## HORACE, ARS POETICA 414–15

qui pythia cantat
tibicen didicit prius extimuitque magistrum

All editors who place a mark of punctuation within these lines (the great majority) put a comma after *tibicen*; a few leave them unpunctuated, but say nothing about the construction. It therefore seems timely to recall the note of W. Heraeus on Martial 5.56.9 *fac discat citharoedus aut choraules*; this runs as follows, *nescio an Hor. a.p. 415* tibicen *cum* didicit *iungendum sit*. This seems right to me. Apart from Martial, there is the corresponding use of διδάσκειν in Greek (e.g. Plato *Meno* 94b τούτους ... ἱππέας μὲν ἐδίδαξεν; other instances in LSJ s.v. διδάσκω at the bottom of 421b and top of 422a), which is brought into Latin by two native Greek speakers, Ammianus Marcellinus (16.8.10 *tonstrices docuit filias*) and the freedman Echion in Petron. 46.7 *destinaui illum artificium docere*, *aut tonstrinum aut praeconem aut certe causidicum*, who slips back from Latin into Greek idiom. I do not pretend that this significantly alters the sense ('has trained as an oboe-player'), but our grammatical conscience demands to be satisfied.

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## TWO VIRGILIAN ACROSTICS: *CERTISSIMA SIGNA*?[1]

At *Aen*. 7.601–4 an acrostic marks the beginning of Virgil's account of the outbreak of war in Italy:[2]

Mos erat Hesperio in Latio, quem protinus urbes
Albanae coluere sacrum, nunc maxima rerum
Roma colit, cum **prima mouent** in proelia **Martem**,
Sive Getis inferre manu lacrimabile bellum.

The reader's attention should be drawn to the existence of Mars in the acrostic by the words *prima mouent ... Martem*.[3] This signal may be compared with the better known technique of marking particularly allusive passages by employing the vocabulary of memory or echo,[4] a practice which is itself closely related to the ways in

[1] We would like to thank Jocelyne Nelis-Clément and Tony Woodman for help and advice.

[2] See N. Horsfall, *Virgil: Aeneid 7*, Mnemosyne Supplement 198 (Leiden, 1999), 391 for bibliography and discussion.

[3] See *Enciclopedia Virgiliana* s.v. 'numerologia', p.793. It is noteworthy that a number of metrical inscriptions explicitly signal the existence of acrostics: see E. Courtney, '*Musa Lapidaria*. A Selection of Latin Verse Inscriptions', *American Classical Studies* 36, Atlanta 1995, numbers 28, 39, 40, 42, 44, 128 and J.N. Adams 'The Poets of Bu Njem: Language. Culture and Centurionate' *JRS* 89 (1999), 109 and 112 on the final line of the poem of M. Porcius Iasuchthan which reads *capita versorum relegens adgnosce curantem*, marking up an acrostic which reveals his name.

[4] G.B. Conte, *Memoria dei poeti e sistema letterario* (Turin, 1985), 35–45 = *The Rhetoric of Imitation: Genre and Poetic Memory in Virgil and Other Latin Poets* (Ithaca, 1986), 57–69; R. Thomas, 'The Old Man Revisited: Memory, Reference and Genre in Virgil *Georgics* 4.116–48', *MD* 29 (1992), 44–51 = *Reading Virgil and His Texts: Studies in Intertextuality* (Ann Arbor, 1999), 181–8; S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman poetry* (Cambridge, 1998), 1–16.

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which Virgil marks his use of particular Homeric passages and broader narrative structures.[5]

Another Virgilian passage adopts the same technique (*G*. 1.424–37):

> Si uero solem ad rapidum lunasque **sequentis**
> **ordine respicies**, *numquam te* crastina *fallet*
> hora, *neque insidiis* noctis *capiere* serenae.
> luna **reuertentis cum primum** colligit ignis,
> si nigrum obscuro comprenderit aera cornu,
> **ma**ximus agricolis pelagoque parabitur imber;
> at si **uirgineum** suffuderit ore ruborem,
> **ue**ntus erit: uento semper rubet aurea Phoebe.
> sin ortu quarto (**namque is certissimus auctor**)
> **pu**ra neque obtunsis per caelum cornibus ibit,
> totus et ille dies et qui nascentur ab illo
> exactum ad mensem pluuia uentisque carebunt,
> uotaque seruati soluent in litore nautae
> Glauco et Panopeae et Inoo Melicertae.

The reference to the poet's name, Publius Vergilius Maro, in the letters MA (429), VE 431) and PV (433) is glossed by *uirgineum* (an allusion to the name Parthenias by which Virgil was apparently known)[6] and, more obviously, by the words *namque is certissimus auctor* (432).[7] It has not been noted, to the best of our knowledge, that the words *sequentis*/*ordine respicies* (424–5) also announce the acrostic, just as the words *prima mouent Martem* signal the acrostic in *Aeneid* 7.[8]

It is well known that in this whole passage Virgil is imitating closely the description of weather signs provided by the moon in Aratus' *Phaenomena* (778–818).[9] It has also been pointed out that Virgil's acrostic thus occupies a position corresponding to that of an Aratean acrostic, his famous λεπτὴ, at *Phaen*. 783–7.[10] Virgil will also have noted that the section in which these Aratean lines are set begins at 778 with the words σκέπτεο δὲ πρῶτον κεράων ἑκάτερθε σελήνην, meaning 'Observe first the moon at her two horns',[11] or 'Observe en premier lieu la lune sur ses bords, de chaque côté'.[12] σκέπτεο is a relatively frequent verse-opening for Aratus (*Phaen*. 75, 799, 832, 880, 892, 994), based on the Homeric *hapax* σκέπτεο at *Il*. 17.652. But only here does he follow it up with πρῶτον. Furthermore, κεράων, here referring to the horns of the moon, means more generally the 'edge' or the 'end' of something, so we may see Aratus flagging the imminent acrostic with his advice to 'look first at the edges'.

Virgil certainly seems to have read it that way, and in a passage which is so closely modelled on Aratus' account of the moon and the weather signs to be provided

[5] G.N. Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer*, Hypomnemata 7 (Gottingen, 1964), 145–7.

[6] *Vita Donati* 11.

[7] E.L. Brown, *Numeri Virgiliani: Studies in Eclogues and Georgics*, Collection Latomus 63 (Brussels, 1963), 102–3.

[8] In addition, the words ***re****spicies* (425) and ***re****vertentis cum primum* (427) may be thought to point out that the acrostic runs backwards. And, of course, if you look hard enough you will be neither deceived nor surprised, *numquam te fallet. . .neque insidiis capiere* (425–6).

[9] See J. Farrell, *Virgil's Georgics and the Traditions of Ancient Epic* (Oxford, 1991), 79–83.

[10] On which see J.-M. Jacques, 'Sur un acrostiche d'Aratos', *REA* 62 (1960), 48–61. For further bibliography on the phenomenon go to http://telemachos.phil.uni-erlangen.de/esterni/akrostichon.html. See also G. Damschen, 'Das lateinische Akrosticon', *Philologus* 148 (2004) 88–115.

[11] Translation by D. Kidd, *Aratus: Phaenomena*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 34 (Cambridge, 1997).

[12] Translation by J. Martin, *Aratos: Phénomènes* (Paris, 1998).

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by close study of it, his elegant signal, *sequentis/ordine respicies*, i.e. 'look at the following in order', corresponds to Aratus' advice to 'look first at the edges'.[13]

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## 'DON'T DALLY IN THIS VALLEY': WORDPLAY IN *ODYSSEY* 15.10 AND *AENEID* 4.271

In Book 4 of the *Aeneid*, Iarbas, a Libyan king and a son of Jupiter, hears the rumour of the alliance between Dido and Aeneas. Angered at having been scorned by Dido in favour of a foreigner, he complains bitterly in a prayer to his father. Jupiter responds by sending Mercury down to urge Aeneas to leave Carthage and proceed on his mission to found a kingdom in Italy. Mercury finds Aeneas decked out in the fancy dress of an eastern prince, supervising a building programme for Dido. He scolds Aeneas for wasting time in Carthage and neglecting his ultimate task. Thus brought to his senses, Aeneas prepares to depart (4.196–295).

The primary Homeric model for this sequence is Zeus' dispatch of Hermes to Calypso in the *Odyssey* (5.1–262).[1] The similarities are clear. Mercury, sent by Jupiter after Iarbas' prayer, is the analogue of Hermes, sent by Zeus in response to Athena's complaint that Odysseus is languishing with Calypso. The descriptions of the preparations of Hermes and Mercury for departure are similar (putting on sandals, taking up the wand). Most striking of all, each god interrupts his flight with a stop on a mountain (Hermes pauses on Pieria, *Od*. 5.50; Mercury on Atlas, *Aen*. 4.246–53), and both are likened to birds (*Od*. 5.51–4; *Aen*. 4.253–5).[2] Finally, both gods bring messages that put an end to an amorous relationship that stands in the way of the hero's progress.[3]

There are, however, important differences between the two situations. Calypso has been keeping Odysseus on the island of Ogygia against his will.[4] Aeneas, by contrast, has become a willing and active partner in building Dido's city. Hermes commands Calypso to let Odysseus leave, whereas Mercury chastises not Dido, but Aeneas himself.[5] The contrast between the situations of Odysseus and Aeneas is well summed up when Mercury calls Aeneas *uxorius*. Odysseus sits dejected by the shore (*Od*. 5.156–8), while Aeneas actively constructs an alternative future around the Carthaginian queen (*Aen*. 4.259–67). Mercury's task in confronting Aeneas,

[13] Note also that Virgil's acrostic is placed in between the horns of the moon, *cornu* (428) . . . *cornibus* (433).

[1] G. Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer* (Göttingen, 1964), 209–14, 386–7; F. Klingner, *Virgil: Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis* (Zürich, 1967), 445; W. Kühn, *Götterszenen bei Vergil* (Heidelberg, 1970), 68–70; E. L. Harrison, 'Virgil's Mercury', in A. G. McKay, *Vergilian Bimillenary Lectures 1982*, *Vergilius*, suppl. vol. 2 (Vancouver, 1984), 1–47, at 16; D. Feeney, 'Leaving Dido', in M. Burden, *A Woman Scorn'd: Responses to the Dido Myth* (London, 1998), 105–27, at 114; D. Nelis, *Vergil's* Aeneid *and the* Argonautica *of Apollonius Rhodius* (Leeds, 2001), 156–7; W. Clausen, *Virgil's* Aeneid*: Decorum, Allusion, and Ideology* (Munich, 2002), 83–4, n. 23.

[2] Knauer, ibid., 210, n. 1; Harrison, ibid., 16.

[3] Harrison (n. 1), 16.

[4] Knauer (n. 1), 214; Clausen (n. 1), 83-4, n. 23.

[5] Knauer (n. 1), 209, 214; Harrison (n. 1), 16; Feeney (n. 1), 114; Nelis (n. 1), 157.

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