balance I should prefer to keep them, since doublets are a characteristic feature of Cicero in this speech, and we have the doublet *spe atque animis* in the parallel passage. The only real objection to *odio inflata* would be that *odio inflammata* is directly paralleled, whereas *odio inflata* is not; but *odio inflata* is not objectionable in itself. As for *inflatus* used in a nautical context (again in addition to *Mur.* 33), it is surely no accident that the word is used in a sentence replete with nautical imagery at *Sest.* 18, *alter. . .puteali et faeneratorum gregibus inflatus, a quibus compulsus olim, ne in Scyllaeo illo aeris alieni tamquam in fretu ad columnam adhaeresceret, in tribunatus portum perfugerat*.

In our passage, then, *studio atque odio inflata* would replace an image that works counter to the intended sense with a striking and appropriate one—an image not just of regal *superbia* (as at § 45), but of full sails and winds of fanatical hatred blowing in the direction of Italy.

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NO MORE SLAVE-GANGS: VARRO, *DE RE RUSTICA* 1.2.20–1*

In republican Italy 'all agriculture (was) carried out by men—slaves, freemen, or both'—so Varro tells us in the first book of his *De re rustica*, and this is the general view held today by modern scholars.[1] It is now also generally accepted that there was a range of combinations of labour arrangements, as indeed Varro himself goes on to say (*Rustica* 1.17.3). Similarly, there would have been a range of ways in which slave labour itself was organized, one of which is usually seen in the employment of slave (chain) gangs.[2]

It is not my aim here to debate issues of slave farm management in any detail. Instead, I would like to have a closer look at one specific passage in Varro's agricultural manual, *De re rustica* 1.2.20–1, which has usually been understood as referring to slaves working in (chain) gangs on the rural estates of aristocratic Romans. In short, I wish to question the widely accepted translation, and instead suggest an interpretation that seems to me to be much easier and more natural in the context of the paragraph in which it appears:

> Nec ullae, inquam, pecudes agri culturae sunt propriae, nisi quae agrum opere, quo cultior sit, adiuvare, ut eae quae iunctae arare possunt. (*Rust.* 1.2.20)

> Agrasius, Si istuc ita est, inquit, quo modo pecus removeri potest ab agro, cum stercus, quod plurimum prodest, greges pecorum ministrent? Sic, inquit Agrius, *venalium greges* dicemus agri culturam esse, si propter istam rem habendum statuerimus. Sed error hinc, quod pecus in agro esse potest et fructus in eo agro ferre, quod non sequendum. Nam sic etiam res aliae diversae ab agro erunt adsumendae, ut si habet plures in fundo textores atque institutos

* I wish to thank Michael Crawford, Lynn Fotheringham, James Roy, and the anonymous reader of *CQ* for their very helpful comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this article. Any remaining errors, however, are entirely my own.

[1] Varro, *Rust.* 1.17.2 (text and translation, here and later, are taken from the Loeb Classical Library unless otherwise stated). The most succinct modern overview on the types of farm labourers employed is still K. D. White, *Roman Farming* (London, 1970), ch. 11, esp. 355–6.

[2] This is usually seen in Columella, *Rust.* 1.3.12, 1.6.3, 1.8.16, 1.9.4, 1.9.7–8, 11.1.14–15; Plin. *Ep.* 3.19.7; see also Cato, *Agr.* 56 and 57, and White (n. 1), 361–2.

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histonas, sic alios artifices. Scrofa, Diiungamus igitur, inquit, pastionem a cultura, et siquis quid vult aliud. (*Rust.* 1.2.21, my emphasis)

Translators and commentators are unanimous in their translation of *venalium greges* as slave-gangs,[3] because, as one of them tells us,

venalis may be applied to anything which can be sold and therefore is used as a synonym of *servus.* The Romans regarded the slave-labourer on the farm as being on a par with the farm beasts. *grex* is primarily applied to herds of animals, but it is also used for crowds of people, not usually, however, in a good sense.[4]

A typical translation of the above passages thus reads:[5]

'No animals', said I, 'come within the province of agriculture save those which can help the soil to greater fertility by their labour, as for example those which yoked together can plough the land.' (*Rust.* 1.2.20)

'If what you say is true', said Agrasius, 'how are you to disconnect cattle from the land, seeing that dung, which is of the greatest use to it, is furnished by herds of cattle?' 'Then', replied Agrius, 'we must say that *a troop of slaves* belongs to agriculture, if we decide to keep one for that purpose. No, the mistake arises from the fact that cattle may be on the land and be productive of revenue on that land; but you must not make this fact an argument; for if you do, other things as well which have nothing to do with land will have to be admitted—as when a farmer has several weavers on a farm with buildings set apart for weaving, and so on for craftsmen.' 'Well', said Scrofa, 'let us separate stock-raising from farming, and all the other things to which objection may be taken on this ground.' (*Rust.* 1.2.21)

The combination of *grex* with *venalis* has indeed a precedent in Plautus' *Aulularia*, and there refers to a group of people.[6] Cicero, too, uses it once to refer to a Cappadocian purchased *de grege venalium.*[7] Other passages that predate or are contemporary with Varro's *De Re Rustica*, including those just cited, use *venalis* by itself or in combination with other terms to refer to a whole range of things, from fish for sale to men acquired on slave markets.[8] Where the meaning implies men (and not animals), this is made clear either by the context in which the term appears or some additional specification (for example, *homines*). But is this the meaning implied by Varro?

[3] For example, D. Flach, *Marcus Terentius Varro. Gespräche über die Landwirtschaft. Buch 1* (Darmstadt, 1997), 170, speaks of 'Sklavenherden'; J. Heurgon, *Varron. Economie Rurale. Livre I* (Paris, 1978), 18, speaks of 'les troupeaux d'esclaves'; W. D. Hooper, *Marcus Terentius Varro. On Agriculture* (Cambridge, MA, 1934), 178, speaks of 'slave-trading [as a part of agriculture, if we decide to keep] a gang'; L. Storr-Best, *Varro on Farming* (London, 1912), 17, speaks of 'a troop of slaves'; B. Tilly, *Varro the Farmer: A Selection from the Res Rusticae* (Foxton, 1973), 42–3 and 151, speaks of 'gangs of slaves'.

[4] Tilly (n. 3), 151.

[5] Taken from Storr-Best (n. 3), 16–17.

[6] Plaut. *Aul.* 452*: ite sane nunciam omnes, et coqui et tibicinae, etiam intro duce, si vis, vel gregem venalium, coquite, facite, festinate nunciam quantum libet.* Cf. also Plaut. *Cist.* 733: *Mirum quin grex venalium in cistella infuerit una.* For later occurrences, see Gell. *NA* 6.4.4 and Suet. *Gram. Rhet.* 25.5.

[7] Cic. *Red. Sen.* 14: *Cappadocem modo abreptum de grege venalium diceres.*

[8] Plaut. *Rud.* 974: *in foro palam omnes vendo pro meis venalibus*; Cic. *Sest.* 134: *cum vero ne de venalibus quidem homines electos, sed ex ergastulis emptos nominibus gladiatoriis ornarit*; Cic. *De Or.* 1.246: *nec quisquam est eorum, qui, si iam sit ediscendum sibi aliquid, non Teucrum Pacuvii malit quam Manilianas venalium vendendorum leges ediscere*; Vitr. 2.9.1: *uti etiam corpora muliebria, cum conceperint, ad foetus a partu non iudicantur integra, neque in venalibus ea, cum sunt praegnantia, praestantur sana.*

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The background of the conversation between Varro and his imaginary friends Agrasius and Agrius is a debate over the right subject matter for a treatise on agriculture. The discussion becomes heated when the question comes on to cattle, which, unless directly employed for the cultivation of the land, ought in Varro's view to be excluded from further treatment. Yet, the manure of cattle was indispensable for the successful cultivation of the land, and Agrasius thought it thus difficult to exclude a treatment of cattle, thereby prompting Agrius' reply that contains the passage in question: *venalium greges* can mean, as stated above, groups of slaves, but what would be the consequence of this translation in this context?

What does *ista res* refer to? The commentators are almost unanimously quiet about it—and for good reason. The demonstrative pronoun *iste* requires a referent previously introduced, and generally one that was put forward by another or an opposing speaker. This, however, would suggest that the *res* referred to is the enhancement of the soil through the manure, the only item brought into the discussion by the previous speaker Agrasius. The Romans sought to exploit their slaves in virtually all sorts of ways possible. But do we really want to imagine slave-gangs as kept on the land for *that* purpose?[9]

One could, of course, stipulate that Varro was only making a pun; he is, after all, well known for playing games with his readers. But the level of crudeness required by the translation traditionally offered for this passage is in my view not at all akin to Varro's sense of humour. Alternatively, one could argue that the *res* in question was the cultivation of the land itself—*agri cultura*—purely linguistically speaking. But that would not make much sense of the discussion, and indeed of the very sentence itself. For whatever is kept for the sake of agriculture proper, is a part of agriculture and need not be questioned. The point here, however, is that the *venalium greges* are usually not regarded as the right kind of subject-matter for an agricultural handbook; they are obviously not normally used to improve the cultivation of the land through their labour. This however is precisely the function of agricultural slaves. Tilly (n. 4) was very correct in stating that the Romans perceived the ordinary farm hand as on a par with the working animals, that is, with those that were needed for various cultivation processes—the ox under the plough being the example chosen by Varro here. The only distinction made by Varro between man and animal is that symbolized by the labels attached to either: the slave labourers belong to the category *instrumenti genus vocale*, and the plough oxen to *instrumenti genus semi-vocale*; both are set in contrast to the *instrumentum mutum*, that is, to tools, machines, and other such necessary appliances on a farmstead (*Rust.* 1.17.1). If we leave these distinctions aside, what all three have in common is their allocated purpose: *agri quibus rebus colantur*—they are the means by which the soil is cultivated, and they thus form part of agriculture proper (*Rust.* 1.17.1; cf also 1.19.3).

If that is so, however—and I cannot see any reason to distrust the legal distinction made by Varro, who includes the slave farm labourers in the *instrumentum* of an agricultural estate in the same way as the legal sources do[10]—the slaves' contribution and

[9] So Flach (n. 3), 241, without comment. Of course, just like today, human excrement, like animal dung, would have been used when available, but not intentionally by keeping people directly on the land. On the use of human excrement, see already Columella, *Rust.* 2.14.2–3.

[10] See generally Digest 33.7, especially Digest 33.7.8: *In instrumentum fundi ea esse, quae fructus quaerendi cogendi conseruandi gratia parata sunt, Sabinus libris ad Vitellium euidenter enumerat. quaerendi, ueluti homines qui agrum colunt, et qui eos exercent praepositiue sunt is, quorum in numero sunt uilici et monitores: praeterea boues domiti, et pecora stercorandi causa parata, uasaque utilia culturae, quae sunt aratra ligones sarculi falces putatoriae bidentes et si*

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resulting relationship to the agricultural processes is beyond doubt. There is no point in using them as a controversial example in this discourse. Moreover, Scrofa makes it plain that it is the issue of the *venalium greges* that leads to the exclusion of pastoral activities from the subsequent discussion. The slave labourers, being by their very purpose of an agricultural 'nature', by contrast, stay in (*Rust.* 1.17.4–1.18.8). Do we have to conclude then that Varro contradicted himself?

There is, I think, a much simpler and more straightforward solution that can be offered to solve the riddle. So far, I have simply sought to demonstrate the problems arising from a translation of *venalium greges* as 'slave-gangs'. A brief look at the context in which the passage appears may offer a less complicated interpretation. As already briefly mentioned above, Varro is struggling to differentiate between topics that are appropriate to be included in a discussion on agriculture, and those that are not. More specifically, he concentrates on discussion of the relationship between animal husbandry and agriculture proper, reflecting on the one hand the necessary interrelationship between the two, but on the other the concerns of the literary genre to which he is contributing.[11] In this, however, he is criticizing earlier, more inclusive, approaches, especially the work of the Sasernae, who, according to Varro, 'have wandered too far from the subject' (*Rust.* 1.2.13; cf. generally 1.2.12–1.2.28). Varro's general distinction between agriculture and animal husbandry on the macro level is then, in turn, mirrored in and taken down to the more specific question of farm animals—some of which are kept for the prime purpose of working the fields, turning the mills, or other such things, while others are reared at the farm for the market or the production of sellable produce. In Columella's words, 'there are, then, two classes of fourfooted animals, one of which we procure to share our labours, such as the ox, the mule, the horse and the ass, and the other which we keep for our pleasure and the profit which they bring us or for keeping watch, such as the sheep, the goat, the pig, and the dog'.[12] Varro devotes most of the second book of the *De re rustica* to the herding and pasturing of animals and directs it at the intensive production of both primary and secondary produce. The maintenance of such herds and flocks would have involved a large amount of buying and selling of individual animals on a regular basis, especially so at points in the year when

qua similia dici possunt, cogendi, quemadmodum torcularia corbes falcesque messoriae falces fenariae quali uindemiatorii exceptoriique, in quibus uuae comportantur. Conservandi, quasi dolia, licet defossa non sint, et cuppae. ('Sabinus states plainly in his books on Vitellius that those things are included in the *instrumentum* of a farm which are provided for the producing, gathering, and preserving of the fruits. Thus, for producing, the men who till the soil and those who direct them or are placed in charge of them, including stewards and overseers, also domesticated oxen and beasts kept for producing manure, and implements useful in farming, such as plows, mattocks, hoes, pruning hooks, forks, and similar items. For gathering, such things as presses, baskets, sickles, scythes, grape-pickers' baskets in which grapes are carried. For preserving, such things as casks, even if not set in the ground, and tuns.') (text and translation taken from *The Digest of Justinian.* Latin text edited by Th. Mommsen with the aid of Paul Krüger. English translation edited by A. Watson, 4 vols [Philadelphia, 1985]). For a brief modern discussion of the *instrumentum fundi*, see U. John, *Die Auslegung des Legats von Sachgesamtheiten im römischen Recht bis Labeo* (Karlsruhe, 1970), 8–12.

[11] Although Cato does not offer this kind of discussion, Columella, *Rust.* 6, preface, provides a good later parallel. On the development of structural organisation of Roman agricultural manuals and handbooks, see generally E. Rawson, 'The introduction of logical organisation in Roman literature', *PBSR* 46 (1978), 12–34, at 13–15 (=*Roman Culture and Society: Collected Papers* [Oxford, 1991], 324–51, at 326–8).

[12] Columella, *Rust.* 6, preface, 6: *Igitur cum sint duo genera quadrupedum, quorum alterum paramus in consortium operum, sicut borem, mulam, equum, asinum; alterum voluptatis ac reditus et custodiae causa, ut ovem, capellam, suem, canem.*

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offspring were born that were not needed for the maintenance of the flock, but that would otherwise have increased the original flock size by two and a half times. This group of animals would have been distinct from those that were kept *in consortium operum*, and could reasonably be described as *venalium greges*. In Book 1 of the *De re rustica*, however, Varro wishes to exclude discussion of anything that is not primarily directed at the cultivation of the soil. Yet, the problem that he must face is that all farm animals may benefit the cultivation of the soil through their manure. Pigs, sheep, cattle, and the like, even if reared exclusively with the view of profiting from their produce, would regularly have been turned out on the land to make direct use of their dung, just as their excrement would have been collected from their stables to make a dunghill for the farm. A farm that was not set up to benefit incidentally from such animals' manure (because it did not specialize in animal husbandry), would nonetheless have done well to acquire animals precisely for this purpose.[13] This is the point at which Agrius rejoins the debate. By drawing on the distinction between working animals and animals reared for the market, he brings the discussion back to the macro level at which it started: the distinction between agriculture and animal husbandry. Varro's *venalium greges*, then, are flocks of (market) animals, belonging to the realm of pastoralism and animal husbandry, and described accordingly in order to differentiate them from the ordinary working animals of a rural farmstead. The translation of the above passage should thus read:

> 'No cattle', I said, 'are a proper part of agriculture unless they can help to cultivate the soil through their labour like those that can plough under the yoke.' (*Rust.* 1.2.20)

> 'It that is so', said Agrasius, 'how can cattle be taken off the land if the manure, which adds so much, is delivered by the herds of cattle?' 'This being so', rejoined Agrius, 'we could argue that *flocks of animals for market* are part of agriculture if we decide to keep them (on the land) for this purpose. But the mistake is that this doesn't follow simply because cattle can be on the fields and can bring in returns on these fields. Otherwise we would have to include other things which would take us away from the fields, for instance if you have on the estate a number of weavers and weaving establishments, or other craftsmen.' 'Let us then distinguish pastoralism from agriculture', said Scrofa, 'and anything else anyone would like to.' (*Rust.* 1.2.21)

This translation and interpretation is fully consistent with the end of the discussion between Varro and his friends, which concludes, as mentioned above, in the exclusion of pastoral activities from the subsequent debate on agriculture; that debate, however, contains a lengthy discussion of slave labourers, not including, of course, any gangs (*Rust.* 1.17.4–1.18.8). As mentioned at the outset, this is not the place to debate issues of agricultural slavery in republican Italy. I have simply sought to demonstrate that a passage traditionally understood to give evidence for the hard- and harshness of rural slave life does, in fact, have nothing to do with it. Its widely accepted translation rests in my view on an equally widely accepted prison-camp image for agricultural slavery in the republican period.[14] I have argued elsewhere that the concept of a male-dominated slave system, based on a reduction of personal and physical liberty as typically assumed in connection with the gang-labour system, is not consistent with

[13] Cf. Columella's discussion of the use of various kinds of manure: *Rust.* 2.14 and 6, preface, 2.

[14] The most emphatic recent statement along these lines is that by T. E. J. Wiedemann, 'Roman slavery: the prison-camp-analogy', unpublished paper given at the Anglo-American Conference of Historians, London, 30 June–2 July 1999.

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the bulk of the evidence.[15] Here, I have simply tried to show that there are no slave-gangs in Varro's *De re rustica* 1.2.21.

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VIRGIL, *AENEID* 10.366–7

> At parte ex alia, qua saxa rotantia late
> impulerat torrens arbustaque diruta ripis,
> Arcadas insuetos acies inferre pedestris
> ut uidit Pallas Latio dare terga sequaci,
> aspera aquis natura loci dimittere quando
> suasit equos, unum quod rebus restat egenis,
> nunc prece, nunc dictis uirtutem accendit amaris;

(365)

Such is the text of (among others) Mynors[1] and Harrison.[2] In v366 P gives *quos*; the other manuscripts give *quis*; *aquis* is the suggestion of Madvig.

We may begin with Harrison's comment:

> In these lines the MSS give a relative pronoun in the same clause as another element expressing the same subordination, the conjunction *quando.* This is intolerable... Recent editors have favoured Madvig's conjecture *aspera aquis* ... this is highly plausible palaeographically, and would mean 'made rough by the waters': cf. 4.426–7 *aspera dumis/rura*, Horace *C.* 1.5.6–7 *aspera nigris aequora uentis*, Sall. *Cat.* 59.2 *planities* ... *rupe aspera*... However this has seemed unsatisfactory to some, not only because it produces something of an odd phrase but also because it leaves an even odder word order, the subordinating *quando* being postponed almost to the end of its clause: *quando* occurs in fourth place at 6.50, in third at 11.509, but never this far back at sixth place. For those unpersuaded by Madvig the passage remains a genuine crux.

Madvig's *aspera aquis* is of course 'something of an odd phrase' because the parallels are not exact. In the examples from Virgil and Sallust *dumis* and *rupe* refer to items on top of an otherwise flat surface, and a true parallel here would be *asper saxis et arbustis locus.* In the example from Horace *uentis* refers to that which has caused an ordinarily flat surface to be itself rough, whereas in our passage the Arcadians' difficulties are caused by the *saxa* and *arbusta* rather than by any irregularity in the ground itself.

We should note that there are two other oddities here. The first is *unum.* Peerlkamp[3] writes: 'et quid *unum* restabat? Restabant plura: poterat fugientes hasta intentata sistere et in hostes impellere, ut Romani duces saepe fecerunt: poterat se ipsum in hostes moriturum inferre, et suos pudore ad uirtutem incendere. Itaque fecit us. 397...'. The second is *rebus egenis.* (i) As a minor point, what case is it? Harrison's note is: 'ablative absolute, possibly derived from older epic (cf. Norden. *Aen.* 6, Anh. 1.1, Austin on 6.91)'. This may well be right, but in the absence of *in*

[15] U. Roth, 'Food rations in Cato's *De agricultura* and female slave labour', *Ostraka* 11.1 (2002), 195–213.

[1] R. A. B. Mynors, *P. Vergili Maronis Opera* (Oxford, 1969).

[2] S. J. Harrison, *Vergil Aeneid 10* (Oxford, 1991).

[3] P. H. Peerlkamp, *P. Virgilii Maronis Aeneis*, 2 vols (Leidae, 1843). Peerlkamp has a reputation, based presumably on his treatment of Horace's *Odes*, for a wanton indulgence in athetesis. He is comparatively restrained in his treatment of the *Aeneid*, and those excisions that he does make are supported by arguments that deserve careful consideration.

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