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'It's like intertextuality, but without the literary texts' – On some difficulties in contemporary interpretations of Roman poetry

L. Kurke-C. Dougherty, *Cultural poetics in ancient Greece*, Cambridge 1998, 2 and 5

-“ritual and ceremony... a difficult to read but ultimately **eloquent text** about the nature of civic life...”

-“the use of language and textuality as operative metaphors for cultural productions stems from a renewed concern with representation” they praise “eloquent text” as a productive metaphor

[one paragraph down:]

- “Cultural poetics rejects the privileging or bracketing of a self-contained realm of art within society, which **an old-fashioned historical approach to literature maintains, with its carefully articulated foreground and backdrop, the text and its context.** Instead, this approach sees texts as sites for the circulation of cultural energy and for the ongoing negotiation of power relations within society”

difficulty no. 1 - disciplinary foundations?

Aeneid 7, 153 sgg.

centum oratores **augusta ad moenia** regis ire iubet, ramis uelatos Palladis omnis, donaque ferre uiro pacemque exposcere Teucris. haud mora, festinant iussi rapidisque feruntur passibus. **ipse humili designat moenia fossa moliturque locum, primasque in litore sedes castrorum in morem pinnis atque aggere cingit.** iamque iter emensi **turris ac tecta Latinorum ardua cernebant iuuenes muroque subibant. ante urbem** pueri et primaueo flore iuuentus exercentur equis domitantque in puluere currus, aut acris tendunt arcus aut lenta lacertis spicula contorquent, cursuque ictuque lacessunt: cum praeuectus equo longaeui regis ad auris nuntius ingentis ignota in ueste reportat aduenisse uiros. ille intra tecta uocari imperat et solio medius consedit auito.

Tectum augustum, ingens, centum sublime columnis urbe fuit summa, Laurentis regia Pici,

cf. 7,126-7 **ibique memento / prima locare manu molirique aggere tecta**

(2 more instances of Augustus in the poem:)

A 6.792 Augustus Caesar, diui genus, aurea **condet** A 8.678 hinc Augustus agens Italos in proelia Caesar

“the founding of the Roman colony Ostia with its square plan, based on Greek models, in the third quarter of the IV century BCE, speaks for a contact between city-planning and the origins of castra-planning, especially if one considers the fundamentally military aims of that colony” (Jorg Rupke, *Domi militiae. Die religiöse konstruktion des Krieges in Rom*, Stuttgart 1990, 167).

2 Intertextuality without the texts?

oscula dat ligno; refugit tamen oscula lignum./ cui deus 'at, quoniam coniunx mea non potes esse,/arbor eris certe' dixit 'mea! semper habebunt / te coma, te citharae, te nostrae, laure, pharetrae; / tu ducibus Latiis aderis, cum laeta Triumphum / vox canet et visent longas Capitolia pompas; /postibus Augustis eadem fidissima custos / ante fores stabis mediamque tuebere quercum, / utque meum intonsis caput est iuvenale capillis, / tu quoque perpetuos semper gere frondis honores!' /finierat Paeon: factis modo laurea ramis / adnuit utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen.

(Ov. *Met.* 1,556-567)

Boemer ad I 560 “The following lines are a panegyric of the emperor: they make a clearly recognizable insertion; they could be omitted, without minimally disturbing the tenor of the Greek myth of Daphne”

Iustinus, *hist. Phil. epit.* XV 4,3-8 “Seleucus...his origins were astonishing. His mother Laodice, married to Antiochus the distinguished general of Philippos, had a vision that she was being impregnated by Apollo in her sleep, and as a present for her sexual favors she had a ring from the god...informed about his double origins, Seleucus founds a city in the East, the city is named Antiochia after his father Antiochus, and the plain near the city becomes a sanctuary for Apollo”

Libanius, *oratio* XI (Antiochena) Foundation of Antiochia. Seleucus honored by a statue with bull's horns, as a memorial of Io. Then (93-98) “The city was named after his father, the most illustrious of his works. Then we have this much celebrated suburbia of Antiochia [i.e. Daphne]. Seleucus has dedicated the area as a sanctuary to the god, after he found that there the myth was reality. Apollo, desiring Daphne, but unable to persuade her, was following her. When she prays and becomes a plant, the beloved is metamorphosed into a garland. This is what is sung, but to Seleucus the hunt was proof that the story was true. Following the dogs and leading the horses, he was looking for game: when he was close to the tree of Daphne's metamorphosis, the horse stops, hits the ground with a hoof, and lo! a golden arrow emerges from the earth. The arrow had letters showing the identity of its master: ‘Phoibos’ arrow’ was the inscription. I think, in fact, that saddened by the girl's transmutation, he had thrown away the quiver, and one of the arrows was lost and hidden in the ground and kept for Seleukos, a protreptic to adorn the place and turn it into what it was, a holy place of Apollo... Seleukos carries the arrow with him, sees a dragon, and kills him: another confirmation that the god was present on the spot. A sanctuary, a sacred wood, a temple are soon dedicated, and quickly the vegetation was blooming and the wood was protected by formidable curses”.

3 reading documents through poetry instead of poetry through documents?

Senatus consultum de Cn. Pisonis patre, propositum

Numerio Vibio Sereno pro consule

(1) *Ante diem quartam Idus Decembres in Palatio in porticu quae est ad Apollinis... (DANAIDS?)*

(21-23) *admirari singularem moderationem patientiamque Germanici Caesaris; evictam esse feritate morum Cn. Pisonis patris atque ob id morientem Germanicus Caesarem, cuius mortis fuisse causam Cn. Pisonem patrem ipse testatus sit, non immerito amicitiam ei renuntiasset... (Ov. Met.*

1.198 *struxerit insidias notus feritate Lycaon? Met 1.204 nec tibi grata minus pietas, Auguste, tuorum Met 1.239 idem oculi lucent, eadem feritatis imago est)*

(3) *Importance of mourning by women – images of mourning women in Augustan epic*

4 New Literalism?

4.1 The Atrium

Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 2.4 **Atria longe pulcherrima columnis quadrifariam per singulos angulos stantibus attolerabant statuas, palmaris deae facies, quae pinnis explicitis sine gressu pilae uolubilis instabile uestigium plantis roscidis delibantes nec ut maneant inhaerent et iam uolare creduntur.** Ecce lapis Parius in Dianam factus tenet libratam totius loci medietatem, signum perfecte luculentum, ueste reflatum, pro cursu uegetum, introeuntibus obuium et maiestate numinis uenerabile; canes utrimquese cus deae latera muniunt, qui canes et ipsi lapis erant; his oculi minantur, aures rigent, nares hiant, ora saeuunt, et sicunde de proximo latratus ingruerit, eum putabis de faucibus lapidis exire, et in quo summum specimen operae fabrilis egregius ille signifex prodidit, sublatis canibus in pectus arduis pedes imi resistunt, currunt priores. Pone tergum deae saxum insurgit in speluncae modum muscis et herbis et foliis et uirgulis et sicubi pampinis et arbusculis alibi de lapide florentibus. Splendet intus umbra signi de nitore lapidis. Sub extrema saxi

marginē poma et uuae faberrime politae dependent, **quas ars aemula naturae ueritati similes explicuit**. Putes ad cibum inde quaedam, cum mustulentus autumnus maturum colorem adflauerit, posse decerpi, et si fontem, qui deae uestigio discurrens in lenem uibratur undam, pronus aspexeris, credes illos ut rure pendentes racemos inter cetera ueritatis nec agitationis officio carere. Inter medias frondes lapidis Actaeon simulacrum curioso optutu in deam [sum] proiectus iam in ceruum ferinus et in saxo simul et in fonte loturam Dianam opperiens uisitur.

2.5 Dum haec identidem rimabundus eximie delector, 'Tua sunt' ait Byrrhena 'cuncta quae uides', et cum dicto ceteros omnes sermone secreto decedere praecipit. Quibus dispulsis omnibus: 'Per hanc' inquit, 'deam, o Luci carissime, ut anxie tibi metuo et ut pote pignori meo longe prouisum cupio, caue tibi, sed caue fortiter a malis artibus et facinorosis illecebris Pamphiles illius, quae cum Milone isto, quem dicis hospitem, nupta est. Maga primi nominis et omnis carminis sepulchralis magistra creditur, quae surculis et lapillis et id genus friuolis inhalatis omnem istam lucem mundi sideralis imis Tartari et in uetustum chaos submergere nouit.'

Vallis erat piceis et acuta densa cupressu,
nomine Gargaphie succinctae sacra Dianae,
cuius in extremo est antrum nemorale recessu
arte laboratum nulla: simulauerat artem
ingenio natura suo; nam pumice uivo
et leuibus tofis nativum duxerat arcum;
fons sonat a dextra tenui perlucidus unda,
marginē gramineo patulos incinctus hiatus.

Ov. met. 3,155-62

“La tournure qui fait de *atria*, mis en évidence en tête de la phrase, le sujet... a pour effet de le personnifier et traduit le saisissement qu’il produit chez Lucius” (D.K. van Mal-Maeder, Apulée. Les métamorphoses, Livre II 1-20, Groningen 1998, 100.)

Niall Slater 1998.28 "nor is it at all clear what a private citizen in the Greek east is doing with statues of winged victories in her home"

Robert Peden, The statues in Apuleius Metamorphoses 2,4, Phoenix 39, 1985, (380-83) st 381

"First of all, what is a private citizen doing with a hall of statues of Nike? The evidence of a cult or dedications to Nike in the Greek world is extremely scanty in all times...even if we suppose that Apuleius is extending the common Roman cult of Victoria into the Greek world, still the problem remains that although the army and the Arval Brethren naturally sacrificed to Victoria, and emperors liked to be associated with her (OCD s.v.), one would not have thought a rich and distinguished private citizen (even away from the emperor's gaze in the provinces) would have dared to - or had much reason to want to...perhaps not every feature of the novel should be pressed for realistic detail; so we might conclude that Apuleius has been content to give his character a rather strange taste in decor in order to make the thematic point of final success"

Peden, art. cit."Apuleius has been content to give his character a rather strange taste in decor (my italics) in order to make the thematic point of final success"

Roman Imperial House Excavated in Corinth: preliminary reports
American School Athens Newsletter 42, Winter 1999, 3 and 9 (G.D.R. Sanders reporting)
"fragments of paneled frescoes in the debris. Lively half life-sized winged Victories decorate two large fragments..." (3) Newsletter 45, Winter 2001, 1 and 5 (1 "a suite of five rooms...these include a room with a centrally placed rectangular fountain pool surrounded by mosaics...and a room paved in marble with a centrally placed octagonal fountain...(5) this is the same room in which two half-lifesized fresco representations of Nike were found in 1996...the find of nine small-scale sculptures...the deities represented are Artemis, Aphrodite, Roma, Europa, Pan, Herakles, Dionysos, and Asklepios (twice)"

Atrium and cultural identity:

"In his discussion of housing more than anywhere else he is concerned to set up a series of contrasts between 'them' and 'us'. His chapter on the Greek house is quite explicitly phrased to underline difference. So the chapter opens with the text-book indicator of attempts to indicate cultural difference, a statement of what some is not" A. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Roman revolution and material culture*, in A. Giovannini (ed.) *La Révolution Romaine après Ronald Syme*, *Entretiens Hardt XLVI*, Vandoeuvres-Genève 2000, 283-313, at 304

Vitr. VI 7,1 Atriis Graeci quia non utuntur, neque aedificant, sed ab ianua introeuntibus itinera faciunt latitudinibus non spatiosis...

(from A. Erskine, *Classics Ireland*, <http://www.ucd.ie/~classics/94/Erskine94.html>: earliest Greek source on Roman atrium)

'As ambassadors on behalf of the demos they (i.e. Amymon and Megathymos) endured both mental and [physical] suffering. They met the [leaders] of the Romans and won them over by daily [perseverance]. They also persuaded the patrons of the [city] to come to the assistance of our demos. By explaining the state of affairs and by means of the daily round of calls at the *atria* they made friends of [some of] those who looked after and championed our opponent.'

SIG3 656; the extant text is from Teos; on the text L. Robert, *BCH* 59 (1935), pp. 507-13 = *Opera* i.320-26, P. Herrmann, *ZPE* 7 (1971), pp. 72-7; cf also G. Chiranky, 'Rome and Cotys, Two Problems: I. The Diplomacy of 167 B.C. II. The date of *Sylloge3 656*', *Athenaeum* 60 (1982), pp. 461-86. For a translation, R.K. Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus* (Cambridge, 1984), no. 26.

I walk into the atrium. gaze up
at the square hole of the sky. You see, our villa

is built in the fashionable style of the Med,
as Felix always boasts,

'Great for British winters' I once replied
as snow fell on the frozen fountain

its centrepiece a statue of snarling Medusa
(a strange choice, but Felix believed

low-class intruders would fear
they'd be turned to stone, and backtrack)

Water poured out of her open mouth,
and her flying dreadlocks, which normally

produced fine sprays,
had grown icicle extensions.

Bernardine Evaristo, *The Emperor's Babe*. A novel, London 2001, 64-65
(the narrator is a Nubian girl in Londinium, AD 211, turned trophy wife of a rich Roman business man)

4.2 Buthrotum and the importance of location

procedo et parvam Troiam simulataque magnis
Pergama et arentem Xanthi cognomine rivum
agnosco, Scaaeque amplector limina portae
(Verg. Aen. 3, 349-51)

“They have simply renamed a Greek landscape and its features and built their citadel on Greek foundations... Working with the material left over from Greeks already belated, what Helenus and Andromache create with their literally servile imaginations can hardly thrive or satisfy” (R. Hexter, in Ch. Perkell (ed.), *Reading Vergil's Aeneid*, Norman Ok 1999, 77)

"The imposition of a Roman colony onto this thriving Hellenistic city brought about a systematic displacement of the native inhabitants of Buthrotum, a development that can be considered in the framework of the sometimes brutal political and cultural change that characterized Augustus' imposition of imperial rule in western Greece... The... statue at Buthrotum... exemplified a visual ideology that was formulated in Early Imperial Italy through the **appropriation of Greek cultural forms, and that was exported back into Greece within this Roman colony**" (J. Trimble, *JRA* 13, 2000, 64. Cf. J. Bergemann, *Die römische Kolonie von Butrint und die Romanisierung Griechenlands*, Munich 1998) 56 (breaking away from local-hellenistic theater architecture, culture wars in Buthrotum) 49 (the changes in administration and civic life could hardly have been more incisive)

4.3

Counting deictics – and trees – in Horace's Odes

2, 11, 13-14 cur non hac sub alta vel platano vel hac / pinu iacentes... potamus (presumably Quinctius' park, not the Sabinum, cf. 22 dic age. Sympotic)

2,14,22 neque harum, quas colis, arborum (only the cypress will 'follow' Postumus to the underworld. Sympotic)

5. do we have enough formalism?

The Carmen saeculare by the numbers

tempore sacro,
quo Sibyllini monuere versus
virgines lectas puerosque castos
dis, quibus septem placuere colles, [line 7] [*cf. Verg. Aen. 1,7 altae moenia Romae; Serv. ad loc. quia in montibus est posita*]
dicere carmen.

certus undenos deciens per annos [line 21]
orbis ut cantus referatque ludos
ter die claro totiensque grata
nocte frequentis.

7: Apollo's number. His birthday on day seven of the month. Hence Apolline festivals on day 7. sevenfold circles around Delos; temple of seven statues. Lyre, invented by Apollo, has seven strings. Seven intervals in music – imitation of the seven intervals of cosmic movements.

7: Diana's number, basis of lunar cycle.

7: Seven Hills (Varro inaugurates Roman tradition. nb Philo, de opificio mundi 127 septem related to Greek *semnon*, *sebasmos*, the number of veneration, venerable, august)

Numbers in the ludi.

CENTESIMO ET DECIMO ANNO (16)

NOCTU AUTEM AD TIBERIM SACRIFICIUM FECIT DEIS ILYTHIS LIBEIS viiii POPANIS viiii PTHOIBUS viiii IMPERATOR CAESAR (115)

“[Augustus speaking] TIBI viiii POPANIS ET viiii LIBEIS ET viiii PTHOIBUS SACRUM FIAT...” (118)

DEINDE CX MATRIBUS FAMILIAS NUPTIS QUIBUS DENUNTIATUM ERAT...M. AGRIPPA (123)

PRAEIT IN HAEC VERBA (124)

‘IUNO REGINA AST QUID EST QUOD MELIUS SIET POPULO ROMANO QUIRITIBUS...MATRES FAMILIAS CX POPULI ROMANI QUIRITIUM (125)

SACRIFICIOQUE PERFECTO PUERI XXVII QUIBUS DENUNTIATUM ERAT PATRIMI ET MATRIMI ET PUELLAE TOTIDEM (147)

CARMEN CECINERUNT. EODEMQUE MODO IN CAPITOLIO. (148)

CARMEN COMPOSUIT Q.HORATIUS FLACCUS (149)