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Parnassus: Classical Journal (Volume 6, 2018)

Steven Merola

College of the Holy Cross, samero16@g.holycross.edu

Jeffrey Dickinson

College of the Holy Cross, jmdick19@g.holycross.edu

Liam O'Toole

College of the Holy Cross, lzotoo20@g.holycross.edu

Richard Ciolek

College of the Holy Cross, rfdiol20@g.holycross.edu

Julia Spiegel

College of the Holy Cross, jrspie19@g.holycross.edu

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Steven Merola, Jeffrey Dickinson, Liam O'Toole, Richard Ciołek, Julia Spiegel, Stephen Conde, Emma Powell, Michael Kelley, Andrew J. Wells, Aidan Largey, Michael Raheb, Charlie Schufreider, Zachary Sowerby, Hui Li, and Caroline MacLachlan

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Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

As multiple chief editors before me have noted, according to classical tradition, the Muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, lay their beds upon Mount Parnassus. They have also noted that this humble little journal strives to mirror the magnificent proportions of its legendary namesake. In that respect, not much is left to say. We, both editors and published writers, hope that our work has even a fraction of the divine inspiration Hesiod received with the staff which the Muses bestowed upon him.

Yet little noted, other than in chief editor Steven Merola's preface to *Parnassus* 3, is the notion of multiple Muses, each of whom wraps her dainty fingers around a different genre. I shall not deliberate over which Muse would act as patron of which essay, photograph, or creative piece here. As Vergil sings in *Georgic* 3, that task, which held minds in song before, is already "*vulgata*": exposed to the public.

We have distinguished ourselves, as a unique sixth volume, in a different way: through sheer diversity of composition. For the first time, the cover art is a beautiful full illustration. Within the journal, pieces of poetry, translation, creative prose, essays on a wide variety of topics, and photography grace the tender pages. Even two alumni traced the mountain's steps again.

The richness of this particular issue of *Parnassus* is yours to drink in. And if that richness is not a satisfying tribute to the nine Muses, I know not what is.

On this fine year, *Parnassus* has finally published its sixth volume, the product of love, labor, and several hours of lost sleep. Thank you, my dear editors, for all your hard work. And as to you, our dear readers – I hope you enjoy it.

Editor-in-Chief
Michael Raheb, '20

Table of Contents

Cover Art

Caroline MacLachlan, '19

Essays and Creative Submissions

**Painting the Icon of Christ: Origen of Alexandria's
Apologetics of Assumption** 2

Steven Merola, '16

Holy Cross Brings Socrates to the Mascot Debate 18

Jeffrey Dickinson, '19

Vergil's Geographical References in Georgics 3.1-48 22

Liam O'Toole, '20

**The Trial of Cremutius Cordus as a Vindication of
Praise in Roman Historiography** 33

Richard Ciołek, '20

October Nights on the Acropolis 46

Julia Spiegel, '19

**Catullus 8 and 76: Partner Poems Expressing a
Mind Fragmented by Love** 47

Stephen Conde, '20

**A Classical Beginning: An Examination of Greek
and Roman Influence on Thomas Jefferson and
Early America** 64

Emma Powell, '20

Ajax and the Arms of Achilles	70
Michael Kelley, '18	
Lucius Shines Light on Brutus' Life	86
Andrew Wells, '18	
N-Grams and the Writing Process of Herodotus	94
Aidan Largey, '21	
Establishing Secure Boundaries for Catullan Terms of Social Distinction	99
Michael Raheb, '20	
A Translation of Juvenal: Satire VII.215-243	117
Charlie Schufreider, '17	

Photography

The Temple of Zeus	1
The "Customs House" with Charging Bull Fresco	17
Boeotian Countryside	32
Parthenon	45
Tholos of Apollo	62
Capital at the Temple of Zeus	63
The Lion Gate	92
The Bull-Leaping Fresco	93
Hermes and the Infant Dionysus	97
The Rape of the Lapiths	98
Mt. Parnassus	120
All by Zach Sowerby, '19	
Pythia	61
Hui Li, '21	

The Temple of Zeus

Approx. 5th century BCE. Limestone. Olympia, Greece.



Painting the Icon of Christ: Origen of Alexandria's Apologetics
of Assumption

Steven Merola, '16

Prefixed to Avery Cardinal Dulles's magisterial *A History of Apologetics* is a little poem by C.S. Lewis entitled "The Apologist's Evening Prayer." The apologist prays that the Lord deliver him "from all my lame defeats and oh! much more / from all the victories that I seemed to score." He goes on to observe that "Thoughts are but coins. Let me not trust, instead / of Thee, their thin-worn image of Thy head." Thoughts are but coins: signs that point toward but cannot fully express a reality greater than themselves. And the more our thoughts of God, whose reality is infinitely and ineffably beyond our own, are indeed our own, the fainter is their resemblance to the truth.

One may ask, then, how apologetics could possibly serve to defend him whose being cannot rationally be spoken of. The trap that Lewis's apologist prays to avoid is that of attempting to put God within our own rational categories or "thoughts." To do otherwise is to risk calling "God" what is in fact an entirely human creation. Rather, apologetics "has a more modest task. It seeks to show why it is reasonable, with the help of grace, to accept God's word as it comes to us through Scripture and the Church."¹ The defense of faith by reason helps us pave the way

¹ Avery Cardinal Dulles, 367.

to trusting what is proclaimed in the Christian tradition. Reason leads us to a faith that takes us beyond reason.

In determining how to go about this task, Cardinal Dulles advises apologists to “seek wisdom from the past and [to] profit from the giants who have gone before them.”² To that end, I purpose in this essay to highlight an approach taken in the Early Church to demonstrate the reasonableness of believing in God’s word “as it comes to us through Scripture and the Church.” I will examine the apologetic strategy adopted by the Church Father Origen of Alexandria in his great apologetic text *Contra Celsum*.

Origen of Alexandria (c. A.D. 185 – c. 254) is a seminal figure in the development of Christian doctrine. His writings brought significant development both to Biblical textual criticism and interpretation. Known as a brilliant catechist, exegete, and homilist, Origen produced ideas on the nature of Christ, the Trinity, and creation which planted the seeds for what would become both orthodox Christian belief and startling heresies. Most importantly for this paper, Origen wrote an apologetic text that is a key source for our understanding of the interaction between Christianity and ancient Greek religion.

Origen’s *Contra Celsum* is a response to a work entitled *The True Doctrine (Alethes Logos)* written by a Greek philosopher named Celsus (d. c. A.D. 175). Celsus’s work constitutes the first informed critique of Christianity by a pagan.

² Avery Cardinal Dulles, *A History of Apologetics*, 367.

Most polemics against Christianity prior to Celsus were *ad hominem* in nature; they caricatured Christians as savages who drowned infants and ate human flesh. Celsus, on the other hand, studied the Scriptures and attempted to demonstrate their fallacies and inconsistencies. The *Alethes Logos* is composed of two parts: in one Celsus takes on the perspective of a Jew and attempts to show how Christ is not the answer to the Old Testament prophecies. In the second part Celsus argues in his own voice against Christianity's theological pitfalls and the danger Christians pose to the governance of the empire.

Celsus is best described as a Middle Platonist. He believes in one supreme God with many divine intermediaries (including the traditional Greek pantheon). As a Platonist, he believes that ascent to God involves leaving behind the physical world. To him, the contemplation of divine truths is an ability privileged to the few with the intellectual capacity to do so. He despises, therefore, the Christian belief that God became enfleshed as a human being in the person of Jesus; he also looks down on the Christian appeal to the masses, especially the weak and uneducated.

Origen composed his response to Celsus, who had long since died, toward the end of his life around A.D. 248. His style is exactly thorough: he quotes Celsus directly and then provides a detailed response to each point of the criticism (the copious fragments contained in the *Contra Celsum* have preserved a majority of Celsus's original text). Although the

style of the book may seem disjointed, we can trace a common strategy throughout the eight books of the text. Origen does not seek to provide a logical proof of Christ's divinity; such a task would be impossible. Rather, in dialogue with Celsus's critiques he paints an image of what the person of Christ is. He describes in terms that appeal to Celsus what the nature of Christian belief is. He then offers the examples of the Christian Church and the Scriptures as evidence that the icon he has painted is praiseworthy, believable, and true.

The Scriptures: Adhesion to Christ

Origen's apology depends on the presupposition of Christ's divinity. To illustrate this principle, he quotes the charge of Celsus that the Christians' "faith has prejudiced [their] soul to make so great an adhesion to Jesus"³. Origen, perhaps surprisingly, responds that "Although, in truth, our faith makes such an adhesion, nevertheless see if that very faith does not prove to be praiseworthy"⁴. He freely admits that the Christians are "prejudiced" (*προκαταλαβοῦσαν*) by their "adhesion" (*συγκατάθεσιν*) to Christ – that is, they form their entire worldview through the lens of Jesus. Origen's challenge to Celsus indicates the course that his apology will take. He will attempt to show why an adhesion to Christ is a "praiseworthy" (*τὸ ἐπαινετὸν*) presupposition to hold. He does not set out to

³ πίστιν... συγκατάθεσιν, 3.39.

⁴ Ἀληθῶς... παράτησιν, id.

prove definitively that Christianity is true,⁵ but merely to show that its claims are reasonable and worthy of praise (and also of faith).

This adhesion is not baseless but is reasonable to take on. Origen often makes the case for adhesion by defending seemingly thorny biblical episodes. One such instance is his defense of Jesus's agony in the garden of Gethsemane. Celsus sees Christ's agony in the garden as an example of his mundane weakness: "Why therefore does he cry and lament and pray to escape from the fear of death, saying something like 'Father, if it is possible to escape this cup?'"⁶ Origen begins his response to this criticism by drawing attention to its errors: "[Celsus] did not accept the honesty of the writers of the gospel, who could have been silent on these matters which Celsus regards as a ground for criticism... no statement is to be found that Jesus *cried*. And he alters the original text 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me (Matt. 26:39).'"⁷ Rather than playing down Jesus' struggle, Origen points out how the evangelists included this detail, despite its potential for misinterpretation. He goes on to say, "the way to conceal tales of this sort is easy – not to have recorded them at all. For if the gospels had not included them who could have reproached us because Jesus said such things

⁵ In his Preface, Origen goes so far as to say that his arguments may weaken the "apology in the facts and the power of Jesus that is manifest to those who are not senseless" (τιῆν... Ἰησοῦ), P.3.

⁶ Τί... παρελθεῖν; 2.24

⁷ τι... τοῦτο», ibid. adapted from Chadwick.

during his incarnation? ...Either therefore they did not invent them, but really did hold these beliefs and recorded the narratives without any deception, or they lied in their writings and did not in fact hold these beliefs, and were not deceived into regarding him as God.”⁸ The evangelists could easily have omitted the details of Jesus’s agony in the garden and might well have had a good motivation to do so. They chose to include it despite the difficulties it would cause in the eyes of those like Celsus. Its very inclusion, Origen argues, is an argument for its veracity and the reliability of the Gospels. Moreover, it forces us to reconsider our notions of what the Incarnation entails.

Faith in Christ is not a blind assent or ungrounded prejudice, as Celsus claims, but reasonable and defensible. The reasonability of Christian belief can be argued directly from the scriptures, as Origen did above. It can also be defended by pointing to the visible example of Christians in the world at large.

The Church: The Icon of Christ Displayed

Origen believes the “manifest power of Jesus”⁹ is itself entirely convincing evidence of Christianity’s truth. Again and again he points toward the unique righteousness of Christian communities and the singular wisdom they possess as evidence of the divinity of Christ. Take, for example, this passage from book three. He has quoted a line from *The True Doctrine* where

⁸ *Καὶ... ἐνόμιζον*, 2.26; Chadwick

⁹ *τὴν ἐπιφανῆ...δύναμιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ*, P.3

Celsus argues that a mythological figure, Cleomedes the Astypalean,¹⁰ shows as much evidence of divinity as Jesus. After expressing doubt at the myth's historicity, Origen replies:

No sign is found in the life of these men of the divinity told about them, but about Jesus there are the churches of those who have been helped and the prophecies spoken about him and the cures provided in his name and the understanding and wisdom there are according to him and the reason that is found in those who have thought to ascend beyond simple faith, and to discover the sense of the divine scriptures.¹¹

Cardinal Dulles remarks that this passage indicates “the grounds of credibility supporting [Origen’s] own faith.”¹² As such, we should examine each of the elements here as they pertain to being a “ground of credibility.” Before doing so, however, we should first note how the evidence is framed. Observe how Origen depicts Celsus’s “divine” figures: “No sign is found *in the life* of these men” (οὐδὲν... ἐν τῷ βίῳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων σύμβολον εὐρίσκεται) of their supposed divinity. If there is any “sign” (σύμβολον) of the pagan heroes’ divinity, it is confined to the depictions of their lives handed down in myth and tradition. If there is any proof at all, it is intangible and invisible. The sign

¹⁰ A figure who, after he was disqualified from a boxing match in Astypalea, in his rage brought down a school-house roof and killed a group of children. The townspeople threw stones at him and he fled to the sanctuary of Athena where he hid inside a chest. When the people opened the chest, they found it empty, and the oracle of Delphi told them to honor Cleomedes with prayers and sacrifices. See Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1980), 149-150, note 7.

¹¹ ἐκείνων... νοῦν[.], 3.33.

¹² Dulles, *A History of Apologetics*, 43-44.

of Jesus' divinity, on the other hand, is readily visible in the phenomena that Origen lists. Each of these elements, furthermore, is a visible sign of divinity in *Christ's* life. The nature of these different elements, then, will set up the qualities of divinity to be found in Christ.

Origen first lists "the churches of those who have been helped" (*αἱ τῶν ὠφελουμένων ἐκκλησίαι*) as evidence of Christ's divinity. He appeals to the Christian churches that contain members who have benefited from the charity within their community. After the churches, Origen lists the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and miracle healings as evidence for the divinity of Jesus. Notice the arrangement: prophecy and thaumaturgy are secondary to the charitable work of the early Christian community. Origen's privileging of the churches suggests that he considers Christian charity the most eminent sign of the divinity of Christ. Furthermore, the arguments from prophecy¹³ and miracles¹⁴ must be rooted in charity in order to provide distinct evidence for Christianity. Pagans are equally capable of both. The selfless love that is highly visible in Christian churches, and that animates the prophecies and the miracles "done in his name" (*αἱ ἐν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ γινόμεναι*), is the singular "sign" of the divinity of Christ.

¹³ Origen makes this very argument about prophecies in 2.30, when he argues that the prophecies have been proven true because they foretold a time of righteousness and peace, which Christians have brought to fruition.

¹⁴ As Wilken (*The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, 100) notes, pagans were capable of performing miracles as well, and Jesus could easily have been perceived as simply one more magician.

Origen next says that Christianity provides a rational framework that proceeds from its faith. His next evidence of Christ’s divinity is “the understanding and wisdom there are according to him and the reason that is found in those who have thought to ascend beyond simple faith” (*ἢ κατ’ αὐτὸν μετὰ σοφίας γνῶσις καὶ λόγος εὕρισκόμενος παρὰ τοῖς φροντίσασιν ἀναβῆναι μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς ψιλλῆς πίστεως*). We first see that faith in Christ is reasonable because of the remarkable charity displayed by his churches. Yet Christianity does not end in “simple faith” (*ψιλλῆς πίστεως*). Rather, from that faith one “ascends” (*ἀναβῆναι*) to “understanding and wisdom” (*μετὰ σοφίας γνῶσις*). Those who understand things “according to him” (*κατ’ αὐτὸν*) see in Christ a vision of the world that most clearly speaks to reality and to the nature of the human person. Origen points to the many whose “simple faith” in Christ has grown into a perception of the underlying principle (*λόγος*) of the universe and human purpose.¹⁵ Likewise, he points to those who find the “sense of the divine scriptures” (*τὸν ἐν ταῖς θεῖαις γραφαῖς νοῦν*) – those who find that there is a comprehensive view of reality within the Bible which reveals human purpose and destiny.¹⁶ The wisdom

¹⁵ I find it distinctly possible that Origen means for his own apology to demonstrate some of these latter qualities – that is, an understanding of wisdom according to Christ and the sense of the Scriptures.

¹⁶ This argument would have had a special appeal in antiquity. In 4.38, Origen remarks that the Pandora story from Hesiod is ridiculous if read literally. Both Platonists and Christians looked to the “sense” of their religious texts to find meaning. Origen here is showing that there are those who have found a “sense” to the Bible that speaks to reality more than any pagan text.

these individuals find, moreover, will necessarily be rooted in the distinct Christian charity to which Origen first appealed.

Origen will make similar appeals to the righteousness and wisdom of the Christian community throughout the *Contra Celsum*. He uses these external evidences of Christian love and charity as signs of Christ's divinity. Based on this empirical proof, Origen will present what John Cavadini calls an "icon" of Jesus,¹⁷ an image of what the Incarnation entails that explains the remarkable charity of the Christians and the reason that Christians have this "adhesion" to Christ. He will show that, in Christ, there is a pattern of perfect self-sacrificing love that unites Jesus to the divine nature, and that participation in Christ allows humans the same share in divinity.

Painting the Icon in Dialogue with Celsus

Origen's icon of Christ is rooted in his understanding of humanity's union with God. Origen quotes Celsus arguing against the resurrection of the body by asserting that "God does not will what is contrary to nature"¹⁸. Celsus assumes here that God operates within the same natural laws to which the rest of the universe is beholden. This God does not will "what is contrary to nature" (*τὰ παρὰ φύσιν*) – the God's will must conform to a preexisting natural order; he is not master over it, and in his perfection he can only do what is "of a right and just

¹⁷ Cavadini, *A Brief Reflection on the Intellectual Tasks of the New Evangelization*

¹⁸ *τὰ παρὰ φύσιν ὁ θεὸς οὐ βούλεται*, 5.23

nature”¹⁹. His concept of divinity is not that of a transcendent source and sustenance of reality, but of a supremely powerful entity that sits atop (but not outside of) the rest of the natural world.²⁰ Since it is the nature of a body to become corrupted and ugly, God (as Celsus sees it) is incapable of granting eternal life to such an unseemly entity.

In so describing the world, however, Celsus begs the question: *why* are these laws of nature so? He assumes a Platonist view of reality in which God does not mingle with material matters, and from that perspective concludes that the resurrection of the dead is contrary to the divine nature. Although his conclusion follows from his premise, Celsus does not defend his assumption. Origen then proceeds to present a different image of reality that both challenges and answers Celsus’s Platonist image of the world.

In his reply to Celsus’s objection, Origen presents a view of God that does not restrict Him to natural limitations. He replies:

If he says things are done according to the Word of God and His will, clearly it is not contrary to nature. For things are not done by God contrary to nature, even if they are paradoxical or seem paradoxical to some. If it is really necessary to call things in this way, we say how God sometimes might do things that are, contrary to nature as it is more commonly perceived, beyond nature, such as lifting humanity

¹⁹ τῆς ὀρθῆς καὶ δικαίας φύσεως, 5.14

²⁰ Cf. Hart, *Atheist Delusions: The Christian Revolution and its Fashionable Enemies*, 114-115.

beyond human nature and making it change to a better and more divine nature.²¹

At the first, Origen defines “nature” not as a preexisting system but as something that must be in accord with “The Word of God and His will” (*κατὰ λόγον θεοῦ καὶ βούλησιν αὐτοῦ*). Nature exists according to God’s *logos* and ordinance. It depends on Him, and its goodness flows directly from His design. Because of this contingency, Origen can assert that the elements of “nature” can be (or at least seem to be) “paradoxical” (*παράδοξα ἢ ἢ δοκοῦντά τισι παράδοξα*). God’s actions need not adhere exclusively to a predetermined rationalism, but can easily appear supernatural. Yet we can already sense a certain discomfort on Origen’s part with this division between “nature” and “paradox,” and only grudgingly (*Εἰ δὲ χρὴ βεβιασμένως ὀνομάσαι*) does he present God’s act of “lifting man beyond human nature” (*ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν ἀναβιβάζων τὸν ἄνθρωπον*) to a “more divine nature” (*θειότεραν*) as something “contrary to nature as it is more commonly known” (*πρὸς τὴν κοινότερον νοουμένην φύσιν*). Origen’s hesitation here indicates that he actually does not see a division between what is natural and what is “beyond nature” or “against nature.” Rather, for Origen nature *is* paradoxical and anything that is contrary to nature only seems to be. Everything within nature, due to its contingency and its unity with “the Word of God and His will,” has the paradoxical quality of being both natural and beyond nature. Applying this principle

²¹ εἰ... θειότεραν (5.23)

to Origen's final statement, God's act of "raising up" (*ἀναβιβάζων*) humankind is not the imposition of a celestial quality on an inherently earthly humanity, but the gratuitous restoration of the divine nature to a humanity that is, by nature, divine.

The special genius of this reply is Origen's depiction of his understanding of created nature in terms that a Platonist can find agreeable. The vision of reality he presents is distinct from Celsus's, but it also shows that Christians are not the base materialists that a Platonist might imagine them to be. Indeed, Origen argues that the resurrection of the dead proceeds from a profound union between God and creation. God's "drawing toward divinity" speaks to the Platonist desire for union with God. Origen incorporates that desire into a vision of reality that leaves room for the deification of material as well as spiritual nature.

Conclusion

In the case of the bodily resurrection, Origen paints an image of a God whose relationship with creation is one of love. He restores what he has made to his divine life out as the gratuitous gift of a father. This example is not a logical proof, but an explanation. Were one to accept this explanation of reality as true, one could then understand why Jesus is so willing to accept suffering in the garden of Gethsemane. One could also understand why the communities of Christians can demonstrate the kind of charity, wisdom, and love that they possess. If God is

love, as the Christians profess, then Christians themselves should demonstrate the same love in whose image they were created. Where this evidence abounded, and guided by the intelligence of the Alexandrian's arguments, we can discern the path to faith that *Contra Celsum* lays out and which can serve as a model for apologetics in any age.

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The “Customs House” with Charging Bull Fresco

Approx. 2000 BCE, Fresco and stone. Archaeological site of Knossos, Crete, Greece.



Holy Cross Brings Socrates to the Mascot Debate

Jeffrey Dickinson, '19

Holy Cross Member: There's currently a discussion on whether the mascot of the College should be changed. Do you have any thoughts?

Socrates: My response would depend on the circumstances. What reasoning lies behind changing or keeping it?

HC: Those who want to change the mascot believe that the Crusader is a reminder of an ugly time, when Catholicism was militant and caused the deaths of tens of thousands of people. A great many of those people were innocent, slaughtered for a purpose never quite achieved. Those who think the Crusader should stay believe that tradition takes precedence over historical connotations. It's always been the mascot.

S: While I am not accustomed to this sort of subject, I will respond first to the former argument with my own question: do you wish to hold such an event as the Crusades, regardless of how terrible, in a position of power?

HC: No.

S: And if you fear something, does it not have power over you?

HC: Yes, you could say that.

S: And you are afraid that using this mascot would give the wrong impression of the school, thus offending certain people?

HC: Well, yes, basically.

S: Removing the mascot would place it in a position of power because you are afraid of its effects, would it not?

HC: By your logic, yes.

S: So, then, in order to remove this event's power, you must take away that which gives it power over you: the fear. And therefore, you must be willing to keep it in use.

HC: It would seem so. But there must be a way to remove its power without making it the model of the school, as if endorsing the Crusades, right?

S: If I am correct, a crusade in its true meaning is taking religious action against an evil. And again if I am correct, fighting evil is something that the current Church would hold honorable. So in fact, a crusade is not an evil in itself; rather, it is quite the opposite, as by definition it is fighting evil. Therefore, the school has no reason to avoid a Crusader, one performing a crusade, as its mascot. The only thing holding the administration back now is the historical event. Let me ask: have you ever been wrong before, in any part of your life?

HC: Of course.

S: Do you still judge yourself by that mistake?

HC: No, I've moved on.

S: As does everyone. Why, then, should the Church be any different? The Crusade was a mistake on a far greater scale, yet the principle is the same. Why judge a crusade based on a former mistake? Embrace the idea of crusade and crusader as what they should be - combating evil - but also, recognize the fact that the historical Crusades were a very dire mistake, and publicize the fact. You agree with the fundamental idea of fighting evil, but you must strive that others understand that the actions of radical individuals a thousand years ago need not influence how we act now. In this manner, you will take away the power of fear from the historical events.

HC: I suppose that makes sense. Do you think then, that the second argument is correct?

S: Certainly not! The second argument argues against itself and provides the best defense against itself. Tradition takes priority over the historical connotation of the crusader? Tell me: how would you define tradition?

HC: Following the actions, beliefs, and customs of our predecessors.

S: And how would you define history?

HC: Anything that has come before our own time.

S: Did our predecessors come before our own time?

HC: Yes.

S: In that case, since the deeds of our predecessors happened before our own time, these traditions must be historical. If history and tradition are the same, can one take priority over the other?

HC: If they're the same, then no.

S: So, then, if tradition and history are the same, and cannot take priority over one another, the historical connotation of the Crusader must be present within the tradition of the mascot. If this is the case, then the argument that one can be ignored in favor of the other is not an argument at all, as it is impossible. If you do not find the connotation of the Crusader to be acceptable, then keeping it is inexcusable.

HC: But wait - what about your response to the first argument? You've gone in a circle.

S: That is true. I have, and I have done so for a specific purpose. Would you like to discern which decision is best for you? I cannot respond. All I can do is spur you forward, directing you to the point where no one else can do your own labor. I am only here to bring you to the final split, and from here you must decide. Which is the path most acceptable to you?

Vergil's Geographic References in *Georgics* 3.1-48

Liam O'Toole, '20

The proem to Book 3 of Vergil's *Georgics* (3.1-48) stands apart from the rest of the didactic work in that it avoids the topics of farming and rural life that are the focus of the rest of the poem. Instead, Vergil here outlines the temple—which scholars often read as a forthcoming epic¹—he intends to build in Mantua in honor of Caesar Augustus. This brief passage is incredibly important, especially for the larger metapoetic purpose it serves. Indeed, Vergil strives both here and throughout the *Georgics* to not only blur the line between epic and didactic poetry, but also to find his true place within ancient poetry. The latter task represents a greater challenge for Vergil, as he struggles to balance the strong influence of his predecessors, the Alexandrian poets, with his desire to pave his own path. In the proem to Book 3, Vergil sketches a synthesized, metaphorical version of his immense internal struggle. In such, he prominently displays his connection to the Alexandrian poets, his desire to break away from them, and his realization that he is currently unable to do so. Crucial to Vergil's effort to condense and express this struggle is a variety of geographical references: allusion, literal reference, and personification.²

¹ Vergil Encyclopedia, Jones

² By literal here, I mean that these references do not allude to any particular myth or story, nor are they personified or otherwise enhanced. i.e. when Vergil says "Mantua" he literally means Mantua.

“You also, great Pales, and we will sing you, shepherd from the Amphrysus, worthy of remembrance, and you, woods and rivers of Lycaeus” (*te quoque, magna Pales, et te memorande canemus/pastor ab Amphryso, vos, silvae amnesque Lycaei*, 3.1-2). Thus, Vergil opens Book 3 much as he does each of the other books of the *Georgics*: with a series of invocations. This is where the similarities end, however. In the other proems, Vergil invokes each deity by name. Here, though, he invokes only Pales by name; the deities Apollo and Pan he invokes through geographical allusions to Greek myth. As Richard Thomas notes in his commentary on Books 3 and 4 of the *Georgics*, this style of allusion is distinctly Alexandrian.³ In addition to their style, the content of these geographical allusions also demonstrates Vergil’s connection to the Alexandrian poets. In the first of these allusions, Vergil refers to Apollo as “*pastor ab Amphryso*” or “shepherd from the Amphrysus” (3.2). This is, in fact, an allusion to the Greek myth in which Apollo serves as shepherd to the flocks of King Admetus at the Amphrysus River, which flows through Thessaly.⁴ What is more important, however, is that the only other time this river appears in connection to Apollo is in Hymn 2. 47-49 of Callimachus, a prominent Alexandrian poet.⁵

³ Thomas (1988), 37

⁴ Barrington Atlas, Map 1a

⁵ Thomas (1983), 93

The allusion to Pan, seen in the phrase “the woods and rivers of Lycaeus” (*silvae amnesque Lycaei* 3.2), is more oblique though no less important. Indeed, Mt. Lycaeus is a mountain in Greece and “one of Pan’s traditional haunts” in Greek myth.⁶ Moreover, Helen Peraki-Kyriakidou notes, “Greek Arcadia and the Greek god Pan...are connected with speech and discourse in general and with poetry in particular, they also stand as a metonymy for all the strata of Greek literature.”⁷ Given their prominent place in “the strata of Greek literature,” this allusion, too, serves as a connection between Vergil and his Alexandrian predecessors. That Vergil uses geographical allusions in a deliberate attempt to invoke these deities in an Alexandrian manner is significant, but that he does so at the outset of *this* passage—one representative of his search for poetic identity—only further indicates the strong influence that the Alexandrian poets, especially Callimachus, had on his career.

In spite of this, Vergil already appears desirous of pulling away, and, as the proem progresses, Vergil’s attitude begins to shift in response. In the lines that follow, Vergil moves away from demonstrating a connection to his predecessors and instead focuses on his future works, works through which he hopes to distinguish himself from the Alexandrian poets.

In order to extend the notion that he desires to pave his own poetic path, Vergil again turns to geographical references.

⁶ Vergil Encyclopedia, Fratantuono

⁷ Peraki-Kyriakidou (2006), 90

This time, however, Vergil places the emphasis not on their mythological importance, but rather on their actual geographical location. Vergil's primary goal in so doing so is to mark his future works as both personal and Italian in nature. To start, Vergil claims that he "will first bring back Idumaeen palms to you, Mantua, and place a temple made from marble in the green field by the water" (*primus Idumaeas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas,/et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam/ propter aquam*, 3.12-14). This temple will not just be anywhere in Mantua, however. Specifically, it will be placed "where the huge Mincius wanders in slow curves and weaves the shores with a thin reed" (*tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat/Mincius et tenera praetexit arundine ripas*, 3.14-15). Though it would be more conventional for Vergil to construct his theoretical temple to Augustus at Rome rather than in rural Northern Italy, Vergil is deliberate in his choice. For one, Mantua and the Mincius function as a sphragis (an identifying "seal" with which an author marks his work) for Vergil. Indeed, his hometown and its river appear once in each of his works and are only referenced elsewhere in connection with him.⁸ Therefore, these two geographic place names serve as an indication that Vergil intends his forthcoming epic to be uniquely personal. Additionally, Marianne Goodfellow notes, "the place names Mincius and Mantua stand out as Italian and Transpadane at the

⁸ Vergil Encyclopedia, Jones

beginning of a long list of foreign places and far away battles.”⁹ These literal geographical references, then, mark this section and the future epic as both uniquely Virgilian and distinctly Italian.

Not only does Vergil use literal geographical references in this proem to demonstrate that his forthcoming work will be personal and Italian, but also to indicate that it will be both different from and superior to the work of his Alexandrian-Greek predecessors. This is best seen in his description of the games he plans to hold in honor of his completed temple. Vergil notes that his games will be superior to the point that, “All Greece, leaving behind the Alpheos and the groves of Molorchus for me, will compete in races and with the bloody boxing glove” (*cuncta mihi Alpheum linquens lucosque Molorchi/cursibus et crudo decernet Graecia caestu*, 3.19-20). If “games” here is read as “poems”, Vergil is predicting that his new, epic work will stand apart from previous Alexandrian works, surpassing them completely. Consequently, he believes that all readers, including previous devotees of Alexandrian poetry, will flock to his work and forget about that of his predecessors.

Critical in setting up this notion is Vergil’s use of literal geographical references. The first of these references is to the Alpheos River, a river that flows by Mt. Olympus in Greece (Barrington 58); the second, “the groves of Molorchus” (*lucosque Molorchi*, 3.19), is a “periphrasis for Nemea.”¹⁰ Both

⁹ Goodfellow (1981), 17

¹⁰ Thomas (1988), 42

function here on two levels. First, they are distinct aspects of the Greek landscape, providing a sharp contrast to Vergil's previous use of Italian geographical place names. Second, they are clear references to the Olympic games and the Nemean games, and Greek games in general. More specifically, *lucosque Molorchi* is a direct reference to the founding of the Nemean games that Callimachus describes in *Aetia* 3. This makes it clear that Vergil, as Thomas notes, intends for "his own foundation of his Italian games to eclipse the Callimachean foundations of *Aetia* 3, just as his poetry will eclipse that of Callimachus" and the other Alexandrians.¹¹ Vergil uses geographical references to set up a contrast between both the Italian and Greek landscapes, and the Italian and Greek games. Together, this is representative of his desire to break from and surpass his Alexandrian predecessors with his forthcoming work.

Though Vergil's desire to break from Alexandrian precedent is clearly stated just a few lines prior, the closing lines of the proem to Book 3 indicate that he is not yet able to do so. Indeed, the proem's final lines convey the burden Vergil feels to remain loyal to the very Alexandrian poets he desires to break away from. To convey this burden, Vergil relies again on geographical features, this time through their personification. When he urges himself to, "Come on, break slow delay!" (*en age segnis/rumpe moras*, 3.42-43), Vergil demonstrates the realization that his discussion of a future work is an unnecessary

¹¹ Thomas (1988), 42

distraction from the task at hand. Vergil is not the only one calling for him to return to his present task, however. He claims that “Cithaeron calls with a huge voice, and the dogs of Taygetos, and Epidaurus, mistress of horses,” each urging him to return to his didactic work (*vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron/Taygetique canes domitrixque Epidaurus equorum*, 3.43-44).

Once again, geography is a key player. Cithaeron, Taygetos and Epidaurus are neither historical nor mythological figures, but rather features of Greek geography: Cithaeron and Taygetos are mountains while Epidaurus is a city (Barrington, 55, 58). Thomas notes that these “Greek localities are appropriate to the pastoral subject of the third book,” especially in that Cithaeron and Taygetos are places well suited for hunting and recall deities including the huntress Diana. Meanwhile, Epidaurus (or perhaps Epirus or Epidamnus¹²) is associated with horses. Through the personification of these places, Vergil gives the impression that the subject matter of his didactic poem itself is encouraging him to return his attention to it.

More significant, however, are the connections to Greek and even Alexandrian literature that each of these geographical features possesses. As R.A.B Mynors indicates in his commentary, each of these locales is detailed by various Greek authors. He notes that Mt. Cithaeron is described as a scene of

¹² For a discussion of the possibility of Epidaurus being incorrect, see Hendry (1999)

Bacchic revelry and summer pasture in the works of Sophocles and is featured in the works of Xenophon.¹³ Additionally, Mt. Taygetos is described as a favorite haunt of Diana in the works of Homer, and, more importantly here, in Callimachus' *Hymn to Diana*.¹⁴ Epidaurus is much less prominent, which perhaps gives credence to one of Hendry's alternative readings cited above. Here, then, Vergil personifies geographical features prominent in Greek literature to stand for the literature and its authors.

What is more, Vergil casts these personified geographical features in a negative light. First, he describes the voice with which Cithaeron calls him to remain on task as "huge" (*ingenti* 3.43), giving the sense that Cithaeron is not asking Vergil to return, but rather exhorting him to. Furthermore, *Taygetosque canes* ("and the dogs of Tayetos" 3.44) indicates that it is not simply Taygetos that urges him on, but specifically his dogs. This, Mynors indicates, is in fact a reference to Spartan hunting dogs. The presence of these terrifying and fierce hunting dogs adds an extra sense of urgency for Vergil to remain on task. That these places—and the literature they stand for—are depicted as angry and terrifying indicates that Vergil now sees his connection to the Alexandrian poets as a burden, a significant challenge for him to break away from completely.

In many ways, the proem to Book 3 serves as a microcosm for the *Georgics*. Phillip Hardie describes the

¹³ Mynors (1990), 187

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Georgics as marked by “an awareness of a range of poetic choices available to the poet,” and “a sense of being in transition, of going on a poetic journey.”¹⁵ Both sentiments ring true in this short proem. Indeed, Vergil’s poetic journey, especially his tenuous relationship with the Alexandrian poets, is played out in these lines. A major part of this story is told through his use of geographical references. Vergil’s use of geographical allusions to Greek myth, contrasting literal place references, and personification each demonstrate a unique step on Vergil’s poetic journey. He moves from demonstrating the influence of Callimachus and other Alexandrian poets on his early works to desiring to distance himself from his predecessors, then finally to realizing that he is not yet able to break away. Clearly then, as Thomas notes, “The first 48 lines of the third *Georgic* constitute Virgil’s most extensive statement of literary purpose.”¹⁶ The importance of geographical references here cannot be understated. Indeed, these geographical references stand out for their uniqueness and undeniable associations. Each locale and individual reference has its own unique connotations and connections, a fact which Vergil expertly employs over the course of this proem as he seeks to outline his own poetic path.

¹⁵ Hardie (1998), 40

¹⁶ Thomas (1983), 92

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Boeotian Countryside

View from a window at the monastery of Hosios Loukas.



The Trial of Cremutius Cordus as a Vindication of Praise in
Roman Historiography

Richard Ciołek '20

Dionysius of Halicarnassus wrote in a letter to Cn. Pompeius, “one might say the most necessary task for writers of any kind of history is to select a noble subject which will please their readers.”¹⁷ Concern for a “noble subject” is indicative of the laudatory nature of ancient historiography. For, if one selects a subject to write about which he deems worthy, it is difficult not to engage in praise. Such a “noble subject” is evident in the first work of Tacitus, the *Agricola*. However, it would seem that his later works, especially his *Annales*, deal with the opposite. The *Annales* cover a subject that is anything but noble. It seems that Tacitus chooses to disrupt the expectations of his readers by focusing mostly on a generally unflattering portrayal of the machinations of the Julio-Claudian emperors, rather than depicting great battles and heroes. Yet, it also appears that Tacitus’ concern with a “noble subject” and the praise of this subject are still present in the *Annales*, and that Tacitus believes this to be an important aspect of writing history. The trial of Cremutius Cordus in *Annales* 4.34-4.35 serves as a primary example.

Cordus’ trial occupies a unique position in classical historiography, as it contains the only recorded speech of a

¹⁷ Usher, *trans.* (1985) 373.

Roman historian.¹⁸ It is riveting defense of an already condemned man, and while many scholars, such as Moles,¹⁹ note the presence of the theme of liberty, a concern with praise also appears to be present. The speech, as with many other speeches in historiography, is likely the result of *inventio*. Syme asserts that the speech is the creation of Tacitus.²⁰ Therefore, given the content of the speech, it seems likely that Tacitus may have used the speech to put forth his own views of historiography. I will argue how the speech of Cordus indicates that Tacitus viewed praise as essential in writing history, and that this is a belief which he retained from the *Agricola*. I will begin with a brief overview of Tacitus' justification for writing encomium in the beginning of the *Agricola* and the historical context of why praise was received with increasing hostility in Rome. From there, I will examine the argument of the speech itself, and consider how diction within it seems to create a distance between Cordus and the charges themselves; rather than Cordus being on trial alone, it appears that the idea of praise itself is also on trial. Finally, I will consider how words of praise that permeate throughout the speech, especially in relation to Livy, provide Tacitus the context to engage in praise, and how this is suggestive of his views of praise.

¹⁸ Martin and Woodman, *ed.* (1989) 176-177.

¹⁹ Moles (1998) 169-175.

²⁰ Syme (1958) 337 n10.

Section I: A Time Savage to Praise

Tacitus begins his first work with a preface that decries how praise in writing history has become increasingly difficult under the principate. He writes: “But now about to narrate the life of a dead man I needed to seek pardon, which I would not seek about to criticize: so savage and hostile are the times towards excellence” (*at nunc narraturo mihi vitam defuncti venia opus fuit quam non petissem incusaturus: tam saeva et infesta virtutibus tempora, Agr. 1.4*). The use of *venia* is indicative of animosity towards praise. Here it means pardon,²¹ which suggests that Tacitus had done a wrong that requires that he seek forgiveness. If writing a work of praise requires forgiveness, this suggests that praise is a crime. Sailor notes that there is much scholarly debate surrounding from whom Tacitus needed to seek pardon (Domitian or his readership), and, as a result, there is much controversy if Tacitus is referring to the reign of Domitian or Trajan. Sailor asserts that the text seems to “refuses to endorse either one.”²² Indeed, the deliberate ambiguity of the tenses would lend credence to both being possible. The form of *sum* could refer to either the past in relation to Tacitus or his readership, and the final phrase lacks a verb. Either *sunt* or *erant* are possible. This choice is deliberate, and, thus, suggests that if both possibilities exist, both readings are possible. Therefore, Tacitus indicates that the principate—

²¹ OLD *venia* 4a.

²² Sailor (2004) 146.

both the regime and his audience—have become hostile towards praise.

The rise of such hostility is, itself, the result of the rise of the principate. With the Republic descending into civil war because of the ability of a single general to garner a large amount of public loyalty and support from their army, many of the institutions of the principate were designed to ensure that power and glory were exclusive to the princeps. Legates, for instance, assigned all their military victories to the emperor.²³ Thus, it proves dangerous for an individual to rise above the renown of the emperor, is seen in Domitian's concern with the rising popularity of Agricola (*Agr.* 39). Therefore, it proves impossible for one to write about a noble subject other than the emperor. This hostility on the part of the regime might have also possibly caused a hostility amongst those reading history. Sailor suggests that the regime had a rather important role in determining the popularity of books, and indifference from the emperor could be disastrous for an author.²⁴ Therefore, it is possible that the opinion of the regime would sway readership, and if that opinion was hostile towards waxing panegyric, then so would be Tacitus' audience.

Section II: The Defense of Praise

Despite optimism of a culture more conducive to *ingenium* during the reigns of Nerva and Trajan, it is evident

²³ Goldsworthy (2016) 323.

²⁴ Sailor (2008) 252-257.

from the content and the diction in the speech of Cremutius Cordus that, by the time he wrote the *Annales*, Tacitus still seemed to be grappling with a hostility towards praise in Roman society. The defense speech, then, serves as Tacitus' own defense of praise. While Cordus is specifically charged with praise of Brutus and calling Cassius the last of the Romans, Tacitus' word choice and Cordus' focus on historical precedent seem to create distance between Cordus' own lauding and that of praise in general. Thus, the speech appears to serve as a metaphorical defense of the act of praise in a time increasingly hostile towards it.

For instance, Tacitus portrays Cordus' very first words as "My words, conscript fathers, are charged" (*verba mea, patres conscripti, arguuntur, Ann. 4.34.2*). Tacitus' decision to have Cordus state that his words (*verba*) are accused as opposed to himself separates Cordus from accusation. Thus, it seems that the very act of praise itself is on trial, not just Cordus. He then states: "But these [words] were not against the emperor or the parent of the emperor, whom the law of majesty embraces" (*sed neque haec in principem aut principis quos lex maiestatis amplectitur, Ann. 4.34.2*). Again, Tacitus distances Cordus from the charge when he states that his words (*haec*) do not apply to the *lex maiestatis* (law of majesty). Furthermore, the use of the relative pronoun here restricts on the scope of the law. The gender and number means that the form of *quos* agrees with *princeps* and *parens*, and directly suggests that the *lex maiestatis*

specifically refers to Tiberius and Augustus. Moreover, the verb *amplector* most literally means “to take or hold lovingly.”²⁵ Thus, the imagery suggests the *lex maiestatis* embraces and loves the emperor. Not only is this suggestive of the relationship between the regime and the use of the *lex maiestatis*, but it also limits the effects of the law to acts that belittle the majesty of the emperor. As Cordus argues, the law does not apply to him in this case, because, therefore, the *lex maiestatis* only encompasses criticism, not praise. The focus of his defense, then, vindicates the act of praise as a whole, not just Cordus’ use. Such a reading seems plausible given the use of ambiguous words that further distance Cordus from the charges.

This may be observed in Cordus’ statement of what he is accused of: “I am said to have praised Brutus and Cassius, of whose deeds, while composed by many, no one has remembered without honor” (*Brutum et Cassium laudauisse dicor, quorum res gestas cum plurimi composuerint, nemo sine honore memorauit, Ann.4.34.2*). The passive of *dico* creates a sense of ambiguity around the charge. Its use suggests that it is unclear whether Cordus actually praised Brutus and Cassius; thus, when Cordus goes on to defend their legacy, it seems that he is defending the very act of praising Brutus and Cassius rather than his own specific praise for the two liberators.²⁶ Moreover, the

²⁵ OLD *amplector* 1a.

²⁶ Cordus’ description of the exploits of Brutus’ and Cassius’ exploits as *res gestas* is also suggestive of a laudatory nature. *Gero* with *res* commonly refers to a list of accomplishments (OLD *gero* 9b)

adjective *plurimus* and the noun *nemo* similarly seem to display vagueness; rather than mentioning specific authors, the non-descript adjectives serve to indicate that the act of praise in history is ubiquitous. After all, if “no one” has written about Brutus and Cassius without honor, then everyone who wrote about them praised them. Thus, it would appear that Cordus does not defend his specific use of praise; rather, he seems to be defending the act itself. This indicates that the trial itself seems to be acting as a defense of the use of praise in historiography as a whole.

Section III: Tacitus Crafts Encomium

In addition to defending the use of praise in his own work, Tacitus has Cordus praise various other historians, especially Livy. Where his argument relies on precedent, Cordus would engage in praise of his predecessors. The language of the passage is rather “over the top,” and seems to serve as panegyric. Not only does Tacitus seem to use this opportunity to compliment his favorite historians, but, by engaging in praise, he seems to reaffirm his views of praise.

For instance, Tacitus has Cordus extoll Livy as “the foremost distinguished man of eloquence and credibility” (*eloquentiae ac fidei praeclarus in primis*, *Ann.* 4.34.3). The prefix of *prae-* on the adjective *praeclarus* gives the adjective a higher degree and suggests “very distinguished,” and the use of the prepositional phrase here adds even further praise. Tacitus’ use of *praeclarus* is also rather uncommon. Cicero used it 373

times, while it only appears in Tacitus on about eight occasions. (It only appears in the *Annales* three times).²⁷ Furthermore, Martin and Woodman note Tacitus' choice of the genitive here as "unparalleled,"²⁸ which brings a sense of insurmountable praise to surround Livy. Thus, just as Tacitus' use of both *praeclarus* the use of the genitive in this context is rare, so as a historian with such quality as Livy. Tacitus' rather extensive praise here not only suggests he held a high opinion of Livy, but indicates that praise was an important aspect of writing ancient history. After all, he is a historian furthering his argument and defending his encomiastic writings with praise. Cordus essentially argues that he is permitted to use praise in describing Brutus and Cassius because Livy, who is highly regarded, did something similar.

Tacitus elaborates further, and uses emphatic diction to pump up Livy's praise of Pompey to further Cordus' argument, but also to enhance the perception of Livy himself. Cordus says that "he lifted Pompey up with such great praise that Augustus called him a 'Pompeian'" (*Cn. Pompeium tantis laudibus tulit ut "Pompeianum" eum Augustus appellerat*, 4.34.3). The use of the adjective *tantus* and the verb *fero* emphasizes the degree of praise Livy employed. Tacitus here (along with much of the speech) seems to participate in some *inventio* to further his

²⁷ This was found by using the Packard Humanities Institute Latin word search tool. <http://latin.packhum.org/search>

²⁸ Martin and Woodman (1989) 179.

extensive praise. It seems unlikely that Augustus actually called Livy a “Pompeian.” Woodman asserts that, based on Livy’s early writings, he would have naturally supported Augustus.²⁹ Rather, it seems prudent to infer that Tacitus created this small detail, or as Woodman and Martin suggest, Tacitus took a joke literally. However, the latter seems questionable, as it is not unreasonable to think that Tacitus was capable of understanding sarcasm and irony. Woodman asserts that ancient historiography was concerned with a core set of facts from which historians could elaborate so long as resultant account was plausible.³⁰ Therefore, it appears Tacitus engages in *inventio* to strengthen Cordus’ argument, and further his praise of Livy. As noted previously, Cordus extolls Livy as distinguished in regard to “credibility” (*fidei*, 4.34.3). *Fides* here appears to mean credence or trust.³¹ Yet, as Woodman notes, an ancient historian’s credibility does not refer to trust in the sense of historical truth, rather trust in the sense of being unbiased.³² Therefore, this would suggest that Tacitus purposely created this account to truly further his praise of Livy. This praise is so laudatory that it appears to be borderline panegyric, and, as a result, serves to affirm Tacitus’ view of praise.

²⁹ Woodman (1988) 136-139.

³⁰ Woodman (1988) 91-93.

³¹ OLD *fides* 12a.

³² Woodman (1988) 74-75.

Section IV: Conclusion

Yet, if Tacitus uses this speech as a platform to voice his concerns with historiography, how might this relate to the digression of 4.32-4.33 where Tacitus also seems to layout something similar? Specifically, why might Tacitus choose to include his defense of praise in a speech rather than in the digression? The digression immediately precedes the speech, and the placement does not seem coincidental. Perhaps, then, the speech is an extension of the digression. Miller notes that speeches were frequently used by the historian to convey a thought they considered important.³³ Therefore, it is possible that Tacitus may have used the speech as a continuation of his digression to further discuss aspects of historiography, yet in a fashion more entertaining to his readership. Woodman notes that while digressions tended to be a source of entertainment, Tacitus seems to state that a reader would not find many of the conventional pleasures a reader might find in reading histories. Therefore, Tacitus ironically states that there is little entertainment value to his work in a section that is traditionally seen in the context of fun.³⁴ The speech then allows Tacitus to discuss the matter of praise (as well as use praise) in the action-packed environment of a trial. Furthermore, setting this discussion in a trial allows Tacitus to suggest that praise is literally on trial.

³³ Miller (1975) 56.

³⁴ Woodman (1988) 184.

The trial of Cremutius Cordus, which seems to fit well into the context of the digression of 4.32-4.33, appears to serve as Tacitus' metaphorical defense of praise of the use of praise in the historical writings of Ancient Rome. Tacitus first seems to make such a claim in the *Agricola*, the preface of which makes it apparent that the regime and possibly Roman readership has grown hostile towards praise, and the speech of Cordus indicates that his beliefs on the matter were consistent when he wrote the *Annals*. Diction within the speech suggests that Cordus is defending the act of praise itself as opposed to his individual crimes. Furthermore, the excessive lauding of Livy seems to resemble a panegyric, which indicates that Tacitus puts into practice what he preaches.

It, thus, appears that Tacitus is still concerned with the "noble subject" and the praise that it demands. Simply because the emperors themselves do not appear to be a "noble subject" in the *Annales* does not mean that Tacitus no longer believes in its importance. This is evident by the fact that one may still find the noble subject in the *Annales*. In addition to Cordus, one might also argue that Germanicus is a "noble subject" deserving of praise. Yet Cordus is exemplary, because he not only is a "noble subject," but seems to defend the very act of a historian writing about and praising the "noble subject."

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Parthenon

Approx. 5th century BCE. White marble. Athens, Greece.



October Nights on the Acropolis

Julia Spiegel, '19

The moon is in love
with the temple.
She lingers in the columns'
steady embrace as long as she can.

The temple is bathed in moonlight
and she stands taller,
her columns a little straighter,
her walls a little more complete.

Marble gleams white as the two
dance through the night,
and the temple is new again.
Dust stirs, hanging in the air
like drops of silver, slowly falling
onto ruins and chipped stone.

As the moon leaves, her love shrouds
the city in mist. Soon her love's twin
will burn it away, but for now,
she relishes the memories of
nighttime.

Catullus 8 and 76: Partner Poems Expressing a Mind
Fragmented by Love

Stephen Conde '20

As Catullus writes of his experiences with Lesbia, he often expresses the weight placed upon his mind due to her wrongdoings. In poem 75, he goes so far as to say: “*Huc est mens deducta tua mea, Lesbia, culpa, / atque ita se officio perdidit ipsa suo,*” (my mind has been led to this by your crime, Lesbia, and thus it destroys itself by its own duty, Catullus 75.1-2). Since Lesbia has lied to and hurt Catullus multiple times, his mind has been split between wanting to pursue her and wanting to abandon her. Two poems in particular, 8 and 76, present this division explicitly. Both poems present a struggle for dominance between these two mindsets, but in poem 8 his reason is more commanding, while in 76 his reason is weaker and more confused. Catullus exhibits this difference through his particular word choice within each poem, as well as his use of similar themes and ideas. Poem 8 is more playful and focused on both Catullus and Lesbia, while poem 76 is heavier and more reflective. The connections between the two poems seem to resemble Catullus’ state of mind as time goes on: at first he jests about the situation, and then he takes a more serious and worried tone. Several scholars have discussed the idea of Catullus’ fragmented mind within these two poems. One scholar in particular, M. Dyson, writes about poem 8 in his essay *Catullus 8 and 76*: “An expression of unhappiness leads through a process

of reasoning in which suppressed emotion almost breaks out, to a demand for self-control and a proclamation of victory.”¹ While Dyson considers how Catullus suppresses his emotion with his reason, he fails to acknowledge how much control desire has in both 8 and 76.

Poem 8: The Playful Call-to-Action

In poem 8, Catullus first examines the theme of a mind divided by love in a somewhat witty manner by presenting the emotional side of himself as “*Miser Catulle*,” a lovesick fool. Marilyn B. Skinner points out the view of two prior critics, E.P. Morris and A.L. Wheeler, that “the ‘*Miser Catulle*’ is a witty, lighthearted adaption of a familiar erotic motif... but humor maintains an ironic control over self-pity.”² Perhaps the rational side of Catullus uses humor to mitigate his confusion and depression, but we cannot forget that, as H. Akbar Khan writes: “*miser* is indicative of a state of mind wholly in thrall to passion.”³ Already we catch a glimpse at the division in Catullus’ mind through this opening word. The next few lines display this split mindset quite straightforwardly:

et quod vides perisse perditum ducas.
Fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles,
cum ventitabas quo puella ducebat...”

¹ M. Dyson, “Catullus 8 and 76,” 136.

² Marilyn B. Skinner, “Catullus 8: The Comic “Amator” as “Eiron,” 299-300.

³ H. Akbar Khan, “Style and Meaning in Catullus’ Eighth Poem,” 556.

(and consider to be lost what you see has been ruined. The suns once shone brightly for you, when you were following to wherever the girl was leading; 8.2-4). The tone of the poem shifts from commanding to reflective and nostalgic. The repetition of the verb “*duco*” helps display this change. First, it is used as a jussive subjunctive where reasonable Catullus orders lovesick Catullus to lead his mind aright. Afterwards, it is used as an indicative imperfect verb with the girl as the subject. While this section of the poem may seem to be an acknowledgement of the good times in the past, it also displays Catullus’ weakness in how he believes that his life was *candidior*, brighter, when the girl was leading him around, rather than how he must now lead himself. Catullus presents the opposing pursuits of his mind: one is looking towards the future while the other is stuck in the past. Yet not only is he reminiscing; he seems to have hope that his relationship is not over. Instead of saying that he followed to wherever the girl *duxit*, led, he uses the imperfect which expresses an incomplete action. He does this with most of the verbs in the reminiscent section of the poem. Ellen Greene discusses how this section displays the division as well: “The transformation from *quondam* to *vere* signals the change in the speaker's mind from distanced reflection on the past to a complete absorption in it.”⁴ The repetition of this particular idea – “*fulsere vere candidi tibi soles,*” (the suns truly shone brightly

⁴ Ellen Greene, “The Catullan Ego: Fragmentation and the Erotic Self,” *The American Journal of Philology* 116, no. 1 (1995): 80.

for you; 8.8) – illustrates the idea of the sun rising and setting. This image adds more hopefulness to the memory; though the sun has set on his past relationship, Catullus hopes that one day the sun will rise again, as it typically does, and he can be with Lesbia once more.

Dyson argues that this reflection on the past is not something Catullus is emotionally invested in:

The past is not sentimentalized or exalted, it is, if anything, played down, *illa multa iocosa*, 6. The expression, traditional as it is in lovers' language, may well be restrained and tender, but it smacks of appreciation. There is an overwhelming simplicity in *amata nobis quantum amabitur nulla*, 5, but the speaker is not primarily defining the quality of his affection; rather he wants himself to realize how lucky he has been in his once-in-a-lifetime experience.⁵

While I agree that this characterization is simplified, I believe that this is the rational side of Catullus restraining his emotional side as best as possible, holding him back from getting too lost in reminiscing. Within this section, it is clear that the person who truly holds the power is the memory of Lesbia. This is explained immediately in how Catullus remembers that he followed her where she led him. The only time in this section that Catullus is in control is in the verb *volebas*, depicting his desire. The role of the subject is taken from him time and time again while the focus remains elsewhere: *amata* is translated “she was loved,” *amabitur* as “she will be loved,” and even when talking about the

⁵ Dyson, “Catullus 8 and 76,”: 135.

iocosa, the times full of laughter, he uses *fiabant* (they were being made) rather than saying that he and his girl were making many of these joyful times. At the same time, Catullus uses litotes in saying *nec puella nolebat*, the girl was not unwilling, to show that the only reason these joyful times happened was because the girl was not against them. Despite the attempt of Catullus' rationality to restrain these memories, they still have a large impact upon his emotion.

Catullus then shifts his addressee from himself to the girl, as if now, after his insistent commanding, he is strong enough to face her, although it is clear he is not from the previous sections:

*Vale, puell(a)! Iam Catullus obdurat,
nec te requiret, nec rogabit invitam.*

At tu dolebis, cum rogaberis nulla.

(Farewell, girl! Now Catullus stands firm,/ nor will he seek you out again, nor will he ask for you unwilling; 8.12-14). Although he is speaking to the girl, he refers to himself in the third person, claiming that he will not pursue her any longer. Once again, Catullus uses the present tense in the verb *obdurat* and matches it with the word *iam*, "now," to emphasize the present. This displays a certainty about how obdurate Catullus currently is, but no certainty about how strong he will be in the future. By referring to himself in the third person, Catullus expresses a schism within himself, almost as if now he cannot be held responsible for any action he commits because of his emotions.

It is the reasonable side of him that claims he will not pursue her, but the emotional part does not have a say, nor does his reason simply say “I will not pursue you.” The two verbs that he chooses to include, *requiret* and *rogabit*, both have double meanings. *Requiret* can mean to seek again, which references his continual pursuit of her, but it can also mean to desire. *Rogabit* here can mean to ask for, in the sense of inviting someone on a date, while at the same time it can mean to beg for. These verbs, which Catullus claims he will not act on, refer to an emotion that he cannot easily control: desire.

Catullus then turns away from himself and back to Lesbia, saying *dolebit*, she will suffer or lament, when she will be sought by no one. This statement perhaps refers to Catullus himself, who is suffering because now that his girl has left him he has no one, which may explain why he is able to claim she will suffer – he is experiencing it himself. Catullus seems to insult her by saying “*scelestā, vae te!*” (wretch, woe to you! 8.15), yet the word *vae* carries an implication of pity, as if he feels badly for her if she will not have anyone to be with. The word *scelestā*, while it means wretch, also carries the implication that she has committed a crime, suggesting that he believes it was wrong of her to leave him. Following this, Catullus launches into a series of questions intended to show the girl how miserable her life will now be:

...*Quae tibi manet vita?*

Quis nunc t(e) adibit? Cui videberis bella?

Quem nunc amabis? Cuius esse diceris?

Quem basiabis? Cui labella mordebis?

(What remains to you in life?/ Who now will go to you? To whom will you seem beautiful?/ Whom now will you love? Whose will you be said to be?/ Whom will you kiss? For whom will you bite the little lips? 8.15-18). This choice holds many implications. Instead of stating that none of these things will happen to her, the questions seem to express Catullus' emotions – as Dyson notes, the questions do not focus only on the action, “but on the person involved. ‘You won’t have me to give you that’ gives way to ‘It won’t be me and I wish it were.’”⁶ The question “*quem basiabis*” calls to mind poems 5 and 7 concerning all the kisses he wished to share with Lesbia. At the same time, the reasonable side of him knows that it is unlikely that she has no one: the repetition of who, who now, who now, etc. conveys a sense of Lesbia moving from guy to guy. Still, he cannot help but fantasize specifically about how she will be “biting the little lips.” Catullus has to catch himself after this last question and remind himself: “*tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura,*” (you, stubborn Catullus, remain strong; 8.19). The use of the word *destinatus* is peculiar. It seems as if the side focused on reason believes the emotional side is being stubborn and not following the directions given. This is emphasized in the fact that Catullus begins by ordering with a jussive subjunctive, a weaker command form, and then switching to blunt imperatives,

⁶ Dyson, “Catullus 8 and 76”: 135.

as if he is applying more force to what he is saying. Clearly there is a battle for dominance occurring in his mind.

Poem 76: The Emotional Prayer for Help

Although poem 76 seems to express the rational side of Catullus in control, considering the higher diction and more complex syntax, a closer look reveals that his mind is still fragmented, and he continues to think about Lesbia. One particular example of this fragmentation within the poem is the amount of elisions; there are thirty-one in total, while poem 8 only held five. Not only does this illustrate his broken mind, but when read aloud it sounds as if he is tripping over his words, desperately praying for help to come as quickly as possible. Simultaneously, we see Catullus using second person to address himself, displaying his divided mind once more.

The entire first section of this poem explicitly acts as an acknowledgement of Catullus' piety, and how he deserves happiness because of his good deeds, while in truth it holds language that relates back to the strife with Lesbia from poem 8. The first line, "*siqua recordanti benefacta priora voluptas/ est homini...*" (if there is any pleasure for a man remembering former services; 76.1-2), holds religious connotations in *benefacta*, but this word hearkens back to how Lesbia was leading Catullus (*ducebas*) as if he was her servant. The word *voluptas* also holds the idea of physical pleasure, again relating back to his former relationship with Lesbia. These aren't the only words that connote some sort of sexual relationship;

sanctam fidem can mean loyalty, as one partner should be to another, *foedere* can be “applied to a marriage bond; also to other sexual unions,” (O.L.D.), and *gaudia* also can mean physical delights. While Dyson seems to believe that the piety Catullus mentions compares “with those of a man who has been *pious* in general,”⁷ he does not consider that perhaps Catullus means to say he has been faithful in his relationship to Lesbia. Catullus cannot be pious in general, because his relationship with Lesbia is adulterous in nature. Ellen Greene comments on this: “In the first place, the erotic principles of *fides*, *sancta amicitia*, and *foedus* are actually fallacious in light of Lesbia’s unfaithfulness and betrayal of her husband.”⁸ All three of Catullus’ examples of piety seem to express Lesbia’s unfaithfulness and deceit towards Catullus. He expresses that he has not acted as she has, and therefore deserves the delights of loyalty. The statement “*nec foedere nullo/ divum ad fallendos numine abusum homines*,” (nor in no sacred trust to have abused the power of the divine in order to deceive men; 76.3-4) enforces this idea. Although adorned with words speaking of the gods, it clearly tells of how Lesbia has not just deceived one man, but *homines*, Catullus and her own husband. Despite the reasonable idea of praying on behalf of piety, the hidden meanings of Catullus’ diction show that the emotional side of him is still

⁷ Dyson, “Catullus 8 and 76”: 140.

⁸ Greene, “The Catullan Ego”: 88.

hung up on Lesbia. The two sides are just acting simultaneously in this instance, rather than one trying to control the other.

Catullus signals through his diction the relationship between poem 76 and 8 in order to illustrate further the results of a fragmented mind. Just as in 8 he wrote “*multa iocosa*,” in 76 he writes “*multa gaudia*.” However, here he is referring to how “there are many joys remaining in life outside of this thankless love,” rather than the many joys in his relationship with Lesbia. Yet despite this statement’s rationality, Catullus places the word “*gaudia*” in between “*ingrato*” and “*amore*” (*ingrato gaudia amore* 76.6). This communicates to his reader that the emotional side of the mind persistently sees the joys of the world in his past relationship, just as it did in poem 8. Another connection comes in the form of questions: while in 8 the speaker was asking multiple questions to Lesbia, here he asks to himself “*Quin tu animo offirmas atque istinc teque reducis, / et dis invitis desinis esse miser?*” (why do you not toughen up your mind and lead yourself away from that one again, and cease to be wretched before the unwilling gods? 76.11-12). These questions remind the reader of the commands from 8: how he tells himself to *obdura*, not to seek Lesbia again, and not to *vive miser* “live as a miserable man.” Coincidentally, the word “*miser*” appears in this poem three times – as “*misereri*,” “*miser*,” and “*miserum*” – which further connects this version of Catullus back to the version of Catullus in poem 8. The use of the verb *reducis* resembles how previously Catullus told himself to *ducas* in

poem 8, as if he tried to lead himself away but has failed, and must *reducis*, lead himself again.

While the prayer may seem hopeful in that Catullus wants help and wants to be rid of this burden, his fragmented mind does not seem to want to let go:

difficile est, verum hoc qua lubet efficias.

Una salus haec est, hoc est tibi pervincendum;

hoc facias, sive id non pote sive pote.

O di, si vestrum est misereri...

eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi,

(it is difficult [to set aside a long love], but in truth you must do this by whatever means you can. This is the one safety, this must be conquered by you; you must do this, whether it is not possible or whether it is. O gods, if it is of you to be pitiful... tear this plague and illness from me; 76.14-17,20). After acknowledging the difficulty of this task, the rational side of Catullus gives the task of getting over this desire to the emotional side of him. He uses jussive subjunctives (*efficias* and *facias*) and passive periphrastic (*pervincendum est*), but he does not use any blunt imperatives here, nor ever in this piece while speaking to himself. This lightens the commands, while also illustrating how much weaker the rational aspect of Catullus has become. Delegating this responsibility to the emotional side is irrational, considering that that side of him has the desire to stay with Lesbia. He says explicitly how it must be conquered “*tibi*,” by you, not by himself. The weakness continues in the speaker’s

consideration of the option that overcoming this obstacle is “*non pote*,” not possible. In poem 8, this was not brought up; the speaker just blatantly ordered the emotional side to stand firm. After this suggestion, the speaker turns to ask the gods for help, as if he already knows that the emotional part of his mind is not able to conquer this illness. The verb *eripite* displays this struggle; it can mean “to tear away from,” as if part of Catullus is clinging tightly to Lesbia and refusing to let go. He calls this illness a *torpor*, which can be translated as “paralysis.” The use of this word shows that this desire he has for Lesbia runs so deeply within him that he is unable to commit to any action. Catullus is paralyzed by his fragmented mind.

Catullus ends poem 76 with a final plea that reiterates the struggle in his mind between wanting Lesbia and wanting to leave Lesbia, unlike poem 8 where he ends with a blunt command. He prays:

*ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum.
O di, reddite mi hoc pro pietate mea.*

(I wish myself to be well and to shake off this foul disease. O gods, return this to me on behalf of my loyalty; 76.25-26). Catullus says that he wishes to be well and to shake off his illness, but never does he explicitly state that he wants Lesbia gone from his life. *Morbum* has connotations of a bodily disease, as if he only wishes to be freed from the paralysis in his body, not from Lesbia herself. The last line of the poem, although it seems like a concluding prayer, holds a great deal of ambiguity.

Catullus asks that the gods “return this to me,” but he does not quite specify what the “this” is. Perhaps this refers back to the masculine word “*amore*,” which he used earlier in the poem. It is possible that while referring to his prayer, he is also subtly asking the gods to return the love he once had to him.

Poems 8 and 76 are clearly meant to act as “partner poems.” They both deal with the theme of mind fragmentation because of desire, and both exhibit a battle between rationale and emotion. While poem 8 tends to display reason commanding the whims of emotion, poem 76 shows reason handing the control over to emotion, which Catullus illustrates through his multi-layered diction. Many critics, such as M. Dyson, notice these themes and connections, but they do not realize how interlocked these two poems actually are. The poet Catullus uses these two characters, the reasonable speaker and the love-struck character, to display both a humorous call-to-action and a confused and depressed prayer for peace of mind. At the end of these two, the reader is left wondering still whether reason or emotion ended up victorious.

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Pythia

Hui Li '21



Tholos of Apollo

4th century BCE. Limestone and marble. Delphi, Greece.



Capital at the Temple of Zeus

Approx. 5th century BCE. Limestone. Olympia, Greece.



A Classical Beginning: An Examination of Greek and Roman
Influence on Thomas Jefferson and Early America

Emma Powell '20

Classical study is not just an academic concentration; it is a way of life. As indicated by his actions, Thomas Jefferson believed in this sentiment. Jefferson's political position as a founding father allowed him the power to promote ideas of classical moralism and a distinct, new, and free America. Like other wealthy colonial men of his time, Jefferson placed great value on his early education in the literature of Greek and Latin historians, poets, and philosophers. He valued his own education, and as a result, he sought to replicate classical models in American higher education. Inspired by the value and style of Greek and Roman architecture, Jefferson and other American founders advocated for classical influences and created designs based on them. The government's fundamental ideas that Jefferson advocated were also rooted in classical terminology. An examination of American governmental terms, like capitol, offers evidence of this. Classical influence was prevalent in this time period in Europe and, by extension, to settlers in America. Thomas Jefferson's commitment to the classics can serve as a case study of how the American colonial elite assimilated classical architecture, education, and governmental ideology into American life, creating a distinct nation informed by Greco-Roman influences.

Jefferson most prominently used architecture to create a new republic, one heavily influenced by Rome, but clearly distinct from England. This is directly shown in the aesthetics of early American buildings. For Jefferson, England represented the monarchy – rule by one – whereas the United States represented the opposite: liberty and individuality. Architecture served as a visual display distinct from English culture. Jefferson’s vision for the Virginian capitol is recalled by Wegner:

In the context of independence, Jefferson’s temple became an overflowing vessel of personal and social meanings—a fitting expression of the quasi-religious devotion propelled leading thinkers of the revolutionary Enlightenment—keeper of what Jefferson called that “sacred deposit of rights and liberties,” that “holy fire...confined to us by the world.” The capitol, however, was also a temple of reason. Classical architecture was a highly codified system of ornaments, organically linked to one another by prescribed proportional relationships. The flexible order and mathematical determinacy of this system appealed to Jefferson’s profoundly rational temperament. (Wenger 92)

Jefferson noticed and applied the code of columns and mathematical rules in ancient architecture to his own architecture in America. Here, the temple demonstrated the order of the American people, who would seek to hold and emulate classical virtues as the cornerstones of their ideal society. In antiquity, the temple served as a holy symbol where heroes of epics would seek guidance for quests from oracles. The holiness of a temple, in combination with its rational aesthetic orders and classical

values, reinforced concepts of American identity in reference to divinity, rationality, and virtue. More interesting is Jefferson's choice of a temple to represent reason, for temples are often associated with religion. As an enlightened thinker, Jefferson believed in a specific type of Christianity. Jefferson believed that God made men equal with a "sacred deposit of liberties" (Wenger 91). The holiness of the temple, when balanced with the rationality of government, powerfully strengthened American ideals with a sense of being called by the divine. Despite that humans have absolute rights as written in the U.S. Constitution, the government and the people must have a rational will to protect those rights. In designing the temple, Jefferson created a scale with sacredness and rationality on each side. He wanted viewers to clearly see this balance through the Capitol building and apply it to American identity.

In addition, Jefferson and the founding fathers used classical terminology to link the classical world to the United States' foundation. Wenger remarks that, "the very term 'capitol' invoked the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and thus signified a link to the civic life of ancient Rome" (Wenger 90). "Capitolinus" refers directly to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, but most specifically to Jupiter. Not only does the word capitol signify first-most importance, but the word capitol comes directly from the Latin word "caput," or "head." Capitol has become the term we use to describe the most important buildings, like the Virginian Capitol, and even the most

important cities in our nation. The term not only refers to the head in the sense of importance, but also directly refers to the “head” of a human. The head houses the brain, which holds reason, and the brain is a beautiful metaphor for the American government. The brain functions on rationality, holds the spirit, and makes critical decisions. Jefferson and others of the time period hoped the American government would hold the same attributes for the American people.

Jefferson advocated for classical education in molding the individual American. Jefferson wrote in his correspondences:

“You ask my opinion on the extent to which classical learning should be carried in our country.... The utilities we derive from the remains of the Greek and Latin languages are, first, as models of pure taste in writing. To these, we are certainly indebted for the rational and chaste style of modern composition which so much distinguishes the nations to whom these languages are familiar” (Wright 226).

From this, Jefferson makes clear the highest form of education and refinement. There was a specific quality in the literature of great Roman and Greek writers that Jefferson thought important to developing the entire person, rather than solely supplying a person with the skill set for any given profession. As a result, he pushed for classical studies at the University of Virginia and other institutions of higher education. This is important to note because it means, at least in Jefferson’s time, that many educated Americans’ ideas of a well-rounded educated person stemmed from Enlightenment Europe and, by extension, antiquity. For Jefferson, classical education most importantly contained the

idea of wisdom. It is one thing to be informed, but it is another to be wise. Wisdom comes not only when you are knowledgeable about poetry, art, science, math, and morals, but when you apply them to make a mark in the world. Jefferson hoped his love for classical wisdom would not apply to the building of the individual, but the nation as the whole; he wanted everyone to strive for a utopia.

Jefferson was not the first man or woman who functioned under classical ideals. However, his actions to strive to take the study of classics and place them in an American context are uniquely noteworthy. His gestures to architecture, diction, and education are riddled with antiquity. Further, Thomas Jefferson was able to incorporate the classics in a lively manner, despite their ancient quality. This is evident in U.S. architecture, education and ideals. The concrete streets of D.C. have eerily similar steps to the cobblestone roads of Rome. It is important to discover and dissect the similarities of America and antiquity – not only to celebrate our cultural similarities, but to be aware of the downfalls of Greco-Roman societies. If Americans are truly informed by antiquity, they can be critical of their own culture and more fully understand their own peoples' past, development and future. Overall, through study of classics, Americans can better understand their own humanity.

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Art, Words, and War: Ajax and the Arms of Achilles

Michael Kelley '18

The following story of the contest between Ajax and Odysseus over the arms of the fallen Achilles takes place after the events of the *Iliad*. The events and the details of the story, however, were likely circulated through an oral tradition that thrived long before the *Iliad* began to interact with writing. While the earliest sources for the story are lost to us, three written reconstructions remain from antiquity: Ovid's in *Metamorphoses* 13.1-13.398, two speeches from Antisthenes¹, and from Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica*.² In writing my own version of the story, I looked to Ovid and Antisthenes for inspiration, and based some of my decisions on the characterization of the Greek heroes in the *Iliad*. I also wanted to make mine differ from those of Ovid and Antisthenes in order to give a sense of the variety of versions, both within the oral tradition and in other written sources that would have existed in antiquity, but are lost to us now.

The advantage Ovid and Antisthenes had over me, however, is that they likely had these written sources from which to construct their version. In order to make up for my lack of

¹ For commentary on Antisthenes' speeches, I used the essay "Odysseus the Athenian: Antisthenes, Thucydides, and an Homeric Hero in an Intellectual Age" (O'Sullivan and Wong).

² For good commentary on Quintus of Smyrna, consult James and Lee's *A Commentary on Quintus of Smyrna Posthomerica V*.

written sources, I decided to incorporate the iconographic tradition, in particular Attic pottery that depicts the events and settings of the story. Throughout my story, I have included footnotes citing the pottery from which I drew inspiration. In some cases, such as Ajax's arranging his weapons before his suicide, and the voting process, I try to describe the scene exactly as it is on the vase. In order to most effectively highlight the ekphrastic nature of these scenes, I transition, almost jarringly at times, between scenes, as if one were going back and forth comparing multiple pieces of art. This story is not meant to be the definitive version of the competition for the arms of Achilles and suicide of Ajax, but how I envision the story drawing from the artistic and literary sources that appeal most to me.

Story

Madness lingered in the mind of Ajax, his own and that of the thankless men who denied him his rightful prize, the divine arms of Achilles. Entranced by the soporific glow of Hermes' wand, he floated over all-encircling Oceanus, above the Great White Rock, through the Gates of the Sun, and past the House of Dreams.³ Finally, he followed him to the Fields of Asphodel, where the souls of the departed wander eternally, swallowed in a sea of the tall, misty-white flowers.⁴ Wading,

³ You can find these landmarks in lines 1-17 of Book XXIV of the *Odyssey*.

⁴ While the *Odyssey* doesn't explain the exact layout of the Underworld, especially regarding what kinds of souls go to what part, a red figure pelike, attributed to the Lykaon painter, depicts Odysseus and Elpenor in a concise,

half-conscious into the asphodel, he was immediately encircled by his Greek comrades who had met their end at Troy. The first to address him was none other than Achilles, his cousin, comrade, and undeniably the greatest of the Achaean warriors who set sail for Troy. Solemn, but clenching his fists, he began, “It kills me to see you here, friend. Please, tell me your death was a glorious one! I refuse to believe the mighty bulwark of the Achaeans was slain like me by a rogue arrow from some flimsy pretty boy, hardly man enough to string his own sandals, let alone a bow. Honestly, I thought you were invincible, the way you could fend off twenty men without a single scratch to show for it! Who could possibly kill a man like you?”

Ajax looked down. “No man killed me, none but myself. I lost my mind... I... When you died, the Greeks had a contest to decide who would get your armor. It was Odysseus against me, making speeches to our fellow soldiers in the pulpit. Suffice to say I lost. I, your dear cousin, who carried your lifeless body from the battlefield, and saved a thousand more with my own shield. Ajax, tossed aside, forgotten. He won the prize, that conniving snake, with pretty words and not a deed to back them up. I can see it now: Odysseus strides into his well-built halls, embraced by wife and son, hoists his prize onto the mantelpiece,

interesting fashion. On the pelike, Elpenor emerges from the Asphodel, stretching out his arms and pushing several reeds of asphodel out of the way. I envision the Lykaon Painter’s Field of Asphodel being similar to the cornfield in *Field of Dreams*, from which the spirits of dead ballplayers emerge as if appearing out of thin air. You can also find Hermes standing behind Odysseus, reprising his role of “psychopompos” with his wand.

and sits down to a feast of hogs and heifers, a man for the little pleasures in life. The shield collects dust while Ajax collects sand, buried under the beaches of Ilium – the Greeks were too busy to build a pyre. What has this world come to? Is there no reward for good and brave deeds but death?”

Achilles sighed, “Friend, there is no one, besides Patroclus, I would rather have inherit my arms than you. But tell me, what led to your undoing? To see a hero, a peerless soldier such as yourself, take his own life because of his comrades’ disrespect pains me to no end. There must be more to the story.”



The shield of Achilles lay pressed against the great wall of Troy, its outermost bronze layer glistening in the rays of the afternoon sun.⁵ Hephaestus had crafted it, five layers thick and solid gold at its core. It had suffered some damage- a single blow from Aeneas’ spear had pierced it to its golden middle layer. A medley of scenes blanketed the surface of the shield, the faces of men and gods dotting the polished gold like constellations. Miraculously, the myriad images all seemed to fit together, as if the curves and lines formed ripples in the tide of a golden Oceanus, flowing motionlessly around the earth, moon, and sun, each shyly overlapping the others in the center of the shield. A

⁵ Most vases either depict the shield of Achilles with the typical gorgon’s head, a hunting dog, or some other common shield embossment, as it would be near impossible to depict the shield as it is described in the *Iliad*.

smooth, silver strap slunk down from the shield and curled up on the warm ground. The shield radiated a godlike aura, utterly bewitching anyone whose gaze fell upon it.

Ajax looked on as Agamemnon and the other council members drew lots to decide who would go first. A day of intense contests had led up to this: Ajax and Odysseus were set to deliver competing speeches for the arms of the slain Achilles, whose memory still stung the minds of the war-weary Achaean soldiers. The fateful lot fell from the urn, and every pair of eyes turned to Ajax. Puffing out his chest, he marched to the front of the crowd and took his place in front of the wall. The crowd fell silent, as his deep voice boomed over the resounding plain:

“I’d hate to delay the rewarding of the arms, so I’m going to keep this brief. There are two men competing for the arms of our slain comrade Achilles. One of them is deserving, and one of them is not. I am the greater warrior and have a reputation for incomparable bravery and skill. It was I who took on Hector twice, and would have killed him without so much as breaking a sweat had the gods not doted on him. And it was I who beat the Trojans back from our ships, the unconquerable last line of defense for the army of the Greeks. And it is only fitting that I take the arms of the man I rescued from the battlefield. I guarded his body, unscarred save for the wound on his heel, rushing back from the battle cries and the rain of javelins.⁶ I am the reason we were able to erect a funeral pyre for the best of the

⁶ Very popular depiction on Attic vases.

Greeks, and give him a proper sendoff. I am the reason we are even having this competition. I am the rightful owner of the arms of Achilles.

“As for Odysseus, I do not hate him, despite his less than optimal reputation. How could I hate one of the men I have fought alongside for all these years? I remember when Odysseus and I, together with old Phoenix, tried to rouse Achilles back into action, but it took the death of a comrade to bring him to his feet. But to give these divine arms to Odysseus? Nonsense! What has he done to deserve them? Sure, he’s a good speaker and a good warrior, too. But let’s not forget that this is also the man who traipsed around his field and sprinkled salt on his own fertile soil, feigning madness to avoid war. This is the man who left Philoctetes for dead on Lemnos, and advised Agamemnon to slaughter his own daughter. Besides, what use would a man like Odysseus have for arms such as these? These are the tools of cold, hard combat, not clever little tricks. I’ll wager he can hardly wield this shield without the help of the gods, who waste their time helping him out in wrestling matches. But nobody wields a shield better than I, and nobody deserves these arms more.

“My father was Telamon, a brave and mighty hero in his own right, who fought side by side with his brother Peleus against the Calydonian Boar and the Amazons, and even here in Troy. As a child, I trained rigorously, dreaming of the day when I would fight alongside my cousin, Achilles. As for the lineage

of Odysseus, how can we trust a man who grew up learning tricks and traps from that good-for-nothing scoundrel Autolycus? I'm sure he'd be very proud of his grandson. And some even claim he's the son of Sisyphus, perhaps the dirtiest conman to walk the earth. Either way, I guess he's carrying on his father's legacy just fine. Would you trust this man with the divine arms of Achilles? What innocent cities will he sack with it? What god-fearing men will he deceive cloaked in this armor? Rest assured, great heroes of the Greeks, that you can trust me. I talk with my spear, and spears tell no lies. I swear, to you my faithful comrades, and to the immortal gods, that these arms are my rightful inheritance. Fate itself binds these arms to me, I who carried Achilles from the battlefield, and wielding these arms, will carry him back in, both in deeds and in spirit."

With that, Ajax strode into the silent crowd, his feet heavy and his eyes firmly fixed on the horizon. A moment passed before another man, of slight but substantive build, emerged from the crowd. Staring downward, Odysseus planted his staff in the rust-colored earth. Warm winds muttered throughout the Trojan plain. Finally, his clear voice took flight over the crowd:

"As I stand in front of you, I cannot help but think this army feels smaller than when we set out for that fateful battle, with Achilles leading the charge. If I had my wish, these arms would never leave the hands of the one for whom they were made. Regardless of who inherits these arms, he will never be

more than a surrogate to the spirit they once clothed. But let us not allow our justified lamentations to cloud our judgment and hinder our resolve. We have a decision to make, and I am standing here in hope of helping you make the right one. Listen closely, for these same things I speak to you now I would have said to Achilles' face when he was alive.

“Ajax would have you believe my ingenious strategies have made me less of a warrior and more of a criminal. I would like to set the record straight. Where was I when Ajax bravely carried the body of Achilles from battle, you might ask? I was there, in the heart of battle, fending off enemies from Ajax's back as he escaped. Every soldier has his role, and so I fulfilled mine and Ajax his. As I have heard even the women among us saying, anyone could lift a man over his shoulders in the rush of battle. And for Achilles, any Greek soldier would. But Ajax was near at hand, a champion of circumstance, and yet a champion nonetheless. And for that, we thank him.

“But, in arguing his case, Ajax has overstepped his bounds. He spreads lies about my parentage, while he extols his own. Wouldn't he love to believe that Sisyphus is my father, and decry my faithful mother and her great-hearted father! Before you condemn Autolycus for his thievery, let me ask you, where would we be if we did not steal? Hungry and hopeless in a faraway land. Your parentage, Ajax, is hardly pristine. Your father slew his own brother and was exiled. As for my father, he was just as noble as yours or any other parent of the Greek

captains, and hunted the Calydonian Boar and set sail for Cholcis with the other Argonauts. Now if we were to award the arms based on parentage alone we would be stuck here another ten years, all the Greek captains boasting the exploits of their illustrious fathers. And if you want to fault me for trying to avoid this whole expedition, then why not apply the same logic to Achilles? It was I that saw through his disguise at Skyros, laying out a sword and shield among the jewelry and perfumes. Were it not for my little trick, we might all be dead, with Achilles stuck hiding on some foreign island, deprived of his destiny. You see, weapons and strategy go hand in hand.

“And I am no slouch with a weapon in my hand, either. I slew many men in battle, and in the hushed warfare of the night as well. How could you forget Dolon, the wretched creature who snooped around our camp on all fours, carelessly unaware that I would use his own tricks against him!⁷ And you even reproach me for the cities that have fallen by my own hand, with which we have fed the army and maintained its morale! But whatever you accuse me of lacking in brute force—might I remind you I stood toe-to-toe with you in our wrestling match—I make up for it and more with my other skills. I have been the chief diplomat of this army since before this war started, when I went with Menelaus to reason with the Trojan chiefs. Theano and the Trojan elders were persuaded by my reasoning. But of course,

⁷ I am describing a portrayal of Dolon found on a red figure vase at the Louvre. On the vase, he crawls around on all fours with a wolfskin on his back.

the insolence of Paris won out in the end.⁸ See what happens when you eschew logic for the vain promises of passion!

“Looking back on all the times I employed the full extent of my wits, never once was it not for the benefit of the Argive army. Remember our predicament in Mysia, battle-weary, lost on our way to Troy? I saw through the Oracle’s utterance and healed Telephus, our guide, with the shards of Achilles’ spear. My counsel you can trust, not that of a man who charges headfirst into battle like a bull seeing red. Furthermore, what does Ajax know of the gods, who guide our victory and lay, twice immortal in life and art, engraved on the shield of Achilles? No man knows the gods better than I, who sacrifice the choicest animals with undaunted piety.

“I think your current shield fits you better, Ajax: strong and sturdy and lined with cowhide. It looks to me like your shield might be in even better condition than Achilles’! You, the so-called ‘Shield of the Greeks,’ might as well start a collection of many-layered shields. I ask you, judicious captains of the Achaeans, should we give our shield another shield? Should we equip the sun with another sun, just to make it a bit brighter? Or should we give the shield to the versatile man, who uses all his weapons well? Now more than ever, when—I sense it—this war is coming to a close, we must be firm and decisive, not hasty and careless. Keep this in mind as you cast your votes. I have guided

⁸ On the Corinthian “Astarita Krater,” Theano stands in front of several women talking to the Greek embassy to Troy.

you through hopeless situations time and again, and I promise my strength, my wit, and my might will save us many more times. Ajax is a fierce warrior; that I do not dispute. But consider this: when you fight with your fists, what part of your body do you guard with unfailing vigilance? Your head. And that is what I am to this army, I who have fought and thought so hard for us to this point. And that's without a proper shield.

“Now, I let you decide. Which of these two men will you have lead you to victory? When Agamemnon saw it fit to test us, everyone crestfallen after Achilles stormed off from the fighting, I urged my men to stand their ground. Where was Ajax? Among the rest of the men, splashing on the shore and flailing their arms after their black-prowed ships. This is –”

Roaring with indignation, Ajax brandished his sword at Odysseus: “Odysseus! You defile my reputation! Not once have I looked back at my ships, licking my wounds and calling it quits. I always finish what I start! Captains of the Achaeans, don't listen to him! He feeds you lies!” Odysseus bent back in defense, as Teucer restrained his rage-stricken brother.⁹ Rising, Agamemnon boomed, “Shame, Ajax! Each man will have his turn, and cooler heads will prevail. The contest is over. Now we will vote. He who places his pebble on the left side of the

⁹ This description recalls the red figure “Douris Cup,” on one side of which Ajax has his sword drawn, with several other men getting between Ajax and Odysseus. While the vase is damaged, it appears Odysseus is bent away, as if defending himself.

podium votes for Odysseus, while he who places his pebble on the right votes for Ajax.”

The Argives stared in amazement as Athena appeared, towering over the podium and standing watch over the voting procedure.¹⁰ Slowly, the captains of the Greeks rose and shuffled nervously to the podium. It swiftly became clear who would inherit the arms of Achilles. Ajax turned away, shielding his face with his cloak. Odysseus lifted his arms with childlike elation. It was a landslide victory. Agamemnon strode nobly to the front of the crowd. “It appears the votes won’t require any counting. Odysseus shall inherit the arms of Achilles!” A cheer rose up among the captains of the Greeks, as Ajax darted off toward the camps, tightly gripping his sword.



Achilles’ heart was filled with pity. “And you say you lost your mind after that? I couldn’t blame you, in the face of such dishonor.” Ajax sighed, “Everything after that was a blur. I flew into a rage. Just like Odysseus quipped, I was a bull seeing red. The urge to kill overcame me. When I came to my senses, my sword was covered in blood. Fat corpses of sheep strewn in front of me. Broken pottery. Tents slashed into smithereens.”

¹⁰ Athena and the podium with the pebbles on it are both depicted on the other side of the Douris Cup.

Ajax felt a lump in his throat. “I couldn’t believe what I had done. I couldn’t live with myself after the mess I had made.”



The warm wind howled as the skies began to sprinkle hot raindrops on the Trojan shore. Ajax swept together a small mound of thick, wet sand, burying his sword up to its hilt.¹¹ A single willow tree loomed over him, dangling slim ribbons of shadow over his back. Ajax neatly aligned his armor for whoever would find it, leaning his long spear over his seven-layered shield, which he had planted upright in the sand. Raindrops streaked the gorgon’s head that had been carved into the bronze, menacing over him as he kneeled in front of his sword. The shield was thick enough for him to lay his helmet flat on top of it, the hairs of its crest bristling in the wind. Gingerly, he straightened out the blade, placing it perfectly upright. Glancing up at the sky, he mumbled a short prayer. He collapsed, expressionless, on the sword.



It had sunk in. Ajax took in the sea of asphodel before him, coming to terms with his fate. “It’s strange,” he remarked. “I felt almost serene, dying on the beach at Troy, but I lack the words to describe it.”

¹¹ This paragraph describes the suicide of Ajax on the famous black figure Exekias amphora.

“Serene?” laughed Achilles. “There’s a word I haven’t heard you use.”

“It’s an odd feeling, but I felt, almost, complete. There were no more battles for me to fight. I had died, undefeated by anyone except myself. I doubt I’ll ever forgive Odysseus, but I hope to Zeus that he’s within the walls of Troy right now, ending this war for good.”



As soon as she had caught sight of him, Tecmessa wept, wrapping the rain-drenched body in her cloak.¹² She stumbled tearfully back to the Argive camps to report the news. Sorrow gripped the heart of the Greeks, lamenting the noble soul that they had lost. Casting his eyes out at the sea, and then back at the great walls of Troy, Odysseus approached young Neoptolemus with the arms of Achilles.¹³ “Here, boy, I think these arms will look better on you than on me. I’d hate to cause any more infighting, and I won’t bear to see any more Greek heroes lose their lives. We have a war to win, and I have a family to return to back home. Somewhere in his skyscraping citadel, Priam is looking down on us, shuddering. I’ve hatched a plan for a bigger shield, one which will hide many men and allow us to infiltrate the great walls of Troy. We will avenge your father, and all the

¹² On the tondo of a red figure cup, Tecmessa covers the body of Ajax, the sword still piercing it, with some sort of shroud or cloak.

¹³ On the inside tondo of the Douris cup, Odysseus hands over the arms of Achilles to a boyish-looking Neoptolemus

noble Greeks who've met their end before their time on this windy plain. Troy will fall soon."



Years passed, and many other heroes found their way to the Underworld, passing away in the final skirmishes or on their journeys home. Their spirits brought news of the Greek victory, the endless treasures reaped, the sheer terror on the faces of the Trojan women, and the noble Trojan warriors, either dead or fled. One day, a familiar sound echoed through the Underworld. Lambs bleated in the distance. Ajax's ears pricked up. Faintly, he heard the roaring of the ocean, all its stillness and volatility packed into one sound. He turned away.

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Lucius Shines Light on Brutus' Life

Andrew Wells '18

In William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, Marcus Brutus engages as a conspirator in Julius Caesar's assassination. Brutus himself displays "binary characterization"; that is, he is a split character. Shakespeare grants access to Brutus' character through conversation and isolation in public and private realms. One way to understand Brutus comes from his seldom-seen servant, Lucius, whose part in the play is small but crucial. Though his lines are few, Lucius illuminates Brutus' "binary characterization." He may appear a simple Roman servant, but Lucius's name itself contains a lexical Latin meaning that should be *construed*, to use Shakespeare's term, by understanding that the name's root "luc" derives from *lux*, which means "light" in Latin; "-ius" is a neuter comparative adjective, making "Lucius" translate as "more light." Shakespeare's classical background guaranteed his access to this knowledge, allowing him to use "Lucius" as more than a servant. Instead, Lucius provides "more light" to the complex binaries of Brutus' public and private personas by moving plot and characterization.

Lucius first enters the drama at Brutus' call for a taper: "Get me a taper in my study, Lucius. / When it is lighted, come and call me here" (II.i.7—8). Brutus' first command for Lucius is to provide more light, which Lucius accomplishes, true to his function as a slave -- but also to his name's natural meaning. Once Lucius leaves to light the candle, Shakespeare has Brutus

deliver the first soliloquy of the play, which sheds more light on Brutus' true beliefs concerning Caesar and the conspiracy. The soliloquy itself exemplifies Brutus' s wavering thoughts about the situation. For instance, Brutus begins: "It must be by his death; and for my part, / I know no personal cause to spurn at him" (II.i.10—11). Here, Brutus presents the situation with the declarative statement, "It must be by his death"; then, commenting on the subject on a personal level, he explicitly uses the word *personal* to emphasize private persona. Brutus admits he has no reason to *spurn* at Caesar, but according to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word *spurn* here means to "reject." Brutus' private persona's fundamental use of *spurn* reveals he struggled with the thought of killing Caesar; instead, he merely hoped to prevent or keep Caesar from power.

There is a change in "private" Brutus within this soliloquy as he subtly develops into his public persona. The final lines reveal Brutus' ability to conceive Caesar's assassination:

And therefore think him as a serpent's egg,
Which, hatch'd, would as his kind grow mischievous,
And kill him in the shell. (II.i.32—34)

Public Brutus presents Caesar as a simile to best express his feelings towards the situation. The metaphor provides a fundamental distance between Brutus and Caesar, which Brutus did not exhibit when speaking on the personal level. Perceiving Caesar as an egg reveals Brutus' political belief that Caesar is a threat waiting to happen. In this public persona, Brutus uses the word *kill*, a more direct and explicit word compared to *spurn*.

Lucius returns when the soliloquy ends and announces: “The taper burneth in your closet,” (II.i.35—36), which means that Lucius has completed his task of providing more light for both Brutus and the audience alike. Brutus receives the benefit of the candle, while the audience receives more light on Brutus’s own internal struggle between his private and public personas. With the taper burning, Lucius then allows the drama’s plot to progress by handing Brutus an anonymous letter (which Cassius revealed he would send earlier) meant to portray the Romans’ feelings towards Brutus. After revealing the personal vs. private debate within Brutus, Lucius delivers the letter that impacts the situation, tipping Brutus towards his public persona. “Shall Rome stand under one man’s awe? What, Rome?” Brutus reads, highlighting the devotion to nationalism that his public persona holds (II.i.52). Brutus comments upon the call to action, saying:

To speak and strike? O Rome, I make thee promise,
If the redress will follow, thou receivest
Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus! (II.i.56—58)

Addressing *Rome* in the vocative case and the public with the intensity of the exclamation point places the public Brutus in a position of declaration towards his nation. The syntax and grammatical choices evoke nationalism and protection as Brutus’s most important desire. Lucius’s deed stimulates the plot, shedding light on Brutus’ need to appease his public and nationalist desires. The deliverance of this appeal allowed Brutus to decide upon his public persona, which keeps the drama on track with the historical account of Caesar’s death by Plutarch.

Further along in the same scene, we learn that Lucius is asleep. Portia now provides Brutus company instead. Brutus confides to Portia: “I am not well in health, and that is all” (II.i.257). Brutus’ refusal to reveal the troubles of his public persona to his wife further illuminates the character shift between Brutus’ public and personal self. Since Brutus is in his public persona, he does not deem it appropriate to tell his wife of his matters at that time, though he does eventually confide to her off stage. This scene also provides evidence for Lucius’s ability to shed light on Brutus’s inner thoughts and beliefs, since Lucius interrupts the discussion to bring forth Ligarius, whom Brutus deems worthy of his public persona. Brutus immediately dismisses Lucius with a stark and strong command: “Boy, stand aside” (II.i.312). This command places Brutus in an authoritative position and public Brutus delivers his plan off-stage – a plan that he at first refrained from admitting to his wife, yet gleefully admits to Ligarius, who was brought forth by Lucius.

At the end of Act II, Lucius provides more light now shed on Portia, who is a crucial component of Brutus’s private life. With Lucius doing her bidding, Portia reveals her insecurities when she asks Lucius to seek out Brutus and find out who surrounds Caesar. Portia reveals she is torn between being the faithful wife who asks no questions and seeking answers from her absent husband. She explicitly states this tear in herself with a caesura in line 7: “I have a man’s mind, but a woman’s might.” This caesura exhibits the balance between Portia’s will for

knowledge and her desire to be a dutiful wife -- revealing a binary conflict inside of Portia, similar to Brutus.'

This binary conflict falls out of balance as Portia progresses to command Lucius, whereas before, Portia acted calmly in the face of worried Brutus in hopes that she could understand his hidden motives. In contrast, she now says:

Yes, bring me word, boy, if thy lord look well,
For he went sickly forth; and take good note
What Caesar doth, what suitors press to him. (II.iv.13—15)

Portia's rhythm in this instruction appears smooth, but the caesuras in the lines present the choppiness and uneasiness in her character. Notice how the mid-line punctuation marks are off-center, showing imbalance in her command, unlike in line seven when she first presents the binary. The caesuras and the rational decision of the command shed light on Portia's uneasiness with Brutus' absence. Again, an inner battle of the self is revealed with Lucius present, although he does not seek these revelations; his nature, rather than coincidence, brings forth this insight.

In IV.iii Brutus speaks to Lucius in a more understanding tone, much like he did when Lucius first appeared. Brutus asks, "Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile, / And touch thy instrument a strain or two?" (IV.iii.256—257). Notice how Brutus asks, rather than commands, Lucius to play his instrument. He pleads with the boy and again projects his private self rather than his public one where he would appear authoritative over his servant. Lucius plays his lyre and then Brutus bids him sleep, allowing himself

solitude with his reliable slave still present. With Brutus in his private persona, Caesar's ghost appears. Brutus mentions how the taper burns dimly, referring both to how candles grow faint when a ghost is near and also to the taper that Lucius lit for him earlier, which provides more light on Brutus' inner self. This scene, though short, sheds light on a deep understanding of Brutus' private consciousness about the assassination. Caesar's ghost introduces himself as: "Thy evil spirit, Brutus" (IV.iii.282). This assertion leads to suspicion about whether Caesar's ghost is actually the ghost of Caesar or a manifestation of Brutus' consciousness. Lucius, the first responder, unconsciously comments upon that debate: "The strings, my lord, are false" (IV.iii.291). Again, Lucius serves the nature of his name by shedding light upon the situation and providing access to the true perspective of the scene.

For such a complex character as Brutus, Lucius's access to Brutus' role makes sense considering the movement of the plot and substance of Brutus' character. Though his lines are few, Lucius becomes involved in heavy turning points in the action of the drama, shedding light on fixations deep inside Brutus' divided personas and even delivering a further understanding of Brutus' wife. Unlike a simple slave boy, Lucius remains true to his name's lexical meaning, for which he is named and through which his nature remains crucial to both the plot of the drama and the understanding of Brutus's personas.

The Lion Gate

Unknown artist(s), 13th century BCE. Limestone. Citadel of Mycenae in Argolid, Greece.



The Bull-Leaping Fresco

Unknown artist, about 1450 BCE. Stucco. Heraklion
Archaeological Museum, Crete.



N-Grams and the Writing Process of Herodotus

Aidan Largey, '21

Throughout his *Histories*, Herodotus uses a distinct ethnographic style to relay information to his audience that can be studied through the use of n-grams, which are particular sequences of “n” (a number of) words in a text. By electronically isolating these sequences, we are able to identify a pattern in Herodotus’ language and writing style which highlights how he views the subject matter. We isolated the n-gram “μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες” which means “indeed the things being said are not believable” and used it to analyze his narration. This four-word n-gram appears five times throughout the *Histories*, and they all appear in relation to a certain ethnography. In describing the customs and details of other tribes and ethnic groups, he is careful to include as much relevant information as possible. He even includes information he believes to be inaccurate and lets his audience know when this happens. He takes a humanistic approach, viewing divine and superstitious claims with skepticism. Although he does not believe some of what has been reported to him, he feels obligated to do so for the sake of his ethnography. His ethnographies outline three distinct themes among the ethnic groups he encounters: *phusis*, which pertains to the divine and glorious deeds; *nomos*, which describes cultures and the social laws and rules that govern them; and dynastic history, which describes the events that shape monarchies and people who govern.

The 4-gram is contained within passages 1.182, 2.73, 4.5, 4.25, and 5.86. In each instance, Herodotus is outlining his usual ethnography of the groups on which he chooses to focus. As soon as the reports sound unreasonable or superstitious to Herodotus, he inserts his opinion, stating “μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες.” It indicates something that he thinks is wrong but deems too important to leave out.

Many of the mythical and outrageous accounts pertain to the divine. Chapter 1.182 is a good example of *phusis* because it is a great erga, or deed, of a god, and by the fact that it is related to the divine. In this chapter, Herodotus describes a story that is told by the Chaldeans. In this story, the Assyrian god Baal has a tendency to sleep with a woman at a shrine in Thebes, and with another woman, a prophetess in Patara in the state of Lycia (modern day Turkey). But in telling his audience all of this, he goes on to share his skepticism. Herodotus is clearly a very rational person, and a god regularly sleeping with human women in multiple locations contradicts his more enlightened understanding of how the world works.

Chapter 2.73 is a good example of *nomos* in the *Histories* because it sheds light on the cultural norms of the Egyptians. This passage describes the activities of a phoenix according to the people of Heliopolis. These people say that hardly anyone has the chance to see the bird, for it only comes into Egypt once every five hundred years. It flies from Arabia to the temple of the sun, carrying his father encased in myrrh.

Herodotus indicates that he finds this hard to believe. This passage is included as part of a series describing animals that the Egyptians consider sacred. The Ancient Egyptians considered the phoenix to be a highly sacred animal. Thus, while the details of the story are false in the eyes of Herodotus, he does not remove it from his account because it reflects a cultural attitude of the Egyptians.

An instance of dynastic history can be found in chapter 4.5. It describes a Scythian story about a man named Targitaus, born of Zeus and a river goddess, who had three sons. One day a golden plow, a sword, yolk, and a flask fell out of the sky and only one son was able to pick them up. This son was given royal power. It falls under dynastic history because it describes the origin of the Scythian nation, and the obvious incredulity of objects falling out of the sky led Herodotus to disbelieve it.

Using an electronic search tool to identify n-grams does come with some limitations. The results are arguably a crude breakdown of Herodotus' text and therefore require closer reading in order to identify significant vocabulary and language patterns. The tool relies on the reader to tease out specific conclusions from its results, which limits its effectiveness if used incorrectly. The tool is also rather meaningless without context, and one must have background knowledge of the subject matter to use it properly. Despite these shortcomings, n-grams allow users to identify language patterns and insights that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Hermes and the Infant Dionysus

Praxiteles, approx. 4th century BCE. Marble. Archaeological
Museum of Olympia.



Rape of the Lapiths

West Pediment of the Temple of Zeus, approx. 5th century BCE.
Marble. Archaeological Museum of Olympia.



Establishing Secure Boundaries for Catullan Terms of Social Distinction

Michael Raheb, '20

All who have read Catullus' "little book" of poems know how scathingly he denigrates his enemies and how proudly he touts the qualities of his friends. His characterizations reflect vividness and precision while simultaneously indicating the polish of a Neoteric poet. Perhaps his *libellus* was read amongst his literary circle by men of discerning tastes and discerning tongues, but the contemporary reader, who has not been raised in a Latin-speaking community, will struggle to comprehend the connotations of new words. They are by no means obvious, and thus must be learned. Therefore, it is crucial to address the nuances of Catullan language, particularly for those words which he uses in his characteristic attacks and praises. This paper will address four such words – *venustus*, *salsus*, *lepidus*, and *facetus*, in both positive and negative forms – which are rather similar in meaning, but have distinctions by nature and by usage in Catullus' work. It will attempt to provide a generalized conception of each word while simultaneously addressing popular, but perhaps inaccurate, interpretations of their meanings.

The translational similarities between *venustus*, *salsus*, *lepidus*, and *facetus* overlap in all quarters. *Venustus*, according to the Oxford Latin Dictionary, is "attractive in appearance or manner, charming; (of speech, writings, etc) graceful, pretty or

neat.”¹ Its negative, *invenustus*, is “lacking in charm or beauty, unlovely, unattractive.” Yet *lepidus* means “agreeable, charming, delightful, amusing; (of remarks, books, etc) witty, amusing” while its negative means “lacking grace or refinement.” Although there are minute differences, does this basic idea of charm, grace, and appeal not seem redundant? And if so, what must a reader of Catullus say when he stumbles upon “*illepidum neque invenustum*” (Catullus, 10 ll. 4) or the same phrase in poem 36, ll. 17? Nevertheless, the translations become even more muddled with *facetus*, which means “displaying cleverness of judgement, clever, adept; being witty or facetious.” *Inficetus* means “boorish, insensitive, humorless... not witty or smart.” As it seems, the word overlies *lepidus*’ control of wit and amusement. What, then, would “*lepore / incensus, Licinii, facetiisque*” (Catullus, 50 ll. 7-8) mean, where a connective conjunction differentiates the words? *Salsus* lies in the same boat as *facetus*, meaning in a literary context “salted with humor, witty, funny” while *insulsus* means “unattractive, dull, boring, stupid.” Although each word – and almost every Latin word, in general – has multiple translations, it is important to get a word’s *sense*, which includes particular meanings and nuances subject to an author’s determination. Each word, therefore, will be listed below with its common conceptions, the errors of some of these

¹ Glare, P G. W. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. This paper only uses definitions from the Oxford Latin Dictionary.

conceptions, and a satisfactory interpretation for the Catullan corpus.

Venustus: The Idea of Taste

Of all the four words, *venustus* appears second-most-often in the Catullan corpus – eleven times in either its positive or negative forms, to be exact. Although every incident factors into the interpretation of this word, poems 12, 22, and 86 especially, are particularly relevant because their adjectival description of characters is rich.

In poem 12, Catullus addresses Marrucinus Asinius, who steals napkins from the table as he dines. Asinius thinks that his action is *salsum* (*hoc salsum esse putas?* Catullus, 12 ll. 4; *salsum* is usually translated as “witty,” but will be addressed in the next section). Catullus, however, calls the napkin-theft a “*sordida res et invenusta*” (ll. 5), or “a vulgar and non-*venustus* matter.” If the OLD (Oxford Latin Dictionary) definitions are applied here, it is then possible to omit the “lacking in beauty” and “unattractive” notions of the word. If it pertains to beauty and attractiveness exclusively – that is, the dimension of physical aesthetics – the object that Catullus refers to must be aesthetically pleasing or not. Yet Catullus, here, is referring to the act of theft itself. What Asinius thinks is *salsum* in ll. 4 contains no clear antecedent, instead agreeing with the prior main clauses (*manu sinistra / non belle uteris: in ioco atque vino / tollis lintea neglegentiorum* ll. 1-3). Furthermore, the *res* in ll. 5 encompasses the whole situation. Unless Catullus finds the

whole matter (*res*) of Marrucinus Asinius' deft swipes to be beautiful, which would be a tremendously odd supposition, Catullus' *venustus* must avoid the realm of physical aesthetics.

In poem 22, Catullus states that "that Suffenus... is *venustus*, well-spoken, and urbane" (*Suffenus iste... homo est venustus et dicax et urbanus* Catullus, 22 ll. 1-2). In keeping with the conclusion from poem 12, Suffenus is not here being called attractive; no, the rest of the poem's content does not suggest anything even remotely similar. Rather, according to the context that follows several lines later, *venustus* here represents an innate characteristic that can be exemplified or represented in one's work and surroundings. The quality *venustus* appeared at the very beginning of 22 near *urbanus*, but Catullus rapidly denies that Suffenus retains these characteristics in his poetry. The insult "that pleasant and urbane Suffenus alone seems to, in turn, be a goat-milker or ditch-digger" (*bellus ille et urbanus / Suffenus unus caprimulgus aut fossor / rursus videtur* ll. 9-11) demonstrates this idea well. Since his poetry does not exemplify any literary merit, he instead is sentenced to country-bumpkinhood.

In poem 86, Catullus calls attention to the lack of *venustas* in Quintia (*nam nulla venustas* Catullus, 86 ll. 3), who is otherwise *formosa, candida, longa, recta* (ll. 1-2) – shapely, pale, tall, and straight. Since denying her beauty means that she is not shapely, pale, tall, and straight, Quintia's lack of *venustas* must refer to something else. The only suitable definition left

from the OLD is “charming” or “beautiful in manner”. Therefore, although Quintia is quite pretty, she lacks a sort of refinement. Suffenus also is, in the lyrics of his poetry, unrefined, and Asinius displays no manners when he swipes napkins up from the table. The idea of refinement applies in the other occasions of *venustus* also. In poem 3, only “rather refined men” (*hominum venustiorum* Catullus, 3 ll. 2) can mourn the loss of a sparrow;² in poem 10, the harlot throws Catullus for a loop because, although she sleeps around, she is not entirely without refinement (*non sane illepidum neque invenustum* Catullus, 10 ll. 4); in poem 13, Fabullus is the *venuste* (Catullus, 13 ll. 6), “refined one,” who is desirable for dinner merriment. A good summation of the idea can be found in Robin Seager’s scholarship: “Fabullus then is *venustus* because he is a person of taste and discrimination in matters over which the *Veneres* preside. How varied these are is fully displayed: conversation, the pleasures of the table and friendship, as well as love” (Seager, 891).³

Of course, by no means do all writers agree on that interpretation. Brian A. Krostenko, in his book *The Language of Social Performance*, delves deeply into the origins, etymologies, and usages of words that indicate social distinction, and *venustus*

² It is possible that Catullus may be joking when he says that “rather refined men” mourn the loss of a sparrow, but the joke would not change the sense of the word. Rather, if he is mocking the sparrow and thereby mocking the men who mourn it, they would simply be *invenusti*: tasteless or unrefined.

³ Seager, Robin. “‘Venustus, Lepidus, Bellus, Salsus’ : Notes on the Language of Catullus.”

is one of them.⁴ Krostenko divides *venustus* into three different categories. Recalling the term's early influences (Venus and gardening), he composes its semantic structure from female attractiveness, eroticism, and being well-arranged (Krostenko, 40-48).⁵ Furthermore, on page 238, he insists that "Catullus has conflated two branches of the word that are normally moved independently"; that is, he has combined eroticism and aesthetic refinement.⁶ Yet when Krostenko's formula of combined eroticism and aestheticism are applied to other poems, such as 12, for example, the idea falls short. When Marrucinus Asinius swipes napkins, does Catullus accuse him because he has failed to be properly arousing or because he has committed a faux pas? Or 22, perhaps: is Suffenus, who appears *venustus* at first glance, erotically appealing? And does the already-attractive Quintia of 86 lack any of Krostenko's proclaimed "female attractiveness?" Neither would make sense. The Catullan interpretation of *venustus* ought to remain a notion of refinement, taste, and discrimination.

⁴ Krostenko, Brian A. *Cicero, Catullus, and the Language of Social Performance*.

⁵ *ibid.*, "venosto- seems to have drifted, by the way of 'desirable,' into 'attractive' (42)... *venustus* maintains its connections to erotic attractiveness, particularly that of women, throughout the history of Latin (43)... the connection with gardens may well be partly responsible for the acquisition by *venust(us)* of the sense 'well-arranged' (44)..."

⁶ *ibid.*

Sal: The Spice of Life

The term *sal* and its derivatives appear only seven times in the Catullan corpus, but their function is easier to discern than that of *venustus*. Like with *venustus*, every incident factors into the interpretation of the word, but that of *sal* is much more clear-cut, especially through poems 12, 13, and 86.

At its root, *sal* finds its home in the Catullus corpus through food metaphors. One blatant example is poem 13, in which Catullus tells Fabullus what to bring to dinner: “a pretty girl, and wine, and *sale*, and all the laughs” (*candida puella / et vino et sale et omnibus cachinnis* Catullus, 13 ll. 4-5). Garrison suggests that *sale* here can play on two meanings: salt and wit, which he suggests sensibly, for the context is witty and full of *cachinni* between friends.⁷ However, a mere choice of “wit” does not differentiate *sal* from *facetus*. In this case *sal* would take a very particular OLD definition: not just wit, but the “quality that gives life or character” to a person, action, or object. So if Fabullus literally brings salt to dinner, he provides flavor for the food, but metaphorically, he provides flavor to the tableside conversation.

Poem 86 mentions *sal* similarly in ll. 4, where Catullus states that Quintia has “not a grain of salt in such a great body” (*nulla in tam magno est corpore mica salis* Catullus, 86 ll. 4). The salt could refer to one of two options here: on one hand, that there is no spice to her beauty, as the Fordyce commentary suggests.⁸

⁷ Garrison, Daniel H. *The Student's Catullus*.

⁸ Fordyce, Christian J. *Catullus*. Student's ed.

On the other, if *sal* refers to the spice that gives life to wit, Quintia is a complete airhead with a terrible sense of humor. The latter is a more accurate interpretation, because by saying that there is no spice to her beauty, Fordyce decontextualizes the situation. He focuses on the previous words describing her physical appearance and does not pay respect to the next few lines. But in those lines, Quintia is being compared to Lesbia, whom Catullus admires in his corpus not only for her beauty but for her intelligence and witticisms. Since these are what Quintia lacks, it would be more suitable to translate *sal* as wit again. Moreover, the food metaphor fits rather interestingly here. Catullus addresses none of Quintia's merits, other than those physical, in the poem whatsoever. Without wit, she shrinks to a mere *corpore* in ll. 4, a body, objectified. Without something to give her "flavor," she is not worth touching; without any mention of intelligence, she seems like a steak without its spice, nothing but flesh.

Catullus, then, essentially deprives Quintia of a personality. It would be, therefore, appropriate to examine the relationship of *sal*, *salsus* and the like to words that denote personality. That relationship is already being developed in scholarship. Amy Richlin, for example, in regard to an individual's *persona* and *sal*,⁹ insightfully comments that "seasoning is proper to the right personality" (Richlin, 358). Interestingly enough, in four out of the seven total places in which *sal* or its derivatives appear, a form of *venustus* is not many lines

⁹ Richlin, Amy. "Systems of Food Imagery in Catullus."

away, and in every occasion where the form is negative, the *sal* is not realized. In poem 10, after Catullus thinks the *scortillum* is not entirely “*illeepidum neque invenustum*” (Catullus, 10 ll. 4), he revises his claim because she supposedly has no *sal* (*sed tu insulsa... vivis* ll. 33). In poem 12 the association appears with “*res... invenusta est*” (ll. 5), which is why Asinius is not actually *salsum*. The same goes for Quintia in 86, who has “*nulla venustas... / nulla mica salis*” (Catullus, 86 ll. 3-4); in 13, Fabullus, who brings the *sale*, is also *venuste* (Catullus, 13 ll. 6). Rosemary Nielsen proclaims about this relationship that *sal* “has been defined as: ‘the spark that kindles the display of *venustas*.’”¹⁰ Perhaps, however, a better definition would be the opposite: that a *venustus* person brings *sal* with him. It is literal in poem 22 (Catullus asks Fabullus to bring the *sale*) but is also quite emphatic in poem 12 because, after Catullus asks whether Asinius thinks he is *salsum*, he states that the matter itself lacks *venustus*. That is, it is unrefined, so it cannot bear any wit. Although it is true that wit can bring a character’s personality traits to the surface, only those who possess *venustus*, as shown above, can demonstrate *sal*. So while *sal* does refer to wit, it is intimately involved with tastefulness, which is quite fitting, considering that it literally means “salt.” *Sal* or *salsus* should then be translated as “salt” or “salty” for two reasons: in English, the word still retains a connotation of wit and humor; and *sal* is a quality that gives character, like a spice does to a food. That character is wit, but it

¹⁰ Nielsen, Rosemary M. “CATULLUS AND SAL (POEM 10).”

is important to recognize that *sal* triggers wit's expression, and is not wit itself.

Lepidus: The Universal Charm

Unlike *salsus*, *lepidus* is quite difficult to pin down. *Lepidus*, its negatives, and *lepos*, the noun it is derived from, appear twelve times in the entire Catullan corpus, more than each of the other terms addressed in this paper. These twelve instances, however – in poems 1, 6, 10, 12, 16, 32, 36, 50, and 78 – are not enough to specify a precise translation.

Several authors testify to the ambiguity of *lepidus*. Cairns states that “there is a strong temptation to take (it) as having a double reference, both to the physical book and to its contents” (Cairns, 154), then later calls it an “ambiguous adjective” (155).¹¹ Seager claims that *lepidus*’ “emphasis may be on either manner or appearance,” then “a combination of mental and physical smartness,” then, in one case, a “stock compliment.”¹² Fordyce comments that the noun it is derived from, *lepos*, is a “general term, covering any sort of sparkle or grace in the spoken word.”¹³ And Krostenko states that *lepidus*, “as a broad ameliorative... described mainly the response of an observer to a stimulus.”¹⁴

If so many critics consider that *lepidus* is ambiguous, the uses of the word ought to be tested against their claim. Poem 1,

¹¹ Cairns, Francis. “Catullus I.”

¹² Seager, Robin. “Venustus, Lepidus, Bellus, Salsus’ : Notes on the Language of Catullus.” pp. 893-894.

¹³ Fordyce, Christian J. *Catullus*. pp. 132.

¹⁴ Krostenko, Brian A. *Cicero, Catullus, and the Language of Social Performance*. pp. 68.

where Catullus calls his work a “*lepidum novum libellum*” (Catullus, 1 ll. 1), describing the *libellus* as an entire unit although it contains many poems, is significant. If the whole book is *lepidus*, the quality must thereby refer to the whole body of text. According to the OLD, the “*lepidum novum libellum*” or “new little book” could be agreeable, charming, delightful, amusing, or witty. Whether these qualities attend to the content of the poetry inside or the exterior, physical appearance of the whole unit, is entirely ambiguous. Testing the definitions one by one does not seem to help. The book could be agreeable, charming, delightful, or amusing in its appearance, as “*arida modo pumice expolitum*” (ll. 2) – “just polished with dry pumice” – seems to suggest. But each of these terms is quite general, as each vaguely refers to pleasure. As for content? Again, because of the generality of these terms, they could certainly refer to the poetry itself. The word “amusement” may also contain some humorous qualities, and surely, no reader can complain that Catullus’ poetry is void of it. If one removable definition remains, it would be “witty”; in poem 16, Catullus mentions that his poems “*habent salem ac leporem*” (Catullus, 16 ll. 7) – have salt and *leporem*, where, as mentioned in the previous section, “salt” retains the notion of wit. Using these terms together with the conjunction “*ac*” seems rather redundant. The poems would “have salt and wit”; they would express wittiness and be witty.

Other instances of the word also suggest that its nature is general. These instances determine its nature not through

addition – that is, each translation lending a different nuance to the term – but through multiple possible translations. In poem 6, for example, Catullus comments: “Flavius, you would want to speak to Catullus about, nor would you be able to be quiet about, your girlfriend, lest she be *illepidae* and inelegant” (Catullus, 6 ll. 1-3). Judging by the context of the poem, where Flavius bounces around on a creaky bed with his feverish harlot of a girlfriend, *illepidus* could refer to both definitions in the OLD. She could be unrefined or ungraceful, for she is, after all, a harlot. The *lepidus* at the end of the poem, where Catullus says he wants to “write of (Flavius) and (his) love to heaven with a *lepidus* verse” (*volo te ac tuos amores / ad caelum lepidus vocare versu* ll. 16-17) acts likewise. His verse does not have any particular associations. It could, without question, be agreeable, charming, delightful, amusing. In either case, the word seems to refer to a blanket notion of pleasure or displeasure.

Perhaps, then, the best translation for *lepidus*’ general nature of perceived pleasure or displeasure is “charm.” Charm can encompass amusement, delight, and agreeability. Moreover, it fits every occasion of the word: in poem 1, a “charming book” (*lepidum novum libellum* ll. 1); in poem 6, an “uncharming and inelegant girl” (*illepidae atque inelegantes* ll. 2) and a “charming verse” (*lepidus vocare versu* ll. 17); in poem 10, a harlot that does not seem “excessively uncharming or inelegant” (*scortillum... non sane illepidum neque invenustum* ll. 3-4); in poem 36, Lesbia thinks she “vows charmingly to the gods” (*lepide vovere*

divis ll. 10); and so on and so forth. These examples should cover that “charm” applies to and fits the general notions of books (whether physical or textual), verses, humans, and vows.

Facetus: The Clever Judge

Like the *sal* family, *facetus* is a term that appears a total of six times in the entire Catullan corpus. Even more frugal is the quantity of poems it appears in – a total of five – 12, 22, 36, 43, and 50.

When Catullus first uses the word in poem 12, he gives it a sense of intelligent judgement. He calls Marrucinus Asinius’ brother, Pollio, “*leporum differtus puer ac facetiarum*” (12 ll. 8-9), or a “boy full of charms and of *facetiae*.” While judging Asinius’ napkin swipes, Pollio, full of *facetiae*, is to be trusted (*crede* ll. 6). Why? The rationale behind the statements arguing for his *facetus* nature is that he “*tua furta vel talento / mutari velit* (ll. 7); he “would like (Asinius’) thefts to be exchanged even for a talent.” Garrison, in reference to this line, comments concisely that a talent is “a lot of Greek money.”¹⁵ In light of this analysis and the host of definitions from the OLD (displaying cleverness of judgement, clever, adept; (*facetiae*) being witty or facetious), the first two translations fit best. Pollio’s estimate of the price of Asinius’ crime provides him cleverness or good judgement. It is important to note, however, that this judgement does not merely apply to matters of intelligence, but also to humor; Asinius thinks he is funny, but Pollio understands that he

¹⁵ Garrison, Daniel H. *The Student's Catullus*. pp. 102.

is not. He thus has a higher understanding of humor and can capably judge its quality.

The intelligence or cleverness of a *facetus* individual gains support from a few other poems, particularly those that reference rustic land. The first is poem 22, where Catullus accuses Suffenus of literary ineptitude by characterizing him as “*infaceto est infacetior rure*” (Catullus, 22 ll. 14), or “less clever than the dim-witted countryside.” The claim pays respect to how he “changes and is so greatly inconsistent” (*tantum abhorret ac mutat* ll. 11). Although Suffenus is tasteful, well-spoken, and urbane, and although his poetry has superior physical characteristics,¹⁶ he has terrible judgement when it comes to verse. For this reason, Catullus terms him a “goat-milker or a ditch-digger” (*caprimulgus aut fossor* ll. 10). Both of these rural professions require repetitive physical labor and profess no mental activity. A goat-milker squeezes teats all day, mindless of his social class, his attractiveness, or his wit; a ditch-digger pounds a shovel into the ground endlessly without engaging the mind’s creative faculties. Neither one needs to be particularly clever. So when Catullus refers to Suffenus as “*infacetior... rure*,” he equates the man with a country dullard.

¹⁶ Catullus, 22 ll. 6-8. Suffenus’ poetry’s physical characteristics: “*cartae regiae, novi libri, / novi umbilici, lora rubra membranae, / directa plumbo et pumice omnia aequata...*” It is made up of royal sheets, new books, new scroll knobs, red leather straps, skins, and is all ruled with lead and leveled with pumice.

The same goes for poems 36 and 43. In poem 36, Catullus addresses the work of Volusius as “*pleni ruris et inficetiarum*,” (Catullus, 36 ll. 19) or “full of the countryside and dim-witted things.” In other words, Volusius’ poetry expresses his lack of the quality *facetus*, for what he produces seems like what a country dullard would write. In poem 43, Catullus asks his addressee, Ameana, whether the province (according to the OLD, a territory outside of Italy and therefore outside of Rome’s city life) says that she is pretty (*ten provincia narrat esse bellam?* Catullus, 43 ll. 6). Through this language, he associates her with dim-witted rusticity. In the final line, Catullus proclaims “*o saeculum insapiens et infacetum!*” (ll. 8). Here, he calls the current generation unwise and dim-witted; they are analogous to the province, which apparently suits itself with an unattractive, lower-class girl. These fools are not capable of judging the qualities that make a beautiful woman.

Other authors seem to agree with this interpretation of *facetus* as a reference to cleverness and intelligence. Krostenko claims that the word is linked by etymology to *fax*, a torch, and expresses a “kind of ‘bright flash’ or ‘smooth polish’ ... in the ‘brilliance of apt or clever speech or the intelligence it suggests.’”¹⁷ Mark F. Williams, moreover, claims that “Catullus’ use of the phrase *tuo lepore / incensus, Licini*,

¹⁷ Krostenko, Brian A. *Cicero, Catullus, and the Language of Social Performance*. pp. 60.

*facetiisque*¹⁸ ...connotes a strong intellectual, rather than erotic, friendship.”¹⁹ Even Fordyce, when explaining the *infacetum* of poem 43, mentions that Catullus’ society “has only scorn for the dull, the insensitive, the clumsy and the provincial... the *infacetus* is the dreary person who takes things seriously.”²⁰ Therefore, on account of analysis as well as the contributions of several scholars, it would be suitable to translate *facetus* as “clever.”

Concluding Remarks

While the Oxford Latin Dictionary is a valuable asset for translating Latin, it is important, especially with Neoteric poets such as Catullus, to understand the nuances of many different words. *Venustus*, or “tasteful”; *sal*, or “salt”; *lepidus*, or “charming”; and *facetus*, or “clever”; are but a few of the words that a poem’s meaning might hinge upon. There are many others, such as *bellus* and *urbanus*, which need investigation. Regardless of the word, there can be no entirely conclusive translation; even if every single instance of the word’s usage has been investigated, a translation is, inevitably, an interpretation. Words take on different uses with different authors, and different readers provide different interpretations. This paper will hopefully provide insight as both a meta-analysis of scholarly

¹⁸ Catullus, 50 ll. 7-8. “...kindled, Licinius, by your charm and clever deeds.”

¹⁹ Williams, Mark F. “Catullus 50 and the Language of Friendship.”

²⁰ Fordyce, Christian J. *Catullus*. pp. 197.

sources and a collection of poetic interpretations. Catullus' poetry is so polished that it deserves the attention.

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A Translation of *Juvenal: Satire VII.215-243*

Charlie Schufreider, '17

The glasses, sweaters tweed, and frumpy dress
The garbs which mark to all the learned best
Of these do any carry cash enough
To justify their work as teachers? Tough!
Though teachers make so little overall,
It's when you teach the Classics payments fall.

For first those nit-wit private tutors steal
That dough which you should rightly spend on meals.
But look at the administration too;
They keep a portion - like they always do.
But even that amount you think you'll get
Prepare to let it drop and raise your debt.
You'll quickly find yourself a bart'ring twit -
No different than some street man peddling shit.

They do get paid, so it's not all a waste.
That while the moon is high, to desks they race.
That time of day when even fact'ries sleep
And migrant workers rest and count the sheep.
Why yes, at those ungodly hours you'll sit;
Fluorescent lights destroying all your wit.
Meanwhile the students do so much the same -
Stupidity disgracing Vergil's name.

So sue the school for sal'ries that are fair
But don't be sad if still your wallet's bare.

It's par'nts who really make your life a hell,
With rules so cruel as life within a cell.
Their child may not know alpha from a tau,
But teaching them requires a Masters now.
Not only must you read the histories
But ev'ry single author you can seize.
And know them well as one's own finger nail
So that when asked, your knowledge doesn't fail
Although you're in a place to be alone -
The public pool, a spa that's all your own -
By chance some par'nts are there and they demand
For you to name Anchises's nurse off-hand,
Or some inquire about Anchemolus,
His step-mother - her name and her polis.
Others will ask how long Acestes lived,
Just how much wine to Trojans did he give.

But par'nts want more than growth of intellect:
Morality devoid of disrespect.
So mold their hearts, their souls and leave no cracks,
Just like a sculptor doing work in wax.
Essentially you'll be the children's par'nt

Since they who screwed it into life are err'nt.
Make sure the children play no dirty tricks
Nor e'er talk back with worse than Stones and sticks.
A not so easy task before you lies:
Watch o'er their overstimulated hands and eyes.

“Please care for all our kids,” those par'nts demand,
“And once a year has passed you'll take in hand
A handsome sum for all your doom and gray -
The same we grant an athlete for a day.”

Mt. Parnassus

A view of Mt. Parnassus at the Tholos of Apollo in Delphi.



Submissions for Next Year

Parnassus welcomes submissions from Holy Cross students of any major. For next year's journal, students from the class of 2018-2021 are welcome to submit, as are alumni and professors. Pieces should relate to the study of the ancient world and should be understandable to a wide audience. Essays, poems, translations, creative pieces, and artwork are all eligible for publication.

Submissions can be emailed to HCclassicsjournal@gmail.com, beginning in the fall of 2018. Pieces will be reviewed after February 2019, and authors will be notified of acceptance at the beginning of March 2019. Authors of accepted articles will continue to work on their piece with an editor in the following month.