

Foreword to *Opellae*

Here is the second instalment of this academic year's edition of *Opellae*, the Classics Faculty Undergraduate Journal, and the sixth to date: it incorporates a variety of essays and compositions produced by students outside of the syllabus, appreciating the wonderful scope of our subject.

It is these contributors I must thank first of all – for their time and effort, their clear love of Classics, and for the quality of the submissions. It has been voiced before, and must be reiterated again, that without them *Opellae* could not be; and I believe it says something about the quality of these languages here at Cambridge that there is no undergraduate Classics journal to my knowledge anywhere else in these isles. Therefore it is my expressed hope that undergraduates will continue to write for this journal and keep the undergraduate voice audible. The next edition should appear in October: come and get involved!

My grateful thanks, also, to the Faculty Finance Committee for their continued funding of *Opellae*, providing a welcome forum of Classical discussion: I encourage as many undergraduates as possible to contribute to the next issue, in October.

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Virgil's Messianic Eclogue – Prophecy or Propaganda?

Of the *Eclogues*, Virgil's exercise in pastoral poetry that preceded his famous *Aeneid*, the fourth in the sequence of ten is the most famous of all. It is, indeed, one of the most well-known prophetic statements in all of classical literature, where Virgil prophesies the birth of an unnamed child, a *parve puer* who will herald the coming of, or rather the return to, a *gens aurea* ('a golden age/race', IV 9). The questions that will hopefully lead us to answering the above question are as follows: who is the child in question, and what purpose (if any) does this Eclogue serve? The idea of a return to a golden age can be likened to Christianity's conception that the sins of Man would be taken away by Christ, so that humanity could once again be sinless (as it was before the Fall). This is similar to Virgil's conception that a Golden Age will follow the preceding Iron Age, with Rome passing from anarchy into harmony (broadly speaking). This idea of 'palingenesis' (rebirth of the ages or their cyclic recurrence) can be traced back to Hesiod.¹ We can therefore see that neither Virgil's idea, nor the biblical one were exactly new.

This most ambiguous section of the *Eclogues* is thought to have been written in around 39BC and many early Christians, most notably St. Augustine, later took it to have been a prophetic statement heralding the birth of Christ. Virgil's place among the seminal figures in the classical literary canon is by no means disputed and would be even without this particular work: the *Aeneid* assures that. However, it is this work and this particular Eclogue that in the Middle Ages raised Virgil to the status of transcendent bard, imbuing his work with a specifically spiritual element. Although he had a tendency to communicate Gnostic elements in his writing, he could not have envisioned his work to have taken on such spiritual significance in the many years following its publication. Or could he? As far-fetched as the idea now seems, it was accepted from the time of St. Augustine, down through to Dante and indeed to the time of Pope, that Virgil was more than a mere poet. In the words of R S Conway, up until the time of Johnson, the Fourth Eclogue would have been seen as 'an inspired prediction of the Christian Messiah'² He was therefore seen as an important prophet in the Christian tradition, a relevance that went beyond his simply being a relic of the literature of a long dead age.

It was the Fourth Eclogue, rather than the *Aeneid*, which was the likely reason that Dante chose Virgil as his guide through the Underworld in his *Inferno*. *The Divine Comedy* itself is a work that is inextricably linked with Christian tradition: the difference is that in Dante's case he was of course aware of this Christian link, whereas Virgil predates Christianity and can therefore be seen as more than simply a precursor to such works as *The Divine Comedy*, but a direct influence on them. Therefore, we can state that Virgil's Fourth Eclogue is not one that is in any conventional sense a part of the lineal

¹ Hesiod, *Works and Days* 174 ff. Also see <http://homepage.mac.com/cparada/GML/AgesOfWorld.html>

² R.S. Conway, *The Messianic Idea in Virgil* in J. Mayor, W. Warde-Fowler and Conway *Virgil's Messianic Eclogue* (John Murray, 1907) p.12

tradition of Christian literature: it is not a work of Christian literature any more than the work of Plato and Aristotle. Which brings us to our first question: what would the early Christians have to gain from making Virgil a revered forerunner of Christianity? Virgil, as was the case with Plato and Aristotle, was appropriated and incorporated into the Christian theoretical and spiritual tradition because he was (as were Plato and Aristotle) one of the seminal figures of classical literature. Further, classical literature was the chief significantly cultural phenomenon that preceded the traditions of the early Christians, who would have therefore understandably held it in reverence. They of course were not the only ones; but what better way to build the already burgeoning popularity of their nascent religion, than claiming great past figures as its precursors?

The question remains: was the prophesied boy really a spiritual epiphany on the part of Virgil? Or was he acting as some sort of propagandist? If the latter, for whom exactly? It is too premature in his career to suggest this that he had come under the patronage of Maecenas at the time of publication; this, it seems, came just after³. Yet Virgil may have been ‘indirectly’ producing propaganda on the part of Octavian (whose wife was pregnant at the time – though so too was Octavia, his sister and married to Mark Antony, now his bitterest rival), strengthening the youth’s conception of the new Rome and specifically the *pax Romana*. Virgil clearly valued this peace above all else, following the intense bloodshed that constituted the immediate aftermath of the dissolution of the Republic. It was this peace that was celebrated in his poetry above the violent chivalry that characterised the heroic age of Homer’s literary characters: the boy ‘*pacatumque reget patriis*’ (‘will rule calmed by his father’s hand’ – IV. 17). This idea of the peaceful and humane idea of heroism over the old traditional warrior-hero of Homer can be most explicitly seen in the two great respective heroic characters of Homer and Virgil, with Homer’s Achilles representing the old bloodshed of the Republic and the more *pious* Aeneas (in Virgil’s later Aeneid, 19BC) heralding the coming of peace not through violent revolution, but sensible governance. For although Aeneas engages in a good deal of bloodshed, it is never celebrated in the same way as it is in Homer. Interestingly, this schism between Homer and Virgil mirrors that between the old pagan traditions and the Christianity that replaced it: the former being animalistic and physical (animal sacrifices etc.), while the latter was spiritual and repudiated what it saw as the barbarism of the old order.

When the poem begins proper, in lines 4-7, Virgil’s aim is presumably looking to create the right, in other words ‘elevated’, atmosphere that is required to convey the importance of his message. This is after all an epoch-defining event if ever there was one, the birth of this child heralding as it does the return to the *Saturnia regna* (‘reign of Saturn’, IV, 1.6) and the birth of the *gens aurea*:

*‘Ultima Cumaevi venit iam carminis aetas;
magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.
iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,
iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.’* (IV, 1.4-7).

³ Cf *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd Edition, 1996) s.v. ‘Virgil’ for more detail on chronology which, it is acknowledged, is by no means undisputed.

Virgil creates the sense of a grand and imminent occasion effectively with his use of present tense verbs to create vividness and the sense of a moment that is happening now, in front of the readers' very eyes. Furthermore, as Breed notes: 'particularly the anaphora of *iam* creates the vigorous sense of occasion as the poem begins'⁴ In other words, the repetitious use of *iam* ('now') acts in conjunction with the present tense verbs to compound the idea that the time for change is *now*, but he leaves exactly what that change entails to the reader's discretion. He could be speaking of the ascendancy of the family of Octavian, and therefore in explicitly political terms. He could just as easily however be speaking of the coming of a spiritual saviour that would wash away the sins of the world, if one were inclined to read it in such a way.

Ambiguity, whether intentional or not, appears to be a masterstroke on Virgil's part with regard to the Fourth Eclogue, as by not naming the child and providing very little clues about the circumstances surrounding its birth, he leaves a great deal open to interpretation. What we do know is that this child is a highly important portent of events to come, namely the coming of the *ultima aetas* ('last great age', IV.4), and it is *definitely* a boy. For in spite of the Virgilian acolytes of the Middle Ages and their insurances on the transcendence of this immortal poet, Virgil was very much a poet of his times, and in one respect at least, they were not enlightened times. If we take the child as being say, the expected child of Octavian and Scribonia (which is more likely than it being Virgil's prophesying the birth of Jesus Christ), it would have been poor form to suggest that the child's sex would be anything other than male. Octavian would have been offended if he had done so, and it is unlikely that Virgil himself would have been inclined to suggest anything that would offend him. Virgil indeed uses the word *puer* ('boy') to refer to the child. In other words, there may be ambiguity about the child's identity, but none about its sex; it was most certainly going to be male. This sort of thing was to be expected in a patriarchal society and Conway goes so far as to say that it would have been 'discourtesy to the parents and more an ill omen, to speak as if there was any doubt of the sex of the child to be'⁵. Indeed, such was the antipathy toward the idea of a female heir to the throne that Octavian actually divorced Scribonia upon learning that the child was in fact a girl, Julia. This is of course one possible reason that Virgil did not name a specific person, precisely the reason being that he could not look into a crystal ball and see what sex the child he named would turn out to be: in his opinion it seems he was a poet, not a prophet.

Virgil can now of course be seen as something of a visionary because of the obvious desire on the part of the early Christians to tie in a writer of such stature to their newly-burgeoning religion. This is obviously something that may have inspired the early Christian theologians. Moreover, one senses that there would have been the somewhat vicarious desire by the writers who followed Virgil to raise him to the pedestal of the 'Greats' of classical literature and someone whose work took on an importance beyond that of simply literature: an importance of a spiritual nature perhaps, and thereby engage in a sort of 'bardolatry' (to use the pejorative term as coined by George Bernard Shaw). Indeed this vicarious desire was what inspired the enormous praise heaped on

⁴ Brian W. Breed, *Pastoral Inscriptions: reading and writing Virgil's Eclogues* (Duckworth, 2006) p. 137

⁵ Conway, *op.cit.* p. 15

Shakespeare (the reason for Shaw's coinage of the word) by subsequent writers, in particular the Romantics. This is because perhaps subsequent literary figures needed a yardstick, be it Homer, Virgil or Shakespeare, by which to measure their own greatness and whose genius they could derive the pleasure of 'understanding' (in the form of writing various essays)⁶.

The reputation that Virgil acquired during the Middle Ages as a mystic stemmed largely from this Eclogue. When people wanted to display the mastery and majesty of Virgil's verse, they turned mainly to the *Aeneid*, but when they wished to prove why he was held in the great reverence that he was held in (and in fact had always been held in) they turned to the Fourth Eclogue. This illustrates that the *Eclogues* serve not only as prophecy or propaganda as pertains to early Christian theory or Octavian respectively, but the Fourth Eclogue, because of its significance, served as perhaps the chief 'propaganda' tool for the cult of Virgil in the Middle Ages. Such was the strength of this cult that it has not completely died out in the last century, as evinced by the numerous books written on the subject of this particular Eclogue.

So the above paragraph states the fact that the Fourth Eclogue is still greatly relevant to modern classical scholarship. The question remains to be answered: *Why* is that the case? It is not simply what Virgil says in this Eclogue that made it required reading, although that is of course highly important. Moreover, it was Virgil's very use of language and his general style, cloaked as it was in mysticism, a mysticism well-suited to the ambiguity of the identity of his subject. It is this intrinsic mysticism and ambiguity which is most fascinating about this work to modern commentators, and why it continues to be of interest (well, relative interest) beyond the somewhat narrow confines of academia. It is because of this perceived mysticism that it has been called 'perhaps the most mysterious poem that has come down from antiquity.'⁷ This is the work that most characterized Virgil as a mystic, so much so that the fairy tale *Virgilius the Sorcerer* seems to have taken Virgil as its inspiration.⁸ There are numerous instances of unusual phrasing in Eclogues IV that draw attention to the particular action or event being described. Take for example Virgil's unusual use of *fallax*. This is of course a perfectly ordinary and innocuous word in and of itself. It is however, a rare word for Virgil to use, occurring as it does only four times in the *Aeneid* and only once in the *Eclogues*. What is even stranger is that it is used with a genitive: '*occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni/ occidet;*' (IV. 24). Housman says that the 'phrase equals *quae fallit venenum* ('that which conceals the poison')'⁹

⁶ cf. "O, mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art; but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers,—like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties..." Thomas de Quincey: On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth* (1823) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakespeare%27s_reputation#Shakespeare_in_criticism).

⁷ Breed *op. cit* p. 136, via Williams (1968 p. 274).

⁸ Andrew Lang, *The Violet Fairy Book* (Dover Publications, 1966)

⁹ Michael Lipka, *Language in Vergil's Eclogues* (de Gruyter, Berlin, 2001) p. 2

Conway states rather confidently: ‘The plain fact is, that the ‘father’ who has given peace to the world can be no one but Octavian; the child who is to rule the world can have been in Virgil’s mind no other than the heir to the empire, who was expected in the latter half of 40BC, but who, in fact was never born.’¹⁰ However, it can be taken that his reason for the Christian idea of Virgil as prophet can be generally accepted as accurate, namely that ‘the outstanding reason for the Christian interpretation of the Eclogue was the fact that the child was not named’ (p.28). His confidence in the above conclusion is validated, in his opinion, by the fact that it has been reached independently by several noted scholars, whom he goes on to name: ‘Henry Nettleship, Mr Warde Fowler, and one of the first of living German Latinists, Professor Skutsch of Breslau (p.29). The argument that can be posited against the idea of the child in the Eclogue being a real child, in other words that the child is a metaphorical totemic figure for a general regeneration of the decaying society, can easily be refuted by the last four lines, that describe vividly the birth of a flesh and blood child:

*‘incipi, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem
 (matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses)
 incipe, parve puer : qui non risere parenti,
 nec deus hunc mensa, dea nec dignata cubili est’* (59-63).

It is unlikely that Virgil would mention the length of the mother’s pregnancy and invoke Lucina (Roman goddess of childbirth) to aid a figurative birth: ‘*casta fave Lucina*’ (IV, 1.10). So we have reached something approaching an answer to the question. The prophesied child is a real child, and this assertion is backed up by Virgil’s own text. The text also refutes one suggestion, that of M. Reinach, who suggests that the prophesied child is Dionysus. W Warde Fowler relates Reinach’s reasons as follows: ‘the language and ideas are Orphic, with a large infusion of Hebraism from Jewish Sibylline verses: and the still youthful Virgil has chosen to introduce a poem of Dionysiac mythology among his simple Theocritan Eclogues. Well indeed might he herald it with the high-sounding line *Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus!*’¹¹ Warde Fowler points to the last four lines (quoted above) as strong evidence contrary to Reinach’s hypothesis: ‘If the child were Dionysus, could a poet of Virgil’s taste and feeling have reverted, at the end of a purely mystical and religious poem, to such unguarded realism as we find in the last four lines?’ (p.66-7). Perhaps it is not Dionysus of whom Virgil is writing, but could it conceivably be Jesus Christ?

Well, it *is* likely that the child is yet to be born. In other words, Virgil has composed an antenatal ode. However, as this Eclogue was published in 40BC, it is far more likely to be the expected child of Octavian and his wife Scribonia rather than Jesus Christ, being born as he was some forty years later. One must ask the question: *where* then lies the ambiguity that was to raise Virgil from mere propagandist to prophetic and Christian herald? The answer lies in part in the immediate aftermath of the publication of the Fourth Eclogue. The Eclogue had already been published when Octavian endured the ‘shame’ of producing a female child, Julia, in 39BC, as has already been stated. Scribonia

¹⁰ Conway, *op. cit.* p. 29

¹¹ W. Warde- Fowler, *Criticism of Reinach* p. 64-5 in Mayor, etc, *ibid.*

was then divorced the very day of the birth (*Conway p.30 cf. 'Dio Cassius, xlvi. 34. There can be no doubt that this is the true interpretation of the divorce; it was given first, I believe, by Mr Warde Fowler in 1903'*). As Conway goes on to say (for it is his hypothesis that we are evaluating), an antenatal ode such as the Fourth Eclogue, must have been 'more concerned with the father than the child, more indeed with the hopes of the world than with either father or child.'¹² I share his opinion that this Eclogue has a far more wide-reaching ambition than to act simply as a panegyric for one man; rather it was intended to act as a signifier for the *Gotterdammerung* of the previous epoch (i.e. The Republic, which symbolizes the Iron Age that precedes the coming Golden Age), as well as an introduction to the new milieu (i.e. the Principate). The essence of this milieu however, seems to have been more political and moral than spiritual and religious in nature. It was therefore allowed to stand for the reason that it was ultimately 'bigger' than either of its subjects, and because it would have drawn further attention to the embarrassment caused by Octavian's lack of an heir. As Conway goes on to state: 'it (the Fourth Eclogue) was therefore allowed to stand, enigma though it had become. Who could possibly have foretold the extraordinary influence upon the history of the world with which this wise and gentle silence was destined to endue the poet?'¹³ Who indeed?

The use of rare linguistic and grammatical devices is just one thing that sets this particular Eclogue apart from the rest of the *Eclogues* and indeed from the rest of Virgil's corpus of work, but he constantly harks back to his sources. These sources are, among others, Hesiod, Catullus and especially Theocritus, whose *Idylls* seem to have been the main inspiration for the *Eclogues*. A casual example of Theocritus' influence on the Eclogues as a whole is Virgil's characterisation of the herdsmen, as Breed says: 'the representation of herdsmen is a particularly marked example of Theocritan imitation.'¹⁴ An arguably bigger linguistic influence on Virgil's writing is that of Catullus. Indeed, so great is the shadow that Catullus casts over Virgil's work in general that it led Fraenkel to refer to him as 'Catullus' great admirer.'¹⁵ The idea that the work in general and the Fourth Eclogue in particular is a patchwork of allusions is interesting, because a discussion of it may shed some light on whether it is indeed a divinely inspired prophecy, or a piece of propaganda for the newly established Roman principate.

Virgil was generally influenced by the neoterics, a group of poets of whom Catullus is the most well-known. Lipka states that 'this ambiguous relationship becomes most strikingly clear at 4.49, where Virgil inserts the markedly unpoetic word *incrementum* in a characteristically neoteric line.'¹⁶ What this and indeed what all of Virgil's influences and his appropriation of them shows is that Virgil is not simply using his influences in a dogmatic way, as an illustration of learning. On the contrary, his is an evolved process of allusion, constantly altering his source material in unexpected ways for his own idiosyncratic literary and thematic ends.

¹² Conway, *op.cit.* p.30).

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ Breed, *op. cit.* p. 15

¹⁵ E. Fraenkel, 1955 p. 80, *cf.* L.P. Wilkinson (1963 p.37)

¹⁶ Lipka, *op. cit* p. 27 - '*cara deum suboles, magnum Iovis incrementum!*'

The allusion is not only thematic or structural, but also (as previously stated) permeates the very use of language in the Fourth Eclogue, one example being the use of the diminutive ‘munuscula’: ‘*At tibi prima, puer, nullo munuscula cultu*’ (IV.18). This is reminiscent of Catullus, who himself uses it twice in his poetry (LXIV.105 and LXVIII.145).¹⁷

It is not only the fact that Catullus uses this particular word that would lead us to believe that he is a direct influence on the language used in Virgil, but its function and position in the line. In both poets, it is in the same position in the hexameter line, before the last catalectic dactyl. The influence of Catullus can also be seen in the actual happenings of the text, for example Virgil’s description of the deification of the child: ‘*ille deum vitam accipiet divisque videbit / permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis, / pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem*’ (IV, l.15-17 which closely resembles the song of the Parcae in Catullus (LXIV.384-6)).¹⁸

Indeed, as Lipka states, ‘both passages centre on the idea of men associating with the gods, in Vergil as a prophecy of the future, in Catullus as a nostalgic reminiscence of the past’. Indeed it is this difference on perspective (Catullus looking back, Virgil looking forward), that prevents Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue from being merely an exercise in allusion. What he clearly does however is take inspiration from an explicitly literary precursor, rather than some unnamed mystical one¹⁹, uses its grammatical and thematic properties, and appropriates them for his own ends. In other words, the idea that this work is a divinely inspired prophecy, at least in the manner that the early Christians would have had you believe, the work of an inspired bard that communicates directly with God and then writes what he hears without pause, is easily refuted by the fact that Virgil has clearly done his homework and that there is more evidence that the work is the result of great labour on the part of Virgil. It is also apparent upon careful analysis of the text and its sources that Virgil is appearing as part of an ongoing self-consciously literary tradition, and although it is tempting to buy into the idea of this particular Eclogue coming from nowhere and inhabiting an ethereal plain beyond the realms of literature²⁰, it is probably safe to assume that this is not the case.

In other words, it does not seem to be direct from God because it *has* literary precursors and these precursors evidently permeate what is communicated in the Eclogue. One can of course easily refute this hypothesis by suggesting that God probably has a cursory understanding of the works of Catullus, Theocritus etc. and that the fact that there

¹⁷ ‘*non ingrata tamen frustra munuscula diuis*’ (c.LXIV, l.105) and ‘*sed furtiua dedit mira munuscula nocte*’ (c.LXVIII, l.145).

¹⁸ cf. ‘*praesentes namque ante domos inuisere castas heroum, et sese mortali ostendere coetu, caelicolae nondum sprete pietate solebant.*’ (cf. LXIV, l.384-6)

¹⁹ For although the mystical Sibylline books are clearly an influence, they are not a sole or even necessarily important one when it comes to the Fourth Eclogue as a whole.

²⁰ This is what is suggested by comments such as Richard Jenkyns’ assertion that the Fourth Eclogue ‘is not set anywhere at all’ (*Jenkyns (1989) p.28, cited in Pastoral Inscriptions – Reading and Writing Virgil’s Eclogues – Brian W Breed, p.137*).

are clear literary allusions in the Fourth Eclogue does not preclude it from being a work of divine inspiration. Ho-hum.

The idea of this being an explicitly secular and politically motivated (at least to some extent) work is lent further credence by the reference to Pollio's consulship: '*te consule, inibit, / Pollio*' (IV. 11-12), and the constant references to the social problems that Rome has faced. It does not, in spite of the mystical bent of Virgil's style, speak of problems that are rooted in the spiritual, rather it refers back to the very real strife caused by a century of civil war. This does not call for a Messiah in anything other than the political sense, a human figure with the power to rule with compassion and sensibility that will return Rome to the *Saturnia regna*. The previous troubles are constantly referred back to, for example line 13 ('*sceleris vestigia nostri*'), and line 31 ('*priscae vestigia fraudis*') seem to be explicit references to the civil wars. These are very firmly not problems that are metaphysical in nature, or even physical in the biblical sense (i.e. famine, disease, earthquakes). Indeed, what makes these problems so tragic is that they are overtly man-made and political, and therefore require a political solution. The only person in a position to restore order is the heir to Octavian, or Octavian himself. Paul Alpers cites the above lines as compounding the positive *Zeitgeist* of the new age because these lines hark back to the awful events that have already been: '(this) celebration of the present moment is in contrast to and gets some of its intensity from past distresses'²¹ can say that the scale of these civil wars, which must have seemed like world wars to the residents of Rome, would seem to have as their ideal solution a Messiah in the Christian sense and that though Virgil may not have been aware of it, he was tuned into some higher plain than simply his own circumscribed literary and social context. This would probably be the argument that adherents of the view of the early Christians, who regarded Virgil as a prophet, would put forth, and it is of course impossible to refute satisfactorily, but it does seem that the evidence points to the fact that Virgil was writing about a political messiah, rather than a spiritual one and that this messiah was in fact Octavian or, more likely, his putative son.

The source of the prophetic nature of the Fourth Eclogue comes primarily from the Sibylline oracles and as Joseph B Mayor asserts, Virgil must also have come into contact either directly or indirectly with the Book of Isaiah. The style of the Eclogue serves to lend further credence to the idea that it is in some ways apart from the rest of classical literature as well as apart from the rest of the Eclogues. Within the Eclogues for example, it is the only monologue, and this is something that, taken in conjunction with the self-consciously 'elevated' style of writing in the Fourth Eclogue, adds weight to the idea that it is something different, if not necessarily other-worldly. This can be explained by the fact that the monologue, like the use of language and the overall thematic structure, is intrinsic to the impact and therefore to the success of the Eclogue. After all, the overriding aim of it is to act as a signifier of the birth of a very important child and the concomitant heralding of a new *gens aurea*. This would probably be best done through a monologue. It does after all give the aura of a prophetic statement, with the narrator acting as an intermediary between the reader and Fate (for want of a better

²¹ Paul Alpers, *The Singer of the Eclogues: A Study of Virgilian Pastoral* (Berkeley, California 1979) p. 140

word). It is also probably the best literary device for delivering a prophetic message of the kind that Virgil intended, as it is delivered holistically and by the one narrator: it is therefore both vividly rendered and also has a powerfully resonating impact due to the absence of another authorial voice. There is therefore no one to argue against what is being stated in a monologue, and there is no real need to justify one's statements because there is no one to refute them. It remains simply to deliver them with the full force of one's conviction, which is clearly what Virgil intended here. The monologue is therefore the ideal rhetorical device for the fulfilment of Virgil's purpose, to announce the arrival of this child. However, this device, because of the fact that it is very intentionally prophetic, lent further ambiguity to the Fourth Eclogue and further ammunition for those who wished to suppose that Virgil was indeed prophesying things of far greater resonance than that which pertained to his own socio-political sphere.

The ambiguities in the text are the primary source of the reputation of the Fourth Eclogue: the fact that the child is not given a name and his identity is so perplexingly kept from us, the fact that his birth will herald a golden age (a golden age for Rome or for all of humanity?) and the fact that forty years after it was written, there was born one Jesus Christ. Of course today one cannot reasonably assume that it is the Christian Messiah of whom Virgil was writing. However, one can ascertain that it was the cumulative effect of various ambiguities in Virgil's writing that gave the Fourth Eclogue and its author, the mythic status that both went on to achieve. Virgil could not have foreseen such events, and so perhaps the most likely conclusion is that the Fourth Eclogue, indeed the entire *Eclogues* and *Georgics* were primarily a literary exercise, a precursor to his magnum opus, the *Aeneid*. Having read numerous authors looking to at least entertain the notion that Virgil was indeed a prophetic precursor of the Christian Messiah, I have found that they invariably dismiss the notion as a relic of the superstitious early years of Christianity and the Middle Ages, ages when the most renowned of scholars were still more inclined to believe what W Warde Fowler calls the '*dira cupido* of scholars'²². In other words, the idea of Virgil's position as a Christian prophet has been entertained and even accepted (by Christians) when Christianity has been in the ascendancy or else in a far more powerful position than it is now.²³ It seems that this particular *dira cupido* has been erased with the increased secularization (and consequent objectivity) not only of society, but also of the academic community. The Fourth Eclogue was, as far as Virgil seems to have been concerned, a literary exercise. It also appears that the son of Octavian (never born) is the most likely candidate for the identity of the unnamed *puer*. As pertains to the original question however, I am inclined to conclude that the so-called 'Messianic Eclogue' can best be described as a serendipitously prophetic piece of propaganda.

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²² Mayor *et.al.*, *op. cit.* p. 50

²³ In the sense that in the Middle Ages Christianity and Christian superstition permeated all aspects of society and there were very few avowed atheists living in Christian societies, whereas Western society has of course become more secularized in recent history.

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Down to Earth - the Elimination of the Divine Element in Medicine and Historiography

“There are in fact two things, science and opinion; the former begets knowledge, the latter ignorance.” - Hippocrates, ‘Law’

Last year, the renowned scientist Richard Dawkins brought forth his most recent jeremiad, *The God Delusion*. In this book, Dawkins continues with his thesis that religious belief is idiocy, dangerous delusion and laughable relic. Impartial investigation and religion have long been thought to be in conflict, and any historian or scientist worth his salt will never mention God as a link in the chain of causality. Why? Why are the gods divorced from sensible discussion and what brought this divorce about?

To assess the shift in historiography, we must begin with Homer. The Homeric poet(s) were certainly not ashamed to link events with the responsible deities - as one example, take a casual phrase from the *Odyssey*, Book 12.313: “Zeus the Cloud-Gatherer whipped up a gale of incredible violence.”²⁴ Even more prominent are the invocations to the Muse at the beginnings of both the Homeric poems. Homer’s claim to authority rests on the fact that the Muse is behind his songs. This is how he knows what happened, both on Olympus and on the battlefield. Otherwise, the poet would be unable to recount the events accurately. This is proved by the preface to the extensive catalogue of ships in *Iliad* Book 2:484-92: “Tell me now, you Muses who have your homes on Olympus- you are gods, and attend all things and know all things, but **we hear only the report and have no knowledge**- tell me who were the leaders of the Danaans and their rulers. As for the mass of men, **I could not tell of them nor name them**, not if I had ten tongues and ten mouths, and in me a voice unbreakable and a heart of bronze, unless the Olympian Muses, daughters of Zeus who holds the aegis, were to tell over the names of all the many who came to Ilios.”²⁵ Even philosophers, widely blamed for the downfall of belief, used to be pious in their way; Parmenides talks about *dai/monev*, and Empedocles mentions ‘quieting the Muse’. However, there is a marked move away from this dependence on the divine, which can be seen in the writings of Theognis, who invokes the gods but also claims to have spoken to eye-witnesses of the facts. Obviously, interviews with eyewitnesses were not possible for the subjects of Homer, but there is a definite shift in emphasis from the complete reliance on divine revelation to the author’s own efforts and study. Crucially, history as we know it has some amount of input from the author, such as Herodotus’ frequent judgements between two versions of a story, while the Homeric poems are almost totally free of any bias beyond describing someone’s speech as disrespectful.

It has been widely believed that the Greeks regarded Homer as a reliable historian- and how could they not, considering his hotline to Olympus, whose inhabitants knew every detail of the conflict? In support of this, scholars point to the fact that

²⁴ Homer, ‘The Odyssey’, Translated by E.V. Rieu, Revised Translation by D.C.H. Rieu, Penguin Classics 1991

²⁵ All extracts from the *Iliad* are taken from ‘The Iliad’, Translated by Martin Hammond, Penguin Classics 1987, (the emphasis is mine)

Thucydides, perhaps the most serious of all the ancient historians, quoted Homer as a source to back up his own hypotheses. For example, this passage from Book 1, Chapter 3 of Thucydides' *History*: "The best evidence for [the fact that Greeks were not called Hellenes before the Trojan War] can be found in Homer, who, though he was born much later than the time of the Trojan War, nowhere uses the name 'Hellenic' for the whole force."²⁶ This would seem to prove that Homer was taken seriously, certainly in the purely factual aspects of his narrative (Thucydides never refers to Homer's mention of the gods).

John Marincola suggests that Thucydides and Herodotus were seen as "imitators and rivals of Homer"²⁷, and later scholars named the nine books of Herodotus' work after the Muses, clearly indicating the link between epic poetry and contemporary history. Herodotus clearly stands out from Homer by not narrating events from the divine perspective as well. While Homer claims that the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon was incited by Apollo (*Iliad* 1.8-9: "Which of the gods was it that set these two to their fighting? It was the son of Zeus and Leto."), Herodotus provides a 'short-term' answer with Croesus, king of Lydia, beginning the first war recounted in the *Histories* on a purely human level (albeit influenced by the perpetually ambiguous Oracle). Herodotus does link himself to the ancient epic tradition by explicitly mentioning the emotive word κλε/ον in the first sentence of his proem, and his subject matter seems very similar to that of Homer- Greeks against barbarians and the 'glorious' fighters on either side. However, he then goes on to give some archaic reasons for the conflict between East and West - the usual mythological themes of abductions and rapes. He uses well-known names, such as Medea and Io, but their abductions have no link to the myths concerning them: both seem to have been abducted by bored merchant sailors from abroad. However, this is the Persian account of events, and Herodotus concedes that "the Greeks have a different story"²⁸. This is an obvious break from Homeric tradition, where the account was definitive and not open to alternative accounts of events. Herodotus does not always alter traditional myths, such as the account of Arion in 1.24, who was saved from pirates by using music to charm a dolphin to take him to shore. There are many other mythological motifs in Herodotus' work, such as the story of Astyages and Harpagus in 1.114-119. Harpagus is served the flesh of his own son at a dinner party as punishment for failing to expose the child of Astyages' daughter. Such anthropophagic events are certainly familiar from other stories in myth, and the recurring mythological motifs all but obscure the original facts of the matter.²⁹

Mysterious and potentially divine events play a large role in Herodotus' account. Beyond the frequent references to oracular pronouncements from Delphi, he also describes prophetic dreams, for example in 1.34, where Croesus dreams of his son Atys' death. Herodotus describes Croesus' misfortune in these terms: "Nemesis fell upon

²⁶ All extracts from Thucydides are taken from 'History of the Peloponnesian War', Translated by Rex Warner, Penguin Classics, 1972.

²⁷ J. Marincola, 'Authority and Tradition In Ancient Historiography', Cambridge 1997

²⁸ I. 2. All references to Herodotus are taken from 'The Histories', Translated by Aubrey de Séincourt, Penguin Classics, 2003

²⁹ For further analysis of the mythology of Herodotus, see C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'Reading Greek Culture', chapter on "Myth" and History- On Herodotus 3.48, 50-3'

Croesus, presumably because God was angry with him for supposing himself the happiest of men”. Herodotus here displays his close affiliation with tragic motifs, such as hubris, but at the same time confessing that he does not know conclusively why the wrath of the divine fell upon Croesus, unlike Homer, who is able to state conclusively why Apollo punished the Greek camp in *Iliad* 1. Despite Croesus’ precautions - he makes his son marry as soon as possible and moves all the weapons in the palace from the men’s quarters to the women’s, “because he was afraid that some blade hanging on the wall might fall on Atys’ head”³⁰ - we already know from myths and fairy tales that Fate cannot be thwarted by any precautions made against it (cf. Oedipus, Jason, Sleeping Beauty...), and Atys is killed in a hunting accident.

Dreams also affect Xerxes and his advisors. In Book 7, chapter 12, Xerxes is visited by a figure in his dream who tells him to invade Greece. When he tells his advisor Artabanus about the dream, he scoffs at it, saying: “You imagine, my son, that your dream was sent by some god or other; but dreams do not come from God.” He believes that dreams are merely reflections of what we have been most concerned with during the day, and offers to sleep in Xerxes’ bed and in his clothes, arguing that the phantom could not be so stupid as to think that whoever wears the king’s pyjamas is the king. If the phantom visits Xerxes again, regardless of his sleepwear, then Artabanus will concede that the dream could be divine. By this rather bewildering logic the switch is made and Artabanus spends the day pretending to be the king. While sleeping, the same spectre appears and, recognising Artabanus as the advisor who has been trying to dissuade the king from invading Greece, attempts to poke his eyes out with hot irons, saying “You will not escape unpunished, either now or hereafter, for seeking to turn aside that which must happen”. (Book 7, Chapter 17). This story is important for showing how Xerxes finally decided to invade Greece, but it would have been more responsible from our point of view to look for the more earthly factors which forced that decision rather than retiring to an account of a dream which is probably deeply rooted in hearsay.

So, Herodotus substantially altered the writing of history by failing to make the gods main characters in his narrative, but he still kept the mystical elements which affected human actions. Thucydides seems to be allergic to this idea of mysticism in history, and decisively declares that his work “is not a piece of writing designed to meet the taste of an immediate public, but was done to last for ever” (1.22). He directly contrasts the (rather difficult to translate) term $\tau\omicron\ \mu\upsilon\mu\omega\tilde{\nu}\epsilon\upsilon$, which Warner renders as ‘romantic element’, with $\tau\omicron\ \sigma\alpha\phi\epsilon/\nu$, which seems to mean ‘the truth’, or that which can be analysed- since myth cannot be effectively analysed, Thucydides conclusively eliminates it from his work, conceding that “it may well be that my history will seem less easy to read because of the absence in it of a romantic element ($\tau\omicron\ \mu\upsilon\mu\omega\tilde{\nu}\epsilon\upsilon$)”. He obliquely criticises Herodotus, pouring scorn on writers like him by saying in 1.21 that the evidence he has gathered is better than that “of the prose chroniclers, who are less interested in telling the truth than in catching the attention of their public, whose authorities cannot be checked, and whose subject-matter, owing to the passage of time, is mostly lost in the unreliable streams of mythology”. This statement is

³⁰ Herodotus I. 39 - 40

totally in keeping with the author's opinion that only the present time can be accurately recorded, since we cannot rely on tradition accurately to relay information about the past. Thucydides' work relies heavily on the fact that the author was present for many of the events described, and even had a hand in some of them. Eyewitness accounts and their increasing popularity are important for understanding why the gods fail to be mentioned - it would have been difficult to find a mortal witness to testify as to what was going on in Olympus at the same time as the battles on Earth, so such testimony is ignored. Thucydides only has mortal witnesses at his disposal, not like Homer, who had the Muse to tell him exactly what happened on each side of the battle line as well as in the divine sphere. However, just because the poets and prose writers sculpt their information to please an audience, this does not mean that they cannot be in some way factual as well. At 1.20 he also says: "In investigating past history, and in forming the conclusions which I have formed, it must be admitted that one cannot rely on **every** detail which has come down to us by way of tradition" (emphasis mine), but this does imply that in every tradition there must still be some aspect of truth, so this justifies his use of mythological characters, such as Minos in 1.4 and Hellen in 1.3, who appear as viable historical characters, albeit stripped of their mythical attributes.

One of the main differences between Herodotus and Thucydides is the total absence of the gods and any sort of mysticism in Thucydides' narrative. The only references to the divine are in places where the characters in question visit a temple or make a direct reference, but the gods do not appear in a place where the author is totally in control of the depiction of the causes of events. However, just because Thucydides does not include myths or gods, it does not necessarily mean that he did not believe in them. He does not draw conclusions about divine intervention from any chance occurrences, and says tellingly during his account of the devastating plague that: "as for the gods, it seemed to be the same thing whether one worshipped them or not" (2.53). In the *Euthyphro*, Socrates' interlocutor declares that he believes in the gods and the myths about them. This statement is slightly problematic- does Plato say that Euthyphro believes this because he represents the common man, or is he trying to make him look like the fool to Socrates' enlightened philosopher? In *Hellenica* 1, Xenophon says that the Athenian sailors erected a trophy after being victorious at the Battle of Arginousae, though he does not say that a god was responsible for the outcome of the skirmish. Clearly the sailors were eager to give whatever due was necessary to the god, manifest or otherwise, lest they be less successful in future ventures.

Why the elimination of the divine then, if there was belief in it? Marincola suggests that history becomes more social and less hero-based as a result of the changing political climate. The development of democracy meant that the people could be given credit for any great things that their government did (though any blame was swiftly passed to the speakers, generals, or any one else who could have been responsible for 'misleading' the people), so by more writing about clashes of city states and entire civilisations, and less about individual conflicts between heroes, the people were appeased in their desire for praise. It could also be the case that, due to the lack of a definitive canon, Greek religion was much more open to scrutiny than scripture-based religions. John Gould says "Greek religion is not theologically fixed and stable, and it

has no tradition of exclusion or finality: it is an open, not a closed, system.”³¹ Since religion was crucial to the structure of the Athenian *polis*, an open rejection of the existence of the gods, or any attempt to replace them would have violated the *pax deorum*, but introducing new gods or (in our case) simply not directly including them in the chain of causality was no great slight. An example of this would be Socrates, executed in 399 B.C. It is possible that, subsequent to the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War, there was some form of religious revival, like that during the plague, where the defeat was blamed on some fit of divine pique, and the city must turn back to ways pleasing to the gods in order to avoid further destruction (cf. Horace *Odes* 3.6). Socrates and his conception of his *dai/mwn* did not go down well with this fervour and, when coupled with his habit of publicly humiliating respected figures, meant disaster for one of the most famous philosophers of all time. By the end of the 4th Century however, we hear nothing more about blasphemy trials concerning philosophers. Drachmann says, in ‘Atheism in Pagan Antiquity’, that any threat to state worship in Rome was prosecuted, but not generally. He suggests that this was due to the fact that Greek philosophy had gradually infiltrated the society, rather than this sudden ‘gad-fly’ of an agitator, Socrates. Lucretius even praised Epicurus (who had also been accused of blasphemy) in his work ‘De Rerum Natura’, saying at 1.62-79 “When human life lay grovelling in all men’s sight, crushed to the earth under the dead weight of superstition whose grim features loomed menacingly upon mortals from the four quarters of the sky, a man of Greece was first to raise mortal eyes in defiance, first to stand erect and brave the challenge... we by his triumph are lifted level with the skies.”³²

Thucydides’ elimination of the gods seems to have been received with some enthusiasm by Roman historians, since they also rarely feature in their works, but there was still some cross over into epic-like concepts. Dio says that dreams he had seen were his motivation for writing history, and Marcus Aurelius thanks the gods for their guidance via his dreams. Marincola says of Dio: “he had begun with a book of dreams and portents, and throughout his history they play an important role”.³³ Dio, like Herodotus, recognised that humans can be influenced by coincidental dreams and thought them worthy of inclusion. Dio thus describes his reasons for writing history in terms of divine guidance, but this more superstitious approach seems to coexist with his line of factual inquiry. The inclusion of gods could also have been intended to harmonise with a prevailing political climate, especially under the emperors, who claimed descent from Venus and Mars. Including the myth could also have implications for the author, whose piety (obviously an important part of the Roman ethos) would have been thus displayed. Tacitus attributes the rise and fall of the deceitful Sejanus in *Annals* 4.1 in these terms: “the cause [of Sejanus’ rise to power] was rather heaven’s anger against Rome- to which the triumph of Sejanus, and his downfall too, were catastrophic”.³⁴

³¹ J. Gould, ‘On Making Sense of Greek Religion’, in Easterling and Muir (eds.), ‘Greek Religion and Society’, quoted in N. Morley, ‘Ancient History: Key Themes and Approaches’, (Routledge 2000)

³² Lucretius, ‘On the Nature of the Universe’, Translated by R.E. Latham, (Penguin Classics 1951)

³³ J. Marincola, ‘Authority and Tradition In Ancient Historiography’, Cambridge 1997

³⁴ Tacitus, ‘The Annals of Imperial Rome’, Translated by Michael Grant, Penguin Classics 1996

So, the elimination of the divine in history was partly down to prevailing political climates, and the increasing dependence on mortal eyewitnesses. It was also quite a conscientious choice by this new version of historian- since they could not speak accurately concerning the reaction of the gods to mortal actions, they preferred to leave it out altogether. Thucydides' translator Rex Warner suggests that Thucydides was inspired by the impartial writings of Hippocrates, so it is on that note that we look at the arena of science, now so widely believed to be in diametric opposition to religion, and specifically the scientific branch of medicine.

Possibly the two most famous medics of the ancient world are Hippocrates and Galen. The writings of both men remained influential in both the Christian and 'pagan' arenas until the discoveries of the likes of Ibn Nafis, William Harvey, Leonardo da Vinci and John Hunter. Science began as a branch of philosophy until the need for a division was discovered, necessitated by the mind-body division; philosophy was for one, medicine was for the other. Celsus writes in Proemium 6 of 'De Medicina' that "at first, the science of healing was held to be part of philosophy, so that the curing of diseases and the contemplation of the nature of things came in through the same authorities"³⁵. However, there was still much mingling of the two - Galen was described by Marcus Aurelius as "first among physicians, unique among philosophers"³⁶. The two skills were closely linked because of their shared need for logic. There was also a lot of superstition incorporated into medicine - in a rather 'Dorian Grey' approach, vices were believed to be 'diseases of the soul', and these spiritual diseases in turn had an effect on the body of the person in question. However, if these vices had no somatic expression then they did not fall under the jurisdiction of the doctor, since there was as yet no concept of psychiatry.

Galen, whose father caused him to take up medicine based on a dream he had one evening of the god Aesculapius, wrote commentaries on Hippocratic treatises and says in the commentary on 'Airs, Waters, Places' that astronomy is needed in medicine, since the stars bring in changes in the seasons, which bring on changes in human health. It should be noted that he does not promote astrology as well. In other words, it was important to the doctor to examine his patient's context for clues as to his disease. Owsei Temkin says in his book 'Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians' that "absence of any mention of the traditional gods is as significant as is the stress on cosmic phenomena and 'the nature' of disease." Hippocrates wrote a treatise entitled 'On the Sacred Disease', but begins the work by saying: "I am about to discuss the disease called 'sacred'. It is not, in my opinion, any more divine or sacred than other diseases, but has a natural cause, and its supposed divine origin is due to men's inexperience, and to their wonder at its particular character." Epilepsy was often thought to be caused by a god in other cultures as well - in Greece the perpetrator was the god Apollo, whereas in Biblical Canaan epileptics were probably those brought to Jesus described as 'possessed by a demon'. In his commentary on 'Airs, Waters, Places' Galen also comments on epilepsy: "the ancients called it boyhood disease... others called it sacred, for it occurs, in their opinion,

³⁵ All references to 'De Medicina' are taken from the Loeb Classical Library.

³⁶ Cited in J. Barnes, 'Galen on Logic and Theory', in Kudlien and Durling (eds.) 'Galen's Method of Healing', E.J. Brill 1991

as a consequence of the anger of heaven”³⁷. Galen scorns people who use “Egyptian sorceries” in *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentisae facultatibus*, so it is possible that he condemned religion as heavily as he did superstition, especially if it got in the way of the doctor’s practices. However, in Proemium 17 of Celsus’ “*De Medicina*”, he writes concerning mysterious diseases: “it is necessary to consider how such have commenced, without which no one among mortals can possibly find out whether this rather than that remedy should be used; this is the reason why the investigate the occult causes.” Despite this, Celsus never recommends worship as a way of curing or avoiding illness.

However, Hippocrates himself seemed to have some religious sympathies. The famed Hippocratic oath begins with vows to the gods, although this could have been merely to formalise the oath or appease the populace. In his book ‘*On Regimen*’, Hippocrates treated the gods positively, since they “ordered [the] nature of all [things]”. Temkin says that later doctors “generally speaking... not only believed in Aesculapius but conceded that he was a greater healer than they.”³⁸ Aesculapius made a doctor’s life slightly easier, as he could refer a particularly tricky case to the care of the god, and provided a solution to hopeless cases which was socially palatable. ‘*On Regimen*’ even orders specific prayers to the gods and a guide to the interpretation of dreams, but in another work (*Decorum* 6) says, crucially: “prayer is indeed good, but while calling on the gods a man should himself lend a hand”. Usually Hippocrates makes references to Aesculapius in particular, but when he does make references to other gods they are much more vague and tend to be interpreted more in the sense of ‘divine power’. Perhaps this vagueness prevented any attack from those who could accuse him of ignoring the traditional gods. Galen also seems to be religious in some areas of his commentary on ‘*Airs, Waters, Places*’- in section G.34 he writes “we should know that every old man has a life limited by the heavenly movements, and these movements are determined by their creator and mover”. Science also seems to be indebted to poetry in some ways, since in section G.50, Galen quotes Hesiod as an authority on the rising of stars, and then also quotes Homer as an astronomer.

Scientists, especially those of the Hippocratic school, idolised the teachers who had gone before them; in *De Usu Partium*, a fairly accurate and complete collection of notes from Galen’s lectures, Galen says “And now again let us begin with the words of Hippocrates as with the voice from a god”. Is this sarcasm, or an accurate reflection of how Hippocrates was viewed by those who came after him? This reverence could be because doctors were believed to be doing to work of the god, almost as though the doctor was a conduit through which Aesculapius could work. In this sense, medicine itself became almost like a religion. St. Jerome mentions in one of his letters that Hippocrates made pupils swear obedience to him every day before he taught them. Jerome seems to suggest that this was a problem for Christians, so it is possible that Hippocrates may have been claiming for himself respect like that given to the gods.

³⁷ Translation taken from Abraham Wasserstein, ‘Galen’s Commentary on the Hippocratic Treatise “*Airs, Waters, Places*”’, Jerusalem 1982

³⁸ O. Temkin, ‘Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians’, John Hopkins University Press 1991

I mentioned earlier the vague ideas of 'divine power' which were espoused by Hippocrates in particular. Doctors and some natural philosophers seem to have made Nature their alternative god, giving nature credit for natural phenomena rather than the gods. In *De Usu Partium*, Galen goes through various aspects of the body and claims that no better structure was possible for each one, be it an organ or a limb. In short, Nature had done perfectly in the shaping of the human form. Galen's devotion to nature served him well- he came tantalisingly close to identifying the cause of diseases when he described the 'germs' of disease which float on the air, especially near foul smelling places such as marshes and cesspools, rather than continuing to attribute diseases to the arrows of Diana and Apollo. The medical devotion to naturalism made it to the status of pseudo-religion, yet this did not earn them any particular enmity among the civilian body. Ralph Jackson says that "the rise of rational medicine did not eclipse irrational beliefs, and the healing deities flourished alongside scientific medicine in an almost parallel development"³⁹. This is much what we could accept from a tolerant society such as Rome, which only really reacted if the divine offices were in direct peril. It was only later that Nature became equivalent to a rejection of the traditional deity/deities. For example, this extract from the Marquis de Sade's book 'Dialogue Between a Priest and a Dying Man' illustrates the later dichotomy between a moral God and the corrupting forces of Nature: "Your god is a machine you fabricated to serve your passions; you manipulated it so that it suited them- but the moment it interfered with mine, I kicked it out of my way, and was glad that I did so... Nature shaped my soul, which is the result of the dispositions she formed in me while pursuing her own ends and needs. And as she needs vices just as much as virtues, whenever she wanted to arouse me to evil, she did so, just as whenever she wanted a good deed from me, she roused in me the desire to perform one. I just did as I was instructed."

While their atheistic view may have caused doctors to be slightly unusual in the ancient world, it is partially because of this attitude that their writings survived for so long in the Christian world - since they did not declare any particular devotion to a specific god except the occasional mention of Aesculapius, they did not offend the church fathers and were therefore permitted to continue to influence medical thought for centuries.

In conclusion, the trend in eliminating the divine element relies on the dependence on eyewitness accounts in both science and history. Homer himself was reliant on eyewitnesses, but his were divine beings. After Thucydides, mention of the gods was completely up to the piety of the historian and the prevailing political conditions. The aim of the author was also important - Galen waxes lyrical on the skill of Nature because he had it in mind to write praising Nature. If Thucydides had wanted to write his History as a work praising the providence of the gods during Athens' struggles, he would have. All were, consciously or not, true to Hippocrates' maxim that opinion only led to confusion and prejudice, whereas the logical processes of science led to a fuller appreciation of the causes of events, and conclusions could be drawn from the information thus acquired. This is important for history in learning how to effectively prevent the mistakes of the past, and important for medicine in curing and preventing

³⁹ R. Jackson, 'Doctors and Diseases in the Roman Empire', British Museum Publications 1988

illnesses. So, until we can find a way reliably to see events from the divine perspective we must not underestimate the effect that mysterious elements can have upon peoples' actions and constitutions, but at the same time the divine element does not belong in disciplines which, in their purest form, should be impartial expositions of the facts at hand.

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Le Sursaut Vital : Lucretius and Bataille.⁴⁰

Much has been written about *De Rerum Natura*, 62-79⁴¹, a passage in which Lucretius gives us the most powerful and poignant account of Epicurean philosophy as an epiphany. Indeed, the passage's semantics certainly point towards this idea of epiphany. The passage is also marked throughout by an important theme, that of geography: Lucretius draws clear lines with regard to the world of the above and the world under it. The aim of this paper is to show that this passage can also be read from a very different perspective. I shall argue that Lucretius' narrative pattern is not constructed for solely poetic reasons, but rather as the *result* of an epiphany. This will lead us to see in what way this passage can also, through the eyes of Bataille, constitute perhaps the most resounding call of the famed Epicurean notion of the "urgency of philosophy".⁴²

I shall start by focusing briefly on the semantic aspects of the passage, drawing particular attention to Lucretius' geography. From line 62, we are at once thrown into the underworld of Humanity, *subjected* to religion: "*oculos*", "*iaceret*". Particular attention should be drawn also to the "*oculos*" of line 63, which coupled with the range of terms indicating high and low regions tell us just quite how important the geographical aspect is in this passage. And this point is only made all the more strongly when, in line 64, we encounter "*caput*", yet another term adding to the importance of spatial division. And further emphasizing the importance of this in the author's eyes is the epithet that is used to describe the powers of the gods in line 65, "*horribili aspectu*". Thus it does not come as a surprise that the epiphany that follows – Epicurus' introduction into the narrative – should be concentrated around terms such as "*primum*" (66), the repetition of "*contra*" (66 and 67), "*ausus*" (67) and "*obsistere*" (67). The sharp contrast created here by the close juxtaposition of terms contrasting so strongly with one another re-enforces the theatrical aspect of Lucretius' lines. But the reasons for his doing this are not entirely poetic. In fact, they are entirely philosophical, in a sense that is far greater than our normal reading of these lines.

Through his construction of a divided world, a divine, above, and a human, under, Lucretius points towards a pre-eminence of one over the other. As our semantic overview showed, there is a clear supremacy of the divine over the human: as it stands, there is no such thing as a question of autonomy of the human world. That is broken by the "*primum Graius homo*" of line 66. Besides the idea of a rise, there is, more importantly, a clear sign that through this, the underworld takes its independence. Indeed as Bataille points out, "*It is only because of the mythical representation of autonomous spirits that the body is placed in the real world*".⁴³ Bataille is making a point of significant relevance to Lucretius's idea here, namely that *because* Epicurus' arrival in the narrative gives the

⁴⁰ It is my greatest pleasure to acknowledge the help of friends, old and new, regarding this paper.

⁴¹ References to Lucretius's text are taken from Bailey's OUP (2nd edition), Oxford, 1921.

⁴² "May no one who, because of his youth, delay the start of his philosophical activity; nor any one who is already of age become tired of it", *Letter to Menoeceus*, § 122.

⁴³ Bataille, *Théorie de la Religion*, Gallimard, Paris, 1973, p. 51. Translations into English are my own.

human gender its independence, it follows that the gods lose their transcendent status (by 'transcendent', I here mean their extra-temporal nature, one fixed in eternity). Thus, Epicurus' irruption into the mortal world gives the human race its independence. But within this point, there are rather more important ideas I wish to develop, notably regarding what Bataille has to say about the profane world, precisely before the emergence of the divine.

Before the advent of the religious fact, the human body is, in Bataille's work, a singularly lonely and desperate one. It rots pitifully, and yet it achieves perfection, fulfilling its nature, through death. As Bataille points out, "... the corpse is the most perfect endorsement of the mind".⁴⁴ What Bataille means by this is that in the wholly natural state, that is to say even *before* the birth of the gods into the mundane world (and their subsequent take-over of it in Lucretius), death is the only possible aspiration of the human race. That is that since the humans do not even have a *master* to follow, the only thing that justifies their existence is, plainly, the sight of their own death. It follows from there that when Lucretius speaks of this relation between the human and the divine as based on domination, the fundamentally human trait of death (as a justification to human existence) disappears. The transition from 'natural' to 'subjected to divinity' marks the happening of the material world. Through their subjection of the human race ("*oppressa*"), the gods afford the human race with matter: from being a "corpse", it is now "*oppressa*", something it could not even have imagined before – void of matter, as it was. And the interesting thing is that this materialization of the body, which happens thanks to its being *subjected*, is death: "the feeling of my fundamental *improbability* places me in a world for which I am a foreigner, absolutely foreign".⁴⁵

What we get to see through Lucretius' lens is the rise of man against the gods. But in a wider frame, it is also the second stage in the evolution of mankind, the first one being the transition from natural state, to his subjection to the divine.

For this reason I now wish to turn to this problem, that of a transition from the individual to the universal. Let us turn back to Lucretius, considering the two following passages: "... *processit longe flammantia moenia mundi*" (73) and "*nos exaequat Victoria caelo*" (79). Line 73 shows us the deification of Epicurus, who, through his genius, stood up in such a way as to go outside our world, that is to say he is placed on a similar level to that of the gods. And the effect of 79 is, precisely, to extend this notion to the entirety of mankind: the glory of Epicurus' victory shines on all of us. This on account of the transition from the "*moenia mundi*", strictly Epicurus' feat, to "*nos ... caelo*", now ours as well. And if anything, here is a step in the right direction. For Lucretius's lines have more to say than what we can read.

Indeed, the step here taken *finds* the human race, it *creates* it. And not only does it introduce an interesting echo to Epicurean universalism, but also does it posit divinity as an indispensable step towards Humanity. Indeed, "it is the human body's glory to be the

⁴⁴ Bataille (1973), p. 54.

⁴⁵ Bataille, *L'Expérience Intérieure*, Gallimard, Paris, 1954, p. 84.

substrate of divinity”, as Bataille points out.⁴⁶ One could not imagine the human race as acquiring its independence, once freed from the servitudes of its divine state, *without* it first going through the phase of servitude. Indeed, by this step, humanity buys its freedom. But this freedom posits two prisoners. The human itself, insofar as it lies prisoner of its own finiteness at first, and the divine, which subjects the human.

What the divine also does (and following on here from the Platonic critique, founded on divine perfection) is reveal to us the urgency of philosophy. In saying this, I do not wish to refer merely to the Lucretian argument in favour of this, but rather to a more general one. Freedom is something always to be conquered; it is a horizon and is therefore never fully achieved, like a fantasy. But this emancipation of man from the divine comes at a price – thought. In Bataille’s words, “god, in man’s thought, necessarily corresponds to man, since man is tired, yearning for food and peace ... man cannot handle it anymore, he asks for a truce and throws himself into abandonment”.⁴⁷ Precisely, it is there that lays the heart of the Lucretian message: this immense resource that man is *condemned* to set forth if he wishes to justify himself as a rational being. And the only way for him to this is philosophy, an “urgency” *precisely* because it raises man from that state of subjection, and the only way for man to justify himself.

This raises an important issue with regards to Lucretius’s text. Indeed, with Bataille’s reading of the situation, we get strangely closer to Epicurus. What Bataille brings us in approaching Lucretius is a key to the reading of the Epicurean message. Things are not simply about ditching the gods, far from it. Things are not simply about philosophy. Rather, there is a strong call from Lucretius for philosophy *as an action*, not as a contemplative activity. What he wants is action, something beautifully illustrated by the movement we see in this passage. *Praxis* is what is at stake, not the text. And Bataille can only serve as an incentive to re-read Lucretius with even more energy, taking on board what Epicurus *did*, rather than to be concerned with what he has to say.

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⁴⁶ Bataille (1973), p. 54.

⁴⁷ Bataille (1954), p. 121.

Catullus: Aspects of Influence on his Imitators, Classical and post-Classical

'Sua tempestate pares paucas in dicendo frenata oratione, superiorem habuit neminem.'

This acclaim of Catullus, found in the 1472 printed manuscript of the lost *Veronensis*, perhaps explains one of the reasons why this particular poet of the late Roman republic has been so widely admired and emulated. As Wiseman suggests, 'of all the Latin poets, Catullus is the one who seems to speak most directly to us,'⁴⁸ a view corroborated by Wright with the following words:

'It's strange to think of Catullus as having my feelings
Without my background. He'd hardly read anything,
Not a line of the romantic poets or Shakespeare,

Didn't even know English, which is almost a prerequisite
For a poet whose subject is me. Somehow he managed,
In spite of these classical failings, to blunder into

Our song.'⁴⁹

So it is not surprising that Catullus and his work have so often been translated, and honoured with reincarnation, a practice which Catullus himself performed, the most renowned case being his poem LI, which closely adheres to the Sapphic ode, fragment 31. We could say that Catullus himself is an imitator, as seen above with his emulation of the Greek poetess Sappho and also considering the Greek *new/teroi*, particularly Callimachus, who turned away from the classical epic poetry in the tradition of Homer to concentrate on personal themes.

When we read Catullus' work, it is hard to believe that anyone could fail to see and admit that it is indeed 'intense with the simple emotions of joy and sorrow, anger and above all love.'⁵⁰ In fact, it is these elements that are chosen apart from the rest, apart from the invectives, to be emulated. A particularly good example of this is Virgil's use of the simile in Book 9 of his *Aeneid* (though, of course, Catullus' is not an inspiration restricted to the *Aeneid* only, but it can also be seen in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*). The scene in the epic which culminates in the death of Nisus and Euryalus is naturally full of pathos, as their particularly strong relationship, previously described as *pious amor*, is cut short by self-sacrifice. The vulnerability of Euryalus is instantly brought to mind by the use of the simile of the flower, severed before its time by the inanimate and uncaring plough. Of course this is highly reminiscent of Catullus' poem XI, in which he describes himself in this way, destroyed by Lesbia. Let us compare the simile itself:

⁴⁸ T.P. Wiseman, *Catullus and his world, a reappraisal*, 1985, p.1

⁴⁹ G.T. Wright, *On Translating Catullus*, *Centennial Review* 19, 1975, p.174

⁵⁰ G.P. Goold, *Catullus*, 1983, p.1

*'purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
 languescit moriens lassove papavera collo
 demisere caput, pluvia cum forte gravantur.'*⁵¹
*'nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,
 qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati
 ultimi flos, praeterente postquam
 tactus aratrost.'*⁵²

These young men have allowed themselves to be overcome by youthful and naïve emotion, and to be destroyed in the pursuit of love. The tenderness of Catullus' simile has aptly been inserted into the epic in a moment of great sorrow which nevertheless aims to depict the effects of *pius amor* in the midst of massacre and warfare. As Petrini comments, 'Catullus and Virgil present their young characters in transition, at the moments in which they leave their childhood and enter the adult world.'⁵³ However, as all these youths find, the transition is not simple, due to the feelings of love that hinder it. Virgil's choice of simile here, although not relating to precisely the same sort of love as Catullus' for Lesbia, is so perfect here because of the intense emotion inherent within it, an element which Virgil successfully picked out from Catullus' world and transposed into that of Nisus' and Euryalus'.

In fact, the emotion within it was not only spotted by Virgil, but Ovid too. His Book 3 of the *Metamorphoses* depicts a chaste, yet proud Narcissus on the brink of manhood, which evokes the image of the untouched maiden in Catullus' poem VXII, particularly in its use of language: thus Ovid -

*'namque ter ad quinos unum Cephisius annum
 addiderat poteratque puer iuvenisque videri:
 multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae;
 sed (fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma)
 nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae.'*⁵⁴

And Catullus -

*'ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis...
 multi illum pueri, multae optavere puellae:
 idem cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
 nulli illum pueri, nullae optavere puellae.'*⁵⁵

Such an example of intertextuality, via the similarity between Narcissus and the maiden, again brings up the simile of the flower. These two youths are also affected by

⁵¹ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 9, l. 435-37

⁵² Catullus Poem XI, l. 21-4

⁵³ M. Petrini, *The Child and the Hero, Coming of Age in Catullus and Virgil*.

⁵⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3. l.351-5

⁵⁵ Catullus Poem VXII l.39-44

the emotions of love, but in a very different way to those seen in Catullus' poem XI and Virgil. Instead they reject such emotion, and as a result, are not cut down in their prime for the sake of love, but their chastity and stubbornness in remaining untouched in fact leave them to wilt and become undesired. So, we see that while the flower simile is evoked, it is also set in a new context.

In fact, context is probably one of the most interesting ways in which Catullus is emulated, or perhaps a more appropriate term here would be 'adapted.' As we learn from Feeney, 'the absence of a context, or the difference between contexts, so far from being a scandal to interpretation, will often be the point...Catullus' weirdly context-less poem XXXIV (*Dianae sumus in fide*), ...may be read alongside other poems of his in which the problem of context appears to be the main point at issue... thirty years later, however, Horace rewrote the hymn so that it was saturated with context.'⁵⁶ It is Catullus' lack of context that renders his poetry accessible to all, given his conscious retreat from public life (which later poets too would try to achieve), and also perhaps what makes it accessible and pliable. Let us take a post-classical author as another example, Ben Jonson. In his 1692 work, *The Forrest*, we find in poems 5 and 6 a clear correlation to Catullus' poems V and VII:

*'Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
rumoresque senum severiorum
omnes unius aestimus assis.
soles occidere et redire possunt:
nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
nox est perpetua una dormienda.
da mihi basia mille, deinde centum,
dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
aut nequis malus invidere possit,
cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.'*⁵⁷

*'Quaeris, quot mihi basiationes
tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque.
quam magnus numerus Libyssae harenae
laserpiciferis iacet Cyrenis,
oraculum Iovis inter aestuosi
et Batti veteris sacrum sepulcrum;
aut quam sidera multa cum tacet nox,
furtivos hominum vident amores:
tam te basia multa basiare
vesano satis et super Catullost,*

⁵⁶ D. Feeney, *Literature and Religion at Rome*, 1998, p. 43.

⁵⁷ Catullus, Poem V

*quae nec pernumerare curiosi
possint nec mala fascinare lingua.*⁵⁸

In response to these, Jonson wrote two poems himself containing within them a wealth of Catullan imitation, translation and innovation, expertly weaved between his poems 5 and 6 to create an amalgamation of sorts to truly combine and bolster the persuasive ideas of his classical predecessor. Let us consider a few of the many lines:

*'Suns, that set, may rise again:
But, if once we lose this Light,
'Tis, with us, perpetual Night.*⁵⁹

*'Add a thousand (kisses), and so more:
Till you equal with the Store,
All the Grass that Runney yields,
Or the Sands in Chelsey Fields,
Or the Drops in silver Thames,
Or the Stars, that gild his Streams.*⁶⁰

We should here consider Boehrer's words, that 'by revising and adapting Catullan lyric, Jonson entered into conversation with a wide range of other poets who had all read, absorbed, echoed and replied to Catullus' verses.'⁶¹ It is Catullus' lack of context that allowed Jonson to adapt his words; again, we see how easily the scene is transferred to Elizabethan England, how easily Jonson was able to create his own mould while using the ingredients provided by Catullus. It is perhaps fitting that the watching stars remain the same, since they are in reality always the same for every lover, a constant which we can all identify with.

It has been discussed above that Catullus is a poet easily related to. That he is the instigator of emotion is a view held by Hinds, seen in his words, 'in the real world, a love-hate feeling may belong to everyone alike; but in the formal discourse of Roman elegy it is, and always must be first and foremost Catullus' emotion.'⁶² It is no surprise that Ovid emulated Catullus' poem LXXXV, since the torturous love-hate emotion is one widely accepted in the sphere of love, but it will always be Catullus' original that is remembered first and foremost for its sheer simplicity in plainly stating the feeling and therefore making the reader all the more affected.

Regarding the same emotion of torturous and unpredictable love, we can see in Byron's poems *To Anne* and *To The Same* an identification with the highs and lows of the volatile and changeable relationship of Lesbia and Catullus in the later years, particularly

⁵⁸ Catullus, Poem VII

⁵⁹ Jonson, *The Forrest*, poem 5, l. 6 -8

⁶⁰ Jonson, *The Forrest*, poem 6, l. 11-16

⁶¹ B. Boehrer, *Ben Jonson and the Traditio Basiorum: Catullan imitation in The Forrest 5 and 6*, Papers on Language and Literature, Vol. 32, 1996.

⁶² S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext, dynamics of appropriation in Roman poetry*, 1998, p. 29.

with elements of poems LXII, LXXVI, CVII, and CIX. Byron captures the oscillation between love and hate, grudge and forgiveness with the following words:

*'I swore, in a transport of young indignation,
With fervent contempt evermore to disdain
you:
I saw you – my anger became admiration;
And now, all my wish, all my hope's to
regain you.'*⁶³

We cannot fail to see that this is the emotion portrayed by Catullus with the following lines depicting his conflicting feelings:

*'nunc te cognovi: quare etsi impensius uror,
multo mi tamen es vilior et levior.
'qui potis es?' inquis. Quod amantem iniuria talis
cogit amare magis, sed bene velle minus.'*⁶⁴

Catullus' prayer to the gods in CIX is also echoed by Byron with the words:

*'Oh, say not, sweet Anne, that the Fates have
decreed
The heart which adores you should wish to
dissever.'*⁶⁵

The similarity to Catullus'

*'di magni, facite ut vere promittere possit...
ut liceat nobis tota perducere vita
aeternum hoc sanctae foedus amicitiae'*⁶⁶

echoes the last resort of the desperate lover, yet another emotion easily recognised and provoking empathy.

Goold has described Catullus' work as 'a binding spell upon the imagination,'⁶⁷ this seems to me a flawless explanation. It is truly binding, considering his depiction of emotions which 'hits the nail on the head,' as it were, and resulted in the wealth of emulation which followed, since it seems there was really no other distinct way of expressing the same feelings, for it had already been done too well. It is enchanting, for it has somehow been able to apply to every lover throughout generations, its pure simplicity and concise expression of intense emotion taking a powerful and extraordinary effect on

⁶³ Byron, *To Anne*, 1.15-20

⁶⁴ Catullus, Poem LXXII, 1.5-8

⁶⁵ Byron, *To The Same*, 1.1-4.

⁶⁶ Catullus, Poem CIX, 1.3-6

⁶⁷ G.P. Goold, *Catullus*, 1983, p.1

its readers. And it works upon the imagination, for it has inspired writers to take his words and set them in a new context, while still somehow remaining faithful to the Catullan original. We should therefore consider ourselves most fortunate that through his own merit and recognition for his brilliance, Catullus has managed to pull himself back from the brink of obscurity, thereby bequeathing to us some of the most exceptional literature the Romans could offer.

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The Roman MIV: Spooks for the Emperor & their subversion of *Romanitas*

Romanitas

‘Romanness’ was quite a fluid concept throughout the life of the city of Rome as it expanded into an empire and assimilated a variety of people and cultures into its own way, yet still maintained a ‘self’ in one form or another. Part of the difficulty for maintaining an equilibrium was that it would often define itself in opposition to other cultures, but then would, still being by far the dominant side, integrate certain aspects of the subordinated culture, such as the assimilation of the goddess Sulis into Minerva. This did not present a significant threat to their self-image very often as they could easily depict themselves as stamping out the barbarian traits in new provinces. Inevitably, in doing this, they would present themselves in a positive light. It is understandable that they liked to see themselves as moral, upright and virtuous and their enemies as devious, treacherous and wicked. The greater the threat posed by an enemy, or the greater the perceived threat, the stronger the need for propaganda in response to them. Take the phrase ‘Axis of Evil’. It has by turns been used in our times to describe Iran, Iraq and North Korea and the US and its allies, whilst those naming others thus, like to think of themselves as some form of ‘Axis of Good’. This is effectively just a rhetorical device to stir up support for one party and turn others against another and so should not be taken literally. Throughout much of Roman literature, *Romanitas* can be seen as exemplified in such a way as well as questioned and the challenge is this: how was the Roman use of spying reconciled with their *Romanitas*?

Spying, by its very nature, is duplicitous and such covert activity became seen as something for a deceitful and cruel Greek like Ulysses rather than an honest Roman. It does, however, seem necessary that the Romans engaged in some spying work as their legions were so successful. After all, even the best army needs to know where the enemy is in order to fight them. Despite this, international spying and watching foreign troop movements was not what primarily concerned the Romans as far as covert activity goes. Even so, covert activity still threatened *Romanitas* as it contributed to the blurring of boundaries when a Roman undertook it as it was depicted as an entirely alien concept.

Essentially, the Romans’ nature was such that the assimilation of other cultures and adaptation to meet events were present throughout the lifespan of the city: a significant part of what made them so successful was this ability to alter aspects of their way of life, even if it was only a re-organisation of the army.

Espionage in Republican Rome

Within the Roman army and before Marius’ reforms, for many years in Republican Rome intelligence gathering was rather ad hoc, used only when there was a threat present or looming, performed by scouts, *exploratores*, generally taken from within the military. Externally, they often relied on their allied cities as well as travelling merchants to give

them warning of what was happening outside their own territory. This, however, led to some startling failures: in 390BC a Roman army was surprised and routed or killed at Allia river by an army of Gauls as they thought that they were much farther away than they were in reality. This Gallic victory opened the path to Rome and they even entered the city. Rome had depended upon reports from allied cities and this almost led to its destruction. Curiously, however, their intelligence gathering system remained almost exactly as it was for many years after and it is surprising that they did not seem to learn from this. It is, however, telling of the difference between Republican and Imperial values. They could not eternally base the defence of their city on reliance on heroes like Horatius Cocles, who according to legend held back the entire Etruscan army alone on a bridge to Rome, whilst the army was organised. It would, however, be unfair to judge a system merely by its failures, but by its very nature espionage is illicit and unknown unless it fails catastrophically and is made public.

A centralised, systematic state security agency may well have been contrary to expressed Republican principles: it not only impinged on freedoms, if the purely ideological view is taken, but, in practical terms, it would also have been fiendishly hard to regulate a system of intelligence gathering impartially when patronage and factionalism held such sway and without an attorney-general's office. This is not to say, however, that the Republic had no information network: it relied on private informers for its information within Roman territory. Cicero claimed to have gained much information concerning the Catilinarian conspiracy from his private informers, including the mistress of one of the conspirators, Fulvia. It seems that in this case, his use of underhand tactics was publicly justified on the grounds that he saved the Republic from a great menace. That such tactics could be explained away after the event if successful is telling as is that there was no great outcry about Cicero using spies. This would indicate that people were familiar with the concept and practice and shows the supremacy of the political process: it was accepted that such methods would be used in order to reach higher offices and much relied on individual rhetorical skill and power to sway the people. This would all indicate that, just as a general would provide the monetary support for his own army which would then have greater loyalty to him directly as opposed to the state, so it was with spies and informers: they were hired out individually and to serve the individual, whether in the role of general or politician, as opposed to being a centralised part of the government.

One interesting aspect is that auspices and the will of the gods played a large role in the acquisition of intelligence: oracles were often consulted regarding the outcomes of campaigns and the success of Rome whilst auspices had to be favourable for battle to be undertaken. This seems to be as gathering intelligence is often concerned with piecing together what the future will bring: officially, auspices and oracles could do this. They could also be used, however, for far more human ends: such superstition could be used to explain away defeats and failures and so acted as both veil and escape mechanism in the right hands.

As each *paterfamilias* would have relied for the most part on the eyes and ears of his slaves, those to whom he was patron, his political allies and hired informers for

information concerning his rivals the comings and goings of his household, so Republican Rome as a whole relied on its citizens and particularly those in office, allied and later subordinated towns and those, such as oracles and augurs, employed by the state for information regarding both plots within Rome and external threats.

Paradigm of the anti-Roman

As regards those external threats and international spying, there is one man who must be mentioned. From literature contemporary to him and long after his death, it can clearly be seen that he was represented as the embodiment of treachery, the characteristic non-Roman: Hannibal. He exemplifies the Roman hatred of deceit and covert activity as he tricked the Romans or showed them to be too ill-informed or ill-prepared to defeat him face to face so visibly and often. He had crossed the Rhone before they were even certain that he had left Spain; they were, to put it mildly, surprised to hear he had camped south of the Alps. He used feints in battles and diversionary tactics such as concealing his troops at Lake Trasimene, tricking the Romans into exhausting themselves at Trebia, even putting torches on bulls' horns and driving them at the Romans so that they thought they were being attacked whilst his army made its escape. At Cannae he slowly enveloped and slaughtered almost the entire Roman army, the largest sent against him, in what was to be their most utter defeat for over a century as well as fuel for much venom against Hannibal. Part of the Romans' anger towards him must surely have arisen from his successes against them and how threatened he made them feel, and so their vehement hatred of him might its base in shame. After all, Polybius accepts that both sides used spies in the First Punic War, so they did not have a significantly higher moral horse to sit upon. The Romans did, though, make sure that their catching of Hannibal's spy in Rome during the Second and his punishment were noted as well as stressing his trickery and crediting his victories to that. They also learnt from their phalanx deployment at Cannae and, when facing Hannibal at Zama in 202BC, Scipio Africanus arranged his infantry to as to have increased manoeuvrability and mobility. Certainly, it was safer to demonise him than admitting that he had simply outwitted them and inflicted horrific casualties: they would have strengthened their credibility by emphasising how they were working to a different rulebook. Similarly, Livy credits the Samnite forces who humiliated the Roman army at the Caudine Forks in 321BC with luck rather than valour when they had planted mock-shepherds in the path of the Roman army who all asserted that the Samnites were in a particular place and so led the Romans into a trap. Certainly, there is inevitably the element of luck but it is as if bravery is negated when used in such a context. This seems to be an attempt to deflect the assumed criticism that the Romans had acted naïvely. It does not recognise that for the Samnites pretending to be shepherds to face an enemy army alone in such a circumstance must have been terrifying. Such dichotomy of views that when others do something it is frowned upon but passed over when done by the same side is pervasive. The presentation of plucky soldiers facing a cruel, morally abhorrent enemy who, in turn, has the same view but the opposite way round is visible in many conflicts. Such chauvinism and double standards are not surprising, however, as it serves to bind a society together in a time when it is especially needed. At such a time, the realities of national character are quickly subsumed by the unity gained from the projection of a certain ethos.

The Romans themselves were not completely ignorant of tricks in battle: they did not place such a great emphasis on honour that that they were above deceiving the enemy by tricks such as sending a small detachment, with much stamping and blaring of trumpets, to another part of the field in an attempt to convince the enemy that Roman reinforcements were on their way. In such a case, a feint by the Romans was an act of ingenious generalship or a worthy action to save the lives of Roman soldiers and which showed their superiority over their enemy. Such manoeuvres were simply a tactical trick in a great host of moves for the battlefield. This adaptability of the Roman army was much more possible after it was moved from the hoplite style in the 4th Century BC to combat the lightly-armed and manoeuvrable Samnite armies more effectively after the defeat at the Caudine Forks. The evolution of the Roman army shows how they adopted others ways and changed their tactics to fight each enemy: between the 6th and 4th Centuries BC they took on more of the Etruscan-style hoplites whilst Marius' reorganisation of the army in 107BC allowed the army to be much more effective all-round against the citizen militias that many city-states retained.

This shows Roman adaptability clearly, but their adaptations were not simply in response to external threats. With the change from republic to autocracy, the dynamic of Rome inevitably shifted and it was under the emperors that the spying actually became institutionalised and it was far more inherent to the system than is often credited; this was precisely because of that change.

The Roman Secret Service

The origins of the first centrally-organised internal security service in Rome are peculiarly Roman. It seems most ironic that an organisation which would become the epitome of covert spying so vilified in Roman culture arose from something as archetypically Roman as agriculture. The *frumentarii* were a wing of the military whose job it was to collect grain and ensure that the army was properly supplied with it. Seeing that they could move about the country and see a variety of people and so hear a good deal, Domitian set them the task of gathering and conveying information pertinent to his interests in a private as well as imperial capacity. Set up at some point during the 1st Century AD, they were an organisation that consisted of soldiers from every province and situated in the *Castra Peregrinorum*, the 'Camp of Foreigners', with enough space for about four hundred men, so roughly twelve or thirteen from each legion. This was on the Caelian in Rome itself and organised in a very military fashion with ranks and junior officers. The *frumentarii* made heavy use of the *cursus publicus* and it was part of their remit to inspect its usage. The problem is that the *frumentarii* have no direct, single modern counterpart. Although originally grain collectors, their increasingly broad range of duties, including enforcing taxation, conveying imperial messages as well as the more sinister sides of the rooting out of dissention, the persecution of certain religious groups, and even assassination, makes a simple comparison impossible. As an illustration of the freedom given to the *frumentarii*, when the emperor Macrinus was deposed, he was able to escape for a significant distance whilst disguised as a *frumentarius* riding along the *cursus publicus* in 218AD even though he was a hunted man.

They acted as a homogenous group with a great variety of functions, performed as needed by the emperor, and in turn undertook aspects of what is now done by MI5, HM Revenue and Customs and the Royal Mail: truly, a fearsome prospect. An organisation with such duties invariably invites comparison with Soviet Commissars but this is not equitable and in any case; their duties fluctuated with each successive emperor.

This is the crux of the matter. This is why the *frumentarii* were apparent in the Late Empire more than the Republic. They were organised and used in such a way as to combat the emperor's enemies within the Empire and to protect him from threats by foreknowledge and intelligence gathering as well as, in some cases, the removal of significant threats, perceived or real. The purpose of the secret service in Rome was, as well as the Praetorians with which the secret service was yoked at times, to protect the emperor's person. This was such a concern to the emperors as seventy-five percent of all Roman emperors were assassinated or killed by those who coveted their throne by some counts. Especially in the Late Empire this is clear; there were twenty-four emperors with an average reign of three years in the span 211-284AD, between the reigns of Septimius Severus and Diocletian. Certainly, the position of emperor was a dangerous and much-coveted position. This was not an issue to nearly the same extent during the Republic: certainly, there were dictators and there was vying for power, but such total power was much more difficult to attain. This is emblematic of the nature of the Late Empire in that it went through such a tumultuous time, often called the Crisis of the Third Century, that the focus was firmly introverted. This can be seen in that there was no institution equivalent MI6 to the *frumentarii*'s MI5 aspect, no international section. Certainly, there were excursions out of Roman territory, but those who undertook such were often drafted from the military and in any case, officially *exploratores*. This was far more to the side of military reconnaissance rather than a spy infiltrating another nation's city to discover its secrets and intentions.

In this time internal security was more necessary than often otherwise to try to hold the empire together, but the reason for the rise of this secret service, something so abhorrent to traditional values was much less high minded. The emperors did want to hold the empire together but it was far more important for them that they were alive enough to rule over it.

If the Crisis came to an end under Diocletian, so did the *frumentarii*. He was apparently bombarded with complaints from his subjects with regard to their corruption and brutal tactics, but it may not have been this extreme: in a society that has been hard pressed by war, both internal and external and by economic collapse, the post of tax collector was unenviable. Taxes were raised to support the increasingly large armies whilst wealth was lost through the rifts in society: goods did not flow so freely and those who chose the losing side in any of the many conflicts were ruined. In such a situation the collection of taxes, when people were under great strain already and would go to great lengths to avoid its payment, would not have been easy and they would have had to have used brutal methods in order to do the tasks set them. In any case, although this is not to say that there was no corruption, they would have been hated simply for the tasks they

were ordered to perform for which they gained the rather reserved unofficial title of ‘snoops’: *curiosi*.

Rebirth

Under Diocletian, 284-312AD, the *frumentarii* were removed, and another group with very similar functions but without the military background was created: the sinisterly euphemistic *agentes in rebus*, or ‘general agents’, although, in many ways, they were just that. To this, yet another organisation was created and they ran in parallel and with overlapping functions but a more bureaucratic grounding, the *notarii* or ‘short-hand writers’ and imperial secretaries.

These were organised along military lines although technically civilian and they quickly gained a reputation for terror and, under such emperors as Constantius II, had considerable freedom to pursue enemies of the emperor in whatever way they saw fit. These *agentes* lasted for a longer time than the *frumentarii*: as long as into the 6th Century AD in Ostrogothic Italy and until just after 700AD in the Byzantine Empire when the government was reorganised. Despite their seemingly more brutal methods than the *frumentarii*, they attracted less enmity as they were less overtly visible – they did not, for instance, wear armour and ensigns whilst conveying imperial documents – and it seems that no emperor felt he could rule safely without them. Whilst they were integral in the pursuit of deviants, they also had a significant clerical side: they oversaw governors and were often attached to their staff and they were especially useful in seeing that policies were implemented because of these origins. It is the repressive actions such as their involvement in the hunting down and bringing to trial of those perceived to be threats that linger in the mind. There are certainly many extreme examples cited, such as the traditional cry of slaves bringing out evening lights in Spain, ‘*vincamus*’ being taken as expressing an intention to overthrow the emperor; Paulus ‘The Chain’, *Catena*, who was supposedly extremely ruthless and made wholesale arrests in pursuit of accomplices of the revolutionary Magnentius in spite of protestations by the province’s governor; Mercurius, the so-called ‘Count of Dreams’, *Comes Somniorum*, who allegedly went to banquets and persuaded people to tell him of their dreams which he would then put an insidious and revolutionary twist upon. Certainly, there are stories of *agentes* and *notarii* dressed simply as normal citizens setting traps such as criticising the emperor publicly and then arresting anyone who expresses their own frustration at the governance. This aspect, however, was merely one of many roles which they played, including courier and tax collector which, for some reason, do not captivate the imagination to the same extent.

The survival of such an agency attests to the character of the successive emperors and the precarious nature of their position, despite their individual use of the *agentes* changing with each personality. Although they played numerous and useful roles in the service of the emperor, they gave a certain security to the position and reinforced the principles of autocracy which is why the centralised form of the secret service was not seen in the Republic. Their role was to solidify the position of one individual and such focussed loyalty would have been counter-productive under a democratic system even though factionalism still remained through to the Late Empire. This in some ways reflects

the change of principles throughout the life of Rome as such a system as was in place under the later emperors was precisely the corrupt, underhand trickery that was abhorred under the Republic, and yet it was an institution in the Late Empire. That is not to say, however, that the Romans of Republican Rome were paragons of virtue in comparison as they still used informers, but it is that the rules seemed to have changed. In the Republic it did exist and it was against their avowed beliefs but it operated on a much smaller scale and it was not institutionalised despite this. This institutionalisation brought it out of the shadows which were its natural home and into the path of political careers: there even seemed to be a great influx of sons of wealthy families entering the *notarii*, although it was open to all citizens so long as they knew short-hand writing. This made it susceptible to political machinations and meant that it was used in a far more arbitrary and partisan way than seems just. In a climate where the emperor did not know where the next dagger would come from and was determined to hold on to his position, it was more useful to come down heavily on all those suspected or suggested to have revolutionary involvement than investigate each case fully as it would set an example to others.

The use of such tactics to instil fear in a population was not unknown in the ancient world: years before, the Spartan *krypteia* were used to terrorise the helots and keep them in place. Although respecting their martial ability and using similarly terrible methods to keep their slaves in their place, the Romans declared such a Greek way un-Roman. Despite this brutal aspect of the Roman secret services, there seems to be another parallel much closer, and that is the Persian intelligence gathering system. Their means of communication, for example, were astonishingly fast, just as the *agentes* used the *cursus publicus* to convey messages. Through all the darker side of the Roman intelligence services, it is important to remember that they performed a great variety of functions and really were, in many ways, general agents, of which spying and policing were simply two of their tasks. They do, however, seem to exemplify the triumph not necessarily of practicality but of fear over ethos. It all comes down to how the emperors felt extremely insecure in their positions. They felt that they required this extra task force even though they officially opposed such underhand tactics, and this shows how that expression of *Romanitas* was in many ways just an almost rhetorical device: a device to convey one's perceived superiority over another, even if that was a hollow triumph.

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The Hecuba of the *Troades* is a sad, broken down old woman waiting in limbo. She watches for the end, knowing all the time that though she may have lost her country, her crown and her menfolk and everything that makes her a human being, between life and death there still stretches an unquantifiable present. She is an old woman with no place, alone after a life of success and respect and love, and her old age has turned her into a new kind of commodity. All sense of self and of dignity is gone; with no hope of kindness at the hands of a new master, life is without meaning beyond mourning for the past. When the play ends, she will be carried across the seas to another man's home, where she will bake bread and hold doors and bring up the children of the enemy. In Brendan Kennelly's version of the *Troades*, there is one further trial: sexual humiliation. Like Cassandra and Andromache, Kennelly's Hecuba will be set before the eyes of unknown men, and as a final blow to the imagination of the lonely, unprotected old woman, Hecuba projects a humiliating future of rape in the bed of Odysseus. And through the play we watch her struggle helplessly and ineffectually against the youth and beauty of the temptress Helen, and know that she cannot win because she is no longer a queen and the world around her has degenerated into a whoremarket in which she will always take last place. Hecuba has become an old crone.

The lot of the hag is a hard one. The case of Hecuba is a documentation of the passage from queen to pauper, and to a greater extent than many other examples, perhaps, it shows the extent to which the dirty and the sordid are forced upon the single old woman as the rags with which she must clothe herself and the role in which she must redefine herself. The soiling of Hecuba before our eyes, taken with the political message of the *Troades* as a plea on behalf of the sufferers of war to the men with the power to inflict suffering, shows up the role of the not-quite-passive onlooker in the transformation, and the dirt which transfers to us through her torment. To think about any old crone is to stray into the territory of self-analysis. But our partial understanding of the sinister underworld of the classical hag comes with its own troubled power games, and whoever tries to compete with her is at risk of unleashing energies beyond his control.

The single old woman appears in many different places but in few contexts. Horace, Martial and the Latin elegists inevitably loom large. Their women are genre characters, largely interchangeable and with a long literary tradition which can be traced down through the wicked witches of fairytales to three witches of *Macbeth* and the nasty old women of Joan Aiken. Through art and literature, the old woman has been given a role as an object of and source of desire, as a talisman and as a counterbalance to traditional phallocracy.

The We or the I or the You of a discussion of marginalized old women refers to a man who is part of legitimate society and who conforms to its expectations and has

⁶⁸ In this essay I have drawn liberally on the observations and ideas of other scholars, in particular those of John Henderson in "Suck it and see".

access to its privileges. The old woman who is set up in his view is a shut-out figure who by virtue of her infertility and lack of useful political and social niche provides us with no reason to wish for her involvement in society. It looks as if there is nothing that the old hag can add to civilised social discourse. As a result, the powers that she does have are ones which can be hinted at but not circumscribed or understood or controlled. She is forced out of normal life, but by going beyond comfortable propriety, convention and legality she gets her claws into the powerful realms of sex, magic and excess.

When we deal with the unknown the importance of the physical appearance is greatly heightened. What we do not understand we reduce to constituent parts. In the *Troades*, Hecuba treats herself as little more than a sack of bones and the tasks that can be performed by that sack of bones. In the article “Suck it and See”, John Henderson talks of Horace’s old woman as the sum of her flesh and her orifices, while perhaps the only usage of an explicitly “rude” word in the works of the Latin love elegists comes at Tibullus 1.5.55 in the description of an old woman who *currat et inguinibus nudis ululetque per urbem*. The straightforward description in all its grubbiness appears to be the easiest way in which to come at this slightly alien creature and the consequence of such directness is a sinister eroticisation of the old crone.

The love poets mock the old lady: Horace⁶⁹, Ovid⁷⁰ and Tibullus⁷¹ all have insults for the *callida lena*, *saga*, *anus*, with her *lacrimosa vino lumina* and *podex velut crudae bovis*. She is kept weak and drunken and downtrodden. Ovid’s old bawd of *Amores* 1.8 is sodden through with alcohol to keep her under control. Tibullus in 1.5 sends his *lena* running through churchyards and over crossroads with dogs and owls at her heels, and Horace makes a list of defects in graphic detail before demanding sexual gratification. Always we have in our mind the *puella*, the girl who ought to be there in her place and against whom she can never win. The old woman is in sexual rivalry with her former self and with the girls who have sprung up to replace her, and she will always have embittered feelings of *invidia* towards the young. In the *Troades* the aging Hecuba argues in vain in the face of Helen’s youth and beauty; when a woman argues, her words mean very little next to her face.

But the insults have a double edge. Taunting the old woman is like repeating a shielding charm and it draws attention to the evil to be warded off. Time’s winged chariot is always on the heels of the love poets, who wait hour by hour through to the dawn outside their mistress’ door⁷², and watch more disinterestedly as hinges grow rusty over the years and clients move on to more fertile pastures⁷³. There is an undertone of haste to the eulogy of the elegiac *puella*, and the amorous lovers are the first to remind us that the young and the beautiful will become old and haggard. Aphrodite too will get cellulite one day. Insulting an old woman is a means of keeping off old age for as long as possible, and the words by which she is forced firmly to the bottom of the hierarchy are as a charm of

⁶⁹ eg *Epodes* 8, *Odes* 1.25, 3.15

⁷⁰ eg *Amores* 1.8

⁷¹ eg 1.5 47-60

⁷² Ovid *Amores* 1.6

⁷³ Horace *Odes* 1.25

eternal youth to the speaker. Catullus tries to confound the ‘crabbed old men’ with the power of reiterative action: *Da mi basia mille, deinde centum, / dein mille altera, dein secunda centum, / deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum / dein, cum milia multa fecerimus, / conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus, / aut nequis malus invidere posit, / cum tantum sciat esse basiorum*. If their actions and their meanings cannot be circumscribed no one will be able to take control of them and time will never be able to catch up with them. The skipping rhymes to keep off the evil eye are the same as the continuous stream of taunts to be spat in the face of the reminder of sordid old age, which confound the witch and stop your own clock from turning.

A good illustration of this fallen old woman still clutching after her long-gone charms is a statuette of a drunken old Hellenistic woman⁷⁴ grasping an ivy-covered wine jar and stretching up her neck in supplication, bare arms and feet in full view and mouth open to the passer-by. Beard and Henderson call her an aged Aphrodite of Knidos and the conscious eroticism of the pose focuses the mind on what ought to be there or what was once there in her place. The driving sexual force is still left but the soft edges have been rubbed off and what is left is more like the sharp edges of a Sarah Lucas, stripped back and bony-edged and with harsh lines/strip-lighting marking out the parts which do the job.

We try to keep our old women in the open. Our taunts are unsubtle and loud and have no refinement of vocabulary. Henderson calls it matey aggro. The only way to deal with the slightly alien phenomenon of the ugly old lady is to strip her of her flesh and reduce her to the vitals and to face her straight on in all her ugliness. No one *wants* to have dealings with the old woman or to surrender any of the power in the relationship to her. In Satires 1.8, the only way in which Priapus can deal with the intrusion of Canidia and Sagana into his territory is by the most macho and de-intellectualised response possible, *pepedi*, I farted. The awkwardness comes when the I or the You of poem or picture wants something from the hag, and becomes aware that somewhere in the insults a line will be drawn. In the love elegists, the old woman is one of the keys to the girl. In Epode 8 she is needed for her mouthwork.

It is perhaps appropriate that the talismanic old woman should be engineered into combat with the phallus, the one with bells on, the most magical apotropaic symbol of them all. The power of the phallus is incredibly aggressive and virile, and the joining of it with an old woman stripped of feminine subtleties is a powerful image in a way which doesn't work with the elegiac puella with her *blanditiae* and *mollitia*. The aggressiveness of the phallus only works if there is something to be subjected to its aggression. In Satires 1.8, it is the demi-god Priapus, the most sexually demanding/undemanding figure of all, who watches the two old women. There is a pull between two extreme forces and it is through his perceived superiority and ability to fart off a situation that Priapus stays in control over the witches. Henderson on Epode 8 cites the argument of Legman that “oral sex is for old men who have trouble getting a firm erection”. Horace may be insulting an

⁷⁴ Drunken Old Woman. Roman copy of an original, perhaps by Myron or Pergamum, of c. 200 BC. Marble. Berlin, Staatliche Antikensammlungen.

old hag who wants a liaison with him despite her repulsiveness, but he needs the old hag at the same time as a source of his virility.

The old woman is like a toby jug, a lucky face-pot which can bring good luck if correctly harnessed and disaster if not. The man needs her on his side or under his control, to intervene with the *puella* and to maintain his own virility. The wiles of the *puella* are explicable and the poet can play games with them and tease her even though he is being ill-treated; for the most part he assumes that though he is tricked he is loved in return, and he gives fame in exchange for beauty. The old woman has no such emotions and her energies are vital and uncontrollable with the power of curses.

Attempting to keep the old woman in her place we keep her drunken and we keep her dirty, an *anus recocta vino, / trementibus labellis*⁷⁵. Dipsas in Amores 1.8, remarkably acute though she may seem in her instructions to (?)Corinna, is given bleary eyes and a taste for gin to cast unpleasant shadow over her connivings (no worse in number or aspect than those of the poet elsewhere). This association with excess soils her but at the same time puts her into a world which is beyond human control and knows no limits or sanity. To write or depict erotic feelings towards an old woman is to engage in a consciously transgressive activity, but for the onlooker, this is a danger zone and if we push too far we may fall over a cliff edge and enter that world ourselves. There are elements of the primaeval here which seems to involve a struggle between wine and magic and virility. Beard and Henderson suggest that the drunken old woman of the statue is a fallen Aphrodite with her hands around the phallic neck of a wine jar; if we go too far we will fall in and the power of the erection will be exhausted by the power of the wine and the control which can be exerted over us by a force of nature.

Not only her body is stripped to the bare sinews, but the thoughts of the old crone are laid out in body and actions. Her preoccupations are food and wine and sex and money⁷⁶ and her power lies in graveyards and the goings-on of the midnight hour⁷⁷. The urges which we attribute to her are age-old and basic and raw, and the old Hellenistic woman stretching her mouth up to the viewer stretches every fibre of her being in her *desire* for something, whether sex or wine or money.

Death and birth are central themes to this character. It is the place of the old woman to mourn, but an old woman who lurks around graveyards becomes a malicious spirit who is tampering with things that man ought not to meddle with and who lays herself open to charges of tormenting small children⁷⁸ and raising the dead⁷⁹ to gain insalubrious ends. The old woman who cannot bear children herself is also the one who brings forth children into the world, the midwife who operates on the borders of existence

⁷⁵ Petronius fragment IV

⁷⁶ see Ovid *Am.* 1.8.113-4 *di tibi dent nollosque lares inopemque senectam / et longas hiemes perpetuamque sitim*

⁷⁷ Horace *Ep.* 5, Satires 8, Tibullus 1.5.47-62

⁷⁸ *Ep.* 5

⁷⁹ Satires 1.8

and ensures that life is continued. The dead and the newborn both need the help and the luck of an old woman.

The old woman envies the young girl, but she has experience which the *puella* lacks. Epode 8 hints uncomfortably at the poet's desire for something that the old woman can give him. She teaches the *ars amatoria* to *puella* and amator alike, showing the young girl how to abuse her lover and take the first steps to herself becoming the inevitable old *lena*⁸⁰, and showing the lover how things ought to be done. There is a vicious circle of abuse and learning by which the old woman teaches the girl to abuse the boy and the boy hates and abuses the old woman for her wickedness. But the old woman also gives lessons in the art of loving to the boy who can pass on his new skills to the girl, perpetuating the cycle of a lovemaking which cannot reproduce itself without outside influence.

In the *Hippolytus*, Phaedra's nurse is a slightly comic character set against the innocence of the major protagonists, advocating sin and practicality and changing her arguments as the situation demands. She tries to teach Phaedra to make the best of a bad situation and is thwarted only because neither Phaedra nor Hippolytus has the inclination or understanding to follow her lead. But the onlooker is tarred with the brush of the nurse; he understands what the old woman means and is dirtied by the mental connection. However repulsed we may feel, there is a certain embarrassment in looking at the drunken old Hellenistic woman and being able to form any conception of her as a sexual being.

In the very different example of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, Daphnis is taught the art of love by a kindly lady from a nearby town. Lycainion is not yet old, but she is out to take sexual advantage of a younger man and her means involve lies and tricks and ambush. When she tells Daphnis to "remember that it was I who made you a man before Chloe" she is asserting a sexual ownership over his virginity and purity which is similar to the power held by the old woman of Epodes 8 over the man she is to emasculate. Goldhill in *Foucault's Virginit*y talks of "jokes about the inability to share innocence" between reader and author. This one-sided seduction draws in the reader as a sexual participant in the place of Daphnis, leaving the relationship between Daphnis and Chloe clean and unsoiled because both of them are innocent of any intent to do wrong. The urges and the sexual powers of the old woman can only take effect against those who are not innocent themselves

Winkler talks of Daphnis' new sense of masculinity and his desire to hurt Chloe in a transferral of the teachings of the older Lycainion to her pupil's subconscious. Lycainion tells Daphnis of the pain he will cause Chloe when he seduces her for the first time, introducing him to a world where sex is associated with violence and forceful penetration is a basic need of the phallus. The insults involved in any discourse with or about the old women of this essay are a hint at the type of sex expected from them when they are set into an erotic context. It is coarse and violent rape, involving force which could never be used with a *mollis puella*, and a woman who knows that she is being

⁸⁰ Ovid *Am.* 1.8, Plautus *Asinaria*

violated and who hates the man who exploits her. This unequal sexual relationship turns the woman into a toothless *fellatrix* who will never be allowed pleasure herself. Martial 3.93 tells Vetustilla that *intrare in istum sola fax potest cunnum*; there is no place for reciprocation. This is a complete inversion of the Corinna of *Amores* 1.5, who visits the reclining poet, is admired, resists, and ends by lying worn out by his side. The business of the old woman is more likely to take place standing up in an alleyway, while the client tries his hardest not to look at her. She is as desperate as the man and there is no question of sleeping or lying together companionably.

The old woman has no limits. If her lover isn't careful, he too will go beyond the boundaries of normality and become a social outcast and sexual deviant. Her filth and his spread across text and image and through the thoughts of the reader/viewer, frightening and fascinating and forcing us to reduce an almost superhuman force down to a genre and then further still to a collection of holes in order to explain her existence. In the *Troades* we manage to feel sorry for Hecuba as she realises the implications of her lot. Part of that realisation is that when the wrinkles set in and the names become generic and the faces begin to merge, there will be nothing left of her but the motif of a comic poem. By sitting in the audience and watching her as she accepts her inevitable new role, the viewer is stained with the innocence of Hecuba and by his own role in her downfall.

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The Outbreak of the Second Punic War: A brief note

The First Punic War (264 – 241BC) had left Carthage at a temporary disadvantage as Sicily, a valuable source for commerce and grain, had been lost to the Romans. Due to the indemnities which had to be paid to the Romans, the Carthaginians could not pay the mercenaries which had fought alongside them in the war. This resulted in the Mercenary War (240 – 237), which was waged with extreme brutality on both sides, but the Carthaginians were eventually successful in rebuffing their former soldiers. In 237, when the Carthaginian garrison in Sardinia invited the Romans to occupy the island, the Romans consented. Carthage could do nothing to regain the island but declare war, so they backed down but nevertheless considered it a serious financial loss and a humiliation. To add insult to injury, the Romans even extorted another indemnity.

Because of these territorial losses, the Carthaginian Senate commissioned Hamilcar Barca with the expansion into Spain, as the rich mineral deposits (especially of silver) would increase the revenue, and Spain would also be a good supply for Carthage in manpower. The Romans inquired about Carthaginian activities in Spain, but were satisfied with the response that Spain was being conquered “in order that the money which was still owing to the Romans on the part of the Carthaginians might be paid.” When Hamilcar died in 229, his son-in-law Hasdrubal was given the command, and he preferred a more diplomatic approach to matters. In 226, he signed the Ebro River Treaty, in which he guaranteed that “the Carthaginians shall not cross the Ebro in arms”. Essentially, the Ebro was designated as the boundary between their fields of interest. This suited the Romans as they were currently occupied with the Cisalpine Gauls and Illyrian pirates, so they did not want to concern themselves over Carthaginian expansion in Spain. Hasdrubal died in 221, leaving Hamilcar’s youthful son Hannibal in charge of operations, who continued with the subjugation of the Spanish tribes.

Since some time the Spanish town of Saguntum, which was south of the Ebro River, had placed itself under the protection of Rome, but this friendship did not violate the Ebro River Treaty, as the treaty did not bar either side from having friendly relations on the other side of the Ebro. However Rome, who had now eliminated the threat posed by the Gauls, began to interfere in Saguntine politics and the Saguntines started to quarrel with some neighbouring subjects of Carthage. The Romans threatened Hannibal to leave Saguntum alone, possibly thinking it to be north of the Ebro, but Hannibal attacked Saguntum in view of the fact that it had been encroaching on Carthage’s subjects. After eight months of siege, in December 219, Saguntum fell, but the Romans had made no move to assist them. Hannibal was sure that Rome would declare war after the fall of Saguntum, so he already made preparations for marching into Italy across the Alps. Sure enough, the Romans did declare war, as they could now not back down over the matter without losing face. Who therefore was at fault for the outbreak of the Second Punic War, Rome or Carthage?

In examining this problem we must consult some ancient sources, but here the problems begin. Our written sources, though not exclusively written by Romans (Polybius was Greek), focus on Rome considerably more than Carthage and are, naturally, likely to be biased against the Punic nation (some scholars prefer to redress this unbalance by terming the Romano-centric 'Punic Wars' with the more precise but perhaps tedious 'Romano-Punic'). Hannibal did not leave any written evidence which might give insight into why he attacked Saguntum, and whether he was planning to declare war on the Romans in the long term, or whether instead circumstance in fact forced him to 'blunder' into a war he was not yet ready for. Livy believes that it was a war of revenge by the Barcid faction, since "Hamilcar was a proud man and the loss of Sicily and Sardinia was a cruel blow to his pride;" and that Hamilcar, in expanding into Spain, was only preparing to attack Rome at a later stage. Since he died though, Hannibal was left to carry out that part of the plan. However, Livy is not totally credible as he was writing a while after events took place, and his elegant style is more to be praised than his historical facts, which were often confused. Polybius, who lived in the second century BC, is a more reliable source, due to his eager and thorough research, and his relative honesty as opposed to Livy's patriotism. He mentions three main causes: Like Livy, he believes that the war was a result of Hamilcar's anger; secondly, the Sardinian event had provoked the Carthaginians; and lastly, Carthage's successes in Spain had made them bold and confident enough to undertake a war. Polybius later suggests that Saguntum was not the cause of the war, but merely its first event. Assuming then that the seizure of Sardinia was the prime reason for the conflict, the Carthaginians "had every good reason to embark on the war".

Many modern historians follow Polybius in his reasoning that that the Sardinian question was one of the main reasons for war. Carthage had to submit to Rome's bullying tactics in 237, weakened as they were by the Mercenary War, but after their successes in Spain, they had become bold enough to resist. They were afraid that the Romans would continue with interference in Spain, and Lazenby points out that Rome "would have been open to any Spanish community which felt itself threatened by Carthage, to seek Roman protection". Yet it is probable that Rome's warning to Hannibal not to attack Saguntum was not much more than an admonition to remain peaceful and not to cross the Ebro. Hannibal, however, understood the matter as a direct threat to Carthaginian dominance in Spain and felt compelled to react.

The role of Hannibal himself as a cause of the conflict is also controversial. He was quite young (28) when the Saguntine incident occurred and Caven describes him as "an impetuous young man in whom the principal motivating force was a burning desire for military glory". Some historians also argue that Hannibal deliberately engineered the incident to place the blame for the war on the Romans. They had provoked the attack on Saguntum and they actually declared war, because they did not want to retreat from their threat to Hannibal. Now the Carthaginian ruling clique was forced to support Hannibal's campaign against Rome, which they may not have done if Hannibal would have marched across the Alps without any immediate cause.

It is difficult to assess who was more at fault in the outbreak of the Second Punic War. The Carthaginian nobility were eager for peace and preferred trade to war, while Rome also did not yet have such an imperialistic orientation as they did in the 2nd century. The war was a result of mounting suspicions and a lack of knowledge of the other power's motives and long-term aims. The aggression of Hannibal can be cited as the main cause for the war, but we have no real proof of this and cannot be sure of his long-term objectives. On the other hand, Roman interference, starting with the seizure of Sardinia, is a definite fact. The Carthaginians had to react when a similar strategy of the Romans became evident in their policy concerning Saguntum. The Romans were also too rash when they declared war due to an incident which was not of immediate concern or importance, as Saguntum was south of the Ebro and not within their direct field of interest. So the Romans, to my mind, must bear the greater blame for the war, but Carthage also played a significant role in bringing it about.

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lectorī prudentissimō s.

hic, lector beneuole, *serta subsiciua* donamus: in his chartis uarias compositiones in Latine Graeceue redditas comperies. nam ualde fruimur scribendo his in linguis, Musa adiuuante, et quoque uehementer te ad sumendum stylum exhortamur. hodie in Facultate linguae Classicae florent, et lecturas hebdomadales de arte poetica et in oratione nobis fert: accipe quae gaudia tibi ferent!*

et denique, si menda in opusculis nostris inuenies, legens care, editorem uerbera solum.

Dabamus coll. Dow. Cant.
a. d. VI. Non. Mart. a. s. MMVII

TEXTRIX ATQUE TEXTORES

Aramick Azarian	Clare	A. A.
Alex Carroll	Robinson	A. K. J. C.
Tom Ford	Downing	T. C. A. F.
Francesca Harris	Newnham	F. A. H.
Oliver Lomborg	Peterhouse	O. A. L.
Benedict Reekes	St. John's	B.T.P.H.R.

*e.g. Wednesdays, 2-3pm with Dr. Weiss (2. 04)

SERTA SUBSICUA

I stand alone in this cold world, could you believe that?
I've seen some good men get blown over G-packs
In the Bronx where it's known to hear the heat clap
And live niggaz get it on with the D-techs, shit, my life's legendary
If I wrote down all in a book it would be very scary
What you know 16 Beamers and Benzes
Rope chain down to my dick, the beef looks tremendous
Me and my niggaz flip holes in bitches
Back then, when I wouldn't even pose for pictures
A-YO, you can ask dapadan who was the man
Back in 88, every other week tricked 30 grand
Even my bitches wore Gucci and Louie
My peeps already in the crowd looking for groupies to screw me
Exit the club, about to cruise up the block now
with the taj, stay frontin' with top down
See me in that new thing with my fiancee
ass so fat, making you say "Muchos GRANDE"
Don't blame me, blame them, the white folk
for giving me ten mil, for possessin' the tight flow
WHOA

Fat Joe, *My Lifestyle*

solus, abestque calor, nec tu mihi credere possis,
 calce, cinaede, tuli puluere dura soli.
 temporis exanimat lepidos hic nubilus orbis:
 cum strepitus ueniat - pungit in aure sonor -
 tum probior pereat - medicamina talia ducunt -
 eque plicentur anus - interiora patent...
 quique auidi carnis rapiuntque feruntque sagittas;
 uita mihi **niueo** fabula taetra foret...
 sic mea **Bronx**...uerear? tibi sunt haec scripta pauenda
 nam niueus rosea labere, barde, toga.
 me penes auxilium uoluisti: pectora sugas!
 scis quater egregias quattuor esse rotas?
 proue meo torques pretiosos pendere pene?
 inque tuli teneris uulnera puncta uiris;
 tum neque uanus eram cum dudum talia didi:
 io Dapadan quaeras (fidus et ille comes)
 quis regeret terras, super omnes quisue ualeret?
 triginta cumulo milia fraude mea
 (de uiridi loquimur) cum uestris mamma placebat
 ecce meis pretio commoda uestis adest
 femineis etiam (mihi quisque bonoque) catellis...
 iam comites spiciunt...dulcia turba tenet?
 ex stabulo gradior rediturus ad aspera - cernas:
 iactat et una pilas, nudat et illa caput...
 inde nouis uehimur, uehimur fuluasque ferentes;
 iam mihi casta sedet cumque **tacone** canis.
 supplicium niueos tu condemnabis ad ingens -
 non ego quae deciens aurea mille dedi.
 uocibus emereor quae dulcia cunque tuerer:
 uersiculos adamant: noque natoque modis.

niueus *here* = maior pars Cantabrigiae studentium
Bronx = Fat Joe's hood, New York
taco, -onis = a taco

A. A.

John Humphrys interviews the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott.

JP: Trouble with you, John, you read too many papers. You want to talk to people that know what happens. If I, if I resign, it doesn't mean there has to be an election. Read our constitution.

JH: If you resigned as deputy leader of the party, there'd have to be an election, wouldn't there?

JP: No, there doesn't. You just don't know, John. You make all these allegations because you read in the press before you come on this programme.

If you want me to read out the constitution, I'll do. If I resign now, there doesn't have to be an election. No. So you're quite wrong.

JH: So it is possible that you could resign, is it?

JP: Well, I could resign if I wanted to say I hadn't got it, it's always within my hands. I can also...

JH: But you're not going to, you're going to stay?

JP: I'm staying, as long as I believe I'm getting on with the job.

JH: And how long's that going to be?

JP: John, you've moved off from something you didn't know to more questions. This programme...

JH: Well that's what I'm paid to do, ask you questions. How long are you going to stay in the job?

JP: You had 20 minutes in this interview, that's more than you give anyone else, and in fact to that extent I'm saying I'm getting on with the job, make no doubt about it, take no notice of the headlines in these papers.

[I always recognise it is the responsibilities of others that can make the decision about whether I'm worthy of support and a job in government, but while I'm doing it, I'll get on with the job, because what we've been doing for the unemployed, for housing, for regeneration and back to the Dome, turning a lousy bit of polluted bit of land into 10,000 jobs, 24,000 houses, jobs and retail, it's becoming the jewel of London. And I tell you what, if it was done by an American, Anschutz, I say thank you very much you've helped us turn unemployment into jobs, homeless into houses. That's what I was elected to do and, by God, that's the job I'll get on with.]

JH: John Prescott, thank you very much.

from *The Today Programme*, 6th July 2006

Duo 0Iwnev

1Iwn Presko/tidev:

Feu, w} 1Iwn, algan soi tw~n mu/qwn me/lei: a0mei/non ga\r e0sti, pro\v qew~n, diale/gesqai oi4v memaqhko/si ta\ geno/mena. e0a\n me/n pwv th~v strathgi/av a0fistw~mai, ou0damw~v de\ h9 ai3rhsiv a0nagkai/wv sxh~sei: a0na/gnwqi de\ moi tou\v no/mouv.

1Iwn 3Umfrhv:

Ou0k eu] le/geiv, w} fi/lh kefalh\ 1Iwn. e0a\n ga\r e0pi\ tou/toiv a0fi/sth|, a}r' ou0 kat' a0na/gkhn elstai h9 ai3rhsiv;

1Iwn Presko/tidev:

Ou0damw~v g' au}tiv, w} be/ltiste: dh~lon e0sti se peri\ tou/twn a0gnoei~n. e0wqw/v toiou/sde tou\v lo/gouv kathgorei~v e0pei\ e9ka/stote tou\v mu/qouv a0kou/sav pisteu/eiv pri\n diale/gesqai. e0a\n elme a0nagignw/skein tou\v no/mouv eqe/lh|v, poihs/sw dh~ta: au}tiv ga\r, e0a\n me/n pwv th~v strathgi/av a0fistw~mai, ou0damw~v de\ h9 ai3rhsiv a0nagkai/wv sxh~sei. lo/gwn ou}n h9marta/nev.

1Iwn 3Umfrhv:

Ou0kou~n me/lleiv a0fi/stasqai; h2 ou0;

1Iwn Presko/tidev:

Fe/re, w} 1Iwn, ei0 h0qe/lon le/gein ou0x i9kano\v me/nein a2n oi9o/v t' h}n a0fi/stasqai th~v strathgi/av o3 ti a0ei\ pro/xairon e0sti kai\ oi9o/v t' ei0mi-

1Iwn 3Umfrhv:

0Alla\ dh\ ou0 me/lleiv a0polei/yein, w} 1Iwn, a0lla\ menei~n;

1Iwn Presko/tidev:

Ma\ to\n Di/a pantalw~v ge, w} makari/e, menw~ tosou~ton xro/non o3son nomi/zw ta\ pre/ponta poiei~n.

1Iwn 3Umfrhv:

Po/son, w} fi/le, xro/non;

1Iwn Presko/tidev:

}W 1Iwn, tou/twn a0maqhv wln, plei/ona elti m' e0rwta~|v. ou{tov o9 dia/logov-

1Iwn 3Umfrhv:

1Age dh/, misqodotou~mai e0rwta~n tade. e0panapolw~ ou}n, po/son xro/non menei~v;

1Iwn Presko/tidev:

Feu, w0gace/, soi diale/gomai makko/teron xro/non h2 oi9
allloi e0n tou/tw|: ta\ pre/ponta poihs/sw, ou0damw~v a0mfi/bolon
e0stin. mh\ me/lei tw~n mu/qwn.

1Iwn 3Umfrhv:

Xa/rin elxw soi, w} 1Iwn, dia\ tou/ton dia/logon.

O.

A. L.

carmen philomelae

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring;
Everything did banish moan,
Save the nightingale alone:
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Leaned her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the dolefull'st ditty
That to hear it was great pity.
All thy fellow birds do sing,
Careless of thy sorrowing.

from Shakespeare, The Passionate Pilgrim 20
(adapted with omissions)

Idibus Maiis placide sedebam
inter umbrosum uigilans iners ab
sede myrtetum pecudes et ales
exhilarantes;

arbores herbaeque nouae uigebant,
omnibus tristes aberant querellae,
unicam praeter philomelam, acerbam
semper ad aures.

pectore innixa misero rubetis
neniam uere cecinit molestam
et cum audirem, lacrimas abunde
edere coepi.

concinent omnes aliae uolucres
nesciae luctus: dolor urget atrox
te solum Curae memorem furentis
non abeuntis.

T. C. A. F.

caedes in Cephalenia

The carnage had none of the ritual formality of such occasions that film and paintings might suggest. The victims were not lined up against the wall. They were not blindfolded, faced away, or faced forward. Many of them were left on their knees, praying, weeping or pleading. Some lay on the grass as though they had already fallen, tearing at it with their hands, burrowing in desperation. Some fought their way to the back of the pack. Some stood smoking, as casually as at a party, and Carlo stood to attention next to Corelli, glad to die at last, and resolved with all his heart to die a soldier's death. Corelli put one hand in the pocket of his breeches to steady the shaking of his leg.

from Captain Corelli's Mandolin by Louis de Bernières

clades et calamitas nullo modo erant similes imaginum bellorum quae hodie scimus. homines enim infelices contra maceriam non ordinati sunt. nec illi sunt obligatis oculis, neque auersi neque prospicientes. multi eorum in genibus procubuerant: precantes, lacrimantes, implorantes sunt reliqui. alii in herba iacebant uelut si iam cecidissent, rapientes terram manibus atque suffodientes sine spe; alii ad tergum conitebantur, alii temere stabant, e poculis uinum bibentes more conuiuiale, et Carolo subsistente prope Corellium, tandem moriri parato, sicut militem Romanum oportet. Corellius dux ipse uestimentorum suorum manum tetendit in sinum ut tremulum femorem stabiliret.

B. T. P. H. R.

complexio difficilis quaedam

Mrs Bennet rang the bell, and Miss Elizabeth was summoned to the library.

‘Come here, child,’ cried her father as she appeared. ‘I have sent for you on an affair of importance. I understand that Mr Collins has made you an offer of marriage. Is it true?’ Elizabeth replied that it was. ‘Very well - and this offer of marriage you have refused?’

‘I have, sir.’

‘Very well. We now come to the point. Your mother insists upon your accepting it. Is it not so, Mrs Bennet?’

‘Yes, or I will never see her again.’

‘An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents. Your mother will never see you again if you do *not* marry Mr Collins, and I will never see you again if you *do*.’

Elizabeth could not but smile at such a conclusion of such a beginning; but Mrs Bennett, who had persuaded herself that her husband regarded the affair as she wished, was excessively disappointed.

‘What do you mean, Mr Bennet, by talking in this way? You promised me to insist upon her marrying him.’

‘My dear,’ replied her husband, ‘I have two small favours to request. First, that you will allow me the free use of my understanding on the present occasion; and secondly, of my room. I shall be glad to have the library to myself as soon as may be.’

Liulia tintinnabulum sonuit ut Iulia in bibliothecam arcesseretur.

quae simulatque peruenit, Augustus ‘ueni, mea filia!’ uocauit. ‘propter rem magni momenti te arcessiui; nonne Tiberius te rogauit utrum in matrimonium ducere sibi licet necne?’ Iulia accedente, pater eius dixit ‘esto, et abnuisti illi nubere?’

‘ita uero, pater.’

‘heia, ego rem acu tangam; mater tua postulat ut adnuas. nonne ita est, Liulia?’

‘ita uero, nisi fecerit, numquam iterum eam uidebo.’

‘mea Iulia, tibi miserae eligendum est, quia ex hoc tempore alteri parentum ignota esse tibi oportet. nisi Tiberio non nupseris, mater tua numquam iterum te uidebit, si uero nupseris, ego haudquaquam iterum te ipse uidebo.’

Iulia facere non potuit quin exitum talem initii talis adrideret, sed Liulia, quae sibi persuaserat uirum rem quo modo ipsa uellet ducturum, hoc uehementer displicuit.

‘qualia in animo habes, Auguste, ut talia dicas? nam pollicitus es te postulaturum esse ut Iulia ei nuptura esset.’

cui uir ‘mea lux,’ inquit, ‘duas minimas gratias a te peto; ut tu sinas me in praesenti et primum sententia mea et deinde bibliotheca mea libenter uti; in qua enim quam primum solus esse gaudebo.’

F. A. H.

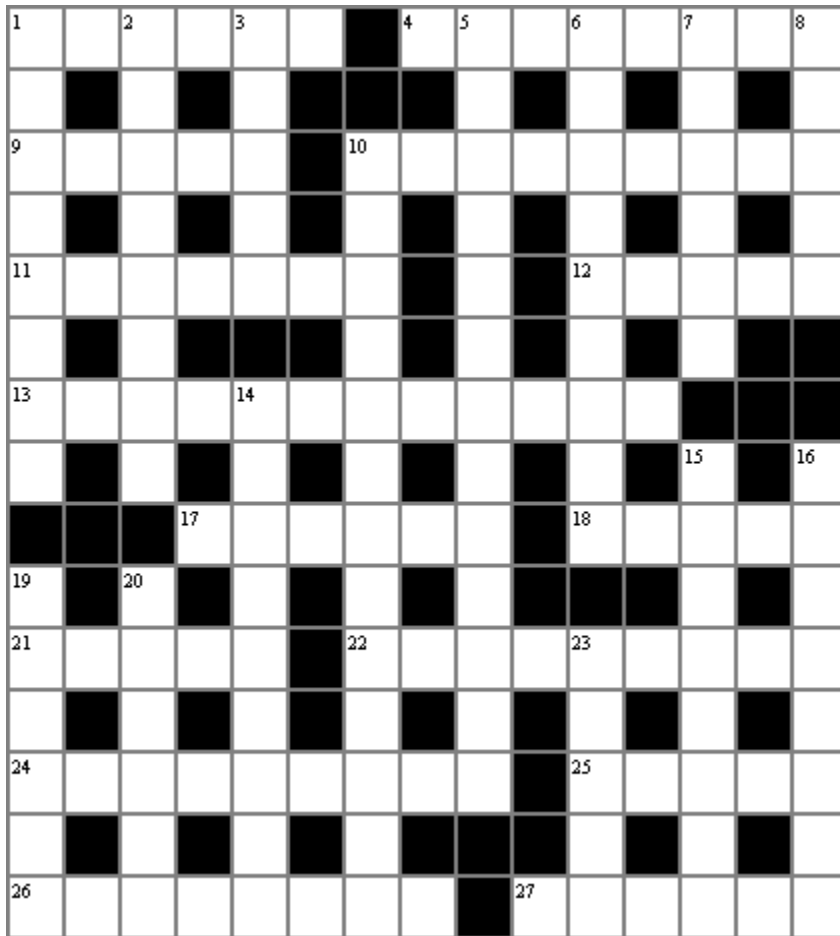
And now as I approached the city gates
And thinking that we might escape the streets,
Suddenly, I seemed to hear pursuing
Feet and then my father looking back cried out,
"Run my boy! They are coming! I can see
The blazing bronze of their shining shields!"
But I've no idea what happened next, I've
Not a clue. My mind was muddled and confused.
As if I was possessed, I hurried down
A maze of winding unknown alleyways.
I abandoned the central road, but then,
Oh God! My wife, my poor Creusa was lost,
Vanished. I don't know how or why, but she
Must have fallen down or wandered off. I can't
Say for sure. I never found her body.
I didn't even see my loss until
We reached the sacred mound, the ancient dwelling
Place of Demeter. Everyone had gathered
There. It was only then, when we'd stopped that
I saw she hadn't made it, that she'd failed her
Comrades and her son and her husband too.
In a fit of rage, out of my mind with grief
I cursed and blamed every single man and
God who ever lived. Throughout Troy's destruction
I never saw a more horrific sight.
I left Ascanius and my father
And the household gods of Troy in the care
Of our friends hidden in a deep ravine.
I turned myself again back towards Troy.
I strapped on my gleaming arms, drew my sword.
It fell to me to relive it all again,
To return again to Troy and risk my life.
First I reached the walls and the shrouded gate
Through which we'd come before and retraced my
Route, straining my eyes through the smoky night.
Hideous sights were everywhere. Silence reigned
And terrified my heart. I headed home.
Perhaps, just maybe she'd have gone there too.
It was entirely occupied by Greeks;
Bursting in they had taken it by storm.
The wind was whirling a consuming blaze
To the very top of the roof and the flames
Leapt sky-high, furiously boiling the air.
I came again to Priam's fortified
Palace and to Juno's empty cloisters
Where Phoenix and dreadful Ulysses took
Their watch and guarded the treasure and loot.
Everywhere the wealth of Troy was piled high,
Altars and craters made of solid gold
And clothes pillaged from our holy temples.
Children and frightened mothers stood around
In long lines.

A. K. J. C

'Hennessey's Prize Classical Crossword'

By James Iles

Welcome to *Opellae's* very first prize classical crossword! Use either set of clues below (they both give the same answers) to solve the grid, and be in with a chance to win a signed copy of *Songs on Bronze: Greek Myths Retold* kindly donated by Nigel Spivey. Send in your photocopied answers to James Iles, St. Edmund's College, or leave them in the college pigeon hole at the faculty before April 30th. The winner will be the first correct entry drawn from those received. Answers in the next edition of *Opellae*.



CRYPTIC

10 May there be no evil portent in moist bean casserole! (5,4)

ACROSS

11 Moron becomes baffled about 99th Greek letter. (7)

1 see 7D

12 Goddess loses guitar strings in musical situations. (5)

4 999,1000, 0, 5, er...0? No! (4,4)

13 Atomic bond just the ticket to unite support for abacus. (5, 7)

9 I am produced within an acre, ordinarily.

(5)

- 17 Heads of small European nation scoffed leaving Roman council. (6)
 18 Sounds like you lose, Ascanius! (5)
 21 Article in Greek about Post Office I read often. (5)
 22 Dio's not half curious to meet one of the twins! (9)

DOWN

- 1 Ivor reversed cars madly around Aeduan rebel. (8)
 2 I tear up a narrow street initially to find old Swiss men. (8)
 3 Make a mistake in English or a mistake in Latin. (5)
 5 Manly part of speech found mixed up in Minoan nucleus. (9,4)
 6 Spill tonic over a Roman street belonging to the young Augustus. (9)
 7 and 1A Old North Road? Sounds like weasel's present! (6,6)

QUICK

ACROSS

- 1 see 7D
 4 Phrase translating 'on the contrary'. (*lat.*) (4,4)
 9 'I am created'. (*lat.*) (5)
 10 Phrase translating 'may there be no evil portent'. (*lat.*) (5,4)
 11 15th Greek letter. (7)
 12 Roman goddess of love. (5)
 13 Characteristic component of one of the three classical orders, originating C6th BCE. (5,7)

DOWN

- 24 Broken up about poet, gives a vile grin. (9)
 25 Disgusted to be found back in radio biathlon. (5)
 26 Scion split over short answer concerning poetic analysis. (8)
 27 I can play dead. (6)
 8 King makes Old English take on Greek letters. (5)
 10 Purcell's opera ends before it begins, leaving epic lovers standing. (6,3,4)
 14 I lead us after Cecil, who has a second name. (9)
 15 Alternatively, poll US raid by USSR, with several results. (8)
 16 To be Frank, this Roman town in Umbria is my home. (8)
 19 Grandad called America confused about tax return. (6)
 20 City's almost austere. (6)
 23 'Carol gets confused,' I explain. (5)

- 17 Main governing council of the Roman republic. (6)
 18 Son of Aeneas. (5)
 21 Literary commonplaces. (*grk.*) (5)
 22 Twin gods symbolised by an egg-shaped cap crowned by a star. (9)
 24 Pertaining to, or characteristic of, Roman poet born 70BCE. (9)
 25 Exclamation of disgust or astonishment. (*grk.*) (5)
 26 Analysis of metrical and rhythmic patterns in poetry. (8)
 27 'I am able'. (*lat.*) (6)

- 1 Julius _____, Aeduan nobleman who led a revolt against the Romans in 21 CE. (8)
- 2 Inhabitants of the province of the Roman Empire now occupied by eastern and central Switzerland. (8)
- 3 'Mistake'. (*lat.*) (5)
- 5 E.g. *vir*, *rumor*, or *dominus*. (9, 4)
- 6 Arcus _____, arch decreed to the young Augustus after Actium. (9)
- 7 and 1A Roman road which ran between London and York. (6,6)
- 8 Father of Meleager and Deianira. (5)
- 10 Lovers in book 4 of Vergil's epic poem? (6,3,4)
- 14 Lucius _____ Iucundus, C1st CE Pompeian banker. (9)
- 15 E _____ unum, national motto of US until 1956. (8)
- 16 Ancient town of St Francis. (8)
- 19 Great-great-great grandfather. (*lat.*) (6)
- 20 Led the Peloponnesian League against Athen in C5th BCE. (6)
- 23 'I make clear'. (*lat.*) (5)

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