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NOTE

This contribution is the response piece to a larger dialogue of three articles that form the current issue of JOLCEL. The other contributions are “Writing in a World of Strangers: The Invention of Jewish Literature Revisited” by Irene Zwiép (pp. 1–20), “A Critical Juncture: ‘Later’ Latin Literature, the Newest Late Antiquity, and the Period of the Western Classic” by Mark Vessey (pp. 22–42), and “The Ordeal of a Sixth-Century Josef K: Boethius’ *De Consolatione Philosophiae* as a Modernist Drama” by Piet Gerbrandy (pp. 44–64).

Ins and Outs and Opened and Closed

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The three papers in this fascicule of *JOLCEL* were delivered at “Winckelmann’s Victims” held at the University of Gent in September 2018 for the 300th anniversary of Winckelmann’s birth.¹ I was not present on that occasion to hear the papers in their original context, but am happy to have the chance to comment on such interesting work after the fact. Two of the contributions (Vessey and Zwiep) discuss the changing position of fields (Later Latin and Jewish Literature) in literary history, while the third (Gerbrandy) concerns itself with the interpretation of Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy* alone, but spends more time on Winckelmann.²

Common ground for Vessey and Zwiep is embedding in literary history. What is to be covered? Will the key be major or minor? Will a sense of decadence, deformation, and decline predominate? Or teleological triumphalism? Or, as in a *Handbuch*, will all substances, to the extent that they exist, be considered good, so that authors and works are simply discussed? Or will handbook-entries be combined with essays? And, above all, how will languages and periodization be handled? And how does all of this look in a rapidly changing and expanding world? Gerbrandy’s piece instead discusses the form, closure, and interpretation of one work. All three works concern territory and boundaries: the first two at the subject level (in or out?) and the third at the level of the textual artifact (open or closed?). All three can be connected to Winckelmann, for aesthetics invariably inform all doorkeepers’ decisions.

Both Vessey and Zwiep address political questions of expansion and globalism, exclusion and inclusion. So, let us start with a narrative of how we got where we are.

There was once, so the story goes, a universal tongue that was undone by the sin of pride.³ We ceased to understand one another. Study of literatures, thus, remains closely linked to languages, and those languages, in many cases, to modern nation-states. Classics, where Greek and Latin arguably constitute one

¹ <https://www.winckelmannsvictims.ugent.be>.

² Zwiep mentions him once and Vessey twice.

³ *Genesis* 11.1-9.

literature in two languages, but where the contact between the two has varied during different historical periods and been supported by different entities, both nations, and institutions such as the Church, is anomalous. Likewise Jewish Literature (or Studies or *Judaistik*).

In the past, one lived and worked somewhere, within a language and a culture, at a given place with the resources available, beggable, borrowable, or stealable. Think Middle Ages. One might encounter a traveler from an antique land, but reading was the primary window onto Others and other times and places. Eventually there came printing, easier travel, and increasingly accessible libraries. *Omne ignotum* could simply remain unknown, or held *pro magnifico*, or pragmatically labelled someone else's problem till some alarming foreign professor croaked, "Hef you read Hesychius?" One concentrated on acquiring expertise in one's own field and in enriching oneself by exploration that might or might not result in expertise. There was time.

Travel and, above all, technology have now made such stances untenable. The Christian missions to the heathen were miraculously enabled by the simultaneous translation of Pentecost.⁴ Automatic translation programs, such as DeepL, now enable many to get the gist or at least work out whether something requires attention or not. Excuses are hard to come by when contact is cheap: in a mere second one can connect to someone who *might know*. And the globe impinges and tempts.⁵ This can be conducive to a sense of guilt for what used to be the virtue of intellectual monogamy.

Zwiep cites Zunz's image of the Jewish stream in the Hegelian literary sea (p. 10). Literary scholars now live in a world of utopian ambitions, where all literatures and cultures will be free and equal, where all will have access to the collective wisdoms thereof, and therefore drink from innumerable fountains which will all be seen as delicious, but all will be distinguishable. This is no Christian dream of one fountain of living water, nor a Symmachan longing for many paths to the one great secret.

Global literary history has arrived. We want to view the world from higher up, a *specula* from where we can see what joins us, rather than concentrating on what is distinctive and local. Zwiep's "planetary poetics" perhaps.⁶ We want the God's eye view from the lofty watchtower.

This dream can be driven by curiosity, idealism, by a quest either to magnanimously transcend one's local sublunary aesthetic (even if it's Winckelmann's uplifting "edle Einfalt" and "stille Größe"),⁷ or to open oneself up to the Other, to seek connections, find them, and bind them intellectually.

But fashion and guilt also have a role and may unfortunately play into the hands of the bodies that organize knowledge and seek to save money. Broader purviews are inclusive (a Good Thing), but faculty members straddling fields also save institutions salaries: hence perhaps "the global this-or-that." When one is

⁴ *Acts* 2.1-18.

⁵ Zwiep's "sweet love"?

⁶ Zwiep, p. 3. I used the image in Shanzer, "Literature, History, Periodization, and the Pleasures," 5 for the Roman empire.

⁷ Winckelmann, *Gedanken ueber die Nachahmung*, 21: "ist endlich eine edle Einfalt, und eine stille Größe."

potentially responsible for any- or everything, where does that leave expertise? It can also look like a new literary historical colonialism, where what used to be your business is now mine too. Broad purviews can immediately give rise to identity politics and accusations of cultural appropriation.

Our two case-studies.

1 Wissenschaft des Judentums

Zwiep takes us back to the problems faced by Jewish literature in a European cultural scene dominated by "the Bible and the Greeks." What of the excluded post-Biblical Jewish literature? She concentrates on the development of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in early nineteenth-century Berlin and reminds us of the moral failings of Enlightenment universalism, Goethe's *Weltliteratur*. She concentrates on the way *in* to academic society during the early nineteenth century, by providing a case-study of Jewish literature and the European canon. She outlines for us the process whereby Leopold Zunz sought to find a place for Jewish culture, marginalized and excluded by reduction to Rabbinic culture⁸ in high German thought in German literary academe. Jewish literature subsisted in a variety of ancient and modern languages⁹ and writers were visibly multilingual. But a romantic eye could still discern a Jewish *Volksgeist* across the immense time-span. Zunz spoke of paganism and Christianity's hostility to Jews, believed in the (fusion) "Sephardi mystique," and fought in his own research for Ashkenazi synagogue poetry.

Zwiep articulates how a supposedly aniconic Jewish culture could be disadvantaged in the aesthetic pursuit of the beautiful, hence becoming perhaps one of 'Winckelmann's Victims.' In the process she introduces us to Leopold Dukes who aimed to rescue and document post-Talmudic Jewish poetry, including the medieval Sephardic poets Solomon ibn Gabirol and Judah Al-Charizi. The latter translated the (now lost) *Kitab Adab al-Falisifa*, including a dialogue-exemplum about the poetics of the *Melitzah* that channels Greek, Indian, Persian, and Roman wisdom.¹⁰ Dukes can also look less aesthetic and prescriptive and Winckelmannian, more like wandering *Märchenforscher* with his research on proverbs and proverbial ways of speaking.¹¹ His immensely useful reference-works made it possible for those without Hebrew to gain access to non-Biblical Jewish Wisdom Literature.

2 Later Latin Literary History

Vessey tackles the position of Later Roman / Late Antique Latin Literature within: 1. The Anglophone high literary 'western Classic' (read 'Vergilian')

⁸ Post-exilic Judaism was not seen as competitive with *frühes Christentum*.

⁹ Ibn Gabirol would have disapproved. See "prologue to the Book of Grammar," 11–16 in Cole, *Selected Poems of Solomon Ibn Gabirol*, 49.

¹⁰ Dukes, *Ehrensäulen und Denksteine*, 51–53.

¹¹ Dukes, *Rabbinische Blumenlese*.

tradition (early to mid-twentieth century) and 2. the continental literary historical *Handbuch* tradition (continuous across the nineteenth to the twenty-first century). The latter enjoyed a palpable injection of fuel in Germany and France in 1976-1977 from the redemptive alliance of Jacques Fontaine, Manfred Fuhrmann, Reinhart Herzog, and Peter Lebrecht Schmidt.

Questions of Periodization

Vessey points out that Herzog had spoken of the Latin literature of the period after 284 as “die erste nachrömische Literatur Europas.”¹² This choice of term is confusing for English speakers and arguably confusing *per se*. I would have preferred ‘Post-Classical.’ ‘Post-Roman’ for me would first come into question later, e. g. after 410 CE in Britain. Or perhaps after, say, 550 for the whole geographical area? But Herzog drew on a famous article by his master Fuhrmann that had argued for a Great Divide and a reset after the end of the Severans. Apuleius was the last *Weltliteratur*. Legal writing bloomed, Christian literature in Latin was derived from Christian literature in Greek.¹³ The ideas that inspired literature changed. Not the state, law, and politics¹⁴ but faith. Production was now driven less by the emperor and more by the schools and the office-holding aristocracy, both Christian and pagan. It was Christian authors who created the pagan renaissance of the late fourth century.¹⁵ This was Fuhrmann’s analysis.

Now, although there is a clear evidential gap in surviving Latin secular writing, between Censorinus and Nemesianus, “das Fuhrmannsche Loch,”¹⁶ it does not necessarily entail a break or discontinuity. Fuhrmann at various points seems eager to paint the small caesura between antiquity and late antiquity as an event more like the onset of a mini-Middle Ages.¹⁷ He never used the term ‘post-römisch,’ but saw the *nationalrömische Substanz* as exhausted after 235 CE.¹⁸ Robin Lane Fox, however, reminds us how sculptors learn from masters, how the *diadoche* passes from hand to hand.¹⁹ Literature can function differently when an author learns from a found text alone. But even though there are evidential gaps in late

¹² Herzog, *Restauration und Erneuerung*, 1: “Die Bände 5 bis 8 des vorliegenden Handbuchs stellen den Gang der lateinischen Literatur in der Spätantike vom Beginn der Tetrarchie 284 n. Chr. bis zum Tode Bedas 735 n. Chr. dar. Die Darstellung folgt mit dieser Begrenzung einer Periodisierung der Epoche, wie sie auch in der Geschichtsforschung vertreten wird. Sie folgt ihr, weil sie die Literatur dieser Zeit als die erste lateinische, die erste nachrömische Literatur Europas auffaßt und sie als Einheit begreift.”

¹³ I would draw attention to the clear Latin literary affiliations of Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian. All read classical texts and clearly had secular training.

¹⁴ Fuhrmann, “Die lateinische Literatur der Spätantike,” 62. This conclusion is belied by the number of works that continue to be driven by emperor and empire. See Vessey, “Ausonius at the Edge of Empire,” 192, 196, 201-2.

¹⁵ Fuhrmann, “Die lateinische Literatur der Spätantike,” 62.

¹⁶ Willy Schetter’s ironic term. Kurt Smolak, who was present at Creation, is my authority here. *Ibid.* speaks of “ein nahezu gänzlich literaturloses Intervall von zwei Menschenaltern.”

¹⁷ See, for example, the rhetoric at *ibid.*, 60, 63, and 74. on how connections to the period afterwards are “inniger” (citing Heuss); how it is more correctly attributed to the Middle Ages (citing Rand); describing Victorinus and Donatus as if they were medieval scholars.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 70. Also Fuhrmann, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, 509-11. At 511 he speaks of the literature of late antiquity as the first “Rezeptionsstufe der Literatur Alt-Roms.”

¹⁹ Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 573.

antiquity, I would be reluctant to argue for any loss of individual functionality. I find Nemesianus, Juvencus, Ausonius, and Prudentius improbable as autodidacts.

Geography

Shortly before the Franco-German team was established, the historian Peter Brown, who has fueled more enthusiasm for late antiquity than anyone else, burst providentially upon the Anglosphere. Vessey here draws attention to something (to me) new and interesting about the Eastern, the Western, and the global. He cites Geoffrey Barraclough's skepticism about western-centered European culture and values (1947) and especially his sense of the importance of late antiquity as a "seminal age" and the need for a global perspective. He connects this with Barraclough's subsequent commissioning of Peter Brown's *World of Late Antiquity* (1971).²⁰ Brown de-familiarized the late antique world, took away any aesthetic aura of white statues, anthropologized it, made it riotous, "vibrant" we would say now.²¹ He drew on different sources, so his (historian's) late antiquity shifted to the Eastern Mediterranean.

Approaches

And then there are trends, such as the Franco-Italian-Anglophone intertextualist classical reception²² that Vessey skewers with velvet paw. The practitioners of that art operate within their comfort zone, an unhistorical and also unhistoricized, largely *verse* universe, in which they contemplate "edle Einfalt und stille Größe" and their own uni-methodological industry.²³ They are a different tribe, from the aestheticians who shiver at the lateness of the hour, the decadence, the decline and deformation. They are classical carpet-baggers visiting Late Antiquity, not the last sigh of the 'western classic.'

What is to come?

So far Later Latin literary history, where in the meantime, there remains a gap of two volumes (7-8) in the German *Handbuch*²⁴ and the prospect of the (still in progress) *Cambridge History of Later Latin Literature*. In the interest of full disclosure let me confess that I have worked in some of the areas covered by Vessey²⁵ and that I am contributing two chapters to the *Cambridge History of Later Latin Literature*. The latter might look like a throwback, or the West striking back at the Rest. I see it as an eminently sensible choice.²⁶

²⁰ Going beyond Wood, *The Modern Origins*, 308.

²¹ See McWhorter, "The Problem With Dropping Standards" for "vibrant" as code for "Black."

²² I firmly distinguish intertextuality used for dating and for interpretation. See, for example, Shanzer, "The Anonymous Carmen contra paganos"; Shanzer, "Once again Tiberianus"; Shanzer, "Avulsa a latere meo"; and polemically: Shanzer, "Augustine's Anonyma I."

²³ Whose workings have been immensely simplified by digital databases such as the LLT, since one can now parachute in.

²⁴ Herzog, *Restauration und Erneuerung* came out; then its prequels: Suerbaum, *Die archaische Literatur* and Sallmann, *Die Literatur des Umbruchs*. There was a long gap before Berger, Fontaine, and Schmidt, *Die Literatur im Zeitalter des Theodosius. Erste Teil*, and Berger, Fontaine, and Schmidt, *Die Literatur im Zeitalter des Theodosius 2. Teil*.

²⁵ E.g. Shanzer, "Literature, History, Periodization, and the Pleasures," 1-38.

²⁶ Albrecht Dihle chose otherwise. See Dihle, *Die griechische und lateinische Literatur*.

One need not discuss other quarters of the world in a language-based literary history *unless there was contact or the comparison is answering a question*. Systematic comparison of Greek hagiography, for example, is not essential for studying Western material. But Classicists and medievalists working on folktale or fables or apocrypha have to take account of and work with material written in languages other than Greek or Latin.²⁷ Handbooks are above all for reference, whereas a literary history might actually be read linearly, if not cover-to-cover. It can reasonably be expected to offer *psychagogia* and recruitment. Let us hope the *CHLLL* will combine Continental command of detail with Anglophone leavening.

3 Boethius

Gerbrandy, a Classicist and prize-winning literary translator into Dutch, discusses the interpretation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. This work written in classicizing Latin to a high standard of literary finish and (to most readers) granular order is usually read at face-value, as a serious work of consolatory philosophy, arising from its author's imprisonment and condemnation under Theoderic the Ostrogoth. The work's sought-after symmetry invites the adoring gaze of Winckelmannian eyes. They long for perfection, for rest. The expectations raised by Boethius' dialogue end up being far higher than those raised by Plato—presumably because of the artfully nested poems. Gerbrandy adds his own signs of perfection to the *summa* of wheels within wheels and sensibly re-vindicates 3 M. 9., the metrical *unicum*, as the center of the *Consolatio*.

In recent decades however some have concentrated on what they read as deliberate inconsistencies and tried to see in the work a failure of philosophy, a parody, or in this case a nihilist and unconsoling, nay, disconcerting intellectual nightmare.²⁸ Gerbrandy suggests that our modernist eyes should help us to see beauty and greatness in ancient works that do not match the rules of ancient *artes poeticae*. He discerns a lack of narrative closure and a “telling, abysmal silence” in which Boethius-Winston Smith faces the all-seeing (*cuncta cernentis*) Big Brother. He rejects readings that “default[ing] to Christianity”²⁹ and is skeptical of Blackwood's hypnotic liturgical therapy.³⁰ He aims for the “heartbreaking” and sees the prisoner of the *Consolatio* as an Ostrogothic Josef K. (Kafka, *Der Process* [1925]), an “innocent man.”³¹

Philosophers can point to problems in Boethius' argument, but which of them (including medieval ones) can fix them?³² This suggests to me that critics

²⁷ Schmitt, *Le Saint lévrier*; Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* and Page, *Folktales in Homer's Odyssey*.

²⁸ For some criticism, see Shanzer, “Interpreting the Consolation,” 235-36.

²⁹ As did Relihan, *The Prisoner's Philosophy*. For a different view of Boethius' religiosity (not mentioned by Gerbrandy), see Shanzer, “Haec quibus uteris verba,” 57-78.

³⁰ Blackwood, *The Consolation of Boethius*.

³¹ Boethius is defiant about his allegiance to Albinus in *1 Cons.* 4. See Shanzer, “Stilo ... memoriaeque mandavi.” And, hot off the press, a suggestion that Boethius himself may have conspired to succeed Theoderic: O'Donnell, “Why Boethius had to die,” 73-92!

³² Pace Lowe, *The Classical Plot*, 96 on the possibility of anticipating dialectic moves just as one can anticipate plot elements.

are not *that* much smarter than Boethius, and that it is too much to demand that a text exhibit better argumentation than its author mustered or than we can ourselves.³³ Can one apply this standard to theological treatises?³⁴ The prisoner’s stance may not be sufficiently despairing or consistently dismayed and contestatory, or, in the end, openly religious, nihilistic, or open-ended as one might expect of a philosopher who had given up on philosophy.³⁵

But *immerhin* . . . closures are contestable. Take, for example, a few comments on the Chorus’ *sententia* in the last line (1277) of Sophocles’ *Trachiniae*: “*κοῦδὲν τούτων ὅ τι μὴ Ζεύς?*” Does one note the occurrence of the word “Zeus,” implicitly related to Herakles’ genealogy?³⁶ Or suggest with the Scholia a virtual supplement of “*ἔπραξεν?*”³⁷ “Not a philosophical speculation, but a poetical statement.”³⁸ Sublime?³⁹ But why not detect a hollow clang or a dark totalitarian put-down? It is all part of the work’s reception. And, if enough people salute, you can become a school. And then they study you.⁴⁰

I find it a helpful hermeneutic exercise to ask, “How could the text have satisfied you that such-and-such was the case? What would unambiguous closure and agreement from the Prisoner have looked like? Would the Open-Enders have been satisfied with the closure offered by the end of Plato’s *Parmenides* or *Sophist* or *Laws*?⁴¹ Would a servile “Absolutely, *domina*,” have constituted an effective sense of an ending?” But there is the *Zeitgeist*: “Given a simple choice of being open or being closed, it is difficult for a twentieth-century person to choose to be closed.”⁴² How to be fair to the texts we read? Are we all Winckelmann’s victims when we demand impossibly high standards of perfection or consistency from the texts we dissect? In the end, the reader has the right to a response, and if it feels right in our parlous Matrix-like, disinformation-ridden times, why not concur that “the crack in the teacup opens / A lane to the land of the dead?”⁴³

³³ See Shanzer, “Interpreting the Consolation,” 235. Donato, “Boethius’ Consolation of philosophy.”

³⁴ E. g. that authors who do not prove god’s existence must have been aiming to show that he/she does not exist or that his/her existence cannot be proven.

³⁵ Responses, air-time, and modality (exposition vs. dialogue) vary in *Cons.* 4-5. The Prisoner initiates or drives discussion in *4Cons.* 4.26, squawks in *4Cons.* 5. 1-6; mentions *perturbant* in *4Cons.* 6.1; *4Cons.* 4.7 is an active dialogue; the Prisoner raises chance in *5Cons.* 1.1 and free will in 5.21.; 5.3.1 starts with *confundor*. It represents the Prisoner’s last intervention. It is organized, commanding, clear, agenda-setting, it culminates with the *commercium* of hope and prayer, but is never less than rhetorically balanced. Philosophy’s (targeted) exposition picks up hope and prayer in *6Cons.* 6.46.

³⁶ Easterling, *Sophocles Trachiniae*, 233.

³⁷ Davies, *Sophocles Trachiniae*, 266-67.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 267.

³⁹ “Its sublimity recalls the Homeric Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή.”

⁴⁰ Consider the different modern schools associated with Vergil’s *Aeneid*, for which see Kallendorf, “Historicizing the “Harvard School,”” 391-93. He does not discuss the negative Christian interpretations of late antiquity.

⁴¹ *Parmenides* 166C ἀληθέστατα “most true;” *Sophist* 268D παντάπασι μὲν οὖν “I entirely agree;” *Laws* 969D συλλήψομαι “I will help.”

⁴² Fowler, “Second Thoughts on Closure,” 5. Also *ibid.*, 6.: “although no one wants to be ‘closed,’ the choice between a reading that stresses unresolved ambiguities and one that tries to mediate and subsume them within a higher resolution is not simply one between a good liberal openness and anal-retentive boorishness.”

⁴³ Auden, “As I Walked Out One Evening,” vv. 43-44.

4 Whither?

Global is good, national is bad, we now hear. We may drill back when we want to belong, to feel grounded, to be proud, to have a heritage. One may sneer at Western culture or wish to see it taken down a peg, but to do so for works like Dante's *Commedia* is nonsense, and to deny the importance of its vertical connectedness to antiquity and to the Middle Ages would be silly, likewise its reach into later literatures. The literary comparatist Walter Cohen can tell a thrilling story from a great height and across a vast time period in his *A History of European Literature: the West and the World from Antiquity to the Present* and present the West initially as the taker and later as a source for global literature.⁴⁴ But Cohen also has wise words about the ogres (global literature) and the pygmies (scholarly ascetism that refuses to teach in translation).⁴⁵

I have already expressed misgivings about possible institutional outcomes of literary globalism. In the sublunary world all scholars have limited time, different abilities, and varying access to materials. At the individual level comes a psychomachy between laziness, curiosity, avoidance, and delight. At the institutional level, space, funding, positions, teaching, and fuzzier goods, such as status or being cherished, all vary. At the national level come politics, support, and institutionalization versus neglect, hostility, or even persecution. At both the national and international level are those camped *ad portas* and those defending the citadel or opening the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Zunz saw the Talmud as a stumbling-block for his subject. Did parallel discussions within Classics result in the firewall that excluded the Bible and Christian texts from the Classics departments of the Anglosphere? When reading Zwiep's essay, I was struck by how the cancelled or outmoded 'western Classic' and, with it, Classics itself may soon find itself deinstitutionalized and knocking on the door of English, Comparative Literature, or World Literatures, just as Zunz (who had been trained as a Classicist) sought inclusion in Prussia. Perhaps the treadmill of reincarnation is ineluctable?

We could dramatize our situation by imagining intellectual genera and species and the threatened fate of dinosaur and dodo. We are talking about literary history and literary histories in this issue, so this is about texts, authors, languages, and the construction of subject areas. It should still matter whether we can produce sustained interpretations based on original texts.⁴⁶ I was recently asked to write a chapter on "Literature: Latin, Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian" for a reference work to be published by a major university press. Not wishing to become either a laughing-stock or a scab, I demurred.

Outside, the air it all breathes, are money, opportunity, demand, and *Zeitgeist*. At the risk of sounding like a frustrated *vagans*—learning has been commodified, universities have become businesses, and not all governments regard the

⁴⁴ E.g. the introduction of Cohen, *A History of European Literature*, 1-13, esp. 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* notes that even he generally avoids sustained interpretation when texts are read in translation.

humanities as cultural heritage and capital. The academic world of humanists no longer promises much security or stability.

How, if at all, do, or should, these changes affect the literary history of the period? I ask myself what the take-away is: what should we be doing? Have we specialists “kept it to ourselves” (Vessey, at 36) in that we have not translated the works concerned, not taught them, not published sufficiently? Or perhaps it is more a matter of telling it on the mountain, and writing a classic piece of psychagogy, a trade book, that sends every reader rushing to the *Patrologia Latina*?

I like to imagine texts as sending radio signals (constant or intermittent, feeble or strong) or as light from stars. I remind my students of the Gettysburg Electric Map (†RIP) and how such an item could be used for Latin literary history: who wrote Sapphics, where and when? Or for world literary history to find the global hotspots and *Supertexts* and κτήματα εἰς ἀεί of *Weltliteratur*.⁴⁷ Imagine all the helpful filters and settings! That is surely a happier thought than the imagined digital map that haunts my nightmares: one of the academic institutionalizations of philologies and literatures with virtual tombstones for discontinued fields and chairs!⁴⁸

Igitur quisquis vera requirit
Neutro est habitu; nam neque novit
Nec penitus tamen omnia nescit,
sed quam retinens meminit, summam
Consulit alte visa retractans,
Ut servatis queat oblitus
Addere partes.⁴⁹

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⁴⁷ Mérite un détour? Vaut le voyage?

⁴⁸ There was always the “ancient house” in Zamyatin, *We*, 25–30. Willum Westenholz has just kindly shared Weinersmith, *Liberal Education* with me. A rant on the modern commercial credentialing university vs. the former liberal arts university: “The first place makes you tired, while the second place would be so beloved that if it burned down you’d want to bury it and write its name on a stone.”

⁴⁹ “Therefore, whoever seeks the truth, / is in neither state (sc. ignorance or knowledge), for neither does he truly know all / nor, however, is he entirely ignorant. / He reflects on the whole that he remembers, keeping it within himself, / going over what he had seen on high, / so as to be able to add forgotten components to those he has retained” Boethius, 5 *Cons.* M.3.25–31.

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