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First Thoughts on Closure: Problems and Prospects

1. *Terminal chic*

Literary critics have begun very much to look to their ends. 'Closure' has become a central critical concern, as a glance at the items listed under that heading in the *MLA International Bibliography* since 1981 soon makes clear, and recent years have seen the devotion to the subject of the 1978 issue of Nineteenth Century Fiction and the 1984 issue of *Yale French Studies*[1]. This interest is not entirely new[2]. The application of terms like 'open' and 'closed' to literary works has been familiar to English readers at least since R. M. Adams' *Strains of Discord: Studies in Literary Openness* (Ithaca 1958); continental readers will think perhaps first of Umberto Eco's *L'opera in movimento e la coscienza dell'epoca* first published in 1959 and then rewritten as the first chapter of his *Opera aperta – Forma e indeterminazione nelle poetiche contemporanee* (Milan 1962) = *L'oeuvre ouverte* (Paris 1966)[3]. The central focus here has been on the novel, short-story and other narrative forms, in works such as A. Friedman's *The Turn of the Novel* (Oxford 1966), D. H. Richter's *Fable's End, Completeness and Closure in Rhetorical Fiction* (Chicago and London 1974), D. A. Miller's *Narrative and its Discontents: Problems of Closure in the Traditional Novel* (Princeton 1981), and the chapters on endings in H. Bonheim's excellent empirical study *The Narrative Modes, Techniques of the Short Story* (Cambridge 1982). Two compre-

1. «Nineteenth Century Fiction» 33.1; «Yale French Studies» 67.

2. The Russian Formalists are particularly important here: see e.g. V. Šklovskij, *O teorii prozy* (1929) = *La construction de la nouvelle et du roman*, trans. T. Todorov, *Théorie de la littérature*, Paris 1966, pp. 170-96; B. M. Ejchenbaum, *O Genri i teorija novelly* (1925) = *O. Henry and the theory of the short story*, trans. I. Titunik, in *Readings in Russian Poetics*, ed. L. Matejka and K. Pomorska, Cambridge Mass. 1971 pp. 227-70.

3. Cf. *The Role of the Reader*, London 1981.

hensive treatments – though in fact more particularized than their titles suggest – are M. Torgovnik's *Closure in the Novel* (Princeton 1981) and A. Kotin Mortimer's *La Clôture Narrative* (Paris 1985). As I write, I see announced A. A. Kuzniar *Delayed Endings, Nonclosure in Novalis and Hölderlin* (University of Georgia 1987), W. R. Thickstun *Visionary Closure in the Modern Novel* (London 1988), and J. A. Rowe *Equivocal Endings in Classic American Novels* (Cambridge 1988). The two works however which in English at any rate have most popularized the subject of closure are Frank Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending* (Oxford 1966) and Barbara Herrnstein Smith's *Poetic Closure, A Study of How Poems End* (Chicago and London 1968). These are very different works, not least because *The Sense of an Ending* began as a distinguished scholar's lectures, *Poetic Closure* as a brilliant graduate thesis. Without denying the importance of Kermode's wide-ranging discussion of the complexity and centrality of the sense of an ending in the whole of human life, it is Smith's book, with its wealth of concrete examples, which is of greater interest to the practising literary critic, as was recognized by Philippe Hamon in his review-discussion in «Poétique» 6, 1975, 495-526 entitled 'Clausules'. This usefully situates Smith's work, written wholly within the Anglo-American New Critical tradition, within the framework of recent French critical theory, and offers the most subtle discussion of the theory of endings to date.

It cannot be said that classical literary criticism has shown much acquaintance with this body of modern work, but there is a growing number of works which are making use of *Poetic Closure* at least. Smith's main concern in her book is with lyric poetry, and one of the earliest (and in many ways still one of the best) examples of the usefulness of her analyses was P. H. Schrijver's discussion of closure in Horace, *Comment terminer une Ode?* «Mnemosyne» 26, 1973, 140-59. The value of using Smith is particularly clear if one contrasts Schrijver's discussion with D. Esser's jejune *Untersuchungen zu den Odenschlüssen bei Horaz* (Meisenheim am Glan 1976) which encounters her work only briefly in the *Schlussbetrachtung* (136-52)[4]. Smith's work has also been used, however, in relation to epic endings

4. I have not seen J. H. Hynd, *Poetic Closure in the Odes of Horace*, diss. Texas 1978.

by B.R. Nagle[5]; and M. Santirocco[6] and J. Van Sickle[7] have used it in relation to the closure of poetic collections (a topic to which I shall return). Particularly interesting are two recent attempts to use Smith's categories for the solution of 'traditional' philological problems. M. D. Reeve[8] has argued that the last poem of Tibullus' second book shows none of the closural devices that Smith recognizes, and that this supports the view that the poem (and the book) is unfinished; while D. H. Roberts[9] has conversely used Smith's work to defend the gnomic conclusions to a number of Greek tragedies which are regularly seen as interpolations. In the light of this growing classical interest[10], it seems opportune to offer a brief general discussion of ancient endings, to map out the terrain and to prevent too many critics 'reinventing the wheel' in ad hoc discussions. This will be therefore one of those annoying pieces which suggest that it would be a good idea if somebody else did some work, but I hope it will be useful to those who have to discuss particular endings and to those (graduate students in particular) who are looking for a suitable topic of research.

5. *Open-ended closure in 'Aeneid' 2*, «Class. World» 76, 1983, pp. 257-63.

6. *The Poetics of Closure: Horace Odes III. 17-28*, «Ramus» 13, 1984, pp. 74-91.

7. *Poetics of opening and closure in Meleager and Gallus*, «Class. World» 75, 1981, pp. 65-75. Van Sickle is perhaps the modern scholar who has devoted the most attention to the problems of closure: see also e.g. *Dawn and Dusk as motifs of opening and closure in heroic and bucolic epos (Homer, Apollonius, Theocritus, Virgil)*, in *Atti del Convegno mondiale scientifico di studi su Virgilio*, Milan 1984, vol. 1, pp. 125-47, and below n. 35.

8. *Tibullus 2.6*, «Phoenix» 38, 1984, pp. 235-9.

9. *Parting Words: final lines in Sophocles and Euripides*, «Class. Quart.» n.s. 27, 1987, pp. 51-64. Her note 3, p. 51 has a good bibliography of earlier work on tragic endings. See now also her *Sophoclean Endings: another story*, «Arethusa» 21, 1988, pp. 177-96. I have not seen F. Dunn's Yale dissertation of 1985, *Euripidean Endings: A Study of the Choral Exit, the Aition, the Concluding Prophecy and the Deus Ex Machina*.

10. See very recently R. Peden's excellent *Endings in Catullus*, in *Homo Viator, Classical essays for John Bramble*, edd. M. Whitby, P. Hardie, and M. Whitby, Bristol 1987, pp. 95-103 (especially on poem 64). I may well have missed a number of contributions, as *L'Année Philologique* does not make it easy to find studies by topic. My apologies to authors omitted: if they and other scholars working on closure contact me, I will be happy to act as a repository of information on current research.

2. *The end in Zeit*

But what is 'closure'?[11] Ending is riddled with ambiguity; and it is a topos of the scholarly discussion that this ambiguity is inevitable because the concepts involved are complex and interrelated. To quote Hamon[12], 'il est certain que le problème de la *fin* du texte (sa *clausule* proprement dite) est lié à celui de sa *finalité* (de sa fonction idéologique, ainsi que du projet de l'auteur d'écrire un texte plus ou moins lisible, à information plus ou moins differée, et d'axer sa mise en oeuvre sur tel ou tel élément de la communication – textes phatiques, conatifs, référentiels, etc), ainsi qu'à celui de sa *finition* (au sens traditionnel de «clôture», de cohérence interne, de «fini» stylistique et structurel – comme on parle de la «finition» d'un objet manufacturé, d'un bricolage, ou d'un produit artisanal).' At the risk of much oversimplification, however, one might distinguish five different senses of 'closure' in recent criticism[13]:

(1) The concluding section of a literary work;
(2) The process by which the reader of a work comes to see the end as satisfyingly final;
(3) The degree to which an ending is satisfyingly final;
(4) The degree to which the questions posed in the work are answered, tensions released, conflicts resolved;
(5) The degree to which the work allows new critical readings.

The interconnections are obvious: where the concluding section of a work makes the reader feel that it has closed satisfactorily by resolving all the conflicts of the work, the reader will

11. I have not attempted a lexicographical study of the term and its equivalents in other languages. B. H. Smith acknowledges the influence on her work of Gestalt psychology (*Poetic Closure* cit., p. 33 n. 29) and the term is familiar in that field before its use in literary criticism (see the OED Supplement s.v. 'closure' 10).

12. «Poétique» 6, 1975, p. 499. Cf. e.g. Kotin Mortimer, *La Clôture Narrative*, p. 32.

13. I ignore the philosophical use of 'logical closure', defined as the proposition that «the logical consequences of propositions true in a story must also be true in it» (H. Deutsch, *Fiction and Fabrication*, «Philosophical Studies» 47, 1985, pp. 201-11 at 202). The recent studies of the relation between fictional worlds and logic are not without interest however for other types of closure: see e.g. T. Parsons, *Nonexistent Objects*, Yale 1980, pp. 49-60, and the 1983 issue of the journal «Philosophy and Literature». For some further senses of *clôture* see Kotin Mortimer cit., pp. 31-2.

tend to see the meaning of the work in that resolution. A work on the other hand which leaves questions unanswered will be 'open' to different interpretations, and may leave the reader feeling that where the work stops is not really The End. Such a polarity between 'open' and 'closed' works can be projected onto a number of different oppositions. Some have talked of 'Western endings' with 'a strong sense of impact and finality' and 'Eastern endings' where the work 'continues to develop quietly and complete itself in the reader's mind after the actual printed ending'[14]. It has been argued that openness to new interpretations is the hallmark of the classic work, in comparison to popular and ephemeral literature[15]; and that the literary work is open while the oral work is closed[16], or the literary work closed but the oral work open[17]. But the opposition is usually portrayed diachronically; the classical work is closed and complete, the Romantic open and fragmentary[18]; modernist works are more 'open' than traditional ones[19], postmodernist works are more radically open than modernist ones[20]; the postmodernist work ironically achieves the closure that modernism made impossible[21]. These varying interpretations are not detailed merely to produce scepticism; the oppositions are not the fantastic intentions of critics. Romantic, modernist, and postmodernist writers dramatize their own practice in precisely

14. Cf. J. Myers and M. Simms, *Longman Dictionary and Handbook of Poetry*, New York and London 1985, p. 339, n. 92.

15. Cf. F. Kermode *The Classic*, Cambridge Mass. and London 1983²; cf. Eco (op. cit. n. 3).

16. Cf. C. Segal, *Greek Tragedy: writing, truth, and representation of the self*, in *Interpreting Greek Tragedy: Myth, Poetry, Text*, Ithaca and London 1986, pp. 75-109.

17. Cf. Hamon, «Poétique» 6, 1975, p. 500; P. Zumthor, *The impossible closure of the oral text*, «Yale Class. St.» 67, 1984, pp. 25-42 (adapted from his *Introduction à la poésie orale*, Paris 1983). See below pp. 93 f.

18. See e.g. A. A. Kuzniar's *Delayed Endings* referred to above.

19. Cf. e.g. Friedman, *The Turn of the Novel*, criticised by Torgovnik, *Closure in the Novel*, pp. 9-10.

20. Cf. B. McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, London 1987, pp. 109-11; L. Hutchen, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, New York and London 1988, p. 59; M. Szegedy-Muszak, *Teleology in Postmodern Fiction* in *Exploring Postmodernism*, ed. M. Catinescu and D. Fokkema, Amsterdam 1984, pp. 41-57.

21. Cf. U. Eco, *Postscript to the Name of the Rose*, New York and London 1984.

these terms. Nevertheless, without denying the value of detailed historical investigation of the swings of the pendulum, it seems to do more justice to our intuitions to see the tension between 'open' and 'closed' as one ever-present in the literary work. All works leave things undone as well as done; all great works have that paradox at the core of their greatness. 'One greatness of the great disquieter lies in the great truths for which he clears the ground; one greatness of the great truths is the great disquieting questions which are cracked out of them'[22]; 'Attempts to characterize the fiction of a given period by its commitment to closure or open-endedness are blocked from the beginning by the impossibility of ever demonstrating whether a given narrative is closed or open'[23].

My last quotation from J. Hillis Miller is not meant to signal a complete embracing of deconstructionist 'opening'[24]. Works do end as well as stop; some endings are stronger than others, and the techniques which determine our perceptions can be analysed; the text controls the reader (with of course – a problematic 'of course' – his cooperation). But it does seem correct to deny that any text can be hermetically sealed. This is important for classical criticism since it is precisely *our* texts that are often seen as 'closed' works. Here is R. M. Adams on the *Oedipus Rex*[25]:

> 'the play is a self-contained unit; there is nothing within it which calls attention to or criticises its aesthetic existence; there is no unresolved or discordant element to disturb its conclusion; in its psychological effects it is a unified and harmonious whole that passes the audience through a clear, easily defined and complete emotional cycle to a distinct logical and emotional conclusion'.

By contrast, recent work on the *Oedipus Rex* has seen its ending as deeply problematic; the final angry squabble between Creon and Oedipus shows that all passion is very far from

22. Adams, *Strains of Discord*, p. 215.

23. J. Hillis Miller. *The problematic of ending in narrative*, «Nineteenth Century Fiction» 33.1, 1978, pp. 3-7.

24. Cf. Kotin Mortimer, *La Clôture narrative*, pp. 31-2.

25. *Strains of Discord* cit., p. 26.

spent[26]. Greek tragedy has benefited in particular from recent 'opening' in opposition to traditional views based on Milton's last line. It is not merely a question of saying that of the many systems operative within a text on all levels (phonetic, syntactic, semantic) some will inevitably conclude and others will not, though that is true; but it is essential to the *moral* of the great literary work that ending and continuation are in tension. The *Iliad* offers another example. The concluding lines describe Hector's funeral:

> πρῶτον μὲν κατὰ πυρκαϊὴν σβέσαν αἴθοπι οἴνῳ
> πᾶσαν, ὁπόσσον ἐπέσχε πυρὸς μένος· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> ὀστέα λευκὰ λέγοντο κασίγνητοί θ' ἑταροί τε
> μυρόμενοι, θαλερὸν δὲ κατείβετο δάκρυ παρειῶν.
> καὶ τά γε χρυσείην ἐς λάρνακα θῆκαν ἑλόντες
> πορφυρέοις πέπλοισι καλύψαντες μαλακοῖσιν.
> αἶψα δ' ἄρ' ἐς κοίλην κάπετον θέσαν, αὐτὰρ ὕπερθε
> πυκνοῖσιν λάεσσι κατεστόρεσαν μεγάλοισι·
> ῥίμφα δὲ σῆμ' ἔχεαν, περὶ δὲ σκοποὶ ἧατο πάντῃ,
> μὴ πρὶν ἐφορμηθεῖεν ἐϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοί.
> χεύαντες δὲ τὸ σῆμα πάλιν κίον· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> εὖ συναγειρόμενοι δαίνυντ' ἐρικυδέα δαῖτα
> δώμασιν ἐν Πριάμοιο διοτρεφέος βασιλῆος.
> ὣς οἵ γ' ἀμφίεπον τάφον Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο.

The last book of the *Iliad* has seen the disappearance of Achilles' second anger in the great reconciliation scene with Priam[27]; the book ends with a funeral, in literature as in life a final act, an occasion for reintegration. The elements of what Smith calls 'closural allusion'[28] could not be stronger; death itself, last rites, the wrapping and putting away of the bones, the burial, the return home. Formally the recapitulation of the opening of the

26. Cf. C. W. Macleod ap. O. Taplin, *Greek Tragedy in Action*, London 1978, pp. 45-6; M. Davies, *The End of Sophocles O. T.*, «Hermes» 110, 1982, pp. 268-77; O. Taplin, *Sophocles in his Theatre*, in *Sophocles* «Fondation Hardt, Entretiens» 29, Geneva 1983, pp. 155-74 at pp. 170-4. Sophocles, *Trachiniae* has another notably controversial ending: cf. the edition of P. E. Easterling, Cambridge 1982, pp. 8-11 and especially T. C. W. Stinton, *The scope and limits of allusion in Greek Tragedy*, in *Greek Tragedy and its legacy. Essays presented to D. J. Conacher*, edd. M. Cropp et al., Calgary 1986.

27. Cf. M. Davies, *The Judgement of Paris and Iliad xxiv*, «Journ. Hell. St.» 101, 1981, pp. 56-62 (contrast with the *Odyssey*).

28. Smith, *Poetic Closure* cit., pp. 172-82.

Iliad in its final scenes is detailed, and the last two lines leave us with Priam and Hector as we opened with Achilles and Peleus. And yet we are told that the burial was hurried, and that watchmen were posted in fear of a Greek attack: C. W. Macleod comments[29], 'this is a tactful reminder of what overshadows the peaceful conclusion of the *Iliad*, war; and in war, there can be no trust in mere agreements'. The *Iliad* ends with a truce, not a peace-treaty, and we know that the war is not over; Greek Trojan and the reader alike know that ἔσσεται ἦμαρ ὅτ' ἂν ποτ' ὀλώλῃ Ἴλιος ἰρὴ / καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς ἐϋμμελίω Πριάμοιο (4.164-5 Agamemnon = 6.448-9 Hector). We must feel that the end of the *Iliad* is satisfactory; but to make it too satisfactory would smugly 'shut off' the events in a way which removed the moral challenge of the epic[30].

3. *Text and Supertext*

This tension between completion and continuance becomes of even greater importance if we extend the study of closure not only to the endings of complete literary works but also to the infratextual 'lieux stratégiques' (P. Hamon)[31] within them and to what one might call the *supertextual* groupings of works in collections or oeuvres. The techniques of closure at these levels are mostly the same as those found at the end of individual works, though obviously there will be a hierarchy of ending[32], and there are clear advantages in seeing the phenomenon of closure on a broad front right from the level of the phrase, the line, the stanza, the chapter, the book through to the largest groupings of collected works. The assertion of regularity after variation, for instance, which is the essential principle of metrical closure in verse or prose (the fixed ends of the hexameter

29. Ed. *Iliad 24*, Cambridge 1982, on ll. 801-3.

30. Cf. M. Mueller, *The Iliad*, London 1984, pp. 72-6.

31. «Poétique» 6, 1975, p. 496: 'le titre, l'exergue, la préface, l'incipit, l'acmé, le climax, la transition, la digression, la césure, la catastrophe, la conclusion, l'épilogue, la péroraison ... jointures entre strophes, entre chapitres, blancs, alinéas, frontières entre style direct, style indirect, et style indirect libre (ou semidirect), entre narration et description, entre des focalisations différentes, entre texte enchâssant et texte enchâssé etc.'.

32. Hamon, «Poétique» 6, 1975, p. 504.

or trimeter[33], the prose clausula) is also a principle operative at higher textual levels such as the conclusion of a lyric poem. Recognition of the phenomenon of supertextual closure, on the other hand, removes the urgency from questions concerned with what counts as the individual work. Horace *Odes* 3.30 clearly closes the whole collection of the first three books of *Odes*; one might be inclined here to see the collection as the 'work', but what of the first three[34] books of Propertius' elegies? 3.24 and 3.25 clearly close all three books on the Horatian model, but most critics would not wish to call those three books a single work (perhaps on no more than historical grounds, on the insecure basis of their presumed separate publication). And it would certainly be odd to say that the *Bucolics* and *Georgics* were a single work of Vergil's; yet the concluding *sphragis* of *Georgics* 4 retrospectively fashions the two works into an oeuvre:

> Haec super arvorum cultu pecorumque canebam
> et super arboribus, Caesar dum magnus ad altum
> fulminat Euphraten bello victorque volentis
> per populos dat iura viamque adfectat Olympo.
> Illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat
> Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis oti,
> carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuventa,
> Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.

But of course we do not have to split hairs over what counts as a single work once we see that closure operates at levels below and above that of the individual text. As both the Propertian and Vergilian examples make clear, supertextual closure is often marked by a parallelism between the progress of a writer's life

33. In the Latin hexameter, accentuated by frequent alliteration of the final two words: cf. J. Kvičala, *Neue Beiträge zur Erklärung der Aeneis*, Prague 1881, pp. 333-45.

34. I see no reason to divide Book Two, and would myself be happy with G. Williams' view of Propertius 1-3 as a unity published together (*Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry*, Oxford 1968, pp. 481-95): the arguments against of e.g. M. Hubbard *Propertius*, London 1974, pp. 41-2 are not cogent. But the *tres libelli* of 2.13.25 may in any case merely be a round number. The topic has been much discussed; for recent bibliography, see W. R. Nethercut, *Recent Scholarship on Propertius*, «Aufst. und Niederg. der Röm Welt» 30.3, Berlin 1983, pp. 1813-57 at pp. 1827-31.

and of his poetry; the end of the affair with Cynthia, the end of a poetry of *otium*. In Vergil's case, although no future project is mentioned here (it is displaced to the 'proemio al mezzo' of Book Three), one suspects a pointed contrast with the epilogue to Callimachus' *Aetia*, one of the structural models for the *Georgics*[35]. There Callimachus declares that he is moving down the hierarchy of genres:

χαῖρε, Ζεῦ, μέγα καὶ σύ, σάω δ' [ὅλο]ν οἶκον ἀνάκτων·
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ Μουσέων πεζὸν [ἕ]πειμι νομόν.

The interpretation of these lines is of course controversial[36], but the likeliest interpretation is that this marks the transition the *Iambi*, a 'lower' genre. Vergil's description of his *otium* as *ignobile* implies (with all due irony) a reproof; maybe it is time for him to turn his attention to the great deeds of the οἶκος ἀνάκτων. This is reinforced by the association of *Bucolics* and *Georgics* that the closure forces; these disparate works can only be seen as a unity by contrast with a higher genre such as epic[37].

Supertextual and especially infratextual closure pose special problems for the classical literary critic: where are our ends?

35. As the discovery of the *Victoria Berenices* as the opening of *Aetia* 3 has made clear; cf. J. Van Sickle, *The Book Roll and some conceptions of the Poetic Book*, «Arethusa» 13, 1980, p. 14; R. F. Thomas, *Callimachus, the Victoria Berenices, and Roman Poetry*, «Class. Quart.» n.s. 33, 1983, pp. 92-113. Both *Aetia* and *Georgics* are divided into two halves, in the case of the *Georgics* by what G. B. Conte called a 'proemio al mezzo' (*Virgilio. Il genere e i suoi confini*, Milan 1984², pp. 121-33). On the end of the *Georgics* in relation of the *Aetia* and what A. La Penna called 'raccordo editoriale' («St. Ital. Filol. Class.» 78, 1985, pp. 76-92), see R. Mayer, *A note on a «raccordo editoriale» of Virgil*, «Maia» 38, 1986, p. 159. For a comparison between the *Aetia* and the *Eclogues*, see J. Van Sickle, *Order in Callimachus and Vergil*, in *Actes du VII^e Congres de la F.I.E.C.*, Budapest 1983, vol. 1, pp. 289-92.

36. See most recently P. E. Knox, *The Epilogue to the Aetia*, «Greek, Rom. and Byz. St.» 26, 1985, pp. 59-65; more generally, A. S. Hollis, *The composition of Callimachus' Aetia in the light of P. Oxy. 2258*, «Class. Quart.» n.s. 36, 1986, pp. 467-71.

37. Note that *Georgics* 4. 565 *lusi* (cf. Nisbet and Hubbard on Hor. *Carm.* 1. 32. 2) recalls Philodemus *A.P.* 5.112 (18 Gow and Page) 5-6, καὶ παίζειν ὅτε καιρός, ἐπαίξαμεν· ἡνίκα καιρὸς / οὐκέτι, λωιτέρης φροντίδος ἀψόμεθα.

That was almost certainly from the closing sequence of an epigram book: and may be imitated at the end of Hor. *Epist.* 2.2 (cf. Brink on 2.2.14). On 'descent to a lower genre' as a closural device, see also T. P. Wiseman, *Catullus and His World*, Cambridge 1985, pp. 183-9 (though his interpretation of Catullus 116 is implausible).

This problem does arise at the level of the individual work; some works like Thucydides' history or Lucan's epic are unfinished, in others the ends have been lost[38]. What were – or would have been – Livy's last words?[39] In other cases – like the *Odyssey* or Herodotus' history – the ending is 'dubious', and scholars argue over the appropriateness[40]. And there is at least one case where we have the ending but it is not usually printed: Lucretius' *De rerum natura*. There can be little doubt that the work originally ended with the lines 1247-51 which have become detached in the manuscript tradition and transposed to before 1252[41]; moving them to the end restores the narrative sequence to that of the Thucydidean model, the return home from the funeral recalls the archetypal epic ending of the *Iliad*, and the generalising statement at 1250-1 is exactly what we expect in an end. But no standard modern text has the courage to move the lines, prompting one unhappy scholar even to try to argue that the present ending is satisfactory[42]. These problems are as nothing however to those concerned with supertextual and infratextual closure. At the supertextual level, the problem arises particularly with collections. It may not matter whether the individual poem or the collection is seen as the work – one person's text may be another person's supertext – but it does matter how a collection is articulated. The Catullan collection is

38. We may not always know when this has happened; cf. Reeve on Tibullus 2.6 (above n. 8). The discovery of the continuation of Theocritus 24 is instructive: cf. Wilamowitz, *Die Textgeschichte der griechischen Bukoliker*, Berlin 1906, p. 241 with A. S. Hunt and J. Johnson, *Two Theocritus Papyri*, London 1930, pp. 23-4. Juvenal's fifth book of satires may be unfinished or may have lost its end, and these may often be the alternatives that we face.

39. Cf. R. Syme, *Livy and Augustus*, «Harvard St. Class. Philol. » 64, 1959, pp. 27-87 = *Roman Papers*, vol. I, Oxford 1979, pp. 400-54, at pp. 36-41 = pp. 410-16, T. J. Luce, *Livy. The Composition of his History*, Princeton 1977, p. 24 n. 50.

40. So frequently in tragedy (e.g. Aesch. *Septem*, see Hutchinson on 1005-78), lyric poetry (on Sappho 16, see below p. 120). A census of «controversies over endings» would be useful.

41. First suggested by F. Bockemüller in his edition (Stade 1873); cf. Martin ad loc., D. F. Bright, *The Plague and the structure of the De rerum natura*, «Latomus» 30, 1971, pp. 607-32. There is a full discussion in P. G. Fowler, *A commentary on part of Lucretius De rerum natura Book Six*, Oxford D. Phil. thesis 1983, pp. 564-7.

42. S. T. Kelly, *The last line of the De rerum natura*, «Latomus» 39, 1980, pp. 95-7. Cf. G. B. Lavery, *Hoc aevi quodcumquest: Lucretius and Time*, «Latomus» 46, 1987, pp. 720-9 at 727-8.

a good example here. The first poem in our corpus clearly introduces a poetry book, and C. W. Macleod showed that the last poem (116) satisfactorily concludes one[43], but what is in between is unclear: one book, two books, three books, or no real 'book' at all?[44] One may wish to suspend judgment on this question, but it will not do to say that it does not matter: the articulation will affect our view of the meaning of the poems. One might compare, for instance, H. Cancik's demonstration that to ignore the organisation into books of Seneca's *Letters* is to miss much of the structure of his argument[45]. G. Highet was insistent that the book-division in Juvenal was of crucial importance, but it is rarely considered by critics[46]. The problems are even more acute with internal closure. The internal divisions of modern editions – books, chapters, paragraphs, stanzas and so on – generally date from modern times, or at the earliest the Renaissance. Most modern critics treat the question of these divisions as merely one of a convenient system for reference, with the vague underlying assumption that ancient texts were not articulated at all. But the American writer, P. Stevick showed in his book *The Chapter in Fiction, Theories of Narrative Division* (Syracuse 1970) how important these divisions may be for the understanding of a work; and R. Friderici was able to show in his Marburg dissertation of 1911 *De librorum antiquorum capitum divisione atque summariis* that in fact we have more evidence on ancient chapter division than is usually supposed. He was able to state confidently (p. 24) 'pro certo

43. *Catullus 116*, «Class. Quart.» n. s. 23, 1973, pp. 304-9 = *Collected Essays*, Oxford 1983, pp. 181-6, with addenda pp. 341-2.

44. For the bibliography on the question, see conveniently E. A. Schmidt, *Das Problem des Catullbuches*, «Philologus» 123, 1979, pp. 216-31 (and *Catull*, Heidelberg 1985, pp. 29-33), E. Block, *Carmen 65 and the arrangement of Catullus' poetry*, «Ramus» 13, 1984, pp. 48-59, and J. D. Minyard, *The Source of the Catulli Veronensis Liber*, «Class. World» 81, 1988, pp. 343-53. There is an excellent pithy discussion in H.-P. Syndikus, *Catull. Eine Interpretation, Erster Teil*, Darmstadt 1984, pp. 52-62.

45. *Untersuchungen zu Senecas epistulae morales*, Hildesheim 1967, pp. 138-51; cf. G. Maurach, *De Bau von Senecas Epistulae Morales*, Heidelberg 1970, p. 19 and index p. 210 s.v. *Buch und Buchfuge*, with M. Winterbottom, «Class. Rev.» n.s. 22, 1972, p. 225 on *ep.* 21 and *ep.* 29.

46. *Juvenal the Satirist*, Oxford 1954, p. 46; cf. W. S. Anderson, *Studies in Book One of Juvenal*, «Yale Class. St.» 15, 1957, pp. 33-90, *The programs of Juvenal's later books*, «Class. Philol.» 57, 1962, pp. 145-60.

statuam iam ante grammaticos Alexandrinos divisionem capitum notam fuisse', taking the division back into the 5th and 6th centuries B. C. It would be useful to have an up to date review of this question to see how far his conclusions still stand[47]; but in any case scholars of post-Hellenistic narrative literature have no excuse for ignoring the question of chapter division in their analyses.

In verse, just how much the question of stanza division can affect interpretation was shown by K.E. Bohnenkamp in his revision of the *Lex Meinekiana* in Horace[48]. He showed that the double-verse systems of Horace were probably read in four-line stanzas, the stichic in couplets (with 3.12 in three-line stanzas), and that this corresponded broadly to ancient practice with lyric verse. Whether or not he is right, the critic must make a decision on this, or only discuss matters like enjambement in relation to the four-line stanzaic poems. Moreover Bohnenkamp's discussion of ancient practice showed up one oddity: although we have two papyri of the stichic poem Sappho 44 (the concluding poem of the second book in the Alexandrian edition of her works), neither shows any sign of stanzaic arrangement. This may be an accident of tradition; but it may reflect the views of ancient editors on the epic nature of that poem, and would surely affect the way the poem was read by ancient readers[49]. Although Lobel's linguistic division of Sappho's poetry into 'normal' and 'abnormal' poems has been shown to be suspect[50], there are other ways in which Sappho 44 is abnormal[51]; and I see no way of ruling out the hypothesis that the lack of stanzaic division in fact goes back to Sappho. The distinction between stichic and stanzaic arrangement need not be merely a written one for those who would wish to stress

47. Cf. J. Van Sickle, *The Book Roll and some conventions of the Poetic Book*, «Arethusa» 13, 1980, pp. 5-42 at pp. 5-12; Minyard (op. cit. n. 44).

48. *Die horazische Strophe*, Hildesheim 1972.

49. The last line of the poem (signalled as such in the papyri) may recall the last line of the *Iliad* (Hector's name). On the Hellenistic reception of Sappho's stanza-divisions, see Gow, *preface* to Theocritus *Idyll* 28 (2, p. 495).

50. Cf. A. M. Bowie, *The Poetic Dialect of Sappho and Alcaeus*, Salem 1981.

51. Cf. D. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* Oxford 1955, pp. 68-9; R. L. Fowler, *The Nature of Early Greek Lyric: Three preliminary Studies*, Toronto 1982, p. 47.

oral reception of Sappho's poetry[52]. It would be interesting to see Bohnenkamp's investigations used more widely by editors and commentators; he observes, for instance, that Catullus 30 is probably written in two-verse stanzas, and the difference this makes to the poem can be seen by comparing those of texts which print it that way (e.g. those of L. Muller, G. P. Goold) with the majority which do not.

4. *Bookends*

Even more difficult – and important – is the question of book-division and its effect on infratextual closure. It is the ancient 'book' which is the closest analogy to the chapter in the modern novel discussed by Stevick, and the effects of closure can often be discerned most clearly at the end of individual books. Stevick himself[53] sees the end of the first book of the *Odyssey* as 'one of the most skilful, elaborate cadences in all of narrative literature', and there are certainly many memorable book ends in the Homeric corpus, such as *Iliad* 19 or *Odyssey* 5. It has been argued that the existing book-division goes back to Homer[54]; and it is certainly true that the common opinion that it is Hellenistic is difficult to reconcile with the absence of any alternative division, and at least a 5th century BC date seems plausible[55]. But even those who see the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as written epics would be reluctant to see the existing divisions as original. Similar problems arise in relation to history. Modern scholarship on Thucydides is usually structured round the division of the work into eight books; but the scholia tell us that this was not the only system current, and indeed where some of

52. Cf. the importance of strophic division in Pindar: M. Lefkowitz, *Pindar' Pythian V*, in *Pindare* «Fondation Hardt, Entretiens» 31, Geneva 1985, pp. 33-63 et pp. 33-4 with A. Hurst at p. 68.

53. *The Chapter in Fiction* cit., p. 164.

54. G. P. Goold, *Homer and the Alphabet*, «Trans. Am. Philol. Ass.» 91, 1960, pp. 272-91. M. S. Jensen, *The Homeric Question and the Oral-Formulaic Theory*, Copenhagen 1980, p. 87 thinks rather that the division was due to the first scribe.

55. Cf. F. Kenyon, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greek and Rome*, Oxford 1951², p. 17; S. West, *The Ptolemaic papyri of Homer*, Cologne 1967, pp. 18-25; Van Sickle , op. cit. n. 35, pp. 10-12. The articulation of Livius Andronicus, *Odusia*, (cf. S. Mariotti, *Livio Andronico e la traduzione artistica*, Milan 1952, pp. 75-87) is of interest in itself but irrelevant to the dating of the book-division in Homer.

the alternative endings came[56]. H. R. Rawlings[57] recently argued that the present division between Books One and Two had led scholars into serious misunderstanding of the opening sentence of Book Two, and the break between Books 7 and 8 has been widely criticised as 'nicht im Sinne des Thukydides'[58]. Similar criticisms have been made of Herodotus' history, though here we have no information on any alternative division: 'La division traditionelle satisfait assez mal l'esprit[59]. These problems with the early period of Greek literary history – and there are similar ones with the early history of Latin literature – seem to have led to a reluctance of scholars to trust book divisions even in the later period when there is no reason to doubt that they are original[60]. This is less true of poetry, where book-ends in Lucretius and Vergil have received some attention[61], yet even here commentators comment surprisingly rarely on closure.

56. Cf. B. Hemmerdinger, *La division en livres de l'oeuvre de Thucydide*, «Rev. Et. Gr.» 61, 1948, pp. 104-17; L. Canfora, *Tucidide Continuato*, Padova 1970, with much of interest for the study of closure (e.g. pp. 20-1 on nightfall as a closural device, on which see also F. M. A. Jones, *The lacuna at Petronius 26.6*, «Liv. Class. Monthly» 13, 1988, p. 61). See also Canfora's *Conservazione e perdita dei classici*, Padova 1974.

57. *The Structure of Thucydides' History*, Princeton 1981, p. 25.

58. Wilamowitz, *Thukydides VIII*, «Hermes» 43, 1908, pp. 578-618 = *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 3, Berlin 1969, pp. 307-45, at p. 578 = 307. Cf. Gomme, Andrewes, Dover on Thucydides 6, Oxford 1973, p. xviii.

59. Ph. E. Legrand, *Hérodote, Introduction*, Paris 1955, p. 227. For the other extreme, see B. Baldwin, *Herodotus and Tacitus: two notes on ancient book titles*, «Quad. Urb. Cult. Class.» 16, 1984, pp. 31-4. For recent bibliography, see S. Cagnazzi, *Tavola dei 28 logoi di Erodoto*, «Hermes» 103, 1975, pp. 385-423, S. Flory, *Who read Herodotus Histories?*, «Am. Journ. of Philol.» 101, 1980, pp. 12-28, and see below pp. 92 f.. It is important to note that P. Ross. Georg. 15, claimed by Snell to be a pre-Alexandrian Herodotus text with a different division, is actually from the 3rd C. *AD*: see A. H. R. E. Paap, *De Herodoti reliquiis in papyris servatis*, Leiden 1948, s.v. Is it certain this fragment is not from a codex?

60. Cf. however the recent study of book-division in Tacitus by H. Y. McCulloch Jr., *Narrative Cause in the Annals of Tacitus*, Köngtein/TS 1984, pp. 137-75 (and compare J. Ginsburg *Tradition and Theme in the Annals of Tacitus*, Salem 1981, on the structuring of the narrative of each year). For Livy see T. J. Luce (op. cit. n. 39) pp. 3-32; for the novel, see below pp. 118 f.

61. For Lucretius, see K. Büchner, *Philosophie und Dichtkunst am Ende des zweiten Buches des Lukrez*, «Hermes» 80, 1952, pp. 3-31 at pp. 25-31; G. Jachmann, *Lukrez im Urteil des Cicero*, «Athenaeum» 45, 1967, pp. 89-118 at pp. 95-118; G. Müller, *Die Finalia der sechs Bücher des Lukrez* in *Lucrèce* «Fondation

Obviously care is needed where there is reason to doubt that the book-divisions that we have are original, but that does not give scholars an excuse for ignoring questions of articulation and closure in early texts. Where there is no material indication of articulation, the signalling of closure becomes more, not less, important. Take, for instance, the way Thucydides closes his account of Plataea (3.68):

> καὶ τὰ μὲν κατὰ Πλάταιαν ἔτει τρίτῳ καὶ ἐνενηκοστῷ ἐπειδὴ Ἀθηναίων ξύμμαχοι ἐγένοντο οὕτως ἐτελεύτησεν.

This is a closure of a narrative as well as of an historical event, and it is marked not only by the formal declaration of an end but also by the general reflection on the whole course of Plataea's relationship with Athens. The detail of the number of years the alliance lasted is not a sign of historical precision; it is at once pathetic and a reproach to the Athenians[62]. Livy ends his account of the destruction of Alba Longa with a similar if more obvious pathos (1.29.6):

> Egressis urbe Albanis Romanus passim publica privataque omnia tecta adaequat solo, unaque hora[63] quadringentorum annorum opus quibus Alba steterat excidio ac ruinis dedit. Templis tamen deum – ita enim edictum ab rege fuerat – temperatum est[64].

It is particularly important that the study of closure in these early historical texts should not assume that their articulation must be based on the most obvious temporal division of the

Hardt, Entretiens» 24, Geneva 1978, pp. 197-231, R.D. Brown, *Lucretius on Love and Sex*, Leiden 1987, pp. 47-100 (with further bibliography); for Vergil, F. J. Worstbrock, *Elemente einer Poetik der Aeneis*, Münster 1963, pp. 26-79 (with a good discussion of ancient epic in general); E. L. Harrison, *The Structure of the Aeneid: observations on the links between books*, «Aufst. und Niederg. der Röm. Welt» 31.1, Berlin 1980, pp. 359-93; A. Barchiesi, *Palinuro e Caieta. Due epigrammi virgiliani (Aen. V. 870 sg.; VII. 1-4)*, «Maia» 29-30, 1977-8, pp. 3-11; B. R. Nagle, (op. cit. n. 5).

62. Cf. Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides*, London 1987, p. 35.

63. On the locution here, see Fraenkel on Aesch. *Ag.* 1455 and Bond on Eur. *HF* 328.

64. The last sentence is a good example of how internal closure can give unexpected emphasis. The obvious closure is after the emphatic *excidio ac ruinis dedit*, but the chapter division in modern texts puts great emphasis on the detail of Roman piety; rightly (note the following *interim*).

events they narrate: it is this (with a certain cavalier treatment of details) which vitiates the attempts by B. Hemmerdinger and L. Canfora to divide Thucydides' history by the years of war[65]. Here is K. J. Dover, for instance, on book division in Thucydides[66]:

> 'The division of Thucydides' work into eight books is one of two (possibly three) alternative divisions which were current in the ancient world, and here is no reason to believe that it corresponds to any division which Thucydides himself envisaged. It is unlikely that he intended any kind of break between Book VI and Book VII, still less between Book VII and the first chapter of Book VIII. Between Book V and Book VI a natural break is imposed by the subject-matter itself, but the opening words of Book VI, 'during the same winter...', presuppose our acquaintance with the last part of Book V'.

There is of course no reason why the first words of one book should not 'presuppose our acquaintance[67]' with the previous book, and they usually will do so. The reasons for doubting divisions before and after Book Seven are based on the subject-matter, and while one might agree about the end of Book Six, the end of Book Seven is as clear a closure as one could imagine:

> ξυνέβη τε ἔργον τοῦτο [Ἑλληνικὸν] τῶν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον τόνδε μέγιστον γενέσθαι, δοκεῖν δ' ἔμοιγε καὶ ὧν ἀκοῇ Ἑλληνικῶν ἴσμεν, καὶ τοῖς τε κρατήσασι λαμπρότατον καὶ τοῖς διαφθαρεῖσι δυστυχέστατον· κατὰ πάντα γὰρ πάντως νικηθέντες καὶ οὐδὲν ὀλίγον ἐς οὐδὲν κακοπαθήσαντες πανωλεθρίᾳ δὴ τὸ λεγόμενον καὶ πεζὸς καὶ νῆες καὶ οὐδὲν ὅτι οὐκ ἀπώλετο, καὶ ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπ' οἴκου ἀπενόστησαν. ταῦτα μὲν τὰ περὶ Σικελίαν γενόμενα.

Again we have a formal statement of closure, and generalising comment in the form of a 'backward look'[68]. But we also have a good example of what B. M. Smith calls 'unqualified assertion'[69]:

65. See above n. 56.

66. Ed. *Thucydides VII*, Oxford 1965, p. xvii.

67. Put more strongly by Canfora (op. cit. n. 56), p. 33: 'l'ottavo si apre con una frase ... il cui soggetto va cercato alla fine del libro precedente'.

68. Cf. R. B. Rutherford, *Tragic Form and Feeling in the Iliad*, «Journ. of Hell. St.» 102, 1982, pp. 145-60.

69. *Poetic Closure*, p. 183.

> 'The point is that when universals and absolutes (words such as «all», «none», «only», and «always») occur in assertions, they are themselves the expression of the speaker's inability or refusal to qualify. And we may add superlatives to this category, for they have the same expressive effect. To speak of what is «highest», «last», «best», or «most» is, of course, also to assert extremities, absolutes, and ultimates. All such nonqualifying words and phrases tend to have closural effects when they occur as terminal features...'

So in Thucydides μέγιστον, λαμπρότατον; πάντα, πάντως, πανωλεθρίαι; οὐδὲν, ὀλίγοι, πολλῶν. The first chapter of Book Eight is a necessary pendant to the Sicilian expedition, but it essentially looks forward to the consequences rather than backwards, and the end of the chapter has no strong closural features. One could, of course, end a book after 8.1, and the closure would then be ominously prospective; but one is tempted to say that such a closure would require a strongly marked book-end to enforce its effect.

There is a similar depressing lack of sophistication about many of the discussions of infratextual closure in Herodotus. Legrand quotes two pieces of evidence for his view that the traditional book-division is unsatisfactory; the end of Book Four and the end of Book Five, in both of which cases there is no clear division at the level of the historical events narrated. For all the naive overconfidence with which they are expressed, the views of the 19th century commentator R. W. Macan seem preferable here: believing that 'the nine-fold division of the work of Herodotus, though not formally his doing, is so obviously just and reasonable that it might fairly be taken to suggest, to a greater or lesser extent, even the secret history of the composition of the work', he comments on 6.1:

> 'The division between the fifth and sixth books is purely arbitrary: the narrative is absolutely continuous. However, it is characteristic of Herodotus to conclude a narrative, or gain a pause, by a biographical or anecdotal passage or appendix (cp. 4.143f, 205, 6.137ff, 9.122): and from this point of view the divisions between Books 4 and 5, Book 5 and 6 are well devised'[70].

Though Book 5 ends with the death of Aristagoras the Milesian, the instigator of the Ionian revolt (!), it is not in fact a

70. Ed. London 1895, p. x on 6.1.

strong instance of closure, but the end of Pheretime as narrated at the end of Book Four is undoubtedly powerful:

> Οὐ μὲν οὐδὲ ἡ Φερετίμη εὖ τὴν ζόην κατέπλεξε. Ὡς γὰρ δὴ τάχιστα ἐκ τῆς Λιβύης τεισαμένη τοὺς Βαρκαίους ἀπενόστησε ἐς τὴν Αἴγυπτον, ἀπέθανε κακῶς· ζώουσα γὰρ ἐυλέων ἐξέζεσε, ὡς ἄρα ἀνθρώποισι αἱ λίην ἰσχυραὶ τιμωρίαι πρὸς θεῶν ἐπίφθονοι γίνονται. Ἡ μὲν δὴ Φερετίμης τῆς Βάττου τοιαύτη τε καὶ τοσαύτη τιμωρίη ἐγένετο ἐς Βαρκαίους.

Of course, as Macan's parallels suggest, similar closures exist within the modern book. What is needed is a systematic investigation of the articulation of the work based not only on content but also on the formal devices of closure, and in particular an analysis of the hierarchy of closure. Only then could we make a guess as to whether there are more satisfactory articulations than the traditional nine-book division.

With Herodotus we approach another problem, however, since many would again wish to stress the oral reception of his work[71]: this is obviously a question which becomes even more acute for Homer and Hesiod. This is a subject to which I hope to return on another occasion in connection with a study of the role of the written book in ancient literature, but for the moment I would only wish to observe that questions of orality of reception may be less important for a study of closure than is sometimes assumed. Oral discourse is often seen as unable to be closed in the same way that a written text is, and there are clearly senses of 'closure' in which this is true. But I believe the strong opposition between written and oral literature drawn for instance by P. Hamon[72] is exaggerated:

> 'Si le texte littéraire occidental «classique» se situe fortement dans l'idéologie de la propriété, de la clôture, de la signature, (la loi le protège contre le plagiat, et le philologue contre l'interpolation), le texte du Moyen Age, le conte populaire et le mythe, perpétuellement réactivés par de nouvelles performances orales, la bande dessinée à succès reprise de dessinateur en dessinateur,

71. Cf. Flory (op. cit. n. 59); L. Canfora, *Il ciclo storico*, «Belfagor» 26, 1971, pp. 653-70 at pp. 658-60; C. Dewald and J. Marincola, *A selective introduction to Herodotean studies*, «Arethusa» 20, 1987, pp. 9-40 at pp. 14-15, and especially M. M. Lang, *Herodotean Narrative and Discourse*, Cambridge Mass. and London 1984.

72. See above n. 17.

> fonctionnent commes des «continuums» sans débuts ni fins (mais avec une finition et une finalité idéologique précise), comme des «fonds textuels» (au sens où on parle de «fond sonore»)'.

In fact modern studies of popular song such as Christopher Ricks' on the American popular singer and songwriter Bob Dylan[73] have drawn attention to the *greater* need for an aurally-received lyric poetry to signal its articulation and its end with the devices of closure; without such devices, the audience is caught unpleasantly unawares (compare the techniques of the cadenza in instrumental music). There is no reason that this should not also be true of aurally-received epic poetry, and indeed such a view is presupposed by the many studies of techniques like ring-composition. We would expect there to be pausing in any long narrative, and it may not matter whether these are a singer's pauses or correspond to book divisions. Again what is needed is a thorough examination of the hierarchy of closure in early epic to see if alternative articulations can be discerned to the traditional book division (and a study on these lines is in fact in preparation by Dr. Oliver Taplin). But again such an investigation might profitably start from the existing endings, many of which are, as I say, strikingly good. If they are the inventions of a later editor, he deserves recognition as a great literary artist; and there is of course another reason for studying these epic ends, since they have strongly affected what is *our* sense of an ending through their later reception. One of my colleagues once set *Iliad* 8.553-9.8 as a continuous piece for translation in an examination, to startling effect; and one can appreciate the reasons for denying a strong pause at this point. But the picture of the watchfires on the plain and the horses silently waiting for dawn which concludes the present Book Eight is one of the greatest 'suspended' endings in Western literature, whoever created it.

When book-divisions do become firmly established (whether marked by the end of a roll or by a division within a roll), it becomes possible to use a dissonance between externally marked articulation and the presence of closural features. In the

73. *Can this really be the end?* in *Conclusions on the Wall*, ed. E. M. Thomson, Manchester 1980, pp. 47-9.

present book-division, the end of the first half of the *Odyssey* comes not at the end of Book Twelve but 13.88-92, where the description of Odysseus sleeping through the night as the Phaeacian ship carries him home to Ithaca clearly recalls the opening lines of the epic. This is often seen as an incidence of mistaken book-division: 'the Alexandrian editors who divided the poem into books should have run Book 12 on to 13.92 with its charming cadence and peaceful close'[74]. When Apollonius came to divide his *Argonautica*, he did so exactly in half, at the end of Book Two; but Vergil keeps the overlap in the *Aeneid*, where the opening proem of Book Seven does not appear until 7.37. Whatever is the position with the *Odyssey* – I am not sure that we should dogmatize about the impossibility of these effects in early epic – the overlap in the *Aeneid* clearly serves a structural principle in preventing the work falling exactly into two halves. Vergil in fact goes out of his way to deny a strong closure to Book Six, though the final couplet is not without closural features and Book Seven does start powerfully with the death of Caieta[75]. One of the most sophisticated uses of book-division is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*[76]. Discussions of the structure of the *Metamorphoses* normally ignore the division into books, and seek other principles of articulation[77]: so for instance R. Coleman[78]:

> 'One unit of structure Ovid has ignored, namely the division into books, which Virgil had exploited so effectively in the *Aeneid*. Not only do closely knit groups run over from one book to another, as *Cadmus* in 3 and 4 and *Orpheus* in 10 and 11, but even individual stories as well, like *Phaethon* in 1 and 2, *Achelous* in 8 and 9, and *Iudicium armorum* in 12 and 13. In this too the poet shows his concern for the *perpetuitas carminis*'.

74. W. B. Stanford ed., *The Odyssey*, London 1948, vol. 2, p. xi.

75. See Norden on 6. 899 f. For Caieta, cf. W. Kroll, *Studien über die Komposition der Aeneis*, «Jahrb. f. klass. Phil.», Suppl. 27, Leipzig 1900, pp. 135-69 at p. 144.

76. Cf. J. Tolkiehn, *Die Bucheinteilung der Metamorphosen Ovids*, «Sokrates» 96, 1915, pp. 315-19.

77. Cf. e.g. G. Karl Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Oxford 1975, pp. 79-109. For a protest, cf. A. Crabbe *Structure and Content in Ovid's «Metamorphoses»*, «Aufst. und Niederg. der Röm. Welt» 31.4, Berlin 1981, pp. 2274-2327.

78. *Structure and intention in the Metamorphoses*, «Class. Quart.» n.s. 21, 1971, pp. 461-77 at p. 471.

Coleman here reflects the conventional view amongst those who have noticed the book-division at all that the overlaps in the narrative between books 'ne sont la que pour donner à l'ensemble l'apparence d'un édifice unique'[79]. This is true in part, but Ovid is rather playing with the book division than ignoring it. L. P. Wilkinson, though believing that the *Metamorphoses* 'should not have been divided into books at all were it not that its length necessitated a number of rolls', is nevertheless prepared to see Ovid's technique of beginning a new story before a book-end as 'partly the time-honoured device of the serial writer to whet the reader's appetite for the next instalment'[80]. But the reader is treated to more sophisticated effects than that. The description of Europa at the end of Book Two (873-5), for instance, is a clear example of 'whetting the reader's appetite':

> ... pavet haec litusque ablata relictum
> respicit et dextra cornum tenet, altera dorso
> imposita est; tremulae sinuantur flamine vestes.

The book end arrests the narrative on a scene familiar both from visual art and literary ekphrasis; a 'static' moment which accentuates the reader's desire for continuance[81]. What matters here however is that that desire is frustrated at the opening of Book Three, where Ovid throws away the rest of the story in typically perverted fashion (which Bömer bizarrely thinks is 'eine Art epischer (!) Verkürzung'[82]):

> Iamque deus posita fallacis imagine tauri
> se confessus erat Dictaeaque rura tenebat,
> cum....

79. G. Lafaye, *Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide et leurs modèles grecs*, Paris 1904, p. 82. Cf. G. Steiner, *Ovid's carmen perpetuum*, «Trans. Am. Philol. Ass.» 89, 1958, pp. 218-36 at pp. 227-8, W. Klimmer, *Die Anordnung des Stoffes in der ersten vier Büchern von Ovids Metamorphosen*, diss. Erlangen 1932, 11, pp. 25-7.

80. *Ovid Recalled*, Cambridge 1955, p. 149.

81. The use of description at a point of closure merits further investigation; it is familiar in the modern novel. For the suspense created by description, cf. P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius*, Berlin 1912, p. 5 on the *Auskunftschema*, with A. Schiesaro, *Il locus horridus nelle Metamorfosi di Apuleio* «Maia» 37, 1985, pp. 211-23 at p. 214.

82. On 2. 873.

As often in Ovid, the frustration is sexual as well as narratological; what we want to read is the account of Jupiter and Europa, having it away, but 'Die Vereinigung des Gottes und der Heroine erwähnt der Dichter nicht'[83]. There is in fact immense variety in the effects of closure Ovid elicits from his book-ends, and they all deserve to be seen as a resource of his art, not an inconvenience.

5. *Falsehoods and Surprises*

The existence of externally marked points of closure permits in particular two complementary effects: the *false* ending, where the text seems to pause or end but the external division has not yet been reached, and the *surprise* ending when the external division comes upon us unawares. Both are often found in the narrative overlapping of the *Metamorphoses*. A good example of the surprise ending at the infratextual (or is it supertextual?) level is the concluding poem of Horace *Odes* Book One, 1.38. This is not even a multiple of ten in the numeration of the poems, and I know of no reason why 38 should be significant in the way 17 may be for the *Epodes*[84]. Nisbet and Hubbard document the dissatisfaction that has been felt with the poem as a conclusion, though their own comment that the poem's 'elegant simplicity makes an effective contrast with the grand manner of 1.37, and gives an agreeable and characteristic ending to the book' is uncharacteristic waffle. Fraenkel was surely right to read the poem as turned by its position into (in part) a literary manifesto[85]:

> 'It is a very graceful little piece. If it were found in any ordinary place in the collection, no one would look for a special meaning under its surface. But is not found in an ordinary place: it concludes a books of lyrics the like of which no reader had ever seen before, a book which represented one of the most daring experiments in the history of ancient poetry'.

The answer to the question posed by Nisbet and Hubbard,

83. Bömer on 3. 11-27.

84. On the *Epodes*, see D. L. Clayman *Callimachus, Thirteenth Iamb: the Last Word*, «Hermes» 104, 1976, pp. 29-35, *Callimachus' Iambi*, «Mnemosyne» Supplement 59, Leiden 1980, p. 7.

85. *Horace*, Oxford 1957, p. 291.

'whether mere position in the book can give a poem a meaning it would not otherwise have possessed', must be 'yes', just as it makes a difference where an individual poem ends. This illustrates the two-stage process that a surprise ending causes the reader to go through; first straight surprise, and then an attempt to read the ending as a closure after all. Both reactions should be acknowledged.

False closure is brilliantly discussed by B. H. Smith[86] in relation to George Herbert's poem *Vertue*:

> Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridall of the earth and skie:
> The dew shall weep thy fall to night;
> For thou must die.
>
> Sweet rose, whose hue angrie and brave
> Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
> Thy root is ever in its grave,
> And thou must die.
>
> Sweet spring, full of sweet dayes and roses,
> A box where sweets compacted lie;
> My musick shows ye have your closes,
> And all must die.
>
> Onely a sweet and vertuous soul
> Like season'd timber, never gives;
> But though the whole world turn to coal,
> Then chiefly lives.

As she remarks: 'what gives this poem so much of its power is the fact that so many elements in its formal and thematic structure conspire to bring about closure at the conclusion of the *third* stanza. The fourth stanza, however, is hardly anticlimactic; on the contrary, it has the effect, entirely appropriate to its theme, of a revelation – that which is known beyond what can be demonstrated logically'. As a Christian poet, Herbert denies the closure of death for the human soul, which 'then chiefly lives'. There is a good example of false closure in Catullus 8:

> Miser Catulle, desinas ineptire,
> et quod vides perisse perditum ducas.

86. *Poetic Closure*, pp. 67-9.

> Fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles,
> cum ventitabas quo puella ducebat,
> amata nobis quantum amabitur nulla.
> ibi illa multa tum iocosa fiebant,
> quae tu volebas nec puella nolebat.
> fulsere vere candidi tibi soles.
> nunc iam illa non vult; tu quoque, impotens, noli,
> nec quae fugit sectare, nec miser vive, 10
> sed obstinata mente perfer, obdura.
> vale, puella, iam Catullus obdurat,
> nec te requiret nec rogabit invitam.
> at tu dolebis, cum rogaberis nulla.
> scelesta, vae te! quae tibi manet vita?
> quis nunc te adibit? cui videberis bella?
> quem nunc amabis? cuius esse diceris?
> quem basiabis? cui labella mordebis?
> at tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura!

So G. P. Goold's text[87]: but the comma he places at the end of line 12 to carry the reader forward is in some ways misleading. There is a strong sense of closure in 11-12; the unqualified assertion, the parallelism at the ends of the two lines (*obdura, obdurat*), the reappearance of the poet's name and of commands addressed to himself, the formal 'farewell' which is often found at the end of poems, all these contribute to our sense of an ending[88]. A poem consisting of only the first 12 lines is perfectly possible: it is an interesting exercise to offer them for comment to someone who does not know the poem. Catullus does not stop at line 12, however, because the point of the poem, as many critics have realised, is precisely that he *cannot* stop. In declaring that his obsession with Lesbia is over, he demonstrates that it is not, and the questions in 15-18 which are meant to be sarcastic and bitter come over as curious and longing. The false closure of 11-12 casts its shadow even over the real concluding line, and makes us unsure of its finality; if Catullus could not stop before, how seriously do we take him now?

There is a complication, however, with the false closure of Catullus 8 which I want to use to introduce my final general

87. London 1983.

88. Cf. E. Fraenkel, *Two poems of Catullus*, «Journ. Rom. St.» 51, 1961, pp. 46-53 = *Kleine Beiträge*, Rome 1964, vol. 2, pp. 115-29 at p. 127.

point about closure before turning to some specific proposals for research: that is, the role of Catullus' model. R. F. Thomas[89] has argued, successfully, I think, that Catullus 8 stands in a close relationship to Demea's monologue in Menander, *Samia* 325-56. There is a degree of false closure there too at 349-50, most notably again in the occurrence of Demea's name at 326 and 349 and of imperatives at 327 and 350[90]. One might indeed see the model here diminishing the power of Catullus' poem, in two ways. As commentators note, Demea's speech is comically unexpected in an old man[91], but Catullus returns it to its more ordinary context of a young lover; and the presence of false closure in the Menander also might be seen as removing the surprise of the false ending at 11-12. The dominant effect of the Menandrean model however is to increase our sense of Catullus' delusion. Demea is deluded also, but his delusion is about Chrysis' character: he thinks she is a faithless whore but the play will demonstrate her innocence. Lesbia turns out to justify Catullus' hatred. Demea puts his resolve instantly and cruelly into practice, but the reader of *Miser Catulle* does not gain the same convinction about Catullus' determination. Whatever judgment one makes on the specific instance of Catullus and Menander, however, it is clear that intertextuality powerfully affects the reader's sense of closure. The *Aeneid*, for instance, notoriously has a surprise ending, though many of the systems of meaning within the epic do culminate in the final book. This ambiguity about closure partly reflects the two main competing models, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; to simplify greatly, the ending is surprising on the Iliadic model – no Book 24 and reconciliation with Priam – but more expected on the Odyssean model, in that the closing scenes of dialogue in heaven and battle on earth are found in *Odyssey* 24[92]. Of course even on the Odyssean model the closure of the *Aeneid* is imperfect: when Juno leaves her cloud at 12.842, it is not like Athena to descend as a *deus ex machina* and halt the fighting. But this merely underlines the complexity that

89. *Menander and Catullus 8*, «Rhein. Mus.» 128, 1985, pp. 308-16.

90. On the sequence of thought in the monologue, see J. Blundell, *Menander and the Monologue*, «Hypomnemata», 59, Göttingen 1980, pp. 37-9, 68-9.

91. Cf. e.g. Bain on 325 f., p. 349.

92. Cf. Davies (op. cit. n. 7).

a consideration of intertextuality brings to the discussion of closure. The simplest case is where one work follows another one closely but then deviates at the end as in Catullus' translation of Sappho in poem 51 (to which I return). But the effects can be much more complicated, which is why a study of the continuing reception of the great canonic endings from the Homeric poems and similarly central works would be particularly interesting[93].

6. *Essential Preliminaries*

I have already made a number of suggestions, where work on closure in antiquity might be profitable, but I should now like to turn explicitly to the areas which seem to offer most scope for further investigation. There are a number of preliminary matters which still await full treatment. First, we need more theory, though it might fairly be said that part of the problem is that we have too much already. A large number of techniques have been isolated, and these have been classified according to various general principles. B. H. Smith, for instance, divided the devices into 'formal' and 'thematic' ones, with a ragbag collection of 'special terminal features' in a separate chapter. The excellence of her work lies precisely in her preference for empirical detail over any rigid arrangement, but it is clear that this classification leaves many questions unanswered. Closure is certainly 'une realité assez flore, et un concept théorique particulièrement difficile à construire et à manipuler'[94], but it would be nice to see some order brought to the competing analyses. Second, what discussion there has been of closure in classical texts needs to be collected and discussed. Although the subject has been undeniably neglected, there are some classic works such as Kranz' study of the *sphragis*[95] and the traditional

93. For one possible phenomenon, see J. E. G. Zetzel, *Catullus, Ennius, and the Poetics of Allusion*, «Ill. Class. St.» 8, 1983, pp. 251-66 at pp. 261: 'it seems to be a convention of Alexandrian and neoteric poetry to reverse beginnings and end' (so that Catullus echoes the end of the *Argonautica* at the beginning of poem 64, and the beginning of the Hesiodic *Eoiae* at the end). The reception of the end of the *Iliad* may well begin with the end of the *Odyssey*: cf. J. Griffin *The Odyssey*, Cambridge 1987, p. 77.

94. P. Hamon, «Poétique» 6, 1975, p. 503.

95. W. Kranz, *Studien zur antiken Literatur und ihrem Nachwirken*, Heidelberg

'problematic endings' have been much discussed, albeit often from an unprofitably narrow viewpoint. A phenomenon that is evident elsewhere in classical studies is the tendency for subjects like closure to be more discussed at the margins of antiquity; so the best discussion of closural allusion to nightfall in antiquity is in Curtius' *Europäisches Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*[96], while one of the few works to devote the same attention to endings as proems usually receive is B. A. Van Groningen's *La composition littéraire archaique grecque*[97]. The latter in particular shows some of the distortion that these chronological perspectives can engender. There are some acute observations, for instance, of the personal endings of many Pindaric *epinikia*[98], but they are spoilt by a determination to see them as stages in the evolution of the formal epilogue, 'un embryon d'épilogue'. But the formal epilogue is only one among many ways of concluding a literary work, and by no means the most common or important: it should not be seen as the pinnacle of literary development. Similarly, as remarked before, the end of Herodotus' history has aroused much controversy, and one may argue about the suitability of the present conclusion[99]: but the final section cannot be called abrupt *simply because* there is no formal peroration[100]. This is a useful reminder of how important it is for those working on the early periods of antiquity to be aware of the variety of later literature (a piece of moralising which *mutatis mutandis* applies of course to classicists as a whole). Apart from these treatments, there are a number of isolated *aperçus* which need to be collected and analysed: in Latin, for instance, G. Williams' observation of Propertius' technique of 'closing a poem with a more or less

1967, pp. 27-78; for more recent studies, see Nisbet and Hubbard on Hor. *Carm.* 2. 20.

96. Trans. W. R. Trask, London 1953, pp. 89-91, *Topics of the Conclusion*.

97. Amsterdam 1960²; see especially pp. 70-6.

98. Op. cit. n. 75.

99. Cf. How and Wells on 8. 122. 3; E. Meyer, *Herodots Geschichtswerk*, Halle 1899, p. 217 = *Herodot* ed. W. Marg, Darmstadt 1965, pp. 679-80; H. Bischoff, *Der Warner bei Herodot*, diss. Marburg 1952, pp. 78-83 = *Herodot*, pp. 681-7 at p. 683; contra A. Masaracchia, *Erodoto, La battaglia di Salamina. Libro VIII delle Storie*, Milan 1977, pp. xxx-xxxii.

100. Cf. Van Groningen (op. cit. n. 97) p. 70; H. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus*, Baltimore 1966, p. 145.

generalising distich, which often looks back over the whole poem'[101] or F. Cairns' collection of 'tangential' endings[102]. Commentators in particular ought to be trawled. Only for a few authors do we have more extended treatments, in Latin most notably again Propertius, whose *Schlusspointe* have often been noted and have been well discussed by E. Lefèvre in his *Propertius ludibundus* and (with Tibullus') by M. Grondona[103].

The third preliminary study that is required is the collection of explicit discussion of closure in antiquity itself. One obvious area is rhetorical theory; the peroration in oratory is frequently discussed[104], though what is said is generally unsurprising and not of great relevance outside oratory, but the discussions of devices such as the *epiphonema*[105] offer more of interest. Demetrius, for instance, in his discussion at *On Style* 106-11, goes out of his way to deny that a *gnome* is the same as an *epiphonema*, since it is often found at the beginning. This seems so obvious as not to be worth saying, but the use of a maxim as a closural device is recognised by B. H. Smith[106] and can be seen in the exit-lines of characters in Greek tragedy, where it performs the same function as the concluding rhyming couplets in Shakespeare (themselves often sententious)[107]. This is a spe-

101. (Op. cit. n. 34) p. 795.

102. *Tibullus, a Hellenistic Poet at Rome*, Cambridge 1979, pp. 125-6: Cat. 11. 21ff, Tib. 1.4.7ff, Hor. *Carm.* 1.5.13ff, 2.19.29ff, 3.4.25ff, Prop. 2.3.51ff, Callimachus *Hymn* 2 etc.

103. E. Lefèvre *Propertius Ludibundus*, Heidelberg 1966, pp. 131-56; M. Grondona, *Gli epigrammi di Tibullo e il congedo delle elegie (su Properzio e Virgilio)* «Latomus» 36, 1977, pp. 3-29. Cf. on Propertius also F. Jacoby, *Drei Gedichte des Properz*, «Rhein. Mus.» 69, 1914, pp. 393-413, 427-63 = *Kleine philologische Schriften*, 2, Berlin 1961, pp. 216-65 at p. 398 = 220, T. D. Papanghelis *Propertius: a Hellenistic Poet on Love and Death*, Cambridge 1987, p. 89 n. 35 etc. Compare on Ovid D. Parker, *The Ovidian Coda*, «Arion» 8, 1969, pp. 80-97.

104. H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*, Munich 1960, vol. 1, pp. 236-40. The most interesting account is that given by Aristotle, *Rhet* 3. 19, where he brilliantly contrives to finish his own work with a quotation of last words: cf. Cope ad loc., 'a sentence which at once illustrates the point under discussion and also serves as an appropriate farewell to the subject of the treatise'.

105. Lausberg (op. cit. n. 104) p. 434.

106. *Poetic Closure* 168-71, p. 207.

107. Cf. O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, Oxford 1977, pp. 88-9 (and in

cial case of *generalisation* as a closural device, but its use in antiquity perhaps deserves analysis going beyond the boundaries of a single genre. There is much more ancient material that deserves discussion however; discussions by grammarians of word-order and period structure, for instance, or the comments in scholia on endings[108]. More extended discussions are rarer, but there is an interesting instance in the *synkrisis* of Thucydides and Herodotus offered by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his *Letter to Pompeius* (3). Herodotus' proem is praised as being καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος[109] ... τῆς ἱστορίας and his ending is seen as being much superior to that of Thucydides; whereas Herodotus 'begins with the reasons why the barbarians injured the Greeks in the first place, and proceeds until he has described the punishment which befell them', Thucydides both starts and stops in the wrong place. 'It would have been better, after describing all the events of the war, to end his history with a climax, and one that was most remarkable and especially gratifying to his audience, the return of the exiles from Phyle, which marked the beginning of the city's recovery of freedom'[110]. This is manifestly unfair to Thucydides, and Dionysius' judgment is often held up to ridicule, but his observations on Herodotus' conclusion deserve some respect. It would be particularly interesting to know if there are instances of ancient critical theory on closure affecting practice: the one example I can think of is Apollonius' conclusion to the *Argonautica*, which is clearly influenced by the comments of Aristophanes and Aristarchus on the πέρας / τέλος of the *Odyssey*[111]. But the growing interest in the influence of ancient

general index s.v. 'exits, lines suitable for'); Bond on Euripides *HF* 1014f (messengers).

108. Note, for instance, the scholia on Soph. *Aj.* 1418a and Eur. *Orestes* 1691.

109. S. Usher (ed. Cambridge Mass. and London 1895) glosses as *purpose*, but Dionysius is punning on the two senses.

110. Trans. Usher pp. 375, 377.

111. Cf. L. E. Rossi, *La fine alessandrina dell'Odissea e lo ξῆλος Ὁμηρικός di Apollonio Rodio*, «Riv. di Filol.» 96, 1968, pp. 151-63, Livrea on *Arg.* 4. 1781; contra M. Campbell, *Apollonian and Homeric Book Division*, «Mnemosyne» 36, 1983, pp. 154-5 (an interesting piece, even if his arguments against Rossi are not cogent). P. Oxy. 2883 (?Rhianos) seems to offer a further example of the influence of *Od.* 23.296: see Lloyd-Jones and Parsons on *SH* 947.

scholarship on literary practice may throw up some further examples.

The final essential preliminary that remains a desideratum is an unprejudiced and up-to-date account of those features of the ancient book which are relevant to questions of closure: colometry, punctuation, book and chapter division and features like titles[112] and catchlines[113]. There is of course no shortage of works on the ancient book[114], but the frequency with which reference still has to be made back to Birt's *Das Antike Buchwesen*[115] shows that a detailed systematic account is still lacking, and much of the existing discussion seems designed to minimise the importance of the physical features of the books in antiquity. Birt himself was in fact much more alive to the possible literary significance of these features than many later writers, and the few pages on endings in his chapter on *Das Buch als Träger der Schriftwerke* still repay study[116]. More needs to be done however. The standard modern account of the *coronis* by G. M. Stephen[117], for instance, raises some interesting questions about the role of that sign in marking endings:

> 'It was normal at the end of a roll, where it was rarely omitted, but it was also used regularly to mark the end of books within a roll or codex and of smaller units within a book – in lyric poetry the end of a poem or a strophic system; in drama the end of a scene or a chorus; and in both prose and poetry the end of a clearly defined section, while in commentaries it marked where the divisions came in the work being commented on. It did not,

112. Cf. R. P. Oliver, *The first Medicean MS of Tacitus and the titulature of ancient books*, «Trans. Am. Philol. Ass.» 82, 1951, pp. 232-61; B. M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, Oxford 1987, pp. 301-4 with bibliography 301 n. 1; A. Rother, *Der literarische Titel, Funktionen, Formen, Geschichte* (Frankfurt am Main 1986: on modern literature).

113. Cf. S. West, *Reclamantes in Greek papyri*, «Scriptorium» 17, 1963, pp. 314-5.

114. For bibliography, see especially the notes to the essays in G. Cavallo, *Libri, editori e pubblico nel mondo antico*, Roma-Bari 1977², and the bibliography in «Arethusa» 13, 1980, pp. 115-27.

115. Berlin 1882.

116. Op. cit. n. 115, 127-56, especially pp. 146-50.

117. *The Coronis*, «Scriptorium» 13, 1959, pp. 3-14. For further bibliography, see E. G. Turner, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*, ed. 2, «Bull. Inst. Class. St. London», Supplement 46, London 1987, p. 12 n. 59.

> however, mark minor divisions in a prose work such as chapters in the historians, nor was it used in collections of the arguments of plays'.

Her examples of 'the end of a clearly defined section' include the end of paragraphs in Aratus, *aetia* in Callimachus, an episode in Herodotus, and the break before Socrates' speech at Plato *Phaedrus* 243e; an up-to date and complete list would be invaluable. Even if we wish to see an author as too early for this sort of punctuation to be original, how texts were read by later readers is not without importance. Similar studies are needed of the other signs used to delineate a text into units, such as the *paragraphos* and *asteriscus*[118].

One aspect of these formal features which deserves special attention is the explicit mention of them in literature. This is a topic which I hope to treat in a wider context elsewhere, but it is of some importance for literary closure, and raises questions about the effects of metaliterary reference in general. The most famous examples are perhaps the *coronis* poems of Meleager[119], *A.P.* 12.57 = 129 GP and a related poem of Philodemus, *A.P.* 11.41 = 17 GP, which has excited much discussion[120]:

> Ἑπτὰ τριηκόντεσσιν ἐπέρχονται λυκάβαντες,
> ἤδη μοι βιότου σχιζόμεναι σελίδες·
> ἤδη καὶ λευκαί με κατασπείρουσιν ἔθειραι,
> Ξανθίππη, συνετῆς ἄγγελοι ἡλικίης.
> ἀλλ' ἔτι μοι ψαλμός τε λάλος κῶμοί τε μέλονται,
> καὶ πῦρ ἀπλήστῳ τύφετ' ἐνὶ κραδίῃ.
> αὐτὴν ἀλλὰ τάχιστα κορωνίδα γράψατε, Μοῦσαι,
> ταύτην ἡμετέρης, δεσπότιδες, μανίης.

αὐτὴν ... ταύτην is difficult, but Gow and Page are probably right to refer it to the physical *coronis* which followed this poem, and Griffiths to see this as the final poem in a collection published by Philodemus at the age of 37: other poems may belong to the same closural sequence (e.g. *A.P.* 5.112 = 18 GP). The whole topic of reference to physical markers of closure deserves wider discussion, however. There is an intriguing example towards the end of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, a work whose sophistication in closure at all levels is noticeable[121]. In 10.39.2 Sisimithres convinces Hydaspes not to sacrifice Charicleа: the gods have signalled that this should not be done by their actions:

> νῦν μὲν τὴν πανόλβιον Χαρίκλειαν ἐξ αὐτῶν σοι τῶν βωμῶν θυγατέρα ἀναδείξαντες καὶ τὸν ταύτης τροφέα, *καθάπερ ἐκ μηχανῆς*, ἐκ μέσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐνταῦθα ἀναπέμψαντες, αὖθις τὴν πτοίαν καὶ τὸν τάραχον τοῖς προσβωμίοις ἵπποις τε καὶ βουσὶν ἐπιβαλόντες καὶ τὸ διακοπήσεσθαι τὰ τελεώτερα νομιζόμενα τῶν ἱερείων συμβάλλειν παρέχοντες· νῦν *τὴν κορωνίδα τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ ὥσπερ λαμπάδιον δράματος* τὸν νυμφίον τῆς κόρης τουτονὶ τὸν ξένον νεανίαν ἀναφήναντες.

The meaning of λαμπάδιον is unclear[122], but it is obviously theatrical, and there are many other theatrical references in these closing scenes; at 10. 38. 3 we are explicitly told that it is divine power ἡ σύμπαντα ταῦτα ἐσκηνογράφησεν. The reference to the *coronis* however reminds the reader that he is approaching the end of the written work, the novel ὃ συνέταξεν ἀνὴρ Φοίνιξ Ἐμισηνός, τῶν ἀφ' Ἡλίου γένος, Θεοδοσίου παῖς Ἡλιόδωρος (10. 41. 4). The way in which the denouement is ascribed to the gods, but it is made plain to us that it is the author's doing, is reminiscent of Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste*, where Jacques believes his fate is written on high but Diderot continually reminds us that it is he who is doing the writing.

The author whose play with reference to physical markers is most sophisticated is Martial: so sophisticated in fact that modern interpreters have often misunderstood him. Here for instance is the closural sequence of Book 11:

118. Cf. Turner (op. cit. n. 117) 12-13. Of course it is still generally true that 'the ancient poet regarded it as part of his craft to mark the beginnings and ends of poems clearly (without relying on external punctuation)' (C. E. Murgia, *The Date of Ovid Ars 3*, «Am. Journ. Philol.» 107, 1986, pp. 74-94 at p. 90 n. 26).

119. Cf. Van Sickle (op. cit. n. 7).

120. Cf. A. H. Griffiths, *Six Passages in Callimachus and the Anthology*, «Bull. Inst. Class. St. London» 17, 1970, pp. 32-43 at p. 37-8 (replying to G. Giangrande «Grazer Beiträge» 1, 1973, pp. 173-7); D. Sider, *The love poetry of Philodemus* «Am. Journ. Philol.» 109, 1984, pp. 310-24. See now P. Bing. *The Well-Read Muse*, «Hypomnemata» 90, Göttingen 1988, p. 35 (which offers an excellent treatement of this whole topic).

121. See below pp. 118 f.

122. See Rattenbury's note ad loc. It most likely refers to the torches frequently brought on at the end of a comedy: see W. G. Arnott, *Hosper lampadion dramatos*, «Hermes» 93, 1965, pp. 253-5.

106 Vibi Maxime, si vacas havere,
hoc tantum lege: namque et occupatus
et non es nimium laboriosus.
transis hos quoque quattuor? sapisti.

107 Explicitum nobis usque ad sua cornua librum
et quasi perlectum, Septiciane, refers.
omnia legisti. credo, scio, gaudeo, verum est.
perlegi libros sic ego quinque tuos.

108 Quamvis tam longo possis satur esse libello,
lector, adhuc a me disticha pauca petis.
sed Lupus usuram puerique diaria poscunt.
lector, solve. taces dissimulasque? vale.

As the latest editor of Book 11 notes[123], 'the three final epigrams in the book are linked together by the idea that the book has been long and the reader has, or should have, other things to do. It is a pleasant touch that in 106 and 107 M. pictures the reader as being fed up with him the author, and then in 108 rounds off the book with a piece suggesting that the reader is avid for more and the author unwilling to supply it'. Martial's play with the contrasting emotions of the reader is brilliant, and so it is depressing to see P. White[124] arguing that 106 is here out of place: Vibius Maximus cannot be asked to read only this epigram because it comes towards the end of a book and he would already have ploughed through 105 epigrams to get to it. That is of course (part of) the joke, and if a reader cannot cope with such irony he will have a hard time with the last line of 106, where Vibius is praised for not reading the four lines he has just read. Throughout his books of epigrams Martial plays on the conventions of serial reading, the reader progressing through each collection supposedly contemporaneously with the author's writing of it, and it is a serious misunderstanding to try to extract from Martial's games of irony traces of alternative collections.

123. B. M. Kay, *Martial Book XI, A Commentary*, London 1985, p. 284.

124. *The Presentation and Dedication of the Silvae and Epigrams* «Journ. Rom. St.» 64, 1974, pp. 40-61.

7. *Romantics and Postmoderns*

The modern reader has to hand a convenient label for these instances where the author draws attention to the fact that this work *is* a literary work, words on paper not conversation or song: Romantic Irony[125]. The importance of this concept for the criticism of classical literature has been recently stressed by G. B. Conte, but I believe it would be helpful if it were more widely employed[126]. As defined by Friedrich Schlegel and his followers like Solger and Adam Müller, this concept was closely bound up with Fichte's idealism. To quote G. T. Hughes[127]:

> 'Schlegel ... starts from the Fichtean philosophical position that the ego both posits the external world and is limited by it. But this limitation is overcome when, to simplify the terminology, the ego recognises what is going on and remembers that the non-ego is indeed its creature. Intelligence recognises that all its creations are relative. The poetic act analogous to the Fichtean process is that the artist, through his intelligence, frees himself from the limitations of what his enthusiasm has created'.

By rupturing the illusion – by in a sense destroying his own creation – the poet frees himself from being bound by the text he has created. As the text progresses, the possibilities narrow, as what has gone before determines what shall follow: the gesture of Romantic Irony reminds us that this is after all just the

125. The standard modern work on the subject is I. Strohschneider-Kohrs, *Die romantische Ironie in Theorie und Gestaltung*, Tübingen 1977², but there are a number of shorter treatments: see the bibliographies in P. Kluckhohn, *Das Ideengut der deutschen Romantik*, Tübingen 1953², pp. 189-90 and G. T. Hughes, *Romantic German Literature*, London 1979, pp. 142-3. There is a recent anthology in English with an excellent introduction, K. Wheeler, *German aesthetic and literary criticism, The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, Cambridge 1984. On the general subject of irony, much has been written: as well as the standard work of Muecke cited below (n. 128), cf. W. Rooth, *The Rhetoric of Irony*, Chicago and London 1974; A. Schaefer ed., *Ironie und Dichtung*, Munich 1970, and the special numbers of «Poétique» 36, 1978, with bibliography by Muecke, pp. 478-94 and *Poetics Today* 4, 1983.

126. G. B. Conte, *Memoria dei poeti e sistema letterario*, Turin 1974¹, p. 39 = *The Rhetoric of Imitation*, Ithaca and London 1986, pp. 62-3; introduction to Ovid *Remedia Amoris*, trans. C. Lazzarini, Venice 1986, pp. 24-7 (with bibliography 150-1, nn. 24, 28). Cf. Lefèvre (op. cit. n. 103) 152, 156, 172-3, G. Luck, *The Latin Love Elegy*, London 1969², p. 99; A. C. Romano, *Irony in Juvenal*, Hildesheim 1979, pp. 26-7.

127. Op. cit. (n. 125) p. 55.

creation of a man like us, who can do what he likes with his material. The ultimate examples of this are novels like Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste* already mentioned, or Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*, the example taken as paradigmatic by D. C. Muecke in the standard English treatment of the subject[128]. As these examples suggest, while the original formulations of Romantic Irony were made in the specific context of German Romanticism, the problems the theory is attempting to address are general ones faced by all literature, and they are bound up with the notion of closure. To quote Muecke's formulation[129]: 'How can a work of art, which of its nature is something that can be finished and therefore something finite and static, express the infiniteness of life?' The answer of the Romantic Ironists was that 'the work of art should itself acknowledge its limitations and by doing so with irony it would take on the dynamic quality that life has and which art should therefore express'. The irony of the work, and the irony of irony of irony, prevent any facile resolution of the oppositions present in the text.

Although Romantic Irony may pervade a work like *Doktor Faustus*, it is particularly associated with actual endings; most famously, the endings of the poems of Heine where, after a Romantic rapture, the poem ends cynically and realistically with a deflating gesture which nevertheless enables the reader then to cope with the initial elevation. There is a tendency for classical critics to see the sort of reference to physical features of books like the allusions to the *coronis* I have mentioned as necessarily spoiling the seriousness of the works which contain them; hence the frequent resistance in general to the supposition of metaliterary effects in ancient texts. A wider use of the insights of the German Romantics might help to dispel this misunderstanding. More specifically, a number of ancient literary texts conclude in ways which are strongly reminiscent of Heine, comparison with whom was made for instance by Shorey and Fraenkel in connection with Horace's second epode[130]. I am myself inclined to see the ending of that poem

128. *The Compass of Irony*, London 1969, pp. 159-215.

129. Op. cit., (n. 128) p. 195.

130. Shorey ad loc.; Fraenkel, *Horace*, Oxford 1957, p. 60.

(and of its Archilochean model, fr. 19 West) as genuinely subversive, pace Fraenkel and many others[131], and similarly subversive endings are to be found in Ovid's *Amores*. In 1.4, for instance, Ovid preaches obsessively about Corinna's conduct at the party, but at the end implies that it does not matter what she does so long as she does not tell him about it, and in 1.7 he agonises over his appaling behaviour in attacking Corinna and asks her to beat him up in turn – or at least straighten her hair so that the damage is not noticeable. The equivalent endings in Propertius, however, in which 'erst der Schluss entzieht dem Gedicht den Boden, indem er die Illusion des Aufschwungs zerstört'[132], are less easily classifiable, and with examples like the ending of Horace *Odes* 3.3 we are surely closer to genuine Romantic Irony:

> non hoc iocosae conveniet lyrae:
> quo, Musa, tendis? desine pervicax
> referre sermones deorum et
> magna modis tenuare parvis.

This has been rightly compared with Pindaric 'breaking off' formulae[133], but the label has not completely eased the embarrassment of critics[134]; clearly however there is no question here or in the parallel but easier example in 2.1.37-40 of the ending subverting what has gone before. The exact effects in these two poems deserve to be analysed with an awareness of the techniques of Romantic Irony, as does the irony of the moralist which we see in the ending of a number of Horace's *Epistles* and Seneca's *Letters*. At the end of the work the writer reveals that he is after all just like us, with all our failings, and thus removes the resistance we feel to his preaching without undermining it:

> tunc ergo te scito esse compositum, cum ad te nullus clamor

131. For bibliography, see A. Setaioli, *Gli epodi di Orazio nella critica dal 1937 al 1972*, «Aufst. und Niederg. der Röm. Welt» 31.3, Berlin 1981, pp. 1674-1788 at pp. 1695-9; add especially S. J. Heyworth, *Horace's second epode*, «Am. Journ. Philol.» 109, 1988, pp. 71-85.

132. Lefèvre (op. cit. n. 103) p. 151. See above n. 103.

133. Cf. H. P. Syndikus, *Die Lyrik des Horaz*, Darmstadt 1972, p. 49 n. 75, Nisbet and Hubbard on Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.37.

134. Cf. G. Williams and loc. in his commentary, Oxford 1969, pp. 44-5.

> pertinebit, cum te nulla vox tibi excutiet, non si blandietur, non si minabitur, non si inani sono vana circumstrepet.
> quid ergo? non aliquando commodius est et carere convicio? fateor. itaque ego ex hoc loco migrabo. experiri et exercere me volui. quid necesse est diutius torqueri, cum tam facile remedium Ulixes sociis etiam adversus Sirenas invenerit? (Seneca *Ep. Mor.* 56. 14-15).

One of the most complex examples of an ending which employs Romantic Irony is the last stanza of Catullus 51:

> otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:
> otio exsultas nimiumque gestis:
> otium et reges prius et beatas
> perdidit urbes.

Whatever may have been the continuation in Catullus' model, Sappho fr. 31 LP, there can be little doubt that 'In der Schlussstrophe weicht Catull stark von seinem Vorbild ab'[135]. The *otium* is the cause of his love, but the breaking off from the translation and the self-address suggests that it also involves the free time to translate Greek poetry. The deviation reminds us that this is 'just' a translation: the trouble with Catullus is that he has too much time on his hands, the time to translate Sappho rather than getting on with life. But along with this realisation of artificiality we see how serious and real it all is: this is the *otium* which has destroyed kings and cities. The translation is also a personal poem. But the personal poem is also a poem we are reading, as the very hyperbole of the last two lines suggests; and they are almost a translation themselves[136]. The expanding circle of irony makes 51 an apt companion piece for 50, where there is a similar tension between poetry as *ludus* and poetry as the expression of feeling[137]. We note, of course, 50.1, *otiosi*. Ultimately we can take poem 51 seriously precisely because our knowledge that it is just a translation is accepted and transcended. The process has been well delineated in a now celebrated passage of Umberto Eco, though he is discussing not Romantic irony but Postmodernism[138]:

> 'I think of the Postmodern attitude as that of a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows that he cannot say to her, «I love you madly», because he knows that she knows (and that she knows he knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland. Still, there is a solution. He can say, «As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly». At this point, having avoided false innocence, having said clearly that it is no longer possible to speak innocently, he will nevertheless have said what he wanted to say to the woman: that he loves her, but he loves her in an age of lost innocence. If the woman goes along with this, she will have received a declaration of love all the same. Neither of the two speakers will feel innocent, both will have accepted the challenge of the past, of the already said, which cannot be eliminated; both will consciously and with pleasure play the game of irony ... But both will have succeeded, once again, in speaking of love'.

135. Cf. Syndikus (op. cit. n. 44) p. 260.

136. Cf. Williams (op. cit. n. 101) 252; R. Lattimore, *Sappho 2 and Catullus 51* «Class. Philol.» 39, 1944, pp. 184-7.

137. C. W. Macleod, *Parody and Personalities in Catullus*, «Class. Quart.» n.s. 23, 1973, pp. 274-303 = *Collected Essays*, Oxford 1983, pp. 171-80.

138. Op. cit. (n. 21) pp. 67-8; cf. C. Jencks, *Postmodernism*, London 1987, pp. 129-20. The notion that Postmodernism may be a revived Romantic Irony is sometimes used as an insult; I would take it to be high praise.

139. Cf. e.g. A. Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*, Oxford 1982; T. G. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Literary Genres: a Mirage?*, «Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature» 34, 1985, pp. 74-84, both with good bibliographies.

8. *Genre and History*

I have begun to talk of the interpretation of individual endings, and it is perhaps time therefore briefly to turn to some suggestions for how work might proceed. Although the general principles of closural technique may be operative at different levels in different genres, it seems likely that an investigation based around genre will be most productive, for all the problems of that concept[139]. *Literary* history cannot be avoided, at least in the manner of the Russian Formalists: we can clearly see the development of new techniques of closure as the older ones become clichéd. But as my remarks above will have indicated, I doubt that it would be helpful to talk of a development in ancient concepts of closure in any other sense: certainly not *Geistesgeschichte*, but perhaps not *Kulturgeschichte* either. With all due awareness of wider principles, then, and also of the

phenomena of *Kreuzung*, a genre-based investigation of ancient closure seems best. The central genre here is the drama, for two reasons. First, the terminal points in a dramatic performance are particularly delineated, most obviously by the exit and entry of characters; and second, partly as a consequence of this but also because of the influence of Aristotle's *Poetics*, much of our terminology for division and closure has its origins in dramatic criticism. We cannot discuss closure in any genre without terms like scene and act, episode and digression, entrance and exit, complication, denouement, peripeteia; not to mention plot, or beginning, middle, and end. That is not to say that closure in drama is unproblematic, as the continuing debate between performance critics and deconstructionists over the textuality of tragedy makes plain[140]. But the growing amount of empirical work towards constructing Fraenkel's 'grammar of dramatic technique'[141] offers much of interest for closure, and a survey would be valuable. Many of the extant endings – of comedy as well as tragedy[142] – are problematic for various reasons, and I commented above on the tendency of modern criticism to stress the inadequacy of traditional emphasis on 'all passion spent'. As an example of how many considerations may be involved in dramatic closure, one might take the final lines of Euripides' *Heracles*:

Her. ἀλλ' ἐσκόμιζε τέκνα δυσκόμιστα γῆ·
ἡμεῖς δ' ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμον,
Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἐψόμεσθ' ἑφολκίδες.
ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἢ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων
ἀγαθῶν πεπᾶσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

Cho. στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολύκλαυτοι,
τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες.

The play ends with a double exit, and the clearing from the stage of the bodies of Heracles' children: the recognition of these movements in words (ἐσκόμιζε, ἐψόμεσθα, στείχομεν) is a familiar closural device. Familiar too is the final choral tag[143],

140. Cf. S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge 1986; D. Wiles, *Reading Greek Performance*, «Greece and Rome» n.s. 34, 1987, pp. 136-51.

141. The phrase was coined in the note on *Agamemnon* 613 f., p. 305.

142. E. g. Aristophanes *Wasps*, Terence *Adelphoe*.

143. Cf. Barrett on *Hipp.* 1467-6; Roberts (above n. 9).

and the closing gnome spoken by Heracles; more unusually, the content of the gnome really does in part sum up the play's moral[144]. The traditional structure of the gnome reinforces the closural effect. The 'unqualified assertion'[145] is not however restricted to the gnome: note πανώλεις, πολύκλαυστοι, μέγιστα, and the strong simple ὀλέσαντες which is literally the last word of the play[146]. The use of all three tenses is significant: this happened, this is where we are, this is to come. Heracles' departure, leaning on Theseus and following him like a dinghy, is a mirror-scene, most obviously to his first exit with his children; the reversal in fortune marks the closure at the level of plot as well as stage-action and language (where ἐφολκίδες instantiates one of the play's Leitmotive[147]). Also mirrored, however, is the chorus' first entrance leaning on their staffs as Heracles leans on his bow. There may also, as D. Furley has recently argued[148], be a significant intertextual link to another tragic ending, that of Sophocles' *Ajax*, an allusion which works against all the other indicators which close on Heracles' utter destruction:

> 'One who saw or read Euripides' play ... if he remembered Sophocles' *Ajax*, would feel himself invited to view Ajax's suicide to preserve his heroic honour as the action of «an ordinary man», and to wonder whether Ajax's refusal to stay with his φίλοι and heed their pleas was after all a kind of cowardice. He might remember the final scene of *Ajax* and compare it with that of *Heracles*. The body of Ajax was with difficulty lifted up by his φίλοι and carried off the stage: Heracles describes himself as following Theseus «like a dinghy under tow» – but he walks nevertheless, and departs proclaiming the value of friendship'.

144. Cf. J. T. Sheppard, *The formal beauty of the Hercules Furens*, «Class. Quart.» 10, 1916, pp. 72-9; H. H. O. Chalk, *Arete and Bia in Euripides Herakles*, «Journ. Hell. St.» 82, 1962, pp. 7-18 (on *philia*).

145. See above p. 91.

146. Emphasis on the literally *last* word is rare in stage-drama, but there is a famous example in tragedy designed for reading, Seneca *Medea* 1027; see Costa ad loc. One might note however the last word of Aeschylus' *Choephori*. The problems associated with the attribution and sense of the very last words of Terence's *Adelphoe* show how much can hang on closure: see the recent discussion by A. S. Gratwick in his edition, Warminster 1987, p. 261.

147. 1424, 631; cf. 203, 445, 478, 837 (ties and stays) etc.

148. *Euripides on the sanity of Herakles*, in *Studies in Honour of T. B. L. Webster*, vol. I, Bristol 1986, pp. 102-13, at p. 111.

Whether this is correct or not – there are obviously more general conventions of tragic ending to consider, but Furley has other evidence for the specific intertextual relationship – the closure of *Heracles* may serve as a paradigm of how many elements may be involved in dramatic closure, and how important they may be for the interpretation of the play.

Closest to drama from the point of view of closure are the narrative genres, epic, history, biography, and the novel. Many aspects of these are common to all four genres, and it is perhaps unfortunate that this has not been more widely recognised. It may seem tempting to distinguish between the 'factual' genres of biography and history and the 'fictional' ones of epic and the novel, but such an apparently obvious distinction is in practice less easy to make, and would rightly be rejected by many narratologists, at least in a naive form. The birth, life, and death of its subject may seem the predetermined beginning, middle, and end of a biography, but the actual beginnings and endings of ancient biographies are varied. In Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, Antony's moment of expiry comes in a participle phrase at the opening of chapter 78, and the work continues for another ten chapter before finally concluding on the significant fact that Nero was Antony's descendant:

> οὗτος (Nero) ἀρξας ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἀπέκτεινε τὴν μητέρα καὶ μικρὸν ἐδέησεν ὑπ' ἐμπληξίας καὶ παραφροσύνης ἀνατρέψαι τὴν 'Ρωμαίων ἡγεμονίαν, πέμπτος ἀπ' 'Αντωνίου κατ' ἀριθμὸν διαδοχῆς γενόμενος.

If it is less obvious than it seems where a man's life starts and stops, the problems are even greater for the events of history, as modern theorists have noted. For the radical American historian Hayden White[149], writing explicitly in opposition to Aristotle, there are no natural beginnings, middles, and ends to the events of history, but the historian inevitably 'emplots' them in

149. See especially *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Baltimore 1973, and the collection of essays *Tropics of Discourse, Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore 1978; cf. M. Petit, *Une poétique de l'histoire* in *La Narrativité* ed. D. Tiffeneau, Paris 1980, 161-82, and A. Momigliano's hostile *The Rhetoric of History and the History of Rhetoric: On Hayden White's Tropes* in E. Schaffer ed., *Comparative Criticism: A Yearbook*, Cambridge 1981, pp. 259-68 = *Settimo contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, Rome 1984, pp. 49-59.

interpretation so as to produce a system for which closure is possible:

> 'The story transforms the events from the meaninglessness of their serial arrangement in a chronicle into a hypotactically arranged structure of occurrences about which meaningful questions (what, where, when, how, and why) can be asked'.
>
> 'Interpretation in history consists of the provision[s] of a plot structure for a sequence of events so that their nature as a comprehensible process is revealed by their figuration as a *story of a particular kind*. What one historian may emplot as a tragedy, another may emplot as a comedy or romance'[150].

This denial of natural patterning in history may be extreme: one factor that is certainly neglected is the influence of literature on life, the way in which historical figures may *themselves* shape their actions as tragedy or comedy. But the basic premise that one can discuss for history as for fiction alternative beginnings and alternative endings is surely correct. Classicists have been familiar since Cornford's *Thucydides Mythistoricus*[151] with some of these notions of 'infiguration', and much recent work on ancient historiography in English has stressed its affinity with the fictional genres[152]. That is not to deny that history may be in part *sui generis*, and in ways relevant to closure: more than any other genre, history may need to suggest the simultaneous presence of a 'proper' ending and the continuance of the historical process. But for most purposes the narrative genres can be treated alike. This is particularly important in that epic endings may influence history, historical endings epic, and both the closures of the novel.

In Lucian's classic account of *How to write History* (48), stress is laid on the articulation of the work:

> καὶ ἐπειδὰν ἀθροίσῃ ἅπαντα ἢ τὰ πλεῖστα, πρῶτα μὲν ὑπόμνημά τι συνυφαινέτω αὐτῶν καὶ σῶμα ποιείτω ἀκαλλὲς ἔτι καὶ ἀδιάρθρωτον· εἶτα ἐπιθεὶς τὴν τάξιν ἐπαγέτω τὸ κάλλος καὶ χρωννύτω τῇ λέξει καὶ σχηματιζέτω καὶ ῥυθμιζέτω.

150. *Tropics of Discourse* (cit. n. 149) pp. 110-11, 58.

151. London 1907; especially pp. 129-52.

152. Cf. T. P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics, Three Studies in Graeco-Roman Literature*, Leicester 1979, with the review by C. W. Macleod, «Times Litt. Suppl.», 1980, p. 152 (on the *cosmetic* metaphor); A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography*, London 1988, with a discussion of Hayden White pp. 197-200.

The importance for closure of internal articulation (and the signalling of internal articulation by closural devices) has already been mentioned several times, but it is a subject which deserves full investigation across the narrative genres. In his study of narrative technique in the Greek novelists[153], T. Hägg saw significant use of book division in Longus and Chariton but denied it for Xenophon Ephesius, Achilles Tatius, and Heliodorus. This may be correct, but further study of closure in these authors might prove rewarding. Certainly Heliodorus seems to use closural effects at book-ends[154], as in the conclusion to the necromancy at Bessa in Book Six (6.15.5 – 7.1.1):

> Τούτων εἰρημένων ὁ μὲν ἔκειτο καταῤῥανείς, ἡ δὲ γραῦς συνεῖσα τοὺς ξένους εἶναι, τοὺς κατασκόπους ὡς εἶχε σχήματος ξιφήρης τε καὶ ἐμμανὴς ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἴεται καὶ κατὰ πᾶν μέρος τῶν κειμένων ἐφέρετο, τοῖς νεκροῖς ἐγκεκρύφθαι αὐτοὺς ὑποπτεύουσα γνώμην τε ποιουμένη διαχρήσασθαι εἰ ἀνεύροι ὡς ἐπιβούλως τε καὶ πρὸς ἐναντίου τοῖς αὐτῆς μαγγανεύμασι κατασκόπους γεγενημένους· ἕως ἀπερίσκεπτον ὑπὸ θυμοῦ τὴν κατὰ τοὺς νεκροὺς ἔρευναν ποιουμένη ἔλαθεν ὠρθωμένῳ κλάσματι δόρατος κατὰ τοῦ βουβῶνος περιπαρεῖσα. Καὶ ἡ μὲν ἔκειτο τὴν ἐκ τοῦ παιδὸς μαντείαν οὕτω παρὰ πόδας ἐν δίκῃ πληρώσασα.
>
> Ὁ δὲ Καλάσιρις καὶ ἡ Χαρίκλεια παρὰ τοσοῦτον ἐλθόντες κινδύνου καὶ ἅμα μὲν τῶν παρόντων φόβων ἐκτὸς ἑαυτοὺς ποιούμενοι ἅμα δὲ τῶν μαντευθέντων ἕνεκεν ἐπισπεύδοντες τῆς ἐπὶ τὴν Μέμφιν ὁδοῦ σπουδαιότερον εἶχοντο. Καὶ δὴν καὶ ἐπλησίαζον τῇ πόλει τῶν ἐκ τῆς νεκυίας μεμαντευμένων ἤδη κατ' αὐτὴν τελουμένων.

Despite the μὲν ... δέ which joins the end of Book Six to the beginning of Book Seven, there must be a narrative pause between the books, to give full force to the summatory οὕτω at the end of Book Six, and the resumptive τοσοῦτον in 7.1.1; we cannot simply read on. Book Six thus ends on a death, and the fulfilment of a prophecy: πληρώσασα is closural allusion. Formally, the transition between Books Five and Six is exactly parallel; a μὲν clause with a feminine subject at the end of Five

153. *Narrative Technique in Ancient Greek Romances*, Stockholm 1971, p. 314 n. 4.

154. Cf. E. Feuillatre, *Études sur les Éthiopiques d'Héliodore*, Paris 1966, p. 14: «Il est visible qu'Héliodore a apporté un très grand soin à l'établissement des divisions de son roman».

(34.2, καὶ ἡ μέν ...) with Six beginning ὁ δὲ Καλάσιρις καὶ ὁ Κνήμων ... Perhaps at the level of plot also it might be possible to show that Book Six has more unity than is generally supposed; essentially all the events it narrates are preparatory to the journey of Calasiris and Chariclea in search of Theagenes. Only a full investigation of the articulation and closure of the *Aethiopica* would make a judgment possible, but such studies remain a desideratum for most epic and historical texts as well, despite the growing number of narratological studies of classical literature, especially in Italian[155].

Drama and the narrative genres share a concern with plot, however defined. It is easy to set up an opposition here to genres like lyric and elegy which do not obviously tell a story, and to stress the differences between the methods of closure used in these and those used in the narrative and dramatic genres. This would be simplification. Many elegies and lyrics do have a plot, and move through time like a novel or epic; this is a perhaps even more true of the ancient representatives than of the modern, as R. Heinze noted in his famous essay on the Horatian Ode[156], and as has often been observed in connection with poems such as those of Propertius' *Monobiblos*[157]. Nevertheless, there is in much lyric and elegy even less of a sense of a 'natural' place to stop than we saw in the narrative genres, and it is therefore all the more important that a sense of proper closure should be produced by the formal and thematic devices which B. H. Smith analysed. Much of value would be obtained simply if the sort of sensitive application of her analyses to Horace by P. H. Schrijvers and to Catullus by Robert Peden[158] was extended to other ancient authors. But we also need an examination of the devices proper to classical lyric; with these analysed, it would be possible to discuss with more confidence the many hard cases that present themselves (and no cases are

155. See especially the series *Materiali e contributi per la storia della narrativa greco-latina* published from Perugia 1976, 1978, 1981, 1986.

156. *Die Horazische Ode*, in Id., *Vom Geist des Römertums*, ed. E. Burck, Stuttgart 1960³, pp. 172-89.

157. Cf. R.O.A.M. Lyne, *The Latin Love Poets*, Oxford 1980, pp. 109-10, «Virtually every poem in the Monobiblos reacts to a single dramatic situation and seems itself to be a little drama.».

158. See above p. 77 n. 10.

harder than many of Horace's *Odes*). It is possible too that light might be thrown on some traditional philological problems, such as the question of the ending of Sappho 16. Several closural features appear in that poem at line 20[159], yet the papyrus seems to continue and there are good arguments for a later ending[160]; an examination of 'premature' (but not necessarily 'false') closure might be of value here. In general it would be helpful if the work currently being done on the structure of ancient lyric and elegy took more account of the wider principles of closure. Many recent works assume that one can only demonstrate the unity of an ancient poem by showing that it is arranged in the form of a 'chinese box' about a notional centre; while recall of the opening ('ring-composition' etc.) is indeed one common closural device, many of the more elaborate schemes seem both unlikely and unhelpfully reductive, and the assumption that poems must be 'rounded off', in this way to possess satisfactory closure is erroneous[161].

Although closure in drama, narrative, and lyric has attracted most attention from modern writers, and thus provides the most interesting comparative material for classicists, the subject is also of interest in minor genres like epigram, bucolic, didactic, the philosophical dialogue, and the literary letter. In connection with the last, I have already mentioned the sophisticated irony of Seneca and Horace, but another feature of interest is their play with the formal signals of closure used in the non-literary letter. Horace *Epistles* 1.6, for instance, ends with the formal *vale*:

> vive, vale. si quid novisti rectius istis,
> candidus imperti: si nil, his utere mecum.

A comparison with Cicero's letters shows that the words after *vale* would be seen by an ancient reader as a postscript, as at the end of *Att.* 4.8[162]:

159. Self-reference, reappearance of first-person, categorical statement: cf. W. R. Johnson, *The Idea of Lyric*, Berkeley 1982, pp. 42-3.

160. Cf. Lattimore (op. cit. n. 136), J. G. Howie, *Sappho fr. 16 (LP): self-consolation and encomium*, «Papers of the Liverpool latin Seminar» 1, Liverpool 1977, pp. 207-35.

161. Cf. «Class. Rev.» n.s. 34, 1984, p. 48.

162. 79 Shackleton Bailey: see his note. On the postscript in ancient letters, see O. Roller, *Das Formular der Paulinischen Briefe*, Stuttgart 1933, p. 489; P. Cugusi, *Evoluzione e forme dell'epistologia latina*, Rome 1983, p. 71 (especially on Fronto). With *vale*, note that in Ovid's *Heroides* only 9, 20 and 21 end in the word, which is perhaps of interest for the genuinness and order of the letters.

> vale. et scribas mihi velim de gladiatoribus, sed ita bene si rem gerunt; non quaero male si se gesserunt.

Horace feigns a last-minute request for news, but it is transposed onto a philosophical plane, as often. The formalised endings of non-literary writings in antiquity might repay some study: Petronius' parody of the *urbis acta* at *Sat.* 53, for instance, ends with *iam reus factus dispensator et iudicium inter cubicularios actum* but was there a set way of ending the originals?[163]

9. *Conclusion*

Rather than descending into ever more minor genres, however, ('closure in the gnomic monostich') let me attempt to conclude with a brief summary and an exhortation (both well established closural devices). I have sketched some aspects of the concept of closure which merit further work by classicists, and suggested some of the ways in which that work might proceed. I have not tried to be exhaustive: suffice it to say that I know of no ancient author in whose work the devices of closure might not profitably be explored, though I can think of a number where the difficulties are such as to dissuade all but the very bold. My exhortation is simply that this work should be done; it is always a pleasure to bid other people labour. What I also strongly urge, however, is that the detailed empirical work that is needed on ancient endings should be carried out fully informed by the theoretical issues involved, with the widest possible horizons. And all classicists need to be aware of the issues involved in closure, as one final example can perhaps illustrate. In his commentary on *Aeneid* 8. 727-8, P. T. Eden[164] had raised the possibility of transposing those lines, which conclude Vergil's description of Aeneas' shield:

163. There is nothing in the meagre remains collected by E. Hübner, *De senatus populique Romani actis*, «Jahrb. f. class. Philologie», Suppl. 3, Hft 5, Leipzig 1857-60, pp. 557-632.

164. *A Commentary on Virgil: Aeneid VIII*, «Mnemosyne» Suppl. 35, Leiden 1975, p. 191.

Euphrates ibat iam mollior undis,
extremique hominum Morini Rhenusque bicornis 727
indomitique Dahae et pontem indignatus Araxes. 728

I. Worthington has argued against this on various grounds[165], but without mentioning that the sequence *que ... et ... que ... que* would be much weaker than the present *que ... que ... que ... et*, and that it would be immeasurably more feeble to end on the adjective *bicornis* rather than the noun *Araxes* unless that adjective could receive an emphasis it clearly cannot[166]. The balanced echo of *indomiti* and *indignatus* gives 728 a sententious power which 727 cannot possess (and of course that is the point of the weakness of 727, to heighten the contrast with the concluding line). That these lines can be discussed without reference to work on closure shows, I hope, that my pleas for a greater awareness of the topic's importance is not a redundant one.

How does one end a piece on closure? Only Romantic Irony seems possible today: so let me close the piece with the now conventional requirement that my last two words are the end[167].

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165. «Eranos» 84, 1986, pp. 167-9.

166. There is a tendency for final words to be *important* words, and nouns seem to occur more frequently at points of closure than one would expect from the rules of word-order in ancient languages. This is a topic which deserves further investigation, perhaps by computer analysis. Note that Araxes is to be associated in folk etymology with *arasso*, which adds to its power (cf. *SH* 1171). 727 *extremi* is closural allusion, but that does not affect the question of the order of 727 and 728.

167. I am grateful for comments and corrections (some of them substantial) to Alessandro Barchiesi, Angus Bowie, Michael Comber, Gian Biagio Conte, Oliver Lyne, Peter Parsons, Michael Reeve, Richard Rutherford, Alessandro Schiesaro, and John Van Sickle. They are naturally not responsible for remaining errors.

Sebastiano Timpanaro

Ancora su alcuni passi di Servio e degli scolii danielini al libro terzo dell'Eneide

alla memoria di Georg Thilo

1. In un ampio saggio su vari passi di Servio e dello scoliasta danielino al libro III dell'*Eneide*, Charles E. Murgia esprime, fra l'altro, molti dissensi nei riguardi di un mio articoletto di vari anni fa, nel quale, a mia volta, avevo mosso alcune obiezioni ad un precedente lavoro del Murgia stesso[1].

Io ho sempre riconosciuto l'alto valore degli studi serviani del Murgia[2]. I precedenti curatori dei due volumi finora usciti dell'*editio Harvardiana* (1946, 1965) erano stati ottimi paleografi, codicologi, studiosi della tradizione manoscritta, ma impari al compito di costituire il testo[3]. Murgia è, finalmente, un codicologo ma anche un filologo, che ha avuto fecondi (anche se talvolta discutibili) scambi d'idee col suo maestro G. P.

1. Ch. E. Murgia, *The Servian Commentary on «Aeneid» 3 Revisited*, «Harv. Stud. Class. Philol.» 91, 1987, pp. 303-331 (cito questo lavoro con l'iniziale del cognome dell'autore e col numero della pagina). Il precedente saggio del Murgia è *Critical Notes on the Text of Servius' Commentary III-V*, «Harv. Stud.», 72, 1967, pp. 311-350, che il M. stesso rammenta come «the first article of my scholarly career». Il mio articoletto, intitolato *Noterelle serviane (ad Aen. III)*, uscì in «Vichiana» N.S. 13, 1984 = *Miscellanea di studi in memoria di F. Arnaldi*, pp. 211-223 (d'ora innanzi citato come *Noterelle*). Di Servio – e di scolii virgiliani non serviani – mi sono occupato anche in *Contributi di filol. e di storia della lingua latina*, Roma 1978 (cit. in séguito con la sola dicitura *Contributi*), pp. 427-567; in una noterella a *Servio Danielino ad Aen. IV 219* («Giorn. ital. di filol.» 33, 1981, pp. 99-105; sullo stesso passo, con maggiore approfondimento, H.D. Jocelyn, ivi, pp. 107-116) e in *Per la storia della filologia virgiliana antica*, Roma 1986, pp. 143-176 e *passim*.

2. Soprattutto in *Noterelle*, pp. 211, 213 s.

3. Rimane sempre fondamentale (nonostante qualche esigenza un po' eccessiva per ciò che riguarda i raffronti con scoliasti greci) la severa recensione di E. Fraenkel al vol. II (unico allora uscito) dell'*ed. Harvardiana*, «Journ. Rom. Stud.» 1948-49 (*Kleine Beiträge*, II, pp. 339-390). Non migliore è il vol. III (contenente il commento serviano e 'danielino' *ad Aen. III-IV*), al quale ci riferiremo, come già si è riferito Murgia, nel presente articolo.