(the letters between the two *u* are now erased) and the descendants of D (not extant there) read *a coitu e*, except F, which has *a coetu e* before correction and *a coitu e* after correction by the second hand.[13] I suggest that it is most sensible to see in the reading *cum terra uitas* a similar conjecture, although not a very felicitous one.

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A DAISY CHAIN? *RERVM ROMANARVM—CARPTIM PERSCRIPTARVM—FLORENTISSIMVS AVCTOR* (TAC. *ANN.* 3.30.2 WITH SALL. *CAT.* 4.2)

ABSTRACT

In praising Sallust, Tacitus chose the epithet florentissimus *in delightful allusion to the former's apparently innovative (and influential) use of the adverb* carptim *in his presentation of his novel approach to writing* res gestae populi Romani*: the adverb and the superlative adjective share an easily discernible etymological connection.*

Keywords: *carptim*; καρπός; *epitheton florens*; etymology; allusion

Memorably and memorably elusively, Tacitus praises Sallust, *rerum Romanarum florentissimus auctor*, 'the brightest flower among the authors of Roman affairs'.[1] But why would he use that particular epithet?

Commentary has concentrated on the semantics of the epithet, which it 'is difficult to render with a single word in English [and other languages, CBK], but inherent in it are the notions of "thriving" and "most vivid"—a sense, that is, that Sallust's influence as a historian was and still is potent'.[2] The range in meaning can be gleaned from the synonyms that the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* offers by way of an approximative definition (6.1.921.6 [Kapp]): 'fere i. q. vigens, laetus, excellens, ornatus, clarus'; it is partly borne out by a random assortment of translations of this characteristic: 'le très

[13] Cf. also instances where the correction of F^2 might have been influenced by the reading of the family of P but certainly does not reproduce it, since it retains many of the errors of the more widespread family: e.g. *HN* 8.166, where P has the true reading *obuersas* and even R before correction reads *obuersus*, but F before correction follows D in reading *aduersus*, and F^2 corrects to *aduersas*; 8.169 *in cubitu laxitas* PL^2 (the true reading), *incubit alaxitas* DR, *incubitus alaxitas* F^2.

[1] Tac. *Ann*. 3.30.2 *Crispum equestri ortum loco C. Sallustius, rerum Romanarum florentissimus auctor, sororis nepotem in nomen adsciuit*. The translation is by A.J. Woodman, *Tacitus. The Annals* (Indianapolis and Cambridge, 2004), 99. Likewise, all following.

[2] A.M. Gowing, 'From the Annalists to the *Annales*', in A.J. Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge, 2009), 17–31, at 22.

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brilliant historien de Rome', 'il famoso storico Romano', 'the eminent historian'.[3] Erich Koestermann—wisely, perhaps, foregoing a translation—limited himself instead to an explication: 'das Adjectiv … enthält stärkstes Lob'.[4] No doubt.

Meanwhile, the question raised above—*Why choose this particular adjective?*—has received much less attention. Tacitus had other options, of course, and used them: Livius and Fabius Rusticus are *eloquentissimi auctores* (*Agr.* 10.3), Julius Caesar *summus auctorum* (*Germ*. 28.1), *celeberrimi auctores* (*Hist*. 3.51.1) are identified as sources, and Mamercus stands out as *oratorum ea aetate uberrimus* (*Ann*. 3.31.4), to name those identified by commentators. Rather more noteworthy, however, is the fact that he does not use the adjective *florens* of a dead person anywhere else—quite to the contrary, in fact, it often serves in antithesis to the circumstances of someone (near)dead (cf. *TLL* 6.1.921.8 [Kapp]: 'fere i. q. vivens').[5] This unusual instance, then, unparalleled in Tacitus' work, merits note—and all the more as any reader's attention would have been heightened by the hexametric form the laudatory phrase takes (*rérum Rómanárum flórentíssimus aúctor*), wherein *flōrentissĭmŭs* occupies 'the most prominent position', in fact.[6]

Looking at the context, it appears that Tacitus' mention of Sallust does not come out of the blue. As has long been recognized,[7] not only does he introduce his digression on the history of legislation (*Ann*. 3.25.2–28.2) with a noticeable variation on his predecessor's introduction to his 'Archaeology' when he says (3.25.2):

ea res admonet ut de principiis iuris et quibus modis ad hanc multitudinem infinitam ac uarietatem legum peruentum sit altius disseram

That circumstance suggests that I should talk in more depth about the beginnings of legislature and by what means one arrived at this infinite number and variety of laws.

[3] P. Wuilleumier, *Tacite. Annales Livres I–III* (Paris, 1978), 166; B. Ceva, *Tacito. Annali* (Milan, 1997), 221; M. Grant, *Tacitus. The Annals of Imperial Rome* (New York, 1971 [orig. 1956]), 146. Cf. A.J. Church and W.J. Brodribb, *Annals of Tacitus* (London, 1884), 92: 'that most admirable Roman historian'.

[4] E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus. Annalen. Band I. Buch 1–3* (Heidelberg, 1963), 476. Similarly, A.J. Woodman and R.H. Martin, *The Annals of Tacitus, Book 3* (Cambridge, 1996), 271, though they seem to suggest 'flourishing'.

[5] All instances are taken from A. Gerber, A. Greef, *Lexicon Taciteum* (Hildesheim, 1962 [reprint]), s.v. They are (with those including antithesis in bold): *res* [*sc*. *gestae*] ***florentibus ipsis*** *ob metum falsae* (which echoes Sall. *Cat.* 39.2 *ipsi innoxii, florentes, sine metu*), ***postquam occiderant*** *recentibus odiis compositae* (*Ann*. 1.1); *florentibus Gaio et Lucio Caesaribus* (*Ann*. 1.53); *adsequentur florente te, Caesar, quos dederis honores* (*Ann*. 2.37); *florente Gaio Caesare missoque ad res Orientis intuta Tiberii amicitia* (*Ann*. 2.42); ***non florentis*** *Caesaris neque suis in castris, sed uelut in* ***urbe uicta*** *facies* (*Ann*. 1.41); *inlacrimabunt* ***quondam florentem*** *et tot bellorum superstitem muliebri fraude* ***cecidisse*** (*Ann*. 2.71); *si ipsi florentes quam inops Italia … cogitarent* (*Ann*. 3.40); *florenti filiae haud concors* (*Ann*. 11.37); ***florentem*** *Soranum celebrauerat,* ***labentem*** *non deseruit* (*Ann*. 16.33); ***florentes*** *priuignos … ***adflictos*** (*Ann*. 4.71); ***florentis*** *domus amicus* ***adflictam*** *deseruisset* (*Ann*. 4.68); ***florentis*** *domus—nam Germanici* ***mortem*** *inter prospera ducebat* (*Ann*. 4.1, note the paradox); *regina … florens aetate formaque* (*Hist*. 2.81); *florente fama* (*Agr*. 44); *non primordia populi Romani … sed florentissimum imperium* (*Ann*. 2.88); *florentissimum Italiae latus* (*Hist*. 2.17); *florentissimis pone tergam municipiis* (*Hist*. 3.60).

[6] S.J. Harrison, '*Discordia taetra*: the history of a hexameter-ending', *CQ* 41 (1991), 138–49, at 138. I do not know of a study of hexameters in Roman historiography; given their frequency (beginning with Cato's [*FRHist* F1] *si ques sunt homines quos delectat populi Ro | mani gesta describere*), it would seem a desideratum. For first steps in this direction, see A.J. Woodman, 'Ennius' *Annals* and Tacitus' *Annals*', in C. Damon and J. Farrell (edd.), *Ennius' Annals. Poetry and History* (Cambridge, 2020), 228–39, especially 228–33.

[7] E. Hahn, *Die Exkurse in den Annalen des Tacitus* (Borna and Leipzig, 1933), 10.

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Its juxtaposition with the original reveals its debts and—typically Tacitean[8]—variances (Sall. *Cat.* 5.9):

res ipsa hortari uidetur, quoniam de moribus ciuitatis tempus admonuit, supra repetere ac paucis instituta maiorum domi militiaeque, quo modo rem publicam habuerint quantamque reliquerint, ut paulatim inmutata ex pulcherruma atque optuma pessuma ac flagitiosissuma facta sit, disserere.

Since the occasion has raised the topic of public morals, the state of affairs seems to encourage me to go back in time and talk briefly about the established practices of our forefathers in peace and in war, how they administered the state, how great it was when they passed it on, and how by gradual changes, instead of the noblest and the best, it has become the worst and the most infamous.[9]

But Tacitus then continues to engage with Sallust throughout the digression, more and less conspicuously; amongst the former there is (*Ann*. 3.26.2):

at postquam exui aequalitas et pro modestia ac pudore ambitio et uis incedebat, prouenere dominationes multosque apud populos aeternum mansere.

But, after equality was cast aside and ambition and force became implanted instead of reserve and shame, despotisms sprang up and, in the case of many peoples, remained permanently.

This reworks various parts of the proem to the *Bellum Catilinae*, but most noticeably this one from the alleged autobiography (*Cat.* 3.3):

nam pro pudore, pro abstinentia, pro uirtute audacia, largitio, auaritia **uigebant**.

For instead of modesty, instead of incorruptibility, instead of merit, there flourished shamelessness, bribery, and greed.

While Sallust is not the only author with whom Tacitus engages in this section,[10] to readers familiar with his work the former is undoubtedly very much on their mind.

They might then, when reading Tacitus' *rerum Romanarum florentissimus auctor*, be counted upon to remember another famous detail within Sallust's first proem (*Cat.* 4.2):

sed, a quo incepto studioque me ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus statui **res gestas populi Romani carptim**, ut quaeque memoria digna uidebantur, **perscribere**, eo magis, quod mihi a spe, metu, partibus rei publicae animus liber erat.

Rather, I decided to return to an undertaking and pursuit from which the harmful craving for advancement had held me back, and to write up the deeds of the Roman people selectively,

[8] For discussion of Tacitus' allusive techniques, see the literature cited in C.B. Krebs, '*Annum quiete et otio transiit*: Tacitus (*Agr.* 6.3) and Sallust on liberty, tyranny, and human dignity', in V.E. Pagán (ed.), *A Companion to Tacitus* (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2012), 333–45, at 335.

[9] For Sallust I am using (and, in this instance, adapting) the translation from J.C. Rolfe (ed. J.T. Ramsey), *Sallust. The War with Catiline. The War with Jugurtha* (Cambridge, 2013), 28; I differ in my understanding of *res ipsa*, on which see K. Vretska, *C. Sallustius Crispus: De Catilinae Coniuratione* (Heidelberg, 1976), ad loc.

[10] Woodman and Martin (n. 4), 237 stress the significance of Cicero.

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according to whatever seemed to me worthy of record; all the more was this my intention because I possessed a mind free from hope, fear, and partisanship.

Outlining his own and rather unprecedented approach (in scope, topic and perspective) to the writing of Roman history, Sallust announces the limitation of his enquiry and the principle of selection with a choice adverb previously unattested: *carptim*.[11]

Tacitus himself would use the word, which experienced a blossoming at the time, as attestations in Pliny and Suetonius evince.[12] It is related to (and most likely derived from) the verb *carpere*, 'to pluck, gather, pick, pull (fruit, flowers, etc.)', which in turn is related to καρπός, 'fruit, … usually of the fruits of the earth'.[13] It is not clear what, if anything, motivated Sallust in his choice,[14] which might perhaps be translated (along with its parenthetical explanation *ut quaeque memoria digna uidebantur*) as 'in selection, with each topic plucked as it seemed worthy'. But the distribution of subsequent attestations amongst authors known to have been familiar with Sallust's work is striking, and in their respective contexts there often are further indications of a Sallustian presence: in Pliny's *Panegyricus* (25.1), the playful *carptim breuiterque perstringi* is combined with an allusion to another passage by the Roman historian (*Iug.* 19.2); similarly, Ammianus quotes Sallust more fully at 28.1.2 (*carptim, ut quaeque memoria digna sunt, explanabo*).[15] This may suggest that the word was readily associated with the *florentissimus auctor*.

It may by now be obvious that Tacitus continues Sallust's botanical metaphor with *florentissimus*, and Woodman's translation—'brightest flower'—happily acknowledges the adjective's literal meaning 'de floribus, coronis …, arboribus, herbis, locis'

[11] *TLL* 3.496.57–497.4 (Bannier). On Sallust's penchant for such (potentially archaizing) adverbs on *-tim*, see S.L. Fighiera, *La lingua e la grammatica di C. Crispo Sallustio* (Savona, 1897), 74: 'I più degni di nota tra i numerosissimi che ne à Sallustio sono: «carptim» (*C*. 4.2); «confertim» (*Iug*. 50.5); «catervatim» (97.4); «turmatim» (101.4). Il Bruennert (*op. cit.*, p. 24) ne fa una imitazione sisenniana: ma sono forse piuttosto un arcaismo generale, non dovuto a speciale influsso di uno scrittore; poichè tale formazione è frequente in tutti gli scrittori arcaici ed arcaicizzanti. Nè vale il numero di esempi Sisenniani (14 circa), trattandosi di tutta una letteratura pervenutaci frammentaria.' The principle of selectivity itself, however, is a commonplace of classical historiography: G. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1956), 128–9.

[12] *Hist.* 4.46 *dein quibus aetas et iusta stipendia, dimissi cum honore, alii ob culpam, sed carptim ac singuli, quo tutissimo remedio consensus multitudinis extenuatur*. The more or less contemporary instances are: Plin. *Ep*. 6.22.2, 8.4.7, 8.14.16; *Pan*. 25.1; Suet. *Dom*. 9. Cf. n. 15 below.

[13] *TLL* 3.496.57 (Bannier); *OLD* s.v. *carpo* 1; LSJ s.v. καρπός 1.

[14] It would, however, seem significant that Sallust had just refused agricultural work as an alternative pastime to his choice of writing history (*bonum otium conterere neque uero agrum colundo aut uenando seruilibus officiis*, *Cat.* 4.1). *carpere* is naturally used in the agricultural context (*manibus carpito, [ocinum] renascetur*, Cato, *Agr.* 54), and *carptim* will be used thus as well (Columella, *Rust.* 9.15.12). Might Sallust's choice adverb pun on its literal meaning: he will not pluck herbs on the field but topics for his history?

[15] In addition to the passages listed above (n. 13), the *TLL* offers the following instances up to the time of Tacitus: Livy 22.16.2, 28.25.9, 44.41.6; Columella, *Rust*. 9.15.12; Plin. *HN* 18.362; Ammianus is fond of the adverb: 14.4.2, 16.7.4, 21.16.8, 23.6.10, 25.4.16, 30.2.8 (cf. G. Kelly, *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian* [Cambridge, 2008], s.v. 'Sallust'). There is more to *carptim* than this entry in the *TLL* lets on; for pointers, see B.-R. Voss, 'Carptim', in H.-T. Johann, M. Lausberg (edd.), *Festgabe für O. Hiltbrunner* (Münster, 1973), 162–6. On Pliny's use of Sallust in the *Panegyricus*, see C.B. Krebs, 'Broad strokes with fine brushes: Pliny, *Paneg*. 25 and its two Sallustian intertexts (*BC* 4.2, *BJ* 19.2)' (forthcoming).

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(*TLL* 6.1.920.67).[16] Amongst the instances of this literal use, of particular interest appear to be Meliboeus' lament 'that [his goats] will not … crop flowering lucerne and bitter willows [anymore]' (*non me pascente, capellae,* | *florentem cytisum et salices carpetis amaras* (Verg. *Ecl*. 1.75–6) and Seneca's words 'what [the bees] have culled from the most delicate of blooming and flowering plants' (*quae ex tenerrimis uirentium florentiumque decerpserint*, *Ep*. 84.4). In both instances *florens* and (a compositum of) *carpere* figure together, and rather naturally so. The latter passage is especially rewarding because of its metapoetic significance: for Seneca, in its context, recommends that writers collect inspiration from other authors just like bees, 'as Vergil says' (*ut Vergilius noster ait*), he adds with a wink before inserting a florid quotation. In other words, the florilegium (the term is post-classical, sadly; but Ovid knows of *florilegae … apes*, *Met.* 15.366) is the outcome of a discerning selection, just as a collection of poetry, in the words of Meleager's metaphorical verse (*Anth. Pal.* 12.95.2), is owed to 'the Graces [as] flower-gatherers of beauty', κάλλευς ἀνθολόγοι Χάριτες.[17] The connection between these two words—*carptim* and *florens*—may thus be tighter even than appears at first *blush*.

But Tacitus added two additional features to facilitate the recognition of the allusion. On the one hand, his *florentissimus* also continues, as Woodman and Martin point out ad loc. (n. 4), the botanical metaphor used in the preceding sentence to describe the good fortunes of Volusius, 'in respect of [whose means] their house *thrived* immensely' (*quis domus illa immensum* ***uiguit***, *Ann*. 3.30.1). But there is more, as Tacitus thereby also uses the same verb that Sallust had employed (as highlighted above in bold [*Cat.* 3.3]) in the passage preceding his programmatic statement. Such peripheral parallels strengthen the case for an intentional intertextual connection.[18] On the other hand, the phrasing of Tacitus' praise matches in its parts and order the Sallustian statement rather closely (the typical Tacitean variations notwithstanding [see n. 8 above]): (1) *rerum Romanarum* (2) *florentissimus* (3) *auctor* corresponds to (1) *res gestas populi Romani* (2) *carptim* … (3) *perscribere*. Both authors include in their respective phrases a botanical metaphor in middle position; it is as if Tacitus thus wanted to highlight what Cairns has called 'implicit etymologies', viz. when an author takes advantage of word order to highlight an etymological connection.[19]

In conclusion, Tacitus' 'stärkstes Lob' is all the stronger, as *florentissimus auctor*—via the shared and variously highlighted botanical etymology—honourably

[16] Plautus plays on the two meanings when he has Toxilus pun in *Persa* 770: 'this flowering [garland] I'll give to you, my flower' (*do hanc tibi florentem florenti*). Elsewhere, the pear-tree, the fields and grass are flowering in Cato, Ovid and Apuleius—to name but a few further but representative instances (*piro florente*, Cato, *Agr.* 131; *florentia proterit arua*, Ov. *Met*. 2.791; *florentis cespitis gremio*, Apul. *Met*. 4.35).

[17] On the 'metapoetic imagery in Callimachus and Meleager', see K. Gutzwiller, 'The reception of Callimachus in Meleager', in J. Klooster et al. (edd.), *Callimachus Revisited: New Perspectives in Callimachean Scholarship* (Leuven and Paris, 2019), 97–120, at 102–6. This imagery is widespread; one further instance, which Bruce Gibson brings to my attention, is Pind. *Pyth*. 10.53–4 ἐγκωμίων γὰρ ἄωτος ὕμνων | ἐπ᾽ ἄλλοτ᾽ ἄλλον ὥτε μέλισσα θύνει λόγον.

[18] See R. Ash, 'Warped intertextualities: Naevius and Sallust at Tacitus' *Histories* 2.12.2', *Histos* 1 (1997), 42–50.

[19] Cf. F. Cairns, 'Ancient "etymology" and Tibullus. On the classification of "etymologies" and "etymological markers"', *PCPhS* 42 (1996), 24–59, at 25: 'implicit etymologies, where [the poet] places two words, often with a similar sound, in close proximity and thus encourages his readers to infer that one derives from the other'.

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alludes to his predecessor's famous characterization of his historiographical approach, thus adding a daisy to the chain: 'among the authors of Roman affairs', recounted in selection, with each topic plucked as it seemed worthy, Sallust is, indeed, 'the brightest flower'.[20]

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