# Lucretian Idiosyncrasy: Where to Draw the Line?

**Abstract:** This piece considers when editors should and should not intervene in moments where Lucretius' style seems to be at the boundary of what is possible. How should we draw the line? How should we treat apparently unique usages, especially in the context of textual criticism and producing a text of the poet?

Prominent among the many challenges of editing a critical text of any ancient author is to know when a stylistic oddity, and thus a statistical rarity, is an example of a rare authorial licence or in fact a scribal corruption of something much more typical of, and frequently used by, the author. Whatever the medium or genre of an ancient literary work, the question nags away: while it is perfectly possible for certain literary features or licences to be deployed in only one place, at what point does a unique occurrence become too improbable to occur even once?

This short piece will survey a variety of categories in the text of Lucretius where I, as an editor of the poem for the Oxford Classical Text series, have been challenged on this very score. I will move through a series of particular problems in the fields of metre, style, and language.[1]

Before I begin, we must first remind ourselves of the outlines of Lucretius' textual transmission. How close can we now get to Lucretius' own autograph, gathered up at his death in the mid-50s BC?[2] The answer is a little disconcerting, at a remove of almost 1,000 years: our two-and-a-half Carolingian manuscripts (O, Q and S) were written in the 9th century, by which point towards two thousand

1 There has been no complete survey of Lucretius' poetic style. Some important preliminary work was done by Holtze 1868 and Cartault 1898. A very useful overview of Lucretian grammar, metre, and style is given by Bailey 1947 on 1.72–171, a more thorough account than the reference-replete survey of these features in Leonard and Smith 1942, 129–186. West 1969 is a *tour de force* of close reading that still repays attention, as do the colorful contributions of Maguinness 1965 and Kenney 2007. The metrical summary given by Dubois 1933 is generally competent; by contrast, the statistical analysis provided by Ott 1970 is effectively unreadable.

2 I follow D'Anna 2002 in regarding Lucretius' probable life span as covering 94–55 BC, and have argued in Butterfield 2014 that the poem was left incomplete at his death. Hutchinson 2001 has made an inventive but improbable case for pushing the poem's composition into the 40s BC, to which Volk 2010 has responded by making the more traditional case for the early to mid-50s BC.

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corruptions had entered the poem.[3] While occasional citations of the poem in other authors can give some useful steers, for the most part our knowledge of Lucretius is based upon one book — a lost 8th-century archetype which can be reconstructed on the basis of OQS.[4]

Let us turn then to some particular cases that pose editorial challenges. We may begin with an especially stark case — the sole instance in the poem where the metre of the line seems in fact to extend beyond its confines. Deep into Book 5, Lucretius discusses how the earth once produced various defective creatures, which were unable to survive for long, since they lacked food and/or the ability to reproduce (5.845–852):

cetera de genere hoc monstra ac portenta creabat, 845
nequiquam, quoniam natura absterruit auctum
nec potuere cupitum aetatis tangere florem
nec reperire cibum nec iungi per Veneris res.
multa uidemus enim rebus concurrere **debere**,
ut propagando possint procudere saecla; 850
pabula primum ut sint, genitalia deinde per artus
semina qua possint membris manare remissis.

[The earth] made other monsters and portents of this sort, all in vain, since nature banned their growth, and they could not reach the desired flower of age nor find food nor be joined by the ways of Venus. For we see that many elements must come together for creatures so that they can by procreation forge out the chain of the generations: first there must be food, next there must be a way for the life-giving seeds to ooze out when the limbs are relaxed.

In verse 849, the infinitive *debere* ('must') can only scan if its final *-e* is elided under the influence of *ut* beginning the next line, thus leaving the spondaic sixth foot *dēbē-*. Such synaphea, whereby one line's scansion can be affected by the beginning of the next, is not elsewhere found in the poem's near 7,500 lines. To find any parallel, we have to look elsewhere: the licence is attested twice in earlier Latin literature, once in Ennius' *Hedyphagetica* (180s/170s BC) and once in a fragment of Lucilius' *Satires* (110s BC?).[5] Although both of these hexametric examples are of a linguistically lower register, and accordingly exhibit greater

**3** The three surviving Carolingian manuscripts are: O, the Codex Oblongus (Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. Lat. F. 30, s. ix¼); Q, the Codex Quadratus (Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. Lat. Q. 94, s. ix med.); and S, the Schedae (Copenhagen Kongelige Bibliotek, Gl. Kgl. S. 211 2º + Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Lat. 107, ff.9–18, s. ix$^{3/4}$).

**4** For a survey of the first millennium of Lucretius' transposition, see Butterfield 2013.

**5** 548K: *ossa lacertiq*(*ue*) / *apparent* (a fragment wrongly attributed to Lucretius in the manuscripts of Macrobius' *Saturnalia* 6.1.43): see Butterfield 2013, 113–114.

metrical freedom, Seneca reported that Virgil allowed the presence of hypermetric elision in his poems so that they would be regarded as a sign of archaism by the 'Ennian crowd' (i.e. presumably those who admired him).[6]

Moving into the first century BC, the licence does occur once in Lucretius' contemporary Catullus (in Poem 64), and — a generation later — twice in Horace's *Satires*, 23 times in Virgil's *Georgics* and *Aeneid*, and — another generation later — thrice in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[7] Every example before Virgil is of enclitic *-que* (or, in one Horatian case, *-ue*), save for Ennius' imperative *sum*(*e*): this was presumably motivated by a Greek λαβέ in Archestratus' original, and may have had a weak closing syllable in Latin (cf. the evolution of *dic*, *duc*, *fac*, and *fer*). After Ovid, the device disappeared for good — except for a single instance in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* (4.293 *illum insperata turbatum fraude furentemq*(*ue*) / *Oebalides*), which echoes Virgil's *Aeneid* (11.609–610 *clamore furentesq*(*ue*) / *exhortantur*).

At *DRN* 5.849, then, are we to say that Lucretius chose in one solitary instance to introduce this radical and pointedly archaic metrical licence, in both a stylistically higher register (didactic epic) and a bolder context — eliding a verbal infinitive — than seems to have been deployed previously? Was Catullus (once every 408 epic verses), or Horace (twice in 1,029 satirical verses), or Virgil (seven times in 2,188 didactic verses, sixteen times in 9,896 epic verses) in turn influenced by this single Lucretian occurrence (once in 7,415 didactic verses), or does their sporadic hypermetrical practice instead draw upon the tradition before him?

Perhaps progress is to be made by considering the context of the passage? Since Lucretius is talking about the necessary conditions for a species to

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**6** A letter from the lost 22nd book of Seneca's *Epistulae morales* is cited by Gellius at NA 12.2.10: *Vergilius quoque noster non ex alia causa* ***duros quosdam uersus et enormes et aliquid supra mensuram trahentis*** *interposuit, quam ut Ennianus populus adgnosceret in nouo carmine aliquid antiquitatis*. The licence was nowhere employed in Greek hexametric poetry, although some scholars, ancient and more modern, mistook the use of Ζῆν in the final syllable of Homeric verse as the elided form of (hypermetric) Ζῆνα. In elegiacs it is found just once: Callimachus *Ep.* 41.1 οὐκ οἶδ(α) / εἴτ'. It is thus impossible to say quite what prompted Ennius' occasional practice, or indeed how rare and genre-specific it was.

**7** The Catullian instance is 64.298 (*cum coniuge natisq*(*ue*) / *aduenit*), but not 115.5, where I read *uastasque paludes*, Pleitner's emendation of *saltusque paludesq*(*ue*). In Horace's first book of *Satires* we find 1.4.96 *usus amicoq*(*ue*) / *a puero*, and 1.6.102 *rusue peregreu*(*e*) / *exirem*. 18 of the 23 instances in Virgil (including Heinsius' emendation at *Aen.* 3.684 *Scyllam Charbydinq*(*ue*) / *inter*) involve *-que* following a long syllable; the remaining five are of final *-ă* or *-em*/*-um*. See further Goold 2002. Two of the three instances in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are of the sequence *-que… -que* (4.11 *Bromiumque Lyaeumq*(*ue*) / *ignigenamque*; 6.507 *natamque nepotemq*(*ue*) / *absentes*), and the other (4.780 *ferarumq*(*ue*) / *in silicem*) echoes Verg. *Georg.* 3.242 *hominumque ferarumq*(*ue*) / *et*.

propagate itself, does the idea of their concurrence (*concurrere*) give a poetic reason for the verses to 'run together'? Is Dubois (1933, 54) right to say of this instance that 'il s'agit de l'union nécessaire à la propagation des espèces' {it is about the union necessary for the propagation of species}? At first glance, this sounds perfectly plausible — almost desirable, until we reflect that literally hundreds of lines in the poem are about the commingling of entities, most especially atoms, and in a much more striking and significant fashion than the abstraction of two or more biological conditions jointly obtaining. There would therefore have been almost countless places where Lucretius, if he did feel that hypermetre could convey such a poetic effect, might have put the device to good use. There are in fact 1,200 cases in the poem where successive verses end and then begin with a vowel: why did the licence of hypermetric elision not suggest itself in any of these cases?[8]

Given its stark irregularity, doubts about the verse's veracity have been felt since the Renaissance. An unknown 15th-century critic, whose emendation is found in manuscripts of the φ group, suggested the conventionally metrical *concurrere* ***debent*** — an idea that occurred independently to Gilbert Wakefield in the late 18th century. But there is no fruit that hangs so low: this indicative *debent* can only stand if *uidemus* ('we see') becomes a parenthetical aside, and this is not how Lucretius writes. Not only can the parenthesis not be paralleled in the 70 instances of *uidemus* (or the many occurrences of analogous verbs), but we find the same sequence *multa uidemus enim* followed by an infinitive later in the book at 5.1094 (and also, used absolutely, at 5.699).[9]

There are other ways to resolve the problem, however. For instance, could Lucretius have written *debere coire* ('must come together'), a verb that is used elsewhere of physical combination and concurrence.[10] Perhaps *coire* was glossed by the less ambiguous term *concurrere* (a verb otherwise found only in Book 6, where it describes clouds and elements physically combining),[11] and once this verb was taken as a correction it was moved to a metrical position earlier. Or

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**8** Dainotti (2015, 178–184) surveys Virgil's metrical practice and contends that hypermetre was used for a variety of reasons: to emphasise the length of long lists, and to convey suspense, anger, and pathos, depending on the context. The sole instance of what one might call meta-metrical play — where the sense of the passage could be reflected by hypermetric synaphea — seems to be the boiling cauldron spilling over at *Georg.* 1.295 *aut dulcis musti Volcano decoquit umor*(*em*) / *et…*

**9** At 6.617 *quippe uidemus enim* governs an infinitive, and at 4.72 verse-end *multa uidemus* governs preceding infinitives.

**10** 1.770, 838, 2.549, 563, 3.395, 5.190, 425, 450, 452.

**11** 6.97, 116, 316, 363.

perhaps *coire* was accidentally omitted, and *concurrere* was introduced to patch up the defective metre of the fourth and fifth feet? It is impossible to know — but a relatively minor textual corruption may be a more probable event than Lucretius using a one-off licence without clear or cogent motivation.[12] As an editor, I feel bound to mark the passage as suspect.

We move now to a less extreme case, but one that is a similarly singular occurrence. In Book 4 we encounter the only case of a word of iambic shape (i.e. scanning short-long) being elided in the poem. Given the frequency of words of iambic shape, and the free use of elision in the poem, the fact that they concur only once is quite remarkable. That moment occurs in the context of unusual atomic images forming by collision in the air, such as the (non-existent) centaur, which the chance collision of human and equine atoms can artificially suggest (4.739–743):

> nam certe ex uiuo Centauri non fit imago,
> nulla fuit quoniam talis natura animantis; 740
> uerum ubi **equi** atque hominis casu conuenit imago,
> haerescit facile extemplo, quod diximus ante,
> propter subtilem naturam et tenuia texta.

> For certainly no image of a Centaur comes from one living, since there never was a living thing of this nature; but when the image of a horse and of a man have met by chance, it easily adheres at once, as I said before, on account of their fine nature and thin texture.

The elision of *equi* before *atque* in 741 is of unparalleled harshness. Is it made more, or less, acceptable, that it appears in an unparalleled sequence of four consecutive elisions: *uer*(*um*) *ub*(*i*) *eq*(*ui*) *atq*(*ue*) *hominis*? Many commentators have argued explicitly that this is deliberate: Munro (1886$^4$, ad loc.) claimed, ‘It strikes me that Lucr[etius] here meant the tangled sound to recal the entangling of two incongruous images’; for Bailey (1947, ad loc.), this ‘undoubtedly harsh elision’ may be ‘an intentional device to suggest the jolt of the ‘idols’ against one another’; and Godwin (1987, ad loc.) remarked that ‘the slapping together of incongruous images is well brought out by the jerky rhythm and harsh elisions of this line.’ To highlight the unusual character of these elisions, Holland (1979, 55–56) observes that, in the 25-line passage surrounding this verse (724–748) Lucretius

**12** An alternative suggestion, which would retain *concurrere* but is less easy to explain, would be to read *concurrere rebu*(*s*) *necesse*. I once suggested *debere occurrere rebus* (corrupted via the omission and verse-end restoration of the syntactically otiose *debere*) but the heart does not thrill: see Butterfield 2008a, 119–120.

seems to use elision very little; only one verse (731) has more than one instance (two easy cases of -*am* and -*um*).[13]

Yet the iambic elision remains a major obstacle. In his celebrated note on *DRN* 3.954, Lachmann (1850) demonstrated the rarity of this particular elision, not just in Lucretius but in poets from Ennius through to Martial. He also demonstrated cogently that the licence is not found elsewhere in this poem.[14] Failing to credit that Lucretius would do this even once, Lachmann instead transposed *casu* two words earlier to give *equi casu atque hominis*. Yet this breaks up the natural juxtaposition of horse and man, and also introduces another metrical rarity, for -*u* is elided by Lucretius only at 1.677 (*abitu aut*), 3.49 (*conspectu ex*), and 4.1188 (*tu animo*). A neater solution was suggested by Arthur Palmer (1894): the nominative *equi<na>*, which would eliminate *atque* by instead being an adjective for *imago*. He compared the opening of Horace's *Ars poetica*: *humano capiti ceruicem pictor equinam / iungere si uelit*.

A slightly different alternative, which avoids understanding the necessarily unmetrical *imāgĭnī* with the genitive *hominis*, would be to give the express dative *equinae*, thus making the man's atomic image, the *hominis… imago*, the natural focus and subject: *uerum ubi equinae hominis casu conuenit imago*, 'but when the image of a man happens to meet one of a horse'. For the seemingly harsh elision of -*ae*, we may compare 1.306 *dispensae in* (perhaps also *suspensae in* of the preceding line), 6.331 *naturae obsistere*, the elision of *aliae* before *atque*/*ac* at 1.605, 813, 1045, and the frequent elision of *quae*.[15] Such an alteration would in face not just remove the unique elision, but also the unique sequence of elisions.

But we are given further pause for thought. In Virgil, not only do we find the elision of iambic words frequently enough, but in four cases this occurs before *atque* (*Georg*. 3.253 *cauae atque*; 434 *siti atque*; *Aen*. 10.31 *tua atque*; 11.401 *metu atque*). Could there be something about the conjunction *atque* that makes this

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**13** Although Holland is therefore wrong to say that 'no line shows more than one easy elision' in this passage, her observation still stands.

**14** At 2.780 most editors read Lachmann's *ut* (for transmitted *uti*) and *sua* (*uestigia*, for transmitted *suo* (*capite*)); likewise, if *uelut* is to be analysed separately as *uel ut*, most editors follow Cippellarius' *ut* (for transmitted *uti*) at 2.322. Although I do not consider *enim* to be a truly iambic word, it may suffer elision at 1.304 (*tangere enim et tangi*), if this not rather an instance of *et* undergoing prodelision: *enim* (*e*)*t*.

**15** I previously made a conjecture in the reverse direction — *equi forte humanae* — but it required greater alteration to the text (Butterfield 2008a, 117–118). The elision of both nominative and genitive -*ae* was explored by Leo 1895, 308–332 and Siedow 1911, 73–80.

elision easier, perhaps even as a species of prodelision, i.e. *equi* (*a*)*tque*?[16] Could Lucretius have used that possibility to allow himself this one-off licence here, in order to emphasise the striking collision of these two distinctive atomic aggregates? Maybe so, after all!

We turn now to Book 3, for a third and final example of metrical singularity. In his account of how different types of atom (round versus spiky) move when combined together, Lucretius writes (3.196–202):

namque papaueris aura potest suspensa leuisque
cogere ut ab summo tibi diffluat altus aceruus,
at contra lapidum conlectum spicarumque
noenu potest. igitur paruissima corpora proquam
et leuissima sunt, ita mobilitate fruuntur; 200
at contra quaecumque magis cum pondere magno
asperaque inueniuntur, eo stabilita magis sunt.

For, as you know, a checked and light breath of air can compel a high heap of poppy-seed to disperse from the top; but contrariwise it cannot (compel) a pile of stones or corn-ears. Therefore insofar as bodies are very small and smooth, they enjoy mobility; but contrariwise, whatever is found to be of greater weight and rough is thereby all the more stable.

In 198 we find mention of a 'pile of corn-ears', *conlectum*[17] *spicarum*(*que*). If these words are retained, we face a spondaic rhythm not only in the fifth foot (rare but permissible: 31 times elsewhere in the poem, i.e. 0.4% of lines), and in a quadrisyllabic word (five times elsewhere in Book 3: 249, 253, 545, 907, 963), but also in each of the line's last four feet. This is not just without parallel, but there is not even any other instance in the poem of the final *three* feet all being spondaic. The result is outstandingly anomalous and, many a reader may feel, arrestingly inelegant. So, the question arises, is this a deliberate anomaly? If so, could Lucretius have a particular reason for deploying such an oddity only here? If not, could it in fact reflect corruption of something metrically (and semantically) unobjectionable?

Again, the more imaginative reader may feel that the heavy (*lapides*) and spiky (*spicae*) objects of the line may be the prompt for Lucretius to create a line of far more spondaic and ponderous (if not spiky) quality than anywhere else in

**16** Perhaps the pairing *auē atque ualē* at Catullus 101.10 was pronounced more smoothly with the prodelision *aue* (*a*)*tque*.

**17** This is Muretius' certain correction of the transmitted *coniectum*, which Lucretius only uses for the process of throwing together (4.959, 5.416, 600, 6.435), not its result. *Conlectus* is also read at 4.414, following Lambinus' emendation of *coniectus*; Lambinus also cites the anonymous emendation of *coniectus* to *conlectus* at 5.416, which Deufert 2019 adopts.

the poem. To others, it may beggar belief that this context was the sole place where Lucretius wanted to deploy such a device.

To begin, we may ask whether we in fact need a second example alongside the pile of stones, to satisfy the relevant criteria of heavy and rough (*cum pondere magno / asperaque*, 201–202)? The stones' weight is obvious enough, but Lucretius also speaks elsewhere of the roughness of a *lapis asper* (3.694) and *aspera saxa* (4.147). Do the ears of corn have a role, and — come to think of it — is a pile of these light offcuts actually safe when blown by the wind? Some critics, seeing the difficulties that this example poses, have fruitlessly wondered whether the *spicae* are in fact ceramic tiles (since Vitruvius speaks of *spicae testaceae* used in pavement manufacture of the oblong, 'corn' style, at *Arch*. 7.1), or hairpins (since Martianus Capella speaks of a *crinalis spicus* at 9.903). But if a pile of stones serves as sufficient contrast to the single comparandum of poppy seed in 196–197, and *spicarumque* gives both odd sense and very odd rhythm, could it not instead have ousted some less objectionable words?

The awkward *spicarumque* has prompted many emendations, and all save for Lambinus' *spiclorumque* (= 'of spears', although the word is not found thus contracted anywhere else)[18] and Konrad Müller's *scruporumque* (= 'of sharp stones') have sought to dissolve the rhythm into something that reflects Lucretius' practice. Most have also sought to remove the presence of a second example, with five emendations instead introducing a new subject relating to the wind (instead of *aura* of 196): Lachmann's *spiritus acer*, Bernays' *Caurus mouere*, Munro's *ipse Eurus mouere*, Bouterwek's *uis Aquilonis*, and Grasberger's *percitus aer*. But the specific nature of a second breeze, or its point of origin, is quite irrelevant to the point. Furthermore, the parallelism of *potest… at contra… noenu potest* strongly suggests that we have a controlled experiment, with the same general subject, viz the *aura… suspensa leuisque*, obtaining throughout.

If the same subject is understood, how to fill out the rest of the line? Some have rightly felt that supplying not just *cogere* but also *ut diffluat* is neither particularly easy nor particularly apposite for the (unsuccessful) movement of stones. While Frerichs' *coniectu uincere aceruum* is too strange an expression (a breeze does not 'beat a pile by throwing [itself]'), other ideas have been weirder: K.F. Hermann turned to a lexicographical curiosity in Festus, suggesting *rumpere spira*, this noun allegedly being an Ennian expression for a crowd of men — as if we expect them to partake in some stone-busting challenge. No less fancifully, Bergk rummaged elsewhere in Festus to conjecture *spicea runa*, this latter word

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**18** This was preceded by the strange appearance of the unmetrical *spiculorumque* in the Verona 1486 and Venice 1495 editions of the poem.

being glossed as a *genus teli*, as if some 'corn-like weapon' were desired for the (unsuccessful) task of moving a heap of stones.

Of all the suggestions made hitherto, Purmann provides us with the most apposite suggestion: alongside the infinitive *disicere*, we have the emphatic adverb *umquam*, which could in fact have caused a scribe to see the close of a noun in *-umque* (an easy error if similar abbreviations were confused), and thus turn *sicereumque* into the (at least Latinate and tub-thumpingly metrical) *spicarumque*.

But many defenders of the text are unimpressed by attempts to change the text. 'All these suggestions', Bailey intones, 'are wasted ingenuity and arise from misunderstanding'. As for the rhythm, 'the triple spondaic ending is clearly intended to give the idea of the stability of the heap' (Bailey 1947, ad loc.); the 'emphatically descriptive rhythm of the verse' (Kenney 2014², ad loc.) suggests 'the difficulty of the process' (Smith in Leonard and Smith 1942, ad loc.) and 'the immovability of the objects' (Smith 1992, ad loc.). And it is here that Deufert (2018, 145) is at his most impassioned: 'Wer *spicarumque* emendiert, begibt sich in Gefahr, ein kostbares Stück unmittelbarer sinnlicher Anschauung zu beseitigen, für die uns das Werk des Lukrez so sehr ans Herz gewaschen ist'.[19]

I am far from convinced that the transmitted text is sound, but two things again give some pause for thought. First, the sentence contains *noenu* (199), the archaic negative adverb, which only occurs once elsewhere in the *DRN*, at 4.712. Could its presence reflect an echo of an archaic poet, and, if so, could that explain the remarkable rhythmical close to 3.198, which an appreciably earlier figure could have stomached? Second, the metrically more experimental Virgil does deploy a very similarly pointed rhythm three times (with final trisyllables): leaving aside the pointedly Graecising instance (with double full hiatus to boot) at *Aen.* 3.74 *Nereidum matri et Neptuno Aegaeo*, we have a description of horses' movement (*Georg*. 3.276 *saxa per et scopulos et depressas conuallis*) and of the moulding of greaves (*Aen.* 7.634 *aut leuis ocreas lento ducunt argento*). As it stands, however, I feel that the rhythm is so rare, and *spicae* so unusual, that the obelus should be deployed as a prudent warning to the reader.

We may turn now to another aspect of style. Repetition is a major part of Lucretius' poetic art, whether at the level of whole paragraphs, lines, phrases,

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**19** {Whoever emends *spicarumque* exposes himself to the danger of setting aside a valuable element of immediately meaningful outlook, so close to our hearts has the work of Lucretius become}.

or individual words.[20] This is undoubtedly a central feature of his didactic and poetic practice. But repetition is also something that very commonly occurs in manuscripts as a result of scribal error, whether by accidentally repeating a term that had been recently written, or (less commonly) by anticipating a term that soon follows, either by visual distraction or 'inner ear' disturbance.

We may begin with a repetition that it may seem heretical to call into question, since it occurs in the poem's famous proem (1.29–33):

effice ut interea **fera moenera** militia
per maria ac terras omnis sopita quiescant; 30
nam tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuuare
mortalis, quoniam belli fera moenera Mauors
armipotens regit

Meanwhile make the **savage works** of war fall into sleep and quiet over all seas and lands. For you alone can please mortals with quiet peace, since battle-mighty Mars rules the **savage works** of war

32 *fera moenera* Marc. Lat. XII 69 (et Lambinus suo Marte): *fera moenia* Lact. Plac. ad Stat. *Theb*. 3.296: *feram onera* Ω

In these famous lines, Lucretius asks Venus for a cessation of war over land and sea, a favour to be obtained via her intimate relationship with Mars. But is it likely that Lucretius would choose, in so purple a passage as his proem, to use the same phrase *fera moenera* (the obvious 15th-century emendation of *feram onera* in 32) three lines apart, and indeed within the same sentence? If anything, the alteration of the dependent genitive from *militiai* to *belli* makes the repetition even flatter. Could it be that the latter *moenera* is a scribe's accidental recollection of its earlier appearance,[21] and that a word such as *proelia* (used by Lucretius seven times elsewhere) has been ousted? While Lucretius had a clear penchant for the repetition of a given adjective in close succession,[22] the near repetition of phrases is pointedly rarer. Furthermore, we find the phrase *fera proelia bello* in the

**20** For Lucretius' use of repetition, see Gneisse 1878, Lenz 1937, Raubitschek 1938, Bailey 1947 on 1.161–165, Ingalls 1971, Minyard 1978, and Schiesaro 1990. A more recent study is provided by the unpublished doctoral thesis of Abigail Buglass (*Repetition and internal allusion in Lucretius'* De Rerum Natura, Oxford, 2015) now partly published in Buglass 2022. See also Galasso's chapter in this volume.
**21** This noun only occurs once elsewhere in the *DRN*, in the singular phrase *in moenere belli* (5.1308).
**22** See my brief remarks in Butterfield 2008b, 182.

fragments of Sueius (*Moretum* 1.4 Courtney), a near contemporary of Lucretius, as well as similar expressions in later poets.[23]

Since the form is already found in Lactantius Placidus' scholia to Statius' *Thebaid*, the text (if indeed wrong) must have been corrupted in the first 400 years of its transmission. Even though that is perfectly possible, this suggestion is very much one to be kept in the apparatus. For, we may wonder, could the phrase have in fact been a stop-gap which Lucretius would have polished into a different one (as seems to be the case after line 43),[24] had he lived to do so?

Another tricky case comes with a near-repetition found in Book 4, when Lucretius considers dream sequences (4.788–791):

> quid porro in numerum procedere cum simulacra
> cernimus in somnis et **mollia** membra mouere,
> **mollia** mobiliter cum alternis bracchia mittunt 790
> et repetunt oculis[25] gestum pede conuenienti?

> What moreover when we see in dreams the images advancing in rhythm and moving their supple limbs, when they nimbly swing their supple arms and repeat for our eyes a gesture with foot corresponding to hand?

The textual uncertainty in line 791 need not concern us here (nor Deufert's decision to athetise 788–793). Instead I am interested in the repeated statement that the *membra* (limbs) are *mollia* (soft) in 789, before the *bracchia* (arms) are likewise described as *mollia* a mere three words later in 790. As Bailey's true but rather unilluminating comment runs, 'Not a Lucretian repetition of *mollia* in the previous line, though certainly intended to recall it.'[26] What if anything, are we to do with this?

As in cases discussed above, some critics have argued that the repetition has poetic purpose: Godwin, for instance, has claimed that 'the epanalepsis of *mollia… mollia* exactly suggests the dreamy *perpetuum mobile* Lucretius wishes to evoke in "repeating the position"' (Godwin 1987, ad loc.). Perhaps Lucretius

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**23** Cf. also *proelia belli* in Virgil (*Aen.* 11.541) and Ovid (*Tr.* 2.71) and *fera proelia* in Ovid (*Her.* 1.31, *Tr.* 5.6.9, *Pont.* 2.5.19), Martial (*Spect.* 28.7) and Silius (1.266, 4.355, 10.427, 14.155, 15.667, 17.383). Stephen Harrison has suggested to me the possibility of *murmura* (comparing *minaci murmure cornuum* at Hor. *C.* 2.1.17), whose sonic qualities would fit neatly with *quiescant* of line 30.

**24** For my approach to the problems of 1.44–50, see Butterfield 2020.

**25** 791 *oculis* OQ : *ollis* Creech : *docili* Watt : *modulis* Olszaniec : *nobis* Butterfield.

**26** Bailey 1947, ad loc. Early editors, and in the 19th century Lachmann and Bernays, placed a comma after *mollia*, evidently understanding it as a particularly Lucretian mode of repetition, whereby a word or phrase from the preceding verse also opens that which immediately follows. For instances of such epizeuxis (sometimes true anadiplosis), cf. 1.872–873, 2.159–160, 955–956, 3.12–13, 5.298–299, 950–951, 1189–1190 (s.v.l.), 1327–1328 (s.v.l.), 6.528–529.

did indeed repeat the adjective, but there seems sufficient scope to entertain doubt: the mobility of a subset of the limbs hardly needs 'recalling' immediately after it has been stated. The alliterative *mollia membra mouere* and the following *mobiliter* could in fact have prompted a scribe to repeat the word at the beginning of 790 as a *Perseverationsfehler*, thus ousting an entirely different adjective.

Richter, the only other scholar who seems to have challenged the near-repetition, was convinced that these lines described a boxer, and therefore offered *callida* ('clever').[27] Since I rather follow the majority view that a form of elegant and rhythmical dance is here being depicted, I suggest that *candida*, a word commonly associated with arms and limbs in general,[28] would better suit the picture of elegant (presumably female) dancers. But, again, such a speculative suggestion has no place outside the apparatus.

A different challenge is posed by an occasional Lucretian quirk, namely asyndeton — where words are juxtaposed without the expected connective. In Book 5, Lucretius summarises his argument that a sky which increases and diminishes cannot be mortal (5.322–323):

> nam quodcumque alias ex se res auget alitque,
> deminui **debet**, **recreari** cum recipit res.
>
> For whatever increases and nourishes other things from itself must be diminished, remade, when it receives things back.

The striking asyndeton of *deminui debet*, *recreari* is all the more striking when contrasted with its syndetic parallel *auget alitque* in the preceding verse. Lucretius' one other analogous pair of asyndetic verbs is found at 4.1199 (*subat ardet*), a reading that has been doubted by some critics.[29] In the context of nouns, we

27 See Richter 1974, 82–84.

28 With *bracchia*: Prop. 2.16.24, 22a.5, Ov. *Am*. 3.7.8, *Her*. 20, 140, *Eleg. Maec*. 162, Sil. *Pun*. 3.414, Stat. *Silv*. 3.5.65 (*candida seu molli diducit bracchia motu*). Other dactylic adjectives can of course be suggested, among which Stephen Harrison suggests *leuia* (used of women's arms by Catullus at 64.332 and 66.10).

29 Richter (1974, 94–95) plausibly suggested that *ardet* fell into the text as a gloss of the rare *subat* (of animals 'on heat'), ousting a word such as *ignis* (a genitive dependent on *abundans*, although Lucretius elsewhere construes *abundo* with the ablative); an adverb such as *intus* may be more probable. At 1.680–681 we find three verbs with one connective: *quaedam discedere abire* / *atque alia adtribui*, although Bockemüller's *ab igne* is worthy of consideration in lieu of *abire*; at 3.395, the same structure is found in *concursare coire et dissultare*. At 3.156 we have the three balanced elements *caligare oculos*, *sonere aures*, *succidere artus*. At 3.1013–1014 we find the sequence *reges expugnant*, *capiuntur*, *proelia miscent*, / *tollunt clamorem*. The pairing *alit auget* is read by some editors at 5.257, but Lambinus' *alid auget* (paralleling *alias res auget* at

find *proelia pugnas* (2.118, 4.1009), although longer lists appear without connectives (1.643–644, 685 = 2.1021, 1.744, 2.553–554, 670, 726 = 5.441, 4.458, 784, 1132).[30] But while asyndeton is indeed deployed in certain Lucretian contexts,[31] it seems unusually awkward here, not least when *recreari* differs from *deminui* in carrying its own dependent clause *cum recipit res*.[32] Adams, in his wide-ranging study of Latin asyndeton, records this as an example of 'discontinuous asyndeton' where 'the verbs are opposites, of the reversive type' (Adams 2021, 358). That may be a good diagnosis of what this would have to be, if asyndetic. But, given the scarcity of parallels in the poem, it is important at least to consider whether Lucretius could have written something else.

As I have argued at greater length elsewhere,[33] the easiest way to provide a viable connection is to write *debet deminui et recreari cum recipit res*. To the reader versed in Augustan poetry, this rhythm will sound inevitably clunky. But it is worth reminding ourselves of two quirks of the Lucretian hexameter.

First, *et* regularly opens the third foot of the hexameter (81 times), thus depriving it of any perceptible caesura. What is more, 64 (79%) of the 81 cases involve the elision of the preceding word, presumably because the syllable lost in elision gives the feel of a quasi-caesura. *Et* stands in this position after a passive infinitive twice (3.661 *tortari et*, 4.400 *uersari et*), and after an active infinitive eleven times.

5.322) is more probable: *alit* is wrongly transmitted for *alid* at 1.263, 407 (Q), 3.970, 5.1456 (Q). The verse 1.873 (*praeterea tellus quae corpora cumque alit auget*) is deleted by many editors as an interpolated variant of 1.867 (*praeterea quaecumque e terra corpora crescunt*); in contrast to the asyndetic pair *alit auget*, we find a conjunction at 1.228 (*alit atque auget*) and 859 (*auget corpus alitque*).

**30** At 1.455–456 seven nouns are joined in asyndeton, although the third element carries a *-que*.

**31** We should note, however, that the other pairs of passive infinitives in the poem exhibit the expected connection: cf. 1.661 *omnia denseri fierique ex omnibus unum*, 681 *atque alia attribui mutarique ordine quaedam*, 2.1069 *geri debent nimirum et confieri res*, 3.484 *at quaecumque queunt conturbari inque pediri*, 4.555 *plane exaudiri discernique articulatim*, 4.676 *et fluere et mitti uolgo spargique putandumst*, 6.922 *perpetuo fluere ac mitti spargique necessest*.

**32** It has long been observed that Lucretius owes a debt in 5.318–323 to a famous fragment of Pacuvius' *Chryses* (90–92 R., itself echoing Euripides' *Chrysippus*), which includes the asyndetic sequence of verbs *animat format alit auget creat / sepelit recipitque*. But since the closest verbal echo of the passage comes in *auget alitque*, which patently carries a connective, it seems unwise to use Pacuvius to defend the asyndeton of 323.

**33** Butterfield 2021, 166–168.

Second, as a self-contained opening spondee, *debet* reflects a rhythm that Lucretius often employed.[34] Although he could not have written the opening words I conjecture in a different order, there are in fact 51 verses in the poem that begin with a spondaic word although it would have been metrically, grammatically, and stylistically possible for Lucretius to have avoided that rhythm by rearranging the opening two or three words. Yet in the majority of these cases there seems to be no reason for this less common rhythm, as with the recurrent opening *debent nimirum* (1.592, 2.161, 340).

For the scribe copying in units of half-lines or full lines, *debet deminui et* could have been accidentally reversed to give the rhythmically more typical *deminui debet*, with the consequent loss of the homophonous syllable *et*, either by accident or by a scribe or reader seeking to fix the faulty scansion.

We may come finally to a crux that touches upon a recurrent difficulty for the Lucretian editor: the scale and range of Lucretius' linguistic archaism, which is one of the most obvious features of his poetic palette.[35] The case in point mixes morphology and prosody: in early Latin verse, there are several hundred extant examples of *est* being combined with a preceding nominative in *-us* to produce the cluster *-ust*. However, this archaic feature is not found in Latin of the first century BC and beyond. Attempts to introduce it by emendation in Catullus have failed,[36] as they likewise do in his contemporary Lucretius.[37] Since one of the more textually conservative critics of the poem — and indeed the last editor of the Oxford text — is a driver here, this may be an instructive example with which to close this essay.

In Book 4, Lucretius describes how food and sleep can affect a human (4.959–961):

> fit ratione eadem coniectus partim animai
> altior atque foras eiectus largior eius, 960
> et diuisior inter se ac distractior **intus**.

> In the same way the gathering of the soul becomes partly deeper, the ejection of it outwards becomes more ample, and it becomes more divided in itself and dispersed within.

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**34** According to the statistics of De Neubourg 1986, 205, Tab. A6, this sequence is found in 3.8% of the lines in Books 1 and 3 of the poem.

**35** For more on Lucretius' use of archaism, see alongside the studies in n. 1 Nethercut 2021.

**36** I briefly discussed this problem in my review of a textual study of Catullus in Butterfield 2009, 120.

**37** This prosodical licence does not feature in the survey of Lucretian 'Ennianisms' (= archaisms) in Nethercut 2021, 159–219 (Appendices 2–5).

961 *inter se* OQ : *est uis* dub. Bailey (Sier suo Marte) *intus* OQ : *actus* Lachmann : *in test* Munro : *intust* Everett (Bailey suo Marte)

Three separate effects on the human soul are here distinguished: some of the spirit is thrust within the body (959), some thrust out of it (960), and some becomes 'more divided in itself and dispersed within' (961). But what is the (masculine/feminine singular) subject of 961, since it clearly cannot be either *coniectus* (959) or *eiectus* (960)? And of what verb would it the subject? *fit* of 959–960, or an understood *est*? The writing seems uncharacteristically loose and ambiguous: Merrill speaks of 'Lucretian *negligentia*' (Merrill 1907, ad loc.), while for Smith the 'looseness of structure suggests that Lucretius did not revise this passage' (Leonard and Smith 1942, ad loc.).

In order to provide an explicit subject, Lachmann conjectured *actus* ('action'), which does not seem well suited to the context; García Calvo's *ictus*, which makes no clear sense, is inventively translated as 'resuello' (breath?) (García Calvo 1997, ad loc.). Sier has argued that *inter se* is a corruption of *est uis*, comparing the earlier verses 4.916–917: *principio somnus fit ubi est distracta per artus / uis animae*. The idea, which had earlier occurred to Bailey (1921, 20), unfortunately removes the apposite *inter se*, mentioned in the context of sleep just beforehand: 4.946–947 *pars etiam distracta per artus non queat esse / coniuncta inter se neque motu mutua fungi*. Furthermore, it is the soul, not its *uis*, that may most obviously be described in the sentence as 'divided'. The very word we desire, *anima*, can in fact be understood without too much difficulty, having been twice referenced in the genitive earlier in the sentence (*animai*, *eius*).

As to the verb, a number of critics have sought to insert *est* elsewhere into the line. But where can it fit? *est* for *et* at the start of the line would introduce an entirely unproblematic asyndeton, but its placing is unidiomatic. Everett (1896, 32), and soon after Bailey (1921, 20), wondered about *intust*. The sense is of course unobjectionable, but what of the metrical licence — which is neither true prodelision nor sigmatic ecthlipsis, but a species of aphaeresis characteristic of early Latin (*intus est* > *intus st* > *intust*). Did Lucretius use such a device?

No, is the simple answer. The slightly more complex answer is that he *does*, but in a very specific context: alongside the frequent appearance of *necessest* (perhaps also written *necesse est*), and the occasional appearance of *necessumst* (4.121, 932, 5.376), we find in our 9th-century manuscripts *necessust* (2.468, 710, 725, 4.516, 1006, 5.351, 6.206), which seems sufficiently common to reflect a fossilised archaism, rather than repeated corruption of *necessūst*. While the neuter *necessum* appears in the nominative (5.57), accusative (2.289, modified by *intestinum*) and genitive cases (6.815, *necessi* being Bouterwek's emendation of the impossible *necessest*), masculine *necessus* is apparently only found in this

cluster.[38] Editors have been prepared to accept that, in this particular (if recurrent) instance, *necessust* was taken up by Lucretius, despite exhibiting a metrical licence which he did not feel able to deploy himself. Although it is unclear *why* this alternative form held any particular appeal, we have to grant that it did. Therefore, since the licence seems entirely unproductive outside this context, it seems very poor method to introduce it anywhere else by emendation.

Instead, those seeking to place *est* in the line could adopt Purmann's emendation of *intus* to *ipsast*, which of course exhibits a perfectly typical prodelision. Yet while it is true that *ipsa* has the advantage of making the feminine subject clear, i.e. necessarily *anima*, it is also true that adverbial *intus* provides a very welcome contrast to *foras* of the previous line, given the absence of an explicit noun.[39]

At this point, we have indeed come full circle — a common occurrence for the critic who explores and weighs up the plausible options. For indeed *fit*, the subject of the two previous elements in the sentence, is still perfectly apposite as the verb in 961. While, I grant, Lucretius could have repeated it explicitly, by writing *fit* in lieu of *et* (as was suggested by Shackle 1922), the line is in fact sufficiently intelligible — if admittedly condensed — without any alteration.

It is therefore not an easy matter to determine how and when a stylistic oddity found in an author's textual transmission is a genuine rarity deployed for artistic (or even carefree) reasons or an anomaly introduced by the omnipresent possibility that a human scribe will fail in the task at hand. All we can do is set the case in its particular context, as best we can, and debate the possibilities open-mindedly, in the genuine hope that the truth, or at least the most probable conceivable option, will percolate through the alembic.

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**38** Munro's attempt to change all of the last category to *necessumst*, or to suggest that there was an archaic nominative *necessu*, is manifestly misguided. Lucretius' carefree commingling of these forms could be evidence in the appearance of *necessest* at 3.806 alongside *necessust* at 5.351, at the start of a largely identical thirteen-line passage; alternatively, the former case be a banalisation of an original *necessust*, in which case many other similar cases may have suffered a similar fate in the poem.

**39** Perhaps *ipsa* — without an accompanying *est* — could be a suggestion for the apparatus.

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# Catullus 64 and the Temptation to Expressionism in Latin Epic

**Abstract:** This contribution considers how the highly intense style of Catullus 64 has elements which can be characterised as 'expressionist' or 'mannered', and how these elements are echoed in later Latin hexameter verse (especially Vergil's *Eclogues*).

## 1 Expressionism

### 1.1 Introduction

The poetry of the Romans was born within the framework of a 'translation project',[1] favouring the high genres of the Greek tradition and on the other hand making sure to meet, with its rhythms and colours, the profound sensitivity of the Latin ear. Its characteristic procedure is that of a transformative appropriation (*uertere*). The Latin rewritings transform the *exemplaria Graeca* with a spirit of emulation that uses magnification, pathos, spectacularisation, and enhancement of national cultural traits to achieve its own 'victory'.

Especially in Italy, where studies on 'artistic translation' have developed since the mid-twentieth century,[2] there is an established habit of referring to the phenomena of amplification and stylistic intensification, characteristic of Latin cultured poetry and in particular of the epos, with the word 'expressionism', which combines ideology, psychological attitude, and above all style.

The purpose of this pair of essays is to test the validity of this paradigm by applying it to a text, Catullus' poem 64, which notoriously played a determining role in the development of the Latin epos, and which is conversely considered as a stage of this development in which the trend towards expressionism of the epic style fades away.

I will proceed in this first paper by recalling the fundamental characteristics of historical Expressionism, useful on a heuristic level, as we shall see, if considered in their mutual relationships; I will then focus on the reasons and ways of

1 Feeney 2016, 45–64.
2 Mariotti 1952.

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applying the category of expressionism to Latin texts, starting with a 1963 article by Antonio La Penna. In the second paper, I will focus on poem 64 and on some forms of its reception in later epic poetry, to show specifically how the experiments conducted by Catullus on the structure, themes, and style of the epic offered useful ideas for the newly founded trend of expressionistic writing.

## 1.2 Historical Expressionism

In 1902, the French painter Julien-Auguste Hervé presented eight paintings entitled *espressionismes* at the *Salon des Indépendents* in Paris. They advocated poetics opposed to those of impressionism, which were seen as radically naturalistic. The new term, 'Expressionism', did not take hold in France but was adopted in Germany, where it signalled, from 1907 onwards and for almost twenty years, the national variant of the historical avantgarde movements in all the arts.[3]

Gottfried Benn describes it as a phenomenon that was multifaceted in its manifestations yet unified both in its inner attitude (destruction of reality, getting to the root of things and thus expressing a creative spirit) and in its style (antinaturalistic, as were all European artistic manifestations at the time).[4]

German Expressionism certainly evolved: it manifested itself first in painting and music, and lastly in literature, where it was characterised by various phases, which are best grasped by considering the field of lyric poetry.[5] In terms of how an expressionist self-awareness in the arts came to be, the first important texts are *Abstraktion und Einfühlung* by Wilhelm Worringer (1908) and Hermann Bahr's *Expressionismus* (1916). The evolution of the historic notion of Expressionism towards its metaphoric meaning is built on these foundations.[6] It then follows a path that goes through the awareness of notions of pre-existence (Grünewald, El Greco, Cézanne, van Gogh, Munch; Goethe, Hölderlin, Kleist, Büchner, Nietzsche, Strindberg) and of a current validation in culturally similar areas, particularly by German academic critics of the Weimar era (e.g. Leo Spitzer on Jules Romains).[7] The evolution ends as soon as the expressionist label is quietly applied to authors who have neither a direct link to the movement (e.g. Joyce,

3 I follow Martini 1958 for the chronology of the Expressionistic period (1907–1926); see also Mittner 1965, 5–12, Chiarini 2011, 121–127.

4 Benn 1989.

5 Contini 1989, 44.

6 Contini 1989; La Penna 1963 coined the successful formula 'metaphoric expressionism': see below, 78–86.

7 Spitzer 1924.

Celine, Gadda) nor a remote one (e.g. Quevedo, Rabelais, Jacopone da Todi, Lucan). As it usually happens in such cases, the defining efficacy of a term diminishes when its categorial use is detached from historical awareness.

To begin with, I would like to recall some key aspects of historical Expressionism that are also specifically relevant to the development of my own argument.

1) *Mala tempora*. Bahr begins the chapter entitled ‘Expressionism’ in his eponymous essay with the following words: ‘This is the vital point — that man should find himself again’. A little further, writing about his own time, he adds: ‘Man [having become a tool of his own work, of the machine] has been gripped by great anguish: art, too, is screaming [...] it calls for help, for the spirit: this is Expressionism’. Conversely: ‘Never has an epoch expressed so much joy and purity as did the dominant bourgeois society that advocated Impressionism’.[8] Yet now the German bourgeoisie is epitomised in Heinrich Mann’s 1918 *Der Untertan* (*The Loyal Subject*); the human being is hollowed out by bureaucracy, industrialisation, militarism and eventually becomes a doll, a marionette, a mechanised puppet.

2) *A movement for young people*. Groups of young avant-garde painters give rise to expressionist art (*Die Brücke*, 1905–1913, *Der blaue Reiter*, 1911–1914). The rebellious attitude of the younger generations is typical of the German avant-garde; young authors, especially in the field of literature, came mainly from the cultured upper middle classes. Among the groups of young poets who would soon call themselves — or would be called — ‘expressionists’ were the ‘neo-pathetics’. In Berlin, they founded the *Neopathetisches Cabaret*, a programme of poetic readings and other activities which, under the guidance of Kurt Hiller, meant to lay bare and to contrast the era’s ‘central apathy’ and its false remedy, ‘empty pathos’. This new pathos brought together the two main trends in the expressionist poetry of the 1910s: the cosmic trend of the ‘eternists’ (which prevailed) and the political-social, utopian one of the ‘activists’.

3) *Expressionism vs Naturalism* (a). Bahr holds that Impressionism is naturalism’s point of arrival, for it attempts to undo the modifying action of the subject upon the optical stimulus produced by the object.[9] It is the swan song of the mimetic art that began with the Greeks, who saw themselves organically within the object and communed fearlessly with nature.[10] Such art is now anachronistic, yet it still reflects the common taste. Expressionism’s eye is *der Auge des Geistes*; an

**8** Bahr 1924, 83–84.

**9** Bahr 1924, 83–91.

**10** See also Worringer 1997, 3–25.

active eye, organ of the creative subject who projects inner images, *phantasiai* that deform, transform, or replace reality.[11]

4) *Expressionism vs Naturalism* (b). Visiting an exhibition by the painter Ludwig von Hoffman in 1895, Bahr was struck by the red trees in one of the paintings. In a review he spoke of this as a choice that did not signal fashionable poetics but rather a specific spiritual reality, the painter's inner experience, which produced a new sensory stimulus. He was unknowingly announcing the new art. On the one hand, the new art proceeded by progressively reducing sensory data, veering towards abstraction while, on the other hand, rendering our perceptions absolute so as to invert the relationship between the objects and their properties. Colour was not applied to a body; a body was applied to colour instead. The result was a violent distortion of reality. Through this subversion, painting greatly influenced expressionist poetry. In some way, the objects of the expressionist vision can be made in the laboratory. The poet who follows this path dissociates quality from substance by recurring to hypallage, thus also contemplating the possibility of an axiological inversion for the benefit of quality, i.e. of the adjective (e.g. Cat. 64.305 *infirmo quatientes corpora motu*). It is clear that such a technique may evolve, even on the ancient poet's page, into a language capable of expressing an inner experience or a personal vision.

5) *Expressionism vs Naturalism* (c). The texts gathered in the *Blaue Reiter Almanach* (1912) document the younger authors' creative search in several fields, as well as an awareness of common foundations and goals of the arts. Many authors are blessed with a *Doppelbegabung* (Kokoschka is both painter and playwright, Barlach sculptor and playwright, Schönberg composer and painter etc.); Bahr writes of the 'music of the eye'.[12] Kasimir Edschmid's famous expression, 'the impressionist looks, the expressionist sees' (i.e. gives expression to an internal vision, the only one capable of truthfully discerning and representing things), is part of a discourse about the new poetry.[13] Kandinsky states that in the work of the productive artist (as opposed to the imitative one) form is the expression of an inner content, of the spirit.[14] This content advances the creative process by *resonating*, as an *inner sound* in search of the right means of expression. The aesthetic problem is reduced to the possibility of bringing the form back to its inner necessity. The audience will give a spiritual reply to an internally necessary form; *synaesthesia* will be part of this profound reply.

**11** Bahr 1924, 56–71.

**12** Bahr 1924, 71–80.

**13** Edschmid 1957, a very important text overall.

**14** Kandinsky 1912, Chiarini 1964.

6) *Expressionism vs Naturalism* (d). In all manifestations of historical modernism, from Callimachus to the Roman *poetae noui* to the German Expressionists, the truly modern work reveals what it has left behind, as well as the problems it faces, the means it uses, its own formative process. The 'montage' technique achieves this effect in narrative fiction, in theatre, and in film. It is fair to say that expressionist narrative literature is inaugurated by Alfred Döblin's 1913 short story *Die Ermordung einer Butterblume*, a text characterised by a segmented composition, whereby the different segments abruptly fade into each other, like short film shots assembled in a non-linear montage. The expressionist dramatists inspired by cinematic montage followed narrative examples such as this one. In this style of 'visible montage', caesura, asymmetry, and contrast become key structural principles. Moreover — consider *dicuntur, perhibent* and the other Alexandrian footnotes of Catullus 64 — 'montage is the art of recovering old materials: it does not create anything *ex nihilo*, but organises the narrative material by ensuring that it is cut in a meaningful way'.[15] In particular, the montage technique in Joyce's *Ulysses* offers ideas to expressionist dramaturgy and narrative. Both the characters' thoughts, perceptions, emotions, and the author's expressions are juxtaposed so as not to evoke an authorial direction. Yet the author has chosen, edited, and shaped the composition's narrative segments. These segments, in turn, often represent levels of the story whose distinction is entrusted to the reader's intuition (*metalepsis*).[16]

7) *Subjectivism. Aber ich will Ich werden!* (G. Benn, *Der junge Hebbel*). The expressionist self dissolves and deforms the coordinates of the objective world. The phenomenology of this new, powerful subjectivism is varied, remaining a constant feature of the new art — from Hoffman's red trees, which announce it, to Benn's transcendentalism, in which it culminates. The maturation of Benn's ideas and style would lead him, after 1933, beyond the confines of Expressionism towards formalism and static poetry. In his later poems, he privileges the second of the two main directions attributed to Expressionism, 'scream' and 'geometry'.[17] The link between these two creative attitudes, seemingly opposed in their respectively irrational and rational origins, is the role played by the search for the essence. Essence is perceived as a starting point ('the naked Man'), expressed by

**15** Pavis 1996.

**16** E.g.: ' – I was with Bob Doran, he's on one of his periodical bends, and what do you call him Bantam Lyons [Bloom's words]. Just down there in Conway's we were. Doran Lyons in Conway's [Bloom's conscience]. She raised a gloved hand to her hair [Narrator's voice]'. Trimble 2020 is illuminating on *metalepsis* in Catullus, especially in poem 64.

**17** Mittner 1965, 41–61.

the apocalyptic scream, at once destructive and liberating, or else is reached through the simplification processes of abstract art.

By using expressions such as 'rivoluzione neoterica' {neoteric revolution} or 'Catullan Revolution' or 'poésie romaine d'avant-garde' {avant-garde Roman poetry}, we project the idea of revolution and avant-garde that has established itself in Western culture, thanks to expressionist aesthetics, onto an ancient historical phenomenon. And when we say, decisively and with good reason, that Catullus' poem 64 is the most 'modern' poem of Latin literature, we are referring to a phase in the history of modernity that, at a time of anguish, marked a spiritual revolution through the scream, through abstraction, atonal music, cinematic montage.

Reception studies have developed the tools necessary to understand these projections not only in order to control them, but also to enhance their critical import. All the features extrapolated from historical Expressionism — *mala tempora*, non-conformism and anti-traditionalism, generational art and artistic circles, criticism of naturalism and hypertrophic subjectivity, new narrative and representational modes — can be found in the neoteric experience. As a complex — i.e. as an internally connected whole — they offer an interesting heuristic possibility to anyone studying the most emblematic product of Latin 'modernism', the Catullan epyllion.

## 1.3 Metaphorical expressionism (and mannerism)

The use of the term 'expressionism' as a means to define certain features of the style of works of Latin literature began with Antonio La Penna's article entitled 'Tre poesie espressionistiche di Orazio (ed una meno espressionistica)'.[18] In this paper La Penna outlines Horace's expressionism as being both 'expressive energy' accumulated in a given historical experience, and as a *modus operandi*, namely that of selecting and carefully combining contents which lend themselves to an expressive intensification, in particular tending towards the spheres of the horrid and revolting. This form of expressionism, thus defined with reference to the *Epodes* where it is more extrinsic and more thematically marked (civil wars, magic rituals, grotesque situations), undergoes a process of refinement in *C.* 1.25, where it is integrally absorbed into the transfiguration of a topic from low to tragic.[19]

**18** La Penna 1963.
**19** La Penna 1963, 192.

La Penna thus adheres to the methodological explanation offered in his introductory paragraph, which has become well-known also beyond the field of classical studies thanks to its practical value.[20] He uses the term 'expressionism' metaphorically when he says:

> I am not referring to Expressionist poetics, to a call to the root and to the expression's inner strength against impressionism and realism, but only to a salient feature of actual Expressionist literature and art, which, I think, is best known among the educated public. I am referring to the violent intensification of expression, no longer held back by a measure that imposes the effort necessary to adequately render an objective reality, which is to say: to the immeasurable accentuation of tones and colours.[21]

La Penna's choice of terminology, with his evident avoidance of the term 'baroque', is due to his intention to draw a distinction between what could be viewed as futile play or empty exaggeration (practices which a metaphorical use of 'baroque' could recall) and real intensification, caused by true emotions and dilemmas.[22] This specification entails the formulation of a critical tool endowed with two functions. On the one hand, by understanding certain poetic choices as expressionist, a reader would tend to form a more balanced judgement of poets who were at the time discredited, such as Lucan and Seneca the tragic dramatist, and more broadly of all such Latin poetry as was generally despised for being overly rhetorical, overblown, unrefined etc. On the other hand, a reader with a growing sensitivity to the 'colore acceso' {bright colour} of much Latin culture would refine their ability — so La Penna writes — to perceive its being distinct from Hellenistic culture.

The acquisition of the term 'expressionism' within the descriptive lexicon of the critic, and the first articulation of its meaning as applied to the analysis of Horace's poems, lay the foundations for a development which takes place, three years later, in La Penna's first monograph on Virgil.[23]

In this work, the use of the word 'expressionism' is not limited to that of identifying, sensitively describing, and lending value to a class of stylistic features; rather, it assumes a more clearly hermeneutical function inasmuch as it connects individual phenomena to the psychological core of Virgil's works, as well as to the technique which translates the latter into structure and language. La Penna's

**20** Contini 1989, 103–104.

**21** La Penna 1963, 181 (trans. mine).

**22** Macchioni Iodi 1973 provides good information on the discrediting of 'baroque' in contemporary Italian culture.

**23** La Penna 1966, 88–96.

main interest is that of defining how expressionism serves as a means to facilitate a gradual dissolution of images, whose place is taken up by musical evocations, throughout the arc of Virgil's poetic *oeuvre*. The endpoint of this analysis, which is of course concerned with the *Aeneid*, also stands as the endpoint of La Penna's essay as a whole. Indeed, it presents expressionism as a possibility which becomes available to epic style, once the contours of what is visible have been subsumed into a state of psychic intensity: the possibility of deforming reality by evocative means. This possibility is, in his view, one which is open, available, rather than intentionally pursued:

> Expressionism always works on that affective material which lies in the feelings of the narrator or in the lyric commentary of the narrator [...]. Its dramatic vocation, however, preserves it, and its art brings about a difficult and risky balance between dramatic realism and a tendency to the sublime, including in this, to simplify things, its inclination towards expressionism.[24]

Here, it seems to me, La Penna draws a deeper lesson from the poetics and the anti-impressionist poems he had excluded from his horizon in the 1963 article on Horace. Indeed, he makes heuristic use of this knowledge, which produces a new and relevant perspective, sharpening both the understanding and the reception of Horace's text. It should be noted, however, that although *Virgilio e la crisi del mondo antico* exerted a very significant influence on Virgil studies in Italy, this was not due, or only to a limited extent, to its final pages.[25]

They are not quoted by Elena Zaffagno, author of the only existing monograph on Latin expressionism,[26] or by La Penna's disciple Alessandro Perutelli, undoubtedly the scholar who has given the greatest scope to this category introduced into the lexicon of Latin studies by La Penna.[27]

Perutelli must have meditated upon this sentence of La Penna's, yet never quotes it, due, perhaps, to the *lapsus* it appears to contain:[28]

> One could talk about expressionism in connection with Ennius, Accius or Lucretius, and, under another label, with Plautus and the Varro of the *Menippeae*; if then one thinks of

**24** La Penna 1966, 96 (trans. mine).

**25** Much less abroad: Johnson 1976 takes no account of La Penna's remarks in his seminal chapter 'Blurring images'.

**26** Zaffagno 1987.

**27** Perutelli 2000; 2002; 2004.

**28** La Penna 1963, 182.

> Lucan, Seneca, Juvenal, one could even be tempted to conclude that the classical period in Latin culture is a kind of major gap in the *expressionist movement*.[29]

Perutelli's history of Latin epic — a genre whose vitality he dates from Livius Andronicus to Silius Italicus but not beyond — in broad terms reflects the picture outlined by La Penna: Roman epic is characterised by expressionism up to the *neoteroi*, but not including them; the *epyllion* contained in *Georgics* 4 still gravitates towards Catullus 64;[30] in the *Aeneid* and, to a much lesser extent, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, there are situations whose contents and language bear the unmistakable hallmark of expressionism; archaic expressionism lays itself out expansively in Lucan's work, mediated at times by Virgilian occurrences; subsequent epic poets keep their ear keenly attuned to the timbre of Lucan's word.

Perutelli rightly offers as exemplary early instances of expressionism in Roman epic poetry, cases such as Livius Andronicus' translation of *Odyssey* 8.138–139 and 5.297 in his *Odusia* (frs. 9 and 30 Mariotti),[31] which testify to the tendency within the practice of *vertere* of increasing the expressiveness of the original by means of the following devices: i) the expansion at a quantitative level (as well as simplification with an intensifying effect); ii) the addition of images or their intensification; iii) the addition of colours or their intensification; iv) the selective enhancement of sound effects; and v) the modification of the lexicon, phraseology, and tension structures of tragedy. Epic *aemulatio* thus comes to amount to the production of a series of effects (generally pathos, monumentality, theatricality), achieved by employing specific means (amplification, paroxysm, visualisation), and which is in overall harmony with the linguistic and expressive base of pre-literary poetry (cult *carmina* with their textures of alliteration and assonance); indeed, the expressive use of archaising features, well attested in Ennius' epic, is no more than a sophisticated integration (or prosecution) of this premise. Latin expressionism, however, only fulfils its purpose entirely when it draws the attention of an educated reader towards its relationship with its literary model, so that the advancement of the Hellenisation of Latin poetry is resolved in the Romanisation of Greek poetry, i.e. through a process of cultural appropriation and self-affirmation.[32]

Expressionism, therefore, is a sign both of Romanness and of Romanisation; it is thus a feature which is specific to Latin poetry and in particular to epic which

**29** My italics.

**30** Perutelli 2000, 68–71, is particularly accurate on the selective, segmented narrative that Virgil inherits from the neoteric epyllion.

**31** Perutelli 2000, 18–19.

**32** Feeney 2016, esp. 152–178.

sings of *res Romanae*. However, in order for it to be understood and appreciated fully as art, and not only perceived as far as its effects are concerned, a term of comparison is always required (this can be a single, specific model or a class of models, or a linguistic or formal standard); the other requirement is an audience capable of appreciating the model.

Let us consider another Latin translation of Homer, in this case from the age of Sulla. In his *Ilias* Matius (fr. 6 Blänsdorf) writes: *ille hietans herbam moribundo contigit ore.*[33] This line, reported by the grammarian Diomedes (345, 9 Keil) as an example of the frequentative of the verb *hio*, has no counterpart in the original. It does, however, provide a variation of the topos ὀδὰξ ἑλεῖν οὖδας ('to grasp the earth with [his] teeth'): firstly by individualising the action, which in Homer is always used with a singular subject, and foregrounding it;[34] secondly by modifying the image by replacing earth with grass; and finally reinforcing the expressiveness of the line by freeing it from its formulaic quality through introducing the frequentative form of the verb, alliteration (*hietans herbam*), the attributive use of *moribundus* and the hypallage which zooms in on the dying man's grimace. Indeed, it is to be noted how the transferred use of the adjective is the key ingredient of the expressionistic quality of this line, whose purpose as a whole is to enable the audience to envisage a new image.[35]

Alfonso Traina, to whom we owe the most refined analysis of this fragment, detects behind the rare *hieto* its synonym *oscito* found at Ennius *Ann.* 483–484 Sk. *Oscitat in campis caput a ceruice reuolsum / Semianimesque micant oculi lucemque requirunt*, another locus featuring an 'effetto espressionistico'.[36] Traina adds that Matius could have made use of the adverb *mordicus* for his rendering of the Homeric ὀδάξ, but rejects it due to its inadequacy in terms of style. Virgil, who was familiar with this line in which Matius has the merit of transferring the death scene from the plural to the individual, thus emancipating it from its original epic formula, rewrote it at *Aen.* 11.418 *procubuit moriens et humum simul ore momordit*, 'eliminando o attenuando le punte espressionistiche' {eliminating or attenuating the expressionistic points} in the process.[37]

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**33** The constitution of the text of this fragment is problematic: see Traina 1986$^2$, 47–52. Ronconi 1973, 37 interprets that the grass is just 'touched' because the open mouth of the dying warrior is without strength, rightly.

**34** Traina 1986$^2$, 53.

**35** See above (76) on hypallage as a stylistic factor of expressionism.

**36** Traina 1986$^2$, 56–57.

**37** Traina 1986$^2$, 57. In fact, he himself later notes how *hietans* has been abandoned, *moribundo* resolved into the pure verbal value of *moriens*, dissociated from *ore*, and *herbam* brought back to the Homeric image, *humum*.

The sequence Homer-(Ennius)-Matius-Virgil offers an interesting picture of the way in which expressionism is formed, modulated, and sharpened throughout the development of Latin epic poetry. Virgil, as we shall see in other instances, often has the role of moderator, and yet demonstrates his understanding of the expressionist style as an intrinsic feature of the Roman mind and as idiomatic of its main form of literary expression, namely epic poetry.[38]

Matius most likely belonged to the so-called pre-neoteric generation. In Perutelli's view two figures, a poet and a prose writer of that same time, Laevius and Sisenna respectively, embody the far limit reached by archaic expressionism before the 'parentesi che abbraccia il neoterismo e gran parte della poesia augustea' {parenthesis encompassing *neotericism* and much of Augustan poetry}.[39]

Laevius, as the initiator of Latin lyric poetry, on the one hand, and as a member of the new Roman Alexandrianism, on the other, is the perfect author whose work can be used to exemplify, by contrast, the neoteric attitude in matter of poetic taste and language: indeed, Laevius' modernism feeds upon materials and methods — especially in the sphere of lexical composition — inherited from tragic expressionism and which had already incurred the censure of Lucilius, whose spirit is to a certain extent furthered by neoteric poetry itself.[40]

As for Sisenna, in a chapter on the influence of tragic Greek historiography on his prose — viewed through the lens of Latin tragedy and of Caelius Antipater's linguistic virtuosity — Perutelli offers a close commentary on fr. 91 Peter *perditantur tormenta ac tela multaque genera machinamentorum*, where he observes how the accurate elaboration of the sentence, especially formulated with the help of alliterations and assonances, produces a wanted effect of disproportion between form and substance. This sophisticated type of contrast, which is documented in a variety of other forms in the fragments, constitutes an attitude which Perutelli names as 'espressionismo manieristico' {mannerist expressionism}, leaving the reader with the task of explaining this label.[41]

In this instance it is a case of expressionism devoid of any pathos or aberration, with an emphasis given to form which thus captures readers' attention for its own sake; in fr. 91, the devices which provide unity (alliteration and assonance) have

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**38** See below, 98–101.

**39** Perutelli 2002, 66. The quote is taken from a good recapitulation of the meaning of 'expressionism' with regard to Latin literature, starting from La Penna 1963; see above, 78–80, and below, 99–100.

**40** Perutelli 2002, 59–70.

**41** Perutelli 2004, 22 (but the entire section is entitled 'Sisenna e l'espressionismo manieristico').

as their ultimate aim that of disunifying (the signifier from the meaning), with a sophisticated effect of estrangement.

In Germany — that is, in the very homeland of the Expressionist avant-garde — starting from the ’60s of the twentieth century, ‘mannerism’ as a label was applied to almost the same facts which in Italy would be labelled as ‘expressionist’. The German category of ‘mannerism’, however, also included among its phenomena formal exaggerations whose effect was a peculiar embellishing, or embellishment combined with a sense of paradox, or further to exhibit artificiality, with a metalinguistic or playful intent: it was probably this meaning of the term that prompted Perutelli to coin the formula ‘espressionismo manieristico’.

The use of the term ‘Mannerism’ in the context of Latin studies stems from Erich Burck’s 1971 *Vom römischen Manierismus*, in which he developed into essay form an idea first presented in a 1966 talk. At a time when substantial interest in Mannerism as an artistic and literary phenomenon had emerged, Burck included under the label of ‘Roman Mannerism’ a group of works belonging to a precise historical period — Seneca’s tragedies, the epic poems by Lucan, Statius,[42] Valerius Flaccus, and Silius Italicus — which in his view shared, albeit to varying degrees,[43] an anti-tyrannical ideology, an interest in the tragic theme of the civil war, as well as a taste for the macabre and the gory and a stylistic attitude which developed ‘abnormally, in gigantic terms, the dimensions of greatness, fullness, and dynamism’.[44] A tendency to blur the edges of characters, rendering them as if they were the vehicle of passions which would find expression in juxtaposed scenes or segments of the narrative which were not, at any rate, fused into an organic whole: here Burck identified another common trait.

The rediscovery of Mannerist art in the German cultural area dates back to the Twenties, at the height of the Expressionist period. That the metaphorical use of the term ‘Expressionism’ came on to the scene relatively early on has already been mentioned; this was hailed by famous claims like the following, taken from Kasimir Edschmid’s 1917 manifesto: ‘Expressionism [...] is a requirement of the spirit [...] there has been expressionism in every age’.[45] Something not unlike this happens with the term ‘Mannerism’. In his essay, Burck responds to the categorial, non-historical meaning assigned by Ernst Robert Curtius to the term

**42** Specifically on ‘mannerist’ applied to Statius’ poetry, see Bessone’s piece in this volume.

**43** Valerius Flaccus’ and Silius Italicus’ ‘mannerism’ is more moderate (or less prone to expressionism) than Lucan’s, Seneca’s, and Statius’. Fucecchi 2012–2013 brilliantly contextualises and analyses Burck’s essay.

**44** Burck 2012, 11, 15.

**45** Edschmid 1957, 40.

'mannerism':[46] according to the latter the term should be applied 'simply to indicate the common denominator for all literary tendencies which are opposed to Classicism, whether they be pre-classical, post-classical, or contemporary with any Classicism'.[47] In his view, Asian rhetoric should be considered as a first large-scale example of literary mannerism. It was characterised by two main aspects: *nimius cultus* and *nimius tumor*, linked to each other by opposition to the *sanitas* of the standard classicist who expresses 'what he has to say in a form naturally suited to the subject'.[48] In Asianist rhetoric, as in later forms of literary mannerism, form prevails over content, thus breaking the classical harmony and upsetting or morbidly thrilling the reader; and the choice of content — extraordinary, pathological, or paradoxical situations — is often determined by the style, by a willingness to test the language through extreme experiments, particularly of *tumor*, but also of *cultus*.

Individual authors have proved their ability to express themselves in both ways. In the work of Statius, mannerism was realised by employing amplification as well as a precious descriptivism. The former aspect was examined by Burck after Hugo Friedrich, a disciple of Curtius, and Hubert Cancik had well described and documented a type of mannerism which presents itself as 'refined in terms of language and description [...] and which, in its extreme concision, often veers towards the symbolic and becomes, at times, pure sensual seduction'. This precious form of mannerism can be seen earlier than Statius' *Silvae* in 'certain stylistic and figurative tendencies of the neoteric epyllion'.[49]

Curtius' claim that all non-classical art is mannerist shares some common ground with La Penna, according to whom 'il classico nella cultura latina è quasi una grande parentesi nel movimento espressionistico' {the classic in Latin culture is almost a great parenthesis in the expressionist movement}.[50] Furthermore, the features which enable Burck to gather together under the umbrella-label of mannerism both the tragedy and epic poetry of the Silver Age, and which concern both their style and their contents, largely coincide with those which, in La Penna's view, qualify much Roman poetry as expressionist.[51]

Perutelli coins the formula 'manierismo espressionista' and applies it to texts whose contents are free from pathos or aberration, but where what counts as

**46** Burck 2012, 7–15, Fucecchi 2012–2013, 265–266.
**47** Curtius 2013, 273.
**48** Curtius 2013, 274.
**49** Burck 2012, 11.
**50** See above, 81.
**51** See above, 78–79.

'expressionist' is the spirit of exaggeration, whereas mannerism emerges in the means of their realisation, as applied to their form.

The formula 'espressionismo manierista' thus stands in parallel to that of 'precious mannerism' as a means of identifying phenomena of deviation from the classical norm, which do not embody 'the dimensions of greatness, fullness, and dynamism'.[52]

As illustrated above, the works of a single author, Statius, present instances of both forms of what Gustave René Hocke (another of Curtius' disciples) calls 'irregular art'.[53] I am interested in exploring the possibility that they might be simultaneously present in another single work, Catullus' poem 64. This poem belongs to a high genre, epic poetry, but is a *miniaturised* expression of the same, as well as an especially learned one; its *doctrina*, however, has the function of signalling an *increment* — as to its range, its intensity, its dramatic quality, its complexity, and its level of embellishment — as compared to the Greek examples of its same type.

This small epic poem therefore embodies simultaneously the result of two opposing processes, reduction and augmentation; it is a work brimming with culture, expressing the sentiment of a society reaching a final crisis while on the other hand manifesting the potential of renovating poetry from within its noblest genre. This can help explain why Catullus 64 will exert an incalculable influence which will be channelled along a path dug by Virgil, with his *Eclogue* 4 and the final section of the *Georgics*, both of which can be described as texts which are 'higher than expected'. Catullus' poem does not halt the 'movimento espressionista' {expressionist movement} of Latin culture;[54] rather, it stands out as the Latin text which is the best match for the heuristic application of the expressionist paradigm, understood as being a set of questions and answers which periodically represent themselves in the history of culture, whose definition at its clearest and most complete was reached in the poetics of German Expressionism.

**52** Burck 2012, 11.

**53** Hocke 1959.

**54** See above, 81.

# 2 Catullus 64

This second paper highlights a series of situations where the expressionism discussed in the first paper can be found in Catullus' epyllion, poem 64:

1. as a possibility created by the narrator's attitude, who refers to a tradition while at the same time improvising his narrative, as a reaction of a condition of pathos;
2. as the overstepping of sharply drawn limits, leading to processes such as enlargement, intensification, broadening (transcoding, *synaesthesia*), the increasing of visibility or of formal elaboration;
3. as the thematising of artistic problems as themes, especially the problem of *mimesis*;
4. as the perfecting of structures, motifs, and stylistic features which will pave the way for the development of expressionism in later epic poetry;
5. as the achieving of a balance between irrationality and rationality or, in other terms, between energy and construction, which find explicit manifestation in the expression of the prominent narrator and the complexity of the text's structure, i.e. of the authorial design.

## 2.1 Catullus 64

The beginning of poem 64 evokes other famous beginnings, by means of its style (Callim. *Hecale* fr. 1 Hollis, Theocr. 18.1–6, Mosch. *Europa* 1) and its content (Eur. *Medea*, 1–8, Enn. *Medea uel Medea exsul*, fr. 1 J., in turn exerting an influence (e.g. Lucan. 6.400–1 *prima fretum scindens Pagasaeo litore pinus / terrenum ignotas hominem proiecit in undas*):[55]

> Peliaco quondam prognatae uertice pinus
> dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas
> Phasidos ad fluctus et fines Aeetaeos,
> cum lecti iuuenes, Argiuae robora pubis,
> auratam optantes Colchis auertere pellem 5
> ausi sunt uada salsa cita decurrere puppi,
> caerula uerrentes abiegnis aequora palmis.

*Ausi sunt* (l. 6): after the young heroes *dared* to make their journey, the world was never the same again; after Euripides *dared* to stage his *Medea*, tragic poetry was

55 Esposito 2019, 766.

never the same; the ancient epos was no longer the same after Apollonius' *Argonautica*; nor the Latin epos, after a poet *dared* to write poem 64, nor indeed the subgenre of the epyllion *tout court*.

The reader of Catullus immediately experiences this attitude of the poet. The *audacity* of the young Argives is remembered in a very daring poetic construction.[56] The incipit with *quondam*, devoid of the epic invocation, unmistakably qualifies this beginning as the beginning of an epos *à la* Callimachus (see below), that is of a short epos;[57] however the clues that announce something small are contained in a singularly large textual unit, a periodic structure that extends for seven lines and consists of six clauses. This *periodus* has a correlative structure (*quondam* ... *cum*) which *docte* specifies the standard structure of the *cum inversum*: in Theocr. 18.1–5 (ποκ᾽ ἄρα ... ἁνίκα) the same arrangement gave importance to the main information, placed in the subordinate clause.[58]

But in Catullus 64.1–7 what is the main information? A motif (the *mirum* of the first navigation), which requires, for the very novelty of the fact, a special expressiveness and a descriptive treatment, contends for the status of 'main information' with the theme conveyed in the *cum*-clause (the feat of the Argonauts).

The first, ample sentence of the poem is both prologue and prelude, if by prelude we mean a beginning that shapes the listening disposition; and this second function prevails. 'Nothing is as it seems' is the law with which the reader must familiarise himself/herself; and we must bear in mind that here the appearance does not coincide with a presupposed ingenuity or average knowledge, but with the expectations of the educated reader. Along the way this law of reading, which leads the reader from discovery to discovery,[59] will be transformed into the profound meaning of the text.

Therefore narrating and describing, communicating and expressing vie for primacy in this peculiar prologue/prelude. As a prologue this opening passage could end in l. 6, where we encounter the apodosis of the period ([*cum lecti iuuenes*] *ausi sunt*). But this apparent closure is followed by a sort of epiphrasis, a

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**56** For the metapoetic meaning of this beginning, see Harrison 2007, whose focus is however different from mine. Harrison 2021, esp. 241–243, is also interesting (on metapoetics in poem 4).

**57** Fernandelli 2012, 1–4 and 2016, 139, n. 7; *aliter* Trimble 2012.

**58** Fernandelli 2012, 1–3.

**59** Klingner 1964, 213: 'Überläßt man sich dem Zug des Gedichts, ohne zurück- und vorauszudenken, so ist das wie die Fahrt durch ein Inselmeer, in dem sich hinter jedem Landvorsprung neue, überraschende Durchfahrten und Raüme auftun' {One abandons oneself to the stream of the poem, without retrospective or prospective consideration, so it becomes like the journey through an archipelago, in which behind every promontory new, surprising routes and spaces open up}.

second participial phrase (*caerula uerrentes abiegnis aequora palmis*): this extension, however, is in itself a model of conciseness, since it concentrates two Ennian hexameters in five words, memorable for their descriptive exuberance (*Ann.* 377–378 Sk. *Verrunt extemplo placidum mare: marmore flauo* / *Caeruleum spumat sale conferta rate pulsum*). Ennius creates a *mirum* in terms of form, which prevails over content; in Catullus *mirabile* is a perception internal to the fiction, suggested as such by an extreme use of *metalepsis*:[60] its image is not fantastic, the metaphors that constitute it are 'necessary' catachreses, which take the place of words not yet coined at the moment in which the *mirum* of the *pinus nantes* presented itself to its first spectators.[61] L. 7 is thus linked to ll. 1–2 through its own language and seals the prelude-function of this long *periodus*: it immediately produces the idea that this text does not lend itself to a unilateral or relaxed reading.

As the poet 'dares', the expectations of the (educated) reader, continually stimulated by the *doctrina* of the text, turn out every time to be too conventional, insufficient, off target. This also applies to the word that marks the text as epyllion, *quondam*: the reader who 'scholastically' recognises its function (a generic marker) will understand the text well only by grasping the nostalgic connotation of the adverb, which will emerge retrospectively and unequivocally, when their reading reaches l. 22 (*O nimis optato saeclorum tempore nati*).[62] In the *Hecale*, and then in some later *epyllia*, the ποτε of the first verse oriented the mind towards an indeterminate temporality, in which an episode of the myth took place; this prepared for a hyper-determined outcome in history. The aetiology of Ζεὺς Ἑκάλειος was the arrival point of an epos that had opened with the verse Ἀκταίη τις ἔναιεν Ἐρεχθέος ἔν ποτε γουνῷ. Poem 64, which refers to this archetype with its *quondam* of l. 1, interprets the aetiological model, significantly distancing itself from it: in this epyllion, the present is not evoked through a single object familiar to everyone and which documents a continuity, but as a general context which demonstrates a hiatus and motivates a nostalgic escape; the 'cause' that matters in this text is found in the present, not in the myth; and it is the very cause of the story: an affection that gives rise to a variegated improvisation.

Therefore the whole poem is an utterance produced by a state of mind, that is, it is *expression*; it is the expression of a subject — the narrator — who is not so much an empirical 'I' as a generational 'I', with a clear cultural and ethical-psychological profile. In other words, it is an 'I' that, in the eyes of the reader, is not identified through ideas, that appear conventional, but through certain accents

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**60** See above, 89.

**61** Fernandelli 2016, 153–154.

**62** Fernandelli 2012, 20–27, with bibliography.

of his speech, the intensity of sympathies and idiosyncrasies, the refinement of culture, the particularities of style. This subjectivity emerges clearly for the first time in ll. 19–21 (tum *Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore*, / tum *Thetis humanos non despexit hymenaeos*, / tum *Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit*), when the narrator confirms, in the passionate way that the triple anaphora underlines, that he is reporting the correct version of this history (l. 16 *illa, atque <haud> alia… luce*).[63]

The narrator deals only with traditional contents; he is identified through the way of treating them, which here begins to redefine itself through the lyrical intonation of his voice. Starting from l. 22 the narrative voice is stylised, for a short stretch, according to the form of the hymn, anticipating at the beginning of the poem the hymn to the heroes that occupied the epilogue in Apollonius' *Argonautica*; in l. 24 the first person emerges emphatically (*uos ego saepe, meo uos carmine compellabo*), in the first of the two passages of the text in which the narrator refers to himself as a poet;[64] the second is internal to the ekphrasis (ll. 115–116) and is again a point in the poem in which the coexistence of *carmen* and *impromptu* is shown.

This initial section (ll. 1–30), where the epic theme initially proposed (the Argonaut saga) has been converted into a lyrical theme (praise of Peleus, who initiated the *nimis optatum saeclorum tempus* with his marriage), ends with a reference to two primordial divinities (ll. 29–30 *Tethys* … / *Oceanusque*) and thus places the story against a cosmic background.

Considering the introductory section of the poem (ll. 1–30) the following potential factors of expressionism have emerged: the audacity of the poet, the sentimental motivation of the narration, and its distancing from the models evoked in the direction of enlargement and intensification.

Lines 22–30 are connected to the epilogue. This location was occupied, in Catullus' most important model, by the hymn to the heroes, as has been said. Instead of this festive greeting, which sealed the return of the Argonauts to the physical starting point of the journey, we find in Cat. 64.397–404 elements which motivate the feeling of distance expressed in ll. 22–23, that is, the inner starting point of the story.

To introduce the next factor of expressionism, a short detour outside the poem 64 might be useful. Deformation — that is, the alteration of a given form, in various senses and degrees — is the salient process of expressionistic art.

**63** See also below, 96.

**64** Fernandelli 2019, 27–33, with bibliography.

This process is well documented by the art of caricature.[65] In general, a poetic caricature of a person is made by selecting a certain trait, associating it with a part of the body, and reducing the totality of his/her being to this part. If the caricature is the work of a poet of value, whose voice will be heard *plus uno saeclo*, the caricature is dangerous (Suet. *Iul.* 73 *perpetua stigmata*). On the other hand, this procedure is usually recognised by us moderns as 'expressionist' when the consistency of the technical means is associated with a typical intention, that of using caricatural deformation to make the portrayed figure the incarnation of a vice of the age. In Catullus' *carmina minora* the body often offers the image of vice: *struma Nonius* (52.2).[66] Usually vice appears under the aspect of sexual depravity, at the lowest point represented by incest: Lesbia seems to be guilty of it; Gellius is its champion. The scommatic *carmina* that caricature well-known characters, more or less close to the poet, leave the moral characterisation of the *saeclum* implied. The reverse happens in poem 64, a mythological epos connected with Catullus' present. I said that a vice is concentrated in a detail of Gellius' figure or action; he becomes its emblem. One vice in particular, in poem 64, represents the irremediable failure of the times. So in the epos the context takes the place of the particular case, but the *modus operandi* presents significant continuity: the search for the essential element and its visualisation remain.

Here is the example. The subtext of 64.397–408 is Hesiod's *Erga* 182–200, that is, that section of the Myth of the Ages which envisages the complete decline of the iron generation. In the present execrated by the Catullan narrator, Hesiod's prediction is fulfilled.[67] This is an increment relative to the *quid*; if we then compare the Latin text to its model, paying attention to the way in which the extreme breakdown is produced, it will be noted that of the four segments that make up Catullus' passage, commonly defined, but not entirely rightly, as *vignettes*, the first (l. 399) and the second (l. 400) serve to evoke Hesiod's text, while the third (401–402) and fourth (403–404) move away from it to represent decadence under the aspect of sexual depravity. The last of these segments, the one that describes the most serious fault, is also the only one that presents its content as an image, and therefore also the only one to whom the label of *vignette* is appropriate (403–404):

> ignaro mater substernens se impia nato
> impia non uerita est diuos scelerare parentes.

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**65** Gombrich 1961, 265–288; the subsequent chapter, 'From Representation to Expression', is useful overall for the topic here discussed.

**66** Fo 2018, 656–659.

**67** Fernandelli 2012, 325–328.

The iron-age vice *par excellence*, in the context of the speaker and his audience, is incest, presented here in its most abominable version (*mater* ... *impia* ... / *impia* ...); thus the picture of the pious and happy heroic age is reversed (ll. 384–396 *domos* ... *castas*). There are no images in the corresponding Hesiodic sequence. Undoubtedly the comparison with the model clearly brings out the 'extra' of expression that the Latin rewriting pursues through selection and visualisation.

Indeed also poem 64 presents a caricature. There are good reasons for having the *Parcae*, and not the *Musae*, sing the nuptial paean at the banquet of Pharsalus,[68] but certainly l. 305 emphasises the fact that the former are not in their fit place (303–306):

> Qui postquam niueis flexerunt sedibus artus,
> large multiplici constructae sunt dape mensae,
> cum interea infirmo quatientes corpora motu
> ueridicos Parcae coeperunt edere cantus.

The appearance of the *Parcae* in the banquet hall is introduced without emphasis, by means of an unexpected *cum interea*-clause after the closure of the previous sentence, already opened by a temporal clause (*qui postquam*); l. 305 then presents a disconcerting image (*infirmo quatientes*, *infirmo* ... *motu*) whose subject is identified only in the next line (*Parcae*), to the surprise of the reader aware of the tradition.[69] The structure of the passage therefore serves to enhance the effect of surprise. The *Parcae*, who can be thought of as an alternative to the Muses with regard to singing, are their opposite if they start dancing: and it is precisely through this *absurdum*, this maximum distortion of the harmony of the Muses' choir, that they are introduced in front of the reader. The hypallage of *infirmo*, its explosive juxtaposition with *quatientes*, the very choice of the pictorial *quatio* are factors of expressionism;[70] furthermore, what justifies the presence of the *Parcae* in place of the Muses, i.e. the song of a future worthy of such a marriage, will in turn produce a strong estrangement. The prophetic song contains forth seven images, inside the frame of the hymn to the couple.[71] Such images illustrate the heroism of Achilles in Troy; the prefiguration of his military prowess culminates in the fifth of these paintings (357–360):

**68** Fernandelli 2012.
**69** Fo 2018, 848–851.
**70** See above, 76.
**71** Fernandelli 2019, 38–53.

> testis erit magnis uirtutibus unda Scamandri,
> quae passim rapido diffunditur Hellesponto,
> cuius iter caesis angustans corporum aceruis
> alta tepefaciet permixta flumina caede.

The book of Achilles' fight against the river is obviously the *incunabulum* of epic expressionism:[72] it deals with an overcoming of human measure, which occurs in a vast and hyper-dynamic scenario, with massive consequences and involving all levels of the divine. In addition to *Iliad* 21.20–21, 228–230, 325, Catullus presupposes a tragic passage by Accius (*Epinausimache*, fr. XIII, 153–154 Dangel [scil. Achilles loq.] *cum Scamandriam undam salso sanguine obtexi sanctam / atque aceruos alta in amni corpore expleui hostico*). Catullus rewrites the model in ll. 359 and 360, operating in two ways: reversing the order of the images and intervening in the sound texture. Accius has two dense alliterative systems, in s- and in a-, divided between his two lines, while Catullus alternates c- and a- in his first line, not insisting on this figure in the second, where he makes the *uocalitas* in -a- prevail by other means.

But while Catullus dampens the expressionism of Accius' language, his rewriting is part of a form that spectacularly develops beyond any expected limit. In fact, the song that does not augur but announces does not stop at the fifth scene, the apex of Achilles' glory, but inexorably exhausts its theme, thus violating the boundary of the form appropriate to the context (the wedding paean) and producing a disconcerting dissonance.[73] This dissonance, that has no effect in the fictional universe, is all the more destined to be received outside of it; furthermore it is exacerbated by the image of the immolated Polyxena, on which the voice of the *Parcae* lingers for two segments of the song, making a particularly accurate, I would say exemplary, use of the poetic ἀκριβολογία. The *absurdum* is later reduced and indeed justified, when it is retrospectively clarified that the name of Polyxena, emblematic of the end of Troy, alludes to the end of the heroic age and of myth *tout court*, *i.e.* to that turning point in the future which will lead to current corruption, execrated by the narrator at the end of the poem and indeed the very cause of its execution.[74]

Catullus 64 reproduces in many respects the Callimachean way of narrating, with a prominent narrator, an accentuated segmentation of the narration, an arbitrary extension of the segments, and the licence of omitting their chronotopic framing. However, in poem 64 the poet's stance on mimesis takes on particular

**72** Miniconi 1951, 173–174, Hunink 1992, 222, on l. 572, Lanzarone 2016, 188–189, on l. 116.
**73** O'Hara 2007, 47–54, Fo 2018, 859–861.
**74** Fernandelli 2012, 96–97, 296–307.

evidence. The truth of what the poem narrates is not determined by the imitation of the mythos, just as it is not exhausted by the critical mastery of tradition. A first factor of truth in this epyllion is the rigorous mimesis of the narrator and not of the narrated myth, and this mimesis is achieved in such a way that the segmentation and the particular assembly of the segments can be traced back to the *pathe* and the initiative of the *persona loquens*.

In this way the narrator is made credible; but it is precisely the strong motivation and the clear intention that make him a credible subject, that document his partiality, and therefore his inadequacy to guarantee the truth of his narration. Therefore the second factor of truth is largely up to the reader. The mode of meaning of the text, in fact, is *generally* indirect (that is, it is not indirect only in the connotations of the learned word); Moschus' ekphrasis in the *Europa* had certainly taught Catullus something about producing meaning through internal relations.[75] So in poem 64 meaning is formed when the horizon of the subjective-assertive narrator is included in another, wider horizon. This ironic structure is activated by the weaving of distant relationships, at a macroscopic and microscopic level, but even before that by moments of inconsistency in which the narrator, without realising it, loses control of the story, or hides its flaws.[76] Finally the poem makes perceptible different levels of reading, one of which is represented by the narrator himself, the 'reader' of the images on the wedding blanket: the narrator's truth is thus presented more clearly as relative.[77]

At the beginning of the ekphrasis the narrator-reader empathises with the character depicted (Ariadne), bringing the real reader with him in his *Einfühlung* (esp. ll. 60–62):

> quem (*scil.* Thesea) procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis,
> saxea ut effigies bacchantis, prospicit, eheu,
> prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis.

This 'entry into the painting'[78] has some important consequences:

1. the narrator-reader, empathising with the embroidered figure, arouses it, endows it with the third dimension, inserts it in time; later he will move it in space, he will attribute to it a speech, productive of consequences: thus a living character arises from a flat and rigid figure, thus an emblematic image

**75** Perutelli 1979, 32–43, Fernandelli 2012, 115–120.

**76** O'Hara 2007, 42–44.

**77** Fernandelli 2016, 177–188.

**78** On this aesthetic concept and its application to the Catullan ekphrasis, Fernandelli 2016, 170–177.

comes to life becoming a story, thus — thanks to this empathisation — a Greek *fabula*, made famous by visual art, becomes the plot of a Roman epos;[79]

2. however, the character of the myth that comes to life in the ekphrasis is imagined rather than described by the narrator; the mimesis of Ariadne's passions and actions is made possible by a projection of the subject (the narrator) onto the object (the embroidered image), i.e. by an activity of the *Auge des Geistes*, to use expressionist idiom;[80] and the result of all this is not a scene whose creator remains invisible, but a construction whose process and difficulties are evident;
3. the particular visibility of the object of this ekphrasis, together with the paroxysmal development of the narrative possibilities immanent in every epic ekphrasis, form the contrasting term for the absolute invisibility, the reduction to their mere role and almost to their mere name of the supposed protagonists of this epic, the hero Peleus and the goddess Thetis. Here another tendency is intensified, that is typical of the epithalamium, i.e. to develop around a presence in the flesh, of real people, a presence that does not require particularisation, but an idealising typification. The *puluinar geniale* awaits Thetis; there is not a word on the presence of the spouses in the hall where the *Parcae* praise their bliss and concord.[81]

Every poetic form of the Greek tradition that Catullus appropriates, particularly in his most ambitious text, is re-motivated and, in doing so, presented as a problem. Poem 64 opens the way for Roman epos towards the acquisition of Greek myth; it is the path of empathy, but only practicable under certain conditions; the intensification of the forms (the prominent narrator, the ekphrasis, the epithalamic stylisation, the *Parcae* in the role of the Muses) and their mutual polarisation, show possibilities alongside their limits; to this intensification belongs the extreme fragmentation of the narration, which is indeed labyrinthine but also surprisingly unitary in the consistent psychological motivation of its development: that is, this epos appears radically antimimetic (in relation to the classic epos) and conspicuously mimetic (in relation to the modern epos *à la* Callimachus); but it does not engage the reader so much with its poetic voice (i.e. with the affective magnetism of the narrator) but rather with its structure, which progressively induces him/her to become an interpreter, together leading him/her to

**79** Klingner 1964, 176–192; Fernandelli 2023 (forthcoming).
**80** The image illustrating the image (l. 61 *saxea ut effigies bacchantis*) is a conspicuous symptom of this subjectivity.
**81** Fernandelli 2019, 59–68.

recognise their own schemata as such and to discover the link between the particular form and the general meaning.

This shrewd combination of expression and construction, of the irrational and the rational — typical of modern expressionistic art — offers a technical, psychological, and partly also ideological basis for the expressionistic developments of the Roman epos (let us first think of Lucan, who certainly admired poem 64). From the Neronian age onwards Roman epos achieves its special effects through the abandonment of mimesis, the prominence of the narrator, the fragmentation of the story, the exhibited hybridisation of the forms, and the intensification of the procedures (such as the apostrophe to the characters, typical of the Alexandrian-neoteric narrator, and the *amplificatio ex insequentibus*).

## 2.2 Latin Epic Expressionism from Catullus to Lucan (*via* Virgil)

Below I will examine a Catullan example of the expressionism that Perutelli calls 'manneristic', the equivalent or nearly so of what Burck defines as 'precious mannerism'. The verses in question are also of considerable interest because they show in terms of *res* the tendency to 'take things to the extreme' that we have observed in terms of forms. The content I am talking about represents a real motif of epic expressionism: the abuse of the *amplificatio ex insequentibus*.

At ll. 39–41 we encounter again the stylistic device of the triple anaphora which shortly before had given lyrical stylisation to the narrative voice (ll. 19–21).[82] The three verses are part of a compact group of five that describe the effects of the migration of the Thessalians from the countryside to the city to pay homage to the newlyweds (38–42):

> rura colit nemo, mollescunt colla iuuencis,
> non humilis curuis purgatur uinea rastris,
> non glebam prono conuellit uomere taurus, 40
> non falx attenuat frondatorum arboris umbram,
> squalida desertis rubigo infertur aratris.

The first hemistich synthetically presents the fact, the second its effect, in a way that immediately seems exaggerated; the central verses analytically represent again the inactivity, the last one its effect, exacerbating the exaggeration of the

82 See above, 90. Patterned repetitions like this, *i.e.* with triple anaphora, are characteristic of poem 64 (19–21, 39–41, 63–65, 257–259): Èvrard-Gillies 1976, 197–205; Wills 1996, 401–402.

first and sealing the passage with an image of desolation — a powerful and ambiguous image, that of the abandoned plough.

A few more observations on style: the passage consists of five verses; its most notable expressive trait is the triple anaphora of *non*; the three verses thus introduced are each made up, after the negation, of five words, in a 'golden' pattern in the first case, then with a variation of it; this also applies to the final verse, which culminates with the term *aratris*, to which the final words of the first and third verses are connected (... *iuuencis* / ... *taurus* /). A cycle (ll. 38 and 42) contains a multifaceted theme (39–41), with a scheme that recalls that of poem 52 (1 + 2 + 1) and is reproduced in enlarged form in the final *vignettes* (2 + 6 + 2).

I said before that the ending of the epyllion has a Hesiodic basis and the anaphoric ll. 39–41 could also have it, even if only on a stylistic level. See *Erga* 182–184, where the poet starts describing the Iron Age:[83]

> οὐδὲ πατὴρ παίδεσσιν ὁμοίιος οὐδέ τι παῖδες,
> οὐδὲ ξεῖνος ξεινοδόκῳ καὶ ἑταῖρος ἑταίρῳ,
> οὐδὲ κασίγνητος φίλος ἔσσεται, ὡς τὸ πάρος περ.

It is worth mentioning that this use of anaphora, clearly well suited to the voice of a prominent narrator engaged in proclaiming values and disvalues, occurs five times in *Erga*.

The abandoned plough is a powerful symbol, and for this reason repeatedly the object of artistic representation, but it is also ambiguous because its semiotics oscillates between the poles of maximum desolation and maximum prosperity. The image of l. 42 (*squalida desertis rubigo infertur aratris*), treated in an expressionistic way (all at once rust builds up on the iron of the plough: the present moment has, in a flash, become the past), refer to what we could call the *situs* motif, one which is found in a number of ancient texts, among which is a well-known paean by Bacchylides (frs. 4 and 22 Maehler) as well as Theocritus 16: usually this motif is integrated into a positive — or even utopistic — context (the rust creeping upon the surface of a given object or class of objects — or, likewise, the cobwebs — symbolises the transition to a new phase, in which that which has become, so as to speak, 'rusty' cannot and shall not find a place). On the other hand, the abandoned plough can by itself announce the golden-age automatism. Giorgio Pasquali was the first to think that in ll. 38–42 Catullus had reworked a description of the Golden Age.[84]

**83** Wills 1996, 402.

**84** Pasquali 1920, 17; Fernandelli 2012, 155 n. 40, with bibliography.

Virgil was probably thinking the same thing when he imitated these lines in *Eclogue* 4 in two different passages, not far from each other (26–30; 40–41), with an undoubtedly exceptional procedure.[85] The rewritings of the Catullan text can be found in the two passages in which the motif of the golden-age automatism is associated with the heroic motif.

at simul heroum laudes et facta parentis
iam legere et quae sit poteris cognoscere uirtus,
molli paulatim flauescet campus arista
incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uua
et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella. 30

non rastros patietur humus, non uinea falcem 40
robustus quoque iam tauris iuga soluet arator

In the former quotation ll. 28–30 are each made up of five words which form different variations of a 'golden line' patterns. Each of these three lines coincides with a sentence, each sentence ends with an icon-word (*arista*, *uua*, *mella*),[86] the metrical structure of the three lines is SSSS/SDSS/SSSS so that the rhythm too, which contrasts with that of the previous two (DSSS/DSDS), signals the presence of an unified, separate block of lines;[87] furthermore, and most notably, each line features a 'Catullan molossus'.[88] There is not a single word or image which the two texts actually share; unmistakeable and precise, however, is the reverberation of the earlier composition in the later. Nevertheless, the chant-like intonation — for the most part the effect of the anaphora of *non* — is something which Virgil avoids, deeming it discordant with the eclogue's ethos.

The latter stretch of text belongs to a section which is articulated in three sentences (38–39, 40–41, 42–45), each introduced by elements with a negative slant (38 *cedet* … *nec*, 39 *non* …, 42 *nec*…); the first and third sentences highlight the golden-age motif of automatism; the middle sentence (40–41), which appears almost redundant, coming as it does directly after the statement which closes the previous sentence (39 *omnis feret omnia tellus*), refers unequivocally to Cat. 64.39–41.

**85** On poem 64 as widespread subtext of *Ecl.* 4, see esp. Trimble 2013.
**86** On vertical juxtaposition, see Harrison's chapter in this volume, who points out Cat. 64 and Verg. *Ecl.* 4 as important models for the general texture of Horace's lyric style.
**87** The metric pattern of Cat. 64.39–41 is DSSS/SSSS/SDSS.
**88** With this expression Ross 2007, 117, 151–152 defines the placement of a molossus before the bucolic diaeresis (word end after the fourth foot; I owe the bibliographic reference to Paolo Dainotti); Clausen 1994, 136, on 28–30 reports that poem 64 presents 145 verses with this rhythm.

Then the structure of Catullus' passage, articulated in three parts, is acquired by Virgil's text where, however, it is redistributed over the arch of the entire section, thus somewhat dampening the 'excessively' marked rhythm of Catullus' lines. Its contents are thus reorganised into a two-line measure, occupied in each case by a sentence divided into three sections (40a *non* ..., 40b *non* ..., 41): it is evident that the last of the three, the most extensive (*robustus quoque iam tauris iuga soluet arator*), is composed with Catullus' composition in mind: indeed, *tauris*, situated in the middle of Virgil's line and framed by the subject *robustus ... arator*, mirrors the layout of the model text considered in its entirety (ll. 38–42), with the ploughing motif situated, as highlighted above, at the opening of the sequence (38 *iuuencis*), at the end (42 *aratris*), and in the middle (40 *taurus*). However, the emphatic Catullan regularity is replaced by a tendency towards a harmonic order, exemplified by the alignment of homologous elements in the same line, in a quasi-chiastic order (*non rastros patietur humus, non uinea falcem*) and by the harmonious architecture of l. 40, perfectly suited to encompass the conversion of a constraining force into a liberating gesture (*robustus ... tauris iuga soluit arator*).

What has been observed so far demonstrates Virgil's exceptional interest in the Catullan passage; the way he assimilates it to his own style demonstrates, on the other hand, what must have seemed excessive to him, evidently in the sense that Burck meant by 'precious mannerism' and Perutelli by 'manneristic expressionism'.[89]

Virgil does not rewrite ll. 38 and 42, which document the most spectacular expressionistic procedure, the abuse of the *amplificatio ex insequentibus* by means of a motif of a temporal nature. However, it is possible to observe the introduction of a similar motif in a well-known passage of the *Aeneid*, which presupposes a Homeric episode but not a direct cue.

At the beginning of *Aeneid* 12 recurs the aforementioned *Ur-Thema* of epic expressionism: the astonishing alteration of the *unda Scamandri*, heated by blood, held back by corpses.

In his 2005 study of Virgil, La Penna returns to the question of Virgilian expressionism, dedicating an entire chapter to it. Its opening reads as follows:[90]

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**89** *Tota Thessalia* reaches the palace and fills its spaces; a simile (ll. 269–275) later illustrates the opposite movement, first choral then individual (276–277 *ad se quisque* etc.). There is a patent disproportion between the *illustrans* and the *illustrandum*, a consequence of the nobility of the model (the *Iliad*) and of the extension and the complex elaboration of the passage (ll. 269–275): this absurdity integrates, linking itself to the narrative *Ringkomposition*, the 'manierismo espressionistico' of the initial description (ll. 38–42; see also above, 96–97).

**90** La Penna 2005, 435. Trans. mine.

> We usually associate realism with an attitude [...] whereby the author adapts to an objective reality, thus marking a limit and requiring measure. This attitude is weak in Virgil, because it is strongly opposed to a general tendency that I have qualified as expressionism: Virgil tends to intensify feelings and emotions or to emphasise and amplify them through images or other expressive means. Such a tendency [...] could also be defined in terms of an accentuated realism, of a propensity towards the strangest aspects of reality.[91] By so doing, the poet aims not only to move and captivate, but also to unsettle the reader.

*Aen.* 12.35–36 presents a particularly interesting example of this kind of expressionism:

> recalent nostro Thybrina fluenta
> sanguine adhuc campique ingentes ossibus albent

These are words spoken by the Latin king following a day of fighting. La Penna places this concise passage among the sensational images of bloodshed, defining it as 'il più allucinante' {the most hallucinating}.[92] I share his interest in this example also for other reasons, which emerge from a careful observation of style:

1. its pursuit of symmetry: (a) *recalent* and *albent* frame a pair of coordinated sentences that re-propose, by varying it, the double expressionistic image of the original text (blood that warms the waters/bodies that block its flow); (b) at the extremes of l. 36 *sanguine* and *albent* form a second frame, which emphasise the red-white contrast;
2. its pursuit of intensity and tension: (a) the composition aims at a paradoxical effect, aided by the dominance of *recalent* and *adhuc* (first and last words of the first syntactical colon, both before a caesura): it is a way to emphasise the absurdity of describing the slaughter's horror through the conflicting images of the river still warm with blood and of the heaps of bones whitening the fields; (b) the second element of this pair presents the same expressionistic technique of Cat. 64.42, i.e. pushing to the extreme consequences a motif of a temporal nature (abuse of the *amplificatio ex insequentibus*);
3. its expressionism and control of expressionism: *campique ingentes ossibus albent* varies the Homeric situation, which was clearly evoked by the first sentence (*recalent* ... *adhuc*); this variation converts the mass (*acerui*) into vastness, a marker of the Virgilian sublime (*campi* ... *ingentes*); but in this way, through the two exaggerated images (bloodied river/whitening bones), Virgil combines two epic traditions, one defined by a reference to the *Iliad*,

**91** Perelli 1988, 408, mindful of La Penna 1963 and 1966, had spoken of 'realismo espressionistico' {expressionistic realism} with regard to some Vergilian descriptions.
**92** La Penna 2005, 439.

> the other by civil war imagery,[93] thus realising a full, almost exuberant, epic orthodoxy. Furthermore, the phrasing of ll. 35b–6 is an instrument of Virgil's ethopoeia: it manifests the lucid rhetoric of the old king — the only character among the Latins immune to *furor impius* — that is the control over the speech with which he, in a highly dramatic situation, intends to dissuade his own people from persevering in hostilities; the exaggerations and the absurdity are functional to bring his listeners to reason.

Therefore 'il più allucinante esempio' of Virgil's expressionism emphasises the absurdity with the same means that put it under control. Like the previous one (the double rewriting of Catullus in *Eclogues* 4) this borderline case also lends itself to showing how Virgil appreciates and tames, at the same time, the epic expressionistic *uis*, here clearly treated as a rhetorical means.

A well-known passage from Lucan (7.786–795), that opens the aftermath narrative of the fratricidal battle of Pharsalus,[94] reveals what can still be done, after *Aen.* 12.35–36, to bring the expressionistic potential of the Homeric theme to its full effect. The Lucanian hyperboles, which describe the battle of Pharsalus as the scariest carnage in history, use quantity for emulative purposes:

> tamen omnia passo
> postquam clara dies Pharsalica damna retexit,
> nulla loci facies reuocat feralibus aruis
> haerentes oculos. cernit propulsa cruore
> flumina, et excelsos cumulis aequantia colles 790
> corpora, depressos in tabem spectat aceruos
> et Magni numerat populos, epulisque paratur
> ille locus, uultus ex quo faciesque iacentum
> agnoscat. iuuat Emathiam non cernere terram,
> et lustrare oculis campos sub clade latentes. 795

These verses mark the limit beyond which it will not be possible to go.

**93** Tarrant 2012, 96, on l. 36; Lanzarone 2016, 401, on l. 538.
**94** Pagán 2000; Roche 2019, ad loc.

# 3 Conclusions (to both section 1 and section 2)

Since 1963, the terms ‘expressionism’ and ‘expressionistic’ have been adopted in Italy to describe the stylistic reflections of a psychological (and also ideological) attitude which is spread across Latin literature. This terminology achieved traction for reasons both positive and negative, owing to the prestige of the scholar who introduced it, Antonio La Penna, already influential at that time; to the bad reputation in that period of a possible competing metaphor, that of the ‘baroque’; to the spread in cultured Italian discourse of the lexical family of ‘expression’ and especially of the term ‘expressiveness’ (*espressività*), which helped in the use of the concept of ‘expressionism’ with appropriate nuances; to the fascination exercised by the poetry of the avant-garde on the Italian cultural elite of the time, ready to turn towards the discovery or re-evaluation of the non-classic texts of classical literature from the perspective of a contemporary critical terminology.

But the metaphorical use of ‘expressionism’ and ‘expressionistic’ was justified above all by the degree to which these terms were applied to specific features of Latin literature: specific because of their diversity (in respect of the terms of comparison the texts themselves evoked), because of their wide distribution (in diverse genres and sub-genres) and because of their persistence (best seen in the history of a single genre, especially epic).

On the matter of persistence, this was confirmed by the fact that expressionism presented itself in a more widespread and more intense form after a gap, marked by the neoteric and classical phases of Latin literature, in as much as the *Aeneid* showed a non-episodic tendency to expressionistic distortion of the reality represented, or to the selection of extreme aspects of reality to be represented in an adequate manner.

Catullus 64 is always described as a text of fundamental importance for the new path of Latin epic. Here I have wanted to show how that applies, too, to the direction of this kind of expressionism. In the Catullan epyllion this direction comes about within a system of choices which are stylistically new and thus clearly recognisable, which in their totality present affinities with the principles and practices of historical Expressionism, a movement which arose in an age of iron, critical of tradition, antimimetic, subjective, in which effusiveness and concision, pathos and calculation are realisations of the same spirit.

The ‘visible montage’ of poem 64 easily allows the emergence of the nexus which binds together the iron-age context, the prominence of the narrator (and in general the ‘problem’ of mimesis in modern epic), and all the exaggerations and also the intensifications which underlie its forms, its motifs, its style.

The specificity of these phenomena and the relevance of the term ‘expressionism’ to describe them is therefore illustrated in an especially interesting way in poem 64, where the high points of traditional expressionism can be blunted (as in the rewriting of the lines of Accius), perhaps an indication of rudimentary skill, while the increase in scope and intensity and also of alienation effects can be measured in comparison with other models (the learned Hellenistic narratives), which had returned life to the genre, in danger of being reduced to a merely derivative existence.

Two last considerations. The first regards the position of Virgil. Through the whole arc of his work, he took from Catullus 64 forms of expression and theme (as in *Eclogue* 4), methods (as in the story-telling in scenes in the finale of the *Georgics*), structures (as in the pathetic narrative in the whole of the *Aeneid*) which offered opportunities for the expressionistic style: he was able to appropriate them fully as his own because he was able to capture the intimate connection with his model. Elsewhere, we have been able to observe how Virgil valorised and at the same time domesticated the expressionistic hints which came from his reading.

The last case examined above saw the emergence of the way in which ‘the most shocking example’ of Virgilian expressionism was acquired and hyperbolically extended in the *Bellum ciuile*, where mimesis is firmly excluded from the narrative sections. The passage of Lucan, within a scene of allusion to cannibalism, shows the *non plus ultra* of what La Penna meant by ‘expressionism’: furthermore, Lucan, evoking the Virgilian passage, marks it as a precedent in which the Homeric subtext of that very scene, the book of the battle in the river, has undergone a calculated variation, whether of quality or quantity. In the context of the *Bellum Ciuile* the Virgilian passage is evoked and ‘outdone’: but this happens because the detail that Lucan has in mind (*recalent … Thybrina fluenta / sanguine … campique … ossibus albent*) is extrapolated from the living Virgilian context (where the irrational element is an instrument of the clear intention of a character and in this way perfectly functional for the mimesis) and thus acquired as a resource within a repertory. We can recognise in this situation a point of encounter between the rhetorical culture of the poet and the mannerist aspect of his poetry.

To a large extent, ‘expressionism’ and ‘mannerism’ are paradigms which agree in focussing on the same objects from different angles, as has been seen; but it is also true that interlacings are inevitable and that it is convenient, in critical description, to privilege one characterisation above the other. The *Sala dei Giganti* of Giulio Romano or films like *Kill Bill* by Quentin Tarantino best show, with their different emphases, expressionism in the service of mannerism: in the case of Lucan, the connection is inverted. And this last feature seems to me to be the direction of Latin epic.

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Paolo Dainotti

# Virgil's Pathetic Technique

**Abstract:** The aim of this chapter is to analyse Virgil's 'pathetic technique', that set of textual strategies and expressive stylistic features (lexicon, word order, rhythm, sound) systematically adopted by Virgil to create pathos, i.e. an intense emotional response in the reader.

## 1 Introduction

Many would agree that Virgil's poetry is a 'poetry of pathos', a poetry intimately infused with emotions and ultimately provoking the reader's emotional response to the characters' feelings portrayed in the text. Nevertheless, when it comes to describing in detail the precise textual strategies adopted by the poet to elicit emotions, we can, quite surprisingly, only give vague and partial answers, probably due to the absence in Virgilian (and not only) scholarship of a systematic and comprehensive enquiry into the topic.[1]

Describing the 'mechanisms' of the *Pathetisierung*, that complex and subtle process by which the poet charges a passage with emotions, is an arduous task, which poses several difficulties. First of all, 'pathos' is a rather broad concept, which includes different forms and degrees of the expression of emotions. Over and above the evident peaks of pathos, especially in the highly intense expressions by characters of their pain and grief or in the narrator's emotional intrusions,[2] we can find also a more discreet, tenuous, and quasi-elegiac pathos,

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1 For some material on Virgil's pathetic style see Rieks 1989; Heinze 1993, 370–373; Dion 1993; La Penna 2005, 420–429; Conte 2007 (*passim*), 2021, and 2022 (on language and syntax); Dainotti 2022a and 2022b. On focalisation, an aspect strictly related to pathos and ideology, see Heinze 1993, 290–298, with his seminal concepts of *Empfindung* (internal focalisation) and *Subjektivität* (the poet's intrusion into narration), recalled and developed by Otis 1964, 41–97 ('empathy', 'sympathy', and 'subjective style'), Parry 1963 ('two voices'), Lyne 1989 ('further voices'), Fowler 1990 ('deviant focalisation', with further bibliography), and Conte 2007, 33 and 50–57, who sees the *Aeneid* as a polycentric text and focalisation as a structural element of the dramatic form of the narration.

2 Through apostrophes, epiphonemas, similes, and 'epitaphs'. See Williams 1983, 164–214.

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which risks passing unnoticed, but which, on a closer look, sets the mood of many passages of the *Aeneid* (moving farewells, funereal lamentations, melancholic exiles, *erotika pathemata*). The scenario is even more complex, if we also consider that 'ethical pathos', the solemnity of situation or diction which characterises many passages (especially in the *Aeneid*) infused by moral tension,[3] is not easily and immediately distinguishable from the high style, the hallmark of epos.

And pathos is indeed mainly a matter of style. It is built up not only through the obvious choice of moving scenes, motifs, themes, and words, but it is, so to speak, an intrinsic aspect of Virgil's style, the 'form of expression' of the feelings, a peculiar *lexis* permeating the poetic technique at all levels and involving different expressive factors — language, rhythm, metre, syntax, and sound — which all conspire together to charge the diction with emotional accents.[4] In other words, pathos, a ubiquitous and pervasive element, exerts such a influence upon Virgil's poetry that we could rightly speak, in homage to Heinze's seminal book, of 'Virgil's *pathetic* technique'.

In this brief contribution, I do not aim at interpreting the ideological implications of pathos,[5] but I will concentrate on style, providing the reader with a simple hermeneutic 'compass', a synthetic catalogue of the main strategies of pathos (themes, words, and stylistic devices) for deciphering the more or less evident expressive vibrations of the texts. But before starting on our trip through Virgil's pathetic style, some preliminary remarks will be the necessary *viaticum* for a safe journey through the perils of a stylistic reading.

## 2 Key concepts for the analysis of Virgilian pathos

Emotions and style can be seen as the Scylla and Charybdis of a stylistic study, since they necessarily imply a high degree of subjectivity, a slippery ground which must be navigated with a solid methodological framework.[6] Perspectival problems can arise, for instance, in assessing when a passage (and especially its form of expression) is pathetically charged. In addition, we must, in my view,

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**3** E.g. *Aen.* 12.435–436 *disce, puer, uirtutem ex me uerumque laborem, / fortunam ex aliis*. See La Penna 2005, 420–423.

**4** On this tenet of ancient and modern stylistics, known as 'convergence of expressive factors', see the introduction to this volume.

**5** Useful discussion of pathos and ideology in Perkell 1997.

**6** See the introduction to this volume.

beware that Virgil's 'implied reader'[7] is not us, but the ancient reader, a competent reader capable of perceiving the expressive nuances of the text, with a profound knowledge of a 'repertoire' of poetry (usually learned by heart) and a different perception of emotions. Thus, if we aim at correctly analysing Virgil's pathetic technique, we must try to fill the gap between us and the ancient reader, reconstructing, at least partially, his/her sensibility. This is possible if we consider the ancient rhetorical treatises and especially the late-antique commentators on Virgil, who can give us a precious testimony on how these texts were perceived in their own times.[8] In particular, Macrobius, with his fine analysis of Virgilian pathos in the fourth book of the *Saturnalia*, will guide our reading, preventing us from adopting misleading hermeneutical categories.[9]

For a definition of pathos, we can look not only to Macrobius (*Sat*. 4.2.1), who defines it in relation to direct speech, observing that the *oratio pathetica* should aim at *indignatio* or *miseratio*, but also to Aristotle, who, in *Rhet*. 1408a, provides a description of pathetic style (λέξις παθητική), observing not only that it aims at the reader's emotional response (συνομοπαθεῖν), but also that it must be mimetic, so as to represent the characters' feelings.[10] Thus, mimesis and pathos are strictly interconnected concepts, as appears clear also in the *Poetics*, where pathos, one of the three parts of the tragic plot (*Poet*. 1452b) — along with *peripeteia* (the dramatic change from happiness to a miserable condition) and *anagnorisis* ('recognition') —, can be achieved also through the spectacle (or the narration) of events generating pity and fear (1453b). In other words, mimesis, that I would more properly call '**pathetic mimesis**', must be considered in its ancillary function to pathos, since it is the most appropriate strategy to reflect the characters' emotions, thereby eliciting the reader's emotional response.

Pathetic mimesis can be achieved by means of different textual strategies. First, the poet can revert to '**pathetic realism**',[11] namely the employing of realistic

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**7** I am here clearly referring to Iser's 1974 influential theoretical framework.

**8** This is what classical scholars usually do to underpin their interpretations of the stylistic effects of a passage. See, among others, Barchiesi 1978, 102; Conte 2007, 62–67; 2021, 15; and especially Griffin 1980, who builds his interpretation of the pathos in Homer in the light of the observations of late-antique and medieval commentators.

**9** Obviously also Servius, DServ., and Tiberius Claudius Donatus provide us with precious stylistic observations on emotions.

**10** Cf. Quint. *Inst*. 6.2.20 (in regards of pathos): *Haec pars circa iram, odium, metum, inuidiam, miserationem fere tota uersatur*.

**11** For this label see Harrison 1991, on *Aen*. 10.832. Pathetic realism should not be confused with Alexandrian or 'precious realism', the elegant contrast between high stylistic register and the humble reality described.

details — usually in the description of everyday objects, words, body parts, actions, and situations —[12] to stress how they are dramatically obliterated or subverted by the violence of History. A telling example can be found at *Aen*. 9.474–476:[13]

> nuntia Fama ruit matrisque adlabitur auris
> Euryali. at subitus miserae calor ossa reliquit,
> excussi manibus radii reuolutaque pensa.

Here an everyday activity, the spinning of wool, is dramatically interrupted: the spindle falls from the hands of Euryalus' mother when she receives the terrible blow of the news of her son's death.[14] The image is carefully constructed to depict the quasi-involuntary action of the woman overwhelmed by her emotions, as Servius astutely observes (*bene 'excussi', quasi nescienti: melius, quam si diceret 'proiecti'*); in addition, Macrobius (*Sat*. 4.1.5) includes this very line (along with the following hemistich *euolat infelix*) as an example of *luctus habitu proditus* in a brief catalogue of pathetic gesture (especially crying or stretching out the hands in entreaty), another important means of expressing emotions, according to modern scholarship too.[15]

But there is more. In this very passage, in the expression *subitus calor ossa reliquit*, we can also find a paradigmatic example of '**expressionism**', that accentuated, and almost exasperated, form of realism which selects the most abnormal aspects of reality in order to strike the reader's sensibility.[16] Expressionistic descriptions can also be found, over and above extreme physical reactions (stiffness, pallor, sweat, paralysing torpor) to emotions (*ira*, *furor*, *horror*), in the grandiose frescoes of war scenes dominated by an obsession with the colour of blood,[17] or in the descriptions of disfigured bodies, which insist, with almost morbid precision, on gruesome details.[18]

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**12** Arist. *Rhet*. 1386b lists some 'signs' (τὰ σημεῖα) of pathos, such as clothes, actions, and words of suffering characters.

**13** For Virgil's text, I follow Ottaviano and Conte 2013 (*Bucolics* and *Georgics*) and Conte 2019[2] (*Aeneid*).

**14** On the *Leitmotiv* of '**grieving mothers**' in the *Aeneid*, see Wiltshire 1989, 38–55.

**15** See Ricottilli 2000, on the relationship between gesture and words in the *Aeneid*.

**16** La Penna 2005, 435–441. For a discussion on the concept of expressionism applied to Latin poetry (and in particular to Catullus 64) see Fernandelli's chapter in this volume.

**17** E.g. *Aen*. 12.35–36.

**18** E.g. *Aen*. 2.272–279 and 6.494–499.

This attention to detail is also a key element of ***enargeia***[19] (to which expressionism is closely related), perhaps the most effective way of eliciting pathos,[20] that vivid description of a scene (usually cinematic and pathetic) in which the poet 'immerses'[21] the reader, placing him/her at a character's side and inviting him/her to feel the same emotions. And again, the falling of the spindle and the ball of wool rolling on the ground cannot help but make us think of a slow-motion technique of a highly pathetic movie scene. It is no accident that Quintilian (*Inst*. 6.2.32) quotes this very line as an example of *enargeia*.

Finally, **iconicity** too (when form imitates meaning)[22] can have a pathetic value, especially when it has the function of 'depicting' the emotional tone of a passage, particularly in direct speech. And in our passage an attentive reader will certainly notice the iconic force of the rare synaloepha over the syntactical pause (*Euryali. at*),[23] which has the effect of stressing the idea of the immediate consequence (the physical reaction of the woman to the horrible news) expressed by the semantics of *subitus* and metrically rendered by the dactylic rhythm of the line.

These macro-categories (realism, expressionism, *enargeia*, and iconicity) are the main hermeneutical tools to interpret the textual strategies of pathos, but obviously Virgil's pathetic art cannot be confined to rigid categorisations; it must be analysed in all its complexity, in the variegated spectrum of nuances, degrees, tones, and emotional accents of the contexts and even intertexts. A passage can indeed also draw further pathetic accents from the texts it evokes, as if the pathos of the model were transfused in the imitation through an emotional **intertextuality**.[24] And again, the quoted lines from the episode of Euryalus offers a clear example of this technique too: an educated reader will immediately remember the similar scene of Andromache spinning when impacted by the news of Hector's death (*Il*. 22.447–448).

In the next sections I will provide a concise catalogue of Virgil's pathetic themes and motifs, following Macrobius' categories and trying to enrich his treatment with a discussion of the related pathetic key words and the main pathetic devices in the light of modern scholarship.

**19** On the figure see Ricottilli 2000, 44–54 and Zanker 1981 (for the Greek and Latin theory).

**20** Heinze 1993, 370–371 (see also 131; 297–298). On *enargeia* and pathos see ps.-Longinus *De Subl.* 15.

**21** The figure is also defined as 'immersion'. See Allan et al. 2017.

**22** On the various forms and degrees of iconicity in Latin poetry see Dainotti 2015, 7–17; on visual iconicity, especially in Horace, Hasegawa's chapter in this volume.

**23** Dainotti 2015, 175–178.

**24** For a theoretical discussion on intertextuality and its applications in classical studies see the discussion by Fowler 1997 (with 'metabibliography').

# 3 Pathetic themes, motifs, and words

The most direct way to elicit pathos is the narration of a painful event, such as **death**,[25] obviously a ubiquitous presence in epic poetry. Varied in many ways (some of which show Homeric or tragic models)[26] and associated with different minor pathetic motifs, this *Leitmotiv* allows us to discuss many other aspects of Virgil's pathetic style. It is not by accident indeed that a large part of the pathetic rhetorical categories analysed by Macrobius can be applied to descriptions of death. I will deal in particular with the place of death (***pathos a loco***), the age or the physical condition of the dead person (***pathos ex aetate***, ***ex debilitate***), and the tragic *metabole* or change of fortune (***pathos a fortuna***).

## 3.1 *Pathos a loco*

A reference to the place where a character dies usually carries a pathetic nuance. A paradigmatic example is at *Aen.* 10.781–782 *sternitur infelix alieno uulnere caelumque* / *aspicit et moriens dulcis reminiscitur Argos*, where the dying Antores remembers for a moment his far and beloved homeland Argos, where sadly he will not be buried. We should note here the convergence of various pathetic themes: '**death far from home**',[27] the warrior '**looking at the sky in the fatal moment**',[28] and the '**thoughts of home at death**'.[29]

A treatment of a pathetic theme cannot be conducted without an in-depth lexical analysis, since, over and above words clearly expressing emotions, we can find other words which, though not pathetic *per se*, on a closer look show an evident emotional tone, especially in Virgil's poetry. A telling example is the adjective ***dulcis***, a key word of pathos expressing a sense of melancholy for something irremediably lost,[30] also usually betraying (as in the just quoted passage) a

**25** Arist. *Poet.* 1452b.

**26** For a first approach to the relationship between *Aeneid* and Homeric poetry see Knauer 1964a and 1964b, and Barchiesi 2015; on tragedy as a model for the *Aeneid* see Hardie 2019$^2$.

**27** Already a Homeric theme (Griffin 1980, 106–111), also common in sepulchral inscriptions (Lattimore 1962, 200–202).

**28** Cf. *Aen.* 4.691–692; 10.898–899.

**29** Harrison 1991, ad loc.

**30** Such as homeland (*Ecl.* 1.3; *Georg.* 2.511), nest (*Georg.* 1.414), life (*Georg.* 3.495; *Aen.* 3.140; 6.428), the beloved one (*Georg.* 4.465) or a beloved object, as at *Aen.* 4.651 *dulces exuuiae* with **pathetic address of a personified object** (Macr. *Sat.* 4.6.10). *Dulcis* can be also an emotive epithet for the affective words *natus* (*Georg.* 2.523; 3.178; *Aen.* 2.138; 4.33), on which see below.

'**deviant focalisation**' (Argos is *dulcis* not for the narrator, but for the character Antores).[31]

Another key word of the *pathos a loco* is the adjective ***notus***, which, referring to a familiar place (or object), can suggest a reassuring familiarity dramatically negated by events,[32] such as at *Ecl.* 1.51–52 *fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota / et fontis sacros frigus captabis opacum*, where, in the pathetic words of Meliboeus, obliged to leave forever his beloved places, the adjective *nota*, employed as it is in a pathetic ***makarismos***,[33] is equal in meaning to 'beloved'; there is similar pathos also at *Aen.* 4.648–649 *hic, post Iliacas uestes notumque cubile / conspexit, paulum lacrimis et mente morata*, where it refers to that sweet place where Dido and Aeneas shared their love. The negative form of this adjective can be also applied to a burial place to stress its unfamiliarity (***ignotus***), such as at *Aen.* 9.485–486 *heu, terra ignota canibus date praeda Latinis / alitibusque iaces!*, where the 'death-far-from-home' motif is associated with the pathetic idea of '**lack of care after death**'[34] and with the image of the **unburied corpse** left as a prey for animals.[35]

*Pathos a loco* can be varied through its corollary theme of **solitude**, as at *Aen.* 5.613–615:

> ***a***t procul in ***s***ola ***s***ecretae Troades ***a***cta
> ***a***missum ***A***nchisen flebant cunctaeque profundum
> pontum ***a***spectabant flentes.

where the key word *sola*, *en relief* before the penthemimeral caesura, is further stressed by the **pathetic 'alliteration of solitude'**[36] (*sola secretae*), in a passage which is a telling example of the evocative force of sound: an attentive reader will certainly also perceive the '**alliteration of anguish**',[37] the repetition of /a/ iconically reinforcing an idea of anguish (key words: ***angor***, ***aeger***, ***amens***, ***anhelitus***) and breathlessness (here *flebant-flentes* confirm the emotions of the women). In this very passage we also find a *Leitmotif* of the entire *Aeneid*, '**tiredness after a**

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**31** Cf. also *Aen.* 4.281 *ardet abire fuga dulcisque relinquere terras*, a classic example of focalisation shift (Fowler 1990, 47), already noticed by DServ. ad loc.

**32** E.g. *Aen.* 3.657; 6.221; 7.491; 11.195.

**33** Even more pathetic is the ***makarismos manqué*** (Conte 2007, 55) at *Aen.* 4.657–658 *felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum / numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae!*. On 'paradoxical *makarismos*' see below.

**34** On this theme in Homer see Griffin 1980, 115–119.

**35** Cf. also *Aen.* 10.557–560.

**36** See Dainotti 2022c, 1–19 (10–12 on this passage).

**37** La Penna 1983, 323–326. Cf. also *Georg.* 3.505; *Aen.* 4.279–282; 5.432; 9.89; 9.814; 10.837.

**long journey**'[38] (key words: ***errare*** and the passive past participles ***iactatus***, ***actus***, ***sparsus***, ***uectus***) converging with the '**lamentation beside-water**' motif.[39]

Connected with the *pathos a loco* is the so-called '**pathetic fallacy**',[40] that particular **personification** by which natural elements reflect and share the feelings of a character.

*Aen.* 7.759–760 ***te*** *nemus Angitiae, uitrea* ***te*** *Fucinus unda, /* ***te*** *liquidi fleuere lacus* is a telling example not only of this figure (woods, rivers, and lakes cry for the death of the Marruvian priest Umbro), but also of ***pathos de repetitione***[41] (through the threefold anaphora of personal pronoun) and of **apostrophe**[42] to a dead person, a stylistic device which conveys a **sympathetic intrusion of the narrator**. As for personification, a similar pathos can be also found in the **humanisation of animals**, as at *Georg.* 3.517–519 *it tristis arator / maerentem abiungens fraterna morte iuuencum / atque opere in medio defixa reliquit aratra*, a highly pathetic passage (*arator*, usually characterised as *durus*, only here defined as *tristis*), where *maerentem* and especially the adjective *fraterna* give a human touch to the ox suffering for the **loss of a brother**.[43]

The pathos of a death can be even more striking when a killing is perpetrated in a **sacred place** (Macr. *Sat.* 4.3.13 *Sacer vero locus praecipue pathos movet*), such as in the tragic end of Priam (*Aen.* 2.499–502), slaughtered by the impious Neoptolemus on the same altars once consecrated by the king himself:

> **uidi** ipse furentem
> caede Neoptolemum geminosque in limine Atridas,
> **uidi** Hecubam centumque nurus Priamumque per aras
> sanguine foedantem quos ipse sacrauerat ignis.

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**38** On this pathetic motif in Greek and Latin literature see La Penna 1997.

**39** E.g. *Ecl.* 6.64; *Georg.* 4.319–320; 4.355–356; 4.507–510. This already Homeric theme (*Il.* 1.348–350) became part of the repertoire of neoteric epyllion (Cat. 64.124–131) and elegy (Prop. 1.15.9–10).

**40** On this figure see Pease 1927; Dick 1968; Putnam 1992, 15–16.

**41** Macr. *Sat.* 4.6.23. For repetition in direct speech see below.

**42** Often used to give pathos to the diction (Traina 1970, 110), apostrophe is further emotionally charged when referred to a dead person (Seider 2012).

**43** Cat. 68.19 is the most meaningful model of the *mors fraterna* motif. Cf. also *Aen.* 4.21; 9.736. On warrior brothers see Harrison 1991, on *Aen.* 10.125–126, on the image of the abandoned plough see Fernadelli's chapter in this volume (97; 99).

Here the **anaphora** of the verbal form *uidi*[44] stresses a pathetic motif, the autoptic **vision of painful events** (Macr. *Sat.* 4.6.13 *Et attestatio rei visae apud rhetoras pathos movet*). There is similar pathos at *Aen.* 2.526–532:

> Ecce autem elapsus Pyrrhi de caede Polites,
> unus natorum Priami, **per tela**, **per hostis**
> porticibus longis fugit et uacua atria lustrat
> **saucius**. Illum ardens infesto uulnere Pyrrhus
> insequitur, iam iamque manu tenet et premit hasta. 530
> ut tandem ante oculos euasit et ora parentum,
> concidit ac multo uitam cum sanguine fudit.

Here the expression *ante oculos … et ora parentum* not only stresses the '**death *ante ora parentum***',[45] but also seems to be a linguistic marker of *enargeia* (also called *ante oculos demonstratio*): the reader, at Priam's side, watches the pitiful dramatic scene (introduced by the dramatic ***ecce autem***)[46] following Polites in his anguished and useless flight (the **asyndetic *per*** is another pathetic stylistic device)[47] to discover, only in the expressive single-word *rejet* (*saucius*),[48] that the son of Priam is already mortally wounded.

## 3.2 *Pathos ex aetate* and *ex debilitate*; *pathos a causa*

At *Aen.* 2.509–511 the old king Priam pathetically prepares himself for the *impar pugna* against Pyrrhus:

> arma diu **senior** desueta trementibus aeuo
> circumdat **nequiquam** umeris et **inutile** ferrum
> cingitur ac densos fertur moriturus in hostis.

This is a key example of ***pathos ex aetate*** and ***ex debilitate*** (Macr. *Sat.* 4.3.1–5 and 4.3.8), namely the pathos arising from an age, or a physical condition, inappropriate to a situation: Priam, old and weak, should not take up his weapons to face inevitable death in war. The key words for this kind of pathos are ***senex*** (and similar), adjectives referring to weakness and incapacity to do something (usually

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**44** On this 'tragic' *uidi* in Virgil see La Penna 1987, 102. See also Nisbet and Hubbard 1970, on *C.* 1.2.13.

**45** On this theme see O'Sullivan 2009.

**46** On *ecce* in Virgil see Dionisotti 2007.

**47** See La Penna 2002, 192–199.

**48** On this expressive kind of enjambement in Virgil see Dainotti 2015, 58–130.

with a negative prefix), such as ***inutilis***,[49] ***imbellis***,[50] ***inritus***,[51] ***inualidus***,[52] and the adverbs ***frustra***, ***nequiquam***, which also betray in some cases a sympathetic 'lyric comment' by the poet,[53] especially with adjectives such as ***demens***,[54] ***infelix***,[55] ***incautus***, and similar, some of which are also employed to express the **pathos of love**.[56]

A particular kind of *pathos ab aetate* is the theme of untimely death or ***mors immatura***.[57] The key word ***puer*** (along with ***iuuenis*** and ***paruus***) has a strong affective force, especially when in a pathetic apostrophe with ***miser*** or derived words,[58] as in the address ***miserande*** *puer* (*Aen.* 6.882; 10.825; 11.42), which links together the characters of the young Marcellus, Pallas, and Lausus, all destined to die prematurely. The pathos can be also enhanced by means of the *topos* of the ***impar pugna***,[59] usually of a young warrior facing, with courage and imprudence, a stronger opponent, as at *Aen.* 1.474–478:

> parte alia fugiens amissis Troilus armis,
> **_in_felix puer** atque **_im_par** congressus Achilli, 475
> fertur equis curruque haeret resupinus **inani**,
> lora tenens tamen; huic ceruixque comaeque trahuntur
> per terram et uersa puluis inscribitur hasta.

**49** Cf. also *Aen.* 2.647 and 10.794.

**50** Cf. *Aen.* 2.544–545 *sic fatus senior telumque imbelle sine ictu / coniecit*, where the negative force of the adjective *imbelle*, here in an effective **enallage** (on the pathetic value of the figure see Conte 2007, 58–122, on its 'expressionistic' use, Fernandelli's chapter in this volume) is further highlighted by *sine ictu*.

**51** Cf. *Georg.* 4.519; *Aen.* 2.459; 9.313; 10.331; 11.735.

**52** Cf. *Georg.* 4.498; *Aen.* 6.114; 12.132.

**53** On *frustra* and *nequiquam* in Virgil's 'subjective style' see La Penna 2002, 199–207 and Dainotti 2022a, 122, n. 6.

**54** *Demens*, modelled upon the Homeric νήπιος, whose also imitates the placement in *rejet* (e.g. *Il.* 12.113; 12.127), can be followed by a pathetic relative clause (e.g. *Aen.* 6.590; 9.728), and, as well as *infelix*, can convey the poet's intrusion into the narrative and his lyric comment on the character's destiny.

**55** 8 times referred to Dido, it is usually employed for characters destined to die.

**56** The madness of love (especially of Dido) is expressed by adjectives such as *demens*, *amens*, *insanus*, or the metaphors of wound or fire: see La Penna 2005, 424.

**57** On the *mors immatura* as pathetic motif in Greek and Latin sepulchral inscriptions see Lattimore 1962, 184–187.

**58** On *miser*, a recurring (72 occurrences in Virgil) word of pain and pity, see La Penna 2005, 428.

**59** On Virgil's feeling of sympathy and pity for the 'underdog' see Hahn 1925, on the significant parallelism of the *impar pugna* in book 10 (Pallas vs Mezentius; Lausus vs Aeneas), Barchiesi 2015, 38–43.

The pathos is conveyed, as often in Virgil, by the **pathetic apposition**,[60] *infelix puer*, here an authorial comment or perhaps an 'internal focalisation': Aeneas, and the reader with him, is admiring the decorations in the temple at Carthage and 'recognises' the Trojans' painful history. The adjective *impar*, with its prefix alliterating with *infelix*, and the adjective ***inanis***, one of Virgil's most tragic epithets,[61] stress the absurdity of the situation: the young Troilus is not fighting on his chariot, but he is on his back, entangled in the reins, and his neck and hair are being dragged along the ground; his spear, instead of hitting the terrible opponent, draws a useless trail in the dust. Another moving example of *impar pugna* is at *Aen.* 10.815–820:

> ualidum namque exigit ensem
> per medium Aeneas **iuuenem** totumque recondit;
> transiit et parmam mucro, **leuia arma minacis**,
> et tunicam molli mater quam neuerat auro,
> impleuitque sinum sanguis; tum uita per auras
> concessit **maesta** ad Manis corpusque reliquit.

Here the idea of the disparity in fighting is stressed by the adjective *iuuenem* (iconically juxtaposed with *Aeneas*), as well as by the pathetic apposition (*leuia arma minacis*), while the **relative clause**,[62] a fine touch of pathetic realism with its focus upon an object (a kind of '**biography of an object**'),[63] the cloak lovingly woven by Lausus' mother and now stained with her son's life-blood (the colour contrast between gold and red is here an expressionistic detail), introduces the reader into a world of private feelings, a world subverted by violence.[64] In the last line, ***maesta***, a key word of pathos[65] (along with ***indignatus***),[66] recurring in the description of the deaths of young warriors, shows the poet's emotional reaction to the young man's untimely end.

In the *Aeneid* the theme of the *mors immatura* is often intertwined with that of the **beauty of the deceased warrior**, often represented in the image of hair

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**60** See Dainotti 2022a, 87–141 (102–104 on this passage).

**61** Cf. e.g. *Aen.* 4.218; 4.449; 6.885; 10.465; 11.49.

**62** Often pathetic in Virgil. E.g. *Aen.* 2.196–198; 2.248–249; 2.426–428; 7.531–533; 12.44–45.

**63** Reitz et al. 2019, 691.

**64** On the connection in the *Aeneid* between death and garments woven by women (also at *Aen.* 10.817–818 and 11.72–75) see Wiltshire 1989, 54–55.

**65** La Penna 2005, 428.

**66** Cf. *uitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras* used also for Camilla's (*Aen.* 11.831) and Turnus's death (*Aen.* 12.952) with an allusion to the rhetorical figure of ***indignatio*** (cf. Cic. *Inv. Rhet.* 1.100). Similar pathos for the adjective *indignus* (e.g. *Aen.* 2.285; 6.163).

stained by dust and blood, as at *Aen.* 10.832 *sanguine turpantem comptos de more capillos*, or burnt, as at *Aen.* 11.77 *arsurasque comas obnubit amictu*, with the pathetic use of the **future participle** (*arsuras*) indicating an imminent, and usually tragic, destiny.[67]

In many cases the reference to beauty is explicit,[68] and emphatically marked, as at *Aen.* 9.431–437:

> talia dicta dabat, sed uiribus ensis adactus
> transabiit costas et **candida pectora** rumpit.
> uoluitur Euryalus leto, **pulchrosque per artus**
> it cruor inque umeros ceruix conlapsa recumbit:
> purpureus ueluti cum flos succisus aratro 435
> languescit moriens, lassoue papauera collo
> demisere caput pluuia cum forte grauantur.

Here the reader, immersed in a vivid description, see the sword penetrating Euryalus' chest. As in a cinematic slow-motion sequence,[69] the fatal action is given emphasis by the **pleonasm**[70] of ***dicolon abundans***,[71] which firstly states a fact (*transabiit costas*) and then adds a pathetic detail (*candida pectora*), alluding, in the adjective *candida*, to Euryalus' luminous beauty, further remarked in the expression *pulchrosque per artus* and in the pathetic **simile** (cf. Macr. *Sat.* 4.5.7 ***pathos a parabola***)[72] of the *purpureus* (the adjective recalls *candida* in the narrative) flower cut down by the plough. Finally, the description of the blood and the plastic image of the neck collapsing on the shoulders must be considered as an expressionistic touch (further deepened in the simile).

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**67** Dainotti 2022a, 99 n. 6.

**68** As with *pulcher* (e.g. *Aen.* 7.649) or expressions like *egregius forma* and similar (cf. *Aen.* 6.861; 7.473; 10.435).

**69** See Harris 1993, 68, who quotes this very passage as an example of a slow-motion scene. For a discussion of cinematic sequence in narrative, over and above the classic Chatman 1978 (72–73 on slow motion), see now the excellent treatment (on Virgil) by Freudenburg 2023 with a useful appendix on cinematic methods in ancient epic (164 on slow motion).

**70** The pathetic force of pleonasm can also be noted in the **pleonastic *-que*** (*Aen.* 3.329 *me fa-mulo famulamque Heleno transmisit habendam* and the **pleonastic** or **'resumptive' *ille*** (*Aen.* 9.479–480 *non illa uirum, non illa pericli / telorumque memor*). See Dainotti 2015, 65 n. 212 and 164 n. 493, respectively.

**71** On this characteristic feature of Virgil's style, also known as 'theme and variation', *iteratio* or *interpretatio*, see now Piazzi 2018.

**72** Similes can 'illustrate the narrative by glossing it with subjective and sentimental notations' (Conte 2007, 30 n. 6 with bibliography).

Another way of 'patheticising' a warrior's death, usually that of a minor character, consists in adding some biographical details in a kind of '**obituary vignette**',[73] such as at *Aen*. 10.390–396:

> uos etiam, gemini, Rutulis cecidistis in aruis, 390
> Daucia, Laride Thymberque, simillima proles,
> indiscreta suis gratusque parentibus error;
> at nunc dura dedit uobis discrimina Pallas.
> nam tibi, Thymbre, caput Euandrius abstulit ensis;
> te decisa suum, Laride, dextera quaerit 395
> semianimesque micant digiti ferrumque retractant.

In this highly pathetic passage (pathetic appositions with oxymoron, emotional apostrophes, horrific expressionism), we can also find the tragically ironic motif of the '**identical twins, non-identical fates in battle**'.

The idea that even death is better than a life in exile, pain, and perils, is also highly pathetic, such as in the '**paradoxical *makarismos***'[74] (or ***pathos a minore***)[75] at *Aen*. 1.94–96 in Aeneas' desperate words during the storm provoked by Aeolus ('*o terque quaterque beati, / quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis / contigit oppetere!*');[76] there is similar pathos in the idea that dying is better than slavery (*Aen*. 3.321–4) or witnessing the death of a son (*Aen*. 11.158–159).

The pathos of a death can also arise from a particular reason (***pathos a causa***),[77] such as in the case of characters who die despite having a privileged relationship with the sacred (priests, seers, sons of gods),[78] as at *Aen*. 2.424–430:

> ilicet obruimur numero, primusque Coroebus
> Penelei dextra diuae armipotentis ad aram 425
> procumbit; cadit et Ripheus, iustissimus unus
> qui fuit in Teucris et seruantissimus aequi
> (dis aliter uisum); pereunt Hypanisque Dymasque
> confixi a sociis, nec te tua plurima, Panthu,
> labentem pietas nec Apollinis infula texit. 430

**73** On this already Homeric technique see Williams 1983, 196–201; Harrison 1991, xxxii–xxxiii.

**74** For another highly pathetic paradox, namely ***utile et non possibile***, see Harrison 1991, on *Aen*. 10.59–62.

**75** Macr. *Sat*. 4.6.1–4 (also Quint. *Inst*. 6.2.22). This pathos is called ***a minore***, since it arises from the comparison between something terrible but less painful than the situation experienced by the speaker, while the ***pathos a maiore*** (Macr. *Sat*. 4.6.5) arises from the comparison with a bigger misfortune (e.g. *Aen*. 4.669–673).

**76** The model here is *Od*. 5.306–307.

**77** Macr. *Sat*. 4.4.1–11.

**78** On this pathetic motif in the *Aeneid* see Dainotti 2022b.

Here Coroebus and Panthus are not saved by their piety (in addition, Coroebus dies in a sacred place). In this passage also noteworthy is the adverb ***ilicet***, with its nuance of tragic irreparability,[79] the enumerations of the warriors slain (the so-called ***Todeskette*** or 'chain of death'),[80] and the motif of ***cadit et***.[81]

## 3.3 *Pathos a fortuna*

According to Macrobius (*Sat.* 4.3.6), another important kind of pathos is that ***a fortuna***,[82] the pathos arising from the tragic *metabole* from happiness and prosperity to a miserable condition. The key words can refer to the idea of a dramatic change (***mutatus***), as at *Aen.* 2.270–275:

> in somnis ecce ante oculos maestissimus Hector
> uisus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus,
> raptatus bigis ut quondam aterque cruento
> puluere perque pedes traiectus lora tumentis.
> ei mihi, qualis erat, quantum mutatus ab illo
> Hectore qui redit exuuias indutus Achilli

Here the *metabole* of Hector, pictorially rendered through the expressionistic description of his terrible wounds (the hammering alliteration of /p/ in line 273 contributes to the effect), in another example of *enargeia* (as signalled by the expressions *ante oculos*, *uisus*) is made more pathetic (notice that only here does Virgil adopt the superlative form of *maestus*) by the striking contrast with the memory of the living and victorious hero, a memory still vivid in Aeneas' mind, as suggested by the use of the present **tense** (*redit*) instead of an expected past tense.[83] Finally, the Ennian allusions contribute to heightening the pathos of the diction.[84]

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**79** Dainotti 2022b, 38 n. 42. See here, n. 117.

**80** On 'casualty lists' in the *Aeneid* see Mazzocchini 2000 and Dinter 2005.

**81** A variation of the more common *occidit et* motif ('*X* too died'). See Harrison 1991, on *Aen.* 10.470–471.

**82** One of the most effective strategies for eliciting emotions, according to *Rhet. ad Her.* 2.50, Cicero (*Inv. Rhet.* 1.107), and Quintilian (*Inst.* 6.1.23).

**83** Dainotti 2015, 44 n. 157 (with bibliography). As for verbal tenses, it must be remembered the **pathetic use of the perfect** in the sense of 'was and is no more', such as at *Aen.* 2.325–326 *fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium et ingens / gloria Teucrorum.*

**84** Line 271 is modelled upon Enn. *Ann.* 3 Sk., the expression *ei mihi, qualis* can be found in *Ann.* 442 (*sed. inc.* i) Sk.

Other key words of *pathos a fortuna* are the adverbs referring to a past irremediably lost (***quondam***,[85] ***olim***), or adjectives (***uetus*** or ***antiquus***[86] and similar) meaning an antiquity which, respected and respectable for many years, is finally destroyed by the violence of History. A paradigmatic example is at *Aen*. 2.445–449:

> Dardanidae contra turris ac **tota** domorum
> culmina conuellunt — his se, quando ultima cernunt,
> extrema iam in morte parant defendere telis —
> auratasque trabes, ueterum decora illa parentum,
> deuoluunt;

Here the pathetic apposition conveys Aeneas' anguished comment on the pitiful scene: in their desperation at the imminent end, the Trojans use as improper weapons the golden beams of the palace, destroying those famous decorations of their ancient ancestors which were the sign of a greatness now relegated to the past.[87] But in this passage an attentive reader will also perceive the pathetic nuance of ***totus*** (similarly to ***omnis***),[88] here, as elsewhere in Virgil, employed to emphasise the idea of complete destruction or loss (usually of a city).

If the past is a source of pathos, the future too, and its uncertainty, can be equally pathetic. It is no accident that the word *spes* is often employed with a pathetic force in the theme of **unfulfilled hope** (Macr. *Sat*. 4.6.6 *praeter spem*), especially in direct speech,[89] as at *Aen*. 11.49–52:

> et nunc ille quidem spe multum captus inani
> fors et uota facit cumulatque altaria donis;
> nos iuuenem exanimum et nil iam caelestibus ullis
> debentem uano maesti comitamur honore.

Here in Aeneas' emotional words the **tragic irony**[90] arising from the different degree of knowledge of Aeneas (and the reader with him) and of Lausus' **father**[91]

**85** Cf. e.g. *Ecl*. 1.74; *Aen*. 2.556. Dainotti 2022a, 112 n. 5.
**86** E.g. *Georg*. 2.209; *Aen*. 1.12; 2.363; 2.626; 4.670.
**87** On this passage see Dainotti 2022a, 118–120.
**88** Cf. *Aen*.1.599; 3.3; 3.709; 4.669. See Dainotti 2022a, 105 n. 1.
**89** Cf. *Ecl*. 1.15; *Aen*. 2.281; *Aen*. 12.57. It can also be introduced by the locution *si quis* (or similar), which expresses 'a doubtful possibility, often a pathetic "hope against hope"' (Harrison 1991, on *Aen*. 10.458).
**90** Similar tragic irony (a father worries in vain for an already dead son) at *Aen*. 10.839–842.
**91** On the pathetic relationship fathers-sons in the *Aeneid* see Lee 1979.

('perhaps even making his vows'), is further stressed by the ***asyndeton aduersatiuum*** (*ille-nos*).[92]

Reading this passage aloud (the best way to perceive the sound effects and metrical expressiveness of the verse), we will certainly also notice the double synaloepha (*iuuenem exanimum et*), iconically reflecting the breaking of the voice ('**gasping synaloepha**'),[93] and the spondaic **rhythm** of the last line, reinforcing the idea of sadness expressed by the semantics of the two juxtaposed adjectives (*uano-maesto*). This passage brings us to our last section, on the pathetic features in direct speech.

## 4 *Oratio pathetica*, emphatic diction, and the figures of pathos

It is no accident that many of the passages quoted so far belong to direct speech, since, owing to its highest degree of mimesis, it is the most appropriate form to express emotions. Virgil deploys all his art in penetrating the mind of his characters — he is a master of *ethopoeia* and exploits direct speech to mimetically depict their emotions.[94] In this section, I will give the reader only a brief overview of such a complex and vast topic as emphasis in direct speech,[95] an aspect which concerns poetic technique at various levels (diction, metre, syntax, sound).

An emotion-laden direct speech usually starts with an ***initium abruptum*** (cf. Macr. *Sat*. 4.2.2), as at *Aen*. 1.37–38 *haec secum: 'mene incepto desistere uictam / nec posse Italia Teucrorum auertere regem?*', where, in Juno's monologue, the personal pronoun is given emphasis by its initial position and the enclitic *-ne* (usually attached to the most meaningful word), while the so-called ***infinitiuus indignantis***[96] (*desistere-auertere*) adds a further pathetic touch. This passage well illustrates how the poet can suggest the speaker's emotion by placing the start of direct speech within the line,[97] exploiting the iconic potentiality of the

**92** This structure is particularly suitable for expressing pathos in direct speech. Cf. e.g. *Ecl*. 1.1–3; 1.4–5; *Aen*. 1.247–252; 2.601–602; 10.80; 10.81–84; 10.372; 12.662–664.

**93** Dainotti 2015, 166–175.

**94** On direct speech see Highet 1972 and 1974; La Penna 2005, 399–405.

**95** See Hofmann 2003[3] and Beghini 2020a.

**96** See now Galli 2022.

**97** Highet 1974, 193–200.

**relationship between metre and syntax.**[98] Ending a direct speech within the line can be also pathetic, as at *Aen.* 6.883–886:

> manibus date lilia plenis,
> purpureos spargam flores animamque nepotis
> his saltem accumulem donis et fungar inani
> munere.'

Here, in the emotional closure of Anchises' moving words in the Underworld, gasping synaloepha obscuring the trihemimeral (*saltem accumulem*), guttural sounds (*a**cc**umulem-fun**g**ar*), interlinear juxtaposition (*inani* / *munere*), and especially the final *rejet* (*munere*)[99] all suggest an emotional diction followed by a pause full of pathos.

The **number of words in the line** must also be considered in a stylistic reading. Since a line is usually composed of no fewer than five words, four-word lines[100] seem to depict a slow diction, a kind of ***rallentando*** effect suitable for expressing cruel sarcasm (in some cases also solemnity), as at *Aen.* 2.547–550:

> cui Pyrrhus: 'referes ergo haec et nuntius ibis
> Pelidae genitori; illi mea tristia facta
> degeneremque Neoptolemum narrare memento:
> nunc morere.'

Pyrrhus, while killing Priam, orders him to narrate to Achilles in the Underworld the nefarious deeds of his degenerate son.

On the other hand, nine- or ten-word lines, especially with monosyllables, can render a kind of ***spezzato*** effect, suggesting a broken diction. Juturna's lamentation (*Aen.* 12.870–874)[101] is a telling example:

> infelix crinis scindit Iuturna solutos
> unguibus ora soror foedans et pectora pugnis:
> '**quid nunc *te*** *t*ua, *T*urne, potest germana iuuare?
> **aut quid iam** durae superat mihi? qua tibi lucem
> arte morer? talin possum me opponere monstro?

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**98** Winbolt 1903, 1–69.

**99** In direct speech *rejet* can give emphasis to imperative forms, interrogative sentences, vocatives, or meaningful words. See Dainotti 2015, 113–130.

**100** Dainotti 2015, 79 n. 261 (with examples).

**101** On this passage see Barchiesi 1978 and Perkell 1997.

The effect is enhanced by the sequence of three monosyllables at the beginning of two contiguous lines (872–873), since the 'density' of a phenomenon reinforces its perceptibility and expressiveness.[102] In addition, we should notice the pathetic alliteration of the dental (*te-tua-Turne*), the **juxtaposition** of personal pronoun and possessive (*te-tua*),[103] the ***vibrato*** effect of the series of hammering **interrogatives** (another three at lines 878–880) intended to depict the character's despair,[104] and the enclitic *-ne* in its rare apocopated form (*talin*), usually reserved for pathetic questions.[105]

As for **emphasis of diction**, another aspect of paramount importance in the stylistic analysis of direct speech, it can portray irony, indignation, or affection.

In regard to interrogative clauses (exclamations and interjections[106] are obviously emotional), we should remember that *an* can introduce a **sardonic question** that acts as the answer to a previous question (of the same speaker to himself/herself), as at *Aen.* 4.325–6 *quid moror? an mea Pygmalion dum moenia frater / destruat aut captam ducat Gaetulus Iarbas?*.[107] In regard to imperative clauses, in some cases they can have an ironic value ('**derisive imperative**'),[108] as at *Ecl.* 1.71–73 *en quo discordia ciuis / perduxit miseros? his nos conseuimus agros! / insere nunc, Meliboee, piros, pone ordine uites*, where Meliboeus ironically, and bitterly (notice the **indignant deictic *en***),[109] invites himself (the self-address is also noteworthy here) to plant pear trees and vines for the stranger who will take possession of his fields.

An indignant tone can also be rendered by the so-called ***et indignantis***, as at *Aen.* 1.48–49 *et quisquam numen Iunonis adorat / praeterea aut supplex aris imponet honorem?*,[110] where the emphatic **use of the speaker's own name** instead of a personal pronoun is also noteworthy (at *Aen.* 4.308 *nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?*, this figure aims at provoking a sense of pity).[111]

**102** On this concept see the introduction to this volume.
**103** Cf. also *Aen.* 2.429; 9.486; 11.845; 12.538. Similar pathos in *me mea* (*Aen.* 4.434; 6.691; 8.131; 10.672).
**104** Self-questioning often expresses a pathetic doubt (***addubitatio***, Macr. *Sat.* 4.6.11), as at *Aen.* 4.534–546.
**105** Excited conversation at *Aen.* 6.779, indignation and anguish at *Aen.* 3.319; 10.668; 12.503; 12.797; 12.874.
**106** See Lepre 1985.
**107** Cf. also *Aen.* 4.208.
**108** Cf. also *Aen.* 4.381; 7.425–426; 9.634; 11.738. For the similar **caustic jussive** cf. *Aen.* 11.129.
**109** Lepre 1985, 995–996.
**110** Usually in exhortatory protests. Cf. also *Georg.* 2.433 and *Aen.* 6.806.
**111** Cf. *Aen.* 2.778; 6.510. On this pathetic or solemn feature see now Beghini 2020b.

There are also words charged with an **affective force**. This is the case for (***g***)***natus*** (an archaic and poetic form) instead of *filius*, e.g. at *Aen.* 6.867–868 *tum pater Anchises lacrimis ingressus obortis: / 'o gnate, ingentem luctum ne quaere tuorum*. In Anchises' emotional words to Aeneas, the affective tone of the vocative is reinforced by the **emotive *o***,[112] while the synaloepha, blurring the trihemimeral caesura, suggests a sob. The **possessive pronoun** (*tuorum*)[113] is also affective, as is usually the case for **possessive adjectives**, as, for instance, at *Aen.* 2.521–522 *'non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis / tempus eget; non, si ipse meus nunc adforet Hector*,[114] where the **ellipsis**[115] and the 'marked' prenominal position of the possessive adjective[116] (also in relief before the hephthemimeral caesura) contribute to render an intense expressive vibration in Hecuba's words.

The affective nuance of **diminutives** is well known, but their use in epic is striking. Take for instance the unique example of adjectival diminutive in the *Aeneid* (a mark of *sermo familiaris*), *paruulus* (4.328), used to convey a note of tender pathos in the words of Dido, who regrets not having a little Aeneas who could remind her of her beloved hero. Finally, there are also some **adverbs** which show a pathetic (***saltem***, ***tandem***, ***ilicet***) or ironic use (***quippe***, ***scilicet***).[117]

Treating the pathetic value of rhetorical figures, we must remember that **repetition**[118] is the most common way to stress the predominant feeling of a passage. Over and above **anaphora** (noteworthy is the repetition of the second person pronoun in funeral laments) and **epanalepsis**,[119] ***geminatio***[120] is also particularly striking in direct speech, as in Nisus' anguished words at *Aen.* 9.427–428 *'me, me! adsum qui feci, in me conuertite ferrum, / o Rutuli!*, where the emotion is rendered through the geminated *me*, an **exclamatory accusative** which seems also

**112** Only here in Virgil before *gnate*. For a comprehensive study on the Latin forms of address see Dickey 2002 (225–229, on *o*). On the emotional tone of **perfect and future participial vocatives** see La Penna 2005, 426–8 and Horsfall 2013, on *Aen.* 6.83 (on *o*+participle).

**113** Cf. especially *Aen.* 2.283; 3.488; 10.94; 12.936; 12.947.

**114** Cf. DServ. ad loc.: *mire 'meus' ut matris exprimeretur adfectio*. Cf. also *Georg.* 4.498.

**115** On 'affective brachylogies' see Hofmann 2003[3], 160–178.

**116** See Leumann et al. 1972, II, 408.

**117** *Saltem* (e.g. *Georg.* 1.500; *Aen.* 4.327; 6.371), *tandem* (*Aen.* 2.523; 2.531; 6.83; 6.687; 8.73), *ilicet* (*Aen.* 2.424; 2.758; 7.583). See Dainotti 2022b, 38 n. 42. *Quippe* (often ironic, e.g. at *Aen.* 1.39; 4.218), *scilicet*, always ironic in the *Aeneid* when used in direct speech (*Aen.* 2.577; 4.379; 11.371; 11.387; 12.570).

**118** On 'repetition in Latin poetry' see Wills 1996.

**119** With pathetic effect at *Ecl.* 9.27–8; *Aen.*10.821–822 (not in direct speech).

**120** See Dainotti 2015, 113 n. 366. Cf., in direct speech, *Ecl.* 2.69; *Aen.* 8.144; 12.260.

syntactically 'suspended'[121] (recalled as it is by a third *me* in the next sentence), the double gasping synaloepha, and the vocative in *rejet*. In some cases the geminated forms are separated (***separatio***) by one word, as at *Aen.* 8.579 *nunc, o nunc liceat crudelem abrumpere uitam* (with the insertion of the pathetic *o*),[122] or even more elements, as at *Georg.* 4.494–495 *illa "quis et me" inquit "miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu, / quis tantus furor?*, where the first *quis*, separated by its repeated form in the next line, remains almost syntactically isolated to signal Eurydice's despair.

**Alliteration**, a kind of sound repetition, especially in direct speech, can be 'pathetic': it can suggest an indignant, contemptuous, or scornful tone.[123] This is the case for the insistent (usually triple or more) use of alliteration, especially of /s/ (*sigmatismos*), when it suggests an angry tone[124] (almost a feral hiss),[125] or /f/ (an unpleasant, almost non-human sound to the Romans' ears),[126] as at *Aen.* 2.538–539 *qui nati coram me cernere letum / **f**ecisti et patrios **f**oedasti **f**unere uultus* (Priam to Neoptolemus).[127]

But it is mainly with **syntax**[128] that the poet can mimetically portray the character's emotions. Sometimes it is an unusual syntactical arrangement which suggests pathos, as at *Aen.* 12.947–948 '*tune hinc spoliis indute meorum / eripiare mihi?*, where the ***uocatiuus pro nominatiuo*** (*indutus uenis* would be the expected form) gives Aeneas' rhetorical interrogative an highly emotional tone.[129] In other cases pathos can be detected in an unexpected use of parataxis instead of a hypotactic construction, as if the speaker, pressed by emotion, could not express a complex and structured thought but hastily juxtaposed one idea with another. A

**121** The expressiveness of this repetition is well analysed by Servius and especially Tiberius Claudius Donatus, ad loc.

**122** Pathetic effects also at *Aen.* 2.602; 2.644; 11.841. Further examples and bibliography in Dainotti 2022b, 47 n. 80.

**123** See Dainotti 2022c, 4.

**124** Cf. *Aen.* 4.29; 4.379–384 (Dido's imprecations to Aeneas). See Dainotti 2015, 49 n. 167 and 2022c, 6.

**125** Cf. Dion. *De comp. uer.* 14.8 Us.

**126** Quint. *Inst.* 12.10.29; Cic. *Orat.* 163 (*insuauissima littera*).

**127** Cf. *Aen.* 3.145; 4.218; 4.603–605; 11.705–706; 12.316–317; 12.573.

**128** I will not discuss here the pathetic value of parenthesis (Tarrant 1998) and anacoluthon (Conte 2018, 110–111; 116–117).

**129** Cf. also *Aen.* 2.283. On the expressiveness of this syntactical Graecism see Dainotti 2022a, 101 n. 2.

striking example of this type of '**coordination of non-coordinate elements**'[130] is at *Aen.* 9.486–489:

> nec te tua funere mater
> produxi pressiue oculos aut uulnera laui,
> ueste tegens tibi quam **noctes** festina **diesque**
> urgebam **et** tela curas **solabar** anilis.

Here, in Euryalus' mother's address to her absent dead son, the relative clause, a pathetic focus on the clothing made by the woman for her son ('pathetic realism'), presents an evident stylistic *écart* in the abnormal use of a coordinate clause (*et … solabar*) instead of a participle phrase (*solans*), a deviation from the norm which mimetically reflects the emotional upheaval of the old woman. But there is more. At line 487 the reader should notice the pathetic value of the ***hysteron proteron***[131] (*produxi-pressi-laui*), while in the successive line the syntagma *noctes diesque* is exceptionally (only here in Latin poetry) split in **hyperbaton**[132] (another characteristic figure of pathos):[133] this strong syntactic discontinuity puts into relief the adjective *festina* (pleonastic in regard to *urgebam*) and suggests all the despair, confusion, and pain of a mother deprived of her son.

## 5 Conclusions

At the end of our brief overview, we can now draw some conclusions on Virgil's pathetic style. In Virgil's poetry there is a repertoire of pathetic themes — death is obviously the most ubiquitous — which are associated with specific words whose knowledge helps the reader to recognise more easily the expressive vibrations of the text. Over and above words clearly pathetic *per se*, there are indeed other words which, for their more discreet pathetic nuance, could passed unnoticed, but which at a closer look plays an important role in the construction of

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**130** On this Homeric trait, which can also have a pathetic effect, see Conte 2018 (111–113 for pathetic examples).
**131** In direct speech it reflects the emotion of the speaker unable to follow a logical order. On the figure see Casali's chapter in this volume (296 on this passage).
**132** In direct speech, a wide hyperbaton, such as for instance 'vertical agreement' (on this volume see Harrison's contribution), can express emotions. Cf. *Aen.* 9.495–496 *tuoque* /… *telo* (again in Euryalus' mother words) and *Ecl.* 9.2–3 *nostri* / … *agelli*, both with the possessive adjective in marked prenominal position and in relief at line end.
**133** See ps.-Longinus *De Subl.* 22, on the mimetic and pathetic value of hyperbaton.

emotions. When we read Virgil and or any ancient text, we should remember that ancient theory is a precious *specula*, a privileged point of observation to evaluate what is pathetic for the ancient reader, a reader different from us, with a different experience of the texts and even a different perception of emotions.

But the *Pathetisierung* is mainly a matter of how Virgil presents the story. In particular, realism in its various forms — pathetic realism, expressionism, *enargeia*, iconicity — is functional for pathos because immersing the reader in a pathetic scene leads him or her to share the emotions felt by the characters (συνομοπαθεῖν). An analysis of pathos cannot therefore disregard direct speech, the narrative form with the highest degree of mimesis and thus the most suitable form for expressing pathos. It is in direct speeches that Virgil's pathetic technique clearly emerges, as he resorts not only to words but also to a whole refined series of figures — rhetorical, metrical, syntactic — to load the text with pathetic expressiveness and thus give the reader, through the magic of his poetry, the illusion of reality.

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# Names and Places in Vergil's *Georgics*

**Abstract:** This chapter argues that clusters of place-names are a key feature of the style of the *Georgics*, and that this is a feature which shows the poem's learning and didactic character as well as its spatial dimension. Such clusters make very special demands of readers of the *Georgics*.

In the chapter devoted to the *Georgics* in *A Companion to the Study of Virgil*, Nicholas Horsfall set out ten features of the style of the poem requiring further exploration.[1] In the belief that '[w]e understand the language of *G*. far less well than we do that of *Buc*. … or *Aen*.', he outlined the following topics: the 'recipe' manner, i.e. the advice running thus: if you want this … , then do this … ; the possibly Lucretian use of particles in the articulation of the argument; the use of Ennian and Lucretian language in general; the presence of colloquialisms and vulgarisms; the role of the high language of epic; neoteric mannerisms; analysis of the presence or lack of stylistic discrimination between the so-called didactic sections and the so-called digressions; the techniques involved in turning prose sources into poetry; metaphor and transference, e.g. the use of military language to describe farming. In this paper I would like to suggest that an eleventh topic should be added to Horsfall's list, that is the study of place-names in the *Georgics*, and more specifically the study of passages in the poem in which we find place-names occurring in groups or clusters.

Accumulations or lists of proper names are a recurring feature of Greek and Latin poetry, particularly in epic, where, when they reach a certain length, they are traditionally referred to as catalogues. Study of this feature takes many forms. Some scholars focus on the literary conventions underpinning the construction of lists as a recurring feature of the genre, others investigate the sources of the knowledge required to put together a lengthy catalogue and the organisation of that knowledge into literary form; some focus on geographical aspects and mythological backgrounds, others investigate etymologies and various kinds of word play, others reveal social and historical contexts, others emphasise poetic

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1 Horsfall 2000, 89–91.

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learning and the attraction of encountering faraway exotic places. The subject is obviously vast, and it has received a corresponding amount of attention.[2] In this paper, I would like to narrow the focus drastically, by looking not at lengthy lists or catalogues but at small clusters of place-names, and only in one poem.[3] By cluster I mean, to put it as simply as possible, a short section of text, no more than four or five lines, in which several places are named. Places can be cities, regions, rivers, seas, mountain ranges, populations, or any other feature with a clearly spatial connotation, including proper adjectives. Take, for example, this passage (1.56–59, trans. Wilkinson):

> nonne vides, croceos ut **Tmolus** odores,
> **India** mittit ebur, molles sua tura **Sabaei**,
> at **Chalybes** nudi ferrum virosaque **Pontus**
> castorea, **Eliadum** palmas **Epiros** equarum?

> Look how Tmolus sends us its fragrant saffron,
> India ivory, incense the soft Sabaeans,
> But iron the naked Chalybes, Pontus the pungent
> Musk, and Epirus mares for Olympic palms.

We have here, very early in the poem, a clear case of clustering of places, with the accumulation of seven names in four lines, with a mountain, three countries or regions, two peoples, one city. What I will try to do is argue that alongside and in direct relation to the sheer number of places mentioned throughout the *Georgics*, the recurrence of clusters of place-names of this kind is an aspect of the poem that is likely to have been noticed by the poem's first readers as unusually pronounced, and that remains worthy of our attention today. In the course of the

**2** For a recent survey see Reitz et al. 2019. See also Most 2022 on the catalogue as a stylistic device and on Hesiod's poetry as catalogue poetry, a not uninteresting formulation for readers of lists in Virgil's *Ascraeum … carmen* (2.176). For place-names as a subject of study see Thomson 1951; on the study of names more generally in Latin literature see Booth et al. 2006 for a set of essays illustrating different kinds of scholarly approaches.

**3** On top of the numerous discussions of individual cases in the standard commentaries (esp. Thomas 1988; Mynors 1990; Erren 2003) geographical aspects have already attracted useful analysis, from very different perspectives: see, for example, Thomas 1982; Fischer 1968; Jenkyns 1998 chaps. 7 and 8; Kerrigan 2020. Nicolet 1988 [1991] provides essential historical background. See Cowan 2019 for an exemplary study of the implications a single mention of Spain can have. Hendry 1999 reminds us that place-names may not be beyond textual corruption, while, more broadly, Syme 1987 well brings out the attractions of the exotic.

work, readers encounter well over one hundred place-names.[4] They represent a very striking feature of this poem, one that can, I believe, be investigated on the level of style, given that we are dealing with deliberate word-choice on the poet's part. It quickly becomes clear from the start of the poem that we are dealing with a crucial part of the poet's strategy, one that is operative throughout the poem and is central to its overall meaning.

The so-called 'spatial turn' has helped Latinists to look at their texts in new ways in recent years, and a spate of scholarship has posed new questions and helped to reformulate old ones, taking the study of geography in Roman poetry in new directions.[5] I would like to suggest that looking closely at place-names as an aspect of style can contribute to this scholarly trend, alongside other features commonly accepted as constitutive of a writer's style, from choice of subject matter and vocabulary to syntax and word order, verbal register and metre. The essential point must be to show that the way in which Vergil uses place-names in the poem will have impressed itself strongly on readers as an original and meaningful feature of the poem as a whole, demanding careful evaluation by learned readers equal to the *doctrina* of the *poeta doctus*, just as appreciation of his use of other kinds of vocabulary played a role in affecting responses to the work.

Names of all kinds, that is not just place-names, are a recurring feature in didactic epic.[6] The inclusion of catalogues in a type of poem that regularly thematises the theme of knowledge seems quite natural. Equally obviously, in many cases subject matter trumps all else as an explanation for the probability that names will occur both in overall numbers and in distinct groups. Hesiod's *Theogony* was always bound to name many gods, the *Phaenomena* of Aratus many constellations, and Nicander's *Theriaca* many snakes. From a broader perspective, the same is true of a genre that often moves into the territory of ethnography and paradoxography, not to mention the world of myth, subjects that are likely to give rise naturally to the naming of places. More overtly philosophical works seem to function in a different way, but the fragmentary nature of the remains of key texts, such as Parmenides and Empedocles, makes generalisation hazardous. It is at least clear from a comparison of Lucretius' *De rerum natura* and Vergil's *Georgics* that place-names are nowhere near as important a feature of the former

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**4** For a full list of 'every word in the poem which denotes a geographical location in the *orbis terrarum*' see Kerrigan 2020, 115–129.

**5** For a brief survey of this topic, with some bibliography see Nelis and Nelis-Clément 2020, 177–180. Work continues to appear; see, for example, Schmitz 2022.

**6** For a recent discussion of some of the problems associated with this generic term see Kneebone 2020, chap. 1; on Hesiod and catalogue poetry see Most 2022, suggesting that didactic and catalogues go together from the very beginning.

as of the latter, despite the fact the two poems are closely linked in a complex web of intertextual connections and, as we shall see at the end of this paper, Vergil may have been influenced in part by Lucretius when it came to putting together place-names in clusters.[7] He will probably have looked carefully, for example, at *DRN* 6.1106–1108 (trans. Rouse and Smith):

> nam quid **Brittannis** caelum differre putamus,
> et quod in **Aegypto** est, qua mundi claudicat axis,
> quidve quod in **Ponto** est differre et **Gadibus** ... ?
>
> For what difference must we suppose to be between
> the climate of **Britain** and that of **Egypt** where the
> world's pole leans aslant? What between that which is
> in **Pontus**, and at **Gades** ... ?

That said, it would be wrong to consider the inclusion of a very high number of place-names in the *Georgics* as somehow inevitable. It was surely not at all inevitable that a poem of a bit over two thousand lines in four books devoted to ploughing, arboriculture, herding, and bee-keeping would contain such a striking number of place-names from all over Italy and the wider Mediterranean world, and indeed right up to the very limits of the known world. In the opening seventy lines of the poem, readers encounter Chaonia, the Achelous, Ceos, Lycaeus, Maenalus, Thule, Greece, and, as we have already seen in the passage quoted above, Tmolus, India, Sabaea, the land of the Chalybes, Pontus, Epirus, and Olympia. The first point to be made is that we have at the start of the poem a very deliberate attempt at cosmography, a sketching out of the physical cosmos within which these places and all human activities described in this poem will be played out.[8] But that grand, universalising ambition alone does not necessarily explain the inclusion of such a profusion of real places, nor of what looks like the very deliberate inclusion of clusters of place-names. The second point to be made is that presenting the names in the forms I have just used (the Achelous, Lycaeus, Pontus, the land of the Chalybes) at once raises the question of readerly knowledge and competence. Where exactly are all these places? Are we supposed to have all this knowledge at our fingertips? Are these places all very well known? Or is foreign exoticism a big part of the picture? What would Roman readers have

7 On catalogues in Lucretius, Vergil, and Ovid see the study of Kyriakidis 2007, an excellent way into the topic as a whole.

8 This cosmic aspect of the subject will be treated in a separate paper.

made of them? What and where is Thule? Never mind the answers, are these even the right questions?

That Vergil was receptive to the inclusion of lists in the *Georgics* and very much alive to their poetic potential is clear from the fact that the work contains three catalogues: wines (2.89–108), rivers (4.363–373), and nymphs (4.333–344). In these as in all such lists, going right back to that of the ships in the second book of Homer's *Iliad*, the individual poet faces directly the question of how to put a list of names into poetic form. In a didactic epic, this problem presents itself even more starkly, given the genre's concerns with the transmission of knowledge and its frequent celebration of the sheer difficulty of putting abstruse information into verse form. In light of such considerations, the fact that readers encounter in the *Georgics* what I have described as clusters of place-names should ideally be looked at in a wider context than is possible within the scope of a short article. What follows, therefore, is presented here as no more than a preliminary exploration of a topic that will require further, more detailed study. It is only to be hoped that this initial investigation will succeed in convincing others that there is indeed here a question worth asking and a topic worth studying, while also giving some sense of the implications for our understanding of Vergil's style. To speak of providing clear answers in relation to a poem as bewilderingly complex as the *Georgics* would be presumptuous; it will be satisfying enough to come up with some of the right questions.

To begin, we will first take a rapid look at a passage in which a single place-name occurs. Doing so will enable us to discover some of the questions arising when analysing the occurrence of just a single place, with the additional effect of providing some context for the second passage we will study, in which several place-names occur. In the section devoted to weather signs, Vergil describes a series of phenomena involving animals that announce rain. One of them involves sea birds (1.383–387 trans. Wilkinson):

iam variae pelagi uolucres et quae Asia circum
dulcibus in stagnis rimantur prata Caystri,
certatim largos umeris infundere rores, 385
nunc caput obiectare fretis, nunc currere in undas
et studio incassum uideas gestire lauandi.

The manifold birds of the sea, and those that love
To rummage in the pools of Asian Caÿster –
These too you may see douching their backs with spray
In eager sport, now charging the waves head-first,
Now racing into the water, just for fun.
Revelling in the joys of a shower-bath.

At no other place in the whole section devoted to signs provided by animals (373–389) is a specific place mentioned. What exactly are the *prata Caystri* and why are they named here? Why the added specification that they are located in Asia? The river Cayster, known today as the Küçük Menderes in modern-day Turkey, rises in Mount Tmolus and flows into the Aegean Sea near Ephesus. A desire to add a moment of colour and variety to a list may be part of the reason why it is named. Vergil has just mentioned cranes, cows, heifers, swallows, frogs, ants, and rooks, before turning to sea birds, and so may have felt the need of some form of detail to enliven the passage. But that is very unlikely to be the whole answer. It is noteworthy that in the direct models that are being closely imitated here, Theophrastus, Aratus, Cicero, and Varro Atacinus, no place-name appears.[9] At least one part of the answer is that, as the commentators note, Vergil is alluding to *Iliad* 2.459–463, a simile in which Homer compares the Greek fighters as they mass for combat to birds (trans. Murray and Wyatt):

> Τῶν δ᾽ ὥς τ᾽ ὀρνίθων πετεηνῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ
> χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἢ κύκνων δουλιχοδείρων 460
> Ἀσίῳ ἐν λειμῶνι Καϋστρίου ἀμφὶ ῥέεθρα
> ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ποτῶνται ἀγαλλόμενα πτερύγεσσι
> κλαγγηδὸν προκαθιζόντων, σμαραγεῖ δέ τε λειμών...
>
> And as the many tribes of winged birds, wild geese
> or cranes or long-necked swans on the Asian meadow
> by the streams of Caÿstrius, fly here and there, glorying
> in their strength of wing, and with loud cries settle ever
> onwards, and the meadow resounds ...

In his note on Aratus 942–943, Douglas Kidd, after mentioning Vergil's imitation at *Georg*. 1.383–387, adds that 'it may be that A. had this famous Homeric simile in mind.' If this is indeed the case, then we have a straightforward example of two-tier or double allusion, with Vergil alluding simultaneously to both Aratus and Aratus' Homeric model. Both imitators turn a Homeric simile into 'reality': whereas in the *Iliad* the soldiers are like birds, in the *Phaenomena* and the *Georgics* birds provide weather signs.

But can there be yet more than this to Vergil's inclusion of Asian Cayster? While this is the only occasion on which he refers to the river in his whole corpus, it may be worth noting that he mentions Asia three more times in the poem (2.171, 3.30, 4.343). The mention in the fourth book occurs in relation to one of the

**9** On the intertextual complexity of this whole passage see the commentary of Thomas 1988 and also Magnavacca 2017.

nymphs surrounding Clymene, *Asia Deopea*; the context there has much to do with rivers, given that they are all sitting *thalamo sub fluminis alti* (333), and a catalogue of rivers will follow soon after (363–373).[10] The other two mentions of Asia in the poem occur in passages devoted to the victories of Octavian in the East, after the battle of Actium, referring also to Alexandria and Parthia. The East-West division between Rome and Egypt and the Orient more generally comes to some prominence in the *Laudes Italiae* in book 2 and in the prologue to book 3, before becoming crucial in book 4, when Vergil says the profound respect the bees show to their king is greater even than that encountered in Egypt and in Lydia, and that of the Parthians and the Medes (4.210–211), before going on to introduce the closing section of the poem about Aristaeus by setting bugonia in Egypt (4.281–292). It may not be entirely beside the point to suggest, therefore, that Vergil mentions Asian Cayster in book 1 in order to keep constantly in the minds of readers images of the wider world and perhaps even plant the idea of Asia in the reader's mind, in order to be able to activate it later on. This technique, if we are prepared to accept it as viable, raises the broader question of locality in the poem as a whole and the possibility that all the places named throughout the poem play some part in an over-arching plan, by means of which the *Georgics* as a whole depict the Roman world and Italy's place within it, and this in the troubled times of civil war and its immediate aftermath amidst hopeful glimmerings of peace.

It is usually assumed without much discussion that the *Georgics* have an Italian setting. But it is worth taking a close look at precisely how readers arrive at this conclusion, because Vergil is in fact rather sparing when it comes to explicit localisation in book 1. He seems to raise the question at the outset, when, in the prologue, he invites a series of deities to come forth (*ferte pedem*, *adsis*). Formally, this invitation can be linked to the *pompa circensis*, with all the gods coming forth in a kind of procession to be in attendance at the start of a work that is presented as a journey or race (*cursus*, 1.41), with strong emphasis on the moment of setting out or beginning (*ingredere*, 1.42).[11] But the question remains, where is all this taking place? The fact that the second half of the prologue is devoted to Caesar probably suggests a Roman setting, especially when it is said that one of the options open to him is to become a god who watches over cities (*urbisne*

**10** At Hesiod, *Theogony* 359 Asia is a nymph, but see Biotti 2022², 314: 'L'epiteto indicante la provenienza intensifica il colore esotico del passo' {The epithet indicating provenance intensifies the exotic colour of the passage}.

**11** See Nelis and Nelis-Clément 2011 for this reading of the prologue.

*invisere*, 1.25).[12] But the use of the plural, perhaps with some syntactical ambiguity, given that it is easy, on a first reading, to construe *urbis* here not as an accusative plural (*urbes* — as Mynors notes 'the textual evidence is fairly evenly divided between *urbisne* and *urbesne*) with *invisere* but as a genitive singular with *curam*.[13] If we accept that there could be a moment's hesitation in a reader's mind, then Vergil may have deliberately sought to create a doubt: is Caesar interested in a city, in which case it must surely be Rome, or in cities generally, as being on earth, rather than in the sky, at sea, or even in Hades, the three other possible options suggested as his possible realm? In any case, Rome is nowhere explicitly mentioned, and will in fact only be named at very end of the book, at 466. And so, the question remains, where are we as readers to situate the farmers to whom the poem is in part addressed? Now, I do not wish to deny that we are in fact to think of an Italian setting for the various kinds of farming that are the poem's concern. But it is clearly the case that we are regularly invited throughout the poem to adopt global perspectives, as the famous descriptions of Libya and Scythia alone show, and as the *Laudes Italiae* illustrate perfectly. All I want to do is draw attention to the fact that Vergil seems to want his readers to work quite hard at figuring out locations and viewpoints, as they work their way through the text. An example of this kind of effort on the part of the reader may come in lines 56–59, quoted above, the first cluster of place-names in the poem and placed early on, I would suggest, with programmatic force. The various places named here all 'send' (*mittit*) their produce. Fairclough and Goold in their Loeb edition translate this by 'sends us', but there is clearly no word for 'us' in the Latin. That said, this has seemed the natural interpretation for many, the sense of the whole sentence being that everyone knows that Tmolus, India, Pontus, and Epirus send their produce to Rome. Conington notes, for example, '*mittit* to Rome.' Mynors takes the verb to mean 'exports' and adds, 'with destination quite unspecified is a poetical usage', citing Tibullus 3.2.23 and Juvenal 6.466. But the Juvenal passages actually reads thus: *quidquid graciles huc mittitis Indi*, clearly referring to Vergil's *India mittit*, and the *huc* must mean to Rome. Erren in his note comments: '*mittit* emphatisch sc. *in emporia nostra*.' Even if we do accept that Vergil indubitably has export to Rome in mind, this seems to be a rather vague way of offering readers a Romano-centric viewpoint for the poem as a whole.

**12** The emphasis on Italy's place in the world at the opening of Varro's *Res rusticae* should also be taken into account, given that Vergil clearly has that text in mind at the start of Book 1.

**13** See the excellent note of Mynors: 'if we read *urbis curam invisere*, only Rome can be meant; this is too narrow for the future deity, and Octavian rules the *Urbs* already.'

Returning to the matter of definitions already touched upon, let us set out on the hunt for syntactical units of between two and four hexameters in length in which at least four place-names occur. If a coherent sense unit is shorter than two full hexameters, then three names will suffice to create the impression of a significant grouping.[14] A read through the *Georgics* in search of passages answering to this description turns up the following:

1.56–59
nonne vides, croceos ut **Tmolus** odores,
**India** mittit ebur, molles sua tura **Sabaei**,
at **Chalybes** nudi ferrum uirosaque **Pontus**
castorea, **Eliadum** palmas **Epiros** equarum?

2.114–117
aspice et extremis domitum cultoribus orbem
**Eoas**que domos **Arabum** pictosque **Gelonos**:
divisae arboribus patriae. sola **India** nigrum
fert hebenum, solis est turea uirga **Sabaeis**.

2.136–139
Sed neque **Medorum** siluae, ditissima terra,
nec pulcher **Ganges** atque auro turbidus **Hermus**
laudibus **Italiae** certent, non **Bactra** neque **Indi**
totaque turiferis **Panchaia** pinguis harenis.

2.224–225
talem dives arat **Capua** et vicina **Vesaeuo**
ora iugo et vacuis **Clanius** non aequus **Acerris**.

2.486–488
o ubi campi
**Spercheosque** et virginibus bacchata **Lacaenis**
Taygeta!

3.43–44
vocat ingenti clamore **Cithaeron**
**Taygetique** canes domitrixque **Epidaurus** equorum,

**14** Kyriakidis 2007 uses the term 'density' in relation to the number of names in any given line; see his p. 19 for a discussion of *Georg.* 2.136–139, lines which for him have 'a middle density [1-2-2-1]' (he does not count *Italiae*). On the concept of 'density' see also the introduction to this volume.

3.461–462
**Bisaltae** quo more solent acerque **Gelonus**,
cum fugit in **Rhodopen** atque in deserta **Getarum**,

4.210–212
Praeterea regem non sic **Aegyptus** et ingens
Lydia nec populi Parthorum aut Medus Hydaspes
observant.

4.461–463
flerunt Rhodopeiae arces
altaque **Pangaea** et **Rhesi** Mavortia tellus
atque Getae atque Hebrus et Actias Orithyia.

A slightly less strict definition of what represents a cluster would lead to the inclusion of several further passages, increasing the size of the sample.[15] Furthermore, we must not forget all the other place-names that occur in the work, many of them occurring in isolation. The clusters may bring the question of geography and space into special focus, but paying attention to them we are, as already noted, looking at only one aspect of a bigger, carefully structured picture involving the poem as a whole.

Obviously, it will be impossible within the confines of this short paper to look closely at all of the passages just listed. We will look at one in some detail (2.114–117), in order to bring out the range of analytic approaches that has to be mobilised in order to make some sense of it (trans. Wilkinson):

aspice et extremis domitum cultoribus orbem
**Eoas**que domos **Arabum** pictosque **Gelonos**:
divisae arboribus patriae. sola **India** nigrum
fert hebenum, solis est turea uirga **Sabaeis**.

And cast your eyes abroad
To the furthest cultivators in the world,
The eastward dwelling Arabs, and the painted
Gelonians: each nation has its trees –
India alone black ebony, frankincense
Saba alone.

I have quoted the whole sentence of four lines, but note that the five place-names occur within three verses, with three of them concentrated in one hexameter,

15 Cf. 1.240–241, 1.490–492, 2.159–164, 2.437–440, 3.10–20, 3.196–204, 4.287–294, 4.517–518.

thus reinforcing the sense of accumulation.[16] Note also the placing in emphatic positions, either at the beginning, at the end, or on either side of the main caesura. The very first thing to note is that these lines recall those we have just been looking at above, the poem's first cluster, at 1.56–59, with *sola* ***India*** *nigrum / fert hebenum, solis est* ***turea*** *uirga* ***Sabaeis*** clearly referring back to ***India*** *mittit ebur, molles sua* ***tura Sabaei***. Here in the second book Vergil is returning to a point he had made near the start of the first, that lands have their specific qualities, and the farmer must observe them. We thus get a clear example of the way in which place-names can be used to create thematic coherence.

Taking the sentence as a whole, the opening *aspice*, beyond the immediate narratological point about manipulation of focalisation, can be thought of also in terms of ekphrasis and *enargeia*, in which case we should not underestimate the force of the invitation to *aspice … orbem*. The previous verse has just ended with the information that vines like slopes and yew trees prefer cold locations. The precisely local detail gives way to 'look at the world', and we shall return to the various ways in which this passage manipulates transition from local viewpoints to much broader perspectives. The word also has a particular force from a generic viewpoint. The use of the second-person imperative is one of the forms didactic poets use to create a dynamic mode of instruction, in order to create and sustain the process or impression of communication between teacher and pupil.[17] For the reader, sitting, as it were, by the shoulder of the internal addressee and constantly involved in appreciating both similarity to and difference from the *agricolae*, the effect is also one of modulation and segmentation, as if being told to pay special attention at this particular moment of heightened importance. The remainder of the line, after the *et*, required in part as a resumption because the previous example had been introduced by *denique* (2.112), but also gently pulling readers into accepting without too much thought the clear veracity of the proposition and encouraging them to draw the correct and obvious conclusions, is taken up by two adjectives followed in turn by their two nouns, in a highly mannered double hyperbaton. The positioning of *extremis* and *domitum*, on either side of the main caesura, automatically throws both nouns to the end of the verse, and when we get to them, we find two rather unusual expressions, *extremis … cultoribus* and *domitum … orbem*. Starting with the last word, closing off the verse as a sense unit while waiting also to be picked up and continued by a second line beginning with *Eoasque*, thus prolonging the force of *aspice*, the description of the *orbis* as 'dominated' or 'conquered' is bold, as is the additional fact that

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**16** On these lines in their wider context see the reading of Jenkyns 1998, 352–354.
**17** See Hine 2011.

*domitum* must then be taken *cultoribus*. Right to the ends of the earth, lands, we are told, are conquered by farmers. The alert reader will recall such lines as 1.160, where the farmers' tools are thought of as weapons (*arma*) and their hard work is seen as a kind of warfare.[18] In the more immediate context, just over fifty lines later, at 2.171, the word *extremis* will be used in the same metrical position of Caesar's military conquests in Asia.[19] When the same word is repeated in what is a more natural context, the strangeness of the initial occurrence is underlined. The adjective demands attention from another point of view, that of its precise meaning. How exactly are we to take it? Fairclough and Goold are worried enough by it to translate by 'the earth's farthest bounds, conquered by tillage', which hardly does justice to the expression *extremis cultoribus*. Wilkinson too is troubled, and his version ignores *domitum* entirely: 'cast your eyes abroad to the furthest cultivators in the world'. The Latin, taking it as literally as possible, says something like 'look too at the world dominated by farthest cultivators'.

When we think of distant, faraway cultivation, we must implicitly do so from a particular spatial perspective; from where do we look at the world? Presumably we are to think of an Italian 'centre' here; note Wilkinson's 'abroad'. The first word of the next line, *Eoasque*, will bring the precision that we are looking first in an easterly direction towards Arabia (*Eoasque domos Arabum*), and from there in a more northerly one, towards Scythia (*pictosque Gelonos*). It seems worth quoting Mynors who, in his introductory note on the section 109–135, says that Vergil 'raises his sights with *aspice* (114) to consider the East, scene of Octavian's expected victories (171–172) and home of Nature's marvels; and concludes by letting the roving camera come to rest, as it were, on one particular species'. The resort to the suggestion of cinematographic technique underlines the fact that something remarkable is going on here.[20] From an immediately preceding sense of local specificity, we are asked to consider a globalised agriculture, before being given again more specific cases, but this time faraway ones, thus underling the importance of *extremis*, a sort of key word, prominently placed first after the opening imperative *aspice et*. Having been invited from the start of the sentence to think about space while grappling with the precise meaning of who these 'farthest cultivators' may be and what exactly they have to do with the person addressed by the opening *aspice*, the stage is set for the accumulation of Eastern Arabs, Gelonians, India, and Sabaeans.

**18** See Betensky 1979.
**19** Thomas 1988, ad loc.
**20** On 'Virgil's cinematic art' see now Freudenburg 2023.

The first thing to be done is to identify the places Vergil mentions. In doing so, we must take care to separate ancient geographical knowledge from its modern counterpart, accepting that we will never know precisely what all these places will have meant to Vergil and his Roman readers. It is often very difficult to decide whether such names are used in a highly precise way, or whether they rather evoke in some vague way distant, barely known locations. The 'eastern homes of the Arabs' probably already denotes the region the Romans would only much later turn into a province. But Bowersock can say that '[t]he ancients encountered Arabs from the northern reaches of Mesopotamia to the southern shores of the great peninsula that lies between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf'.[21] It is no easy job to decide exactly whether Vergil has in mind a specific region of eastern Arabia, or whether the expression means much more generally the East, as today we sometimes loosely refer to the Near East. The Gelonians were Scythians, and the note of Mynors invites us to imagine them as 'ranging over south Russia on horse-back, with their bows and arrows, tattooed…'. After India, which Conington states 'is not a loose name for the East, including Ethiopia, but must be taken to refer to 'India Proper', come the Sabaeans, who are to be located in south-west Arabia. It is perhaps a little bit odd that having just mentioned Arabia Vergil should go on to refer to one part of that region. If we take the adjective *Eoas* in a precise sense, could Vergil be referring to eastern Arabia and south-west Arabia in the same sentence? In that case, why insert Scythia and India in between?

Even setting aside the added details about the different kinds of produce mentioned and certain problems arising (India is not the only country to produce ebony, as Pliny points out at *NH* 12.17–20), further questions rapidly pile up for readers. At the same time as they are deciding where these places are and trying to assemble the geographical picture, they must also ask themselves what possible associations these places may have, the very natural question being why Vergil would refer to these places and peoples in particular at this point. Do they have anything in common? Do they have any specific contemporary reference? Mynors points out that the Geloni were to 'feel the effect of Octavian's victories', while in the *Res Gestae* (26.5) we get a reference to the campaign *usque in fines Sabaeorum*. The probable date of this campaign is 26–25 BCE, and so after the publication of the *Georgics* (unless we believe in a second edition after the death of Cornelius Gallus), but the idea of further conquests following on the capture of Alexandria and Egypt must have been in the air by 29.[22] It is certainly the case that the events taking place in Egypt and beyond in the late thirties and early twenties

**21** Bowersock 1983, 1.

**22** On the problem of the second edition after the death of Gallus see Horsfall 2000, 86–89.

BCE were very much on Vergil's mind elsewhere in the *Georgics* (cf. 3.26–33), and so will likely have been of concern to some of his readers. In this poem, as is well known, farming and politics are never far apart.

We have been looking at a passage in which a first verse invites readers to consider the world as a whole, before giving us five place-names in three lines, creating a rapid vision of faraway places in the east and north. We are indeed to think of the farthest limits of the Roman empire, as initially suggested by the word *extremis*, but the term *cultoribus*, evoking cultivation in a general sense, perhaps surprisingly gives way to examples 'notable for outlandishness than for skill in husbandry'.[23] Whatever we may make of this, the poet immediately guides us towards one conclusion to be drawn: *divisae arboribus patriae*. This is a difficult phrase. The basic sense is that each country has its own trees, but we have here an odd way of saying that. Conington's paraphrase, 'their countries are divided among trees', brings out the strangeness. We can only get the point when we look at this half verse in the wider context in which it occurs. The section we find ourselves in begins thus (2.109–111, trans. Wilkinson):

> Nec uero terrae ferre omnes omnia possunt.
> fluminibus salices crassisque paludibus alni
> nascuntur, steriles saxosis montibus orni...
>
> Neither can every soil bear everything.
> By rivers willows grow, in heavy marshland
> Alders, on rocky mountains barren ashes...

Without this introduction, the cryptic *divisae arboribus terrae* would be almost incomprehensible. And there is another problem. What is at first sight a kind of conclusion, with the *terrae* of 118 looking back to *terrae* in 109, cannot be so easily related to the immediately preceding lines 114–115, where no trees whatsoever are mentioned. It is in fact when we move on to the second half of line 116, where we find out that *only* India produces ebony and *only* Sabaea incense, that we can draw the correct conclusion about the relationship between lands and their particular trees. It is the revelation about India and Sabaea that dispels some of the obscurity surrounding the idea that countries can be divided up according to the different kinds of trees that grow in them, which is in turn a recapping of the opening declaration that not all regions can produce all kinds of plants. The result is that we are left to wonder about how line 115 and the Arabians and Gelonians fit in. What do they have to do with trees, and what kind of cultivation are we

**23** Mynors 1990, on 2.114–115.

to think of? Vergil says nothing on either topic. In this particular case, therefore, what begins to come to the fore is the question of how readers figure out the coherence and unity of any given cluster of place-names. Do the locations mentioned hold together as a group? Are they to be found in close proximity? What are the relations between them? Are there any possible connections to other names close by, not part of the cluster as such, but lurking with some kind of intent close by?

When we look at lines 2.114–117 in their wider context, it becomes immediately clear that this is indeed the case. After the naming of the Sabaeans and their incense, Vergil goes on to mention further places and products. According to the definition fixed at the beginning of this paper, what follows does not constitute a cluster as such, but in lines 118–35 we encounter Ethiopia (2.120), China (2.122), Ocean (2.122), India again (2.122), and Media (2.126, 134), whatever Vergil may have meant by that.[24] Media will then be evoked again for a third time just two lines later (2.136, *Medorum silvae*), in the verse that introduces the *Laudes Italiae*, a famous section of the poem (2.136–176) in which Italy's place in the wider Mediterranean world is brought to the very forefront of attention. When we take this wider perspective, therefore, we can see that right from line 2.109 (*Nec vero terra ferre omnes omnia possunt*) Vergil has been building up to the section in praise of Italy. When he initially illustrated the fact that every land cannot produce everything by stating that willows grow by rivers but ash trees on hilltops (2.110), he had already carefully planned the whole following section, in which, as we have already seen, we move from the precisely local to much wider vistas.[25] And this whole portion of the book from 109 to 176 contains mention of twenty-four different place-names, which is surely a remarkable figure.

At the beginning of this paper, we surveyed the didactic genre, suggesting that there was a direct connection between choice of subject matter and the probability that a given poem was likely to contain many names, e.g. of gods in Hesiod's *Theogony*, of stars in Aratus' *Phaenomena*. In closing I would like to suggest a further possible forerunner of Vergil, and perhaps even a direct model for his procedures in the *Georgics*. The *Aetia* of Callimachus, insofar as we can tell from its surviving very fragmentary state, seems to have included a highly significant

**24** See Erren 2003, on 2.136.

**25** See Pridik 1971, 61–62 for the way in which line 109 looks back to 83 and forward to 177, the line after the *Laudes Italiae* that opens the next paragraph, thus turning the whole complex from 83 to 225 into a coherent, artfully structured block of book 2, amounting to the first half of the whole. Much has been written about the structure of the *Georgics*, but there is still work to be done in elucidating the relationship between theme, structure, and the overall unity of the poem.

number of place-names. This aspect of the poem has been very suggestively examined by Markus Asper, in a paper entitled 'Dimensions of Power. Callimachean Geopoetics and the Ptolemaic Empire', starting from the fact that 'Callimachus mentions hundreds of place names in his narratives'.[26] Vergil's numerous evocations of the spaces of the Roman world in the *Georgics* may well be a direct response to Callimachus' poetic explorations of the dynamics of Ptolemaic empire in the *Aetia*. But this topic will have to wait for further study elsewhere. The essential point I have tried to make in this paper is that clusters of place-names make very special demands of readers of the *Georgics* and that this feature can be considered as one aspect of this great poem's style.

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# Iconic Word Order in Horace's *Odes*

**Abstract:** The word order of Horace's *Odes* is intricate and often explored, usually from the perspective of formal patterning. In a highly inflected language such as Latin, however, word position can also reinforce meaning. This investigation will first focus on the repeated separation of adjectives from their nouns, taking into account a word's place in the line. In the second part, I will study the postponement of the conjunction or relative pronoun to the second position in subordinate clauses in order to convey how syntax pictures sense. The present paper offers a partial catalogue of syntactic expressiveness in Horace's *Odes*.

## 1 Introduction

The word order of Horace's *Odes* is famously intricate[1] and has drawn the attention of many critics, but they generally only investigate formal patterns.[2] In a highly inflected language, however, word position can also reinforce meaning. My investigation will firstly focus on the recurrent separation of adjectives from their nouns, taking into account a word's place in the line. Next, I will study the postponement of the conjunction or the relative pronoun to the second position in subordinate clauses in order to convey how syntax reflects sense. Finally, I will turn my attention to the position of words in the line. The present paper offers a partial catalogue of syntactic expressiveness in Horace's *Odes*, partly based on Lateiner's categories of mimetic syntax (enclosure, separation, and position in

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**1** This very particular word order is illustrated by *C.* 1.5.13–16 or *C.* 1.9.21–22 (see Marouzeau 1946[2], 322–323; Wilkinson 1963, 220; Mayer 2012, 10–11 and ad loc.). This could be a modern perception of readers who are not used to an inflected language, but even Latin speakers noticed this aspect of the Horatian language. Often, for example, ps.-Acron rearranges the word order of Horace's *Odes* to explain difficult passages in his view, with the formula *ordo* [*est*] (see, e.g., comm. on *C.* 1.9.22), as does Porphyrion.

**2** See, e.g., Naylor 1922, a neglected commentary as observed by Nisbet 1999, 136; Wilkinson 1963, 218–220.

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the verse of ordering words).[3] Although I have already published something on this subject,[4] I intend to develop a more general study of it in Horace's *Odes*, something that has not yet been done in a systematic way, as Frances Muecke pointed out in her study on Horatian style.[5]

In the *Odes* Horace usually encloses one or more words between an adjective and its noun in a hyperbaton.[6] In some instances, the word order corresponds to the situation described in the text and is an important aspect of Horatian style. It sometimes occurs when the poet describes something contained in something else or something encircled by something else. The *locus classicus* for this discussion, quoted by many scholars,[7] is the famous ode to Pyrrha, in which the poet describes the girl and a boy in a grotto (*C*. 1.5.1–3):

> Quis **multa** gracilis te puer in **rosa**
> perfusus liquidis urget odoribus
> **grato**, Pyrrha, sub **antro**?

In the first line, the adjective *multa* and the corresponding noun *rosa* enclose the adjective *gracilis* and the corresponding noun *puer*, that is to say, the 'slender boy' is 'in the middle of a heap of roses'. Furthermore, the pronoun *te* is surrounded by *gracilis* and *puer*, that is, the 'slender boy' embraces, 'presses' (*urget*) Pyrrha. There are, therefore, two hyperbata that seem to mimic what is being said. In addition, in the third line, when Horace describes the place where the girl and the boy are, he positions the adjective *grato* at the beginning of the line and its noun (*antro*)[8] at the end, encircling the beloved's name. In this new hyperbaton,

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**3** This type of iconic expressiveness has been variously defined: 'mimetic syntax' (Lateiner 1990), 'metaphor from word order' (Wilkinson 1963, 65–66), 'pictorial arrangement of words' (Young 1933), and 'iconic hyperbaton' (Traina 2004$^2$; *index* s.v. 'iperbato iconico'). Although there are some specific studies of the topic to date related to ancient poetry (e.g. Dainotti 2013), surprisingly there is none dedicated to Horace' *Odes*, known for a very particular word order. On the word order of Horace's *Odes*, see Nisbet 1999, with bibliography.

**4** Hasegawa 2022, 121–130, where I discuss only examples from *Odes* 1.

**5** Muecke 1997, 780.

**6** On hyperbata in the *Odes*, see Stevens 1953, 202–203; Nisbet 1999.

**7** See, e.g., Commager 1962, 51–52; Lee 1969, 11; Nisbet 1999, 140; Mayer 2012, ad loc.; Knox 2013, 239–240; Dainotti 2015, 248 n. 772; Tarrant 2020, 96.

**8** An important parallel to this use with the word *antrum* could be found in the *Aeneid*. Vergil often involves Polyphemus or Cyclops with this noun characterised by an adjective: *immemores socii* ***uasto*** Cyclopis *in* ***antro*** (3.617); *nam qualis quantusque* ***cauo*** Polyphemus *in* ***antro*** (3.641); *ferrum exercebant* ***uasto*** Cyclopes *in* ***antro*** (8.424). For this type of icon, see Dainotti 2015, 245–248 (see 246 and n. 765, especially on the hyperbaton with the word *antrum*).

Pyrrha is enclosed by the delightful grotto. Moving on from this well-known example, I present below some patterns of enclosure in Horace's *Odes*.

# 2 Enclosure

## 2.1 The proper name

In this kind of hyperbaton, with adjectives separated from their nouns, it is common to enclose a proper name, in order to indicate that the person is surrounded by something or affected by something. For instance, Daedalus is surrounded by the empty air (*C.* 1.3.34 *expertus* ***uacuum*** *Daedalus* ***aera***); Priam is enclosed in his ancient kingdom (*C.* 1.15.8 *et* ***regnum*** *Priami* ***uetus***); Damalis, a copious drinker, is surrounded by a lot of wine (*C.* 1.36.13 *neu* ***multi*** *Damalis* ***meri***); Palinurus is enveloped in his Sicilian waters (*C.* 3.4.28 *nec* ***Sicula*** *Palinurus* ***unda***); and Bacchus (wine) is contained in a Laestrygonian jar (*C.* 3.16.34 *nec* ***Laestrygonia*** *Bacchus in* ***amphora***).[9]

## 2.2 The vocative

As has been previously noted by a number of scholars,[10] a proper name in the vocative case is often enclosed by words appropriate to the person addressed, as in *C.* 1.5.3 ***grato****, Pyrrha, sub* ***antro***. For example, Munatius Plancus is surrounded by mellow wine, in which he drowns life's sadness and troubles (*C.* 1.7.19 ***molli****, Plance,* ***mero***); Thaliarchus is enclosed by the Sabine jar, which also contains wine (*C.* 1.9.7–8 ***Sabina****, / o Thaliarche, merum* ***diota***); Tyndaris is enchanted, surrounded by the sweet sound of Pan's pipe (*C.* 1.17.10 *utcumque* ***dulci****, Tyndari,* ***fistula***); Pollio is placed in the middle of the senate's deliberations, where he holds a prestigious position[11] (*C.* 2.1.14 *et* ***consulenti****, Pollio,* ***curiae***); Alcaeus sings in more resonant tones with his golden plectrum (*C.* 2.13.26–27 *et te*

9 For this last example see Woodman 2022, 26 and ad loc. Though Bacchus is a proper name, the god here is of course a metonymy for wine.

10 See La Penna 1989, who considers these examples in Horace's *Odes*, but also identifies the same pattern in Vergil, Tibullus, Propertius, Catullus, Meleager, Ovid, and Martial. See also Fraenkel 1957, 206 and n. 1, 215, 222, and 433 n. 5, who is important to La Penna's investigation; Nisbet 1999, 140.

11 See Harrison 2017, ad loc.

*sonantem plenius **aureo**, / Alcaee, **plectro***); Postumus, emphatically referred to by the *geminatio* of his name, is embraced by the fleeting years, i.e. the time within which he is contained (*C.* 2.14.1–2 *eheu **fugaces**, Postume, Postume, / labuntur **anni***); the Muse Calliope is invoked by the poet with her lengthy song (*C.* 3.4.2 *regina, **longum**, Calliope, **melos***); Lyde has to bring out the Caecuban from her store, and then the wine will dominate her (*C.* 3.28.2–3 *prome **reconditum**, / Lyde, strenua **Caecubum***); and Maecenas is surrounded by a wreath of roses (*C.* 3.29.3 *cum **flore**, Maecenas, **rosarum***).[12]

From these examples, music and wine stand out as subject matter generally appearing in Horace's *Odes* in this kind of hyperbaton. These two elements are essential in a banquet, where they should surround the guests, and keep them together. This may perhaps be the reason why Horace frequently emphasises wine and music through mimetic syntax. I shall explore a few more passages in which Horace talks about wine in another section (2.4 below).

## 2.3 Miscellaneous

Apart from proper names, other words are also surrounded by adjective and noun to indicate that something encircles something else, or that someone is in a certain place,[13] as Pyrrha is in the grotto (*C.* 1.5.3). For instance, this kind of hyperbaton may mimic a man's limbs stretched out beneath a leafy and green arbutus (*C.* 1.1.21 ***uiridi** membra sub **arbuto***);[14] a glistening head surrounded with green myrtle (*C.*1.4.9 *nunc decet aut **uiridi** nitidum caput impedire **myrto***);[15] Faunus' shrine in the leafy groves (*C.* 1.4.11 *nunc et in **umbrosis** Fauno decet immolare **lucis***); a wolf in a Sabine wood (*C.* 1.22.9 ***silua** lupus in **Sabina***);[16] the fearful poet carried

12 This last example is the starting point for La Penna 1989, who, based on Pöschl's 1970 commentary to *C.* 3.29.3, developed his text. However, it is worth mentioning that there is a difference in this last example: there is no adjective, but a noun that functions as an adjective (*rosarum*). La Penna also quotes (1989, 337) *C.* 4.11.2–3 *est in horto, / Phylli, nectendis apium coronis*, again without an adjective, but it is possible to perceive the same idea of crowning with a garland.

13 This is called 'spatial hyperbaton', which 'allows the reader to visualize a space in which the subject of the clause is present' (Dainotti 2013, 186). Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 3.104; 9.59; 9.339; 12.80.

14 See Lee 1969, 10. Vergil could be a good parallel here (*Ecl.* 1.1): *Tityre, tu **patulae** recubans sub tegmine **fagi***. Tityrus reclines (*recubans*) beneath the shade of the spreading beech tree.

15 A good parallel here would be *Ecl.* 3.45 *et **molli** circum est ansas amplexus **acantho***, where the hyperbaton reflects 'the twining of the sinuous acanthus around the handles of the cup' (see Dainotti 2015, 246 and n. 767, with bibliography; Cucchiarelli 2012, ad loc.).

16 In this example and in the previous one there is the use of the preposition *in*, as in *C.* 1.5.1, quoted at the beginning of the text, and in *C.* 4.12.24, further in the text. Cf. *Epod.* 12.5 ***hirsutis***

by Mercury in a thick cloud (*C.* 2.7.14 ***denso** pauentem sustulit **aere***);[17] the anxieties that fly around coffered ceilings (*C.* 2.16.11–12 ***curas** laqueata circum / tecta **uolantis***);[18] the fish hemmed in by the contracting waters (*C.* 3.1.33 ***contracta** pisces **aequora** sentiunt*);[19] the three hundred fetters that hold Pirithous fast (*C.* 3.4.79–80 ***trecentae** / Perithoum cohibent **catenae***); a doe in close-meshed nets (*C.* 3.5.31–32 ***densis** / cerua **plagis***);[20] the whole flock that plays in the grassy meadow (*C.* 3.18.9 *ludit **herboso** pecus omne **campo***);[21] and a rich man in a well-stocked house (*C.* 4.12.24 ***plena** diues ut in **domo***).

## 2.4 Roman wine in a Greek jar

As I have mentioned above, the presence of wine in these passages is loaded with meaning. In general, wine (the content) is described as being in a container (vessel, cup, jar, etc.), or someone is surrounded by wine. So, Horace usually surrounds the content with the container, producing a hyperbaton with the adjective and its corresponding noun. I would like to bring into my discussion another kind of hyperbaton (or anastrophe), present in *C.* 1.20.1–3, an ode addressed to Maecenas, while emphasising how frequently wine appears in this kind of *ordo uerborum*.

> uile potabis **modicis** Sabinum
> cantharis, Graeca quod ego ipse testa
> conditum leui, ...

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*cubet hircus* in ***alis***. I think the prepositions *inter* (see below), *circum*, and *in* are key words for passages where enclosure is imitated. This can be a starting point for future research on mimetic syntax in other poets. For instance, on Ov. *Trist.* 2.533–534 *sed tamen ille tuae felix Aeneidos auctor / contulit* in ***Tyrios** arma uirumque **toros***, with Barchiesi's commentary (1994, 18–19): '*Tyrios toros* [...] abbracciano, tramite l'iperbato, *arma uirumque*: ora la parte, *Eneide* IV, contiene il tutto, e l'epos è subordinato all'eros' {*Tyrios toros* [...] embrace, via hyperbaton, *arma uirumque*: now the part, *Aeneid* IV, contains the whole, and the epos is subordinate to eros}.

**17** See Lee 1969, 11.

**18** Harrison 2017, ad loc.: 'the noun/participle combination bookends the phrase, appropriately enclosing the area of the flight described'. There is a similar example with *circum* in Verg. *Georg.* 1.377 *aut **arguta** lacus circumuolitauit **hirundo***.

**19** See Woodman 2022, 26 and ad loc., who describes the *ordo uerborum* as 'mimetic syntax'.

**20** See Woodman 2022, 26 and ad loc. Compare this passage with *C.* 1.1.28 (see below).

**21** This example is similar to Verg. *Aen.* 12.80 ***illo** quaeratur coniunx Lauinia **campo***, with Traina's comment (2004[2], ad loc.): 'L'iperbato a cornice del v. apre uno spazio al cui centro campeggia il premio della lotta, la donna' {the framing hyperbaton of the line opens a space in the centre of which stands the prize of the struggle, the woman}.

There are two consecutive enclosures that seem to emphasise the Roman content and the Greek containers: the first one is Sabine wine (*Sabinum*) embraced by the 'modest cups' (*modicis* ... / *cantharis*). This kind of hyperbaton, with an adjective and its associated noun surrounding a word, is just like the others we have studied. The second enclosure, however, is again referring to Sabine wine, now taken up by the relative pronoun *quod*, surrounded by the Greek jar (*Graeca* ... *testa*). The proleptic placing of the adjective *Graeca* at the start of the second clause not only leaves *quod* within the subordinate clause but also brings it closer to the Greek noun *cantharis*, the other term indicating the Greek element. Horace thus produces a repetition of the encircling of Roman contents by a Greek container. The syntax again mimics what the poet describes: the content surrounded by the container.

In addition to the passages already analysed above,[22] there are others in which wine is mentioned or is implied, and there is mimetic enclosure: for example, when Horace, addressing Pompeius, orders that he fills up the polished cups with Massic (*C.* 2.7.21–22: ***leuia*** *Massico* / ***ciboria*** *exple*);[23] when an old woman is described drinking jars drained to the dregs (*C.* 3.15.16 *nec* ***poti*** *uetulam faece tenus* ***cadi***); when the poet mentions that plenty of wine is available for the mixing bowl, Venus' companion (*C.* 3.18.6–7 *larga nec desunt* ***Veneris sodali*** / *uina* ***creterrae***); and when mellow wine is said to be in a jar not yet tilted for pouring (*C.* 3.29.2 *non ante* ***uerso*** *lene merum* ***cado***).

# 3 Separation (and juxtaposition)

By means of hyperbaton, the poet separates words that in general should be together. Accordingly, he also uses these words' special placement to mimic breaking, cutting, and separation. In *C.* 1.1, for instance, there are two examples close to each other, emphasising this pattern at the beginning of the lyric collection. Describing a farmer, satisfied with his activity on land, Horace says that he is fearful of the sea and therefore does not want to face its dangers (ll. 11–14):

> gaudentem **patrios** *findere* sarculo
> **agros** Attalicis condicionibus
> numquam demoueas, ut trabe Cypria
> **Myrtoum** pauidus nauta *secet* **mare**.

22 *C.* 1.7.19; 1.9.7–8; 1.36.13; 3.16.34; 3.28.2–3.

23 In this example, once again we have Italian wine as content and the container is referred to with a Greek term, although it is Egyptian (see Harrison 2017, ad loc.).

Speaking of the farmer, who cleaves the country's fields with a hoe, the poet places *findere sarculo* ('to cleave with the hoe', 11) between the adjective (*patrios*, 11) and its corresponding noun (*agros*, 12). This last word is still separated by the break between the lines, while *patrios*, in turn, is placed before the caesura in the previous line. In this way, *findere sarculo* produces an even stronger 'cut' between two strong divisions, the caesura and the line-end. The poet thus places *agros* on one side of the phrase, and *patrios* on the other.[24] In line 14 the word order again mimics what the poet is saying: in the *ordo uerborum* it is possible to see 'the sailor cleaving the Sea of Myrto'.[25] The key word here is clearly *secet* ('cleaves'). Just as the fearful sailor cuts through the sea in a Cyprian bark, so the adjective *Myrtoum* is separated from its noun *mare* by *pauidus nauta secet*.

These examples provide the opportunity for a methodological caveat. The interpretation of the phenomenon of mimetic syntax must only be accepted if there is a conjunction between what the poet is saying (*res*) and how he is saying it (*uerba*).[26] In other words, there must be an agreement between *elocutio* and *inuentio*, i.e. appropriateness (*decorum* / πρέπον), a virtue well explored by Horace in the *Ars*.[27]

The interpretation of the *ordo uerborum* in *C*. 1.1.14 can further be corroborated by two other passages in the same ode: the first (l. 28) has a similar word order with two adjectives first and then two nouns in a sequence. However, the first adjective does not occupy the beginning of the line, and the second one is placed after the caesura. Thus, another frequent pattern is found here: an adjective placed at the end of the first hemistich, and its noun at line-end,[28] as follows:

> seu rupit **teretis** Marsus aper **plagas**.

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**24** A parallel example can be seen in the *Ars* when the poet talks about cutting pretentious ornaments (ll. 447–448): ***ambitiosa*** *recidet* / ***ornamenta***. It is evident that the verb 'to cut' (*recidet*) and the division of the lines separate the adjective (*ambitiosa*, 'pretentious') from the noun (*ornamenta*, 'ornaments').

**25** See Dainotti 2015, 248 n. 772.

**26** On the importance of semantics in a stylistic analysis, see Dainotti 2015, 2.

**27** On *decorum* in Horace's *Ars*, see Camarero Benito 1990. On the relationship between πρέπον and mimetic composition, see Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*De comp. uerb*. 20), who is, however, concerned with the sound and sense, not explicitly the syntax. For this passage in Dionysius, see the excellent discussion in Calcante 2005, 139–151.

**28** This pattern is commonly found in the pentameters of Augustan elegy. For instance, in Propertius 1.1.1–20, it occurs five times (6, 8, 12, 18, 20) in the ten first pentameters (50%). However, this is already common in Catullus' elegies, which in turn are imitations of Hellenistic poets, such as Hermesianax and Callimachus. In Catullus 66, a translation of Callimachus, it occurs five times (2, 6, 14, 16, 20) in the ten first pentameters (50% again).

If a reader considers only adjectives and nouns, he/she could say that the poet is mimicking a boar caught in a net.[29] However, the key word here is *rupit* ('has broken'),[30] once again a verb, like *secet* in the passage above. The poet is saying that a Marsian boar ruptured the fine-spun net, and the adjective (*teretis*) separated from its noun (*plagas*) by the caesura and the *Marsus aper* paints an image of what he says in the collocation of the words. The hyperbaton can be significant in this passage, but for a possible interpretation in this sense, it is necessary to consider the passage as a whole.

The second passage is more complex and it does not present any adjectives. It is the beginning of the last part of the ode (ll. 29–32), when the poet starts the transition from the pursuits of other men to what Horace himself desires, namely his poetic profession, which separates him from the *profanum uolgus* and unites both the poet and the gods. To my knowledge, no one has yet considered the passage from this point of view, i.e. mimetic syntax. The last part of the *Priamel* is as follows:

> ***me*** doctarum hederae praemia frontium
> ***dis*** miscent superis, ***me*** gelidum nemus 30
> nympharumque leves cum Satyris chori
> *secernunt* **populo**, ...

The emphatic position of the first *me*,[31] further stressed by the anaphora in the next line, marks the transition to the last portion of the *Priamel*. In the first part, the 'picture' of the poet next to the gods can be seen by the position of the words *me* and *dis* at the beginning of successive lines, in a vertical juxtaposition.[32] At the same time and correspondingly, the poet is separated from the crowd. In this second part, *me* is the first word of the sentence after the caesura, and *populo* is the last, each occupying the extremities of the clause, i.e. they are in the most

**29** Lee 1969, 10.

**30** The same pattern is found in *C.* 1.15.7, also in the same meter, the lesser asclepiad, with the same verb: *coniurata tuas* || *rumpere nuptias* ('having sworn an oath to wreck your marriage'). The difference is that the key word, the verb *rumpere*, itself 'ruptures' the possessive adjective (*tuas*), placed right before the *caesura*, and its noun (*nuptias*), at the end of the line. On the emphasis on *tuas* in this word order, see Nisbet 1999, 142. For this hyperbaton in the lesser Asclepiadean meter, i.e. attribute before *caesura* and noun at the line-end, see Conrad 1990, 265–266, who counts 85 occurrences. For *rumpere* 'rupturing' the attribute and its noun, cf. *C.* 4.15.22 (greater Alcaic line): edicta ***rumpent*** || Iulia, *non Getae*; two times in *Epist*. 1.3.35: *uiuitis, indigni* fraternum ***rumpere*** foedus, and 1.14.9 *fert et amat spatiis* obstantia ***rumpere*** claustra.

**31** On the emphatic position of the pronoun, see Nisbet 1999, 143–146.

**32** For vertical juxtaposition in Horace's *Odes* see Harrison's chapter in this volume.

distant positions from each other. Everything which separates (*secernunt*) the poet from the vulgar crowd is placed between the two of them. The hyperbaton again is significantly used in order to mimic what the poet is saying.

The hyperbaton, however, like any other poetic device used by the poet, is not always an imitation of a person or of something separated from something else. In this passage, for instance, there is another hyperbaton (l. 29) where the adjective *doctarum* is separated from its noun, *frontium*, by *hederae praemia*. This construction is called 'parenthetic apposition' or 'inserted apposition', when 'a noun with its modifier surround a phrase in apposition to it', like *doctarum, hederae, praemia frontium*.[33] This kind of hyperbaton, albeit considered 'extremely stylish',[34] does not mimic what the poet is saying. In this case, it is actually doing exactly the opposite, because, from a semantic point of view, *hederae* surround *frontes*, but here *hederae* is syntactically surrounded by *doctarum* and *frontium*.

## 4 A long wait

An adjective separated from its noun can also mimic a long time or a long wait. In *C.* 2.16, an ode addressed to Grosphus, Horace contrasts (29–32) the short life of Achilles with the everlasting existence of Tithonus, in order to illustrate that nobody's happiness is complete: Achilles had a glorious life, cut short by an untimely death; Tithonus has eternal life, but an infinitely prolonged bodily decay. Therefore, Horace may even live longer than his addressee:

> abstulit clarum **cita mors** Achillem,
> **longa** Tithonum minuit **senectus**, 30
> et mihi forsan, tibi quod negarit,
> porriget hora.

The contrast between the mythical figures is reinforced by syntax. The adjective *longa* is at the beginning of the line (30), and its associated noun, *senectus*, occupies the other end of the line. If *senectus* takes a long time to arrive, on the one hand, in the previous line (29) the adjective *cita* comes immediately after its

33 Known also as *schema Cornelianum*, a term invented by Otto Skutsch, judging it an invention of Cornelius Gallus, this construction, as Solodow (1986) well pointed out, seems 'extremely stylish', more common in the *Eclogues* (8 occurrences) than in the *Georgics* (3) and the *Aeneid* (2). Solodow lists (1986, 139) four occurrences in the *Odes* (1.1.29; 1.20.5; 3.24.42; 4.8.31), one in the *Epodes*, one in the *Epistles*, and none in the *Satires*.

34 See previous footnote.

corresponding noun, *mors*, on the other. In other words, it can quickly be seen which noun is associated with *cita*, but it takes time to understand which noun is characterised by *longa*.

In Horace, the adjective *citus* frequently[35] comes immediately next to its noun: *C.* 1.37.18–19 *aut leporem* ***citus*** */* ***uenator*** *in campis*; *C.* 1.37.24 **classe cita** *reparauit oras*; *C.* 3.7.27 *nec* ***quisquam citus*** *aeque*; *Sat.* 1.1.8 *momento* ***cita mors*** *uenit aut uictoria laeta*; *Ars* 252 ***pes citus***; *unde etiam trimetris accrescere iussit*.[36] The adjective *longus*, however, is very rarely juxtaposed with its noun,[37] and in some cases, its position, separated from its noun, mimics a long duration in time or long extension in space,[38] as in the quoted *C.* 2.16.30. The same is true for *Epod.* 8.1 *rogare* ***longo*** *putidam te* ***saeculo***;[39] *C.* 1.4.15 *uitae summa breuis* ***spem*** *nos uetat incohare* ***longam***; *C.* 3.3.37–38 *dum* ***longus*** *inter saeuiat Ilion / Romamque* ***pontus***;[40] *C.* 3.27.42–43 *meliusne* ***fluctus*** */ ire per* ***longos*** *fuit*; *Epist.* 1.10.23 *laudaturque domus* ***longos*** *quae prospicit* ***agros***;[41] *Ars* 346 *et* ***longum*** *noto scriptori prorogat* ***aeuum***.[42]

**35** In all the occurrences in the *Odes*, the adjective *citus* is immediately next to its noun. Regarding all of Horace's works, *citus* appears 55% of the time next to its noun.

**36** In this last case, the meaning can also be reinforced by the metre. In the previous line (251), there is only one spondee in the hexameter, in which Horace describes the iambic foot, a *pes citus*: *syllaba longa breui subiecta uocatur iambus*. As Rudd (1989, ad loc.) pointed out, '[t]he iambic line was regarded as quick, when not retarded by spondees'. Cf. *Ars* 260, almost totally spondaic, where Horace comments on the verses which Ennius hurled ponderously upon the stage (see Marouzeau 1926, 110; Brink 1971, ad loc.).

**37** In the *Odes*, the adjective *longus* is immediately next to its noun only in 23% of the cases.

**38** This is similar to Vergil's use of *ingens* in wide hyperbaton (see Dainotti 2015, 254–255 and n. 793).

**39** The construction here implies that her repulsive appearance (*putidam*) is the result of old age (*longo … saeculo*).

**40** According to Woodman (2022, ad loc.), '[t]he separation of *longus* and *pontus* (hyperbaton) is mimetic'.

**41** It is worth noting that *longos* is proleptic, and the relative pronoun is postponed.

**42** With Brink's commentary (1971, ad loc.): '[t]he adj., redundant with *prorogat*, strongly emphasizes the length of time'. Besides, again the meaning is reinforced by the metre: only the fifth foot is dactylic. Ovid imitated this Horatian hyperbaton at *Medic.* 49 *sufficit et* ***longum*** *probitas perdurat in* ***aeuum***.

## 5 Inversion and disorder

The prolepsis of a word, unusually placed just outside a subordinate clause within which it would usually appear, is in principle intended to highlight it. The poet, however, can use this deviation to make the anticipated adjective and its noun embrace one or more words, thus mimicking what is being said, as we saw above. In addition, word order, affected by hyperbaton and/or anastrophe, is still used by Horace to imitate the disorder of the world. Thus, words out of their usual positions — a conjunction or relative pronoun not at the beginning of its subordinate clause — are like animals in unexpected places, when the flood happens, putting fish on the tops of mountains and deer in the sea, as the poet describes them in *C.* 1.2.1–12:

iam satis terris niuis atque dirae
grandinis misit Pater et rubente
dextera sacras iaculatus arces
terruit urbem,

terruit gentis, **graue ne** rediret 5
saeculum Pyrrhae noua monstra questae,
**omne cum** Proteus pecus egit altos
uisere montis,

**piscium et** summa genus haesit ulmo,
**nata quae** sedes fuerat columbis, 10
et superiecto pauidae natarunt
aequore dammae.

The displacement of the conjunction or the relative pronoun to the second position of the subordinate clause occurs throughout the *Odes* and in Latin poetic language generally. However, there is no other poem that presents four deviations of this kind. It is rare to find two displacements of conjunction and/or pronoun in a single ode. Besides, the postponement of the usual word that begins the subordinate clause occurs in sequence: the four occurrences are found in a passage in which the world is described as being turned upside down because of the flood: *graue ne* (l. 5), at the beginning of the flood's description; *omne cum* (l. 7), in the passage where 'Proteus drove all his seals to visit the high mountains'; *piscium et* (l. 9), when the poet says that 'the race of fish became lodged in the tops of elm trees'; *nota quae* (l. 10), in the part in which he remembers that the tops of elm trees 'had been the home of doves'. Everything seems out of place in the subject matter, mirrored in the distorted word order. It is worth mentioning

that these three last occurrences are at the beginning of the lines, thereby emphasising the construction, and the first one is just after the caesura, another emphatic position.

## 6 Verse position of ordering words: initial, medial, and final

I would like to begin this section with a passage from the *Ars* (l. 152), fully illustrative of what I will discuss in the *Odes*: ***primo*** *ne* ***medium***, ***medio*** *ne discrepet* ***imum*** ('so that the middle is not discordant with the beginning, nor the end with the middle'). The distribution of the words in the line establishes an agreement between the position they occupy and their meaning, in such a way that 'beginning' (*primo*) occupies the first place, and 'end' (*imum*), the last. Similarly, 'middle', repeated in anadiplosis with polyptoton (*medium*, *medio*), is at the centre of the verse, with the penthemimeral caesura dividing it into two halves: the first that ends with *medium* and the second that begins with *medio*. Finally, there is also the homeoteleuton between *medium*, the last word of the first half, and *imum*, the end of the line. Thus, nothing seems to be out of order in the Horatian line. Hence, in Horace himself, it does not seem casual to place, for example, *prima* at the beginning of the first epistle, opening the book (*Epist*. 1.1.1 ***prima*** *dicte mihi, summa dicende Camena*). As has already been observed,[43] the placement of the first word in the book of *Epodes* (1.1), *ibis* ('you will go'), is significant at the beginning of the work, as is that of the last (17.81), *exitus* ('end'), closing the whole.

It is evident, however, that the adjective *primus* will not always be in the initial position, or *medius* in the middle, or *imus* at the end. However, it may also be significant that these words do not occupy such positions. That seems to be the case, for example, of the opening of Propertius' *Monobiblos*, in which the name of the beloved — for many scholars, the title of the elegiac book — occupies the beginning, leaving even the adjective *prima* in second place (1.1.1 *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis*). But what if *primus* is the last word of a line? Let us look carefully at the following passage from Horace's *Satires* (1.4.53–62), which is very important for the discussion of word order in the construction of the line, where he opposes his own satires and those of Lucilius to Ennius' poetry:

43 Cucchiarelli 2008, 99 and n. 2; Watson 2003, ad loc.

ergo
non satis est puris uersum perscribere uerbis,
quem si dissoluas, quiuis stomachetur eodem 55
quo personatus pacto pater. his ego, quae nunc,
olim quae scripsit Lucilius, eripias si
tempora certa modosque, et quod prius ordine uerbum est
*posterius* facias praeponens **ultima primis**,
non, ut si soluas 'postquam Discordia taetra 60
belli ferratos postis portasque refregit',
inuenias etiam disiecti membra poetae.

First, it is remarkable that in the line in which he prescribes placing 'the last ones before the first' (*praeponens ultima primis*, 59), he should make precisely the word 'last' (*ultima*) precede the word 'first' (*primis*); it is also significant that the word 'first' (*primis*) occupies the last position in the line and the term translated as 'after' (*posterius*) comes first of all, that is, in the first position in the line, which is still marked by strong alliteration of 'p': *posterius facias praeponens ultima primis*, distributing the consonant at the beginning, middle, and end of the line, generally occupying the position of an *ictus*.[44]

## 6.1 Initial

As in the passage from the *Ars* (l. 152), discussed above, Horace uses the word *primus* significantly in the *Odes*. For example, when the poet blames 'the man who first entrusted a fragile craft to the savage sea' (*C.* 1.3.10–12 *qui fragilem truci / commisit pelago ratem / primus*), not only is *primus* the first word in the line but it is also followed by a pause, making it stand out.[45] In *C.* 3.13, addressed to the *fons Bandusiae*, *primis* (l. 5) has the same emphatic position, and it is the first word not only of the line but also of the stanza. Similarly, in *C.* 4.9.17 (***primus****ue Teucer tela Cydonio / direxit arcu*), *primus* with the enclitic *-ue* occupies the first position in the stanza,[46]

**44** For a detailed commentary on this passage, see Freudenburg 1993, 146–150, esp. 147, where he affirms on line 59: '[t]he syntax is mimetic, an exact mirror image of meaning'. Besides, in *Sat.* 1.4.53–62, as Freudenburg (1993, 146) pointed out, Horace seems to criticise 'Stoic/quasi-Stoic theory' which elevates 'the merits of natural talent (the *ingenium* of *Satires* 1.4.43) over art'; see also Oberhelman and Armstrong 1995; Gowers 2012, ad loc., esp. on ll. 58–59 ('[a] positively iconic demonstration of the vital importance of poetic word-arrangement in the 'prosy' outline of the suggested operation').
**45** See Nisbet 1999, 147.
**46** For *primus* at the beginning of the line in Horace's other works, cf. *Sat.* 1.4.39; 2.1.63; 2.3.41; 2.4.74; *Epist.* 1.3.25; *Ars* 61; 103; 254. See also in the *Odes*: *C.* 3.6.18; 3.7.2; 3.7.29; 4.14.31. For

emphasising that Teucer was the first to shoot arrows with the Cretan bow. Finally, when Horace claims to be the first to bring Aeolian song to Italian melodies (*C.* 3.30.13–14 ***princeps*** *Aeolium carmen ad Italos* / *deduxisse modos*), he highlights this action with the word *princeps* at the beginning of the line.

## 6.2 Medial

The adjective *medius* significantly occupies the central position of its line in Horace's *Odes*, as follows: 2.4.7 *arsit Atrides* ***medio*** *in triumpho*; 2.19.28 *pacis eras* ***medius****que belli*; 3.16.9 *aurum per* ***medios*** *ire satellites*; 4.14.24 *mittere equum* ***medios*** *per ignis*. In these cases, it appears in the middle, counting by words (I am considering the enclitic *-que* as a separate one),[47] or position: when there is a caesura, dividing the line into two halves, *medius* is immediately after or before it.

Horace uses the hyperbaton studied above, with an adjective and its associated noun, enclosing one or more words, in order to emphasise that something is in-between, that it is in the middle, reinforcing the semantics of the preposition *inter*: *C.* 1.12.47–48 *micat uelut* inter ***ignis*** / *luna* ***minores***;[48] 3.10.5–6 *nemus* / inter ***pulchra*** *satum* ***tecta***;[49] 3.18.13 inter ***audaces*** *lupus errat* ***agnos***;[50] 3.27.51–52 inter *errem nuda* ***leones***;[51] 4.3.14–15 *dignatur suboles* inter ***amabilis*** / *uatum ponere me* ***choros***;[52] *Epod.* 1.1–2 *ibis Liburnis* inter ***alta*** *nauium, / amice,* ***propugnacula***.[53]

*primus* in Ovid, see Lateiner 1999, 210. Other words that indicate initial position or start could be investigated. For instance, it is very common to put the verb *incipere* at the beginning of the line. For *incipere* in Ovid, see Lateiner 1999, 209.

**47** The enclitic *-que* should link the co-ordinated *pacis* and *belli*. For the displacement of *-que*, Nisbet and Hubbard's commentary (1978, ad loc.) is important: '[t]he position of *-que* also deserves note: *pacis eras mediusque belli* = *pacis eras bellique medius*. This stylised mannerism is common enough in the *Odes* (I. 30. 6 n.), but in our poem it is repeated at the end of successive stanzas'.

**48** There is a similar example in Horace's *Epodes* (15.1), in which the moon shines in the serene sky: *nox erat et* ***caelo*** *fulgebat luna* ***sereno***. On this passage, see Traina 2007[18], 46–47.

**49** Woodman (2022, ad loc.) comments: '[t]he interspersal of trees and buildings is mirrored in the interlaced word order'.

**50** Mayer 2012, 86; Dainotti 2015, 247 n. 771; Woodman 2022, 26 and ad loc.

**51** In this example there is no adjective, but, as Nisbet and Rudd (2004, ad loc.) pointed out, 'the position of *nuda* between *inter* and *leones* [...] may reflect Europa's position amid the lions'.

**52** Nisbet 1999, 140.

**53** Although the last example is from the *Epodes*, I quote it here because it is very similar to the others. Mankin (1995, ad loc.) comments on the special word order: '[t]he word order, with *amice* literally 'amid' the words for the ship, seems to emphasize the threat'; see also Watson 2003, 34 and ad loc. Freudenburg (1996, 200, n. 12) considers the word arrangement of *Sat.* 2.8.42–43 (*affertur squillas* ***inter*** *murena natantis*/ *in patina porrecta*) mimetic, 'with the eel positioned directly

## 6.3 Final

As we saw above in the *Ars*, *imus* at the end of the line reinforces its meaning. In the *Odes*, Horace concludes *C.* 1.10, a hymn to Mercury, with the same word (ll. 19–20): *superis deorum / gratus et* ***imis***. This poem is at the end of the first section of the book, enclosing the Parade Odes (1–9), with the first repetition of a metre (Sapphics), as an element of *Ringkomposition*. In a group characterised by metrical diversity, this first repetition indicates closure. However, *C.* 1. 10 reveals itself as a false ending amidst the continuity of the reading. The word *imis* at the end of the ode thus reinforces not only its own meaning but also the expectation of an ending.[54] But as the next poem informs us, we should not inquire what end (*finem*)[55] the gods have assigned to us, as readers of the book, and we ought to continue reading.

Horace produces the same effect in *Odes* 4. In the middle of the book, *C.* 4.8, the poem addressed to Censorinus, is concluded with *exitus*, the same word as at the end of *Epod.* 17, the conclusion of its book.[56] Besides, *C.* 4.8 is written in the lesser asclepiad, the same metre as *C.* 3.30, once again the conclusion of the book. With *exitus*, the last word in *C.* 4.8, Horace suggests closure, but it is a false ending, at least at the level of the book. The next poem reminds us that the words will continue (*C.* 4.9.1 and 4):[57] *ne forte credas interitura … uerba* ('you may imagine that these words will perish'). The word *exitus* in *C.* 4.8.34 significantly occupies the last position of the poem, reinforcing the semantics.

Other words could be investigated,[58] but I would like to finish this section by observing that some boundary words (*ripa* and *ora*) often appear at the 'edge' of a line. *Ripa* is often found before a caesura in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,[59] as Lateiner

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among the "swimming prawns" (*squillas…natantis*) to suggest the appearance of the dish itself'. So, possibly, there will be other examples of mimetic syntax in Horatian hexameters. In other Augustan poets, I found some examples of iconic expressiveness with the preposition *inter*: Prop. 2.31.15; 3.14.4; Verg. *Ecl.* 1.24; 8.13; 9.36; *Georg.* 3.488; *Aen.* 8.608. For other examples, see also Dainotti 2015, 247, n. 771.

**54** For other signals of closure in *C.* 1.10, see Hasegawa 2017, 92–95.

**55** *C.* 1.11.1–2 *quem mihi, quem tibi / finem di dederint, Leuconoe, nec Babylonios*. *Finem* at the beginning of the line could also reinforce that it is a false ending. In *C.* 3.18.2, *finis* is at the end of the first hemistich, before the caesura: *per meos finis et aprica rura*.

**56** See Putnam 1986, 156 n. 16; Thomas 2011, ad loc.

**57** Horace continues to play with ending in *C.* 4.9. The last word here is *perire* (l. 52). We can comment with Horace himself (*Epist.* 1.16.79, the last line of the epistle): *mors ultima linea rerum est*.

**58** For example, *ultimus* occupies the last position of the line in the vast majority of cases in the *Odes*: 1.11.4; 1.16.18; 1.35.29; 1.36.4; 2.7.1; 2.20.18; 3.3.45.

**59** 1.636; 6.373; 9.118; 10.74; 15.733.

pointed out (1990, 210). In the *Odes*, Horace always places *ripa* at the extremities of the lines.[60] In *C*. 1.2, for example, the word is immediately before the caesura, i.e. at a 'bank' of the line: 1.2.19–20 *labitur* ***ripa*** *Ioue non probante u- / xorius amnis*. However, the river is out of control, and therefore Horace does not observe the other boundary, the end of the line. There we find the (rare) run-over between the third and fourth lines, mirroring what the poet is saying.

The word *ora* (boundary, as in the coast or a region's border) is also placed at the boundaries of lines. In general, *ora* occupies the end of the line, and its corresponding adjective is immediately before the caesura: for example, *C*. 1.12.5 *aut in* ***umbrosis*** Heliconis ***oris***; *C*. 3.3.45–46 *horrenda late nomen in* ***ultimas*** / *extendat* ***oras****, qua medius liquor* (in this case, *oras* before the caesura, characterised by *ultimas*, the last word of the previous line); *C*. 3.8.21 *seruit* ***Hispanae*** *uetus hostis* ***orae***; *C*. 3.14.3–4 *Caesar* ***Hispana*** *repetit penatis / uictor ab* ***ora***.[61]

# 7 Conclusion

Nisbet in his important study of word order in Horace's *Odes* stated that "[t]his aspect of Horace's hyperbata (i.e. iconic word order) is subsidiary at most, for it affects a small proportion of the material".[62] With this partial catalogue of syntactic expressiveness, I think we can reconsider this affirmation. Horace is a poet very concerned with word order, as we saw, for example, in the passage of the *Satires* (1.4.53–62), analysed above. In addition, there is another passage (*Ars* 46–48),

**60** There are seven other occurrences in which the word *ripa* occupies the extremity of the line in the *Odes*: 2.18.22 (at the end of the line; in the previous line, there is *litora* at the end); 3.1.23 (*ripam* at the end of the line); 3.25.13 (*ripas* at the beginning of the line); 3.27.24 (*ripas* at the end of the stanza); 3.29.24 (*ripa* at the beginning of the line); 4.2.6 (*ripas* at the end of the line); 4.7.3 (*ripas* at the end of the line). The word appears only two other times in the *Odes*: 1.20.6 (*fluminis* ***ripae*** *simul et iocosa*) and 4.2.31 (*Tiburis* ***ripas*** *operosa paruus*), always before the caesura, as in 1.2.19. Therefore, without exception, all occurrences of the word are at the extremities of lines. On *C*. 4.2.6 see Morgan 2010, 228.

**61** In the *Aeneid*, for example, Vergil also seems to place the word significantly: the vast majority of *oris*, in the ablative case, are at the end of the line. Thus, the use at the first line could be expressive, when the poet says that Aeneas came from a limit, 'the coasts of Troy' (*Aen*. 1.1 *arma uirumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab* ***oris***) and reached another limit, 'Lavine shores', in Italy (*Aen*. 1.2–3 *Italiam, fato profugus, Lauiniaque uenit /* ***litora****, multum ille et terris iactatus et alto*). For a study on expressiveness in the *Aeneid*, see Dainotti 2015 (esp. 218–225 on the expressive placement of words at the beginning and the end of lines).

**62** Nisbet 1999, 140.

where Horace himself discusses word order or σύνθεσις ὀνομάτων (*compositio uerborum*):[63]

> in uerbis etiam tenuis cautusque serendis
> dixeris egregie, notum si callida uerbum
> reddiderit iunctura nouum.

I do not have space here to discuss this passage in detail, but Horace says that a clever combination of words can make a well-known word appear new. If here he is not exclusively discussing mimetic syntax, this clever combination certainly includes it, as Lateiner pointed out. Horace does not place words early or late just for emphasis;[64] his clever collocation of words reinforces their semantics. This is an important aspect of Horatian style and deserves recognition, even if some examples do not convince everyone or may have been unintended by Horace. Indeed, as I have tried to show, a scrutiny of Horace's word order can explain something fundamental to the character of his varied lyrics.

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63 On this passage, see Freudenburg 1993, 144–145, who related it to Epicurean theories of word arrangement. For the *callida iunctura* as *compositio uerborum* see Calcante 2005, 27–57, who demonstrated how the references to *iunctura* in Horace (and Persius) are perfectly congruent with the rhetorical theory of *compositio* in Dionysius. In rhetorical treatises the *iunctura* is an exclusively phonosyntactic device that does not change the form and meaning of the word.

64 In his conclusion, after quoting *Ars* 45–48, Lateiner (1990, 236) states: 'Horace placed words early or late for emphasis. Ovid is more artful, often, than may at first appear'. This is not entirely correct, in my view. In fact, Horace (and other poets) sometimes places words in some positions for emphasis, but he, as Ovid after him, also places the words in the line to imitate what is being said, as I have discussed so far.

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Stephen Harrison

# Vertical Juxtaposition in Horace *Odes* 1

**Abstract:** The elaborate and effective combination of word-order, metre, and sound-effect is one of the key features of Horace's *Odes*. This piece presents an initial consideration of the under-investigated phenomenon of vertical juxtaposition of related words in consecutive lyric lines. The ways in which these vertically juxtaposed words are linked are various, from simple anaphora and rhyme to the pairing of words which relate to each other in shape, sense, grammar or sound. These connections form interlocking structural and euphonic patterns which contribute materially to the poetic texture of the *Odes*.

## 1 Introduction

The artistic use of complex word-order and its accompanying effects of sound and rhythm constitutes one of the key stylistic features of Horace's *Odes*.[1] This piece looks at the neglected phenomenon of vertical juxtaposition of terms related by sound and/or grammar in consecutive lines in these lyric poems,[2] using *Odes* 1 as a sample. As we shall see, such juxtapositions tend to occur in three prominent metrical positions in the usually brief lyric lines of the *Odes:* at the start, end and medial caesura of consecutive lines.[3] Such effects can usually be perceived both by the reader on the page, who can see the verbal structures, and by the suitably alert listener, who can hear them since they occur at key points in identifiable metrical units.[4]

I am most grateful to both my fellow-editors and to Linda Forstmann for their acute and valuable comments on my paper.

1 See especially Nisbet 1999 and Muecke 1997, both with extensive bibliography, and Hasegawa's piece in this volume.

2 It is mentioned briefly by Nisbet 1999, 145 with some examples (see also a few at Marouzeau 1949, 184 and Facchini Tosi 1997, 845 and 848); further examples are noted in Harrison 2017 (see notes on *C.* 2.3.1–2, 2.4.13–14, 2.6.10–11, 2.6.13–14, 2.8.1–2, 2.14.19–20, 2.14.26–27, 2.16.13–14), but the phenomenon is generally not noted in earlier commentaries.

3 For the position of medial caesurae in Horace's lyric metres see conveniently the detailed schemata set out in Nisbet and Hubbard 1970, xxxvii–xlvi.

4 Probably already felt in the Roman reading and writing of poetic texts (see Marouzeau 1949, 182, Adams and Mayer 1999, 17).

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Vertical juxtaposition in consecutive Horatian lyric lines can be usefully separated into five main types:

A. Vertical anaphora — repetition of the same word in the same metrical position, e.g. *C.* 1.1.27–28:

> **seu** visa est catulis cerva fidelibus,
> **seu** rupit teretis Marsus aper plagas

Such line-initial vertical juxtaposition has been shown to be a common effect in Latin poetry in general.[5] I have labelled this simple anaphoric type as A1 in the analysis below. A similar effect can be achieved by using polyptoton as at *C.* 1.12.51–2:

> **Caesaris** fatis data: tu secondo
> **Caesare** regnes.

I have labelled these examples of metrically equivalent polyptoton as A2. Both these features can occur in the middle of the line (cf. *C.* 1.12.33–35, 1.18.8–9, and 1.37.1–2 below) as well as at its start and (less often) end (for the latter see *C.* 1.13.1–2).

B. Vertical rhyme where there is a grammatical relation between the two terms, e.g. *C.* 1.2.13–15:

> Vidimus flavum Tiberim **retortis**
> litore Etrusco violenter **undis**
> ire

This normally involves hyperbaton, the marked separation of related lexical elements (here noun and participle) which would naturally occur close together in Latin prose word-order, a feature of both poetry and artistic Latin prose.[6] I differentiate between sub-type B1, where both the overall shape of the word and its ending are similar (homoeoptoton), and B2, where only the ending is similar. Sometimes two words may be juxtaposed vertically which end in the same vowel and consonant but with the vowel in a different quantity, short and long; I have chosen to include these since their sound is so similar; I have also chosen to

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**5** On line-initial anaphora see Wills 1997, 397–405, and on polyptoton in the same position 418–423.

**6** On hyperbaton in Latin poetry in general see Hoffer 2007.

include here examples of rhyme of the same syllable with an added *-que* (e.g. *C.* 1.3.32–33 *semotique* ... / *leti* below), where the termination seems more significant than the copulative suffix.

C. Vertical rhyme where there is no grammatical relation between the two terms, e.g. *C.* 1.1.2–3:[7]

> o et praesidium et dulce decus **meum**,
> sunt quos curriculo pulverem **Olympicum**

This line-final rhyme sonically reinforces the end of the metrical line. I differentiate between sub-type C1, where both the overall shape of the word and its ending are similar, and C2, where only the ending is similar. As for category B, I include pairs of words which end in the same vowel and consonant but have the vowel in a different quantity, for the same reason.

D. Vertical juxtaposition of a noun and its epithet without rhyme. This can take the form where the two words have the same prosodic shape (category D1), e.g. *C.* 1.9.21–22:

> nunc et **latentis** proditor intimo
> gratus **puellae** risus ab angulo

Or it can take the form where they are different in prosodic shape (category D2), e.g. *C.* 1.5.15–16:

> suspendisse **potenti**
> vestimenta maris **deo**.

E. Vertical juxtaposition of elements otherwise related in syntax or meaning, e.g. *C.* 1.2.18–19, with syntactically parallel verbs, a common pattern (see 3 Conclusions below):

> **iactat** ultorem, vagus et sinistra
> **labitur** ripa Iove non probante

More semantic in its connection is *C.* 1.3.21–22:

7 Skutsch 1964 notes that internal (horizontal) rhyme in Horatian lyric normally occurs between grammatically related elements; vertical rhyme occurs equally freely with both related and unrelated elements, as the analysis below shows.

Nequiquam deus **abscidit**
prudens Oceano **dissociabili**

Here two words referring to separation are vertically juxtaposed at line-end, appropriately the point where we find the separation of metrical units.[8] Again, E1 indicates cases where the two juxtaposed terms are metrically equivalent, E2 where they are not.

A particular sub-category here is that of the vertical juxtaposition of initially alliterative words which are not examples of anaphora or polyptoton, e.g. *C.* 1.2.22–23:

quo graves Persae melius **perirent**,
audiet pugnas vitio **parentum**

This can also be found at 1.3.12–13; 1.12.3–4; 1.14.17–18; 1.15.34–5; 1.16.7–8, 11–12; 1.20.2–3, 10–11; 1.21.14–15; 1.23.11–12; 1.24.5–6; 1.25.1–2, 9–10; 1.27.2–3; 1.34.5–6; 1.37.5–6; 1.38.5–6.

In what follows I will present my analysis of vertical juxtaposition (VJ henceforward) in Horace *Odes* 1, categorised according to the above list.[9] Each example of vertically paired elements is marked by the appropriate letter in the margin of the line containing the second element in the pair (or third element in the trio). Each poem is followed by appropriate annotation, especially focussed on explaining the most flexible and subjective category E.

## 2 *Odes* 1 – analysis

*Odes* 1.1

Maecenas atavis edite regibus,
o et praesidium et dulce decus **meum,**
sunt quos curriculo pulverem **Olympicum** C2
collegisse iuvat **metaque fervidis**
evitata rotis **palmaque nobilis** 5 C1 x 2
terrarum dominos evehit ad deos;
[...]
illum, si proprio condidit **horreo**

8 For this kind of iconic effect in Horatian word-order see Hasegawa's chapter in this volume.
9 I cite Wickham and Garrod 1963 for the text of Horace except at *Odes* 1.32.1, where I read *Poscimus,* for *Poscimur*.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| quicquid de Libycis verritur **areis**. | 10 | |
| Gaudentem patrios findere **sarculo** | | E1 |
| Agros [...] | | |
| mox reficit rates | | |
| quassas, **indocilis** pauperiem **pati**. | | C2 x 2 |
| Est qui nec **veteris** pocula **Massici** | | |
| nec partem solido demere de die | 20 | |
| **spernit**, **nunc** viridi membra sub arbuto | | |
| **stratus**, **nunc** ad aquae lene caput **sacrae**. | | E1, A1 |
| Multos castra iuvant et lituo **tubae** | | C1 |
| [...] | | |
| **seu** visa est **catulis** cerva fidelibus, | 27 | |
| **seu** rupit **teretis** Marsus aper plagas. | | A1, C1 |
| [...] | | |
| si neque tibias | 32 | |
| **Euterpe cohibet** nec Polyhymnia | | |
| **Lesboum refugit** tendere barbiton. | | E1 |
| [...] | | |

In lines 9–11 we find VJ of three final nouns of the same metrical shape which have similar senses, all related to grain and agriculture, the first and third of which also rhyme (... *horreo* / ... *areis* / ... *sarculo*). Lines 33–4 have rhythmically matched first halves, with a trisyllabic Greek word followed by a similarly-shaped present tense compound verb (*Euterpe cohibet, Lesboum refugit*); such vertical verb-pairs are a common pattern (see 3 Conclusions below). Overall, the fact that 17 of the 36 lines of this programmatic opening poem present some form of VJ suggests that it will be a key feature for Horace's lyric collection; this proportion (47.2%) is in fact typical of Book 1 as a whole (see 3 Conclusions below).

1.2

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Iam satis terris nivis atque dirae | | |
| grandinis misit Pater et rubente | | |
| dextera sacras iaculatus arces | | |
| **terruit** Urbem, | | |
| **terruit** gentis, grave ne rediret | 5 | A1 |
| **saeculum Pyrrhae** nova monstra questae, | | |
| omne **cum Proteus** pecus egit **altos** | | C2, E1 |
| visere **montis**, | | D1 |
| [...] | | |
| Vidimus flavum Tiberim **retortis** | | |
| litore Etrusco violenter **undis** | | B2 |
| ire deiectum monumenta **regis** | 15 | C1 |
| templaque Vestae, | | |
| Iliae dum se nimium querenti | | |

**iactat** ultorem, vagus et sinistra
**labitur** ripa Iove non probante E2
uxorius amnis. 20
Audiet **civis** acuisse ferrum,
quo graves **Persae** melius **perirent**, E1
audiet pugnas vitio **parentum** E1
rara iuventus.
Quem vocet divum populus ruentis 25
imperi rebus? Prece qua fatigent
virgines sanctae minus **audientem**
carmina **Vestam**? D2
Cui dabit partis scelus expiandi
Iuppiter? Tandem venias precamur, 30
nube candentis umeros **amictus**,
augur **Apollo** D2
[...]
heu nimis longo satiate **ludo**,
quem iuvat clamor galeaeque **leves**, E1
acer et Mauri peditis **cruentum**
vultus in **hostem** 40 D2
[...]
**Serus** in caelum redeas diuque 45
**laetus intersis** populo Quirini, B1
neve te **nostris** vitiis iniquum C2
ocior aura
tollat

Here a note about the visual form of the stanzaic metres of the *Odes* for ancient and modern readers is appropriate. Vertical juxtaposition in the Sapphic stanzas of this poem, and in the stanzaic or epodic metres of most other Horatian odes, is naturally more complex to define than in the metrically identical stichic asclepiads of 1.1. In 1.2.4–5 the line-initial anaphora of *terruit* would appear unproblematically as a vertical juxtaposition in ancient manuscripts, since our papyri of Sapphic stanzas consistently begin all their lines (the three Sapphic hendecasyllables and the shorter final adonean) at the same left-hand margin;[10] this might well have been the case for texts of Horace's lyrics in antiquity, though none in fact survive.[11] 1.2.7–8, however, which end with a noun and its adjective

**10** See e.g. P.Oxy.7 (Sappho fr. 5 V. papyrus of 3C CE), image at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:P.Oxy._I_7.jpg.

**11** The earliest surviving MSS of Horace from the 9/10C (Paris Lat.7900A) does in fact indent the final adonean in his Sapphics — see the image at https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10546779x/f62.item.

respectively, might not have been written in antiquity with these two words immediately above each other, given the papyrus evidence, but they might be heard as such when recited, and I have included them in category B for that reason; interrelated words in these positions are in fact found in all the Sapphic odes of Book 1 except the brief 8-line 1.38.[12]

In lines 13–15 we find three *-is* sounds at the end of each of the hendecasyllables, two of which are long syllables in agreement and the third of which is a short syllable which I would want to count as a third rhyming element (see 1: Introduction above); it is worth noting that the same syllable occurs at the end of three consecutive hendecasyllables in Sappho's own Sapphics (fr.1.21–23 V.). In lines 18–23 we find a dense group of effects in which sematically-linked elements are connected by sound and VJ: the parallel verbs *iactat* and *labitur* are placed at consecutive line-starts (18–19), the antonyms *civis* and *Persae* (native and foreigner) are vertically linked by their shared disyllabic length and metrical position (21–22), and the alliterating and identically-shaped opposing terms *perirent* and *parentum* (death and birth) appear at consecutive line-ends (22–23).

1.3

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Sic** te diva potens Cypri, | | |
| **sic** fratres Helenae, lucida sidera, | | A1 |
| ventorumque regat pater | | |
| **obstrictis** aliis praeter Iapyga, | | |
| **navis**, quae tibi creditum | 5 | C2 |
| **debes Vergilium**; finibus Atticis | | |
| **reddas incolumem** precor | | E1 and D1 |
| [...] | | |
| **circa** pectus erat, qui fragilem truci | 10 | |
| **commisit** pelago ratem. | | E2 |
| nec timuit praecipitem **Africum** | | |
| decertantem **Aquilonibus** | | |
| nec tristis Hyadas nec rabiem **Noti**, | | E2 |
| quo non arbiter Hadriae | 15 | |
| maior, tollere seu ponere volt freta. | | |
| **Quem** mortis timuit gradum | | |
| **qui** siccis oculis monstra natantia, | | |
| **qui** vidit mare turbidum et | | A1 |
| infamis scopulos **Acroceraunia**? | 20 | |

12 To 1.2.7–8 and 1.2.31–2 add 1.10.3–4; 1.12.3–4, 7–8, 23–24, 47–8; 1.22.3–4, 7–8; 1.25.8–9, 19–20; 1.30.3–4, 7–8 [so each of the poem's two stanzas shows this feature]; 1.32.3–4. This pattern is not found in the extant Sapphics of Sappho herself.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nequiquam deus **abscidit** | | E2 |
| prudens Oceano **dissociabili** | | E2 |
| terras | | |
| [...] | | |
| **semotique** prius tarda necessitas | | B2 |
| **leti** corripuit gradum. | | |
| [...] | | |
| caelum **ipsum** petimus stultitia neque | | |
| per **nostrum** patimur **scelus** | | C1 |
| iracunda Iovem ponere **fulmina**. | 40 | E2 |

In lines 6–7 *debes Vergilium* is vertically juxtaposed with *reddas incolumem*; this pairs not only the initial disyllabic verbs *debes* and *reddas* (for vertically linked verbs see 3 Conclusions below), semantically connected as financial metaphors ('owe', 'pay back'), but also the poet's name and its identically-shaped and half-rhyming adjective *Vergilium* ... / ... *incolumem* in the middle of the line (category B). Lines 10–11 begin with alliterating terms, while 12–14 all end with the proper names of winds, two of which (12 *Africum* and 13 *Aquilonibus*) are linked by assonance; lines 17–19 all begin with monosyllabic masculine forms of *quis* or *qui* (an interrogative followed by two relative pronouns), with the second and third in identical anaphora (*quem* ... / *qui* ... / *qui* ...), while 20–21 end with alliterating terms; for lines 21–22 see the exemplification of category E above (linked at the end by the idea of separation. In lines 39–40 we have final VJ of *scelus* and *fulmina*, neatly linking together human crime and its divine punishment. The high proportion of vertically related lines in this poem (20/40) would have no doubt been appreciated by its addressee Vergil, himself a master of the same technique.[13]

1.4

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Soluitur** acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni | | |
| **trahuntque** siccas machinae carinas, | | E2 |
| ac neque iam **stabulis** gaudet pecus aut arator **igni** | | |
| nec prata **canis** albicant **pruinis**. | | C2 and E2 |
| [...] | | |
| Pallida Mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas | | |
| regumque **turris**. O beate Sesti, | | |
| vitae summa **brevis** spem nos vetat incohare longam. | 15 | C1 |
| Iam te premet nox fabulaeque Manes | | |
| et domus exilis Plutonia, quo simul **mearis**, | | |

**13** For example, in *Eclogue* 4, where 24 of the 63 lines show vertical juxtapositions under the categories listed above. See Dainotti 2015, 251–252.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|     **nec** regna vini sortiere **talis** | | C2 |
| **nec** tenerum Lycidan mirabere, quo calet iuventus | | A1 |
|     nunc omnis et mox virgines tepebunt. | 20 | |

The opening pair of lines both begin with polysyllabic verbs referring to motion, placing each verb emphatically and artistically at the start of its clause,[14] while lines 3 and 4 have rhyme at their respective medial caesurae and both end with words which refer to semantic opposites (fire and frost).

1.5

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Quis multa **gracilis** te puer in rosa | | |
| perfusus **liquidis** urget odoribus | | C1 |
|     grato, Pyrrha, sub antro? | | |
| [...] | | |
| **qui** nunc te fruitur credulus aurea, | | |
| **qui** semper vacuam, semper amabilem | 10 | A1 |
|     sperat, nescius aurae | | |
|       fallacis. Miseri, quibus | | |
| intemptata **nites**. Me tabula sacer | | |
| votiva **paries** indicat uvida | | C2 |
|     suspendisse **potenti** | 15 | |
|      vestimenta maris **deo**. | | D2 |

Whether we read *deo* in 16 (so MSS, i.e. Neptune) or *deae* (so Zielinski, i.e. Venus),[15] noun and epithet are clearly vertically paired in final position in the last two lines of this poem. Note that 50% of the lines in this short, epigram-type poem show some form of VJ.

1.6

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nos, Agrippa, neque haec dicere nec gravem | 5 | |
| Pelidae stomachum cedere **nescii**, | | C2 |
| nec cursus duplicis per mare **Vlixei** | | |
| [...] | | |
| Nos convivia, nos proelia **virginum** | | |
| sectis in iuvenes unguibus **acrium** | | B1 |
| cantamus, vacui sive quid urimur | | |
|     non praeter solitum leves. | 20 | |

**14** See similarly *C.* 2.2.4–5 with Harrison 2017, 62 listing other examples in Book 2.

**15** For the choice see Nisbet and Hubbard 1970, 79–80.

In lines 6–7 the final rhyme between *nescii* and *Vlixei* might be thought ironic given Odysseus' reputation for wisdom, even if the epithet belongs strictly to Achilles.

1.7

Laudabunt alii claram Rhodon aut **Mytilenen**
aut Ephesum bimarisve **Corinthi** E2
moenia vel Baccho Thebas vel Apolline **Delphos**
insignis aut Thessala **Tempe**; E1
sunt quibus unum opus est intactae Palladis urbem 5
carmine perpetuo celebrare et
undique decerptam fronti praeponere **olivam**;
plurimus in Iunonis **honorem** E1
aptum dicet equis Argos ditesque **Mycenas**:
me nec tam patiens **Lacedaemon** 10 E2
[...]
'Quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente, 25
ibimus, o socii comitesque.
Nil desperandum Teucro duce et auspice **Teucro**:
certus enim promisit **Apollo** ... C2

Here there is much VJ of Greek place-names at line-end, a feature found in lines 1–4 and 9–10: this suits and emphasises the poem's subject-matter of an imagined travelogue. In lines 7–8 the metrically equivalent and semantically related terms *olivam* ([honorific] olive-wreath) and *honorem* (honour) are also vertically juxtaposed at line-end, so that this feature occurs in 8 of the poem's first 10 lines.

1.8

Lydia, dic, per omnis
te deos oro, Sybarin cur properes amando
perdere, cur apricum
oderit Campum, patiens pulveris atque **solis**,
cur neque **militaris** 5 C2
inter aequalis equitet, Gallica nec **lupatis**
temperet ora **frenis**. B2
[...]
saepe **disco** 11
saepe trans finem iaculo nobilis **expedito**? B2

Here lines 4–7 all end with the same rhyming syllable, an unusual effect in Horace; here in the Greater Sapphic epodic metre, as in Sapphic stanzas, (see on 1.2

above), longer and shorter lines can be felt as vertical rhymes even if not visually so placed.

1.9

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vides ut alta stet nive candidum | | |
| Soracte nec iam sustineant onus | | |
| silvae laborantes **geluque** | | |
| flumina constiterint **acuto**? | | D2 |
| Dissolve frigus ligna super **foco** | 5 | C2 |
| large reponens atque benignius | | |
| deprome quadrimum **Sabina**, | | |
| o Thaliarche, merum **diota**. | | B1 |
| **Permitte** divis cetera, qui simul | | |
| **strauere** ventos aequore fervido | 10 | C2 |
| deproeliantis, nec **cupressi** | | |
| nec veteres agitantur **orni.** | | E2 |
| Quid sit **futurum** cras, fuge quaerere, et | | |
| quem fors **dierum** cumque dabit, lucro | | C2 |
| **adpone** nec dulcis **amores** | 15 | |
| **sperne**, puer, neque tu **choreas**, | | E1, E2 |
| [...] | | |
| nunc et **latentis proditor intimo** | 21 | |
| gratus **puellae risus** ab **angulo** | | D1, D2 and B2 |
| pignusque dereptum lacertis | | |
| aut digito male pertinaci. | | |

In lines 11–12 we find different types of trees in VJ at line-end, just as at the end of lines 15–16 we find the closely associated ideas of love and dancing as youthful activities (note that *amores* and *choreas* also have the same metrical word-shape). In lines 21–22 VJ contributes to the enclosing effect of the overall word-order here.[16]

1.10

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Mercuri, facunde nepos Atlantis, | | |
| qui feros cultus hominum recentum | | |
| voce formasti catus et **decorae** | | |
| more **palaestrae**, | | B1 |
| te canam, magni Iovis et deorum | 5 | |
| **nuntium** curvaeque lyrae parentem, | | B1 |

**16** See Hasegawa's chapter in this volume.

**callidum** quicquid placuit **iocoso**
condere **furto**. B2
[...]
Tu pias laetis animas **reponis**
sedibus virgaque levem **coerces** E1
aurea turbam, superis deorum
gratus et imis. 20

Lines 3–4 and 7–8 present rhyming noun and epithet at the end of the third hendecasyllable and the adonean, already found in Horace's first Sapphic poem (1.2 above) and a regular location for VJ (see n.11 above), while lines 17–18 present matching identically-shaped present-tense second-person verbs in VJ at line-end, another regular pattern (see 3 Conclusions below).

1.11

quae nunc oppositis debilitat pumicibus mare 5
Tyrrhenum, **sapias**, vina liques et spatio brevi
spem longam **reseces**. E1

This brief poem (at eight lines the equal shortest Horatian ode with 1.30, 1.38, and 4.10) shows only one significant example of VJ, the identically-shaped and pararhyming present subjunctive second-person verbs at the medial caesurae of lines 6 and 7 (for such vertically paired verbs as a regular pattern see 3 Conclusions below).

1.12

Quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri
tibia sumis celebrare, Clio?
Quem deum? Cuius recinet **iocosa**
nomen **imago** D1
**aut** in umbrosis Heliconis oris 5
**aut** super Pindo gelidove in Haemo? A1
Unde vocalem temere **insecutae**
Orphea **silvae** B2
[...]
Quid prius dicam solitis parentis
laudibus, qui res hominum ac **deorum**,
qui mare ac terras variisque **mundum** 15 C2
temperat horis?
[...]
Proeliis audax, neque te **silebo**, 21
Liber, et saevis inimica **virgo** C2

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| beluis, nec te, metuende **certa** | | |
| Phoebe **sagitta**. | | B2 |
| Dicam et Alciden puerosque Ledae, | 25 | |
| hunc equis, **illum** superare **pugnis** | | |
| nobilem; **quorum** simul alba **nautis** | | C1 and C1 |
| stella refulsit, | | |
| **defluit** saxis agitatus umor, | | |
| **concidunt** venti fugiuntque nubes | 30 | E1 |
| et minax, quod sic volvere, ponto | | |
| unda recumbit | | |
| **Romulum** post hos prius **an** quietum | | |
| **Pompili** regnum memorem, **an** superbos | | |
| **Tarquini** fasces, dubito, **an** Catonis | 35 | E1, A1 |
| nobile letum. | | |
| [...] | | |
| Crescit occulto velut arbor aevo | 45 | |
| fama Marcelli; micat **inter omnis** | | |
| Iulium sidus, velut **inter ignis** | | C2 |
| luna **minores**. | | B1 |
| Gentis humanae pater atque custos, | | |
| orte Saturno, tibi cura magni | 50 | |
| **Caesaris** fatis data: tu secundo | | |
| **Caesare** regnes. | | A2 |
| Ille seu Parthos Latio imminentis | | |
| egerit iusto domitos triumpho | | |
| sive subiectos Orientis orae | 55 | |
| Seras et Indos, | | |
| **te** minor laetum reget aequus **orbem**: | | |
| **tu** gravi curru quaties **Olympum**, | | A2, E2 |
| **tu** parum castis inimica mittes | | A1 |
| fulmina lucis. | 60 | |

Here as regularly in Horace's Sapphics we find several examples of the regular VJ of related elements at the ends of the third hendecasyllable and of the following adonean (see n.11 above). The stanza of lines 21–24 contains a VJ of final rhymes, unusual in Horace, while that of 33–36 has a similar density[17] of vertical effects: each of the three hendecasyllables begins with a trisyllabic proper name, and ends with a phrase introduced by *an* followed by another trisyllable. The poem is unusual in having two examples of line-initial vertical polyptoton (51–52, 57–59).

**17** On the stylistic concept of 'density' see the introduction to this volume.

1.13

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cum tu, Lydia, **Telephi** | | |
| cervicem roseam, cerea **Telephi** | | A1 |
| laudas bracchia, vae, **meum** | | |
| fervens difficili bile tumet **iecur**. | | D1 |
| [...] | | |
| quos inrupta tenet copula nec **malis** | | |
| divolsus **querimoniis** | | B2 |
| suprema citius solvet amor die. | 20 | |

The final anaphora of the name in lines 1–2 seems to reflect the speaker's exasperated view of Lydia's tiresome repetition of the name of her latest lover.[18]

1.14

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **O navis**, referent in mare te novi | | |
| **fluctus**. O quid agis? Fortiter occupa | | |
| **portum**. Nonne vides ut | | E1/2 |
| **nudum** remigio latus, | | C1 |
| [...] | | |
| non tibi sunt integra **lintea**, | | |
| non di, quos iterum pressa voces **malo**. | 10 | E2 |
| [...] | | |
| **Nuper sollicitum** quae mihi taedium, | 17 | E2 |
| **nunc desiderium** curaque non levis, | | C2 |
| interfusa **nitentis** | | |
| vites aequora **Cycladas**. | 20 | D2 |

In both lines 1–3 and 9–10 we see vertical juxtaposition of marine terms central to the scenario of this poem set on the sea (ship, wave, harbour; sails, mast), while in lines 17–18 we find carefully balanced openings using intial alliterative and assonating temporal adverbs (*nuper* ... / *nunc*) as well as medial rhyme.

1.15

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Pastor cum traheret per freta **navibus** | | |
| Idaeis Helenen perfidus **hospitam**, | | |
| ingrato celeris obruit **otio** | | E1 |
| ventos ut caneret fera | | |
| Nereus fata | | |

18 So Nisbet and Hubbard 1970, 171.

[...] 15
  nequicquam thalamo gravis
hastas et calami spicula **Cnosii**
vitabis strepitumque et celerem **sequi** C2
Aiacem: tamen, heu serus, adulteros
  crines pulvere collines. 20
Non Laertiaden, exitium tuae
[...]
Iracunda diem proferet **Ilio**
matronisque Phrygum classis **Achillei**;
post certas hiemes uret **Achaicus** 35 E2/1
  ignis Iliacas domos.'

The first three lines of the poem (1–3) all finish with trisyllabic nouns which rapidly establish its scenario (ship, hostess, calm); the first three lines of the last stanza all finish with proper nouns referring to the Trojan War, the latter two of which are tetrasyllables both beginning with 'A' and referring to the Greeks.

1.16

O matre pulchra filia pulchrior,
quem **criminosis** cumque voles modum
  pones **iambis**, sive flamma B2
    sive mari libet Hadriano.
Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit 5
mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
  non Liber aeque, non **acuta**
    sic geminant Corybantes **aera**, B2
tristes ut irae, quas neque Noricus
deterret ensis nec mare naufragum 10
  nec saevus ignis nec **tremendo**
    Iuppiter ipse ruens **tumultu**. D1
Fertur **Prometheus** addere principi
limo **coactus** particulam
[...]
**strauere** et altis urbibus ultimae
  **stetere** causae, cur perirent E1
    funditus inprimeretque muris 20
**hostile** aratrum exercitus insolens.
**Conpesce** mentem:

In lines 11–12 the vertically juxtaposed noun and epithet do not rhyme at line-end, but they are linked by both identical word-shape and initial alliteration (*tremendo* / ... *tumultu*).

1.17

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| [...] usque meis pluviosque **ventos**. | | |
| Inpune tutum per nemus **arbutos** | 5 | C2 |
| quaerunt **latentis** et thyma deviae | | |
| olentis **uxores** mariti | | B1 |
| **nec** viridis metuunt **colubras** | | |
| **nec** Martialis haediliae **lupos**, | | A1, D2 |
| [...] | | |
| Hic tibi copia | | |
| manabit ad plenum **benigno** | 15 | |
| ruris honorum opulenta **cornu**: | | D2 |
| hic in reducta valle Caniculae | | |
| **vitabis** aestus et fide Teia | | |
| **dices** laborantis in uno | | E2 |
| Penelopen vitreamque Circen; | 20 | |
| hic innocentis pocula Lesbii | | |
| duces sub umbra nec **Semeleius** | | |
| cum Marte confundet **Thyoneus** | | B1 |
| proelia nec metues protervum | | |
| suspecta Cyrum, ne male dispari | 25 | |
| incontinentis iniciat manus | | |
| et scindat haerentem **coronam** | | |
| crinibus inmeritamque **vestem**. | | E2 |

In lines 18–19 we see once again VJ of parallel verb forms, here at line-start (see further 3 Conclusions below); in lines 27–8 we find two items of sympotic dress (also parallel as accusative objects of the same verb) in VJ in final position.

1.18

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Quis** post vina gravem militiam aut pauperiem crepat? | 5 | |
| **Quis** non te potius, Bacche pater, teque decens Venus? | | A1 |
| Ac ne quis modici transiliat munera **Liberi**, | | |
| **Centaurea monet** cum Lapithis rixa super **mero** | | |
| **debellata**, **monet** Sithoniis non levis **Euhius**, | | E2, B1 and A1 |
| cum fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum | 10 | |
| discernunt avidi. Non ego te, candide Bassareu, | | |
| **invitum quatiam** nec variis obsita frondibus | | |
| **sub divum rapiam**. Saeva tene cum Berecyntio | | C2 and E1 |
| cornu tympana, quae subsequitur caecus amor sui | | |
| et tollens vacuum plus nimio gloria **verticem** | 15 | |
| arcanique fides prodiga, perlucidior **vitro**. | | E2 |

Here in lines 12–13 we see VJ of rhyming parallel verb forms again (see 3 Conclusions below), this time in medial position, immediately preceded by another rhyming pair; there is a closely similar initial double VJ earlier, in lines 8–9, and lines 7–9 all end with terms referring to Bacchus/wine.

1.19

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hic vivum mihi caespitem, hic | | |
| verbenas, pueri, ponite **turaque** | | |
| bimi cum patera **meri:** | 15 | |
| mactata veniet lenior **hostia**. | | E2 |

In this poem the last three lines all end with nouns characterising the poem's essential scenario of a sacrifice (incense, wine, victim).

1.20

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vile potabis modicis Sabinum | | |
| **cantharis**, Graeca quod ego ipse testa | | |
| **conditum** levi, datus in **theatro** | | E2 |
| cum tibi **plausus**, | | E2 |
| [...] | | |
| Caecubum et **prelo** domitam **Caleno** | | |
| tu bibes **uvam**; mea nec **Falernae** | 10 | |
| temperant **vites** neque **Formiani** | | E1, E2 |
| pocula **colles**. | | D2 |

In another brief poem, lines 2 and 3 begin with initially alliterating cretic words, while lines 3 and 4 both end with words referring to theatre (at a metrical point where words are often vertically paired in Horace's Sapphics, see n. 11 above), and the first three lines of the last stanza all end with proper adjectives connected with famous wine-locations, the last two of which are also paired by alliteration, while lines 9, 10, and 11 show VJ of nouns connected with wine at the medial caesura.

1.21

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dianam tenerae **dicite** virgines, | | |
| intonsum, pueri, **dicite** Cynthium | | A |
| Latonamque supremo | | |
| **dilectam** penitus **Iovi**; | | B2 and E2 |
| vos laetam fluviis et nemorum coma, | 5 | |
| quaecumque aut gelido prominet **Algido**, | | |
| nigris aut **Erymanthi** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| silvis aut viridis **Gragi**; | | E2 and C2 |
| vos Tempe totidem tollite laudibus | | |
| **natalemque**, mares, Delon Apollinis | 10 | |
| insignemque pharetra | | |
| **fraternaque** umerum **lyra**. | | C1 x 3, E2 and C2 |
| Hic bellum lacrimosum, hic miseram famem | | |
| **pestemqu**e a populo et principe Caesare in | | |
| **Persas** atque Britannos | 15 | E2 |
| vestra motus aget prece. | | |

Lines 3–4 present an appropriately intricate vertical balance between the two lovers Latona and Jupiter: her name is paired with its participle at line-start, his with its epithet at line-end. Lines 6–8 all end with Greek place-names, the last two of which rhyme and are parallel genitives, while lines 10–12 all begin with rhyming word-groups, lines 11 and 12 both end with rhyming and syntactically parallel items carried by Apollo, and lines 14 and 15 begin with plague and its potential target, also paired by alliteration and assonance. The high incidence of VJ here (13/16 lines, 81.3%) fits the poem's character as a musical hymn.

1.22

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Integer vitae scelerisque purus | | |
| **non** eget Mauris iaculis neque **arcu** | | |
| **nec** venenatis gravida **sagittis**, | | E1 |
| Fusce, **pharetra,** | | E2/1 |
| **sive** per Syrtis iter **aestuosas** | 5 | |
| **sive** facturus per **inhospitalem** | | A1 and E2 |
| Caucasum vel quae loca f**abulosus** | | |
| lambit **Hydaspes**. | | D2 |
| Namque me silva lupus in **Sabina**, | | E2 |
| dum meam canto Lalagen et **ultra** | 10 | C2 |
| terminum curis vagor expeditis, | | |
| fugit inermem, | | |
| quale portentum neque **militaris** | | C1 |
| Daunias latis alit **aesculetis** | | |
| [...] | | |
| pone **sub curru** nimium propinqui | 21 | |
| solis **in terra** domibus negata: | | E1 |
| **dulce ridentem** Lalagen amabo, | | |
| **dulce loquentem**. | | A1 and E2 |

Here lines 2–4 all end with co-ordinated ablative nouns referring to archery equipment, while lines 5–6 both end with polysyllabic adjectives referring to a hostile environment and 7–8 with a noun and its epithet, an impressive density

of VJ in all but one line of the first two stanzas. Lines 8–9 are linked by final contrasting geographical nouns/adjectives, the exotic *Hydaspes* and the more domestic *Sabina*, 21–22 by matching prepositional phrases. For the regular VJ of related terms at the end of the third hendecasyllable and the adonean of the Sapphic stanza, see n.12 above.

1.23

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vitas inuleo me similis, Chloe, | | |
| quaerenti pavidam montibus aviis | | |
| matrem non **sine vano** | | |
| aurarum et **silvae metu**. | | E2, D1 |
| Nam seu **mobilibus veris** inhorruit | 5 | |
| adventus **foliis uirides** rubrum | | D2, E2 |
| [...] | | |
| **tandem** desine **matrem** | 11 | |
| **tempestiva** sequi **viro**. | | E2 and E1 |

Note how the last two lines both begin with VJ of an alliterating pair of words referring to time and end with VJ of a pair of disyllabic words referring to family relationships (and spring and greenness are fittingly in VJ in lines 5–6); the final pair of lines encapsulates the poem's central argument (Chloe needs to exchange a mother for a husband).

1.24

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ergo Quintilium perpetuus **sopor** | 5 | |
| urget? Cui Pudor et Iustitiae **soror**, | | C1 |
| incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas | | |
| quando ullum inveniet parem? | | |
| **Multis** ille bonis flebilis occidit, | | |
| **nulli** flebilior quam tibi, Vergili. | 10 | E1 |
| Tu frustra pius, heu, non ita creditum | | |
| poscis Quintilium deos. | | |

Lines 9 and 10 have initial VJ of two disyllabic adjectives of quantity which are also linked by the same vowels (u and i).

1.25

| | |
|---|---|
| **Parcius** iunctas quatiunt fenestras | |
| **iactibus** crebris iuvenes proterui | C1 |
| [...] | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 'Me tuo longas perevnte **noctes**, | 6 | |
| Lydia, **dormis**?' | | E1 |
| Invicem moechos anus **arrogantis** | | |
| flebis in solo levis **angiportu** | 10 | E1 |
| Thracio bacchante magis sub | | |
| interlunia **vento**, | | |
| cum tibi flagrans amor et **libido**, | | C2 |
| quae solet matres furiare **equorum**, | | |
| saeviet circa iecur **ulcerosum** | 15 | C2 |
| non sine questu, | | |
| **laeta** quod pubes hedera virenti | | |
| **gaudeat** pulla magis atque myrto, | | E2 |
| aridas frondes hiemis **sodali** | | |
| dedicet **Euro**. | 20 | D2 |

Lines 9–10 end with polysyllabic words also linked by initial assonance and identical rhythm, while lines 7–8 end with words referring to sleep and 17–18 begin with words referring to joy. Lines 7–8 and 19–20 end with related terms as often at this metrical point in Sapphics (see n.11 above).

1.26

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Musis amicus tristitiam et metus | | |
| tradam **protervis** in mare **Creticum** | | |
| portare **ventis**, quis sub **Arcto** | | B2 and E2 |
| rex gelidae metuatur orae, | | |
| quid Tiridaten terreat, unice | 5 | |
| securus. O quae fontibus integris | | |
| gaudes, apricos necte **flores**, | | |
| necte meo Lamiae **coronam**, | | E2 |
| Piplea dulcis | | |

In lines 2–3 medial VJ of rhyming noun and epithet is accompanied by a pairing of geographical names in final place, while lines 7–8 both end with linked references to flowers and garlands.

1.27

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Natis in **usum** laetitiae scyphis | | |
| pugnare **Thracum** est; tollite **barbarum** | | C1 |
| morem verecundumque **Bacchum** | | C2 |
| sanguineis prohibete rixis. | | |
| Vino et lucernis Medus acinaces | 5 | |
| **immane** quantum discrepat; impium | | |
| **lenite** clamorem, sodales, | | C1 |

et cubito remanete presso.
[...]
**amore** peccas. Quicquid habes, age, 7
**depone** tutis auribus.
[...]
vix inligatum te **triformi** 23
Pegasus expediet **Chimaera**. D1

In this poem all but one of the instances of VJ involve grammatically and semantically unconnected pairs of words (23–24 are the exception); those at the end of lines 2–3 are paired by alliteration as well as rhyme.

1.28

Te maris et terrae numeroque carentis harenae
mensorem cohibent, **Archyta**,
**pulveris** exigui prope litum parva **Matinum** E2
**munera** E1
[...]
et Iovis arcanis Minos admissus habentque
**Tartara** Panthoiden iterum **Orco** 10
**demissum**, quamvis clipeo Troiana **refixo** C2, E2
[...]
Sed omnis una manet nox 15
et calcanda semel via **leti**.
Dant alios Furiae toruo spectacula **Marti**, C1
exitio est **avidum** mare nautis;
mixta senum ac **iuvenum** densentur funera, nullum C1
saeva caput Proserpina fugit. 20
Me quoque devexi rapidus comes **Orionis**
Illyricis Notus obruit **undis**. C2
[...]
Neglegis **inmeritis** nocituram 30
postmodo te **natis** fraudem committere? Fors et B2
debita iura vicesque superbae
**te** maneant ipsum: precibus non linquar inultis
**teque** piacula nulla resolvent. A
[...]

In lines 2–3 the final pair of trisyllabic proper names links the dead man and his place of burial, expressing the key topic of this sepulchral poem, while in lines 3–4 the grammatically connected and metrically matching terms *pulveris* and *munera* are paired in initial VJ, a striking hyperbaton; in lines 10 and 11 the cognate ideas of Tartarus and downwards motion are initially juxtaposed.

1.29

Icci, beatis nunc Arabum **invides**
gazis et acrem militiam **paras** E2
non ante devictis **Sabaeae**
regibus horribilique **Medo** E2
nectis catenas? Quae tibi virginum 5
**sponso** necato barbara serviet?
**Puer** quis ex aula **capillis** E2
ad cyathum statuetur **unctis**, B2
[...]
cum tu coemptos undique nobilis
libros Panaeti Socraticam et domum
mutare loricis **Hiberis**, 15
pollicitus meliora, **tendis**? C2

Here again the poem begins with a dense set of vertical juxtapositions which also summarise the poem's plot of intended conquest and its motivations (envy and preparation, Eastern places); lines 1–2 also pair parallel verb forms (for both these features see 3 Conclusions below) as well as parallel proper names of the opponents of Roman military might, both in final position, and lines 6–7 both begin with nouns referring to young males.

1.30

O Venus regina Cnidi Paphique,
sperne dilectam Cypron et vocantis
ture te multo Glycerae **decoram**
transfer in **aedem**. D2
Fervidus tecum puer et solutis 5
Gratiae **zonis** properentque Nymphae
et parum **comis** sine te **Iuventas** C1
**Mercuriusque.** E2

In this eight-line poem, with 1.11, 1.38, and 4.10 the equal shortest of Horace's *Odes*, in both lines 3–4 and lines 7–8 we find the regular placing of related elements at the end of the third hendecasyllable and adonean of the Sapphic stanza (see n.11 above); in lines 7–8 these are paired proper names of deities associated with Venus.

1.31

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Quid dedicatum poscit Apollinem | | |
| vates? Quid orat, de patera novum | | |
| fundens liquorem? Non **opimae** | | |
| Sardiniae segetes **feraces**, | | E1 |
| non aestuosae grata **Calabriae** | 5 | |
| armenta, non aurum aut ebur **Indicum**, | | E2 |
| non rura, quae Liris quieta | | |
| mordet aqua taciturnus amnis. | | |
| Premant Calena falce quibus dedit | | |
| Fortuna vitem, dives et **aureis** | 10 | |
| mercator exsiccet **culillis** | | B1 |
| vina Syra reparata merce, | | |
| dis carus ipsis, quippe ter et quater | | |
| anno revisens aequor Atlanticum | | |
| inpune: me pascunt **olivae**, | 15 | |
| me cichorea levesque **malvae**. | | E2 |
| Frui paratis et valido mihi, | | |
| Latoe, dones, at, precor, integra | | |
| cum mente, nec turpem **senectam** | | |
| degere nec cithara **carentem**. | 20 | B1 |

At the ends of lines 3–4, 5–6, and 15–16 we find semantically related words in VJ (two synonyms for fertility, a proper geographical noun and adjective, and two items of vegetarian diet).

1.32

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Poscimus**,[19] si quid vacui sub umbra | | |
| **lusimus** tecum, quod et hunc in **annum** | | E1 |
| vivat et pluris, age, dic **Latinum**, | | C2 |
| barbite, **carmen**, | | D2 |
| [...] | | |
| O decus Phoebi et dapibus supremi | | |
| **grata** testudo Iovis, o laborum | | |
| **dulce** lenimen, mihi cumque salve | 15 | E1 |
| rite vocanti. | | |

Lines 1–2 begin with similar first-person verb-forms and lines 3–4 match words in the third and fourth lines of the Sapphic stanza, both regular types of vertical

19 This reading is much to be preferred to *poscimur*, printed by the OCT, for the reasons given in Nisbet and Hubbard 1970, 380.

pairing in the *Odes* (see 3 Conclusions below and n.11 above respectively), while lines 14–15 start with VJ of metrically equivalent adjectives of a positive character (welcome, sweet).

1.33

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Albi, ne doleas plus **nimio memor** | | |
| immitis Glycerae **neu miserabilis** | | E2 |
| decantes elegos, cur tibi iunior | | |
| laesa praeniteat fide. | | |
| Insignem tenui fronte Lycorida | 5 | |
| Cyri torret amor, Cyrus in asperam | | |
| declinat Pholoen: sed prius **Apulis** | | |
| iungentur capreae **lupis** | | B2 |
| quam turpi Pholoe peccet adultero. | | |
| [...] | | |
| Ipsum me melior **cum** peteret **Venus**, | 13 | |
| grata detinuit **compede Myrtale** | | E2 x 2 |
| libertina, fretis acrior Hadriae | | |
| curuantis Calabros sinus. | | |

Lines 1–2 both end with a pair of words beginning with n- and then m-, while lines 13–14 end with the name of Venus, goddess of love, and that of Myrtale, the poet's lover, whose name is cognate with Venus' plant of myrtle.[20]

1.34

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| namque **Diespiter** | 5 | |
| igni corusco nubila **dividens** | | D2/E2 |
| plerumque, per purum tonantis | | |
| egit equos volucremque currum, | | |
| **quo** bruta tellus et vaga flumina, | | |
| **quo** Styx et invisi horrida Taenari | 10 | A1 |
| sedes Atlanteusque **finis** | | |
| concutitur. Valet ima **summis** | | D1/E1 |
| mutare et insignem attenuat deus | | |

The noun and participle in agreement paired by VJ at the end of lines 5–6 are further connected by alliteration and assonance as well as metrical shape, while lines 11 and 12 both finish (appropriately) with a disyllabic word referring to the idea of limit or extremity.

**20** See Nisbet and Hubbard 1970, 375.

1.35

| Text | Line | VJ |
|---|---|---|
| O diva, gratum quae regis Antium, | | |
| praesens vel imo tollere de gradu | | |
| mortale corpus vel **superbos** | | |
| vertere funeribus **triumphos**, | | B1 |
| te pauper ambit sollicita prece | 5 | |
| […] | | |
| te Spes et **albo** rara Fides **colit** | | |
| velata **panno** nec comitem **abnegat**, | | B1 and E2 |
| utcumque **mutata potentis** | | |
| veste domos **inimica linquis**; | | C2 x 2 |
| at vulgus infidum et meretrix retro | 25 | |
| periura cedit, diffugiunt cadis | | |
| cum faece siccatis **amici**, | | |
| ferre iugum pariter **dolosi**. | | B1 |
| Serves iturum Caesarem in ultimos | | |
| orbis **Britannos** et iuvenum recens | 30 | |
| examen **Eois** timendum | | E2 |
| partibus Oceanoque rubro. | | |
| […] | | |
| Unde manum **iuventus** | 36 | |
| metu deorum continuit? **Quibus** | | C2 |
| pepercit aris? O utinam nova | | |
| incude diffingas retusum in | | |
| Massagetas Arabasque ferrum! | 40 | |

Lines 21–2 present in final VJ the familiar pairing of similar verbs (see 3 Conclusions below), while lines 30–1 juxtapose geographical names from different extremes of the Roman Empire in medial position.

1.36

| Text | Line | VJ |
|---|---|---|
| **Et ture et** fidibus iuvat | | |
| **placare et** vituli sanguini debito | | B2/E2 |
| custodes Numidae deos, | | |
| […] memor | | |
| **actae** non alio rege **puertiae** | | |
| **mutataeque** simul **togae**. | | C2 x 2 |
| Cressa ne careat pulchra dies nota | 10 | |
| **neu** promptae modus amphorae | | |
| **neu morem** in Salium sit requies pedum | | |
| **neu multi** Damalis meri | | A1, E1 |
| Bassum Threicia vincat amystide | | |
| **neu** desint epulis rosae | 15 | |
| **neu** vivax apium neu breve lilium. | | A1 |

Omnes in Damalin putres
deponent oculos nec Damalis **nouo**
divelletur **adultero** B2
lascivis hederis ambitiosior. 20

The poem's first two lines both have rhyme in the third syllable followed by *et*. Lines 8–9 present a double VJ of rhyming words at both start and end; both lines are also enclosed horizontally by a noun and participle in agreement and with the same termination, presenting a neat combination of vertical and horizontal connection, while lines 11–12 are linked by both vertical anaphora and alliteration.

1.37

Nunc est bibendum, **nunc** pede libero
pulsanda tellus, **nunc** Saliaribus A1
ornare pulvinar deorum
tempus erat dapibus, sodales.
Antehac nefas depromere **Caecubum** 5
cellis avitis, dum **Capitolio** E2
regina dementis ruinas
funus et imperio parabat
[...]
redegit in veros timores 15
Caesar, ab Italia volantem
**remis** adurgens, accipiter velut
**mollis** columbas aut leporem citus C1
venator in campis **nivalis**
Haemoniae, daret ut **catenis** 20 C1
**fatale** monstrum. Quae generosius
**perire** quaerens nec muliebriter C1
expavit ensem nec **latentis**
classe cita reparavit **oras**, D2
ausa et iacentem visere regiam 25
vultu sereno, fortis et asperas
tractare serpentes, ut **atrum**
corpore conbiberet **venenum**, B2
deliberata morte ferocior:
saevis Liburnis scilicet invidens 30
privata deduci **superbo**
non humilis mulier **triumpho**. B1

Lines 5 and 6 have final VJ involving two alliterating terms referring to Italian locations, appropriate to the nationalistic stance of this poem on Actium.

1.38

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Persicos odi, puer, **apparatus**, | | |
| displicent nexae philyra **coronae**, | | E2 |
| mitte sectari, rosa quo locorum | | |
|    sera moretur. | | |
| **Simplici myrto nihil** adlabores | 5 | |
| **sedulus curo**: **neque te** ministrum | | C1, E1 x 2 |
| dedecet myrtus **neque me** sub arta | | A1, E1 |
|    vite bibentem. | | |

Lines 1 and 2 end with two terms related to the symposium (*coronae* are a part of the *apparatus* or elaborate equipment rejected here), while 5 and 6 begin with alliterating cretic trisyllables followed by alliterating negatives, and lines 6–7 have two pairs in VJ, one of identical negations and one of rhyming monosyllabic pronouns.

# 3 Conclusions

The analysis above shows that stylistically significant vertical juxtaposition according to the categories set out here occurs in more than a third of the usually short lyric lines of Horace *Odes* 1 (380/876, 43.4%) and is thus a prominent feature of Horatian lyric style. In conclusion, I will try to draw out some of its key features.

Structurally, it is regularly found at the start of odes, in the first stanza or epodic couplet (1.1; 1.4; 1.7; 1.13; 1.14; 1.15; 1.22; 1.27; 1.29; 1.31; 1.32; 1.38); in this position it can sometimes emphasise and link together the words which designate the key themes of the poem, providing a kind of radical summary (1.13.1–2; 1.14.1–3; 1.15.1–3; 1.28.2–4; 1.29.1–4). Equally, it is also regularly found in the last lines of poems, providing a rhyme or its equivalent which binds the poem's ending together in a closural effect (1.3; 1.5; 1.14; 1.17; 1.19; 1.23; 1.25; 1.27; 1.29; 1.31; in the final stanza but not the final lines in 1.12; 1.13; 1.15; 1.20; 1.21; 1.32).

Particular kinds of words are regularly vertically paired, apart from those which belong together in strict grammar such as noun and epithet. Especially notable is the tendency to pair parallel verb forms, whether they are metrically identical (as at 1.1.33–4; 1.3.6–7; 1.10.17–18; 1.11.6–7; 1.16.17–18; 1.18.8–9, 12–13; 1.32.1–2) or not metrically identical (1.2.18–19; 1.4.1–2; 1.12.29–30; 1.17.18–19; 1.29.1–2). Proper names too are often vertically paired, usually to express similarity or contrast (1.1.33–4; 1.3.12–14; 1.7.1–4, 9–10, 27–8; 1.12.33–5, 51–2; 1.13.1–2;

1.15.34–5; 1.17.22–3; 1.20.9–11; 1.21.6–8; 1.22.8–9; 1.26.2–3; 1.28.2–3; 1.29.3–4; 1.31.5–6; 1.33.13–14; 1.35.30–1; 1.37.5–6).

In terms of poetic style, the sonic and structural effects achieved by such vertical juxtaposition in these brief lyric lines reflect the history of Aeolic lyric which lies behind the *Odes*. Sonically, Sappho's fragments show regular instances of final vertical rhyme, whether of single syllables, disyllables, or even trisyllables,[21] but almost all belong to category C, and rarely involve words which are otherwise significantly related or parallel:[22] a key exception here is the famous Sappho 1.21–23 V. καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως **διώξει**, / αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ **δώσει**, / αἰ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως **φιλήσει** (three parallel future verbs with the same ending, category E1/E2). Horace's tendency to pair similarly-shaped verbs vertically (noted just above) is thus a Sapphic trait.

But most of the Horatian categories seem to derive from Latin and its capacity for complex poetic word order; this is demonstrated by Catullus' two poems in Sapphic stanzas. At Catullus 11.2–3 we have balancing final geographical terms in final place (*Indos* /... *Eoa*, category E2) and in lines 3–4 we have the familiar Horatian Sapphic pattern[23] where the third hendecasyllable and the adonean end with a pair of terms in agreement (*Eoa* / ... *unda*, category B2), while lines 7–8 have subject and verb above each other at line-end (*colorat* / ... *Nilus,* category E2) and lines 10–11 have significantly related proper terms at the start (*Caesaris* ... / *Gallicum* ) which link Caesar's name and his area of operations in Gaul (category E1) and rhyme at the end (*magni* / ... *ulti*-, category C2). Similarly, Catullus 51.1–2 (in a poem translating Sappho fr.31 V.) have line-initial anaphora of *ille* (category A), not there in the Sapphic original,[24] a balancing initial *te* and *mi* in lines 6–7 (category E2), and once again the familiar pattern where the third hendecasyllable and the following adonean end with a pair of closely linked terms, here noun and epithet (15–16 *beatas* / ... *urbes*).

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**21** Single syllable: fr.5.2–3 and 5–6 V., 16.6–7 and 21–22, 44.8–9, 94.7–8; disyllable 44.11–12; trisyllable 115.1–2. There are three consecutive monosyllabic end-rhymes in 1.21–3 and 96.4–6.

**22** 44.11–12.

**23** See n. 12 above.

**24** Though note that Hellenistic hexameter poets also have vertically juxtaposed initial anaphora: Theocritus 1.4–5, Callimachus *H.* 1.6–7 and 8–9. The musical hexameters of Theocritus' pastoral songs and of Callimachus' hymns present many vertical juxtapositions, but as in Sappho most of them do not set syntactically or semantically related terms together, and do not show the striking hyperbata found in Horace and Catullus.

Alongside Catullan lyric style, the hexameters of Catullus 64 are also very rich in significant vertical juxtapositions,[25] as are those of Vergil *Eclogue* 4 which imitate them;[26] these non-lyric poems no doubt influenced the general texture of Horace's lyric style, but Catullan lyric is the crucial precedent here.

In sum, vertical juxtaposition deserves more consideration as a feature of Horace's lyric style than it has been given before now; it is a prominent feature that has its own literary functions and literary history. This piece is a sample treatment of a single book of the *Odes*, but the whole collection deserves the same treatment, since this angle of analysis reveals a key technique which underlies the remarkable stylistic texture of Horatian lyric.

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**25** 251 of the 408 hexameters of Catullus 64 (61.5%) contain some form of vertical juxtaposition as defined above: see Harrison, forthcoming.
**26** The phenomenon occurs in 44.1% of the hexameters of *Eclogues* 1–5 and in 58.7% of those of *Eclogue* 4. A high frequency is also found (unsurprisingly) in Hellenistic hexameter poetry (55.2% in Callimachus *Hymn* 1, 53% in Aratus *Phaenomena* 1–100, 64% in Theocritus *Idyll* 1).

Eleonora Tola

# Ovid's Stylistic Program in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*

**Abstract:** In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid complicated his earlier writing with some issues related to his new displaced identity. At the end of the poet's literary career, the inherent doubleness of elegy provided him the most proper stylistic vehicle for narrating his 'in-between' exile condition. Indeed, such a doubleness allowed Ovid to shape a stylistic program focused on paradox and self-representation. I explore the way in which lexical, semantic, and metrical fluctuation features as a major pattern of authorial style in both exilic collections.

## 1 Introduction

In his *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid interwove his elegiac writing with his exilic identity. On the margins of the Roman world, he deployed some literary strategies to portray his new condition and simultaneously keep himself familiar to his readers. The inherent duality of the elegiac couplet provided him with a highly appropriate rhythmical tool for narrating the tensions involved in his displacement. Ovid exploited this formal duality to shape a stylistic program focused on the paradoxes of self-(re)presentation. Here I explore some of its lexical, semantic, and metrical aspects to suggest that they feature as a major authorial pattern in both collections. From small-scale figures and contexts, paradox relates to larger structures that convey the dialectic of continuity and discontinuity in exile.

## 2 Paradox and self-representation

Scholars have already pointed out that paradox[1] is a pervasive device in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It is key to its imagery, its topics, and its poetic design.[2] Indeed, as Gildenhard and Zissos have shown,[3] the original chaos at the beginning of the

**1** On paradoxical style see also Bessone's chapter in this volume.

**2** Bernbeck 1967, 112; Lefèvre 1970; Tissol 1997; Hardie 2009; Knox 2009, esp. 142–144. On the proem, see especially Kenney 1976; Heyworth 1994; Barchiesi 2005, 133–145.

**3** Gildenhard and Zissos 1999, 167.

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poem (1.15–20) can be read as its 'Urparadox', since it makes to interact some contradictory issues that programmatically foreshadow Ovid's narrative of bodily change. From ancient Greek philosophy,[4] Roman rhetoric introduced paradox into the forensic field with the so-called *admirabilia* that Cicero distinguished from the *loci communes* (*Paradoxa Stoicorum* 3–4).[5] Additionally, in his classification of the *genera causarum*, Quintilian (*Inst*. 4.1.40–41) included the *admirabilis causa* that the Greeks called 'parádoxon' and that was supposed to transgress ordinary expectations (*admirabile autem uocant quod est praeter opinionem hominum constitutum*, 41). Paradox was progressively used as a figure of speech and thought that combined two conflicting assertions to provoke surprise or scandal in the audience.[6] In literary texts it traditionally appeared as an effective tool for associating opposite meanings. When joined to their logical contraries, concepts implied their own negation.[7] The interweaving of contradictions therefore enabled the poets to dissolve boundaries and create astonishment, uncertainty, and even discomfort. Of course, the resulting instability invited readers to carry out some linguistic and cultural adjustments. This was especially significant in self-referential contexts. As Martelli[8] has argued within her exploration of the boundaries of 'Naso's' identity in Ovid's exilic works, the problem of the gap between poets' first-person authorial selves and their written identity permeates Latin literature. Yet, Ovid's last collections 'push autobiographical fallacy, a defining prerogative of Latin elegy, to its limit'.[9] By equating some disparate words and topics in his *Tristia* and *ex Ponto* Ovid blurs their meaning and thus erodes autobiographical consistency. Moreover, the poet's paradoxical wit calls into question the portrayal of banishment as a subjective dissolution (e.g. *Tr*. 1.3.73–76; *Pont*. 1.1.67–68). Through paradox Ovid displays, rather, the tensions of his self-referential story in the light of his earlier writing.

The elegiac couplet notably conveyed these tensions at both ends of Ovid's literary career. In his love poetry, he had made explicit the meaningful potential of the contrasting elements of the elegiac form when presenting its metrical ethos in terms of sexual potency and impotence (*cum bene surrexit uersu noua pagina primo / attenuat neruos proximus ille meos*, *Am*. 1.1.17–18).[10] For an alert readership, the paradoxical intertwining of the hexameter's heroic connotations and

4 Auroux et al. 1990, 1848.
5 See Price Wallach 1990.
6 Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1958; Pernot 2000, 299.
7 Hardie 2009, 1–18.
8 Martelli 2013, 145. See also Holzberg 2006; Hallett 2012.
9 Further considerations in Blanco Mayor 2017, 16–22.
10 See also Ov. *Am*. 1.1.27. On this topic, see Kennedy 1993, 58–63.

the pentameter's 'shortness of breath'[11] metrically reproduced the incongruity between the 'epic' sufferings of the exiled poet and the very form of his poetry.[12] As Perutelli[13] has noted on Lucan's Neronian epic, the rhetorical paradox increasingly took on a key role in Roman ideological conceptions. Within a transitional empire, Ovid already exploited the blending of identity and otherness to depict his relegation and its consequences for his literary status. Through paradoxical wit 'Naso' rearranged his poetic world in a foreign setting. Indeed, paradox was an expressive vehicle for showing the logic of exile, which the poet himself presents as a condition between life and death (*seminecem Stygia reuocasti solus ab unda*, *Tr*. 5.9.19),[14] metrically speaking, as a 'trembling' between the hexameter and the pentameter (*aspicis alternos intremuisse pedes?*, *Tr*. 3.1.56).[15] From some aspects of Ovid's equivocal writing, I suggest that paradox operates as a principle of stylistic consistency *before* and *against* the poet's (alleged) depersonalisation.[16]

## 3 Shaping confusion

In *ex Ponto* 3.9[17] the poet defends himself from an unnamed critic, quoted by Brutus, who criticises the monotony of his poems. After alluding to his loss of poetic control (47 ff.), Ovid paradoxically admits he is attempting the credibility he had rejected at Rome within his love poetry (*Musa mea est index, nimium quoque uera, malorum*, *Pont*. 3.9.49; *Nec tamen ut testes mos est audire poetas*, *Am*. 3.12.19). He then closes his elegy by arguing that his text is not a *liber*, but a mere binding of individual letters:

> nec liber ut fieret, P [18] sed uti sua cuique daretur
> littera, propositum // curaque nostra fuit.

**11** Barchiesi 1997, IX–X (cf. Hor. *Ars* 75 *uersibus impariter iunctis*). See also Dangel 2007; Morgan 2010, 345–359.

**12** Williams 1994, 113.

**13** Perutelli 2000, 148.

**14** See Grebe 2010.

**15** See also *Tr*. 3.1.11–12; 3.7.10.

**16** Claassen 1990.

**17** This is the last poem of the collection, since it is commonly accepted that Book 4 was published posthumously. See Franklinos 2018, 289; Galasso 2009, 195–199.

**18** I note with the letters T, P, and H the three regular caesurae of the hexameter (trihemimeral, penthemimeral, and hephthemimeral) intended as significant sense-pointers (i.e. a reading grid) in the verse. See Dangel 1999.

postmodo collectas [P] utcumque sine ordine iunxi:
hoc opus electum // ne mihi forte putes.
da ueniam [T] scriptis, [P] quorum non gloria nobis 55
causa sed utilitas // officiumque fuit.
(*Pont*. 3.9.51–6)

Not to produce a book, but to send a letter to each
has been the object of my care.
Later I collected them and put them together somehow, without order
–not to have you think perchance that for this work I have made selections.
Grant indulgence to my writings, for their purpose has been not my renown
but my advantage, and to do homage to others.

According to the exile's 'truth', banishment has challenged literary consistency. Conceived as *litterae*, his poems are described as a (re)collection (*collectas*; *electum*)[19] of fragmentary pieces, i.e. a corpus without cohesion (*sine ordine*).[20] Of course, recalling to his readers the nature of his writing allows Ovid to develop the *Leitmotiv* of self-disaggregation in exile. Yet, in that very poem of the *ex Ponto* he twice undermines his own statement. First, the framing couplet of the quoted passage exhibits a compelling sound-play that 'gathers' the words indicating the (negated) book (*li*_**ber**_), its process (_**fier**_*et*), the author's agency (*d*_**are**_*tur*) within the epistolary mode (*litt*_**era**_), and his literary care (*c*_**ura**_). The phonic linkage seems to override any potential break, thus bringing into question the poet's claims of poetic and subjective dispersion.[21] Second, a sensitive reader would also remember the poet's mention of the defects of his 'books' at the beginning of the elegy:

ipse ego librorum [P] uideo delicta meorum,
cum sua plus iusto // carmina quisque probet.
(*Pont*. 3.9.7–8)

**19** Note the emphatic vertical juxtaposition. On this effect, see Harrison's article in this volume.
**20** On Ovid's fallacious claims in the light of the symmetrical organisation of the first three books of his *ex Ponto*, see Gaertner 2005, 2; Evans 1983, 110–111; 148; Jansen 2012; Franklinos 2018.
**21** Claassen 2008, 98–104, has well demonstrated the importance of context in the interpretation of phonic effects to avoid the 'intentional fallacy' of reading sound-play in fortuitous groupings. The author especially shows how alliteration and assonance often feature as a 'binding factor' in Ovid's exilic works. This concept, also called 'omosemia fonetica' {phonetic homosemy} (Carnoy 1927, 216 ff.), is a hermeneutical advance of Russian formalism (e.g. Lotman 1972, 153: 'il ravvicinamento sonoro (fonologico) diventa ravvicinamento di concetti', {sonic (phonological) similarity becomes similarity of concepts} quoted in Traina 1999, 11). See also Tola 2004; 2021. On phonostylistics (*Lautstylistik*), see Leon 1993; Traina 1999; Facchini Tosi 2000; Jobert 2014.

> I myself perceive the defects of my own books
> despite the fact that every man is all too fond of his own verse.

Ovid's editorial note erodes self-referentiality by joining the opposite ideas of fragmentation and unity of his exilic writing (*collectae litterae*/*libri*). In addition, he evokes Agrius to endorse his literary failure with a contrasting analogy. While this legendary figure denied the traditional ugliness of his son Thersites (9–10), Ovid openly recognises the *uitia* (5; 37) and *delicta* (7; 13) of his works.[22] Paradoxically, the *exemplum* acknowledges the intactness of his craft, mostly in light of a subtle allusion to Horace's poetic rules when referring to honest critics (*si defendere delictum quam uertere malles, / nullum ultra uerbum aut operam insumebat inanem* ... *Ars* 442–3). In the very way that Ovid claims weakness, then, he shows that he is still in control, and the ensuing duplicity amounts to the blurring of his self-confessional tone.[23] Ovid underscores the paradoxical effect in the quoted final lines of *ex Ponto* 3.9, where he reveals his exilic purposes (*non gloria nobis / ... sed utilitas officiumque fuit*, 55–56) to request indulgence (*ueniam*, 55) for his poetic deficiency.[24] Again, the poet's self-proclaimed inconsistency in such a polished frame spurs his readers to distrust his *propositum* (52) and to encounter, rather, his poetic design.[25] The stylistic shaping of sincerity thus features as the evidence of insincerity, i.e. of the poet's ability through artful contradiction. As Block well noted,[26] the capacity to express failure poetically throws the sincerity of such failure into doubt. In the last book of the *Tristia* Ovid had cleverly foreshadowed to his readers the fluctuating status of his banished voice:

> si tamen e uobis aliquis, tam multa, requiret,
> unde dolenda canam,// multa dolenda tuli.
> non haec ingenio,[P] non haec componimus arte:
> Musa mea est propriis // ingeniosa malis.
> at quota fortunae pars est in carmine nostrae!
> felix, qui patitur // quae numerare potest!
> (*Tr.* 5.1.25–30)

**22** See *Tr.* 2.578; 4.8.39; 5.6.21; *Pont.* 1.7.41 (*delictum*). On the interchangeable sense of the term with *crimen* and *peccatum* (*peccare*), see McGowan 2009, 42–43.

**23** Block 1982, 22.

**24** On *utilitas* in the exile poetry, see Nagle 1980, 71–82. On the topic of poetic immortality as a central concern in Ovid's whole works, see Kenney 1982, 420–422; 447–449. On the association of *utilitas* and *officium* with both the activity of writing and Horatian *Ars*, see Evans 1983, 149–150, and Williams 1994, 89–90; 114–115.

**25** See Williams' 1994, 50 ff. on the seminal idea of Ovid's 'pose of poetic decline'.

**26** Block 1982, 25.

Yet if someone of you asks why I sing so many
grievous things, many grievous things I have borne.
I write these poems with no talent, with no skill.
My Muse is made talented by its own suffering.
And how small a part of my lot is in my poetry!
Happy he who can count his sufferings!

Lexical duality (25–27) emphasises the lack of *ingenium* by mirroring Ovid's works and his 'true' misfortunes.[27] Moreover, the poet's Muse is verbally interwoven with his exilic pains (*Musa mea … propriis ingeniosa malis*, 28).[28] Through a witty self-dissociation the poet simultaneously refers to his loss of *ingenium* and to his Muse's ability in the central couplet of the quoted passage:[29] the focalised loss of talent (*non*) that frames each hemistich of the hexameter (27) is echoed by a hyperbatic arrangement of the phrase that highlights the Muse's skill at the beginning of each colon of the pentameter (*Musa* … // *ingeniosa*, 28). If a heroic (epic) context does not (*non*) fit confessional poetry, exile can still be narrated through the elegiac pattern, i.e. by taking it back to its very origins (*propriis … malis*).[30] What is more, the anagrammatic interlocking of the verb indicating the poet's literary task (*componi**mus***) and his inspiration (***ar**te*; ***Mus**a*) phonically dissolves the (alleged) gap between his *ingenium* and his ('deficient') exile poetry. The last elegy of the *ex Ponto* achieves Ovid's playful treatment of his artistry:

inuide, quid laceras Nasonis carmina rapti?
  non solet ingeniis // summa nocere dies,
famaque post cineres P maior uenit, et mihi nomen
  tum quoque, cum uiuis // adnumerarer, erat …
(*Pont*. 4.16.1–4)

Jealous man, why do you wound the verse of ravished Naso?
The final day is not wont to injure genius,
and fame is greater after one is ashes. I too had a name
even at the time when I was counted with the living …

When addressing a jealous man, Ovid exploits the exile-as-death motif to stress the triumph of his genius. Through verbal patterning, the poet's incapacity to

27 On Ovid's contrast between *ingenium* and *ars*, see Williams 1994, 84–88 (cf. *Am*. 1.15.14; 19; *Tr*. 2.424).
28 On the textual problems of this line, see Hall 1992, 147.
29 The use of the third person (*Nasonis … rapti*, 1) also features as a vehicle for self-dissociation.
30 See Ov. *Tr*. 5.1.5–7; *Am*. 3.9.1–6 (on Tibullus' death). On the connection between Latin elegy and the funerary epigraphic tradition, see Yardley 1996; Ramsby 2007.

count his sufferings at the end of the *Tristia* (*numerare*, *Tr.* 5.1.30)[31] shifts here to the topic of renown when he was 'alive' (*cum uiuis ... adnumerarer*, *Pont.* 4.16.4). Accordingly, via syntactical negation the lack of *ars* focused on in that context of the *Tristia* (*non ... ingenio...*[P] *non ... arte*, *Tr.* 5.1.27) turns into the opposite emphasis on the poet's talent (*non solet ingeniis ... nocere*, *Pont.* 4.16.2).[32] Despite Ovid's self-confessed fragmentation throughout the *Tristia* and the *ex Ponto*, his poems blur, rather, the boundaries between life and death to unmask the continuity of his writing: exile is frequently associated with death, but death also relates to renown (e.g. *Tr.* 3.7.45–52; 4.9.19–24). The sound-blending of the word *fa**ma***, its enlargement (***mai**or*), the poet's self-allusion (***mi**hi*), and his renown (***nome**n*; *ad-num**erarer***, ***era**t*) amounts to the undercutting of Ovid's pretended discontinuity and dividing effects of metrical structures. The awareness of notoriety is paradoxical itself, since the exile metaphorically writes from death but still exhibits his unimpaired *ingenium* to his readers.

Through a confusing play on division and unity, on life and death, on decline and perpetuation of poetic genius (*ingenium*) and its related appeal for indulgence (*uenia*), the poet succeeds in 'displacing' his exilic bewilderment on to his readership. Indeed, later in *ex Ponto* 3.9 Ovid complains of the lack of listening in Tomi (*uix audior ulli / uerbaque profectu dissimulata carent*, 'scarce any listen to me, and my words, which they feign not to understand, are without result', 39–40).[33] He underlines the idea of a disregarding audience (OLD s.v. *dissimulare* 3) that involves his location in Tomi and his unnamed critic in Rome (3.9.1–2). Yet, in the light of his contradictions, his readers are driven to recognise the poet's own 'concealing' (OLD s.v. *dissimulare* 1) as a sophisticated rhetorical ability. Such an ability is based on verbal traps and ruses aimed at controlling the reader within the exile's autobiographical fallacy.[34] Ovid's authorial strategy has a political goal in relation to the emperor since it enables him to shape a cautious plea; it has also stylistic *proposita* in relation to his audience inasmuch as it offers to an ingenuous reader a misrepresentation of reality. In what follows I examine

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**31** Note that the first hemistich of this line of the *Tristia* recalls the famous Virgilian *felix qui potuit* (*Georg.* 2.490) but with the verb *posse* at the end of the line and out of its expected placement (*felix qui potest enumerare quae patitur*). This hyperbatic arrangement changes the *makarismos* into a 'paradoxical *makarismos*', as suggested to me by Paolo Dainotti, who also discusses it in his chapter on this volume.

**32** Note the emphatic rhyme (*non...nocere*).

**33** See also *Tr.* 3.14.39 ff.; 4.1.89 ff.; 5.12.53 ff.

**34** See Cic. *Brut.* 292; *de Orat.* 2.269. See e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.62; 2.468; 3.1.4–6. On the topic of love as simulation, see e.g. *Am.* 1.8.36; 71; 2.2.36; 2.2.18; 3.11.24; *Ars* 1.611–612; 615–618; 2.641–642; 3.210; 553. See Kennedy 2012; Blanco Mayor 2017, 65.

Ovid's request for leniency (*uenia*) and its connected allusions to his talent (*ingenium*) in the *Tristia* and the *ex Ponto*. I argue that their fluctuations and interactions, at both micro- and macro- stylistic levels, feature as a key issue of Ovid's exilic voice.

# 4 What kind of indulgence?

In both collections the term *uenia* relates to Ovid's request for indulgence for his *crimina*, as a part of his semantic set of words referring to 'guilt'.[35] But it also involves literary aspects when the poet asks his audience to read his works as 'exilic works'. Ovid's *probatio* to the emperor in the single elegy of the second book of the *Tristia* especially shows the exile's semantic play on both senses of that word:

His, precor, exemplis tua nunc, mitissime Caesar,
   fiat ab ingenio // mollior ira meo.
illa quidem iusta est, nec me meruisse negabo-
   non adeo nostro // fugit ab ore pudor-     30
sed, nisi peccassem,[P] quid tu concedere posses?
   materiam ueniae // sors tibi nostra dedit.
si, quotiens peccant homines, sua fulmina mittat
   Iuppiter, exiguo // tempore inermis erit ...
(*Tr*. 2.27–34)

Such examples now form the basis of my prayer, O merciful Caesar,
that my poetic gift may assuage your wrath.
Just indeed it is — I will not deny that I have deserved it,
for shame has not so utterly fled my lips.
But had I not sinned, what leniency were it possible for you to display?
My fate has given you the means of mercy.
If at every human error Jupiter should hurl his thunderbolts,
he would in a brief space be weaponless ...

The passage follows a catalogue of examples that highlight the doubleness of poetry as wound and cure (20).[36] The erotic diction of the poet's appeal to Augustus in the first hexameter (*precor*; *mitissime Caesar*)[37] culminates in the pentameter of the couplet with the juxtaposition of the self-referential and the literary levels

35 Claassen 2008, 123.
36 Claassen 1989.
37 Nagle 1980, 63–64.

of Ovid's prayer (*mollior ira*).[38] Elegy (i.e. Ovid's *Ars*) has been the reason of the poet's banishment and affliction with 'epic' misfortunes (e.g. *Tr*. 1.1.67–8; 2.7–8; *Tr*. 5.12.67–68; *Pont*. 3.3.23; 39–40). However, the poet's elegiac *ingenium* could also provide him with a solution, as suggested by the chiastic arrangement that frames both the generic and the biographical hints (*ab ingenio // mollior ira meo*). Indeed, a sound-play in the poet's argument subtly blends his exilic story and his customary erotic code (*prec**or***; *Caes**ar***; *moll**ior ira***). The pervasive assonances and alliterations of the second couplet (***me me**ruisse*; ***no**n* ... ***no**stro*; ***ore*** ... *pud**or***) amounts to this kind of ambiguous duality in Ovid's plea. Strikingly, he recognises the legal pertinence of the emperor's *ira* (*iusta est*; *meruisse*) but at the same time challenges his addressee — and his wider audience — with a conflicting assertion: the emperor's leniency (*uenia*) could not exist without the poet's *ingenium*, by the faults of which (*nisi peccassem*) Augustus was granted the very possibility (*materiam*) of applying it (31–32). An informed reader would not neglect the close association between elegy and *ingenium* in Roman love poetry (e.g. *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*, Prop. 1.2.4; *ingenium mouit sola Corinna meum*, Ov. *Am*. 3.12.16). A paradoxical analogy further advances Ovid's plea, since Augustus is compared to Jupiter within a lexical frame (*exiguo*; *inermis*) that also relates to love elegy.[39] The poet thus shapes a layered confusion since he justifies his punishment in terms of what has provoked it. The assonant words *ing**eni**o* and ***ueni**ae* at the same metrical position in their pentameters (28 and 32) fashion a new kind of elegiac prayer.[40] Although in his exilic 'reality' Ovid underscores the primacy of *uenia* over literary *laus*, he disconcerts his readers with a pun on the kind of *uenia* he requests. At the beginning of the *Tristia* the first occurrence of the term refers to his readership's potential reaction:

> haec quoque quod facio, $^{P}$ iudex $^{H}$ mirabitur aequus,
> scriptaque cum uenia // qualiacumque leget.
> (*Tr*. 1.1.45–6)

> Even the making of such verse as this will surprise a fair-minded critic
> and he will read these verses with indulgence, however poor they are.

**38** See *Pont*. 3.4.85 (*molles elegi*).

**39** On the programmatic use of *inermis*, see e.g. Ov. *Am*. 1.2.21–22; 2.10.3; 3.7.15; 71–72; *Ars* 3.46; *Rem*. 347. For *exiguus* in a lowly generic sense, see Hor. *Ars* 77; Prop. 3.9.35–36; 4.1.59–60; *Am*. 3.1.40; *Tr*. 2.329–330; 531–2; *Pont*. 3.3.33–34; 3.4.5–6.

**40** On elegiac prayers, see e.g. Tib. 3.4.64; 76; 3.6.46; Prop. 1.6.6; 1.8.12; 28; 1.16.20; 2.16.48; 2.30.12; Ov. *Am*. 1.3.1; 2.2.66; 2.3.17; 3.6.65; *Ars* 1.440; 709–710; 715; *Her*. 2.103; 3.91–92; 4.149; 153; 175; 15.262.

Ovid turns the legal flavour of his *relegatio* (*iudex aequus*)[41] into his verses (*scriptaque*) to stress the amazing effects (*mirabitur*) of his changed writing and then advocate indulgence (*cum uenia*). Yet, the word *uenia* paradoxically leads his audience back to his love poetry. The poet's readers are reminded of his prayer to Cupid in the *Amores*, and to the related genre-based rejection of war:[42]

> nil opus est bello: [P] ueniam [H] pacemque rogamus;
>   nec tibi laus armis // uictus inermis ero.
>
> (*Am.* 1.2.21–2)

> There is no need for war; I ask for pardon and peace.
> Nor will I be glory for you having been conquered by arms when all unarmed.

The exile repeatedly echoes the lover's search for peace (e.g. *Tr.* 2.203; 3.10.67; *Pont.* 1.2.16; 1.8.5; 2.2.96; 3.3.40) and thus creates a surprising context where *uenia* (as 'pardon', OLD s.v. 4, and 'literary indulgence', OLD s.v. 2) and *pax* (as a generic hint) refer both to his personal situation and his writing conditions. Moreover, Ovid seeks leniency for his self-depreciated genius by subtly evoking his earlier 'guilty' skill. Conflicting allusiveness is still more comprehensive since in *Tr.* 1.7 he refers to his unpolished *Metamorphoses* (*defuit ... ultima lima*, 1.7.30) to strengthen 'true' pardon over literary praise (*ueniam pro laude peto*, 1.7.31). As a climax of such artful puns, Ovid links his new geographical context and his request for literary mercy to a new kind of self-metamorphosis:

> dicere saepe aliquid conanti - turpe fateri! -
>   uerba mihi desunt // dedidicique loqui.
> Threicio Scythicoque fere circumsonor ore,
>   et uideor Geticis // scribere posse modis.
> crede mihi,[T] timeo ne sint [H] inmixta Latinis
>   inque meis scriptis // Pontica uerba legas. 50
> qualemcumque igitur [P] uenia [H] dignare libellum.
>   sortis et excusa condicione meae.
>
> (*Tr.* 3.14.45–52)

> Often when I attempt some utterance — shameful confession! —
> words fail me: I have unlearned my power of speech.
> Thracian and Scythian tongues chatter on almost every side,
> and I think I could write in Getic measure.
> O believe me, I fear that Pontic language
> may be mingled with the Latin in my writings.

41 See also *Tr.* 4.1.1–4; 103–106; *Pont.* 3.9.55–56.

42 Ov. *Am.* 3.2.49–50; 59–60. *Rem.* 283. See Gale 1997.

Such as my book is, then, deem it worthy of indulgence
and pardon it because of the circumstances of my fate.

The poet shapes his transformation by playing on his incapacity for speech in the margins of Rome: paradox arises between sound-identity by alliteration and assonance (***dic**ere*; *uerba ... **de**sunt*; ***dedidici***[43]) and semantic opposition (speaking/unlearning to speak). Additionally, Ovid's asking for poetic indulgence (*uenia*) encompasses a dexterous allusion to love matters at the end of the same pentameter (*libellum*).[44] The internal echo on the poet's foreign linguistic environment (*circumson**or ore***, 47) adds more conflicting nuances to Ovid's discourse since it mirrors his moans in reaction to his martial environment, i.e. the very topic of war he had rejected in his erotic works (*circumson**er ar**mis*, *Tr.* 4.10.111; *circumson**or ar**mis*, *Tr.* 5.3.11). On a larger scale, the echo-like effect 'replicates' the motive of linguistic fluctuation (*Latinis ... scriptis*; *Pontica uerba*) in the last book of the *Tristia*:[45]

omnia barbariae loca sunt uocisque ferinae, 55
omniaque hostilis // plena timore soni.
ipse mihi uideor iam dedidicisse Latine,
nam didici Getice // Sarmaticeque loqui.
nec tamen, ut uerum fatear tibi, nostra teneri
a componendo // carmine Musa potest. 60
(*Tr.* 5.12.55–60)

All places are filled with barbarism and cries of wild animals,
all are filled with the fear of a hostile sound.
I myself, I think, have already unlearned my Latin,
for I have learned how to speak Getic and Sarmatian.
And yet, to confess the truth to you, my Muse
cannot be restrained from composing verses.

The contrast that Ovid spreads over the two elements of the second couplet (*dedidicisse*/*didici*)[46] evokes his earlier role of *praeceptor amoris* through allusion

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**43** Same claim in *Tr.* 5.5.6; 5.12.57.
**44** See e.g. Prop. 1.11.19–20; 2.13.25; Ov. *Am.* 2.11.31; 2.17.33; 3.8.5–6; 3.12.7; *Rem.* 1.67; *Tr.* 2.1; *Pont.* 1.8.9; 4.12.25; 4.13.9.
**45** See also *Tr.* 5.7.57–58. On Ovid's topic of linguistic decline, see De Luce 1993; Casali 1997, 92–96; Forbis 1997; Stevens 2009; Natoli 2017.
**46** Note also the strong repetition of the 'I' sound to highlight both the idea of hostile sound and the allusion to Ovid's didactic discourse (*Ipse mIhI uIdeor Iam dedIdIcIsse LatIne*, / *nam dIdIcI GetIce SarmatIceque loquI*), as Alexandre Hasegawa suggested to me.

to his didactic role.[47] However, the exile would like to reject this very role when he recalls Medea and Jason's story at the beginning of his *ex Ponto* (*illum furtiuae iuuere Cupidinis artes, / quas a me uellem non didicisset Amor*, *Pont.* 1.4.41–42). Word play and sound blending concerning the opposite ideas of learning and unlearning enable Ovid to keep his well-known identity by a strategy of concurrent denial and recalling. Actually, his pretended unlearning does not prevent him from openly endorsing his literary status (59–60). Despite his changed background and his self-confessed deterioration (*nec tamen*), the poet turns his 'shameful confession' of *Tr.* 3.14 (*turpe fateri*, 45) into the 'true' conviction of still being an elegiac poet (*ut uerum fatear tibi*, *Tr.* 5.12.59).[48] The semantic shift is also suggested by a veiled correlation between the verb applied to his Muse's unrestrained inclinations (*nec* ... ***teneri*** ... *potest*) and his self-definition as ***tenerorum*** *lusor amorum* in two programmatic sections of the *Tristia*, i.e. Ovid's own epitaph (*Tr.* 3.3.73) and his poetic biography (*Tr.* 4.10.1).[49] The hyperbatic reference to inspiration over the last quoted couplet in 'vertical agreement'[50] (*nostra* ... //... *Musa* ...) seems to validate Ovid's two-faced metrical ability. Indeed, the exile's dislocation paradoxically unveils gathering effects, as shown by the cumulative sound linkage combining Ovid's actual epic context with some elegiac traces to underline the poet's unharmed genius (***Ne***_c_ ***tamen***, ***ut*** _uer_***um*** _fa_***te***_ar_ ***ti***_bi_, ***no***_stra_ ***tene***_ri_ / _a_ ***compone***_ndo_ // ***ca***_rmi_***ne*** ***Mu***_sa_ ***pote***_st_). Faced with such an ability, the reader is then invited to doubt the kind of *uenia* the poet requests. Ovid does not obtain pardon from the emperor, but he still succeeds in misleading his audience by implicitly imbricating his story and his literary modes.

## 5 A shifting craft

The loss of literary talent paradoxically underscores both the poet's self-dissolution and his literary continuity in exile. In both collections, the word *ingenium* wavers between negative connotations (the poet has lost it or it has harmed him, e.g. *Tr.* 2.12; 316; *Tr.* 3.3.74; *Pont.* 3.5.4) and poetic self-awareness connected to

**47** See e.g. *Ars* 1.50; 1.459; 3.27–28; 281 ff.; *Rem.* 71–72 (*discere*); *Ars* 2.744; 3.812 (*magister*); *Ars* 1.17; 2.161–162; 2.497–498 (*praeceptor*).

**48** As Harrison 2002, 89, has pointed out: 'In terms of generic complexity and drama, these [exilic] poems certainly continue the concerns of the pre-exilic work at an equivalent or even greater level of intensity'.

**49** Cf. *Am.* 3.1.69 (*Teneri properentur Amores*).

**50** Claassen 2008, 151.

renown (*fama*, *gloria*, *laus*). When addressing an unnamed friend in the third book of his *Tristia*, Ovid justifies his artistic failure in Tomi:

> aequus erit scriptis, quorum cognouerit esse
> exilium tempus // barbariemque locum; 30
> inque tot aduersis [P] carmen [H] mirabitur ullum
> ducere me tristi // sustinuisse manu:
> ingenium [T] fregere meum [H] mala, cuius et ante
> fons infecundus, // parcaque uena fuit.
> sed quaecumque fuit, nullo exercente refugit, 35
> et longo periit // arida facta situ.
>
> (*Tr.* 3.14.29–36)

> He will be fair-minded to writings which he knows were composed
> in time of exile, in the barbarian world;
> and amid so many adverse circumstances he will wonder
> that I had the heart to write with sorrowing hand any poem.
> Misfortunes have broken my talent, which even before
> came from a barren source and tiny trickle.
> But such as it was, with none to exercise it, it has retreated
> and is lost, dried up by long neglect.

As in the first book of the collection (*iudex mirabitur aequus*, *Tr.* 1.1.45), the poet's argument focuses on his reader's astonishment (*mirabitur*) before the temporal and spatial circumstances of his writing. But wonderment results rather from two framing allusions in the passage. First, Ovid gingerly recalls his *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 1.4) through the hyperbatic phrase *carmen /... ducere* in two key positions of the hexameter and the pentameter of the second couplet (31–32).[51] Astonishment arises from the combination of Ovid's metamorphic world and his new self-referential context. Second, through the contrasting image of water and dryness (34–36) the poet depicts the decline of his voice in the language of programmatic poetics.[52] He manipulates his narrative to show less his historic truth than the risks of losing his elegiac genius (*parcaque uena*) in a 'dry' environment (36). In addition, Ovid undermines his own didactic statements in the *Ars*:

> ingenium [T] mala saepe mouent; [H] quis crederet umquam
> aerias hominem carpere posse uias?
>
> (Ov. *Ars* 2.43–44)

**51** The phrase appeared already in Cat. 64.312–313. Cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 6.5; Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.224–225 and Ov. *Pont.* 1.5.13 (*luctor deducere uersum*).

**52** On *uena* as the 'flow' of poetic inspiration (OLD s.v. 7) and its allusion to Callimachus' literary distinction (*Hymn to Apollo* 108–112), see Williams 1994, 73–76.

> Misfortunes often stimulate talent: who would ever have thought
> a man could voyage through the air?

When evoking Daedalus and Icarus' myth to portray the difficulties of his task (*Ars* 2.21–96), Ovid associates the word *ingenium* with the misfortunes and the consequent creativity of the legendary artist (*Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes*, *Ars* 2.34). The *mala* are the obstacles imposed by Minos but also the character's transgression as suggested by the rest of the couplet.[53] Ovid provides a confusing re-reading of the idea in *Tr.* 3.14: though he aligns himself with the exiled Daedalus, he also recalls a transgression through the artist's audacious decision (*audacem … repperit ille uiam*, *Ars* 2.22) and Icarus' punishment after his audacious flight (*audaci arte*, *Ars* 2.76). Via double allusiveness the exiled poet plays upon the relationship between misfortunes and talent: the very misfortunes that motivated love poetry (i.e. Daedalus' artistry) now undercut his self-confessional *ingenium* as a result of his own audacious 'path' in the *Ars*. Indeed, Ovid's disbelief in the marvellous achievement in the quoted lines of his didactic text (cf. 2.77–78; *Met.* 8.217–220) moves, in his *Tristia*, towards the reception of his verses (*mirabitur*, 3.14.31) to stress the assimilation of his life and his works. Yet, the layered allusion to Daedalus' myth invites his readership to distrust Ovid's assertions: in the light of his poetic autobiography in Book 4 of the *Tristia*, the phrase *ingenium mala mouent* of his *Ars* and its opposite exilic echo (*ingenium fregere mala*) blur the claimed connection *mala/ingenium*:

> mouerat ingenium [P] totam cantata per urbem
> nomine non uero // dicta Corinna mihi.
> (*Tr.* 4.10.59–60)

> My genius had been stirred by her who was sung throughout the city,
> whom I called, not by a real name, Corinna.

The poet unmasks his autobiographical fallacy by thematically dissociating literature from 'reality' to detach himself from his amatory writing as the alleged reason for his banishment. The cumulative sound-binding of the hexameter (*__mo__uerat ingeni__um__ tot__am__ … urb__em__*) is achieved by a strong internal alliteration that underscores a fictionalised narrative in the first colon of the pentameter (*__no__mine __no__n uero*, cf. *Am.* 3.12.41–42).[54] Thematic disjunction and stylistic

53 See Myerowitz 1985, 161. Cf. Horace's use of the myth of Daedalean flight as somehow unnatural and transgressive (Hor. *Carm.* 1.3.34–35; 4.2.1–4).

54 As Paolo Dainotti suggested to me, it could be noted that for the sake of creating an alliterative pattern the poet uses *non* over *haud* (*nomine haud uero*), metrically possible and usually

gathering thus convey the confusing relationship between the exile's 'truth' and its literary representation. By simultaneously asserting and denying his circumstances, Ovid deftly shapes an in-between identity that beguiles his audience (and the emperor): although he seems to embody Icarus' punishment, he also writes between reality and fiction, elegy and epic, hexameters and pentameters, as if he had followed Daedalus' instructions to his son (*Inter utrumque uola*, *Ars* 2.63).[55] Moreover, he relates his poetic decline to a wish for self-metamorphosis, i.e. a change to the most intermediate of conditions:

> me quoque despero,[P] fuerim [H] cum paruus et ante,
> illi, qui fueram, // posse redire parem. 30
> contudit ingenium [P] patientia longa malorum,
> et pars antiqui // nulla uigoris adest.
> (*Tr.* 5.12.29–32)

> For me also I feel despair that, little as I was even before,
> I can become once more the man I was.
> My talent has been crushed by my long endurance of woes:
> no part of my former vigour remains.

To get the earlier identity back would imply, however, a dangerous return to the literary reason for the poet's relegation. Only through stylistic ambiguity can he operate a 'safe' transformation, i.e. by joining his exilic sufferings with some recognisable traces of his earlier love poetry (*fuerim cum paruus et ante*; *antiqui ... uigoris*).[56] In doing so, Ovid makes his proclaimed self-fragmentation collapse: the acoustic continuity in the quoted passage dissolves the boundaries of time (*ante*/*despero*) and enriches (again) the idea of poetic cohesion (*desp**ero***, *fu**eri**m* *p**ar**uus* ***et*** *an**te***; *fu**era**m*; *red**ire***; *p**are**m*; *c**on**tudit* ***ingenium*** *pat**ien**tia* *l**on**ga* *malo-**rum***). On a larger scale, Ovid discloses the fallacious motive of his damaged skill by openly denying himself. At the very beginning of the *Tristia* he is stunned by the endurance of his talent when he remembers the sea journey to Tomi, i.e. the starting point of his 'epic' events:

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preferred with adjectives and adverbs. In the terms of Traina, 'Il suono ha selezionato la forma' {The sound has selected the form}.

**55** See also *Met.* 8.206 (*inter utrumque uola*...).

**56** *Paruus* distinguishes elegy and lyric from the more elevated genres (Hor. *Carm.* 4.2.31; 4.15.3; *Ep.* 2.1.257–258; Prop. 3.3.18; 4.1.58; *Tr.* 2.331–332; *Pont.* 2.5.25–26). For the use of *uigere* in sexual contexts, see Ov. *Am.* 3.7.67.

> ipse ego nunc [T] miror [P] tantis animique marisque
> fluctibus ingenium // non cecidisse meum.
> (*Tr.* 1.11.9–10)
>
> I myself now marvel that amid such turmoil of my soul
> and of the sea my powers did not fail.

The poet takes over the astonishment (*miror*) that he often assigns to his readers when they face his 'damaged' *ingenium*. Yet, such a perplexity denotes here the opposite idea: Ovid's poetic self-depreciation (***non*** *haec ingenio,* ***non*** *haec componimus arte*, *Tr.* 5.1.27) shifts to a disavowal of his literary failure via the repetition of *non* (***non*** *cecidisse*). In addition, some conflicting statements erode the proclaimed effects of exile on the poet's genius (*fregere*, *Tr.* 3.14.33; *contudit*, 5.12.31). On the one hand, Ovid simultaneously undervalues and vindicates his *fama* (e.g. *Tr.* 3.3.77–80; 3.7.49–52; 4.1.3–4; *Pont.* 3.9.46; 55; 4.16.3). On the other hand, he gathers and separates reality and fiction. However, the explicit association of his writing with insincerity (*magnaque pars operum mendax et ficta meorum*: / *plus sibi permisit compositore suo*, *Tr.* 2.355–356) underlines the continuum of his poetic identity and 'harms', rather, the credibility of an extra-poetical persona. In the last book of the *Tristia* this confusing authorial position reaches a climax with Ovid's metaphorical 'displacement' of his talent from Rome to Tomi:

> nec me Roma suis debet conferre poetis:
> inter Sauromatas // ingeniosus eram.
> denique nulla mihi captatur gloria, quaeque 75
> ingeniis stimulos // subdere fama solet.
> (*Tr.* 5.1.73–76)
>
> Rome should not compare me to her own poets:
> among Sarmatians I have become a genius.
> In fine I court no renown nor that fame which
> usually sets the spur to talent.

An unexpected genius brings into question the poet's wish to get his Roman identity back (*Tr.* 5.12.30). Paradoxically, the topic of self-depreciation unveils Ovid's poetic cohesion. On first sight, the exile denies his talent and focuses on his inattention to *gloria* and *fama* (75–76). Far from this assertion, he displays instead a *recusatio* based on the recurrent topic of poetic immortality. Actually, the only significant transformation is Ovid's geographical displacement as a trigger of a new relationship with poetry and renown. The assonant pair ***fama***/***mala*** when related to Ovid's skill makes clear the illusory nature of his proclaimed

inattention to renown in exile: in his love poetry, misfortunes spurred him to achievement via allusion to Daedalus; in Tomi, fame and renown (i.e. Ovid's earlier status) are implicitly said to spur him to *ingenium*, to the point that the poet describes himself as *ingeniosus* in his new context. In other words, although Ovid denies the importance of literary *fama* far from Rome, his exilic condition paradoxically benefits from his earlier renown, i.e. from the very love poetry that had led him to relegation. Interestingly, the semantic connection between the alliterating words *stimulus* and *subdere* either side of the pentameter's caesura denotes both poetic motivation and mental torment or unrest (OLD s.v. 2).[57] Moreover, through his self-definition as *Romanus uates* Ovid undertakes a metamorphosis. Still, this does not take him back to his earlier status, as wished in *Tr.* 5.12.29–30, but into a restored poetic identity:

> ille ego Romanus [P] uates [H] - ignoscite, Musae ! -
> Sarmatico cogor plurima more loqui.
> (*Tr.* 5.7.55–56)

> I, the Roman bard — pardon, ye Muses! —
> am forced to utter most things in Sarmatian fashion.

> nec te mirari [P] si sint uitiosa decebit,
> carmina, quae faciam // paene poeta Getes.
> (*Pont.* 4.13.17–18)

> And it will not be right for you to wonder if the poems
> I write are full of mistakes, being myself now practically a Getic poet.

Whether Roman or Sarmatian, Ovid is above all a poet, as suggested by the authorial transformation involving the last book of both exilic works. The word *paene* seems to ironically gather the exile's fluctuations: he is no longer totally Roman or Getic, but he reminds his readers of his earlier identity to make himself recognisable from his unfamiliar background. On a metapoetic level, the astonishment that Ovid assigns to his readership (*nec te mirari*) conveys rather Ovid's paradoxical ability to offer a new poetic self within a customary format. Such an ability especially exploits the tensions between the hexameter (*ille ego Romanus uates*, *Tr.* 5.7.55) and the pentameter of the elegiac couplet (*paene poeta Getes*,

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**57** See *Pont.* 1.1.75 (*stimuli* as torments).

*Pont.* 4.13.22). The proclaimed poetic failure thus unmasks the artistry of disclosing new facets of the renowned Roman poet.[58]

Anderson[59] has drawn attention to the vocabulary of surprise and amazement in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It enables the poet to display the amazement resulting from bodily change; it expresses the reactions of the internal narrators before a surprising event or the astonishment of the changed persons during or after the transformation process. Anderson detected that the verb *miror* occurs 45 times in the poem, and is thus supreme in the whole vocabulary of surprise. Strikingly, Ovid's exilic poetry picks up that verb (e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.45; 3.3.1; *Pont.* 1.5.29; 4.13.17) to hint at self-referential or metapoetic claims. When related to the poet's *ingenium*, amazement features as a privileged vehicle for telling his shifting status. Such an association conveys Ovid's authorial strategy of blurring the boundaries between his true story and his (veiled) poetics.[60]

# 6 Conclusion

As scholarship has pointed out, paradoxical wit notably permeated post-Augustan literature. Its expressions in earlier literature have, then, important ramifications for our understanding of Augustan culture and its transitional position.[61] In the case of Ovid's exilic works, paradox has a crucial function in the light of the problem of relegation and self-referentiality. The overlap between the poet's first-person self and his poetic identity embodies the programmatic tensions between the exile's 'truth' and his fictionalised experience, between his stated self-fragmentation and his implicit literary continuity. Ovid's exilic paradox informs both the thematic and the stylistic levels of his last collections and triggers some literary and ideological issues. First, paradox as lexical, semantic, and metrical fluctuation leads Ovid's readership to move back and forward throughout his works. Second, it creates a confusion that avoids any political risk for the exiled poet and his primary addressees. Paradox thus relates to a mischievous dissimulation strategy.[62] The complementary words *uenia* and *ingenium* have a key role in such a technique. Their interactions allow us to trace the poet's in-between condition and its

**58** For negative interpretations of the motive, see Lozovan 1958, 402; Herescu 1959, 74; Evans 1983, 165.

**59** Anderson 1963, 4.

**60** See Pernot 2018; Tola 2021.

**61** See Hardie 2009, 95–112.

**62** On dissimulation and safe speech, see Quintilian (*Inst.* 9.2.65. Cf. Pernot 2018).

poetic effects. What is more, they allow Ovid to transfer the astonishment of exile to his audience's reactions. At the same time, this very strategy incites the poet's familiar readers to recognise his metamorphic and erotic worlds. Their assimilation with his exilic self-portrayal achieves a peculiar artful ingenuity. In exile, the need to bewilder the audience through a pretended candid narrative is paramount. By making an assault on different levels of his writing, Ovid arranges a misleading poetics based on paradox as a main feature of stylistic consistency despite the poet's alleged dissolution. Through paradox Ovid manipulates his self-referential 'truth' to mask his boundless poetry within an unsafe speech context that regards less his 'uncultured' background in Tomi than the political consequences of his (irrepressible) voice.

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Chiara Battistella

# The Style of Evil in Seneca's *Medea*

**Abstract:** Style is a salient feature of Seneca's production, in both the philosophical and the poetic corpus. This paper specifically focuses on the play *Medea* with a view to suggesting that there may be a functional correspondence between the character's stylistic choices and the dramatic action.

## 1 Introduction

Epistle 114 to Lucilius is often cited as the most indicative text to present Seneca's stance on style with a special focus on philosophical writing. It contains the well-known proverbial phrase *talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis vita* (114.1), in which the correspondence between the author's life and his speech (or, in other words, style as an index of character) suggests that it is the character of the mind that determines and gives shape to the character of the style.[1] In this paper, I will look at some speeches in Seneca's *Medea* from a stylistic viewpoint, seeking not to lose sight of the above-mentioned statement, in order to verify whether it may apply not just to Senecan philosophical writing but also to his tragic poetry.

## 2 Words and emotions in Seneca's *Medea*

Style appears as a salient feature in Seneca's plays, especially owing to their excess of rhetoricity by means of which the author confers exceptional prominence on *verba* over *res*. However, rhetoricity should not be dismissed as a merely decorative trait of Seneca's dramatic style since it is key to structuring the action and articulating the sequence of the drama's main moments.[2] The armoury of rhetoric and stylistic techniques that the playwright displays in his tragedies (*Medea*

I warmly thank the editors for inviting me to contribute to this volume and providing useful comments on this paper.

1 See Merchant 1905; Setaioli 1985; Graver 2014, 282–283. The wise man always follows nature; consequently, in the Stoic view, excellence in writing depends on conformity to nature. See also Traina 2011, 46.

2 Boyle 2014, xliv.

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included) serves a dramatic purpose, in that it contributes to portraying states of mind and, thus, creating powerful tragic characters.[3] As Boyle duly observes, 'in Medea's rapid exchange with her Nurse (*Med*. 150–167) — rhetorical, sententious, at times stichomythic, even antilabic (i.e. with divided verse-lines) — the Nurse's barrage of commonplaces and epigram is not only thrown back in her face but used as a springboard for Medea's redefinition of herself'.[4] In this regard, let us consider lines 164–167:

> NU. Abiere Colchi, coniugis nulla est fides
> nihilque superest opibus e tantis tibi.
> ME. Medea superest, hic mare et terras vides
> ferrumque et ignes et deos et fulmina.

Medea's retort to the nurse effectively highlights her impressive self-identification with nature's elements and, therefore, anticipates the attitude of striking self-confidence that she will display throughout the tragedy: her stylistic choices, such as the repetition of *superest* and the following 'catalogue' marked by a cosmic tint and polysyndeton (*et* ... *-que* ... *et* ... *et* ... *et*), should not be considered as purely ornamental exaggeration since they strongly contribute to the dramatisation of the character's ethos. In Seneca's tragedies, therefore, style can be construed as a powerful instrument of identity construction and definition, as will be argued below.

It has been abundantly acknowledged that Seneca's Medea is a remarkably strong-willed and 'exhibitionist' character, all the more so if compared to her Euripidean counterpart. Starting from this premise, I intend to look at her *verba* within the play especially with a view to bringing to the fore some of the distinctive features of her 'idiolect' as a tragic villain.[5] She interacts with all the other *dramatis personae* of the play except for the chorus, an exclusion typical of

3 Boyle 2014, xlvi (he speaks of dramatisation of minds).

4 Boyle 2014, xlvi. See also: 'Seneca's dramatic style [...] is a major instrument of profound interiority, enabling the Roman dramatist to achieve a non-Greek focus on the psychologies behind the masks'. As happens elsewhere in Seneca's tragic corpus, the repartee of *sententiae* at 157–176 serves the purpose of bringing to the fore the emotional attitude that pervades the play, namely Medea's anger, but also her extraordinary qualities (see Mastronarde 1970, 293 on Seneca's *Oedipus*).

5 It would be interesting to look from this research perspective at the style and language of other villains in Seneca's plays in order to show whether they share significant stylistic and linguistic 'habits', a sort of common 'style of evil' (Atreus could certainly be an 'authoritative' example); however, this investigation goes beyond the scope of the present pages.

Seneca's tragedies, unlike their Greek models.[6] The prologue in the *Medea* is a conspicuously bombastic opening, differing from that of Euripides' *Medea* especially in that the protagonist is given voice from the very outset of the play.[7] The Senecan Medea is not someone who shies away from the spotlight: the nurse and the chorus need not urge her to get out of the house and take the floor like in Euripides' *Medea* (180–186; 214–215). In the Latin prologue, her character is already on stage when the tragedy starts, ready to put in play a variegated array of rhetorical strategies. Prominent among these are a stylistically elaborate invocation of the gods and the employment of violent imagery and sententious diction,[8] as for example in the last line, *quae scelere parta est, scelere linquenda est domus* (55). This *sententia,* thanks to its brevity and closural position,[9] seals in a quite vivid way the character's first appearance and creates dramatic expectation.[10] Interestingly, the sententious colour with which the Senecan Medea rounds off her speech seems to 'refine' the concept expressed by the Euripidean Medea in a generalising maxim at the end of her first intervention on stage (265–266):[11] 'but when she [*scil.* a woman] is injured in love, no mind is more murderous than hers'.[12] The image of blood brought about by the Greek adjective μιαιφονωτέρα[13] is replaced in the Roman version by the emphatic repetition of the term *scelus*, strengthened by the trope of parallelism. Moreover, the use of *parta*, hinting at the language of parturition, pointedly brings to the fore, from the very outset, the narrow (though allusive) connection between Medea's forthcoming revenge and her offspring

**6** In Seneca's play, there is no direct interaction or interlocution between Medea and the chorus, which is rather hostile to her. Therefore, Medea has no recourse to rhetorical techniques to achieve solidarity from the chorus as in Euripides' tragedy. The non-integration of the chorus and its lack of dramatic function are distinctive traits of the Senecan tragedies (cf. Zanobi 2014, 83–84).

**7** 'Seneca's prologues are normally of great importance for setting forth both the mood of the poem and the key-words associated with it' (Mastronarde 1970, 292).

**8** See Setaioli 1985, 815 on the *sententia* as a means to 'deteriorate' the architecture of Cicero's sentences. *Sententiae* are amongst of the most quintessential features of the declamatory style of early imperial Roman literature. See also Traina 2011, 25–27; 78.

**9** Boyle 2014, 130–131.

**10** See von Albrecht 2014, 742 on *sententiae* as an instrument of philosophical education: 'But how does one make a quoted sentence or maxim really "one's own"? One should live it, not just pronounce it (*epist*. 108.38)'. *Mutatis mutandis*, Medea too seeks to make the content of her maxims come true.

**11** In Euripides' play, Medea's voice is only heard from within the house until line 214. Her concluding words to the chorus open up a range of interpretive possibilities, on which see Mastronarde 2002, 217.

**12** Translations are from Kovacs 1994.

**13** 'Striking and emphatic' (Mastronarde 2002, 217).

(cf. also 25–26 *parta iam, parta ultio est*: / *peperi*),[14] which is absent from the corresponding scene at the beginning of Euripides' play.

In Seneca's play, readers can envisage some connection between Medea's style and her personality: her powerful emotional turbulence, for example, is mirrored in the inner tension of her speech at 397–424.[15] The nurse has just described her mistress' *furor* in the lines above utilising the image of an overflowing wave (*ubi se iste fluctus franget? exundat furor*, 392):[16] Medea's following speech seems indeed to be pervaded by that same wave, owing to the relentless rhythm of the sentences. Just as she is no ordinary woman, so too her fury is, in metaphorical terms, no ordinary *fluctus* since neither rushing rivers nor stormy seas nor fire could restrain it (411–414):[17]

> non rapidus amnis, non procellosum mare
> Pontusve Coro saevus aut vis ignium
> adiuta flatu possit inhibere impetum
> irasque nostras: sternam et evertam omnia.

*Impetus* is a recurring term in the text, constantly referring to Medea's uncontrollable emotions, which will trigger a spiral of violence throughout the play (cf. 157; 381; 413; 895; 903). The term also has a strong Stoic flavour, being the Latin rendition of the Greek ὁρμή and meaning a movement of the mind towards action or, in other words, the impulse following the mind's assent to an impression, obviously a false one.[18] However, I wonder whether there may also be some further connotation in the passage above. *Impetus* and *ira* are the two driving forces that animate Medea's actions, but they are also likely to function as a creative impulse in giving shape to her wording. The destructive words she utters at line 414

**14** See Boyle 2014, 117–118 and line 50. Medea's words and intentions are still opaque in the prologue, but nevertheless they hint at the filicide to come. See also Fantham 1982, 204 on Medea containing in herself the motive power of the tragic action and, thus, hinting in the prologue at horrors of which she herself is not yet fully conscious. On the *Steigerung* {'intensification'} effect, see Billerbeck 1988, 123.

**15** Medea's speech is likely to be an 'open soliloquy', as Boyle 2014, 235 points out.

**16** The association of the emotion of anger with a wave is not novel: see Boyle 2014, 233–234. For this image see also Harrison 2013, 215–228. Lines 380–396 contains the nurse's detailed description of Medea's emotions. Such kind of descriptions is generally much briefer in Greek tragedy (see Tietze Larson 1994, 59).

**17** On Medea setting her emotions, especially her *ira*, in competitive conflict with weather events or natural phenomena, see Slaney 2019, 73. See also Pratt 1983, 90–91: 'The annihilating effect of Medea's rage is profusely conveyed in the metaphors of fire and sea storm. She is a flaming storm of passion buffeting the cosmos'.

**18** See Boyle 2014, lv; 168; 353.

*sternam et evertam omnia* appear as a direct emanation of her *impetus*, which thus comes to instantiate a privileged source of inspiration for her tragic diction[19] (Medea's promise that she will subvert the universe finds a counterpart at line 739 *mundus vocibus primis tremit*, when she adds her dreadful words to the venoms she is concocting [737–738; on this cf. further below]).[20] It is worth noticing that the nurse employs the same vocabulary, that is the same key words *impetus* and *ira*, a few lines earlier while inviting her mistress to control her anger and curb her impulse: *resiste et iras comprime ac retine impetum* (381). She then proceeds to depict Medea's behaviour in some celebrated lines (382–396), which have long been the object of scholarly attention owing to their noticeable similarity with the description of the angry man in Seneca's *De Ira* 1.1.3–5, in particular the following extract, dealing with the pre-verbal / non-verbal 'communicative' acts of the *iratus*: *gemitus mugitusque et parum explanatis vocibus sermo praeruptus* (cf. also 2.35.3 *rabida vocis eruptio colla distendet*; 2.35.5 *sibilo mugituque et gemitu et stridore et si qua his invisior vox est perstrepentem*). The nurse refers to Medea's speech acts of cursing as follows, hinting at their arguably pre-verbal and chaotic features (387–390):

> flammata facies, spiritum ex alto citat,
> proclamat, oculos uberi fletu rigat,
> [...]
> haeret: minatur, aestuat, queritur, gemit.[21]

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**19** *Impetus* can be used to signify 'inspiration', like e.g. in Sen. *Ben*. 7.8.2 *eloquentiae vero eius, quae res fortissimas deceat, non concinnatae nec in verba sollicitae, sed ingenti animo, prout impetus tulit, res suas prosequentis*.

**20** Her words are defined *metuenda* at 738, which can be related to *tremenda* at 46, where the participial adjective is referred to her evil thoughts (a similar idea of terror is conveyed by *tremit* at 738).

**21** I wonder whether this line, despite its topical content, may be indebted to Aesch. *Eum*. 117–130, in which the Erinyes utter non-verbal cries in their sleep, such as moans and groans. There is no exact correspondence between the Aeschylean and the Senecan scene; however, Medea is represented as a Fury in the play, full of anger and committed to violent revenge like the goddesses in the Greek play (see Costa 1973, 109 on *Furor* at 396 'virtually = *Furiae*'). With reference to Sen. *Med*. 391–392 *quo pondus animi verget? ubi ponet minas? / ubi se iste flucus franget?*, in which Medea's nurse employs the metaphors of a balance and of the sea to talk about her mistress' *furor*, I wonder whether commentators fail to notice a possible analogy with the epilogue of Aeschylus' *Choephori* (1075–1076), where the chorus, after Orestes has fled owing to the Erinyes' sudden appearance, rounds off the play with a similar phraseology: ποῖ δῆτα κρανεῖ, ποῖ καταλήξει / μετακοιμισθὲν μένος ἄτης; (there is also conceptual resemblance).

However, once Medea has taken again the floor right after the nurse's description, she appears perfectly capable of articulating and mastering speech: although she continues to be in a state of furious anger, she employs several stylistic and rhetorical artifices. After resorting to the technique of self-address (397–398), she composes a long period with several clauses containing cosmic references[22] to express the immutability of both the eternal processes of the natural world and her own *furor* (401–407). She then constructs other two quite elaborate sentences pointing to the exceptional character of her rage (407–414) and rounds them off with the menacing promise that she will destroy everything (*sternam et evertam omnia*, 414),[23] as already observed above. Next, she moves on to talk about Jason and, after an effectively sententious line (*amor timere nemimem verus potest*, 416), lingers over the following concession (417–419): even supposing that he has been coerced to marry Creon's daughter, he should first have informed Medea as his wife. She pursues a flawless (and very lucid) line of reasoning, which seems to jar with the nurse's previous description of her frenzied emotional state. Also, Medea, in the closing words of her speech, again has recourse to the future of resolve, in particular at 424–425 *invadam deos / et cuncta quatiam*, which replicates as a sort of disquieting refrain the same concept expressed at line 414, but this time with a notable variation: *deos* at 424 is obviously an extremely threatening and hybristic addition.[24] Boyle duly signals the extra force given to the phrase by stopping the verse and stresses the use of a half-line for theatrical effect.[25] Medea, despite being undeniably infuriated, clearly exhibits rhetorical awareness of her stylistic choices: she, therefore, appears to be in full control of her speech acts.

Quite surprisingly, Medea's words are feared even more than her actions in the play. In the prologue, she complains about the alleged uselessness of her words, *querelas verbaque in cassum sero?* (26), but she immediately overcomes this sense of impotence by addressing her *animus* and spurring it on to banish female fears through self-persuasion (42–43).[26] Neither Medea's *ira* nor her

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**22** On the irony of Medea's assertion, see Boyle 2014, 236.

**23** Boyle 2014, 238 defines the future tense of the two verbs as 'future of resolve', which reflects Medea's sense of agency (cf. also 118–119).

**24** Variation is a well-attested *Stilfigur* {stylistic device} in Seneca's tragedies in all its forms (repetition of a concept by means of synonyms or through theme and variation): see Billerbeck 1988, 101–108. In the lines quoted above, it occurs at some distance, at 414 and 425.

**25** Boyle 2014, 240.

**26** In his philosophical works, Seneca has frequent recourse to rhetorical strategies aimed at persuasion. His language is often characterised by rhetorical questions, use of irony, commentary on the action, and sustained apostrophes, as D'Alessandro Behr 2021, 231 observes. The

*verba* can be restrained, as emerges from the first intense exchange between her and the nurse (157–173), in which the servant tries to quench her mistress' outburst of anger (*compesce verba / animosque minue*, 174–175). It is precisely in this dialogue, as already pointed out above, that Medea overtly proclaims her 'all-encompassing' identity, also resorting to the rhetorical technique of self-naming.[27] Medea's words are a direct expression of her exceptional personality, as emerges later in the play from the nurse's account of the gruesome incantation scene: *addit venenis verba non illis minus / metuenda. sonuit ecce vesano gradu / canitque. mundus vocibus primis tremit* (737–739). These lines may remind the reader of Erichtho's similarly dreadful voice in Lucan. 6.685–686 *tum vox Lethaeos cunctis pollentior herbis / excantare deos*. Both Medea's and Erichtho's utterances are frightening because of the ritual of black magic the two witches are practising (they are likely to be magical formulae). Before the invocation of the gods, Erichtho emits a 'catalogue of weird noises';[28] the nature of Medea's *verba* remain unspecified in the nurse's messenger-style account, which leaves open whether those words coincide with the formulae heard by the servant or should be identified with the speech delivered by Medea in the next scene, which stages her prayer to the forces of the Underworld.[29] There Medea's monologue appears, again, as an example of well-articulated speech. Apart from the topical moment of the invocation of the infernal powers (740–751), it has a long, prolix section,[30] in which Medea first describes in detail her past services to Hecate, then the offerings made to her and the performance of the rite, employing a sort of running commentary. Once more, she gives proof

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Senecan Medea deploys a very similar rhetorical arsenal. See also von Albrecht 2014, 719 and 738–739 (with reference to apostrophe to *animus*: in Seneca's whole production, it is limited to the characters of his tragic corpus with the exception of Cato, whose death is described in highly dramatic terms in *Prov*. 2.10) and below in these pages.

**27** More frequent in Seneca's play than in Euripides' one, where she self-names only once at line 402: see Boyle 2014, 171. On Medea's identity see e.g. Galimberti Biffino 2000 (with further useful bibliography).

**28** Braund 2008, 284. Only after delivering dissonant murmurs and sounds discordant from human tongues, which contain all possible animal and natural sounds (686–693; the half line at 693 sums them up properly: *tot rerum vox una fuit*), does Erichtho commence her direct speech invocation.

**29** Zanobi 2014, 123 notices that the two speeches, the one of the nurse and the other of Medea, respectively, both deal with the preparation of the magic potion employed to kill Creusa, thus duplicating each other. See also Boyle 2014, 313.

**30** Erichtho's sounds too in Lucan's text morph into an articulated speech, in which she threatens the Furies and Hecate for not fulfilling her prayer immediately, that is her request to revive the soul of a Roman soldier recently killed in battle (730–749).

of her ability to master language and compose elaborate speeches despite her constant state of frenzy throughout the play (*vesanus gradus*, 738).[31]

Therefore, although one may agree with Seneca's statement that *iracundi hominis iracunda oratio est, commoti nimis incitata, delicati tenera et fluxa* (*Ep*. 114.20) and that *ab illo* (i.e. *animo*) *sensus, ab illo verba exeunt* (22), Seneca's Medea appears to challenge such an idea of strict adherence of language to thought (what may be called 'style of mobility' to borrow Spitzer's words),[32] since she is and remains in full control of all her communicative acts, in spite of being *demens* (cf. for example 174) and, thus, allegedly only capable of irrational behaviour.[33] Medea can switch from a breathless, taut style to a more flowing one; analogously, urgent clauses alternate with a more relaxed, even 'civilised' sentence structure, while she maintains her state of emotional perturbation.[34] To this effect, I intend to focus now on the speeches Medea delivers in front of Creon and Jason respectively. Both scenes are introduced by the nurse's warning to Medea to rein in her feelings: *animos … minue* at 175 has a counterpart in *animum mitiga* at 426. In both cases, she disdains the nurse's admonitions, resorting to sententious phrases in her replies, *Fortuna opes auferre, non animum potest*, 176, and *sola est quies*, / *mecum ruina cuncta si video obruta*, 426–427,[35] which bring to the fore her strong-willed personality.[36] Also, in both scenes there is a shift, in the dialogic exchange between the characters, from an initial very unfriendly and aggressive phase to a less tense one, in which Medea, thanks to her manipulative skills, manages to partially 'mitigate' her interlocutors' hostile disposition towards her.[37]

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**31** As Leo notices, readers see Seneca's Medea '*furere ab initio paene per totam fabulam*'. See Costa 1973, 82.

**32** Spitzer 1967, 166.

**33** Anger is commonly considered as the opposite of *ratio* (see e.g. Schnell 2021, 169); however, in Seneca's tragedies an irrational state of mind often resorts to 'rational' ways of reasoning (see e.g. von Albrecht 2014, 737).

**34** On the 'rationality' of Medea's anger see Müller 2014, 72–78 ('how "rational" is Medea's anger?').

**35** See Costa 1973, ad loc.

**36** The term *sententia* was etymologically connected to *sentio*: *sententiam veteres quod animo sensissent vocaverant* (Quint. *Inst*. 8.5.1). See Dinter 2014, *passim* and, in particular, 321–322 on the ideal correspondence between the moral character of the author and the ethical quality of his *gnomai* according to Arist. *Rhet*. 2.21.16.

**37** Such a change also occurs in the Euripidean play, but with some notable differences, which will be discussed below.

Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*, contends that the personal goodness (ἐπιείκεια) belonging to the speaker hugely contributes to his power of persuasion to such a point that ethos (ἦθος) constitutes the most effective means of persuasion he possesses (1356a). Now, the Senecan Medea is perfectly aware, like her Greek counterpart, that she has to face direct confrontation with adverse interlocutors, who are in a position of strength. To beat them, she will refine her argumentative capacity and stylistic devices after an initial violent confrontation.[38] In his letters, Seneca argues that there is an ideal correspondence, as already pointed out above, between character and *oratio*. In *Ep*. 114, he condemns Maecenas' style for being an *oratio portentosissima* (7), in which the use of *verba tam inprobe structa, tam neglegenter abiecta, tam contra consuetudinem omnium posita* (*ibid*.) is the reverberation of his quite questionable lifestyle. In light of this 'rhetorical' principle, given that reason follows nature, readers would likely expect Seneca's raging Medea to have recourse to a style against nature (*contra naturam*) and matching her moral viciousness.[39] However, as already hinted earlier, apart from some vehement utterances through which she gives vent to her anger during the exchange with her male interlocutors, she knows how to cleverly adjust language and style to her own ends.[40] Such an ability may point to the fact that Seneca's Medea, rather than being swept away by an irrational passion, actively embraces it:[41] hers seems to be a sort of lucid *akrasia*, in which she is perfectly aware of what she is doing, even though passion has taken over.[42]

**38** Medea often acts in a rather un-Stoic way in the play (cf. Bartsch 2006, 255–258; Star 2006 and 2012; Battistella 2017 and 2021). She has 'introjected' principles of the Stoic doctrine only with a view to distorting them. This may also apply to her argumentative moves, which she exploits just to persuade her interlocutors and obtain what she wants. By contrast, it is disgraceful for the philosopher to say one thing and think another. There should be harmony between thought and word: the man who means what he says does not try to cover up his thought but to make it clear.

**39** *Orationis licentia* proves that *animi* have suffered a moral collapse (*procidisse*): cf. Sen. *Ep*. 114.11.

**40** The Euripidean Medea too is capable to produce flattering speeches (e.g. 309–312; Creon calls her words μαλθακά, 316).

**41** See Müller 2014, 73.

**42** See Müller 2014, 77–78. Medea gives herself over to her anger (*ira qua ducis sequor*, 953) since her mind has completely enslaved itself.

# 3 The encounter between Medea and Creon

Medea meets Creon at lines 179–300: they maintain a lively verbal exchange at 192–202 characterised by the presence of several rhetorical devices, such as alliteration, stichomythia, antilabe, the repetition of key words and *sententiae*, but also of legalistic terms and concepts.[43] Medea then speaks for almost fifty lines, starting with a speech-introduction that stands out for its particularly sophisticated syntax (203–206). Despite the employment of hyperbaton, her initial clause is neither chaotic nor emotional: there is no trace of exclamations, invocations, invectives, or unfinished sentences. It is as if she intended to put on display from the very start her oratorical ability by 'toying' first and foremost with complex syntax ('a grand beginning').[44] In the next lines, she draws attention to her precarious condition through a pathetic asyndeton (*expulsa supplex sola deserta*, 208),[45] which contributes noticeably to the simplification of the sentence structure. However, in recalling her origins and the splendour of her father's reign, she returns to syntactical elaboration, probably owing to the narrative flavour of that passage (211–216). In those lines, readers come across syntactic inversion and tricolon with anaphora (*quodcumque … quidquid … quidquid…*), which carry them all the way to the end of line 216, where the climactic main verb *regit*, governing the whole previous clause, is to be found.[46] Additionally, there is epanadiplosis at 218–219 (*petebant* / *petuntur*, with variation of the active and passive voice). Medea then moves on to present herself as the saviour of the Argonauts, but she is unable to utter Jason's name, who is referred to only indirectly and by means of a polyptoton (*nam ducum taceo ducem*, 233). Syntax becomes fragmented, parataxis and pronoun forms prevail, bringing about a rather staccato style, as in 233–235 *nam ducum taceo ducem* / […] *hunc nulli imputo;* / *vobis revexi ceteros, unum mihi*. In confessing her guilt, thus anticipating Creon's accusations,[47] Medea lays out the gist of her argument, that is the return of Jason, for whom she

**43** On *parte inaudita altera* (199), see Boyle 2014, 184. Medea's speeches may have been influenced by both the structure and legal language of *controversiae* and the persuasive characteristics of *suasoriae*. On lines 199–201, cf. Dammer 2004, 314.
**44** Boyle 2014, 185. The opening of her speech also serves the typical function of the *exordia*, that is *captatio benevolentiae*.
**45** On the pathetic function of adjectives in asyndeton cf. Dainotti 2015, 91 n. 297. There is also alliteration here, on which cf. Dainotti 2022.
**46** See Boyle 2014, 186.
**47** On Medea's *praesumptio* and *confutatio*, see Boyle 2014, 194.

committed her crimes (*crimen*, 237; 246).[48] At the end of her speech, she takes on the role of *supplex* and asks, in a very humble way clashing with her previous lofty self-image (217–219), at least for a corner in the land in which to take shelter (250–251). After realising that the king is unmoved and, by contrast, intends to banish her from the city, Medea changes her strategy performing a strongly pathos-oriented argumentative move, in which she self-presents as a *moritura* mother (*fortasse moriens*, 290).[49] She finally brings her children into the picture, also resorting to the *topos* of (fake) feminine tears (293).[50]

The turning point of her speech thus occurs at lines 282–295, where she demonstrates a conscious use of words to achieve persuasion first of all by means of a formal act of supplication to Creon (cf. the employment of the *figura iuris iurandi*, common in Roman declamation,[51] at 285–286 *per ego auspicatos regii thalami toros / per spes futuras perque regnorum status*). By means of her rhetorical ploys, modelled after those of the Euripidean source-text,[52] she ultimately manages to get what she wants, that is one extra day to bid farewell to her children, which notoriously will turn into their fatal last day. The persuasive effect she aims at, therefore, hinges upon her continuous rhetorical adjustments and her *fraudes*,[53] whereas her emotional 'background' remains unvaried.[54] Once she has attained her goal (*unus parando dabitur exilio dies*, 295), she adds the following remark: *nimis est, recidas aliquid ex isto licet. / et ipsa propero* (296–297). In her unrequested reply, which interestingly does not have a counterpart in

**48** The crime motif permeates the whole play. Initially, Medea seeks to justify her alleged guilt in front of Creon arguing that her only *crimen* is to have made the ship Argo return (237–238; cf. also 280 *totiens nocens sum facta, sed numquam mihi*); she later uses the same argument in front of Jason (*tua illa, tua sunt illa* [*scil. scelera*]: *cui prodest scelus / is fecit*, 500–501), ending up re-functionalising it at 563–564.

**49** On appended present participles in Senecan tragic diction, see Billerbeck 1988, 118–119; von Albrecht 2014, 724.

**50** On fake tears, see Calabrese 2021, 406–410. Medea exploits 'the child motif' both in her speech to Creon, on which see Dammer 2004, 319–320, and, more significantly, in the one to Jason.

**51** Boyle 2014, 203–204. As the commentator points out, she 'is a brilliant rhetorician, whose control of the play's language will mirror her mastery of its action'.

**52** Cf. Eur. *Med.* 340–347.

**53** This is a 'rare successful supplication in Senecan tragedy', as Boyle 2014, 202–203 observes. Cf. Dammer 2004, 322 on Medea's rhetorical strategy influenced by the presence of Creon's guards (cf. also 323 and *passim*). On persuasion and flattering speech by Medea see n. 38 above.

**54** She is never really committed to 'educating' her emotions, which — as the chorus points out — are always excessive, whether it is anger or love (*frenare nescit iras / Medea, non amores*, 866–867).

Euripides' play, Medea's style shows a different texture and tempo:[55] it gets simpler and more rapid since she has eventually reached her objective. Medea's haste to execute her plan of vengeance (*et ipsa propero*) also seems to be reflected in her urgent and ordinary style, which falls rather flat.[56] In other words, one may detect, rather than a correspondence between *oratio* and *vita*, a sort of consistency between the heroine's style and language and her actions or behaviour.[57]

## 4 The encounter between Medea and Jason

The episode of Creon and Medea is followed by a choral ode dealing with the Argonauts' journey to Colchis and the loosing of nature's bonds resulting in their violation (301–309). After the choral song, Medea is still represented as overwhelmed by anger, almost verging on madness (380–386). She asks herself which limits (*modus*, 397) she should set to her hatred, given that her passions (*amor* and *odium*) have a 'limitless' nature (*si quaeris odio, misera, quem statuas modum, / imitare amorem*, 397–398):[58] she is indeed the right 'prize' for the Argonautic expedition (cf. 360–363, in part. 362–363 *maiusque mari Medea malum, / merces prima digna carina*) in light of the Argonauts' analogous propensity to breach rules or pre-set limits.[59] As already noted, the emotion of anger never really abandons Medea across the play, but she seemingly knows how to

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**55** See Powell 1999, 322.

**56** On the overt dramatic irony of Medea's claim, see Boyle 2014, 205. On ordinary and uncoloured language, see Powell 1999, 318–319. Medea's close produces an effect of *brevitas*, on which see e.g. von Albrecht 2014, 708 (on the close of *Prov*. 6.6–8); 735–736. However, the verb *propero* may also point to the fact that the scene has reached its conclusion, as at 54 *rumpe iam segnes moras*, by means of which Medea not only highlights her impatience, but also signals the end of the prologue, as observed by Boyle 2014, 130: 'The phrase is Virgilian (*segnis / rumpe moras*, *Geo*. 3.42–43) and comes from a passage in which the poet commands himself to end his prologue and commence his subject proper. So Medea commands herself to end her prologue and begin her poetic creation proper, the dramatic action'. Analogously, such a device also occurs at the end of the encounter between Medea and Jason, after which she spurs herself on to action (566–567). Interestingly, she will regret acting too quickly at 919 and will invite her *dolor* not to rush at 1016, thus avoiding the mistake of Atreus, who repents his haste (cf. *Thy*. 1057 with Boyle 2014, 382; Battistella 2021, 107; 113)

**57** See Schiesaro 2003, 132 on Atreus' energy and determination.

**58** See Boyle 2014, 235 and Sen. *Med*. 866–867 (n. 54).

**59** See Boyle 2014, 225, who, however, does not correlate the Argonauts' breach of the laws of nature to Medea's lack of *modus*.

temporarily 'suspend' it, if necessary.[60] Thus, when Jason encounters her at 431 ff.,[61] he immediately notices her agitated state: *constituit animus precibus iratam aggredi. / atque ecce, viso memet exiluit, furit, / fert odia prae se: totus in vultu est dolor* (444–446). As soon as Medea catches sight of him, she starts complaining about her predicament and presents her statement of grievances characterised by a brisk and asyndetic style (cf. for example 447–449),[62] followed by a stream of longer and highly rhetorical sentences, in which she, replaying the same argumentative technique used in her speech to Creon, recalls to Jason the help provided in Colchis (465–467), also employing descriptive moments and linguistic devices for dramatic effect.[63] At lines 487–488, the repetition[64] (partially anaphoric) of *tibi* (3x) contributes to giving strong emphasis to her abnegation in exclusive favour of Jason:[65] *hos* (*i.e.* her brother's limbs) *quoque impendi tibi; / tibi patria cessit, tibi pater frater pudor* (cf. also 458 *quascumque aperui tibi vias, clausi mihi*, in which verb/pronoun parallelism fulfils a contrastive function). In the next antilabic section, when Jason points to Medea's anger inviting her to rein it in for the sake of their children (506), she replies using first person verbs in asyndeton hinting at passionate resolve,[66] which however also gesture towards cold legalistic language (*abdico eiuro abnuo — / meis Creusa liberis fratres dabit?*,

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**60** See however Müller 2014, 89 with regard to Medea's emotion: 'one should not be misled by Medea's repeated and ferocious assertions of herself and her ever-increasing anger. At the crucial junctures of the play, she is always on the verge of collapsing. In her encounter with Jason in the third act and during the prolonged successive murder of her two children in the fifth act, she has obvious difficulties to muster the anger needed for her revenge because she is confronted with counter-emotions of erotic and maternal love. Her anger does not seem to possess the excessive and lasting quality she is eager to ascribe to her own revengeful state.' See also Slaney 2019, 106–107 (the last opponent Medea must face is herself).

**61** Seneca reduces the number of meetings between Medea and Jason to just one (epilogue excluded), whereas in Euripides' play the two characters meet twice (see also above).

**62** *Fugimus, Iason, fugimus. hoc non est novum / mutare sedes; causa fugiendi nova est: / pro te solebam fugere. discedo, exeo* (Medea opts for plain style and language). Usually, asyndeton raises the emotional pitch of the sentence: see Schiesaro 2003, 131; Billerbeck 1988, 122. See also *De Subl.* 19.2 on asyndeta and anaphoras narrowly tied to the production of emotions, which, being violent movements of the soul, demand disorder.

**63** The emotional impact of description is amply acknowledged by rhetoricians (see e.g. *Rhet. ad Her.* 4.55.69; *De Subl.* 15.4; Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.29–30).

**64** On repetition as a linking element in Senecan prose cf. Traina 2011, 31. On antithesis, polarity of expression, etc. see Billerbeck 1988, *passim* and von Albrecht 2014, 724.

**65** Medea clarifies this at 500–501 *cui prodest scelus / is fecit*.

**66** As pointed out by Boyle 2014, 259.

506–507).[67] Such a ‘tension’ between first-person perspective and a more impersonal style also recurs within a relatively short space in this scene. Medea refers to herself in the third person three times, generating an effect of ‘sourdine pathétique’ {*pathetic muting*} — to borrow Spitzer’s words,[68] through which the character succeeds in both attenuating the pathetic effect and yet providing a self-aggrandising image of herself: *est et his maior metus: / Medea* (516, with alliterative anticipation of her name,[69] effective apposition and enjambement);[70] *nec ut te caede cognata inquines / Medea cogit* (523–524); (after Jason has left) … *perge, nunc aude, incipe / quidquid potest Medea, quidquid non potest* (566–567, with an effect of *gradatio*).[71] In my view, this concentration of third person moments in about fifty lines might be an intimation of the fact that Medea, alongside her attempts at verbal persuasion, is seeking to establish her superiority over Jason by speaking in an impersonal and ‘detached’ manner. She therefore implements a variety of rhetorical strategies, amongst which there is obviously the one of the suppliant (*liberos tantum fugae / habere comites liceat in quorum sinu / lacrimas profundam*, 541–543; cf. also 551–552). Her request to take her children into exile with her, however, is not going to be satisfied, since Jason loves them too much[72] (*haec causa vitae est, hoc perusti pectoris / curis levamen. spiritu citius queam / carere, membris, luce*, 547–549). Nevertheless, Jason himself naively gives her a clue about his weak spot, their own children: *sic natos amat? / bene est, tenetur, vulneri patuit locus* (549–550). In this aside, plain style prevails to underline the rapidity of Medea’s deliberation and, thus, her ‘pragmatism’ (a similar wording recurs in the epilogue: *bene est, peractum est* [1019], once both her children have been killed). But then she again changes stylistic register,[73]

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**67** On the three compound verbs and their prefixes, see Billerbeck 1988, 72 n. 177. Medea conjures up legal language also in the exchange between her and Creon, as already noticed above.
**68** See Spitzer 1980, 211; 222.
**69** See Boyle 2014, 261. On wordplay on Medea’s name, see Nelis 2017 (n. 7 provides further useful bibliography). See also Battistella 2017; Bexley 2022, 35–36 on Medea’s self-fashioning and *constantia* with further bibliographical references. On Medea’s shift to self-description in third-person form at 926–953, see Gill 1987, 33.
**70** See Billerbeck 1988, 116.
**71** On these lines, see Boyle 2014, cxi: ‘She has already objectified herself’.
**72** Persuasion has already failed earlier in their conversation or, rather, altercation, while she was trying to convince Jason to flee with her (cf. lines 524–537). This prompts Medea’s violent verbal reaction. She invokes Jupiter, asking him to shake the whole world and strike the guilty (either her or Jason). See Slaney 2019, 196.
**73** Medea shares some commonalities with other villains of Senecan tragedy, like Atreus, who is a ‘consummate manipulator of words, knowledge and emotions, and overpowering all others’ (Schiesaro 2003, 134).

adopting the stance of the weak, submissive, and even irrational female (551–556): let us notice the repetition of the hortative subjunctive *liceat* at 551 and 552, the conspicuous hyperbaton *suprema* ... *mandata* (551–552), the terminological constellation focussing, though ironically,[74] on final farewell and death (*suprema*, 551; *ultimum*, 552; *extrema*, 553),[75] through which Medea presents herself as a dying mother. She ultimately succeeds in making Jason forget her previous angry *verba*, for which her *dolor* is said to be responsible (553–556); she then concludes: *haec irae data oblitterentur* (556–557).[76] Jason swallows the bait and, after a conciliatory response, characterised however by an ingenuous, platitudinous, and also insensitive tone, quickly departs[77] (557–559), leaving Medea simmering with anger. It should be noted that the Senecan Medea only invites Jason to erase her angry words, unlike the Euripidean counterpart, who, in her speech to him (on which see also briefly below) points out that χόλος has vanished (898; cf. also 878–879 'shall I not cease from my wrath?'). Although Euripides' Medea is obviously lying, it is interesting to observe that Seneca's Medea carefully avoids saying that her anger has disappeared, thus implying that she remains in an angry mood, as already said above. As soon as Jason exits, her style abruptly changes again, and, in her monologue, she switches to shorter sentences, rhetorical questions,[78] and self-exhortation; they all suggest a resurgence of indignation and rage, visibly resurfacing after Jason has left in complete forgetfulness of Medea's services to him and his oaths to her (560–567),[79] an upsetting circumstance that lets Medea's true personality ultimately take over (*excidimus tibi? / numquam excidemus*, 561–562). Her stylistic choices, starting with a sudden implicit switch of

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**74** See Boyle 2014, 266–267.

**75** *Extrema* is already in Medea's prayer to Creon (289).

**76** A similar manipulative strategy is implemented by the Euripidean Medea, with a different goal, though: in Euripides, she seeks to make her children remain at Corinth, in Seneca she would like to take them with her. See Mastronarde 2002, 312–313. On the colloquialism *oblitterentur*, Billerbeck 1988, 74.

**77** The Senecan Jason is a rather flat and passive character: see Bexley 2022, 298–299 (with further bibliography). Both Creon and Jason walk away quite in a hurry (maybe to avoid succumbing to Medea's speech? See Dammer 2004, 321, but see also Di Benedetto 1997, 159 n. 142 on the difficult balance between word and action in ancient tragedy). On Jason's reply, see Boyle 2014, 267–268.

**78** On the effect of *Emotionalisierung* {emotionalisation} brought about by this type of questions, see Billerbeck 1988, 123. Interrogations and self-interrogations are amongst the most notable features of the sublime, on which see *De Subl.* 18.1–2 and Schiesaro 2003, 131 and n. 132. Interestingly, the rhetorical methods of self-manipulation of Seneca's characters resemble those of philosophical self-education in his prose writings (see von Albrecht 2004, 738).

**79** On Jason's memory, see Boyle 2014, 268–269.

the person in the verbs at 560 *discessit. itane est? vadis oblitus mei* (*scil.* Jason), signal her emotional involvement and give a pathetic colour to her speech.[80] She then, without any further hesitation, turns to self-instruction and self-exhortation mode (562–563; 566–567), staccato style and sententious sentences enhanced by polyptoton (e.g. *fructus est scelerum tibi / nullum scelus putare*, 563–564).[81] Such sophisticated rhetorical scaffolding also injects novelty into the Greek model, upon which Seneca draws; he, however, compresses in one single moment what in Euripides' *Medea* is split into two distinct scenes (lines 623–626, staging Medea's outburst against Jason when he leaves after their altercation; and lines 869–893, representing Medea's reconciliatory *Trugrede* ['deception speech'] to Jason), thus coming to confer greater prominence to the heroine's utterances in the Latin version.

## 5 Conclusion

In Seneca's plays, style demands attention especially as a powerful medium to communicate a variety of psychic states (no matter whether 'real' or contrived) of his characters. In particular, some stylistic choices, such as hyperbata, anaphoras, or asyndeta, but also wordplays, are often directly correlated to the destructive force of the characterisation, as with Medea's case. As Mastronarde points out with specific reference to Seneca's *Oedipus*, 'the words are dramatic vehicles of the basically uniform moods of gloom, horror, and abnormality'.[82] He singles out a consistent network of words and images associated with the central figure of that play, Oedipus, whose mental-emotional situation and personality are brought to the fore by means of pointed imagery (for example that of entanglement and confusion) and vocabulary (recurring thematic words dealing with impiety), so that a sick situation is made to revolve around a sick individual. In the Senecan *Medea* too, the themes of evil are verbalised[83] through imagery (for example parturition, as signalled above) and language, whereof style is a constitutive component. As I have sought to show above, Medea bends it to her own goals (to attack or persuade her interlocutors, to give vent

**80** On the change in verbal person cf. Billerbeck 1988, 240.
**81** See von Albrecht 2014, 733–734.
**82** See Mastronarde 1970, 301 and *passim*.
**83** See Mastronarde 1970, 315.

to her rage, to spur herself on to action),[84] never giving up the *ira* by which she is already pervaded in the prologue.[85] Thus, Medea's ability to produce speech acts not strictly mirroring her 'true' character challenges Seneca's statement in *Ep*. 114.3 centred on the correspondence between the *color* of *animus* and that of *ingenium*: *non potest alius esse ingenio, alius animo color. Si ille sanus est, si compositus, gravis, temperans, ingenium quoque siccum atque sobrium: illo vitiato hoc quoque adflatur* (see also above). On the contrary, Medea proves to be capable of bringing about different rhetorical styles despite allegedly having the same *animus*.

Her speeches, while often modelled after those of the Euripidean equivalent, showcase the new personality with which Seneca has endowed her character. Such an operation implies not only the imitation of the illustrious model, but also the creation of a new (literary) individual who tailors language and style to her own patterns of thought. In both epilogues, the heroine rides off in her chariot. The two scenes, however, display a remarkable difference, in that Seneca's Medea hands the corpses of her two children back to Jason (she may even have thrown them down at his feet),[86] whereas the Euripidean character takes the dead children with her in the chariot to give them burial. Apart from the striking dramaturgic difference in the two plays, it might be interesting to notice that the last words spoken by Seneca's Medea contain an imperative form: *recipe iam natos, parens* (1024). There are several imperative forms in the final agon between Medea and Jason (997 ff.) and Jason too uses them, but he generally does so in a begging tone, whereas she imparts orders, thus coming to dominate the scene until the very end also from the verbal standpoint. Being in control of her own soul for most of the time,[87] Seneca's Medea is also in

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**84** Interestingly, Seneca's Medea deploys her own form of 'inwardness language' (*intus*), to borrow the phrase from Traina 2011: cf. *Med*. 46–47 *tremenda caelo pariter ac terris mala* / *mens intus agitat*; 917–918 *nescioquid ferox* / *decrevit animus intus*. Her interiority is however scrutinised only to practice evil (cf. also n. 88 below).

**85** Full-blown emotions are a common trait of Seneca's plays: his characters never really undergo a process of transformation or gradually discover things about themselves. Oedipus' guilt, for example, 'is implicit in the imagery from the prologue on', as Mastronarde 1970, 314 observes, a circumstance that, therefore, rules out the process of *Enthüllung* {'disclosure'} of the Greek model.

**86** See e.g. Battistella 2017, 270 n. 14.

**87** On Medea's oscillations and her conflicting emotions, cf. however Müller 201, 88–91.

control of her actions, speeches, and style, although her self-possession is totally applied in the service of evil.[88]

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Federica Bessone

# Statius' Paradoxical Style

**Abstract:** Paradox is a hallmark of Statius' style: it arouses tension in the reader, and performs epistemological as well as aesthetic functions. The *Thebaid, Achilleid,* and *Silvae* share a taste for paradoxical expression, imagery, and structures: in the sublime, the playful, and the polite registers, a rhetoric of wonder is at work. Perversions of language embody the perversions of a war between equals; spectacular illusions transform a cross-dressed hero under our eyes; oxymoronic definitions exalt the excellence of patrons. As he makes words, images, and ideas (or even poetic traditions) collide with each other, Statius intensifies his text and creates an aesthetics of surprise.

*j'aime mieux être homme à paradoxes que homme à préjugés*
J.-J. Rousseau, *Émile*

## 1 Introduction

I will examine Statius' paradoxical style as an expression of a poetics of paradox. Firstly, I will explain why I think that paradox is a hallmark of Statius' poetry; secondly, I will present examples of stylistic procedures by which he creates paradoxical effects; finally, I will argue that the most sublime scene of the *Thebaid* is also an exercise in paradoxical style. A closer integration of stylistics and literary criticism is needed.[1] Statius' style is still often labelled as 'mannerist', or 'baroque': it is time to outline its 'anatomy'.[2] I hope that a new investigation of this complex style can contribute to a better understanding of Statius' poetics, offer a tool for textual criticism, and open new perspectives for reception studies, helping us appreciate even Dante's sensitivity to this poet's diction.

**1** Despite Conte's claim (2021, 67), style is not a central concern in Flavian studies. On stylistics, see Stockwell and Whiteley 2014; Burke 2017a; 2017b; Stockwell 2020[2]; for Latin literature, overview in Oniga 2002.

**2** Cf. the Flaubertian title of Conte 2007, ch. 3; Bessone 2018a; 2020. On mannerism see Fernandelli's chapter in this volume.

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## 2 Poetics of paradox

Paradox pervades all levels of Statius' text; the tension between opposites, the unexpected, and surprise are the energy of his writing. Statius is an experimental poet, and the very conception of his works is a provocation. Newlands (2011, 3) captures this quality: 'Paradox is a favourite stylistic trope of the *Silvae*'. 'Trope' is used here in a loose sense. For ancient (and modern) rhetoric, paradox is neither a trope, nor a clearly identified figure in itself: it escapes a precise definition, and is rather an effect associated with different *tropoi* and *schemata*.[3] In Greek, (τὸ) παράδοξον is what goes against δόξα, common opinion (Lat. *inopinatum*), and creates surprise, like the wonders of paradoxography (Lat. *mirabile*, or *admirabile*). '*Paradoxon*', spanning both the factual or conceptual and the verbal level (*in re* / *in verbis*), applies to a number of rhetorical arguments and procedures that rely on a contradiction, in thought and language. The modern use of the term tends to identify 'paradox' with the paradoxical *sententia*:[4] the *paradoxa Stoicorum* — pointed *sententiae* that give effective rhetorical form to philosophical truths contrary to common sense — contributed to this semantic evolution;[5] in addition to the *acutum dicendi genus* of the Stoics, Roman declamation was a training ground for what we now, more commonly, call 'paradoxes'.[6]

### 2.1 'Mannerism', 'rhetorical poetry', and paradox

The *Silvae* are Statius' most original accomplishment, but the *Thebaid* too is born from this experimental vocation, and this taste for paradox. Here I touch on a problematic point. Post-Virgilian epic has often been accused of excessive compliance with the Augustan model, and, at the same time, of rhetorical excess and 'mannerism'.

'Rhetorical poetry' was almost a definition of post-Augustan poetry at the turn of the twentieth century, in the wake of Leo: this is a dismissive label, born from a

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**3** Lausberg 1990[10], § 37, 1 (*genus admirabile*/*turpe*, or παράδοξον σχῆμα); 1998, § 64, 3, n. 1. Quintilian presupposes παράδοξον/*inopinatum* as a figure of thought (*Inst.* 9.2.23; see Russell 2001, ad loc.). A definition is missing in Mortara Garavelli 2004 (cf. 280). Gruppo μ 1976, 220–221 lists a specific paradox under the 'paralogisms' (akin to the 'figures of thought': 49).

**4** A narrow definition of 'paradox' as a primarily linguistic phenomenon in Lefèvre 1970 (59–60 and n. 5), 1992 (209–210 and n. 5), *vs* the (much) broader notion of Brooks 1947 and Hardie 2009b.

**5** Moretti 1995, 163–164. See Galli 2019. On Stoic paradoxes in poetry, Demanche 2013.

**6** Geyer and Hagenbüchle 1992. In modern philosophy, a logical antinomy can be defined as 'a resistant contradiction' (D'Agostini 2009, 21–22).

Romantic prejudice.[7] 'Mannerism' is a term from art history, first applied to literature by Curtius,[8] and mostly associated with a notion of decadence.[9] Curtius intended 'mannerism' as an (ahistorical) category of style — 'the common denominator for all literary tendencies which are opposed to Classicism, whether they be preclassical, postclassical, or contemporary with any Classicism' — and he exemplified it with a review of characteristic rhetorical figures, from Statius to Baltasar Gracián. His pupil Hocke traced this modernising trend throughout European culture, rather identifying 'mannerism' with an (ahistorical) category of the human spirit, and a disquieting vision of the world.[10] Another pupil of Curtius, Erich Burck, focused on Neronian and Flavian epic and tragedy as expressions of an age of anxiety; however, he did not discuss theoretical issues, and did not address the question of style.[11] Today, the use of the term in Latin studies is rather generic: it points to gloomy themes typical of first century CE,[12] or highlights contrived form and conceit, from archaic expressionism, to Ovid, to the post-Augustans.[13]

'Mannerist' (together with 'baroque') is a label often applied to Statius' poetry.[14] In the theoretical debate of the 1960s, it defined both the distorted world of the *Thebaid* and the precious style of the *Silvae*.[15] Schetter contrasted the *Thebaid* with the 'classical' balance of the *Aeneid*: Statius' epic is dominated by *furor*, the Inhuman and the Superhuman; it is characterised by dissonances, 'manneristic experimentalism', and 'manneristic taste for variation'; overall, it makes artifice prevail over reality, verisimilitude, and nature. Cancik attempted a comprehensive assessment of Statius' epic and occasional poetry as a manneristic oeuvre, tracing the Unreal and Perverse, the Artificial and Unnatural in it — deformation, of reality and language, is a distinctive feature of Mannerism.

Relationship with literary models is central to the notion of 'mannerism', as well as of 'rhetorical poetry': both imply a, potentially disparaging, comparison between the elaborate structures and style of this poetry and its literary precedents (or ideals of classicism). The charges of uninventive imitation and artificial

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**7** Cancik 1986, 2701–2702.

**8** Curtius 1948, 277–303 [= 2013², 273–301]; see Galasso 2012 and Fernandelli's chapter in this volume.

**9** Curtius 2013², 274.

**10** Hocke 1957; 1959 (cf. Conte 1985², 81 n. 11).

**11** Burck 1971 (written in 1966).

**12** E.g. Frings 1992.

**13** A hint at Ovid as an anticipator of 'imperial mannerism' in Rosati 2021, 173 [= 1983, 168–169].

**14** Vessey 1973, 7–14, esp. 12.

**15** Schetter 1960, 122–125 (cf. 56–63); Cancik 1965 (*vs* Vollmer 1898); Friedrich 1963. See Cancik 1986, 2702–2704.

distortion of a 'classical' model like Virgil were the Scylla and Charybdis of Statian criticism until fairly recent times. In what follows, I will take for granted a by now unprejudiced view of the rhetorical construction of poetry,[16] and will do without a critical category, that of 'mannerism', that proved historically useful at a crucial turn, but comes too loaded with preconceptions. I will also avoid the misleading label of 'baroque', despite a general affinity between Statius' poetics and the poetics of surprise that was theorised and practised, in literature and art, in the baroque age.[17]

## 2.2 The *Thebaid* and the paradoxes of 'secondariness'

Almost until the end of the last century, a Romantic prejudice conditioned studies on all Flavian poetry, on the basis of a flat reading of the *Thebaid*'s *envoi*: Statius' invitation to his poem not to 'challenge' the divine *Aeneid* (*nec tu... tempta*), 'essay not the divine *Aeneid*, but ever follow her footsteps from afar in adoration' (12.816–817).[18] The declaration of 'secondariness'[19] was read at face value, and legitimised a devaluation of Silver Latin poetry as inferior to the Augustan Golden Age.[20] Today, this is recognised as an ambitious self-affirmation. Divinising the predecessor means proposing oneself as a candidate for succession:[21] he who follows in such footsteps is preparing to receive in turn divine honours after death (819).[22]

This epilogue itself is a paradox — and it contains more than one within it. Fame has already paved a way for the poet's work, in its journey to posterity: *iam certe* ***praesens*** *tibi Fama benignum / stravit iter coepitque* ***novam*** *monstrare* ***futuris*** ('Already, 'tis true, Fame has strewn a kindly path before you', 812–813). A bold fusion of present and future is conveyed through the breathtaking combination ***novam ... futuris***. This varies an oxymoronic phrase by Horace, *C*. 3.30.7–8 *usque ego* ***postera*** */ crescam laude* ***recens***, 'I shall grow with the praise of posterity ever fresh'.[23] Moreover, Statius boldly replaces Callimachus' 'untrodden path'

**16** See Peirano 2019.

**17** On this category from art history (applied to literature by Wölfflin 1888), Ibbett and More 2019; Battistini 2012$^2$; Russo 2012.

**18** Translations of Statius are from Shackleton Bailey 2003, occasionally modified.

**19** Hinds 1998, 91–98.

**20** Williams 1978.

**21** Rosati 2008.

**22** Hardie 1993, 110.

**23** Tr. Woodman 2022, 377.

with the philosophical image of 'following' a 'divine' teacher (Lucr. 3.3–4; 15),[24] an image that in Lucretius coexists with the untrodden paths of the Muses (1.926–927 = 4.1–2).[25]

The Flavian poet dares to mention a sacred name, in such a way as to suggest his own future consecration. Almost every Augustan poet before Ovid fashions himself as the 'first' Latin equivalent of a Greek canonical author: this is the *primus ego* motif, the paradox of originality as imitation. Statius is in fact the first to fashion himself as the new Virgil, his heir in the role of national epic *vates* (814–815). This ambitious poet has the audacity to represent himself as a follower of an Augustan Latin classic, in the same language, and at a relatively close temporal distance: 'challenging' the *Aeneid* (*temptare*) is the ambition he declares in *Silv*. 4.7.25–28.[26]

Every new reading of post-Augustan poetry cannot but address its relationship with its predecessors: what changes are our cultural assumptions. A limited vision of Virgil's 'classicism' led to condemning both the flatness and the excesses of his imitators. A more attentive reading of the tensions of the *Aeneid* made us recognise the vitality of its Neronian and Flavian reception: Virgil's 'Epic Successors' strike us today as acute readers, and creative interpreters, of the Virgilian text.[27] The changed evaluation of Ovid also favoured the re-evaluation of Neronians and Flavians: the new *aetas Ovidiana* has revealed the lines of continuity between Ovid's experiments and the experimentalism of the post-Ovidians.

Even the study of paradox must be framed in this relationship with the Augustans. The ongoing reappraisal, of the Flavian successors and of Statius, will not make some extremes of expressive provocation pleasant to our taste. However, recognising the presuppositions of this paradoxical style, and of post-Augustan 'mannerism', in the Augustans themselves — in the *cacozelia* and the enallages of Virgil, in the oxymorons and *callidae iuncturae* of Horace, as well as in the syllepses and conceits of Ovid — can help us consider, with less prejudice, the dynamics of continuity and rupture between the different phases of the imperial age.

Paradox can be a gesture of rebellion towards the forms and thought of Virgil and the Augustan models; but it can also express an extreme interpretation of the

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**24** Hardie 1993, 110–11. Notice the language of imitation in 3.1–13 (esp. 5–6; 10–12).

**25** In Hor. *Epist*. 1.19.21–2, the boast of having 'planted' one's 'footsteps freely in the void' and 'placed' one's 'feet in no other's steps' coexists with the boast of 'following the metre and spirit' of Archilochus (21–22; 24–25); cf. Hardie 2009a, 53–56 (from which the transl.).

**26** Coleman 1988, ad loc.; Hinds 1998, 142–144.

**27** Hardie 1993. On Statius as an interpreter of Virgil, Bessone forthcoming b).

models themselves, which makes the contradictions of thought left open by Virgil explode — and takes even his expressive tensions to the extreme.

## 2.3 Paradoxes and epic of *nefas*

At key points in the *Thebaid*, a violent paradox disrupts the norms of the genre, and conflicts with the Virgilian model; Statius renews the rebellious gesture of Lucan, in dialogue with tragedy.

The *epiphonema* on the fratricidal duel (11.574–579) reverses Virgil's apostrophe to Nisus and Euryalus (*Aen.* 9.446–449) and stages a crisis of the memorial function of epic, when its subject is a *nefas*.[28] By invoking oblivion for the events he has just sung, Statius reformulates Lucan's refusal to represent the horror of Pharsalus (7.552–556). This paradoxical attitude of the narrator empties the epic form from within, and recharges it with a new energy.[29]

Shortly before, a narrative paradox reduces the conventions of epic to absurdity. Once 'bloodshed has begun' (*coeptus sanguis*, 536), the 'Furies' step back before a human 'fury' greater than their own: this is a paradoxical picture, fixed in a conceptual antithesis; *nec iam opus est* ***Furiis****; tantum mirantur et astant / laudantes, hominumque dolent plus posse* ***furores*** ('There is no more need of the Furies; they only marvel and stand by applauding, chagrined that men's *fury* is mightier than their own', 11.537–538). These words almost amount to a *sententia*: something similar to a paradox by Lucan, in a less concentrated syntax.

The verb of wonder, *mirari*, is a textual marker of paradox.[30] The reader is invited to be amazed at this narrative invention — human passions as 'Hell on Earth' —, and at how Statius has transformed Allecto's exit in the *Aeneid*, when she is no longer needed (*Aen.* 7.552–559, cf. 554 *sanguis novus imbuit arma*, 'the arms… are now stained with fresh blood'; 569–571).[31] Here, the Furies are not sent back to the Underworld: they remain on the field, enjoying the spectacle.

In rewriting the *Aeneid*, Statius exploits the creative energy of paradox, on the narrative, intellectual, and verbal level, and sometimes he signposts, with paradoxical formulas, his inversions of Virgilian structures. But this is only part of the story. As we shall see, it is in Virgil himself that Statius finds no small reserve of the paradoxical energy with which he animates his writing.

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**28** Bessone 2011, 75–101.

**29** Cf. Conte 1985², 75–108 (not included in Conte 1996).

**30** Traina 1984³, 111–112 (see Tola's piece in this volume).

**31** Tr. Fairclough and Goold, adapted.

## 2.4 Paradox as a programme. Statius and the Augustan models

All of Statius' oeuvre is under the sign of paradoxes. To create some of these, in programmatic passages, the Flavian poet looks at the Augustans. The *Achilleid* — a 'Paradoxical Epic' —[32] puts an eccentric poem like Ovid's *Metamorphoses* back at the centre of Roman epic tradition.[33] Its proem reproduces the contradiction of Ovid's proem between 'cyclical' epic and Callimacheanism, *perpetuum carmen* and *deducere*:[34] ***tota*** *iuvenem* ***deducere Troia*** ('sing the warrior through Troy's whole story', or 'accompany the young hero all around Troy', *Ach*. 1.7). The contrast between *tota* and *deducere* is intensified by the juxtaposition of *deducere* and *Troia*, a toponym that stands for the highest Homeric epic.

This effect was already part of a 'proemial' move in the middle of the *Thebaid*. The warrior-poets of Helicon are compared to 'swans escorting bright Strymon when pale winter yields' (7.286–287 '*quales… renidentem* ***deducunt Strymona cycni***'), and are destined for immortality, as 'the Muses shall celebrate your wars in perpetual song' (289); here, the Callimachean *deducunt* (together with the swans) is juxtaposed with the martial 'Strymon', in the frame of another *perpetuum carmen*.

Making words and thoughts, images and languages, genre conventions and poetical affiliations collide with each other is a predilection of Statius, which comes to the foreground at programmatic points — in the *Silvae* too.

*Silvae* 4.7 opens by reversing Virgil's invocation to Erato to sing a *maius opus* (*Aen*. 7.37–45); Statius calls Erato back from the *ingens opus* of epic to a minor measure, *minores… gyros*, and inverts his master's words to legitimate his own poetic career, that frequently re-descends from the sublime (ll. 1–4). In the third strophe, Horatian oxymora are reused, for a lyric experiment that attenuates the rhythm of the epic poet, but intends to be worthy of the addressee: ***Maximo*** *carmen* ***tenuare*** *tempto* ('For Maximus I essay to trim my verse', 9).

'Composing a tenuous song' — and at the same time 'attenuate the song' — 'for Maximus' (a *pun*): this oxymoronic program recalls the closure of Horace's *Ode* 3.3, *desine…* ***magna*** *modis* ***tenuare parvis*** ('Stop… diminishing momentous matters with your trivial ditties'), a recall of the Muse to a minor measure, with a reproach for daring a song too great for the lyric metre (3.3.69–72). In Horace,

**32** Davis 2015.
**33** Hinds 1998, 142–144.
**34** Uccellini 2012, ad loc.

behind that reproach, there is pride in his experiment; so it is also in Statius, who once again uses the verb of poetic audacity, *tempto*.[35]

Paradox functions as a programme. In his poetic statements, Statius contradicts Callimachus, revises the Augustan manifestos or recalls them in their most provocative extremes; he exalts the paradoxes he finds in the models or creates new ones — and, pushing the images, the language, the moves of the Augustans to the point of paradox, he designs his innovative profile as a poet.

## 3 Paradoxical style

A well-known article by Lefèvre, after analysing the paradoxical style of Ovid, Seneca and Lucan, ends by contrasting Statius with the last.[36] Differently from Lefèvre, I could say that every paradoxical poet is paradoxical in his own way. Statius does not show, in the *Thebaid*, the unmistakable, monochord tendency of Lucan to compose by *sententiae*, the intensified intellectualism, or the uninterrupted sequences of figures that hammer a paradoxical conceit.[37] However, he has a wider range of paradoxical effects, which he uses with different density, intensity, and functions, and adjusts to the different needs of his works. Different too are the models of paradoxical style to which Statius looks: not only Ovid, Seneca, and Lucan, but also Horace, and Virgil himself — whom Hardie (2009b) has recently rediscovered as a Silver poet (his joke) in an article entitled *Virgil: A Paradoxical Poet?*

In his introduction to *Thebaid* 10, Williams captures this distance in style between Lucan and Statius: '*Sententiae* as such are much rarer than in Lucan, and Statius' aim is to be striking not so much by intellectual wit or conceit or paradox, as by colour, exaggeration, brilliance' (1972, XVI–XVII). Here, again, 'paradox' is used in a specific sense, and to define Lucan's style. However, Williams' commentary reveals a number of paradoxical procedures, which are often examined in detail, although they are mostly labeled as 'typically Silver-Age' (or accompanied by Barth's judgments on *grandiloquentia* & *grandiniloquentia Papiniana*).

At the beginning of the 1970s, Flavian epic was still largely excluded from the horizon of studies. Kenney, in his essay on the style of the *Metamorphoses*,[38]

35 More in Bessone 2018b, 40–44.

36 Lefèvre 1970, 82 [= 1992, 242].

37 Conte 1985$^2$, 80. Cf. Martindale 1976; Moretti 1984; Bartsch 1997, 48–72; Nadaï 2000; Dinter 2012, 89–118 ('rhetorical epic': Morford 1967).

38 Kenney 1973 (reprinted almost identically in Kenney 2002).

wrote: 'The existence and instant canonisation of the *Aeneid* confronted all subsequent aspirants to epic honours with a most intractable problem. Of surviving Latin epicists only Ovid and Lucan can be said to have tackled it with originality and anything approaching success'. Today, after the reappraisal of Ovid has induced the reappraisal of Flavian poetry, we also know better the Ovidian poetics of Statius[39] — who rethinks Ovid's style originally (if not successfully), both in the epic and in the occasional poetry.

Statius' style is complex and original.[40] Paradox is its hallmark: it arouses tension in the reader, and performs epistemological as well as aesthetic functions. The *Thebaid*, the *Achilleid*, and the *Silvae* share a taste for paradoxical expression, imagery, and structures: in the sublime, the playful, and the polite registers a rhetoric of wonder is at work. Scandals of language embody the scandal of a war between equals; spectacular illusions transform a cross-dressed hero under our eyes; oxymoronic definitions exalt the excellence of patrons. The perverted world of the *Thebaid* is cast in distorted epic formulas; in the *Achilleid*, the changing poetic register exploits the antithesis, and coincidence, between love and war; *Überbietung* ('outdoing') and *Vermischung* ('combination'), in the *Silvae,* capture the marvels of 'the best of all possible worlds'. As he makes words, images, and ideas (or poetic traditions) clash with each other, Statius intensifies his text and creates an aesthetics of surprise. Hyperbole is a basic constituent of this poetry, and is constitutively linked to paradox. There is more. A characteristic feature of this writing, dense and provoking, is polysemy: and it is precisely the union of polysemy and paradox that produces the most interesting results.

## 3.1 Techniques of paradox

It is time to point out some techniques of this paradoxical style: I will distinguish them by categories, that are intertwined with each other (*schemata*, themes, models); I will give a few examples; and I will start from the simplest figure: oxymoron.[41] In the *Thebaid*,[42] it often accompanies the theme of *furor*, and sometimes works out Horatian *callidae iuncturae*.

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**39** Hardie 2006; Bessone 2018c, 2019.

**40** Micozzi 2019, 15–19.

**41** Lausberg 1990$^{10}$, § 389.3; 1998 [= 1973$^{2}$], § 807; Gruppo μ 1976, 183–185; Mortara Garavelli 2004, 243–245; Fontanier 1977, 137 ('paradoxisme'). On poetic oxymoron, for semantics and psycholinguistics, Shen 1987; in classical literature: e.g. Büchner 1951; Fehling 1968; Muecke 1997, 781 (also Tartari Chersoni 1997, esp. 805–806); a mention in Oniga 2002, 329.

**42** See Barth 1664 on 10.240 [234], with Berlincourt 2013, 396.

Oedipus' prayer to Tisiphone starts the poem under the sign of a 'sweet fury': '*si **dulces furias** et lamentabile matris / conubium gavisus ini*' ('if I joyfully entered sweet furies and my mother's lamentable wedlock', 1.68–69).[43] *Dulce…furere* is an oxymoron of Horace (*C.* 2.7.27–28), of ancient origin.[44] Here it takes on an erotic flavour, and recalls the 'mournful joy' of incest, anticipating the sweetness of another *furor*, that is a *Leitmotiv* of the poem: the eros of power.[45]

Impiety and sweetness are conjugated in the *dulce nefas* of the Lemnian women, inspired by Venus (***dulce nefas** in sanguine vivo coniurant*, 'in the living blood they swear the delicious crime', 5.162–163): the killing of the husbands in the *thalami*, stylised in the Lucretian forms of sex-as-war.[46] Here, a verbal paradox is the poetic manifesto for a whole paradoxical episode.

Justice and impiety conflict with each other in the cause of Polynices, exiled by his brother: *nefas… iustius*, in the duel (*cui fortior ira **nefasque** / **iustius***, 'he whose anger is the stronger and crime the juster', 11.540–542), condenses in an oxymoron an issue raised by Lucan, and an ethical paradox: *quis **iustius** induit arma / scire **nefas*** ('which had the fairer pretext for warfare, we may not know', Lucan. 1.126–127).

These are the paradoxes of a distorted world, that subverts the values and language of morality and justice, as in the *Bellum civile* (Lucan. 1.2). Also in the *Thebaid* this programme of style is announced from the beginning, following the pact of alternation between the brothers. Statius launches it with another oxymoron, which exalts the paradox of Fortune made fickle by man: *sic **iure maligno** / Fortunam transire iubent* ('Thus by an ungenerous law they bid Fortune change sides', 1.140–141); and he brands it with the violent distortion of verbal meaning: ***haec** inter fratres **pietas erat*** ('This was brotherly devotion between the two', 1.143; cf. Lucan. 4.565–566).

On the paradoxical technique of similes, and intertextuality, I refer to what I wrote elsewhere about the preceding comparison (1.131–138).[47]

The language of emotions is a paradoxical language. ***Spes anxia** mentem / extrahit et **longo consumit gaudia voto*** ('Torturing hope drags out his soul and in prolonged desire exhausts his joy', 1.322–323): this is Polynices who, in exile,

**43** Here a play with *Furia* can be felt. Cf. *Ach.* 1.398.

**44** Nisbet and Hubbard 1978; *C.* 3.4.5–6; 3.19.18; 4.12.28 (*dulce*); *Anacreontea* 53.14 (also 9.3); Sen. *tranq.* 17.10.

**45** Briguglio 2017a, 48–62; 2017b; Bessone 2018a, 152–154; 2018d, 172–178. In the Alcaic *Silvae* 4.5 (22–28), Horace's *dulce periculum*, a formula for Bacchus' inspiration to praise Caesar (*C.* 3.25.18–20), is adapted to Statius' competing in the Ludi Albani: Bessone forthcoming a).

**46** Rosati 2005.

**47** Bessone 2020, 149–152.

longs for the throne.[48] 'Hope' makes him 'anxious'. 'Joy' is 'consumed' in advance and 'exhausted' by desire. Statius often exploits *consumere*, and its polysemy, for the paradoxes of absent presence and the anticipation of the future (*ductor* ***in absentem consumit proelia fratrem***, '[so] … does the chieftain fight it out against his absent brother', 2.133). This is a usage Dante will appreciate (*Inf.* 2.40–42).

Elsewhere the effect is more concentrated. The oxymoron ***consumpsit ventura*** *timor* ('Fear has devoured the future', 10.563) exploits the opposition in meaning, mode, and tense between the two juxtaposed verbs. This picture of the besieged Thebans is one of the paradoxical set-pieces of the poem, passages in which a number of effects strengthen one another,[49] and which stand out in a narrative sequence — like a surprising departure, or a closing in climax.

One of these paradoxical pieces is the entrance on stage of Oedipus. Everything, here, is paradoxical, and tends towards an *aprosdoketon*: *illum* […] *tamen adsiduis* ***circumvolat alis*** / *saeva* ***dies*** *animi scelerumque in pectore Dirae* ('and yet the fierce daylight of his soul flits around him with unflagging wings and the Avengers of his crimes are in his heart', 1.49–52). Here, an oxymoron (blindness, in the dark, illuminated as by daylight) is empowered by a striking gesture of 'allusive perversion'.[50]

The paradoxes of fear are a predilection of the *Thebaid*, and have a manifesto in the portrait of *Pavor*:[51] a poetological emblem, like the House of Fame in the *Metamorphoses* (12.39–63). *Pavor* is a creator of deformed images, hallucinations, and mental obsessions (7.109–112); his *acre ingenium* is that of the poet, who 'puts his keen talent to a new fiction', and almost 'renews his keen wit, making it innovative': *tunc acre novabat / ingenium* (116–117).[52] This very passage exemplifies the poet's skill at creating hallucinations by paradoxical stylistic effects. The following picture of the 'field of Nemea' that Panic 'raises with false dust', *falso Nemeaeum pulvere campum / erigit* (v. 117, tr. mine), conjures up an impression of the ground being literally raised, and this by a striking enallage; a stylistic trick that is almost glossed by *falso*.

As a self-reflexive *sententia* declares, *nil falsum trepidis* ('to the frightened nothing is false', 7.131). The 'attacks' with which *Pavor* 'drives cities mad' are

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**48** See Briguglio 2017a, ad loc., and cf. [Sen.] *Herc. O.* 811.

**49** On this concept, the so-called 'convergence of expressive factors', see the Introduction to this volume.

**50** Bessone 2020, 139–144.

**51** Hardie 2012, 207–214.

**52** Not only 'then he bethought him of something new and clever' (tr. Shackleton Bailey); *acre ingenium* has also its current, abstract meaning: 'ora dà una nuova prova del suo ingegno' {he now gives new proof of his talent} (tr. Traglia and Aricò).

nothing but 'panic attacks': *bonus omnia credi / auctor et* ***horrificis lymphare incursibus urbes*** ('on his authority all things are easily believed, and he drives cities mad with his terrifying onslaughts', 112–113). And nobody but the poet conveys the fictional effects of p/Panic, through inventive imagery or ambiguous words. In *horrificis… incursibus*, military and psychic language coincide: Statius' paradoxical style changes the human mind into a theatre of war.

Subjective deformation of reality and distortion of stylistic forms into paradoxes are foregrounded in Polynices' fears, as he is caught by a storm on his way into exile (1.364–369). The epigrammatic close of the sequence, ***pulsat metus*** *undique* ***et*** *undique* ***frater*** ('Terror strikes from every side, *and from every side* his brother'), reuses a Virgilian matrix for a new effect: *Aen*. 3.193 *caelum undique et undique pontus* ('sky on all sides and on all sides sea'), describing Aeneas' ships just before the storm. Playing on the metonymic and literal use of *frater*, and the figurative and literal meaning of *pulsat*, Statius visualises Polynices' monomania in the, subjectively real, image of his brother 'hurting' him. Similarly, antithesis, chiasmus, personification, and a polysemic verb, heighten the paradoxical effect of a terrifying absent presence when, after the omens, Thebes 'clamours' in Amphiaraus' mind: *iam bella tubaeque / comminus,* ***absentesque*** *fremunt* ***sub pectore*** *Thebae* ('Now war trumpets are at hand and absent Thebes clamours in his breast', 3.566–569).

Joy also has its paradoxes.[53] In the *Achilleid*, joy makes Thetis anxious, ***angunt*** *sua* ***gaudia*** *matrem* ('her joys torture the mother', 1.183), in face of her son's heroic beauty.[54] But it is in the *Thebaid* that the oxymoron, associated with personification and other devices, produces more intense effects: so in the reaction to the killing of the monster by Coroebus, *magnaque post lacrimas etiamnum* ***gaudia pallent*** ('after tears great joy, but pallor still', 1.620), with the multi-level oxymoronic clausula mixing joy and fear, literal and metaphorical, abstract and concrete. Even more striking are the paradoxes of the poem's end, expressing its tragic complexity: ***gaudent lamenta*** *novaeque /* ***exultant lacrimae*** ('Lamentations rejoice, new tears exult', 12.793–794). 'New tears exult' is yet another instance of polysemy and paradox, where two meanings coexist in the verb ('spring up' and 'exult'), one of them clashing with the substantive.[55]

Statius' visual poetics and his sophisticated technique of ekphrasis exploit the force of paradox intensively (Econimo 2021a). This is so in a pair of descriptions of the Gorgon. In the ekphrasis of Adrastus' *patera*, the lifelike representation of

53 Cf. Nisbet and Hubbard 1978 on Hor. *C*. 2.19.6.

54 *Gaudia* is also concrete. With the oxymoron, Statius renews *Aen*. 1.502.

55 Bessone 2011, 177 and n. 4.

death is doubled by further paradoxical effects, such as the play on the inchoative form and ambiguous sense of *pallescit* (1.546–547 *illa graves oculos languentiaque ora / paene movet* ***vivoque etiam pallescit in auro***, 'almost she moves her heavy eyes and drooping countenance and pales even in the living gold'). In the reaction to Tydeus' cannibalism, the monster itself seems to be petrified, instead of petrifying (8.762–864 ***stetit*** *aspera* ***Gorgon***, 'The Gorgon stood rough'). The Ovidian manner of Statius' pointed descriptions, and paralogisms, are also analysed by Econimo (2021b).

I offer only one example of an oxymoron resulting from a metaphor. This is the most refined trait in the description of the hero in the *Achilleid*:[56] *niveo* ***natat ignis*** *in ore / purpureus* ('A *purple fire* swims in his snow-white face', 1.161–162).

Finally, just a mention of enallage. There is no need to recall its role in Virgil (Conte 2007, ch. 3), nor is it necessary to underline the more violent effects it produces in Seneca and Lucan.[57]

Enallages with a Senecan-Lucanian and Stoic imprint, in the *Thebaid*, serve to represent heroism pushed to the point of martyrdom: this is the style of the body that strikes the weapons. Antigone and Argia, in chains, challenge Creon and joyfully go to death, as two 'Senecan martyrs of self-destruction' (12.679–681 *ambae hilares et mortis amore superbae /* ***ensibus intentant iugulos*** *regemque cruentum / destituunt*, 'Both of good cheer and proud in their eagerness to die, they hold out their throats to the swords, disappointing the bloodthirsty king').[58]

Another paradox is based on polysemy: ***regemque*** *cruentum /* ***destituunt*** means not only 'disappoint the bloodthirsty king', that is, frustrate his expectations, and his bloody pleasure. Here we should also feel the almost technical and institutional sense of *destituere*, when it refers to the supreme political authority, or is joined with *regem*, or *principem*.[59] Thus the image gets its full force — and this is a forceful paradox: Creon is 'removed' from power by his female victims, even before being killed by Theseus.

*Virtus* (disguised as Manto) pushes Menoeceus into a voluntary divine possession, and premature death: 10.670 ***'rape*** *mente* ***deos, rape*** *nobile* ***fatum'*** ('Quickly seize the gods in thought, seize a noble destiny').[60] Polysemy and

**56** Bessone 2018b, 26.

**57** Hübner 1972, 600.

**58** Bessone 2011, 216–218. With *mortis amor* cf. the joy/hope of death (e.g. 10.444; 11.715; 12.456–457).

**59** Svet. *Ner.* 40.1; 40.2; *Galb.* 11.1, cf. 10.5; *Dom.* 14.4 *destitutionem*; Tac. *Hist.* 1.5.2; 1.30.16; 'destituire [un re]' or 'destitute king' may come from here, through 'destituer': *GDLI* (https://www.gdli.it/) s.v. *destituire*, 3.

**60** Cf. 10.676–677 ***letique invasit amorem*** ('and rushed on love of death').

paradox conspire: *rape* (= *rapide cape*) expresses the need to hurry, and quickly seize one's destiny (*fatum*), instead of being seized by it (*fato rapi*);[61] moreover, *rape*, joined with *deos*, reverses by a paradox the usual image of being possessed and 'driven on' by a god [62] — while the whole phrase replaces an epic imperative like *rape arma*.

Finally, a double enallage that gives an essay of mimetic syntax. This is Thiodamas, divinely inspired: ***sertaque mixta comis sparsa cervice flagellat*** ('tossing his neck he flails the garland entwined with his hair', 10.169). *Furor* disrupts, together with the augur's head, even the syntactical relations between words (*spargere* would rather go with *serta*, *flagellare* with *cervicem*). The violence of the scene is matched by the violence against syntax, a sort of unnatural rotation, and a paradoxical one. Statius has gone a long way from a double enallage like Virg. *Aen.* 6.268.[63] We shall soon see what Statius can make of a Virgilian enallage. To conclude, just a few words on Capaneus.

## 4 Paradox and the sublime

Hyperbole is anything but unexpected when dealing with a Giant-like hero, and a man fighting a god is a paradox in itself, but I would like to point out the sustained use of paradox that marks the theomachy of *Thebaid* 10 even at the verbal level. Statius' Capaneus stands in a gallery of 'paradoxical portraits' in Roman literature. And paradox is here an effective tool for testing the limits of heroism, of a sublime poetics, and of a sublime style.

Capaneus' assault on the sky is continually made to clash with expressions and images suggesting the ascent of a noble soul to heaven — as if this were a paradoxical apotheosis. The very words that describe the hero's ladder, *innumerosque gradus, gemina latus arbore clausos, /* ***aerium*** *sibi portat* ***iter*** ('he carries steps beyond count enclosed on both sides by wooden beams, an airy path for himself', 10.841–842), were branded by Curtius as an instance of the manneristic 'abuse of periphrasis' that, in European literature, 'begins with Statius': 'If someone has to climb a ladder, we find [...] "innumerable steps, enclosed between twin trees, an airy road"'.[64] Yet these words portray, not 'someone', but a sublime hero; and they expand a lofty periphrasis from Greek tragedy (Eur. *Phoen.* 1173–4 *et al.*)

**61** Cf. 10.316 and, e.g., Ov. *Am.* 3.9.35; Sen. *Oed.* 125; Lucan. 9.825; 10.22 with Berti 2000.
**62** Hor. *C.* 3.25.1–2 (Sen. *Thy.* 261 *rapior*).
**63** Conte 2007, 96–97.
**64** Curtius $2013^2$, 276.

with a paradoxical apposition. *Aerium… iter* is Capaneus' — jarring — version of 'Virtue-as-a-path-to-the-sky'. Here the poet mixes physical with spiritual elevation, carpentry with philosophy, and an arrogant ascent with ethical sublimity.[65]

The first two verses of the proem set the stylistic mode of the episode: *hactenus arma, tubae, ferrumque et vulnera: sed nunc / comminus astrigeros Capaneus tollendus in axes* ('Thus far of arms, trumpets, of steel and wounds. But now Capaneus must be raised aloft to fight the starry vault at close quarters', 10.827–828). Line 828 makes the language of martial epic collide with the language of divinisation: theomachy looks like a perverted apotheosis. *Comminus* continues the sequence of words started by *arma* — a signpost for the epic genre. But Virgilian epic is left behind, as the poet represents himself literally raising his hero to the starry vault — indeed, 'close' to the sky, so as to fight it in 'close combat'.

By a common convention, the poet portrays himself as doing what he sings of: here, the narrator provides Capaneus with his ladder up to the walls, and up to heaven. However, the metaphorical import in phrases like *tollere in astra* is also fully felt here (*pace* Williams, and as Lactantius Placidus saw). The epic poet is going to extol his hero's *aristeia* — the impious deed of the *superum contemptor*. As Leigh (2006, 235) notes, 'That the language employed here is more commonly that reserved for ecstatic praise renders the assertion the more arch, the more troubling'.

There is more. 'Extolling to the sky' has a second meaning that is also literal, in the fictive worlds of epic and imperial ideology, as well as in Stoic philosophy: that of raising a hero to divine level, namely, divinisation. With *astrigeros… tollendus in axes* we may compare Jupiter's promise of Aeneas' deification in *Aen.* 1, the (eulogy and) apotheosis of Daphnis in *Ecl.* 5, and many similar passages.[66] Statius' request of a *maior amentia* from the Muses, so that he can raise Capaneus to the stars, thus comes close to Horace's Bacchic frenzy, which enables the poet to be heard 'practising to install among the stars and in Jupiter's council the everlasting adornment of exceptional Caesar' (*C.* 3.25.3–6). A divine ecstasy is required, to sing of god-like heroes aspiring to heaven.

Statius' provocative language almost equates Capaneus with Menoeceus, his mirror-image and polemical target: Menoeceus, who was sent to heaven by *Virtus* (10.662–665), and whose 'spirit is long since before Jupiter, claiming for itself a pinnacle among the highest stars' (10.782). Capaneus' boast that his own *virtus* is

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**65** 10.845–846 evokes the 'steep' path of virtue, leading to heaven.

**66** Enn. *Ann.* 54–55 Sk.; Verg. *Ecl.* 5.51–52; *Aen.* 1.259–260 (cf. 12.795); Ov. *Met.* 14.814; cf. 15.843–844.

a *numen* to him (3.615–616) is 'realised' here; and the poet sponsors his hero's self-promotion to divine level with a suitable elevation of his (paradoxical) style.

In the *Thebaid*, Statius' *maior amentia* matches his hero's madness: the sublime poet identifies with his sublime hero, in line with the identification suggested by ps.-Longinus.[67] In turn, Capaneus later identifies with the poet, when he uses programmatic language to announce his greatest deed: 'renewing' his torch with the lightning bolt, that is, in a sense, becoming Jupiter (*'"his", ait, "in Thebas, his iam* ***decet*** *ignibus uti, / hinc* ***renovare*** *faces* ***lassam****que accendere quercum"'*, '"These flames", he says, "ay, these, it now beseems me to use against Thebes, from them to renew my torch and kindle my wearied oak"', 10.925–926). This design of appropriating the thunderbolt is unprecedented: here is the *homoiosis theo* of a theomachist.[68]

The moment he formulates his programme, Capaneus is struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt (927). Yet, right at this moment the hero's plan is accomplished, in an unexpected and spectacular way: as he is burnt by lightning, Capaneus can literally 'use this fire against Thebes' (925), hurling his body against the walls, and thus becoming a living bolt:

10.932–936

iamque omnia lucent
**membra viri**. cedunt acies, et terror utrimque,
quo ruat, ardenti feriat quas corpore turmas.
**stat tamen,** extremumque in sidera versus anhelat, 935
pectoraque invisis obicit fumantia muris.

… now all his limbs are aglow. The lines fall back; on either side is terror, where will he plunge, what squadrons strike with his burning body? But still he stands and breathes his last against the stars, leaning his smoking breast against the hated walls.

This is a sublime version of Lucan's Scaeva:[69] here we have a suicide bomber — and one who is 'armed' by Jupiter.

I come to the last three verses of the book:

10.937–939

nec caderet, sed membra virum terrena relinquunt,
exuiturque animus; paulum si tardius artus
cessissent, potuit fulmen sperare secundum.

**67** Leigh 2006. Bessone 2011, 97, n. 1.

**68** Capaneus' ambition of imitating Zeus with his two torches is stated by Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 1173 (Hutchinson 1985, on A. *Sept.* 422–456).

**69** Lucan. 6.172–173; 204–206.

Nor would he have fallen; but his earthly limbs desert him and his spirit is set free. If his body had yielded a little later, he might have hoped for a second bolt.

*Membra virum… relinquunt*: a striking enallage personifies the *membra*, and extols the *vir*. This unyielding hero, deserted by his limbs, that are now his weapons, has something to do with Virgil's Camilla.[70] Capaneus' incineration, and Camilla's gradual slipping to the ground (*Aen.* 11.827–831), do not weaken their resistance: both heroes do not want to fall down (10.937 *nec caderet* ≈ *Aen.* 11.828 *ad terram non sponte fluens*, 'slipping to earth *against her will*'), they do not yield. At last, her weapons abandon the heroine: *arma **relinquunt*** (830) is the reading of the indirect tradition.[71] Probus explained the phrase as *hypallage… vel contrarium*, while 'others understand *arma relinquunt* as a eulogy (*cum laude dictum*), that is, her weapons fell from the hands of the dying Camilla' (DServ.). A Virgilian enallage, praised by ancient and modern critics alike, may have impressed the keen critic, and creative reader, of Virgil that Statius is.[72]

Paradoxes do not end here. *Terrena* (10.937) recalls *iam sordent terrena viro* ('Now the warrior despises aught terrestrial', 837; cf. 664–665): contempt of earth is thus suggested, while the *animus* freeing itself from the body (938) is redolent of spiritualist philosophy. Once again, Capaneus the atheist, blasphemous, Epicurean, rationalistic hero[73] is described in terms conflicting with his 'creed'.

Finally, in 10.939 J.B. Hall prints the variant *meruisse*, and Nau (2008) defends it. Barth (1664) knew his poet better, and upheld *sperare* with characteristic flair: *illius perditae ambitioni, huius affectato acumini nil accommodatius inveneris. et quis librariorum cerebro tale quid deberi crediderit?* ('You could not find anything more appropriate to the wretched ambition of the hero, and the mannered poignancy of the poet. And who would believe that something like this could be due to the copyists' brain?').

*Potuit fulmen sperare secundum*, 'he might have hoped for a second bolt', is the *fulmen in clausula* that closes this epic book, like an epigram — in the sublime register.[74] Capaneus' fight, against Thebes and against Jupiter, does not end with his death (as book 11 will show). And precisely this paradox, of the undefeated

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**70** For another contact between Capaneus and Camilla, Harrison 1992, 251–252.

**71** Defendend by Timpanaro 1986, 94–99; 2001, 73–77; Delvigo 1987, 69–81; Conte 2007, 93–95.

**72** Delvigo 1987, 77–78 finds traces of *arma relinquunt* in Silius' and Statius' *arma fluunt*.

**73** Fucecchi 2013; Chaudhuri 2014, ch. 8; Reitz 2017; Pontiggia 2018; Rebeggiani 2018, ch. 3.6; Agri 2020.

**74** By an additional paradox, the clausula *sperare secundum* (cf. Lucan. 7.349; 9.243) conjures up the sense of 'hoping for the favour of' someone or something (e.g. the gods). Lucan, book 4 also has an epigrammatic ending.

loser, is reproposed by Dante in the paradox of the indomitable damned man (*Inf.* 14.51–60). The poet of the *Divine Comedy* extends indefinitely — and for eternity — Capaneus' hope for a 'second bolt'; and his character appropriates the unreal hypothesis, and counterfactual mode, of the *Thebaid*'s narrator:

'Qual io fui vivo, tal son morto.
**Se Giove** stanchi 'l suo fabbro da cui
crucciato prese la folgore aguta
onde l'ultimo dì percosso fui;
[...]
e **me saetti** con tutta sua forza:
non ne potrebbe aver vendetta allegra'.

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Luigi Galasso

# ‘Conscious’ and ‘Unconscious’ Repetitions in Latin Hexameter Poetry from Ennius to Lucan

**Abstract:** This contribution seeks to draw up a typology of repetition in Latin hexameter poetry that also considers possible textual corruptions in cases when repetitions have no marked rhetorical function (as e.g. in anaphora, epiphora, epanalepsis), in order to distinguish between what is determined by author’s choice and what is due to copyists’ practice.

## 1 The Problem

Repetition — whatever its ultimate rhetorical effect may be — has always been one of the main literary techniques available to poets working in any language; this is certainly true of Latin poetry, at least, for which the essential study remains that of Wills 1996. In the present essay I would like to pose a specific question, which can be stated as follows: how are we to evaluate those cases of repetition in Latin poetry in which the motivation for that repetition is not immediately evident? In other words, how are we to evaluate repetitions that seem at first to be rhetorically insignificant, or perhaps even meaningless?

We may begin with a fragment from Ennius’ *Annales* which forces us to confront this problem head on: *Nauos repertus homo, Graio patre, Graius homo, rex* (165 Sk.). Do the repetitions in this verse (especially that of *homo*) render it particularly effective in some way? Or are they simply awkward — a sign of inexpert versification, which might even lead us to view the line as corrupt and in need of emendation?[1] In my view, Skutsch’s arguments in defence of the transmitted text are convincing, both with regard to the definition of Pyrrhus as Greek, which is important from an ideological perspective, and with regard to the periphrasis involving *homo*, which is attested numerous times within the *Annales* and has an

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1 L. Fruterius (*ap*. Meyer 1878, 244) proposed *Graius domo*, because Pyrrhus himself was not in fact Greek.

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authoritative model in Homer — and reflects, moreover, a common usage in Greek.[2] Of course, above and beyond these questions, one might also detect a certain amount of stylistic and metrical finesse in the line's chiastic double repetition, by which the two forms of *Graius* (each occupying a different rhythmic collocation)[3] are framed by the two instances of *homo* (with the *arsis* each time in the second syllable, first before the main caesura, and then before a verse-final monosyllable).[4]

## 2 The Theory

The discussions of this question that we find in ancient rhetorical theory are not particularly illuminating, since reflections on repetition are usually connected with those on rhetorical figures (*Rhet. ad Her*. 4.54; Cic. *De orat*. 3.206; *Orat*. 135). Scholars have traditionally cited two passages from Quintilian, the first of which (10.1.7) treats of the lexical repertoire that the orator must acquire. There, Quintilian remarks:

> Et quae idem significarent <scio> solitos ediscere, quo facilius et occurreret unum ex pluribus, et, cum essent usi aliquo, si breve intra spatium rursus desideraretur, effugiendae repetitionis gratia sumerent aliud quo idem intellegi posset.

He himself, however, does not believe that such efforts are wisely spent:

> Quod cum est puerile et cuiusdam infelicis operae, tum etiam utile parum: turbam enim tantum modo congregat, ex qua sine discrimine occupet proximum quodque.

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**2** Skutsch 1985, 331. For Lucretius' re-use of *Graius homo* at *DRN* 1.66 and its ideological implications, see Farrell 1991, 34–35 n. 17.

**3** On *ictus*-shift see Wills 1996, 467–469; Dainotti 2015, 191 n. 579.

**4** Skutsch (1985 ad loc.) cites two other passages from Ennius as examples of an analogous type of repetition, although to my mind they are in fact rather different. In lines 188–189 we find a strong and immediately apparent rhetorical effect (*quorum virtuti belli fortuna pepercit / eorundem me libertati parcere certum est*); on the other hand, in lines 175–177 (*incedunt arbusta per alta, securibus caedunt / percellunt magnas quercus, exciditur ilex, / fraxinus frangitur atque abies consternitur alta*) the effect is more difficult to explain in rhetorical terms. The first instance of *alta* occurs in an emphatic position (before the trochaic caesura), whereas the second instance is highlighted by means of the alliteration with *abies*; thus, perhaps in this repetition (*alta* … *alta*) we ought to hear an echo of the sonority found in the Homeric model that stands behind the Ennian lines, namely *Il*. 23.116 πολλὰ δ' ἄναντα κάταντα πάραντά τε δόχμιά τ' ἦλθον.

Rather, in Quintilian's view, a fundamental role must be played by critical discernment (10.1.8):

> Nobis autem copia cum iudicio paranda est, vim orandi, non circulatoriam volubilitatem spectantibus. Id autem consequimur optima legendo atque audiendo: non enim solum nomina ipsa rerum cognoscemus hac cura, sed quod quoque loco sit aptissimum.

Variation, then, is not a virtue in and of itself; instead, it must be employed judiciously, as part of an overall approach characterised by a great degree of attention and care.

Quintilian's ambivalence is apparent in the second passage as well, where he discusses certain specific oratorical defects (8.3.50–51):

> Vitari et elleipsis, cum sermoni deest aliquid, quo minus plenus sit, quamquam id obscurae potius quam inornatae orationis est vitium. Sed hoc quoque, cum a prudentibus fit, schema dici solet, sicut tautologia, id est eiusdem verbi aut sermonis iteratio. [51] Haec enim, quamquam non magnopere a summis auctoribus vitata, interim vitium videri potest, in quod saepe incidit etiam Cicero securus tam parvae observationis, sicut hoc loco: 'non solum igitur illud iudicium iudicii simile, iudices, non fuit'.

Once again, it is clear that one cannot avoid a certain subjective element, to be decided by individual taste, as indeed is rather evident in the example cited from Cicero (*Cluent.* 96).

Ancient critics remained sensitive to this aspect of linguistic usage, and they continued to remark upon it. DServius' comment on Verg. *Georg.* 1.6 is noteworthy in this respect: *lumina 'numina' fuit, sed emendavit ipse, quia postea ait 'et vos agrestum praesentia numina fauni'*.[5] Now, DServius' hypothesis of an authorial variant is not very plausible; probably we are in fact dealing with a corruption that made its way even into certain highly-esteemed manuscripts. Be that as it may, it should be clear that it is reductive and oversimplifying to state that the ancients were less attentive to repetition than we are today.

# 3 Strategies

In some authors, we find that repetition is employed as an over-arching structural element and constitutes an essential part of a given work's formal economy. In the *Aeneid*, for instance, Vergil makes frequent use of repetition in order to give the text

5 On this passage, see Delvigo 1990.

as a whole a kind of Homeric patina; in other words, repetition helps to characterise the work as belonging to the genre of epic (a fact which was already understood by ancient critics, even if their discussion of the phenomenon is limited to scattered observations).[6] Of course, it is true that there are certain passages belonging to a kind of 'grey area', in which a precise evaluation of the repetition in question remains difficult; and in such cases the particular nature of the *Aeneid* as an incomplete, posthumous text — radically different, in this respect, from the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* — sometimes seems to be relevant: in fact, it is often hard to resist the temptation of the logic of suspicion. Nevertheless, above and beyond individual cases, each of which may be motivated by one of many possible rhetorical or literary effects,[7] the overall use of repetition that I have mentioned above should be considered a constitutive element of the Vergilian style — an element, moreover, charged with important literary connotations.[8] Alongside this, however, we also commonly find certain other phenomena characterised by an avoidance of repetition, as for instance what one might call the virtuosic flourish of synonyms in passages where a single concept frequently recurs,[9] or else the use of fixed synonymic pairs when a given notion must be repeated within a short span of text (e.g. *tacere*/*silere*; *flamma*/*ignis*; *frigidus*/ *gelidus*).[10]

Before Vergil, Lucretius had employed repetition to remarkable effect, in a manner that was closely bound up with his philosophical ideas. For Lucretius, language, with its various combinations of the letters of the alphabet, presents a parallel for the way that physical bodies composed of atoms come to be formed and reformed. And this idea — namely, that the reconfiguration of fundamental elements is capable of producing different results — is reflected in the text of Lucretius' didactic poem, and at multiple levels: in the repetition of letters; in the repetition of one or more verses; even in allusions to other works. The effects of such recombinations (whether they be of atoms or letters) may well vary, but they

**6** Moskalew 1982, 2–4.

**7** For a discussion of the role of repetition in Vergil (including formulaic and paraformulaic repetitions), see Berti 2021, which pays particular attention to implications that repetitions have for textual criticism.

**8** Cf. Moskalew 1982; Briggs 1988, 505–506. For some discussion of the use of formulas, see Sale 1999. Niehl 2002 includes an annotated catalogue of formulas in Vergil and attempts to identify a specific literary strategy in their use.

**9** E.g. the various words for 'soil' or 'earth' in *Georg.* 1.63–70; 79–83; 104–127; for 'water' in *Georg.* 4.360–373, nine different words in fourteen verses (Jackson Knight 1966², 408); for 'sea' in *Aen.* 5.615–618, three different synonyms in three following verses.

**10** Herescu 1960, 181–188.

are all regulated by the same elemental processes; the repetitions in Lucretius' text thus reproduce the atomic structure of the world that he describes.[11]

Just as in Vergil's *Aeneid*, in the *De Rerum Natura* we are confronted with the problem posed by the use of formulas.[12] In addition, however, Lucretius' text also includes cases of repetition employed for the sake of clarity or efficacy of argumentation — cases which would certainly have been shunned by the Augustan poets. A few examples culled from Book 1 (Bailey 1947, 157) should suffice to give an idea of the precise function of such repetitions: they form part of the poem's didactic style and contribute to its emphatic and insistent expository tone, as in 1.393–394 *nam vacuum tum fit quod non fuit ante / et repletur item vacuum quod constitit ante,* or in 1.793–794 *credit enim sensus ignem cognoscere vere, / cetera non credit,* and even in 1.813 *certis ab rebus, certis aliae atque aliae res*. Alongside these, one also finds other specific stylistic choices, for instance the frequent use of polyptoton (Piazzi 2005, 217), often involving the word *res*, as at 1.763–766:

> denique quattuor ex rebus si cuncta creantur
> atque in eas rursus res omnia dissoluuntur,
> qui magis illa queunt rerum primordia dici
> quam contra res illorum retroque putari?[13]

Of course, as with Vergil, so too with Lucretius a certain shadow of doubt hangs over the work, due to the question of whether the work was completed by the author or not. All told, however, it is clear that we find in the poem a highly sophisticated system of repetitions. Individual exceptions naturally will have to be evaluated each on its own terms.

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**11** For an effective overview of the problem along with some additional reflections, see Buglass 2022.

**12** For a discussion of this complex issue, see Schiesaro 1990.

**13** Bailey (1947, 145) also highlights a further kind of repetition, whereby Lucretius repeats unusual words or phrases that he wishes to establish within philosophical discourse. In addition, Bailey detects a certain 'semi-conscious' repetition in Lucretius, whereby expressions or terms that have already been employed reoccur in the same collocation but in a different context. The example he gives is the repetition of 5.86 *rursus in antiquas referuntur religiones* at 6.62, with a partial repetition also at 6.871 *rursus in antiquas redeunt primordia sedis*. This observation could prove to be useful for determining certain text-critical problems: e.g., the first part of 5.312 *quaerere proporro sibi cumque* (*cumque* OQ; *sene* H. Munro, Bailey; *quaerere — cumque* between *cruces* M. Deufert) *senescere credas* would be guaranteed by 2.979 *et sibi proporro quae sint praemordia quaerunt*.

## 4 Unconscious repetition

These days we might be tempted to consider the title of an article published by A.B. Cook at the beginning of the previous century — 'Unconscious Iterations' — as a kind of provocation. The basic idea of the article is, effectively, that a word or image may impose itself with such force in the mind of the author that he finds himself re-utilising it even in passages where we, as readers, might consider it inappropriate — after all, if it were not odd in some way or other, we would not have noticed it. Such an idea presupposes that, in cases of insistent or nearby repetitions which cannot be clearly accounted for in rhetorical terms, the author has been in a sense overcome by his own language (cf. *infra* n. 22). Indeed, one might even go so far as to claim that in such cases language has determined thought. In his essay, Cook adduces numerous noteworthy examples of this kind of persistent repetition, above all from Greek literature, but with a few from Latin literature as well, even if the latter are relatively minor. Naturally, Cook is aware of the possibility of self-citation — i.e., conscious repetitions of one's own words, which an author expressly intends to include — and he seeks to exclude such passages from his catalogue of examples. The study is also interesting because Cook was not himself a philologist in a strict sense, but rather a scholar of archaeology and anthropology, and his work thus brings a new perspective to a subject that previously had been examined across centuries of criticism within a fairly clear framework.

Indeed, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was a rather widely held notion that 'good' authors avoided any repetition that was not rhetorically justifiable — in other words, repetitions that we might describe as due to lack of attention or skill — and such an idea naturally led philologists to 'correct' texts extensively and systematically when producing critical editions. This attitude, in turn, led to a reaction, whereby the space allotted to conjecture in critical editions was gradually reduced. The reaction was due to a shift in how scholars conceived the problem: where once critics focused on single instances, they now viewed the question of repetition as a broader phenomenon of linguistic culture; in this view, Latin authors (and even more so Greek ones) were less afflicted by that anxious scruple to avoid repetitions which causes us moderns to have such frequent recourse to synonyms. At the same time, however, an important point was raised and soon given its due emphasis — namely, the point that there is a difference between authors of a high level of literary culture, who

ought to be free of this defect, and 'minor' authors, who are not.[14] The same goes for prose authors, in which, however, the characteristics of the different literary genres also need to be taken into consideration: Caesar represents an interesting case, with his propensity to repeat words without intending any particular meaning or effect.[15]

As far as terminology is concerned, the word 'unconscious' introduces a potentially misleading notion, since it might imply that a given author did not work sufficiently hard on his text, or that a given repetition found its way into the text against the author's will. As we have seen above, this idea is implicit e.g. in Cook's discussion; from a methodological point of view, however, we have to imagine that authors are always attentive and always write to the best of their abilities. To that extent, it would be better to speak of 'unpointed' (McKeown 1987, 106) or 'unfigured' (Wills 1996, 475) repetitions.

In any case, numerous uncertainties necessarily remain, and they must be confronted individually, when one comes face to face with each single passage.

## 5 Vergil and Horace

We can begin by examining a few passages from the Vergilian 'grey area' mentioned above. Critics have raised doubts regarding the literary quality of the repetitions found at *Aen.* 6.417–423:

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**14** Cf. Scaliger 1600, 21: 'Est et aliud non leve vitium in nostro [*sc.* Manilius], quod nimius in verborum iteratione, quum posset aut parcius eadem, aut alia pro illis usurpare. Itaque criticas aures offendunt illa toties totiesque inculcata, Sidera, caelum, mundus, per templa, per sidera; et alia non pauca, quae ter quarter trinis, quaternis continuis versibus infulcit. Hoc ut non mediocre vitium est in nitido scriptore, ita puri sunt ab hac labe principes poetae Virgilius, et Ovidius.' Scaliger's assessment was echoed later by Naeke 1847, 280, although with a few qualifications: 'Et in universum quidem laudabile hoc poetarum studium fuit. Varietas, etiam verborum, delectat; iteratio, dum taedium legenti creat, suspicionem movet inopiae. Verum tamen, ut libere dicam, vereor ne interdum supra modum diligentes et fere anxii poetae latini fuerint. Difficilis res est ad demonstrandum, sed quae lucem capit e comparatione poetarum graecorum. Memini Hermannum aliquando praecipere, graecos poetas, copiarum sermonis sui nulla unquam intentione exhauriendarum memores sibique conscios, verba eadem repetere haud cunctanter; latinos, qui non tam amplum sibi domi penum esse sentiant, studio ac diligentia efficere, ut locupletes videantur.'

**15** For a useful starting-point regarding repetition in prose (with bibliography, now obviously dated, and a clear overall opinion on the question), see Gudeman 1914[2], 186. The discussion in Hofmann and Szantyr 1965, 819–821 [2002, 223–227], on the other hand, places a strong emphasis on the desire for *variatio*.

> Cerberus haec ingens latratu regna trifauci
> personat adverso recubans immanis in antro.
> Cui vates, horrere videns iam colla colubris,
> melle soporatam et medicatis frugibus offam 420
> obicit. Ille fame rabida tria guttura pandens
> corripit obiectam atque immania terga resolvit
> fusus humi totoque ingens extenditur antro.

Here we find a chiastic repetition, whereby *ingens* (itself with an assonantal echo in *recubans* and *videns*) and *immanis* in lines 417–418 find their mirror image in *immania* and *ingens* in lines 422–423.[16] To my mind, this studied structure guarantees that the repetitions are not unconscious but rather the result of a precise poetic intent.[17] Now, the tendency to try to reconstruct the intentions of the author may well be inevitable, as can be seen at work in Norden's comment on 6.423, where he argues that the phrase *fusus humi*, with the specification *toto* ... *antro*, is meant to highlight Cerberus' enormous size and, consequently, the great powers of the Sibyl; but in order to render *toto* credible, the poet repeated *ingens* from line 417.[18] The point we should take from this passage, however, is not that the ancients were less sensitive to repetition than we are (as Norden in fact seeks to demonstrate with the bibliography he cites), but rather that they sought out repetitions even when the effects those repetitions created were rather modest. As a result, each time we encounter a repeated word or phrase, we should be encouraged to look for the motivation behind it.

Indeed, even the passage that Norden cites (also from *Aeneid* 6) in order to prove the ancients' relative indifference to repetition has itself an important expressive function (6.684–685):

> Isque ubi tendentem adversum per gramina vidit
> Aenean, alacris palmas utrasque tetendit.

Anchises reacts to the gesture of his son, who is heading toward him (*tendentem*), by stretching forth (*tetendit*) both of his hands; and even if he does not yet move

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**16** Participial resumption in *obicit* (421) *obiectam* (422): Wills 1996, 314.

**17** Stephen Harrison points out to me that the repetitions also have a narrative function, insofar as they highlight the metamorphosis of Cerberus, who passes from horrific monster to, as it were, a harmless puppy. This could be said also of the repetition of *in antro* (with a different adjective) at the end of l. 418 and 423, comparable (A. Hasegawa *per litteras*) to the one at 3.617 *vasto* ... *in antro*, and 624 *medio* ... *in antro*, concerning Polyphemus, another huge monster.

**18** Norden 1934[3], 243: '*Um toto glaublich zu machen, wird ingens aus 417 wiederholt und gewissermaßen erklärend* (ἅτε πελώριος ὤν) *daneben gestellt*'. {In order to make *toto* credible, *ingens* is repeated from 417 and juxtaposed in a somewhat explanatory manner (ἅτε πελώριος ὤν)}

to approach him, this immediate reaction is already enough to demonstrate the father's affection and care for his son. The same verb is used in two different senses so as to highlight the correspondence of the two men's emotions, notwithstanding the difference of their respective physical actions. In light of this example, we can reformulate with greater precision the statement made in the previous paragraph: in order to obtain particular effects, skilled Latin poets may have recourse to repetition even in cases where our own sensibility would instead push us to avoid it.

Let us look at another example, that of *Aen.* 1.102–117:

Talia iactanti stridens Aquilone procella
velum adversa ferit fluctusque ad sidera tollit.
[...]
Hi summo in fluctu pendent; his unda dehiscens 106
terram inter fluctus aperit, furit aestus harenis.
Tris Notus abreptas in saxa latentia torquet –
saxa vocant Itali mediis quae in fluctibus aras
dorsum immane mari summo[19] –
[...]
ast illam (*sc.* navem) ter fluctus ibidem 116
torquet agens circum et rapidus vorat aequore vortex.

In these lines the word *fluctus* is repeated over and over, like hammer-blows falling one after the other; but precisely through this, the word creates a notable expressive effect — an effect that moreover should be considered against Vergil's ability to flourish a range of synonyms if he wants to, as we saw above. Furthermore, the repetition of *fluctus* evokes the frequent usage of the word (μέγα) κῦμα in *Odyssey* (5.296–454) — which is the model for the present passage (Wills 1996, 476 n. 13).

Over the years, the idea that the ancients' sensitivity to repetition differed from our own has given rise to various rules and limitations which scholars have formulated and which they sometimes invoke when a given repetition seems unmotivated. A curious example may be found in Wagner's (1830) note on *Georg.* 2.125 *et gens illa quidem sumptis non tarda pharetris*. That verse has been suspected of corruption, due to the striking re-use of the adjective *tardus* in the next verse (2.126–127 *Media fert tristes sucos tardumque soporem / felicis mali*). This would indeed seem to be one of those cases in which it is hard to find a rhetorical justification for the repetition, and the same goes for the other examples cited by

**19** For a notable series of arguments in favor of the literary quality of this verse and a half (which might seem rather off-putting to a modern sensibility upon first reading), see Austin 1971, 59–60.

Wagner in his note: *Georg.* 3.524–525 *terram ~ terras; Aen.* 1.504–505 *medios ~ media;* 5.780–781 *pectore ~ pectus*; *Georg.* 1.301–302 *curant ~ curas*; *Ecl.* 6.14–16 *iacentem ~ iacebant*.[20] At this point Wagner proposes to delimit a specific context within which repetition should simply be considered unremarkable: in these cases we find a strong full stop in punctuation, and the repeated term does not appear in the same metrical *sedes* with the same morphological ending. For Wagner's analysis, the perhaps more significant fact that the adjective *tardus* has two different senses in *Georg.* 2.125 and 126 does not seem to be relevant.

One could easily cite many similar examples and concoct seemingly-impressive lists even for a poet as refined as Vergil.[21] But in fact a closer look at each individual passage often leads one to observe that it is actually possible to explain the various repetitions: generally, the ancient author seems simply to have felt that the overall stylistic gain was greater than the cost of the repetition; if we formulate the issue in this way, we at least recognise that the phenomenon represented a problem for the author.[22] Again, it is important not to be overly schematic: for instance, at *Aen.* 12.853–859 there is a triple repetition, but in fact what we find is the re-use of the same word in both the tenor and the vehicle of a simile — a procedure that occurs numerous times in Vergil (Traina 2004², 178).[23]

The case of Horace's hexameter poetry is particularly instructive. Here we might expect to find a very high frequency of unconscious repetition, given the nature of the literary genre. But actually these turn out to be very rare; it is almost

**20** It is indeed difficult to find an explanation for the repetitions in *Georg.* 3.524–525 and *Ecl.* 6.14–16. For the other passages, however, we can at least attempt to discover a motivation: in *Aen.* 1.504–505, the emphasis given to the position of Dido is important; in *Aen.* 5.780–781, the rhetorical and expressive force of the repetition is actually rather obviously marked; in *Georg.* 1.301–302, there is a semantic conceit: the farmers take *care* of their banquets, to which they have been invited by Winter, who frees them of their *cares*.

**21** Poutsma 1913, 415–419. For a different perspective and different interests, see Bannier 1914, which further develops a previous work (Bannier 1912), in which the author was concerned specifically with repetitions. In these studies once again the definition of a typology of repetitions is bound up with questions of textual criticism (with results that are frankly rather extreme, as for instance the defence of both of the alternatives found in Ovid *Met.* 6.280–284, at Bannier 1914, 500, and 1.544–547, at 1914, 510).

**22** Henry (1873, 214–216) has given an extremely severe judgement on repetition in Vergil; in this case too, in addition to passages which could be explained, there are some which are difficult. In Mackail's words (1930, lxxx): 'Noticeable also as a feature in Virgil's use of language is his obsession with a word, which makes him repeat it, sometimes with a difference in meaning, almost immediately'. 'Classic' notes on Vergil's repetitions in Williams 1960, 95–96 ('unintentional repetitions'); 1962, 95; Austin 1964, 196.

**23** Another important point of methodology: one ought to consider the presence of repetitions in a given author in terms of percentages rather than in the absolute number of instances.

always possible to identify a motive for the repetition. To wit, words are repeated for efficacy of argumentation in examples like *Sat*. 1.2.59/62 *res ~ rem*, 1.3.68/70/76 *vitiis ~ vitiis ~ vitium*, 94 *faciam ~ fecerit*, 4.67/69 *latronibus ~ latronum*, 129/131/140 *vitiis*, 2.3.27/28/33 *miror ~ mire ~ mira*, *Epist*. 1.18.5/9 *vitio vitium ~ vitiorum*, *Ars* 221/226/233 *satyros ~ satyros ~ satyris*; there is a strong contrast expressed in 1.2.97/100 *res ~ rem*, 6.73/76 *pueri ~ puerum*; whereas in 1.2.109/ 112 *dolores ~ dolitura* the repetition can be explained as wordplay upon *latura*. In a few other cases, the subject-matter requires the repeated use of a single term, sometimes at a substantial distance, as for example in *Sat*. 1.4.47/54/58 *verbis ~ verbis ~ verbum*, 101/6 *vitium ~ vitiorum*, 6.53/62/70 *amicum ~ amicorum ~ amicis*, 2.5.29/34 *in ius ~ ius*, *Epist*. 1.14.4/8/13 *animo ~ animus ~ animus*; 2.1.122/126 (and 132/142) *puero ~ pueri*. As one can see, we are dealing here with words from everyday language which are generally employed with different forces in different passages, often indeed with a different semantic range and at a certain distance. Nevertheless, given the style and pace of the *Satires* and the *Epistles*, the repetitions hardly make themselves felt at all. On the other hand, the jingle to be found at *Ars* 451–3 remains mysterious:

> hae nugae seria ducent
> in mala derisum semel exceptumque sinistre.
> Ut mala quem scabies aut morbus regius urget[24] ...

## 6 Ovid

Ovid's *Amores* 1.5 is a poem which plays a decisive role within the narrative arc of the elegiac *liber*. It begins thus:

> Aestus erat, mediamque dies exegerat horam;
> adposui medio membra levanda toro.

In this way Ovid defines the context in which his — and the reader's — encounter with the female body will take place. It is the afternoon on an ordinary day, and he finds himself alone upon his bed: and being alone, he can lie stretched out in the middle of it.[25] As McKeown (1987, 106) informs us in his note on these lines, numerous scholars have called into question the use of *medio* so soon after

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**24** Cf. Brink 1971, 422 ('The jingle 452 *in mala*, 453 *ut mala* may or may not be intentional').
**25** Cf. *medio* ... *toro* in *Am*. 2.10.18; *Her*. 19.158.

*mediam*. Of these two instances of the adjective *medius*, the first one, *mediam* (*horam*), is guaranteed by the echo at line 26 (*medii* … *dies*), but the second one finds no support of the same kind. The repetition clearly bothered Bentley, who pencilled *sextam* into the margin of his copy of Burman's edition, whereas Burman himself suspected that *medio* was a corruption of an original *vacuo* or *viduo*. Kenney (1959, 248 n. 1), on the other hand, suggests that in this passage Ovid is playing with the figure of *traductio*, whereby *medius* is first used in a temporal sense and later in a spatial one; but even he expresses some doubt as to whether this opposition of the two senses is really all that meaningful. And in fact such an explanation does seem rather weak, since the first usage of *medius* (*mediam* … *horam*, with reference to the daytime) does not imply a change of any kind, whereas the second (*medio* … *toro*, with its reference to the empty bed) implies a major change in situation. McKeown (1987, 106) lists a few examples of repetition that seem to have no rhetorical function in Ovid, but he then concludes: 'I can, however, cite no parallel in Ovid for an unpointed repetition quite so obvious as that here.'[26]

In a different example, this time from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, we find a repetition which has not aroused any suspicion from critics. In the middle of an extremely virtuosic passage, the battle between the Centaurs and the Lapiths, there is a certain moment which must have been felt as the climax of the scene — the death of the centaur Dorylas (*Met.* 12.385–392; the speaker is Nestor):

iaculum torsi; quod cum vitare nequiret, 385
opposuit dextram passurae vulnera fronti.
adfixa est cum fronte manus; fit clamor, at illum
haerentem Peleus et acerbo vulnere victum
(stabat enim propior) mediam ferit ense sub alvum.
prosiluit terraque ferox sua viscera traxit 390
tractaque calcavit calcataque rupit et illis
crura quoque impediit et inani concidit alvo.

In these lines the series of horrific scenes reaches its pinnacle: the centaur's innards gush forth from his stomach; he steps upon them and ruptures them; his feet become entangled in them, causing him to trip; and he falls to the ground, his stomach now empty. There is of course a notable wordplay involving finite forms of the verbs in the indicative on the one hand, and participles, on the other,

26 One can however note that in line 2 *medio* is found at the middle of the pentameter, before the principal caesura, just as *mediam* is the central word in the hexameter, and in this respect the couplet reproduces a mannerism that is widely attested in Latin verses of a high stylistic level. Cf. Lateiner 1990, 210–211 and Hasegawa's chapter in this volume.

which serves to highlight the various steps in the development of the action (*traxit* / *tractaque calcavit calcataque*). But what really stands out — and to a modern reader may not seem very elegant — is the repetition of *alvum* and *alvo*. And yet, just as in the case of Cerberus, here too (S. Harrison *per litteras*) one may detect a narrative function in the repeated use of the same word: the emphasis falls upon *alvus*, which we can watch, as it were, as it passes from its normal state to being emptied of its entrails.

This passage can fruitfully be set against the following one, in which, however, the manuscript tradition presents some corruptions. Cadmus looks upon the bodies of his fallen comrades and the giant serpent that has killed them (*Met.* 3.55–59):

> ut nemus intravit letataque corpora vidit
> victoremque supra spatiosi corporis hostem
> tristia sanguinea lambentem vulnera lingua,
> ‘aut ultor vestrae, fidissima pectora, mortis,
> aut comes’ inquit ‘ero’.

In lines 57 and 58, instead of *vulnera* and *pectora* some manuscripts read *corpora*, but this last term should be reserved for the wordplay on *corpora/corporis* (ll. 55–56). Even this polyptoton may well seem frigid to us moderns, but it must have produced an effect of at least some interest for Ovid and his readers.

These lines confront us with an important aspect of the problem of repetition, which we have already mentioned above, namely its implications for textual criticism. It is no wonder that Haupt felt it necessary to deal with our question when it came to defending the conjecture that he proposed in order to emend the text of Catullus 11.11 (*horribilesque*). The correction he suggests there — *horribile aequor* — would involve repeating the same word at very close distance, since *aequora* occurs above, in line 8; such a repetition, however, would only be justifiable if one were able to understand an opposition between a stormy *aequor* in line 11 and the open and flat expanses of line 8 (whether these should ultimately be understood as of water or soil). To support his emendation, Haupt cites as parallel Cat. 64.12–15 (*proscidit aequor ... aequoreae Nereides*), but in that passage the repetition can easily be explained: the ship cuts through the flat expanse of sea like a plow, and then from the sea there emerge the Nereids, who are intimately connected with it.[27]

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**27** As is well known, Catullus was very attentive to repetitions, and he generally handled them with extreme skill; the examples of repetition in his poetry that might seem to be due to a lack of sensitivity to the phenomenon are indeed very rare. In the hexameter and elegiac poems, one

In effect, it must be admitted that, however rigorous they may have been, the various attempts to establish a typology of repetition that would be useful for textual criticism have not, in the end, proved convincing. Heinsius and Bentley indeed went too far in their elimination of repetitions, and the subsequent reaction against them was necessary:[28] one can reasonably state as a principle that not every rhetorically weak repetition is the result of a corruption and ought to be emended. And yet, at the same time, there remains a wide grey area, and there does not seem to be a single easy way out of it.

Instead, the individual traits of each author need to be studied and delineated.

## 7 The Case of Lucan

The critical analysis of repetitions that might appear to be literary defects found a rich testing ground in the text of Lucan. Recent studies have emphasised that repetitions in Lucan may have various functions: they can serve to highlight key concepts; they can render explicit the logic of repetition itself, inherent in a world swept along by a civil war; they can be markers of the poet's own self-awareness of his role as an epic successor of Vergil.[29] That said, there are a certain number of repetitions that appear to be still awaiting a convincing interpretation. In the history of the critical discussion on this topic, the severest judgement is perhaps that of Heitland, who catalogued all the repetitions found in the course of the entire work.[30] If we examine them singly, it is often possible to see a motive

might perhaps note 64.69 *curans* alongside 64.72 *curas*, although even there it is possible to detect a contrast between the two types of emotion being described (concern *vs.* anxiety or torment) — a contrast which corresponds, moreover, to the opposition between *toto ex pectore* and *in pectore*. A striking instance can in fact be found at 64.194–208, where the word *pectus* is repeated four times: once in the genitive, and then three times in a row in the ablative; and all four times it occurs in the same metrical *sedes* as the fifth dactyl. In 64.399–402, on the other hand, the repetition of *natus* seems to be employed in order to highlight the collapse of normal familial relationships: *destitit extinctos gnatus lugere parentes / optavit genitor primaevi funera nati, / liber ut innuptae poteretur flore novercae, / ignaro mater substernens se impia nato*. Lastly, the repeated use of *caput* in 68b.120 *caput seri... nepotis* and 68b.124 *a cano... capiti* produces a meaningful, pathetic effect.

**28** For a defence of the transmitted text in cases where it is rendered suspect by a repetition, with specific reference to prose (Cicero above all), see Wopkens 1730, 186–190, who also lists various passages involving repetition and addresses the problem from a more general point of view as well.

**29** Dinter 2012, 119–143.

**30** Heitland 1887, lxxxi–lxxxii.

behind them, even if at times that motive is admittedly rather weak. Sometimes we might want to consider that we are dealing with key words, which appear and reappear for the purpose of creating a typical thematic texture.

It will be useful to analyse a few examples. One passage that does seem to be rather obscure is at 6.255–259:

> telaque confixis certant evellere membris,
> exornantque deos ac nudum pectore Martem
> armis, Scaeva, tuis: felix hoc nomine famae,
> si tibi durus Hiber aut si tibi terga dedisset
> Cantaber exiguis aut longis Teutonus armis.

In his commentary, Conte (1988, 110–111) includes a note on this passage which discusses the phenomenon at a broader level. In truth, the issue is not so much the repetition in and of itself: the word *armis* is placed at the beginning of line 257 and at the end of 259 in the same case, and this fact ought to suggest that we are dealing with an intended effect.[31] The real difficulty is in the overall sense of the passage. Scaeva's fellow soldiers extract the arrows and spears that have become stuck in his limbs, and 'with his armour' (*armis*) they adorn naked-chested Mars. But Scaeva's claim to glory would have been quite different, if the statue of Mars and those of the other gods had been decorated with the small shields (*armis*) of the Cantabri, or the long shields of the Teutons. Lucan wants to say that the spoils are of a Roman soldier rather than of a foreign enemy, and he uses the same term in the two places in order to emphasise the paradoxical interchange. In this case, therefore, it turns out that we are dealing with a semantic conceit, even if it might seem to us a rather dull one.

Let us examine the cases that Heitland cites from Book 1. The first is at 1.24–27:

> at nunc semirutis pendent quod moenia tectis
> urbibus Italiae lapsisque ingentia muris
> saxa iacent nulloque domus custode tenentur
> rarus et antiquis habitator in urbibus errat.

**31** In this regard one might recall the assessment given by Jackson 1955, 220–221 of the passage Eur. *Phoen.* 1637–1638 καὶ παρθενεύου τὴν ἰοῦσαν ἡμέραν / μένουσ', ἐν ᾗ σε λέκτρον Αἵμονος μένει. Jackson remarks on the repetition of the verb μένω at the beginning and end of 1638 that 'the total indifference of the dramatists extends even to cases where the repetition must have been forced on their attention by the order of the words' — an affirmation that to my mind strikes one as utterly paradoxical.

Here the rhetorical effect created by the repeated use of *urbibus* is fairly clear; in any case, we should exclude the possibility that it was unintentional, or that Lucan did not notice it, given that in line 25 *urbibus* appears at the beginning of the verse, whereas in line 27 it appears in interlocking word-order (abAB).

The next example is from 1.79–86:

> … totaque discors
> machina divolsi turbabit foedera mundi. 80
> in se magna ruunt: laetis hunc numina rebus
> crescendi posuere modum. nec gentibus ullis
> commodat in populum terrae pelagique potentem
> invidiam Fortuna suam. tu causa malorum
> facta tribus dominis communis, Roma, nec umquam 85
> in turbam missi feralia foedera regni.

*Foedera*, first determined by *mundi* (l. 80) and then by *regni* (l. 86), is clearly a key word with thematic significance, and the echo at line-end in this passage grants it a particular density of meaning.

The following case (1.510–514) is more difficult:

> o faciles dare summa deos eademque tueri
> difficiles! urbem populis victisque frequentem
> gentibus et generis, coeat si turba, capacem
> humani facilem venturo Caesare praedam
> ignavae liquere manus.

The fact that Rome is *easy prey* concretely exemplifies the usual ways of the gods: they offer supreme power to Caesar without any difficulty, but they are not inclined to conserve it for him. Opinions may differ as to the felicity of Lucan's linguistic cleverness; but it would be wrong not to notice it.

# 8 Conclusions

Naturally, these reflections must remain to a certain extent open-ended. With that in mind, we may bring this essay to a close by citing some words of A.E. Housman, which equally could have been placed at the beginning: 'Horace was as sensitive to iteration as any modern […] Virgil was less sensitive, Ovid much less; Lucan was almost insensible, but not, like the scholars I mention,

quite.'[32] Here we can see at work the distinction between literary genres, whereby Horace stands apart from the rest in a place of his own. Vergil, Ovid, and Lucan are listed in a sequence (of decadence?) which all but compels one to consider that, in them, we can see the development of a new literary sensibility — and all the more so, given that, in a diachronic perspective, one naturally thinks of the important influence played by the 'New Rhetoric'.

To conclude: 'unfigured' repetition is a question of some importance for Latin poets, and it presents us with a complex situation. For if we accept the idea that they tolerated careless repetitions, then we are faced with an extremely difficult methodological problem. As a working hypothesis, we must suppose that authors always wrote at the best of their abilities (as I have mentioned above), and for that reason, when we encounter a given stylistic phenomenon, we must always attempt to find a motivation for that phenomenon within the text. If, however, we are unable to explain a certain passage in a convincing manner (or even merely an acceptable one), then we are confronted with two options: either we must suppose that the author did not produce his text with care and to the best of his ability; or else we must suppose that, in effect, he felt that repetitions were not necessarily to be avoided at any cost. At this point, given that the first option is excluded, only the second remains, and along with it the need to find some explanation for each individual passage.

Historically, an initial period of interventionist textual criticism, characterised by the desire to normalise texts according to contemporary taste, was followed by a long reaction, which emphasised that ancient authors were less attentive to repetition than we tend to be now, and this reaction brought with it a different attitude towards textual criticism. The result has been a decrease in the recourse had to conjecture and a corresponding impression of greater editorial reliability. The question, however, is naturally not so simple, because there always remains the obligation to attempt to provide an explanation for any given passage. In fact, if there exist repetitions that are clearly rhetorically marked, then it is difficult to imagine that other repetitions in a given text are completely insignificant, however unmarked they might initially seem.[33] In other words: we may resign ourselves to accepting that there are 'unfigured' repetitions in the text only when we have exhausted every possible explanation and the text proves amenable to none of them. The burden of proof, therefore, lies with those who wish to define a given repetition as 'unfigured'. And finally, we ought not to forget

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**32** Housman 1926, xxxiii.

**33** For a lucid presentation of the issue, with reference to the particular (and representative) case of Sophocles, see Easterling 1973.

that we too have our insensitivities — in this case, a lesser sensitivity to the technical aspects of rhetoric, which can often lead us to make inappropriate critical judgements.[34]

Thus, the decisive element in these questions (including the diagnosis of potential corruptions in the text) proves to be, in the end, our understanding of each author's style — 'und *unser* Gefühl hierfür zu vervollkommnen, wird zeitlebens *unser* eifrigstes Streben bleiben müssen, auch wenn *wir einsehen*, daß ein Menschenleben nicht ausreicht, um eine wirkliche Meisterschaft auf diesem Gebiete reifen zu lassen'[35] (Maas 1957[3], 10).

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**34** In her essay on Sophocles, Easterling (1973, 15) finds a useful and illuminating comparison in the style of English poets writing before the Romantic reaction against rhetoric.

**35** {and to perfect *our* feeling for it will have to remain the object of *our* most eager lifelong striving, even if we perceive that a human life is not sufficient for the ripening of a real mastery in this area}.

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Sergio Casali

# Reconsidering Virgil's *hysteron proteron*

**Abstract:** This paper is devoted to a reconsideration of the so-called 'hysteron proteron' in Latin poetry (where a logically later action narratively precedes a logically earlier one), with special reference to the author who is most commonly associated with the use of this figure, that is, Virgil. This paper, building on Luigi Battezzato's treatment of 'hysteron proteron' in Homer and Greek tragedy (Battezzato, L. 2018[2], *Linguistica e retorica della tragedia greca*, Rome, 13–51), argues that Virgil uses this figure in archaising imitation of Homeric style. The occurrences of the figure in Latin poetry outside Virgil are also treated in the light of Battezzato's approach.

In Latin poetry the stylistic phenomenon of the *hysteron proteron* is associated above all with Virgil. *Aen.* 2.353 *moriamur et in media arma ruamus* is the canonical example encountered in most manuals and dictionaries of rhetoric. Despite this, an important, if not preponderant, part of Virgilian criticism looks at the *hysteron proteron* with suspicion and distrust, if not with open hostility. They range from those who deny the phenomenon's very existence, to those who, while admitting its existence, feel obliged, in analysing its occurrences, to adopt a sceptical and hypercritical attitude. The impression is that there is a certain confusion, and this confusion is mainly due to two factors. First of all, not enough attention is paid to the actual definition of *hysteron proteron*; secondly, it does not appear sufficiently clear what the cause is of Virgil's use of this stylistic phenomenon. In this paper, I would therefore like to propose some clarifications regarding these two factors: based on an important article, focused on Homer and Greek tragedy, by Luigi Battezzato (2018[2]), I will recall the correct definition of *hysteron proteron*, thus showing how the vast majority of examples of *hysteron proteron* that the exegetical tradition identifies in the *Aeneid*, far from having to be 'unmasked' and invalidated, are actually excellent examples of this figure; and then I will reiterate what should be obvious, but which instead turns out to be an aspect largely overlooked by Virgilian interpreters, namely that the use of this phenomenon by Virgil constitutes, as Battezzato himself suggests at the end of his article, an archaising imitation of Homer.

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# 1

In 1894 Thomas Ethelbert Page published a brief note in which he heavily attacked the use of the category of the *hysteron proteron* to interpret numerous passages of the *Aeneid*, even starting with the classic example of *Aen.* 2.353 *moriamur et in media arma ruamus*. Page applied his ideas on the *hysteron proteron* in his successful commentary on the *Aeneid*, and both the 1894 note and the notes of his commentary exerted a powerful influence on subsequent Virgilian criticism: Page is still quoted and praised not only in the commentaries by R.G. Austin (cf. e.g. Austin 1964, 54 on 2.353) and R.D. Williams (cf. e.g. Williams 1960, 106 on 5.316), but also in the more recent ones by Nicholas Horsfall (cf. e.g. Horsfall 2006, 444 on 3.662).[1]

Page started by contesting the following definition of *hysteron proteron*: 'Hysteron-proteron is when, of two things, that which naturally comes first is mentioned last: as *moriamur* ... (*Pub. Sch. Lat. Gr.* § 215)' (Page 1894, 203):[2]

> Is it not time that such rubbish was definitely excluded from notes and grammars? How long are we going on accusing Virgil of mentioning that last "which naturally comes first"? Putting the cart before the horse is folly [...]. No writer of sense puts that last which should come first, and to accuse a great writer of doing so is mere impertinence.

According to Page, one should not speak of *hysteron proteron*, but of a main clause to which Virgil would append 'an *explanatory clause introduced by -que* (or sometimes *et*)' (Page's emphasis). This explanatory clause, which is grammatically coordinated to the main one by *-que* or *et*, but which is defined as 'logically subordinate to the main clause', 'often refers to something which is prior in point of time to that which the main clause describes'; however, 'this priority in point of time does not make the clause one whit less subordinate or give it any right to priority in point of sense'. The origin of these explanatory clauses would be in the tendency of poets to prefer parataxis over hypotaxis, to which metrical convenience would also be added.

All of this is very strange. Page combines a correct, even if partial, definition of the *hysteron proteron*, and a valid, even if partial, explanation of its origin, with a controversy whose meaning is hard to understand. When we say that Virgil

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1 Cf. also Horsfall 2016, 289 on 6.361: 'Page's n. a warning, intelligent and amusing, against taking the expression as strictly "*hysteron proteron*"'.

2 The abbreviation of Page ('*Pub. Sch. Lat. Gr.* § 215') of course refers to Kennedy 1871, 446; the definition already in Kennedy 1844, 99.

coordinates by means of -*que* or *et* a main clause and an explanatory clause which refers to something that is chronologically previous to what is described in the main clause, far from *contesting* the existence of the stylistic phenomenon commonly known as *hysteron proteron*, we are just summarily *defining* this phenomenon itself. In fact, it is not clear what the point is of Page's observation regarding the fact that 'this priority in point of time does not make the clause one whit less subordinate or give it any right to priority in point of sense': in reality, if one appends to the main clause a coordinated clause which refers to a chronological moment previous to the one described by the main one, and actually constitutes its logical presupposition, so much so that it can be described as 'explanatory' of the main one, it is clear that an almost paradoxical situation is created in which, precisely, the coordinated clause is given an unexpected and surprising 'priority in point of sense' with respect to the main one; what is expected, in fact, is that a coordinated clause is *not* explanatory of the main one (because this is not the usual function of coordinated clauses), and that it does not refer to a moment chronologically prior to the one described by the main one (because usually the coordinated clause refers to a chronologically later moment).

Page's explanation does nothing more than provide a definition of the *hysteron proteron*. This definition is far more accurate than that of the *Public School Latin Grammar* from which he started. As mentioned, the *Public School Latin Grammar* generically defined the *hysteron proteron* as a phenomenon that occurs 'when, of two things, that which naturally comes first is mentioned last'; the definition that we can extrapolate from Page's explanation, on the other hand, specifies that the two 'things' must be coordinated with each other, usually by means of -*que* or *et*; and that the second 'thing', coming chronologically first, is 'logically subordinate' to the second, in the sense that it is an explanation of it.

We can compare the definition that can be extrapolated from Page with the much more precise and accurate one proposed by Battezzato (2018[2], 21):

> The *hysteron proteron* puts on the same level, through a coordinating conjunction, two verbs (or two nouns) in an order inverse to that of the chronological succession of events (or of the succession implied by the two nouns), entrusting the understanding of the chronological succession to the semantic relationship between the verbs (or nouns) involved, without giving signals through the tense of the verbs or temporal adverbs.[3]

Compared to Page, Battezzato does not make explicit in his definition that the semantic relationship between the two verbs (or nouns) involved is one of logical subordination — but, if he does not do so, it is only because this is obvious: it is

**3** The translation is mine.

inevitable that what is chronologically before is also the logical presupposition of what comes chronologically after. The 'strange' thing that defines the phenomenon of *hysteron proteron* is simply that this chronological and logical inversion *occurs*.

Battezzato (2018[2], 15–18) explains that what makes the *hysteron proteron* 'strange' is the fact that in languages such as Italian or English, or — let us add — classical Latin, certain coordinating conjunctions do not always connect symmetrical elements, but often, on the contrary, if not usually, presuppose a certain degree of subordination: 'I heard a scream, and I broke down the door' has a different meaning from 'I broke down the door, and I heard a scream'; 'come in and sit down' is a possible sentence, while *'sit down and enter' is not.[4] Battezzato cites Scorretti (1988, 257–258): 'usually the conjunctions between clauses tend to be interpreted as "cause-effect" or "premise-result" pairs [...].[5] The interpretation of a sentence as a "cause-effect" series is also obtained when the two (or more) coordinates that constitute it are ordered according to a scale of generality which allows the first to be identified as nomic, i.e., a statement of a general nature, [...] and the second as eventive, i.e., describing an event, a fact that can be clearly located in time and space'. Precisely because it is usually the first clause that tends to take the form of an explanation of the second, it is not acceptable for us to say something like: *'John hit the mark and has good aim'; this is precisely a *hysteron proteron*, which replaces the normal sentence, which would be: 'John has a good aim and hit the mark'. It is important to note that, if we remove the coordinating conjunction, the sentence seems more easily acceptable: 'John hit the mark. He has good aim'. This helps us to understand that it is strictly the presence of the coordinating conjunction that creates a *hysteron proteron*: the coordinating conjunction arouses the expectation that the second clause is explained by the first; instead, in the *hysteron proteron*, the reader discovers that it is the first clause that is explained by the second.

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**4** The examples given by Battezzato are in Italian, but everything stays the same if we translate them into English.

**5** Cf. Kühner and Stegmann 1914, 625: 'Beigeordnete Sätze werden so aneinander gereiht, wie die Gedanken entweder der Zeit oder dem kausalen Verhältnisse nach aufeinander folgen' {'Associated sentences are linked with each other as the ideas either of time or of causal relations follow after each other'} (it follows an 'Anmerkung' on *hysteron proteron*). The temporal and causal uses of 'and' are called 'conjunction buttressing'. This phenomenon can also be defined as 'the enrichment of conjunctions by the assumption of temporal sequence and causality', as in 'John turned the switch and the motor started' (Levinson 2000, 37). See, most recently, Horn 2019, who, starting from Aristotle (*Categories* 14a26–b23), discusses the problems of the 'natural order' of clauses (see esp. 271–272 on *hysteron proteron*), offering a reconsideration of the concept of 'conjunction buttressing'.

As one can see, this roughly corresponds to Page's explanation. However, it can in no way be configured as a criticism directed at the use of the category of the *hysteron proteron*. Page's polemic ('Is it not time that such rubbish was definitely excluded from notes and grammars?' etc.) is entirely out of place.

## 2

Page's hostility towards the concept of *hysteron proteron*, and his attempt to 'eliminate' it from the critical lexicon by replacing it with the concept of 'explanatory clause introduced by -*que* (or sometimes *et*)', has its roots in the idea, especially widespread in British culture at least since the early modern period, that the *hysteron proteron* is an 'error', and that attributing to a poet the use of a *hysteron proteron* means making an accusation of inconsistency, of having done something wrong and reprehensible. This probably has to do with the use of the word 'preposterous' as a synonym for *hysteron proteron* encountered in early-modern rhetorical dictionaries and treatises, and with the frequent recourse to the example of the illogicality of 'the cart before the horse' to illustrate the meaning of it (in fact this expression is used by Page himself).[6]

Page is not the first British interpreter of Virgil to attack the use of the term *hysteron proteron*, and to propose the illogical *aut aut*: either *hysteron proteron*, or explanatory clause introduced by a coordinating conjunction. We find the same attitude, for example, in the notes on 2.353 by Bryce (1857, 42), by the American Frieze (1867[2], 367),[7] and by Storr (1888, 96). Even Conington, a commentator

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**6** 'In early-modern descriptions, *hysteron proteron* [...] was inseparable from what was known as the "preposterous", a reversal of "post" for "pre", behind for before, back for front, second for first, and end or sequel for beginning' (Parker 2007, 133). The approach to the *hysteron proteron* as an 'error' is of course not limited to Anglo-Saxon scholarship; cf. e.g. Menge 1890[6], 383: 'Das *Hysteron proteron* ist an und für sich ein Fehler, der sich nicht mit dem Namen einer Redefigur beschönigen läßt' {'The *hysteron proteron* is in itself an error, that is given the sheen of the name of a figure of speech'}.

**7** Frieze quotes Ladewig's paraphrase, which introduces the expression 'to that end' after *et* to clarify the meaning of Virgil's sentence (Ladewig 1851, 49). Again, this is entirely legitimate: only that introducing 'to that end' into the sentence is simply a way of 'explaining' the *hysteron proteron*; it is not an alternative interpretative option to that of defining Virgil's line a *hysteron proteron*, as would be Frieze's intention. If Virgil had written the Latin equivalent of 'Let us die, and to that end rush into the midst of the enemy', he would not have written a *hysteron proteron*, but, not having inserted the expression 'to that end' he did write a *hysteron proteron*.

who has no particular objection towards the *hysteron proteron*, in the case of *Aen.* 2.353 notes (1884[4], 126):

> 'Moriamur et ruamus' is not exactly a case of ὕστερον πρότερον. The first thing which Aeneas had to do was to persuade his comrades to die; the next to tell them how to do it.

It would seem, therefore, that Conington also joins Ladewig in understanding 'and [to this end] let us get into the fray'. Again, this explanation does not invalidate that the line is technically a *hysteron proteron*.[8]

## 3

In his 1894 note, Page illustrates his way of explaining the passages in which the exegetical tradition has identified *hysteron proteron* with a series of examples from the *Aeneid* (2.208, 223; 4.154, 263; 6.361, 365) and with one from Euripides (*Hec.* 266). Now, Page's operation transforms each coordinated clause with *-que* or *et* into a subordinate clause with a primarily causal value but more generally with a value of circumstantial presupposition. The action in the main clause presupposes, in the given circumstances, the action in the coordinated clause with *-que* or *et*; in 6.365, the fact that Aeneas can throw some earth to bury Palinurus presupposes the fact that he had previously made for the port of Velia, and therefore the Virgilian phrase 'bury me and make for the harbour of Velia' (= *hysteron proteron*) can be 'translated', by eliminating the *hysteron proteron*, with 'bury me making for the harbour of Velia'. As for 2.353, Page says, 'Applying this principle to the present passage we get 'Let us die by dashing into the thickest of the fray'.

Once again: it is hard to see how such a remark could be considered a *criticism* of the concept of *hysteron proteron*. These cases of *hysteron proteron* have been explained in this way since the ancient Homeric exegesis: in *Il.* 22.467–468 it is said that Andromache ἀπὸ δὲ ψυχὴν ἐκάπυσσε, / τῆλε δ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς βάλε

**8** See also, for example, Sidgwick 1884, 58: '*moriamur ... ruamus*, not the order of time, but the order of importance, and so natural'. An attitude of open hostility towards the *hysteron proteron* is also found in Nutting 1916; Norwood 1918, 149 ('I do not believe there is any such monster in literature — Latin or other — as a ὕστερον πρότερον'); Dunlop 1937. A notable exception is Kent 1909.

δέσματα σιγαλόεντα, 'she fainted away and away from the head she threw off the shining headbands'.[9] The exegetical scholia 22.468b Erbse wonder:

> **τῆλε δ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς <χέε δέσματα>:** καὶ πῶς ἀποψύξασα ἐνεργεῖ; ἔστι δὲ σύνηθες Ὁμήρῳ τὸ ὀφειλόμενον ἁπλῶς ἑρμηνεύεσθαι ἐν δυσὶ περικοπαῖς ἐκφέρειν·
>
> 'far from the head she dropped the headbands': and how does she do this, having fainted? Homer has the habit of expressing in two sections what he should say only once.

This consideration is followed by a list of four passages that contain as many cases of *hysteron proteron* (*Od*. 1.293, *Il*. 21.537, 2.4, and 10.67). One of these passages, and *Il*. 22.467–468, are explained in precisely the same way in which Page explains the Virgilian passages which contain *hysteron proteron*:

> ἄνεσάν τε πύλας καὶ ἀπῶσαν ὀχῆας (*Il*. 21.537), ἀπώσαντες ἄνεσαν [...]. οὕτως ἐκάπυσσε (*Il*. 22.467), / τῆλε δ' ἔχεεν ἀντὶ τοῦ χέασα τῆλε ἐκάπυσσε.
>
> 'they opened the doors and pulled back the bolts': 'having pulled back, they opened' [...]. Thus 'she fell unconscious' (*Il*. 22.467), 'and away she dropped', instead of 'having dropped away, she fell unconscious'.[10]

After all, explanations similar to those of Page are given by Norden, who is perhaps, together with James Henry, the commentator most willing to recognise cases of *hysteron proteron* in Virgil's text. Norden quotes Page, but does so only when he mentions the fact that 'the chronological reversal of terms (ὑστερολογία or ὕστερον πρότερον) [...] can also be explained by Virgil's search for a paratactic sentence structure' (Norden 1927[3], 379). For the rest, when Norden illustrates the cases of *hysteron proteron*, he does so in a way not very different from Page himself (e.g. 2.353 *moriamur et in media arma ruamus* [= *ruentes moriamur*], 5.292

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**9** The medieval vulgate presents the variant χέε instead of βάλε, which was the reading of Aristarchus (Did/A); the reading χέε is probably due to a will to attenuate the voluntariness of the action implied by βάλε. Modern editors also try to tone down the strangeness of the Homeric construction by placing a full stop at the end of 467; see Battezzato 2018[2], 22–23. On this passage, see Schironi 2018, 533–534.

**10** The scholium on *Il*. 22.468 is cited by Battezzato as testifying to the fact that the ancient exegetes of Homer recognised *hysteron proteron* in each of the passages mentioned therein; see Battezzato 2018[2], 41–45. However, the last sentence of the scholium reads: τινὲς δὲ ὡς τὸ 'θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε' (*Od*. 12.134), 'Some <see in it a chronological inversion> as <that which is observed in the expression> 'having brought up and generated''. θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε being one of the Homeric examples par excellence, this suggests that the scholiast meant the four passages quoted as something different from a real *hysteron proteron*, or at least as something different from a *hysteron proteron* like θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε.

*invitat pretiis animos et praemia ponit* [= *praemiis positis invitat*]), but without in any way wanting to criticise its concept, or even deny its existence.

# 4

Page, therefore, did not invent anything, but, as we said, the approach to the problem of the *hysteron proteron* he advocated had great success. His influence extended to the leading Virgilian commentaries of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century.

R.G. Austin's note on *Aen.* 2.353 (1964, 154), for example, brings the contradiction we have already noted in Page to a climax: 'put[ting] the important thing first, appending an explanatory clause by parataxis instead of subordination' is a good definition for many cases of *hysteron proteron*,[11] not a refutation of the existence of this phenomenon, all the more so if this is further illustrated by a reference to *Aen.* 2.749 *ipse urbem repeto et cingor fulgentibus armis*, which is one of the most striking examples of *hysteron proteron* in the *Aeneid*.[12] Nicholas Horsfall (2008, 292) is less trenchant than Austin, but he does quote him and displays an exaggeratedly sceptical and aporetic attitude.

Let us see how this classic example of *hysteron proteron* is treated in the two most important articles dedicated to the subject of Virgil's *hysteron proteron*, that of McDevitt (1967) and that of Kraggerud (2012).

McDevitt programmatically assumes a sceptical attitude: 'the reversal of the proper time-sequence of two events known as *hysteron proteron* is much less common in Virgil than has been supposed. Many of the alleged examples do not in fact contain such a reversal, and they admit a perfectly logical explanation' (McDevitt 1967, 317). Thus, McDevitt denies the label of *hysteron proteron* to twelve passages, some of which — if not all — instead represent indubitable

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**11** In his note on *Aen.* 10.140 Stephen Harrison cites Austin on 2.353 among the bibliographic references on Virgil's *hysteron proteron*, and echoes his formulation, but reversing his attitude: in 10.124 we have a case of 'the so-called ὕστερον πρότερον common in Vergil where the poet puts the most important thing first, appending an explanatory clause which precedes it in strict logic' (Harrison 1991, 98): as we can see, the words that Austin used to *deny* the presence of a *hysteron proteron* are used by Harrison to *define* it.

**12** The 'enemies' of the *hysteron proteron* are either silent (e.g. Page), or scrambling to deny it (e.g. McDevitt 1967, 320: '*cingor fulgentibus armis* [...] must be taken metaphorically', followed by Horsfall 2008, 252). Kraggerud (2012a, 104) declares the line spurious. See below for the 'rules' set by Kraggerud.

examples of this phenomenon.[13] McDevitt offers only four examples where, according to him, 'if the two clauses are taken literally, a temporal reversal must be admitted, and for these [...] justification is to be found in the dramatic and poetic effectiveness of the order'.[14] Even in these cases McDevitt tries as much as possible a) *not* to take the two clauses literally; and in any case b) to find 'justifications' of a poetic nature to demonstrate that 'if the second clause contributes a useful image, and, much more important, if the very order of the two clauses further enhances the effectiveness of the overall picture, then there is no flaw, and the fact that the clauses are presented in the 'wrong' order is irrelevant' (McDevitt 1967, 317). As can be seen, the idea of the *hysteron proteron* as 'flaw' persists in McDevitt: Virgil must be defended from the accusation of presenting the clauses in the 'wrong' order. This is the attitude with which McDevitt also faces the case of 2.353. In this passage, 'the rush into the fray ought, *strictly speaking*, to precede their death. *But* if we go beyond the literal sense we see that this too is an example of the General and Particular' (my emphasis), a phenomenon that McDevitt had previously spoken about in connection with 6.542–543, i.e., one of the passages that would not constitute actual examples of *hysteron proteron*. Since *in media arma ruamus* 'is not an invitation to action with any hope of defeating the enemy', 'the second clause *means* (though it does not *say*) the same as the first; it gives the exhortation in more specific detail'.[15]

This is entirely fair, but, once again, the 'General and Particular' is not a concept to be *opposed* to that of *hysteron proteron*; on the contrary, as already mentioned above, it represents an essential characteristic of very many Homeric cases of *hysteron proteron*, in which there is precisely a relationship of contextual presupposition between the actions indicated in the two clauses: here the action A 'to die' presupposes, in the given circumstances, action B 'rush into the fray'. As Battezzato says, starting from an example like *Il.* 5.118 δὸς δέ τέ μ' ἄνδρα ἑλεῖν καὶ ἐς ὁρμὴν ἔγχεος ἐλθεῖν ('Grant that I may slay this man, and that may he come within the cast of my spear'): '*hysteron proteron* adds an element specific to the circumstances and useful for clarifying the details of the narrative or conversation, but does not displace the textually most important element from the salient

**13** The passages are: *Aen.* 2.207–208, 2.223–224, 3.662, 4.154–155, 4.263–264, 5.292, 5.316, 5.379, 6.226, 6.331, 6.542–543, 8.125.

**14** McDevitt 1967, 319. The passages are: 2.353, 2.749, 6.365–366, 10.819–820.

**15** Pinkster's observations also follow the same line as McDevitt, whom he cites in the footnote: 'While Servius' comment on (a) [i.e., *Aen.* 2.353] is logically correct, the action *in arma ruamus* can also be seen as a specification of the manner in which or the method by which *moriamur* should be performed; in this light, the order of the clauses is entirely comprehensible' (Pinkster 2021, 710).

position. Note that very many of the Homeric cases of *hysteron proteron* involve only one line: the first element has a certain textual salience due to the initial position while the second element, chronologically antecedent, adds details that give greater fullness to the description' (Battezzato 2018$^2$, 20). Recognising the structure of the 'General and Particular' in *Aen.* 2.353 in no way contributes to 'diminishing' the *hysteron proteron* nature of the line; on the contrary, chronological reversal and circumstantial presupposition are two sides of the same coin, and work together in producing this textbook *hysteron proteron*.[16]

Kraggerud also tries to limit the detection of cases of *hysteron proteron* as much as possible. It is entirely legitimate, and even necessary, to analyse each case of alleged *hysteron proteron* individually; Battezzato also does the same in the case of Homer's examples of *hysteron proteron*. But Kraggerud's hypercritical attitude is, in fact, exaggerated, and it too derives, in the final analysis, from the long tradition of unmotivated distrust towards the *hysteron proteron* we are considering. Kraggerud catalogues *Aen.* 2.353 among its ten examples involving 'Actions not yet realized or not at all'.[17] According to him, great importance should be attached to the 'exhortative mood' of this line. If someone had written something like *occiderunt et in media arma irruerunt*, it would have been 'meaningless': but why? Of course, no prose writer would have written it, and no speaker would have uttered a sentence like this; but Virgil was a poet, and if the metre had allowed it, he might well, in my opinion, have written a *hysteron proteron* like this. According to Kraggerud, the exhortative subjunctive in 2.353 is charged with an intense 'emotional and connotative meaning so that no need is felt by an empathic reader to transform it into the more straightforward sequence (2–1). It is immediately felt that to fight is to die and that any hope of victory or even survival is ruled out beforehand. So the idea of a 'temporal reversal' in this example should likewise be abandoned [...] simultaneity and virtual identity, reflecting

16 Obviously, also the observations that McDevitt makes to illustrate the 'definite (and effective) dramatic purpose in Virgil's order' have no relevance to attenuating the *hysteron proteron* character of the line. Already Servius Danielis, in interpreting the passage as *hysteron proteron*, drew attention to its rhetorical efficacy: *bene tamen 'moriamur' opportuniore loco posuit; ante enim dixerat* (350) *'quae sit rebus fortuna videtis'*. The fact that DServ. says *bene tamen* suggests that even then the presence of a *hysteron proteron* could need, if necessary, some form of 'justification' (cf. Georgii 1891, 121). On the treatment of the *hysteron proteron* in ancient grammatical sources, see Torzi 2000, 174–180, 185–275; in Servius, see Kazanskaya 2016. On the ancient rhetorical terms for *hysteron proteron*, see Battezzato 2018$^2$, 39–40.

17 Kraggerud 2012, 121–126. The passage are: *Georg.* 4.106–108, *Aen.* 1.524–526, 2.352–353, 2.547–548, 4.288–289, 4.574–576, 4.594, 6.365–366, 6.348–351, 9.486–487. Apart from perhaps 4.594, I consider all of these cases to be good examples of *hysteron proteron*.

the speaker's understanding of the situation, are essential factors' (Kraggerud 2012, 123). I cannot follow the logic of this argument: the passage is indeed charged with an intense emotional and connotative meaning, and it is true that, in a certain sense, the two actions, 'to die' and 'to rush into the fray', are presented as simultaneous and virtually identical — but this happens precisely because Virgil resorts to the *hysteron proteron*, i.e., a chronological inversion between the action of 'dying' and that of 'rushing into the fray'. To 'die', it is necessary to 'rush into the fray'; one cannot first 'die' and then 'rush into the fray'. Saying 'to die' first and then 'to rush into the fray' means announcing the essential element of the sentence in the first place so that the second element, which is logically and chronologically its premise, appears almost subordinate to the first.

Moreover, it is clear that when the second element of a *hysteron proteron* involves a verb with the meaning of 'to be born',[18] or the first element of it a verb with the meaning of 'to die'/'kill' (as in Euripides *Hec*. 266 κείνη γὰρ ὤλεσέν νιν ἐς Τροίαν τ' ἄγει, 'for she it was that killed him and brought him to Troy', Sophocles *OC* 1387–8 θανεῖν ἀλλὰ συγγενεῖ χερὶ / κτανεῖν θ' ὑφ' οὗπερ ἐξελήλασαι, 'I pray that you die by a related hand and slay him by whom you have been driven out'), 'time reversal is safe because these verbs imply a specific chronological order' (Battezzato 2018$^{2}$, 24).[19]

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**18** As in the classic examples θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε (*Od*. 12.134) or τράφεν ἠδ' ἐγένοντο (on which see Hoekstra in Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989, 207 on *Od*. 14.201). All three examples of *hysteron proteron* signaled by Heinze 1897, 155–156 in Lucretius involve the idea of 'be born' or 'grow': 3.787 *crescat et insit* ('to exist and grow'), 797 *durare genique*, 6.527 *cetera quae seorsum crescunt seorsum creantur* ('are born and bred'): one may hypothesise an influence of Homer's formulas θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε and τράφεν ἠδ' ἐγένοντο. (We can also compare the only example of *hysteron proteron* in Pacuvius, *Trag*. 90 R.$^{3}$ = fr. 80.1 Schierl *omnia animat format alit auget* ***creat***.) On Lucretius' *hysteron proteron* see also Kenney 2014$^{2}$, 100 on Lucr. 3.159–160 *propellit et icit*, 'strikes and drives forward' (providing no further examples).

**19** To this tradition involving a verb with the meaning of 'to die'/'to kill' we can compare the most evident case of *hysteron proteron* in Horace, i.e., *Sat*. 2.3.293–294 *mater delira necabit / in gelida fixum ripa febrimque reducet*, where Kiessling and Heinze 1921$^{5}$, 260 refer, as well as to *Aen*. 2.353, to Lucil. 153 Marx = 155 Krenkel *occidam illum equidem et vincam* (where, however, we would have *hysteron proteron* only if we translated 'I will kill him and I will conquer *him*', but not if we translated instead 'I will kill him and I will win'). According to Kiessling and Heinze, the *hysteron proteron* is 'erklärlich, wie bei Virgil aus dem Pathos der Verzweiflung, hier aus dem Eifer des Scheltenden, der das Schlimmste nicht früh genug sagen kann, und dann mit der unentbehrlichen Erklärung nachhinkt' {explicable, as in Virgil from the pathos of doubt, so here from the zeal of the critic, who cannot say the worst thing quickly enough, and then lags behind with the essential explanation}. For an explanation of the *hysteron proteron* as a tendency of the spoken language, see Hofmann 1951$^{3}$, 123–124. This is relevant for cases of *hysteron proteron* in

# 5

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the treatments of the *hysteron proteron* by the interpreters of Virgil is the little, if any, attention they pay a) to the fact that the use of the *hysteron proteron* in the *Aeneid* constitutes an imitation of Homer; b) to the fact that in imitating the Homeric use of the *hysteron proteron*, and also in making a fact of style of what was a fact of (Homeric) language, Virgil fits into a tradition that mainly consists of Attic tragedy and, with very few examples, its Roman republican adaptations. Page never mentions Homer; McDevitt mentions Homer only in passing, in reporting the position of Norden, who in his brief treatment of the *hysteron proteron* in his *Anhang* II.2 says that 'Probably (Virgil) saw in it something specifically archaic or Homeric';[20] Kraggerud never quotes Homer in the course of his discussion, and limits himself to dedicating a postscript of about ten lines to 'Vergil and Homer' at the end of his article. In it, Kraggerud makes two observations: (i) 'It seems that Vergil has avoided deliberately the one Homeric type of *h.p.* that is felt as an offence against the natural order of events in past narrative', e.g. *Il.* 1.251 τράφεν ἠδ' ἐγένοντο; (ii) 'If we compare *A.* 6.366 [*aut tu mihi terram / inice, namque potes, portusque require Velinos*] with Homer's future *h.p.* like *Il.* 24.206 εἰ γάρ σ' αἱρήσει καὶ ἐσόψεται ὀφθαλμοῖσιν (where no special effect or enrichment seems to be gained by the reversal, however) Vergil may seem formally close to Homer, but the difference is nonetheless striking: Vergil's persona is subjective stressing his own priority, Homer is making an objective statement'.

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comedy: cf. Plaut. *Cist.* 675, *Men.* 509–510, *Mil.* 773, *Pseud.* 133, 283, *Rud.* 996, Ter. *Hau.* 779 (list of Jocelyn 1967, 282). On cases found in prose, generally of little interest, see Hofmann and Szantyr 1965, 698–699, with further references.

**20** Norden 1927[3], 379. Norden refers to Cic. *Att.* 1.16.1 *respondebo tibi* ὕστερον πρότερον, ὁμηρικῶς (so, for example, also Maurach 1990, 125). This passage can certainly be significant of how automatically the educated Romans of the late Republic associated time inversion with Homer (later, cf. also Quint. *Inst.* 7.10.11 *ubi ab initiis incipiendum, ubi more Homerico e mediis vel ultimis*; Plin. *Epist.* 3.9.28 *succurrit quod praeterieram* [...] *sed quamquam praepostere reddetur: facit hoc Homerus*). However, in that passage Cicero, like Quintilian and Pliny later, is not referring to the *hysteron proteron* we are discussing here, but to another phenomenon, the one in which a character answers questions or suggestions from another character in reverse order; more generally, the 'reverse order' principle (τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον, 'continuity of thought' principle) states that 'when two persons, objects, or ideas have been mentioned, it is the second which is uppermost in the mind and is taken up first (A–B–B'–A')' (de Jong 2001, xvii). This phenomenon was widely discussed by the ancient Homeric exegesis and in particular by Aristarchus: cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 2.629b Erbse 'Homer always deals with the later first'; see Bassett 1920; 1938, 119–128; Nünlist 2009, 326–337; Massimilla 2017; Schironi 2018, 154–157.

But: as for (ii), the critical thing is indeed that Virgil is '*formally* close to Homer', since it is on Homer's cases that he models his own; that between Homer and Virgil the poetic effects can be different — this is simply obvious, given that for Homer the *hysteron proteron* is a fact of language, while for Virgil it is a fact of style. Conte's observations regarding Homeric parataxis can very well be transferred to the *hysteron proteron*: what in Homer was a fact of language, linked to the original oral composition of the poem, becomes in Virgil a fact of style.[21] After all, the *hysteron proteron* is only a 'subgenre' of the parataxis, 'similar to *dicolon abundans*'.[22] For Homer, 'The tendency towards coordination, the prevalence of parataxis and the absence of tenses specifically dedicated to marking the precedence in the past linguistically authorize the *hysteron proteron*' (Battezzato 2018$^2$, 22); Virgil appropriates this fact of Homeric language and makes it a fact of style, which contributes to characterising his own epic as 'Homeric'.

As for (i), the thesis according to which Virgil would have completely avoided the forms of *hysteron proteron* involving the 'narration proper (about realised actions in the past) expressed by means of preterite tense [or historical presents]' is entirely based on the analyses of a series of cases of *hysteron proteron* carried out by Kraggerud in the course of his article. But, as has been said, these analyses are conducted with a sceptical and hypercritical attitude, and are not always convincing. In particular, Kraggerud denies the label of *hysteron proteron* to numerous passages, which he includes in the category 'Simultaneous actions'.[23] But most of these passages are undoubtedly to be considered fully valid examples of *hysteron proteron*. There is no need for a macroscopic time reversal between action A and action B for *hysteron proteron* to occur; the inversion can be slight, barely perceptible, and above all also simply logical or based on a circumstantial presupposition; as mentioned above, the relationships that link the two clauses, and that the *hysteron proteron* reverses, can be various: relationships of cause-effect, premise-result, nomic sentence-eventive sentence, etc. There may be a relationship of hyponymy, when 'one of the two elements indicates a class of actions or states that is included in the class of actions or states expressed by the other element' (Battezzato 2018$^2$, 25). When the second element is hyponymous of the first, we have *hysteron proteron* where 'the first element indicates a

**21** Conte 2021, 69.

**22** Dainotti 2015, 223 (with n. 684). Thus, Conte includes the *hysteron proteron* among the consequences of 'Virgil's marked tendency to avoid participial constructions and to replace them with coordinate structures' (2021, 77, n. 22); for *hysteron proteron* as a special case of *dicolon abundans*, see also, in the footsteps of Norden, Görler 1985, 276; Piazzi 2018, 37; Pinkster 2021, 710.

**23** Kraggerud 2012, 129–137.

completed action, which presupposes and includes the single elements'; these are cases bordering on pleonasm, and not always easily categorised as *hysteron proteron*. The example given by Battezzato is *Il*. 3.318 λαοὶ δ' ἠρήσαντο, θεοῖσι δὲ χεῖρας ἀνέσχον 'and the people made prayer and lifted their hands to the gods': 'to have prayed one must have already raised one's hands to the gods'. This *hysteron proteron* (noticed as such by Lausberg 1998, 397) is precisely reproduced by Virgil in *Aen*. 5.685–686 *Tum pius Aeneas umeris abscindere vestem, / auxilioque vocare deos, et tendere palmas*.[24]

Stronger for us are the cases of *hysteron proteron* in which the first of the coordinated elements is hyponymous of the second; in these cases the two verbs can be differentiated by the generality or specificity of the action described or by the completeness or otherwise of the action.[25]

Battezzato makes observations regarding *hysteron proteron* in Homer and tragedy that can be perfectly extended to Virgil's *hysteron proteron*. Not taking adequate account of the fact that Virgil's *hysteron proteron*, on the one hand, imitates Homer and on the other, is part of a tradition of imitations of Homer, leads Kraggerud to contest cases of *hysteron proteron* which should not be contested. Take, for example, *Aen*. 9.486–487 *nec te tua funere mater / produxi pressive oculos aut vulnera lavi*. Kraggerud denies that there is *hysteron proteron* here: 'Hardie (1994), followed by Dingel (1997), applies the term *h.p.* here without further discussion, but wrongly in my opinion'. Here Virgil locates himself in a tradition of funereal *hysteron proteron*. Macrobius, *Sat*. 6.2.21 indicates a passage from Ennius' *Cresphontes* (*Trag*. 138–139 Jocelyn) as a model for Virgil here: *neque terram inicere neque cruenta convestire corpora / mihi licuit, nec miserae lavere lacrimae salsum sanguinem*. Jocelyn comments: 'Certainly both Ennius and Virgil reverse the chronological order of events. But such ὕστερον πρότερον is frequent in the *Aeneid*, Attic tragedy, and the republican adaptations. It may even have been a particular feature of funeral descriptions; cf. Euripides, *Herakles* 1360–1361 περίστειλον νεκροὺς / δακρύοισι τιμῶν ['Give these a tomb, and clothe the dead, honouring them with tears']'.[26] We can add Euripides *Supp*. 494–495 σὺ δ' ἄνδρας ἐχθροὺς καὶ θανόντας ὠφελεῖς, / θάπτων κομίζων θ' ὕβρις οὓς ἀπώλεσεν; 'Are you giving help to our foes even after death, burying and carrying out to burial (or:

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**24** In the list of Kent 1909, 77 n. 1; cf. Fratantuono and Smith 2015, 621: 'There may be an element of *hysteron proteron* too'. The reference to *Il*. 3.318 is not pointed out by Virgil's commentators (absent from the list of Knauer 1964); see Marini 2015–2016, 20.

**25** See Battezzato 2018², esp. 24–27.

**26** Jocelyn 1967, 279–280. The *hysteron proteron* in 9.486–487 appears never to have been noticed before Jocelyn.

and taking care of) people who have been brought to ruin by their hubris?' The tradition does not end with Virgil: Ovid, *Pont.* 1.9.47 *funera non potui comitare nec ungere corpus*; Statius, *Theb.* 8.114–115 *non tumulo, non igne miser lacrimisque meorum / productus, toto pariter tibi funere veni.*

# 6

Many of the passages which, according to Kraggerud, would not be cases of *hysteron proteron* because the actions in the two cola would be 'simultaneous' are instead to be considered cases of *hysteron proteron* to all intents and purposes; therefore, the 'rule' enunciated by Kraggerud according to which Virgil completely avoids *hysteron proteron* involving the 'narration proper (about realised actions in the past) expressed by means of preterite tense' is not valid. Let us look at some examples.

Sinon recounts how he would have escaped the human sacrifice to which he had been destined: *Aen.* 2.134 *eripui, fateor, leto me et vincula rupi*. The *hysteron proteron* is noted by Servius Danielis: *et est hysteroproteron, prius enim erat ut vincula rumperet, et sic fugeret*. Both Austin and Horsfall invoke the concept of paratactic explanation to deny that the line can be defined as a *hysteron proteron*. Kraggerud agrees with the refusal of the qualification of *hysteron proteron*; according to him, '*eripui* is the general notion summing it all up in one word whereas 2 [i.e. the second part of the line] explains how the escape was achieved (*et vincula rupi* = 'by breaking the bonds')'. Once again, Kraggerud's explanation is substantially correct, but it explains what can still be defined as a *hysteron proteron*. Here we are faced with a case in which there is a circumstantial presupposition: action A ('saving oneself from death') presupposes, in these circumstances, action B ('breaking the bonds'). A cannot occur unless B first occurs, as in 2.353 A ('die') cannot occur unless B ('rush into the fray') first occurs. This fits perfectly into the category of *hysteron proteron*. Kraggerud's own words confirm it: *eripui me leto et vincula rupi* in prose would be *ruptis vinclis eripui me leto* (or *eripui me leto, ruptis vinclis*: this is not what matters), precisely in the line of cases of *hysteron proteron* as explained (e.g.) by Norden. It should also be noted, against the idea of a precise simultaneity between the two actions on which Kraggerud insists, that *vincula rupi* is not only the logical presupposition of *eripui me leto*; there is also a chronological gap between the two actions because of Sinon one could not say that he 'saved himself from death' simultaneously with his 'breaking the bonds': *first* Sinon must break the bonds, and *then* he can say he 'saved himself from death'. In other words, Sinon is not 'saved from death' *while* he 'breaks the bonds': instead, after breaking the

bonds, he evidently escapes unnoticed and saves himself; at that point, then, he can say that he 'saved himself from death'.

## 7

A kind of 'subgenre' of *hysteron proteron* is characterised by the verb *relinquo* in the second element.[27] In these cases, the current scholarly consensus tends to deny the presence of *hysteron proteron*: the verb *relinquo* would have the particular meaning of 'leave behind' and not the obvious one of 'to go away and leave (a place), depart from, abandon' (*OLD* s.v. 2, where it is placed, for example, *Aen.* 7.7). It seems clear to me that the recourse to this sense of *relinquo* is motivated by the desire to annul the *hysteron proteron*; in other words, the most immediate sense of the verb is rejected, and one is sought that makes it easier to eliminate the *hysteron proteron*. Thus, Horsfall always translates 'normally' (*re*)*linquo* in its various occurrences in *Aen.* 3 (e.g. 10 *litora cum patriae lacrimans portusque relinquo*, 'then weeping I left the shores and harbours of my homeland'), but translates 7.7 *tendit iter velis portumque relinquit* as '(Aeneas) set his sails on course and left the harbour behind'. But this approach can, and perhaps should, be reversed: since the *hysteron proteron* is an essential feature of Virgil's style, it is not appropriate to strive to find ways to eliminate it.

The case of *Aen.* 7.7 is perhaps the one in which the chronological inversion is less perceptible: this is because action A does not contain a precise determination of the place of crossing or arrival, so it can easily be seen as simultaneous with action B of leaving the port. However, for the ancient reader it was perhaps assumed that the ship would first have left the port by rowing, and then unfurl the sails only once it had left the port itself.[28]

But consider instead 4.153–155. If the deer are already crossing the fields (154 *transmittunt*), and in doing so they gather in droves raising clouds of dust, there must be *hysteron proteron* when Virgil adds the second coordinated phrase *montisque relinquunt* (155). It is clear that *montibus relictis* would be the right way to render *montisque relinquunt* in prose,[29] and this means confirming the presence of a *hysteron proteron*. With a bit of goodwill, one could also say that *glomerant*

**27** The passages are: 4.153–155, 5.315–316, 7.7, 8.125 (the only one where late ancient exegesis recognised a chronological inversion: see Servius and Tiberius Claudius Donatus ad loc., Servius on 3.662, 6.525: see Torzi 2000, 99, 177), 10.819–820.

**28** See e.g. Mohler 1948, 48–49. This is contemplated, but rejected, by Horsfall 2000, 52.

**29** So many interpreters since La Cerda 1612, 409; e.g., Ladewig 1851, 105.

and *relinquunt* are 'simultaneous' (McDevitt 1967, 317–318; Kraggerud 2012, 129–130), but in saying this, we neglect the previous coordination with *transmittunt ... campos*. Virgil wants to clarify where the deer are, and they are not on the mountains, nor are they abandoning the mountains: they have already abandoned them, and now they run across the plain.[30]

## 8

In these cases of 'Theme and Variation' (*dicolon abundans*) with a form of (*re*)*linquo* in the last colon, it is therefore not easy to distinguish between cases in which there is a real logical inversion in the succession of the two members and cases in which the two actions are instead to be considered as simultaneous. The logical inversion appears more clearly in cases where the place towards which the action is directed or through which it takes place is made explicit in the first member. If in *Aen.* 7.7, where no particular place is made explicit in the first member, the logical inversion between *tendit iter velis* and *portum reliquit* is perceptible in a very slight way, in the remaining cases it is perceptible with more clarity — unless, of course, one persists in not feeling it due to a programmatic prejudice against the *hysteron proteron*.

It should be noted that the Virgilian situation, in which we have a series of cases of *dicolon abundans* characterised by the presence of a form of *relinquo* in the second colon, and which at least vaguely suggest *hysteron proteron*, exactly replicates the Homeric situation, and constitutes an obvious imitation of it. There is a series of Homeric passages with a coordinated phrase containing a form of λείπω which is perfectly parallel to Virgil's series with *relinquo*. In the same way as in Virgil, in these passages one can perceive, with lesser or greater clarity, some logical inversion between the two members, and at least in one of these cases authoritative commentators speak of *hysteron proteron*.

For example, in *Od.* 16.340–341 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πᾶσαν ἐφημοσύνην ἀπέειπε, / βῆ ῥ' ἴμεναι μεθ' ὕας, λίπε δ' ἕρκεά τε μέγαρόν τε ('And when he had fully told all that had been commanded him, he went his way to the swine and left the courtyard and the hall') the two actions, the one indicated by the usual collocation βῆ ῥ' ἴμεναι and the one indicated by λίπε, can be seen as simultaneous. Thus, in

30 See Maclennan 2007, 100; Gildenhard 2012, 158. Another way of neutralising the *hysteron proteron* could be to say that some of the deer cross the plain and some are still leaving the mountains: this is the approach of Ladewig 1857, 117.

cases like *Il.* 1.428 (= 2.35) ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασ᾽ ἀπεβήσετο, τὸν δὲ λίπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ('So saying, she went his way and left him where he was'); 10.272–273 τὼ δ᾽ ἐπεὶ οὖν ὅπλοισιν ἔνι δεινοῖσιν ἐδύτην, / βάν ῥ᾽ ἰέναι, λιπέτην δὲ κατ᾽ αὐτόθι πάντας ἀρίστους ('So when they had clothed them in their dreadful armour, they went their way and left there all the chieftains'). In a case like *Il.* 15.728–729 ἀλλ᾽ ἀνεχάζετο τυτθόν, ὀϊόμενος θανέεσθαι / θρῆνυν ἐφ᾽ ἑπταπόδην, λίπε δ᾽ ἴκρια νηὸς ἐΐσης ('but [Aias], ever foreboding death, gave ground a little along the bridge of seven feet in height, and left the deck of the shapely ship'), a minimum of chronological inversion can be noticeable.[31]

But consider *Il.* 15.123–124: and then would have been even greater the anger of Zeus towards the gods, εἰ μὴ Ἀθήνη πᾶσι περιδείσασα θεοῖσιν / **ὦρτο διὲκ προθύρου, λίπε δὲ θρόνον ἔνθα θάασσε**, 'if Athena, fearing for them all, had not sped forth through the doorway, and left the throne where she sat'. In his note on this passage Janko (1994, 242) observes: 'The rapid dactyls and *hysteron proteron* in 124 lend excitement — she is in the foyer before she rises from her chair!'. Although Battezzato does not list this passage, Edwards (1991, 45 n. 49) proposes it as a classic example of *hysteron proteron* together with *Il.* 21.537 (on which see below).

The Virgilian cases of *dicolon abundans* with *relinquo* in the second member, which are placed at the limits of the *hysteron proteron*, are therefore inspired by the analogous Homeric cases with λείπω.[32]

# 9

Consideration of the cases of Homeric *hysteron proteron* can help interpret the Virgilian passages in which the presence or absence of *hysteron proteron* is discussed. *Il.* 21.537 οἳ δ᾽ ἄνεσάν τε πύλας καὶ ἀπῶσαν ὀχῆας ('and they opened the doors and thrust back the bars') is presented by Edwards as a classic example of *hysteron proteron* together with *Il.* 15.124, and the line is also present in

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**31** Cf. also, to limit ourselves to the *Iliad*, *Il.* 16.367–369, 17.107–108, 533–536, 21.496. Another series of passages presents the colon with λείπω in the first place, in what is perhaps to be considered the 'normal' order of ideas: *Il.* 5.204, 14.284–285, 15.135–136, 18.65–66, 468, 19.14–15, 21.17–18, 22.136–137, 22.226.

**32** Norden 1927[3], 380, n. 1 suggested an Ennian influence on this Virgilian typology, noting how three lines of the *Annales* ended with a form of *relinquo*: 51 Sk. *vix aegro cum corde meo me somnus reliquit*, 137 Sk. *postquam lumina sis oculis bonus Ancus reliquit*, and esp. 618 Sk. *despoliantur eos et corpora nuda relinquont*, with *dicolon abundans* (but without *hysteron proteron*).

Battezzato's catalogue (2018², 42). A similar passage is *Il.* 24.446 ἄφαρ δ' ὤϊξε πύλας καὶ ἀπῶσεν ὀχῆας ('and straightway opened the doors and thrust back the bars'). This type of *hysteron proteron* influenced Aeschylus, *Choeph.* 877–879 ἀνοίξατε / ὅπως τάχιστα, καὶ γυναικείους πύλας / μοχλοῖς χαλᾶτε ('open as soon as possible and unblock the bars that close the doors').[33]

Now, a debated case of supposed *hysteron proteron* in Virgil is *Aen.* 2.258–259 *inclusos utero Danaos et pinea furtim / laxat claustra Sinon*. Here we are not faced with a real *dicolon abundans*, but with a striking case of syllepsis bordering on zeugma, and this is undoubtedly the most noticeable stylistic aspect of the passage. But 'this is also an example of *hysteron proteron*, since the bars would be loosened before the Greeks could be released'.[34] The reference to the Homeric typology of *hysteron proteron* which involves the action of unlocking the bolts in the second member of the dicolon and the effect of this unlocking, i.e., the opening of the doors, in the first member, helps us to understand that here, where the unlocking of the bolts follows the liberation of the Greeks, with stylistic virtuosity, Virgil wants to combine a syllepsis/zeugma with a Homeric-type *hysteron proteron*. This is all the more probable if we remember that *Il.* 21.537 was included among the cases of *hysteron proteron* listed by the exegetical scholia on *Il.* 22.468b (see above). It is therefore possible, if not probable, that Virgil was aware of lists of this kind from which to draw inspiration for his operations of Homeric imitation.

There are also other examples of Homeric *hysteron proteron* which may have directly influenced Virgil. Take *Od.* 6.314–315 ἐλπωρή τοι ἔπειτα φίλους τ' ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι / οἶκον ἐυκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν ('then there is good hope that you will see your loved ones and you will come to your well-built house and your homeland'). The passage is not in Battezzato's list, but Chantraine 1953, 352 (with a list of passages belonging to this typology) and Garvie 1997, 159 ('Logically Odysseus will come to his πατρίς before his οἶκος') indicate *hysteron proteron*; but as well as between πατρίς and οἶκος, I would say that there is *hysteron proteron* also between φίλους τ' ἰδέειν and ἱκέσθαι / οἶκον: first you have to get home, and then you see your loved ones. In *Aen.* 11.593–594 *post ego nube cava miserandae corpus et arma / inspoliata feram tumulo patriaeque reponam*, where Henry (1878, 172) indicates *hysteron proteron*, Virgil seems to imitate this type of Homeric *hysteron proteron*: logically, Diana will first bring back the body and weapons of Camilla to her homeland, and then she will place them in a burial

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**33** On the interpretation of the passage, see Battezzato 2018², 45.
**34** Ganiban 2012, 240.

mound. Virgil Homerises Homer, adding a Homeric-type *hysteron proteron* to the reworking of *Il.* 16.453–457 (~ 16.671–675).[35]

In considering, among the examples involving 'Actions not yet realized or not at all', *Aen.* 4.574–576 *deus aethere missus ab alto / festinare fugam tortosque incidere funis / ecce iterum instimulat*, Kraggerud rejects the *hysteron proteron* suggested by Buscaroli (1932, 400).[36] Actually, here Virgil probably keeps in mind a Homeric formulaic typology in which, similarly to *Aen.* 4.574–576, these are the actions envisaged by an order (and therefore 'Actions not yet realized or not at all'), and a chronological inversion occurs which involves, in the second member of the dicolon, 'untying the ropes': *Od.* 9.177–178 ἐκέλευσα δ' ἑταίρους / αὐτούς τ' ἀμβαίνειν ἀνά τε πρυμνήσια λῦσαι, 'I ordered my companions themselves to board the ship and to loose the stern ropes' (178 = *Od.* 9.562, 12.548, 15.548).[37] Even if in the Homeric cases the inversion is between 'boarding' and 'loosing the ropes', and not between 'leaving' and 'cutting the ropes', it seems probable that the Homeric formula, with its suggestion of *hysteron proteron* influenced Virgil's diction.[38]

# 10

To appreciate a *hysteron proteron* in Virgil it is sometimes necessary to make strict reference to the Homeric model, even in cases where in Homer there is no *hysteron proteron* and it is instead Virgil who 'Homerises' Homer by introducing one.[39]

Take, for example, 5.292 *invitat pretiis animos et praemia ponit*. Norden identifies this line as *hysteron proteron* (= *praemiis positis invitat*). McDevitt (1967, 319) and Kraggerud (2012, 131) deny that there is *hysteron proteron*, and instead see it as a simple case of 'Theme and Variation'.

**35** Cf. Marini 2015–2016, 82–83.

**36** First the sailors will have to cut the cables that hold the ship fixed to the bank, and then they will be able to escape; the passage is also in the list of Kent 1909, 77 n. 1. Cf. also *Aen.* 3.666–667 and 3.639.

**37** The *hysteron proteron* in this series is noticed by Classen 1867, 203; see Monro 1901, 70: 'Prothysteron, since they must have unfastened the cables before embarking. The embarkation is put first as being the main action'. Contra, Hoekstra in Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989, 264. The passage from *Od.* 9.177–180 is compared with *Aen.* 4.574 by Marini 2015–2016, 20–21.

**38** For two cases of *hysteron proteron* from the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* in which Virgil would have directly taken into account Homeric models see Kazanskaya 2015.

**39** For this kind of 'stylistic intertextuality', see Dainotti 2021, esp. 401–404 and the introduction to this volume.

McDevitt's and Kraggerud's criticisms ignore the Homeric model. In *Il.* 23, the beginning of the introductory sequence to the contests is fixed, providing: (i) a section where Achilles is said to set the prizes for a given contest, and these prizes are described, of which it is said that Achilles puts them up for grabs and offers them to the first, second, and third; (ii) a section in which Achilles addresses his companions, inviting those who want to participate to stand up, and referring to the prizes. See, for example, the introduction to the boxing contest: (i) in 653–656 the poet says that Achilles 'set forth prizes (θῆκεν ἄεθλα) for grievous boxing': he ties a mule in the arena and offers the winner a cup with two handles; (ii) in 657–663 he stands up and in a direct speech invites the two strongest to come forward, saying that he will give the first the mule, the second the cup: 'we invite (κελεύομεν) for these prizes the two strongest to raise their fists and strike'.

Phase (ii) corresponds to *invitat pretiis animos*; phase (i) to *praemia ponit* (= θῆκεν ἄεθλα). That '*pretia* is not different from *praemia*' (Kraggerud), far from demonstrating the non-existence of the *hysteron proteron*, is its inescapable premise: the reader must imagine that Aeneas first sets out the prizes (*praemia ponit* = Homer's phase (i)), and then, by means of the reference to those same prizes, he invites his companions to participate (*invitat pretiis animos* = Homer's phase (ii)). Virgil inverts the Homeric phases, creating a *hysteron proteron* for the reader who knows Homer's text and assumes it as the 'reality' of the facts.[40]

## 11

The distrust of and hypercritical attitude towards the *hysteron proteron* that are observed in much of contemporary Virgilian criticism therefore seem to a large extent excessive and unjustified. Most of the criticisms levelled at Virgil's *hysteron proteron* are not criticisms at all; for example, saying that in a particular passage we have 'Theme and Variation', or *dicolon abundans*, and that therefore there is no *hysteron proteron*, does not make sense: the *hysteron proteron* is a particular case of *dicolon abundans*. Consequently, all cases of *hysteron proteron* are also cases of *dicolon abundans*. What specifies a given case of *dicolon abundans* as *hysteron proteron* is the presence of a logical-chronological inversion between the actions expressed in the two cola. This reversal need not be dramatic; it can

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**40** In 5.486 *invitat qui forte velint et praemia dicit* we have the same *hysteron proteron*, although the use of *praemia dicit* instead of *praemia ponit* (which literally translated θῆκεν ἄεθλα) could leave open the possibility that only phase (ii) is referred to here, with elimination of phase (i).

also be very subtle, or barely perceptible, and we can remain faced with cases in which one is left in doubt whether there is *hysteron proteron* or not (this is the case, e.g., of *Aen.* 7.7). On the other hand, we have seen how much useless effort Virgil's interpreters have dedicated to trying to 'neutralise' cases in which the logical-chronological inversion between the two cola is truly sensational (think of *Aen.* 2.353). This is the legacy of a critical tradition that regarded the *hysteron proteron* as a defect: to deny the *hysteron proteron* meant to defend Virgil.

Just as Virgil's use of the *dicolon abundans* in general is modeled on the Homeric one, so is that of the *hysteron proteron*: in both cases, Virgil turns what was a fact of (Homeric) language into a fact of style. The same wide range of gradations in the intensity of the *hysteron proteron* that we find in Virgil, for which we go from the clear example of *Aen.* 2.353 to the ambiguity of *Aen.* 7.7, does nothing but replicate the Homeric situation, in which, in the same way, the logical-chronological inversion between the two members of a *dicolon abundans* could be more or less evident, and often left room for the subjective interpretation of the commentator.

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