calendar, Ovid notes that he is no longer a poet of love and wonders who would have believed that this would be the path his work would take (*Fast.* 2.5–8):[16]

> ipse ego uos habui faciles in amore ministros,
> cum lusit numeris prima iuuenta suis.
> idem sacra cano signataque tempora fastis:
> ecquis ad haec illinc crederet esse uiam?

Though he speaks of his love-poetry as something of the past (2.5–6), it is well known that the amatory is never very far from the surface of the *Fasti*, and the reader of Ovid's exile poetry—as *Tr.* 1.2.75–80 suggests—ought likewise to be unsurprised when on occasion the *poeta–amator* is once again at his exercise.

Oriel and Wolfson Colleges, Oxford T.E. FRANKLINOS
tristan.franklinos@classics.ox.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0009838824001113

A NOTE ON PLINY THE ELDER (*HN* 9.126)*

ABSTRACT

The article argues for an emendation in Plin. HN *9.126. Modern editors are accustomed to print the text* cum testa uiuas*, adopting J. Hardouin's conjecture for* cum terra uitis*, the reading transmitted in most manuscripts. Nevertheless, the overlooked manuscript reading* contritis conchis *allows us to deduce a palaeographically neater solution* contritis *if* conchis *is considered a gloss which entered the text*.

Keywords: Pliny the Elder; textual criticism; conjecture; manuscripts; transmission; manuscript tradition

In *HN* 9.126, Pliny describes the extraction of purple from sea snails. Modern editions print the following text of the passage:[1]

uiuas capere contendunt, quia cum uita sucum eum euomunt. et maioribus quidem purpuris detracta concha auferunt, minores cum testa uiuas frangunt, ita demum eum expuentes.

[16] Indeed, *Fast.* 2.8 takes on an even more pointed connotation when one reads Ovid's calendrical poem as a piece revised in exile.

* The work for this note was financially supported by the grant from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation (agreement no. 075-15-2024-549 of 23 April 2024) 'Russian and European Classical Texts in the 21st Century: Preparing Digital Academic Editions with Commentaries'.

[1] C. Mayhoff (ed.), *C. Plini Secundi Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1909[2]), 199; H. Rackham (ed.), *Pliny: Natural History*, vol. 3 (London, 1940), 248; E. de Saint-Denis (ed.), *Pline l'Ancien, Histoire naturelle, Livre IX* (Paris, 1955), 78; R. König, G. Winkler (edd.), *C. Plinius Secundus d. Ä. Naturkunde: Lateinisch–Deutsch, Buch IX* (Munich, 1979), 94; A. Borghini, E. Giannarelli, A. Marcone, G. Ranucci (edd.), *Gaio Plinio Secondo, Storia naturale*, vol. 2 (Turin, 1983), 368.

© The Author(s), 2025. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of The Classical Association.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838825100633 Published online by Cambridge University Press

People strive to catch this fish alive, because it discharges this juice with its life; and from the larger purples they get the juice by stripping off the shell, but they crush the smaller ones alive with the shell, as that is the only way to make them disgorge the juice. (transl. H. Rackham)

The words *cum testa uiuas*, however, are a conjecture by Jean Hardouin based on the reading *cum terra uitis* preserved by most manuscripts.[2] It is clear that they roughly correspond to the sense required,[3] since the passage is dependent on Arist. *Hist. an.* 547a21–7:

τὰς μὲν οὖν μικρὰς μετὰ τῶν ὀστράκων κόπτουσιν· οὐ γὰρ ῥᾴδιον ἀφελεῖν· τῶν δὲ μειζόνων περιελόντες τὸ ὄστρακον ἀφαιροῦσι τὸ ἄνθος … σπουδάζουσι δὲ ζώσας κόπτειν· ἐὰν γὰρ πρότερον ἀποθάνῃ, συνεξεμεῖ τὸ ἄνθος.

The small ones people break up, shell and all, because it is not easy to extract <the bloom>; in the case of the larger ones they remove the shell and take out the bloom … They make every effort to break them up while they are alive, because if they die before this is done, they vomit the bloom out. (transl. A.L. Peck)

Compare, in particular, μετὰ τῶν ὀστράκων in Aristotle's text. But, while Hardouin's conjecture is generally appropriate and might seem to be additionally supported by the reading of F^2 (unknown to Hardouin), *cum terra uitas*,[4] it is not really easy to imagine why *testa* should have been corrupted to *terra* or *uiuas* to *uitas*/*uitis*.

At the same time, Michael Reeve has shown in his recent monograph[5] that in Books 1–13 of the *Natural History* a manuscript family alternative to the one better known to the editors is available even where its readings were earlier thought to be lost, as in the passage in question. The best continuous representative of this family is MS P (Prague, Národní knihovna České republiky, XIV A 12, fifteenth century), not used by modern editors before Reeve, and it is convenient to check its readings with the second-hand corrections in MS L (Florence, BML, Plut. 82.1–2, twelfth century). Now both P and L^2 give a different variant instead of *cum terra uitis*, viz. *contritis conchis*. The readings of the family were actually known to some early editors such as S. Gelenius,[6] and the *editio princeps* actually printed the text *contritis conchis*.[7] However, other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century editors who were aware of this reading seem to have tacitly rejected it as an obvious conjectural interpolation.[8] Still it might be sensible to reconsider this assessment in the light of Reeve's evaluation of the family.

[2] J. Hardouin (ed.), *Caii Plinii Secundi Historiae naturalis libri XXXVII*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1741), 542; he elaborates on F. Pintianus's earlier conjecture *cum testis*: F. Pintianus, *In C. Plinii Historiae naturalis libros omnes … obseruationes eruditissimae …* (Heidelberg, 1593), 53.

[3] Contrast earlier Renaissance conjectures: *cum trapetis* ('with the help of mills', G.A. Bussi [ed.], *<Plinii Naturalis historia>* [Rome, 1470], 108v), *trapetis* (*C. Plinii Secundi diuinum opus …* [Basel, 1525], 163).

[4] Mayhoff's statement that R reads *cum terra uiuas* and Saint-Denis's ascription of the same reading to both R and d are wrong; both manuscripts actually read *cum terra uitis*.

[5] M.D. Reeve, *The Transmission of Pliny's* Natural History (Rome, 2021).

[6] Reeve (n. 5), 70–1.

[7] *<Plinii Naturalis historia>* (Venice, 1469), 97v.

[8] I presume that this was at least the case of Bussi (n. 3), who must have known the reading of the *editio princeps*, the only antecessor of his own 1470 edition, but prints *cum trapetis*, and Gelenius, who must have known the same reading *contritis conchis* from manuscripts belonging to the tradition of P, but prints *trapetis* in all of his editions from S. Gelenius (ed.), *C. Plinii Secundi Historia mundi …* (Basel, 1530), 163 through S. Gelenius (ed.), *C. Plinii Secundi Historiae mundi …* (Basel, 1554), 161. By the time editors started to list variant readings (as in J. Dalechamps [ed.], *C. Plinii Secundi Historiae mundi …* [Lyon, 1587] and Hardouin [n. 2]), the reading *contritis conchis* fell into such oblivion that it does not even receive a mention.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838825100633 Published online by Cambridge University Press

What is interesting about *contritis* is that it can be shown to be not just a contextual replacement for the *cum terra uitis*; the discrepancy clearly results from a mechanical corruption: *cum* and *con-* sometimes share the same abbreviation in early medieval scripts[9] and are thus easily confused; *terra* is actually abbreviated as *tra* with a tilda in our place in R, one of the two oldest independent manuscripts of the more widespread family, according to Reeve, and the abbreviation *tr* with a tilda is also attested in the early ninth century;[10] and the letters *-itis* at the end coincide. Even though I do not know exactly how to explain the appearance of *u*,[11] it seems anyway clear that the two variants reflect independently the same text of the archetype and so must be considered on equal terms. Once we compare them thus, *contritis (conchis)* is certainly preferable: in fact, it gives the very sense of μετὰ τῶν ὀστράκων in a way which would even as a conjecture be palaeographically neater than *cum testa uiuas*. Note also that *uiuas* is actually superfluous, since it has already been said that all the purples must be used while alive. The change in number from singular to plural is also understandable, since only large purples receive individual treatment while smaller ones have to be crushed collectively (cf. the corresponding use of, respectively, τὸ ὄστρακον and τῶν ὀστράκων in Aristotle). The only reservation that has to be made is that it is only *contritis* that corresponds to *cum terra uitis* palaeographically, not *conchis*; however, the word *conchis* is not actually necessitated by the context. After another ablative absolute, *detracta concha*, an elliptical use of *contritis* for *contritis conchis* will be very easy to understand.[12] *conchis* can most conveniently be interpreted as a gloss to the elliptical expression that entered the text. Consequently, I suggest that we should read *et maioribus quidem purpuris detracta concha auferunt, minores contritis frangunt, ita demum eum expuentes*.

One further complication remains to be commented upon. MS F^2, which, as I have said, reads *cum terra uitas*, according to Reeve, belongs to the same family as MSS PL^2 and is a better witness to its text than them, at least when this corrector reflects the readings of its main source. If this is the case in our passage, the reading of PL^2 must be a later conjectural innovation in the family, since the reading of F^2 is closer to the reading of the more widespread family. However, if *cum terra uitas* is the reading of the archetype, the reading of PL^2 must depend not on it but on the reading of the more widespread family, and this would imply a line of contamination which seems not to be confirmed otherwise; anyway, some readings of F^2 certainly have to be interpreted as purely conjectural attempts to correct the reading of the 'vulgate' without recurring to the readings of the alternative family: cf. for example *HN* 9.166, where the true reading is clearly *acus siue* (known from MS R^2 and some late manuscripts), while P read *actis siue*; as for the 'vulgate' manuscripts, R before correction read something like *a cuatue*

[9] W.M. Lindsay, *Notae Latinae: An Account of Abbreviation in Latin MSS. of the Early Minuscule Period (c. 700–850)* (Cambridge, 1915), 41–2, 324.

[10] Lindsay (n. 9), 309. The hyparchetype of the more widespread family must date before *c*.800, the date of MS D, its earliest member here (L.D. Reynolds, 'The Elder Pliny', in L.D. Reynolds [ed.], *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics* [Oxford, 1983], 307–16, at 311; Reeve [n. 5], 19), but it is perhaps not very difficult to imagine that an abbreviation used in 811 was also used some twenty years earlier.

[11] The main variants are perhaps an attempt to make sense of the letters *itis* and a correction *a* added to *tr* to make the abbreviation easier to decipher and then misunderstood owing to the 'open' graphics of the letter.

[12] Cf. e.g. Plin. *HN* 37.155 *melle enim colluto ore inpositam linguae futurorum diuinationem praestare promittunt XV luna et silente toto die, decrescente uero ante ortum solis* 'For they claim that the stone ["chelonia"], if it is placed on the tongue after the mouth has been rinsed with honey, confers powers of prophecy—at full moon or new moon, during the whole of the day; when the moon is waning, before sunrise only' (transl. D.E. Eichholz).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838825100633 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(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.

A.M. Gorky Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow
HSE University, Moscow
RANEPA, Moscow
MIKHAIL SHUMILIN
mvlshumilin@gmail.com
doi:10.1017/S0009838825100633

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.

© The Author(s), 2025. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of The Classical Association. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838825100633 Published online by Cambridge University Press