HERCVLEVS LABOR – LABOR LIMAE: EPIC ARITHMETIC AT VIRGIL, *AENEID* 8.230-2

A distinctive feature of *Aeneid* 8 is the constant interplay and fluctuation of registers, with high epic and the *genus grande* alternating with the lighter strains or learned allusions associated with the *genus tenue*. As one commentator has remarked, 'Man darf das Buch allein schon wegen seines Reichtums an Aitien als das 'kallimacheischste' der *Aeneis* bezeichnen.'[1] Beyond the emphasis on aetiology—the Cacus myth in particular is presented as *aition* for the consecration of the Ara Maxima—the Callimachean complexion comes out also in several smaller not-so-serious or learned touches, typically at unlikely moments to infuse an element of humour in an otherwise intensely dramatic narrative. The Hercules–Cacus episode conflates high drama and low comedy as the cattle rustler's slightly ridiculous stratagem becomes a gigantic clash resonating with the primal gigantomachy.[2] Among the rudimentary weapons of mass destruction unleashed by Hercules upon Cacus (*omniaque arma | aduocat et ramis uastisque molaribus instat*, 8.249-50), the hapax *molaris* (massive boulder, lit. millstone) echoes its Homeric equivalent μύλαξ (*Il.* 12.161), itself a hapax, with the recherché term then reappearing (again as hapax) at Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.59:[3] missiles and diction are equally outlandish. When Hercules in a reprise of the celebrated Empedoclean leap plunges *per ignem* in pursuit of Cacus (8.256-8), an (incongruous) evocation of the Sicilian philosopher's fiery exit adds a touch of comedy at the heated moment.[4] And from this inferno Virgil moves to Olympus, lowering the tone but raising the temperature as Venus in a domestic comedy seduces the uxorious Vulcan into preparing new armour for Aeneas: now she kindles flames of a different sort in the fire-god (8.388-92, 8.404-6) in a scene marked by witty double entendre that provides a playful contrast with the unfolding drama at Pallanteum.[5] At moments like these, a lighter strain is audible through the epic thunder, *Vergilius ludens* is hard at work (or play).

So again in the monumental showdown between Hercules and Cacus as related by Evander. The duel itself (8.190-267) is framed by two segments in which the narrator links *aition* and subsequent celebrations (8.185-9, 8.268-75), embedding the epyllion in the larger narrative: the *maximus ultor* (8.201) commemorated in the eponymous

[1] See N. Holzberg, *Vergil. Der Dichter und sein Werk* (Munich, 2006), 174–7, 180–7 (the quotation from 175); further E.V. George, Aeneid *VIII and the* Aitia *of Callimachus* (Leiden, 1974); M.A. Tueller, 'Well-read heroes quoting the *Aetia* in *Aeneid* 8', *HSPh* 100 (2000), 361–80; J.F. Miller, 'Virgil's Salian hymn to Hercules', *CJ* 109 (2014), 439–63.

[2] Holzberg (n. 1), 181: 'In seiner Plumpheit ist der Trick des Cacus im Grunde lächerlich'; comedy is generated 'weil Vergil einen Hirtenschwank durch Elemente der Heldensage angereichert hat und sein Erzähler Euander mit entsprechend hohem Pathos vorträgt' (183); and id., 'Der Böse und die Augusteer. Cacus bei Livius, Vergil, Properz und Ovid', *Gymnasium* 119 (2012), 449–62, at 452–3. On Cacus' literary genealogy, see V. Buchheit, *Vergil über die Sendung Roms* (Heidelberg, 1963), 126–30; M. Labate, 'In search of the lost Hercules: strategies of the fantastic in the *Aeneid*', in P. Hardie (ed.), *Paradox and the Marvellous in Augustan Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2009), 126–44; D. Lowe, *Monsters and Monstrosity in Augustan Poetry* (Ann Arbor, 2015), 220–6; and, on the gigantomantic resonances, P. Hardie, *Virgil's* Aeneid*: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford, 1986), 110–18; R. Glei, *Der Vater der Dinge* (Trier, 1991), 328–9.

[3] Holzberg (n. 1), 183.

[4] On the Empedoclean allusion, cf. Hardie (n. 2), 116; Glei (n. 2), 330–1; Holzberg (n. 1), 183.

[5] Holzberg (n. 1), 184–7.

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altar (*hanc tanti numinis aram*, 8.186; *hanc aram luco statuit, quae maxima semper | dicetur nobis et erit quae maxima semper*, 8.271-2). An introductory Homeric formula (*postquam exempta fames et amor compressus edendi*, 8.184 ~ *Od*. 1.150, 3.67)[6] sets the tone for a grand epic narration, which then plays out according to a carefully choreographed dynamic. Cacus' appearance is preceded by a description of his lair as *locus horribilis* (8.190-9), where the signature emphasis on vastness and rugged savagery gives a foretaste of the monster himself (*disiectae ... moles, ingentem ... ruinam, uasto ... recessu, magna ... mole*).[7] The heroics and thundering hyperbole throughout the episode will justify its inclusion, in the celebratory Salian hymn, among the canonical Herculean labours (8.280-305, esp. 8.303-5, *super omnia Caci | spelunca, adiciunt …*);[8] but behind the gigantic *Herculeus labor* we also get occasional glimpses of the distinctive *labor limae*. Cacus is both terrifying and slightly ridiculous, with perhaps a hint of the double aspect in the line *ne quid inausum | aut intractum scelerisue doliue fuisset* (8.205-6), where *scelus* and *dolus* capture respectively the criminal and the more comic aspects. At any rate, his theft of the cattle and his stratagem of dragging them backwards by their tails to his cave, to leave no tell-tale tracks, replays a trick described in the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes* 73–8, and is closer to rustic farce than to the world of high heroics: *atque hos, ne qua forent pedibus uestigia rectis, | cauda in speluncam tractos uersisque uiarum | indiciis raptor saxo occultabat opaco* (8.209-11). Hercules later returns the compliment when he unceremoniously drags out the defeated Cacus —again feet first—from his cave (*pedibusque informe cadauer | protrahitur*, 8.264-5).[9] The game is given away when one of the stolen heifers bellows audibly from within Cacus' cave (8.217-18): evidently it had escaped Virgil's Hercules, up to this point, that eight head of cattle were missing (Livy 1.7.6 and Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.39 have him do the arithmetic before setting off). With Cacus' cover thus blown, we reach the first *peripeteia* in the narrative (*et Caci spem custodita fefellit*, 8.218).

This initiates a vigorous counter-movement at 8.219 as Hercules' anger flares up and he races furiously to the mountain, club in hand (*hic uero Alcidae …*); in a paradoxical reversal, the awe-inspiring monster now himself takes to flight in naked terror (*tum primum nostri Cacum uidere timentem | turbatumque oculis*, 8.222-3) and seeks refuge in his impregnable lair. Then a second paradox, still more surprising: Hercules' furious surge of energy is thwarted, he literally comes up against a stone wall. An impressive terminal anaphora dramatizes the paradox of foiled effort and motion arrested (the second turning point) (8.228-32):

[6] For the epic protocol, see A. Bettenworth, *Gastmahlszenen in der antiken Epik von Homer bis Claudian* (Göttingen, 2004), 163–5.

[7] Epic scale and dramatic character of the encounter are consistently reinforced by adjectives of size (*tantus* 186; *ingens* 192, 204, 241, 252, 258; *uastus* 193, 217, 250; *magnus* 199; *maximus* 201, 239, 271, 272; *immane* 225); by the polarity high–low (*aerii* 221; *ardua* 221; *altissima* 234; *imis* 237; *infernas* 244; *barathrum* 245; *desuper* 249; *caelo* 264), by affective terms (*dira* 194; *tristi* 197; *feruidus* 230; *mirabile dictu* 252; *terribilis* 266; *laetique* 268), and by strong emphasis on the visual (*aspice* 190; *uidere* 222; *apparuit* 241; *recludat* 144; *ostenduntur* 264; *tuendo* 164). See further L. Quartarone, 'Quantity, quality, tension and transition: the dimensions of Vergil's *ingens*', *Vergilius* 57 (2011), 3–34; R.A. Smith, *The Primacy of Vision in Virgil's* Aeneid (Austin, 2005), 147–52.

[8] Hardie (n. 2), 111 n. 68; Miller (n. 1), 441–7.

[9] An allusion to the removal of a corpse would give the detail a humorous point (cf. Plin. *HN* 7.46, *ritus naturae hominem capite gigni, mos est pedibus efferri*).

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ecce furens animis aderat Tirynthius omnemque
accessum lustrans huc ora ferebat et illuc,
dentibus infrendens. ter totum feruidus ira
lustrat Auentini montem, ter saxea temptat
limina nequiquam, ter fessus ualle resedit.

Formally the *ter* sequence resembles a number of other 'focussing' triads, with anaphora or polyptoton (*uel sim.*), to highlight a noteworthy aspect.[10] But beyond that, it also touches on an old stylistic controversy around the quoted lines. Peerlkamp objected to the hypermetric enclitic in *omnemque* (8.228: 'elegantius absit copula') and other tautologies, proposed deleting verses 229 and 230, and then reading *ecce furens aderat Tirynthius; omnem | lustrat Auentini montem* ...: this, he opined, would produce a more rapid and streamlined sequence. The repetitions *lustrans/lustrat* and *furens animis/feruidus ira*, according to Peerlkamp, are un-Virgilian; and while the opposition *ter temptat/ter resedit* is attractive, triple *ter* is without parallel in Virgil. With verses 229 and 230 deleted, the action is brisker: 'facti celeritas magis apparet. Semel Auentini montem lustrasse sufficiebat. Unum modo esse aditum uidit. Neque opus erat montem circumire, ut ad fores speluncae ueniret. Hunc ter tentat, ter fessus resedit.'[11] His tinkering however is without manuscript authority and was rightly dismissed soon afterwards by Albert Forbiger in his edition of the *Aeneid*;[12] other editors too have noted that the thematic repetitions in these verses are included for their literary effect, consciously heightening drama and pathos at this critical moment in the narrative.[13] This line may be further pursued in light of Peerlkamp's objections. At the apex of his rage (*furens animis, dentibus infrendens, feruidus ira*) and when his efforts are most intense (*omnemque | accessum lustrans, lustrat Auentini montem*), Hercules is thwarted: the *ter* sequence neatly calibrates this retardation, with progression from *feruidus ira* to *temptat nequiquam* to *fessus resedit* indexing the shift from kinesis to stasis, from attempt to failure. Anaphora with *ter* is 'traditional in epic contexts of attempt and failure',[14] but here the *poeta ludens* goes a step further. For typically the anaphoric element *ter* appears only twice, as famously in *ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum; | ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago* (2.792-3 = 6.700-1; cf Hom. *Od.* 11.206-7).

[10] Examples from Book 8 include the deictic polyptoton in Evander's preface, *non haec sollemnia nobis, | has ex more dapes, hanc tanti numinis aram | uana superstitio ueterumque ignara deorum | imposuit* (185–8); or the Gauls on the shield of Aeneas, *aurea caesaries ollis atque aurea uestis, | uirgatis lucent sagulis, tum lactea colla | auro innectuntur* (659–60; cf. 1.448-9, 4.138-9, 7.278-9, 11.774-6). On 8.564-6, see n. 15 below.

[11] P.H. Peerlkamp (ed.), *P. Virgilii Maronis Aeneidos Libri VII–XII* (Leiden, 1843), 103.

[12] A. Forbiger (ed.), *P. Virgilii Maronis Opera* III (Leipzig, 1852), 121: 'Haeret autem Vir doct. primum in iterata notione *omnem accessum lustrans* et *lustrat Auentinum montem*, tum in tautologia *furens animis* et *feruidus ira*, denique in uoc. *ter* tribus uersibus repetito, quum alibi … semper modo iteretur; quae omnes causae non tanti sunt, ut inuitis omnibus Codd. hos uersus spurios censeamus.'

[13] E.g. T. Ladewig (ed.), *Vergils Gedichte* III (Berlin, 1871), 61 (ad 8.228); T.E. Page (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil, Books VII-XII* (London and New York, 1962), 217 (ad 8.230): 'emphatic repetition'; E. Paratore (ed.), *Virgilio, Eneide* IV (Milan, 1981), 247: 'la sonora anaphora vuol dare tutta l'impressione dei vani sforzi compiuti da Ercole.'

[14] S.J. Harrison (ed.), *Vergil* Aeneid *10* (Oxford, 1991), 235 (ad 10.685-6): thus (e.g.) 2.792-3; 4.690-1; 6.700-1; 10.885-6; cf. A.S. Pease (ed.), *Publi Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Quartus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935), 527 (ad 4.690); F. Bömer (ed.), *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen Buch I-III* (Heidelberg, 1969), 309 (ad *Met.* 2.270); N. Zorzetti, 'Numerali', in F. della Corte (ed.), *Enciclopedia Virgiliana* III (Rome, 1987), 782–8 (on 'il *cliché* ternario'); E. Dekel, *Virgil's Homeric Lens* (New York and London, 2012), 17 (and curiously suggesting, at 119 n. 62, that 8.564-6 'is not strictly speaking a failed attempt').

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Peerlkamp, unwilling to countenance a departure from this schema in the Hercules passage, resorted to a drastic deletion. However, the unique use here of threefold *ter* is fully justified by the unique context and as a clever *amplificatio*: the hyperbolic attempt-and-failure sequence cannot be 'contained' within the traditional formula, and the 'thrice' trope is now literally inscribed in the verses. Virgil, in other words, aligning structure with content and using form to articulate meaning, deploys a witty 'mimetic' tricolon to calibrate and amplify Alcides' truly Herculean exertion—and correspondingly infuriating failure. The point here is not, as Peerlkamp insisted, the *facti celeritas* but precisely the *protracted* and ultimately ineffective effort: the impressive 'Herculean' triad, consciously calling attention to itself, dramatizes not only the signature Herculean effort, but also carries a hint of tongue-in-cheek melodrama.[15]

This excessive amplification is consistent with the tenor and calculus of the whole episode, and is answered a few lines later by another drastic (triadic) hyperbole. With *nequiquam* and *fessus ... resedit* (8.232), Hercules' frenzy briefly abates: the half-time score is 1–0 to Cacus.[16] However, the triad signals not just failure, but more particularly a pivotal and paradoxical setback before the imminent heroic rebound—and from this point the showdown resumes with even greater energy. Hercules purposefully dislodges a massive needle of flint (8.233-9)[17] to smash his way into Cacus' cavern, and in a spectacular display of his proverbial strength makes good the earlier setback (third *peripeteia*) (8.237-40):

> … et imis
> auulsam soluit radicibus, inde repente
> impulit; impulsu quo maximus intonat aether,
> dissultant ripae refluitque exterritus amnis.

Stylistically the resurgent energy is captured in dynamic enjambement of *impellere*,[18] the juxtaposition with *impulsus*, a kind of *figura etymologica* that produces an intensifying and 'elevated effect,'[19] and in violent reverberations throughout the natural world.

[15] Triple anaphora on *ter* is rare. The number three has ritual significance (e.g. *Aen*. 6.506; Tib. 1.2.54; 1.5.14) and triple *ter* appears in this environment (*Ecl*. 8.73-5; *Ciris* 371–3; Ov. *Met*. 7.261)—but the attempt-and-failure sequence is something different. A later example at Ov. *Her*. 4.7-8, *ter tecum conata loqui, ter inutilis haesit | lingua, ter in primo destitit ore sonus*. A variant of the pattern when Evander relates his hard-fought victory over the formidable Erulus, and where the mimetic 'three' is again inscribed in the triad: *nascenti cui* ***tris*** *animas Feronia mater | (horrendum dictu) dederat,* ***terna*** *arma mouenda— |* ***ter*** *leto sternendus erat* (8.564-6). The number game clearly appealed.

[16] Structurally this 'Atempause' (F.J. Worstbrock, *Elemente einer Poetik der Aeneis* [Münster, 1963], 105–6), indexed by the *ter* grouping (8.230-2), is placed at the exact centre of Evander's ninety verses of direct speech (8.185-275). Such careful positioning is deliberate: cf. also the ideologically loaded *aude, hospes, contemnere opes et te quoque dignum | finge deo, rebusque ueni non asper egenis* (8.364-5) at the centre of the whole book (Holzberg [n. 1], 175).

[17] G.K. Galinsky, 'The Hercules-Cacus episode in *Aeneid* 8', *AJPh* 87 (1966), 18–51, esp. at 41. The attempt-and-failure sequence at 8.230-2 carries a hint of *uis consili expers*.

[18] Verbs denoting a sudden, violent or dramatic action (collapsing, grabbing, striking, shattering, *uel sim*.) are often thrown into relief by enjambement, as *corripere* (1.363, 2.217, 9.502, 12.299), *dissilire* (12.741), *excidere* (9.113, 12.424), *ferire* (12.730), *frangere* (9.413, 12.732), *incidere* (2.467), *proicere* (5.402), *proterere* (12.330), *sternere* (2.385). See further J. Veremans, *De plaats van het verbum finitum in de latijnse dactylische hexameter* (Brussels, 1963), 132–6; Worstbrock (n. 16), 164–6.

[19] The quotation (with reference to *Aen*. 12.457) from R. Tarrant (ed.), *Virgil Aeneid Book XII* (Cambridge, 2012), 210. Cf. repeated *concussa / concussu* (Lucr. 6.289-90), though not in juxtaposition. On the figure, see J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry* (Oxford, 1996), 243–53.

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Here the calibrated sequence from thundering sky to river banks leaping apart to recoiling river (8.239-40)—a localized application (*amnis* 8.240 ~ *amnem* 8.204, 8.236) of the tripartite division of the universe into heaven, earth and sea[20]—amplifies the feat into an event of truly cosmic dimensions. But notwithstanding the intrinsic hyperbole, it is the suggestive counterpoint with the preceding attempt-and-failure group that gives this second triadic sequence its full force: first hyperinflated failure and frustration, with a hint of *lusus* embedded in the structure, then a hyperinflated 'comeback' and grim duel to the death. If we follow Peerlkamp, we miss both the small-scale artistry at 8.228-32 and the 'big-screen' epic effects. The number game on *ter* in particular wittily captures the Herculean effort at this crucial moment. In the 'arithmetic' of epic, it all adds up.

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AMPHICTYON, SON OF HELLEN? A MISUNDERSTOOD MYTHOLOGICAL REFERENCE IN DION. HAL. *ANT. ROM*. 4.25.3*

Virtually all the major scholarly reference works, as well as many more popular sources, provide two alternative versions of the ancestry of Amphictyon, the mythical founder of the Delphic-Pylaic amphictyony, as either the son or the grandson of Deucalion, that is, by implication, either the brother or the son of Hellen.[1] Yet, a review of all relevant sources shows that they unanimously and exclusively refer to Amphictyon as the son of Deucalion.[2]

[20] Cf. F. Bömer (ed.), *P. Ovidius Naso: Die Fasten* II (Heidelberg, 1958), 292 (ad *Fast*. 5.11); id. (n. 14), 18 (ad *Met*. 1.5); Hardie (n. 2), 322–5.

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[1] W.H. Roscher, *Lex*. 1.305 (H.W. Stoll); *Kl. Pauly* 1.311 (H. von Geisau); *BNP* 1.611 (F. Graf); R.L. Fowler, *Early Greek Mythography* (Oxford, 2013), 2.142. Cf. further, J. Lempriere, L.L. Da Ponte and J.D. Ogilby, *Bibliotheca Classica* (rev. ed. New York, 1839), s.v. Amphictyon, and the works cited in n. 4. Notable exceptions are P. Grimal, *The Penguin Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Engl. trans.; London, 1986), and *RE* 1.1904 (Wagner), s.v. Amphictyon, which give only the first (correct) alternative, but do not mention or comment on *Ant. Rom*. 4.25. There is no entry on Amphictyon in either *OCD*[4] or *LIMC*.

[2] Roscher (n. 1) cites the most important sources: Theopomp. in Harp. *Lexicon in decem oratores Atticos*, ed. Dindorf (Oxford, 1853; repr. Groningen, 1969), 28 s.v. Ἀμφικτύονες; Suda α 1736 s.v. Ἀμφικτύονες; Ps.-Zonar. *Lexicon* α 145 s.v. Ἀμφικτύονες; *IG* 12.5 no. 444, line 5.8b; Paus. 10.8.1; Schol. Eur. *Or*. 1094. A TLG search further produces Schol. Hom. *Od*. 10.2; Steph. Byz. β 116 Billerbeck s.v. Βοιωτία; p. 675 Meineke s.v. Φύσκος = Arist. *fr*. 560 Rose = Rhianus, *FGrHist* 265 F 57; Ps.-Scymn. *Periegesis ad Nicomedem Regem* 588–9, in *GGM* 1.219; Ael. Herodianus, *De Prosodia Catholica*, in *Gramm. Gr*. 3.1, 184 Lentz; Syncell. *Ecl. Chron*., ed. Mosshammer (Leipzig, 1984), 184; Phot. *Lexicon* α 1340 s.v. Ἀμφικτύονες; Apostolius s.v. Ἀμφικτυονικὸν συνέδριον, in *Paroemiogr*. 2.281. This list is exhaustive. Many of these sources depend on each other, but their relationship is beyond the scope of this note.

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