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JOLCEL

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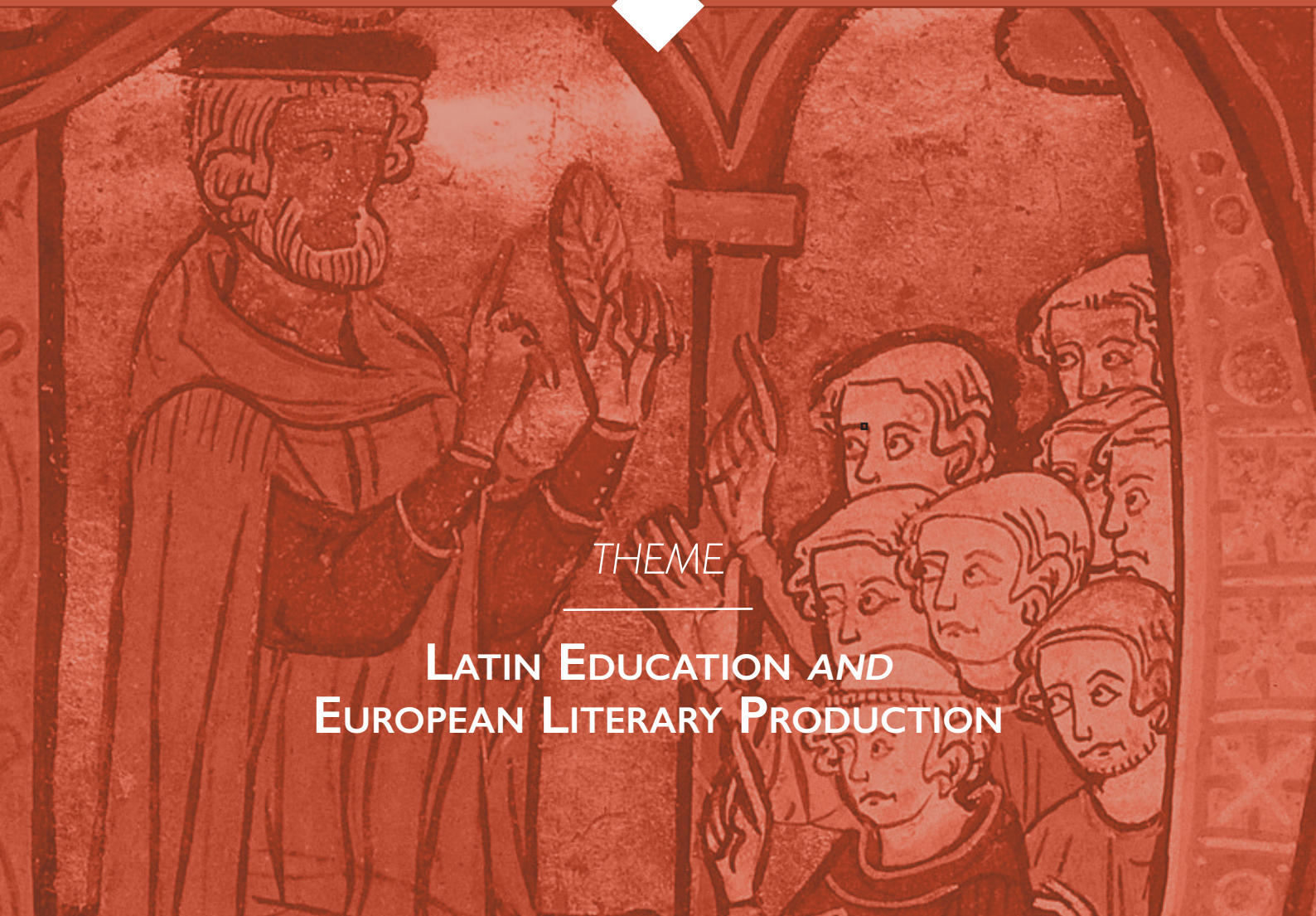

THEME

LATIN EDUCATION AND EUROPEAN LITERARY PRODUCTION

The *Journal of Latin Cosmopolitanism and European Literatures* (*JOLCEL*) (ISSN 2593-743X) is an online peer-reviewed open access journal, published multiple times a year.

The journal's contents are closely linked to the activities of the research group RELICS (*Researchers of European Literary Identity, Cosmopolitanism and the Schools*), an international network of researchers interested in the themes developed throughout the journal issues.

For more information, visit the *JOLCEL* website, or contact `relics@ugent.be`.

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Cover image: Historiated initial 'P'(ostquam) of a teacher lecturing to a group of students (France, 1st quarter of 14th century): London, British Library, MS Harley 3745, f. 1.

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Editorial Note

Welcome to the first issue of JOLCEL, a journal devoted to the study of Latin literature. Given the existence of so many other journals in this field, the reader might be wondering what sets this one apart.

Firstly, our literary-historical scope. Latin Studies has come a long way since its nineteenth-century inception in the bosom of classical philology. While generally speaking, most of its practitioners still occupy themselves primarily with literature from the classical period, scholars of late antique, medieval and early modern Latinity have long stepped out of the heavy shadows of the marble columns, and with good reason. To put things into perspective: according to one conservative estimate by Jürgen Leonhardt (University of Tübingen), classical Latin texts, including all inscriptions, barely make up for 0.001% of all of extant Latinity – with 80% of that 0.001% consisting of *late* antique texts. However, instead of focusing on one particular historical period, JOLCEL will tackle the entire Latin tradition from antiquity to the early 1800s, when Latin's status as a truly living language of literary creation and education was nearing the end of its swan song. Moreover, we want to consider this long tradition in terms of its more constant traits, of its DNA, if you will. The question that interests us here is: what is it exactly that defines Latinity *as a whole*?

Secondly, JOLCEL will examine how the Latin tradition compares to other literatures written in transnational cosmopolitan languages and how it relates to the broader landscape of European literatures. Doing so, we will be looking at Latin literature not as some autonomous, monolithic and inert entity, but as an open tradition, very much characterised by its constant *two-way* interactions with other literatures, both older and contemporaneous. As Wim Verbaal (Ghent University) also argues in his inaugural piece to this first issue, one cannot construe a thorough history of Europe's national literatures without taking into account their roots in Latin schooling and texts – roots that run far deeper than the (already widely studied) 'reception of the classical'. Vice versa, we cannot fully understand the internal workings and development of the Latin tradition without taking into account neighbouring, overlapping and competing literatures. That is another big question we want to pose: how should we envision this Latinity of European literatures and the Europeanness of Latinity?

It is not evident to combine grand scale questions such as these under the hooding of one journal. We do not expect the answers to come quickly or easily, and they demand a community of scholars who are willing to look beyond the kind of lingual, cultural and

temporal borders that tend to go hand in hand with our current academic climate of extreme specialisation. JOLCEL's wide scope will also need a suitable format if it wants to maintain its focus. By introducing the element of dialogue in the form of a critical response piece, we want to ensure a greater coherence that will help us keep in mind the bigger picture. We will try to adhere to this format as frequently as possible.

This first issue will start off with the aforementioned general introduction by Wim Verbaal, in which he hones in on some of the concepts and questions that will be central to JOLCEL, highlighting the fundamental role of schooling in the formation and continuation of literary universes. This will also be the shared topic of our next three contributions: Anders Cullhed's (University of Stockholm) article serves as an illustration of how the literary universe of Latin was shaped by schooling. Focussing on five authors from medieval to postmodern times, Cullhed shows how each of them re-use Latin literature in different ways, depending on their relation to their own Latin educations. Jonathan M. Newman (Missouri State University) explores the impact of *ars dictaminis* and the study of dialectics in twelfth- and thirteenth-century literature from France, Italy and northern Europe, which according to him is clearly felt across different genres, disciplines and national boundaries. Erik Gunderson (University of Toronto) focuses on the topic of Latin imperial prose fiction and its ironic reliance on traditional Greek education, which he believes gives the Latin novel its fairly unique 'morosophistic' character. Based on these three diverse contributions, Roland Greene (Stanford University) will close off this issue with a critical response, in which he also argues that fictional writing is one of the key factors in the durability of Latin education until this very day.

For its first forthcoming issues, the materials offered in JOLCEL will largely stem from activities organised by the international scholarly platform RELICS, or Researchers of European Literatures, Cosmopolitanism and the Schools, including its regular workshops and conferences. After that, we will start launching open Calls for Papers. For more information, we want to refer you to our websites at `jolcel.ugent.be` and `relicsresearch.com`.

The JOLCEL Editorial Board
June 2019

Reconstructing Literature. Reflections on Cosmopolitan Literatures

Wim Verbaal

Ghent University

By Way of Introduction: Reading the School

> Es ist auf der Albrechtsstraße, jener Verkehrsader der Residenz, die den Albrechtsplatz und das Alte Schloß mit der Kaserne der Gardefüsiliere verbindet—um Mittag, wochentags, zu einer gleichgültigen Jahreszeit. Das Wetter ist mäßig gut, indifferent. Es regnet nicht, aber der Himmel ist auch nicht klar; er ist gleichmäßig weißgrau, gewöhnlich, unfestlich, und die Straße liegt in einer stumpfen und nüchternen Beleuchtung, die alles Geheimnisvolle, jede Absonderlichkeit der Stimmung ausschließt. Es herrscht ein Verkehr von mittlerer Regsamkeit, ohne viel Lärm und Gedränge, entsprechend dem nicht sehr geschäftigen Charakter der Stadt. Trambahnwagen gleiten dahin, ein paar Droschken rollen vorbei, auf den Bürgersteigen bewegt sich Einwohnerschaft, farbloses Volk, Passanten, Publikum, Leute.[1]

With these sentences the unsuspecting reader is introduced into the small grand duchy of Grimmburg, in which Thomas Mann's short novel *Königliche Hoheit* (1909, translated into English as *Royal Highness* later that year) is staged. Only gradually, perhaps even only at the very end, does the reader become aware that what the novel has actually been elaborating is a realistic, even naturalistic kind of fairy tale, not from the traditional point of view of the girl and future princess but from that of the prince, who, moreover, does not appear as the girl's handsome saviour, but as the one who is saved himself through the fortunes of the American millionaire's daughter Imma.

[1] Thomas Mann, *Königliche Hoheit* (Berlin: Fischer, 1909), "The scene is the Albrechtsstraße, the main artery of the capital, which runs from Albrechtsplatz and the Old Schloss to the barracks of the Fusiliers of the Guard. The time is noon on an ordinary week-day; the season of the year does not matter. The weather is fair to moderate. It is not raining, but the sky is not clear; it is a uniform light grey, uninteresting and sombre, and the street lies in a dull and sober light which robs it of all mystery, all individuality. There is a moderate amount of traffic, without much noise and crowd, corresponding to the not over-busy character of the town. Tram-cars glide past, a cab or two rolls by, along the pavement stroll a few residents, colourless folk, passers-by, the public—'people.'" Thomas Mann, *Royal Highness*, trans. A. Cecil Curtis, `http://www.gutenberg.org/files/36028/36028-h/36028-h.htm`, Accessed online (Gutenberg project): 2018-12-24, New York, 1909.

Revisiting these opening sentences, the reader might realize that such a reading had been hinted at from the very outset. The opening phrase now becomes a clear allusion to the stereotypical *Es war einmal*. While the scene is moved here from an indefinite past to the present (Es ist) and from an undetermined time and world to an all too specific place (*auf der Albrechtsstraße…*), the indistinctness that characterizes the fairy tale world has not disappeared altogether. Rather, it has been transposed into the description itself. The entire paragraph emanates indeterminacy, haziness, boredom. Everything remains unresolved, vague, in-between (*unbestimmt*). Even the precise location (*auf der Albrechtsstraße*, *jener Verkehrsader*...) loses its exactness and becomes blurred in the fog of these sentences – which of the many German '*Albrechtsstraßen*'?

The writer achieves this haziness through several techniques. To begin with, these sentences do not have a *true subject*. In three instances, they open with the undetermined adverb that also introduces many a fairy tale: *Es ist*, *Es regnet nicht*, *Es herrscht*. If there is a subject, it is in the neuter gender (*das Wetter*), in the plural (*Trambahnwagen*, *ein paar Droschken*), or so generic that it cannot be 'subjectivized' and remains impersonal (*der Himmel*, *die Straße*). But even that which is described remains undetermined. It is around noon on an unspecified day during one season or another. The weather is dry but grey, nothing out of the ordinary. The streetlights cast a dim glimmer on a road that offers nothing exciting, where everything seems to move in a dull monotony. The 'climax' is reached in the paragraph's final words. The focus falls on the human beings moving along the street. They are a bunch of residents, colourless folk, passing, public, people.[2]

One could say that this ultimate greyness that is evoked here forms the strongest possible opposition to the more typical fairy tale opening. Mann plays with this tension throughout his entire novel. As such, this opening paragraph is a masterpiece of the writer's skill. In fact, throughout this entire paragraph Mann is simply varying on one and the same theme, expressed by the first true adjective that appears: *gleichgültig*. It is immediately echoed in its quasi-synonym, *indifferent*, and then elaborated in almost every sense. As the German word means both 'uninterested' and 'irrelevant', both senses start to overlap, giving the reader the impression that in a place so insignificant and mediocre no story of any significance could ever develop. Not more significant, anyway, than a fairy tale.

Thomas Mann's practice to constantly reformulate the sense of a specific word is nothing more than the highly artistic and sophisticated application of an old school technique, known as *copia verborum*, which for centuries formed a basic constituent of every teaching curriculum. Erasmus dedicated an entire treatise to this technique (1512), intended as a manual for Latin students to develop their language skills, and offering them a huge catalogue of variations on a range of themes, expressions, and words. It is therefore no coincidence that writers who were trained in the technique of *copia verborum* would also apply it within their own writing throughout the centuries, with comparable results. The following excerpt from the second book of Milton's *Paradise Lost* offers another illustration.

> Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd, then whom,
> Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
> Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
> A Pillar of State; deep on his Front engraven

[2] The English translation tries to handle this ultimate greyness but fails in doing so as it cannot take over the conscious use of the neuter gender that gives the German its indeterminacy, even where concrete things are described as the telling *Einwohnerschaft* that, moreover, does not just move but 'moves itself' (*sich bewegt*). For this reason, I have referred to the German text only.

> Deliberation sat and public care;
> And Princely counsel in his face yet shon,
> Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood
> With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
> The weight of mightiest Monarchies; his look
> Drew audience and attention still as Night
> Or Summers Noon-tide air, while thus he spake.[3]

The passage describes Beelzebub rising from his seat before speaking in Satan's council. As in the excerpt from Mann's novel, it is the first adjective that sets the tone for all the verses that follow. Beelzebub's graveness is elaborated in epic similes ("a pillar of State," "night or summers noon-tide air"), in personifications of his expression ("on his front deliberation sat, princely counsel shon"), in epic allusions ("with Atlantean shoulders"), in the description of his bearings ("he rose, in his rising seemed, sage he stood, shoulders fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies, his look drew still") or in more simple descriptors ("deep engraven, majestic, sage"). Even though the genre and function of this text ask for a different approach, Milton's technique is fundamentally the same as Mann's: a descriptive adjective is elaborated upon and spun out over a longer fragment as a variation on the same theme.

Both Mann and Milton use this technique as a subsidiary tool in order to evoke the suggestive description of either a setting or a character. It can be applied also as a more structural element of a text. In the *Anticlaudianus* by Alain de Lille († 1203?), Nature convenes a meeting with her sisters in order to discuss her project of creating a New Human. The text offers extensive descriptions of the different members of Nature's council taking the floor. These descriptions do much more than just framing the narrative; they indicate how the figures embody the meaning of their very names. Prudentia, the heroine of the first part of the epic, is one of the most broadly represented speakers. Everything about her is in harmony: her hair, the arches of her eyebrows, the colour on her face, her breasts and her limbs, her dress.[4] But this harmony is not a natural one as it is in the appearance of her sister Concordia, whose hair remains kempt without any difficulty.[5] Prudentia needs to rely on tools and her own efforts to attain this equilibrium: her hair is submitted to the 'rule' of her comb (*regula pectinis*) and kept in place with a hairpin (*acus*). Prudentia is the personification of discernment, which implies mental action as opposed to Concordia's representation of natural harmony. Every element thus builds upon the sense of Prudentia's name, making the text into the picture of her personality as the central character of the poem.[6]

The example of the *Synonyma* by Isidor of Sevilla († 636) demonstrates that the technique of *copia verborum* can even be the main constitutive element of a text. Starting from a clear Biblical allusion, Isidor develops an extensive dialogue between Suffering Man and Reason, always varying upon the preceding sentence. Consequently, the poem is characterized by

[3] John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (London: Oxford University Press, 1674, repr. 1938), II. 299-309.

[4] *Anticlaudianus* I.270-315. Notably in the opening verses of her presentation, words for modesty and equilibrium abound: *gestus modesti* (I.270), *circumscripta modum* (I.271), *mediata refrenat* (I.272), *regula pectinis* (I.273), *ordo – iusto libramine* (I.274), *nec nimis – nec multa* (I.275). Alain de Lille, *Anticlaudianus*, ed. Robert Bossuat (Paris: Vrin, 1955); see Wim Verbaal, "*discretionis libra*: with the scales of discernment. Allegorical Poetics and Alan of Lille's Concealment of Etymologia," in *Etymology and Wordplay in Medieval Literature*, ed. Mikael Males, Disputatio 30 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 45–81.

[5] *Anticlaudianus* II.169-173.

[6] This is not to imply that her image is vividly evoked in the manner of a more traditional description or *ekphrasis* likewise a school exercise. Alain's figures remain abstract personalities and his descriptions elude all imaginative representation.

an extremely high poetic expressivity and a strong meditative force, as the opening lines illustrate:

> Anima mea in angustiis est,
> spiritus meus aestuat,
> cor meum fluctuat.
> Angustia animi possidet me,
> angustia animi affliget me.
> Circumdatus sum omnibus malis,
> circumseptis aerumnis,
> circumclusis adversis,
> obsitus miseriis,
> opertus infelicitate,
> oppressus angustiis.
> Non reperio uspiam tanti mali perfugium,
> tanti doloris non invenio argumentum.
> Evadendae calamitatis indicia non comprehendo,
> minuendi doloris argumenta non colligo,
> effugiendi funeris vestigia non invenio.
> Ubique me infelicitas mea persequitur,
> domi forisque mea calamitas me non deserit.[7]

It is as if the text unfolds under the reader's eye and during the reading process. The educational work organically grows into a poem, seemingly in collaboration with the reader who starts filling in the new elements and thus meditates along the lines of the poem. From school exercise to poem to meditative self-reflexion: Isidor gets the most out of the technique he had learned as a boy and had also taught at the schools himself.

The World in Literature

Isidor and Thomas Mann have more than one and a half millennium between them. However, *copia verborum* had already been around for much longer, applied for instance by Apuleius (second century CE),[8] discussed by Roman grammarians and rhetoricians,[9]

[7] Isidor of Sevilla, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Synonyma*, ed. Jacques Elfassi, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, 111B (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), I.5, 4. "My soul is in anguish (Baruch 3.1), / my spirit glows, / my heart falters. / The anguish of my heart possesses me, / the anguish of my heart torments me. / I am surrounded by all evil, / enclosed by need, / shut in by misfortune, / barred in by adversity, / immersed in misery, / oppressed by anguish. / Nowhere can I find refuge from all this evil, / discover a reason for all this pain. / I do not touch upon signs that the disaster will pass, / nor perceive any proofs that the pain will cease, / nor do I find the indications that I will escape death. / Everywhere, my misery pursues me, / at home nor outdoors, my disaster leaves me alone." All translations are mine, unless when indicated differently.

[8] His *Metamorphoses* give ample examples of the technique, most of them highly playful and often very complicated. See *Met.* II.8 for a wonderful example on the beauty of hair. Apuleius of Madaura, *Metamorphoses*, ed. J. Arthur Hanson, Loeb, 44/453 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996–2001).

[9] See the probably third-century Aquila Romanus in his *figuris sententiarum et elocutionis liber* 44. Aquila Romanus, *De figuris sententiarum et elocutionis Liber*, ed. Carl Felix Halm (Leipzig: Teubner, 1863), 22–37.

elaborated on by Quintilian (first century CE)[10] and emphasized by Cicero († 44 BCE).[11] Indeed, the technique is one of the most recurrent and enduring elements in the history of European literature. But it is not the only one. Till very recently, school exercises also entailed various kinds of standardized descriptions: of persons, of objects, of art works, of places. Students were also trained in paraphrasing, abbreviating, amplifications, versifications or prosifications (conversion into prose), personifications (*prosopopoeia*), and characterizations through speech (*ethopoeia*). As is the case with *copia verborum*, these techniques had a broad range of applications throughout the centuries and in many literary genres.

All these techniques seem to be of a rather universal nature. For instance, repetition and variation occur in various different poetics. A central feature of Biblical poetry is precisely the repetition of elements with slight variations, which add a slow but steady dynamism to the poetical progression.[12] Old Mesopotamian poetry is characterized by a strong use of repetition that in most versions of the epic of Gilgamesh seems to serve clear poetic exigencies.[13] Likewise, Japanese, Persian and Arabic literature both display repetition and break it down in various highly stylized literary forms.[14]

Yet, in spite of this apparently universal characteristic of repetition as a poetical technique,[15] it would be impossible to define a general rule that might cover all of its different applications and purposes. There may exist some overlap in its use in different literary traditions but the exact way it is applied is always determined by the rules of each individual literary culture. This brings us to the heart of one of the central ongoing debates in literary theory.

It is clear that the field of literary studies has undergone a radical paradigm shift. Over the last half of the previous century, a predominantly text-focused approach (in New Criticism, Structuralism, Narratology, and Deconstruction to a certain degree) gave way to more contextualized readings (in Deconstruction, New Historicism, Post-Colonialism,

[10] In his *Institutio oratoria*, Quintilian dedicates the first paragraph of the tenth book to the *copia verborum*. It contains a famous list of books to read. Quintilianus, *Institutio oratoria*, ed. Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

[11] Cicero's attitude is somewhat more difficult to understand. In his *De oratore* III.125, he makes Crassus explain how the topic itself has to evoke the words in all their abundance, while in his *Tusculanae* III.30 he attacks the Stoics for their toying around with *copia verborum* without ever explaining what they exactly mean. Cicero, *Tusculanes*, ed. Georges Fohlen, trans. Jules Humbert (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1931); Cicero, *De oratore*, ed. Kazimierz Feliks Kumaniecki (Leipzig: Teubner, 1969).

[12] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

[13] Mostly assumed to be the remnants of oral traditions, the repetitive fragments in the Gilgamesh epic actually seem quite deliberate, well-chosen and clearly embedded within the storyline. The most striking examples are the two travel stories, the first to the Cedar Forest characterized by its repetitive order (preparation of the resting-place, sleep, dream, awakening, recounting the dream, explanation) and the second through the Twin Mountains in continuous darkness, that is described in ten identical strophes in which only the hours of walking change.

[14] Makoto Ueda, "The Taxonomy of Sequence. Basic Patterns of Structure in Premodern Japanese Literature," in *Principles of Classical Japanese Literature*, ed. Earl Miner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 63–105; David Bialock, "Voice, Text, and The Question of Poetic Borrowing in Late Classical Japanese Poetry," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54, no. 1 (1994): 181–231; James T. Monroe, "Oral Composition in Pre-Islamic Poetry," in *Early Islamic Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2009), 1–53; R. Khabazha, "Repetition and the Style of Sheikh Bahayi's Poetry," *Journal of Stylistic of Persian Poem and Prose (Bahar-e-Adab)* 7, no. 1 (2010): 141–56; Mohammed Amir Masshadi and Zahra Taheri, "Repetition and Association, Nezami's Style Feature in Khosrow and Shirin," *Journal of Stylistic of Persian Poem and Prose (Bahar-e-Adab)* 6, no. 2 (2010): 363–81.

[15] Anna Christina Ribeiro, "Intending to Repeat: A Definition of Poetry," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 65, no. 2 (2007): 189–201.

Feminism, Gender Studies, Ecocriticism, Critical Discourse Analysis) with a focus on power relations and the manipulation of the (textual/literary) message. Rather than being a true revolution that shook the foundations of the field of literary studies, this shift entailed a change in focus from the object (text) to its users (readers) and surroundings (societal mechanisms and positions). The research topic remained what it still is, namely that what is traditionally called 'literature' in its Western European definition. To this day, Western European notions of what constitutes 'literature' still very much inform and dominate literary studies, even if it is the target of critical or violent reaction. Whenever it is opposed to other, non-European traditions and confronted with other, non-European concepts, these were already often redefined in order to meet the Western concept of literature.[16]

This is not to say, however, that the privileged position of Western European literature is taken for granted in academic and literary debates. Critics have doubted whether it is still possible to speak of 'literature' as an innocent (Western) European conceptual category.[17] In a similar way, criticism has brought to view of the concept of 'world literature', a translation of Goethe's concept *Weltliteratur*,[18] which has entered the field of literary studies in the past two decades, in the wake of the traumatic events of 9/11,[19] mass migrations, and digitalization, and in direct response to the problems of climate change and global warming. More than ever, the study of 'world literature' implies the critical investigation of the notion of 'literature' itself,[20] questioning the supposed 'Europeanness' of literature, which is still too often taken for granted as "a tautology in terms."[21] This implies the redefinition, if not reinvention, of the concept of 'literature' and its connection to if not altogether its incorporation of Europe.

The discussion usually concentrates on the first element in the category: what is meant by *world* literature? Is it the same as transnational literature?[22] This would oppose it to national literatures, which seems to be implied by Casanova's notion of a 'world literary space.'[23] But

16 "In this respect (i.e. regarding "the ideological agenda of the notion of literature, whose worldwide diffusion follows the route mapped out by nation-states"), the resemantization in the course of the nineteenth century of Arabic *'adab*, Japanese *hungaku*, Russian *literatura*, or Greek *logotehnia* in order to translate the European concept of literature is eloquent." César Dominguez, "Medieval Literatures as a Challenge to Comparative Literature. A Reflection on Non-National Cultural Formations," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée* 31, no. 4 (2004): 407, n. 17.

17 Roberto M. Dainotto, "World Literature and European Literature," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 425.

18 Letter to Streckfuss on Januari 27, 1827: "Ich bin überzeugt daß eine Weltliteratur sich bilde, daß alle Nationen dazu geneigt sind und deshalb freundliche Schritte thun. Der Deutsche kann und soll hier am meisten wirken, er wird eine schöne Rolle bey diesem großen Zusammentreten zu spielen haben." (I am convinced that a world literature is in process of formation, that all nations are inclined to it and for that reason take friendly steps. The German is capable and even ought to do most in this respect; he will have a nice part to play in this great gathering.) Goethe's preoccupation with the concept of *Weltliteratur* in these years becomes clear from several sources, among them Eckermann's conversations: David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton/London: Princeton University Press, 2003), 6–14.

19 Schoene in César Dominguez, "World Literature and Cosmopolitanism," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 246.

20 It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that the concept of world literature is lacking in Bertens' concise but excellent introduction to literary theory. Hans Bertens, *Literary Theory. The Basics* (London/New York: Routledge, 2008).

21 Dainotto, "World Literature and European Literature," 425.

22 Sandra Bermann, "World Literature and Comparative Literature," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 172.

23 Pascale Casanova, "Literature as a World," *New Left Review* 31 (2005): 72.

it could also be understood as a conglomeration of all national (and regional and ethnic) 'literary' activities, through which individual groups try to guarantee their existence. On the other hand, 'world literature' may also be understood as 'global' or 'globalized', i.e. something that is subjected to 'globalization' and therefore 'a global phenomenon.' This would imply that 'literature' has become a worldwide event, something like a global 'postcolonial bazaar.'[24] It is unclear to what extent 'world literature' should be understood in its initial meaning conceived by Goethe, namely in its universalist sense,[25] or should be taken in its cumulative meaning as used by others.[26]

Be that as it may, the discussions on how to define or delimit the 'world' in 'world literature' are clearly distinct from the debates that dominated the last decades of the previous century. In the latter, the common denominator, one could say, was anti-imperialistic. At stake was the liberation from what was commonly seen as the dominant *habitus* that had itself imposed upon or 'colonized' the 'other': the non-male, the non-heterosexual, the non-white, the non-Western, the non-productive. At the same time, the goal was to achieve the right to express one's individual identity (as opposed to the common 'norm'). The result was a diversification of literary identities.[27]

The 'world literature' discussions, on the contrary, betray to a certain extent an opposite dynamic: how could the ever-increasing diversification of voices in 'literature' be ascertained in a time of globalization, in which it simultaneously runs the risk of being subjected to uniformization, thanks to mass production and mass consumption? How could polyphonies and polyvalences in 'literature' be preserved without the loss of the common ground, the *raison-d'être* that makes them recognizable as belonging to 'literature'? Essentially, these questions all relate to the quintessential problem of literary studies: what to make of the cultural category that we are used to label as 'literature'? Are we allowed to see literature as 'European' in terms of the tautology mentioned above?

Literary Universes

> The standard fate of an influential literature is to be naturalized and, often, surpassed in other lands. What is unique about the present is the playing out of this phenomenon on a world-wide scale. Hence the central irony of European literary history. We can accordingly return to the admittedly maddening definition of the dynamic of European literary history [...]: *European literature may be defined as the literatures of medieval Latin Christendom's self-constitution as such, of their chosen predecessors, of their successors, of those successors' chosen predecessors, of the cultures deeply influenced by those successors, of their chosen predecessors, and so on.* [...] This formulation has the potential for infinite extension that eventually issues in the self-abolishing

[24] Bishnupriya Ghosh, *The Postcolonial Bazaar: Thoughts on Teaching the Market in Postcolonial Objects*, `https://muse.jhu.edu/article/27687`, Accessed online: 2019-04-14, 1998; quoted in Russell McDougall, "The 'New' World Literature: A Review Essay," *Transnational Literature* 6, no. 2 (2014): 8.

[25] Monika Schmitz-Emans, "Richard Meyer's Concept of World Literature," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 50; Christopher Prendergast, "Negotiating World Literature," *New Left Review* 8 (2001): 100.

[26] Sarah Lawall, "Richard Moulton and the 'Perspective Attitude' in World Literature," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 32–40.

[27] The resurgence of right wing identitary movements during the last decades fits with this tendency. They identify themselves, however, with precisely the identity that was previously dominant but is now under attack.

> contradiction we have just observed. If everything is European literature, what is European literature?[28]

The closing question in the quotation above can also be posed from the opposite side: if everything is European literature, what should then be understood as Japanese or Lebanese or Bengali or Australian or… literature?[29] Must we consider this apparent lack of identity/identities as the inevitable consequence of the emergence of what we have come to call 'world literature'? This, however, would contradict the observation that we made in the beginning, namely that certain literary techniques are used in a distinct way within the tradition that is normally seen as European and within those traditions that are considered to be 'different'. A similar distinction between 'European' and 'other' literatures seems to conflict with the general notion of world literature.[30] It brings us in a state of aporia, resulting from the fact that we might have overlooked something in our discussions on the concepts of *world* (and) *literature*.

Indeed, most of the discussions attack the problems from a more or less contemporary point of view, leaving aside the vertical dimension, i.e. a form of historicity.[31] Even if the historical dimension is taken into account, discussions usually convey a predominantly evolutionary perspective, suggesting that literary history implies somehow a unilinear natural ramification ("the phylogenetic tree derived from Darwin"[32]), based upon the central trunk that is formed by the undefined concept of 'literature'. More 'systemic' approaches, on the other hand, seem to be characterized by a rigidity, overlooking the elasticity that literature and literary history exhibit through their continuous dialogues with earlier and other traditions, contexts and themselves.

Cohen's 'maddening' definition, on the contrary, brings in dynamics that are, in fact, very similar, both on a vertical and horizontal axe. It captures the fact that literature can never be considered as a network of fixed relationships. Neither can it be understood as a unilinear historical evolutionary movement. Literature does not behave as a system within which everything passes through connections that are somehow preconditioned or calculable. If I should compare it to anything, I would rather refer to the literary field as resembling a universe, or even better, a universe of universes, perhaps even a 'multiverse'.

Approaching 'literature' as a universe has several implications that might help us to get out of all too rigid predetermined conceptualizations. A universe is a unit of space and time or an amount of energy that consists of or contains elements that might be considered smaller sub-units or sub-universes. These sub-universes, however, may also be seen as openings towards other universes that display similar characteristics but that can also be entirely different. Moreover, a universe is no rigid or stable unit but rather expands and contracts with time according to forces that can undergo fundamental changes themselves or that can change

[28] Walter Cohen, *A History of European Literature. The West and the World from Antiquity to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 492, emphasis by the author.

[29] "Other literatures have had to try to reposition themselves in world literary space, for other reasons, with varying degrees of success. Time will tell whether Australian Literature can make the difference, either to World Literature, or to itself." McDougall, "'New' World Literature," 10; for Japanese, Russian and Arabic, see also Dominguez, "Medieval Literatures," 407, n. 17.

[30] This seems to be the background of the criticisms by Apter when she posits the untranslatable as literary category and criterium in Emily Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (New York: Verso, 2013).

[31] Helena Carvalhão Buesco, "Pascale Casanova and the Republic of Letters," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), 131.

[32] Ibid.

within the constellation they belong to. Because of similar internal dynamics and because of the potential of the parallel existences of distinct or alternate ones, the concept of universe lends itself very well to the study of literature(s) on a level that transcends but simultaneously incorporates the individual concrete works.[33] The metaphor of the literary universe may help to define and distinguish some crucial elements that in recent discussions on world literature have tended to coalesce into an incomprehensible amalgam.

As mentioned above, a universe obeys to a coherent constellation of laws, rules and forces that may be typical for this particular universe and do not need to overlap with those that rule another, parallel or even crossing one. Although such a view may lead to a nihilist perspective with the danger of ending up with an understanding and application of the term 'globalization' in its uniformizing aspect, it may be illuminating to conceptualize 'literature' as a unit that is submitted to rules and forces of which each individually need not be typical for this literary universe. In their specific constellation, however, they may delineate its possibilities and form. Thus they can help literary scholars to get a firmer grip on what actually happens in the domain of literary history and literary interactions. The metaphor points first of all to the necessity of gaining insight into the forces that determine the literary tradition under study. Besides, it posits the element of dialogue at the meeting points of different universes and thus at the interfaces of different constellations of forces.

Therefore, when focusing upon a specific literary universe, the literary scholar might explore its properties in depth, i.e. the formative forces/rules/laws which contributed to make this literary universe into a literature that distinguishes itself from other literary universes. One has to confront the problem of the formative forces within a literary universe: which are the rules/laws/forces/aspects—whatever name might be preferred in order to characterize them, either more inclined towards the applied sciences or more towards an open approach without any attempt to prescriptive abstraction—that create and form the specific literary universe of a language?[34]

[33] I take the concept of universe from the introductory chapter to Marinus Burcht Pranger, *Eternity's Ennui. Temporality, Perseverance and Voice in Augustine and Western Literature* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010), 1-2. The multiverse-theory that posits the existence of parallel universes and/or multiple worlds has been applied frequently in literary genres, most notably science fiction and fantasy, and thus also in studies of these literary forms. But it seems to have been neglected in theories and studies on literature itself. The following is a first concise attempt, distilled from a more elaborate treatment that I plan to publish in a work on the literary history of medieval Latin literature.

[34] The focus on language may help to disrupt the still prevalent national perspective. The identitary link between literature and nation was born and expressed repeatedly in the early nineteenth century. As an example may count Wolfgang Menzel's statement from 1832: "Die Philosophen sagen so: keine Literatur ohne Volk, kein Volk ohne Geschichte, keine Geschichte ohne Philosophie." (The philosophers say: no literature without nation, no nation without history, no history without philosophy," with 'Volk' clearly in the meaning of 'nation'.) Wolfgang Menzel, "Literatur-Geschichte 4: Lehrbuch der Literaturgeschichte von Dr. Ludwig Wachler. Zweite verbesserte Auflage. Leipzig, Barth, 1830," *Literaturblatt* 100 (1832): 400. Remarkably enough, a post-modern literary historian as Denis Hollier expresses a similar opinion in the introduction to his *A New History of French Literature*: "National borders are not the only ones dividing literature. [...] literature's production and consumption remain for the most part shaped by the nonuniversality of languages." Denis Hollier, ed., "A New History of French Literature" (Cambridge, MA/Londen: Harvard University Press, 1989), xxi. This was formulated in an even stronger way in the French edition of 1993: "Il en va de même pour la littérature, qui exige un espace divisé par des frontières. [...] Cet ancrage linguistique est à l'origine du postulat selon lequel un historien de la littérature doit partager la lange de son objet: l'histoire d'une littérature doit être écrite 'de dedans'." (The same is true for literature that needs a space divided by borders. [...] This linguistic embedding of literature leads to the statement that a literary historian must by necessity share the language of his object: the history of a literature has to been written 'from inside'.) Denis Hollier, ed., "De la littérature française" (Paris: Bordas, 1993), xxi.

When dealing with a literary universe that displays not only a spatial but also a temporal magnitude, however, it is impossible to get a restricted number of aspects/forces/concepts that are invariably formative for the literary universe of a specific language. Changes, shifts of emphasis, even inversions that often result from the interaction and dialogue with other literary universes, have to be taken into consideration either in the past or in the present. Yet, some features seem more fundamental to the literary universe of one language than to other ones. They are not unchangeable but constitute the *cruces* around which a specific literary universe is formed. In my opinion, the identification and analysis of these *cruces* for the literary universe of a language seems to constitute the most important task of the modern literary historian. A comparative approach, then, seems inevitable in order to understand the different forces at work in different literary universes. But is the actual field of comparative literature not focused too specifically on the comparison of narrative developments or the use of universal themes, to the relative neglect of the formative forces that produce each individual literature, as also suggested for instance by Longxi?[35]

Literature, Schools and the World

Considering the concept of 'literature' as referring to the interactions between different constellations of formative forces will open a scholarly perspective that tries to analyse how each individual literary work takes its form within the specific constellation it belongs to. Does it so by obeying or, on the contrary, by opposing the specific 'laws'? An approach such as this might help to entangle some of the terms and concepts that often obscure discussions within the fields of literary studies. One of the most complicated terminological questions that is essential to our objective is the problem of the equation of world literature and cosmopolitan literature.

The confusion surrounding the meaning of the concept of world literature is a constant in scholarly literature. Neither Damrosch's very readable and sympathetic treatment of the topic nor the highly sophisticated collection in the *Routledge Companion* offers a satisfactory solution. Alongside many valuable insights into the features of the concept of world literature, Damrosch's treatment ultimately leaves one confused. For world literature is taken "to encompass all literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin, either in translation or in their original language" but "is not an infinite, ungraspable canon of works but rather a mode of circulation and of reading, a mode that is as applicable to individual works as to bodies of material, available for reading established classics and new discourses alike."[36] In Damrosch's view, world literature thus comprises both the sum of all literary works that have been translated (and are then effective in their new surroundings) and a way of reading. It is both a product and a reception, both a thing and an attitude. Moreover, it is vast and indeterminable and yet not infinite and ungraspable.

In addition, Damrosch defines world literature as highly subjective and personal: "I have given you *my* world literature, or at least a representative cross-section of it, while recognizing that the world now presents us with material so varied as to call into question any logic of representation, any single framework that everyone should adopt and in which these particular works would all have a central role. A leading characteristic of world literature today is its variability: different readers will be obsessed by very different constellations of texts."[37] The *Routledge Companion* does not do much better. It does not

[35] Zhang Longxi, "The Relevance of *Weltliteratur*," *Poetica* 45, nos. 3-4 (2013–2014): 242.
[36] Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?*, see specifically 4 and 5.
[37] Ibid., 281, my emphasis.

offer an attempt to define or circumscribe its central concept.[38]

Studies in world literature ought to focus, in my opinion, not only on those works that have the luck of being translated, which in our globalized economical and politic world strongly depends on power relations.[39] Its primary object should be the interactions and dialogues between different literary universes. What are the interfaces, the intersections, and the overlaps? How do the formative forces of each literary universe collapse, collaborate, and break up? What is the result of the confrontation of literary universes? Does it result in a new constellation, obeying to a new set of forces that create a new literary universe? The study of world literature should be an analytical science that surpasses the national one on which it is founded. Ideally, it combines both close and distant reading in order to uncover the forces that determine a specific literary universe while also tracing its changes over time and in space.

A fundamental task for the scholar in world literature, or rather in the literary field itself, must therefore be to gain a better understanding of the nature of specific literary universes. And here I return to the observations made at the beginning of this article. When perceiving the various appearances of *copia verborum* throughout the centuries of (Western) European literature and noticing 1) the similarity of the technical rules that seem to govern them and 2) their distinctive application in various other literary traditions, some kind of common background may be hypothesized - in this case, one that gives (Western-)European literature its unmistakable identity. Although the literary universe of each individual writer is ultimately clearly different from that of other ones, there is something that links Thomas Mann to Isidor of Sevilla, Alain de Lille to John Milton and makes them all go back to similar literary techniques. This common background is, of course, the school.

Since the instalment in Roman Antiquity of the school as a public institution, even to a certain degree supervised by the state, school practices in the West, implying both curriculum and exercises, show a remarkable consistency. After it had disappeared together with the Roman Empire, Charlemagne reintroduced classical education on the continent in its British form. Mirroring ancient times, Charlemagne's concern was political and thus essentially secular. Even though teaching came to be provided in religious institutions and by monks (later bishops and canons), the curriculum remained rooted in the classical, constituted by classical pagan texts, mostly the poets, and built upon classical exercises. In spite of the manifold changes and adaptations in the school systems during the centuries that followed the Carolingian re-instalment of classical education (the expansion and academization of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the humanist return to the basics, the Jesuit unification), its fundament does not seem to have undergone any radical change till the last century. The particularity of the school system (with its pagan and Christian aspects, its secular and religious institutions, its poetical means and practical goals) and its impact can be considered the spine that runs through the history of Western European literature and somehow connects the most different and diverse writers and texts.

This unity is reinforced by the fact that schooling in Western Europe was not only based upon a fairly continuous curriculum and text corpus but was also provided until quite recently in one classical language, Latin. As a language that was nobody's mother tongue, Latin had to be learned at school. Knowing Latin and being schooled became synonymous. Moreover, Latin was almost the only written language for centuries. Consequently, writing, school and

[38] Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir, "Preface. *Weltliteratur*, *littérature universelle*, *Vishwa sahitya*...," in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London/New York: Routledge, 2013), xviii.

[39] Apter, *Against World Literature*.

Latin came to form an inextricable unity. This gave rise to a literary universe that was closed in itself and that shaped to a large extent the literary universes that emancipated themselves from it. Discussing the effect of a school exercise such as *copia verborum*, we have to realize that we are dealing with a Latin school exercise.

Latin has to be considered the *cosmopolitan* language of the literary universe of Western Europe, which implies that Latin literature is a *cosmopolitan* literature. The same goes for classical Arabic in the literary universe of the Islamic world, Sanskrit in Southern Asia, classical Chinese in Eastern Asia and (Byzantine) Greek in Eastern Europe. French certainly took over in Western Europe (and beyond) from the thirteenth to fifteenth and from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. English is doing it today, perhaps. Importantly, 'cosmopolitan' language or literature is not equivalent to a 'world' language or literature, as many scholars seem to imply, heaping together notions of world, globalization and cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitan is the language and the literature that forms a literary universe in itself, that obeys to its own rules and forces, but that at the same time is also formative to other literary universes. To explain what I mean, I return to an example from the literary universe of Latin.

As a language of both schooling and liturgy—which may have been the actual reason for establishing a Latin curriculum in Anglo-Saxon Brittany—Latin almost inevitably became 'a language of truth,' both the didactic truth in the context of schools and the religious truth in the hands of the Church. Writing in 'a language of truth' has some significant implications. One could wonder, for instance, if it is possible to 'lie' in a language of truth, i.e. to tell things that are 'untrue'? Typically, Latin literature of the Early and High Middle Ages is characterized by the complete absence of fiction and wherever fictive topics are treated, they are almost always presented as truthful, either explicitly or implicitly by the literary form they take (epic, history, treatise...).[40] Remarkably, simultaneously with the emergence and bloom of literatures in the vernaculars (all of them 'mother tongues', unlike Latin) during the twelfth century true fiction appears as well. Apparently, the new vernacular literatures adopt a space that was not covered by the Latin universe. It is from here that they start to rival and to conquer the cosmopolitan universe of Latin. Thus, only with the rise of new literatures, fiction begins to penetrate the Latin universe.[41]

A last concise example may suffice to demonstrate how a more flexible and open approach to literature as a dynamic constellation of forces allows one to have a less rigid view on literary changes, both as they took place in the past and are occurring before our very eyes. An approach such as this may help scholars to transcend the comparatist dead end as soon as it limits its focus to influence and reception because this perspective is mostly defined by a nationalist point of view.[42] It could also challenge and undermine the almost inherently Eurocentric approach in all literary studies, which is tacitly implied by the aforementioned tautology 'European literature.' For, although my approach is inextricably linked to my own scholarly background as European and Latinist, it should be evident that its underlying principles are not restricted to a Eurocentric point of view. On the contrary, all literary universes have to deal with the aspect of schooling, certainly those that were influenced by literature(s) in a cosmopolitan language in one or other stage of their history, because every cosmopolitan language is a language that needs to be acquired through study. Schools

[40] Wim Verbaal, "Medieval Epicity and the Deconstruction of Classical Epic," in *Structures of Epic Poetry Poetry III: Continuity*, ed. Christiane Reitz and Simone Finkmann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), forthcoming.

[41] Dennis Howard Green, *The Beginnings of Medieval Romance: Fact and Fiction, 1150-1220* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[42] Longxi, "Relevance of *Weltliteratur*," 242-243.

are therefore essential to understanding the literary constellations that proceed from it. But school systems differ for each of the aforementioned universes. A clear insight into the impact of school curricula and its literary exercises will yield a deeper understanding of how literary universes are formed and how they react to external influences. It might help us as scholars to see both what happened in the past and what is happening right now. In addition, it can prevent us from getting lost in the complex dynamics of globalization and uniformization, or from getting stuck in reactionary nationalism, which looks for identities where they ought not be found.

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Avatars of Latin Schooling. Recycling Memories of Latin Classes in Western Poetry: Five Paradigmatic Cases*

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Abstract

This paper tries to elucidate the significance of Latin schooling for the production of poetry by lining up five typical cases of recycling Roman texts, from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. The French poet Baudri de Bourgueil (ca. 1050–1130) rewrote Ovid's *Heroides* 16–17 within a cultural context, characteristic of the incipient 'Ovidian age,' *aetas ovidiana*, based on classroom practices such as paraphrase, *accessus* and glosses, presupposing a sense of historical continuity —or *translatio studii et imperii*— from Antiquity down to the twelfth century. In his great work, *The Comedy*, the Florentine Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) reused Ovid in a quite different way, representative of the allegorizing tendencies noticeable in Italy and France towards the end of the Ovidian age. The Early Modern motto *ad fontes*, on the other hand, presupposed a breach between ancient and present times, none the less capable of being bridged, by means of imitation within the framework of *studia humanitatis* and a new philological culture, made possible by the printing press. This cultural paradigm shift is illustrated by a look at a famous sonnet by the Spanish Golden Age poet Francisco de Quevedo (1580–1645). Finally, our modern and postmodern era, characterized by an ambivalent attitude to the classical heritage, is represented by the Anglo-American poet T.S. Eliot (1888–1965) and his Swedish successor Hjalmar Gullberg (1898–1961), both of whom remembered their Latin classes in their mature poetry, marked by irony, distance and, probably, nostalgia.

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The following paper sets out to expose the significance of Latin schooling for the production of poetry by lining up five typical cases of recycling Roman texts, from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. The fact that these model texts belong to different genres (lyric

* I want to thank the anonymous reviewers of this paper for their valuable comments and suggestions for improvements.

or narrative poetry) has not been crucial to my discussion, which is aimed at establishing a general comparative taxonomy on the field of literary reuse. My choice of representative students, in turn, has been dictated by their canonical status (as major poets) and exemplarity in literary history; the first two flourished in the High Middle Ages, the third embodied some advanced properties of Early Modern lyric poetry, and the last two could on reasonable grounds be considered typical of two phases of modernism. Each of my five cases is meant to demonstrate a specific strategy of literary recycling; an intertextual device, as it were, which in turn epitomizes an instance of cultural memory, a way of perceiving and relating to the past.

Case I: Paraphrase (Baudri de Bourgueil)

At the beginning of the medieval reception of the Latin classics was grammar. This seems quite natural, since already the old Roman teaching of literature, the *enarratio poetarum*, was a part of the grammar curriculum. Medieval teaching of Latin literature, in the monasteries as well as in the cathedral schools, inherited this connection to grammar. Pupils were taught to put a standard set of questions to literary texts, known as the *accessus ad auctores*.[1]

Such introductory texts might sometimes provide us with interesting snapshots from contemporary literary classroom situations. Some of them are accessible in Bavarian manuscripts from the twelfth century, edited by Robert B.C. Huygens. Let us see what they say of Ovid, a main classical model for what the German scholar Ludwig Traube, more than a hundred years ago, famously labelled the *aetas ovidiana*. Traube considered this 'Ovidian age' typical of Western European literary culture of the twelfth and thirteenth (and, it should be added, the fourteenth) centuries.[2] In two *accessus* to Ovid's *Epistulae heroidum* (or *Heroides*), we are told that the poet's work should be classified as a moral statement, teaching us good manners while eradicating the bad ones: "Ethicae subiacet quia bonorum morum est instructor, malorum vero exstirpator." More precisely, Ovid had written the *Heroides* with the intention of elucidating three kinds of love (all of them condemnable): mad, unchaste, and furious. The second of these categories, the *amor incestus*, unchaste or adulterous love, is exemplified by *Heroides* 16-17, featuring Helen of Troy, who married Paris in spite of being the lawful wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta. By contrast, Penelope, the protagonist of *Heroides* 1, is adduced to illustrate the commendable chaste love, due, of course, to her fidelity to her long absent husband, Ulysses.[3]

Times had been (comparably) ill-suited for Ovid during the previous centuries, the *aetas vergiliana* in Traube's parlance, and the widespread monastic Cluniac reforms of the tenth and eleventh centuries did probably not do much to improve his reputation. But the various *accessus* dedicated to his work indicate that things were changing for the better, a development which I would like to exemplify with the French poet Baudri de Bourgueil (ca. 1050–1130), an abbot in the county of Anjou southwest of Paris (and later Bishop of Dol in Bretagne), frequently counted among the so-called Loire poets and nowadays accessible in

[1] Two imperative presentations of the *accessus* corpus are Richard Hunt, "The Introduction to the *Artes* in the Twelfth Century," in *The History of Grammar in the Middle Ages: Collected Papers*, ed. Geoffrey L. Bursill-Hall (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1980), 117–44; and Alastair J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship. Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 9–72.

[2] Ludwig Traube, *Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen. Vol. 2, Einleitung in die lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters*, ed. Paul Lehmann (Munich: Beck, 1911), 113.

[3] I quote these *accessus Ovidii Epistolarum* from Robert B.C. Huygens, ed., *Accessus ad auctores. Bernard d'Utrecht. Conrad d'Hirsau: Dialogus super auctores* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 30–32.

an outstanding edition by Jean-Yves Tilliette.[4] In two of his poems, numbered 7 and 8 in the Tilliette edition, Baudri rewrote the *Heroides* 16–17, converting Ovid's elegiac couplets to hexameter verse but, on the whole, following his classical model remarkably closely in first giving voice to Paris and his arguments for Helen's escape from miserable Sparta to superior Troy, then to his addressee, initially skeptical about this dangerous adventure but finally giving in to her suitor's alluring words.[5]

Still, a few passages in Paris' discourse are conspicuous for their deviations from Ovid's work and for their blatant anachronisms, observed by virtually all recent commentators. Paris tries to convince Helen at all costs: he says she had better leave her vile countrymen who, firstly, come up with all kinds of fables and old wives' tales and, secondly, are effeminate, addicted to homosexual love, dressing up as women, a kind of moral criticism (7.110–38) anticipating the famous prosimetrum produced by Alan of Lille a few decades later, *De planctu Naturae* (*The Complaint of Nature*). In fact, these two vices—making up stories, and making illicit love—seem to be affiliated: the Greeks are said to invent fancy tales of Icarus, Narcissus and, tellingly, Ganymede. In Troy, on the other hand, heteronormativity reigns supreme, and not only that: The surroundings of my city, continues Baudri's Paris, produce such marvelous grapes and wines that not even the prosperous region of Orléans can enter into competition! And which watercourses, he asks rhetorically, could ever be compared to Xanthus in the vicinity of Troy, with the possible exception of the rivers of Loire and "the happy Changeon, watering the gardens of Bourgueil," *qui Burgulii rigat ortos Cambio felix* (7.194–209)?

Recent Baudri specialists have launched different opinions on these strange passages from his poem 7, which compare archaic Troy with high medieval Bourgueil, as if these two cities were located in the same temporal space. All scholars seem to agree, however, on one thing: Baudri was no naive victim of popular anachronistic conceptions of ancient culture but, as is clear from commentators such as Gerald Bond, Tilliette or Tue Marek Kretschmer, a quite sophisticated poet.[6] More specifically, I believe, along with Tilliette, that he was joking with his readers here, making Paris come up with a short aside to the poem's contemporary audience. Baudri wanted after all, to quote another poem of his, his muse to be light-hearted, a *musa iocosa* (193.102–8).[7] Nevertheless, even a poetic *iocus* such as this one might reveal something of the writer's attitude to his art and his literary heritage. To Baudri, Troy and the Loire region in Western France were indeed comparable or compatible, connected to each other by means of a historical continuity which since Carolingian times was frequently labeled a transfer of empire and culture, *translatio imperii et studii*. This transfer was supposed to have proceeded from ancient Greece via Rome to modern France, and Troy, of course was a crucial site in this context, since it was believed to have been the origin or matrix of Rome.[8]

[4] Baudri de Bourgueil (Baldricus Burgulianus), *Poèmes*, 2nd ed., ed. Jean-Yves Tilliette, vol. I–II (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012).

[5] In fact, Baudri reused Ovid's *Heroides* repeatedly. For an excellent and updated overview, see Wim Verbaal, "Loire Classics. Reviving Classicism in some Loire Poets," *Interfaces* 3 (2016): 109–28.

[6] Bond frequently returns to Baudri. As for the *Heroides* paraphrases, see especially Gerald Bond, "Composing Yourself: Ovid's Heroides, Baudri of Bourgueil and the Problem of Persona," *Mediaevalia* 13 (1987): 83–117; Tilliette repeatedly emphasizes Baudri´s poetic refinement in the notes of his edition. For poems 6–7, see vol. 1 of Baudri de Bourgueil (Baldricus Burgulianus), *Poèmes*, 155–67; see also Marek Tue Kretschmer, "Bourgueil, la nouvelle Athènes (ou Troie), et Reims, la nouvelle Rome. La notion de *translatio studii* chez Baudri de Bourgueil," *Latomus* 70 (2011): 1102–16.

[7] Jean-Yves Tilliette, "Savants et poètes du Moyen Âge face à Ovide: Les débuts de l'*aetas Ovidiana* (v. 1050 – v. 1200)," in *Ovidius redivivus. Von Ovid zu Dante*, ed. Michelango Picone and Bernhard Zimmermann (Stuttgart: M&P, 1994), 97.

[8] Kretschmer, "Bourgueil, la nouvelle Athènes," 1105–9.

Overall, Baudri, at this early stage of high medieval recycling of Ovid, kept remarkably close to the *Heroides*. His Latin schooling might well have included exercises in paraphrasing the ancients, as school boys had been doing since late Antiquity. That is, indeed, how I would label this kind of literary reuse: paraphrase, but with a twist. Baudri was probably well aware of the possibilities of 'moralizing' Ovid, already tried out in the *accessus* tradition, but he preferred another strategy, rewriting the *Heroides* while shrewdly insinuating a criticism of literary make-believe and of queer *mores* in the mouth of Paris.

Does such criticism reflect the opinions of the writer? We cannot be sure of that, since Baudri—in a way, *mutatis mutandis*, reminiscent of Ovid himself—liked to play hide-and-seek with his readers, assembling a rich gallery of *personae* in his poetry.[9] Paris is one of those fictional characters, and practically all of his arguments are refuted by Helen until she at the end of her speech, somewhat surprisingly, shows herself responsive to her admirer's recurrent appeals to *fatum* and the gods' will, finally willing to arrange for her own abduction.

To summarize this: Baudri's clever exercise in rewriting Ovid reminds us of the High Middle Ages' sense of continuity between ancient and contemporary culture. He assumed, as it were, his position on the shoulders of the giant that was Ovid, elevated by the ancient poet's magnitude but seeing more and farther than him. He playfully updated his precursor's *Heroides* 16-17, converting them to a contemporary debate on the use of pagan learning or mythology, on contemporary morals, divine omnipotence and human agency, perhaps even on Catholic power and Byzantine decadence, without providing his readers or listeners with any definite answers to these thorny issues. This kind of literary reuse, based on a sense of cultural continuity, of dependence as well as difference, might best be classified as a quirky paraphrase of the Latin original text, reformulating its topics or arguments as well as recycling its style, mode or genre.

Case II: Allegory (Dante Alighieri)

Let us proceed to our next case: the first *canto* from the third *cantica*, Paradiso, of Dante's *Comedy*, lines 67–72. At this moment, the protagonist of the work, Dante himself, and his omniscient guide, Beatrice, are about to begin their great ascent through heavenly Paradise. Dante has just caught a glimpse of God's light pouring through the ethereal regions. Now he fixes his gaze upon Beatrice, understanding, at last, that they are entering the purely divine dimension of the universe:

> Nel suo aspetto tal dentro mi fei,
> qual si fé Glauco nel gustar de l'erba
> che 'l fé consorto in mar de li altri dèi.
> Trasumanar significar per verba
> non si poria; però l'essemplo basti
> a cui esperïenza grazia serba.[10]

[9] See 85.35–44: "Quod vero tanquam de certis scriptito rebus / Et quod personis impono vocabula multis." In translation: "But when I repeatedly write about things as if they were true, / and when I give names to a multitude of persons," see Baudri de Bourgueil (Baldricus Burgulianus), *Poèmes*, vol. I, 81.

[10] "As I gazed on her, I was changed within, / as Glaucus was on tasting of the grass / that made him consort of the gods in the sea. / To soar beyond the human cannot be described / in words. Let the example be enough to one / for whom grace holds this experience in store." I quote *The Comedy* after Dante Alighieri, *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. Giorgio Petrocchi (Milan: Mondadori, 1966–7); for the translation, see Dante Alighieri, *Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso*, trans. Jean Hollander and Robert Hollander (New York: Anchor Books, 2002–8).

This is easy to identify as a Christianized version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 13.904–68, where the fisherman Glaucus, after tasting some magic herbs, is being wonderfully converted into a sea-god, *deus aquae* (918).[11] Just as pagan Glaucus was utterly changed, in body, mind and element, so is Christian Dante about to be transformed upon entering supernal reality. This divine metamorphosis is actually beyond words, but the poet has luckily access to an ancient example, an *essemplo*, to hint at what was happening to him.

How do we know that Dante was reusing his Latin schooling here? Actually, as in the case with Baudri, we don't, since we lack any detailed account of Dante's education, but we might arrive at a fair guess. We do know that virtually all education in *trecento* Tuscany still meant Latin education, that grammar was still synonymous with Latin grammar, and that literary studies still meant reading and explaining a Latin text, *lectio* and *enarratio*. As Charles Till Davis has pointed out, Dante surely studied with a grammarian, since he—in the *Convivio* 2.12.2–4—remembers how he struggled to enter into the meaning or *sentenza* of Boethius and Cicero "so much as the knowledge of grammar that I possessed, together with some slight power of the intellect, enabled me to do" ("quanto l'arte di gramatica ch'io avea e un poco di mio ingegno potea fare").[12] In addition, he probably profited from the teaching of Brunetto Latini, who certainly knew the classics well, including Ovid.

It is true, though, that the breakthrough of the classics in Florentine learning came later, at the end of the *trecento* era; in the Florence of Dante's youth, the *trivium* was still seen as a preparation for the study of theology, philosophy or commercial activities in the commune. Dante, however, was no typical offspring of the era of European scholasticism. He did not, primarily, identify with modern philosophers but with the classical poets. In this context, we might well recall his fictional meeting with Homer, Horace, Lucan and Ovid in the first infernal circle, those four poets who constitute 'la bella scola' along with Virgil, and to which Dante-the-pilgrim is admitted (Inferno 4.94). In fact, Ovid enters in at least two similar constellations through Dante's work: in the *De vulgari eloquentia* (2.6.7), where he is counted among the *regulati poetae* along with Virgil, Statius and Lucan, and as early as in the *Vita nuova* (25.9), where he figures with Virgil, Lucan and Horace as Latin poets which have put the rhetorical figure of *prosopopeia* to good use.[13] So, in the *Vita nuova*, written when Dante was about twenty-five years of age, we already possess an early draft to *The Comedy*'s 'bella scola,' to which Ovid naturally belonged, surely as a result of the author's grammar schooling.

The Ovid of Paradiso, however, is used to express Christian devotion. Several of Dante's earliest commentators elaborated on his technique of exploiting a pagan fable for pious purposes. A few years after the poet's death, for example, Jacopo della Lana noted how he had introduced *una favola* to express Beatrice's stunning contemplative capacities, a procedure which another early commentator, the author of the so-called *Ottimo commento* labeled *alegoria* or metaphor. The Glaucus passage resorts to metaphor, he tells us, since Dante's poetic style, even though it deals with theology, is completely different from the style of a theological treatise. For some examples of the Latin terminology in this context, we might consult the commentary of Benvenuto da Imola from the 1370s, according to

[11] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 3rd ed., trans. Frank J. Miller, vol. II (Rev. by George P. Goold. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 292.

[12] Charles Till Davis, "Education in Dante's Florence," *Speculum* 40, no. 3 (1965): 417–18; Dante Alighieri, *Convivio*, 4th ed., ed. Piero Cudini (Milan: Garzanti, 1992), 104-5; Dante Alighieri, *The Banquet (Il convito)*, trans. Elizabeth Price Sayer (New York: Aegypan Press, 2009), 60.

[13] I have used Dante Alighieri, *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. and trans. Vittorio Coletti (Milan: Garzanti, 1991), 74; and Dante Alighieri, *Vita nuova*, ed. Manuela Colombo (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1999), 133.

whom the poet's literal story differs from his *sententialiter dicere*, the true meaning of his words. The pagan fisherman is introduced as a 'figure' for the Christian poet, *Glaucus piscator figuraliter est poeta Dantes*.[14]

This allegoric procedure (of Dante's) and these interpretive decodings (of his commentators) are not surprising. After all, even the Church Fathers had opened the door for such possibilities of saving the classics within an orthodox framework, as we know from famous statements in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* (*On Christian Doctrine*, 2.40.61) and Jerome's *Letters* (70.2).[15] But the High Middle Ages made this technique of putting pagan themes and procedures to Christian use the very hallmark of the poetics of the *aetas ovidiana*. Perhaps its earliest expressions is to be found in a poem on "The books I used to read" by the Carolingian poet Theodulf of Orleans (17–22):

> [...] legebam,
> Et modo Virgilium, te modo, Naso loquax.
> In quorum dictis quamquam sint frivola multa,
> Plurima sub falso tegmine vera latent.
> Falsa poetarum stilus affert, vera sophorum,
> Falsa horum in verum vertere saepe solent.[16]

This attitude, according to which the frequently dubious letter or immediate sense of the text, its *littera* or *sensus*, is considered a foil for its true meaning or *sententia*, can be traced through the hermeneutics of the High Middle Ages in general and probably through the Ovidian commentaries in particular, and it would live on through the Early Modern Age's transmutations of, for example, the Phoenix bird or Narcissus into Christian symbols, converted *ad divinum*. But no one, as far as I am aware, developed this technique in such a masterly fashion as Dante. His work retains the sense of a historical continuity with Antiquity, translating the power claims of ancient Rome into his hopes for the contemporary Holy Roman Empire, but to him, the *translatio imperii* likewise implied a perception of pagan Rome as a foreboding of Christian paradise, "that Rome where Christ Himself is Roman" ("quella Roma onde Cristo è romano," Purgatorio 32.102).

In sum, Dante's reuse of his literary Latin schooling is very different from Baudri de Bourgueil's. It could only exploit the classical heritage by radically transforming it. This artful reformulation of the Ovidian paradigm dispenses with paraphrase and the kind of *iocus* so crucial to Baudri. Dante's reprocessing of the classics, based on a sense of both cultural continuity and alterity, might, today just as well as in the fourteenth-century commentaries to the Glaucus passage, be labeled an allegorization of the Latin original texts. What the Florentine poet recycled in Virgil, Ovid, Statius and their likes was no longer the style, mood or genre of their works but, primarily, their intradiegetic levels of meaning—mythological, historical or pseudohistorical—converted, into his *Comedy*, to a new and different discursive code.

[14] All three commentaries (and quite a few more) are most comfortably studied on the 'Dartmouth Dante Project' website, Dartmouth College, `https://dante.dartmouth.edu/commentaries.php`, accessed online: 2018-02-26.

[15] Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, ed. and trans. Roger P.H. Green (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 126; Jerome, *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 22–30 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne editorem, 1844–55), 22:666.

[16] "I would study Virgil and wordy Ovid. / Although there are many frivolities in their words, / much truth lies hidden under a deceptive surface. / Poets' writing is a vehicle for falsehood, philosophers' brings truth; / they transform the lies of poets into veracity." For both original and English versions, I quote from Peter Godman, ed., *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 168–69.

Case III: Accommodation (Francisco de Quevedo)

My next piece of evidence is a canonical text too, probably the most famous sonnet in Spanish literature, composed by the Baroque poet Francisco de Quevedo (1580–1645) and printed posthumously in the first edition of his collected poems, *El Parnasso Español*, in 1648. It is a strangely solipsistic amatory poem, celebrating the constancy of the speaker's love, even beyond death. Quevedo's first editor, José Antonio González de Salas, assigned it the following title: "Amor constante mas allà de la muerte" ("Love constant beyond death"). Here it is, as it was printed in *El Parnasso Español* 1648 ("Erato, Musa IV. Canta sola a Lisi, XXXI"):

Cerrar podrà mis ojos la postrera
Sombra, que me llevare el blanco dia;
I podra desatar esta alma mia
Hora, a su afan ansioso lisongera:
Mas no de essotra parte en la rivera
Dejarà la memoria, en donde ardia;
Nadar sabe mi llama la agua fria,
I perder el respeto a lei severa.
Alma, a quien todo un Dios prision ha sido,
Venas, que humor a tanto fuego han dado,
Medulas, que han gloriosamente ardido,
Su cuerpo dejaràn, no su cuidado;
Seran ceniça, mas tendra sentido;
Polvo seran, mas polvo enamorado.[17]

The representation of the lover's anticipated moment of death in the first lines of the sonnet gives way, in the second quatrain, to the metaphor of fire, crossing the mythological river of death (Styx or, more probably, Lethe). The tercets repeat this movement from spirit to matter or, to be more precise, from soul (*alma*) to veins and marrow (*venas, medulas*). Actually, in these final verses, the mythological scenery has been replaced by the corporeal remains of the lover. It is his body burnt to dust which finally bears witness to his never-ending passion.

As Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges was the first to note, a substantial part of this poem is a recreation of a passage from the Roman poet Propertius' *Elegies*, where the speaker, obsessed as always with his love for Cynthia, assures his audience that such a magnificent passion will survive his earthly existence.[18] These are the lines 5–12 from Propertius' elegy 1.19:

[17] "The last shadow a cloudless day / may cast on me could close my eyes; / and this, my soul, may be freed by / an hour eager to flatter its ardor: / but on that far shore it will not / forsake the memory where it burned; / my flame can swim frigid water / and will flaunt so cruel a law. / Soul, long imprisoned by a god, / veins, fuel you gave to the blaze, / marrow, gloriously you burned; / it will leave its body, not its cares; / they will be ashes, but still will feel; / dust they will be, but dust in love." Francisco de Quevedo, *El Parnasso Español, monte en dos cumbres dividido, con las nueve musas castellanas*, ed. Ioseph Antonio Gonzalez de Salas (Madrid: Pedro Coello, 1648), most conveniently examined on the website of Biblioteca digital hispánica, Biblioteca nacional de España, `http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000050707`, fol. 281, accessed online: 2018-02-26. The translation is by Francisco de Quevedo, *Selected Poetry of Francisco de Quevedo: A Bilingual Edition*, ed. and trans. Christopher Johnson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 137.

[18] Jorge Luis Borges, "Quevedo," in *Otras inquisiciones* (Buenos Aires: Alianza, 1985), 49.

non adeo leviter nostris puer haesit ocellis,
ut meus oblito pulvis amore vacet.
illic Phylacides iucundae coniugis heros
non potuit caecis immemor esse locis,
sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis
Thessalus antiquam venerat umbra domum.
illic quidquid ero, semper tua dicar imago:
traicit et fati litora magnus amor.[19]

So what exactly does Quevedo reuse in his sonnet? First and foremost, of course, Propertius' verbal constellation *pulvis amore*, two Latin words which belong to different grammatical cases but whose juxtaposition seems to anticipate the Spanish poet's final syntagm, his famous *polvo enamorado*. In Propertius' elegy we can also register "the boy," Cupid, whose presence might be felt in Quevedo's *Dios*, the "god" in the sonnet's line 9, probably referring to Cupid as well. And, last but not least, Propertius imagines his great love shooting across the shores of fate in the elegy's line 12, vaguely foreboding his Spanish colleague's posthumous achievement in the sonnet's second quatrain, where the poet's dead soul on "that far shore" of Lethe, remembering his beloved lady, is prepared to swim back over the cold waves, a ghostlike Leander indeed, defying the stern law of the underworld. As a matter of fact, this magnificent scenario might also be based on another elegy by Propertius, 2.27, where the dead lover is projected sitting at the oars of Charon's boat over the river Styx. If he could only perceive "a breath of air" from his beloved, assures us the Roman poet, that is the voice of his grieving *puella* calling upon him, he would immediately retrace his steps, a return trip which no law concedes (15-16): "si modo clamantis revocaverit aura puellae, / concessum nulla lege redibit iter."[20] Here, of course, it is primarily Propertius' "law" (*lex*), which Quevedo might have had in mind when he made his proud lover defy the infernal *lei severa*, the law which prohibits all visitors to the realm of death from returning to where they came from.

Actually, the literary resonance of Quevedo's sonnet is extremely rich, echoing a number of ancient and recent texts, but we do not need to specify all these intertextual traces here.[21] My point is that such Baroque recycling of Propertius is no coincidence. If there ever was any *aetas propertiana*, it would surely have been the Early Modern Age. The study of poetry in the Renaissance schools, one of the five main subjects which made up the *studia humanitatis*, no longer reduced to any *ancilla theologiae* or *philosophiae*, certainly rehabilitated Propertius, forgotten during the better part of the Middle Ages. This new interest in the Roman elegy also colored the typical Spanish curricula elaborated for the Jesuit schools, which provided the elementary education of Quevedo in Madrid. An anthology such as the *Sylvae illustrium autorum, qui ad usum Collegiorum Societatis Iesu selecti sunt* (1588), by all probability used by Quevedo in his student years, concluded with the elegies of Tibullus and Propertius.[22]

[19] "The boy did not linger in my eyes so lightly, / that my dust would lie empty, its love forgotten. / The hero of Phylacus' line could not leave his lovely / wife out of his memory in those dark places, / no, the Thessalian returned, a shadow, to his old home, / eager to touch his love with false hands. / There, whoever I will be, my shade will always be called / yours: a great love will cross even the shores of fate." Propertius, *Elegies*, ed. and trans. George P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 90. The translation into English is mine.

[20] "If only a breath of air from his girl will call upon him, / he shall make the journey back, permitted by no law," see ibid., 184, the translation is mine.

[21] For a solid study on intertextual devices in Quevedo, see Paul Julian Smith, *Quevedo on Parnassus: Allusive Context and Literary Theory in the Love-Lyric* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1987).

[22] Some ten elegies by Tibullus and Quevedo are included at the end of part II of the *Sylvae illustrium autorum*,

Hence, the great humanist poet Quevedo adopted the Early Modern doctrine of imitation, formulated by his countryman Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, known as El Brocense, in the preface to his second edition of the Spanish Renaissance poet Garcilaso de la Vega (1581): "I maintain and affirm that I do not consider any poet satisfactory, who does not imitate the excellent ancients" ("digo, y affirmo, que no tengo por buen poeta al que no imita los excellentes antiguos").[23] As a matter of fact, this type of imitation was innovative (as well as creative), not to be confused with earlier paraphrase practices, based on the culture of the printing press rather than that of medieval orality. To Quevedo, the dead masters seemed, as it were, hidden away in printed books, libraries and archives, as is clear from another well-known sonnet of his, representing the poet in retreat to his cottage or "tower" in the country, where his sole company consists of his great books, "the dead," to whom he famously listens with his eyes. These are the tercets of his sonnet, addressed to his editor, José—'Don Ioseph'—Gonzáles de Salas (Polymnia, Musa II, CIX):

> Las Grandes Almas, que la Muerte ausenta,
> De injurias, de los años vengadora,
> Libra, ô gran Don Ioseph, docta la Emprenta.
> En fuga irrevocable huie la hora;
> Pero aquella el mejor Calculo cuenta,
> Que en la leccion, i estudios nos mejora.[24]

This poem celebrating (Latin literary) *lectio* and *studia* might well serve as a motto for this paper. I quote it, however, since it throws light on Quevedo's intense company with the dead. It tempts me to draw the conclusion that this poet's reuse of his Latin schooling presupposes, metaphorically, a burial of the classics who now, by means of the recent technique of printing, entailing new manners of intimation and allusion, are resurrected in the Early Modern poet's works. Accordingly, such literary recycling would in fact presuppose a distance from the Latin past, bridged by the later writer's verbal recollections. The great cultural continuity of the West, linking old Greece and Rome to contemporary Spain (or France, or England), was no longer self-evident but had to be reinstated and confirmed over and over again, all from the early humanists' philological activities, summed up by their watchword *ad fontes*, to the Baroque poets' eclectic reconfigurations of their ancient masters.

That is why Quevedo had no use for either the paraphrase exercises of Baudri or the integumental rewritings of Dante. I would prefer to label this kind of literary reprocessing, based on a sense of absence and ensuing revival of the dead, as an ingenious assemblage, appropriation or, to use a word conveniently borrowed from Baroque poetics, 'accommodation' of the Latin original text. The term was registered by the Aragonese writer and critic Baltasar Gracián in the "Discurso 34" of his *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* (1648), an ambitious listing of literary devices, among which he discerns "los conceptos por

explicitly intended for inexperienced students, *Sylvae illustrium autorum, II: Sylvae variorum autorum, qui inferioribus classibus idonei sunt* (Olyssipone [Lisbon]: Antonius Riberius, 1588), 171–88, digitalized by the Biblioteca nacional de Portugal, `http://purl.pt/23215/4/`, accessed online: 2018-02-26.

[23] Garcilaso de la Vega, *Obras del excellente Poeta Garci Lasso de la Vega: Con Annotaciones y emiendas del Maestro Francisco Sanchez, Cathedratico de Rethorica en Salamanca* (Salamanca: En Casa de Lucas de Iunta, 1581), fol. 5., accessible on the website of Biblioteca digital hispánica, Biblioteca nacional de España, `http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000082500&page=1`, accessed online: 2018-02-27.

[24] "The great souls of times past whom death makes absent / are liberated from the insults of the years, oh Don Iosef, / by that avenger, the learned printing press. / The hours are on the run in an irrevocable flight, / but that one provides us with the best account / which improves us by means of classes and studies." Quevedo, *El Parnasso Español*, fol. 115, the translation is mine.

acomodacion de verso antiguo, de algun texto o autoridad."[25] Such creative accommodation, characteristic of Early Modern poetry and developed with exceptional subtlety by Quevedo and some of his Baroque or 'metaphysical' contemporaries, had in fact already been described by El Brocense in the preface to his edition of Garcilaso de la Vega's works 1581, according to which the poet "applica y traslada los versos y sentencias de otros Poetas, tan a su proposito y con tanta destreza, que ya no se llaman agenos sino suyos, y mas gloria merece por esto, que no si de su cabeça lo compusiera."[26] In this context, the object of recycling is primarily the very words, syntagms and controlling concepts of the original text—or text corpus—which are made to reverberate in the rich and eclectic intertextual space, the library space, so to speak, of Spanish Golden Age poetry.

Case IV: Allusion (T.S. Eliot)

Modernity evinces completely different cases of literary reuse compared to what we have seen so far. In the following I will have to limit myself to two poets, one of whom is known all over the world, the Anglo-American Nobel prize winner T.S. Eliot (1888–1965). As for his Latin schooling, we know that he followed a six years long "Classical Course" at Smith Academy, St. Louis.[27] Later, at Harvard, where Eliot studied from 1906 to 1914 (except for a year in Paris 1910–11), he would, in contrast to most undergraduate students, continue with both Greek and Latin. Among his teachers was the brilliant E.K. Rand, renowned for his works on Boethius and other Late Antique or medieval authors, commonly known to his students as Ken. Young Eliot might well have learnt something from Rand's emphasis on the unbroken continuity between pagan and Christian culture. In these years he seems to have taken a particular interest in Late Roman literature. For the Latin courses during the academic year 1908–9 he preferred Petronius and Apuleius, whom he studied for another well-known master, Clifford Herschel Moore. More importantly, from our point of view, is the fact that Eliot during these Harvard years made acquaintance with the Late Roman anonymous poem on the primaveral vigil of Venus, *Pervigilium Veneris* (sometimes, though hesitantly, attributed to the early fourth-century pagan poet Tiberianus). It is a work connected to the widespread cult of the goddess Venus in the Mediterranean world, more precisely the three-night festival of Venus in Spring, probably in a Sicilian setting. The poem focuses on the renewal of all nature—of the vegetation, the animal, the divine and the human world—through the erotic agency of Venus, a topic inherited from classical Roman literature, most conspicuously, perhaps, from the famous opening of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*.

The British critic and essayist Walter Pater had brought this poem to the fore in the only novel he ever wrote, *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), set in the Rome of the Antonine dynasty during the late second century. In his novel, Pater ascribes *Pervigilium Veneris* to the fictional poet Flavian, to which "old mythology seemed as full of untried, unexpressed motives and interest as human life itself"; hence, Flavian "had long been occupied with a kind of mystic

[25] "[T]he conceits by accommodation of ancient verse, of some text or authority." I quote Gracián's seminal work according to the modern Clásicos Castalia edition, Baltasar Gracián, *Agudeza y arte de ingenio*, ed. Evaristo Correa Calderón, vol. 2 (Madrid: Castalia, 1987), 62.

[26] "[A]pplies and transfers the verses and thoughts of other poets for his own ends, with such skill that they are no longer alien, but his; and this deserves even greater glory than if he had composed them in his own head." Garcilaso de la Vega, *Obras*, fol. 6. Translation by Ignacio Enrique Navarrete, *Orphans of Petrarch: Poetry and Theory in the Spanish Renaissance* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 130.

[27] As far as I am aware, the most up-to-date survey of Eliot's formative years, including his Greek and Latin schooling, is to be found in the chapters "Schooling" and "A Full Fledged Harvard Man" in Robert Crawford, *Young Eliot: From St Louis to The Waste Land* (London: Vintage, 2016), 59–101.

hymn to the vernal principle of life in things; a composition shaping itself, little by little, out of a thousand dim perceptions, into singularly definite form."[28] In addition to the possible influences from Rand and Pater on young Eliot, we should remember the general resonance of the early twentieth-century's scholarly efforts in disciplines such as history of religion and anthropology, focused on ancient spring rites, frequently based on assumptions about the death and rebirth of vegetation gods, that is, the main theme of the *Pervigilium*. Moreover, Pater had construed the *Pervigilium* as a literary anticipation of medieval courtly poetry, so no wonder that influential Ezra Pound paid attention to this poem, most of which he translated in his *Spirit of Romance*, published in 1910 and probably read by Eliot shortly afterwards.[29] Finally, at least two English translations of the *Pervigilium* appeared in those years, in 1909 and 1911.[30] So, by all accounts, the time was ripe for the impact of the *Pervigilium* on Anglo-American literary culture, not only through translations and re-readings but, as we shall see, for poetic reuse.

In the course of the year 1910, Eliot began to work on his "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," originally published in the June 1915 issue of the journal *Poetry*, the earliest of those poems of his which later would achieve canonical status.[31] Ever since Christopher Ricks in 1996 published Eliot's working materials from the years 1910–11, we are informed of the first stages of the poem's manuscript history. It was actually part of a bigger project called "Inventions of the March Hare," and it originally included 29 lines jotted down under the headline "Prufrock's Pervigilium," which never made it to the final version in *Poetry*.[32]

These verses depict a sordid city scenario in the spirit of French symbolism. Night is approaching, and "Women, spilling out of corsets, stood in entries / Where the draughty gas-jet flickered / And the oil cloth curled up stairs." They are witnessed by Prufrock himself, walking along the narrow streets. Finally, he is portrayed in his room at midnight, tossing his blankets back, staring into the darkness until dawn comes and "the world began to fall apart..." Profrock's modern (or modernist) vigil is obviously set in stark contrast to the Late Antique poem's *pervigilium*. This is not a new version or restaging of the model poem's enthusiastic pan-erotic salutation of Spring, but rather a transformation of it into the typical vigil of early twentieth-century metropolis night-life, characterized by prostitution, drinking and smoking, with a very Eliot-like addition of personal anguish. In other words, the Late Antique celebration of new life and returning vigor to the earth has been turned into a vision of the metropolitan waste land, foreboding the third part of Eliot's famous poem with that title, "The Waste Land," published in 1922.[33] By all accounts, Eliot's use of the *Pervigilium Veneris* in his notebook from 1910–11 provides us with the matrix of his later treatment of the ancient or Renaissance masters, projecting their grand scenarios in ironic contrast to his desolate settings of modern post-war city-life. In the first lines of his poem, the Latin writer had claimed that "Spring is reborn throughout the world," *ver renatus orbis est*, and that "In spring are loves in harmony," *vere concordant amores* (2–3).[34] In Eliot's drafts for his

[28] Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean: His Sensations and Ideas*, vol. I (London: Macmillan, 1898), 77.

[29] Ezra Pound, *The Spirit of Romance: An Attempt to Define Somewhat the Charm of the Pre-Renaissance Literature of Latin Europe* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1910), 10–12.

[30] W.H. Porter, trans., *Pervigilium Veneris: The Watch-Night of Venus* (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1909); Cecil Clementi, trans., *Pervigilium Veneris. The Vigil of Venus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1911).

[31] T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," *Poetry* 6, no. 3 (1915): 130–35.

[32] T.S. Eliot, *Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909–1917*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Faber / Faber, 1996), 43-44.

[33] T.S. Eliot, "The Waste Land," *The Criterion* 1, no. 1 (1922): 50–64.

[34] I quote the Latin text of *Pervigilium Veneris* following the old version of John W. Mackail (who incidentally had edited the poem in 1910) in the Loeb edition, Francis W. Cornish, John P. Postgate, and John

Prufrock poem, we are confronted with precisely the opposite scenario: the city is haunted by darkness, fear, and a sense of being lost, for which reason everything, including people's emotions, seems to fall apart.

All things considered, in Eliot's version, modernity seems to have lost all sense of continuity with ancient culture. The old authoritative voices are reduced to what Eliot himself called 'whispers of immortality,' barely audible among the noise of early twentieth-century urban life. Nonetheless, they are certainly not silenced but deliberately echoed and meant to be recognized, hence the famous notes which Eliot would attach to the first book version of *The Waste Land* ten years later, listing an impressive catalog of writers and works present in the poem, many of them Latin, among them the *Pervigilium Veneris*.[35] This kind of literary reuse seems to be based on a sense of discontinuity with a past which nevertheless makes itself felt in the present. It presupposes a dissociation with the Latin cultural heritage, a disconnection which still, however, is perceived as painful. Eliot's typical art of literary reuse thus depended on the device of allusion, generating irony—resulting from a series of contrasts between past and present—and, inevitably, a note of nostalgia too, in the modern text.

Case V: Quotation (Hjalmar Gullberg)

The Swedish writer Hjalmar Gullberg (1898–1961) was a highly esteemed poet, an accomplished translator and a great enthusiast of the classics. His main field of interest was Greek literature, ancient and modern, but he was also, of course, able to read the canonical Roman poets in their original language. Gullberg's biographer Carl Fehrman tells us that he received his elementary education from the age of ten in the Latin school of Malmö in southern Sweden, and at nineteen he continued his studies at Lund University, in the immediate vicinity of Malmö.[36] There, his first subject was Latin, and his teacher was professor Einar Löfstedt, known for his studies in the Late Latin language and in the Church Fathers, particularly Tertullian.

In his next-to-last book of poetry, *Terziner i okonstens tid* (1958), whose title in English would correspond to something like 'Terze rime in the Time of Non-Art,' Gullberg remembers his old teacher, dead three years earlier, in a poem to which he assigned a heading in Latin, "Non si demisso si ipse voret capite."[37] These words are placed between quotes by the poet himself, so obviously it is a quotation, and in the subsequent verses Gullberg explicitly makes clear from where he got it:

> När vi läste, för att det ingick i kursen, Catullus
> och professorn förstod på ett ställe att vi inte förstod,
> log han åt vår oskuld som var obekant
> med denna art av självbefläckelse och översatte:
> "Ej om med huvud (och mun) nedsänkt han slukar sig själv."
>
> Jag vet inte om studenter av i dag skulle chockeras
> av den bild som vi fann överskrida gränsen för en mans
> förmåga att kröka rygg. Efter fyrti år

W. Mackail, trans., *Catullus, Tibullus and Pervigilium Veneris* (London: Heinemann, 1913), 348; and, in English, according to Pound's translation in Pound, *The Spirit of Romance*, 10.

35 T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (New York: Boni / Liveright, 1922), 63.

36 Carl Fehrman, *Hjalmar Gullberg* (Stockholm: PAN/Norstedts, 1967), 18–42.

37 Hjalmar Gullberg, *Dikter* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1985), 430–31.

är en personlig nidvers vad jag minns
av det tunnaste häfte som nånsin till odödligheten
burit en diktares namn.

Vad är en diktare? Narkissos,
böjd över svaret, ser i källan plötsligt
i stället för sin bild hans bild som så obscent
slukar sig själv i en bisats hos Catullus.[38]

These lines obviously refer to a memory from the years 1917–18, when Gullberg had taken up Latin studies in Lund, more precisely to a recollection from his reading in class of Catullus' poem 88, four elegiac couplets dedicated to a certain Gellius, once the Roman poet's friend, later on his rival and now his enemy as well. It reads like this:

Quid facit is, Gelli, qui cum matre atque sorore
  prurit et abiectis pervigilat tunicis?
quid facit is, patruum qui non sinit esse maritum?
  ecquid scis quantum suscipiat sceleris?
suscipit, o Gelli, quantum non ultimi Tethys
  nec genitor lympharum abluit Oceanus:
nam nihil est quicquam sceleris quo prodeat ultra,
  non si demisso se ipse voret capite.[39]

In these eight verses, hot-tempered Catullus fiercely attacks his former friend, here accused of various types of incest, the foulest of crimes. We understand from the final couplet that no one is unable to commit any wicked deed worse than that, not even if he would perform oral sex on himself.

So what literary use does Gullberg make of the Latin studies of his youth? In the first place, he resorts to complete decontextualization. He is not in the least concerned with the person or particular feelings of Catullus, and even less interesting seems, of course, Gellius, his allegedly incestuous affairs and his relation to the irascible poet. All that remains of Catullus' couplets in Gullberg's memory is their final conditional clause, where Gellius is imagined, as it were, committing incest with himself. And the reason for this remembrance seems perfectly clear: the nineteen year old boy, brought up in the early twentieth-century

[38] I have tried to translate the poem as follows: "When we were reading, since it was mandatory, Catullus / And our professor, at one passage, understood that we did not understand, / He smiled at our innocence which was unfamiliar / With this kind of self-defilement, and he translated: / 'Not even if, with his head (and mouth) lowered, he devours himself.' / I don't know if any students of today would be shocked / By the image we found transgressing the limit for a man's / Capacity to kowtow. After forty years, / All I remember is a personal polemical line / Out of the thinnest booklet that ever carried / A poet's name to immortality. / What is a poet? Narcissus, / With bowed head over the answer, sees suddenly, / In the spring, not his own image but the image of the one / Who so obscenely devours himself in a subordinate clause by Catullus."

[39] "What's that man doing, Gellius, who has the hots for mother / and sister too, who's up all night in the buff? / What's he doing, who won't let Uncle be a husband? / Are you aware how great a crime he commits? / His offense, Gellius, is one that neither remotest / Tethys nor nymph-breeding Ocean can wash away: / for there's no more heinous crime he could commit, not even / were he with down-stretched head to gobble himself." Francis W. Cornish, John P. Postgate, and John W. Mackail, trans., *Catullus, Tibullus, Pervigilium Veneris*, 2nd ed. (Rev. by George P. Goold. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 162–64; for the translation, see Catullus, *The Poems of Catullus*, trans. Peter Green (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 193.

Sweden, still imbued by Victorian morals, was simply unable to conceive of such an act, and when he got it explained by his teacher, he was stunned. In other words, young Gullberg was shocked, and the shock still aches within him forty years later, in 1958, to the extent that it had made him forget everything else in Catullus' vituperative poem.

In all probability, Gullberg's verses should be read as a mildly self-ironic comment on the lost innocence of his youth and perhaps also on the change of morals and manners from the previous fin-de-siècle down to the 1950s. The closing lines of the poem, however, tell us something more. Gullberg not only decontextualizes Catullus' final couplet but reinterprets it in terms of literary self-representation. Throughout his four decades long work, he repeatedly returned to the figure of Narcissus, bent over his reflection on the water of the spring, understood as an image of the modern poet's predicament in the wake of Symbolism. As early as in *Andliga övningar* ('Spiritual Exercises', 1932), there is a poem called "Lidande Narkissos" ("Suffering Narcissus"), where the speaker reacts against the "skönhetstyp" ("type of beauty") allotted to him, expressing a vehement longing for breaking out of his self-contained existence.[40] In his late books, Gullberg's attitude to Narcissus is even more critical, articulating a strong devaluation of the poet and his work. Specifically, various kinds of modern literary presumption or self-absorption seem to be turned into deprecation or parody.

All this is quite clear from the last stanza of "Non si demisso si ipse voret capite." Here, Narcissus does no longer gaze at his own image in the water. He sees only the boy from Catullus' poem, devouring himself: a distorted picture, indeed, of narcissistic desire, and, in addition, a parodic version of poetic solipsism, with the protagonist literally making a knot of himself. By all accounts, this is Gullberg's farewell to the ornate post-symbolist art to which he had dedicated the better part of his life. If it survives at all, it is as a grotesque reflection from the distant past. Here, indeed, poetic grandiloquence is relegated to a subordinate clause.

So, finally, in "Non si demisso si ipse voret capite," former Latin student Gullberg resorts to a quotation, as did Eliot time and again in his most famous poems, but in a very different way.[41] To the Swedish poet, the quotation is nothing but a personal recollection, a reminiscence from his remote youth, emblematic of the dead-end of modern poetry. What is recycled here is a Latin phrase rendered between quotes and more importantly, this phrase is the very subject of Gullberg's poem, identical with its title, remembered, commented upon, and interpreted. Such explicit reuse of fragments from the past, an advanced and somewhat playful kind of *ars memoriae*, virtually converting the present work to a gloss on earlier texts, would mark much postmodern writing—sometimes labeled an art of quotation—from the final decades of the twentieth century.

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Baudri's ingenious exercises in paraphrasing Ovid depended on a sense of historical continuity, linking present France (or, specifically, Anjou) to the cultural past, quite typical of early medieval culture in Western Europe, focused on the topos of *translatio studii et imperii*. Dante's allegorical rewriting of ancient mythology, on the other hand, while admitting the historical exemplarity of Rome and Roman poetry, presupposes a sense of cultural alterity,

[40] Gullberg, *Dikter*, 131.

[41] For other quotations in Gullberg's earlier work, see Gullberg's use of Giacomo Leopardi in his poem "Kärleksroman" ("Love Novel") from *Kärlek i tjugonde seklet* ('Love in the Twentieth Century', 1933), and of Goethe (without quotes) in "Nyåret 1942" ("The New Year 1942") from *Fem kornbröd och två fiskar* ('Five Barley Loaves and Two Fish', 1942), in ibid., pp. 157, 295.

a breach separating pagan legend from Christian truth. Such a marked difference between Antiquity and the present was still felt in Early Modern literature, but it was bridged, as it were, by means of new techniques of imitation. Renaissance and Baroque poets such as Quevedo tended to echo Roman verse fragments for their own artificial purposes, imitating or accommodating the old texts in their richly variegated, post-Gutenbergian intertextual space.

In contrast, deracination was a common topic in early Modernism around and after the turn of the century 1900. It certainly impregnated the poetry of T.S. Eliot, according to which twentieth-century Western civilization was characterized by nihilism and decadence, cut off from its cultural roots. Eliot's answer to this bleak predicament was a new kind of experimental poetry, underlining the gap between past and present by means of allusion, expressing irony as well as nostalgia. Such nostalgia was not entirely absent from the work of his Swedish successor Hjalmar Gullberg, who, for his part, resorted more than once to playful quotations from earlier poets, Latin or not, in order to convey a strong personal experience while laying bare or making explicit modern (or postmodern) devices of literary reuse.

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Competition, Narrative and Literary *Copia* in the Works of Boncompagno da Signa and Guido Faba

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Abstract

This study argues for the importance of competitive discourse in placing the study of the *ars dictaminis* within the cosmopolitan tradition of humanistic Latin literature in the Middle Ages, particularly as it is expressed in the writing of Boncompagno da Signa and Guido Faba at Bologna in the first decades of the thirteenth century. Examining cultural links and similarities to the competitive literary culture of twelfth century humanism in France and northern Europe (especially the Goliardic poets), it also compares the function and relative prestige of *ars dictaminis* to other studies at Bologna, especially canon law. This comparison focuses in particular on the respective ways each discipline employs narrative fictions, and this comparison establishes the humanistic literary character of the cultivation of *ars dictaminis*. Ronald Witt has argued that the textual culture of Bologna in Boncompagno's day is dominated by a practical legal orientation, but this study would qualify that claim by exploring the literary copiousness of Boncompagno's writing and the literary character of several of his works, including the *Rota Veneris*; it likewise links this literary performance to a pattern of competitive discourse that elevates *ars dictaminis* above other disciplines, Bologna above other *studia*, and Boncompagno above other masters. The study then turns to the work of Guido Faba, especially the *Summa dictaminis* and *Dictamina rhetorica* to explore how Guido deepens and broadens Boncompagno's competitive discourse, especially through the epistolary narrative sequences of the *Dictamina rhetorica*.

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A Heroic Age of Technical Writing in Medieval Bologna

The rising status of *ars dictaminis* and those who taught it in early-thirteenth-century Bologna transformed it from a technical practice—the art of writing formal letters—to a prestigious form of expertise linked to the development of humanistic literary culture in Western Europe. The earliest known textual codification of *ars dictaminis* comes from the monastic school at Monte Cassino in the later eleventh century, but as with other fields of technical lore in our own day, codification trails behind practice.[1] Formulas of salutation and arrangement were already being formulated and elaborated in the chanceries of Pope and Emperor.[2] The teaching and learning of the *ars dictaminis* spread to schools at Pavia and Bologna, Orleans and Tours, and southern German monastic and cathedral schools as Bamberg, Speyer, Tegernsee, and Regensburg.[3] In the twelfth century, letter writing continued to flourish among elite clerics in ecclesiastical and lay administration; with this skill in demand, the schools of Orleans and Bologna in particular became centers for the study of *ars dictaminis*.

Some historians of *ars dictaminis* have associated Orleans and Bologna with two distinct styles. The Orleans style was more florid and literary, the *stilus supremus*, the Bolognese more spare and utilitarian, the *stilus humilis*.[4] According to Ronald Witt, the difference stemmed from the ascendancy of the liberal arts for their own sake in the 'book culture' of twelfth-century France as opposed to the 'documentary culture' of Northern Italy where the most prestigious and highly pursued studies were the practical arts—legal, dictaminal, and notarial.[5] The distinction fell away in the first decades of the thirteenth century, a process paradoxically fought, sustained, and represented by the celebrated career of Boncompagno da Signa, a *dictator* who wrote prologues to seemingly practical school texts that were brash, self-assertive, and rivalrous. He towers over the Bolognese *ars dictaminis* of the first two decades of the thirteenth century as Guido Faba would tower over the third and fourth.[6]

These two men stood at the apex of a school whose aggressive competition contributed to the humanistic literary culture of Western Europe through their Italian successors. Boncompagno and Guido's handbooks feature self-aggrandizing prologues referencing various feuds with rivals, asserting their own supremacy in their art, but also demonstrating their mastery through a verbal copiousness that included constructing fictions through the sequence of model letters. Model letter collections were an important part of the teaching

1 A technical writer for an Internet Service Provider has informed me that startup firms typically hire a technical writer to collect and organize their 'lore' only when the company is passing beyond the control of its founders, who have no need to have the startup's technical systems and peculiarities explained to them.

2 Les Perelman, "The Medieval Art of Letter Writing: Rhetoric as Institutional Expression," in *Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Writing in Professional Communities*, ed. Charles Bazerman and James G. Paradis (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 100-102.

3 William D. Patt, "The Early *Ars Dictaminis* as Response to a Changing Society," *Viator* 9 (1978): 135-55.

4 Ronald Witt, "Medieval 'Ars Dictaminis' and the Beginnings of Humanism: A New Construction of the Problem," *Renaissance Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1982): 13.

5 Witt tells this story in great breadth in parts three and four of Ronald G. Witt, *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 229-350. Witt is careful to use the terms *Francia* and the *Regnum* (*Italiae*) to avoid confusion of these cultural-geographical regions with their successor states.

6 Florian Hartmann identifies how the *dictatores* linked their skill to the honor and prominence of their profession, of individuals and families in their cities, and of their respective communes as a whole. Florian Hartmann, "Il valore sociale Dell'*Ars Dictaminis* e Il *Self-Fashioning* dei dettatori dommunali," in *Medieval Letters: Between Fiction and Document*, ed. Christian Høgel and Elisabetta Bartoli (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 105–18.

and learning of *ars dictaminis*—by the second half of the twelfth century collections of model letters (real, fictional, and all the space in between) were circulating independently of the theoretical introductions and schemata of the *ars dictandi*. In Guido especially, these fictions transcend their utilitarian purpose to suggest a lifeworld in a manner that oscillates among satirical, novelistic, and legalistic modes of representation.

Latin Authority and Competitive Self-Display in the Twelfth Century

A number of scholars, including Robert L. Benson, Ronald Witt, and Enrico Artifoni have identified in the Bolognese grammar *studia* surrounding the *ars dictaminis* the origins of literary and civic humanism in Italy.[7] I suggest that the ethos of Boncompagno and Guido, if they look forward to the monumental self-aggrandizement of Dante and Petrarch, also belong to the playful competition of twelfth-century Latin literature, such as the Goliardic verses of Hugh Primas, the Archpoet, and Walter of Châtillon, all of whom imagine themselves in competition with envious rivals. Walter of Châtillon's sixth lyric, a *stanza cum auctoritate*, satirizes the pretentions of the intelligentsia at many places: "superbia sequitur doctores, inflati scientia respuunt minores."[8] Walter's strategy of self-justification is common to the agonistic intellectual life of clerics in the twelfth-century; he declares himself one hated by "Pharisees" for refusing to conceal their crimes, with echoes of Abelard's own tales of persecution by enemies.[9] The Bolognese *dictatores* share this self-portrayal as surrounded by envious rivals and mercenary epigones; the notable difference is that Boncompagno and Guido represent themselves as triumphing over their rivals.

Giving themselves the laurel for their unrivalled supremacy in their textual and professional universe, these Bolognese *dictatores*, Boncompagno first and foremost, establish their educational community as a prototypical humanistic coterie. His work, although ostensibly devoted to practical textual arts, has unmistakably literary qualities that are an instrumental part of his self-promotion.[10] The links between rhetoric and literary practice in the Middle Ages have been explored in depth.[11] Yet one aspect of their competitive

[7] See n. 3–4. See also e.g. Enrico Artifoni, "Retorica e organizzazione del linguaggio politico nel Duecento italiano," in *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e nel Trecento. Relazioni tenute al convegno internazionale di Trieste (2-5 marzo 1993)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1994), 157–182; Enrico Artifoni, "Boncompagno da Signa, i maestri di retorica e le città comunali nella prima metà del Duecento," in *Il pensiero e l'opera di Boncompagno da Signa: atti del primo Convegno nazionale: Signa, 23-24 febbraio 2001*, ed. Massimo Baldini (Siena: Tipogr. Grevigiana, 2002), 23–36; Robert L. Benson, "Protohumanism and Narrative Technique in Early Thirteenth-Century Italian *Ars Dictaminis*," in *Boccaccio: Secoli Di Vita. Atti Del Congresso Internazionale Boccaccio 1975, Università Di California, Los Angeles, 17-19 Ottobre 1975*, ed. Marga Cottino-Jones and Edward F. Tuttle (Ravenna: Longo, 1977), 31–50.

[8] "In addition, pride accompanies the learned, who, puffed up in their knowledge, despise their lessers." Robert Levine, *Satirical Poems of Walter of Chatillon*, `http://people.bu.edu/bobl/walt821.htm`, 2018, accessed online: 2018-04-02; for the edition of the original text, see Walter of Châtillon, *Moralisch-satirische Gedichte Walters von Chatillon: aus deutschen, englischen, franzosischen und italienischen Handschriften*, ed. Karl Strecker (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1929).

[9] Walter of Châtillon, *Moralish-satirische Gedichte*, 11.69.

[10] A similar point is made by Elisabetta Baroli, "Da Maestro Guido a Guido Faba: autobiografismo e lettera d'amore tra la seconda e la terze generazione di dettatori," in *Medieval Letters. Between Fiction and Document*, ed. Christian Høgel and Elisabetta Bartoli (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 121.

[11] Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); the many publications of Rita Copeland (most notably Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1995); the work of Martin Camargo focuses in particular on the history of *ars dictaminis* and its literary ramifications. See for example Martin Camargo, *Essays on Medieval Rhetoric* (Farnham: Routledge Taylor

self-display not yet systematically explored is their 'fabulation'—the invention of stories—for use in the model letters that made up part of the *artes dictandi* like Guido's *Summa dictaminis* or standalone collections like his *Dictamina rhetorica*, which the final part of this essay will treat. That model letter collections ever went farther than Guido Faba or contributed to the development of the medieval genre of the story collection cannot be established, but there is a direct genealogy of masters and students linking Boncompagno, Guido, Filippo Ceffi, and Boccaccio, and I believe that in its copiousness and naturalism, the *Dictamina rhetorica* anticipates and parallels later medieval story collections. Thus, secular literature of the later Middle Ages remains imbued with the competitive character of the dictaminal school, which has roots in school culture of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, be it that of the schools of the secular clergy in the North or the private schools of law and *dictamen* in Northern Italy.[12]

Twelfth-century schools enjoyed a flourishing in the production of texts collecting short narratives for didactic and utilitarian purpose, such as the *exempla* of preacher's handbooks or legal textbook, but even such stories were capable of an aesthetic surplus. By aesthetic surplus, I mean that a selection of letter-writing handbooks and model letter collections exceeded their expressed utilitarian purpose to become objects of artistic contemplation and enjoyment in their own right. This happened with other kinds of school texts—the literary and self-consciously aesthetic character of some school texts is obvious, as in the poetic displays of Matthew of Vendome's and Geoffrey of Vinsauf's poetry handbooks, or in the artful stories of Peter Alfonso's *Disciplina clericalis*. These can be seen as literature insofar as they are both *dulce et utilis*; Gratian's *Decretum*, on the other hand, a textbook of canon law the second part of which was a compilation of 36 *causae* or cases, might be viewed as a more purely functional collection of narratives. These brief stories served as legal dilemmas for law students to practice arguing about, but like dictaminal letter collections strive for a comprehensive representation of society (according to the priorities of canonists, judges, and lawyers).

The variety and copiousness of such narrative collections is impressive, and one main goal of both institutional and literary authority in the Middle Ages was certainly to impress. The entire point of chancery styles from the *Variae* of Cassiodorus to the development of high medieval curial epistolography was to impress. Authority works by impressing—inviting admiration and allegiance—rather than coercion, and that purpose was served by the elevated and elaborate syntax and the sonority of the *cursus*—these were the textual counterparts to the elaborateness and ornamentation of imperial and papal dress and ceremony.[13] Authority, then, is both literary and institutional. Both of these aspects of authority are enacted in writing, and both kinds of authority were combined in the work of the *dictatores* of the early thirteenth century who taught the techniques of textualizing authority through their instruction and wrote books for those who use those techniques as secretaries, chancellors, and notaries. Moreover, Boncompagno da Signa, Guido Faba, Bene of Florence, and others invoke their institutional authority as university masters in combination with the authoritative display of rhetorical skill.

& Francis Group, 2012).

12 See also, for example, Monika C. Otter, "Sex, Magic and Performance in Anselm of Besate's Rhetorimachia," in *Performance in Medieval Culture*, ed. Almut Suerbaum and Manuele Gragnolati (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

13 It was Horace who first applied *purpureus* to written style. He meant it disparagingly, but it speaks to a longstanding associate of puffed-up language with authority. Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Horace on Poetry: The 'Ars Poetica'*, ed. C.O. Brink (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 14-21.

It has been commonplace for literary historians to dismiss the products of the *ars dictaminis* as distinctly unliterary. Auerbach posed a contrast between the literary language in the vernacular, continually re-invigorated by contact with common language, and the desiccated 'chancellery dialect' with its rhetorical mannerisms and artificial formulism; he identifies the latter in a tradition that runs from the *Variae* of Cassiodorus to the *artes dictandi* of fourteenth century.[14] At the same time, observing a "new flowering in the *ars dictaminis*" of the Italian chancelleries in the thirteenth century, Auerbach found that

> its methods—rhythmical movement of clauses, rhymed prose, sound patterns and figures of speech, unusual vocabulary, complex and pompous sentence structure—stem from the ancient tradition, but now they are used more freely, richly, organically.[15]

Auerbach identifies the origin of this development with the class of 'urban patricians' and with the large number of educated laymen in cities such as Bologna, Florence, Arezzo, and Siena, in distinction from the literary culture of the 'courtly clerics' and 'feudal aristocracy' in Northern Europe.[16] This may seem to parallel Witt's distinction between 'book culture' and 'document culture,' but it also implies a commonality insofar as the elite laity of Italian communes are also striving and competitive, and those Northern clerics imagine their participation in the life of the Church explicitly along the lines of the patrician Cicero's participation in the life of his republic.[17]

If Auerbach and Witt do not thematize transalpine cultural exchange in their studies, they point to it, particularly the mutual influence of Orleans and Bologna (and the set of aesthetic values attached to those locales) with respect to the *ars dictaminis*. Italian scholars studied in France, and eminent northern scholars taught in Bologna; Geoffrey of Vinsauf was himself teaching *dictamen* privately in Bologna in the 1180s, and the Anglo-Norman clerical poet Walter of Châtillon's poem addressed to the students of Bologna demonstrates the reciprocity and exchange across the Alps.[18] As indicated just above, the highly literate clerics who cultivated the *ars dictaminis* through the long twelfth century deliberately emulated the urban patricians of the late Roman republic and early empire, reproducing their modes and the specific medium—letters—of enacting and advertising affiliation and association.[19] The clerical administrators in Northern European courts shared an elite subculture self-consciously distinct from the culture of the lay nobility and monks alike, but their culture had much in common with the literate elites of lay Italian city-dwellers. Their burgeoning civic culture called for an education that would both ornament the participant in public life with eloquence and prepare him for the "practical and worldly" work of civic administration.[20] Such men generated the demand that brought the center of the study of *dictamen* from

[14] Erich Auerbach, *Literary Language & Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages* (New York, NY: Bollingen Foundation, 1965), 259.

[15] Ibid., 273.

[16] Ibid., 272-73.

[17] See n. 4; on twelfth-century clerical Ciceronianism, see for example Cary J. Nederman, "Friendship in Public Life during the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Writings of John of Salisbury," *Viator* 38, no. 2 (2007): 385–97.

[18] Witt catalogues the intensifying exchange of students and masters between *Francia* and the *regnum italiae* as the twelfth century progressed; celebrated intellectuals of the 'twelfth-century Renaissance' who studied or taught at Bologna included Alberic of Rennes, Walter of Châtillon, Stephen of Tournai, Peter of Blois, Gervase of Tillbury, and Geoffrey of Vinsauf among others. Witt, *Two Latin Cultures*, 384-85.

[19] See n. 17.

[20] Auerbach, *Literary Language*, 273.

Orleans to Bologna at the end of the twelfth century and made eminent men of Bologna's masters.

Boncompagno da Signa and *copia verborum*

Boncompagno da Signa was not the first of the Bolognese *dictatores*, but he represents a new departure in the way that he celebrates his own genius and authority. Born in 1170 in the village of Signa outside Florence, educated in grammar, rhetoric, and law at Florence and then Bologna, he joined the faculty at Bologna around 1190 as its first doctor of the *ars dictaminis*.[21] Boncompagno brought a literary copiousness to practical handbooks for utilitarian texts: not just letters, but wills, statutes, and arbitrations. In this way, he extended the authority of the *dictator* beyond a functionary producing practical documents. The developing professional identity of the *dictator* made the work of composition no longer something a cleric happened to perform when worldly affairs drew him from prayer and contemplation, nor the mechanical reproduction of the notary, but a source of professional distinction, with a recognizable style combining notarial precision with the allusive grandeur of humanistic rhetoric. Ronald Witt coined the term *stilus medius* to describe this style.[22]

Boncompagno's *Boncompagnus* or *Rhetorica antiqua* criticizes overly ornate and quotation-heavy prose letters.[23] His targets are *grammantes*—grammarians influenced by the new grammatical studies from France and their rising popularity. Witt's compendious argument is aligned around the argument that Boncompagno is sincerely committed to a thorough difference in method and orientation in rhetorical practice.[24] The fact that his term for his enemies resembles *garamantes*—the term by which John of Salisbury attacks his rivals as intellectual pretenders in the *Metalogicon*—suggests that Boncompagno's rejection of northern influence and practice is more of a rhetorical posture—we might even say a 'branding' choice—than an important practical difference. Given Boncompagno's often florid and exuberant style, his championing of Bolognese schools and the legal-civic orientation of its culture and of his own supremacy within that culture, another possibility is that his rejection of an authoritative proverb as a necessary element for the letter's *exordium* serves as a symbolic distinction around which to orient a partisanship that is more civic and institutional than practical or intellectual. Bolognese scholarship stands before transalpine scholarship as Boncompagno stands before his peers and rivals at Bologna. Competition is both individual and collective. His parodic letter written under the pseudonym Robert of France is a mockery of the *stilus supremus* of Orleans, but also a demonstration that its "pretentious vocabulary and convoluted syntax" were well within his powers.[25] Bene of Florence, Boncompagno's rival *dictator* at Bologna, embraced the French learning and stipulated the inclusion of *auctoritates* in the *exordium* of letters, which further suggests that Boncompagno's self-identification with a local style was a competitive move to present himself as the champion of a particularly Bolognese style. Witt summarizes a polemical thread that connects a number of Boncompagno's treatises:

[21] Josef Purkart, "Boncompagno of Signa and The Rhetoric of Love," in *Medieval Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. James Murphy (Berkeley, 1978), 320.

[22] Witt, *Two Latin Cultures*, 417; Brundage identifies a similar development of professional identity among canonists in the same period. James A. Brundage, *The Medieval Origins of the Legal Profession: Canonists, Civilians, and Courts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

[23] Witt, *Two Latin Cultures*, 386-87.

[24] Ibid., 388-93.

[25] Ibid., 391-92.

> The error of the aggressive grammarians lay in their efforts to treat *ars dictaminis* as if it were the product of the grammarian's study, not of the communal secretary's busy office. The rhetorician or orator used language in a contextualized atmosphere, unlike the grammarian.[26]

This implies that the *dictator* is no mere mechanical functionary—*ars dictaminis* is rhetoric or oratory, a liberal rather than practical art.

For whatever reason—out of an intellectual commitment to the 'documentary culture' over the 'book culture' that Ronald Witt's grand thesis proposes, or simply as a matter of personal ambition and competition among rival *dictatores* and masters at Bologna—there is a consistent apologetic attached to these performances, an argument for the indispensability of textual mastery to the formation of virtuous individuals and just, orderly societies. Boncompagno's formulation of the *dictator*'s status can be shocking in its audacity, not just in the literary fantasia of his *Rota Veneris*, a guidebook for writing love letters, but even in seemingly utilitarian texts, but the *Rota Veneris* merits examination as an example of Boncompagno's *copia verborum* and his ability to fashion sequences of letters into narratives.[27] In one section early in the text rubricated "The Commendation of Women," Boncompagno takes the variety of possible alternatives, the textual menu of *artes dictandi* (epitomized in the flowcharts of Thomas of Capua's *Summa dictaminis*) and links them into one copious utterance:

> Cum inter gloriosos puellarum choros vos nudiustertius corporeis oculis inspexi, apprehendit quidam amoris igniculus precordialia mea et repente me fecit esse alterum. Nec sum id quod fueram nec potero de cetero esse. Nec mirum, quia michi et universis procul dubio videbatur, quod inter omnes refulgebatis tanquam stella matutina, que in presagium diei auroram polliceri videtur. Et dum subtiliter inspicerem, quanta vos gloria natura dotaverat, in amiratione deficiebat spiritus meus. Capilli siquidem vestri quasi aurum contortum iuxta coloratissimas aures mirifice dependebant. Frons erat excelsa et supercilia sicut duo cardines gemmati, oculi velut stelle clarissime refulgebant, quorum splendore membra quelibet radiabant. Nares directe, labra crossula et rubencia cum dentibus eburneis comparebant, collum rotundum et gula candidissima se directe inspiciendo geminabant pulcritudinem, quam nunquam credo potuisse in Helena intendi. Pectus quasi paradisi ortulus corpori supereminebat, in quo erant duo poma velud fasciculi rosarum, a quibus odor suavissimus resultabat. Humeri tamquam aure a capitella residebant, in quibus brachia sicut rami cedri erant naturaliter inserta. Manus longe, digiti exiles, nodi coequales et ungule sicut cristallum resplendentes totius stature augmentabant decorem.[28]

[26] Ibid., 397.

[27] Paolo Garbini has explored Boncompagno's narrative powers and literary sensibilities in the *Rota Veneris* as well as his *De malo senectute* and connected these in passing with the narrative sequences in the *Boncompagnus*. Paolo Garbini, "Il pubblico della Rota Veneris di Boncompagno di Signa," in *Medieval Letters: Between Fiction and Document*, ed. Christian Høgel and Elisabetta Bartoli (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 201–13.

[28] "And I while I intently examined how much glory Nature had bestowed upon you, my spirit, in enrapturement, was overwhelmed. For the strands of your hair flowed down like braided gold over your most delicately reddened ears; your forehead was noble, and your eyebrows like gem-encrusted hinges; like two stars, your eyes were shining forth most brightly, and through their splendor all parts of your body were lent radiant light. Your straight nostrils, your sensuous and ruby lips vied with your ivory teeth; your smooth neck and whitest throat doubled, for the beholder, a beauty which, I think, could never have been intended more for Helena. Your bosom rose above your body like a garden of paradise, in which lay two apples like bundles of roses, from which wafted the sweetest perfume. Your shoulders rested like sockets of gold, into

This passage is offered to the service of the lover who would write a letter to his beloved, a formulary of compliments featuring a verbal abundance which can be chiseled down by the text's ostensible user; at the same time, it also demonstrates its author's mastery of the full range of possible expressions, and his invention in combining them. The same combination of invention and exhaustiveness can be seen in the whole of this work, which features love letters for a number of situations ranging from conventional courtly love to abandoned wives to young women forced against their will into convents. In both individual letters and in the range of letter types copiousness is manifested in the making of lists.

Boncompagno's *Rhetorica antiqua sive Boncompagnus* is a more practical work, and seems to have been better known; it survives in eighteen manuscripts and an incunabulum.[29] More than just knowledge of verbal formulas, Boncompagno advertises dictaminal mastery as a mastery of social situations—conflictual and cooperative—that take place across a broad range of elite institutions, and promotes a particular posture within that cluster of institutions for the *dictator*: a scholar, but not a humble retreating servant. In the *Boncompagnus*, we can find continual self-assertion and self-promotion that gives the *dictator* an authority and social status that spans various domains.[30] The *Boncompagnus* divides its model letters into different spheres of society: the school; the Roman church; the Pontifical curia; letters to and from emperors, kings and queens; bishops, their subordinates, and church business; noblemen, citizens, and the people. The typical fashion in a dictaminal treatise was to sort the model letters from highest rank to lowest, first clergy and then laity: pope to parish priest, and then emperor to commoner. The audacity here is in Boncompagno's placing letters among schoolmen, masters and students, and speaking to the values and goals of the school, at the beginning of the work, implying social priority through textual priority.

The prologue of the *Boncompagnus* is organized as a dialogue between the book and its author, adopting a prosopopoetic envoy based on Ovid's *Tristia*. In this fanciful conversation between the book and its author, Boncompagno claims that he was popular with students, but envious colleagues falsely accused him of fraud in order to drive him from Bologna at the height of his career.[31] After a period (1204-15) serving at the court of Wolfger of Erla, Patriarch of Aquileia, Boncompagno returned to Bologna and wrote the *Boncompagnus* in a spirit of triumphal return epitomized by crowning this very book, the *Boncompagnus*, with laurel: "Demum, ad conferendum perpetuum robor institutioni iam facte, super caput tuum laureatam pono coronam."[32] This crowning of his book is, of course, a metonymical self-crowning, as Boncompagnus declares himself and his work supreme among his colleagues, but the organization of this text also puts the letters of rhetoric masters ahead of those of

which your arms, like boughs of cedar, were fitted naturally. Your long hands, your slender fingers, your well-shaped knuckles, and your nails, resplendent as crystal, enhanced the seemliness of your whole figure." Boncompagno da Signa, *Rota Veneris*, ed. Paolo Garbini (Salerno: Minima, 1996), 40; for the translation, see Boncompagno da Signa, *Rota Veneris. A Facsimile Reproduction of the Strassburg Incunabulum*, trans. Josef Purkart (Delmar: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975), 77.

29 Boncompagno da Signa, *Rota Veneris*, 77.

30 As Elisabetta Bartoli puts it, the self-representations of thirteenth-century *dicatatores* like Boncompagno and Guido Faba intensify the political and controversial nature of their works as a means of self-promotion, and their autobiographism is a "literary elaboration" linked to their magisterial role. See Baroli, "Da Maestro Guido a Guido Faba," 121-125.

31 See Purkart's introduction to Boncompagno da Signa, *Rota Veneris*, 14.

32 "At last, in order to confer perpetual validity to the institution already made, I place a laurel crown over your head," see Steven M. Wight, *Medieval Diplomatic and the 'Ars Dictandi'*, `http://www.scrineum.it/scrineum/wight/index.htm`, 3.18, accessed Online: 2018-04-02; at this time, I have not yet been able to consult the edition of Boncompagno da Signa, *Testi riguardanti la vita degli studenti a Bologna nel sec. XIII: dal Boncompagnus, lib. I*, ed. Virgilio Pini (Bologna: s.n., 1968).

popes and emperors, an act that is no mere anticipation of humanism.

We see this self-assertiveness in other texts by Boncompagno. He selects model letters that articulate the wills of the greatest personages in Latin Europe, and which may explore local and wider controversies. The *Mirra*, named for the aromatic resin gifted to Christ at birth, and used to anoint the bodies of the dead, is a formulary for preambles to wills written "in the office of the orator and not the jurist," a distinction that belies the thesis that Boncompagno's orientation is driven purely by the practical demands of his students.[33] For such oratorical preambles, he offers specifics models, the first for the will of a dying emperor:

> Quanto nos celestis pater mirarum temporali dignitate ac rerum affluentiis fecit inter mortales copiosius habundare, tanto propensius extremum diem piis operibus et iustis actionibus preuenire debemus, ne dies Domini peccatis nostris exigentibus tanquam fur ueniens nobis testandi auferat potestatem.[34]

This is in keeping with the orthodox discourse of the Middle Ages calling on those at the top to set an example of piety and service. Boncompagno's model imperial will, however, introduces specific material that belong to a will's body and not to its preamble:

> Constituimus ergo nostrum comissarium archiepiscopum Maguntinum, qui de camera nostra .X. milia marchas purissimi argenti recipiat et ex illis monasterium in aliqua silua sub congregatione Claraualensium construere non postponat. Si uero in ualescentibus egritudinum procellis debitum exsoluerimus humanitatis, duo milia libras auri uiduis, pauperibus, orphanis, hospitalariis, templariis, infectis aliisque necessitatem patientibus procurent taliter inpertiri, ut si qua macula de terrenis contagiis nobis inhesit, per elimosinarum largitiones et orationes pauperum diluantur.[35]

This might refer to the 1197 death of Emperor Henry VI—the *Mirra* was composed in 1203; the Deeds of Innocent III suggest some controversy over who was appointed the executor to the imperial will.[36] This assertion of authority is more than rhetorical—it offers a generic model fleshed out with specific interventions, and the tension between the generic and the specific gives the work a character that exceeds the strictly utilitarian nature that characterizes most such formularies. It makes moral arguments about the content and not just the form of wills: if such deference to the spiritual authority of the church and attentiveness to individual and collective need within Christendom is to be found in the world's ultimate temporal

[33] "In hoc autem libro proposui non iurisperiti, sed oratoris officium exercere [...]," Wight, *Medieval Diplomatic*, *Mirra*, 1.3; a recent critical edition of the *Mirra* may be found in Boncompagno da Signa, *Breviloquium, Mirra*, ed. Elena Bonomo and Luca Core, Subsidia mediaevalia patavina 12 (Padova: Il Poligrafo, 2013).

[34] "However much the celestial Father makes us abound among all mortals in the temporal dignity of marvels and in affluence of possessions, we should in like amount specially prepare for the last day with pious works and just actions, lest the day of the Lord, coming like a thief for the weighing of our sins, might take away from us the power to make a testament." Wight, *Medieval Diplomatic*, *Mirra*, 7.1.

[35] "Thus we constitute as our testamentary executor the archbishop of Mainz, who shall receive from our treasury 10,000 marks of pure silver, from which sum he shall not postpone to construct a monastery in a wooded area under the congregation of Clairvaux. If indeed, buffeted by waves of sickness, we shall have paid our debt of humanity, let 2000 pounds of gold be bestowed upon widows, paupers, orphans, Hospitallers, Templars, lepers and to others suffering need, so that if any stains of earthly contagion adheres to us, they shall be washed away through gifts of alms and the prayers of paupers," see ibid., *Mirra*, 7.2.

[36] James M. Powell, *The Deeds of Pope Innocent III* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 35.

authority, *a fortiori* it should be found in all disposed to leave a will. This sets the tone for the preambles to follow, wills written to suit less unique circumstances: prosperity, sea travel, pilgrimage, war, youth, age, old age, and extreme old age. In the section on wills composed on behalf of the very ill, Boncompagno argues that their preambles should be brief, since

> Pro infirmantibus non est exordiis utendum, quia repugnarent manifeste ueritati, cum infirmantes raro uel numquam exordiis utantur, sed cum gemitu et dolore coguntur sua negotia propalare. Ita nec tu, qui pro eo loqueris, debes uerborum longitudine uti, sed condere propere testamentum et narrare, que ab eo proponuntur sub competenti breuitate.[37]

If mortal sickness is signified by verbal paucity, we may then consider verbal copiousness as the manifestation of health, power, abundance, and authority; as *dictator*, Boncompagno demonstrates this.

Boncompagno da Signa wrote many texts besides the *Mirra* to provide prescriptive theory and illustrative samples for various kinds of documentary instruments. The *Boncompagnus* lists the works for which he takes credit; the first two of these are *artes dictandi* in the traditional mode, offering instruction and models for epistolary rhetoric. He also applied dictaminal principles—composition "in the office of the orator and not the notary"—to the formation of wills (as in the *Mirra*), statutes (the *Cedrus*), ascriptions of privilege (*Oliva*), and other documents associated with the *ars notariae* or the study of law. This makes sense in the context of Bologna; texts were the information technology of the high middle ages, Bologna the Silicon Valley, and *dictatores* and notaries the programmers and system administrators, elaborating the formats codified in the previous century and extending them to new contexts and purposes in a culture that celebrated egotism as much as ingenuity. The competitive egotism is plain to see in the prologue to the *Cedrus*:

> Propter geminam uictoriam quam Palma et Oliua mihi de inuidis prebuerunt, exalti sunt libri mei sicut cedrus Libani et quasi plantacio rose in Iericho. Vnde librum presentum Cedrum appello, quoniam hoc est dignus nomine nuncupari. Vel Cedrus dici merito potest per quandam similitudinem effectus. In hoc siquidem libro de statutis generalibus et laudamentis tractatur, quorum auctores uidentur ubique terrarum exaltari ut cedrus, cum inter alios componendi generalia statuta et pronuntiandi laudamenta recipiant potestatem.[38]

The author compares his works to a triumph over enemies, associating his textual production with a victory that in a sense sets up the author by analogy to a statesman, and from this rhetorical position of authority writes a formulary for the writing of general statutes. It also speaks to the competitive culture of Bolognese masters—Boncompagno asserts his superiority within this community, a community whose primacy he argues for in

[37] "Preambles should not be used for <the testaments of> sick persons, because it would be manifestly repugnant to the truth, since sick persons rarely or never use preambles, but are forced to carry out their business with groans and pain. Thus you who would speak for a sick person should not employ lengthiness of words, but should construct a testament quickly and narrate those things which are proposed by him under appropriate brevity." Wight, *Medieval Diplomatic*, *Mirra*, 23.1.

[38] "On account of the double victory which the *Palma* and the *Oliva* afforded me over enemies, my books are exalted like the cedar of Lebanon, like the propagation of a rose in Jericho. Whence I call this present book the Cedrus, since it is worthy to be called by this name. Or, it can be deservedly called Cedrus through a certain similarity of effect, inasmuch as general statutes and *laudamenta* are treated in this book, whose authors in all lands seem to be exalted like the cedar, since among others, they have received the power of composing general statutes and of pronouncing *laudamenta*," see ibid., *Cedrus*, 1.1-2.

the *Boncompagnus*. Again, there is an association of lists, verbal mastery, textual prowess, with plenitude, authority, and power. It is the *dictator* or a *notary* who gives actual verbal form to the statute. Boncompagno urges those who write statutes to add preambles even though it is not customary:

> Post istam autem inuocationem non consueuerunt illi, qui statuta dictant, uti aliquo exordio, aut quia exordiri nesciunt aut quia prolixitatem cupiunt euitare. Sed magis est credendum, hoc ex ignorantia prouenire.[39]

Boncompagno offers his instructions and profession as the antidote to this ignorance. The *Cedrus* features several model statutes, which offer long and specific accounts of contemporary situations.[40] This text also provides elaborate formulas for the composition of *laudamenta*, or binding arbitrations.[41] The notary might compose the judgment in the first person or record it in the third, so there is a certain ambiguity between the function of the *dictator* who composes and the notary who records. But both enact an educated mastery over authoritative textual discourses including the particular copiousness of legal discourse (to which we refer in modern times with the expression 'fine print'); legal discourse seeks to saturate the full range of meaning to avoid ambiguity, as evidenced in the common practice of legal doublets, seen here in the *Cedrus: dico et pronuncio nomine laudamenti firmiter obseruandi*.[42] This doubling redundancy—"I say and pronounce" is called a 'legal doublet'—have and hold, aid and abet, all and sundry—and in itself signifies the authority of the law. Boncompagno uses this doublet not in a model or formula, but to pronounce his own mastery over the forms of the *laudamenta* with the force of legal ceremony.

These collections of model documents reveal a performative self that coordinates their variations and that displays a unifying sensibility about both rhetorical and social values. However, the paramount social value expressed is the supremacy of the rhetorical master. In the prologue of the *Boncompagnus*, where the author puts the laurel on his book, he also compares his instruction to the life-giving abundance of water:

> Certum est et rei effectus ostendit, quod dividi potes in mille particulas et ultra, quarum quelibet humore doctrine aridum cor irrigat et intellectus germen producit tanquam rivulus a flumine derivatus. Aquam tuam igitur divide in plateis et noli curare, quid invidi referant, qui propter aliorum felicitates igne inextinguibili aduruntur, videntes quod lucem de fumo produxi et ambulantibus per errorum semitas rectitudinis itinera demonstravi nec ob aliud aliquorum errores perlegi, nisi ut per contraria viderem clarius veritatem.[43]

Here, the *copia verborum* of the dictaminal master is identified with the truth, freedom from

[39] "[...] those who compose statutes are not accustomed to use any preamble, either because they do not know how to compose preambles, or because they desire to avoid prolixity. But it is more likely that this comes about from ignorance," see ibid., *Cedrus*, 6.3.

[40] Ibid., *Cedrus*, 6.17-19.

[41] Ibid., *Cedrus*, 10.4-5.

[42] Ibid., *Cedrus*, 10.3.

[43] "It is certain and shows the effect of the matter, that you can be divided into a thousand particles and more, each of which may irrigate the arid heart with the liquid of doctrine and bring forth a sprout of meaning like a stream derived from a river. Therefore divide your water in the streets, and do not care what the envious may say, who burn with inextinguishable fire on account of others' happiness, seeing that from smoke I have brought forth light and have demonstrated paths of rectitude for those wandering in trails of errors, nor for anything else have I surveyed the errors of others but to see the truth more clearly by way of contrast," see ibid., *Boncompagnus*, 3.21-22. See n. 26.

error, and the 'liquid of instruction' irrigating the arid heart, imagery suggesting both natural fertility and life-giving baptismal water.

Guido Faba and the Heroic *Dictator*

This kind of bravado is not singular to Boncompagno; he is merely the outstanding instance of the wider culture of competition and self-assertion that prevailed at the University of Bologna in the opening decades of the thirteenth century. Guido Faba, one of Boncompagno's most renowned students, frames his vocation in almost messianic terms in the preface to the *Rota Nova* of 1225.[44] He claims that "celestial mercy" wished to elevate Bologna in the profession of Rhetoric (speaking, perhaps, to the rivalry among cities and *studia*) and so it has become "matrem in terris et magistram, a qua sicut a capite vel a fonte singuli viventes lumen accipiunt et doctrinam."[45] This echoes but outdoes the exalted civilizing mission that Cicero ascribes to rhetoric in *De inventione* 1.1, one of the most widely read and used rhetoric handbooks of the age. Guido goes on:

> Gaudeas siquidem, Bononia, vere felix prenimium et formosa facta, excelsa meritis et virtute, et tecum cives omnes laudes resonent ad superna, quia ex te natus est homo ille, qui veterum ignorantiam et confusionem modernam clarificet suis epistolis atque mundet.[46]

With this *captatio benevolentiae*—medieval arts handbooks are given to practice what they preach—Guido appeals to the civic pride of Bologna and places its intellectual culture—its *studia*, at the center of its civic self-regard. The intellectual culture of the University of Bologna developed around the study of canon law, and Guido indicates that he spent time studying law and then the notarial arts before returning to the study and teaching of rhetoric.[47]

> [...] curam capelle sancti Michaelis suscepit, in qua feliciter ad sacerdotalis ordinis officium est promotus, et rehedificans ecclesiam ipsam cum domibus ruinosis post vicinorum multas persecutiones et scandala, que substinuit patienter, quorum partem clerici fovebant civitatis latenter, novum templum fabricari fecit archangelo Michaeli, cuius preceptionibus et mandatis ystoriam hanc descripisit [...][48]

[44] Excerpted and translated in "Preface to the *Rota Nova*" in Rita Copeland and Ineke Sluiter, *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric: Language Arts and Literary Theory, AD 300 -1475* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 699-705; the Latin text can be found in Ernst H. Kantorowicz, "An 'Autobiography' of Guido Faba," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 1, no. 2 (1943): 253–80.

[45] Kantorowicz, "'Autobiography'," 278; "[...] mother and mistress of the sciences on earth, from which, as from a summit or fountainhead, every single living being receives light and instruction," Copeland and Sluiter, *Medieval Grammar*, 702.

[46] Kantorowicz, "'Autobiography'," 278. "Therefore Bologna, happy and beautiful creation beyond measure, lofty in your merit and virtue, may you indeed rejoice, and with you may all your citizens sing praises to the heavens, because from you was born this man, who dispels the ignorance of the ancients and modern confusion, and cleanses both with his letters," see Copeland and Sluiter, *Medieval Grammar*, 703.

[47] Kantorowicz, "'Autobiography'," 268.

[48] "[He] took on the care of the Chapel of Saint Michael, where he was happily promoted to sacerdotal office. There he renovated the church itself along with the crumbling houses, and having borne with patience the many persecutions and scandals of the neighbors whose faction the clerics of the city covertly supported, he had a new temple constructed in honor of the Archangel Michael by whose precepts and rules he has written this account," see Kantorowicz, "'Autobiography'," 268; translation by Copeland and Sluiter, *Medieval Grammar*, 705.

Ernst Kantorowicz suggests he was not literally a priest; the "sacerdotal office" refers to the Bolognese practice of appointing masters to specific chapels—the chapel of St. Michael was where grammar and rhetoric was taught. Again, we see Guido's heroic identity as *dictator*, his singular excellence, thrown into relief by the existence of "persecutions and scandals of the neighbors whose faction the clerics of the city covertly supported." Like Boncompagno, Guido's status as the target of envy, conspiracy, and enmity serves to underscore and enhance his status. This, perhaps, is a perennial feature of emulous communities—the boasting and insults common to Occitan troubadours, hip-hop MCs, and the Goliardic versifiers of the twelfth century.

Guido's boasting also resembles the goliards through a kind of parodic discourse that appropriates sacred language bordering on, if not indulging in, outright blasphemy.[49] At the beginning of his *Summa dictaminis*, Guido Faba paraphrases the epistle of Peter, and compares his lessons on proper letter writing to a revelation of sacred mysteries:

> Iam omnia sint aperta: ecce novella surrexit gratia,[50] abicite procul vetustatis errores, ut viri doctissimi sollicite precaventes ne ignorantie vel cecitatis fermento massa vestre prudentie corrumpatur. Advenite nunc omnes ad viridarium magistri Guidonis, qui dona sophie cupitis invenire, ubi dulces avium cantus resonant et suaviter murmurant a fontibus rivuli descendentes [...][51]

Again we see the generativity of the rhetorical master expressed in images of fertility, nature, abundance, and flowing fountains.

Kantorowicz also discerns a 'semi-farcical' effect to Guido's prologues, a rhetorical burlesque mismatching style and content. The effect of this mismatch is to draw attention to the prose style of authority as technique and performance; the manifestation of sacredness and majesty when a *dictator* writes on behalf of pope and emperor is not the necessary effect of their office but of his learning and skill. At the same time, there is something self-deprecating about this burlesque insofar as it reduces pomp to play. This curious combination of self-deprecation and self-promotion also recalls the goliardic ethos; isolating style in this way puts the power of style itself into relief, and asserts the professional identity of the stylistic master. This is evident, for instance in the Archpoet of Cologne's "Aestuans intrinsecus," where the poet shifts from confessing his sybaritic tendencies to advertising his skill in what appears like a pitch for a secretarial position.[52] This kind of play illustrates the power and importance of a certain kind of work; it promotes its maker as master of the profession and promotes the profession itself. This is one of the essential features of competition—competition entails, and even generates

[49] On the drinker's masses and nonsense saint's lives of twelfth-century school culture, see Martha Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages. The Latin Tradition* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

[50] The phrase *novella rex* is found in a gradual in the Christmas liturgy, underscoring the incarnational discourse of Guido's self-presentation here.

[51] "Let everything be now revealed—behold, a new favor has arisen, cast off far away the errors of old age, that the most learned men anxiously taking care that the bulk of your prudence be not corrupted by the ferment of ignorance or blindness. Come now all to the orchard of Master Guido, you who long for the gifts of wisdom, where the sweet songs of birds resound and the streams gently whisper as they flow from fountains [...]" Latin text from Guido Faba, *Guidonis Fabe summa dictaminis*, ed. Augusto Gaudenzi (Romagnoli - dall'Acqua, 1890), translation is my own.

[52] "Vide, si complaceat tibi me tenere; / in scribendis litteris certus sum valere, / et si forsan accidat opus imminere, / vices in dictamine potero supplere." Archipoeta and Hugo Primas, *Hugh Primas and the Archpoet*, trans. Fleur Adcock (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), in my own translation: "Look, if you should like to hire me, / I am sure to succeed in writing letters, / And if maybe it happens that there's work that needs doing, / I will be able in turn to help out with the letter writing," see.

community through agreement, implicit or explicit, over its methods and stakes. The glory of a champion is also the glory of the game.

Copious Narrative in Guido Faba's *Dictamina rhetorica*

The *Rota Veneris* of Boncompagno da Signa and the *Dictamina rhetorica* of Guido Faba are two collections featuring the arrangement of model letters into narrative sequences. It is possible that the designing of vivid or humorous narratives in model letters stood as an arena of professional competition in this time and place. The *Dictamina rhetorica* is Guido Faba's most widely attested work.[53] This collection's announced ambition is to demonstrate letters for a full range of possible occasions and demands—"quasi oraculo super omni materia suavitatis odorem exhibent litteratis."[54]

The organization of this collection is unconventional, proceeding not by rank, but by the social proximity of sender and recipient—the normal ordering is high to low, ecclesiastical to lay.[55] Thus, the *Dictamina rhetorica* begins with correspondence between immediate family members, then between cousins, then neighbors. Then come letters between scholars, then prelates, and then nobles, and as the work's focus passes through these orders its addressees move upward in clerical and lay rank. The topical focus of the *Dictamina rhetorica* thus moves for the most part from topics of greater to those of lesser relevance for students and masters at Bologna. This organizational scheme is in keeping with the way Guido Faba centers the study of rhetoric in the university, the university in the city, and the city itself in the cosmos.

If the *studia* are at the center of Guido's world, they are also at the center of Guido's representation of his work in the *Dictamina rhetorica*. The very first of the *Dictamina rhetorica*'s letters is of a kind familiar to medievalists since Haskins: a student requests money from his parents, explaining that necessities have consumed his money quicker than he had reckoned because of food being more expensive in Bologna.[56] The parents respond graciously, expressing their pride in his studies, their confidence in his diligence, and their wish that he should conclude his studies successfully while dwelling among his comrades honorably.[57] The third letter is again from the student's parents; they now declare their anguish and heartache upon hearing that their son is neglecting his studies to keep the company of prostitutes in brothels "day and night."[58] "Reverte igitur ad studium fili," they write, "reverte festinanter si nostram subventionem et gratiam unquam habere desideras vel expectas," and their subsequent language expresses in ever-amplifying terms their grief and shame.[59] In response, their self-described *devotissimus filius* expresses his shock and sadness that his parents could have believed the lies of his enemies. He insists that he has been living honorably, persevering in his studies, earning a good name in Bologna, and that his career and usefulness will put his detractors to shame.[60]

[53] Guido Faba, "Guidonis Fabe Dictamina rhetorica," ed. Augusto Gaudenzi, *Il Propugnatore* 5, no. 25–26 and 28–29 (1892): Gaudenzi dates this treatise to around 1228-1229, but Gaudenzi's work is in need of revision.

[54] "[...] like a heavenly oracle, to offer the learned the smell of sweetness on every subject matter," see ibid., preface.

[55] Giles Constable, "The Structure of Medieval Society According to the Dictatores of the Twelfth Century," in *Law Church and Society. Essays in Honor of Stephan Kuttner*, ed. Kenneth Pennington and Robert Somerville (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977),

[56] Faba, "Dictamina rhetorica," I.1; Charles Homer Haskins, "The Life of Medieval Students as Illustrated by Their Letters," *The American Historical Review* 3, no. 0 (1898).

[57] Faba, "Dictamina rhetorica," II.

[58] Ibid., III.

[59] "Return to your studies quickly, son, if you ever wish or hope to have our support and good will," see ibid.

[60] Ibid., IV.

This narrative suggests the possibility that the agonistic culture of the *studia*'s masters is paralleled or emulated by the students. It is also possible that Guido is projecting his own experience onto students, or even parodying it. The story of this student is specific and concrete, but at the same time, skeletal. We have no frame or narratorial perspective to ascertain whether the student is telling his parents the truth. The reader is not asked to support or oppose the justice of the student's claim. The form of the model letter creates a shifting 'I' and 'you' that generate alternate possibilities. The student's debauchery or defamation are both plausible, and this uncertainty perhaps invited an appreciative smile from the Bolognese students and masters who were the collection's first audience. Despite the potential interest of the narrative in its own right, its purpose is to provide a framework to demonstrate and model Guido's rhetorical prowess.

The exchange has a satirical flavor, and follows one tendency in medieval satire, following its Roman original, to deal in types more than identifiable persons, so the model letter as a genre lends itself to satiric use. If these are intended as models, then the student's situation can be taken as typical or unsurprising, which contributes to the world-building quality of the collection's epistolary narratives, the potential for a sequence of exchanged letters to evoke an enduring fictional world. This becomes clear a few letters later in the *Dictamina rhetorica* because, after presenting some other situations, it returns to a student having trouble with money and family. We want to read this as the same student; the succession of letters offer a sequence that, like the panels of a comic, invite the reader to connect them through an act of cognitive closure. Letter XXII has the rubric "De scholare ad consanguineum ut intercedat pro subventione apud patrem."[61] This kinsman reports his failure to soften the *duritia* of the father's heart, and instead passes along and reiterates the condemnation of his parents for falling in with bad company and neglecting his studies.[62] The young scholar then begs a *propinquus*, a neighbor, to intercede![63] There is a certain domestic comedy to this repetition; the *propinquus* reports that the father is immovable because of the *serpentina lingua* of the young scholar's many detractors.[64] These two letters connect to the opening sequence of letters, implying the young scholar's periodic calling on an ever-widening network of family, friends, and acquaintances.

According to Constable, the organization of the *ars dictaminis*'s examples typically models the social hierarchy; in this case it gives an index not of hierarchy but of social distance.[65] It also, perhaps, does the work of resocializing the student into the priorities and affiliations of the university—not asking him to renounce family connections but to mobilize them to enable study. At letter LXI, the story takes a turn that links the student narrative to the wider institutional issues and experience reflected in Guido's own account of his studies in his 'autobiography.'[66] The student writes to his uncle asking for help in transferring his area of study from the liberal arts to law.[67] The uncle responds that he does not believe his nephew has spent enough time studying liberal arts and commands him to spend another year on this 'foundation of knowledge.'[68] If the work aims to teach epistolary rhetoric, it also has a

[61] "From a scholar to a kinsman that he should intercede with his father for financial assistance," see ibid., XXII.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid., XXIII.
[64] Ibid., XXIV.
[65] See n. 55. The difference between social hierarchy and social proximity is discussed in Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959), 259.
[66] Faba, "Dictamina rhetorica," LXII, see n. 47.
[67] Ibid., LXI.
[68] Ibid., LXII.

more embracing meta-rhetoric persuading the reader of the collection about the value of its subject. Thus, as the work of an interested party, it models what Guido might have seen as appropriate priorities and views not just for students but also for those patronizing their studies. The last student letter in the collection features another repetition; the student asks a friend to intercede with his uncle to restore his financial help.[69] The friend responds with his regrets: "Nam quicquid tibi dedit se asserit amisisse, quoniam non in studio sed in postribulo, non in litteris sed potius in tabernis, dicitur quod omnia consumisti"—recalling directly the opening letters and bringing the narrative full circle.[70]

Given Guido's abortive legal career and what was no doubt the pervasive hegemony of legal study at Bologna, there should be little surprise that a liberal arts master should be called to advocate his discipline over law. For the same reason it should come as no surprise that there is a resemblance between the elaboration of *causae* (cases) among the canonists and the elaboration of cases for letters treated by the *dictatores*. Both trade in hypothetical situations often too far-fetched, elaborate, or specific to be understood as describing commonplace events. The two genres of hypothetical narrative, however, ask a different kind of work from their readers. The *causae* of the *Decretum* ask for judgment and analysis, not identification or impersonation. When presenting the case of a woman abandoned by her husband, the *causa* asks the reader to adjudicate principles of right and responsibility. If these legal *causae* are elaborate and highly specified, this is not to increase their verisimilitude or narrative power, but to achieve greater precision about the problem or set of problems that they pose to the canonist in order to finally work out a clear solution and to articulate the enduring principles on which the solution is based. In other words, the *causae* are 'philosophers' tales,' thought experiments.[71]

The fictions of these Bolognese *artes dictandi* work differently; they do not ask for adjudication but participation and even role-playing. The events of these fictions that call them into being as narrative are always summoned through a petitioning voice; the reader of the handbook is implicitly charged by virtue of the book's stated function with voicing that petition. Responding to this charge might demonstrate rhetorical virtuosity, but the fiction is open and undetermined in a way that a canonist's *causa* cannot be. The *causa* is narrated in the third person in a way that tells the reader everything they need to know to carry out their legal reasoning. The narratives embedded in the *ars dictandi*'s model letters ask to be read as actual letters from one person to another, so that their generality reads like a deliberate concealment of specifics, but they hint obliquely at a lived experience and in a way that evokes a persistent fictional world. This evocation takes place whether the events described are unusual or predictable. This incompleteness is a necessary part of a fictional world, according to Thomas Pavel. We do not, for example, know the names of Sherlock Holmes's grandparents, but are led to assume they exist.

In Pavel's description, when events that belong to our world become fictions, they undergo what he calls 'conventional framing,' a reduction of detail to familiar types that can be easily contemplated and understood.[72] I suggest that this hermeneutic can be reversed. The reader can begin with the conventional circumstances that pattern the letters of the *Dictamina rhetorica* and collections like it—the pairing of two social identities which

[69] Faba, "Dictamina rhetorica," LXIII.

[70] "For [the uncle] asserts that whatever he has given you you lost, since it is said that you have spent everything not in study but in the bawdy house, not in letters but rather in taverns," ibid., LXIV.

[71] Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 30.

[72] Thomas G. Pavel, *Fictional Worlds* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1986), 86.

provide circumstances for an exchange of letters—and imbue those letters with an increasing level of detail to the extent that they become less and less conventional and more and more the narration of unique and unrepeatable narrative events. Boncompagno's book of instruction on how to write love letters, the *Rota Veneris*, gives the circumstances and dispositions of the exemplary lovers to achieve the high degree of specificity found in romance or novella. In this way, the writer of fictional letter collections is the generative inventor described by Boncompagno in the *Rhetorica novissima*, the Genius-like figure who figures forth the range of possible letters as something like the building of a world through 'fabulation'.

Recurring characters like the scrounging student are just one part of a broader social representation that emerges from the small narratives of the *Dictamina rhetorica*. One sequence has two cousins (*consobrini*) discussing a threat to their inheritance from an uncle with no legitimate children. This exchange of letters includes warnings about threats from specific enemies.[73] Another short sequence represents the blustering threats of two counts against each other, arranging a place and time for combat.[74] If the *Dictamina rhetorica* was used in the way it offers itself to use, the early thirteenth century was a world in which a count who wished to threaten a neighboring magnate with military force put an educated secretary to the task of consulting a formulary like Guido's to find a suitable Latin threat or fashion an appropriate variation. But we, like (I think) the Bolognese students for whom it was written, encounter the *Dictamina rhetorica* as a sequence of letters, responses, and dialogues, enlarged and intertwined with stories of murder, conspiracy, war, unplanned pregnancies, blood feuds, and other parts of the social reality of thirteenth-century Europe with a vividness that demonstrates Guido's ability not just at finding appropriate and grand rhetoric for all these occasions, but at making fictions populated by indigent students, nobles, bankers, merchants, tailors, judges, wives, sisters, and so forth.

Conclusion: Competing Textualities and Humanistic Authorship in European Literature

Ronald G. Witt writes about Northern Italy at this time as a place where two different Latin cultures, a 'book culture' and a 'documentary culture,' are crashing against each other.[75] In these works by Boncompagno da Signa and Guido Faba, men educated at the intersection of these two cultures and responding to their creative demands, we see their creative ferment generated by the friction between those two worlds, and this creativity anticipates the capacious frame stories of Boccaccio and Chaucer. This narrative richness is a surprising feature of the *ars dictandi*, an innovation of the early thirteenth century, and perhaps an effect of the uneasy overlap of these two textual cultures. Boncompagno da Signa and Guido Faba stand at the beginning of a tradition that will flow in a thousand rivulets into the humanistic literary culture of the fourteenth century. Petrarch and Boccaccio studied law and the notary arts and were thus immersed in the culture of profuse textuality of which Boncompagno is a foundational figure. Further research, I suggest, will continue to demonstrate that Boncompagno and his immediate progeny are a direct link in literary history between the goliardic braggadocio of the literary culture of twelfth-century secular clerics and the self-assertion of later humanistic literary culture.

[73] Faba, "Dictamina rhetorica," XVIII-XXI.
[74] Ibid., XXXVI-XXXVII.
[75] See n. 4

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The Morosophistic Discourse of Ancient Prose Fiction

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Abstract

This essay explores a set of connections between philosophy and prose fiction. It combines a somewhat Foucauldian outlook on the question of genealogical filiation with a Bakhtinian interest in polyphony and heteroglossia. This is an overview of the various possibilities for the emplotment of the story of knowledge. The structural details of these plots inform the quality of the knowledge that eventuates from them. In coarse terms, I am asking what it means to insist upon the novelistic qualities of Plato while simultaneously thinking about the Platonic qualities of novels. This highly selective survey starts with classical Athens, touches upon Plutarch and Lucian, and then lingers with narrative prose fiction more specifically by examining the texts of Chariton, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus, Apuleius, and Petronius.

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Introduction: Emplotting Knowledge

The subject of this journal is "Latin Cosmopolitanism and European Literatures." And this issue takes as its topic the schools. I will explore the perhaps overly broad topic of Greek education and Latin literary production. That is, I am not going to write about Latin literature as if it were a prologue to European literature. Instead I am going to examine a dialectic of cosmopolitanism and literary production within the Roman period. In order to do so we will need to think about the cultural antecedents that were ultimately recast within the Roman era. But by my own conclusion I do hope to connect up with the main currents of the issue. We will first travel a little further upstream in order to explore various moments where the waters of erudition and wisdom mingled in the Greco-Roman tradition.

The appropriation of Latin schooling by later centuries recapitulates founding aspects of Roman prose fiction's emergence as a vernacular literature in its own right. Roman prose fiction is a learned-and-stupid literature that will inspire still further vernacular literatures.

And as is clear from the other pieces in this issue, these are literatures that likewise arise out of a self-conscious engagement with a bookish past. And, significantly, the moment of literary emergence for ancient prose fiction is marked by various impieties and reversals of foundational gestures. Chief among them is a refusal of discourse to confine itself to the search for enlightenment as per the dictates of the philosophers. Indeed, wisdom and erudition can find themselves demoted from ends, and they can become mere means. And, as means, they are wont to do no more than menial service relative to some 'higher' literary purpose. This aesthetic orientation of itself represents a transgression of the evaluative schema that reserved the sublime for philosophy alone.[1] Indeed laughter, absurdity, and ridicule emerge as forces that can demolish the old figures of sublimity in the name of replacing them with novel(istic) possibilities.

We can trace some notable contours of this process by attending to the dramaturgy of knowledge within the prose traditions of Greece and Rome. Given our own training, we are apt to associate learning with the textbook and its flat expository style. This mode delivers up a series of facts, illustrations, and proofs. The classical period was abundantly supplied with flat expository textbooks, but the textbook by no means furnishes the only mode of presentation.[2] We can also find texts that give a plot to their story of learning. Instead of a textual object that itself (re)produces knowledge-as-object, we see characters who embody an acquired knowledge that they disseminate to others. That is, learning is extremely subject-oriented in such a text: the human process is every bit as important as the product. And the product itself is less 'knowledge' in the abstract than the concrete emergence of 'one who knows'. We see characters who acquire or modify their own understanding in the course of a drama of learning.[3] And, naturally, the reader is an invisible supplementary character within this drama. The net effect is a textual apparatus that fuses learning and literary production, and it does so in a programmatic fashion.

These dramas of erudition have their specific plots. Here plot means, effectively, the ostensible subject of the conversation, whether the topic is the nature of the soul or the best means of household management. Dialogism in such a scheme indicates, in effect, the process that subjects undergo when they engage in learned dialogue and so subject themselves to self-transformation at the level of their thinking. What a narratologist might call a plot arc a Greek would describe via a set of metaphors derived from travel. Furthermore the shape of the plot of one of these texts is convergent with their epistemological status. Discussions either find a path to a solution or they do not: there is either a *poros* or we end in aporia. 'Method' is itself a word derived from the vocabulary of movement along a road.[4]

Implicit in the formal question of these dialogic journeys towards knowledge are a host of expectations. In addition to the question of finding a path, we will observe a preoccupation

1 See the sixth chapter of James I. Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), where the philosophers' sublime is explored. Porter explores the tension within antiquity between 'the grand style' qua style and the broader variety of ways of conceptualizing 'the lofty'.

2 Even the most formal, dry version of the ancient curriculum has difficulty staying clear of implicit provocations to fiction. One thinks especially of the instructions regarding invention and narration or of the practice of declamation: here one is being taught story-telling. On the relationship between declamation and the novelistic imagination see Danielle van Mal-Maeder, *La fiction des déclamations* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

3 On the dramaturgy of antiquarian knowledge see Erik Gunderson, *Nox Philologiae: Aulus Gellius and the Fantasy of the Roman Library* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

4 *Poros*: v. πόρος, "means of passing (a river)" or "(more generally) pathway, way." *Aporia*: v. ἀπορία, "(of places) difficulty of passing," "(of things) difficulty, straits," "(of persons) being at a loss, embarrassment, perplexity." Method: v. μέθοδος (= μετά + ὁδός), "mode of prosecuting an inquiry, method, system." A ὁδός is "a way, road."

with the overcoming of limitations, the dissolution of difference, efforts towards convergence and coherence. Here we can shift our metaphors to another favorite ancient register: the theory of music. The polyphonous initial presentation and the variegated cast of characters frequently gives way to a higher order synthesis that finds concord among the varied voices. Whether or not all of these features are always present is somewhat beside the point, the real issue is that I have just described a situation that is convergent with modern sensibilities about literary production. And, of course, this ancient species of literary production is keen to ensure that synthesis at the level of discursive form converges at the level of knowledge as such.[5] What Aristotle says of the ideal drama works well for the ideal philosophical dialogue: recognition and reversal converge and they do so at a moment of crisis for the character who has just encountered a species of enlightenment.

What I describe as a typical set of features is by no means an inevitable set of features. Complications abound. Instead of concordant polyphony throughout the flow of a work we can detect as well contrapuntal elements. Some characters resist the movement of the plot and are never fully integrated into the final synthesis. Cacophonous interruptions are even conceivable, but these are seldom the last notes to sound and are instead a sort of overture to a still more elaborate bit of literary and conceptual orchestration.[6] Let us take designate this as the Form of Dialogue, or, perhaps more usefully, its Ideal Type.[7]

I wish to fill in this initial sketch of learning and the literary. And then I want to transition to the set of complications that arise when new literary configurations confront the old traditions of erudite discourse. Here our challenge will be to avoid the reflex that reduces the literary rejoinder to a mere parody or a mere failure, that is, to see in non-philosophical discourse something that is either inconsequential or beneath notice. If Plato is said to have abandoned literary production in the name of philosophy, why might people who were fully apprised of the legacy of Greek dialogue make the converse move and turn away from philosophy and towards literature? The intellectually lazy answer is to say that their own insipidity drove them to it.

To anticipate the conclusion of this piece, let us imagine that people who made this choice were enticed by the possibility of productively recasting those earlier traditions. In particular I suspect that the old framework no longer seemed adequate to an evolved *episteme*.[8]

[5] Unless you are a Derridean for whom synthesis always fails. The deconstructive subtext of my argument can be unpacked as follows. Begin with notions of structure and presence. Then emphasize the self-presence of speech and the complicitly consonant structure of the book-of-speech. Next set these notions against an affirmative act of non-centering. What ensues is a Nietzschean poetics in contradistinction to a Platonic one. See Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play," in *Writing and Difference*, ed. Jacques Derrida and Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 292; the longer version takes us into "Plato's Pharmacy," where one should read especially the section on "Play," see Jacques Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissemination* (London: Athlone, 1981), 63–171.

[6] See, for example, Thrasymachus in Plato's *Republic*. The unsatisfactory debate with Socrates in Book 1 is in fact the way we set the agenda for the rest of the *Republic*. See In Ha Jang, "Socrates' Refutation of Thrasymachus," *History of Political Thought* 18 (1997): 206.

[7] On the ideal type as a heuristic device, see Max Weber, *Max Weber on the Methodology of the Social Sciences* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1949), 89–93.

[8] The word *episteme* signals a Foucauldian debt. At issue is the perceived adequacy of one set of intellectual tools within a new discursive formation. Even if the word itself remains the same, the structure that subtends 'knowledge' in, say, democratic Athens, need not be the same as that which undergirds 'knowledge' in the vast, heterogenous Roman empire. See Michel Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 196–198; each of those items offers an encapsulation of key elements of Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *The Order of Things*. Compare to Michel Foucault, "On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle," in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology: Essential Works of Foucault,*

In particular the 'subject of knowledge' can no longer be assumed to be a Greek man raised within a very specific and historically fragile set of circumstances. And, accordingly, novelistic discourse spoke both to the contemporaneous moment as well as to a future of knowledge.[9] And hence the neologistical title of this essay: the discourse of ancient prose is morosophistic in as much as it leverages a productive species of 'stupidity' relative to the cleverness of the wise. It offers a rejoinder to the discourse of wisdom that implicitly indicts prose on a charge of sophistry. What had been a philosophical story of the all is replaced by a formal critique of 'allness'. Bakhtinian polyglossia intrudes into the monologic domain of hegemonic discourse and insists that something important got left out of the discussion.[10]

While I will focus on philosophical dialogue, I am perhaps less interested in philosophy *per se* than I am in the social space occupied by philosophy in particular and educated society in general.[11] This is the realm of the good and the beautiful, an exclusive and exclusionary domain that fetishizes elite male citizens while eliding and deprecating the voices of persons who are not members of this privileged set. Accordingly I am not offering Plato as a specific antecedent of the texts I will speak of subsequently. Rather than seeing the later authors as reacting to an earlier one, I want to think about questions of how prose can effect a centering operation around which a whole discursive world can and will form.[12] That is the first part of the paper. The later segments all concern themselves with various reactions to the possibility or desirability of striving for such a center.

Communicating Wisdom over Drinks: Plato's *Symposium*

Plato's *Symposium* is obsessed with the question of remembering and recording speech.[13] In fact, the dialogue as a whole is preoccupied with the nexus between *eros* and speech: what discourse of love is the most love-like? Which lovely words really get to the nature of love

1954-1984, ed. James Faubion, vol. 2 (New York: The New Press, 1998), 297–333.

9 Throughout I will use the terms 'novel' and 'novelistic' even though this involves a notorious question of anachronism. See, for example, Niklas Holzberg, *The Ancient Novel: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 26. 'Prose fiction' is the more accurate designation of the domain. But even that label is not especially satisfying. One could settle instead for the following: this is a discussion of elements of how a certain collection of texts work and, by implication, how texts that are proximate to them might also work.

10 It is difficult to do a strict, orthodox Bakhtinitan reading —whatever that might be...— of the ancient material, even when it is the very material that Bakhtin himself discusses. See Robert Bracht Branham, "The Poetics of Genre: Bakhtin, Menippus, Petronius," in *The Bakhtin Circle and Ancient Narrative*, ed. Robert Bracht Branham (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2005), Branham offers a collection of revisions and qualifications. For example, Branham shows how 'Menippean' is perhaps less useful than 'carnivalesque' when thinking about Bakhtin, even though Bakhtin uses both terms. Yet this latter term itself needs further explication and complication. I too would prefer to attend to the chief issues rather than to litigate the details: certain key Bakhtinitan themes and features remain exceptionally useful as points of orientation and inspiration.

11 It is hard to find a time where one might tidily separate education and literature. For example, the poems of the archaic poet Hesiod are frequently described as wisdom literature. But our story can begin with Plato.

12 Plato is not the *Ursprung* of what comes later. Instead the *Entstehung* of prose discourse can be described as marked by the tokens of a Platonic *Herkunft*. Which is to say that my argument is much more 'geneaological' than 'historical'. See Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, ed. James Faubion, vol. 2 (New York: The New Press, 1998), 369–91.

13 The dialogue is in fact not really a dialogue: it is the story of a dialogue told by one man who has been asked to recall what he remembers of a party by another man who has heard about it but who was not there. Plato's *Phaedrus* is even more explicitly concerned about questions of speech and memory.

itself?[14] Various gentlemen give various accounts of love that are consonant with their own delimited horizon of expectations: the pretty boy talks about how pretty love is; the doctor makes love into a question of medical harmony, and so forth. But the discussion is not merely about love, many of these men are erotically interested in someone else at the table. And so all of the speeches are also themselves a sort of bid for love and affection.

Even Socrates' own position could be read by a cynic as a mere self-description. In recounting what he heard from Diotima Socrates makes love into an in-between thing, a means of approaching the beautiful and eternal. Once one understands the in-between art of bringing forth (true) beauty, the story of metaphysical ascent towards the Form of the Beautiful can ensue.[15] But, as the speech of Alcibiades makes clear, Socrates himself offers to his interlocutors a chance to make a metaphysical ascent, provided they are ready to let Socrates' words sink into their souls and to germinate there. And so the limited, particular horizons that we began with will give way to the possibility of finding our way to a higher ground from which to see clearly.

This dialogue about Socratic dialogue purports to give us a formula for approaching the Forms in their universality. But Plato's text implies that monologue is the proper successor of dialogue. The initial dialogism of the *Symposium* is the product of a collection of naive particularities.[16] And, further, even if one finds the idea of ascent to monologism to be a comforting thesis, there is a strong sense that the socially good and beautiful are the only people who will be positioned to make this ascent. One need only look at the people at the party. And the early dismissal of the flute-girl is itself a sign that this is even more exclusive event than your average elite party.[17] The already lofty can and should rise further. Gentlemen are the ones who can move from their empirical privilege and mount onto the plane of metaphysical distinction. And from this higher vantage they can discern the unitary Form of The Good instead of being mired in the confusion of many partial instantiations of the good, a collection of fragments that tend only to deceive and to pull us away from our upward journey. Everything that rises must converge, and an empirically good man is obligated to attempt the ascent towards the better until he has The Good Itself.

Table-talk about Books about People who Talked at Tables

Plato's dialogue takes its title from a concrete social institution. The symposium was a key cultural event: gentlemen gathered, discoursed, and drank. Plato's *Symposium* takes something that was sociologically lofty and then enfolds it in the literary sublime while arguing, of course, that this same gesture is also a means of achieving the philosophical

[14] To anticipate what follows somewhat, Winkler notes that the Aristophanic joke about love in the *Symposium* turns into the core of the romantic plot of the novel. See John J. Winkler, "The Invention of Romance," in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. James Tatum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 37. Like so many connections between this dialogue and that genre, these ties are distinctive because of their ironies and surprises rather than owing to their tidy indications of linear descent.

[15] See Plato, *Opera*, ed. J. Burnet, vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), *Symposium* 210a-211d.

[16] On the *Symposium* and its relationship to Bakhtin's dialogism and novelistic discourse see Kevin Corrigan and Elena Glazov-Corrigan, "Plato's Symposium and Bakhtin's Theory of the Dialogical Character of Novelistic Discourse," in *The Bakhtin Circle and Ancient Narrative*, ed. Robert Bracht Branham (Groningen: Barkhuis, 2005), Corrigan and Glazov-Corrigan are much more up-beat in their appraisal of Plato's commitment to polyglossia than I am.

[17] She is cursorily dismissed (χαίρειν ἐᾶν). But, if she wishes, she might play to herself or to the womenfolk inside the house (Plato, *Symposium* 176e). On the gender dynamics of the dialogue, see David M. Halperin, "Why is Diotima a Woman?," in *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality: And Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York/London: Routledge, 1990), 113–151.

sublime. As a specifically literary conceit, the fecund possibilities of table-talk will remain productive for centuries, if not millennia. Massive, encyclopedic works such as Athenaeus' *Deipnosiphistae* and Macrobius' *Saturnalia* are sympotic texts. Portraits of gentlemanly dialogues offer the framework for a variety of mannered works that are preoccupied with the lives and habits of the elite. And what becomes clear when reading these various works is that dramatic dialogue and social theory have been pointedly fused.[18] One dramatizes community formation and community values. But none of this is merely a rewriting of the Platonic text. A closer inspection of the details of several of these later works will reveal a set of structural ironies that displace Socrates' philosophical irony. That is, dialogue is taking on a life of its own. In fact, dialogue is becoming a vehicle for articulating the impossibility of the very sort of monological synthesis that one associates with Plato and the theory of the Forms. We find in such texts a heterogenous moment that is neither 'classical' nor 'novelistic'. These texts are instead piously oriented towards the monologism of the former while evincing—in form, in practice and often as well in theory—an affinity with the dialogism of the latter.

I would like to pluck out a few related strands of thought that are gathered from the rich, variegated tapestry of Imperial prose. Specifically I would like to look at some passages from texts written by people who are both extremely interested in Plato and also drifting away from the very conceptual framework to be found in this same Plato whom they idolize. People still read Plato and think about him carefully, but 'Plato' and 'Athens' are by now remote cultural objects no matter how much effort one expends on making them proximate, immediate, and vital. In fact each term can at times label nothing more than the idea of a center towards which a heterogenous project moves. That is, a 'return to origins' can mask a postlapsarian power-grab that cloaks itself in antique, conservative trappings.

Plutarch's Platonizing takes place in a world where Athens has long since ceased to be a cultural and political power-house. Plutarch is a Greek living within a Roman empire. He posits the relevance of that Greek past to the Greco-Roman present. Most obviously we can look at the *Parallel Lives* where (often Athenian) Great Men are paired up with Exemplary Romans. Plutarch's *Life of Marius* opens and closes with explicitly Platonic meditations, meditations about self-moderation, the wisdom required of leaders, and the problem of a ruler insatiable for power. Marius, a man who prided himself on his ignorance of Greek, would, our biographer implies, have done well to read something like Plato's *Republic* and its account of the soul.[19] Such gestures send an implicit message to Plutarch's readers: "Certain truths are timeless. Go back to the old Greek philosophers and you can understand the Rome of the 90s BCE that gave us the Empire of the 90s CE."

But, conversely, the chaotic, broken lives—and *Lives*...—of Otho and Galba make one wonder about the actual ability of the biographical project to explain the Empire of living memory and the discord of 69 CE. For example, *Otho* 14 is exceptionally deceptive about the part played by Plutarch's own patron in the civil war of that year. Plutarch describes visiting a civil war battle site with Mestrius Florus many years later. Mestrius' "insincere partisanship" (*μὴ κατὰ γνώμην*) during the chaos of the Year of Four Emperors is casually

[18] Plato's contemporary Xenophon also writes a *Symposium*, but this work is much less ambitious philosophically: instead the participants all focus on a socio-political story of gentlemanly moderation in the face of desire. And in many ways Xenophon's text offers the surer template for a history of prose fiction as an exercise in the theory and practice of social reproduction. For 'gentlemanly moderation' see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2: The Use of Pleasure* (New York: Vintage, 1990), 78-93.

[19] See Plutarch, *Marius* 2 and *Marius* 46. The former is effectively the first chapter of the life, the latter is the last chapter.

mentioned in the course of a long digression on the unusual fate of the bodies of some of the dead. Furthermore Plutarch does not explicitly note here that Mestrius is his own patron. The true political principles and resolutions of these men, that is their "sincere partisanship" (*γνώμαι*), are left strategically opaque. What are these beliefs? What were they? It turns out that, in contradistinction to the timeless truths heaped upon us elsewhere, more timely meditations are not necessarily all that pellucid. And, in contrast to old Attic meditations, contemporary Antonine ones are not very thick on the ground. They emerge only in little details that poke out once every so often in the *Lives*.

We can hear a nostalgic, centralizing major chord not just in Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, but so too in his *Dialogue on Love*. But things have changed, and perhaps fundamentally. The topic of the dialogue and general pattern of the articulation of the titular theme may be familiar enough, but the invocation of the old Greek thinking on these issues is flagged precisely as old thinking. New questions have emerged, especially when it comes to female agency. In the *Symposium* Plato's Diotima is a woman, yes, but she is really an abstract figure, a sage and not a lover. Conversely Plutarch's Ismenodora is herself a lover. And the dialogue is predicated on the fact that she is rich, in love, and determined to get her boy. The dialogue will transition away from Platonic pederasty and towards heterosexual marriage. The final moments of the text are Roman and imperial and heterosexual.[20] And so, even though we begin with Plato and allusions to the *Phaedrus* (749a), there is a sustained attack on the sublimity of homoerotics throughout rather than a presupposition of the excellence of the institution. Here the contrast with Plato's *Symposium* is stark. Plutarch writes something that has Platonic beats and rhythms and melodies, but the song itself is not at all the same old Athenian tune.[21] This is new music for a new world even as it poses as a faithful remake of a golden oldie.

Plutarch is hardly alone in his effort to insist that yesterday's Greece should be considered vital to a contemporary agenda even as this same effort to posit the relevance simultaneously exposes the many ways in which the past is truly past. The converging, ascending purity of the old Athenocentric thesis is revealed to be but a single cultural thread rather than an eternal philosophical truth. And, while precious, this same thread is not some golden filament that will unerringly lead one past the maze of the contemporary and up and out to some higher, timeless plane. Imperial writers may well revere the Greek past, but they do not live in it. This situation produces inevitable complications.[22]

Lucian, a man whose native language was perhaps Syriac writes a variety of works in the Greek of classical Athens. He has laboriously acquired the canonical learning, and he is not ready to turn his back on it.[23] His 'pure' Greek fetishistically reconstructs (the fantasy

[20] The text ends with the story of a Gaulish wife whose fidelity to her husband makes everyone hate the emperor Vespasian. See Plutarch, *Amatorius* 770d-771c. Conversely Alcestis is merely a member of a class of self-sacrificing persons at Plato, *Symposium* 208b. And she is introduced introduced as part of a condescending line of argument in *Symposium* 179b: "But even women are willing to die on another's behalf [...]"

[21] See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 3: The Care of the Self* (New York: Vintage, 1988), 193-210; the conclusion of the chapter summarizes his observations on the manner in which Platonic erotics has been dismantled in the course of the piece: "There can no longer be a place for [boys and pederasty] in this great unitary and integrative chain in which love is revitalized by the reciprocity of pleasure." Foucault, *Care of the Self*, 210.

[22] The "Greekness in process" described by Goldhill has as one of its chief elements the conjuring of an Athens that likely never was, and yet this is an Athens against which one stakes out a variety of stances as part of a process of self-positioning within the contemporary world of the Roman empire. See Simon Goldhill, "Introduction: Setting an Agenda," in *Being Greek Under Rome : Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 20.

[23] "Both Lucian and Philostratus see Greek culture—its establishment, value, maintenance,—as a question

of) a specific place and time, and this same erudite Greek hierarchically distinguishes men from one another in a polyglot empire where the Greek language itself is not a single, simple thing.

Lucian's 'classical Greek' is not an idiosyncratic anachronism. It is instead a representative moment in a centuries-long effort to construct a legitimate linguistic center that can be seized and monopolized by a certain class of man. Consider, for example, the various collections of Attic words that survive in antiquity. They are teaching tools that enable people to police their own Greek and that of others so as to ensure that it is sufficiently 'pure'. Athenaeus (late second century CE) cites Philemon's *On Attic Words*. Aelius Dionysius (second century CE) writes a work on Attic words. The grammarian Orus (fifth century CE) likewise has a Collection of Attic Words. See entries like the following: "We say *bibliopôlên* and *not biblopôlên*. Theopompus: 'I'll stone the booksellers (*bibliopôlous*).'"[24] Failing to add the iota after the first lambda in the word exposes that 'you' are not one of 'us', i.e. you are not one of the (educated) people who can speak the Greek of Athens from nearly one thousand years ago. Instead 'you' are one of the (uneducated) people who speak the everyday Greek of the Roman empire. And this word-gathering project goes on for a very long time indeed: Thomas Magister (late thirteenth century CE) has a *Collection of Attic Names and Words*. An analogous phenomenon is occurring in the Latin world as well.[25] A tremendous amount of energy was exerted in the name of actively stemming the tide of polyglossia and building dykes to keep the vernacular off the learned page.

Nevertheless, if Socrates cannot imagine leaving Athens, men like Lucian—men who were born outside of and might perhaps never see Athens—can only have an ironic relationship to the organic intellectualism that Socrates espoused.[26] Socratic irony as seen in the dialogues of Plato finds itself displaced into a variety of formal ironies in a subsequent author. As Alcibiades insists in the *Symposium*, Socrates' deceptively rough appearance and his lowbrow language hide inner treasures.[27] But in Lucian the figure of the philosopher has been inverted. Glossy surfaces now hide cavernous vacuity. In Lucian's works men of learning are typically frauds, and what they know tends to be a sort of bookish know-how that gets you admitted to the right sort of society and recognized as the right sort of reader of the right sort of text.

The living voice fetishized by Plato is replaced by bibliomania: men talk like books. Writing spells the death of memory: see Plato's *Phaedrus*. But now one speaks 'by the book', 'from the book', and 'like a book', and the interest gained on the ancient legacy bastardizes the original figure of inception-and-conception.[28] The valorized productive and reproductive 'psychic pregnancy' of Plato's *Symposium* has vanished.[29] Philosophical dialogue turns into an

integral to their intellectual projects, and to the social impact of their writing," see ibid., 7.

[24] Orus, *Das attizistische Lexikon des Oros*, ed. Klaus Alpers, Sammlung griechischer und lateinischer Grammatiker 4 (Berlin, 1981), fr. 19: "*βιβλιοπώλην, οὐχὶ βιβλοπώλην λέγομεν. Θεόπομπος: `τοὺς βιβλιοπώλας λεύσομαι'.*"

[25] For the absurdities of the same, see Erik Gunderson, "The Paraphilologist as 'Pataphysician," in *'Pataphilology: An Irreader*, ed. Sean Gurd and Vincent W. J. van Gerven Oei (North Charleston: Punctum, 2018), 169–217.

[26] Goldhill says the following on Lucian's Scythian: "The ironist's discussion of Athenian irony seems designed to make the scene of learning the site of a ludic confusion of voices." Goldhill, "Introduction," 4.

[27] See again Plato, *Symposium* 221e.

[28] See Derrida on Plato's *Pharmacy*. Deeply ambiguous figures like interest-and-offspring (*tokos*) haunt the Platonic figuration of 'The father of the Discourse'. That is, the 'pure' and 'original' version of dialogue is already obsessed with bastards precisely because it is working so hard to constitute its own immaculate, originary status. Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 75-84.

[29] For Plato on psychic pregnancy and the ascent towards the good, see Frisbee C. C. Sheffield, *Plato's*

occasion for a collection of erudite jokes and nothing more. Lucian's own *Symposium* turns the table-talk of the philosophers into a drunken brawl that recalls the mythical fight of the Centaurs and the Lapiths.[30] By shunning the earnest propaeudeutic project of the *Phaedrus* with its insistence upon presence and the living word, Lucian's bookish inversion learnedly repeats Plato's argument, wittily illustrates its content, and validates it, albeit in a most ironic manner. Lucian shows that Plato 'got it right' both because of his own efforts and in spite of them. In Lucian we have book-culture turning against itself just as Plato said it would. And yet we do not have access to the monologic discourse of Truth.[31] We are amused (by the Platonic image), but not improved (because it really is just Plato-as-book that we have here). Given the amount of bluff and bravado that lurks behind all of Lucian's portraits of performances of erudition, the lives of sophists—and therewith Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*—take on a necessarily picaresque quality. The story of wisdom has come to have a very different form and content indeed.

Lucian's community of the wise dissolves and devolves, it does not converge and ascend. And the audience is meant to laugh a bookish laugh at this very failure of wise speech to yield cohesion and coherence. The mystagogic experience of the Platonic corpus—just ask any Neoplatonist who lived during these same postclassical centuries I am surveying—leads us to an encounter with The One, and we find that The Word is fundamentally bound up with Rationality itself. The demystifying world of Lucian moves in the opposite direction: the erudite reader pushes beyond an ecstasy of surfaces and into a vacant land of bemused disappointment where instead of The Word and The One we find a plurality of old words chattering among themselves, most of which signify their own opposites.[32] The Educated Man can 'center himself' via his education, but a transcendental reward does not follow. He becomes a member of the unfooled 'smart set', a man who can stand apart from and above his contemporaries. This is a quasi-dialogic moment and one that can readily be distinguished from the dialogues of ascent that we find in Plato, but the free play of the encounter between voices that a richer dialogism would provide has been severely constrained by the selective and interested investments made by these erudite players of a specific social game.

While the above moves too quickly and too coarsely through my example texts, I wish

Symposium: The Ethics of Desire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 127-133. One might note as well that missing in Lucian is the figure Sheffield calls the "desiring agent who occupies the higher mysteries," that is, the protagonist of the philosophical project valorized in the *Symposium*.

30 According to Männlein, the piece perhaps parodies sympotic literature more generally. Irmgard Männlein, "What Can Go Wrong At a Dinner-Party: The Unmasking of False Philosophers in Lucian's Symposium or the Lapiths," in *Double Standards in the Ancient and Medieval World*, ed. Karla Pollmann (Göttingen: Duehrkohp und Radicke, 2000), 249.

31 See Plato, *Phaedrus* 275b on the disastrous pupils of the book: "They will be polymaths and seem most prudent without the need for any teaching. Yet, for the most part, they will be senseless and difficult to get along with, become seeming-sages instead of actual wise men. (πολυήκοοι γάρ σοι γενόμενοι ἄνευ διδαχῆς πολυγνώμονες εἶναι δόξουσιν, ἀγνώμονες ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλῆθος ὄντες, καὶ χαλεποὶ συνεῖναι, δοξόσοφοι γεγονότες ἀντὶ σοφῶν)."

32 Karen ní Mheallaigh is much more optimistic about Lucian. On his modernism: "Instead of performing straightforward homage to the models of the past, *mimêsis* in Lucian's hands will become a weapon with which to assault the strictures of a stifling Classicism." Karen ní Mheallaigh, *Reading Fiction With Lucian: Fakes, Freaks and Hyperreality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4. For Lucian's interest in hybridity, see also ibid., 12-13. But I am hesitant at junctures like ibid., 18. Is the piece on pantomimes really unironic in its praise of the low-brow bump-and-grind? And the *Theacher of Rhetoric* does not seem to be 'funny' unless one is ready to laugh at gender non-conformity. For the deeply conservative nature of such laughter, see the fifth chapter of Erik Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity: The Rhetoric of Performance in the Roman World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 149-186. In general, ní Mheallaigh emphasizes a very different sector of Lucian's exuberant corpus than I do. Her *index locorum* testifies to this.

only to adumbrate a problematics of prose fiction. Hitherto we have looked at a high style and high culture collection of texts that offer valorized fictions of their very milieu. I have chosen my examples to highlight internal tensions and in so doing exaggerated features of a body of texts that is typically rather straight-laced and normalizing. This sketch will, I hope allow us to make the necessary pivot to what one typically thinks of under the heading of prose fiction. My chief claim is that there is not a strong divide between the fictionalized world of table-talk and the more freely imagined worlds of ancient prose authors. Nor should one expect that there would be any such divide. All prose authors would have themselves come through a curriculum that had made them familiar with not just oratory and philosophy as academic disciplines but also with these same as the fodder for fictional dialogues.

Lucian's works are full of what one might think of as medial forms between philosophical engagement, erudite table-talk, and prose fiction. He has dialogues of the gods, dialogues of the dead, and dialogues of courtesans. He gives voice to the various strata of genteel learning: characters familiar from epic, tragedy, comedy, and philosophy are all given witty little literary turns here and elsewhere. His *Trial of the Consonants* turns spelling disputes into a court battle about property rights. Historiography gets more than one ironic send-up. And Lucian's *True History* underscores the question of the relationship between prose and fiction in the strongest possible terms: everything in it is marked as a lie. But lying is no mere nullity with a torpid and negative relationship to a fetishized truth. This same text is sometimes referred to as the first science fiction novel given that it includes a trip to the moon and stars. Untruth qua untruth is giving birth to literary possibilities.[33]

In Lucian's corpus we can see an author sliding between the free play of the imagination as a specifically scholarly exercise and the free play of the imagination as productive of what we might think of as a distinctly literary freedom: the imagination can go anywhere and it can do anything; it can produce impossible combinations and it can play with them according to its fancy. Personally I find that Lucian is too often overly interested in sneering at the ill-educated. That is, his works still cling to the idea of a culturally hegemonic center against which all else will be evaluated. On the one hand we roam far and wide and productively, but, on the other, we never lose sight of the fact that a certain kind of educated person is writing and, by implication, reading these works.[34]

The Displaced Bookishness of the Greek Novel

Ancient prose narratives generally embody still further freedoms than the ones that Lucian allowed himself. Long narratives might impose certain commitments to coherence of character and plot, but other constraints are lifted. There is no requirement for a unity of place. In fact, exotic locations are often favored. And the cast of characters can vary widely to cover a striking mix of stations, sexes, and ethnicities that would severely strain most antecedent literature with the notable exception of Homer's *Odyssey*.

While there is much that is divergent in theory, in practice these prose fictions contain a variety of convergent features that connect them with the rest of the genteel prose tradition. They accordingly represent an extension of educated discourse and not a radical break from

[33] It is new, but not, of course, radically new. See Froma Zeitlin, "Visions and Revisions of Homer," in *Being Greek Under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 242: "And who is the guide and teacher (*archegos kai didaskalos*) of all this mendacity? Why Homer's Odysseus, of course, and particularly in the narration of his fabulous wanderings before the Phaeacians."

[34] See Erik Gunderson, "Men of Learning: The Cult of *Paideia* in Lucian's *Alexander*," in *Mapping Gender in Ancient Religious Discourses*, ed. Todd C. Penner and Caroline Vander Stichele (Boston: Brill, 2007), 479–510.

it. The ethical milieu is familiar to readers of Plato and Xenophon even if many plots are centered on the once peripheral issue of chastity.[35] We hear any number of speeches delivered as per school training. The characters we see at the core of the plot are frequently the sort of persons that we would be happy to invite to a proper Greek symposium: that is, they are well-bred leading citizens of their communities.

It must be noted, though, that the socially peripheral are often also the concrete agents that advance the plot: the good and the beautiful are all too often passive and merely register a (trite) reaction to a world that changes around them and that is largely working beyond them. The concrete logic of a fallen world is experienced as a 'test of character' by such people, elite individuals who can be far less savvy about power than are their debased interlocutors. While the fair couple virtuously reacts, pirates, eunuchs, satraps, and slaves make things happen. This situation perhaps also works as an ideological double for the novels' own relationship to the literary past. The non-elite genre is making the real difference somewhere in the background while normative schemata are upheld in the foreground.[36]

There is an obvious continuity with prior literary and cultural traditions on display within the Greek novels. If you were to take Homeric epic and mix it up with some of Menander's New comic plays and throw in some Athenian forensic oratory and a few dashes of Herodotus, you would have most of what you need available to you to construct one of these on your own.[37] But there are assuredly innovations here and a set of choices that can reveal a programmatic break with the past and a self-assertion on the behalf of a new kind of writing.[38]

For example, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* though written in the first century CE is set in fourth century BCE. The action takes place after the fall of Athens. In fact, the heroine's father is a general who was instrumental in Athens's defeat (1.1). This is something we learn at the very opening of the narrative. And so this book that is post-Athenian in form is explicitly post-Athenian in content. And even as the plot will take us from west to east and back again,

[35] Foucault famously sees this as part of a constellation of shifts that mark a key transition in the History of Sexuality. And this sort of change of emphasis fits in with "a new stylistics of existence" that is emerging. See Foucault, *Care of the Self*, 71; Goldhill shows how productive reading the novels along these lines can be in Simon Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[36] A concrete example: the eunuch Artaxates knows how to read and to manipulate the King. And these manipulations drive the course of the plot. Artaxates thinks that offers of money and power might influence Chaereas to betray virtue, but he is wrong. Chaereas, the 'hero' of the story is virtuous but reactive. Artaxates, the 'agent of the plot' is vicious and highly active. See Chariton, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* 6.3-5. Artaxates will engage in a similar back-and-forth with Callirhoe in 6.7.

[37] See Graham Anderson, *Eros Sophistes: Ancient Novelists At Play* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), 2-7; compare Kuch for whom few antecedent genres have been omitted from the novel, just as Bakhtin had himself asserted. Heinrich Kuch, "Die Herausbildung des antiken Romans als Literaturgattung," in *Der antike Roman: Untersuchungen zur Literarischen Kommunikation und Gattungsgeschichte*, ed. Heinrich Kuch (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1989), 11–51; in addition to the high genres, on might add a dash of Aulus Gellius. On the connections between prose fiction, erudite miscellanies and 'table talk' more generally, see Hendrik Müller-Reineke, "Facts or Fiction? The Fruitful Relationship Between Ancient Novel and Literary Miscellany," in *The Ancient Novel and the Frontiers of Genre*, ed. Marília Pinheiro Futre, Gareth L. Schmeling, and Edmund P. Cueva (Eelde: Barkhuis, 2014), 69–81.

[38] See Daniel Seldon, "Genre of Genre," in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. James Tatum (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1994), For Seldon the novels are 'about' anti-Platonic generic mixing, and their 'essence' is this very hybridity that emerges out of a programmatic, structural deployment of syllepsis. Zimmermann offers a consonant but less ambitious thesis: we see a symphony of antecedent genres mobilized by a 'bastard' upstart genre that is fighting for its legitimacy. Bernhard Zimmermann, "Die Symphonie der Texte: Zur Intertextualität im griechischen Liebesroman," in *Der antike Roman und seine mittelalterliche Rezeption*, ed. Michelangelo Picone and Bernhard Zimmermann (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1997), 3–13.

Athens, a natural geographical stop-over is omitted from the trajectory of the plot.[39] In fact the middle of the plot and the geographic center of the text comes when Callirhoe crosses the Euphrates (5.1). A different Greek world is on display here, and it is one that is preoccupied with an exotic non-Greek Persian hegemony. There is a lot of nationalistic self-assertion in here: a Greek reader swells with pride to see these characters get the better of the Persians. But these Greeks and their pride demand to be read as non-Athenians. Characters that we might today call Italians and Turks delight in their cultural identity as non-Athenian Greeks. And the climax of the novel may well include public speeches in the theater and so perhaps recall Attic drama (8.7). But the sequel to the dramatic retelling of the plot is a settlement of new citizens in Syracuse. Men who were Egyptians will become Syracusans.[40] Athens was notorious for its reluctance to admit new citizens, and it most assuredly avoided taking in such radically strange figures during the heyday of Pericles' citizenship laws. Of course, that Athens had lately been vanquished by the father of our heroine.

The plot of *Chaereas and Callirhoe* accordingly acts as a sort of allegory for its own literary-historical situation: it speaks to Greekness in a post-Athenian multi-ethnic imperial universe where identities are fluid and Greekness itself is something that one can achieve or attain.[41] And this novel is by no means alone in playing these games. The novels regularly emerge from and keep an eye upon the old cultural milieu, but they simultaneously speak to an inadequacy of old forms to handle the new, more global contents, whether these contents be the specific plot itself or just the novel as a literary form.

Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* is another such novel. It also never makes it to Athens. The mid-point of the novel arrives when the characters see a crocodile on the Nile and then make and entry into wondrous Alexandria (4.7; 5.1).[42] But before then we have been treated to a variety of inset genres. There is an obsession with myth that is both implicit and explicit. The characters are also aware of the plots and tropes of tragedy. There is a courtroom drama at the end, complete with clever speeches. There are many philosophical moments. Natural history makes an appearance. But there is a particular emphasis on love and the philosophy of desire.

A lot of what gets felt by the characters is also anatomized within a quasi-philosophical framework. We even have complex discussions of erotic matters that recall Plato and Xenophon, but this time we are not in an Athenian home but aboard a ship heading east. And the plot itself will offer its divergent answer to the question of the relative merits of heterosexual desire as against the sublime homoeroticism of the Platonic circle. Specifically, the novel ends with a collection of heterosexual unions. Even if one decides that this novel is not especially successful on an aesthetic level, there is no denying that it has ostentatiously swallowed all of the high genres. This is post-Athenian literature that signals an Alexandrian pedigree.[43] And it sees as its particular virtue its own hybrid form

[39] On the politics of the representation of the various places in the novel, see Jean Alvares, "Some Political and Ideological Dimensions of Chariton's Chaireas and Callirhoe," *The Classical Journal* 97, no. 2 (2001): 113–44; on Athens in particular, see Alvares, "Some Political and Ideological Dimensions," 119-20.

[40] For the manner in which Chariton is building an idealized Syracuse with elements such as this see Alvares, "Some Political and Ideological Dimensions," 135.

[41] Hock's suggestion that New Testament scholars read the ancient novels is predicated on the notion that aspects of the world of the biblical narratives are often convergent with these contemporary fictions. See Ronald F. Hock, "Why New Testament Scholars Should Read Ancient Novels," in *Ancient Fiction and Early Christian Narrative*, ed. Ronald F. Hock, J. Bradley Chance, and Judith Perkins (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1998), 121–38.

[42] The Nile matters a great deal to Heliodorus as well. See Tim Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity in the Ancient Greek Novel: Returning Romance* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 120-22.

[43] The Nile passage occasions a paroxysm of specifically bookish literary play in Achilles Tatius. See Sandrine

even as, ironically, the plot itself is obsessed with sexual purity and centers on the question of whether of not Leucippe can and will save her sexual favors for Clitophon.[44]

Leucippe and Clitophon seems unable to decide about the degree of its separation from the past. Athens may be missing, but the novel effectively presupposes the historical replacement of Athens by Alexandria, a city that appointed itself Athens' successor. And we are in a liminal moment from a Bakhtinian perspective: there is polyglossia here, but there is also a longing to cash in on the cultural center.[45] In it we see an aggregation of the classical genres. And there is the suggestion that the novel itself might be a superlative synthesis of them rather than an innovative break from the classical monologism.[46]

The long, ambitious novel of Heliodorus plays similar games. The narrative is not told in a linear fashion. And the reader, like the characters, has to move between and among Delphi, Egypt, and Ethiophia. The chief conceit of the plot is that the periphery and the center are importantly connected. The heroine is an Ethiopian princess who has been mistaken for a proper Greek girl from Delphi. There is a programmatic de-exoticization of the periphery. The Delphic navel of the world and the Ethiopians at the world's edge are in profound communication. A collection of allusions to the Homeric corpus enables this cosmopolitanism. Meanwhile the novel eschews reference to the concrete Roman and imperial politics that has in fact connected such disparate lands.

Even if Delphi does offer a notional center for the Greek-speaking reader who picks up this Greek text, another sort of center has been displaced. An Athenian character is present, but only as a friend of the central couple. He is good for a lot of inset storytelling, and his own history is very 'tragic' in the sense that this Athenian's personal story seems to line up strongly with that genre that was so celebrated at Athens. But Knemon is not someone who will make it to the end of the novel. He bows out after about two thirds of the narrative. In fact the heroine no longer really trusts him (6.7): she latches onto an opportunity to part ways with him; and he is likewise ready to exit from this story and to return to his affairs in Athens. In a book obsessed with virtue, the Athenian was weighed and found wanting. The owls have all fled from Athens.[47]

Dubel, "Le phénix, le crocodile et le flamant rose: sur le bestiaire égyptien d'Achille Tatius," in *Présence du roman grec et latin: Actes du colloque tenu à Clermont-Ferrand, 23-25 Novembre 2006*, ed. Rémy Poignault and Sandrine Dubel (Clermont-Ferrand: Centre de Recherches A. Piganiol-Présence de l'antiquité, 2011), 404.

44 Conversely, see the final section of *The Ancient Novel and the Frontiers of Genre* which is labeled "Hybrid Forms": here one can see Christian non-novelists in the late antique period picking up on novelistic material. Marília Futre Pinheiro, Gareth L. Schmeling, and Edmund P. Cueva, *The Ancient Novel and the Frontiers of Genre* (Eelde: Barkhuis, 2014).

45 Alvares casts a wider net and comes to a more nuanced conclusion about the relationship between the novels and culture more generally. He sees in various novels "narratives about how their protagonists, as they mature, accommodate themselves to the social and political realities of their milieu, and, more importantly, find or create alternatives to those realities." Jean Alvares, "The Coming of Age and Political Accommodation in the Greco-Roman Novels," ed. Michael Paschalis et al., (Groningen), 2007, 18; see also the highly convergent remarks of Steve Nimis, "The Prosaics of the Ancient Novels," *Arethusa* 27 (1994): 404.

46 A more hard-line answer: the classical genres break and are rendered obsolete; the novel is the new container for these fragments; the novel is part of the development of new esthetic criteria. See Nimis, "Prosaics," 407-8; similarly, but less the emphasis on breakage, see Steven D. Smith, "Bakhtin and Chariton: A Revisionist Reading," in *The Bakhtin Circle and Ancient Narrative*, ed. Robert Bracht Branham (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2005), 183-90.

47 John R. Morgan, "Heliodorus the Hellene," in *Defining Greek Narrative*, ed. Douglas L. Cairns (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 261: "This structural relegation and negative moral marking of Athens constitute a deliberate alienation from the cultural centre of mainstream Hellenism." Whitmarsh on

It may well be absurd to summarize so many novels in such a short span, but I hope that my point is clear enough: these novels are not just vehicles for their plots, they are also worried about learning and literature. Homer, the father of 'adventure literature', is presupposed throughout. So too is there a constant an engagement with rhetorical theory and practice. Tragedy and comedy inform, both explicitly and implicitly, the characters and situations.[48] Longus' novel is virtually unintelligible unless one is conversant with the highly erudite pastoral tradition. Mixing and matching is encouraged. Achilles Tatius' final rhetorical duel even contains a gibe that the opposing side is pretending that its lewd comedy ought to be mistaken for a tragedy.[49] The speaker's genre-play in fact occurs in the course of offering a completely inaccurate description of the (novelistic) situation. Did he know more about novels, then he might be more inclined to believe that the plot of the novel he finds himself in is 'in fact' no fiction and that the girl really is chaste, despite her many adventures.

The novels have taken up the old schoolhouse questions, but they are answering them diegetically. And in the course of their exposition, they inevitably innovate. The space and time of telling acts as an index of spatial and temporal questions that challenge the very notion of the adequacy of some center to speak as a central authority.[50] While my own impression is that most of these authors actually believe in the ability of Greek education to act as a legitimate hegemonic discourse of a center that poses as the center, a set of glaring issues arises that exposes the limits of any such pretense.[51]

The authors are part of a cosmopolitan Roman empire. Some may not even be native Greek speakers.[52] They are writing about a valorized culture that they have laboriously acquired. They are not effortless inheritors of that same culture, sons of Plato whose classical Greek comes to them as a birth-right. These books may be speaking to old concerns and doing so in the familiar language of the past, but they also contain new elements and ones that are not part of that tradition. They offer a global synthesis of

the programmatic opening of the novel: "This text forces us to read the genre, and the Hellenocentric assumptions upon which it is predicated, through fresh eyes." Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity*, 109.

48 Boy-marries-girl-in-the-end is the classic New Comedy plot structure. A notable example of the deployment of tragedy-as-objectified-genre: Heliodorus' novel opens with a 'tragic' scene observed by an uncomprehending bandit audience. One is sensitive to the play with genre even before we hear the word in the narrator's comment at *Aethiopica* 1.3: "Ἡ μὲν ταῦτα ἐπετραγῴδει [...]" ("And so she was voicing these tragic laments, [...]"). See Heliodorus, *Héliodore. Les Êthiopiques*, ed. R.M. Rattenbury and T.W. Lumb (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1960).

49 See Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, ed. E. Vilborg (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1955), 8.10.4. Note that the opening of speech to which 8.10 responds is flagged by the narrator as being Aristophanic. The designation is somewhat unexpected given the occasion and the speaker. See *Leucippe and Clitophon* 8.9.1: "ἦν δὲ εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἀδύνατος, μάλιστα δὲ τὴν Ἀριστοφάνους ἐζηλωκὼς κωμῳδίαν."

50 The lost *Wonders Beyond Thule* seems to have particularly trafficked in this game wherein 'the marginal is central', at least for the novelistic imagination. The narrative seems to consist substantially of tales of the exotic periphery. Other fragmentary novels also seem to have situated themselves within the learned fantasy of the margins: *Ninus* (Assyria); *Sesonchosis* (Egypt); *A Babylonian Story*; *A Phoenician Story*.

51 Whitmarsh on the politically suspect slide between high culture and culture: "[W]e should guard against any assumption that such rare birds [as Callimachus, Plutarch and Lucian] described the norm (even if they undoubtedly sought to prescribe it)." Tim Whitmarsh, "The Romance Between Greece and the East," in *The Romance Between Greece and the East*, ed. Tim Whitmarsh and Stuart Thomson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 7.

52 On the manner in which the Hellenistic age saw Greece confront in earnest four other major neighboring civilizations, see the first chapter of Arnaldo Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 1-21. And these aliens soon start contributing elements of their wisdom to the Greek-speaking world in the form of non-Greek intellectuals who nevertheless write in Greek.

literary history that renders the discrete voices of different Greek times and places as segments of a new sort of comprehensive narrative form, a form that can encompass all other forms as mere moments of itself. Accordingly Homer becomes a proto-novelist and not an epicist.[53] He made a good start of it, but he did not finish the business.

Though initially received as second-rate and low-brow works by modern scholars, an important feature that enables the displeased to declare that these texts are 'stupid' is, of course, an actual species of stupidity to be found in the novels. The specific obtuseness they manifest is a self-interested numbness to the established hierarchy of the legitimate elements of the learned traditions of classical Greece. The treatment of these elements evinces a reconfigured sensitivity that converts the objects of the literary past into mere objects to be manipulated within the context of the literary present.[54]

If the symbolic coherence of the Athenian socio-cultural universe has dissolved, it has been replaced by only the coherence of plot and consistency of character.[55] And, obviously there is an implicit politics of form in any substitution that displaces the politics of a concrete then and there polis. In these texts the discourse of the doctor and the poet do not arrive as mere preludes to hearing the speech of the philosopher, who will himself proffer a speech genre that synthesizes and transcends these other discourses. Instead philosophical discourse is itself just another way of talking. The net result is a text that will inevitably strike a certain kind of reader as mere sophistry given that *sophia* has been dethroned from her pride of position.

And so we have my first initial outline of the 'morosophistic discourse of ancient prose fiction'. We have moved from wisdom in literature to literature that is informed by wisdom-literature, but this same literature is by no means ready to reduce itself to a philosophical or even gentlemanly agenda. Literary artifice offers a literal and metaphorical first step on a centripetal project when we read Plato's *Symposium*.[56] But later prose fiction no longer strives to journey towards that one table around which a hegemonic elite gathers in order to achieve an even more potent discursive consensus.[57] In later authors we see completely

[53] And, of course, they have a point. On the novelistic aspects of Homer, see Kuch, "Die Herausbildung," 39-40; on Heliodorus and his self-conscious recasting of Homer, see Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity*, 112-15.

[54] For Bakhtin the Greek novels are incomplete representatives of novelistic discourse's full potential because they lack an ironic distance vis-à-vis style. Mikhail Bakhtin, "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 66; much of the current scholarship on these novels is very much engaged with the manifold number of styles embedded in these novels, and it is in fact hard to say that there is not a very refined sensitivity to questions of style in the novels and even ironic deployments of styles. Perhaps one should instead affirm that there is nevertheless a hesitation towards a radically ironic relationship to the question of style that would dethrone 'high style' as itself nothing more than a mere style among others. The analog of this is an investment in 'the classical body' within the Greek novels while we see a much more 'grotesque body' in the Latin novels. On the two kinds of bodies, see Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 1st ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 29 and 31-32. And, similarly, 'carnivalesque' laughter suffuses the aesthetic of the Latin novel while it is generally alien to the surviving Greek novels with the notable exception of Pseudo-Lucian's *The Ass*, a warped and abridged text.

[55] On how the skilled reader's artful reading is itself conjured as a centripetal force by the Greek novels, see Tim Whitmarsh, "Dialogues in Love: Bakhtin and His Critics on the Greek Novel," in *The Bakhtin Circle and Ancient Narrative*, ed. Robert Bracht Branham (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2005), 119. That is, 'the politics of coherence' is a specifically textual and readerly politics.

[56] On the centripetal and the centrifugal, see Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 272.

[57] In fact, to the extent that prose fiction is a 'Mediterranean' phenomenon with deep roots in the cultures of Greece's neighbors, then the very form of prose fiction is of itself always already an ectopic hybrid relative

heterodox journeys that are not, for all that, simply ignorant of the sort of centering games of Plato. They are instead guilty of a high sin against Platonism: they know what Socrates said, but they do not automatically give ear to it. Instead they are in pursuit of other voices and other stories and other paths to other kinds of knowledge.[58] And if Socrates refused to leave Athens, these writers pointedly write Athens out of their works.

Apuleius and Petronius Wrote Such Stupid Books

I wish to push things a bit further by transitioning to the Roman novels. They are the more obvious terrain for us to cover given the remit of the journal as a whole, of course. In the Greek novels we see an adumbration of the issues that surround the high and the low, and they also mix in meditations on wisdom, especially ones that concern the gentlemanly ethics of moderation and self-restraint. One should hold fast to Foucault's insight that philosophy, diet, and sexual ethics are all part of an interlocking 'care of the self' which is also a 'technology of the self' that both enables and constrains subject-production. But the Roman novels are full of cracks and fissures. The high can go missing entirely as the plot is given over to the low and the (at best) middling. Our bad subjects have a deeply problematic relationship to wisdom in general and moderation in particular. And their fates speak only to a fitful mechanism that does not contain a seamlessly meshing set of parts that allow for the smooth reproduction of the obvious goodness of the overdetermined collocation of notions that governed the first two thirds of this study; namely good men eating good food while speaking of The Good. And, much as happened to the elite sociality, eschatology either goes missing from these books or it arrives in the form of a jarring religious miracle.

Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is a Latin rewrite of a mostly lost Greek novel.[59] The first and last books are additions on Apuleius' part. So too is the middle inset tale of Cupid and Psyche. All three additions are pointedly philosophical. The first book has no bearing on the plot proper. In it the narrator meets a man who tells a story about how he met up with an old friend named Socrates and talked with him under a plane tree just like they did in Plato's *Phaedrus*.[60] That is, the narrator Lucius is in dialogue with a man who had been part of a quasi-Platonic dialogue. Of course this interview with Socrates is not the climax of the novel but only its opening. Indeed the interview happens to someone other than the narrator, and it takes place at a period before the dramatic time of the narration. This Socrates is introducing a soon to be discarded minor character to the metaphysics of magic and not to the theory of the forms. This Socrates was been bewitched and is walking around in an undead state since enchantresses have stolen his heart. But Socrates does not know this fact about himself. When Socrates stoops over to drink from the river after his chat under the tree, he topples over dead. It would seem that we are being invited to take this as a metaphor for the relationship between Platonic dialogue and novelistic discourse: one is dead and does

to the centripetal gambits of Athenocentric biases. For a review of the back and forth we can see in prose between cultures and over centuries see Whitmarsh, "Romance."

58 Bakhtin, "Prehistory," 47: the novel is a collection of images of languages whose interrelationships are dialogic. And polyglossia is the interanimation of these languages. Bakhtin, "Prehistory," 50.

59 For a survey of Apuleius' thematic deformations that break from the typical Greek novel, see Stavros Frangoulidis, *Transforming the Genre: Apuleius' Metamorphoses* (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2007).

60 On the broad set of connections between Plato's *Phaedrus* and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, see Jeffrey Winkle, "'Necessary Roughness': Plato's *Phaedrus* and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*," *Ancient Narrative* 11 (2013): 93–131.

not know it; the other is just getting started.[61] One is but the overture; the other is the complete symphonic work.

The center of the *Metamorphoses* is occupied by a story told by an old woman to a young girl being held hostage by bandits. This story swallows up the last part of the fourth book, the whole of the fifth book, and most of the sixth book of an eleven book novel. And even though our clueless narrator mocks it as the prattle of an old woman, no reader can fail to have noticed that the fable of Cupid and Psyche is redolent of philosophical motifs, and specifically Platonic ones at that. This fable embedded in the novel makes it clear that fiction is the vehicle that has been chosen to talk about desire, the soul, and transformation. The psychic life of characters over time and in contact with other characters enables the dialogic imagination of novelistic discourse to do the work of Platonic dialogue in a new and scandalously expanded form.[62]

Cupid and Psyche work as a Platonic myth run wild. Their story does not come as a climax to an argument or as an encapsulation of a thesis. Instead it is unannounced, misunderstood by its internal audience, and opaque in its function for the external audience. It is both obviously about the book and part of the book, but the book is by no means reducible to this tale. This story is a semi-centering center that disorients, and it is absolutely not a centering center that offers the key with which to unlock the whole.

The eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* makes quite clear the shape of this scandalous expansion of Platonic possibilities. After Lucius' story is over—at least it is over by this point in the original Greek novel—we get a whole extra book, and one whose interpretation has split critics for generations: is this a joke or are we supposed to take it seriously? Doubtless the correct answer requires a synthesis that transcends the two poles. What is in this book? Well, we find out that our narrator is actually a priest of Isis and that he has studied at Rome. He probably should have told this to us up front. Again we have an unthinkable combination where periphery and center are meeting, exotic and familiar combine, and high and low unite. And instead of an ascent to The Form of the Good, we find ourselves confronted with a cultural and mythological manifold. And, indeed, we realize that this book has tricked us and that we have to go back all over and to read it anew in light of this perspective that was withheld from us at the beginning. And much as the narrator himself had to undergo a series of initiations, so too will we need to read and reread this book.[63] Enlightenment may well emerge out of a narrative arc and its discursive

[61] John R. Morgan says the following on the philosopher in the Greek novels: "[A]lthough these novels frequently evoke philosophical intertexts and are not shy of ideas and big issues, philosophers as characters are not used as vehicles of those ideas [...] It is almost as if there is a consistent and deliberate disjunction between philosophy as a profession and the ideas that the texts articulate." John R. Morgan, "The Representation of Philosophers in Greek Fiction," in *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel*, ed. J. R. Morgan and Meriel Jones (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2007), 48.

[62] On the need to reread see John J. Winkler, *Auctor & Actor: A Narratological Reading of Apuleius' Golden Ass* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Walter Englert, "Only Halfway to Happiness: A Platonic Reading of Apuleius' Golden Ass," in *Philosophy and the Ancient Novel*, ed. Marília Pinheiro Futre and Silvia Montiglio (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2015), 81–92; Winkler argues that one is supposed to engage in a specifically Platonic rereading. But a Middle Platonism that is filtered through Egyptian allegories seems like it should be distinguished from Plato's Platonism. A bolder and perhaps more fruitful route is offered by Ahuvia Kahane. See his Neoplatonic meditations on finding 'inclusive speech' in Apuleius, that is, a rhetorical mode that entertains a discourse of alterity and a historical regime of truth via a "cancellation of the opposition between legitimate and illegitimate speakers," see Ahuvia Kahane, "Disjoining Meaning and Truth: History, Representation, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and Neoplatonist Aesthetics," in *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel*, ed. J. R. Morgan and Meriel Jones (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2007), 266.

[63] And this formal feature of the novel's structure perhaps corresponds to 'Egyptian allegory' for someone like

trajectory, but reason and narrative are pointedly not one and the same thing. This represents a break from the philosophical tradition where the same word, *logos* can and should be used to span both notions. Moreover within the philosophical schema the reason-of-the-narrative and the narrative-of-reason necessarily converge and reinforce one another.

And this brings us to the second and third books of the *Metamorphoses*. These are where we see Lucius before he is turned into an ass. The person we see there is the sort of clever young gentleman that might otherwise have fancied himself a suitable dinner guest at a Platonic symposium. He is educated and full of himself. In particular he is quite convinced that he has the world in which he is moving pretty well figured out, except, of course, for the bit about magic, a dangerous mystery that fascinates and entices him. Lucius may be our narrator and he may well focalize the novel's actions for us but the plot holds this representative of the traditions of learning up for ridicule throughout. He is literally made into the but of the grand civic joke at a public Festival of Laughter. Of all of the people in the city, he alone is unaware of his own story and the role he is playing in this festival. And everyone laughs precisely because he thinks he knows what is going on and tries to deploy some razzle-dazzle oratory to wriggle his way out of a situation that he fundamentally misunderstands (3.4-7).

Similarly Lucius learns precisely nothing from the story of Socrates from the first book, and he specifically fails to see that that story is his own story. In book two Lucius casts a mythologically and aesthetically informed eye over a statue group depicting a curious Acteon being turned into a stag for peering at things he should not look upon. But his erudition is misplaced in that he does not appreciate that here too he is encountering his own story, something that his aunt ominously hints is the case.[64]

Similarly Lucius thinks that he is going to have some agreeably casual sex with a simple slave-girl named Photis. But he is too dim to see who is really the bright bulb in the relationship. And a symptom of his obtuseness is her teasing him with the label of *scholasticus* during their sex talk: "Careful my learned fellow..."[65]

The novel stages the inadequacy of its own clever readers to appreciate novelistic discourse.[66] The trick ending, much like the Festival of Laughter, will even trip up the cleverest of the clever readers. These readers have almost certainly been trained like a Lucius. And their horizon of expectations can be expected to converge with his.[67] And yet

Plutarch. See Whitmarsh on Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride* 360e-f: "Allegory, particularly in connection with Egyptian mythology, routinely distinguishes between demotic and initiated comprehension." Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity*, 132.

64 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 2.5.2: "'Tua sunt' ait Byrrhena 'cuncta quae uides' [...]" ("'Yours,' said Byrrhena, 'is everything you see' [...]"). The edition used is Apuleius, *Apulée. Les Métamorphoses*, ed. D. S. Robertson, trans. Paul Vallette, Collection Budé (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1945).

65 Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 2.10.5: "'Heus tu, scolastice,' ait 'dulce et amarum gustulum carpis. Caue ne nimia mellis dulcedine diutinam bilis amaritudinem contrahas.'" ("'Careful, my learned fellow.' she said, 'You are snatching at a morsel that is both sweet and bitter. Make sure that the excessive sweetness of the honey does not entangle you in a long-term biliously-bitter contract.'").

66 On the axial role that failure plays in the ancient novel more generally, see Gareth L. Schmeling, "Narratives of Failure," in *The Greek and the Roman Novel: Parallel Readings*, ed. Michael Paschalis et al. (Groningen: Barkhuis, 2007), 23–37; see Jennifer H. Oliver, "Queer World-Making in Petronius' *Satyrica*" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2016), on 'queer failure' in Petronius.

67 See Fletcher on the contemporary scholarly 'horizon of expectations' that reduces intertextuality to a question of recognizable quotations. Richard Fletcher, "Kristeva's Novel: Geneaology, Genre, and Theory," in *The Bakhtin Circle and Ancient Narrative*, ed. Robert Bracht Branham (Groningen: Groningen University Library, 2005), 234-38; Fletcher likewise suggests that commentaries on commentaries (on

it is exactly cleverness of this stamp that is reduced to mere sophomorism within the novel, a learned stupidity. Lucius is perfectly capable of delivering a brilliant piece of impromptu forensic rhetoric when suddenly on trial for murder. But his audience howls with laughter at his performance: the genres in which he thinks and with which he is comfortable are not in fact the relevant genres for making it through this text. Lucius will dismiss the old woman and her fable as sub-philosophical and therewith allow the contents of the middle of his own novel to sail past him.[68] It is precisely his traditional education that trips Lucius up and leaves him unable to see his here and now world for what it really is, a medley of speech-genres whose polyphony is 'extra curricular'.

Yet another novel poses similar challenges to the smart set. Petronius' *Satyricon* offers a thorough-going assault on schools and scholars. Stupidity is the order of the day. To the extent that people are clever in the book, this cleverness is always evidence of either a low cunning or an abuse of high culture for sordid ends. At times we see both. The fragmentary novel opens with talk about teachers and students. The discussion has an almost modern feel to it: the curriculum is abused for being flashy and shallow and too-little invested in the classics. The students are denounced for demanding as much: the customer is always right, and all that. But neither party to this discussion is himself anything other than a scoundrel, and each could himself be labeled as a buffoonish pretender rather than a representative of the real thing.

But that seems to be the point: there is no such thing as the real thing in this world. Though the author is steeped in the classics, the novel itself is anti-classical. Both world and work chew up and spit out the old education and the rendered remainders constitute the bloody raw material for a new sort of narrative that puts into question the well-tempered past in the name of a polyphonic and riotous present. The old center is exposed as being empty. In fact, according to this barbed fiction, the old center of someone like Plato is itself *merely the fiction of a center*. Meanwhile the world is full of other narrative possibilities that can, and indeed must, be explored.

That opening scene from the *Satyricon* saw Encolpius talking to a teacher named Agamemnon. The scholar is a man with an epic name but a comic present. He is not a Homeric hero. He is not even a heroically gifted scholar of Homer's poetry. Instead he is a second-rate educator of middling youths who sponges for meals at the tables of men for whom he has contempt and who do him the favor of returning this same contempt. At Trimalchio's dinner the schoolteacher is a guest of honor only to the extent that it is thrilling to put him in his place and to evince an ostentatious indifference to the high-culture that he pretends to represent (48.5-7).

At every turn all of the characters show a sensitivity to the idea of Homer and the classics, but nobody really has any use for the classical past as a centripetal and organizing force. Low-brow Trimalchio engages in a boorish bricolage that mixes and matches gladiators and epic poems (29.9). The predatory pedophile Eumolpus composes a political epic about civil war that is so over-full of itself that it never actually attains any aesthetic gravity. His unlearned audience throws rocks at him (90.1). The more erudite narrator thinks no better of the verses. The inset epic is a pointed failure.

Meanwhile the narrator is more than happy to keep on re-writing his own sexcapades in

commentaries...) can get us closer to the spirit of the dialogism in question, a spirit that tends to elude the academic fetish of discrete, authoritative to-the-letter filiation. Fletcher, "Kristeva's Novel," 256-57.

[68] As the story of Desire and Soul ends the narrator says, "Sic captiuae puellae delira et temulenta illa narrabat anicula [...]" ("And that's the story the drunk and raving little old lady told the captive girl [...]"), Metamorphoses 6.25.1.

quasi-Homeric terms. His life is a veritable *Odyssey*, but one where all of the characters have been given libidinous roles. The Cyclops is a sexual rival (101.7). The witch Circe with her spells is converted into a attractive, confident woman whose charms are not quite enchanting enough to rouse the narrator's refractory genitals (127.6-7). And if Odysseus famously spoke to his heart within him, Encolpius self-consciously riffs off of Homer by speaking to his own penis in similar terms and offering a (literary-)theoretical justification for doing so (132.13).

As an epic Homer's *Odyssey* conjures a whole lost world of greatness, a fully-realized vision of a then that also paints a portrait of an expansive there, a rich territory across which a hero had his adventures. The world of the novel exposes the pastness of that past, in both chronological and ideological terms. What Bakhtin would call epic monologism is no longer an adequate vehicle for the representation of cultural coherence. Indeed, in Petronius' case we find an explicit positing of something that is often implicit in the other novels: there is no such thing as a coherent culture. The contemporary world is too big and too heterogenous for that. There are too many voices and too many people pursuing too many ends. If Odysseus seeks a *nostos*, a return to his place of origin, a broken novel like the *Satyricon* seems to have no beginning nor end.

But even in the case of a complete narrative like Apuleius', the moment of return and narrative closure is presented as anything but that: it is a moment of radical transformation that both challenges our sense of the beginning—for the narrator has been hiding something important about himself from us from the start—and it also challenges our sense of the ending—for we have arrived at a point that is alien to our expectations that were shaped by the experience of participating in the narrative's world.

Instead of ascent, convergence, and closure as per Plato and a certain classicizing canonic, these novels will linger with antithetical themes. Leveling, disparity, and open-endedness lend the novel its novelty. Educated authors and bookish readers may well be presupposed, but the point of the whole exercise is not a reaffirmation of the already-said or the mere transcription of older forms into a more contemporary prose idiom. And if the latter were the aim, then one could only say of the novels that they are sad failures: Platonic dialogue is more edifying, Attic tragedy is more likely to stir fear and pity, and Homeric epic is more grand.

Novelistic 'vulgarization' is not so much the problem as the solution to the old impasse. If Apuleius and Petronius pose the question of the adequacy of the old centripetal education within the context of the new centrifugal world, the *Alexander Romance* stages that very inadequacy as the substance of the thing that is there instead of a plot. The *Alexander Romance* is a hybrid text in a hybrid world. The work was a super smash hit to judge by the number of manuscripts and their distribution.[69] It comes in Greek, Latin and Syriac versions. There are even Arabic, Ethiopic, Hebrew and Turkish variants. It is a piece that gets reworked by various hands at various times and in various places. People keep finding themselves in their otherness via this text.[70] But it is also a text that is singularly unfaithful to the youth who united the world under a Greek banner. The text's very origins offer testimony to a vigorous impetus towards hybridity. The text seems to be a fusion of a first century epistolary novel

[69] "Ce titre rassemble une myriade de textes, pour un récit qui a connu au Moyen Âge une sphère de diffusion plus large encore que celle de la Bible, et qui a été traduit en une trentaine de langages," see Christine Sempéré, "La recension *epsilon* du *Roman d'Alexandre*: les avatars d'une métamorphose," in *Présence du roman grec et latin: Actes du colloque tenu à Clermont-Ferrand (23-25 Novembre 2006)*, ed. Rémy Poignault and Sandrine Dubel (Clermont-Ferrand: Centre de Recherches A. Piganiol-Présence de l'antiquité, 2011), 561.

[70] "[...] ses réécritures successives dans les avatars d'ε construisent un sens nouveau qui contribue à l'élaboration de la figure du héros, garante de la vitalité du mythe à travers les âges," ibid.

that features Alexander, a third century history of Alexander, and various Egyptian materials whose dates are themselves likely disparate.[71]

The pedantic reader will see only stupidity in here: it is all a mess of atrociously ignorant chronological and geographical references heaped together with an indiscriminate mix of fact and fiction. But this fluid, open text was something that later antiquity and further centuries delighted in. Within the textual event of the *Alexander Romance* the question of 'what Alexander means' can be wantonly uprooted from 'the Hellenic tradition'. Instead Alexander becomes a cipher for new edifices built from the shards of the collapsed older version of learning.[72] This Alexander is indeed a heroic figure that brings the world under his sway, but the world so united is no longer one that reflects the imperialistic desires of a Macedonian youth. Instead this world itself is a literary construct full of magic, wonders, and dreams. Aristotle may be present in the narrative, but he is very much akin to the sort of Aristotle one might see in a Hollywood film today. Of course an actor will be found to play Aristotle because his name is in the cast of characters, but this Aristotle is not in least true to or informed about Aristotle himself. And, much as a contemporary audience goes to watch an 'Alexander' so as to see swords, sandals, and stars like Colin Farrell and Angelina Jolie, readers of the *Alexander Romance* would be well advised not to get preoccupied by the notional Greek past of its subject matter. That is a mere background that potentially distracts us from the work getting done here and now.

Petronius has his Trimalchio make risible blunders in his cultural references. Some guests laugh, but that does not stop them from eating his food. And maybe Trimalchio's stupidity is no mere stupidity: when he forces the educated to compromise themselves he evinces a sort of cunning. And in the *Alexander Romance* we see similar 'epic blunders'. But this is an epic that consists almost entirely of blunder.[73] There is no inset audience chortling derisively. There is nobody around to laugh at the narrator. There is only the reader and the fact of the narration.

Indeed the central figure is not an epic hero of the old stamp but instead a protean trickster. And his greatest trick is the manner in which he displaces Greek epic as a whole with a new late antique novel. Novelistic discourse itself both reflects and embodies the discourse of the present and the future. This half-educated prose displaces the over-erudite verse of an Alexandrian poet and Homeric scholar such as Callimachus. Alexander may well have enabled the emergence of Hellenistic Greek as a self-consciously erudite generalization of ancient Greek culture, but that very same gesture laid the seeds for a counter-culture that enables polyphonous, low-brow, vernacular literature to rise up as well.

Once upon a time a dinner party of the Greek Sages constituted a site of the possible gathering of all knowledge and all culture. It promised a glorious moment where both body and soul could ascend to a specifically Greek sublimity. But, in the course of literary history, that sort of table gets overturned by rowdier, less disciplined guests. The more genteel might well believe that there is something tragic in this tumult, but a morosophistic outlook enables us to see that these clods have made an irrefutable case both in theory and in practice: what had masqueraded as a discourse of the all was in fact just the story of a part. And this part had

[71] For example, the Nectanebo material might actually come into the Greek out of a Demotic original. But this material may itself be extremely old, perhaps dating from the third century CE. Richard Jasnow, "The Greek Alexander Romance and Demotic Egyptian Literature," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 56 (1997): 101. In which case the first version of the romance is either deeply hybrid or at least immediately becomes hybridized.

[72] *Alexander Romance* 2.7: "One Greek idea confounds hordes of barbarians."

[73] We are, though, sensitive to epic: see *Alexander Romance* 1.21 where the violent feast is supposed to remind us of centaurs and Lapiths and Odysseus and Penelope.

insinuated itself into the position of the whole. And, for more than mere aesthetic reasons, one has to give ear to such an unruly claim. This morosophistic discourse is an important legacy, like it or no. For my part, I rather like it. But maybe I am just being stupid.

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Letters, Poems, and Prose Fictions in Cosmopolitan Latinity

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> Paris of Troy, the son of Priam and Hecuba, importunes Helen of Sparta to leave her husband Menelaus for him. She replies coyly at first but comes to declare that she is prepared to elope. However, both Paris and Helen reveal a consciousness of later history that exceeds what is possible for them to know within the period of the Trojan War. As they make their plans, they also comment on the world of their later readers.

> Dining together, a company of philosophers debates the Platonic questions of virtue and vice, knowledge and illusion, but their conversation is counterposed with mundane matters of bodily and social concern, such as who sits where and who is sleeping with whom. The climax of the banquet is not a philosophical illumination but a drunken brawl.

> A university student in Bologna writes to his parents for money, having spent his allowance more quickly than he had expected. The parents reply first indulgently, then with alarm at the fresh news that he has been neglecting his studies for companions of low character. The young man responds with shock and grief at the clouding of his reputation, and affirms that he lives honorably.

The three episodes related here figure prominently in the articles by Anders Cullhed, Erik Gunderson, and Jonathan Newman gathered in this inaugural number of *JOLCEL*. Addressed broadly to the topic of schools as sites for the making of Latin cosmopolitanism, the three articles are concerned with highly distinct materials. Newman gives an account of letter-writing culture in late medieval Bologna, while Gunderson explores how late antique prose fiction stages its distance from the genres and ideals of the earlier ancients, and Cullhed reports on the durability of Latin pedagogy for later Western poets who seek in some measure both classical authority and vernacular autonomy. The three essays complement each other both in their congruent but discrete bases of knowledge and their common interests in proposing terms for understanding the afterlife of classical Latin in European culture. As every reader will see, they break new ground. As I will show, they converse and collaborate. And most salient, they reveal the power of story as a mode of

scholarly argument and literary criticism.

I begin my response with the three anecdotes in order to cast attention on the place of fiction in the three articles. As Gunderson shows, the banquet of the philosophers in Lucian's *Symposium* (after 160 CE) is an exercise in genre fiction, adopting the convention of Platonic debate over dinner to parody the schools of classical philosophy in a nearly post-classical world. Cullhed observes that the French poet Baudri de Bourgueil (ca. 1050-1130) wrote poems that might be counted as genre fiction of another kind, contrafacta in response to Ovid's *Heroides* 16 and 17, which concern Helen and Paris. Even Boncompagno da Signa, the thirteenth-century Bolognese authority on formal letter-writing or *ars dictaminis*, whom Newman discusses in his illuminating article, turns what might otherwise be a rote collection of models (a student to his parents and the parents' reply, among many other templates) into narratives. The three anecdotes might be replaced by a number of others from their respective articles, while the terms for fiction favored by Cullhed, Gunderson, and Newman show considerable variance, from 'story' and 'narrative' to 'prose fiction,' even within a single corpus as anatomized within one article (Gunderson: "Lucian's works are full of what one might think of as medial forms between philosophical engagement, erudite table-talk, and prose fiction").[1] Still, the range of anecdotes and more or less common vocabulary reveal a set of shared assumptions among the three articles.

One of these assumptions, of course, is given in the premise of the journal, that a classicism in vernacular European literatures might serve as a vehicle for cosmopolitan rather than antiquarian, nostalgic, or elitist desires, fostering a *lingua franca* rooted in a productive relation to the past. Much recent writing shares this assumption or something like it. Our three authors, however, would go further. Across the distinctive eras represented in their articles, from Imperial Rome to twentieth-century Malmö and the Cambridge of New England, the classical tradition becomes accessible through complementary conditions, what might be called scenes and modes. The principal scene is a school or another site of learning: as the three articles demonstrate, formal instruction according to models figured as somehow 'classical' was essential to the transmission of a cosmopolitan Latinity. We see these scenes of instruction in the attenuated belief of Imperial writers that "Greek education [can] act as a legitimate hegemonic discourse of a center that poses as the center" and, eleven centuries later, in the ambition of letter-writing *dictatores* in Orleans and Bologna to emulate "the urban patricians of the late Roman republic and early empire, reproducing their modes and the specific medium—letters—of enacting and advertising affiliation and association."[2] Together, the three articles invite us to visit an array of such scenes across two thousand years and to reflect on how 'schools' of several kinds have transmitted Latinity in many spirits—argumentative, reverent, transformative.

The articles show with striking clarity the mode that distinguishes the scenes they choose to investigate: that mode is fiction. And in view of the conviction and particularity with which Cullhed, Gunderson, and Newman address this mode, I must tarry for a moment over the implications. Some of the figures treated here, such as Apuleius, Petronius, and Dante, are plainly engaged in writing fiction. Others, hardly literary in the modern sense of the term, nonetheless resort to fiction as a way of making a disciplinary practice vivid and imitable: such is the case of the *dictatores* such as Boncompagno and his younger contemporary Guido Faba, who realize fabulation—Newman calls it 'the invention of stories'—in the model letters of their collections.

[1] See Gunderson, 65.

[2] See respectively Gunderson, 69, and Newman, 39.

Still others participate in a more ambiguous literary phenomenology. For instance, when the Baroque poet Francisco de Quevedo adapts an elegy of Propertius in an imitative process Cullhed calls accommodation, can we observe fiction? Quevedo's sonnet "Cerrar podrá mis ojos la postrera" evokes the problem and some of the attitude of Propertius 1.19 ("Non ego nunc tristis vereor, mea Cynthia, Manis"), how to attest that the ardor for a beloved will survive one's death. The elegy may be understood as a lyric fiction that evokes a lover's struggle to lend a temporality to the stasis of death. Quevedo makes the same argument but for his humanist readership also educes Propertius's poem: his sonnet transports us not only to a fictional occasion in which the speaker adjures his love for Lisi even after death but, at a remove, to the moment of its Augustan model—two lyric temporalities occupying the same poem, joined by a common stance despite local differences and held together with an emotional vocabulary of dust, shadow, and shore. By a process of creative appropriation of past poetry, the Golden Age commentator El Brocense observes in a passage quoted by Cullhed, "the verses and thoughts of other poets" are "no longer alien, but his [i.e., Quevedo's]."[3] Cullhed describes the "eclectic reconfigurations" by which a Baroque poet "accommodates" a classical model. If each poem alone offers a fiction of experience, these two poems suspended together enact a fiction of historical relation: early and late, Augustan and Hapsburg, classical and Baroque. Cullhed's five cases of classicism—paraphrase, allegory, accommodation, allusion, and quotation—should be understood as versions of such a fiction that embody different shades of relation, what he calls continuity, alterity, artifice, and deracination.

Classicism, then, depends on fictions that are activated in sites of learning, the mode emplaced within the scene. I decoct the common situation here to show that it arises spontaneously in three articles concerned with highly various materials. No doubt the situation itself warrants more attention. Cullhed, Gunderson, and Newman demonstrate in their own ways that fiction is central to what classicism accomplishes in late- and postclassical European cultures, that it mediates the contact between past and present in striking ways as though to render unmistakable the fallacy of unmediated contact. Some fictions are literary and explicit: Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* (ca. 100 CE) responds to Plato and Xenophon, while Baudri reworks Ovid. Others emerge out of non-literary practices. Regardless of their provenance, fictions appear in these cultures because the stories they tell are about not only separated lovers or contentious philosophers but the process of transmission of knowledge from past to present to future. In Gunderson's account, the 'novels' he treats are "worried about learning and literature"; and in Newman's words, the discipline of letter writing in Bologna not only demonstrates epistolary rhetoric but "has a more embracing meta-rhetoric persuading the reader of the collection about the value of its subject."[4] One might wonder how the functions of fiction in these contexts vary by period, genre, and other criteria. The three articles provide plenty of suggestions.

For instance, in one of their presumably chance collaborations, Cullhed, Gunderson, and Newman put into the foreground of their arguments something we might call the tone of late Latinity. Literary historians such as Thomas M. Greene and Ronald G. Witt have often striven to capture the tone of medieval and Renaissance Europeans' retrospective grasp of the classical past. In turn, each of the three authors in our issue reports on a surprisingly rich stock of tones that monitor the character of relations between past and present. In Newman's case, the Bolognese *ars dictandi* that draws most of his attention often depends

[3] See Cullhed, n. 26.

[4] See respectively Gunderson, 69, and Newman, 50.

on a narrative "summoned through a petitioning voice" that becomes concrete in the reader's own performance.[5] Tone enters here when we must decide how to personify the importunate student or the besotted lover as well as their correspondents. For its part, Cullhed's wide-ranging article offers up a palette of tones in which writers gather their classical models, from the jocosity and confidence of Baudri to the "irony, distance and, probably, nostalgia" of T.S. Eliot and Hjalmar Gullberg.[6]

Gunderson's essay is an especially bountiful register of tones as markers of difference. Already within the Greek-speaking classical world, he notes the palpable distance between Plato's *Symposium* and Plutarch's *Amatorius* ("Plutarch writes something that has Platonic beats and rhythms and melodies, but the song itself is not at all the same old Athenian tune").[7] When he arrives at the Greek 'novels' that begin to appear in the first century CE, Gunderson observes that *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, and the handful of others that survive "offer a global synthesis of literary history that renders the discrete voices of different Greek times and places as segments of a new sort of comprehensive narrative form, a form that can encompass all other forms as mere moments of itself."[8] With the turn to the Roman novels, the distance widens again, while tone remains an index: "there is no such thing as a coherent culture. The contemporary world is too big and too heterogeneous for that. There are too many voices and too many people pursuing too many ends."[9] As with Newman and Cullhed's materials, we identify through tone the deepest purposes of these works: what authorizes them not merely to participate in a version of classicism that happens to be available in their time but to challenge and ultimately divert it toward their realities.

In classical Latinity as well as its Greek anticipations and vernacular outcomes, then, tone signifies well beyond its function as a feature of literary discourse. A reader schooled by these articles might say that tone demonstrates something often overlooked, that a cosmopolitan sensibility toward the classical past is widely distributed by standpoint. As we learn here, there is often a master tone that superintends works, corpuses, and even historical eras. Fictions, poems, and even collections of letters tend to strike a general, authorial attitude toward their models and the business of Latinate *imitatio*, while at the same time they are populated by subvening tones that may reflect the standpoints of "students, nobles, bankers, merchants, tailors, judges, wives, sisters" or "pirates, eunuchs, satraps, and slaves"—a "striking mix of stations."[10] There is never one version in play; there are always many.

A common but unspoken project of these articles is to disclose the productive tensions between a master tone and the variations of it that evoke social and other distinctions. The three authors realize the project in their own ways. Newman conveys how both Boncompagno and Guido establish a sense of their personal and institutional mastery of *ars dictaminis* while releasing a "verbal copiousness" that gestures beyond themselves toward a "lifeworld" of "satirical, novelistic, and legalistic modes of representation."[11] 'World' is the key concept that serves for Newman as a hinge between the authority of the *dictatores* and the richly circumstantiated experiences they evoke. Further study of how letter-writing makes way for the literary fictions of Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Chaucer will surely demand

5 See Newman, 50.
6 See Cullhed, 17.
7 See Gunderson, 62.
8 See Gunderson, 70.
9 See Gunderson, 75.
10 See respectively Newman, 51, Gunderson, 66 and 65.
11 See Newman, 37.

more attention to this term as a perhaps implicit but defining condition of the Bolognese culture anatomized so well here.

Cullhed and Gunderson are prepared to bring still more resources to the account of a master tone and its implications. While it seems unpromising to generalize about the five episodes followed by Cullhed, one must be impressed by the resourcefulness with which he summons terms for the stances of his principal figures such as the jocosity of Baudri's Ovid and the prudent seriousness of Dante's—tones that will come together and pull apart in the classicisms of the centuries to come, for example in what has often been called the 'jocoserious' quality of Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and More's *Utopia*. Gunderson's 'morosophistic' character of ancient prose fiction—that which "leverages a productive species of 'stupidity' relative to the cleverness of the wise"—is a triumph in the naming of a large-scale attitude that can be realized only by local versions according to their own interpretations of both wisdom and foolishness, yielding works as different as the *True History*, the Greek novels, and the *Satyricon*.[12]

I take it as a good sign that Cullhed, Gunderson, and Newman have little use for received literary theory as a template for the questions they want to pursue. I say this not because the canonical positions of M.M. Bakhtin, Jacques Derrida, and others would not serve these questions. To the contrary, these theorists have much to offer at this crossroads of schools, voices, and stories. But I think one reason Gunderson holds Derrida at arm's length and Newman glances belatedly at Thomas Pavel is that the primary works here are ripe with their own speculative insights, which the three authors are prepared to harvest. Gunderson's Lucian and Cullhed's Gullberg, for example, are themselves theorists of their complex relations to language and the past. These arguments are built to permit them to be heard as such. Treating Bakhtin as no more than a foil, Gunderson teases out a raw insight directly from the Greek novels, that there is "a hesitation towards a radically ironic relationship to the question of style that would dethrone 'high style' as itself nothing more than a mere style among others."[13] All but hidden in a footnote, the observation is characteristic of the *sprezzatura* with which these essays address theoretical questions. Moreover, even as the articles participate in long-running conversations in their respective fields, this is foundational scholarship that sets fresh frames around well-known material and attacks basic issues. While twentieth-century and later theory has its place here, Cullhed, Gunderson, and Newman are right to enforce its practically programmatic removal to the margins of their projects (and sometimes to handle it parodically, as Gunderson does with Derrida and Bakhtin).

Together the articles reveal how in late classical, medieval, and early modern culture there are more ways to adopt a cosmopolitan attitude toward the classical past than we suppose from our historical distance. Meanwhile, their argumentative practice confirms that when we recover a range of tones or attitudes and develop a working sense of how these become the basis for locating oneself in history, we meet an obligation to the past that might be construed as nothing less than ethical. Often as I read and reread these articles, I found myself drawn to the ingenuity and tact with which they deduce the varieties of classicism, reconstruct scenes of learning, and expose a dependence on fictions—those that each cohort of writers receive from their forerunners as well as those they advance for themselves. Collectively they argue for what would amount to a poetics of cosmopolitan Latinity, a rigorous explanation of how past becomes present, learning becomes knowledge, and voice becomes fiction. That poetics would be a story too: our own version of how the classics live on now.

[12] See Gunderson, 59.

[13] See Gunderson, n. 54.