LATIN POETRY AND ITS RECEPTION

ESSAYS FOR SUSANNA BRAUND

Edited by
C. W. Marshall

Latin Poetry and Its Reception

This volume offers 18 new studies reflecting the latest scholarship on Latin verse, explored both in its original context and in subsequent contexts as it has been translated and re-imagined. All chapters reflect the wide research interests of Professor Susanna Braund, to whom the volume is dedicated.

Latin Poetry and Its Reception assembles a blend of senior scholars and new voices in Latin literary studies. It makes important contributions to the understanding of kingship in Hellenistic and Roman thought, with the first four chapters dedicated to exploring this theme in Republican poetry, Virgil, Seneca, and Statius. Chapters focusing on the modern reception include case studies from the 16th to the 21st century, with discussions on Gavin Douglas, Edward Gibbon, Herman Melville, Igor Stravinsky, and Elena Ferrante, among others. No comparable volume provides a similar range.

Latin Poetry and Its Reception will appeal to all scholars of Latin poetry and classical reception, from senior undergraduates to scholars in Classics and other disciplines.

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Essays for Susanna Braund

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for Susanna

nec tibi cura canum fuerit postrema
Virgil, *Georgics* 3.404

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Preface

The eighteen studies in this collection are offered in tribute to the career and scholarship of Susanna Braund, on her retirement. Susanna has been a colleague, collaborator, and friend to the contributors, and this recognition for her excellence as a Latinist and as a human being represents a small offering for her. After completing her PhD at the University of Cambridge, Susanna Braund taught in the United Kingdom for sixteen years before moving to Yale (2000–2004), Stanford (2004–2007), and then the University of British Columbia (2007–21) as Canada Research Chair in Latin Poetry and Its Reception. She has distinguished herself academically in many ways, in recent years as a Killam Research Fellow (2016–18) and in being elected as a corresponding member of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (2018), and as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (2019).

This collection's title therefore is lifted from the parameters Susanna Braund established for her own research. It is ambitious and far reaching, and inevitably this collection cannot cover the full range of these interests, or meet the promise of the title.

Susanna's work on the satirist Juvenal began with her book *Beyond Anger: A Study of Juvenal's Third Book of Satires* (CUP 1988). Her survey *Roman Verse Satire* (OUP 1992) remains an indispensable starting-point for the study of the genre. Her commentary on Juvenal's *Satires* book 1 (CUP 1996), and her edition and translation of Juvenal and Persius in the Loeb Classical Library (Harvard UP 2004), are both foundational for the academic discussion of these authors. *A Companion to Persius and Juvenal* (Blackwell 2012) was co-edited with Josiah Ober, a former doctoral student and one of this volume's contributors. Her work on Lucan was established when she provided the first verse translation of the epic poet in modern English (OUP 1992). This pedagogical emphasis was reinforced when she published a short Latin reader of selections from Lucan (Bolchazy-Carducci 2009), inaugurating a new series of readers to be used in senior undergraduate Latin courses. She is also a distinguished scholar of Seneca the Younger. Her text, translation, and commentary on *De Clementia* (OUP 2009) is the first full commentary on the text in English and the most detailed commentary on this important work in any language. She has written a wide-ranging

introduction to Seneca's tragedy *Oedipus* (Bloomsbury 2016) and provided translations of *Oedipus*, *Agamemnon*, and *Phoenician Women* for a complete translation of Seneca's works (Chicago UP 2016).

In addition to these works, her research has been pursued in dozens of articles and chapters, too many to describe here. Her scholarly interests have drawn her to other Latin authors, and she has provided an important survey of Latin literature (Routledge 2002, revised 2017). In articles and in edited volumes, she has contributed substantially to the understanding of emotional and psychological states as can be inferred from ancient sources. Her co-edited volumes on Passions (CUP 1997), Disgust (Johns Hopkins UP 1998), Love (CUP 1999), and Anger (CUP 2004), with additional articles on Forgiveness and Fairness, anticipate her later work on Mercy in Seneca.

Her most recent scholarship is on the poet Virgil. Building on her presidential address to the Virgil Society (published in 2004), Susanna has pursued an understudied niche in the reception of the author since the Renaissance. Looking at translations of Virgil in many languages, she draws particularly on her knowledge of French and Russian. An edited volume on Virgil (OUP 2018) was co-edited with another contributor to this collection, Zara Torlone. Susanna's own magisterial translation history, *A Cultural History of Translations of Virgil: From the Eleventh Century to the Present*, will appear from Cambridge University Press in 2021.

The impact of this scholarship cannot be adequately measured. Her name is encountered by most classics undergraduates among essential readings in a wide range of literary subjects. She remains an incredibly generous scholar, giving generously of her time to colleagues, students, and to those who email her out of the blue. It would be insufficient, however, to mention only her published output. She has served as a mentor to a wide range of students and junior scholars, whose names are found on her c.v. as co-authors, doctoral students, co-organizers of conferences, etc. Almost every one of these instances reflects an intense relationship where she as a senior scholar has worked with, and learned alongside, a junior one. At the same time, she remains active in charitable causes and volunteering in her community. Her friends know her as a dedicated player of the electric bass, an enthusiastic participant in the organization of her local community, and a devoted companion and caretaker to many wonderful and appreciative dogs over the years.

The chapters assembled here have been grouped into four sections. They begin with a collection of four studies concerning the idea of 'kingship' in Roman literature. This focused examination provides a rich interlocking case study that shows how previous literature shapes the interpretation of Latin poetry. In Chapter 1, Joe **Farrell** traces the influence on Hellenistic discussions of kingship on early Latin poets. Hellenistic theories drawing on readings of Homer had begun to deplore Achilles for his intransigence. This discussion traces the impact of this influence on earlier Roman authors in shaping Virgil's understanding of leadership. In Chapter 2, Alison **Keith**

extends this analysis to the *Aeneid*. She shows how the Hellenistic philosopher Philodemus exerts particular emphasis in a rich analysis of books 1 and 4 of the epic. The analysis demonstrates that it is necessary to appreciate not only Hellenistic kingship theory and the precedent of Homer, but also the influence of Epicurean philosophy. In Chapter 3, Jayne **Knight** explores the analogues between Virgil's *Georgics* and Seneca's *De Clementia* in acknowledging the newly established power of Augustus and Nero respectively. In this practical way, these texts explore the risks associated with sole rulership. At the same time, Seneca's direct quotation of *Georgics* allows him to use Augustus as an *exemplum*. Finally, in Chapter 4, Alessandro **Barchiesi** extends the analysis to the Flavian period with a study of Statius' *Achilleid*. By positioning itself as a kind of prequel to the *Iliad*, Statius' unfinished poem engages with the opposing characterization of Achilles and Ulysses. Effective leadership, as seen throughout the Flavian epic tradition, requires continued military aggression.

The second section assembles four chapters that juxtapose ancient sources, examining how reception of literary texts and of ideas in Latin literature can work across genre boundaries. The sequence of these chapters is less tightly linked, but in each case literary form is crucial in the reception of a particular text. In Chapter 5, Marcus **Wilson** examines an event in Rome's early history when professional musicians (*tibicines*) withdrew their participation from public worship, festivals, and games. He discusses the contrasting descriptions of this event in the historian Livy and Ovid's *Fasti*, and illuminates the confused manuscript tradition recording the event. In Chapter 6, Chris **van den Berg** explores the philosophical underpinnings of Plautus' comedy, *Pseudolus*. In addition to drawing specific connections between the play and Plato's *Phaedrus*, he provides a context for understanding the associations of the clever slave with the Greek philosophical tradition and Socrates in particular. On Chapter 7, Paula **James** describes the dynamics of theophany in Roman literature, drawing on specific examples from Ovid and Apuleius. While divine appearances extend back to the earliest Greek literature, the pattern seen in the Latin texts can be traced to modern television examples, such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

Finally, in Chapter 8, Victoria **Pagán** defines the qualities by which we might measure sincerity in the dedications found in Latin authors. With examples from Ovid, Lucan, and Pliny, she provides a deep consideration of the sincerity of Tacitus, and concludes with an examination of the address to Domitian in Statius' *Thebaid*.

The third section provides three chapters that examine intertextual reference in Imperial hexameter verse. In Chapter 9, Cillian **O'Hogan** takes the cremation and burial of Misenus in *Aeneid* 6 and identifies its influence on two separate moments in Lucan's *Civil War*. He argues that the shared intertext of the two moments in Lucan expect the reader to consider them against one another. In Chapter 10, Andrew **McClellan** traces Virgilian influences on

Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, with particularly dense evocation of the *Aeneid* in the central combat between Mens Humilis and Superbia. By drawing on foundational moments in Rome's mythic history, Prudentius over-writes the understanding of the Roman state through a Christianizing lens. Finally, in Chapter 11, Philip **Hardie** considers the use of allegory in two fifth-century poets, Honorius and Paulinus of Nola. He demonstrates how the allegorical practices of these poets shape the reception of earlier Latin literary history.

The seven chapters in the final section consider the modern reception of Latin literature, with chapters offering insight into the reception in each of six centuries, from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first (with two chapters for the twentieth century). In Chapter 12, Carole **Newlands** provides an avian examination of Gavin Douglas's sixteenth-century translation of the *Aeneid* into Scots, focusing particularly on the prologues he wrote to books 7 and 12. She shows how the description of birdcalls and the wider soundscape shows Douglas's awareness of Lucan and Ovid, and the broader epic tradition. In Chapter 13, Stuart **Gillespie** presents a Latin poem of the seventeenth century by Famiano Strada, which also focuses on birdsong, that of the nightingale. In addition to identifying seventeen translations and adaptations of the poem into English by 1800, he isolates four versions that have not previously been printed, and presents them in a new edition here. In Chapter 14, Josiah **Osgood** traces how the eighteenth-century historian Edward Gibbon uses and understands the satirist Juvenal. Juvenal both prompts Gibbon to make specific historical associations and helps him frame his understanding of the moral failings of the Rome he describes. In Chapter 15, Bill **Gladhill** reveals the rich layering of classical references that weave themselves throughout Herman *Moby-Dick*. Drawing on annotations in Melville's books and the indications of his voracious reading, the imagery of jaws runs throughout the nineteenth-century novel. The twentieth century is represented in this collection by three Russian authors. In Chapter 16, Stephen **Harrison** provides a detailed description of the Latin libretto of Igor Stravinsky's opera-oratorio *Oedipus Rex*. The influence of Jean Cocteau, Catholic liturgy, intellectual currents at the Sorbonne, Senecan tragedy, and Roman pantomime are all identified as roots of the unusual nature of the libretto. In Chapter 17, Zara **Torlone** explores the way two Soviet poets, Marina Tsvetaeva and Anna Akhmatova, present the plights of classical heroines such as Phaedra, Ariadne, and Dido. The articulation of female voice in these poems provide a new vector for understanding the classical poetics of these two, very different, authors. The final chapter brings us to the present day, with its consideration of the quartet of *Neapolitan Novels* by Elena Ferrante. In Chapter 18, Corrinne **Pache** demonstrates how the presentation of female friendship in Ferrante draws particularly on *Aeneid* 4, and how a layer of classical learning pervades the series. The index was prepared by Emma Hilliard.

Many of the chapters adopt the personal voice, in deference to Susanna's own practice as a pioneer in the use of the personal voice in classical

scholarship, and many make reference to popular culture, be it music or television or cinema. Together the chapters bring together new studies on many of the research interests that have occupied Susanna's career. They demonstrate the appeal of her wide-ranging investigations and the deep questions that they have provoked. These concerns will continue to challenge scholars for years to come, and the work of Susanna Braund will continue to be seen as indispensable to those who pursue them.

Part 1
Roman kingship

1 Homeric kingship theory in archaic Latin poetry

Joseph Farrell

The reception of Greek theories of kingship in Latin poetry is not as fully appreciated as it should be.[1] This is especially true of poetry written before Philodemos' treatise *On the Good King According to Homer*, which is assumed to have been known to the philosopher's literary acquaintances, including Virgil and Horace.[2] But there is reason to think that important ideas had been absorbed even by the earliest figures we can date. In this chapter, I am concerned with evaluations of Homer's principal heroes, Achilles and Odysseus, that considered the former highly problematic on account of his emotional, intransigent, and violent nature, while valuing Odysseus as a paragon of endurance, restraint, intelligence, and adaptability.[3] The existence of these attitudes has been well documented, but their impact on archaic Latin epic and tragedy remains especially underappreciated. I will argue that this impact was substantial and that it forms an important part of the horizon of expectations with which poets and readers of the late Republic and afterwards regarded Odysseus and Achilles as paradigms of heroic *virtus*, the one quite positive and the other much less so.[4]

To those who know the two heroes mainly from canonical literature, this line of argument may seem paradoxical. In Greece down to the end of the fifth century BCE, it was more or less taken for granted that Achilles, however difficult a personality, is Homer's greatest example of heroic *andreia*. At the same time, Odysseus is likely to be openly disparaged, in tragedy very often playing the role of a "stage villain," as W. B. Stanford memorably showed.[5] More generally, Rome's earliest epic and tragic poets took their bearings from Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides and, in the eyes of most critics, departed from their models only as necessary to render them comprehensible to the supposedly unsophisticated Roman public. It is also true that later Romans celebrated the Middle Republic more for its military than its cultural achievements and habitually contrasted the straightforward valor of Roman warriors with the shiftiness of the Carthaginians, their principal adversaries during this time.[6] Accordingly, one would expect Latin epic and tragedy to be dominated by ethical attitudes similar to those found in archaic and early classical Greek literature, not those of late classical and Hellenistic philosophy. Finally, the nature of our evidence is such

that we cannot point to many instances in which Roman poets are likely to have drawn on a particular element of Homeric kingship theory. These are not entirely lacking, however, and the frequency with which Roman poets choose to adapt texts that present Ulysses in a more favorable light than Achilles raises the question of why, in spite of all of the other factors mentioned previously, this might be so. I infer that the most likely explanation is that they were, in fact, guided by attitudes characteristic of contemporary kingship theory. The implications of this argument are significant not only for our estimate of archaic Latin epic and tragedy, but also, as noted earlier, for our understanding of how their work might have influenced later Latin poets.

Epic *virtus*

To begin, I ask (as many have done before) why Livius Andronicus chose to translate the *Odyssey* instead of the *Iliad*.[7] In addition to the factors mentioned earlier that might have recommended an epic of war rather than one of travel, it is the *Iliad* that was regarded, throughout antiquity, as the greater of Homer's masterpieces. Papyrological evidence suggests that it was also the more widely read.[8] Moreover, it contained Rome's foundation myth in Poseidon's prophecy to Aeneas.[9] What caused Livius to translate the *Odyssey* instead?

In answer, I refer to a recent paper in which I argue that Livius was influenced by an interpretation of Odysseus as an ethical hero advanced by Antisthenes, a younger friend of Socrates and an older contemporary of Plato.[10] The scholia to *Odyssey* 1.1 cite Antisthenes' argument that Homer, by calling Odysseus *andra . . . polytropon*, equates courage or manliness (*andreia*) with versatility (*polytropia*) and skill in dialectic.[11] We have long known that the scholia contain other information that was available to Livius.[12] It is therefore easy to understand his treatment of *virum . . . versutum* as endorsing Antisthenes' redefinition even more emphatically, thanks to the sonic similarity created by Livius' lexical choices and the fact that the entire first line of Livius' poem is framed by the phrase. Furthermore, where Antisthenes had likened Odysseus to a dialectician, Livius makes Ulysses a version of the poet/translator – who himself, we may suppose, inherits Homer's mantle as the source of all wisdom.[13] Livius no doubt had additional reasons to choose the *Odyssey* over the *Iliad* as his model of the first Homeric epic in Latin. The fact is, though, that the hero of the *Iliad* simply did not, either in his Homeric form or in his subsequent reception, afford him possibilities like these.

It would in fact be surprising if Livius' choice had not been informed by ethical considerations. One would expect the same of Naevius; and indeed, Scevola Mariotti considers it obvious that *The Punic War*, for the poet and his contemporaries, "represented the national poem of Rome corresponding to the *Iliad*, the first example of any warrior epic." Mariotti makes this

point, however, after stating that Naevius' intention was to combine both Homeric epics into a single poem.[14] Moreover, in the course of his discussion, he notes that the first half of the *Bellum Poenicum* is largely taken up by the story of Aeneas' voyage to Italy and the foundation of Rome, within which he finds numerous specific correspondences with the *Odyssey*; but in contrast, he notes, "one cannot point out analogous similarities between the story of the Punic war and the *Iliad*."[15] It may be that Naevius was motivated by a spirit of *aemulatio* to surpass his predecessor by combining both Homeric epics into one. It nevertheless seems striking that it is the Odyssean portion of his poem that seems the more specifically Homeric. One reason for this may be that Aeneas was the most important individual character in the poem, both as the ultimate heroic ancestor of the Roman people and as an example of Odyssean endurance, adaptability, and wisdom. It is hard to see who in the Punic War narrative might have rivalled Aeneas in these respects, since it appears (quite understandably) that no single figure remains on the scene for long, while the remains of the narrative emphasize the mishaps and sheer violence of war more than any grandeur or glory that it confers.

With Ennius' *Annals* a much clearer picture comes into view. The poem has a good deal to say specifically about kings while making Homer a constant point of reference. Regarding kingship theory as such, a passage attested for book 11 says kings tend to get carried away by good fortune. A second, attested for book 16, states they devote enormous effort and resources to perpetuating their own memory. None of this sounds complimentary, which is hardly surprising: the general field of reference in these later books includes contemporary potentates who are enemies of Rome, as we shall see. Thus, actual kings do not often come off well in the *Annals*.[16]

There are exceptions.[17] A fragment attested for book 1 deplores reflexive preference for violent combat as a bestial tendency; another censures someone's failure to protect the state, perhaps specifying that he should do so by strategy rather than by force. Editors since Terzaghi have linked these fragments, which Skutsch prints as follows:[18]

> nam ui depugnare sues stolidi soliti sunt; *Ann.* 1.52 (96) Sk
> ⟨cui data cura uiro regnum populumque tuendi⟩
> ⟨astu non ui⟩ sum summa⟨m⟩ servare decet rem. *Ann.* 1.53 (97) Sk
>
> For stolid swine are wont to settle disputes by force;
> ⟨as for the man given responsibility for protecting
> his kingdom and his people,⟩
> it is right that he guide the state ⟨by strategy, not force.⟩

If this (or something like it) is correct, then the number of passages dealing with such themes attested for book 1 is reduced, but their significance is multiplied. The most prominent king in this book must have been Romulus.[19] He may have spoken these words himself or, perhaps more likely, heard

them from a counselor. His shrewdest stratagem was the Rape of the Sabine Women, to which another fragment attested for book 1 almost certainly pertains.[20] As one of Romulus' most familiar exploits, it is easily taken for granted; but if Ennius used it early in the poem to emphasize prudence over bellicosity – specifically in Romulus, of all possible rulers – that is quite significant.

Evidence about Romulus' successors is too fragmentary to permit inferences of this sort, but Romulus' mirror image is found in Pyrrhus, king of Epirus and one of the most fascinating characters in the *Annals*. In book 6, Ennius presents Pyrrhus as the very type of the worthy foe. Not merely a king (and emphatically so: *nauos repertus homo, Graio patre, Graius homo, rex*, "a vigorous man was found, a Grecian man from a Grecian father, a king," 6.2 [165] Sk), he is also a lineal descendant of Achilles: Ennius even calls him "Aeacides," as Homer frequently calls Achilles himself.[21] Here if anywhere we should be entitled to look for the influence of ethical exegesis of Homer, as in the following passage:

> . . . stolidum genus Aeacidarum:
> bellipotentes sunt magis quam sapientipotentes — *Ann.* **6.14 (197–8) Sk
>
> Stolid is the race of the Aeacidae:
> they are powerful in war rather than wisdom.

This characterization of the Aeacidae as bellicose but none too clever clearly pertains to Pyrrhus, and it exploits the contrast between *biē* and *mētis* (or *vis* and *sapientia*) that is familiar from ethical discussions of Achilles and Odysseus. Further, it gains explicit connection to Homeric kingship theory as an evaluation of Achilles' regal descendant.[22] True to his lineage, Pyrrhus is not only a man of *biē*, but is also *stolidus*.[23] Recall that in book 1 bellicosity is typical of *stolidi sues*. In book 6, Pyrrhus' Roman opponents were not kings, but senators and magistrates; but theorists had long defined the "king" (*basileus*) very flexibly with reference to politically involved citizens and leaders within many different constitutional forms. Were Ennius' Roman Republican leaders, then, aligned with Odyssean wisdom against Pyrrhus' Achillean force? If so, was this a consistent theme in the *Annals*?

A lengthy fragment attested for book 8 depicting a breakdown of civil order is worth quoting in full:

> *proelia promulgantur*
> pellitur e medio sapientia, ui geritur res;
> spernitur orator bonus, horridus miles amatur;
> haud doctis dictis certantes nec maledictis
> miscent inter sese inimicitias agitantes;
> non ex iure manu consertum sed magis ferro
> rem repetunt regnumque petunt, uadunt solida ui — *Ann.* 8.1 (247–53) Sk

battles are promulgated . . .
good sense is driven from view, by force are affairs managed,
the honest advocate is spurned, the uncouth soldier loved,
not striving with learned speech nor with insulting speech
do they contend among themselves, stirring up hatred;
not to lay claim by law, but rather by the sword –
they press their claims and seek mastery – they rush on with force unchecked.[24]

The context of this fragment is uncertain, and it is full of mixed metaphors and hyperbole. Its language should not be pressed too hard. Still, its structure involves sharp antitheses between legal process and civil unrest, speaker and soldier, word and deed, all of which are based on a more fundamental opposition between *sapientia* and *uis*. Its general tenor, once again, is in favor of the former. If it relates to a crisis early in the Second Punic War, as most editors have believed, then Ennius' denigration of the *miles* in contrast to the *orator* is especially striking; but it also makes perfect sense. It was by wise counsel, after all, rather than main force that Rome was saved. A fragment attested for book 12 looks back to this time in celebrating the enormously important theme of the "one man," here Q. Fabius Maximus, who saved the state by his delaying tactics (*unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem*, 12.1 [363] Sk). The later historiographical tradition compared the prudent Fabius to the tricky Hannibal, treating each general as a consummate strategist.[25] One could conjecture that it was Hannibal's fate, at the hands of Roman writers, to attract opprobrium for his shiftiness and treachery while Fabius basked in approval for his patience, prudence, and restraint. But Fabius was just one in a succession of individual leaders who served Rome with their wisdom, and not their appetite for battle. Later in the same war, P. Sempronius Tuditanus and M. Cornelius Cethegus served together as censors in 209 and again as consuls in 204. Cethegus was evidently not much of a soldier.[26] Instead, Ennius praises him as "an orator of mellifluent speech" (*orator . . . suauiloquenti | ore*) who was called by his fellow citizens "the choicest Flower of our people and the marrow of Persuasion" (*Flos delibatus populi Suadaique medulla*).[27] This opinion attests a better state of affairs than had obtained earlier in the war. No longer is the *bonus orator* spurned and the *miles horridus* beloved, as in the previous passage discussed. Electing the eloquent Cethegus marks the return of good sense to the body politic.

If Fabius and Cethegus are both singular men of wisdom, Ennius launches book 10 by inverting the *unus homo* theme in a virtuoso passage that celebrates the communitarian ethos responsible for Rome's success in the Second Macedonian War (*insece, Musa, manu Romanorum induperator | quod quisque in bello gessit cum rege Philippo*, "Say, Muse, what each commander of the Romans | accomplished in the war with King Philip," *Ann.* 10.1 [322–3] Sk). To invoke the Muse at some crucial moment is common

in the *Iliad*. Sometimes the device opens an episode of *aristeia*, in which a single hero mows down so many opponents that the narrator requires divine assistance to recall the details.[28] Ennius' problem is almost the converse of this: his challenge is to recall not the victims, but the many Roman commanders whose combined efforts defeated Philip V. This is more than just a sophisticated inversion that emphasizes the magnitude of an accomplishment.[29] Rome prevailed over Macedonia because its strength derived from many, not from one. Nevertheless, even if the frame of reference is Iliadic, the passage is obviously intertextual with the opening of Livius' *Odyssey*.[30] As such, it comports with a passage attested for book 9 that compares someone to Homer's Polyphemus extending his belly by gobbling up Odysseus' men (*Cyclopis uenter uelut olim turserat alte | carnibus humanis distentus*, "Just as the Cyclops' belly had once swelled high, | stretched tight with human flesh," *Ann*. 9.15 [319–20] Sk). Ennius' Cyclops simile may derive from a satirical epigram by his near-contemporary Alcaeus of Messene, also directed against Philip, but both poets were working within a wider context.[31] One-eyed megalomaniacs – including Philip's ancestor, Philip II, Antigonus Monophthalmos, and Hannibal – had been remarkably plentiful for centuries, so that comparing them to Homer's one-eyed cannibal had become a commonplace.[32] For Ennius to compare Philip V to Polyphemus, making the Roman generals who defeated him so many avatars of Odysseus, is easily interpretable in terms of Hellenistic kingship theory with reference to Homeric prototypes.

It is in book 15 that Ennius offers two of his most explicitly Iliadic imitations. In one, a pair of enormous Istrian brothers reprise the roles of Leonteus and Polypoetes, the gigantic twins who defend the Greek ships from Hector's assault in *Iliad* 12. In the other, an unnamed military tribune defends the Roman camp just as Ajax had defended those same Greek ships in *Iliad* 16.[33] These striking Iliadic imitations might seem out of tune with my reading of Homeric exemplarity in the *Annals* – both the Romans and their enemies are compared to Homeric Greeks, and a Roman tribune is compared to Ajax, of all people, the most "stolid" of the Aeacidae. However, Ennius' principals in these passages are not generals, but are drawn from the lower ranks. It seems to me that such passages present Roman soldiers facing brutish foes of more than human capacity, comparable to figures that even in Homer are out of proportion to normal men, and that to defeat them they themselves must be like the strongest and most stubborn of Homer's heroes. That said, the other passages we have examined recommend the general conclusion that these qualities would be of no avail if Iliadic fighters were not commanded by leaders of Odyssean wisdom.

Tragic *uirtus*

Much as the epics of Livius, Naevius, and Ennius are informed by late classical and Hellenistic ethical preferences, so are their tragedies and those of

their most influential successors, Pacuvius and Accius.[34] The Roman playwrights typically adapt those few fifth-century Greek scripts that are more favorable than most to Odysseus, while presenting Achilles himself and his would-be successors in an especially skeptical light.

These tendencies are evident in a Livian passage featuring a complaint that someone is acting "not at all like him whom Chiron taught on craggy Pelion" (*haut ut quem Chiro in Pelio docuit ocri*).[35] The didactic relationship between Chiron and Achilles was emblematic of princely instruction in antiquity.[36] Mentioning the pair in a tragedy activates the self-referential theme of theater as a form of civic edification. We are therefore considering a passage very much aligned with the concerns of kingship theory. But who is being addressed? When other heroes are compared to Achilles and found wanting, the point of reference is Achilles himself at the height of his powers; here it is Achilles as a boy.[37] A reasonable inference is therefore that the speaker is contrasting an older Achilles with his younger self.[38] Emphatic reference to Pelion's wild, "craggy" nature (*in Pelio . . . ocri*) suggests that lessons in physical courage – precisely the kind of *uirtus* for which Achilles is famous – are what he has forgotten.[39] The hero could most plausibly be accused of this during his retreat to Scyros, where he tried to avoid going to Troy, forsaking manliness almost literally by disguising himself as a girl among the daughters of King Lycomedes.[40] It is Odysseus who saw through this ruse. Therefore, it is a good bet that in this fragment Ulysses is chastising Achilles and reminding him that he is a man of *vis* (*biē*), and not (like Ulysses himself) of *sapientia* (*mētis*). Achilles' misguided attempt in effect to imitate Ulysses, against his own nature, by resorting to a stratagem, fails just as surely as his battlefield exploits will prove a terrible success.[41] The Livian fragment, illustrating a point I made at the end of the previous section, thus dramatizes Odyssean *mētis* guiding Achillean *biē*, with Ulysses and Achilles themselves appearing in their signature roles.

A different form of selectivity appears in plays that adapt episodes of the *Iliad* itself. Pantelis Michelakis writes that Aeschylus' *Achilleid*, a trilogy consisting of *Myrmidons*, *Nereids*, and *Phrygians or Ransom of Hector*, explored

> the tensions and ambiguities between a powerful individual and his society . . . recast[ing] the protagonist of the *Iliad* as an early fifth-century aristocrat who displays his self-destructive power in front of, and for the sake of, the collective audiences of the Achaeans and the Athenians.[42]

Such was the impact of the *Achilleid*, as Michelakis further observes, that it inhibited later tragedians from restaging the central episodes of the *Iliad*.[43] Roman playwrights, however, turned to these episodes more frequently than did their Greek predecessors.[44] In their versions, Achilles remains his intransigent self even while resorting to tactics that one would hardly expect of him.

Above all, the Roman plays emphasize the problematic nature of Achillean *uirtus*. In Accius' *Myrmidons*, Achilles debates Antilochus to defend his withdrawal from battle:

> tu "pertinaciam" esse, Antiloche, hanc praedicas,
> ego "peruicaciam" aio et ea me uti uolo;
> nam peruicacem dici me esse et uincere
> perfacile patior, pertinacem nil moror.
> haec fortis sequitur, illam indocti possident.
> tu addis quod uitio est, demis quod laudi datur.
>
> Accius, trag. 108–13 Dangel

> Antilochus, you call this obstinacy,
> but I say it's steadfastness that I want to practice;
> for if it's said that I'm steadfast and that I prevail,
> I grant that with no difficulty, but for obstinate I have no time.
> The one quality attends brave men, while even boors possess the other.
> You give me what is like a criticism, and remove what is granted as praise.

The debate is not about Achilles' treatment by the Achaeans but about his character, specifically his "stubbornness." One is reminded of Ennius' *stolidum genus Aeacidarum*; but it is disorienting to find Achilles parsing his stubbornness with such hair-splitting, logic-chopping sophistry.[45] This cannot reflect anything in Aeschylus, but instead suggests how familiar Roman playwrights had become with philosophical themes and motifs in late classical and Hellenistic discussions of Homeric ethics. The same is true of the contrast Achilles draws between "brave men" (*fortis*) and "boors" (*indocti*) and of the inference that his own stubbornness is an expression of *uirtus*. It would be more honest to admit that his stubbornness stems from his anger. Instead, it is almost as if Accius' Achilles were trying to equate *uirtus* with unphilosophical *ira* in a perverse imitation of Antisthenes' redefinition of Odyssean *polytropia* as philosophical *andreia*. This inference is supported by a more straightforward passage attested for the same play in which someone begs Achilles, "rein in your anger, block your emotions, check your arrogance."[46] But anger continues to drive the hero: in preparing rejoin the fighting in *Battle for the Ships*, before he has received his divine armor, he goes so far as to declare, "I am sufficiently armed when I go in anger, as I do now."[47]

With this treatment of Achilles we may contrast Accius' representation of Ulysses in *Night Sortie*. The Iliadic "Doloneia" and the *Rhesus* tragedy based on it had been attacked by ancient critics on ethical and other grounds.[48] Accius' version unapologetically represents the main characters, Diomedes and Ulysses, as paragons of *uirtus* deserving of *laus*.[49] Thus one unidentified character remonstrates with another, saying of Diomedes and Ulysses, "it was their own manliness that made them do it; do you make light of the

praise that is theirs?"[50] Since no one in *Iliad* 10 disparages Odysseus and Diomedes, it seems likely that disapproval of them expressed in *Night Sortie* served as a metatheatrical representation of criticism leveled at the ethics of Accius' Greek sources and that it was voiced by some spokesman for traditional heroic ethics, such as Ajax or even Achilles himself.

Accius' Iliadic scripts, then, in keeping with philosophical kingship theory, brood over Achilles' obstinacy and anger while praising Ulysses for his *uirtus*. Accius' plays on post-Iliadic episodes follow suit, as do those of Pacuvius. Both poets dramatized *The Judgment of the Arms*, an episode central to the themes of heroic succession and ethical exemplarity.[51] Happily, the relatively plentiful remains provide an unusual opportunity to assess the dialogue between these influential poets.

Pacuvius' play opened with a proclamation of *ludi*, the funeral games of Achilles (including the *armorum iudicium*), which is another metatheatrical flourish. The Latin word denotes not only "festivals" and the "plays" performed at them, but also "schools."[52] The proclamation thus reminds the audience that the poet's notional purpose is to serve the state by teaching its citizens. This comports with a subsequent announcement by Agamemnon that the contest will determine which of the Greeks, after Achilles' death, is supreme in *virtus*:

> qui sese adfines[53] esse ad causandum uolunt,
> *de uirtute* is ego cernundi do potestatem omnibus
> fr. 22 Schierl
>
> to all those who wish to be partakers in this trial,
> I grant them the opportunity of competing *about* <u>*uirtus*</u>

These same words can equally well describe a contest of *uirtus* and one to decide what *uirtus* is.[54] Of course, Agamemnon has effectively determined the outcome by making it a contest of words. Ajax instead presents himself as Achilles' rival in manliness (*uirtuti aemulus*) and maintains that the "fair" thing (*aecum*, i.e. *aequum*) would be for him to have Achilles' armor.[55] Crucially, Ajax has not learned the hard-won lesson voiced by Achilles himself in Ennius' *Ransom of Hector*, that *ius* and *aequum* are different from and even superior to *uirtus*.[56] Indeed, he has a simplistic conception of *aequitas*, which he seems to think means "equivalency." Believing himself Achilles' sole equal in *uirtus*, he considers it *aequum* that he be awarded the fatal armor.[57] This is wrong: *aequitas* is a principle of balance that does not recognize single, absolute standards, but takes into account competing claims within a heterogeneous ethical world. Ajax, recognizing nothing but simple, absolute standards, wonders how anyone can think Ulysses worthy (*dignum*) of the contest.[58]

Accius' engagement with his predecessor's treatment of the story is precise and pointed. In Pacuvius, when Agamemnon announces a contest for

anybody who wishes to "possess" Achilles' arms, he strikingly uses the verb *uescor* ("to feed upon" in classical Latin) as a synonym for *utor* or *potior* ("to enjoy, have use of" or "possess").[59] Accius goes further, exploiting this odd usage to make an issue of Ajax's character and motivation: "he longs so to possess (*uesci*) Achilles' famous armor that he thinks all the most splendid prizes cheap in comparison." In the manuscripts, "all the most splendid prizes" is *ea optima*, which many editors emend to (e.g.) ⟨*cuncta*⟩ *op*[*t*]*ima*.[60] If this is right, then Accius is alluding to that consummately Roman battle prize, the *spolia opima*, the armor that only a Roman general could win by stripping it from the corpse of his enemy counterpart after defeating him in single combat. Accius would thus be putting the contest over Achilles' arms in a peculiarly Roman light.[61] At the same time, he would suggest that Ajax would welcome a fight to the death against Ulysses; but the fight is to be one of words, and the ultimate result will be the death of Ajax.

Ajax, blind to all this, deems Ulysses an unworthy opponent, asking, "What reason is there why you would dare compare yourself to me or me to you?"[62] Ironically, Ulysses better represents a traditional heroic ethos when he observes, "for my taking the trophy from a brave man is a handsome thing; but if I should be defeated, there is no disgrace for me in losing to such a man."[63] This chivalrous view of the matter is not shared by Ajax. He is as truculent and inflexible as Achilles ever was, "a man of obstinate and unchanging mind," and thus Ulysses' polar opposite.[64] Indeed, the word I have rendered as "unchanging" (*auorsabilis*) is the antonym of "versatile" (*uorsutus/uersutus*), Ulysses' defining epithet since the time of Livius; and Ajax is nowhere more inflexible than in defining *uirtus*. This was the point of Pacuvius' play, and it remains the point of Accius' rendition: when Ajax takes leave of his son before committing suicide, he hopes that the boy may be his father's equal in *uirtus*, but not in fortune.[65]

Ajax's leave-taking of Eurysaces raises the theme of the son as successor to his father. This question is fundamental to the myth of Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, the title role in a play by Accius in which Ulysses fetches the young man from Scyros to Troy, as he had earlier fetched his father in Livius' *Achilles*.[66] Again, the issue of succession involves Achilles' arms. His mortal armor proved fatal to Patroclus and to Hector, and his divine armor did not save Achilles' own life. Ajax longed for this divine armor, and killed himself in disgrace after Ulysses won it.[67] But Ulysses never wore it, having learned that Achilles' son must do so if Troy were to fall. Thus he commends the young man as deserving to wear it: "as I have said, made greater by these weapons, make greater your father's *uirtus*."[68] Just as Odysseus had once recalled Achilles to his native *uirtus* by showing him weapons, Ulysses entices Neoptolemus into battle by decking him out in his father's gear.[69] To accomplish this, the Ithacan evidently had to overcome his reputation: someone in the play, probably Deidameia, Neoptolemus' mother, refers explicitly to Ulysses' shiftiness.[70] Another passage suggests, however, that Ulysses prevails not by

trickery, but by means of acuity linked to the force of truth.[71] A third makes him a clear-sighted realist who will not put up with willfulness or sloppy thinking.[72] In the end, either Deidameia or perhaps Neoptolemus gives way to reasonable *aequitas*.[73] It is overwhelmingly likely that the agent of this resolution is Ulysses.

Accius' Ulysses cannot be seen as exploiting Neoptolemus: the armor was not fatal to the young hero, because he was fated to wear it. He departed from Troy in victory. Accius again acknowledges the need for powerful warriors who may not themselves be wise, and for a strategist to direct the efforts of such men. Achilles' real successor must be not someone like him, but the one hero as different from him as it is possible to be.

At the same time, Neoptolemus cannot escape his own character. In an unspecified Ennian tragedy, Neoptolemus famously declares, *philosophandum est paucis; nam omnino haud placet* ("One must do philosophy, but in moderation; for it does not please completely," trag. 28 Jocelyn = *TrRF* 147).[74] Ancient readers who quote or allude to this *sententia* generally agree with Gellius' paraphrase, that it is all right to have a taste of philosophy, but not gorge oneself on it.[75] They are probably correct; but it is remarkable that the Ennian Neoptolemus would show any interest at all in *philosophia, sapientia quae perhibetur*, "love of wisdom, which is called knowledge" (*Ann.* 7.2 [211] Sk). He is, after all, one of the "stolid" Aeacidae, who are *bellipotentes* rather than *sapientipotentes*. The fragment therefore probably does not attest any real enthusiasm for philosophy. Neoptolemus may even be resisting sound advice offered by some other character, in which case the young hero is simply being true to his nature.[76] Thus in Accius' *Neoptolemus* it is clear that the son, before receiving the father's armor, had already inherited his character: as someone complains, "hardly anyone can tolerate his bitterness."[77] Still another passage simply enumerates his defining qualities: "violence, ferocity, vehemence, savagery, anger, bitterness."[78] These traits pursue him after his victory at Troy.

The philosophical reception of these plays by Cicero, who follows Plato and other Greek thinkers in using tragic figures as ethical exempla, drives home just how familiar the lessons of kingship theory had become by the mid-first century. In *Tusculan Disputations*, for instance, Cicero speaks of Achilles in Accius' *Ransom of Hector* as "having come to his senses at last." The Latin phrase, *aliquando sapiens*, uses a very loaded word, especially in a philosophical context, and especially in discussing this hero.[79] Achilles, who has been abusing Hector's corpse, finally realizes that there is no further revenge that he can inflict on a dead body. Cicero contrasts Achilles' sudden insight with the benighted attitude of another character (either Andromache or Hecuba) whom he reproves for lamenting Achilles' abuse of Hector's corpse "as if (she considered it) the most bitter experience possible" (*sicut acerbissimam rem maeret*). "But what 'Hector'?" Cicero asks, "Or how long will he remain 'Hector'?"[80] And with that, Cicero turns again to Accius and the words of his Achilles, who realizes that he has taken Hector away, and given Priam back

nothing more than a body (*immo enim uero corpus Priamo reddidi, Hectora abstuli*). Cicero then goes on to comment on the effect of apparitions in other tragedies, pointing out how absurd it is that a ghost should fear having his corpse eaten by animals rather than consumed by fire.[81] He writes that "when such passages are delivered to the accompaniment of low, mournful music that brings gloom over entire theaters, it is difficult not to think that those who lack burial are to be pitied," a comment that harkens back to the Platonic Socrates' criticisms of Homer and the tragic poets for presenting heroes who fear death as if it were the worst thing that could befall a man.[82] At other moments, however, Cicero can be seen as arguing implicitly that some poets took these criticisms to heart and acted on them.

Again in *Tusculans* (2.21.48), Cicero praises Pacuvius for his presentation of the wounded and dying Ulysses in "The Washing Scene" (*Niptra*).[83] He does not immediately name the hero, but simply calls him "that wisest man of Greece" (*ille sapientissimus Graeciae*) and praises his restraint in response to pain, writing:

> Pacuvius managed this better than Sophocles: for in Sophocles, Ulysses complains ever so mournfully about his wound. But in Pacuvius, as he groans gently, even those who carry the wounded man, beholding the dignity of his character, do not hesitate to say:
>
> > You, too, Ulysses, although we see
> > you gravely wounded, are almost too calm,
> > being used to spending your life under arms.
>
> The insightful poet understood that practice in bearing pain is a teacher not to be taken lightly.[84]

Modern critics, and for that matter ancient ones, seldom think of Roman tragedians as having surpassed their Greek models. For this reason alone, Cicero's comment on Pacuvius' bettering of Sophocles is of interest. Significantly, it is not in poetic expression, plot management, or any other technical or literary aspect that Pacuvius has surpassed the master, but in representing Ulysses' character, and not in a realistic but in an ideal sense. Pacuvius, says Cicero, represents the hero in pain as he should be, as a morally edifying example to the playwright's students, his audience of fellow citizens. Cicero may be justified in thinking that the Roman poet can see farther than his predecessor, because both Pacuvius and Cicero have benefitted from centuries of rigorous literary and philosophical debate. The argument is in a sense self-serving, and not without an element of national pride; but it should not for those reasons simply be dismissed. Far from misrepresenting the passage, Cicero is in fact bringing out possibilities of interpretation that may not be explicit, but that are important, thus enhancing his reader's appreciation of Accius' achievement.

Conclusion

Against the background of archaic epic and tragedy, certain characteristics of late Republican poetry begin to look less revolutionary and much more continuous. Lucretius, for instance, in promulgating the philosophy of Epicurus seeks to distract Memmius from the pursuits of warfare to those of philosophy. In the process, he openly disparages most of the Greek heroes who fought at Troy. He even declares that the Trojan War, which set in motion the founding of Rome, and the Second Punic War, which effectively ensured Rome's hegemony in the Mediterranean world, are nothing to us. Meanwhile, Lucretius praises Epicurus as a *victor* who brought spoils back from the ends of the earth after vanquishing religious superstition. Epicurus is, however, an intellectual warrior and a wanderer, like Odysseus, because he traversed the universe in his own mind, and because the spoils that he brought back in victory are those of *sapientia*.[85] By the same token, Catullus' extraordinary disparagement of Achilles in poem 64 has been seen as a revolutionary denunciation of an entire value system rigorously maintained by the Roman governing elite. In light of the evidence that we have been examining, however, Catullus' condemnation of Achilles, even if it is more forceful, is quite congruent with ethical concerns about the hero's behavior that are reflected in earlier Roman poetry. So is the fact that Catullus aligns himself with Odysseus, not only as a traveler but also as someone who has grown wiser through with experience.[86] This dichotomous treatment of Homer's principal heroes as ethical paradigms would continue into the next generation of poets, as one sees with particular force and clarity in Horace's letter to Lollius Maximus on the ethical lessons that Homer teaches (*Epist*. 1.2.1–31). The *Iliad*, Horace writes, is from start to finish a tragedy of kingly malfeasance, with leaders on both sides of the conflict unable to act on any basis except that of their own passions and appetites; while the *Odyssey*, in contrast, teaches how a man of good sense, by keeping these same passions and appetites in check, can save himself even when everyone surround him succumbs.

What we have seen is ample evidence that such perspectives on Achilles and Odysseus are not late arrivals to Roman literary culture. The archaic epic and tragic poets did not simply translate their Greek models in the most straightforward possible way, nor did they depart from them merely to clarify foreign elements for the benefit of untutored Roman audiences. Rather, their versions of Greek epic and tragedy reflect ethical interpretations of Achilles and Odysseus in particular that had begun to arise only after their poetic models had been written and that eventually coalesced into a coherent branch of ethical philosophy known as kingship theory. Against any expectation based on the well-attested self-conception of the Romans as a nation of uncouth warriors, their poetry from the very beginning shared this movement's preference for the wise Odysseus over the powerful Achilles, stressing the necessity that strength be guided by wisdom and the belief that

strength alone is the lesser of the two *uirtutes*. I have no space to pursue the matter further here, and no need, since others will do so in this very volume.[87] I will therefore conclude with gratitude for the opportunity to offer this chapter in tribute to Susanna Braund for her pioneering work in the three areas of poetry, kingship theory, and translation with which I have been concerned.

Notes

1 This is the case only because Susanna Braund has focused her attention on later periods. I am delighted that she has thus opened an opportunity to explore the prehistory of three of her principal interests – namely kingship theory, Latin literature, and poetic translation as a form of reception – and the intersections between them. To date, Cairns (1989) is exceptional in making kingship theory central to his interpretation about the *Aeneid*, but now see the contributions to this volume of Alison Keith and, on the *Georgics*, Jayne Knight.
2 Gigante and Capasso (1989).
3 In general, see Richardson (1975), Murray (1965), (1984), and (2008). On Achilles, see King (1987) and especially Michelakis (2002). Montiglio (2011) is an excellent analytical survey of attitudes towards Odysseus especially in Greek literature and philosophy. On the Roman reception of Odysseus, see Perutelli (2006).
4 On the rapidly changing nature of Roman conceptions of *virtus* from the Middle to the Late Republic see McDonnell (2006).
5 Stanford (1963, 102–17), Montiglio (2011, 1–19).
6 Later Romans remembered those days in terms that recall the martial ethos of the *Iliad* more than the fantasy world of the *Odyssey*; see, e.g. Gellius, *NA* 17.21.
7 My answer to this question is not meant to exclude others; see, variously, Solmsen (1986), Malkin (1998, 178–209), von Albrecht (1999, 38), and Biggs (2018 and 2020).
8 Hunter (2018, 4–7).
9 *Il.* 20.307–8.
10 Farrell (2020, 000–000); cf. Montiglio (2011, 20–37).
11 Σ EQ, HMQR pp. 9.16–11.9 Dindorff; cf. Pucci (1982, 53–6), Montiglio (2011, 23).
12 Fränkel (1932, 306–7).
13 Hinds (1998, 61–2).
14 Mariotti (1955, 13–14). Naevius' poem would thus anticipate the bipartite structure of the *Aeneid* as it has traditionally been understood; cf. Buchheit (1963, 23–53).
15 Mariotti (1955, 20). He goes on to say that such pointed correspondences can easily be imagined on the basis of Ennius' later practice; but in fact the number of specifically Iliadic episodes in the *Annals* is small, as I discuss later, to say nothing of the lack of rigor behind such an assumption.
16 Jupiter is king of the universe, but even he seems to have come to power through violence and palace intrigue: see Farrell (2020). The first mortal king to be named is probably Priam (*Ann.* **1.12 [14] Sk; on this method of citation see Damon and Farrell [2020, 22]), whose fall stands for that of his entire kingdom. On Pyrrhus of Epirus and Philip V of Macedon, see later.
17 The first may be the unnamed king of Alba Longa (*Ann.* **1.26 [31] Sk), with whom Aeneas negotiated a peaceful settlement in Latium, according to the persuasive arguments of Fabrizi (2012, 32–71).