

ISSN 1018-9017

# SCHOLIA

*Studies in Classical Antiquity*



NS Vol. 1 / 1992

South Africa

ISSN 1018-9017

# SCHOLIA

*Studies in Classical Antiquity*

Editor: W. J. Dominik

NS Vol. 1 / 1992

South Africa

# SCHOLIA

*Natal Studies in Classical Antiquity*

ISSN 1018-9017

*Scholia* features critical and pedagogical articles and reviews on a diverse range of subjects; in addition, there is information about programmes and activities in African universities and schools, news about the University of Natal's Museum of Classical Archaeology, and the B. X. de Wet Essay.

**Manuscripts:** Potential contributors should read the 'Notes for Contributors' located at the back of this volume and follow the suggested guidelines for the submission of manuscripts. Time before publication decision: 2-3 months.

**Subscriptions (1993):** Africa R15; outside Africa US\$15/UK£7,50. Includes ns Vol. 1 (1992) & ns Vol. 2 (1993). Foreign subscribers should send payment with all bank charges paid; the preferred method of payment is an international postal money order or an international bank draft in South African Rand.

**Address:** Correspondence concerning manuscripts and subscriptions should be directed to *Scholia*, Department of Classics, University of Natal, King George V Avenue, Durban, 4001, Republic of South Africa. Telephone: (031) 816.2312; fax: (031) 816.2214; telegram: University telex 621231SA; electronic mail: Dominik@Classics.UND.AC.ZA.

**New Series:** *Scholia* is indexed and abstracted by *L'Année Philologique* and listed in the *MLA Directory of Periodicals* and *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory*; the tables of contents are accessible by electronic mail through the TOCS-IN project. NS Vol. 1 (1992) is published with the support of the University of Natal and the Classical Association of South Africa.

**Old Series:** *Scholia* was founded by A. P. Bevis at the University of Natal, Durban and retains its earlier format in the 'B. X. de Wet Essay' section.

**Cover Illustration:** Drawing by E. A. Mackay based on an Attic black-figure fragment (inv. L.1989.K) in the Museum of Classical Archaeology, University of Natal, Durban (on permanent loan from M. A. Gosling).

**Typesetting:** W. J. Dominik

**Printing:** Multicopy Centre, UND

**Copyright:** UND Classics 1992

# SCHOLIA

*Natal Studies in Classical Antiquity*

ISSN 1018-9017

## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE (1991-92)

W. J. Dominik	Editor/Business Manager
J. L. Hilton	Assistant Editor/Reviews/In the Schools
E. A. Mackay	Advisory Editor/In the Museum
M. A. Gosling	In the Universities
A. P. Bevis	Reader/B. X. de Wet Essay
S. C. McGill	Editorial Assistant
A. M. Delany	Editorial Assistant

## EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD (1991-92)

J. M. Claassen	University of Stellenbosch
P. J. Davis	University of Tasmania, Australia
W. J. Henderson	Rand Afrikaans University
S. B. Jackson	University of Natal, Durban
D. Konstan	Brown University, USA
D. M. Kriel	University of South Africa
M. Lambert	University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg
D. H. J. Larmour	Texas Tech University, USA
B. E. Lewis	University of Port Elizabeth
K. O. Matier	University of Durban-Westville
Z. M. Packman	University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg
W. T. Wehrle	College of William and Mary, USA
B. X. de Wet	University of Natal, Durban

# SCHOLIA

*Natal Studies in Classical Antiquity*

---

NS Vol. 1

1992

ISSN 1018-9017

---

## CONTENTS

Editorial Note 1

## ARTICLES

*Poikiloidos Sphinx* 3  
*E. A. Mackay*

Playing the Others: The Mythological Confusions of Admetus 12  
*C. A. E. Luschnig*

Eyes, Knowledge and Power in the *Prometheus Bound* 28  
*David H. J. Larmour*

Plutarch on Justice Toward Animals: Ancient Insights on a Modern Debate 38  
*Stephen T. Newmyer*

Persius *Semipaganus*? 55  
*William T. Wehrle*

A Generic-Ontological Reading of Adrastus' Sminthiac Prayer  
(Statius, *Thebaid* 1.696-720) 66  
*William J. Dominik*

Inleidende Atmosfeerskepping in Vergilius se *Aeneis* en Dante se *Inferno* 79  
*L. F. van Ryneveld*

Pericles and Ephialtes in the Reforms of 462 BC 85  
*Edmund F. Bloedow*

The Teaching of Latin in a Multicultural Society: Problems and Possibilities 102  
*Jo-Marie Claassen*

**REVIEW ARTICLE**

C. G. Perkell, <i>The Poet's Truth: A Study of the Poet in Vergil's Georgics</i> (Peter Davis)	119
<b>Reviews</b>	125
<b>Books Received</b>	128
<b>UND Roman Studies Conference Proceedings</b>	130
<b>In the Universities</b>	138
<b>In the Museum</b>	140
<b>In the Schools</b>	142
<b>B. X. de Wet Essay</b>	149
<b>Notes for Contributors</b>	156
<b>Forthcoming in <i>Scholias</i> (1993)</b>	159
<b>Subscription Form</b>	161

## EDITORIAL NOTE

The Editors introduce the first volume of the new series of *Scholia: Natal Studies in Classical Antiquity*. *Scholia* invites submissions relating to all fields of Classical Studies from scholars in Africa and abroad. Particularly welcome are articles on classical antiquity and the teaching of Classics in Africa.<sup>1</sup> This volume features contributions from academics and teachers in South Africa, Malawi, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There are no geographical restrictions upon contributors, although the Editors are disposed to give preference to South African contributions of a suitable standard. Worthy articles submitted are published after being reviewed by at least two members of the Editorial Advisory Committee.

*Scholia* offers its contributors competent and prompt refereeing by leading scholars in Africa and abroad (for articles only), immediate responses to the receipt of contributions, a short time for decision between submission and acceptance (2-3 months), the shortest possible time between acceptance and publication (3-12 months in most cases), regular communication at all intervals of the refereeing and editorial process, and free offprints of articles. *Scholia* invites its readers to take advantage of these features by submitting their work and to advise others who have useful work to contribute. While the Editorial Committee undertakes to publish submissions accepted as soon as possible, it reserves the right to hold over any contribution to the next volume. The Editors deem this policy to be preferable to the alternative of keeping an article for up to a year and then rejecting it because of insufficient space.

This first volume of the new series is made possible through the financial support of the University of Natal and the Classical Association of South Africa. *Scholia* expresses its gratitude for this support. Naturally we encourage our readers to subscribe to *Scholia*. A subscription form is included at the back of this volume for this purpose.

The University of Natal (Durban and Pietermaritzburg) and the University of Durban-Westville (Durban) have an establishment of sixteen full-time Classics lecturers spread between the three campuses and a combined enrolment of approximately 20 000 students.

William J. Dominik  
Editor (1991-92), *Scholia*

---

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, J. M. Claassen's 'The Teaching of Latin in a Multicultural Society: Problems and Possibilities' (pp. 102-18), P. McKechnie's 'Kamuzu Academy, Mtunthama, Malawi' (pp. 142f.), and A. Oberholzer's 'Latin in Natal Schools' (pp. 143-47) in this volume; see also L. Thompson's 'Roman Perceptions of Blacks', F. Opeku's 'Popular and Higher Education in *Africa Proconsularis* in the Second Century AD' and 'Classical Studies in Ghana', forthcoming in *Scholia* ns Vol. 2 (1993).

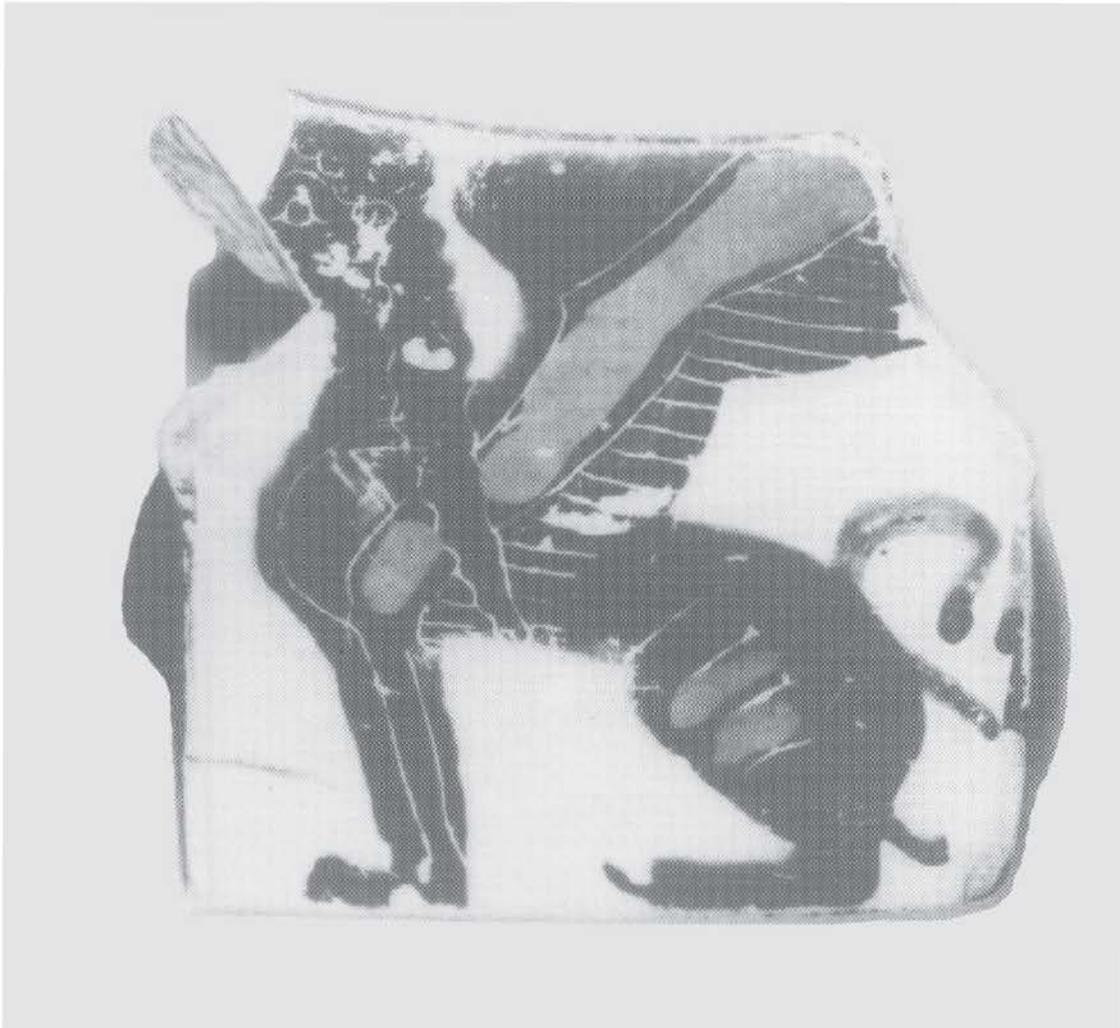


Figure 1: Handle-plate from a black-figure column-krater: Durban inv. L.1989.K (scale 1: 1.14).



Figure 2: Diagram showing the decoration scheme of a black-figure columnkrater (composite). The interior would be painted black; on the reserved band around the body would be the main scenes.

## POIKILOIDOS SPHINX

**E. A. Mackay**

Department of Classics, University of Natal  
Durban 4001

**Abstract.** The image of the sphinx on the cover of *Scholia* is derived from a hitherto unpublished Attic black-figure fragment in the Museum of Classical Archaeology, University of Natal, Durban. After a description of the fragment and consideration of its attribution, the broader range of circumstances in which sphinxes occur in the vase-painting and sculpture of the archaic period is summarised in an attempt to determine the likely signification of the Durban sphinx in both its archaeological and cover-plate manifestations.

To mark the institution of its new series, *Scholia* now appears in a new format. The sphinx which is featured in the new cover design is derived, with a little artistic licence, from an Attic black-figure fragment (inv. L.1989.K) in the Museum of Classical Archaeology, University of Natal, Durban.<sup>1</sup> It is a handle-plate (greatest dimension 132 mm.) from a column-krater produced in Athens around the middle of the sixth century BC, and is decorated with a sitting sphinx facing to the left. On the underside a portion of the handle on which the plate rested is still attached. Added red was applied as follows: a patch on the sphinx's shoulder, continued as a stripe on the wing, and two patches on the haunch; in addition, a broad line runs around the inner edge of the mouth just below the rim. Figure 2 illustrates the normal form and decoration scheme of an Athenian column krater of this period,<sup>2</sup> and the estimated height of the krater from which the Durban

---

<sup>1</sup> See figure 1. Acknowledgement is due to Mrs Anne Gosling, the owner of the sphinx fragment, both for generously allowing the Museum to exhibit the piece, and for granting permission for its use in the *Scholia* cover design and its reproduction in this article. I am indebted to James Ede for the information that the fragment was previously in the Moustaki Collection and therefore almost certainly found in the area around Alexandria.

<sup>2</sup> The normal scheme is black neck, handle and foot, and a black band separating the main scene-area around the widest part of the body from the rays around the base; on the shoulder, enclosed tongues, alternating black and red. The rim is commonly decorated with lotuses or diagonal zig-zag lines or, as in figure 2, attenuated rays; the lip may be black, or be reserved, with archaic sigma-motifs as in figure 2, or diagonal zig-zag lines. The outer edges of the handle-plate are black, the upper surface reserved with one of a variety of

fragment derives is about 410 mm. with a rim diameter of about 440 mm. There is no indication of the use of added white on the fragment, although as sphinxes seem generally to have been thought of as female,<sup>3</sup> white flesh might be expected in terms of Attic black-figure convention: in the representation of sphinxes, as with gorgons, the use of added white seems to have been a matter of the painter's preference—some sphinxes have white faces,<sup>4</sup> others do not. The round eyes, of the shape used conventionally by black-figure painters for men, need imply no more in this context than a recognition that the figure is a monster, and not human.<sup>5</sup>

Sphinxes such as this are common in the decoration of column-kraters around the middle of the sixth century, and indeed are comparatively well-represented on the surviving kraters produced in the workshop of Lydos, either by the master himself or by one of his companions (the Painter of Vatican 309 and the Painter of Louvre F 6);<sup>6</sup> it is to this workshop that the Durban fragment may be attributed.<sup>7</sup> As Beazley notes, 'the difference between the three painters comes out in the *human scenes*; the *wild animals* are in a single style—whether one artist painted them all, or whether

---

motifs painted on it.

<sup>3</sup> The word σφίγξ ('sphinx') has feminine gender in ancient Greek and seems to have been female: Herodotos (2.175) writes of the setting up of ἀνδρόσφιγγες ('male sphinxes') in Egypt as though the male of the species was extraordinary—although this may indicate his awareness that Egyptian sphinxes generally *were* male, as figures standing for the pharaoh (on Greek male sphinxes see H. Payne, *Necrocorinthia* [Oxford 1931] 89 and B. S. Ridgway, *The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture* [Princeton 1977] 158 n. 13); Sophocles in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* refers to the Theban Sphinx as πτερόεσσα κόρα ('winged maiden', 508) and τὸν γαμψώνυχον παρθένον χρησμοδόν ('the crook-clawed, sooth-singing maiden', 1199f.); the heads of archaic sculpted sphinxes closely resemble those of *korai*. Furthermore, E. Vermeule, perhaps following a delicate suggestion of J. Harrison (*Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* [Cambridge 1908] 208) comments on the erotic implications of a (female) sphinx (*Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* [Berkeley 1979] 171-173).

<sup>4</sup> To give a single example, a white-faced sphinx appears on a Lydan hydria, Töcher 1027 (J. D. Beazley, *Paralipomena* [Oxford 1971] 47—henceforth *Para.*).

<sup>5</sup> Large, round eyes seem to have been a standard feature of hybrid mythical monsters of various kinds: again, one might compare painted representations of gorgons, where, albeit in a frontal face, the eyes are regularly of the 'male' shape. The almond-shaped female eye does occur on some sphinxes, particularly in combination with added white flesh, when presumably the painter was aware of the sphinx as a female more than as a monster.

<sup>6</sup> J. D. Beazley, *Attic Black-figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford 1956) 107-132—hereafter *ABV*; *Para.* 43-54; T. H. Carpenter, *Beazley Addenda* (Oxford 1989) 29-35.

<sup>7</sup> I am grateful to Dr Elke Böhr for her suggestion that parallels for the Durban sphinx might be found among the works of the Painter of Louvre F 6.

subordinates had so assimilated the master's animal style that we cannot tell one hand from another.'<sup>8</sup> Given that sphinxes are in the same category as 'wild animals', since they commonly occur in similar decorative circumstances, this should rule out a more specific attribution; however, the marked similarity of the Durban sphinx to sphinxes on the handle-plates of a column-krater in Athens,<sup>9</sup> attributed (on the basis of its human figures) to the Painter of Louvre F 6, at least prompts the comment that the Durban sphinx is by the same hand as the sphinxes on the Athens krater. In both cases the incised detail within the silhouette of the sphinx follows the same scheme, and in general form and proportion the figures are very close; the only real differences are that the Durban sphinx sits on its haunches (the Athens beasts raise their haunches a little) and its tail is closer to the body, even overlapping in part, although in a similar configuration. In the *Scholia* cover design, the restoration of missing parts (the wing-tip, nose and chin, broken away on the Durban fragment) was derived from the better-preserved sphinx on the Athens krater—although the incision defining the tail overlapping the haunch is a modern addition for greater clarity. It is worthy of note that both the Durban and the Athens sphinxes hold their wings in the same position, raised and bent back like a bird in flight; more commonly, sphinxes on vases have the wing curling forward at the tip or half-folded.<sup>10</sup>

The question of whether there may be some special significance in the placing of a sphinx on the handle-plate of a column-krater is, to say the least, enigmatic. Other motifs used in this position by the Lydan workshop include gorgons, sirens, flying eagles, swans, and a male head in profile (or two, overlapping). Apart from the last, the common origin of most of these motifs can be traced back through the animal-bands used by early Attic black-figure vase-painters, such as the Gorgon Painter and Sophilos, and their immediate source of inspiration in the Corinthian and Island animal-

---

<sup>8</sup> *ABV* 114.

<sup>9</sup> Athens 11706, *ABV* 125, 28.

<sup>10</sup> Examples of the curl-tipped wing may be seen on a column-krater (Boston 60.1452, *Para.* 51), while a nuptial lebes (Houston 34.129, *ABV* 125, 32) exemplifies both the curl-tipped and the half-folded types under its handles; however, compare two column-kraters recently attributed to the Painter of Louvre F 6, both of which have sphinxes with wings stretched back on the handle-plates, though the proportions of the figures are different from the Athens and Durban examples: Polyguros 235 and Vasileia, Borowski Collection, published in M. A. Tiverios, *Προβλήματα τῆς Μελανόμορφης Ἀττικῆς Κεραμικῆς* (Thessalonike 1981) plates 1-19 and 25-27.

bands, to the art of the Near East;<sup>11</sup> it is noteworthy that all these creatures occur together with sphinxes or are interchangeable with them in the secondary or subsidiary decorative fields of kraters and other vase-shapes. Sphinxes occasionally occur, for instance, in the scene section on the bodies of column-kraters, where they are usually set like framing parentheses to either side of the composition<sup>12</sup> or are placed with other canonical 'wild animals' in the scene area on the reverse side.<sup>13</sup> With this may be compared similar uses of sphinxes on other vase-shapes such as amphorae and cups.<sup>14</sup> From this evidence, on the grounds of interchangeability and derivation from purely decorative animal-bands, it may be concluded that in such instances the motifs fulfil a function that is primarily decorative.

Occasionally, however, a sphinx features as an integral part of a mythological narrative scene, and then it is likely to be the infamous Sphinx of Thebes, preying on the Theban youths who were unable, when challenged, to answer its riddle. Although Oedipus' well-known encounter with this monster becomes popular later, mainly on red-figure vases at the end of the archaic period, a few black-figure painters represent a sphinx with youths: an early example of such a scene is on a Siana cup by the C Painter,<sup>15</sup> where a sphinx carries off one youth while other youths flee before it.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> See, *inter alia*, the evidence assembled by E. Akurgal (trans. W. Dynes), *The Art of Greece: Its Origins in the Mediterranean and Near East* (Methuen 1968) *passim*.

<sup>12</sup> For example Orvieto, Faina inv. 2667, formerly 45 (ABV 125, 27), Louvre E 678 (ABV 125, 29), Polyguros 235 (Tiverios [10] plate 2); also the nuptial lebes Houston 34.129 (ABV 125, 32).

<sup>13</sup> For example, Oxford G 190 (ABV 124, 16), between lions, and Perugia (ABV 125, 31), between panthers.

<sup>14</sup> Most notably on the François Vase (Florence 4209, ABV 76, 1), where a sphinx appears at each end of the topmost band on the obverse, the Hunting of the Calydonian Boar. Instances of framing sphinxes may also be found on a number of Tyrrhenian neck-amphorae (for example, on Louvre C 10697 [ABV 96, 20] and Louvre E 840 [ABV 99, 52]), and sphinxes are sometimes themselves framed, for instance, by swans on Munich 1426 (ABV 95, 5). On the latter amphora, as on others, sphinxes also appear on the neck as subsidiary decoration; here again the François Vase may be compared, in respect of the paired sphinxes around an elaborate floral motif on the obverse above the rays. The sphinxes that sometimes replace the handle-palmettes on little master cups should also be mentioned in this regard.

<sup>15</sup> Syracuse 25418 (ABV 53, 49). For a different treatment of the same theme, see also the Haimon Painter's lekythos, Syracuse 12085 (C. H. E. Haspels, *Attic Black-figured Lekythoi* [Paris 1936] 241, 8).

<sup>16</sup> A number of archaic engraved gems have a similar theme: a sphinx with a youth in its claws—see, for instance, G. M. A. Richter, *Engraved Gems of the Greeks and the Etruscans* (New York 1968) cat. 152-154; cat. 151 in a fairly similar compositional

Some late archaic painters (one or two black-figure artists, perhaps influenced by a larger group of contemporary red-figure painters) depict the sphinx perched on a column, usually with an Ionic capital,<sup>17</sup> and in such scenes there is surely influence from the sculpted sphinxes which seem to have proliferated in Athens as in other parts of the Greek world in the course of the archaic period.

In their monumental manifestations, sphinxes seem always to have occupied lofty positions. They featured not infrequently as architectural ornaments in the form of akroteria and often (in Attica) graced the tops of tall funerary stelai, where they were customarily perched on an Ionic capital. However, as Ridgway points out, it seems probable that some at least of the Attic sphinxes listed by Richter as stele finials may rather have been independent votive monuments after the fashion of the sphinx dedicated at Delphi by the Naxians around 570-560 BC.<sup>18</sup>

Given this variety of circumstances in which it may appear, what did a sphinx signify to Athenians in the archaic period? Certainly, as with most mythical monsters, there are folk-bogey elements to the sphinx,<sup>19</sup> but at an early stage it seems to have acquired an apotropaic force, serving, like the gorgon, as a shield device or helmet decoration; it was probably in this capacity that sphinxes were used as akroteria and on funerary monuments. For the Greeks there seems to have been no contradiction in having a

---

arrangement shows a sphinx preying upon an antelope, and it is curious that in cat. 155 a griffin is preying upon a youth: that these elements seem to be interchangeable indicates the common derivation from predatory 'bogeys'.

<sup>17</sup> The best known red-figure example is undoubtedly the scene inside a cup which gives the Oedipus Painter his name: Vatican 16541 (J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*<sup>2</sup> [Oxford 1963] 451, 1), and compare also the pelike Boston 1971.343. Among rarer black-figure examples are a pelike by the Eucharides Painter (Chicago 1967.115.68, *ABV* 396, 23) with a sphinx on a column, pillar or stele without a volute capital, between men, and a skyphos by the Theseus Painter (Athens 18720 [formerly E 653a], *ABV* 520, 23), with a sphinx descending from her column.

<sup>18</sup> For a brief discussion of the significance of the sculptural remains, see Ridgway [3] 156-160, where she expands upon the work of G. M. A. Richter in *The Archaic Gravestones of Attica* (London 1961). Ridgway [3] 156 n. 10 suggests that the elevation of funerary and votive sphinxes may derive by association of ideas from the ever-popular sphinx-akroteria. She notes that in any case its wings 'make it a plausible figure to place on elevated positions'. For a summary of the development of the funerary series, see J. Boardman, *Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period* (London 1978) 162f. and figures 224-228. See also D. Kurtz and J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (London 1971) 84-86.

<sup>19</sup> On a white ground lekythos (Berlin 1934, *ABV* 528, 44), two female monsters are depicted together—'Sphinx' and 'Lamia': see Haspels [15] 144.

legendary predator who carries off Theban youths serve as a protective tomb guardian,<sup>20</sup> and it is probable that the two roles were united in the concept of the sphinx as a Κῆρ, or Death-goddess.<sup>21</sup> The narrative vase-scenes with sphinx and youths, which seem to evoke the Theban legend, could in some cases as well depict consultation as catechism and may thus refer to a mantic aspect that is later clearly attested to in literature.

One need consider only the evocative adjectives used by Sophocles to describe the Sphinx in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*;<sup>22</sup> ἡ ποικιλωδὸς Σφίγξ ('the sphinx with her embroidered song', 130), for example, combines the idea of singing, not in itself devoid of mantic connotation, with an adjective that conveys suggestions of something colourful (indeed painted), changeful, and complex almost beyond comprehension; it is used elsewhere to describe oracles.<sup>23</sup> The reference later in the text to τὰν γαμψώνυχα παρθένον χρησμοφδόν ('the crook-clawed, sooth-singing maiden', 1199f.) combines the oracular with the predatory aspect of the Sphinx.

Given the pervasiveness of the sphinx as an image in archaic Athens, and the range of functions with which in various contexts the creature seems to have been associated, it would seem likely that even when apparently serving a purely decorative function, a sphinx would have carried encoded within it a range of not entirely unconnected significations. On a column-krater handle-plate, for instance, it is easy to hypothesise an apotropaic function with an admixture of *memento mori* and perhaps too a soothsaying touch of *in vino veritas*. The placing of the figure on the highest part of the vessel overlooking the contents can also be perceived as not inappropriate considering the lofty perches customarily occupied by monumental sphinxes at the time. In the case of a sphinx on the cover of an academic journal, the elevation must be gauged from what is printed within; however, here too the ancient connotations of the figure are evocative: this 'soothsayer with the evil

---

<sup>20</sup> A similar duality in helping/harming function is to be recognised, for instance, in two aspects of Apollo—the healer and the sender of sudden death.

<sup>21</sup> See Harrison [3] 207-212 and Vermeule [3] 171-173.

<sup>22</sup> Although Sophocles composed his play later by over a century than the time when the Durban sphinx was painted, there is no reason to believe that his presentation of the Sphinx, which is incidental to his dramatic purpose, is in any way innovative in terms of the pre-existing concept of the monster.

<sup>23</sup> As R. D. Dawe, *Sophocles: Oedipus Rex* [Cambridge 1982] ad 130 comments, Aristophanes uses ποικίλος of an oracle in *Knights* 195f.: χρησμός . . . καὶ ποικίλως πως καὶ σοφῶς ἠνιγμένως ('an oracle . . . rather ambiguously and cunningly wrapped up in obscure words'). Similar uses by Herodotos (7.111) and Euripides (*Helen* 711) are comparable.

habit of asking riddles as well as answering them'<sup>24</sup> serves as a reminder that for scholars as for humanists, even more important than providing the right answer is the ability to ask the right question.

---

<sup>24</sup> So J. Harrison [3] 207 describing the Sphinx as Ker.

## PLAYING THE OTHERS:<sup>1</sup> THE MYTHOLOGICAL CONFUSIONS OF ADMETUS

C. A. E. Luschnig

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University of Idaho  
Moscow, Idaho 83843, USA

**Abstract.** Through verbal and visual allusion, Euripides represents Admetus as a character in search of a literary identity. In order to understand what has happened to him, Admetus tries on various roles of more tragic or heroic characters from epic and tragedy.

### *A Character in Search of a Role*

Like many Euripidean agonists (proto- or deuter-), especially adult male ones,<sup>2</sup> the Admetus represented in the *Alcestis* is out of his element in the world of myth. This is something deeper than lack of success: it is a profound lack of sympathy with the heroic world, a failure not only to live up to, but even to recognize the heroic mode or code. In the play Pheres expresses this most openly (726), but Admetus, except in the realm of hospitality, lives it. He seems to do well enough in the ordinary relation-

---

<sup>1</sup>The title is with playful respect borrowed from Froma Zeitlin's well-known piece 'Playing the Other: Theater, Theatricality, and the Feminine in Greek Drama' in J. Winkler and F. Zeitlin (edd.), *Nothing to Do with Dionysos?* (Princeton 1990) 63-93.

<sup>2</sup> One thinks especially of Jason, the ex-hero saved by Medea, who even trivializes his past and spends his time looking for security; of Hippolytus who tries to impose his fantasy of life with Artemis (real but not transferable) on palace life where he is out of his element on both the personal and political levels; of Orestes in the *Electra* who is reluctant for rather too long to admit that he is Orestes and has to wait for the loyal old geezer to recognize him by tokens; this Orestes seems all the more diffident juxtaposed to Electra's fantasy about him; of Agamemnon in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*, unable to make a firm decision until it is too late and whose power to decide is taken from him by the victim of his cruel deception; of Pentheus, whose vision of himself as 'child of Agave and Echion' is too limited for his survival in a world that includes Dionysus and maenadism; of Heracles in the play that bears his name, who cannot seem to distinguish between the mythological adventure and the domestic/political world.

ships of son, host, husband, householder,<sup>3</sup> but when these are squeezed by the pressures of a heroic world of interfering gods and extraordinary men and women, his values become warped and he insufficient to deal with the new requirements. Of course the story itself, or in any case the part of it enacted here, does not give him much scope for heroism, but that again is a common feature of Euripidean men, who so often are depicted after (like Jason, Heracles, Theseus, or Menelaus) or before (like Agamemnon in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*) their great feats or adventures. Their actions in the plays (even when the major event of their career does take place in the play's time, as in the case of Orestes in *Electra*) often leave us doubting the reality or value of their *aristeiai*. The *Alcestis* enacts not the crucial choice for Admetus of looking for a surrogate or for Alcestis of accepting death, but its result, its effect on the characters. These events, however, if they had been enacted would certainly have put Admetus in a more unfavorable light, as references to them and reenactments of them at crucial times hint.<sup>4</sup> He does not really have a heroic story in this play as he might have had in another telling.

Admetus himself experiences a series of 'mythological confusions' in which he tries to put himself into a number of traditional stories or literary scenes of such greater or more tragic men and women as Achilles, Haemon, Andromache. These stories and scenes, however, really are not quite parallel to his own story. His brief lapses into other lives, other stories, are not mere poses on his part: he actually plays these roles however unconsciously, briefly, and unsuitably.<sup>5</sup> He even reveals some anomalies of

---

<sup>3</sup> Ample evidence is given of what he was like in the *chronos* of which the present action is the *kairos*. He has always been a good son. Granted the only evidence is his own claim, but that is proof enough that he knows the rules. His wife seems to have no complaints about him as a husband and she does die for him, an act which in itself gives him worth; as host he has the friendship of Apollo and Heracles. His house is celebrated for its wealth and hospitality. The problem is he acts as if the extraordinary were ordinary and every situation could be met by following the rules.

<sup>4</sup> M. Lloyd, 'Euripides' *Alcestis*,' *G&R* 32 (1985) 120f., makes an important point about flashbacks to past events.

<sup>5</sup> Admetus' ineptness in choosing and playing his literary types, I believe, adds to the lightheartedness of the piece, but also may contribute at the last to the resurrection of Alcestis. See C. A. E. Luschnig, 'Admetus the Artist' forthcoming in *Eranos*. On Admetus' active participation 'in the conversion of his moribund state into joyful recovery of life,' see also E. M. Bradley, 'Admetus and the Triumph of Failure,' *Ramus* 9 (1980) 112-27 (esp. 123-26).

gender identification<sup>6</sup> as he strives to make sense of his situation by resorting to characters and scenes that were well known to the audience.<sup>7</sup> That the audience would feel any chronological difficulty with Admetus' mythological forays is unlikely. When he projects himself into stories that have not yet

---

<sup>6</sup> See Zeitlin [1] on the feminizing of males as part of the tragic experience. Zeitlin suggests 'how closely the tragic genre in its theatrical form, representation, and content is linked to Greek notions of gender, and how for the most part man is undone (or at times redeemed) by feminine forces or himself undergoes some species of feminine experience,' (86). Admetus is a perfect example of this 'feminization': he is undone by a woman, defeated by her as his father points out (697) and his extended life granted by her free gift of her life turns into a living death for him. And yet the various female roles he tries on prepare him for seeing *her* life through *her* eyes and thus mentally resituating her in her world, which in part is what redeems them both: he had asked her to prepare a home for him in the other world, but in the *kommos* and the short speech that ends it, it is he who prepares the space for her in their home. The ultimate result of the feminizing of Admetus is the salvation rather than the destruction of himself and his wife and of the *oikos* they formed at their marriage, the past event brought to the front of his mind at his return from the funeral. Also, the dirty floors, the children, the servants all serve to bring us back to the more liveable, less heroic circumstances of Alcestis' and Admetus' domestic arrangements, putting them back into a story more suitable to them and therefore bestowing upon them the better life that Admetus claims (1157).

<sup>7</sup> On the parallelism between Alcestis and epic figures (especially Patroclus and Hector) see R. Garner 'Death and Victory in Euripides' *Alcestis*,' *CA* 7 (1988) 58-71: 'More than once, reactions to Alcestis' death invite comparisons with reactions to the deaths of Patroclus and Hector. When Alcestis is dying (193-95) and after she is gone (769-71) one of the servants notes how kind she always was, even to the humblest. Now both Patroclus and Hector displayed such kindness, and just as with Alcestis, this trait was mentioned at their deaths. . . . Similarly before she is gone Admetus speaks of the vision of her ghost which will come to him in his dreams (354-56); this, combined with Alcestis' dying requests, recalls the sad ghost of Patroclus, which visits and pleads with Achilles as he sleeps (*Il.* 23.65-107). Such shadowy and phantom reminiscences might seem to be of the sort that evaporate in the bright light, but they are surrounded by words and phrases which seem to have been drawn by Euripides from the *Iliad* to suggest that poem to the audience'. If Alcestis is to be compared to the heroes of the *Iliad*, what about Admetus? At the very least he must be the foil to the hero. In certain cases this means that he is playing the role of Achilles, hardly an appropriate one for him. But he does reject the gifts; he does anticipate receiving the dreams of his lost loved one; he does finally bury the body of the one who died in his place. On Euripidean self-conscious awareness of the tradition see F. Zeitlin's brilliant piece, 'The Closet of Masks: Role-Playing and Myth-Making in the *Orestes* of Euripides,' *Ramus* 9 (1980) 51-77. I suggest here that the 'literariness' which she attributes to the *Orestes* was already present in an inchoate form in *Alcestis*. As J. W. Halporn points out in 'The Skeptical Electra,' *HSCP* 87 (1983) 101, 'Indeed, it is often through his references to earlier Greek literature that Euripides isolates his heroes from the supporting framework of society and the sanction of family and religion. . . . Such reminiscence of earlier literature is part of the tradition of tragic dramaturgy from its very inception.'

happened according to ancient traditions of mythological chronology, he is suggestive rather than explicit. Of these references to other stories some are more clear and detailed than others. Orpheus<sup>8</sup> (357) he calls by name and wishes for his gift of song. The reference to Perseus (incongruously slaying the Gorgon, not rescuing Andromeda, 1118) is unmistakable. And the reference to the story of Protesilaus whose widow had a statue made of him with which she acted out her erotic fantasies, a story from the neighborhood, even from the family,<sup>9</sup> is strongly felt (especially if, as is likely, the *Protesilaus* of Euripides was earlier than the *Alcestis*<sup>10</sup>), but those to Ismene and Haemon, Achilles and Cassandra, Andromache and Penelope are brief and faint echoes or shadowy hints of literary or dramatic scenes from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, *Oresteia* and *Antigone*.

Other aspects of the play, I believe, encourage us to see it as representing a world where other literature not only exists, but intrudes. Among them: the fact that it is set in the framework of other stories (Apollo's quarrel with his father, Heracles' labors); the narrative description of Alcestis dressing like a warrior preparing for the ordeal; explicit references to other stories and figures (Orpheus, Asclepius, Acastus,<sup>11</sup> who was after all

---

<sup>8</sup> Orpheus keeps cropping up, not always by name. First Admetus wishes for his persuasive power of song, to bring Alcestis up (before she has died), saying 'I *would* go down' (357-60). But he doesn't. Instead he situates his wife as a homemaker in Hades and bans music in the house. Admetus *would* go down, yes, but it is the museless Heracles who *will* go down if he has to and who does face off with Death. The Orpheus theme returns in the choral ode about song when the old Pheraean men wish to restore Alcestis (455-59) in this stasimon about the virtue of song as praise. Again, Apollo is pictured not as the Orpheus of the resurrection but as the charming bucolic singer, surrounded by animals both domestic and feral (570-87). Finally the Thracian tablets of the mystic Orpheus are mentioned for their vanity in the face of Necessity. Thus the various aspects of Orpheus as singer, lover, and mystic are introduced, but as C. P. Segal, *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet* (Baltimore 1989) 19, points out, it is the brute force of Heracles that turns out to be the right stuff. Heracles makes the allusion to himself as a mock-Orpheus figure more explicit by echoing Admetus' futile wish (1072-74; cf. 362) after he has in fact brought Alcestis back into the light.

<sup>9</sup> In Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead* (428), Protesilaus refers to Alcestis as τὴν ὁμογενῆ μου ('my kinswoman'). Note also Lucian's echo of *Alcestis* 900 in the words ἀνθ' ἑνὸς δύο νεκρούς ('two of us dead instead of one'). See J. Kott (tr. B. Taboriski and E. Czerwinski), 'The Veiled Alcestis,' in *The Eating of the Gods* (London 1970) 95.

<sup>10</sup> On the *Protesilaus* see T. B. L. Webster, *The Tragedies of Euripides* (London 1967) 97f.

<sup>11</sup> Of whom A. M. Dale (ed.), *Euripides: Alcestis* (Oxford 1954) ad 730, says: 'The allusion to Acastus, son of Pelias, a far from famous mythological figure, is of a highly unusual type in drama or indeed in any form of narrative, apart from lyric.'

Protesilaus' father-in-law besides being Alcestis' brother).

The Apollo in the prologue has been compared by scholars to the Apollo of the *Eumenides* and especially his dialogue with Death to that with the Furies.<sup>12</sup> A recent study of the play by Peter Riemer treats similarities between Alcestis' farewell to her home (as reported by her servant) and Deianeira's in the *Trachiniae*.<sup>13</sup> Despite their treatment in both recent and older studies, there is still room for discussion of the effect of such allusions: do they add to the gravity or, as I believe, to the levity and humanity of the piece?

The scene between Admetus and Pheres is one of the richest in allusions to other scenes and stories, reactivating the scene between Creon and Haemon from the *Antigone* and the rejection of the gifts of Agamemnon by Achilles in *Iliad IX*. In the scene with his father, Admetus also becomes like the young warrior defending his fallen companion from the enemy. Ironically the enemy has not come to strip the body, but to bring gifts. The scene then shifts subtly to one of ransom with Admetus acting like Achilles holding himself to ransom and finally to a less appealing Admetus, holding on to the body of his victim.

The Peleid connection extends back a generation with some genealogical confusion. Like Achilles' father Peleus, both Admetus and his father had received only the good things from the jars of Zeus; for Admetus has had everything given to him and suffered no loss of anyone dear.<sup>14</sup> But that was not to last for any of the men: Peleus must lose his only son untimely and Admetus learns that his doom is upon him. Admetus' father is to become for a short time the Peleus figure in the play, if a much debased one. And Admetus sees himself for a moment or two as the Achilles figure. Pheres has a single son who was (until he was given a way out) destined to die untimely, but Pheres, unlike Peleus, is offered the opportunity of saving his son. Pheres, however, does not live up to the image of the suffering old man on the doorstep of sorrowful old age, missing his son. His grief would have been bearable. We know this from the fact of his refusal to die for his son, from his action in the play in which he reenacts his earlier refusal and gives us a hint of its manner, and from the parallel life the chorus offers

---

<sup>12</sup> G. Italic, 'De Euripide Aeschlyli Imitatore,' *Mnemosyne* 4.3 (1950) 177-82; P. Riemer, *Die Alkestis des Euripides: Untersuchungen zur tragischen Form* (Frankfurt am Main 1989) 14-19; R. Aéliou, *Euripide, héritier d'Eschyle* 2 (Paris 1983) 132-36.

<sup>13</sup> Riemer [4] 56-70.

<sup>14</sup> Or as W. Arrowsmith, *Euripides: Alcestis* (Oxford 1974) 3-27, explains it in the introduction to his translation, Admetus does not know the modes of human existence.

when they sing of a kinsman who lost his only son and bore it with equanimity.<sup>15</sup> Pheres (like the Peleus of the later *Andromache*, who true to his own *phusis* risks all to protect his great-grandson) could have had the enjoyment of his grandson even if his son had died. But Pheres' son—given the choice—decides not to die untimely: he has already lost the right to impersonate Achilles and feel the great hero's emotions before the play opens. The scene from the *Iliad* flashed before us, however, becomes also the one in which Achilles threatens to go home with his men and ships so that he can enjoy the good things his father has arranged for him. The wife, of course, is missing and Admetus cannot go home to her even if he disowns Pheres.

Alcestis' life (like those of Admetus and his family) has been comparatively uneventful. Monumental or at least mythical events (such as the special relationship with Apollo) are treated as ordinary.<sup>16</sup> Even Apollo makes his son's death sound more like a commonplace intergenerational squabble than a cosmic event that defined the human condition once for all (or almost all): people die and there is no more opportunity for resurrection; no one is even trying to change the way things are.<sup>17</sup> The *Alcestis*, despite its life and death issues, or because they are treated in such a physical and at times even vulgar way, has a certain domestic coziness and a familial intimacy (with all its positive and negative aspects) that other dramas (whether comic—until the advent of New Comedy—or tragic) lack.

Admetus' and Alcestis' tragic colleagues generally have lives more crowded with incident. A livelier past could have been established for both Alcestis and Admetus, but it is not. Their past extends back only as far as

---

<sup>15</sup> It is somewhat odd for a chorus to speak of a kinsman in common and their consolation is hardly comforting to Admetus, but it does illuminate the character of his father. And that is perhaps the point.

<sup>16</sup> As J. M. Bell notes in the impressive piece 'Euripides' *Alcestis*: A Reading,' *Emerita* 48 (1980) 43-75, the chorus has a tendency to deny the uniqueness of the acts of Alcestis and Admetus (see esp. 49 and 73). They are not the only ones. Throughout extraordinary events are passed over as if they happened every day. The characters themselves seem to add to this disjunction between what is said of a (nearly) miraculous event and how it is treated *and* how we know it is related to reality, by their very ordinariness when they are not in fact doing extraordinary things.

<sup>17</sup> Apollo's part in this squabble was to take vengeance not against the cause, nor even against the instrument of his son's destruction, but against the makers of the instrument. He is hardly fair or just, but rather ineffectually petty and puerile. On the intergenerational significance of this cosmic conflict, see E. M. Thury, 'Euripides' *Alcestis* and the Athenian Generation Gap,' *Arethusa* 21 (1988) 197f., 209-211.

their wedding day (referred to in the reported scene in the bedroom and again after the funeral when Admetus makes his pathetic then and now comparison). Absent are the bizarre demise of Pelias at the hands of his (other) daughters at Medea's instigation and the contest for Alcestis' hand in which Apollo gave Admetus the help he needed to win her by yoking together two incongruous and undomesticated beasts. We are told that her father is dead and so indirectly, if at all, are reminded of the extreme methods used by the sisters of Alcestis to preserve the head of their household, but the point is certainly not emphasized there. In fact her father's passing is mentioned at the time Alcestis is being turned into the generic woman (535) and so the *name* of old Pelias is suppressed when his death is referred to, though he is mentioned several times by name elsewhere in the drama (37, 82, 435).

Without a past of his own to fall back on or a heroic part to play in his life, Admetus reacts to events and characters by slipping into roles of other literary figures. The most prominent scenes reactivated in the *Alcestis* come from the *Iliad*, the *Oresteia*, and the *Antigone*. Not content with these literary *topoi*, Admetus also tries on Orpheus and Perseus among his legendary archetypes.

### *Playing to Antigone*

Alcestis' talk about remarrying (284-86) makes the difference between herself and most other victims of imposed or self-sacrifice the more prominent. She can be compared to Antigone doing her duty to the kinsman nearest to her and currently in the greatest need of her ministrations and giving up her life for him. But Alcestis is concerned with her family, that is, with her living family, unlike Antigone whom circumstances, a blighted life and so many deaths, have made more concerned with her family's past and those who have gone ahead of her to Hades than with anyone alive, making her choice not only the idealistic one, but the practical one as well. An echo of the *Antigone's* infamous logic (911f.) may be found in Alcestis' calculation (293f.) that Pheres or his wife should have died for their only son now that they are beyond child-bearing age. But hers is a parody of the younger woman's desperate rationalization: Alcestis mentions the aged parents in order to suggest a way that her husband could have avoided death without needing her sacrifice, not to show why death is preferable.

There are, in fact, several reminiscences of the *Antigone* which though not always close are numerous enough to indicate that Euripides intended his audience to refer to the earlier play. For example, Pheres' calculation

(692f.) about the length of time spent here compared to that in Hades echoes Antigone's words at 74-76. Pheres becomes in the minds of the younger generation the insensitive father, the Creon figure, as killer of Alcestis. Admetus, furthermore, tells him that he is childless (735) though his child lives, giving himself the role of Haemon, the last of Creon's sons, who (773-80) promises his father that he will never see him again alive. These scenes of the *Alcestis* are almost a parody of the tragedy of a youth or maiden dying before marriage. Pheres did not condemn Alcestis to death: the causation is more complicated than that. The reported scene (from the *Antigone*) at the tomb and Haemon's rash and desperate act, when he almost becomes an Oedipus figure, are parodied first by Admetus' wish that his father were dead. And the tableau that results from Antigone's untimely suicide and Haemon's temerity, despair, and guilt—the two lovers embracing in death (1240)—is recalled vaguely first in Admetus' promise to his dying wife that they will lie together in the same coffin and then later in his attempt to leap into the tomb, despairingly related by him in the *kommos*. Admetus' futile cry 'take me with you, take me below' (382) corresponds to the second scene between the two sisters in the *Antigone* in which Ismene begs to be allowed to share the guilt and the glory (544f.), but Antigone answers ἀρκέσω θνήσκουσ' ἐγώ ('my death will be enough', 547). Alcestis' response to Admetus is perhaps the clearest verbal echo of the *Antigone* to reverberate in the *Alcestis*, ἀρκοῦμεν ἡμεῖς οἱ προθνήσκοντες σέθεν (in the generic masculine plural, 'my dying is enough for you', 383). Pheres' attack on Admetus for being 'worsted by a woman' (697) might remind the hearer of Creon's obsessive need to be superior to women in all things (678-80, 745, 756). The father-son scene has all the bitterness of the Creon-Haemon scene, but in the *Alcestis* produces none of the tragic events of the earlier play. This is one of several places where the play is in danger of deteriorating into (or being elevated to) another kind of drama, but it turns out to be a false start, a prosatyrical non-event. For the heart-rending pathos of the Sophoclean scene is missing. Part of the effect of the Pheres episode as a reactivation of the scene from the *Antigone* is to show the meanness of Pheres in taunting his son, coming as it does after Admetus has seen his beloved wife die before his very eyes, if we remember that Creon's closing words in his son's presence (just before Haemon says his father will never see him again), are a command to bring Antigone out to die in front of him.<sup>18</sup> This is Creon's most cruel action, for it is gratuitous malice with

<sup>18</sup> On the importance of sight in this scene of the *Antigone* see D. Seale, *Vision and Stagecraft in Sophocles* (London/Canberra 1982) 96-98.

no political pretext. And Pheres, in that he is like Creon, is at his most despicable at the end of his scene. This nastiness on Pheres' part, however, is, perhaps, mitigated by the petulance of Admetus and his threat not to bury his father, when, subtly, the roles become reversed.<sup>19</sup> Admetus, like Creon, is mixing up the living and the dead.<sup>20</sup> But the *Alcestis* is not the *Antigone*. Pheres did not condemn Alcestis to the grave, and neither did Admetus. The scenic similarities and verbal echoes highlight the differences in the type of story being told. The fairy tale threatens to become, but does not become, a tragedy of grand family conflict, or of right against equal right, or of multiple suicide. Even one death is too much: this is not that kind of family. For Pheres finally is not Creon. He is not capable of reaching the depths of suffering, despair, and remorse of the Theban king. We cannot imagine him cradling his son's body in his arms. Admetus walks back from the place of burial. And so at last does Alcestis. Pheres does not even go. Alcestis is worthy of her prototype, sharing her shortcomings, sharing her glory and valor. Beside her (literally over the stage prop that is her corpse) the two men are painfully farcical.

Admetus had tried to map out his father's past and future life for him and in so doing he maps out his own uneventful biography. In his youth Pheres had been king as Admetus is now; he had fathered a son so that he would not leave his estate orphaned for strangers to plunder; Admetus, too, has an heir to (eventually) take over for him. Pheres' son was always respectful to him and Admetus could have expected the same from his son: it is τὸ Ἑλληνικόν ('the Greek way', cf. 684). Pheres could expect to be buried and to have his tomb tended by his descendants and so could Admetus, only a little earlier than he had hoped. The threat of Admetus to disown his father and not to bury him (665) is answered by the old man when he says that he does not care what happens after he is dead (726). The respectful Haemon of the *Antigone* is here a person of the past, present only in the claim of Admetus that he always treated his father with appropriate

---

<sup>19</sup> The father and not the son is driven off. Admetus becomes the bully, excluding his father from the house, more like Creon than Haemon, more like Theseus than Hippolytus. Usually the younger man runs off in despair, but here it is Admetus who is in possession of the house and property and who has caused the rift and will later be proved to have been mistaken. Pheres, however, does not remain a focal character and is soon passed over like a young victim as the plot moves on to something else.

<sup>20</sup> He tries to keep his wife alive and equivocates about the time of her death, about which we and the chorus (since we have witnessed it) cannot be fooled. Timing is everything in tragedy as well as comedy. By spreading out these reminiscences the tragic element is removed.

filial piety (658-60). What more, Admetus' words imply, could the old man have wanted out of life (653)? His life should be over now. What if the father's calculations had been more like those of Antigone (in Sophocles' tragedy of 441) who, realizing that as mortals we will spend eternity with the dead, chooses to honor the dead more than the living and die for her dead brother?<sup>21</sup> But are Pheres' calculations really very different from Antigone's? He counts the time on earth in the sunlight short compared to eternity in the dark world just as she does. Perhaps his refusal to die for his son is the more logical, if also the more pusillanimous, conclusion of the arithmetic of life introduced in the earlier play<sup>22</sup> and besides Pheres is old, the time he can expect is shorter, more precious. Antigone had seen life as lateral, with herself and her brothers as the last generation (as it should have been according to the oracle, 'without issue to die,' *Septem* 748f.), not as continuing. She had abandoned (or not allowed to enter into her calculations) her living sister and her future spouse. She had claimed that she would not die for a spouse or a child, for she could always get another of each.<sup>23</sup> What is really touching in this speech is that she had neither child nor spouse and so could not know how she would react to the death of either, but by saying these words she undermines her ideals of an earlier self, a self a little further from death who did not have to search so hard to find an incontro-

---

<sup>21</sup> The scene invites us to ask, what if Admetus had been in the position to let his father die for him? What would Admetus say if he were grieving for his father? Would he not have to admit guiltily the things that are said here by the father? He gave me life and substance, he let me be king in my youth, and enjoy the estate, and now he has died for me, leaving me even more lands and flocks.

<sup>22</sup> On Pheres' fortitude in resisting the temptation of Apollo/Admetus, see R. M. Nielsen, 'Alcestis: A Paradox in Dying,' *Ramus* 5 (1976) 98. On the illogicality of Antigone and Alcestis see H. M. Blumenthal, 'Euripides, *Alcestis* 285ff. and the Authenticity of *Antigone* 905ff.,' *CR* 24 (1974) 174f.

<sup>23</sup> Her family of origin weighs more with her than that which she was going to enter at her marriage to Haemon, as R. Seaford notes in 'The Structural Problems of Marriage in Euripides,' in A. Powell (ed.), *Euripides, Women, and Sexuality* (London/New York 1990) 163. But there is another aspect, lest we over-emphasize this loyalty to her natal family, which is shown in Ismene's part. Ismene is a member of the natal family, too, but the point is that Antigone is dedicated to her dead. Alcestis is quite the opposite, being more loyal to her family by marriage, as if her natal family did not exist. And we are only reminded of it by Admetus' equivocation that she lived in his house after her father died so that the assumption that her family of origin had died out is not unreasonable until we are told by Pheres that there is a brother in the vicinity ready to avenge his sister's death. And even more to the point, Alcestis' willingness to sacrifice herself is influenced not by her dead but by her living family.

vertible confirmation of her choice to die. She does not die for the living but for the dead, for her dead brothers because her parents are dead. And it is with the dead that she chooses to spend her immediate and more distant future. Pheres will not die for his child either, though he is too old (so it is said often enough) to father another child.<sup>24</sup> His calculations are similar, but he reaches a different conclusion concerning what is the right and appropriate action. And then he is justified—if only after the fact—in refusing to die for a man who not only wishes him dead but even threatens not to bury him when he does die: these are the words not of a φίλος ('friend') but of an ἐχθρός ('enemy') of almost epic proportion. Furthermore Pheres' life has not been so filled with incident as that of Oedipus' daughter. His dead ancestors will hardly excite the interest (in the audience) that Antigone's do. Theirs are not the lives of tragic, mythic persons, but of ordinary men, whose first reaction to the heroism of others is this vituperative scene. Blame someone else or pretend that nothing has happened: these are the two reactions of Admetus in the two central scenes. In any case the similarity breaks down when we realize that Pheres is not asked to die to be with his dead, but to die so that his son can live, and that means that he would miss the enjoyment of him.<sup>25</sup> The incongruity of Pheres echoing Antigone's words could not show more clearly how ludicrous is the comparison between Antigone and Pheres. Alcestis, of course, is the Antigone figure, but she diverges from her younger colleague in the older play most in this: Alcestis dies for the living and so must suffer separation from the family she loves, a separation which Admetus, like the lovers of Antigone (Haemon and Ismene), does his best to deny and negate. For obvious reasons (of age, gender, and circumstances) Admetus is ludicrous as the Ismene figure begging Alcestis to take him with her. He is just as ineffectual playing Haemon to his father's Creon after his beloved is already dead.

### *Epic Intrusions*

Admetus will not take Pheres' funerary offerings, and yet, though he denounces and disowns his father, and even questions his own legitimacy, he does not offer to return the estates he received, nor the royal power.

---

<sup>24</sup> Giving a nice twist to Hesiod's advice 'die old if you are going to leave a second son' (*Op.* 376-78) when Admetus tells him to go get another son. See also R. S. P. Beekes, 'You Can Get New Children: Turkish and Other Parallels to Ancient Greek Ideas in Herodotus, Thucydides, Sophocles and Euripides,' *Mnemosyne* 39 (1986) 225f.

<sup>25</sup> See Blumenthal [21] 174f. on the relation between *Antigone* and *Alcestis*.

Pheres cannot buy affection; he could have done that only by dying in place of his son. Alcestis gave up her life. In return Admetus promises to sacrifice all pleasure, all that makes life worth living. The extravagance of his mourning reaches epic proportions and the despair when he sees himself to blame almost achieves Achillean depths. The gifts of Pheres—however splendid and reminiscent of epic<sup>26</sup> ransoms (or bribes) they may actually be—are too little: they will not buy back a woman's life (cf. *Iliad* 401). Admetus will force his father to lose the one thing he gained by Alcestis' willing self-sacrifice: his father will live out his life (as if he were) childless. Now Admetus calls Alcestis his father and his mother (646f., 668), reminding us of Andromache's words to Hector at their parting, not because all his loved ones are dead—they are too patently and mockingly alive—but because she alone gave him life. He even calls himself her *γηροτρόφος* (668), the person (usually a son) who takes care of an elderly parent in his old age. This is the filial duty of Admetus to his father and mother. He has rejected them. But it is odd to offer to be the 'nurse of the old age' of one who is already dead and who died young and to save the life of her husband who is (Oedipally ?) seeing himself as her son. Is it again that Admetus is in some part of his mind still keeping Alcestis alive (as Apollo did in the prologue when he tried to persuade Thanatos to let Alcestis grow old and have a rich funeral)?

Pheres and his gifts are rejected by Admetus. Here there is a hint of Achilles rejecting the embassy and gifts from Agamemnon. He blames Pheres for the loss of his bride, for his refusal to value his son's life more than his own, that is, at the value Admetus himself sets on it (as the rational, stated purpose of Achilles' withdrawal—in addition to the anger that still hurts him—had been to make Agamemnon and the Greeks recognize his value, by actually feeling what it would be like without him). The gifts and long catalogue of past and future gifts are not enough to buy back the affection and loyalty of Admetus any more than Agamemnon's had been sufficient to buy back Achilles'. If even for the briefest instant that scene from the *Iliad* is activated here, it is only to put Admetus in a poor light and to show how absurd the comparison is. Admetus is no Achilles. We may remember that in his previous scene (with his friend Heracles) he has done what is most

---

<sup>26</sup> Staging could make the epic allusion more apparent. I would like to see the scene staged rather grandly with a wagon load of funeral gifts from Pheres, reminding us of scenes of ransom in the *Iliad*. Admetus, by declaring himself a free agent, not bound by his loyalty to his father, falls in with this pattern. The two processions confront each other, then leave by opposite *parodoi*. Pheres need not be stingy where it does not cost anything more than possessions of which he has plenty and needs few.

hateful to Achilles: he has hidden in his heart the death of his wife and said another thing with his lips: he has equivocated; he has lied to a friend. Nor is Pheres an Agamemnon. It is not he (nor his servants), but Death, who has come to the house and taken Alcestis. He could not offer to return her intact even if he wanted to. And yet she *will* be restored.

There are themes (as well as actions) in common between this scene and Achilles' speech to Odysseus in the *Iliad*. Besides the rejection of the gifts and the accusation (here false) that Pheres is responsible for the loss of Alcestis there are the thematic parallels in talk about death, about the value of life, about the brave and cowards, about wives, about fathers and sons, and possessions. Achilles talks about his double fate, and although Admetus does not do so here, it is part of his story too: by living beyond his time Admetus has lost his good name. In Pheres' part of the scene comes the accusation of shamelessness and the catalogue of gifts. But through age and relationship Pheres is by rights the Peleus character rather than the Agamemnon figure and we remember how Achilles looked forward (without any real hope) to enjoying the possessions Peleus had amassed for him with the wife Peleus would have picked for him. In the embassy to Achilles, Agamemnon is a false father and is rejected by the son, who sees what Agamemnon is up to. He has tried to usurp the role of Achilles' father, setting up a match for him, giving him property. But Pheres is unquestionably Admetus' own father. If we are reminded of Achilles' wonderful speech to Odysseus in the *Iliad* we must see all the more clearly how false Admetus' position is. For Achilles loved his father and felt for his tragic fate. He was deeply troubled by the thought of his father on the threshold of a sad old age, being deprived of his only son. Admetus with unkind words dismisses his father to just such a fate. The father becomes the false father (in Admetus' mind), the Agamemnon figure, when Admetus wishes he will feel the need of him one day. Pheres' threat (730-33), an alternative to Apollo's prophecy, is like Phoenix's veiled threats in the form of *exempla*. Finally we may be reminded (by the death of Alcestis in the place of Admetus) of Patroclus who died in the place of Achilles. The visible action, however, with the corpse, the grieving young man, and the old man with his load of gifts, is more reminiscent of the ransoming of Hector than the embassy to Achilles. Admetus holds himself to ransom, not to prove his prowess in war, but to show what it is like to be childless. Transferred to the domestic arena, the threat not to bury the dead reeks of inappropriate familial rancor. Admetus is at his worst when he is playing Achilles to his father's shifting roles as Agamemnon and Peleus. Pheres is at his worst playing Creon to his son's Haemon.

*Hero of Epic, Tragedy, or Drinking Song*

Only after the funeral does Admetus finally come to see himself playing his own part in his own story. Even so, his mythic forays are not quite over. No longer can he play Haemon to his father's Creon: he must realize that he and not his father bears the greater responsibility for Alcestis' death. When he imagines an enemy seeing him and saying 'he hates his parents' (958), it shows that he knows he is wrong to blame them. He had anachronistically cast himself as Protesilaus' wife<sup>27</sup> (when he speaks of keeping the statue in his bed) and Hector's wife<sup>28</sup> (when he says that Alcestis is his parents, 646f. and 667f., where he uses the masculine pronoun to refer to her). The gender confusion may be part of this variation of the story pattern: for should not the manly hero be the one to die for his beloved rather than the other way around?<sup>29</sup> He even plays Ismene to his wife's Antigone. Admetus is a man out of his element, hunting for a mythic archetype to explain his suffering to him and more than that to be the hero who could save his beloved. The hero he explicitly wishes he could be is the artist Orpheus (357). And so he may be after his fashion, a more cerebral Orpheus, in his mind resituating his wife in her home, filling the space with her absence, bringing her back to life by not letting her be all dead (941-53).

At the gates of the house he recoils (861ff). He has reached the despairing acceptance that Cassandra reaches at the foregates of the house of Atreus. Like the Trojan prophetess amid inarticulate cries of pity and fear he sees what has been in the house and what is to come in that grim interior scene. But in *Alcestis*, the fourth play—inverted tragedy or whatever we want to call it—the interior is not the scene of evil or mysterious doings, of ghoulish furies hanging about the rafters, of dark memories and darker deeds, as interiors so often are. What keeps Admetus out is his memory of happy times in the house (913-25). Both Admetus and Cassandra are driven back, repulsed by the house. Unlike Cassandra, he is reluctant to enter it

---

<sup>27</sup> See Dale [10] 79 *ad* 348-54.

<sup>28</sup> Alcestis' farewell as narrated by her servant had reminded us earlier of the beautiful farewell scene in the *Iliad* when Alcestis had said a tearful goodbye to (not Admetus but) her marriage bed. Like Andromache she kept turning back to the scene of her farewell. The chorus has to elicit information about Admetus' presence in this scene (no Hector he) from the servant who is describing this touching farewell in which the bed is more prominent than the husband.

<sup>29</sup> On the versions of the folktale in other cultures, see A. Lesky, *Alkestis, der Mythos und das Drama* (Vienna 1925) and D. J. Conacher, *Euripidean Drama: Myth, Theme and Structure* (Toronto 1967) 327-33.

because he knows he must go on living in it; she knows she will die like a beast as soon as she passes the threshold: she already smells her own spilt blood.<sup>30</sup>

Almost at the end Admetus compares himself to Perseus averting his eyes from the monster (1118) that would turn him to stone should he look fully at it when he reaches out to take the silent sculptural Alcestis. Or is he again the Orpheus he wished he could be, not looking at his returned wife until she is truly his beyond recall? In the next moment he recognizes his dear wife and we all see how absurd that last mythological foray was. For Admetus is returned to the ordinary domestic life of a wealthy Thessalian nobleman. Not he but Heracles has rescued the woman from the monster. And it would be uncharitable and not in keeping with the pleasure of the happy ending to point out that Admetus was the one who had endangered her in the first place. Nor would it be fitting to notice that as a second wedding<sup>31</sup> this is perhaps vaguely reminiscent of the final entrance of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra into their palace, forming a new *oikos* by their union, in a drama often compared to this one because of its emphasis on the suffocating presence of the house; or to suggest that the returned Alcestis is the phantom wife Clytemnestra claims to be to her dead husband (*Agamemnon* 1497). No, the fact that it is a second marriage is important because this time Alcestis is not a stranger entering a stranger's home, but a loved one coming to her own home.<sup>32</sup> The remarriage is more like that of Penelope and Odysseus but with the interlopers sent away more peacefully and the only and last claimant on Admetus being his own wife.

Admetus does not fit into any of the other, grander or more pathetic story patterns that he tries on or that are ill-tailored for him by others. He is not a warrior or a murderer or a grieving widow or a loving sister. He is neither parricide nor poet nor misused son and lover. He is a sleek Thessalian in the prime of his life, rich in sheep and pasturelands, who likes

---

<sup>30</sup> Euripides' use of the unusual word *στροφόμενη* ('moving freely', 1052, with the idea of sharing a bed, from the Aeschylean usage) in the next scene, earlier employed by Cassandra in *Agamemnon* (1224) adds weight to the notion that he had that scene in mind. On the meaning and significance of this word see T. Pandiri, 'Alcestis 1050 and the Yielding of Admetus,' *CJ* 70 (1974) 50-52.

<sup>31</sup> For a brilliant interpretation (with which I do not happen to agree, but which I cannot help admiring) of the ambiguity of the resurrection of Alcestis, see Kott [8] 88-108.

<sup>32</sup> See the conclusion of C. A. E. Luschnig, 'Alcestis and the Athenian *Oikos*,' *Dioniso* 60 (1990) 37-39. On the wedding see R. G. A. Buxton, 'Euripides' *Alkestis*: Five aspects of an Interpretation,' *Dodone* 14 (1985) 77-89 and M. R. Halleran, 'Text and Ceremony at the Close of Euripides' *Alkestis*,' *Eranos* 86 (1988) 123-129.

to entertain on a grand scale and to enjoy himself, welcoming to all, god and slave alike and at once.

## EYES, KNOWLEDGE AND POWER IN THE *PROMETHEUS BOUND*<sup>1</sup>

David H. J. Larmour

Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures, Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas 79409, USA

**Abstract.** Sight and blindness are important themes in the *Prometheus Bound*. The limited nature of non-Promethean vision is exemplified by the mythological creatures catalogued in lines 794-806. The play demonstrates that neither Zeus nor Prometheus has complete sight and, hence, reminds us that there is no panoptic reading of a text.

Literary texts frequently challenge traditional assumptions about language and its ability to fix 'meanings' and to provide secure definitions.<sup>2</sup> That this holds true for Greek tragedy has been amply demonstrated by Goldhill, who remarks that 'lack of security and misplaced certainty in and about language form an essential dynamic of the texts of tragedy'.<sup>3</sup> In the *Prometheus Bound*, the challenge is made primarily through the language of sight and seeing. In this play considerable emphasis is placed on sight and blindness.<sup>4</sup> Critical and statistical analysis of the 90 occurrences of the 35 words for eyes, seeing, blindness and the like (15 are 'Eigenwörter', in the terminology popularized by Griffith)<sup>5</sup> suggests that these words constitute a

---

<sup>1</sup> Delivered during the annual meeting of the Philological Association of the Pacific Coast at Las Vegas, USA, November 1991.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to thank Professor David Sansone of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for his help and encouragement when this project was in its early stages.

<sup>3</sup> S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1986) 2f. Particularly useful with reference to the present discussion is chapter 8 'Blindness and Insight', on vision in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, in which Goldhill 220 shows how 'in a reversal of Oedipus' language of knowledge and enquiry in the terminology of sight and enlightenment, recognition requires blindness'.

<sup>4</sup> Noted (at least for δέρκεσθαι) by M. Griffith, *The Authenticity of Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge 1977) 185; see also the periodic comments of H. S. Long, 'Notes on Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*', *PAPhS* 102 (1958) 229-80.

<sup>5</sup> See H. G. Edinger, *Index Analyticus Graecitatis Aeschyleae* (Hildesheim 1981); Griffith [4] 272-75; H. Holmboe, *A Concordance to Aeschylus' Prometheus Vincit* (Aarhus 1971); G. Italie, *Index Aeschyleus* (Leiden 1964). The relevant words and the number of

significant layer of meaning in the play. They have been examined in detail, however, only by Fineberg<sup>6</sup> and, more recently, Tarkow.<sup>7</sup> This paper will examine the theme of sight in connection with recent critical theories about language and reading.

The text sets up several paradoxes and ambiguities around the notions of sight and blindness, which make determination of a single 'meaning' for words impossible. The best example is Prometheus' description of the condition men were in before he helped them:

οἱ πρῶτα μὲν βλέποντες ἔβλεπον μάτην . . .

(Pr. 447)<sup>8</sup>

This line has proved awkward for several translators, who have rendered it as 'first of all, though they had eyes to see, they saw to no avail',<sup>9</sup> or 'men at first had eyes but saw to no purpose'<sup>10</sup>, or 'in those days they had eyes, but sight was meaningless',<sup>11</sup> none of which conveys the startlingly paradoxical effect of the juxtaposition of βλέποντες and ἔβλεπον μάτην:

---

times they appear, if more than once, are as follows (an asterisk marks an Eigenwort): \*αἰστοῦν (2), αἰστος, ἀλαός, \*ἀπρόοπτος, ἄσημος, \*ἀφεγγής, βλέπειν (2), δέρκεσθαι (8), δυσθέατος (2), \*ἐξαιστοῦν, εἰσορᾶν (13), \*ἐξομματοῦν, ἐπάργεμος, \*ἐπόπτης, ἐφορᾶν, \*θέα, \*θέαμα (2), \*θεορεῖν, \*θεωρία, θεωρός, ἰδεῖν (6), λεύσσειν (2), ὄμμα/ὄσσε (10), ὄρᾶν (15), ὄψις, πανόπτης, \*παπαταίνειν (2), \*προδέρκεσθαι, \*προσβλέπειν, προσδέρκεσθαι (3), προσορᾶν, σκοπεῖν, \*τυφλός, \*ὑπαρ, \*ψελλός.

<sup>6</sup> See especially S. Fineberg, *The Prometheus Bound: An Interpretive Study* (diss. Texas, Austin 1975) 176f., 189-95. Dr. Fineberg has also been kind enough to let me read an unpublished paper, 'Modes of Olympian Vision in the *Prometheia*' (1987), in which he argues for a distinction in meaning between the verb δέρκεσθαι, on the one hand, and ἰδεῖν or ὄρᾶν, on the other: δέρκεσθαι denotes the 'visual attitude' of violent or frightened characters, while ἰδεῖν and ὄρᾶν denote a more normal, less emotional, type of seeing.

<sup>7</sup> T. Tarkow, 'Sight and Seeing in the *Prometheus Bound*', *Eranos* 84 (1986) 96-99, connects the prominence of the motif with a heightened interest in 'the visual potential of drama' brought about by certain developments and modifications in the contemporary Athenian theatre structure.

<sup>8</sup> Line numbers pertain to the edition and commentary of M. Griffith (*Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound* [Cambridge 1983]).

<sup>9</sup> H. W. Smyth, *Aeschylus* 1 (London 1922) 255.

<sup>10</sup> D. Grene, *The Complete Greek Tragedies: Aeschylus* 2 (Chicago 1956) 155.

<sup>11</sup> P. Vellacott, *Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound and Other Plays* (Harmondsworth 1961) 34.

'seeing, they saw in vain'.<sup>12</sup> Rather than simply reproducing the paradox in English, these translators have succumbed to the temptation to neutralize it and to give us what they believe is the poet's intended meaning.<sup>13</sup>

There are other ambiguities: Prometheus claims to have 'cleared the vision' of men by giving them the ability to see the signs in flames:

... καὶ φλογωπὰ σήματα  
ἐξωμμάτωσα πρόσθεν ὄντ' ἐπάργεμα.

(Pr. 498f.)

... and I cleared their vision  
of signs in flames, formerly obscured.

He also, however, removed men's power to 'foresee their fate' (προ-δέρκεσθαι μόρον, 248) and gave them 'blind hopes' (τυφλὰς ἐλπίδας, 250).<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the Chorus describes the human race as an ἀλαδὸν

<sup>12</sup> Cf. A. 1623, οὐχ ὄραϊς ὄρων τάδε; ('do you have eyes and lack understanding?'), and Fraenkel's commentary (*Agamemnon* 3 [Oxford 1950]) *ad loc.* D. 25.89, ὄρωντας μὴ ὄραν ('seeing, they see not'), is also a close parallel, but an instance like OT 413, σὺ καὶ δέδορκας κοῦ βλέπεις ('you have eyes, yet you do not see') is not really comparable, as two different verbs are being used and this significantly reduces the degree of paradox.

<sup>13</sup> Translations in a similar vein are provided by the following: D. J. Conacher, *Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound: A Literary Commentary* (Toronto 1980) 49: 'In the beginning, then, men had eyes but saw not'; G. Murray, *The Complete Plays of Aeschylus* (London 1952) 41: 'sight they had, but saw in vain'; P. Roche, *Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound* (New York 1964) 46: 'Those first had eyes to see, but never saw'; J. Scully and C. J. Herington, *Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound* (Oxford 1975) 50: 'Men and women looking saw nothing'; G. Thomson, *Aeschylus: The Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge 1932) 83: 'who, first, with eyes to see, did see in vain'; R. Warner, *Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound; Shelley: Prometheus Unbound* (New York 1966) 20: 'They, then, at first had eyes, but all their sight was in vain'; A. S. Way, *Aeschylus in English Verse* (London 1906), Pr. 24: 'First, having eyesight, all in vain they saw.' Less inclined to tamper with the paradoxical flavour of the original are T. A. Buckley, *The Tragedies of Aeschylus* (London 1880) 15: 'at first seeing saw in vain'; E. Hamilton, *Three Greek Plays: Prometheus Bound, Agamemnon, The Trojan Women* (New York 1937) 115 'seeing they did not see'; E. A. Havelock, *Prometheus* (Seattle 1968) 143: 'seeing, they did not see'; P. E. More, in W. J. Oates and E. O'Neill, Jr. (edd.), *The Complete Greek Drama* 1 (New York 1938) 140: 'For seeing they saw not.'

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Fineberg [6] 193; Griffith [8] *ad loc.*; J. C. Hogan, *A Commentary on the Complete Greek Tragedies: Aeschylus* (Chicago 1984) 284; Tarkow [7] 88-90. Tarkow [7] 96 detects a 'contradictory ambiguity' around the notion of 'blind hopes': he shows that the frequent association of sight with pain suggests that the blind hopes may be a blessing, but also comments [7] 92 that 447 (cf. 498f.) injects 'an unfortunate but necessary unclarity' into the discussion—'Prometheus may have had to give man blind hope because the gift of effective sight was not that grand a benefaction' (cf. [7] 95).

γένος ('blind race', 549): as far as it is concerned, men are still blind. Argus has many eyes (πυκνοῖς ὄσσοις δεδορκῶς), yet an unforeseen (ἀπροσδόκητος) death overtakes him (678-80):<sup>15</sup> he sees, but not well enough. The Sun sees everything (πανόπτην κύκλον, 91), yet neither the Sun nor the Moon looks at (προσδέρκεται) the Phorcides (796f.).<sup>16</sup>

All this provokes the question: what do words like 'see' and 'blind' actually mean? Indeed, is there a single, fixed meaning for such words as δέρκεσθαι, βλέπειν or τυφλός? The question becomes all the more important when we remember that vision is closely connected with knowledge in the Greek linguistic system, as it is in many others: the verb εἰδέναι ('to know'), for instance, comes from the same root as ἰδεῖν ('to see').<sup>17</sup>

Different types, or degrees, of sight are presented in the *Prometheus Bound*. In the first half of the play, there are several passages in which Prometheus complains of his treatment by Zeus (92-5, 119-20, 140-3, 237f., 304-06) or in which other characters comment on his plight (144-6, 540f., 561-63). These passages are linked by many verbal echoes and the most significant element is always the *spectacle* which Prometheus presents.<sup>18</sup> Everyone sees the victim's sufferings and, hence, *knows* that the power of Zeus cannot be fought. The eyes which look upon Prometheus' unfortunate situation may be either sympathetic or hostile: Oceanus and the Chorus, for instance, watch events with a more or less sympathetic gaze, while Kratos, Argus and Zeus himself watch with un pitying eyes. Zeus' vision is directly connected with his violence: he watches over the binding of Prometheus (53) and Io is explicitly said to be the victim of Zeus' eye (654; cf. 903; A. 468f.).

Yet the vision of Zeus and all the other spectators is limited. While they 'see', these figures are all, in a sense, blind—βλέποντες βλέπουσι μάτην ('seeing, they see in vain'), one might reasonably say. Oceanus and the Chorus ask Prometheus four times if he does not 'see' his mistake in seeking to defy Zeus:

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Fineberg [6] 191.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Aesch. *Fr.* 369M; Griffith [8] *ad loc.*; Tarkow [7] 94.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Goldhill [3] 218; Tarkow [7] 89, 94f.; see further H. Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1970) s.vv. εἶδομαι, ἰδεῖν, οἶδα, ὁράω.

<sup>18</sup> They are also reminiscent of the passages about Typhon (351-56), Atlas (425-30) and Io (690-95), three fellow-victims of Zeus.

ἤμαρτες; . . . οὐχ ὀραῖς ὅτι  
(Pr. 259f.)

. . . don't you see that  
you erred?

πρὸς κέντρα κῶλον ἐκτενεῖς, ὀρῶν ὅτι  
τραχὺς, μόναρχος οὐδ' ὑπεύθυνος κρατεῖ.<sup>19</sup>  
(Pr. 323f.)

[don't] kick against the gods, seeing that  
a harsh ruler reigns supreme.

ἐν τῷ προθυμείσθαι δὲ καὶ τολμᾶν τίνα  
ὀραῖς ἐνοῦσαν ζημίαν;  
(Pr. 381f.)

What danger do you see when there is  
daring in zeal?

. . . οὐδ' ἐδέρχθης  
ὀλιγοδρανίαν ἄκιυν,  
ισόνειρον, ἅι τὸ φωτῶν  
ἀλατὸν γένος ἐμπεποδισμένον;  
(Pr. 547-50)

. . . Didn't you see  
the feeble helplessness,  
like a dream, in which  
the blind race of mortals is shackled?

They see his present suffering and conclude, on the basis of the knowledge thereby gained, that he cannot possibly succeed in the struggle against Zeus. But Prometheus sees in a different way from the others: he can see in the future as well. And through this power of foresight he has knowledge of

<sup>19</sup> The use of ὅτι after ὀρῶν occurs only in this play in the Aeschylean corpus, but does so three times (259, 323, 951). Griffith [4] 192 notes that the use of ὅτι after verbs of 'saying or thinking' occurs seven times in the *Pr.* (104, 186, 259, 323, 328, 377, 951) and only at *E.* 98 elsewhere in the corpus. He sees the usage as more Sophoclean, citing the phenomenon of Sophoclean enjambement. The matter may be taken a little further, however: H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge Mass. 1956) §2110 notes that ὀρῶν takes the participle when it denotes 'physical (actual) perception' and may take ὅτι when denoting 'intellectual perception'. In view, however, of the undoubted and inevitable visual emphasis on each of the 12 other occasions when the verb is used in this play, the use of ὅτι is a little disconcerting (except perhaps at 906): it serves, however, to reinforce the link between sight and knowledge: the verb has an obvious visual—as well as intellectual—meaning every time it is used, and the presence of ὅτι at 259 or 323 or 951 is not sufficient to exclude a visual frame of reference in these instances.

something which will bring about Zeus' downfall. Thus Zeus (and his vision) are not all-powerful, and the other characters too possess only limited vision. This is hinted at throughout the play, but it is only towards the end that Prometheus begins to use the language of sight—the same language used with reference to all the other characters—in speaking of his own variety of 'seeing':

σημεῖά σοι τάδ' ἐστὶ τῆς ἐμῆς φρενός,  
ὡς δέρεται πλέον τι τοῦ πεφασμένου.  
(Pr. 842f.)

These are signs for you of my understanding,  
[showing] that it sees more than is apparent.

and

ὁ δ' οὖν ποίειω πάντα προσδοκητά μοι.  
(Pr. 935)

Let him do it! Everything is foreseen by me.

Hermes asks Prometheus not to continue to defy Zeus:

... ὁράεις δ' ὅτι  
Ζεὺς τοῖς τοιούτοις οὐχὶ μαλθακίζεται.  
(Pr. 951f.)

... you see that  
Zeus is not softened by such actions as these.

to which Prometheus answers, picking up on the verb ὁρᾶν:

... οὐκ ἐκ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ  
δισσοὺς τυράννους ἐκπεσόντας ἠσθόμην;  
τρίτον δὲ τὸν νῦν κοιρανοῦντ' ἐπόψομαι ...  
(Pr. 956-58)

... didn't I see  
two tyrants thrown out of here?  
A third too—the present ruler—I will see [thrown out] ...

The most striking contrast between Promethean and non-Promethean sight comes at 997f.:

Επ. ὄρα νυν εἴ σοι ταῦτ' ἀρωγὰ φαίνεται.  
Πρ. ὤπται<sup>20</sup> πάλαι δὴ καὶ βεβούλευται τάδε.

<sup>20</sup> A form which occurs only here in Classical Greek, as Griffith [4] 196f. points out.

Her. See now if this course does you any good.

Pr. It has been seen and decided long ago.

In these lines the ambiguity surrounding what 'seeing' actually means is most clearly encapsulated. Ironically, Hermes tells Prometheus not to 'look forward' to an end of his sufferings (μή τι προσδόκα, 1026)<sup>21</sup> and not to say that Zeus cast him εἰς ἀπρόοπτον πῆμ' ('into an unforeseen doom', 1074f.).

There is, then, in the course of the *Prometheus Bound*, a gradual expansion in the meaning of terms for vision. First, there are the men who, although seeing with their original powers of sight, saw 'in vain'; then Prometheus 'cleared' their vision, but not completely—he left them 'blind hopes' for the future. In other words, he gave men a greater vision than they had had before, but not including complete, Promethean foresight. Next, there is the vision of Zeus and the other divine or semi-divine characters in the play: this too has its limitations, compared with Promethean sight. Finally, there is Promethean vision, with its foresight of future events; presumably, however, this is not limitless either: Prometheus, after all, has his counterpart in Epimetheus in the mythological tradition.<sup>22</sup>

The text therefore clearly demonstrates that the signifiers βλέπειν, δέρκεσθαι, τυφλός and the like have multiple signifieds. All the figures in the play see in their own particular way: in other words, what they see is determined by who they are and by the position from which they are viewing the world: no vision is 'complete' and fully accurate; 'sight' and 'knowledge' are not absolutes.<sup>23</sup> In the *Prometheus Bound*, then, no character sees fully: each eye is biased or limited in some way. Zeus and Prometheus typify two extreme positions of vision: Zeus is essentially a voyeur—trying to see without being seen—while Prometheus is an exhibitionist, concerned with being seen by others. Zeus' looking is a gesture towards control, an attempt at visual mastery of the object, Prometheus. It is a refusal to be seen as an object

<sup>21</sup> Griffith [8] *ad* 1066-69 says that Hermes 'by unconscious irony describes exactly what will indeed happen'.

<sup>22</sup> See also Fineberg [6] 187-93 on Prometheus' 'shortsightedness' and lack of understanding of the importance of historical perspective.

<sup>23</sup> It is, perhaps, especially appropriate that this should be stated in a dramatic work, presented in a *theatron* (place for seeing); cf. Goldhill [3] 220: 'in its challenge to the security of the language of sight as a basis for knowledge or enquiry, the *Oedipus Tyrannus* seems to question also the security of the position of the audience or spectators in the theatre . . . the terminology of sight and language in which the theatrical experience itself is formulated. . . . Seeing what one sees and hearing what one hears cannot be regarded as simple processes by the audiences of this text.'

himself. Prometheus' exhibitionism is likewise an attempt always to be showing, rather than to be shown. In each case, the issue is power: each god is trying to control the other. Yet both forms of seeing are 'perverse'—they are optical illusions. The subject who looks at an object to an extent 'becomes' that object and consequently the former object becomes a new viewer-subject. Vision, then, is a two-way process, which involves seeing and being seen, even if one of the positions of seeing is temporarily repressed. Zeus and Prometheus are both defective in their sight and misguided in their attempts to exercise total control over each other.

Bearing this in mind, we may turn to a curious set of lines at the beginning of Prometheus' second long speech to Io (786-876), detailing the places and creatures she will see in her wanderings. At 794-806, Prometheus mentions three groups of beings, all characterized by some ocular peculiarity: (1) the Phorcides, or Graeae, three sisters κοινὸν ὄμμα' ἔκτημέναι ('possessing a single eye', 794f.); (2) the Gorgons, ἃς θνητὸς οὐδεὶς εἰσιδὼν ἔξει πνόας ('whom no mortal looks at and lives', 798-800); and (3) the μουνῶπα στρατὸν of the Arimaspians, who live with the griffins near the gold-bearing river of Pluto (803-06). Why does Prometheus make reference to these particular creatures and people? Part of the answer may lie in (?pseudo-)Aeschylus' use of the *Arimaspea* of Aristeas as a source,<sup>24</sup> but difficulties arise if one tries to make this the sole reason for the existence of the passage. Firstly, while the Arimaspians and the griffins can be traced back to Aristeas with some certainty, the same cannot necessarily be said of the Phorcides and the Gorgons; Bolton's argument that Aeschylus acquired these two from the *Arimaspea* is not supported by any direct evidence, but rather relies on certain assumptions about Aristeas' use of Asiatic folklore.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, the location of the Gorgons in the North-East, with the Phorcides,<sup>26</sup> runs counter to most ancient accounts which place the Gorgons

<sup>24</sup> See Conacher [13] 18 n. 29, 61; Griffith [8] *ad* 696-741; Hogan [14] 296.

<sup>25</sup> J. D. P. Bolton, *Aristeas of Proconnesus* (Oxford 1962) 74-101 shows that the *Arimaspea* preserves some elements of the folklore of central Asia; he then suggests (101) that we may legitimately reverse the process 'to confirm our tentative claim to . . . the "swan-shaped" Phorcides of Aeschylus' since 'central Asiatic tales tell of swan-maidens, ugly . . . and murderous, who live in darkness. . . .' He further comments (102) that 'that same process of Hellenizing barbarian story which I have postulated in the case of the griffins and Hyperboreans may then have taken place here also, with the resultant location in the *Arimaspea* of Gorgons and Phorcides in the north-east of the world, which had its effect later on both Aeschylus and Pindar.'

<sup>26</sup> See Griffith [8] *ad loc.*; Hesiod *Th.* 270-75; Pherecydes, *FGrH* 3 fr. 11 (cf. Apollod. *Lib.* 2.4.2); Ovid *Met.* 4.774. The Phorcides are usually located in the east, but are not the

in the West (or in Hades):<sup>27</sup> we do not know from any independent source if Aristeas mentioned them, let alone where he put them. Thirdly, the description of the griffins as 'the hounds of Zeus' is idiosyncratic: griffins are more usually associated with Apollo.<sup>28</sup>

Thus the explanation of the references to the Phorcides, Gorgons and Arimaspians as direct borrowings from Aristeas, appropriate only as elements in a traditional catalogue, leaves something to be desired. Nor is it sufficient to note that these references are simply part of the general preoccupation with sight and seeing in this play. The common denominator is the element of ocular peculiarity and this is closely connected with the gradual development of the vision motif outlined above: the placing of the passage, which comes just before Prometheus becomes explicit about his own variety of sight, allows it to function as a summary of the features of 'non-Promethean' vision. For Prometheus, the Phorcides represent the limited ability of non-Promethean vision to perceive things: none of the Graeae has sight all the time, as the single eye must be shared. The Gorgons symbolize the violence inherent in Zeus' type of vision: the Gorgons petrify those who look at them—in other words, they, like Zeus, respond with violence when they are made the objects of others' eyes, when they are threatened by possession and control. The monocular Arimaspians typify the restricted character of human vision; these people too are rather violent—Io is told to avoid them—so that, again, there is a connection between limited vision and violent behaviour.<sup>29</sup> The Arimaspians steal the gold from the griffins,<sup>30</sup> alluded to here

---

neighbours of the Gorgons as they are here (Aeschylus' *Phorcides*, however, appears to have put the Phorcides near the Gorgons [*Fr.* 459 M]).

<sup>27</sup> See Griffith [8] *ad loc.*; Homer *Od.* 11.634; Ar. *Ra.* 475. The Gorgons are usually placed in the far west or underground: Schol. Pi. *P.* 10.72 notes the discrepancy.

<sup>28</sup> K. Meuli, 'Scythica', *Hermes* 70 (1935) 154 argues that Aeschylus deliberately promotes Zeus at the expense of Apollo; Bolton [25] 62f., however, finds this argument excessive and comments that "'hounds of Phoebus" would have smacked of pedantry'; he also notes that the fact that griffins are half-eagle might explain Zeus' interest (cf. *Pr.* 1021f.; *A.* 136). See also Griffith [8] *ad loc.*; Bolton [25] 62-67; according to Pausanias 1.24.6, Aristeas said the griffins guarded the gold yielded by the earth and fought over it with the Arimaspians (cf. *Hdt.* 3.116; 4.13; Pliny *NH* 7.1.10). Aristeas put them in the far north, but Ctesias (*FGrH* 688 fr. 45h) places them in the east, as Aeschylus appears to do here.

<sup>29</sup> Compare the Cyclopes, violent creatures with one eye, born with the Hecatoncheires and associated with the Giants (Hes. *Th.* 139-53; Hom. *Od.* 7.56, 206). They were allied with Zeus in his struggle against the older generation and provided him with the lightning-bolt.

<sup>30</sup> See above, n. 28.

with the mention of the gold-bearing stream of Pluto (805f.),<sup>31</sup> and the griffins are, most unusually, styled as hounds of *Zeus*. By this device, the suggestion is made<sup>32</sup> that it is *Zeus*' gold which the Arimaspians are stealing, and thus we may have in this struggle a reflection of the antagonistic relationship between *Zeus* and humanity: as the Arimaspians steal *Zeus*' gold, men acquire—through Prometheus—*Zeus*' secret of fire. Gold and fire do not make an inappropriate pairing in this context, since they have certain fundamental characteristics in common: both are precious, both are yellow in colour.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, as the Arimaspians are hounded by *Zeus*' griffins, part-eagle in form, so Prometheus is tortured by the eagle he sends. The eagle, a bird of prey which 'watches', is a stand-in for *Zeus*—it attempts to gain visual mastery over Prometheus and enables *Zeus* to avoid becoming an object himself.

The reading of the passage as a summary, in the mouth of Prometheus, of the failings of non-Promethean vision, makes its initially puzzling features (such as the emphasis on ocular peculiarity, the grouping of the Phorcides and Gorgons together in the north-east, and the description of the griffins as hounds of *Zeus*) much less problematical. In a broader context, however, the passage serves to state yet again that 'sight' is not fixed and absolute, but relative: there can hardly be a more graphic illustration of the fact that what is seen depends on the viewer than the one-eyed Arimaspians or the Phorcides with their single eye among three. Thus the passage not only summarizes non-Promethean vision from Prometheus' point of view, but also challenges Prometheus' assumption that his own sight is perfect, that he alone 'sees'. Prometheus' own words, therefore, serve to undermine the security of the position he so trenchantly maintains.

The ambiguities surrounding vision, then, embody the essential tragedy of the situation in the *Prometheus Bound*: both Prometheus and *Zeus* believe that they alone truly 'see'. Yet, as the text makes abundantly clear, neither has complete vision, or knowledge, or power, just as there is no complete, panoptic and authoritative reading of a text.

<sup>31</sup> See also Paus. 1.24.6; Griffith [8] *ad* 803-06.

<sup>32</sup> The griffins, according to Paus. 1.24.6, have wings and eagles' beaks; the eagle is, of course, the bird of *Zeus* and 'winged hound of *Zeus*' is used of the eagle attacking Prometheus at *Pr.* 1021f.: Διὸς πτηνὸς κύων.

<sup>33</sup> The association of gold and fire is a natural and common one: consider, for instance, *Pi. O.* 1.1f. (ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ, ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς αἰθόμενον πῦρ / ἅτε διαπρέπει νυκτὶ μέγανος ἐξοχα πλούτου ['even as water is excellent, while gold, like fire / blazing at night, stands out from man-exalting wealth']) or the beginning of the third stanza of Yeats' 'Sailing to Byzantium' ('O Sages standing in God's holy fire / As in the gold mosaic of a wall.').

## PLUTARCH ON JUSTICE TOWARD ANIMALS: ANCIENT INSIGHTS ON A MODERN DEBATE

**Stephen T. Newmyer**

Department of Classics, Duquesne University  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15282, USA

**Abstract.** While concern for the rights of animals is frequently considered to be a recent phenomenon, study of the treatises *De sollertia animalium*, *De esu carnium* and *Bruta animalia ratione uti* suggests rather that the philosopher Plutarch has anticipated many of the arguments raised today in defense of animals. Basing his position on the idea that animals have some share of reason and sentience, Plutarch concludes that they therefore merit just treatment from human beings.

It is evident in 1992 that some of the central intellectual debates of the present decade will focus on the question of the rights of animals.<sup>1</sup> Each day the media confront us with stories drawn from around the world of organized protests against maltreatment of animals by the scientific community and the cosmetics industry, of disruptions of hunting expeditions by animal advocates, of the criminal prosecution of big game poachers, and of countless other activities, some of them marked by violence, carried out by groups seeking to raise the consciousness of the public to issues of animals' rights. It has been argued by the philosophers of the modern animals' rights movement that the drive to better the lot of animals drew its inspiration from and developed concurrently with the anti-sexism and anti-racism movements of the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> In the decades since that time, moral

---

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of convenience, the term 'animal' is used in this study to refer to non-human beings because the word is universally understood and used in that sense. Some philosophers of animals' rights argue, however, that the word should be avoided both because it implies a vast gulf between the 'lower animals' and man and because it, like the word 'beast,' has developed negative connotations of savagery and viciousness that foster prejudicial attitudes toward non-human animals.

<sup>2</sup> This idea is developed, for example, in R. D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes Towards Speciesism* (Oxford 1989) 3-6, who contends that just as considerations of gender and color do not justify the oppression of one group by another, so too can considerations of species no longer be used to justify the oppression of one species by another.

philosophers, especially in Britain and the United States, have worked out the intellectual positions of the movement in numerous carefully-argued ethical treatises, so that it could recently be claimed, with some justification, by Richard Ryder, one of the leading philosophers of the animals' rights movement, that 'rarely has a cause been so rationally argued and so intellectually well armed.'<sup>3</sup>

However much one may applaud the effort of a thinker like Ryder to develop a case for the position that animals have moral status and therefore deserve better treatment at the hands of human beings, one cannot fail to notice a certain historical myopia implicit in much of the literature of the modern animals' rights movement that tends to regard serious philosophical discussion of the rights of animals as a relatively recent phenomenon. This view may be observed, for example, in the subtitle of the seminal work of Peter Singer that helped to initiate the modern animals' rights movement, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*.<sup>4</sup> Singer opens his book with a historical sketch of thinking on animals' rights that reaches back no further than the ironically-intended treatise of the early nineteenth-century Neoplatonist Thomas Taylor entitled *A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes*. More telling still, in his Preface to a recent edition of the humanitarian Henry S. Salt's treatise *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress*, a work that dates to 1892, Singer writes, 'I marvel at how he anticipates almost every point discussed in the contemporary debate over animal rights.'<sup>5</sup> In common with many recent theorists on animals' rights, Singer here overlooks the fact that the debate which forms the subject of Salt's work, which he praises as so advanced in outlook, is in fact an ancient one, and he seems unaware that many of the arguments which Salt propounded and which he and Ryder perfect in their own works, have carefully-expressed and closely-reasoned counterparts in Greek philosophical writers. While Singer does mention in passing the names of Ovid, Seneca, Porphyry and Plutarch as individuals less benighted in their attitudes toward animals than were most ancients, he appears to have made no study of their works.<sup>6</sup> Had he read Plutarch, in particular, he would have had reason to marvel even more so than he does at the opinions of Salt, for of all ancient

---

<sup>3</sup> Ryder [2] 6.

<sup>4</sup> P. Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (New York 1975).

<sup>5</sup> H. S. Salt, *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress* (Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania 1980) viii.

<sup>6</sup> Singer [4] 200.

writers who address the subject of animals, perhaps none felt more sympathy for animals or defended them on more rational and humane grounds than did Plutarch.<sup>7</sup> In this paper I shall examine some elements of Plutarch's thinking on the animal estate, with particular attention to the case which he develops for the position that animals are both sentient and rational and in consequence merit justice at the hands of human beings, an argument central to the case made in defense of animals by contemporary theorists on animal issues.

While it may be said that Plutarch, in common with other classical authors long considered to be of second rank, is presently enjoying something of a renaissance of interest among scholars, the author's treatises on animals have not taken part in this rebirth of scholarly attention. Recent general studies of Plutarch by Barrow, Giankaris and Russell scarcely take note of this aspect of their author's thought.<sup>8</sup> This relative neglect is surprising when one reflects on the prominence which animal-related topics have in Plutarch's *oeuvre*. In addition to his treatises devoted entirely to animals, Plutarch touches upon such issues incidentally in a number of other works included in that vast collection that is generally termed Plutarch's *Moralia*. Moreover, Plutarch occasionally comments sympathetically on animals in the *Lives*. In his life of Marcus Cato, for example, he remarks that a just man will treat his animals kindly at all stages of the animals' lives (5.2). This same sympathy is reflected in Plutarch's treatise on parental love, *De amore prolis*, wherein our author notes (493C-D)<sup>9</sup> that animals less

---

<sup>7</sup> R. H. Barrow, *Plutarch and His Times* (London 1967) 112, is correct in remarking: 'That Plutarch takes more sympathetic note of the animal creation than any other Greek writer except the naturalists, would be a thesis no doubt impossible to prove. Yet, for what it is worth, the impression remains.' While Barrow certainly shows more interest in Plutarch's treatises on animals than do most modern critics of the author, his discussions are limited almost exclusively to content summaries of the treatises in question.

<sup>8</sup> On Barrow, see above, n. 7. C. J. Giankaris, *Plutarch* (New York 1970) 119-122, stresses the 'humanistic' side of Plutarch's character, but fails to note how this is manifested in the author's attitudes toward animals. D. A. Russell, *Plutarch* (London 1972) 13, merely observes that Plutarch seems interested in the subject of cruelty to animals, and he attributes this interest to Plutarch's sympathy for the Pythagorean school of philosophy.

<sup>9</sup> On the numeration of pages in the treatises included in the *Moralia* and on the titles of the treatises, Barrow [7] 164 remarks: 'The order and pagination of the extant books are taken from the Frankfurt edition of 1599 (Greek with Xylander's Latin) which modern editions almost all follow. . . . The conventional Greek titles which follow are probably not Plutarch's own; the Latin titles vary somewhat in different editions.' In this study, the Latin titles of the treatises under discussion are those given in the Loeb edition of the *Moralia*. All quotations from the Greek text of Plutarch are taken from this edition. The standard

frequently demonstrate excesses of conduct than do human beings. Likewise, the topic of the preferability of a vegetarian diet for humans is touched on in passing in his book of suggestions for good hygiene, *De tuenda sanitate praecepta* (132A). Plutarch's positions on animal-related subjects are developed most thoroughly, however, in three treatises of the *Moralia*. The longest of these, the dialogue *De sollertia animalium*, has as its subject the question of whether land-dwelling or sea-dwelling animals are more clever. The short dialogue, *Bruta animalia ratione uti*, whose title is a misnomer, argues that being an animal is preferable to being human. In this humorous work, Odysseus visits Circe to induce her to reconvert his men into human beings. One of her victims, Gryllus ('Porcher'), declines the offer on the grounds that the lives of animals are naturally free of the cares that beset human beings. Finally, in the last two parts of the somewhat poorly preserved treatise *De esu carniū*, Plutarch argues for the moral and hygienic superiority of a vegetarian diet for humans. Broadly speaking, then, Plutarch's animal-related treatises focus upon two ideas which, as I shall note below, were intimately connected in his thinking: animal psychology and what may be termed 'philosophical vegetarianism,' that is, the belief that the choice of a vegetarian lifestyle can be justified on both rational and ethical grounds.<sup>10</sup>

Because questions of the reasoning power of animals and of the religious and ethical justifications for choosing vegetarianism were argued from time to time by almost every philosophical school in antiquity, much of the scholarship on the three treatises outlined above has been devoted to *Quellenforschung*. Scholars eager to detect the sources of Plutarch's arguments have paid relatively little attention to the points which he makes or to how he defends his positions. Moreover, a prejudice against certain of the ideas presented in these treatises seems to have colored the conclusions of some scholars on the value of Plutarch's animal-related works. Typical are the statements of Harold Cherniss and William Helmbold, the editors of the Loeb edition of the treatises, who hold that the light tone of *De sollertia*

---

pagination mentioned by Barrow is given throughout this study.

<sup>10</sup> I borrow the term 'philosophical vegetarianism' from the excellent work of D. A. Dombrowski, *The Philosophy of Vegetarianism* (Amherst, Massachusetts 1984). Dombrowski proves a welcome exception to the rule that modern philosophers of animals' rights are largely oblivious to the thought of their ancient counterparts. His work explores the development of support for and opposition to vegetarianism in Greek and Roman writers from Hesiod through Porphyry and serves as a corrective to some of the errors included in the only other book-length treatment of vegetarianism in antiquity (J. Haussleiter, *Der Vegetarismus in der Antike* (Berlin 1935).

*animalium* suggests that the work is 'something of a school exercise,' perhaps composed in part by Plutarch's pupils!<sup>11</sup> These same editors dismiss *Bruta animalia ratione uti* as 'this little *jeu d'esprit*,'<sup>12</sup> while for them, the argument of *De esu carnium* 'probably depicts faithfully a foible of Plutarch's early manhood.'<sup>13</sup> The great Plutarch scholar, Konrat Ziegler, had argued for an early date for *De esu carnium* on the grounds of its rhetorical cast,<sup>14</sup> while he considers *Bruta animalia ratione uti* an early exercise in Menippean satire composed before Plutarch had developed his own style.<sup>15</sup> As often happens in exercises in *Quellenforschung*, the same pieces of evidence have led scholars to widely disparate conclusions. Urs Dierauer, for example, has analyzed *Bruta animalia ratione uti* as a Cynic satire that illustrates the favorite Cynic device of disparaging human life by praising the virtues of dumb animals. For Dierauer, Cynic elements include the encounter of human life with animal life, in which the human condition comes off the inferior, as well as the emphasis on the negative side of the character of Odysseus, underlined by the favorable portrayal of the animal character in the case of Gryllus.<sup>16</sup> Johannes Haussleiter, in contrast, holds that Plutarch's ideas on animal psychology are essentially Academic in origin, and that his ideas offer nothing that had not been worked out in earlier Academic confrontations with Stoic thinking on animals.<sup>17</sup>

Nor has the possibility of a religious origin for Plutarch's interest in animal psychology and vegetarianism been overlooked by scholars. Haussleiter had concluded that the intellectual foundation for Plutarch's vegetarianism lay in his study of Pythagoreanism, a school that was enjoying

---

<sup>11</sup> H. Cherniss and W. C. Helmbold, *Plutarch's Moralia* 12 (repr. London/Cambridge, Mass. 1984) 312.

<sup>12</sup> Cherniss and Helmbold [11] 489.

<sup>13</sup> Cherniss and Helmbold [11] 537. These editors here go on to observe that there is little trace of adherence to a vegetarian lifestyle in Plutarch's later treatises. Since the dating of Plutarch's treatises is a difficult matter, it is not easy to understand how they can be sure of their statement. The only apparent evidence that Plutarch may have changed his mind at some point is his statement, *De tuenda sanitate praecepta* (132A), that the eating of meat has become for humans almost second nature. Even this may not be evidence that he has chosen to do so himself, but may argue only that he can excuse it in others.

<sup>14</sup> K. Ziegler, *Plutarchos von Chaironeia* (Stuttgart 1964) 98 (=RE 21.636-962).

<sup>15</sup> Ziegler [14] 105.

<sup>16</sup> U. Dierauer, *Tier und Mensch im Denken der Antike: Studien zur Tierpsychologie, Anthropologie und Ethik* (Amsterdam 1977) 187-189.

<sup>17</sup> Haussleiter [10] 218: 'Vielmehr ist diese ganze Literatur nur ein Wiederhall älterer stoisch-akademischer Kontroversen über die Vernunft der Tiere.'

renewed popularity in Plutarch's time.<sup>18</sup> Recently, however, Damianos Tsekourakis has argued convincingly that, although Plutarch frequently refers to the Pythagorean and Orphic doctrine of metempsychosis which underlay abstention from meat prescribed by those schools, such arguments play a distinctly secondary role in the development of Plutarch's own position.<sup>19</sup> Tsekourakis' claims are amply supported by Plutarch's own statements, for he tends to doubt the role of Pythagoras as originator of a vegetarian lifestyle. In *De sollertia animalium*, for example, he argues (964E) that vegetarianism was the choice of the earliest men on earth, but that in time this diet fell into disuse, until Pythagoras reintroduced it. In *De esu carniuum*, Plutarch also casts doubt on the believability of the doctrine of transmigration of souls (998D). Finally, in the opening sentence of *De esu carniuum*, Plutarch dismisses the question of why Pythagoras abstained from meat by stating that it is more important to determine why early man came to eat meat (993A).

The earlier analyses outlined above establish, at the very least, that Plutarch was conversant with the part played by animals in the speculations of a number of established schools of Greek philosophy,<sup>20</sup> but, if we may judge from his own emphatic statements, the content of Plutarch's defense of animals against what he considered to be the unjust claims of human beings was most especially influenced by his opposition to Stoic teachings on

---

<sup>18</sup> Haussleiter [10] 228.

<sup>19</sup> D. Tsekourakis, 'Pythagoreanism or Platonism and Ancient Medicine? The Reasons for Vegetarianism in Plutarch's *Moralia*,' *ANRW* 2.36.1 (1987) 380.

<sup>20</sup> Because the present study is focused specifically on Plutarch's philosophical defense of animals, it leaves out of consideration the question of the sources for Plutarch's examples for the 'clever' behavior by particular species of animals, that is, the sort of material discussed in ancient treatises on 'natural history.' Plutarch was no better a natural philosopher than any other ancient Greek, and his observations on apparent instances of rational behavior in animals, which form the subject of *De sollertia animalium* 965E-985C, blend sound observation with much absurdity. Readers interested in the particulars of Plutarch's zoology and his sources may consult S. O. Dickermann, 'Some Stock Illustrations of Animal Intelligence in Greek Psychology,' *TAPhA* 42 (1911) 123-130; V. d'Agostino, 'Sulla Zoopsicologia di Plutarco,' *Archivio Italiano di Psicologia* 11 (1933) 21-42; and, more recently, Dierauer [16] 186-193, 279-293 and K. J. Pratt, 'Plutarch's Formal and Animal Psychology,' in S. M. Burstein and L. A. Okin (edd.), *Panhellenica: Essays in Honor of Truesdell S. Brown* (Lawrence, Kansas 1980) 179-186. An outstanding interpretation of recent scientific research on the question of animal intelligence may be found in J. Mortenson, *Whale Songs and Wasp Maps: The Mystery of Animal Thinking* (New York 1987). A number of the animal species mentioned by Plutarch in *De sollertia animalium* are treated in Mortenson.

animals. In this section of my paper, I shall examine the Stoic case against animals, followed by Plutarch's reply to the Stoics, and then I shall point out how his defense in a number of important particulars presages current ethical arguments in defense of animals. While Plutarch's opposition to Stoicism, and not least to Stoic ideas on animals, has been noted by scholars, the full implications of his opposition to Stoicism for the development of Plutarch's philosophy of animals' rights have yet to be explored in detail.<sup>21</sup>

The Stoic tenet that formed the particular target of Plutarch's criticism was their teaching that animals are nonrational and cannot therefore be said to merit just treatment from human beings. This basic premise which underlay Stoic theory on the moral status of animals has, throughout history, in the doctrines of various philosophers and religious groups, proven immensely injurious to all animal creation, and vestiges of Stoic arguments may even today be detected in the thinking of contemporary opponents of animals' rights. The Stoics arrived at their position by a logical extension of their concept of soul (*ψυχή*). While it is clear from the fragments of Chrysippus that the Stoics acknowledged that animals were endowed with soul (*SVF* 2.714-716), the defect of the animal soul in their thinking was its innate tendency to remain at the lowest levels of intellectual capacity. The Stoics distinguished eight parts to soul: the five senses, the faculties of speech and reproduction, and a more mysterious part which they called the *ἡγεμονικόν* ('governing principle').<sup>22</sup> The shortcoming of animal creation lay here in the *ἡγεμονικόν* which allowed animals to exhibit only behaviors which might be defined as impulses, such as the tendency to move toward food when it has been sighted. Animals, unfortunately, cannot rise above the level of such behaviors, for the *ἡγεμονικόν* of animals never develops with the passage of time. A human infant, in contrast, has at birth a *ἡγεμονικόν* not unlike that of animals, but humans in time gain *λόγος* ('reason'). We

---

<sup>21</sup> The most exhaustive treatment of Plutarch's relation to Stoicism remains D. Babut, *Plutarque et le Stoicisme* (Paris 1969). While Babut 54 acknowledges that the greater part of Plutarch's writings on animals is intended as polemic against Stoicism, much of Babut's discussion of Plutarch's animal-related treatises is content summary. The anti-Stoic flavor of Plutarch's writing on animals is noted as well in Barrow [7] 116 and in H. Martin, 'Plutarch's *De Sollertia Animalium* 959B-C: the Discussion of the Encomium of Hunting,' *AJPh* 100 (1979) 103-106.

<sup>22</sup> See *SVF* 2.827 (Aetius quoting Chrysippus): οἱ Στωικοὶ ἐξ ὀκτώ μερῶν φασὶ συναστάναι (τὴν ψυχὴν), πέντε μὲν τῶν αἰσθητικῶν . . . ἕκτου δὲ φωνητικοῦ, ἑβδόμου δὲ σπερματικοῦ, ὀγδοῦ δὲ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ('The Stoics say that [the soul] is put together of eight parts, five being of the senses, the sixth of speech, the seventh of reproduction, and the eighth the governing principle itself').

then have, as Diogenes Laertius reports in his life of Zeno, a perfect being: τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῖς λογικοῖς κατὰ τελειότεραν προστασίαν δεδομένου, τὸ κατὰ λόγον ζῆν ὀρθῶς γίνεσθαι τού<τοις> κατὰ φύσιν ('When reason has been accorded to those beings who are rational, with a view toward a more complete leadership, life lived correctly in accord with reason becomes for them the natural life,' D.L. 7. 86).<sup>23</sup> Animal behavior, in contrast, remains largely a matter of self-interest: animals seek that which is useful and shun that which is harmful.<sup>24</sup> Because animals never advance beyond this level of intellectual development, they can never gain an understanding of moral duty, which is the exclusive province of the human intellect. It was an obvious conclusion to the Stoics that because animals cannot have an understanding of morality and cannot therefore have shared values with human beings, humans cannot have any duties toward animals, for only those who share values can uphold each other's interests. We cannot, therefore, speak of justice toward animals, according to Stoic logic. This is stated as their position in Cicero's survey of Stoic morality: *neque ulla re longius absumus a natura ferarum, in quibus inesse fortitudinem saepe dicimus, ut in equis, in leonibus, iustitiam, aequitatem, bonitatem non dicimus; sunt enim rationis et orationis expertes* ('In no respect are we further removed from beasts, in whom we often say that there is courage, as in the case of horses or lions; but we do not say that there is in them justice, equity or goodness. For they are without reason and speech,' Cic. *Off.* 1.50). Indeed, not only do humans owe nothing to animals, but the entirety of creation was made for the use of man and gods, to do with as they please. Again, Cicero is our authority for this Stoic notion: *sed quomodo hominum inter homines iuris esse vincula putant, sic homini nihil iuris esse cum bestiis. praeclare enim Chrysippus cetera nata esse hominum causa et deorum, eos autem communitatis et societatis suae, ut bestiis homines uti ad utilitatem suam possint sine iniuria* ('But in the same way as they think that there exist the bonds of right between men and men, so do they feel there is no bond of right with the beasts. For Chrysippus has well observed that other things were born for the sake of men and gods, while men and gods exist for their own society and fellowship, so that men may use beasts for their advantage without injustice,')

<sup>23</sup> All translations from classical sources in this paper are the author's.

<sup>24</sup> D.L. 7.85: οὕτω γὰρ τὰ βλάπτοντα διωθεῖται καὶ τὰ οἰκεῖα προσίεται ('For thus [animals] push away that which is injurious and draw toward them that which is akin to them').

Cic. *Fin.* 3. 67).<sup>25</sup>

This Stoic line of argument has important corollaries. It will be obvious that if men owe nothing to animals, if they are after all created solely for man's use, intentionally harming an animal entails no moral censure for human beings, since animals fall outside the realm of human moral concern. It is no surprise to find that philosophers who advance such arguments were adamantly opposed to vegetarianism. In the view of the Stoics, animals have no right *not* to be slaughtered for food! Moreover, the Stoics went so far as to argue that to refrain from eating meat will cause the philosopher to controvert the entire concept of justice, for by so doing, he accords to animals a moral status that cannot be theirs. The dire consequences of such an overly generous construction of the moral status of animals to the Stoic world view are explored quite cogently by the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry in his treatise *De abstinentia*, the most extensive examination of the moral arguments in defense of vegetarianism to survive from antiquity.<sup>26</sup> Porphyry observes that a Stoic would argue that

---

<sup>25</sup> This view is corroborated by Diogenes Laertius: ἔτι ἀρέσκει αὐτοῖς μηδὲν εἶναι ἡμῖν δίκαιον πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα ζῶα, διὰ τὴν ἀνομοιότητα ('It is their opinion that there is no justice for men toward animals because of their unlikeness,' D.L. 7. 129). An excellent historical survey of the persistence of the idea that man owes nothing to animals on the grounds that they are unreasoning is offered in J. Passmore, 'The Treatment of Animals,' *JHI* 35 (1975) 195-218. Passmore's intention is to show how reluctantly men have accepted restrictions on what they consider to be their right to do as they please with other creatures, and he spends considerable time illustrating how the attitude of Christianity combined Stoicism with an anthropocentric construction of the biblical injunction to man to hold dominion over creation (Genesis 1: 26-28), to create a climate in which sympathy for nonhuman animals could hardly grow. As recent a figure as Cardinal Newman, for example, held that humans owe nothing to animals since they cannot reason. On this, Passmore [above, this note] 203 observes, 'Behind this attitude to animals lies a theology, a theology bitterly opposed to any form of naturalism, determined to insist that between man and beast there lies an absolute barrier.' A detailed consideration of the fate of animals in the early centuries of Christian faith is found in Ryder [2] 31-42, wherein he points out that at least some Christian clerics went out of their way to defend animals against attack by humans.

<sup>26</sup> See Porphyry, *De abstinentia* 1.4-6 and 3.18-24; especially noteworthy is 1.4: Εὐθὺς τοίνυν φασὶν οἱ ἀντιλέγοντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην συγχεῖσθαι καὶ τὰ ἀκίνητα κινεῖσθαι, ἐὰν τὸ δίκαιον μὴ πρὸς τὸ λογικὸν μόνον τείνωμεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἄλογον ('In the first place, our opponents maintain that justice is overturned and immovables moved, if we extend justice not only to the rational, but even to the irrational'). Some passages in 3.18-24 are drawn directly from *De sollertia animalium* 959D-964C. The Neoplatonic philosopher also developed Plutarch's arguments against the Stoic idea that animals were created solely for man's use by exploring the interesting possibility that man was created solely to be the dinner of wild beasts! (3.20). It is surprising that Porphyry does not make even greater use of Plutarch's treatises than he does, but we may explain this from the fact that Porphyry's

to accord moral status to animals would compel human beings to refrain from using animals for farm labor lest such employment be construed as dishonorable to animals. To refrain from labor aided by animals, however, will hinder human advancement and, the Stoic would contend, will cause the entire structure of society to collapse. Indeed, to treat animals kindly will cause humans to become no better than brutes themselves. We may note, finally, that there runs through Porphyry's exploration of Stoic arguments against the claims of animals an implication that the Stoics believed that humans could not survive on a vegetarian diet. To abstain from animal slaughter would therefore constitute yet another proof to the Stoics that complete non-interference in the lives of animals will undermine human society.

To counter this devastating Stoic indictment of non-human creation, Plutarch marshalled an array of arguments that impress the modern reader of his animal-related treatises as much by their humanity as by their rationality. In a recent study of the psychology of Plutarch, Kenneth J. Pratt observed that Plutarch judged the validity of scientific propositions largely on how reasonable they appeared to him.<sup>27</sup> Thus he opposed Epicurean atomism because he considered it unreasonable to suppose that atoms could fall randomly through space. While Plutarch does raise the argument that it is not reasonable to suppose that animals cannot reason, his defense of animals against the Stoics is more subtle and far-reaching than such a simple proposition and he even succeeds in citing Stoic arguments to catch up his opponents in embarrassing self-contradictions.<sup>28</sup> However much Plutarch may impress us with his logic, we should not slight the appeal which he makes to the emotions in his defense of animals, for in this he stands alone among ancient defenders of non-humans. In the last sentence of the second part of the mutilated treatise *De esu carniūm*, at the very point at which he promises to take up the important question of whether humans in fact have no debt of justice toward animals, that point where regrettably the treatise breaks off, Plutarch exhorts his reader to investigate this question with him using arguments that do not leave out emotional considerations: οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτ' ἤδη σκεψώμεθα, τὸ μηδὲν εἶναι πρὸς τὰ ζῶα δίκαιον ἡμῖν, μήτε τεχνικῶς μήτε σοφιστικῶς, ἀλλὰ τοῖς πάθεσιν ἐμβλέψαντες τοῖς ἑαυτῶν καὶ

---

arguments against flesh-eating are focused on the dangers to the human soul that such a diet produces, a point raised in Plutarch only at *De esu carniūm* 995E-F.

<sup>27</sup> Pratt [20] 175.

<sup>28</sup> It is instructive to note that Plutarch had devoted an entire treatise, *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*, to this subject.

πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ἀνθρωπικῶς λαλήσαντες καὶ ἀνακρίναντες . . . ('Well then, let us look to this too, whether we have no obligation of justice toward living creatures; and [let us do so] neither in an artificial nor a sophistical manner, but looking at our emotions and conversing like humans toward humans and judging . . .', *De esu carniū* 999B). As we shall note, Plutarch opposes a meat diet as much because it involves pain and fear for those it sacrifices as because it is, in his judgment, unnatural and harmful to human beings.

Plutarch understood well that a successful refutation of the Stoic denial of justice toward animals depended upon a demonstration of the rationality of animal creation. This demonstration forms the subject of the first eight chapters (959A-965E) of the dialogue *De sollertia animalium*, and Plutarch's arguments are restated and refined in both *Bruta animalia ratione uti* and *De esu carniū*. Early on in *De sollertia animalium*, Plutarch has the interlocutor Soclarus state the Stoic position on justice and its necessary consequences:

οἱ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς καὶ τοῦ Περιπάτου μάλιστα πρὸς τὸναντίον ἐντείνονται τῷ λόγῳ, τῆς δικαιοσύνης τότε ἂν γένεσιν οὐκ ἔχουσης, ἀλλὰ παντάπασιν ἀσυστάτου καὶ ἀνυπάρκτου γινομένης, εἰ πᾶσι τοῖς ζῴοις λόγου μέτεστι· γίνεται γὰρ ἢ τὸ ἀδικεῖν ἀναγκαῖον ἡμῖν ἀφειδοῦσιν αὐτῶν, ἢ μὴ χρωμένοις τὸ ζῆν ἀδύνατον καὶ ἄπορον.

(964a)

For those of the Stoic and Peripatetic persuasions lean to the opposite view, that justice could not then come to birth, but would be without form and nonexistent, if there is a share of reason in all living creatures; for it is necessary either that injustice arise if we take no care for them, or if we do not make use of them, life would be impossible and impracticable.

This statement of the case is soon after countered by the observation of the dialogue's other speaker, Autobulus, that the Stoics are not in a position to make such an assertion against animals since they make no attempt to prove it, an observation which, we may note, seems true if we may judge by the extant fragments of the Stoics: πῶς καὶ προσήκει τὸ περὶ τῶν ζῴων ὑποτίθεσθαι πρὸς τὴν δικαιοσύνην, εἰ μήθ' ὁμολογεῖται μήτ' ἄλλως ἀποδεικνύουσιν; ('How is it possible for them to lay this down about animals with regard to justice, if it is not generally agreed upon and they do not otherwise prove it?', *De sollertia animalium* 964C).<sup>29</sup> For Plutarch, the burden of proof lay with the Stoics, for nature itself offered, in his view, ample evidence that animals are rational. To borrow the phraseology of Pratt, it is simply not reasonable to maintain that animals are nonrational in the face of

<sup>29</sup> On Porphyry's elaboration of this section of *De sollertia animalium*, see above, n. 26.

simple observation of animal behavior.

The treatise *De sollertia animalium* purports to be the second part of a discussion that had been broken off the previous day.<sup>30</sup> The position had been advanced, in the first day's discussion, that all animals are endowed with reason: ἀποφηνάμενοι γὰρ ἐχθές, ὡς οἴσθα, μετέχειν ἀμωσγέπως τὰ ζῷα διανοίας καὶ λογισμοῦ ('[We] said yesterday, as you know, that all animals partake in some manner of thought and reason,' 960A). This faculty of reason in animals is, after all, Autobulus continues, the very quality that renders hunting so challenging, for hunters must outwit their quarry. Nor is it to be wondered at that animals have a share of reason and understanding, since every creature with soul (and even the Stoics will not deny soul to animals) is from birth sentient: πᾶν τὸ ἔμψυχον αἰσθητικὸν εὐθὺς εἶναι καὶ φανταστικὸν πέφυκεν ('Every creature with a soul comes to birth capable of sensation and possessed of imagination,' 960D). But no creature is endowed with soul merely to be sentient, Autobulus continues, for as Aristotle rightly noted, animals have sentience so that they can make decisions on what to flee and what to pursue (960E). Autobulus cites as support for his argument on the reasoning power of animals, a work by the Aristotelian philosopher Strato wherein that author argued that a creature cannot have soul without intellect: καὶ τοι Στράτωνός γε τοῦ φυσικοῦ λόγος ἐστὶν ἀποδεικνύων ὡς οὐδ' αἰσθάνεσθαι τὸ παράπαν ἄνευ τοῦ νοεῖν ὑπάρχει ('There is a treatise of Strato the natural philosopher, in fact, that demonstrates that it is not possible to have sensation without thought,' 961A). The Stoics thus catch themselves in a logical contradiction between their theory and their practice, for, Autobulus notes, they punish their dogs and horses with an intention of creating in them a feeling of repentance (μετάνοιαν, 961D), which would be pointless if the animals could not reflect on the purpose of their chastisement!

Having proven to his satisfaction the proposition that animals can reason, Plutarch briefly takes up the question of justice before devoting the remainder of the treatise to the enumeration of countless examples of what he calls (966B) the sense of purpose (προθέσεις), preparedness (παρασκευαί), memory (μνήμαι), emotion (πάθη), and care for their young (τέκνων ἐπιμέλειαι), which would be impossible for any creature devoid of at least some powers of reasoning. It is the possession of these qualities that allows philosophers to draw an incontrovertible conclusion: δι' ὧν οἱ φιλόσοφοι δεικνύουσι τὸ μετέχειν λόγου τὰ ζῷα ('Philosophers demonstrate by means of these things that animals have a share of reason,' 966B). We may note here, as a particularly striking example of the sort of 'case studies' that

<sup>30</sup> For the possible dramatic setting of this dialogue, see Martin [21] 98-101.

Plutarch cites to prove the reasoning powers of animals, his anecdote about a number of elephants trained at Rome to perform tricks in the arena. One of this group, who proved slow to learn and was consequently frequently punished, was observed practicing his tricks at night! (968D)

It was an obvious conclusion to Plutarch that animals that exhibit in a high degree the noble qualities cited above (qualities which humans admire in each other) and at times exceed humans in the degree to which they possess such qualities, deserve just treatment from humans, despite the protestations of the Stoics. Plutarch was ready to allow, however, that humans were not guilty of injustice in slaying animals whose sole interest is in harming humans (964F). Nor did he consider the use of animals to aid humans in their labors to be intrinsically unjust. Only the cruel misuse of animals is unjust (965B).

What Plutarch reckoned to be an especially cruel misuse by humans of the other rational creatures that share their world is taken up in the treatises *De esu carniū* and *Bruta animalia ratione uti*, in which the philosopher argued that the necessity of showing justice toward animals demands a vegetarian lifestyle. Plutarch believed that man was in the earliest stages of history exclusively herbivorous. The question of what induced early man to forsake this lifestyle and turn to the eating of flesh, the question which opens the treatise *De esu carniū*, was of more than mere academic interest to him, for the adoption of a flesh-eating lifestyle signaled to Plutarch a breach of the contract of justice which should prevail between man and animal. Plutarch was able to excuse early man his flesh-eating ways in the belief that only the direst necessity brought on by unfavorable soil conditions could have induced man to endure the cries of animals during slaughter and the stench of their gaping wounds (*De esu carniū* 993B). What most troubled Plutarch in this historical development was the fact that, once having tasted flesh and having become inured to the piteous cries of the slaughtered, man felt content to remain on a diet of flesh.

Plutarch considered this choice of lifestyle indefensible on a number of grounds that range from considerations of human anatomy to more exalted considerations of justice. In the first place, Plutarch argued, agriculture was in his day so highly developed that the eating of flesh was no longer necessary. To persist in a flesh-eating regimen was an insult to Mother Earth: τί καταψεύδεσθε τῆς γῆς ὡς τρέφειν μὴ δυναμένης; ('Why do you slander the earth on the grounds that she cannot sustain you?,' *De esu carniū* 994A). Plutarch uses the argument of the earth's plenty to catch the Stoics once again in their own contradictions. Since animal food is unnecessary when the earth produces an abundance, the Stoics, who

denounce luxury, ought to oppose the eating of flesh rather than condoning it! (999A) In addition, Plutarch develops at some length the notion that the eating of flesh is unnatural to humans since their bodily makeup does not easily support such a diet. Man, unlike natural carnivores, cannot slaughter animals without the aid of man-made tools; man cannot easily digest blood; man must cook flesh because he cannot bear to eat it raw (994F). The conclusion from these considerations was clear to Plutarch: "Αλογον γὰρ εἶναι φάμεν ἐκείνους λέγειν τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀρχὴν ἔχειν τὴν φύσιν· ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπῳ κατὰ φύσιν τὸ σαρκοφαγεῖν, πρῶτον μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν συμμάτων δηλοῦται τῆς κατασκευῆς· ('We say that it is illogical for those men to say that nature is the origin [of the eating of flesh]; that the eating of flesh is not according to nature for human beings, is in the first place obvious from their bodily makeup,' 994F). The most compelling reason for abstaining from meat, however, lay for Plutarch in the argument for justice. Humans do not restrain themselves even in the face of evidence of reason on the part of their victims. Plutarch deserves to be quoted at length here for the humanity of his formulation of the issue:

ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἡμᾶς δυσωπεῖ, οὐ χροᾶς ἀνθηρὸν εἶδος, οὐ φωνῆς ἐμμελοῦς πιθανότης, οὐ τὸ καθάριον ἐν διαίτῃ καὶ περιττὸν ἐν συνέσει τῶν ἀθλίων, ἀλλὰ σαρκιδίου μικροῦ χάριν ἀφαιρούμεθα ψυχῆς ἥλιον, φῶς, τὸν τοῦ βίου χρόνον, ἐφ' ᾧ γέγονε καὶ πέφυκεν.

(*De esu carniū* 994E)

But nothing shames us, not the flower-like appearance of their skin, not the persuasiveness of their melodious voices, not their cleanliness nor the excellence of the understanding of the poor creatures, but for the sake of a little bit of flesh, we deprive their souls of the sun, of light, of the time of life to which they were born.

In their heartlessness, Plutarch concludes, men do not realize that the seemingly inarticulate squeals of the dying beasts are in reality cries for justice (παραιτήσεις καὶ δεήσεις καὶ δικαιολογίας ἐκάστου, 'entreaties, deprecations, the pleas for justice of each creature,' *De esu carniū* 994E). The devastating implication of Plutarch's vision of a slaughtered animal is that the poor beast understands better than man that its right to just treatment as a rational creature has been ignored.

Even in the course of the light-hearted lecture to which Odysseus is subjected in *Bruta animalia ratione uti*, the sage pig-philosopher Gryllus manages to make a few serious points on the excellences of animals. Gryllus' thesis, developed in a somewhat 'tongue-in-snout' manner, is that animals, unlike man, possess by nature the excellences that must be developed in man. Animals are courageous, temperate, brave, in fact,

veritable Platonists from birth! Unlike humans, they limit their diets to a few foods and do not seek unnecessary variety (991C). All these natural endowments of animals lead Gryllus to conclude: ἀντοῖς μὲν οὖν τούτοις, ὧ βέλτιστε Ὀδυσσεῦ, μάλιστα δεῖ τεκμαίρεσθαι τὴν τῶν θηρίων φύσιν, ὡς λόγου καὶ συνέσεως οὐκ ἔστιν ἄμοιρος ('One may prove by such evidences, excellent Odysseus, of the nature of beasts, that it is not without its share of reason and intellect,' *Bruta animalia ratione uti* 992C). Despite such evidences of animal intellect, Gryllus laments, humans cannot restrain themselves from slaughtering them and eating their flesh, which they cannot even digest easily (991C-D).

One may smile at the sophistries of Gryllus and may detect logical fallacies and oversimplifications in Plutarch's arguments that were perhaps unavoidable given the state of ancient science; one cannot fail to admire what Plutarch has attempted to accomplish in the treatises discussed above. Plutarch has endeavored to build a case for just treatment of animals based fundamentally on rational considerations. For Plutarch, evidence of sentience and intelligence in animals was too compelling to allow him to condone cruelty to them, in whatever form that manifested itself. It is no exaggeration to say that Plutarch glimpsed the principle which underlies, in infinitely greater sophistication, many modern philosophical arguments for the rights of animals. In opposing the anthropocentric construction of moral duty implicit in Stoicism, Plutarch sought to insure that, as Peter Singer expressed it, 'the basic moral principle of equal consideration of interests is not arbitrarily restricted to members of our own species.'<sup>31</sup> Plutarch's treatises are, in effect, directed against the prejudice which is commonly termed 'speciesism' by philosophers who discuss animal issues. The classic formulation of the moral failings of this prejudice is found in Singer's *Animal Liberation*, wherein the author argues that 'speciesism,' the belief that the claims of one species should prevail over those of another simply because one species has the power to insure its dominance, is intrinsically morally wrong. Equality, according to opponents of 'speciesism,' must be granted to other species as a moral principle, that is, because it is right to do so, not because such equality is a matter of fact. Consequently, while one species may possess a higher level of sentience, reason or intelligence, this fact does not allow that species to exploit another.<sup>32</sup> Singer observes that the British

---

<sup>31</sup> Singer [4] viii.

<sup>32</sup> Singer [4] 1-7. On the prominence which the refutation of 'speciesism' has in current thinking on animals' rights, see Ryder [2], 'The struggle against speciesism is not a side-show; it is one of the main arenas of moral and psychological change in the world today.'

moralist Bentham in the late eighteenth century was one of the earliest thinkers to extend the principle of equality of interests to non-humans, for he argued that the capacity to feel pleasure or pain is the essential characteristic that gives every creature the right to equal consideration.<sup>33</sup> It is clear from our analysis of Plutarch's treatises, however, that Plutarch had anticipated Bentham's arguments by holding that all animals have at least some level of sentience and reason and therefore merit consideration from humans, a consideration that Plutarch calls justice.

The determination of an acceptable criterion for what constitutes justice toward animals has been a central preoccupation of recent advocates of animals' rights. Philosopher Tom Regan has argued that, while one may acknowledge that justice requires that all parties be given their due, it is no easy matter to determine what is in fact due to each living creature. Regan's concept of justice supports the notion that all individuals do in fact possess inherent rights that are not dependent on the value that some individuals place on the experiences which other individuals may have. Experiences which may be more pleasurable or more intellectually fulfilling are not necessarily more valuable. Regan concludes that one may develop a satisfactory conception of the value of experiences by asking if the individual is what he calls the subject-of-a-life: does that individual have beliefs, desires, preferences, the capability to act so as to effect its goals, sentience, and emotional life? Creatures that meet such criteria must, according to Regan, be said to have inherent value and are therefore entitled to just treatment, whether they be other humans or other animals.<sup>34</sup> In advocating just treatment of animals in the belief that they can be shown to possess at least some share of reason, sentience and emotion, Plutarch has developed a line of argument which, while considerably more naive than the sophisticated formulation of Regan, clearly adumbrates the position of Regan.

The possession of sentience by animals has important implications for the thought of philosophers of animals' rights, some of which are again foreshadowed in Plutarch.<sup>35</sup> Some moral philosophers who agree with

---

<sup>33</sup> Singer [4] 7f.

<sup>34</sup> T. Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley 1983) 241-248.

<sup>35</sup> That animals can feel has not always been obvious to philosophers. The most notorious doubter of animal sentience is the famous Descartes who regarded animals as moving machines that only *appeared* to have feelings. Not only do animals not reason, they cannot even feel pain, Descartes contended. This led the philosopher to speculate that animals might not in fact be alive at all. Even the screams of the victims of Descartes' experiments in vivisection could not convince the great man that he might be misinformed. An excellent discussion of Descartes' philosophy of animal nature is offered in Regan [34]

Plutarch that sentience demands justice hold that preventing animals from realizing the interests that are natural to them constitutes unjust harm to them. This is termed by Regan the 'harm as deprivation' argument.<sup>36</sup> According to this position, to deprive a chicken of the opportunity to peck or a cow of the opportunity to graze freely constitutes injustice because the potential self-realization of these animals is stolen away. It will be obvious that to persons who hold to such a view, it is morally indefensible to slay an animal for food because this will deprive it of its interests forever. When Plutarch argues that the slaughter of animals for food is wrong because it deprives the victims of the sun and light which they crave and the time of life to which they were born (*De esu carniū* 994E), he makes the same point that Regan develops. Perhaps, indeed, when Plutarch claims, in this same passage, that animals being slaughtered cry out for justice, in a language humans cannot understand, we may see a moving anticipation of the claim made by modern advocates of animals' rights that it is after all not possible to guarantee a painless death to slaughtered animals because animals can anticipate their own deaths with fear when they see their fellow creatures slaughtered before them.<sup>37</sup> Unlike so many other thoughtful persons, in his own culture and in after ages, Plutarch heeded the cry of those whose language he could not understand but whose interests he defended, and he deserves a place in the history of the struggle to better the condition of the animals who share man's world.

---

3-6.

<sup>36</sup> Regan [34] 96-99. An affecting expression of the moral wrong entailed in the position of those who deny the 'harm as deprivation' argument is found already in Salt [5] 63: 'The most mischievous effect of the practice of flesh-eating, in its influence on the study of animals' rights at the present time, is that it so stultifies and debases the very *raison d'être* of countless myriads of beings—it brings them into life for no better purpose than to deny their right to live.'

<sup>37</sup> Dombrowski [10] 92; Singer [4] 151f.

## PERSIUS SEMIPAGANUS?<sup>1</sup>

**William T. Wehrle**

Department of Classical Studies, College of William and Mary  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185, USA

**Abstract.** This article deals with Persius' self-description (self-presentation) as both satirist and unique poet. Implicit herein is an important distinction between 'bards' (*vates*) and 'poets' (*poetae*). The argument involves an evaluation of Persius' poetic disclaimer (*ipse semipaganus*, 'I, a semipaganus') and (seemingly odd and unorthodox) language and syntax—language and syntax which involve the deliberate and calculated distortion of expected (usual) conventions of (Neronian) poetry.

Heliconidasque pallidamque Pirenen  
illis remitto quorum imagines lambunt  
hederae sequaces; ipse semipaganus  
ad sacra vatium carmen<sup>2</sup> adfero nostrum.

(*Prol.* 4-7)

Heliconiades and pallid Pirene  
I leave for them whose busts  
Adherent ivy licks; a semipaganus  
I bear our song to bards' rites.

It is with the question of Persius' self-description as *semipaganus* (conventionally translated 'half-countryman') in the above passage that we will begin an examination of the *Prologue* and *Satire 1* as indicative of their author's larger literary prospectus. I will argue here that this *semipaganus* is much more programmatically significant of Persius' intentions than has so far been recognized.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, why did Persius feel compelled to invent a new word

---

<sup>1</sup> This article is derived in part from chapter 1 of my *The Satiric Voice: Program, Form and Meaning in Persius and Juvenal* (Hildesheim 1992).

<sup>2</sup> *Carmen* ('song') is not merely 'a dignified term for P.'s satire' (R. A. Harvey, *A Commentary on Persius* [Leiden 1981] 12), but is ironic, portraying deliberately the disparity between Persius' 'song' and those of the 'higher' genres (e.g., Epic).

<sup>3</sup> In the most recent commentary on Persius (G. Lee and W. Barr, *The Satires of Persius* [Liverpool 1987]), the generic denial of poetic inspiration by Roman satirists is stressed, but no explanation is given concerning the uniqueness of *semipaganus*. Yet Lee and Barr, as well as Harvey [2], note the possible connection between *semipaganus* and the Paganalia.

by which to introduce himself as a (Neronian) poet? And further, what might be the programmatic implications of this enigmatic self-description? In Persius' *Prologue*,<sup>4</sup> the poet's primary emphasis is of course on the subject of traditional (e.g., Hesiodic) poetic inspiration.<sup>5</sup> The denial of such inspiration is, on the part of Persius, outright:

Nec fonte labra prolui caballino  
nec in bicipiti somniasse Parnaso  
memini, ut repente sic poeta prodirem.

(*Prol.* 1-3)

I neither washed my lips in horse-fount  
Nor do I remember dreaming on two-headed Parnassus,  
That I should suddenly come forth thus—a poet.

The opening language of the *Prologue* immediately strikes the reader as paradoxical. It is at once personal (e.g., the first person references in *prolui*, 'I washed', 1; *memini*, 'I remember', 3; *prodirem*, 'I should come forth', 3), colloquial (*fonte . . . caballino* ['in horse-fount', 1] a markedly jocose and likewise contemptuous phrase for illustrious Hippocrene), yet poetical (e.g., the alliterative phrases *somniasse Parnaso*, 2; *repente . . . poeta prodirem*, 3) and originally experimental (*ipse semipaganus . . . carmen adfero*, 'a semipaganus, I bear our song').<sup>6</sup>

*Semipaganus* (6) is a unique Persian coinage (occurrent, evidently,

---

J. Bramble, *Persius and the Programmatic Satire: A Study in Form and Imagery* (Cambridge 1974) 163, however, interprets *semipaganus* as evidence of 'the calculated but introverted diffidence of Persius.' Yet 'diffidence' is not what is implied by Persius' poetic disclaimer. On the contrary, *semipaganus* facilitates an *active* and engaged dissociation of the satirist from the other classes of writers.

<sup>4</sup> For discussion on the placement of the choliambics see, e.g., W. V. Clausen, *A. Persi Flacci Saturarum Liber* (Oxford 1956) preface.

<sup>5</sup> Persius' pointed rejection and criticism *re* the 'dream on Helicon' as divine intervention by Muses for poets is directed not only at the Hesiodic tradition, but also at that custom which was subsequently maintained by, e.g., Callimachus (*Ait.* 1), Ennius (*Ann.* 1.2-5), Propertius 3.3. By renouncing Helicon, Persius at once defines his own (poetic) status and initiates an aggressive incursion against those of his contemporaries who might pretend some degree of traditional (divine) poetic inspiration.

<sup>6</sup> Of note also is Persius' choice of scazons ('limping iambs') for the *Prologue*. Harvey [2] 9 notices two aspects: '. . . a metre was required which set the *Prologue* apart from the other poems and which had at least some association with satirical themes (cf. Hipponax, Catullus).' But there is another possible aspect, significant programmatically. Persius' subject here is poor poesy; a 'limping' meter is therefore appropriate in describing poets who are themselves 'limp' in respect to style, production, even inspiration.

nowhere else in Roman literature). Its meaning, however, has remained enigmatic.<sup>7</sup> What Persius implies by calling himself a 'half-member of the pagus'<sup>8</sup> is not, except at a pretentious level, that he considers himself 'unqualified . . . to be in the company of *vates*.'<sup>9</sup> Rather, the *semipaganus* reference is characteristically indicative of Persius' larger satiric program. It is therefore simply wrong to assert that Persius is being sincerely modest or 'self-depreciatory'<sup>10</sup> here. In fact, far from considering himself either unqualified or unworthy of writing poetry, the satirist is deliberately divorcing himself from the traditional class of poets. His satire is separate and distinct from the poetic corpus of the bards whom he mentions (*ad sacra vatium carmen adfero nostrum*, 'I bear our song to bards' rites,' 7). *Vates*, in this sense ('seer/bard'), is to be set up by Persius as a contrasting term to *poeta* ('poet'). 'Bardness' and 'limpness' are characteristic of Persius' contemporary poetasters; the satirist stands apart.<sup>11</sup>

Further, the poetic style of the *Prologue* is itself an index of the larger satiric program. Persius' much discussed *iunctura acris* (e.g., *cantare . . . Pegaseium nectar*, 'to sing Pegasian nectar', *Prol.* 14) is neither unfortunate

---

<sup>7</sup> Translations implying 'half-rustic' (as suggested by the scholia), 'half-poet,' 'half-learned,' etc., are probably misleading. Equally misleading are those mentioned by D. Bo, *Persi Flacci Saturarum Liber* (Turin 1969) 12: 'sunt qui "semipoeta", alii "semidoctus" intellegant.' If *semipaganus* was indeed coined here by Persius (as is evidently the case), its appearance would certainly have forced the *Prologue*'s original readership to assess its meaning. While the prefix *semi-* suggests 'half-,' a translation 'half-countryman,' the most apparent connotation of the word, fails to allow for the plurality of meaning which *semipaganus* would have originally embraced. At least one aspect of this plurality, although apparent, has to my knowledge been overlooked. *Pagus*, from which *paganus* is derived, is related to the verb *pangere*. Apart from meanings of 'set, arrange, plant,' etc., in a general sense, *pangere* meant 'to compose poetry' (cf., e.g., Cic. *Fam.* 16.18.3: *an pangis aliquid Sophocleum?* ['or are you *composing* something Sophoclean?']; Lucr. 1.25: *versibus . . . quos ego de rerum natura pangere conor* ['by verses . . . which I am trying to *compose* about the nature of things.']). Thus the sense of *semipaganus* as 'half-composer' emerges, a sense more attuned to Persius' mock poetic disclaimer than that of 'half-countryman/half-rustic,' etc.

<sup>8</sup> Harvey [2] 11.

<sup>9</sup> Harvey [2] 11.

<sup>10</sup> OLD s.v. *semipaganus*: 'Word applied by Persius to himself in a self-depreciatory sense, as an unworthy member of the "religious guild" of poetry.'

<sup>11</sup> Juvenal likewise, in his program, speaks of his contemporary poets as *vates*; they are, in fact, 'everywhere': Juv. 1.17f.: *stulta est clementia, cum tot ubique / vatibus occurras, periturae parcere chartae* ('Foolish is the clemency to spare, when you run into so many bards everywhere, pages destined to perish [anyway].').

accident of linguistic indecorum nor symptom of ill-conceived poetic style.<sup>12</sup> It rather is an indicator and amplifier of the satirist's *indignatio*. Persius *deliberately* and with express purpose (i.e., to accent the unoriginality of more 'traditional' [i.e., *bardic*] poets) inserts these (apparently) discontinuous *iuncturae acres* into contexts which intend to upset and even break down formal poetic convention. Persius' is an attack on style—style of course reflects men and *mores*; thus his disintegration of poetic style suggests his ultimate purpose—to dissolve the value-assumptions of a society bonded by corruption, perversion and immorality. Equally complementary to the preliminary Persian satiric program as presented in this *Prologue* is the attack on the creative resources of other (contemporary) poets; while their passion for poetic production may be sincere (real), it is nevertheless base, amounting only to the most primitive excitant: hunger. Even birds are motivated by it, and their motivation (like that of the poets whom Persius attacks) gives rise to nothing original, but to mere repetition, duplication of what they have heard before:

quis expedivit psittaco suum 'chaere'  
 picamque docuit verba nostra conari?  
 magister artis ingenique largitor  
 venter, negatas artifex sequi voces.

(*Prol.* 8-11)

Who achieved for the parrot his 'Welcome'  
 And taught the pie to try our words?

<sup>12</sup> The employment of 'sharp juxtapositions' by Persius is discussed especially by C. S. Dessen, *Iunctura Callidus Acri: A Study of Persius' Satires* (Urbana 1968) *passim*. Innumerable critics have been aversely perplexed by Persius' 'unorthodox' and 'obscure' use of language; this of course justifies their conclusion that Persius was himself a poor and unoriginal (see the irony) poet. As recently as 1982, for example, N. Rudd, 'Persius', in E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature 2: Latin Literature* (Cambridge 1982) 507, remarks on the 'weakness' and irrelevance of Persius' fourth satire: 'The satire as a whole . . . is rather weak. The ridicule of the demagogue Alcibiades has little bearing on imperial Rome. The sequence of thought is sometimes confusing.' Cf. also Rudd (above, this note) 510 on Persius as a poet in general: 'These limitations [Stoic interest, intolerance, limited perspective, etc.] disqualify Persius from greatness.' P. Connor, 'The Satires of Persius: A Stretch of the Imagination', in A. J. Boyle (ed.), *The Imperial Muse: Ramus Essays on Roman Literature of the Empire* (Bentleigh 1988) 55, fortunately, however, perceives Persius' *iunctura acris*, for example, as imparting to his verse 'a sharp ferocity of expression and a certain aggressively extravagant imagination.' Indeed, essential to Persius' programmatic divorce of himself from typical *vates* is his unique (individual) and virulently original phraseology.

Master of Arts and briber of genius:  
Belly, artist at following voices denied.

And it is the prospect of indulgence which motivates these mercenary poets; *venter* (11) is a boldly stark term which can refer not only to the parrot and magpie, but transferred to the larger context of (Neronian) literary society, the term might conjure up images of sloth, sluggishness, *appetentia* ('desire') and *luxuria* ('excess').

Further, bellies are for Persius indicators of the inflated, and especially the overinflated or perversely inflated.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, poets whose *ventres* are equivalent to motivators of 'genius' (*magister artis ingenique largitor*, *Prol.* 10) are overcome by the impulses of greed and hunger with the result that they attempt poetic creation which is quite beyond their nature: *negatas voces* (*Prol.* 11) is entirely appropriate not only to birds, but also to mercenary and unoriginal poets who 'pursue voices denied'). Similarly, what is produced by such poets is, like the satiric belly, *turgidus* ('swollen').<sup>14</sup> Thus one of the most salient aspects of the *Prologue* is its almost immediate incursion into what we might aptly call poetic excess—an excess which manifests itself in (mercenary) poetry which, while aiming at eternity, reaches only immense dilation. And complementary to this point is Persius' implied assertion that truly well-inspired poetry is not born of mercenary intent:

quod si dolosi spes refulserit nummi,  
corvos poetas et poetridas picas  
cantare credas Pegaseium nectar?

(*Prol.* 12-14)<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Cf., e.g., a passage in Persius *Sat.* 3.94-106, wherein a 'swollen' gourmand with 'white belly' meets with a hideous death in the bath (*turgidus hic epulis atque albo ventre lavatur*, 'this one, blown up with banquets and with white belly, takes a bath', 3.98). Also, one cannot help but recall here the Muses of Hesiod, who describe mortal men as 'mere bellies' at *Theog.* 26. Thematically, Persius' 'bards,' motivated by appetite alone, parallel the 'gastric' shepherds of Hesiod.

<sup>14</sup> Cf., e.g., 1.14, where the verses of a contemporary comprise 'something massive, which a lung overdeveloped of wind would bellow' (*grande aliquid quod pulmo animae praelargus anhelet*). Cf. also Juvenal's assessment of contemporary poetry, wherein an oversized *Orestes* is described by likewise excessive verbiage: . . . *ingens / Telephus aut summi plena iam margine libri / scriptus et in tergo necdum finitus* *Orestes* ('. . . a massive *Telephus* or an *Orestes* written, not yet [even] finished, with the margins at the top of the book already full, as well as [written on] the backside,' *Sat.* 1.4-6).

<sup>15</sup> In punctuating the end of verse 14 with a question mark, I follow the plausible suggestion of Harvey [2] 9. Despite most editors' preference for the full stop here, the question mark seems to yield the better sense, since the 'belief' implied would be both

But if hope of tricky cash should radiate,  
 Would you believe that crow-poets and  
 Pie-poetesses sing Pegasian nectar?

And the implication here again depends upon our understanding of the ravenous *venter*; mere greed and bestial appetite (stressed appropriately by analogies to the parrot, magpies and crows) can in no way inspire the innately untalented. Otherwise, implies Persius, we would have to believe that crows and magpies, if sufficiently rewarded, were capable of composing poetry worthy of the gods' ears (*Pegaseium nectar*).

At *Satire* 1.2 Persius promptly embarks upon an *apologia pro opere suo*. An imaginary interlocutor is introduced immediately to occasion Persius' defence of his undertaking (this anonymous adversary's fictive nature is confirmed at 1.44: *quisquis es, o modo quem ex adverso dicere feci*, 'whoever you are, whom I have just created to speak in opposition'):

'quis leget haec?' min tu istud ais? nemo hercule. 'nemo?'  
 vel duo vel nemo. 'turpe et miserabile.' quare?  
 ne mihi Polydamas et Troiades Labeonem  
 praetulerint? nugae. non, si quid turbida Roma  
 elevel, accedas examenve inprobum in illa  
 castiges trutina nec te quaesiveris extra.

(1.2-7)

'Who shall read these things?' You ask me that? By Hercules, nobody.  
 'Nobody?'

Either two or none. 'Disgraceful as well as sad.' Why?  
 Lest Polydamas and the Trojan ladies prefer Labeo to me?  
 Nonsense. You should not, if disordered Rome disparages anything,  
 Concede or reprove the inferior tongue in that pair of scales, nor  
 Should you seek [opinion] outside yourself.

Persius' declaration is quite simple and straightforward here. The satirist admits that his work will be unpopular, his readers none or maybe two. But the primary point is that the literary preferences of Rome provide unreliable criteria for the judgement of literature in general. One (Persius) should write not for the taste of the unbalanced Roman audience, as does Labeo, the translator of well-known epic, but rather produce what stems from internal inspiration. Likewise, Persius urges an audience (reader) to evaluate literature from a personal perspective (*nec te quaesiveris extra*, 7) rather than from the perspective of a *turbida Roma* which has proven itself a poor literary judge. Thus there is an implied antithesis: Persius on the one hand,

---

incredible and absurd.

and the bird-poets of the prologue (exemplified here especially by Labeo) on the other.

Persius protracts his assault on poetasters. After the protest of his interlocutor of *Satire* 1 ('rides,' ait, 'et nimis uncis / naribus indulges,' "You laugh," says he, "and overindulge in curled nostrils," 1.40f.), he then combines his defense with a renewed attack on those would-be poets who profess to love truth, but seek mere flattery. Here Persius uses as his defense a reminiscence of his *Prologue* (i.e., denial of poetic inspiration), and simultaneously admits his own humanity (the effect of which is to personalize the narrative, drawing us toward empathetic relation to the satirist):

non ego, cum scribo, si forte quid aptius exit  
(quando haec rara avis est), si quid tamen aptius exit,  
laudari metuam; neque enim mihi cornea fibra est.

(1.45-57)

I do not, when I write, if by chance something rather apt comes out,  
(Seeing that this is a rare bird), if nevertheless something rather apt comes  
out,  
Fear to be praised; for my bowels are not of horn.

And here begins his renewed assault:

sed recti finemque extremumque esse recuso  
'euge' tuum et 'belle.' nam 'belle' hoc excute totum:  
quid non intus habet? non hic est Ilias Atti  
ebria veratro? non siqua elegidia crudi  
dictarunt proceres? non quidquid denique lectis  
scribitur in citreis? calidum scis ponere sumen,  
scis comitem horridulum trita donare lacerna,  
et 'verum,' inquis, 'amo, verum mihi dicite de me.'  
qui pote? vis dicam? nugaris, cum tibi, calve,  
pinguis aqualiculus propenso sesquipede extet.

(1.48-57)

But I object that the end and point of right is  
Your 'good' and 'fine.' Just shake out that whole 'fine.'  
What doesn't it have inside? Isn't the *Iliad* of Attis here  
Drunk on hellebore? Any paltry elegies the nobles should  
Tell? Even whatever's written on citrus-wood couches?  
You know how to serve a warm sow's udder, how to  
Treat a raw companion to a worn mantle, and  
'Truth I love,' you say, 'Tell me the truth about me.'  
How's it possible? You wish me to speak? You trifle  
With yourself, baldhead, your fat pork-belly  
Sticks out in a foot-and-a-half slope.

Finally at this juncture Persius brings his 'turgidity' (fatness) theme directly into contact with its original embodiment (the connection thus far has only been implied; here it is realized). The poetaster (who now evidently has assumed the identity of the adversarial interlocutor) is called directly babbling, bald, with a grotesquely enormous belly (the rather bizarre *aqualiculus* serving to emphasize the swinish deformity of the poetaster).

Persius' program continues to retain as its main emphasis the decline of poetry as reflective of moral decadence, yet he expands his criticism to the indefinite *populus*:

'quis populi sermo est?'<sup>16</sup>  
 (1.63)  
 What's the talk of the populace?'

Persius<sup>17</sup> then replies:

. . . quis enim nisi carmina molli  
 nunc demum numero fluere, ut per leve severos  
 ecfundat iunctura unguis?  
 (1.63-65)  
 . . . well what, except that poems  
 Now at last flow in smooth meter, so that the seam  
 Allows severe nails to glide smoothly.

And criticism of the larger society is thus (re)introduced into the program; the *populi sermo* ('talk of the populace', 63) proves to be invalid (it too lacks the ability to make sound literary judgements). Society cites as the marks of a good poet only the ability to compose an even verse and to treat diverse *topoi*:

. . . scit tendere versum  
 non secus ac si oculo rubricam derigat uno.  
 sive opus in mores, in luxum, in prandia regum  
 dicere, res grandes nostro dat Musa poetae.  
 (1.65-68)  
 . . . he knows how to draw out a verse  
 No differently than if he were with one eye aligning

<sup>16</sup> In describing the opinion of the *populus* as a *sermo*, Persius may have been intentionally recalling Horace's reference to his (satiric) *Sermones*. Thus what is expressed by the incompetent public is itself 'self-satirizing.'

<sup>17</sup> Clausen's [4] attribution of lines to speakers at 1.63-65 is incorrect; Harvey [2] 34: '63-65 (*quis* . . . *unguis*) are spoken by P.'

A red (line). Whether the need's to talk of morals,  
Luxury, or kings' banquets, the Muse gives great  
Themes to our poet.

Yet in reality (and in recollection of the ineptitude of the contemporary poets as put forth in the beginning of the program), Persius asserts, those of whom the *populus* approves are accustomed only to trifle (*nugari solitos Graece*, 'used to trifling in Greek', 1.70); common and easy themes are even beyond their ability (*nec ponere lucum [possunt]*, '[they can] not even portray a grove', 1.70). Thus better than half of Persius' program deals almost entirely with literature in decline and its attendant moral decadence.

It is not until 1.85 that an issue drawn from the larger sphere of 'real' life is finally introduced. Here the perversion of literature which Persius has described is transferred to the realm of illegality, and thus he confirms another implicit theme: civilization as *victim* of its own moral insensibility. Justice is travestied by perverse poetic persuasiveness:

'fur es,' ait Pedio. Pedius quid? crimina rasis  
librat in antithetis, doctas posuisse figuras  
laudatur: 'bellum hoc.' hoc bellum? an, Romule, ceves?  
(1.85-87)  
'You're a thief!' he says to Pedius. What's Pedius say?  
He balances the crimes on shaven oppositions, he's  
Praised for having placed learned tropes: 'This is gorgeous.'  
This gorgeous? Or, Romulus, are you shaking your ass?

The attribution to Romulus of pathic effeminacy (who perhaps represents the court officials) of course recalls 1.15-23 especially.

Further, by introducing now the picture of the (shipwrecked) sailor (*naufragus*, 88) who 'sings' his misery, Persius touches on the (programmatic) theme of *avaritia*. In short, the satirist's sailor is an impostor, his ruse having been prepared the night before, and the fact of his singing reveals insincerity:

men moveat? quippe et, cantet si naufragus, assem  
protulerim? cantas, cum fracta te in trabe pictum  
ex umero portes? verum, nec nocte paratum,  
plorabit qui me volet incurvasse querella.  
(1.88-91)  
Should that move me? Indeed, and, if a castaway sings,  
Am I to come up with my coin? You sing, when you bear  
On your shoulder yourself painted on a broken board?  
True disaster, not that prepared at night, he will lament  
Who wants to influence me with his complaint.

And the idea that (avaricious) insincerity can be (and often is) glossed over by pseudo-grandiloquence (such as that of the *naufragus*) is not yet admitted by the adversary, who continues to display critical inability:

'sed numeris decor est et iunctura addita crudis.  
cludere sic versum didicit "Berecyntius Attis"  
et "qui caeruleum dirimebat Nerea delphin,"  
sic "costam longo subduximus Appennino."  
"Arma virum," nonne hoc spumosum et cortice pingui  
ut ramale vetus vegrandi subere coctum?'  
(1.92-97)<sup>18</sup>

'But composition and appropriate connection have been added to unfinished verses.

Thus [our poet] has learned to close a verse: "Berecyntius Attis" and:  
"Which dolphin was dividing sky-blue Nereus," thus:  
"We withdrew a rib from long Appenine."  
"Arms, the man," Isn't this foaming and of swollen bark  
Like an old branch cooked with stunted sponge-cork?'

The self-defacing irony of the adversary is manifest here. His 'decorous' lines attempt complicated metaphor, yet he accuses the simple *Arma virum* of frothiness and excessive padding. But the adversary is cajoled further:

quidnam igitur tenerum et laxa cervice legendum?  
(1.98)  
Something then tender and to be read with lax neck?

The resulting quasi-Catullan<sup>19</sup> verses give Persius the opportunity finally to disparage directly self-indulgent treatments of mythical themes:

<sup>18</sup> Most editors now agree that 96f. should be attributed to the voice of the adversary and not to that of the satirist (Persius). G. G. Ramsay, *Juvenal and Persius* (London/New York 1918), who attributes 96-98 to Persius, turns *Arma virum* ('Arms, the man,' 96) into an exclamation: 'O shade of Virgil!', but this is both semantically forced and critically unnecessary. *Berecyntius Attis* (93), *caeruleum . . . delphin* (94), are evidently Ovidian confections (see Harvey [2] 44). *Costam . . . Appennino* (95) has not been traced to any source; cf. Bo [7] 29, 'ex quo carmine versus afferatur incertum est neque facile est dictu quid significet.' On *Attis*, however, see Lee and Barr [3] 79f. It may be that Persius' reference to an *Attis* is designed to disparage conscious imitators of Catullus and/or Ovid (Lee and Barr cite Cat. 63, Ov. *F.* 4.221ff.); likewise, there may be implied an attack on Neronian Callimacheanism.

<sup>19</sup> On the Catullan nature of 1.99-106 see again Lee and Barr [3] 81f., where a comparison is drawn with Cat. 64.254-64. *Re* 1.99-102 Lee and Barr also note Persius' possible attack on Nero('s verse).

'torva Mimalloneis inplerunt cornua bombis,  
et raptum vitulo caput ablatura superbo  
Bassarid et Lyncem Maenas flexura corymbis  
euhion ingeminat, reparabilis adsonat echo.'  
haec fierent si testiculi vena ulla paterni  
viveret in nobis? summa delumbe<sup>20</sup> saliva  
hoc natat in labris et in udo est Maenas et Attis  
nec pluteum caedit nec demorsos sapit unguis.

(1.99-106)

'Grim horns they filled with Mimallonian rumbles,  
Both Bassarid, about to carry off the head snatched from  
Proud yearling and Maenad, about to flex Lynx with fruit  
Clusters, repeats "euhion," restoring echo replies.'  
Would these come about if a single vein of paternal ball  
Were living in us? Limp this swims in upper spit on lips  
And Maenas and Attis are permeated; it neither strikes the  
Writing-couch nor tastes of gnawed nails.

The emphases in Persius' attack on his adversary's literary *exempla* involve two aspects: the nervelessness (effeminacy) and pretentiousness of these verses, and their unoriginality (they are uninspired, since their author has not milled over them). Thus the theme put forth first in the *Prologue* is confirmed by example.

In conclusion, it is evident from the outset that Persius' is a poetry not only unique in style (both in respect to Roman satiric tradition and Neronian literary standards), but also singularly vexatious. Poetic convention represented to Persius a symptom of perverse and ill-discerning society. The 'limping iambic' meter of the *Prologue*, for example, reveals immediately its author's intention to parody the poor poesy of his contemporary *litterati*. A 'bard' who writes in a 'crippled' or 'limp' style likewise leads a life which is feeble and handicapped, even impotent. Thus the connection is quite explicit—literature is reflective of its procreator, an idea not new, but perhaps especially timely in Persius' Neronian world. Persius' disclaimer is therefore no less than requisite; he declares himself a *semipaganus* in order to ensure dissociation from those whose poesy (as reflective of lifestyle) he attacks. What Persius means, then, by calling himself a *semipaganus* is that he is not, and would not wish to be, a *vates* (no less than a term of abuse, denoting pretense) at all.

---

<sup>20</sup> *Delumbe*, 'crippled, limp,' recalls Persius' theme of 'lame' composition as was introduced first in the *Prologue* (by means of imitative 'limping meter').

## A GENERIC-ONTOLOGICAL READING OF ADRASTUS' SMINTHIAC PRAYER (STATIUS, *THEBAID* 1.696-720)

**William J. Dominik**

Department of Classics, University of Natal  
Durban 4001

**Abstract.** An interpretation of Adrastus' hymn to Apollo in the *Thebaid* (1.696-720) of Statius can be assisted by examining the *topoi* of the Sminthiac hymn prescribed by Menander. Although the similarities suggest that Statius is indebted to the Sminthiac prescription, the references in Adrastus' hymn are connected closely to other passages in the *Thebaid* and point toward and highlight details of dramatic and thematic significance.

The extent of the influence of rhetorical principles and formulae upon the conformation of a literary work is difficult to determine with any real degree of precision under the best of circumstances, perhaps most of all when a poet's treatment is virtually identical with the prescription of a rhetorician, as in the composition of Adrastus' formal hymn to Apollo in Statius' *Thebaid* (1.696-720). This prayer bears topical and structural characteristics of the hymnal formulae recorded by the third century AD rhetorician Menander of Laodicea in his *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*.<sup>1</sup> No doubt Menander is influenced in his composition of the hymnal prescription by the cultural and social milieu of the Second Sophistic and the specific occasions of presentations. Nevertheless, his rhetorical treatise preserves the learning of earlier ages, for it cites the rules for hymn composition based on his study of a number of poets (e.g., Homer, Sappho) and rhetoricians (e.g., Quintilian, Aelius Theon) throughout classical antiquity; therefore an investigation of its relation to the prayers in an epic such as the *Thebaid* is a worthwhile exercise.

Generic typing is valuable mainly in the preliminary stages of critical investigation. The process of classifying would certainly be misguided if it were to serve no useful purpose beyond the (obsessive) act of classifying for

---

<sup>1</sup> The edition of Menander used in this article is that of C. Hammer, *Rhetores Graeci ex Recognitione Leonardi Spengel* 3 (Leipzig 1856). References to the works of other Greek rhetoricians from Spengel are preceded by 'Sp.' The text of the *Thebaid* used is that of D. E. Hill, *P. Papini Stati Thebaidos Libri XII* (Leiden 1983).

its own sake. For the critic classification should not be an end in itself, but a means to an end—a heightened appreciation of a particular passage in a literary work. A knowledge of generic typology can aid the critic in his understanding of a passage without necessarily impinging upon his critical sensibilities in evaluating the entire work; more importantly, perhaps, a generic awareness can aid in the considered exegesis of a speech in relation to its epic context and militate against the formulation of intemperate critical judgements.

*The Honorific Hymn: Callimachus, Ap. and Menander, Epid.*

In generic hymn composition, frames of time reference are suspended in an atemporal framework; generic prescriptions, rhetorical or literary, admit little of the bounds of time. This synchronic principle of generic hymn composition can be illustrated through a brief comparison of two hymns to Apollo from different periods with Menander's prescription for the Sminthiac hymn. Although Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* and Adrastus' brief Apolline hymn in the first book of the *Thebaid* anticipate Menander's treatise by five and two centuries respectively, the *topoi* and structure of the hymns bear a remarkable resemblance to Menander's outline; therefore it is reasonable to identify those elements as 'rhetorical'. It is at this point that the meaning of 'rhetorical' and 'generic' merge, in that both terms suggest the systematisation of rules, explicit or implicit, governing the composition of the Sminthiac prayers. This phenomenon is not so much proleptic as metaleptic in nature, for the topical and structural requirements for the composition of the Apolline hymn cut across boundaries of time and space in classical antiquity; however, the Apolline hymn assumes far greater flexibility in the matter of structure than in the variation of *topoi*, as the following synopsis of Callimachus' hymn illustrates.

Callimachus' hymn betrays the influence of the Sminthiac tradition in the third century BC. It is difficult to determine to what extent Menander made use of Callimachus in the formulation of his guidelines for the composition of the Sminthiac hymn. A comparison of the hymn with Menander's treatise reveals the similarities as topical rather than structural. Menander stresses the need for suitable *prooemia* (*Epid.* 3.437.6-438.9); while Callimachus incorporates a lengthy *prooemion* of thirty-one lines, it lacks the *topoi* recommended for inclusion by the rhetorician. Both Callimachus and Menander refer to the need to sing Apollo's praises (*Ap.* 28-31; *Epid.* 437.12-15); allude to the god's origin and parentage (*Ap.* 4f.; *Epid.* 438.29-440.15); lay stress on his prophetic effect upon colonisation

(*Ap.* 55-58; *Epid.* 442.11-21); and recount his four powers (cf. *Ap.* 42-46; *Epid.* 440.24f.)—those of music (*Ap.* 43f.; *Epid.* 442.24-443.12), archery (*Ap.* 43f.; *Epid.* 441.3-442.8), prophecy (*Ap.* 45; *Epid.* 442.9-23) and medicine (*Ap.* 45f.; *Epid.* 443.13-32). Callimachus and Menander list Apollo's various titles (*Ap.* 19, 33, 47, 69-71; *Epid.* 445.25-446.8), describe his benefits to mankind (*Ap.* 38-41; *Epid.* 440.20-24), make reference to the myths concerning the god (*Ap.* 22-24, 35, 47-54, 60-68; *Epid.* 441.10-442.4), mention his role as the founder of cities (*Ap.* 55-59, 74-76; *Epid.* 442.14-21), and describe his temples (*Ap.* 76f.; *Epid.* 445.1-15) and festivals (*Ap.* 77f.; *Epid.* 440.20-26).<sup>2</sup>

A comparison of the epideictic treatises of Menander and those of other rhetoricians such as Quintilian, Aelius Theon, Alexander, pseudo-Hermogenes, pseudo-Dionysius, Aphthonius and Nicolaus suggests that they were intended to serve as general rules for the composition of prayers, hymns and *encomia*. As in the composition of the deliberative speech by the professional orator, the specific circumstances naturally exerted greater influence over the writer in his composition of a hymn than the guidelines recorded by the rhetorician. This is evident in Statius' own composition of the *Silvae*.<sup>3</sup> Epideictic speeches were usually directed toward a particular person and intended to be recited and heard by a wide audience; therefore it was necessary for the poet to vary the elements according to the particular occasion and status of the dedicatee or addressee.

#### *The Sminthiac Hymn:*

*Statius, Theb. 1.696ff. and Menander, Epid. 437.5ff.*

Since the *Thebaid* was frequently recited as a show piece, it is hardly surprising Adrastus' formal hymn to Apollo reveals a significant debt to the influence of display rhetoric and poetry. The context is Polynices' confession of his Theban ancestry to Adrastus (1.676ff.). The regent replies with compassion to Polynices' confession (682ff.) and naïvely alleges Polynices can escape punishment for the crimes of his ancestors (*nec culpa nepotibus obstat*, 'past sin avoids descendants', 690). Adrastus fails to

<sup>2</sup> On Apollonian epiphanies see K. Kerényi (tr. J. Solomon), *Apollo, the Wind, the Spirit and the God* (Dallas 1983).

<sup>3</sup> On this see S. T. Newmyer, *The Silvae of Statius: Structure and Theme* (Leiden 1979) 10-44, who perhaps goes too far in denying Statius' indebtedness to the prescriptions of the rhetoricians. Earlier analyses appear in F. Leo, *De Statii Silvis* (Gottingen 1892-93) and H. Lohrisch, *De Publii Papinii Statii Silvarum Poetae Studiis Rhetoricis* (diss. Halle 1905).

recognise that man is enmeshed in forces which he can neither control nor extricate himself from. His deferential prayer to Apollo, whom he refers to as *seruator parentum* ('the saviour of our fathers', 694), is particularly ironic in view of the accompanying festivities and his kingdom's eventual plight, since Apollo is only too aware of what the future holds for the Argives.

Because of the identification and conflation of the Roman divinities with foreign deities, the major gods in the Roman pantheon were associated with a host of domestic and foreign localities. This phenomenon is illustrated in the opening lines of Adrastus' hymn—note the anaphorae (1.696f., 699, 701), which are characteristic of the formal hymn (cf. 705, 709, 717-19)—when the regent lists a number of Apollo's favourite abodes:

'Phoebe parens, *seu* te Lyciae Pataraea niuosis  
 Exercent dumeta iugis, *seu* rore pudico  
 Castaliae flauos amor est tibi mergere crines,  
*Seu* Troiam Thymbraeus habes, ubi fama uolentem  
 Ingratis Phrygios umeris subiisse molares,  
*Seu* iuuat Aegaeum feriens Latonius umbra  
 Cynthus et adsiduam pelago non quaerere Delon.'

(1.696-702; my emphasis)

'Phoebus sire! *Whether* the thickets of Patara and  
 Lycia's snow-clad mountains occupy you, *or* you desire  
 To dip your golden hair in Castalia's pure dew,  
*Or*, as Thymbra's deity, you dwell in Troy, where rumour says  
 You bore willingly on ungrateful shoulders Phrygian stones,  
*Or* Latonian Cynthus delights you, casting his shadow on the Aegean  
 And Delos, anchored in the sea, not requiring your search.'

This cataloguing and multiplication of geographical places is consistent with rhetorical practice (cf. *Men. Epid.* 334.27-335.20). Additionally, there is a psychological motive behind Adrastus' catalogue of Apollo's possible whereabouts. The regent presumes his hymn will not be heard by Apollo if it is addressed to a vacant abode of the god. Adrastus' catalogue of the god's residences appears to be an attempt to guard against this possibility.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Another instance where this occurs is in Tydeus' speech to Athena in *Theb.* 2.720-24 (note the customary repetition of the conjunction; my emphasis): '*Seu Pandionio nostras inuisere caedes / Monte uenis, siue Aonia deuertis Itone / Laeta choris, seu tu Libyco Tritone repexas / Lota comas qua te biuigo temone frementem / Intemeratarum uolucer rapit axis equarum . . .*' ('*Whether* you come from Pandion's mount to inspect / My slaughter, *or* you turn aside from your joyous dances / In Aeonian Itone, *or* had washed and combed your hair / In Libyan Triton's lake, where as you shout the swift axle / Of sacred horses rushes you in your two-horsed chariot . . .'). For a list of other occurrences in classical literature, see

Adrastus pleads in humble fashion to Apollo for divine favour. The structural and topical elements of Adrastus' formal hymn invite comparison with the prescriptions for honorific appeals to the gods described by the rhetoricians, including contemporaries of Statius such as Quintilian (*Inst.* 3.7, 12, 16) and (possibly) Aelius Theon (*Progymn.* Sp. 2.110).<sup>5</sup> It would be inapt for the poet in epic to develop a speech to the extent of a complete Sminthiac oration, but the inclusion of certain topical elements in Adrastus' brief appeal to Apollo suggests that its composition is influenced by the prescriptions of the rhetoricians. Adrastus' plea conforms generally to the standard arrangement laid down by Menander in his rhetorical treatise.

Menander observes that the Sminthiac oration should commence with two *proemia* and discusses the manner of commencing the oration and addressing Apollo (*Epid.* 437.6-438.29). In his oration Adrastus addresses Apollo by an appropriate epithet (*Phoebus parens*, 'Phoebus, sire', *Theb.* 1.696), but dispenses with the *proemium*. Menander next suggests that the orator should mention the origin of Apollo, present a brief encomium of the country, and proclaim the god as an ally (*Epid.* 438.29-440.20). After Adrastus addresses Apollo, the regent refers briefly to the myths concerning Apollo's birthplaces, mentioning Lycia (*Theb.* 1.696), Delos (702), and Cynthus (702), the abode of his mother Leto. Adrastus refers to Apollo's 'celestial parents' (*aetherii parentes*, 704), an oblique reference to Iuppiter and Leto, which reinforces the earlier patronymic *Letoiden* ('Leto's son', 695). Menander notes that the encomiast should acknowledge Apollo's role as a helper of men (*Epid.* 440.20-24); however, Adrastus does not need to assert that Apollo is an ally at this point in the oration, since the regent did that earlier just prior to the hymn when he referred to the god as 'the saviour of the [Argive] fathers' (*seruator parentum*, *Theb.* 1.694).

According to Menander, the speaker should then cite Apollo's powers of archery (*Epid.* 441.3-442.8), prophecy (442.9-23), music (442.24-443.12) and medicine (3.443.13-444.2). This Adrastus does in the characteristically brief manner required of epic, omitting only a reference to medicine (*Theb.*

---

H. Heuvel, *Papinii Statii Thebaidos Liber Primus, Versione Batava Commentarioque Exegetico Instructus* (Zutphen 1932) ad 1.696ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Men. *Epid.* 369-77, 419-22; Anaximen. *Rhet. Alex.* Sp. 1.186f.; Ps.-Hermog. *Progymn.* Sp. 2.11.17ff.; Aphthon. *Progymn.* Sp. 2.36ff.; Nicol. *Progymn.* Sp. 2.479.27ff.; Arist. *Rhet.* 1.9, 16, 18f., 31, 38. Ps.-Hermog. *Progymn.* Sp. 2.13.21-23 observes that the *encomia* of gods are formed on the same principles as the *encomia* of other subjects. The *progymnasmata* of Greek and Roman rhetoricians were no doubt known to Statius and other poets in the first century AD. See D. L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York 1957) 177ff.

1.703-12). Menander observes that the rhetor should include mythological details to provide relevance to his appeal (*Epid.* 443.2-444.2). Adrastus refers deferentially to the god's victory over the giant Tityos (*Theb.* 1.709f.), the fate of Niobe (711), and his avengement of Phlegyas' burning of his temple at Delphi (713-15). The monarch's delineation of these powers and deeds is conventionalised:

'Tela *tibi* longeque feros lentandus in hostes  
 Arcus et aetherii dono cessere parentes  
 Aeternum florere genas; *tu* doctus iniquas  
 Parcarum praenosse manus fatumque quod ultra est  
 Et summo placitura Ioui, quis letifer annus,  
 Bella quibus populis, quae mutent sceptrum cometae;  
*Tu* Phryga summittis citharae, *tu* matris honori  
 Terrigenam Tityon Stygiis extendis harenis;  
*Te* uiridis Python Thebanae mater ouantem  
 Horruit in phraretris, ultrix *tibi* torua Megaera  
 Ieiunum Phlegyan subter caua saxa iacentem  
 Aeterno premit accubitu dapibusque profanis  
 Instimulat, sed mixta famem fastidia uincunt.'

(1.703-15; emphasis mine)

'*Yours* are the arrows and the bending of the bows against the  
 Savage foes far off; your celestial parents as a gift  
 Granted that your cheeks bloom eternal. *You* are skilled to foreknow  
 The unjust hands of the Fates, and destiny that lies beyond,  
 and what pleases supreme Jove, what deadly season will come,  
 To what peoples war, what sceptres comets change.  
*You* rout the Phrygian at the lyre; *you*, for your mother's fame  
 Stretch the earth-born Tityos on the Stygian sands;  
*You*, exulting in your quiver, the green Python and the  
 Theban mother shudder at; *you* grim Megaera avenges  
 As she presses on the famished Phlegyas, who lies  
 Ever prone under the hollow rocks, and goads him with an  
 Impious feast; but mingled disgust overwhelms his hunger.'

The repetition and near repetition of the formal *tu* and its variant forms at or close to the beginning of clauses or lines again shows the importance of anaphora as a characterising element of the formal hymn.<sup>6</sup>

Menander mentions that the orator should then go on to speak of the

<sup>6</sup> Of course (rhetorical) repetition is frequent in about just any kind of poetry, but anaphora, the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive lines or clauses, is (as opposed to the closely related figure of *adiectio*, the simple repetition of a key or emphatic word [Quint. *Inst.* 9.3.28]) a particularly distinctive feature of the formal hymn.

foundation of the city and its festivals (*Epid.* 444.2-26), then proceed to a description of Apollo's temple and statue (445.1-24); Statius omits these subjects in Adrastus' hymn, perhaps on account of the epic exigency for brevity. Adrastus concludes his oration thus:

'Adsis o memor hospitii, Iunoniaque arua  
dexter ames, *seu* te roseum Titana uocari  
Gentis Achaemeniae ritu, *seu* praestat Osirim  
Frugiferum, *seu* Persei sub rupibus antri  
Indignata sequi torquentem cornua Mithram.'

(*Theb.* 1.716-20; my emphasis of anaphora)

'Be at hand, mindful of our hospitality, and show  
Propitious love of Juno's fields, *whether* it is better  
To call you rosy Titan, as does the Achaemenian  
Race, *or* harvest-bearing Osiris, *or* Mithras, who in  
The rocky Persean cave tugs at the stubborn horns.'

This final appeal to Apollo, in which Adrastus employs various invocatory names of the god in identifying him with other sun-deities, mirrors the Menandrian prescription for the epilogue (445.25-446.13).<sup>7</sup>

An analysis of this demonstrative prayer appears to suggest that the poet composed the hymn section (*Theb.* 1.696-720) primarily in a conventional manner that precedes the content and meaning of the work as a whole. In fact Legras is so impressed by the similarity in form and *topoi* between Statius' version of the hymn and the rhetorical prescriptions<sup>8</sup> that he fails to perceive the considerable thematic significance of the (general and specific) references in Adrastus' prayer. Although the general references in Adrastus' prayer are commonplace in the Sminthiac hymn, their inclusion owes as much to the specific organic requirements of the poem as to the topical requisites of the oration. The careful manipulation of *topoi* germane to the theme without appearing to violate the conventional form of the hymn bears

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Men. *Epid.* 445.25f.: μέλλων δὲ πληροῦν τὴν ὑπόθεσιν χρῆσι ἀνακλητικοῖς ὀνόμασι τοῦ θεοῦ . . . ('When you come to complete the subject, one must employ the invocatory names of the god. . .').

<sup>8</sup> On the similarity between Adrastus' prayer and the Menandrian prescription L. Legras, *Etude sur la Thebaïde de Stace. Les legendes thebaines en Grece et à Rome* (Paris 1905) 289, is moved to say: 'Le procédé est le même, les formules se répondent exactement, et les ressemblances paraîtraient bien plus nombreuses encore si l'on pouvait citer ici tous les attributs d'Apollon développés par le rhéteur dans son éloge et que le poète résume d'un mot rapide dans son invocation (I.703 sq.)'. He suggests further to this: 'Qu'en conclure sinon que les rhéteurs avaient fini par établir un véritable formulaire dont Stace n'a pu s'affranchir?'

testimony to Statius' considerable skill as a poet.

One of these references, *mutent sceptrā* ('they change sceptres', 708), serves specifically to recall the abrogation of the agreement between Eteocles and Polynices. Other allusions relate more generally to the narrative and serve a general function in relation to the theme. The references to the violent accomplishments of Apollo (709-15) demonstrate the god's awesome destructive power and vindictive cruelty, thereby reinforcing the overall impression of Apolline and supernatural malevolence that pervades the epic. Vessey correctly interprets the significance of the phrase *mutent sceptrā* (708), whose implications are obvious enough. It is more difficult to see the specific prognosticative function of some of the other references in Adrastus' prayer, but Vessey plausibly argues that the Giant Tityos (709f.) and Lapith Phlegyas (713-15) are symbols of the anarchy that predominates during the war between Argos and Thebes; his suggestion that the allusion to Niobe (711-12) whose sons were struck down by Apollo foreshadows the fate of Jocasta's sons in book 11 is particularly astute.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the mythological figures Adrastus cites suffer an especially harsh fate at the hands of Apollo, just as the god's punishment of Argos in the Coroebus story, which Adrastus has just related to Tydeus and Polynices (557-672), is without question wantonly cruel. Thus the references serve a triple function: they recall the divine ill will toward Argos in the past, anticipate the continued hostility of the gods toward the city in the future, and point up the irony inherent in Adrastus' present thanksgiving to Apollo.

The significance of Titan (717), Osiris (718) and Mithras (720) at the close of the prayer has been the subject of much confused critical (and theological) discussion. Adrastus' syncretistic references to Apollo are commonplace in classical literature (e.g., Callim. *Ap.* 69-71 and Stat. *Theb.* 1.717-20) and receive a full treatment from Menander.<sup>10</sup> A knowledge of

<sup>9</sup> D. W. T. Vessey, *Statius and the Thebaid* (Cambridge 1973) 135.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede* (Leipzig/Berlin 1913) 165. As D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford 1981) *ad Epid.* 445.28ff. observe, most of the titles Menander catalogues for Apollo are well attested in classical antiquity: for *Lykeios* and *Delos*, see M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* 1 (München 1955) 505, 521; for *Aktios* see Nilsson, *GGrRel* 2 (München 1961) 312. *Amyklaios* is a popular title, for Amyclae is well known for the temple of Apollo (see E. R. Fiechter, 'Amyklai. Der Thron des Apollon', *JDAI* 33 [1918] 107-245). For *Branchiotes* see Schol. Lactant. *In Stat. Theb.* 3.479 in F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden 1962) 184 F 16 (7a). *Askraios* is unattested; however, Russell and Wilson [above, this note] *ad Epid.* 445.28ff. suggest that the title could be a corruption from *Ἀκραῖος* or *ὑπακραῖος* or, more likely, that Menander was aware of an

the rhetorical prescription for the conclusion of the Sminthiac oration suggests that the inclusion of the appellations is essentially conventional. The scholiast Lactantius Placidius acknowledges Statius' prescriptive use of the invocatory titles Titan (717), Osiris (718) and Mithras (720) of Apollo in the composition of Adrastus' hymn: *dicit Apollinem a diuersis gentibus uariis appellari nominibus. apud Achaemenios enim Titanus uocatur, apud Aegyptios Osiris, apud Persas ubi in antro colitur, Mithra uocatur* ('He [Statius] says that different peoples refer to Apollo by various names. For he is called Titan among the Achaemenians, Osiris among the Egyptians, and among the Persians where he is worshipped in a cave, he is called

---

Apollo *Askraios*. On Adrastus' identification of Apollo with Mithras, see F. V. M. Cumont, *Les Religions Orientales dans le Paganisme Romain* (Bari 1967) 182ff. For syncretistic references to Apollo, see Nonn. *Dion.* 40.399f.; Stat. *Theb.* 1.719f. (Mithras); Hdt. *Hist.* 2.144; Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 375 F; Macrobian. *Sat.* 1.21.13. (Horus). Russell and Wilson [above, this note] *ad Epid.* 446.4 defend the identification of Apollo with Dionysus and explain (*ad Epid.* 442.26ff.) Menander's reference (446.7f.) to Apollo as a Chaldaean sun god. E. Forcellini *et al.*, *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis* 1 (1864) s.v. 'Apollo' observe that the deity 'ob multiplicem virtutem variis nominibus appellatus [est], nempe Adon, Atthis, Bacchus seu Liber pater vel Dionysus, Hercules, Ianus, Iuppiter, Pan etc. (Macrobian. *Sat.* [1.17.15]). Sic apud Achaemenios Titan; apud Aegyptios Ra, Apis, Horus, Ammon, Osiris; apud Syro-Phoenices Adad; apud Persas Mithras; apud Gallos Moritargus etc.' See also F. Caviglia, *P. Papinio Stazio La Tebaide libro I: Introduzione, testo, traduzione e note* (Rome 1973) 170f., who cites Men. *Epid.* 3.445.25ff. and Lactant. *In Stat. Theb.* 1.717-20, then comments, 'Parafraresi corretta, anche se a volte autoschediastica, dei complicati versi di Stazio; complicati e ambigui, perche . . . non ci si spiega la duplice menzione del culto di Apollo in Persia, prima come divinita solare (Titana, v. 717), quindi come assimilato a Mitra (v. 719 sg.)'. On Statius' reference to the Achaemenian race (*Theb.* 1.718) Caviglia observes, 'Probabilmente gentis Achaemeniae sara da intendere come denominazione comprensiva e generica di tutti i popoli d'Oriente'. On the synonymy of the appellations Heuvel [4] *ad Theb.* 1.717ff. observes, 'Desiderium labentis deorum multorum cultus erat semper plures deos in unum contrahere, uniusque numen tantopere augere, ut multo ante quam publice Christianismus introit re vera monotheismus iam apud gentiles existere coeperit'; while this comment is interesting, it does not explain the thematic significance of the appellations. For well-known examples of the conventional practice in classical literature of listing various titles for the same god, see Nonn. *Dion.* 40.392-410 where Tyrian Heracles is identified with a host of foreign divinities (Belos, Ammon, Apis, Arabian Kronos, Assyrian Zeus, Sarapis, Kronos, Mithras; also Apul. *Met.* 11.5 where Isis is identified with a number of deities of different nations (Pessinuntian Mother of the Gods, Cecropian Minerva, Paphian Venus, Dictynnian Diana, Propserpina, Ceres, Iuno, Bellona, Hecate, Rhamnusia, Isis). For the best modern studies on syncretism, see F. C. Grant *et al.*, *Hellenistic Religions: The Age of Syncretism* (New York 1953); J. Ferguson, *The Religions of the Roman Empire* (London 1970).

Mithras', *In Stat. Theb.* 1.717-20).<sup>11</sup> Adrastus' invocation of Apollo at the end of his prayer by his various titles and the expression *seu te uocari praestat* ('whether it is better to call you', 717f.) illustrates the conventional practice in classical antiquity of making certain a god is invoked by the appropriate title. The suppliant traditionally catalogues a full range of alternative appellations a god might employ, then further covers himself by an inclusory phrase covering any unheard of invocatory titles. The practice presumably is designed to ensure the god cannot ignore the invocation.<sup>12</sup> Adrastus' mention of these titles in the traditional manner is entirely consistent with our expectations of the regent, for his worshipful speech plays a critical role in the poet's depiction of Adrastus as a pious and god-fearing monarch; but he is certainly no Stoic *sapiens*,<sup>13</sup> since the syncretistic references to Apollo in his manifestation as the sun-god are impossible to account for within the Stoic framework. In fact, Adrastus is anything but a Stoic sage: he is pious and therefore uses the appropriate (i.e., conventional) references for the Sminthiac hymn, but his own ignorance is revealed through his singular lack of appreciation of Apollo's destructive role in the affairs of Argos and his misplaced trust in this deity.<sup>14</sup> This revelation of character is obviously the most important function of his prayer.<sup>15</sup>

The naming of Titan by Adrastus as a title for Apollo is conventional, as the use of the appellation for the god is commonplace in post-classical poetry (e.g., Ovid *Met.* 2.118; Sen. *Phaedr.* 678); however, this conventional synonymy *per se* does not preclude textual significance, since the appellation *Titana* is especially appropriate in the overall context. In early

---

<sup>11</sup> On *Stat. Theb.* 1.716-20 and the polyonymy of Apollo in classical antiquity, see R. E. Witt, 'Some Thoughts on Isis in Relation to Mithras', in J. R. Hinnells (ed.), *Mithraic Studies* 2 (Manchester 1975) 482.

<sup>12</sup> A famous non-epic literary echo of this custom occurs in Catullus 34 where the poet employs a string of appellations (*Tu Lucina dolentibus / Iuno dicta puerperis, / Tu potens Triuia et notho's / Dicta lumine Luna*, 'You are called Juno Lucina / By mothers in painful childbirth; / You are called mighty Trivia / And Moon with counterfeit light', 13-16) and the inclusory expression in invoking Diana (*Sis quocumque tibi placet / Sancta nomine*, 'May you be hallowed by / Whatever name pleases you', 21f.).

<sup>13</sup> *Contra* Vessey [9] 95, 98.

<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Adrastus is not immune to the madness that afflicts his fellow citizens in the war with Thebes. He ignores omens that portend disaster for his city (cf. *Theb.* 3.456-58, 499-451, 619-47) and enthusiastically promotes the nocturnal slaughter of the dormant Thebans in their camp (10.227-44, esp. 236-44; 266-68).

<sup>15</sup> *Contra* W. Schetter, *Untersuchungen zur epischen Kunst des Statius* (Wiesbaden 1960) 84, who considers Adrastus' speech to be solely decorative.

literature the Titan is presented as a plenipotentiary of chaos and as an agent of destruction (cf. Hes. *Theog.* 207-10; esp. 617ff.; 820ff.), and here its primitive and feral qualities mirror those associated with the destructive role of Apollo in the epic. Apollo's cruelty is revealed in many incidents related by Adrastus in the tale of Coroebus (*Theb.* 1.557-672). Two notable examples of the god's destructiveness in the main narrative are his near-slaying of Polynices in the chariot race during the funeral games (6.491ff.) and his murderous role on the battlefield prior to Amphiarauus' descent to the underworld (7.440ff.). Significantly, Vessey does not offer an explanation for Adrastus' naming of Titan as a title for Apollo, presumably because he is unable to explain its inclusion in (favourable) terms similar to those of Osiris and Mithras.

Osiris, the sun-god (cf. Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 52), was naturally associated with Apollo, represented in the *Thebaid* most unfavourably. Vessey, however, attributes the identification of Apollo with Osiris, whom he sees as 'figure of beneficent law and cosmic order', to Theseus' role in book twelve; he further suggests that Adrastus' reference to the Egyptian god specifically prognosticates the Athenian monarch's arrival in Thebes.<sup>16</sup> In Adrastus' hymn Osiris is depicted as a geponic deity (*Osirin frugiferum*, 'harvest-bearing Osiris', 718f.) and Mithras is portrayed as a bull-slayer (*Persei sub rupibus antri / indignata sequi torquentem cornua Mithram*, 'Mithras, who in the rocky Persean cave tugs at the stubborn horns', 719f.). Although Osiris is represented by Statius as a patron god of georgic endeavour, there is nothing in the text to suggest that the poet is specifically associating his function with Theseus' role in the last book of the epic; nor is there anything at this point or anywhere else to suggest that the descriptive epithet *frugifer* (719) expressly foreshadows the reference to the Eleusinian mysteries in 12.501f., as Vessey asserts.<sup>17</sup> Even if Statius were associating Osiris with Theseus, the identification (as with Mithras and Theseus) would serve only to stress the hostility of the divine powers to humanity and the violence of Theseus' campaign against Thebes.<sup>18</sup> The depiction of Osiris as a geponic deity appears to reflect the more favourable aspect of Apollo's ambivalent nature and his benefic potentiality; therefore the reference is ironic, since it not only highlights specifically the ignorance of Adrastus in

<sup>16</sup> Vessey [9] 135f.

<sup>17</sup> Vessey [9] 136, 310 n. 1.

<sup>18</sup> On the ambiguous portrayal of Theseus and his 'war' against Thebes, see W. J. Dominik, 'Monarchal Power and Imperial Politics', in A. J. Boyle (ed.), *The Imperial Muse: Flavian Epicist to Claudian* (Bendigo, Victoria 1990) 87-92 (= *Ramus* 16 [1990] 87-92).

assuming that the pious and innocent will be more favourably treated by the gods than the wicked and guilty but also underscores generally the limited capacity of man to understand his position vis-à-vis the higher powers in the *Thebaid*.

Vessey uses Vermaseren's explanation (that the tauroctony in Roman Mithraism symbolises the predominance of life over death and disorder)<sup>19</sup> to argue that the reference to the tauroctony in Adrastus' hymn anticipates Theseus' liberation of Thebes from the evils of Creon. Vessey draws a connexion between the representations on Theseus' shield (*Theb.* 12.665-67) referring to Theseus' emancipation of Athens through his slaying of the Minotaur and the Athenian king's defeat of the tyrannical Creon. He asserts that the repetition of three words—*antri* ('cave', 668), *torquentem* ('twisting', 669) and *cornua* ('horns', 671)—which appear earlier in the closing lines of Adrastus' hymn (1.719f.) is partial justification for his view of a thematic link between the actions of Mithras and Theseus. However, Hinnells<sup>20</sup> refutes Cumont's<sup>21</sup> interpretation of the tauroctony (especially Mithras' role as the creator) upon which Vermaseren's view (and therefore Vessey's interpretation of 1.719f.) appears to be based and argues that it does not even remotely represent the triumph of life over death, order over disorder, or good over evil. In fact the tauroctonous scene in the *Thebaid* represents very much the opposite. The image of Mithras, traditionally identified with the sun (and therefore with Apollo), dragging a bull to be sacrificed represents the malevolent gods (especially Apollo) dragging Polynices and Eteocles to destruction, as the pair are compared frequently with bulls (e.g., 1.131ff., 4.397ff.; cf. 3.323ff., 11.251ff.).<sup>22</sup> The bull functions as one of the most important metaphors in the *Thebaid*,<sup>23</sup> and the strategic placement of *Mithram* at the close of the first book's final line (720) underscores its metaphorical (and thematic) significance.

<sup>19</sup> M. J. Vermaseren, *Mithras, the Secret God* (London 1963) 68-70.

<sup>20</sup> J. R. Hinnells, 'Reflections on the Bull-slaying Scene', in *Mithraic Studies 2* (Manchester 1975) 290-312. Hinnells' belief (309) is that 'the Roman reliefs depict the divine sacrifice which gives life to man . . .'.

<sup>21</sup> F. V. M. Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, trans. T. J. McCormack (repr. New York 1956) 132-37, esp. 137.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. J. K. Newman, 'De Statio Epico Animadversiones', *Latomus* 34 (1975) 89.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Dominik [18] 89f.

The foregoing comparative-analytical study demonstrates how the interpretation of Adrastus' hymn to Apollo can be assisted by examining the *topoi* of the Sminthiac hymn as prescribed by Menander, especially with particular reference to *genos*, *praxeis* and *epilogos*. Adrastus' formal hymn is much briefer than what the schema presented by Menander allows for in the epic context. Statius is influenced by the tradition of Sminthiac composition in the formulation of Adrastus' speech, but the regent's speech is not patterned strictly after the Menandrian prescription. Adrastus' brief epic speech betrays the topical influence of the Sminthiac tradition because it contains some of the topical elements of the Sminthiac hymn; in the matter of structure Adrastus' formal hymn is generally faithful to the tradition. The topical and structural similarities between Adrastus' Apolline hymn and Menander's Sminthiac outline suggest that their inclusion by Statius owes more to the Sminthiac tradition than any other factor. But generic hymn composition *per se* precludes neither ontological integrity nor intratextual specificity and suggestion: not only are some of the references in this traditional hymn linked closely to other passages in the poem, but the manipulation of key details in this scene points toward and emphasises certain thematic and dramatic aspects of particular importance to the poet.

# INLEIDENDE ATMOSFEERSKEPPING IN VERGILIUS SE *AENEÏS* EN DANTE SE *INFERNO*<sup>1</sup>

**L. F. van Ryneveld**

Departement Latyn, Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat  
Bloemfontein 9300

**Abstract.** The influence of Vergil is obvious in the numerous similarities between Dante's *Inferno* and the *Aeneid*, especially book 6, yet the profound difference between the two works is equally obvious. Dante achieves this by modelling his opening canto on the Bible and by creating in the opening lines a non-heroic atmosphere of dread that contrasts strongly with Vergil's epic-heroic *arma uirumque cano*.

'Virgil was a life-turning experience for Dante, and marked him far more deeply than [T. S.] Eliot was marked by Dante.'<sup>2</sup>

Dis min of meer algemene kennis dat Dante se *Goddelike Komedie* sterk onder die invloed staan van Vergilius se *Aeneïis*. Wat die leser met klassieke agtergrond egter opval, is die mate waarin Dante tog daarin slaag om iets heel vars en oorspronklik te skep. Dit doen hy deur met die aanvang 'n Bybelse agtergrond te vestig en eers mettertyd toe te laat dat Vergilius self en nog later sy poësie die toneel betree.

Lesers van veral die eerste van die drie dele van die *Komedie*, die *Inferno*, oftewel *Die Hel*, sal nie anders kan nie as om sterk onder die indruk te kom van die invloed van die *Aeneïis*, en veral boek 6. Enkele opvallende ooreenkomste is die volgende: in *Inferno* 4.124-126 word vier *Aeneïis*-karakters genoem, t.w. Camilla (vgl. *Aen.* 11.543), wat net in Vergilius voorkom<sup>3</sup>, Penthesilea (vgl. *Aen.* 1.491), Latinus (vgl. *Aen.* 7.45) en Lavinia (vgl. *Aen.* 6.764). Die geografie van Hades/die Hel stem dikwels ooreen, bv. die drie riviere: Acheron (*Inf.* 3.78, 14.116; vgl. *Aen.* 6.107, 295),

---

<sup>1</sup> Gelewer tydens die Konferensie vir Romeinse Studies by die Universiteit van Natal, Durban, Julie 1992.

<sup>2</sup> H. A. Mason, 'A Journey through Hell: Dante's *Inferno* Revisited. Introduction: *O quam te memorem, uates?*', *Cambridge Quarterly* 15 (1989) 117.

<sup>3</sup> R. D. Williams (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil* (London 1973) ad *Aen.* 7.803f.: 'She is Virgil's own creation, not heard of before him or again after him'.

Phlegethon (*Inf.* 14.116, 131; vgl. *Aen.* 6.265, 551) en Styx (*Inf.* 7.106, 9.81, 14.116; vgl. *Aen.* 6.323). Daar is hele episodes wat ooreenstem, bv. Aeneas en later Dante se vaart oor die Acheron in Charon se bootjie (*Inf.* 3.70-129; *Aen.* 6.295-332).

Van groter betekenis is ooreenkomste in taal en styl. Vir die groot getal siele wat hy in die Hel sien, gebruik Dante die similee van blare wat in die herfs afval totdat die boomtakke kaal is:<sup>4</sup>

Come, d'autunno, si levan le foglie  
l'una appresso dell'altra, infin che il ramo  
rende alla terra tutte le sue spoglie ...

*Inf.* 3.112-114

En soos in die herfs die blare  
die een ná die ander afval, totdat die tak  
al sy lower op die grond sien lê ...

Vergelyk bostaande met die *Aeneïs*:

quam multa in silvis autumni frigore primo  
lapsa cadunt folia . . .

*Aen.* 6.309f.

so veel soos blare in die woude wat  
in die herfs se eerste koue fladder-val

Austin haal egter heelwat voorbeelde uit Griekse gedigte aan van dieselfde simileë.<sup>5</sup> Van 'n meer dwingende aard is die volgende, waar die hertog Ugolino reageer op Dante se versoek om inligting:

. . . 'Tu vuoi ch'io rinnovelli  
disperato *dolor* . . .'

*Inf.* 23.4f.

. . . 'Jy wil hê dat ek desperate  
verdriet moet ophaal . . .'

wat duidelike woordelikse ooreenkoms toon met die beroemde reël uit die

<sup>4</sup> Alle aanhalings kom uit die volgende bronne: Williams [3]; N. A. Blanckenberg, *Vergilius. Van Wapens en 'n Man: Versvertaling van die Aeneïs* (Durbanville 1980); D. Provenzal (ed.), *Dante Alighieri. La Divina Commedia Commentata da Dino Provenzal: Inferno* (Verona 1967); D. A. H. du Toit, *Dante Alighieri. Die Goddelike Komēdie: Die Hel; Afrikaanse Versvertaling met Inleidings* (Kaapstad 1990).

<sup>5</sup> R. G. Austin (ed.), *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Sextus* (Oxford 1977) *ad Aen.* 6.309ff.

*Aeneïs*:

Infandum, regina, iubes *renovare dolorem*

*Aen.* 2.3

Vorstin, u dwing my om opnuut 'n namelose leed te ly . . .

Dit dien gemeld te word dat die Italiaanse *vuoi* (=Lat. *vis*) ooreenkom met Vergilius se *iubes* en ook deur 'n indirekte bevel gevolg word.

Dat hierby veel kom wat Vergilius nie gehad het nie, verras ook nie—oor die duisend jaar is intussen verby en die Christelike geloof het die ou Romeinse gode verdring. Bv. in die eerste reël wat volg op die klassieke blaar-similee hierbo is 'n Bybelse verwysing:

. . . il mal seme d'Adamo

*Inf.* 3.115

. . . die bose saad van Adam

Dante is egter ondanks die ooreenkomste tussen die *Inferno* en die *Aeneïs* tog besig met 'n heel ander soort werk: geen mitiese epos hierdie nie, maar 'n Christelike allegoriese verhaal van een man se sielontwikkeling, 'n produk van die Middeleeuse kultuur, wysbegeerte en lewensbeskouinge. Sy leser moet weet dat dit iets anders is as 'n soort eietydse herkousel van die klassieke epiese tradisie. Soos Vergilius skep Dante heel aan die begin van die *Komedie* die atmosfeer wat die geheel van sy werk sal oorheers.

Singleton toon dat die openingstoneel van die *Inferno* een van bekering is.<sup>6</sup> Dante self sê in 'n brief dat die Exodus-verhaal in die morele sin 'n beeld is van die bekering van die siel vanaf die ellende van die sonde tot die toestand van begenadiging. Derhalwe betoog Singleton: 'Exodus is the master pattern of the prologue action.'<sup>7</sup> (Om dan Singleton se soort terminologie te gebruik, kan ons sê dat *Aeneïs* boek 6 die oorheersende model is vir die *Inferno* in sy geheel, in elk geval vanaf die derde kanto, waarin Dante met Vergilius as gids die Hel betree soos Aeneas en die Sibille vantevore die Doderyk betree het.) Du Toit wys voorts daarop dat die drie vreeswekkende diere wat Dante verhinder om voort te gaan na die ligomgewe berg te vinde is in Jer. 5:6.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> C. S. Singleton, 'In Exitu Israel de Aegypto', in J. Freccero (ed.), *Dante: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs 1965) 102-21.

<sup>7</sup> Singleton [6] 104.

<sup>8</sup> D. A. H. du Toit, *Dante Alighieri. Die Goddelike Komedie: Die Hel; Verklarende Aantekeninge* (Kaapstad 1990) ad *Inf.* 1.32.

Deur middel van die sterk Bybelse inslag in die eerste kanto slaag Dante daarin om sy leser daarvan bewus te maak dat die werk wat volg, nie sonder meer as epos vertolk moet word nie. Maar ook deur ander middele skep hy 'n eiesoortige atmosfeer. Dit is reeds in die eerste reël van die eerste kanto voelbaar. Vergelyk die aanvang van die twee gedigte:

Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris  
Italiam fato profugus Laviniaque venit  
litora . . .

*Aen.* 1.1-3

Ek sing van wapens en 'n man—die held  
wat deur die lot verban, die eerste was  
om van Trojaanse kuste af te kom  
en op die strande van Lavinium te land.

En hierteenoor:

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita  
mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,  
ché la diritta via era smarrita.

*Inf.* 1.1-3

Halfpad deur die reis van ons lewe  
het ek my in 'n donker woud bevind  
daar ek die reguit pad byster geraak het.

Met die eerste drie woorde van die *Aeneis*—*arma virumque cano*—plaas Vergilius sy gedig vierkant in die klassieke epiëse tradisie met die heroïese *arma virum*, wat dit duidelik stel dat dit gaan om die wapenprestasies van 'n heldhaftige man en dat ons weerklanke van Homerus se twee eposse oor die Trojaanse Oorlog te wagte kan wees. Williams haal die eerste vier woorde aan van die *Odusseia*:

\*Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα . . .

Sing, Muse, van die man wat . . .

om te toon hoedat Homerus hier opgeroep word.<sup>9</sup>

Voorts is dit opvallend hoe duidelik die geografiese aanduidings in die *Aeneis* is: die held kom van Troje af, hy vaar na Italië en, om presies te wees, die omgewing van Lavinium, waar die Trojane hulle in Latium gaan vestig. Daarteenoor is Dante baie vaag. In die eerste reël is die selfstandige

<sup>9</sup> Williams [3] *ad Aen.* 1.1.

naamwoord *cammino*, 'wandeling', wat op die epiese reismotief kon gedui het, maar dit word onmiddellik gevolg deur *di nostra vita*, 'van ons lewe', d.i. 'ons lewensloop' of in Du Toit se vertaling, 'reis van ons lewe', wat dus blyk 'n tydsbepaling te wees. Maar die tydsbepaling is eerstens relatief—geen vaste kalenderdatum nie, maar iets wat afsonderlik betrekking kan hê op elke individu se lewensloop, en boonop nie op die minuut af te pen nie—ons veronderstel dit beteken so om en by die 35-jarige leeftyd.

In albei openingsinne is daar 'n werkwoord in die eerste persoon enkelvoud indikatief aktief—*cano* en *ritrovai*—met dié groot verskil dat die eersgenoemde Vergilius dadelik identifiseer as 'n skynbaar objektiewe, alwetende verteller van buite af, 'n sogenaamde 'ouktoriële verteller', want die direkte voorwerp van *cano* is *arma virumque*, '(van) wapens en 'n man', die man synde die held van die verhaal. Die direkte voorwerp van *ritrovai* daarenteen is die refleksiewe voornaamwoord van die eerste persoon enkelvoud *mi*, d.i. 'ek het my bevind', waardeur dit duidelik blyk dat verteller terselfdertyd protagonis van die verhaal is. Die verteller is dus subjektief betrokke. Ook *nostra* van die eerste reël—'van ons lewe'—betrek die leser subjektief.

Du Toit lewer die volgende kommentaar op Dante se werkwoordkeuse: ' . . . *ritrovarsi*=om jou per toeval op 'n plek te bevind, sonder om mooi te weet hoe jy daar beland het en sonder dat jy ooit bewustelik van voorneme was om daarheen te gaan'.<sup>10</sup> Die vaagheid word dus verder versterk.

Die woud waarin Dante hom bevind, word nie geografies geïdentifiseer nie: hy vertel ons maar net dat dit *oscura* ('donker') is, met 'n sterk aanduiding in die volgende reël dat dit 'n metaforiese bos is, want Dante het 'die reguit pad byster geraak'; vgl. Hand. 13.10: . . . *non desinis subvertere vias Domini rectas*, Exod. 32.8: *Recesserunt cito de via, quam ostendisti eis* en 'n groot getal ander verse wat met die hulp van 'n Bybelse konkordansie nageslaan kan word onder die trefwoord 'weg (van die Here)'.<sup>11</sup>

Die volgende tersine voer die leser nog verder van die heroïese en manmoedige atmosfeer van die aangehaalde openingsin van die *Aeneïs*:

<sup>10</sup> Du Toit [8] *ad Inf.* 1.2.

<sup>11</sup> Bybelaanhalings uit *Biblia Sacra Latina: Vulgatae Editiones Sixti V et Clementis VIII* (London s.a.).

Ah! Quanto, a dir qual era, è cosa  
dura questa selva selvaggia e aspra e forte,  
che nel pensier rinnova la paura!

*Inf.* 1.4-6

Ag, hoe pynlik om dit te beskryf,  
hierdie bos so wild en wreed en dig  
dat bloot die gedagte daaraan my vrees hernieu!

Die *figura etimologica* in *selva selvaggia*—letterlik iets soos ‘woudagtige woud’—is vermoedelik bedoel om die hele effek te beklemtoon. In elk geval is alles afgestem op die laaste woord in die sin van drie reëls—*paura*, ‘vrees’. In die volgende reël word die graad van die allesoorheersende vrees ondubbelsinnig aangedui:

Tanto è amara che poco è piú morte

*Inf.* 1.7

Só bitter is dit dat die dood skaars erger is.

Met Juno in die vierde reël en met die aanduiding van Aeneas se goddelik bepaalde lotsbestemming in reëls 4 en 5 van *Aeneis* 1 is dit duidelik dat die bonatuurlike, die religieuse, in albei werke ’n groot rol speel. Daar is tog ook ’n belangrike verskil:

. . . dum conderet urbem  
inferretque deos Latio . . .

*Aen.* 1.4f.

. . . voor hy ’n stad kon stig—na Latium  
sy gode bring . . .

Teenoor die onsekerheid en vrees in *Inferno* kanto I, is dit duidelik dat Aeneas ’n ondubbelsinnige opdrag van die gode het om uit te voer en dat hy bewus is van daardie opdrag.

Met die aanvang van die *Inferno* word die leser dus ingelei in ’n atmosfeer van vrees in ’n kanto wat blyk grotendeels op die Ou Testament geskoei te wees. Eers later kom Vergilius en saam met hom die *Aeneis* op die toneel, sodat die epiese terugflitse deurgaans teen ’n christelik-Bybelse agtergrond verskyn.

## PERICLES AND EPHIALTES IN THE REFORMS OF 462 BC

**Edmund F. Bloedow**

Department of Classical Studies, University of Ottawa  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5, Canada

**Abstract.** Thanks to the nature of our sources, the so-called reforms of the Athenian constitution by Ephialtes have prompted a great deal of discussion amongst modern scholars. By contrast, there has been much less discussion of Ephialtes himself, although his rôle involves a number of serious problems. In this study some of these problems are considered, and it is argued that the reforms should be attributed primarily not to Ephialtes but rather to Pericles.

As is only too well known, Thucydides is notoriously silent also on the so-called reforms of the Athenian constitution by Ephialtes in 462.<sup>1</sup> Despite this, there is virtually no modern critic who has denied that reforms took place, in one form or another.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, not only is it universally accepted, but it is also regarded as of great importance. In view of the silence of Thucydides, and indeed of any other contemporary source, we have to make the best of ostensibly lesser sources for this allegedly highly important event. These are Aristotle *Ath.* 25.1-4; 27.1; 28.2; 35.2; 41.2; *Polit.* 1274a 7f.; Philoch. *Frg.* 141b; Diod. 11.77.6; Plutarch *Cimon* 10.8; 15.2; *Pericles* 7.5f.; 9.2; *Mor.* 805d; 812d; *hypothesis* Isoc. *Areopagitikos*; Paus. 1.29.15.

The prevailing modern approach has been determined primarily by Aristotle—both, presumably, by reason of his stature and his date. His

---

<sup>1</sup> Although it presumably had significant ramifications for Athenian foreign policy, which was his primary concern. Other, by no means insignificant, events during the Pentecontaetia and the Peloponnesian War which also receive no notice by Thucydides are Cimon's ostracism, the Congress Decree, the transfer of the League Treasury from Delos to Athens, the Peace of Callias, details of the Thirty Years' Peace, the specifics of the Megarian Decree, the Peace of Epilycus, support of Amorgos and the siege of Doriscus.

<sup>2</sup> Unlike, for instance, the so-called Peace of Callias.

account in the *Ἀθηναίων Πολιτεία* reads as follows:<sup>3</sup>

The Areopagus, though in gradual decline, continued supreme for about seventeen years after the Persian War. But as the masses grew in strength Ephialtes took over leadership of the popular party and set about undermining that Council. His first step was to ruin many of its members by charging them with maladministration. Then, in the archonship of Conon he deprived the Areopagus of all its more recently acquired privileges which made it guardian of the constitution. Some of these he conferred upon the Council of Five Hundred, others upon the Assembly and the courts.<sup>4</sup>

(*Ath.* 25.1f.)

Very close to this appear to be statements by Plutarch (these may in fact go back to Aristotle):

Ephialtes . . . tried to dethrone the Council of the Areopagus.

(*Cimon* 10.8)

The populace . . . under the lead of Ephialtes robbed the Council of the Areopagus of all but a few of the cases of its jurisdiction. They made themselves masters of the courts of justice, and plunged the *polis* into unmitigated democracy.

(*Cimon* 15.2)<sup>5</sup>

On the basis of these statements there was to begin with, and still is, almost universal unanimity that Ephialtes was the prime mover of the reforms that resulted in greatly weakening the power of the Council—namely, that he was both the architect and the chief agent in carrying them out. As a representative of this prevailing approach, one may cite the following: ‘If anything is certain, it is that Ephialtes is the leader of the party down to his assassination, and that Pericles was his subordinate’. And to emphasise the point, it is added: ‘It was Ephialtes, not Pericles, who led the opposition in the great debate on the Messenian question; it was he that conducted the series

<sup>3</sup> On the disputed authorship of the *Ath.*, see P. J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Athenian Politeia* (Oxford 1981) 61-63. He himself believes that it is by a pupil of Aristotle.

<sup>4</sup> For the quotations from the *Ath.* and from Plutarch in this study, the translations by Warrington and the Loeb are used.

<sup>5</sup> It may be noted here that Plutarch was well acquainted with the *Ath.* He cites it twice in his *Pericles*, and both times, notably, in connection with Ephialtes. In the first instance, he uses Aristotle as his source for Damonides as Pericles’ political adviser (*Per.* 9.3; cf. *Ath.* 27.4). In the second case, in connection with Ephialtes’ assassination, he cites Aristotle as his authority for Aristodicus of Tanagra as the assassin (*Per.* 10.8; cf. *Ath.* 25.4).

of prosecutions of the members of the Areopagus itself; and he, not Pericles, who was the author of the laws which deprived it of its prerogatives'.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the rôle of Ephialtes was not seen as a problem. Rather, modern scholars have concentrated on the substance of the reforms. There has, however, been a great deal of debate over the precise nature of the contents of Ephialtes' reforms—thanks chiefly to the *Ath.* itself.<sup>7</sup>

What is missing in these discussions, however, is any reference to further statements in the *Ath.*, which form an integral part of Aristotle's account, but which also pose a significant problem (i.e., in addition to the problem concerned with the *contents* of the reforms). In other words, what is lacking is a fuller treatment of the sources. Just what does this involve? After stating that Ephialtes transferred some of the powers to the *Boule* and others to the Popular Court, Aristotle continues *immediately* as follows:

Themistocles had a hand in these proceedings. Himself an Areopagite, he was awaiting trial on a charge of treasonable negotiations with Persia, and was therefore anxious for the Council's overthrow. He set to work as follows:

---

<sup>6</sup> E. M. Walker, *The Cambridge Ancient History* 5 (1927) 69. Cf. E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*<sup>4</sup> 4.1 (Stuttgart 1944) 533 and 540; H. Berve, *Griechische Geschichte*<sup>2</sup> 2 (Freiburg 1952) 85; H. Bengtson, *Griechische Geschichte*<sup>5</sup> (Munich 1977) 199; *History of Greece* (Ottawa 1988) 119f.; C. Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford 1952) 213. See also G. Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte* 3.1 (Gotha 1897) 246; H. Swoboda, *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* 5.2 (Stuttgart 1905) 2849-52 s.v. 'Ephialtes' no. 4; R. von Pöhlmann, *Grundriss der Griechischen Geschichte*<sup>4</sup> (Munich 1909) 135; K. J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*<sup>2</sup> 2.1 (Strassburg 1914) 149-54; *GrG* 2.2 (Strassburg 1916) 196; G. Busolt and H. Swoboda, *Griechische Staatskunde* 2 (Munich 1926) 894f.; G. de Sanctis, *Storia dei Greci alla fine del secolo V* (Florence 1939) 58-59; *Atthis: Storia della repubblica ateniese dalle origini alla età di Pericle*<sup>2</sup> (Rome 1964) 407-16; J. B. Bury and R. Meiggs, *A History of Greece to Alexander the Great*<sup>4</sup> (London 1975) 213; N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Greece to 322 B.C.*<sup>3</sup> (Oxford 1986) 288; R. Sealey, 'Ephialtes,' *CP* 59 (1964) 11-22; E. Ruschenbusch, 'Ephialtes,' *Historia* 15 (1966) 369-76; F. Kiechle, *Der kleine Pauly* (Munich 1967) 297 s.v. 'Ephialtes' no. 5; A. W. Gomme and T. J. Cadoux, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*<sup>2</sup> (1970) 387; R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1972) 89; E. Will, *Le monde grec et l'Orient* 1 (Paris 1972) 146f.; R. W. Wallace, 'Ephialtes and the Areopagus,' *GRBS* 15 (1974) 259-69; J. R. Cole, 'Cimon's Dismissal, Ephialtes' Revolution and the Peloponnesian Wars,' *GRBS* 15 (1974) 369-85; J. V. A. Fine, *The Ancient Greeks: A Critical History* (Cambridge, Mass./London 1983) 387-91; M. F. McGregor, *The Athenians and their Empire* (Vancouver 1987) 48; R. Develin, *Athenian Officials 681-321 B.C.* (Cambridge 1989) 73; D. Kagan, *Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy* (New York 1991) 38f., 44, 73, 82.

<sup>7</sup> See J. Day and M. H. Chambers, *Aristotle's History of Athenian Democracy* (Berkeley 1962) 84; cf. 128; Fine [6] 390f.

Themistocles told Ephialtes that the Areopagus was going to arrest him, and likewise informed the Areopagus that he would discover to them certain persons who were conspiring against the state. He then escorted the Council's representatives to the house of Ephialtes, promising to point out the assembled conspirators, and began conversing with them in great earnest. When Ephialtes noticed this he panicked and took refuge in suppliant guise at the family altar. There was general excitement. Presently the Council of Five Hundred met; Ephialtes and Themistocles fulminated against the Areopagus, and then went on to do the same before the popular Assembly, until they succeeded in depriving it of all effective power.<sup>8</sup>

(*Ath.* 25.3f.)

There is virtually no modern scholar who thinks that Aristotle is correct in what he says here about Themistocles. That is presumably why this passage of the *Ath.* does not figure in most modern discussions. Indeed, already a century ago Wilamowitz, in an incisive discussion, exposed the legendary character of this aspect of Aristotle's account.<sup>9</sup> And more recently Stadter has maintained that 'the alleged association of Themistocles and Ephialtes . . . is most unlikely, unless we are to refer it to a specific occasion at a much earlier date, in the 470s'<sup>10</sup>—of which there is of course not the slightest hint in our sources.

None the less, chiefly on the basis of an obscure reference in the *hypothesis* to Isocrates' *Areopagitikos* (7), and on the hypothesis that Aristotle was following a 'low chronology' when writing *Ath.* 25.3f. (based primarily on an incidental reference in Cicero *Fam.* 5.12.5,<sup>11</sup> Piccirilli has recently attempted to uphold the Themistoclean association, arguing that Aristotle was attempting to see a continuity between the two democratic giants of fifth-century Athens, Themistocles and Pericles, with Ephialtes acting essentially as a link.<sup>12</sup> The case for a low chronology, i.e., for Themistocles' ostracism ('*fuga*') in 461, however,<sup>13</sup> is more than weak. But

<sup>8</sup> Taking up an idea first advanced by T. Reinach ('Aristote ou Critias?', *REG* 4 [1891] 7-23), Rhodes [3] 53-55 (cf. 319f.) has argued that this passage is an insertion.

<sup>9</sup> U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* 1 (Berlin 1893) 140-42.

<sup>10</sup> P. A. Stadter, *A Commentary on Plutarch's Pericles* (Chapel Hill/London 1989) 120. Wallace [6] 262 refers to it as 'the curious story in *Ath. Pol.* 25.3-4'.

<sup>11</sup> Although there appears to be a problem with Cicero's text. Cf. Rhodes [3] 320.

<sup>12</sup> L. Piccirilli, *Ephialte* (Genoa 1988) 47-57.

<sup>13</sup> Piccirilli actually accepts an earlier exile and then a return—the latter in 461. But Aristotle, whom he follows, makes it clear that Themistocles' alleged involvement in attacking the Areopagus *preceded* his ostracism ('he was *awaiting trial* on a charge of treasonable negotiations with Persia', *Ath.* 25.3).

more especially, Piccirilli does not respond adequately to Wilamowitz's objections nor to those of Rhodes—not least the latter's important point that Themistocles 'cannot have tried to avert his condemnation by assisting in the attack on the Areopagus'<sup>14</sup>; rather, 'it is more likely that his condemnation helped to provoke that attack'.<sup>15</sup> No less important is the chronological problem. There is of course uncertainty about precisely when Themistocles was ostracised, but virtually no one places it as late as 462.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, to associate Themistocles with the reforms of 462, as the *Ath.* does, seems to be out of the question.

Now, if Aristotle (or his pupil) could be incorrect on the important question of whether or not there was a Themistoclean connection with the so-called reforms of Ephialtes, there does not seem to be any reason why he could not also have been incorrect on the question of the first section of his account of the reforms. Here it is important to observe what must be recognised as, at least on the surface, a curious phenomenon. As already noted, there is almost unanimous agreement that *Ath.* 25.3f. is incorrect (i.e., about Themistoclean participation). By contrast, there is almost unanimous agreement that *Ath.* 25.1f. is correct (i.e., about Ephialtes as the architect and chief agent of the reforms).<sup>17</sup> How is one to explain this anomaly? One suspects that the reason is that in the case of Themistocles we possess additional sources against which to test the statements in the *Ath.*, whereas in the case of Ephialtes we do not have similar additional information.

Admittedly, it does not follow that, because *Ath.* 25.3f. is not true, therefore *Ath.* 25.1f. must also be untrue. At the same time, however, simply because we do not possess similar information against which to test *Ath.* 25.1f., it does not follow that it is true—as virtually all scholars seem to have concluded. There appear in fact to be some reasonable grounds for being cautious about accepting *Ath.* 25.1f. as it stands. Three may be considered here.

Firstly, the problems associated with Themistoclean participation do not

<sup>14</sup> Which becomes all the more pertinent if he was evicted from Athens only in 461.

<sup>15</sup> Rhodes [3] 320.

<sup>16</sup> According to Rhodes [3] 319f., 'the dating of his downfall has been frequently but inconclusively discussed . . . but almost all are agreed that he was condemned several years before 462/1'.

<sup>17</sup> Bengtson, for instance, declares the section on Themistoclean participation to be 'unhistorical,' but clearly accepts the first part of Aristotle's account (25.1f.) to be genuinely historical (Bengtson [6] 199, esp. n. 4, and 119f., with 450 n. 37, respectively). But Bengtson is merely typical of the prevailing approach.

constitute an isolated case. For instance, in 26.1, Aristotle has Cimon making a 'belated appearance'—namely, *after* the reforms of 462 (i.e., when he was already in exile)—which prompted Rhodes to offer the following comment: 'It is likely that *A.P.* is using a source which (without flattering him) gives Cimon a prominent position in Athenian history after the Persian Wars, but either misdated Cimon's prominence or was so unclear that *A.P.* was led to misdate his prominence. By contrast, in 28.2 Ephialtes succeeds Themistocles as *προστάτης τοῦ δήμου* and Cimon succeeds Aristeides as *προτάτης τῶν γνωρίμων*'.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, 'in his narrative *A.P.* perversely delayed the introduction of Cimon until after Ephialtes' death'.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, Xanthippus and Miltiades are mispaired.<sup>20</sup> These discrepancies, it seems to me, warrant caution also in respect of *Ath.* 25.1f.

Secondly, there are major problems connected with the contents of the reforms themselves. It has, for instance, been pointed out that Aristotle seems to have been rather uninformed about these reforms.<sup>21</sup> According to Hignett, the statements in connection with them 'raise serious difficulties'.<sup>22</sup> Fine noted that 'this passage is notoriously difficult, if not impossible, to explain satisfactorily'.<sup>23</sup> And earlier, Ruschenbusch acutely drew attention to the fact that in the whole literature from 462 to Isocrates' *Areopagitikos*, delivered in 356, there is not (apart from isolated instances in tragedy and rhetoric) a single reference to Ephialtes' reforms. Thus, in addition to Thucydides' silence, neither Herodotus nor Aristophanes nor Plato nor Xenophon so much as mentions them.<sup>24</sup> Particularly surprising is that, in his detailed account of the Thirty, Xenophon has not a word about the restoration of the powers of the Areopagus—although Aristotle refers to this (*Ath.* 35.2). No less important is Plato's silence, since he had been very closely associated with the Thirty and they with him—not that he had anything

<sup>18</sup> Rhodes [3] 325.

<sup>19</sup> Rhodes [3] 349.

<sup>20</sup> Rhodes [3] 348. And on Aristotle's probable inventions in connection with the Thirty, cf. E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*<sup>4</sup> 5 (Stuttgart 1958) 14, 17 with nn., 35 n. 3; see also F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* (Leiden 1962) 324 with commentary to F 10/11. Moreover, his version of Salamis is apparently unknown to Herodotus, and is contradicted by Cleidemus (cf. Jacoby [above, this note] 323 F 21; Day and Chambers [7] 121f.) and virtually ignored by Aristotle himself in his *Politics*.

<sup>21</sup> Day and Chambers [7] 84; cf. 128.

<sup>22</sup> Hignett [6] 194.

<sup>23</sup> Fine [6] 388. See also Day and Chambers [7] 84; cf. 128.

<sup>24</sup> Ruschenbusch [6] 370f.

to do with their policies, but he did agree with them in opposing democracy. And yet not once does Plato mention the Areopagus. And even more important is the fact that in his scathing criticism of fifth-century politicians in his *Gorgias*, although he mentions Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristeides, Cimon and Pericles (503C, 515D-E, 516D, 519A, 526B), he never once mentions Ephialtes. From this silence it would seem that the rôle of the Areopagus, or certainly that of Ephialtes, was of no significance to Plato and his contemporaries.<sup>25</sup>

Despite this, Piccirilli, on the assumption of Ephialtes' primacy, has now taken up the problem once more and outlined it as follows. Some sources attribute an exclusive rôle to Ephialtes (*Ath.* 41.2, Philochorus = *FGrH* 328 F 64,<sup>26</sup> Diod. 11.77.6, Plut. *Mor.* 805d, Pausanias 1.29.15, *Anecdota Graeca* 1 188.12<sup>27</sup>). Others ascribe it to Pericles only (*Ath.* 27.1), while still others associate the following with Ephialtes: Themistocles (*Ath.* 25.3f., *hypothesis* to Isocrates' *Areopagitikos*), or Archestratus (*Ath.* 35.2), or Pericles (Arist. *Pol.* 1274a 7f., Idomeneus of Lampsacus = *FGrH* 338 F 8,<sup>28</sup> Plut. *Cim.* 15.2, *Per.* 7.7f., 9.5, *Mor.* 812c-d).<sup>29</sup>

The chief problem, according to Piccirilli, is Plutarch, who sometimes portrays Ephialtes as subordinate to Pericles (*Per.* 7.7f., 9.5, *Mor.* 812 c-d), whereas at other times he designates Pericles as subordinate to Ephialtes (*Cim.* 15.2, Idomeneus). He thinks, however, that a solution may be possible—namely, via Aristotle, who in one place designates Ephialtes as *prostates* of the *demos*.<sup>30</sup> But as we have seen above, Aristotle is not particularly reliable on details. Moreover, Piccirilli does not argue the case further, but appeals to Hignett, who pressed the view that 'Ephialtes must have been the leader of the radical party until his death in 461',<sup>31</sup> a claim that is based on the unargued assumption that Theopompus is Plutarch's

---

<sup>25</sup> Ruschenbusch [6] 371f. Despite this silence, Ruschenbusch does not question Ephialtes' rôle in the reforms, but seeks to offer a different interpretation from that proposed hitherto.

<sup>26</sup> Jacoby [20].

<sup>27</sup> I. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca* 1 [Berlin 1814].

<sup>28</sup> Jacoby [20].

<sup>29</sup> Piccirilli [12] 65. Piccirilli's source allocations do not all appear to be entirely accurate.

<sup>30</sup> Piccirilli [12] 65.

<sup>31</sup> Hignett [6] 253f. Cf. Hignett [6] 197: 'In the sixties his position in the radical party was subordinate to that of Ephialtes'.

source at *Cim.* 15.2,<sup>32</sup> and the unargued thesis that Theopompus' is a 'more trustworthy version' than the accounts which ascribe the principal rôle in the reform to Pericles.<sup>33</sup>

Thirdly, there is in fact some additional information against which to test *Ath.* 25.1f., but which has hitherto been for the most part overlooked. This we find in a number of passages in Plutarch, and it is to these we must now turn. Explaining how, in competition with Cimon, Pericles gained the upper hand, chiefly on the advice of Damonides, he goes on to point out that

with festival grants and jurors' wages and other fees and largesses he bribed the multitudes outrightly, and used them in opposition to the Council of the Areopagus. . . . For this reason Pericles, strong in the affections of the people, led a successful faction against the Council of the Areopagus. Not only was the Council robbed of most of its jurisdiction by Ephialtes. . . .

(*Per.* 9.3f.)

Here Plutarch gives a very different emphasis by attributing the initiative to Pericles, with Ephialtes playing only a secondary rôle. This of course appears to be precisely the opposite of what we find in his *Cimon* (written earlier) and especially of what we find in the *Ath.* On the other hand, it could be seen as being illuminated by an earlier statement in his *Pericles*, when he explains how Pericles, in order to retain the greatest effect with the *demos*, approached the people only on very few, key occasions—and adds:

The rest of his policy he carried out by commissioning his friends and other public speakers. One of these, as they say, was Ephialtes, who broke down the power of the Council of the Areopagus, and so poured out for the citizens, to use the words of Plato, too much 'undiluted freedom'. . . .

(*Per.* 7.5f.)<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> See, however, A. Blamire, *Plutarch: Life of Kimon, with Translation and Commentary* (London 1989) 158-60.

<sup>33</sup> Hignett [6] 197.

<sup>34</sup> On the presupposition that 'the later Pericles continuously hovered before his mind,' E. Meinhardt, *Perikles bei Plutarch* (Frankfurt am Main 1957) 29, adopted the view that here Plutarch had recourse to the little information to be found in the *Ath.* and perhaps in Ephorus and that he combined this with the picture he had formed of the later Pericles and retrojected this to his early career, for which he did not possess any sources. This is indeed a speculative possibility, but it leaves unanswered why Plutarch should have invented the precise details which he provides, especially since it is difficult to imagine how many of them could have any logical derivation from Pericles' later career. But Meinhardt 32 is quite categorical: the claim that Pericles carried out most of his policies through the agency of friends and other orators 'constitutes the late Pericles, not the political novice'. How wide

In other words, Ephialtes was Pericles' 'front man'. While Ephialtes may in fact have *carried out* most of the details of the reforms, Pericles was the actual architect of the enterprise—although he may also have participated to some degree at least in its implementation.

This latter contention, however, seems only to heighten the degree to which Plutarch's statements in his *Pericles* are at variance with those in his *Cimon* and in the *Ath.* Is this discrepancy, however, in fact as great as it at first seems to be? Secondly, is it possible to make a case for a Periclean initiative? As for the former, one way to account for the difference is to appeal to Plutarch's style and approach.<sup>35</sup> Although it has been maintained that Plutarch's *Cimon* 'makes Ephialtes the central figure of the reform, with Pericles only a useful ally,'<sup>36</sup> Plutarch adds the interesting clause that 'Pericles was already powerful with the multitudes' (*Cim.* 15.2). In light of all that Plutarch has to say on the subject of Pericles' power over the *demos*, it is questionable whether one should construe this clause as synonymous with 'only a useful ally'.

We need, however, to examine the problem in a wider context and consider here the second question raised above, whether it is possible to make a case for a Periclean initiative. One of the ways of approaching this is to look more closely at Ephialtes himself. The rather surprising factor here is that he is a very obscure figure—well summed up in the statement: 'We know nothing about Sophonides [his father] and very little about Ephialtes'.<sup>37</sup> Although earlier scholars tended to see him as stemming from the aristocracy,<sup>38</sup> Stadter has suggested that, since Sophonides is unknown, 'he may not have belonged to the elite class of old and wealthy landowners, which could explain Ephialtes' reputation for poverty (Aelian *VH* 2.43, 11.9, 13.39)'.<sup>39</sup> Swoboda also took the fact that he had made it into the *strategia* as an indication of an aristocratic background; therefore, this negates the tradition of his poverty.<sup>40</sup> This, however, does not necessarily follow. It

---

of the mark this is can be seen by the fact that it is fundamentally at variance with Thucydides, where the late Pericles is portrayed as continuously addressing the Athenians and carrying out his own policies.

<sup>35</sup> Stadter [10] 113.

<sup>36</sup> Stadter [10] 113.

<sup>37</sup> Rhodes [3] 311. Also see below, n. 45. Despite this, Piccirilli [12] has now given us a whole book on Ephialtes.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Busolt [6] 246 n. 1; Meyer [6] 567; Swoboda [6] 2850.

<sup>39</sup> Stadter [10] 121.

<sup>40</sup> Swoboda [6] 2850; cf. Hignett [6] 194.

is interesting that an integral element in Swoboda's argument at this point is that Ephialtes had distinguished himself as a *strategos*, although he appears to be able to cite for this theory only Ephialtes' expedition with thirty triremes into the eastern Mediterranean, i.e., beyond the Chelidonian Islands.<sup>41</sup> There is, however, nothing to suggest that this expedition was of any military significance whatsoever.<sup>42</sup> Otherwise, we do not hear anything about his activities as a *strategos*.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Swoboda, on the basis of Plut. *Per.* 7 and 10, thought that it was possible to talk about 'dem jüngerem Perikles,' as compared with Ephialtes.<sup>44</sup> Stadter, however, claims that 'contrary to P., modern historians presume that Ephialtes was the older and more influential at this time' and notes that 'we know practically nothing about Ephialtes'.<sup>45</sup> In other words, there are really no grounds at all for concluding that Ephialtes was older than Pericles. Otherwise, all that we know about Ephialtes is that he was allegedly honest (Plut. *Cim.* 10.8); he opposed, unsuccessfully, Cimon's bid to send troops to help the Spartans (Plut. *Cim.* 16.9);<sup>46</sup> that he was involved in the reforms of 462 (*Ath.* 25.2, 28.2, 35.2; Plut. *Cim.* 10.8, 15.2; *Per.* 7.5f., 9.2; Diod. 11.77.6) and shortly thereafter was assassinated (*Ath.* 25.4; *Per.* 10.7; Diod. 11.77.6; Antiph. 5.68).<sup>47</sup> Thus, apart from involvement in events connected with

---

<sup>41</sup> This information on this expedition derives from Callisthenes (Jacoby [20] 124 F 16; cf. Plut. *Cim.* 14.4).

<sup>42</sup> Meiggs [6] 79, 91; E. F. Bloedow, 'The Peaces of Callias', *SO* 67 (1992) 43-51. Wallace [6] 263 regards the expedition as having taken place at the same time as that of Pericles. In that case, it may too have been initiated by Pericles.

<sup>43</sup> Piccirilli's ([12] 15-20) discussion of Ephialtes' *strategia* adds little that is new.

<sup>44</sup> Swoboda [6] 2850.

<sup>45</sup> Stadter [10] 120. Walker [6] 69: 'Few things are to be more regretted in the history of this period than that we should know so little about him'.

<sup>46</sup> Chronologically, this is the first action attributed to him (i.e., apart from the *Ath.*'s claim that he took over the leadership of the *demos*, or possibly his expedition into the eastern Mediterranean), in which case he could also have been acting as Pericles' 'front man'.

<sup>47</sup> Objecting to Curtius' attribution of 'stormy rhetoric', Swoboda [6] 2850 sought to cast him as 'a bold, thoroughly logical theoretician of the democratic faction in Athens', but this is purely speculative. Swoboda would presumably have objected also to casting him as 'bitter and fanatical' (Walker [6] 69), but would perhaps have accepted the equally speculative claim that he was 'an able constitutionalist and a fine speaker' (Hammond [6] 288).

462/1, his career is decidedly obscure.<sup>48</sup> The aforementioned does not of course in itself prove that Ephialtes did not play the leading rôle in the reforms. Still, it makes it legitimate to treat such a thesis with at least some caution—especially in light of the problems posed by the *Ath.*<sup>49</sup>

How does Pericles compare with Ephialtes? Stadter has in fact suggested that 'it is quite possible that Pericles, with his wealth and family connections, was the more influential if not the more active of the two'. But he then gives the impression of tending to take away with one hand what he has just given with the other—when, for instance, he goes on to acknowledge that 'it is possible that Ephialtes began the attacks on the Areopagus and that Pericles associated himself only later'.<sup>50</sup> It seems to me, however, that we can arrive at a more specific picture. It is true that Aristotle claims, as we have seen above, that Ephialtes 'took over the leadership of the popular faction (25.1), but he does not explain how he did this. By contrast, Plutarch explains in some detail how Pericles gained control over the *demos* by the following means: as a matter of deliberate policy (*Per.* 7.1f.); by approaching the people only on crucial occasions (*Per.* 7.5); above all by means of rhetoric (*Per.* 8.1-6); and especially by means of a series of popular gestures—such as (*Per.* 9.3): festival grants (θεωρικοῖς), jurors' wages (δικαστικοῖς λήμμασιν, other fees (ἄλλαις μισθοφοραῖς) and largesses (χορηγίαις).<sup>51</sup> And by means of the latter, Plutarch adds, 'he totally bribed the multitudes' (*Per.* 9.3).

A notorious problem concerns the date(s) when these various innovations were carried out. To take merely what is probably the most important of these (at least from a modern point of view), pay for jurors,

---

<sup>48</sup> It will scarcely do to claim that 'his fame was so completely overshadowed by that of Pericles that he became to later writers little more than a dim and insubstantial form' (Walker [6] 69; cf. Hignett [5] 193). Had he distinguished himself as a *strategos*, for instance, or in other areas of state affairs, it would doubtless have become reflected in our sources. Prior to Ephialtes' assassination there appears to be nothing in our sources to suggest that Pericles had distinguished himself as a *strategos*—so that Ephialtes was not compelled to compete with Pericles in this sphere. Where, then, are his other exploits as *strategos*?

<sup>49</sup> The fact that Pausanias saw Ephialtes' tomb in Athens (1.29.15), is not of any special significance in our context. For instance, did we not have Thucydides' text, we should, on the basis of the statues alone, almost certainly conclude that Harmodius and Aristogeiton slew Hipparchus for political reasons.

<sup>50</sup> Stadter [10] 121.

<sup>51</sup> On these see Stadter [10] 116-18.

many modern critics attempt to place this in the period *after* the reform,<sup>52</sup> although others see good reasons for dating it before the reform.<sup>53</sup> A definitive answer is not possible at this point in time. There are, however, a number of considerations which suggest that it is a distinct possibility that Pericles had moved onto the political stage some time before 462. To my knowledge, no one has ever doubted Plutarch's statement that Pericles was *strategos* for fifteen years consecutively (*Per.* 16.3f.).<sup>54</sup> Although Plutarch makes another statement in the same context, many modern critics have contested his claim that Pericles 'stood first for forty years' (*Per.* 16.2), as this would take us back to 469, when, it is alleged, there is no evidence for significant action by Pericles in the affairs of state. Certainly Thucydides does not seem to know of any such action at such an early date,<sup>55</sup> although Pericles would then have been between 25 and 29 years of age.<sup>56</sup> At the same time, it is true that in the list of Pericles' contemporaries which follows, Plutarch begins with Ephialtes. This has in large measure determined the prevailing modern view that 'he became prominent only after Ephialtes' death'.<sup>57</sup> But even if he begins the list of Pericles' contemporaries with Ephialtes, he clearly states that Pericles 'stood first' also *vis-à-vis* Ephialtes (*Per.* 16.2).

Moreover, no one has explained why Plutarch would have written 'forty' when in fact he allegedly meant only about 'thirty'. At the same time, modern critics do not seem to have any difficulties with Plutarch's statement that Pericles led the prosecution of Cimon when the latter returned from Thasos in 463 (*Cim.* 14.4), although to do this it would have been

---

<sup>52</sup> See, e.g., Day and Chambers [7] 143. But, after acknowledging the difficulties, their date remains essentially an assumption: they offer no proof, only the statement that 'it may be accepted as being roughly in its chronological place, that is after the Ephialtic reforms'. The only authority they cite (p. 143 and n. 21) for this is Hignett. But Hignett's ([6] 342) case is based on the presupposition of 'the subordination of Perikles to Ephialtes at the time'. This enables Day and Chambers [7] 143 n. 19 to state that 'Pericles probably did nothing in the legislation of 462/1', thus ruling out even any collaboration between Pericles and Ephialtes. But if it is acknowledged that Aristotle 'could not describe the far more important reforms of Ephialtes' (than those which attribute primacy to Pericles), it seems hazardous to use Aristotle to date Pericles' policy of jurors' pay. See now, in particular, Rhodes [3] 339f.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. H. T. Wade-Gery, *Essays in Greek History* (Oxford 1958) 197; Stadter [10] 117.

<sup>54</sup> That is from 443 until his death in 429.

<sup>55</sup> It should be noted that Thucydides' first reference to Pericles is in connection with the Athenian expedition in the Corinthian Gulf in 454 (1.111.2f.).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Stadter [10] 88.

<sup>57</sup> Stadter [10] 195, where he suggests that 'forty' years is a 'traditional' number.

necessary for Pericles to have been prominent in state affairs already before the reform of 462.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, Plutarch is explicit in pointing out that it was within the context of rivalry with Cimon that Pericles rose to power:

In the beginning . . . pitted as he was against the reputation of Cimon, he sought to ingratiate himself with the people.

(*Per.* 9.2)

And

When Aristeides was dead,<sup>59</sup> and Themistocles in exile,<sup>60</sup> and Cimon was kept by his campaigns for the most part abroad, then at last Pericles decided to devote himself to the people, especially the cause of the poor and the many instead of the rich . . . .

(*Per.* 7.2)<sup>61</sup>

This must have been prior to 463. Moreover, already as a *véoc* ('young man') his eloquence was noted by his fellow-citizens (*Per.* 7.1).<sup>62</sup> Although *véoc* is a rather elastic term, the implication in this instance is that it refers to a time either before Pericles was significantly active in affairs of state or at all events was at the outset of such a period. This eloquence would have enabled him to rise very quickly once he had resolved to move in this direction.<sup>63</sup> It has been observed that 'Pericles would not have become prominent until his father died, sometime between his campaign at Sestos in 479/78 (Hdt. 9.114.2) and Pericles' *Choregia* for the *Persae* in 472'.<sup>64</sup> This too would make Plutarch's 'forty years' possible.

In commenting on the manner in which the government in Athens functioned, which allowed considerable scope for *stratego*i to initiate and

---

<sup>58</sup> If Ephialtes was noted for 'stormy rhetoric', why do we not hear of him leading the prosecution against Cimon?

<sup>59</sup> Probably soon after 468.

<sup>60</sup> After 472. On Aristeides and Themistocles, see Stadter [10] 92.

<sup>61</sup> Like just about everything else that Plutarch relates about Pericles' early career, Meinhardt [34] 31 took as pure invention the statement that Pericles exploited Cimon's absence abroad on foreign campaigns in order to gain control of the *demos*.

<sup>62</sup> On *véoc*, see Stadter [10] 88.

<sup>63</sup> According to Plutarch, 'in the art of speaking, he far excelled all other speakers' (*Per.* 8.1), and Thucydides, son of Melesias, is said to have referred to 'the clever persuasiveness of Pericles' (*Per.* 8.3).

<sup>64</sup> Stadter [10] 88. That Pericles was *choregos* for Aeschylus' trilogy in 472 strongly implies that he was building his power-base already at that time.

influence policy through the *Boule*, McGregor, in addition to accepting Plutarch's statement that Pericles was elected to the *strategia* for fifteen years in succession, not only maintained that 'it is all but certain that he was elected to the board (*strategia*) by his fellow-citizens from 451 to 446 inclusive', but also was prepared to speculate that 'from 460 he had seldom been out of office'.<sup>65</sup> I see no reason why one might not endorse such a thesis for a considerably earlier period. There is also the point that Damonides seems to have been Pericles' political adviser in the 460s (*Per.* 9.2).<sup>66</sup> In light of the above, it seems entirely possible that Plutarch's reference to 'forty years' may not in fact be wide of the mark, and that the innovations which Pericles employed to organise his political base could fall some time well before the reforms of 462.

What the above indicates is that a correct understanding of the reforms of 462 is a question of sources. *Ath.* 25.1f., *Plut. Cim.* 15.2 and 10.8 could possibly be treated as essentially a single source, which, as we saw above, is not entirely above suspicion. In the absence of an independent source against which to assess *Ath.* 25.1f., it will not do simply to declare the Themistoclean section (*Ath.* 25.3f.) as unhistorical, but accept the Ephialtes section (*Ath.* 25.1f.) as completely reliable. At the same time, it is admittedly difficult to see what may have been Plutarch's source for parts of his Pericles other than the *Ath.*, although Theopompus may be considered as a possibility.<sup>67</sup> That is to say, are his statements in his *Pericles* based on another, perhaps additional, source, or are they simply his own eccentric amplification of Aristotle? The latter may appear the more plausible if one accepts Stadter's explanation that 'in the *Pericles*, as regularly in the *Lives*, P. highlights and even exaggerates the activities of his hero, helped by the focus on Pericles' competition with Cimon in *Ath. Pol.* 27'.<sup>68</sup> There is no doubt a great deal of truth in this statement, but since we do not possess a *Vita* of Ephialtes by Plutarch, it is difficult to assess this general claim in any depth in the present context. Moreover, one would also have to demonstrate

<sup>65</sup> McGregor [6] 91.

<sup>66</sup> Stadter [10] 115; cf. Swoboda [6] 2850.

<sup>67</sup> See especially Stadter [10] lxxii, including n. 105, to which one may add H. Sauppe, *Die Quellen Plutarchs für das Leben des Perikles* (Göttingen 1867) 34 (=H. Sauppe, *Ausgewählte Schriften* [Göttingen 1896] 505); F. Rühl, 'Die Quellen des plutarchischen Perikles', *Jahrbuch für Klassische Philologie* 97 (1868) 658-60; C. Bünger, *Theopompea* (diss. Strassburg 1874) 21-24; and H. N. Fowler, 'The Origin of Statements Contained in Plutarch's Life of Pericles', *HSCP* 12 (1901) 213—as against Meinhardt [34] 23 n. 50.

<sup>68</sup> Stadter [10] 113.

that in his *Pericles* Plutarch exaggerates his hero's activities where they can be checked against Thucydides' account. This Stadter does not do. So far as I can tell, there are no such instances in which Plutarch significantly embellishes information derived from Thucydides in such a way as to give a picture basically different from that provided by the fifth-century historian.<sup>69</sup> There do not therefore seem to be any grounds to conclude that he exaggerates Pericles' actions.

How, then, can one explain the picture which Plutarch gives in his *Pericles*, as compared with that in his *Cimon*? One could imagine Plutarch as actually using a different, or additional, source here (Theopompus?). That apart, while there may not be any major exaggeration in the *Pericles*, it would be only natural for Plutarch to highlight Pericles' actions. And this would explain the difference between the *Cimon* and the *Pericles*—namely, a difference of emphasis. If we accept Plutarch's statement about Pericles, that 'the rest of his policy he carried out by commissioning his friends and other public speakers' (*Per.* 7.5),<sup>70</sup> we could see Ephialtes, who is singled out as one such individual, as acting in this capacity in the *Cimon*. In other words, the perspective in the *Cimon* is that of Ephialtes acting as Pericles' representative, but receiving emphasis there because it was he who assumed the leading part in actually carrying out the various details of the reform.<sup>71</sup> The same would apply to the *Ath.* In the *Pericles*, on the other hand, the emphasis should fall on the actual architect of the reform - and that is why Plutarch highlights Pericles' own rôle in the way that he does. Within the context of his discussion of the reforms of 462, in which he accords Ephialtes (subordinate) credit, Plutarch also discusses Cimon's ostracism (*Per.* 9.3f.). Ephialtes is usually credited also with being the architect of the latter, but Plutarch, commenting on both, says forthrightly in a carefully considered summarising statement: 'So great was the power of Pericles among the people' (*Per.* 9.4). Plutarch, accordingly, regarded Pericles as the architect of both events.

There are three further considerations which lend weight to our thesis of Ephialtes acting as Pericles' 'front man'. Plutarch, for instance, tells us that Ephialtes 'had become a friend of Pericles and a partner in his political

---

<sup>69</sup> This applies in particular to *Per.* 22f. (Megara and Euboea), 25-28 (the Samian War), and 29-35 (the Peloponnesian War). Cf. Stadter [10] lx-lxi.

<sup>70</sup> It is noteworthy that Stadter passes over this statement without comment.

<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, one could perhaps believe that Plutarch was following Aristotle less than rigorously, while unaware that the latter had not been well informed about the affair.

programme (*Per.* 10.6). Here again Plutarch indicates that the initiative stemmed from Pericles. Secondly, and more importantly, as it turned out, circumstances (one could say by hindsight) recommended the prudence of such a strategy. For, as Plutarch tells us in the succeeding passage, when Ephialtes went to work against the Areopagites, 'his enemies laid plots against him and had him assassinated' (*Per.* 10.7).<sup>72</sup> Had Pericles played the same active rôle in the matter, there is a strong probability that he would have suffered the same fate. One of the greatest attributes which Thucydides accords Pericles is a distinct *πρόνοια* ('foresight', 2.65.5f.), and it may indeed have been his foresight that saved him on this occasion. Nor would this have been an isolated instance. Plutarch also tells us that at the outset of his career, Pericles, for a number of reasons,<sup>73</sup> 'feared that he might be ostracised and so kept a low profile by staying out of politics and 'devoting himself instead to a military career' (*Per.* 7.1). Would Thucydides not attribute this strategy also to his *πρόνοια*? By 462, however, Pericles had gained enough experience and self-confidence to enable him to pursue a different route. If anything, then, it seems possible to harmonise Plutarch's ascription of Periclean primacy in the reform with circumstances at the time.

Finally, and perhaps not least important, there is an indirect factor which may be considered. In a statement that appears to have received very little notice by modern critics, Plutarch reports Idomeneus' accusation that Pericles was the real architect of Ephialtes' assassination (*Per.* 10.6). Plutarch was, not surprisingly, horrified at such a suggestion, and rejected the accusation outright.<sup>74</sup> It cannot, however, be ruled out entirely that Ephialtes, after having as 'front man' engendered so much opposition, had become a political liability, and so Pericles was prepared to sacrifice him on the altar of expediency. Certain events in recent modern history have taught us that we should not be over-hasty in joining Plutarch in flat rejection of such an idea.<sup>75</sup> If this idea is not entirely implausible, it would support the notion that Pericles was a powerful figure at the time.

A century ago Wilamowitz, also on the basis of *Plut. Per.* 7.5f., suggested that Aristotle's statement that the Thirty 'removed from the Areopagus the laws of Ephialtes and Arcestratus' (*Ath.* 35.2) can be taken

<sup>72</sup> On Ephialtes' assassination, see also *Ath.* 25.4 and *Diod.* 11.77.6.

<sup>73</sup> Alleged resemblance to Peisistratus, wealth and contacts in high places.

<sup>74</sup> Perhaps it is for the same reason that most modern scholars pass over this reference.

<sup>75</sup> Plutarch was equally horrified by Duris' claim that Pericles was responsible for torturing Samian prisoners and treating them with brutality at the time of the revolt of Samos (*Per.* 28.2-3). But not all critics share Plutarch's horror (*pace* Kagan [6] 277 n. 2).

to mean that Pericles used Archestratus as one of his agents and identified him as the son of Lycomedes who was strategos in 433/2.<sup>76</sup> Wilamowitz's suggestion has, so far as I can tell, received very little notice, except to be rejected.<sup>77</sup> I would, however, go further than Wilamowitz, and see Ephialtes as Pericles' leading 'front man' in 462, but agree with him that Archestratus also functioned in that capacity, albeit to a lesser degree.

In conclusion, if we accept that *Ath.* 25.3f. is wholly unreliable, then we should also approach *Ath.* 25.1f. with due caution. This is underlined by the fact that *Ath.* 25.3f. is not an isolated instance, but is one of a number of anomalies in the immediate context. It is also emphasised by reason of the virtually insoluble problems connected with the contents of the reforms. This suggests that one should pay more attention to other sources bearing on the question, in particular to statements in Plutarch's *Vita* of Pericles. If we also accept that, apart from his involvement in the reforms of 462 and opposition to sending aid to Sparta and his expedition to the eastern Mediterranean, Ephialtes is a distinctly obscure figure, whereas Pericles is otherwise highly prominent, we can, on the basis of this information from Plutarch, see the ground cleared for ascribing to Pericles a possibly important rôle in the reforms. And if we give due weight to other statements by Plutarch, then, all in all, we can go even further and see him politically active much earlier and in fact playing a significant rôle in the reforms—at the very least as an equal partner, but more probably as the real architect of the enterprise, with Ephialtes acting essentially as his 'front man'. Further support for this could be seen in the fact that there does not appear to have been any power vacuum immediately after Ephialtes' assassination. There is therefore no real contradiction after all between the *Cimon* and the *Pericles*. It is a matter of emphasis, *alias*, perspective. What emerges as important from this is that the *Pericles* should be regarded equally as a source for the reforms of 462, not just the *Cimon* and the *Ath.* That being so, and in light of what we can glean from other information, we arrive at a significantly different picture of the reforms of 462—one in which Pericles already stands at centre stage.

---

<sup>76</sup> Wilamowitz-Moellendorff [9] 68 n. 40.

<sup>77</sup> Hignett [6] 198, for instance, sought to reject it and see Archestratus as 'one of Ephialtes' supporters' (cf. Meyer [6] 536), albeit on no more evidence than 'nothing is known of the reformer Archestratus except his name'. One can of course say that Ephialtes is little less obscure than Archestratus.

## THE TEACHING OF LATIN IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES<sup>1</sup>

**Jo-Marie Claassen**

Department of Latin, University of Stellenbosch  
Stellenbosch 7600

**Abstract.** This article traces some of the problems relating to the politicising of mother-tongue education in South Africa, looks at multilingualism in other countries, and discusses language learning theories in the context of the statutory requirements for admission to the Bar and the teaching of Latin to non-Indo-European mother-tongue speakers.

Because of the many languages spoken in South Africa, medium of instruction in the schools is problematical. Educational problems in Southern Africa are not as great as in India, which has ten writing systems and about 1652 different mother tongues.<sup>2</sup> With changing migratory patterns, even British education has to cope with the needs of pupils from over one hundred different linguistic backgrounds. Medium is now an issue even in previously monolingual and monocultural England.<sup>3</sup> The issue of mother-tongue education, like so many other social issues, has in South Africa unfortunately been politicized and is consequently more problematical than elsewhere.

This paper sets out to explore the issue as it relates to Latin teaching at university level in South Africa. Successful students derive more from their compulsory Latin studies than a facility to decipher phrases in their Roman law course books. Some students are particularly disadvantaged by these Latin studies not because Latin *per se* is 'too difficult', but because of the basic problem of medium of instruction, exacerbated by the fact that Latin is a so-called 'dead language' that is taught in a severely codified form.

---

<sup>1</sup> Delivered during the University of Natal Roman Studies Conference at Durban, July 1992.

<sup>2</sup> D. P. Pattanayak, *Multilingualism and Mother-Tongue Education* (Delhi 1981) 42, 95.

<sup>3</sup> R. Todd, *Education in a Multicultural Society* (London 1991) 17-35, 53.

*Bicultural Alienation*

The phenomenon of bicultural alienation amounting to almost total loss of identity is frequently documented. The problem of multilingualism has different aspects: to be able to join the mainstream of modern African urban life, native African speakers need to acquire at least one, often two, European-based languages. To promulgate an own, African education that would equip the native speaker with the tools to adapt to an 'Africanized' technological and media-controlled era would require the adaptation in South Africa alone of about eleven African languages to this era and its specialized vocabulary.<sup>4</sup>

A solution most generally adopted has been to accept English, the international lingua franca of the northern world, as the language of education. This 'solution' is not without its own pitfalls, since it leads to further disorientation and alienation, particularly of intellectuals, as graphically described by Ngugi wa Thiong'o: 'The African Prometheus had been sent to wrest fire from the gods, but instead became a captive contented with warming himself at the fireside of the gods. Otherwise he carried the fire in containers that were completely sealed and for which the majority had no key'.<sup>5</sup>

*South Africa: The Background*

Teaching medium has been a burning issue in South Africa for the last century or longer. Adoption of English as the medium of instruction in schools and African first language teaching cause problems.<sup>6</sup> In the struggle between contending 'colonial settlers', the issue was solved variously in the course of power struggles between Boer and Brit. In the nineteenth century Transvaal, Boer reaction to the suspect 'free thinking' of President Burgers and the teachers he imported from Holland led to a rejection of Dutch as the teaching medium and the preference of English for their children by

---

<sup>4</sup> Such status equivalence was advocated by Albie Sachs of the ANC at an international conference on language and law, 27-30 April 1992 (*CSD Bulletin* 4.5 [1992] 14), but rejected by other speakers as impracticable. Cf. E. De Kadt, 'Language, Power and Emancipation', *Theoria* 78 (1991) 9-13. In India fourteen languages are used as medium of higher education (Pattanayak [2] 126).

<sup>5</sup> *Weekly Mail Suppl.* (Nov. 3-9 1989) 2. The problem lies in a tension between parochial and international communication.

<sup>6</sup> M. Kumalo, 'First Language Teaching at Tertiary Institutions: What are the Objectives?', *SA Journal for Language Teaching* 23.1 (1989) 60f.

Afrikaans-speaking parents.<sup>7</sup> Latin was consistently taught through the medium of English.<sup>8</sup> Ironically the imposition of British rule and Anglophile emphasis in the schools, particularly before 1900, evoked fierce pro-Dutch reaction and the final victory during the first quarter of this century of Afrikaans as the general medium of instruction. Even up to 1948 and beyond many Afrikaans-speakers still favoured at least dual-medium instruction for their children, but a severe curtailing after 1948 of such dual-medium schools for white South Africans led to virtual monolingualism in the schools.<sup>9</sup>

### *Paternalism and the Bantu Education Act*

Much that is wrong on the educational scene may be imputed to the well-meant paternalism of the traditional wielders of power. The ills of black education do not all stem from Afrikaner actions since 1948. The English language as the 'colonial tool of oppression' carries its own burden of guilt.<sup>10</sup> C. T. Loram, the influential educator of the 1920s and 1930s, first suggested that primary syllabi for black pupils, even those within urban areas, should reflect a 'rural' and 'subservient' culture. Primary classes were consciously conducted in the vernacular, with the best interests of the pupils within their culture, *as seen by educators*, at heart.<sup>11</sup> The notorious Bantu Education Act of 1954 was built on an established system.<sup>12</sup> The

---

<sup>7</sup> M. A. Basson, *Die Voertaalvraagstuk in die Transvaalse Skoolwese* (Johannesburg 1944) 50f. Later the state imposed compulsory mother-tongue education (Basson [above, this note] 90). Cf. J. G. Williams, *Mother-tongue and Other-tongue: A Study in Bilingual Teaching* (Bangor 1915) 109.

<sup>8</sup> P. N. J. Snijman, *'n Ondersoek na die Medium van Onderrig van Latyn in Blanke Hoërskole onder die Kaapse Onderwysdepartement, met Besondere Klem op die Posisie van die Afrikaanssprekende Leerling* (MEd diss. Stellenbosch 1964) *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> J. A. Marcum, *Education, Peace and Social Change in South Africa* (Berkeley 1982) 19.

<sup>10</sup> De Kadt [4] 9.

<sup>11</sup> L. Maree, 'The Hearts and Minds of the People', in P. Kallaway, *Apartheid and Education* (Johannesburg 1984) 149; R. H. Davis Jr., 'Charles T. Loram and the American Model for African Education in South Africa', in Kallaway [above, this note] 108-26. Cf. C. H. Schmidt, *The Language Medium Question* (Pretoria 1926) 34.

<sup>12</sup> C. M. Doke, 'Vernacular Text Books in South African Native Schools', *Africa* 8 (1935) 183-209 gives an insight into 'what might have been' if black education had been allowed to continue in the more liberal direction it was then taking. The problem of inadequate funding was already pervasive.

ideological and content switch was now carried through to the high school level. Latin as subject in black schools was thus unthinkable. The medium of instruction generally remained English, although Afrikaans in some cases was used and even imported as a subject for the first time. Writing some fifteen years later, after the inadequacies of the system had become glaringly apparent, the architect of this scheme refused to acknowledge these and reiterated the need for the black pupils' 'suit to be cut according to an "African-type" cloth',<sup>13</sup> but with the powers that be deciding on the type of cloth. Consciousness of their struggle against linguistic imperialism underlay much of the Afrikaners' insistence on education in the vernacular for black South African pupils.<sup>14</sup> Publications outlining studies in Wales, Belgium and elsewhere propagated 'mother-tongue education' for young Afrikaners and by implication for young Africans.<sup>15</sup>

Recent studies have shown that in South Africa, where the switch from the vernacular is implemented during the fifth year of school, some teachers find the medium of instruction an almost insuperable obstacle in understanding and teaching 'content subjects'.<sup>16</sup> The problem of medium is pervasive and has a deleterious effect on the whole educational system. Yet a vast corpus of international publications extols the value of mother-tongue education, particularly in the first grades.<sup>17</sup> It would appear that the Bantu Education Act and more recently the De Lange Commission<sup>18</sup> have laid emphasis on an important but delicate and difficult principle: the literature indicates that preparation of a pupil in his mother tongue for eventual progression to a different teaching medium is a complex and specialized

---

<sup>13</sup> W. W. M. Eiselen, 'Standard of English and Afrikaans in our Bantu Schools', *Bantu Education Journal* 17.5 (1971) 4-7.

<sup>14</sup> Marcum [9] 19 n. 16; P. Enslin, 'The Role of Fundamental Pedagogics in the Formulation of Education Policy in South Africa', in Kallaway [11] 140-7.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., Schmidt [11]; Basson [7]; cf. Williams [7].

<sup>16</sup> D. P. Langan, 'The Language of Textbooks—A Major Cause of the Failure to Learn through the Medium of English?', *SA Journal for Language Teaching* 23.2 (1989) 28-42; W. L. Lanham, 'Another Dimension of Readiness to Learn in the Second Language', in *The Role of Language in Black Education* (Pretoria 1986). This is part of the bitter fruit of Eiselen's [13] airy claim that 'too many frills' in History and Geography teaching may make way for Afrikaans as third language.

<sup>17</sup> E.g., K. Hakuta, *Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism* (New York 1986); I. Bliss, 'Language and Language Teaching in Plural Societies: An Agenda for Discussion', *European Journal of Teacher Education* 12.2 (1989) 59-67.

<sup>18</sup> J. P. De Lange, *Verlag van die Hoofkomitee van die RGN Ondersoek na Onderwys: Onderwysvoorsiening in Suid-Afrika* (Pretoria 1981).

process, involving initial parallel instruction by skilled bilinguals, and then gradual progression, over some years, to the second language—from object of instruction to instructional medium.<sup>19</sup> The hermetic sealing off of social contact and cutting-off of black pupils' contact from 'western' (or 'northern') culture, except as mediated by a generation of teachers, themselves deprived of wider cultural contacts, resulted in many cases in sadly stunted linguistic development, which is termed the 'ghettoisation' of linguistic skills. As bilinguals straddling two different and vibrant cultures, pupils should have had the opportunity of blossoming and thriving as functional multi-culturalists.<sup>20</sup> Restriction of access to the language of the dominant power led to further handicaps, particularly in legal and administrative access.<sup>21</sup> In South Africa politics have therefore exacerbated the problem of medium of instruction. The ghettoising effect of 'Bantu Education' mother-tongue education is a sad impediment that will take generations to overcome.<sup>22</sup> Problems are the restricted skill, and sometimes inadequate degree of bilinguality, of teachers, cultural isolation of schools, and the perceptions of parents and pupils that mother-tongue education (seen as 'additive' in most cultures) is harmful and inferior (or 'subtractive').<sup>23</sup> This perception is based on solid fact. A new move further to amend the language policy is therefore being opposed.<sup>24</sup>

Language medium in schools of the apartheid-based 'House of

---

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Pattanayak [2] 162-168. In 1982 a significant proportion of South African parents favoured education in a second language; the majority preferred a parallel medium (*Beeld* [18 February 1982] 15). De Lange [18] 144-48 recommends that mother-tongue education be encouraged but not enforced. After ten years and initial rejection of key aspects, some of his recommendations are being implemented but are viewed by many as basically racist in their relegation of the poor to education for manual trades; see M. P. Mncwabe, *Separate and Equal Education* (Durban 1990) 38; Kallaway [11] 32f.; L. Chrisholm, 'Redefining Skills: Black Education in South Africa in the 1980s', in Kallaway [11] 386-409. P. Buckland, 'Technicism and De Lange: Reflections on the Process of the HSRC Investigation', Kallaway [11] 371-386, criticizes the assumption that language medium problems can be solved by providing 'support material on cassette from a resource centre' (sic).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Mncwabe [19] 23.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Pattanayak [2] 74, 110, 154f.

<sup>22</sup> Mncwabe [19] 14-28, 66.

<sup>23</sup> A. Thembala, 'Black Education in South Africa: Issues, Problems and Perspectives', *Per Linguam* 5.1 (1989) 2-8; Marcum [9] 150. On valorisation of the home language of bilinguals, see Todd [3] 74f., 135; J. F. Hamers and M. H. H. Blanc, *Bilinguality and Bilingualism* (Cambridge 1989) 257; Bliss [17].

<sup>24</sup> *The Argus* (11 May 1992) 4.

Representatives' also offers problems. Afrikaans or Xhosa-speaking parents, perhaps regarding English as less 'political', enrol their children in 'English-medium' classes.<sup>25</sup> A situation of potential cultural enrichment is often traumatic for children on the lower end of the socio-economic scale. Insufficient qualification of teachers, consequent on 'ghettoisation,' remains a problem. Of course there are notable exceptions: at university level we deal with exceptional people.<sup>26</sup>

In the rest of Africa the medium of instruction in 'western-type' schools has traditionally been that of the locally dominant colonial power. After liberation, awareness of the educational value of mother-tongue teaching was offset by the fear that Africans should be 'imprisoned in their own vernaculars'.<sup>27</sup> Only recently have guidelines for the vernacularisation of primary education been compiled, advocating 'contextual teaching' in the vernacular, that is, the integration of the cultural habits of a particular community. No linguistic hierarchy is suggested; nor teaching solely in the vernacular. Dual-medium presentation, on lines followed elsewhere in the world, is outlined.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> M. E. Du Toit, *Die Uitkenning van Probleemareas in die Skolastiese Vordering van Leerlinge in die Departement van Onderwys en Kultuur; Administrasie Raad van Verteenwoordigers* (MEd diss. Stellenbosch 1989) 87, 131.

<sup>26</sup> The problem is being addressed by upgrading both teachers' linguistic command and pupils' proficiency in 'thinking skills' (*Thembala* [23]). According to statistics released by the Department of National Education (*Onderwysrealiteite in Suid-Afrika 1990*, NASOP 02-300 (91/06) [Pretoria 1991] 8-35), the student-lecturer ratio at black teacher training colleges is extremely favourable, as is the proportion of the gross national product spent on education. Political and social factors still seem to impede progress in training. J. M. Squelch, *Teacher Education and Training for Multicultural Education in a Multicultural Society* (Pretoria 1991) 141-64, proposes a (possibly not implementable) curriculum for 'multicultural' teacher training. The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town has proposed sweeping changes to the present academic system (F. Esterhuysen, 'Saunders Suggests a Bold Initiative', *UCT News* 19.1 [1992] 3-5).

<sup>27</sup> A. R. Thompson, *Education and Development in Africa* (Basingstoke 1981) 309-13.

<sup>28</sup> J. Poth, *National Languages and Teacher Training in Africa* (Paris 1980) 43f.; S. Y. Cisse, *Education in Africa in the Light of the Harare Conference (1982)* (Paris 1986); Todd [3] 69; cf. Schmidt [11] 98-103. In India, where restriction to the vernacular impedes progress of the uneducated, three languages are routinely used in schools: English, Hindi and a local language that is not necessarily the pupil's home language (J. Di Bona and R. P. Singh, 'Modernity or Tradition in Indian Education: The Revival of Indian Languages and Indigenous Systems of Education', in G. Ratua and M. Zachariah, *Education and the Process of Change* [New Delhi 1987]); this causes difficulties (Pattanayak [2] 137-49). English and Hindi appear to wield an imperialist hegemony over minority languages (N. R. Ray, *Some Current Educational Problems* (New Delhi 1971) 142-49. M. S. Khan, *Teacher Education*

### *The Problem of Cultural Illiteracy*

Some of our students' problems do not stem from 'Bantu Education' as such but, as with the 'cultural illiteracy' diagnosed as the root of the American educational malaise, relate to an almost universal educational policy, developed by Dewey from the ideas of Rousseau.<sup>29</sup> 'Skills' are elevated above 'content' as the aim of elementary training in reading. Kindergarten pupils from a disadvantaged background progressively fall behind through lack of exposure to culture: what they bring to their education is too meagre to enhance what little they derive from it and invalidates the skills they have acquired. It is even worse when South African schools restrict pupils' contact with western (or 'northern'-type) thought, and subject urban children to a sometimes inappropriate 'rural skills training' that is unrelated to their daily lives. Many South African pupils transcend these profound handicaps, achieve Matriculation exemption, and enter the universities to read for degrees in engineering, medicine, the arts and law. Latin is unfamiliar to almost all. Some universities, as in Europe and the United States, have standard programmes to help non-native speakers to perfect their command of English as teaching medium.<sup>30</sup>

When English has been a medium of instruction since their fifth year at school, disadvantaged students resent the imputation of inadequacy and dislike being compelled to overload their timetables with remedial classes. These students are great achievers in the eyes of their friends and family, not defective underachievers. Remedial courses are often viewed with suspicion. University teachers should appreciate such students' remarkable accomplishment, *inter alia* by a stronger valorisation of the students' home languages. This is not a plea for extended monolingualism in the schools or the vernacularisation of university courses, but for a new look at the fact of the bilingualism or multilingualism of South African students. Subtractive bilingualism can be converted to additive bilingualism, particularly in Latin teaching.

---

*in India and Abroad* (New Delhi 1983) ignores this issue.

<sup>29</sup> E. D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (Boston 1987) xv, 102-08. Cf. I. Shor, *Culture Wars: School and Society in the Conservative Restoration, 1969-1984* (Boston 1986) and Du Toit [25] 86f. Khan [28] 102 defends the Dewey system.

<sup>30</sup> A. L. Behr, 'South African Universities Today: Perceptions for a Changing Society', *SA Journal of Higher Education* 1.1 (1987) 3-9; M. C. Mehl, 'Academic Support: Developmental Giant or Academic Pauper?', *SA Journal of Higher Education* 2.1 (1988) 17-20.

*Latin for Law in South Africa*

The issue of medium of Latin instruction has great local significance. Southern Africa (i.e., South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana) is unique in its application of the Roman-Dutch legal system.<sup>31</sup> An ability to interpret correctly the Latin terminology of the legal profession is therefore required of aspirants to the Bar. The South African statutory minimum has recently been relaxed to either matriculation level or a single year at university. No one denies that Latin is a valuable ancillary to legal studies, but some see this as a ploy of 'apartheid-minded' legislators to exclude non-Indo-European first language speakers.

The desirability of Latin studies at South African universities may be taken as given.<sup>32</sup> Latin and Roman studies offer 'cultural literacy' and provide South African law students with more than the ability to grope at the meaning of legal authors. In a multilingual social and legal system Latin-based terminology codifies the intricacies of legal thought. There is a large body of evidence showing that Latin enhances intellectual proficiency.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, study of the classical world as a closed microcosm gives students a standard whereby to compare and evaluate their own environment and a metaphor for the dispassionate discussion of delicate political issues such as democracy, disenfranchisement, liberty, prejudice and power.

---

<sup>31</sup> H. J. Erasmus, 'Roman Law in South Africa Today', *SA Law Journal* 106 (1989) 666-77.

<sup>32</sup> J. M. Claassen, 'Latin for Lawyers: A Five Year Dialogue', *SA Law Journal* 105 (1988) 769-776. Compare a report on the Conference on Latin and Legal Training held by the Classical Association of South Africa at Pretoria in July 1989, particularly arguments by A. H. Van Wijk, *Codicillus* 31 (1990) 11-14.

<sup>33</sup> As early as 1925 a controlled survey in the United States indicated the positive influence of Latin vocabulary teaching on pupils' English (A. A. Hambley, *An Investigation to Determine the Extent to Which the Effect of the Study of Latin Upon a Knowledge of English Derivatives Can Be Increased by Conscious Adaptation of Content and Method to the Attainment of This Objective* [Philadelphia 1925]). Latin in the elementary schools has since the 1960s influenced the U.S. educational upsurge.

*Theories of Multilingual and Multicultural Education*

There is very little literature<sup>34</sup> on the problem of Latin teaching in a non-Indo-European setting.<sup>35</sup> There is, however, a growing body of informative literature, some extremely idealistic, on 'multicultural education'. The American 'melting-pot' theory was based partly on an erroneous assumption that bilingualism is an undesirable cultural defect—the so-called 'myth of the bilingual handicap'.<sup>36</sup> British experience has shown that a teacher's positive attitude to the pupil's mother tongue and minority culture leads to an enhancement of learning in a bilingual situation.<sup>37</sup> A very idealistic M.Ed. dissertation happily postulates a South African school situation where half a dozen mother tongues are adopted in a multicultural school setting.<sup>38</sup> More than another forty-odd years *outside* the wilderness of Bantu Education is needed for the training of enough multiculturally proficient teachers.

In the South Africa of 1992 we cannot speak of 'minority education' nor imply that black South African culture, either traditional or urban, is inferior or 'minor'. But for many reasons it lies outside the main stream which our potential lawyers must enter, for which they need a general South African 'cultural literacy'. This real minority, a select group of highly intelligent students, is subjected to the compulsory study of a foreign

---

<sup>34</sup> See M. F. Wakerley, 'Latin at the University of Transkei', *Akroterion* 27.3 (1982) 84f.; 'Law Students Like Latin: The Unitra Latin Course', *Akroterion* 30.4 (1985) 100-103; I. Banó, 'L'enseignement du latin à l'école secondaire en Hongrie,' in Z. Telegdi *et al.*, *Modern Linguistics and Language Teaching* (The Hague 1975) 405-10; M. Waczulic, 'Studium Linguae Latinae in T.I.T.', in Telegdi [above, this note] 411.

<sup>35</sup> On teaching Swedish, English and German (all Indo-European languages) to Finnish (non-Indo-European) speakers, see E. Mägiste, 'Selected Issues in Second and Third Language Teaching', in J. Vaid (ed.), *Language Processing in Bilinguals: Psycholinguistic and Neuropsychological Perspectives* (Hillsdale 1986) 101-15. On the interrelationship of Russian (Indo-European) and Hungarian (agglutinating non-Indo-European), see G. Ferenczy, 'Some Questions on the Comprehension and Segmentation of Russian Texts', in Telegdi [34] 175-82; K. Maitinskaia, 'Some Remarks on Teaching Hungarian to People with a Russian Mother Tongue', in Telegdi [34] 399-404.

<sup>36</sup> Todd [3] 72-75. A positive attitude to additive bilingualism is gaining ground in the United States (Hakuta [17] 15-54), but it is still decried as unrealistic by an otherwise perceptive educationist such as Hirsch [29] 93.

<sup>37</sup> Bliss [17].

<sup>38</sup> Squelch [26]. F. M. Grittner, *Teaching Foreign Languages* (New York 1969) 161f. advises use of the 'direct method', although he warns about possible inadequacies that are ignored by others, for example, Schmidt [11] 103.

language from an alien past. University teachers of Latin must acknowledge the great linguistic potential of these multilingual students and hone their teaching strategies to meet their students' needs. Language is the object and the means of their teaching.

### *Linguistics, Learning Theory and Teaching Theories*

Language learning theory derives from both psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. Consensus is an unattainable ideal. All teaching, including language teaching, is partly an art, partly a science and partly 'inspired'. Teaching constitutes at its best an almost indefinable interaction between teacher and learner that involves the personalities of both. 'Theory' and 'prejudice' converge. Traditional Classics teaching is based on the prejudgment that synthesis of prescribed analytical norms will enable the learner both to reproduce and to decipher Latin texts. Such teaching often results in a loss of awareness of the 'living reality of the language' with an adherence to the 'stereotyped patterns of the textbook' that 'acquire the force of an absolute truth'.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, in most Latin courses it is not 'Latin as a language' that is taught, but rather 'Latin grammar as an organized system aimed at unravelling linguistic intricacies'. The extremes of the 'direct' or 'natural' method versus the 'grammar-translation' method, between which lie the 'structural' and 'audio-lingual' methods, have given way to a compromise weighted in the direction of the 'grammar-translation' method. We Classicists are once more in line with modern linguistic teaching theory, where the 'cognitive approach' underlies 'communicative language teaching'. We may, however, disregard theories of language acquisition, knowledge and competence *à la* Krashen. At the level of compulsory elementary Latin at university the question may be begged by stating that students of Latin, as most other students, wish to pass their examinations and that university Latin examinations generally tend to test what the students have been taught, whether it be reading competence (synthesis of grammatical or structural analysis) or grammatical insight (analysis of form for the sake of deciding function).

### *Grammar, Latin and Instructional Medium*

Teaching and testing are therefore not so much of competence in Language 2 (Latin) in relation to Language 1 (English/Afrikaans) but rather of

---

<sup>39</sup> J. Higgins and T. Johns, *Computers in Language Learning* (London 1984) 44.

understanding of Language 2 (Latin) in terms of a specialized code (Latin grammar as formulated in English or Afrikaans) in order to attain a non-language-specific grasp of the information conveyed (in transformational grammar terms, the 'deep meaning', also known as 'interlingua') that can generate a surface meaning in any language<sub>n</sub>. Whether this process is or can be effective is beside the point: the teacher's or tester's prejudgment that it will be effective directs both teaching and testing strategy.

Language can feature in three ways: as mother tongue, second language (both as object of instruction) or medium of instruction.<sup>40</sup> These categories are not always distinguished. In addition, when teaching occurs with a second language as the medium, the student oscillates between the language in question as medium and as subject matter, that is, between the meaning of the words in which information is conveyed and the content of what is conveyed.<sup>41</sup> This applies equally when a second language is employed as medium to convey a third language (Latin).

Research in Sweden has shown that Finnish trilinguals (Finnish-Swedish-German) with an active knowledge of their non-Indo-European mother tongue have greater problems in learning English (another Indo-European language) than those with only a passive familiarity (understanding but not speaking). Both fare better than monolinguals. From this it is deduced that passive bilingualism facilitates second language learning, whereas active bilingualism delays it. The potential for 'interference' is greater.<sup>42</sup> In the case of non-Indo-European first language speakers the learning process cannot merely be linearly represented as:

(a) L<sub>1</sub> <----> (b) L<sub>2</sub>

Nor can it be represented as:

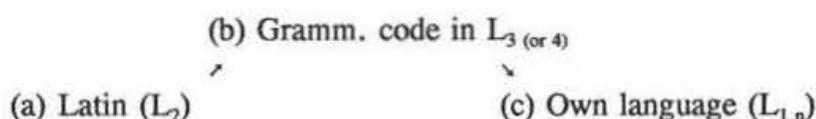
(a) L<sub>2</sub> <---- (b) Interlingua ----> (c) Deep meaning in own  
(Gramm. code) language L<sub>1,n</sub>

<sup>40</sup> Pattanayak [2] 146.

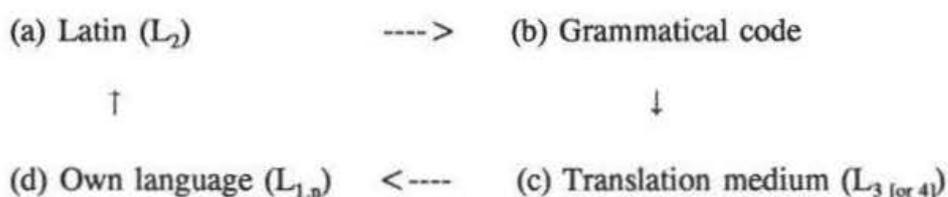
<sup>41</sup> Schmidt [11] 41.

<sup>42</sup> See Mägiste [35] 97-122; Telegdi [34] *passim*; Hakuta [17] *passim*. Bilingualism fosters awareness of language and facilitates further language learning, if the pupil's home language is 'valorized' (treated positively). Awareness is greater between two different language systems (e.g., Indo-European and non-Indo-European); see Hamers and Blanc [23] 50.

Where the medium of instruction is neither the learner's mother tongue nor from the same language system, one should postulate a triangular system as follows:



Given the prominence of grammatical terminology in Latin teaching, a four-cornered scheme is most suitable for portraying the relationship of the codes with which the learner is confronted:



It is (d), the 'fourth corner' of this imaginary rectangle, and consequently any direct connection between it and (a), which are missing in Latin teaching strategy to non-Indo-European language speakers in South Africa.

This does not imply that Latin should be taught through the vernacular. In an African context use of non-mother tongue as a teaching medium is (as shown above) the norm. Attempts to foster vernacular education in South Africa are resented and there are many arguments against further ghettoisation of black education. Just as, politically, the elusive ideal is for the New South Africa to be non-racial rather than multiracial, so the didactic ideal is elusive: a virtually non-linguistic approach to Latin teaching, that is, practical exploitation of students' multilinguality in an attempt to reach students' level of non-verbal conceptualisation (or image-formation) as postulated by Chomsky and the generativists.<sup>43</sup> Effective contrastive analysis, showing similarities and differences between the Latin and African language systems, will help students to understand and master the grammatical code on which university Latin teaching and testing is focused.<sup>44</sup> For Latin grammar teaching in an African context, what should be learnt must clearly be the point of departure in contrastive analysis. Illustration of similarities and contrasts must proceed in various African languages.

<sup>43</sup> C. James, *Contrastive Analysis* (Harlow 1980) 45. Hamers and Blanc [23] 47 quote Vygotsky on creation of a more complex and better-equipped 'mental calculus' in bilinguals who express the same thought in two languages.

<sup>44</sup> D. H. Harding, *The New Pattern of Language Teaching* (London 1967) 51-67.

It is said that both great divergence and virtual convergence of two languages can impede foreign language learning, the first being crucial to language learners as speakers and the latter to hearers.<sup>45</sup> One may add 'or to readers and interpreters'. Consequently, points of similarity between Latin and the African language system should receive initial stress, to form a base for the non-Indo-European first language speaker, before points of contrast are subsequently highlighted. Divergence of opinions indicates that the 'scale of difficulty' is almost impossible to gauge and is seldom an indicator of preferable didactic precedence. 'Difficulty' is perhaps item-specific rather than overall. A different order may be required for encoding than for decoding a language.<sup>46</sup>

Contrastive analysis has many levels. For the purpose of contrast with a so-called 'dead language' the phonological level may be set aside, which leaves the lexical, morphological, syntactic and contextual levels to be dealt with in turn, with increasing complexity and greater pitfalls. Context, which appears as the most complex level, is also involved in every other level. At the lower end of the scale of 'complexity', context involves the familiarity of lexical items within the learners' culture;<sup>47</sup> at the upper end, the legal ambience of Roman Law.

The presumption of one-to-one equivalence of lexical items in two different languages must be dissipated in every fresh learner. At the basic level of foreign language learning it is not a very serious issue. Approximate verbal equivalents for words may be given by means of elaborations or circumlocutions. When vocabulary is presented in context, either contrast or similarity between contextual usage can pinpoint 'meaning' in the target language.<sup>48</sup> Translators engaged on a multilingual vocabulary for a South

---

<sup>45</sup> Quoted by James [43] 191 from G. Nickel and K. H. Wagner, 'Contrastive Linguistics and Language Teaching', *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 6.3 (1968) 233-55.

<sup>46</sup> James [43] 188.

<sup>47</sup> Professor A.-J. Töttemeyer, Acting Head of the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Namibia, tells of the difficulty experienced by some of her librarianship students with cataloguing topics such as 'statues', 'ballet' and 'Rembrandt van Rhyn', which are either totally unfamiliar or, in the last case, known only in an applied form such as a cigarette brand.

<sup>48</sup> J. P. Louw, 'Words and Meanings: A Semantic Problem', *Akroterion* 34.3/4 (1989) 238-43. Information is stored either in verbal form (*logogens*) or as imagery (*imagens*). Bilinguals probably combine two verbal systems interconnected with imagery at the referential level. Dual coding may also stem from a common semantic memory, fed by two separate verbal channels (Hamers and Blanc [23] 102-05). Overlapping of these systems in

African edition of Nepos' *Vita Hannibalis* point out that some words require circumlocution and others need translation into a different part of speech. Because the African language system is adnominal in its syntactic structure and Latin is largely adverbial, the functional appearance of conceptual equivalents often differs.<sup>49</sup>

Morphological and syntactic levels can scarcely be separated in any effective Latin teaching. The interrelation of the two levels influences students' perceptions of each when contrasting two language systems. On the morphological level Latin and the African language system appear superficially to be strikingly similar: both make use of inflection to indicate changes in meaning, syntax, aspect and mood. The learner may initially conclude that the greatest point of contrast is that Latin inflects word endings, whereas agglutinative prefixes predominate in the African language system. This morphological contrast is, however, merely superficial; more importantly, in Latin the verb is the focal or 'growth' point in a sentence, whereas in the African language system syntax is regulated by nominal connection.<sup>50</sup> This syntactic contrast must form the basis of contrastive teaching of Latin grammar and grammatical terminology.

Speakers aware of the so-called 'universal rules' of their own language will recognize these rules in another language.<sup>51</sup> Native speakers are often unaware of them in their own mother tongue and must therefore be trained to see them at work in familiar syntactic structures.<sup>52</sup> Ideally students should be made aware of either similarity or contrast between Latin structure and the structure of their mother tongue, without intermediation of yet another structure in another language. The teaching language should act only as the means of communication between teacher and student. In practice the best one can hope for is that both learner and teacher will be aware that there are similarities and differences. A Latin teacher can make students more linguistically aware by asking them to think of the corresponding structure

---

multilinguals should enhance verbal memory in the target language.

<sup>49</sup> Similar divergence between Russian and Hungarian is obviated by using newspapers as texts for teaching Russian in Hungary because of the idiosyncratic, adnominal nature of traditional journalistic style (Ferenczy [35]). The Latin teacher cannot do this and must use approximate lexical equivalents.

<sup>50</sup> Such confusion resulted in the description of African languages by means of 'Bantuized Latin-English terms'; this is criticized by Doke [12] 191.

<sup>51</sup> R. D. Gumb, *Rule-Governed Linguistic Behavior* (The Hague 1972) 17-23.

<sup>52</sup> Kumalo [6]. Cf. D. S. Gxilishe, 'The Case for Grammar Instruction in Second Language Acquisition Research: A Paradox', *Xhosa Newsletter* 10 (1988) 1-7.

in their mother tongue when a new structure is introduced.

At the contextual level contrasts in idiom may be illustrated as they arise, but these contrasts are minor, once the learner has mastered the difference in focus between the two systems, as mediated by whatever modern Indo-European language is used as the teaching medium. English and Afrikaans have far fewer inflectional forms, but the genius of the two languages lies closer to that of Latin in the sense that their verbal focus is paramount, with the addition of word order as a determinant of meaning.

Frequency is a decisive factor in choice of material. Low-frequency forms and constructions have in the past made up too large a proportion of Latin teaching syllabi: in the limited time of a compulsory one-year university Latin course only the most frequent forms and syntactic usages should receive attention. Here another modern teaching strategy comes into play: error analysis will show common problems of non-Indo-European home language speakers (as opposed to those problems common to all) that require different remedial strategies.<sup>53</sup> The existence of idiosyncratic errors implies interference of the student's mother tongue, an assumption that is often contested. Some research appears to indicate that all foreign language learners make similar mistakes, related to the developmental stage in the learning process.<sup>54</sup> This negates the concept of 'interference'. Yet Latin teachers can attest to the observably 'Germanic' word order in English of Afrikaans-speaking students and obvious 'mother-tongue interference' when both language groups apply word-order rules to decipher Latin sentences.<sup>55</sup>

### *Practical Application of This Research*

Theoretical study should relate to practice, that is, to both the normal and the remedial teaching strategies of a particular educational institution. At the University of Stellenbosch pioneering research in efficient Latin teaching was initiated by the late Professors Smuts and Bruwer and since then has been

---

<sup>53</sup> Contrastive linguistics predict areas of learning difficulty. Error analysis examines problems after they occur. There is a low correlation between predictions about students' perception of difficulty and errors actually occurring (W. Nemser, 'Problems and Prospects in Contrastive Linguistics', in Telegdi [34] 99-111.

<sup>54</sup> Nemser [53] 104-11.

<sup>55</sup> Compare J. Wulfek *et al.*, 'Sentence Interpretation Strategies in Healthy and Aphasic Bilingual Adults', in Vaid [35] 199-219.

perfected by a team of Latinists.<sup>56</sup> A system of computer-aided Latin learning (CALL) programmes was initiated. It is now in its fifth year of implementation. Students using the system are consistently more effective than those who do not.<sup>57</sup> Perhaps they simply work harder, but this observation seems consistent with some psycholinguistic research that shows computer aid involving the right hand ('creative') side of the brain, which is apparently also important in second and third language acquisition in adults.<sup>58</sup>

It is hoped eventually to adapt these CALL programmes to include contrastive material in the various African languages. Contrastive research should therefore ideally be set out in such a way that it will complement existing CALL material.<sup>59</sup> On a simpler level the provision in the computer-aided learning context of multilingual word lists is proposed. Such lists must offer equivalents for the most frequent Latin words without which no student can make sense of even the simplest passage of legal Latin.<sup>60</sup> An experimental list has already been instituted within the extant CALL programme at Stellenbosch. As yet there is no statistical evidence of the efficacy of these word lists for linking the Latin material to be learned to images existing at students' conceptual level; even anecdotal evidence is at present meagre. Some non-Xhosa-speakers consciously choose the 'multilingual' mode when practising vocabulary, apparently because it gives a 'new dimension' to what they are learning. An Owambo-speaking Namibian student presently enrolled avers that his home language helps him in Latin learning, as he can discern similarities in the systems of the two languages. When in class reference is made to similarities between Latin and Xhosa (in the gradation of demonstratives, for instance) this student's face lights up with interest. Even the Afrikaans and English speakers, who predominate at this stage, evince great interest in the existence of different language systems and seem to enjoy having parallels demonstrated. Some

---

<sup>56</sup> J. M. Claassen, 'Experiments in the Teaching of Introductory Latin at University Level', *SA Journal for Higher Education* 2.1 (1988) 35-40.

<sup>57</sup> J. M. Claassen, 'The Design of Computer Software for Learning Latin', *Per Linguam* 7.1 (1991) 3-24.

<sup>58</sup> See P. Chary, 'Aphasia in a Multilingual Society: A Preliminary Study', in Vaid [35] 183-97.

<sup>59</sup> J. M. Claassen, 'The Use of the Microcomputer as an Aid in Students' Understanding of Latin Language and Literature in a Multilingual Society', *Per Linguam* 5.1 (1989) 33-41.

<sup>60</sup> One-to-one equation of meaning and word-for-word translation equivalents must be treated with circumspection.

English speakers say that they prefer to work in Afrikaans once they have become familiar with the Afrikaans grammatical terminology. One student explained that in 'English First Language' at school he did not learn any grammar. So formal grammar as a linguistic codification is being learned as a new system and then being applied to students' extant language systems.

Education is a pragmatic discipline that relies largely on trial-and-error methods. It sometimes strays into error through the application of fallacious or conflicting theories. The theories postulated above are still purely hypothetical. In correspondence with a Latin teacher from the famous Kamuzu Academy in Malawi on the topic of language medium, I was told that a particularly articulate pupil once explained that she simply had 'two domains' within her thought—Shona and English—and that she located Latin within her 'English domain'.<sup>61</sup> This makes nonsense of the postulation of the mother-tongue as the essential 'fourth corner' in the 'Latin learning rectangle,' but in the case of this pupil, further questioning would arguably have shown her to be a so-called co-ordinate bilingual, whose 'mother tongue' is Shona-English bilingualism, rather than compound, with English bedded over a Shona base. As a co-ordinate bilingual (English-Afrikaans) whose baby years were spent thinking that English was a women's language and Afrikaans a men's language, I find that my own perception of Latin has entered the specific-language-free conceptual level. I experienced medium crossover at the seventh school year and, being bilingual, I found movement from the first medium (English) to the second (Afrikaans) easy. Having subsequently been taught Latin through the medium of Afrikaans, I now have no difficulty in translating the language or its grammatical descriptions into either language.

If this paper does no more than alert fellow Latinists to the complexity of language learning processes and their obligation to exploit their students' extant bilinguality in a positive way, it will have achieved its major purpose. Admittedly much more remains to be done.

---

<sup>61</sup> Although frequently touted (e.g., Chary [58] 197f.), a difference between 'co-ordinate' (two domains) and 'compound' (interdependent) bilingualism has not been proved (Hakuta [17] 95-98).

## REVIEW ARTICLE

*Scholia* publishes solicited and occasionally unsolicited review articles. Review articles to be considered for publication should be directed to the Reviews Editor, *Scholia*.

Christine G. Perkell, *The Poet's Truth: A Study of the Poet in Virgil's Georgics*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989. Pp. xi + 210. ISBN 0-520-066323-6. US\$30.

Peter Davis

Department of Classics, University of Tasmania  
Hobart, Tasmania 7001, Australia

The late 1970s and the 1980s witnessed a major revival of critical interest in Virgil's *Georgics*. Whereas in the 1960s it seemed to Williams that 'very broadly one may say that the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* must be taken on eighteenth-century terms or not at all',<sup>1</sup> in the '70s and '80s the *Georgics* (and the *Eclogues* for that matter) were decisively reclaimed for twentieth century readers and readings. Although Wilkinson could rightly claim that his book was the first in English to be devoted to this poem alone,<sup>2</sup> he largely refrained from interpretation. For Wilkinson the choice of Orpheus to conclude the poem remained 'a matter for speculation'<sup>3</sup> and speculation was something that he eschewed. The '70s and '80s, by contrast, saw the appearance of Boyle's collection of articles devoted to the poem,<sup>4</sup> of the books of Miles<sup>5</sup> and Putnam<sup>6</sup> and the commentaries of Mynors<sup>7</sup> and Thomas.<sup>8</sup> It is in this context of renewed interest and understanding that Perkell's book needs to be understood. Like other contemporary critics of the poem, she views the *Georgics* not so much as a versified agricultural handbook, but as a

---

<sup>1</sup> R. Williams, 'Changing Attitudes to Virgil' in D. Dudley (ed.) *Virgil* (London 1969) 128.

<sup>2</sup> L. Wilkinson, *The Georgics of Virgil* (Cambridge 1969).

<sup>3</sup> Wilkinson [2] 120.

<sup>4</sup> A. Boyle, *Virgil's Ascræan Song* (Melbourne 1979).

<sup>5</sup> G. Miles, *Virgil's Georgics: A New Interpretation* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1980).

<sup>6</sup> M. Putnam, *Virgil's Poem of the Earth* (Princeton 1979).

<sup>7</sup> R. Mynors, *Virgil: Georgics* (Oxford 1990).

<sup>8</sup> R. Thomas, *Virgil: Georgics* (Cambridge 1988).

meditation upon the moral and political dilemmas confronting Virgil's generation. Perkell's view of the poem has much in common with those of the critics I have just named. On the other hand, she comes to the poem with her own distinctive point of view.

Perkell's introduction begins with Virgil's biography and contemporary conditions, in particular the civil wars. She then goes on to discuss a number of important methodological issues, the relationship between the *Georgics* and earlier texts, different critical responses to the poem in the twentieth century, and the poem's ambiguity. Perkell has important and interesting things to say on all these questions but I shall concentrate on her discussion of methodology.

Unlike many critics, Perkell is led by her account of Virgil's life and times to state that 'one might well suppose that experience of such unstable times and bloody events would result in a deeply pessimistic vision, in fear of loss, and in anxiety for the future' (p. 3). Such a conclusion is not only sensible, but, given the usual facile conclusions drawn from the 'facts' of Virgil's life, refreshing.

Perkell then discusses the widely varying critical responses to the *Aeneid*, contrasting the contemporary (and largely American)<sup>9</sup> tendency to emphasise the 'costs of victory' and 'the emotional and moral failures of Aeneas' with the earlier (and largely European) stress on 'the awesome achievement that Rome represents' (p. 4). With these varied readings she associates particular verses. With the 'American' view she associates *sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt* (1.462) and with the 'European' view *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* (1.33). Perkell then argues that 'the critical challenge for readers of the *Aeneid* must be to incorporate both of these verses and what they suggest about the poem into a truer vision of what the poem does. Since Virgil wrote both these verses, to privilege one to the exclusion of the other is surely to falsify the poem'.<sup>10</sup> This argument seems to me fundamentally flawed. It is possible to argue that one verse (or indeed one passage) in a poem should be privileged over another. When Anchises presents a particular view of the nature of Rome's achievements (6.756-846) and links that with a command to Aeneas to act in certain ways (6.847-853) and when Aeneas conspicuously fails to act in accordance with that command, for he spares not one single suppliant during the war in Italy (and note that Turnus, in particular, quite explicitly fits the category of a *subiectus*, for he is both *humilis* and *supplex* in 12.930), then the reader is entitled to doubt the value and validity of Anchises' view of the nature of Rome's achievements. Experience as presented by

---

<sup>9</sup> But not only American. For example, A. Boyle's *The Chaonian Dove: Studies in the Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid of Virgil* (Leiden 1986), which presents the most pessimistic of all interpretations of the *Aeneid* (Boyle speaks of 'the *Aeneid*'s adamantine pessimism'), was written when the author resided in Australia. See also R. Lyne, *Further Voices in Virgil's Aeneid* (Oxford 1987).

<sup>10</sup> We might note that *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* is by no means inconsistent with emphasis on 'the costs of victory'.

the poet must be privileged over interpretations suggested by the poem's characters. Hence, I do not agree that 'there is, in fact, no "solution" to the *Aeneid*, for there is no resolution of its conflicts' (p. 7). Aeneas' behaviour, in my view, gives the lie to Anchises' injunctions. But if such an approach fails to work for the *Aeneid*, it does not follow that it fails to work for the *Georgics*. Indeed I think it suits the poem very well. Perkell's view that 'the *Georgics* is a deliberately ambiguous poem' (p. 17) seems to me correct.

Chapter 1 is entitled 'The Figure of the Poet'. Perkell begins by relating the *Georgic* poet to Orpheus and the farmer to Aristaeus. She points out that each pair has 'different values, aspirations, and sensibilities' (p. 26) and summarises these as follows: 'while, overall, the farmer's relationship to nature is one of domination and control in which he compels nature to ends that are productive to man, the poet's relationship to nature is characterized by harmony, song, and play' (pp. 26f.). The contrast is, moreover, 'a constitutive polarity of the text and central to its meaning' (p. 27).

Perkell begins by examining the farmer. The farmer is, naturally enough, 'the normative figure in a georgic poem'. He also represents Man and, more specifically, Roman man. The farmer's symbolic significance is underlined, Perkell points out, by Virgil's use of certain unrealistic details (p. 28f.). In particular, Virgil makes no mention of the importance of slavery in contemporary agriculture and no reference to the profit motive: 'the effect of the anachronistic representation of the farmer, to the degree that it is of no practical use, is precisely to support the paradigmatic, symbolic value of the farmer as an individual, facing on his own the larger terms and conditions of mortal experience' (p. 29). This is an important observation and a useful counter to the older view that the *Georgics* is a didactic poem in the conventional sense.

Like all contemporary commentators on the *Georgics*, Perkell is well aware of the military metaphor which pervades Virgil's description of the farmer's work. What is distinctive about her discussion is her interpretation of the motif: 'My thesis is that the military activity of the farmer, analogous as it is to war, suggests the moral ambiguity and tension of the human condition as it is epitomized in the farmer's experience, where material progress is pitted against humane value in man's relationship both to nature and other men' (p. 37). The ambiguity arises because 'despite its characteristic military quality, it is also sometimes sustaining' (p. 37). There is an ambivalence about the farmer's work in the *Georgics*. In book 1 the farmer is presented overwhelmingly as engaged in some kind of military activity. There is very little emphasis on the helpful or productive side of the farmer's work. The farmer is presented as a soldier and the book climaxes with soldiery in action, with Rome's civil wars. It is in book 2 that we are presented with a different aspect. It is here that Virgil stresses the fruitful side of the farmer's activities and this book climaxes with an idealised vision of country life. Virgil's vision of the farmer is indeed fundamentally ambiguous.

For Perkell the poet represents the antithesis of the farmer: 'the poet values

useless song, is in harmony with nature and even nurtured by it' (p. 45). He is inclined to 'gratuitous and selfless pity' (p. 46), an emotion the farmer cannot afford to indulge. This pity ennobles the poet but also makes his work negligible in the political world. This much we can agree with. But Perkell goes on to argue that 'the gratification that pity provides to the pitier is cheap and easy, almost a kind of play' (p. 55). To prove this she cites Virgil's use of *ludere* at 4.565: *carmina qui lusi pastorum*. But *ludere* here has nothing to do with pity and everything to do with the pose adopted by neoteric and pastoral poets.<sup>11</sup> The case is hardly strengthened by citing Euripides and Augustine.

Perkell's discussion of Aristaeus and the technique of *bougonia* is particularly valuable. She argues convincingly that for the ancients '*bougonia* is not a precept of verified and routine value' and applies Buchner's rule that 'the less the practical value of *praeceptum*, the greater is its symbolic value' (p. 75). Few will doubt that *bougonia* is intended to be of symbolic significance. What is important then is Perkell's interpretation of that significance. Whereas others see implications of resurrection or rebirth, she rightly sees 'an exchange of death for life' (p. 76). After all *bougonia* does not restore life to the hive. Rather, it creates a new one. Moreover, it entails the destruction of a calf by particularly repulsive means. This enables Perkell to argue that Aristaeus 'embodies the moral ambiguity of the Iron Age towards nature and other men' (p. 80). By contrast, Orpheus' restoration of Eurydice, had it succeeded, would have represented a genuine resurrection of a unique individual. Orpheus desires Eurydice, not just a new wife. His achievement is, however, spoiled by his own *dementia* (488). Both Aristaeus and Orpheus are flawed human beings.

Chapter 2 is entitled 'The Poet's Vision'. Perkell begins with the concept of the golden age which she views (rightly, I think) as a means of focusing 'the reader's attention upon the disparity between the present, as the poet sees it, and an ideal vision of alternative moral values' (p. 90) and not as a programme for Roman renewal. Virgil's first account of the golden age (though Virgil does not use the term) occurs at 1.125ff. That era is defined both in its own terms (absence of agriculture, absence of private property, primitive communism, natural abundance) and by contrast with the subsequent Jovian age (serpents became poisonous, wolves ravenous, the sea restive, leaves honeyless, fire hidden and wine absent from flowing rivers). Virgil's description makes it plain that not only was the earlier period morally superior to that of Jupiter, but that Jupiter's intervention has brought about the present adversarial relationship between man and nature (p. 97). It is not surprising then that Perkell questions the god's benevolence (p. 96, n. 12).

In her discussion of some of the most optimistic passages in the poem, the praises of Italy, spring and country life (all of which are contained in book 2),

<sup>11</sup> For this motif in the *Eclogues* see 1.10; 6.1, 19, 28; 7.17; 9.39. For neoteric self-deprecation cf. Cat. 1 (did the poet really consider his verses to be *nugae*?). For Catullan poetic play see 50.2, 5.

Perkell emphasises their ambivalence towards Roman values. She notes the reference to Italy's cities in the *Laudes Italiae* (2.155ff.) and links that with the denunciation of city life at the book's close (2.503ff.) and the description of the sea's protestation at the construction of the Portus Julius and the martial qualities of the Italian peoples. It is in the praise of country life, however, that Virgil's ambivalence is most plain. Virgil's ambivalence is underlined by reference to the departure of Justice from this world (2.473f.) and by the allusion to Romulus and Remus (2.533), whose fraternal strife was for the Romans an archetype of civil war.

In books 3 and 4 concern with the golden age continues. *Georgics* 3, the grimmest of all the poem's books, may seem a strange place to seek descriptions of the golden age, but in the descriptions of the life of the Scythians and of the Noric plague we find perversions of the ideal, for the Scythians lead a life of leisure, but one that is devoid of feeling for fellow creatures, while the plague produces a kind of mock golden age. By contrast, in book 4 we find not travesties of, but approximations to the golden age. Perkell considers the society of bees and the old man of Tarentum. The bees require critical attention firstly, because it was once customary to see in them and their renewal a model for Octavian's regeneration of the Roman republic and, secondly, because Virgil devotes more space to them than we might expect in a truly didactic work. That Virgil has more than apiculture in mind is plain from the fact that he describes the bees in a manner which suggests not only human beings in general (4.3ff.), but Romans in particular (43, 155, 201). But Perkell rightly stresses those aspects of the bees' society which make it impossible to view them as possible or even desirable paradigms for Roman renewal. Firstly they are militaristic little creatures and secondly they lack sexual desire. The Corycian gardener, on the other hand, is decidedly human. For Perkell he represents 'a poetic ideal' (p. 131); he is a 'Golden Age figure' (p. 132). This is an attractive notion, for Virgil does place great stress on the beauty which results from the gardener's work. On the other hand, to assert that 'in growing flowers, the epitome of superfluous beauty, the gardener pursues (like the poet) an aesthetic and spiritual ideal that ignores material function or profit' (p. 132) is to go too far. Given that the gardener grows vegetables, herbs and fruit (4.120ff., 134) as well as producing honey (4.139ff.), and given that he actually lives off his few acres (*seraque reuertens / nocte domum dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis*, 4.133f.), one can hardly say that the purpose of his work is solely aesthetic, that he ignores 'material function' entirely. Perkell wishes to view the old man as a foil to both Orpheus and Aristaeus. The view that I am advancing actually suits her case better than her own, for in my view the old man combines the best qualities of both. He is concerned with both beauty and productivity, but he lacks Aristaeus' heroic aspirations and Orpheus' passion.

The third and final chapter bears the same title as the book itself: 'The Poet's Truth'. Here Perkell argues that 'there is a tension within the poem, most clearly reflected in the poem's final book, between two types of knowledge and value. The one is materially useful and real, the farmer's knowledge. . . . The other

knowledge, the poet's, is not aimed at material usefulness, but, embodied in myth and mystery, it adumbrates a vision of the quality of human experience' (p. 139). This is perhaps the most original portion of Perkell's book. She sees *bougonia* as emblematic of this dichotomy: 'the *bougonia* is unreal but true. The carcass of a calf, no matter how treated, will not yield bees; but *bougonia* as an image, as a representation of the poet's vision of Iron Age existence - with its message of the brutality of success, of the cost of survival, of the pathos of loss - is true and thus reveals the limitations of the merely real' (p. 140). Perkell advances her thesis by restating her earlier argument concerning *bougonia*, namely, that the ancients were sceptical about the process and that we should therefore view it symbolically. She then turns to the prayers which open and close book 1. By asserting the need for prayer and by praying, Virgil acknowledges 'the reality that technology is not, in fact, in complete control' (p. 149). Next comes an account of Virgil's scientific explanations which aims to demonstrate 'the primacy of mystery and the inadequacy of *praecepta*' (p. 153). In particular she cites the cases of the portents which followed Caesar's death and the plague in Noricum. The signs associated with these events are unique and hence incapable of rational explanation. Such signs have no scientific value. Virgil also suggests the inadequacy of the scientific method by his use of plural causes. Lucretius regularly suggests alternative causes for unusual phenomena, but Virgil, argues Perkell, differs in that he suggests contradictory causes. Indeed, she says, Virgil employs vagueness as a means of reducing our confidence in scientific method 'by illuminating the pervasiveness of mystery in our experience' (p. 172). This portion of the argument I find implausible. Virgil may not profess to know the physical causes of certain phenomena, but he does have the courage to offer physical explanations. He does not simply throw up his hands in despair and declare the phenomena incapable of all explanation. To be contrasted with science is myth. Myth is used both in connection with natural events and as a model of human experience. Myth may be in one sense false but it is the poet's primary medium for addressing the mysteries of existence. Whatever the truth concerning Virgil's views of the value of science, there can be no doubt that it is through myth that Virgil confronts us most directly and most powerfully with the dilemmas of human existence. The issues dealt with indirectly in the first three and a half books are made pressing and concrete when presented in the persons of Aristaeus, Orpheus and Eurydice.

This is a short book. It will by no means revolutionise our understanding of the *Georgics*, but it does make a valuable contribution to a continuing debate.

## REVIEWS

*Scholia* publishes solicited and unsolicited short reviews. Short reviews to be considered for publication should be directed to the Reviews Editor, *Scholia*.

Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Roman Art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. Pp. 304, incl. 31 colour plates, 310 black and white plates, 22 maps and plans, 9 figure drawings and 1 family tree. ISBN 0-521-40297-2. UK£19.95.

Those who have attempted recently to teach an introductory course in Roman art have soon realised that there was a lack of an up-to-date, lucid, basic, wide-ranging and inexpensive introductory text that communicates the beauty, grandeur, exquisiteness and meaning of Roman art. The best (in my opinion) have been Martin Henig's *A Handbook of Roman Art* (Ithaca 1983), Donald Strong's *Roman Art* (New York 1976; repr. 1988) and Mortimer Wheeler's *Roman Art and Architecture* (New York 1964). Despite their many excellent points, these introductory books labour under various disadvantages. Strong's book is dense and devoted almost solely to sculpture; Henig focuses mainly on the decorative arts; and Wheeler's text, long regarded as standard, is dated. After reading in the Ramages' preface that their book 'is intended first and foremost for students and readers who are launching into the study of Roman art perhaps for the first time' (p. 9), I was encouraged to expect that this text would meet a critical need by fulfilling its stated purpose. I was not to be disappointed.

There is an introduction, followed by twelve chapters with broad coverage. Like most texts on Roman art, the Ramages take us chronologically through periods and genres. The authors present a selection of objects from all over the Empire and from the time of the Villanovans and Etruscans (1000-200 BC) to Constantine (AD 307-337) and beyond. The focus of this text is on the standard subjects of architecture, wall painting, and sculpture, but there is also treatment of such diverse topics as mosaics, stucco, pottery, the luxury arts, coins and even town planning. Included in the material that follows the text are lists of Roman emperors and ancient authors, a glossary and a select bibliography divided according to the book's chapters.

The volume is most handsomely produced. The text, with its clear and concise expression, is very readable and therefore ideal for an introductory text. There is throughout a consistently high quality in the descriptions of individual genres and objects that makes the book worthwhile reading as an introduction to

Roman art. There are few disappointments with this book. The numerous illustrations, broad categories treated and fundamental nature of the text mean that there is not much space to devote to a discussion of the *intellectual* achievements of Roman art (e.g., the complexities of narrative relief and concrete architecture), but given the intended audience, this is not necessarily a flaw and may even be a plus. Some supplementation of the text will inevitably be required, but the central monuments and artefacts are covered at least in their basic form. Although the book will not satisfy the serious scholar except as an introductory teaching text, this seems to be precisely its main aim.

As a textbook, the criticism certainly cannot be levelled that it lacks a sufficient number of illustrations. The book is lavishly illustrated: packed into its 304 pages are 373 illustrations, many more than in Henig (246 illus. in 288 pp.), Strong (265 illus. in 197 pp.) and Wheeler (215 illus. in 250 pp.). The photographs, maps and drawings, ranging in size from the large to the very small, are uniformly of the highest quality. Many photographs are bright and large; the focus and contrast of even the smallest ones merit praise.

This is the best introductory work on Roman art on the market. As for text adoption, especially in North America, the United Kingdom and Australasia, this book should prove to be the standard for years to come. If monetary constraints are a problem and students can afford only one text, I recommend this one. The publishers should consider producing a soft cover version, which would bring it within reach of more students.

William J. Dominik

*University of Natal, Durban*

Jan Scholtemeijer and Paul Haase, *Legal Latin: A Basic Course*. Pretoria and Cape Town: Academica Press, 1990. Pp. ix + 219. ISBN 0-86874-364-X. R34.

This is a traditional grammar book designed 'to teach basic Latin grammar and reading skills in one year to law students who do not have school Latin' (p. ix). It is not intended to be a course for self-study but for study under guidance, although the explanations given in many of the sections are thorough enough for students to understand by themselves.

Each of the forty-four lessons deals with specific aspects of Latin grammar, accompanied by a short vocabulary and sets of exercises. Exercises A-C concentrate on the grammar and vocabulary of the chapter concerned, while Exercise D revises earlier lessons. Exercise E, which begins from Lesson 33, consists of extracts from Gaius's *Institutes*. There is a selection of longer passages from Gaius in the appendices and a list of common Latin expressions that the aspiring law student will find very useful. The remaining appendices consist of conspectuses of verb conjugations and noun declensions, a list of Latin numerals, a list of Latin prefixes and their meanings, a Latin index and a selective grammati-

cal index. The conspectuses are rather brief and too concentrated. If the entire conjugation of each verb had been set out separately, the tables would be easier for students to decipher.

The order of grammar and constructions to be learnt is rather surprising. The important irregular verbs are only introduced well over half way through the course and the gerund and gerundive would have been better explained in the same or consecutive chapters. The imperative and vocative, two relatively simple constructions, are only explained in the final chapters after the student has already had to deal with the far more difficult concept of the subjunctive. The grammar is generally well explained and sufficient examples are given of the various constructions. An exception to this is the chapter on the ablative absolute, which shows how to recognise and translate the construction but does not explain why and when it is used. The gerundive could also have been dealt with more clearly and concisely. The course as a whole is comprehensive and thorough, if rather unstimulating. A selection of passages for translation from other legal writers or relevant passages from the historians would have provided some variety for the student. However, the work is generally well-suited to the law student. Explanations of Roman law are given where necessary and both vocabulary and examples keep to relevant legal issues.

Lesley A. Dickson

*University of Natal, Durban  
University of South Africa*

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*Books for review should be sent to the Reviews Editor, Scholia.*

Michael Cheilik and Anthony Inguanzo, *Ancient History*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991. Pp. viii + 249. ISBN 0-06-467119-4. US\$10.95.

John Dillon and Jackson Hershbell (edd. and trr.), *Iamblichus: On the Pythagorean Way of Life: Text, Translation and Notes*. Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1991. Pp. ix + 285. ISBN 1-55540-523-1. US\$29.95.

Richard J. Evans, *A Short History of Greece: 1600-336 BC*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1992. Pp. ix + 85. ISBN 0-636-01638-2. R23.

Walther Kirchner, *Western Civilization to 1500*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991. Pp. x + 310. ISBN 0-06-467101-X. US\$9.95.

Walther Kirchner, *Western Civilization from 1500*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991. Pp. v + 378. ISBN 0-06-467102-X. US\$9.95.

Bryna E. Lewis (tr.), *Latin Literature for Contemporary Readers: An Anthology of Latin Prose and Verse Translated into English with an Introduction and Notes*. Port Elizabeth: University of Port Elizabeth Press, 1992. Pp. xv + 159. ISBN 0-86988-493-X. R22.50.

Christine G. Perkell, *The Poet's Truth: A Study of the Poet in Virgil's Georgics*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989. Pp. xi + 210. ISBN 0-520-06323-6. US\$30.

Jan Scholtemeijer and P. Haase, *Legal Latin: A Basic Course*. Pretoria and Cape Town: Academica Press, 1990. Pp. ix + 219. ISBN 0-86874-364-X. R34.

A. V. van Stekelenburg (ed.), *De Iure: Romeinse Regstekste met Kommentaar*. Pretoria and Cape Town: Academica Press, 1991. Pp. vi + 160. ISBN 0-86874-404-2. R45.

- D. H. van Zyl, *Cicero's Legal Philosophy*. Roodepoort: Digma Publications, 1986. Pp. x + 116. ISBN 0-86984-645-0. R24.
- D. H. van Zyl, *Justice and Equity in Cicero: A Critical Evaluation in Contextual Perspective*. Pretoria and Cape Town: Academica Press, 1991. Pp. vii + 317. ISBN 0-86874-399-2. R88.
- D. H. van Zyl, *Justice and Equity in Greek and Roman Legal Thought*. Pretoria and Cape Town: Academica Press, 1991. Pp. ix + 177. ISBN 0-86874-423-9. R66.

# UNIVERSITY OF NATAL ROMAN STUDIES CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Durban, South Africa  
Wednesday, 8th July to Friday, 10th July 1992

*Organisers: W. J. Dominik and J. L. Hilton*

## SESSION 1 ON HISTORY, M. LAMBERT, CHAIR

ROMAN AGE LAWS AND THE REPUBLICAN *CURSUS HONORUM*  
R. J. Evans, University of South Africa

What were the regulations governing a young man's entry into a political career, and what qualifications was he actually obliged to obtain before he could aspire to the highest magistracies of the *res publica*? The structure of the *cursus honorum* was fixed for all time by Augustus shortly after 27 BC, and prior to this date Sulla's *leges Corneliae* had stipulated certain requirements for a political career at Rome. Despite the fact that the *lex Villia annalis* appears to have enforced provisions for holding public office, there is evidence to suggest that the *cursus* which existed before Sulla's dictatorship was very much more flexible. Although the traditional offices were available to would-be politicians who desired them, it may be argued that many, in fact, avoided all but the most senior and prestigious positions. Indeed, it seems to have mattered less what offices were held than whether a Roman politician was ultimately successful.

MUNICIPAL ÉLITES IN THE ROMAN WORLD AND OUTSIDE  
M. Kleijwegt, University of South Africa

Every Roman city possessed a municipal council to administer local politics. Each year four to six magistrates were elected who were responsible for jurisdiction, the food supply and finances. Outside Italy, the Roman government relied heavily on municipal élites for matters of taxation, the upkeep of roads and the billeting of troops. *In concreto*, the towns represented a vital part in the machinery of state. It is more than a matter of coincidence that when the Roman empire was slowly crumbling away, the town councils are said to have been experiencing a period of crisis.

Up until now municipal élites in the Roman empire have not been studied in

detail. Possibly, the cause for this must be sought in the fact that ancient literary sources—still the primary source for the majority of us—are particularly unhelpful in giving information on municipal affairs. A man like Tacitus was to a large extent only interested in imperial affairs. The most informative source on municipal élites is provided by epigraphy. Unfortunately, epigraphists are not always able ancient historians. Work on municipal élites, as I see it, should move in two directions. Firstly, one should collect all the evidence available and digest from this some basic aspects of municipal élites in the ancient world. Secondly, one should choose a sociological approach and establish a paradigm for élite-behaviour. This should be tested against the data we have for the ancient world and early modern Europe. Scholars on the latter period have provided us with many excellent monographs on individual cities. Thus, what is not known for the ancient world can be tested against a similar background in the same region: the Mediterranean world.

POPULAR AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN  
*AFRICA PROCONSULARIS* IN THE SECOND CENTURY AD  
 F. Opeku, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

To be published in *Scholias* ns Vol. 2 (1993).

THE CONCEPT OF 'CLASS' AND  
 THE SOCIETY OF THE EARLY ROMAN EMPIRE  
 H. Szesnat, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg

The basic thesis of this paper is that, despite the claims of Finley and others, a Marxist concept of class (as opposed to *ordo* and/or status) can be highly useful for the analysis of the early Roman empire, provided that its purpose is recognised. Different sociological concepts of class are briefly described in order to point to an important misunderstanding by many critics of the Marxist class concept: it is not a gradational concept equalling the notion of social stratification (as are those of, for instance, Alföldy and Finley), but rather is a relational concept. Then a Marxist-oriented, relational class concept is developed that helps to describe and explain essential socio-economic inequalities within the society of the early Roman empire. Following the work of de Ste Croix, it is my contention that the basic distinction between classes of the early Roman empire rests on the ownership and control of land; thus the two basic groups of classes can be called 'propertied' and 'non-propertied'. However, legal, occupational, labour, and other aspects are not ignored within this concept of class. The definition and conceptual clarification of sub-classes within the propertied and non-propertied classes remains problematic; further work is needed in this field.

## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN: ROLE REVERSAL AND POWER-BROKERS IN ROMAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

M. De Marre, University of South Africa

Women were undoubtedly involved in political life from whenever politics began at Rome to the end of the empire in the west and, indeed, to the ultimate collapse of Byzantine civilisation. The role of politicised women was, however, very seldom overt or easily identified. Moreover, female roles were affected, in differing degrees, by the prejudices of writers in antiquity who were, for the most part, male.

How far was the position of women in politics distorted by the historian concerned, perhaps, about enhancing the majesty of a masculine dominated Roman society? To what extent may shifting perceptions in female contributions to public affairs, for example, from the regal period to the early principate, be ascertained in the sources? Furthermore, is it possible that the views and beliefs of modern writers and twentieth century preconceptions, especially related to feminism and a male-oriented social framework, have coloured the real facts as found in the source material?

This paper not only examines the various political roles which were assigned to women by Roman historiographers and identifies changes in the way that they were represented by these writers, but also attempts to analyse the process by which current academic trends have produced apparently well-founded hypotheses concerning the functions of dynamic females, but without solid foundation in the sources.

## THE *RES GESTAE* AND THE AUGUSTAN AGE

T. T. Rapke, University of the Witwatersrand

The *Res Gestae divi Augusti* is a unique and a uniquely maltreated document. No other emperor chose to justify or commemorate his career, achievements, and policies in this fashion; historians, both in antiquity and in modern times have either ignored its existence altogether or have made but scant use of its contents.

It is argued that the date of composition was not later than AD 1 and that the *Res Gestae* received very few finishing touches after that date. The few additions and updates that were made were probably penned in AD 14. The comparatively early date for the all but final draft of the document made it an unattractive source for historians in antiquity. It is not a complete record of Augustus' achievement—the unhappy but fascinating years AD 2 to 10 are all but ignored; Tiberius receives even less attention than Gaius Caesar in a work that could have been used, at least in part, to promote his prestige and suitability for the destiny that was so plainly to be his after AD 4. Its overall tone and tendency never quite rise above those which Augustus adopted in his earlier work, the *Autobiography*—explanation, justification, and self-exculpation.

That Augustus chose not to proceed with his *Autobiography* beyond the year

26 BC was a mistake. Despite being even more incomplete than the *Res Gestae*, the *Autobiography* was widely read and, to judge from the number of fragments that appear in an impressive range of ancient writers, much more widely used and quoted than the later, shorter and more accessible work.

## SESSION 2 ON HISTORY, J. L. HILTON, CHAIR

### M. VALERIUS MESSALLA CORVINUS. AN ARISTOCRATIC OPPORTUNIST?

A. Watson, University of Durban-Westville

M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus has been accused by Sir Ronald Syme of being an aristocratic opportunist. While Corvinus' aristocratic status is beyond question, it is the purpose of this paper to defend him against the charge of opportunism. It will attempt to show that Corvinus was not only not opportunistic in his activities and intentions but, on the contrary, was behaving properly in terms of his class; it will also attempt to explain the difference in attitude towards his actions and towards similar actions by contemporaries as being the result of socio-economic bias.

### THE *SATURNALIA* AND THE POLITICS OF RITUAL

M. Lambert, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg

In the light of H.S. Versnel's analysis of the Athenian myth and ritual complex, the *Kronia*, this paper argues that, as a ritual of rebellion, the Roman *Saturnalia* dangerously dissolves the status quo in order to confirm it. The ritual is politically exploited by the ruling class in order to legitimise its continued domination.

### REFLECTIONS ON A MIRROR: POSSIBLE EVIDENCE FOR THE EARLY ORIGIN OF THE CANONICAL VERSION OF THE ROMAN FOUNDATION LEGEND

P. Tennant, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg

A re-examination of a scene engraved on a fourth century BC bronze mirror from Praeneste suggests that the main elements of the Romulus and Remus legend—in particular the role of Mars—may have their roots in an earlier period than is generally assumed.

SOME STATISTICS ON THE  
DECLINE OF THE ROMAN MONUMENTS  
A. V. van Stekelenburg, University of Stellenbosch

The demolishing of Roman buildings for the sake of re-using their material began in earnest in the fourth century AD. Imperial legislation to protect the monuments was largely unsuccessful. Until the end of the Middle Ages the process of destruction went on almost totally unrecorded. A comparison between the *spolia* used in Christian basilicas from the fifth through the thirteenth centuries clearly reveals the increasing inability of the ruins to cope with the demand for material. Statistical calculations applied to the *spolia* columns show a progressive decline in availability of homogeneous material and a similarly increasing use of granite columns resulting from a diminishing supply of marble.

SESSION 3 ON LITERATURE, A. P. BEVIS, CHAIR

*TU . . . ROMANE, MEMENTO (AEN. 6.851FF.):*  
ANCHISES' MORAL INJUNCTION AND HISTORICAL REALITY  
W. J. Dominik, University of Natal, Durban

This paper discusses one of the crucial scenes in the *Aeneid*: Aeneas' passage through the gate of ivory as he ascends to the upper world (6.893ff.). It explores various interpretations that have been offered to 'explain away' the scene in a manner that is appropriate (or at least not detrimental) to the idea that the *Aeneid* is a glorification of the Roman imperial achievement. The significance of the gates scene is manifest when it is examined within the context of the entire *Aeneid* and Vergilian corpus. Its significance is entirely consistent with—indeed essential to—Vergil's themes in the *Aeneid*: the disparity between imperial achievement and human cost; between imperial ideology and practice. The second part of the paper explores the reasons for the various misinterpretations of the gates of sleep passage and the *Aeneid*. It also responds to some of the objections of critics who argue that Augustus never would have supported Vergil and saved his epic if it had borne an anti-imperial message.

DIE SKEPPING VAN ATMOSFEER IN  
VERGILIUS SE *AENEÏS* EN DANTE SE *INFERNO*  
L. F. van Ryneveld, Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat

Published in this volume, pp. 79-84.

THE SINGER, THE SONG, AND THE SONG (OVID, *FASTI* 2.79-118)

M. A. Gosling, University of Natal, Durban

In his tale of Arion and the dolphin, as so often in the *Fasti*, Ovid is almost more concerned with the process of narration than with the narrative itself. Comparison with Herodotus 1.23f. and other sources reveals manipulation both of the narrative and of the reader as recipient of the narrative. Central to Ovid's version of the tale is his concern with the value of poets and poetry, which may be seen as his personal *credo*.

A ROLE REVERSAL IN SILIUS ITALICUS, *PUNICA* 10.605-39

K. O. Matier, University of Durban-Westville

The entry of a great man into the city and the welcome he receives is a traditional *topos* in Greek and Latin literature. The entry of Varro into Rome after the disaster of Cannae is a neat reversal of this theme, possibly suggested by Cicero's portrait of Piso returning from Macedonia like a dishonoured corpse. The flattering portrait of Fabius is in sharp contrast to the negative image of Varro. Although Silius' attitude to Fabius may have been influenced by Plutarch, it is argued that differences between Silius and Livy should be ascribed to poetic originality rather than the use of an annalistic source. The use of similes in Silius, particularly nautical similes, is discussed. This passage shows great narrative skill and psychological insight for which the poet has not received due credit. Feeney is the latest in a long line of critics to savage Silius.

## TACITUS AND LITERARY CRITICISM

M. A. Dirksen, Rand Afrikaans University

The historical works of Tacitus have been the subject of analyses and criticism (both historical and literary) for more than a century. The main tendencies in scholarship are traced from the early commentaries as well as the historical and aesthetic approaches to the recent trend towards theory. The problem of historicism in its various forms and the possible solution which contemporary literary theory offers are discussed. A workable model for the analysis of an historical text is proposed and the advantages of such a method demonstrated by comparing aspects of a traditional analysis with one based on modern theory.

## CICERO'S USE OF NARRATIVE IN HIS PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

J. L. Hilton, University of Natal, Durban

Ancient rhetorical theory in Cicero's time defined *narratio* very broadly but repeatedly drew a distinction between more and less elaborate forms of narrative (in line with the larger distinction between the *genus grande* and the *genus humile*).

Of the three types of *narratio* mentioned in the rhetorical literature, the first two concerned forensic rhetoric, while the third was used in rhetorical exercises and drew on literature in general for its subject matter. It was sub-divided into narrative concerned with events (as found in mythological drama, realistic drama and history) and narrative concerned with persons (*personarum sermones et animi*).

Cicero's varied use of *narratio* in his speeches has been studied by Johnson (1967) and McClintock (1975). Johnson drew a distinction between *narratio simplex* and *narratio ornata* in Cicero's speeches. McClintock suggested that Cicero extended the range of *narratio* to include logical argumentation and elaborate descriptions of character (*ethos*), but he also pointed out that narrative in Cicero's speeches makes use of colloquial speech (*cotidiano sermone explicatae*), chronological presentation, brevity, clarity and vividness. This paper examines the use Cicero makes of narrative in his philosophical works in the light of contemporary attitudes to narrative.

#### GRIEVING PARENTS

J. H. D. Scourfield, University of the Witwatersrand

Studies of consolatory writing in the Greco-Roman world have tended to concentrate on literary aspects of the texts: philosophical and rhetorical influences, *topoi*, *exempla*, and so on. Recent interest in the Roman family has caused some attention to be given to the affective bonds linking family members, and a small number of consolatory texts have been used as evidence in such investigations. This paper proposes that a wider and more systematic examination of the extant consolatory letters from the late Republic to the late Empire will yield valuable information about the character of the Roman family and about the experience of grief in the Roman world. It takes a first step in this direction by asking certain questions of those consolatory letters written to parents on the deaths of children.

#### SESSION 4 ON PEDAGOGY, M. A. GOSLING, CHAIR

##### MULTI-LINGUAL LATIN TEACHING: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

J. M. Claassen, University of Stellenbosch

Published in this volume, pp. 102-18.

HOW TO ELIMINATE THE DRUDGERY FROM  
LEARNING LATIN VOCABULARY AND ACCIDENCE

B. E. Lewis, University of Port Elizabeth

This paper suggests means of enlivening the drudgery of rote learning of Latin vocabulary and paradigms. It entails illustrating: (1) that words and sounds in Latin behave in much the same way as those in English and Afrikaans; (2) the application of some elementary facts of comparative philology. General phenomena are illustrated, for example, assimilation, changes of vowels and consonants, vowel gradation and the effect of stress. Sound laws are used to explain the so-called irregularities of the third declension, *fero*, *volo* and *sum*, principal parts of verbs, and comparatives. The common origin of certain words is shown, proving the shared ancestry of Latin and English/Afrikaans, and that sounds behave in a fairly predictable way. With this knowledge students are encouraged to find more examples of phenomena presented and to make learning an active process.

*DER NEUE PAULY: A REPORT ON THE PROJECT*

B. Kytzler, Free University, Berlin / University of Natal, Durban

The talk will present a brief history of the series of encyclopaedias substituting or complementing each other since the beginning of the last century at Metzler Verlag. It will then report the discussions and results of the founding session for *Der Neue Pauly* held in Tübingen in December 1991. A discussion at the end that reflects the good or bad experiences of happy or disappointed users would be most welcome, since these comments could be passed on to the editors and could influence the content and style of the new edition.

CLASSICS IN AFRICA: DISCUSSION

This discussion session consisted of some comments by Fabian Opeku (University of Cape Coast, Ghana) on the state of Classics in West Africa with a general discussion on the situation in South Africa.

## IN THE UNIVERSITIES

*Information about programmes and activities in teaching and research in Classics at the university level in Africa is welcome and should reach the In the Universities Editor, Scholia by 30 June.*

### UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

Eric J. Ning'ang'a<sup>1</sup>  
Ministry of Education and Culture,  
Zomba, Malawi

Classics is taught at Chancellor College and in a number of secondary schools. The main subjects are Latin and Greek. Although Latin was introduced in the schools in the 1940s and examined at O level, it was not until 1982 that it was taught at university level. Latin was first offered as a subject in the Department of Philosophy at Chancellor College in Zomba. In 1984 a Department of Classics was formed at the College. The Department offers courses in Latin, Greek and Ancient Civilisation. The first graduate of Classics (with majors in Latin and Greek) was in 1986. Since then the Department has produced a number of graduates in Classics. Most of them are employed in the government and private sectors.

Classics in Malawi is supported personally by President H. Kamuzu Banda, who has studied Classics and practises it in his state affairs. His love of Classics was demonstrated when he set aside funds to build a grammar school in Malawi based on classical tradition. Since Kamuzu Academy was officially opened in 1981, it has produced an educated class who have secured scholarships for further education in various fields outside Africa. Recently the University released the results of candidates who completed the programme in Medicine at the Medical College. A number of these graduates studied Latin and Greek at Kamuzu Academy.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Mr Ning'ang'a taught in the Department of Classics at Chancellor College until he took up a position as a Teacher of Latin in the Ministry of Education and Culture at the beginning of 1992. He is currently undergoing training to become an Inspector of Latin in the schools. —*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> See 'In the Schools' for a report on Kamuzu Academy. —*Ed.*

## UNIVERSITY OF NATAL, DURBAN

Anne Gosling  
Department of Classics, University of Natal  
Durban 4001

The Classics Department at the University of Natal, Durban hosted a Roman Studies Conference, organised by William Dominik and John Hilton, on 8-10 July 1992.<sup>1</sup> B. X. de Wet, Registrar of the University, welcomed the delegates. Twenty scholars, representing thirteen universities in South Africa and abroad, delivered papers at the Conference. Anne Gosling, John Hilton, Aileen Bevis and Mike Lambert chaired sessions on History, Literature and Pedagogy. In addition to these papers, John Hilton demonstrated *Pharos*, a computer programme for Classical texts; Faith Armstrong, Assistant Curator of the Museum of Classical Archaeology, gave delegates a brief tour of the Museum; and there were two book displays.

Highlights of the Conference included the attendance of Bernhard Kytzler, recently of the Free University of Berlin, Germany,<sup>2</sup> who delivered a report on *Der Neue Pauly*, and of Fabian Opeku of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, who spoke on 'Popular and Higher Education in *Africa Proconsularis* in the Second Century AD'<sup>3</sup> Opeku also gave a talk on Classics at Cape Coast University; this presentation was followed by a question and answer session in which he gave his views on the value of Classics in Africa and advised delegates on what Classicists could do to ensure the vitality of their discipline in the changing political, educational and economic circumstances of South Africa.

The Department hosted a few visiting scholars in 1991-92. Pedro a Barceló (Catholic University, Germany) lectured on 'The Perception of Carthage in Greek Historiography' on 16 October 1991; K. D. White (London) gave a talk on 'Wine and Other Drinkables' in the same month; and Alan Shapiro (Stevens Institute of Technology, USA) spoke on 'Music and Poetry at the Panathenaic Festival' on 23 May 1992. In addition, E. A. Mackay, the Chair of the Classics Department, presented her inaugural lecture entitled 'The Oral Shaping of Culture' on 11 September 1991. The Department looks forward to the visits of Geoffrey Arnott in October 1992 and David Konstan in August 1993.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the proceedings see pp. 130-37. —Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Kytzler recently arrived from Germany to take up a position as Chair of Europe Studies.

<sup>3</sup> To appear in *Scholians* Vol. 2 (1993). —Ed.

## IN THE MUSEUM

*Scholia* publishes news about the University of Natal's Museum of Classical Archaeology. Information about Classical exhibitions and artefacts in other Museums is welcome and should reach the In the Museum Editor, *Scholia* by 30 June.

### MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

E. A. Mackay, Curator

Museum of Classical Archaeology, University of Natal, Durban  
Durban 4001

The Museum of Classical Archaeology, University of Natal, Durban started with the purchase in 1975 of an ancient wine-cup from Athens. With this acquisition B. X. de Wet, who was then the Professor of Classics, committed his Department and the University of Natal to a long-term plan of building up a small but representative collection of original ancient art works and artefacts. He realised that for today's students Classical Antiquity tends to be an abstract concept, and it is thus difficult for them to make direct contact with the realities of such a distant past. Original artefacts provide an ideal bridge over the millennia: an original ancient object offers a direct and tangible point of contact between the person holding it now, and those who made it, bought it and used it so long ago. A modern thumb can be placed over a thumb-print left accidentally by a potter twenty-five or more centuries ago, and antiquity acquires a historical reality. There is no mediation of manuscript and editing traditions, no probability of political or historical bias to be taken into account.

In 1988, with the purchase of the first large amphora (object number seventeen in the accessions register), the Classics Antiquities Collection was deemed sufficiently big and impressive to be called a Museum. To mark the inauguration of the Museum of Classical Archaeology, the Durban Art Museum offered eight small pieces of ancient sculpture as a loan exhibition, and this was to be the beginning of a flood of loan-objects from private sources, from the Natal Technikon and from all the Durban Museums. For a time it seemed as though every other week there would be another offer of antiquities on loan. With this additional material, the Museum now displays objects from most parts of the eastern end of the Mediterranean, from pre-dynastic Egypt to Roman imperial times.

Towards the end of 1992 two new display-cases will be set up in the Museum, making it possible for the extensive collections of small terracotta

sculptures and some other ancient artefacts to be exhibited for the first time. The additional display space will also allow special 'theme' exhibitions to be set up from time to time, supplementing the Museum's original objects with photographs. The day-to-day running of the Museum is in the hands of the Curator, E. A. Mackay, and a volunteer Assistant Curator, Faith Armstrong, with secretarial assistance from Joy McGill. Visitors are always welcome during normal office-hours in University term-time (special arrangements can be made for other times), and with advance notice the curatorial staff will provide a guided tour for groups of up to twenty. The Museum is located on the Durban campus of the University of Natal, on the ground floor at the front of the Memorial Tower Building.

## IN THE SCHOOLS

*Contributions consisting of programmes and activities related to the teaching of Classics at the school level in Africa are welcome and should reach the In the Schools Editor, Scholia by 30 June.*

### KAMUZU ACADEMY, MTUNTHAMA, MALAWI

Paul McKechnie<sup>1</sup>

Department of Classics and Ancient History, University of Auckland  
Auckland, New Zealand

Kamuzu Academy opened in Mtunthama, the home village of Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, at the end of 1981. It had been announced that Latin, Ancient History and Greek would be the core subjects studied by all pupils. Reaction outside Malawi bordered on incredulity. Could it be done? Ten years' experience now shows that it could. The boys and girls, selected from ordinary primary schools, board at the Academy for six years' secondary education. All study Latin and Greek for at least four years. A large majority continue Latin in Forms 5 and 6; Greek is optional at these levels. They also study a full range of other secondary subjects: Sciences, Maths, English and Humanities. British syllabi and examinations are used: GCSE, A Level and AS Level. Results are sound. Classics teachers in less supportive surroundings will of course not be surprised that students who have five forty-minute lessons a week in each language for four years can get along in Latin and Greek. Anyone who doubted ten years ago whether boys and girls from village primary schools in Malawi could learn subjects as hard, and as foreign, as Latin and Greek has been proved quite wrong.

Yet the gesture of setting up an out-and-out Classical School in the 1980s may still seem quixotic. Has President Banda gained anything by swimming so much against the current? In general his pro-western, pro-South African stance now looks a much better idea than it did ten years ago. Then Comrade Robert Mugabe had just taken over in Zimbabwe and Comarada Samora Machel was at the height of his power in Mozambique. Mwalimu (=teacher) Julius Nyerere in Tanzania,

---

<sup>1</sup> Dr McKechnie was Head of the Classics Department at Kamuzu Academy during 1987-91. He is the author of *Outsiders in the Greek Cities in the Fourth Century* (London/New York 1989), a re-working of a PhD thesis that was awarded the Croom Helm Ancient History Prize for 1986. —Ed.

Malawi's northern neighbour, was also 'teaching' a left-wing syllabus. Now things are different. Mozambique's erstwhile best friend, East Germany, does not even exist. The pro-western statement implicit in Kamuzu Academy proved to be a shrewd bet. But even granted that President Banda was a better judge of political realities than most African leaders, it could still seem eccentric to insist on all the Latin and Greek. Kamuzu Academy students get a full all-around education. The intention was never to create an oversupply of professional Classicists; in fact, not many have continued their Classical studies on the University level. So the outcome is not in any way unbalanced. And the point to remember is that the whole enterprise is a political manifesto as well as an education one. Donors (UN, governments and NGOs) are important in Malawi and the Malawi government puts a good deal of effort into working together with them to achieve joint aims. But in the educational field donors prefer to support technical programmes consisting of training in agriculture, engineering or other practical fields that will offer a short-term economic payoff. The choice of Classics, which donors will not support, is a commitment to a larger and longer-term vision that involves Malawi's taking of a place in the international community that it chooses for itself rather than one prescribed by donors' views of what a black African country should have. The aim is to give Malawians access to the roots of western culture and not just the branches where the short-term needs are. The political manifesto isn't an obscure one. Official visitors to Malawi are very often shown around the Academy, although it is a long drive from Lilongwe. Joaquim Chissano, President of Mozambique, was taken in 1988 into a Greek lesson where Pericles' Funeral Speech was being taught. 'Democracy, boys and girls', he said, 'that's what we're putting into action in Mozambique'. Ali Hassan Mwinyi, President of Tanzania, visited in 1989 and afterwards accepted an offer to send his daughter to the Academy.

Over a period of ten years Kamuzu Academy has become the best school in Malawi. The Academy has shown that the uncompromising standards President Banda demanded can be reached. Its emphasis on the Classics aims at unlocking the heart of western civilisation to Malawians. And the more time goes on, the more this is looking as if it is a very good idea.

## LATIN IN NATAL SCHOOLS

Anne Oberholzer

Research Unit, Curriculum Affairs, Natal Education Department  
Pietermaritzburg 3201

### *Latin at Risk*

Latin is coming under pressure in schools. It is 'at risk' in many of the schools which offer it, primarily as a result of the decrease in expenditure on white

education and hence the reduction of staff in schools. Subjects that do not attract a reasonable number of pupils will not survive in an environment that is strongly influenced by economic factors.

In the preliminary findings of a recent investigation into the position of French and German in South Africa, the following are cited by children as the major reasons why they do not opt to do French or German at school: (i) the two subjects are difficult in comparison with other options; (ii) they have the perception that the subjects have minimal use outside school; (iii) the amount of time spent on studying the languages bears little relation to the marks obtained. There is reason to believe that the small number of Latin candidates can be similarly explained. Whether the reasons cited above are valid or not, this does not alter the reality that the number of children offering a third language at the Standard 10 level is relatively small. There has been a steady increase in the number of subject options that are available, especially in the vocationally-oriented area. An examination of the syllabi and the Natal Senior Certificate (NSC) results of respective candidates indicates that in many instances these subjects are not as intellectually demanding or as time-consuming for candidates as the third languages appear to be. In some cases the subject combinations that a school offers do not favour a third language because it is offered with a subject that a candidate does not wish to study or a candidate is unable to take the language with another preferred subject. The points system for admission that is applied at a number of universities plays a major role in a pupil's choice of subjects at school level. Since the third languages have a reputation for being more difficult and more time-consuming than other options, pupils tend to feel that they could spend that time more profitably on their other subjects in order to improve their points total. There is a common perception among school children that the amount of work required to get a particular mark in Latin is far greater than the amount of work required to get that same mark in many other subjects. The relevance of Latin as measured by its direct applicability to a particular profession or job of work puts it under pressure from other vocationally-oriented subjects such as Accounting, Economics and Business Economics.

These factors all contribute to the small numbers of pupils choosing Latin as an option for Standard 10. In addition, many schools are operating under severe financial constraints. A number of these who have offered Latin in the past have decided not to continue doing so. Fortunately there are still some principals who, convinced of the educational value of Latin, ensure that their schools continue to offer the subject in spite of the aforementioned pressures.

### *Small Classes*

While in 1967 15,5% of NSC pupils wrote Latin, this had declined in 1972 to 8,6% and in 1982 to 1,5%. The numbers of pupils who wrote the Natal Senior Certificate Latin examination from 1987 to 1991 are given in the following table.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Latin Candidates</u>	<u>Total NSC Candidates</u>	<u>Latin as Pct. of Total NSC Candidates</u>
1987	59	8727	0,7
1988	45	8994	0,5
1989	64	8910	0,7
1990	57	8857	0,6
1991	42	8389	0,5

The number of Latin pupils, expressed as a percentage of all NSC candidates, is given in order to see whether there has been a significant decline in the number of pupils choosing Latin as a subject at the Standard 10 level. Although the percentages are very low, it can be seen that they have been more or less constant over the past five years. Recent developments in white education may influence these figures still further.

Because of the very small numbers of pupils who wish to take Latin to Standard 10, some schools have been forced either to abandon Latin completely or to find alternative methods of dealing with small classes. At least one school has considered the option of offering the subject as a seventh subject, which requires that pupils study it after regular school hours. There are obvious problems with placing a subject like Latin in this position. An imaginative alternative and one which has great possibilities for application in other schools is being explored by two schools in the Durban area. Both schools have a positive history with Latin and are in communities which do not wish to see Latin discontinued. The schools, situated in close proximity to each other, are experimenting with sharing staff. In both schools the Standard 8 Latin class is timetabled for the first period or first two periods each day. The Standard 8 Latin pupils from School A go to School B each morning, have their Latin class together with the Standard 8 Latin pupils of School B, and then are fetched by their school bus and returned to their own school for their other lessons. In this way a viable class is formed and pupils at both School A and School B are provided with the opportunity of studying Latin. This experiment needs to be looked at more closely and the advantages and disadvantages of such an arrangement need to be examined. If such an arrangement proves workable, there is potential in it for many subjects that are faced with similar problems to those of Latin.

#### *The Latin Syllabus and the Academic Calibre of Latin Candidates*

The changes in the Latin syllabus which have placed more emphasis on the Classical Culture aspect of the subject seem to have had a positive effect on the subject. Many pupils not only enjoy this section of the syllabus but also benefit in the crucial area of mark attainment from having the class-based assessment of this aspect of the syllabus included in their final results. The School Assessment system applied in the NSC examination allows for twenty-five per cent of the final Latin mark to be

made up from work in the area of Classical Culture. This work is set and marked by the teachers themselves, using guidelines issued by the Natal Education Department (NED). The school-based assessments are standardised at provincial level to ensure that no pupil is prejudiced by the school-based mark. A review of the Latin marks of 1990 and 1991 Standard 10 candidates showed the following:

<u>Year</u>	Number of Candidates			<u>Total</u>
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	
1990	31	5	21	57
1991	18	2	22	42

A—Pupils whose written examination result (Papers 1 & 2) was at least two per cent lower than their final result. These are pupils who benefitted from the School Assessment system.

B—Pupils whose written examination result (Papers 1 & 2) was at least 2% higher than their final result. These are pupils who did not benefit from the School Assessment system.

C—Pupils whose written examination result (Papers 1 & 2) was within 2% of their final result. These are pupils whose results were more or less unchanged by the School Assessment system.

The following observations have been made by researchers in two provinces. In 1989 a study of scholastic aptitude was conducted by the NED in which the IQ measurements of pupils were examined in conjunction with their NSC results. One of the results showed that the subject whose students had the highest average IQ score was Latin. In a report of the Cape Education Department,<sup>1</sup> the subject with the highest IQ average in 1985 was Latin, higher than even Mathematics Higher Grade. While it is acknowledged that the IQ measurement is only a rough indicator of scholastic ability, it nevertheless provides some indication of overall academic ability. In addition, four students who were among the top thirty candidates in the NSC examination in 1990 and 1991 were Latin candidates. Considering the small number of candidates who offer Latin, this is an exceptional statistic.

The following table summarises some aspects of the NSC results of Latin candidates in 1990 and 1991.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> D. Norton, *Research into the Results Obtained by Pupils in the Senior Certificate Mathematics Examination* (Cape Education Department 1990).

<sup>2</sup> I express my thanks to the NED for its willingness to release these results.

Year	Candidates			Number of Subjects					Average in All	
	Total No.	Exemption No.	Pct. <sup>3</sup>	6	7	8	Pct.	Other Subjects (Total 400)		
1990	57	57	100	32	56	19	33	6	11	284 (71%)
1991	42	42	100	18	43	17	40	7	17	279 (70%)

From this table it can be seen that as a group, the Latin candidates were high achievers, since they all attained matriculation exemption and almost fifty per cent of them sat for more than the required six subjects in the NSC examination. The average score of seventy per cent in all other subjects further illustrates the excellent academic ability of the group as a whole. The following table shows the Latin symbol distribution against the aggregate symbol distribution.

Year	Symbol in Latin	Aggregate Symbol									
		A	Pct.	B	Pct.	C	Pct.	D	Pct.	Total	Pct.
1990	A	9		2						11	19
	B	9		3		2				14	25
	C	5		10		5				20	35
	D	2		2		4		1		9	16
	E							3		3	5
		<u>25</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>100</u>
1991	A	12		1						13	31
	B	5		5		1				11	26
	C	1		5		3				9	21,5
	D			5		1		3		9	21,5
		<u>18</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>100</u>

Over 70% of Latin candidates scored at least a B aggregate and no one scored less than a D aggregate. A look at the Latin results of these candidates would seem to verify the perception that the demands made by Latin exceed the demands made by other subjects since the group's aggregate scores are higher than their Latin scores.

What has clearly emerged in looking at the overall NSC results of Latin candidates is that the pupils who are choosing Latin are the academically more capable pupils. They would more than likely do well no matter what subjects they chose. Possibly these students are choosing Latin because it offers them a challenge which is lacking in other subject options. It would be unfortunate if these academically talented pupils were not given the option of choosing subjects that challenge and extend them intellectually, especially if the reason for this were financially based. There is an obligation to provide all children, including the academically talented, with educational opportunities that suit their interests and abilities.

<sup>3</sup> All percentages in this table are expressed as percentages of the total number of Latin candidates.

## PROVINCE OF NATAL

John Hilton

Department of Classics, University of Natal  
Durban 4001

Natal Schools performed very well in the 1991 Latin Olympiad, which was held in Pietermaritzburg on 24 April. In the Standard 10 section P. Cumming (Durban Girls' College) and C. Dempster (Pietermaritzburg Girls' High) tied for fourth place, while T. Davidson (Durban Girls' College) was placed fifth. In the Standard 9 section N. Larsen and T. Lockyer (Durban High School) came third and fifth respectively, while K. Thompson (Durban Girls' College) was placed seventh.

A Schools' Competition is organised annually by the Classical Association of South Africa (Natal). The competition, which has art, drama and poetry sections, is open to all pupils in Natal studying Latin. The 1991 competition, organised by John Hilton (University of Natal, Durban), was attended by about 450 pupils on 21 August at Durban High School. The prize for the art project was won by Michaelhouse (R. Mayes and R. McBride) for its newspaper front page called '*Forum Diurnum*'; the award for the dramatic sketch by Durban High School's first team for their interpretation of the Daedalus and Icarus story; and the prize for the poetry reading by St. Mary's Seminary for their reading of a scene from Plautus' *Pseudolus*.

The 1992 competition is being organised by Peter Tennant (University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg). The dramatic presentations and poetry readings will commence at 18h00 on 21 September at Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School.

Classicists from the University of Natal, Durban presented lectures on Classical subjects related to the set works studied by pupils in Natal schools at Durban Boys' High School on 16 October 1991. William J. Dominik gave a talk on Vergil, while John Hilton spoke on Cicero.

## B. X. DE WET ESSAY

*The paper judged to be the best undergraduate essay submitted to Scholia by 30 June for the preceding year is published annually as the B. X. De Wet Essay. Classics Departments in Africa are encouraged to send their submissions to the B. X. de Wet Essay Editor, Scholia. Papers should not exceed 3 000 words in length.*

*This essay is named in honour of Professor B. X. de Wet, who was Head of the Department of Classics at the University of Natal, Durban from 1975-89.*

### THE WIDOW OF EPHEBUS IN PETRONIUS, PHAEDRUS AND ROMULUS

**Barry Kayton**

3rd-year Classical Civilisation and English major  
University of Natal, Durban 4001

The story of the Widow of Ephesus is a Milesian Tale, a short story of love and adventure, 'generally erotic and titillating' and a forerunner 'of such medieval collections of tales as the *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, and the *Heptameron* of Marguerite of Navarre'.<sup>1</sup> The versions of the tale in Phaedrus and Romulus, in the medieval collections noted above and the modern rehandling of the tale, Christopher Fry's *A Phoenix Too Frequent*, are not set in Ephesus. In contrast Petronius in the *Satyricon* sets his tale at a place where the devoutly chaste Artemis 'was worshipped in her second person, as Nymph, an orgiastic Aphrodite with a male consort'.<sup>2</sup> It is this ambivalence—virtue and vice in one figure—with which Petronius' widow is associated even before the tale begins. Petronius' tale is selectively crafted: the means (in this case, the setting) and the end (the moral theme) are perfectly integrated.

#### *The Tales in Context*

Although Petronius' version of the tale (*Sat.* 111f.) is intelligible when excerpted and the versions in Phaedrus and Romulus are self-sufficient, Petronius' version is sketched on a larger canvas within the immediate and wider contexts of the rest of the *Satyricon*. The version in Phaedrus is prefaced with a moralistic sub-title: 'The

---

<sup>1</sup> M. C. Howatson, *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1989) 364.

<sup>2</sup> R. Graves, *The Greek Myths* 1 (Harmondsworth 1960) 85.

great inconstancy and lustfulness of women'; similarly the tale in Romulus begins with moral authority: 'A woman who does not put up with an importunate man is chaste'. In contrast the immediate context of the Petronian tale is given by the narrator, the disreputable poet Eumolpus, whose taunts at feminine unfaithfulness might be taken seriously if it were not for the fact that he has no moral authority; his moral judgements are hypocritical. This is perhaps the most significant difference between the three texts: the shorter versions have omniscient narrators which, we may assume, are the voices of the fabulists, Phaedrus and Romulus, but Petronius' tale is narrated by one of his characters.

The moral positions of Phaedrus and Romulus are readily accessible and reliable; there is nothing in the fabulists' texts to suggest that their judgement ought to be questioned. Indeed it may be said that the very function of fable is to reform the bad habits of men by presenting a tale to illustrate an aspect of morality often captured in an epigrammatic ending. It is thus plausible that the origin of the tale lies in fable. By contrast Petronius' moral viewpoint is obscured behind the moral deficiency of his character-narrator. Given the compatibility of the tale with fable and the distance of Petronius from the tale his character narrates, it is an oversimplification to refer to Petronius' version simply as a Milesian tale.

The role of Eumolpus as narrator is important to consider in establishing the literary character and purpose of the Petronian tale. Eumolpus has established a truce among former enemies (*Sat.* 109) and proceeds (110) with his cynical tale of feminine unfaithfulness 'to prevent the general merriment lapsing into silence'.<sup>3</sup> Eumolpus wants to entertain the others and (perhaps) to entertain himself. For he succeeds in shaming Tryphaena (by reminding her of her involvement with both Encolpius and Giton) and in annoying Lichas (by reminding him of his own wife's unfaithfulness—Hedyle was seduced by Encolpius). Tryphaena blushes and Lichas, angered, declares that it was the widow that should have been crucified. The story of the Widow of Ephesus is the means to this end. Seen from this perspective, Eumolpus' moral pronouncements are not the judgements they appear to be out of context, but devices to entertain, to shame and to rankle. This is the immediate context in which the tale is embedded. The wider context is given by the *Satyricon* as a whole, but it is the literary character of the *Satyricon* on which this discussion of the tale of the Widow of Ephesus is aiming to shed light.

### *The Tales Compared*

This section examines eight points of comparison between the versions of Petronius, Phaedrus and Romulus: (1) the introduction of the widow; (2) the crucifixion of the

---

<sup>3</sup> Translations of the *Satyricon* are those of J. P. Sullivan, *Petronius: The Satyricon and Seneca: The Apocolocyntosis* (London 1968); translations of Phaedrus are those of B. E. Perry, *Babrius and Phaedrus* (London/Cambridge 1965); and translations of the Romulus version are by J. L. Hilton.

thieves; (3) the introduction of the guard; (4) the guard's discovery of the widow; (5) the guard's relationship with the widow; (6) the removal of the criminal's corpse; (7) the guard's discovery of this; and (8) the resolution of the guard's dilemma.

(1) Petronius introduces the widow as a woman whose fidelity to her husband was famous even before he died and more so after his death owing to her fanatical devotion (*Sat.* 111). In the account of Phaedrus the widow was devoted to her husband when he was alive, but she acquired a reputation for chastity only after his death. Note: she acquired a *reputation* for chastity—not chastity itself. In Romulus there is still less emphasis on the widow's grief and mourning, which are presented in a matter-of-fact manner, the details themselves being unusual: the widow spends her days of mourning in the tomb with the corpse. From the outset Eumolpus takes pains to establish the widow as the paragon of womanly virtue, but the notion that 'she attracted women from neighbouring countries to come just to see her' (111) is not particularly realistic; it verges on hyperbole.

A crucial distinction needs to be made here between Eumolpus and Petronius concerning the realism—or lack of it—of the tale. The exaggeration reflects not on Petronius' style but on Eumolpus' style of telling the tale. It does not detract from the realism of Petronius' tale but actually adds to it by rendering Eumolpus as a character who likes to exaggerate the stories he tells. Petronius enhances Eumolpus' character by having him emphasise an aspect of the character of the widow.

(2) Eumolpus places little emphasis on the crucifixion incident (*Sat.* 111). He relates only that the governor ordered the crucifixion of some thieves nearby. This part of the account is indefinite: Eumolpus says neither how many thieves there were nor what they stole. In comparison, the version in Phaedrus has a little more detail: again 'some' men were crucified, but in this rendering they are guilty of sacrilege. Although this crime against Jupiter is far greater than the widow's violation of the sanctity of her dead husband, the echo of sacrilege remains. In this account the woman is depicted falling from grace to a level which, although not equal, is at least comparable to the crucified criminals. The version in Romulus is the least specific of the three. 'Someone had committed a crime' reveals neither who did it nor what that 'someone' did. Eumolpus' account demonstrates Petronius' superb selectivity: the details he omits are essential neither to our nor the contextual audience's understanding of the tale and do not detract from the moral theme; the details he does include establish the tale's credibility. A credible tale is also a realistic one.

(3) Petronius does not detract from the essence of the narrative by having Eumolpus explain separately that a watch was posted to prevent the removal of the bodies for burial (*Sat.* 111). Unlike the versions in Phaedrus and Romulus that have 'guards' and 'a guard' stationed respectively, Petronius' tale introduces 'the' guard immediately and by way of the pronoun 'who' reveals why he is near the tomb, that he sees a light and hears the sounds of a mourner. This definite and

specific reference is a more economical and sophisticated method of introduction than the sentences used in the other two tales; for this reason it lends realism to the account.

(4) The soldier's discovery of the widow in Petronius' tale differs markedly from the others (*Sat.* 111). In this version the soldier is made curious—'a general human failing'—by the light shining among the tombs, then is 'terrified by some strange sight' and realizes that the beautiful woman is mourning the unbearable loss of her husband. Eumolpus is suggesting (perhaps) that appearances can be deceptive: the soldier mistakes the light for an apparition. This mirrors everyone's mistaking the widow for a 'shining example of true fidelity and love'.

In Phaedrus the guard asks the maidservant for water and then sees the woman and lusts after her. There is no reference to a light appearing among the tombs, no fear of the supernatural, and it is not curiosity which leads him to the vault but his thirst. The guard in Romulus is also thirsty but asks for water, drinks it, leaves, then sees the woman and returns; here thirst is associated with lust. Petronius thoroughly develops this association of appetite for food and water with sexual desire. His version of the tale is (again) far superior in the structure of surface details and the composition of layers of meaning.

(5) Similarly the interaction between the widow and the soldier is far more complex in Petronius than in Phaedrus and Romulus. Initially the soldier brings the widow food, pleads with her not to prolong her grief, and makes suggestive statements (for instance, that awaiting everyone are 'things that restore grief-stricken minds to sanity' [*Sat.* 111]). The widow refuses to listen; she is unswayed by the soldier's rhetoric; her virtue remains uncompromised and in fact seems to be enhanced since she grieves more violently. In Phaedrus the widow is not taken immediately with the charms of the soldier; only 'gradually' does she yield and then not until the soldier finds 'a thousand pretexts for seeing' her. In Romulus the guard returns repeatedly to the women, but no relationship is developed. These two versions aim only to convey that a change takes place in the widow. Petronius (through Eumolpus) describes in great detail and with great realism *how* this change takes place.

In Petronius the soldier, unsuccessful in seducing the widow with his food, turns to the girl, with whom his seduction *is* successful. Previously the girl had kept the lamp burning, as she had supported her mistress's mourning. Now 'refreshed' with food and drink, she begins to work at her mistress's resolve (*Sat.* 111f.). It has been noted that the tale 'is invested with a literary flavour' when the girl quotes Virgil (*Aen.* 4.34, 38) in her appeal to the lady and that this is 'an attempt to introduce an element of sophistication to relieve the sequence of crude sexual incidents, by the exploitation of the exalted language of epic in the depiction of a mean theme'.<sup>4</sup> However, it seems more likely that Petronius' intention was not to make his literature more appealing directly but rather indirectly by implying

---

<sup>4</sup> P. G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge 1970) 43f.

that the girl believes her mistress to be chaste, pure, virtuous and incorruptible and therefore that her mistress will be swayed only by 'literary' and 'sophisticated' language. If there is sophistication here, it lies in the irony that the widow, as we come to learn, is not as chaste, pure, virtuous and incorruptible as the girl might believe. This irony is brought down to the perceptual level in the description of the lovers from the point of view of a stranger who, coming to the tomb, would think that 'the *blameless widow* had expired over her husband's body' (*Sat.* 112; my emphasis). Neither the version in Phaedrus nor that in Romulus matches the forethought, selectivity and craftsmanship of Petronius' version. While Petronius' tale deals with a similar subject, the method employed is of an entirely different nature.

(6) There are a few differences between the three versions of the removal of the criminal's corpse, but only one of these differences offers a clue to the nature of the Petronian version. Petronius is the only one of the three which recalls the reason why a guard was initially posted: 'the parents of one of the crucified men, seeing the watch had been relaxed, took down the hanging body in the dark and gave it the final rites' (*Sat.* 112). This reinforces the realism of the tale. In addition Eumolpus, by reminding his audience that the relatives of the criminals wish to honour their dead kin by giving them the last rites (even though it is forbidden), emphasises the widow's disrespect for her dead husband. These details complicate the widow's change: she does not merely take a lover after having been a paragon of virtue nor merely neglect her husband; she treats him in the fashion of a criminal. The widow in Phaedrus and the widow in Romulus are two-dimensional characters in comparison with the characters so richly painted by Petronius (through Eumolpus' eyes).

(7) In Petronius the soldier, upon discovering the missing body, 'explains' to the widow and expresses his (sudden and short-lived) loyalty to duty which demands suicide. In Phaedrus the guard is 'greatly disturbed' but simply tells the woman what has happened; he does not threaten suicide. The version in Romulus has the soldier fleeing back to the widow and appealing for her help. Considered in isolation, these differences reveal nothing about the literary character and purpose of Petronius' version. However, considered in relation to the widow's solution to the soldier's dilemma, they are very revealing.

(8) In all three versions it is the widow who suggests the use of her husband's corpse to cover up the consequences of her lover's dereliction of duty. The guard in Phaedrus is 'surprised' by the quick response of the 'highly-respected woman'; there is no overt indication of the widow's motivation. In Romulus, the widow's *pity* is stressed as her motivation. However, Petronius establishes the motivation of the widow (partly) in terms of the soldier's actions.

Consider Petronius' account (unmatched by the others): the widow has recently lost her husband; the lover she has just as recently taken bursts in to tell her the terrible news; he threatens suicide, and her new-found happiness is threatened with greater sadness than before. Petronius establishes the motivation

of the widow's action to the extent that, although her behaviour is not presented as excusable, she is portrayed in such a way that Eumolpus' audience *can* sympathise with her (although, of course, they do not). In this way the disrespect that was emphasised earlier is balanced with a realistic rendering of the widow's motivation in depth—in contrast with the simplistic and superficial accounts in Phaedrus and Romulus.

These two versions conclude moralistically. In Phaedrus, 'thus did infamy take by storm the stronghold of fair fame' seems to shift the emphasis from the fault of the woman to the public reception of that fault—'fair fame' becomes 'infamy'. Given that her reputation for chastity was 'acquired' after her husband's death, this is an appropriate ending; it was not that the woman was actually chaste, but that she was perceived to be so. In Romulus the emphasis is firstly on the woman's duty in return for the soldier's kindness and secondly on her chastity which she had kept 'for some time'; these are contrasted with her two crimes—the taking of the soldier as lover and the use of her husband's body. This tale ends with the rather cryptic imperative: 'Let the dead have something to grieve for and let the living have something to fear'.

Petronius does not have Eumolpus moralise over the widow's actions. Instead toward the end of the tale Eumolpus says that 'the woman's pity was equal to her fidelity' (*Sat.* 112). Does this mean that it is not pity for the soldier—since she lacks that quality just as she lacks fidelity to her husband—but rather pragmatism or hedonism that leads her quickly to a solution to save her new lover? Or does it mean that her pity for the soldier was as great as her fidelity—not to her husband, but to her lover? Given that the widow is presented neither as a pragmatist nor as a hedonist and, if we consider that the widow 'chooses the interests of the living over the dead',<sup>5</sup> the latter interpretation may be more appropriate. However, the ambiguity itself suggests that Petronius did not wish to paint the widow changing morally from pure white to pure black. This is not surprising since Petronius avoids simplicity throughout his tale.

### *The Literary Character of the Satyricon*

Just as it is an over-simplification to refer to Petronius' version simply as a Milesian tale, so it is equally unsuitable to conceive of the *Satyricon* as a collection of Milesian tales and comic sketches; 'a collection of tales' no more describes the *Satyricon* than 'a collection of cells' describes a human being. Sullivan considers the work 'organically as a development of a literary tradition in the context of a certain milieu'.<sup>6</sup> He notes that formally the work resembles Menippean satire, a 'mélange of prose and verse'<sup>7</sup> bound by humour and philosophy, and he identifies

<sup>5</sup> N. W. Slater, *Reading Petronius* (Baltimore 1990) 170.

<sup>6</sup> Sullivan [3] 18.

<sup>7</sup> Sullivan [3] 18.

Petronius' substitute for philosophy as aesthetic and literary taste. Indeed, one passage that stands out in the *Satyricon* is the discussion of poetry (118). Another striking passage concerns Eumolpus' response to Encolpius' moralising in which he says: 'There is nothing on earth more misleading than silly prejudice and nothing sillier than moral hypocrisy' (132). But Eumolpus' tale about the widow of Ephesus is a hypocritical attack on women by a narrator whose moral judgement is unreliable. Eumolpus, as hypocritical moraliser, is himself the object of Petronius' satire. Given the form of the work and an episode such as Eumolpus' tale, the description of the *Satyricon* as Menippean satire is certainly justified, but it is not definitive. The prose and verse, tales and comic sketches, and Petronius' satirising of Eumolpus are dominated by the literary values of realism and depth. Therefore the *Satyricon* can be described most definitively as a 'realistic' Menippean satire.

A comparison of the three tales of the widow reveals the literary superiority of Petronius' version. Petronius' tale is selectively crafted: the means (setting) and the end (the moral theme) are perfectly integrated; the omitted details are not essential to his audience's understanding of the tale and do not detract from the moral theme; the included details establish the tale's credibility and realism; and surface details, logically structured, embody layers of meaning. The widow in the *Satyricon* is a multi-dimensional character whose motivation explains and moderates her disrespect for her dead husband. Petronius is not content merely to demonstrate that a change occurs in the widow but shows also *how* this change takes place.

## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. Submissions are invited in every area of Classical Studies. Preferred languages are English and Afrikaans.
2. (a) Contributors should address two copies of the submission to the Editor, *Scholia*, Department of Classics, University of Natal, King George V Avenue, Durban, 4001, Republic of South Africa. Submissions are not normally returned unless return postage is pre-paid. Contributors should, in any case, retain copies of their manuscripts.  
(b) Submissions are acknowledged forthwith and every effort is made to inform contributors of the Editors' decision concerning publication as promptly as possible.  
(c) All contributions accepted for publication are edited to conform to the *Scholia* style.  
(d) While the Editorial Committee undertakes to publish submissions accepted as soon as possible, it reserves the right to hold over any contribution to another volume.  
(e) First (and occasionally second) proofs are sent to contributors whose submissions are accepted for publication. Proofreading is then the responsibility of the author.
3. (a) Articles should be submitted in clear type and be double-spaced throughout on 210mm x 297mm or 8.5" x 11" paper.  
(b) Articles should not ordinarily exceed 7 000 words in length. Review articles should not be longer than 3 000 words; short reviews of 300-600 words are preferred.  
(c) Articles should preferably be accompanied by copy on a diskette in computer-readable form; contributors should indicate clearly the word-processing programme used in writing the article. (To avoid damage to the diskette during mailing, please post in a diskette mailer.) Manuscripts not accompanied by copy on a computer diskette are also acceptable.
4. (a) The title of the article or review, author's full name and title, affiliation, position, full address (also e-mail address and fax number, if available), and a 40-70 word summary in English suitable for publication (for critical and pedagogical articles only) should be typed on a separate page; the title and summary alone should appear on the first page of the manuscript.

- (b) References to the author's own work should be made in the third person. Any acknowledgements are to be included only after the submission has been accepted.
5. (a) Paragraphs should be indented five spaces, except the first paragraphs after subheadings, which should not be indented.  
(b) Inverted commas (quotation marks) should be single, not double, unless they are placed within single inverted commas.  
(c) Spelling and punctuation should be consistent. American spelling and punctuation are acceptable from American authors; otherwise, spellings should conform to the most recent edition of *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*.
6. (a) Greek script should be used for quotations from Classical Greek. Short Greek quotations may be inserted by hand, but special care should be taken with breathings, accents and iotas subscript. Passages longer than a few words should be typed or photocopied.  
(b) Greek names in the text should either be fully transliterated or fully Latinised (e.g., Klutaimestra or Clytemnestra) throughout.
7. All Greek and Latin text should be translated, preferably by the author.  
(a) In the case of an indented passage, the translation should appear unbracketed (without parentheses) immediately below the quotation; the citation of the work in brackets (parentheses) should follow rather than precede the indented quotation.  
(b) In the case of a short citation in the body of the text, the following convention should be followed: *cupido dominandi cunctis affectibus flagrantior est* ('the desire for power burns more fiercely than all the passions', Tac. *Ann.* 15.53).
8. (a) Notes should appear at the end of the text.  
(b) Authors should be cited by initials and surname only.  
(c) Titles of books, periodicals, and Greek and Latin technical terms should be italicised.  
(d) Titles of articles should be enclosed in single inverted commas.  
(e) Volume numbers of periodicals should be given in Arabic rather than Roman numerals.  
(f) Page and line references generally should be given as follows: 'f.' (e.g., '174f.')
- ought to be used, but 'ff.' should be avoided wherever possible (e.g., '174-76' is preferable to '174ff.').

- (g) When citing a book or periodical in the notes for the first time, details should be given as follows:  
H. Cancik, *Untersuchungen zur lyrischen Kunst des P. Papinius Statius* (Hildesheim 1965) 93-110.  
K. H. Waters, 'The Character of Domitian', *Phoenix* 18 (1964) 49-77.  
All subsequent citations should contain the author's name, endnote number of the first citation of the work, and relevant page numbers. The following forms should be used:  
Cancik [4] 38-40; Waters [17] 55f.
- (h) The author is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of all references to primary and secondary materials.
- (i) Cross-references should be marked clearly in the left-hand margin of the manuscript.
9. (a) Periodicals cited in the notes should use the abbreviations in *L'Année Philologique*; the names of periodicals not listed in the most recent volume should appear in full.
- (b) Abbreviations of ancient authors and works should be those listed in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (1970) or in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* and Liddell-Scott-Jones' *Greek-English Lexicon*.
- (c) In citation of classical works, names of texts should be italicised and Arabic rather than Roman numerals should be used.
- (d) Titles of standard reference works should be written out in full the first time that the works are cited:  
*Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*; *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*.  
Subsequent citations of the works should be by abbreviation:  
*RE*; *FGrH*.
10. *Scholia* retains copyright in content and format. Contributors should obtain written permission from the Editor before using material in another publication.

# SCHOLIA

*Natal Studies in Classical Antiquity*

ISSN 1018-9017

## FORTHCOMING IN SCHOLIA (1993)

Articles and reviews forthcoming in *Scholia* ns Vol. 2 (1993) include:

### ARTICLES

Roman Perceptions of Blacks

*Lloyd Thompson* University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Popular and Higher Education in *Africa Proconsularis* in the  
Second Century AD

*Fabian Opeku* University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Moral 'Clusters' in the *Odyssey*

*Charles Fuqua* Williams College, USA

Socrates, Plato and Fiction

*David Rankin* University of Southampton, England

An Examination of Jason's Cloak (Apollonius, *Argonautica* 1.730-68)

*C. U. Merriam* Queen's University, Canada

On Translating Catullus 3

*Charles Elerick* University of Texas, El Paso, USA

### REVIEWS

G. Clark (ed. and tr.), *Iamblichus: On the Pythagorean Life* / John Dillon and  
Jackson Hershbell (edd. and trr.), *Iamblichus: On the Pythagorean Way of Life*  
(John L. Hilton)

John L. Hilton, *An Introduction to Latin* (Jo-Marie Claassen)

A. S. Hollis (ed.), *Callimachus: Hecale* (Steven B. Jackson)

### IN THE UNIVERSITIES

Classical Studies in Ghana

*Fabian Opeku* University of Cape Coast, Ghana

To subscribe, please cut along the line or photocopy the entire page.

**Subscription Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City and Province/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode/Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Rates (1993): Africa R15; outside Africa US\$15/UK£7,50

Foreign subscribers should send payment with all bank charges paid; the preferred method of payment is an international postal money order or an international bank draft in South Africa Rand.

Mail subscriptions with money order or bank draft to:

Business Manager, *Scholia*  
Department of Classics  
University of Natal  
King George V Avenue  
Durban 4001  
Republic of South Africa