

# VATES

*The Journal of New Latin Poetry*

*Issue 5, Summer 2012*

## CONTENTS

Editorial	2
<i>Carmina Latina</i>	
<i>Diuisio Palaeontologica</i> (Jan Křesadlo)	3
3 Drinking Songs (Brad Walton)	6
<i>Intellige Te Domi</i> (Timothy Adès)	12
2 Songs from <i>Erus Anulorum</i> (Richard Sturch)	13
<i>Ocelli Virides</i> (Lucius Alter)	18
7 Epigrams from A.P. 7 (Paul Murgatroyd)	19
<i>A View of Old Oxford</i> (Chris Kelk)	21
<i>Features</i>	
For Better or Verse (Barry Baldwin)	27
<i>Verba Modulata</i> (Mark Walker)	32
<i>Versus ex Machina</i> (Barry Baldwin)	42
Book Review: <i>Juvenal in English</i>	58
<i>De gustibus non est disputandum</i>	61
Contributors	64

Edited by Mark Walker  
email: [vates@pineapplepubs.co.uk](mailto:vates@pineapplepubs.co.uk)

*Vates* is a [Pineapple Publications](http://PineapplePublications.com) publication

## Editorial

Something of a musical theme seems to have developed this issue: at the same time as I was musing on Latin song lyrics (p. 32), I received three magnificent new drinking songs from Brad Walton, which have – almost! – inspired me to start tipping again after some years of abstinence (long story short: too many early mornings, too many headaches). Not only that, among other treasures this issue also boasts some elegant singable translations (of Tolkien and Lionel Bart respectively) from Richard Sturch and Timothy Adès. And following my own attempt to write a poem about dinosaurs [II:14], a Latin poem inspired by the palaeontological wonders of London's Natural History Museum arrived from Václav Pinkava, the son of the Czech polymath, novelist and poet of the same name (1926-1995) who wrote under the pen name Jan Křesadlo. Křesadlo's verse is yet another rhyming lyric.

*Vates* contributor Chris Kelk has translated Juvenal into English verse, which is strictly speaking the 'wrong way round' for this journal; but I feel sure that readers will be interested to discover how one of our own Latin poets has taken on the challenge of turning Latin into English rhyme (review p. 58).

Elsewhere, the indefatigable Barry Baldwin looks at the sometimes pernicious practice of Latin verse 'comp' in the English Public Schools of yesteryear (p. 27), and, on a similar theme, casts a critical eye – with archly raised eyebrow of course – over the remarkable Eureka machine (p. 42).

Modesty forbids the translation of Joseph Tusiani's urbane verse letter (p.61), though I can't resist the opportunity to encourage other readers to send in similar *epistulae*!

### *Vates* needs you!

This journal cannot exist without your contribution. So if reading this inspires you to compose some Latin verses of your own, please don't be shy – share them with us! And tell all your friends about us, too.

Once again, *gratias maximas* to all the contributors without whose kind and generous support this journal would not be possible.

If you missed previous issues, please visit the [Vates webpage](#) to download your free copies.

Mark Walker, Editor  
[vates@pineapplepubs.co.uk](mailto:vates@pineapplepubs.co.uk)

# Carmīna Latīna

(n.b. Latin spellings follow the orthography of the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Only proper names are capitalised.)

## Divisio Palaeontologica Musei Historiae Naturalis Londinensis

**Jan Křesadlo**

*Václav Pinkava writes:* My father was very much a polyglot, and wrote poems in various languages, including Latin. This one from a collection published in the 1980s resonates with one by the editor of this journal [*Dinosauria*, II:14], as it is set in the London Natural History Museum. Here among all the exhibits of extinct species we find a *memento mori* for the human visitors, who are all destined to go the same way.

*Dinornis elephantopus*  
*altus uiginti cubitus,*  
*Batrachorhynchus clauiceps*  
*quem mirans perturbatur plebs,*  
*minatur rostro tricorni*  
*Trinacromerum Osborni.*  
*est Allosaurus infimus*  
*est atque Struthiomimus,*  
*Gorgosaurus, Diplodocus,*  
*est furiosus Helocus,*  
*Procompsognathus monstrosus*  
*ac Spinosaurus spinosus,*

*est Stegosaurus scutifer  
sicut creasset Lucifer,  
est cornu Triceratopis,  
est pes cuiusdam inopis,  
iungitur Tetralophodon,  
adest et Iguanodon,  
qui osseo in nemore  
enormi gaudet femore,  
est atque alia fera,  
et cetera, et cetera,  
quae ego neque narrare  
scio, nec enumerare:  
sunt crura, pelues, ischia,  
sunt maxillae, sunt bracchia,  
sunt phalanges, tarsalia,  
sunt grandia carpalia,  
sunt dentes quasi gladii,  
sunt ulnae atque radii  
similes truncis arborum.  
et minimum os carporum  
uix subleues in manibus,  
quod tamen in hominibus  
est sicut granum minutum:  
nonnullum rostrum acutum  
\*confraternatur cornibus*

*unguibus atque dentibus:*  
*periculosa portenta*  
*et illorum armamenta*  
*hic habent coemeterium.*  
*iam dormit Dinotherium*  
*quod attamen horribile*  
*simul erat peribile:*  
*omnia quae hic uidere*  
*potes, cuncta periere:*  
*et tu peribis misere,*  
*neque poteris manere.*  
*manebit solum crus et dens*  
*sub scripto: HOMO SAPIENS.*

\***Editor's note:** *confraternatur* – I would be interested to hear any thoughts from readers about this word, especially any examples of its use elsewhere. For although I can't find the verb *confraterno* in either Lewis & Short or the OLD, it seems like a word that really ought to exist in Latin! Similarly, is there a precedent for *peribile* (seven lines from the end), or is it an interloper from the Romance languages?

**Translation:** Dinornis elephantopus twenty cubits high, Batrachorhynchus claviceps, admired by awestruck people, threatened by the trident beak of Trinacromerum Osborni. Allosaurus the base and Struthiomimus, Gorgosaurus, Diplodocus, Helocus the furious, Procompsognathus the monstrous Spinosaurus the thorny, Stegosaurus the digger just as if created by Lucifer, the horned Triceratops, some foot of some unfortunate beast joins Tetralophodon, and Iguanodon is here, who, in this forest of bones enjoys the most enormous thigh, and other wild creatures, and so on and so forth, that I do not know how to describe, but not forgetting: there are legs, pelvises, hips, jawbones, arms, there are the fingers, tarsals great carpals, the swordlike teeth, the radii and ulnas like the trunks of trees. And the smallest mouth bones hardly fit in the hands, given that a man by comparison is as small as a grain; some sharp beaks keep company with horns claws and teeth; dangerous monsters and their armaments, here have their cemetery. Therein already sleeps the Dinotherium, quod however horrible was also perishable. All that you are able to see here likewise shall perish, and you too will perish miserably, unable to remain. The only keepsakes being a leg and a tooth and the inscription: Homo Sapiens.

\* \* \*

### 3 Drinking Songs

**Brad Walton**

*Brad Walton writes:* In the Letters page of the last issue of *Vates*, Judy Koffler expressed a desire for drinking songs [IV:48]. Coincidentally, I had spent much of last summer writing drinking songs, generally at my local pub. Most of the regulars there are older gentleman of retirement age. I was thinking of them, obviously, when I wrote *Anacreonticum Senile* and *Diutius Vivere. Bibamus, Sodales* is intended for anyone of drinking age. Incidentally, it was written before the European fiscal crisis burst on the world. Otherwise that would certainly have been mentioned in my catalogue of current catastrophes.

#### (1) *Anacreonticum Senile*

*premit aetas, ueterani*  
*uicium dolumque uitae.*  
*abit Auster iuuenilis,*  
*Boreas adit senilis,*  
*cineres et tenebrosum*  
*ferimur leues in orbem.*  
*neque amamus uelut amplum*  
*iuuenes amant theatrum*  
*speciosa ubi furibundum*  
*peragit facinora saeculum.*  
*fere cunctis uariemus*  
*pretiis ut aestimandis,*  
*tamen inter legiones*  
*iuuenum senumque constat*  
*Dionysum genialis*

*caput esse suauitatis,  
 et alentem celebrandum  
 Cererem dedisse donum.  
 glacialis domat acrem  
 cereuisia solis aestum  
 cumulatque societatem  
 citat et dicacitatem;  
 iuuenes soluit honesti  
 ualidis obicibus usus,  
 moderamine nimio leuat  
 animos diu repressos;  
 uetulis excutit umbras  
 animis supermeantes,  
 epularum et superarum  
 bibulis dat arrhabonem.*

**(1) Old person's drinking song**

**Metre:** alternating ionic dimeters and anacreontics

**Translation:**

Age weighs on us, veterans of life's ups, downs, and delusions. The south wind of youth departs, the north wind of old age approaches, and we are being borne like weightless ashes into the world of darkness. We are not so enamoured, as are the young, of the vast theatre where the mad world plays out its glamorous misdeeds. Though we differ in our evaluation of almost everything, still the cohorts of the young and old agree that Dionysus is the source of delightful sweetness, and that kindly Ceres has given us a gift to be celebrated. Frosty beer overcomes the sharp heat of the sun, increases comradery and inspires wit. It releases young people from the strong constraints of respectable propriety; it relieves spirits long repressed by excessive control. It shakes off the shadows creeping over the souls of the old, and gives to them as they drink a foretaste of the parties in heaven.

\* \* \*

*(2) Bibamus, Sodales*

*bibamus, sodales, neque obstent inanes  
 crumenae facetis et doctis loquelis,  
 animis uel benignis et amicis catenis,  
 uel curis in horas aliquot derelictis.  
 ahenum in camino, planetes calescit.  
 glacialis polorum uetustas liquescit  
 et ursus niuosus spoliatur scabello.  
 se tollens profundum frequentes in oras  
 fugat nationes penatibus aquosis.  
 palatia Tonantis modo ardent, modo algent.  
 feroces procellae tellurem flagellant  
 meatusque flumina tumentia redundant  
 et fundos et hortos et aedes inundant.  
 patescit caelestem fuligo per orbem,  
 petroleum coinquinat et agros et aequor.  
 purgaminis Olympi sub aruis humanantur  
 natant et marini per undas barathri.  
 lymphis profluentes arescunt regiones,  
 et inter sitientes Mauors intumescit  
 pro parcis mundarum fluentis aquarum  
 locupletes crebrescunt, egentes abundant,  
 mediocri rarescunt thesauro beati.*



*habent cuncta pauci, nihil multitudo.*  
*dum dites aceruant, plebei uix ullum*  
*parant quaestuosum retinent uel laborem.*  
*rerum publicarum rationes turbatae,*  
*Columbia suis intumescit uenenis.*  
*iacet collocatae uorago monetae,*  
*et nobis misellae per annos corrasae*  
*opes in trapeza seruatae macrescunt.*  
*alimur spe uiriles ut alamur seniles,*  
*inopem praeuidemus tamen omnes senectam.*

**(2) Friends, let us drink**

**Metre:** Bacchiac tetrameters

**Translation:**

Friends, let us drink, and do not let empty wallets stand in the way of witty and well-informed banter, or of kindly spirits and the bonds of friendship, or of abandoning care for a few hours. The planet warms like a pot on a stove. The primordial ice caps are melting and the polar bear is robbed of his footstool. The sea, rising against the crowded coastlines, chases peoples away from their flooded homes. The sky blazes one moment and freezes the next. Fierce storms whip the land, and the swollen rivers overflow their channels to inundate farms, gardens, and houses. Soot spreads through the celestial sphere. Oil pollutes land and sea. Mountains of garbage are buried underground, or float over the waves of the oceanic abyss. Water-rich countries go dry and war flares up among the thirsty for scant streams of clean water. The wealthy increase. Paupers abound. The middle class grows scarce. A few have everything. Many have nothing. While the rich heap up their wealth, the poor can hardly get or keep a job. The balance sheets of the State are a mess. America swells with its own toxins. The vortex of investment is in ruins, and our pittance, scraped together over the years and deposited in the bank, wastes away. As adults we feed on the hope that we will be fed in our dotage, yet we all anticipate an impoverished old age.

\* \* \*

*(3) Diutius Viuere*

*Aurora, rubens diua, perennis et puella,  
 Tithonum adamat Cypride roscida nitentem,  
 uerno ualidum sanguine ferreisque neruis,  
 hominem tamen, ac legibus insitis caducum.  
 a patre deum uiuificis rogat uenustae  
 in perpetuum deliciae fruuntur auris.  
 sed mente leui diua misella, obliuiosa  
 tantum rogat ut morte maritus eximatur,  
 non ut careat tempore temporisque damnis.  
 ergo, socii, fundite Bacchicos liquores,  
 tristes animos soluite rebus inuenustis  
 praesentibus et praeteritis et adfuturis.  
 iam iam, comites, huic radians patrona saeclo,  
 artis medicae lux facit ut noui recente  
 Pallantiadis numine candidae mariti  
 abiecta putris fata supersimus salutis,  
 macie domito corpore, mente dissoluta,  
 dum clara dii tela diutius tuentes  
 nos liuor edat Ditem adeuntium profundo  
 nondum senio debilium, quibus superstes  
 et adhuc aliquid corporei uigoris exstat,  
 necnon aliquid sospitis integraeque mentis.*

**(3) *Living too long*****Metre:** Sotadeans**Translation:**

Aurora, rubicund goddess and perennial girl, falls for Tithonus, sparkling with dewy Venus, strong in the spring-time of his vigour and iron muscles, but yet a human being, and doomed by his natural condition to perish. From the the father of the gods she asks that her delightful darling enjoy the life-giving air forever. But the poor, dizzy, forgetful goddess only asks that her husband be exempt from death, not from time or the damages of time. So, friends, pour out the liquors of Dionysus. Release your sad minds from present, past and future unpleasantness. Nowadays, comrades, nowadays the luminous art of medicine, the patroness shining on this age, sees to it that we, the new husbands of a dawn bright with fresh divinity, survive the pitiful death of our withered health, our bodies wasted away, our minds dissolved, until beholding the bright shafts of day too long, we envy those who approach death not yet disabled with extreme old age, for whom there yet survives something of corporeal vigour and something of a sound, unimpaired mind.

\* \* \*

## *Intellige Te Domi*

**Timothy Adès**

*Timothy Adès writes:* By way of commemorating the Dickens Bicentenary Year, a singable translation of the song “Consider Yourself at Home” from the musical *Oliver!* by Lionel Bart.

*intellige te domi*

*incolumem cum familiaribus,*

*amplectimur te maius,*

*res certa est, comites erimus.*

*intellige te gratum,*

*partemque puta te supellectilis:*

*non pullulat hic pondus:*

*contenti cuncta diuidimus.*

*forsan habebimus aspera ieiunia,*

*forsan egebimus: quid tum?*

*scilicet aderit optimus munificus:*

*quam benigne bibendum!*

*intellige te carum:*

*discrimina nolumus:*

*iam nuntiamus id quod intelleximus:*

*noster es fraterculus!*

\* \* \*

## Two Verses from *Erus Anulorum*

**Richard Sturch**

*Richard Sturch writes:* It was in 2004 that I contributed a light-hearted piece, about the problems that would be involved in translating *The Lord of the Rings* (which I have loved ever since it came out) into Latin, to a collection on *Translating Tolkien* (and later to a *Festschrift* for my former Classics master's 84th birthday). In it I regretted that the great work would probably never be undertaken; but then something said to me "Why not try it yourself?" I have been at it, off and on, for about six years, and have just finished Book Four. Whether it will be a *magnum opus* or merely what Tacitus called a *magna moles et improspira* remains to be seen.

The verses have been the real challenge. As noted in the last issue of *Vates* [IV:32], metre should vary according to subject – and in the case of *LOTR*, species. Hobbits and Dwarves, I felt, would use accentual metres like the ‘Goliardic’ I have used for Frodo's song at Bree (‘There is an inn, a merry old inn’). But Elves, and Men of Gondor, would be more classically-minded; so Galadriel's *Lament* is in straight hexameters. The Men of Rohan composed their songs in alliterative verse, and I think any Latin version will have to take that form too, despite lack of precedent. (I haven't tried this yet!) And Tom Bombadil actually talks in a kind of loose English hendecasyllables; there was no real choice there, loose hendecasyllables it had to be in Latin.

I am not looking forward to checking the text. I have probably made lots of errors (even my original paper contained two or three!). Of course, if any kindly reader of *Vates* felt willing to undertake a bit of proofreading ...

### (1) Frodo's song, ‘There is an inn, a merry old inn ...’

*sub uetusto colle stat hilaris taberna*

*qua talem ceruisiam porrigit pincerna*

*ut olim Vir uenerit Lunae de lucerna*

*ut sitis sedata sit sua sempiterna.*

*agasoni feles est, saepe temulenta,  
modulatur fidibus uia uiolenta ,  
quarum sonus euocant nunc delectamenta,  
tunc in altis uocibus stridulis tormenta.*

*caupo canem aluit, callidum odorum,  
paruae magnitudinis, cupidum iocorum;  
hospitum qui auscultat uerba facetorum  
emittitque obloquens risum indecorum.*

*bos hic quoque pascitur cornibus ornata,  
reginis superbior dum sit tranquillata,  
sed cum fidis carmine fiat fascinata  
tum saltantis fluctuat cauda capillata.*

*aptum est armarium argenti patinis,  
aptus cocleariis apothecae finis;  
honorantur feriae instrumentis binis  
quae ministri poliunt horis matutinis.*

*potiones maximas Lunae Vir potabat,  
fidibusque stridulis feles ululabat,  
lanx cum cocleario hilare saltabat,  
uacca quoque, dum canis caudam indagabat.*

*tum exhausto poculo Vir nunc satiatas  
subter sellam uoluitur potu superatus,  
somniaans ceruisiam, axis dum stellatus  
rediente aurora pallescit lustratus.*

*feli tunc est agaso anxie locutus  
“frena mandent lunares equi dum solutus  
dormit erus somnians sub sellam uolutus;  
mox resurget et dies anceps et acutus!”*

*carmen modulata est resuscitaturum  
quale posset mortuis reddere futurum;  
donec caupo hospiti donat ictum durum:  
“excitare! mane adest diem adlaturum!”*

*Lunae Virum in Lunam omnes sustulere;  
equi albi lunares pone aduenere;  
bos ut cerua exsultans noluit manere;  
ipsi ex armario lances cucurrere.*

*magis magis rapide fides resonabant,  
canis paruus latrabat, patinae saltabant,  
bos et equi inuerso in capite stabant,  
excitati hospites in solo saltabant.*

*ruptis cunctis fidibus lyra crepitauit!*  
*bos trans Lunam siluit, coetus inhiavit;*  
*risu canis ioculum talem aspectauit;*  
*lancem, coclearium sonitus fugauit.*

*Luna lente uoluitur post collem morata,*  
*ipsa Sol nunc oriens multum est mirata;*  
*quamquam sua coeperat lux desiderata,*  
*omnes ad cubilia ibant adfectata!*

\* \* \*

**(2) Galadriel's Lament, 'I sang of leaves, of leaves of gold'**

*cum de frondibus auratis cecini, creuere profecto:*  
*cum de flaminibus, uenerunt carmine uenti.*  
*Solem ultra Lunamque, maris qua spuma fluebat,*  
*aurea crescebat longinqui litoris arbor*  
*lustrata Eldamaris sub scintillantibus astris,*  
*Quendorum speculae Tirionis moenia iuxta.*  
*illic auriferas ramosus plurimus annus*  
*frondes sustulerat; nos autem triste perennes*  
*Oceanum citra lacrimis deflemus acerbis.*  
*Lórien alma, dies hiberna aduentat ut omnes*  
*deiciat frondes, quas flauas auehet amnis.*



*Lórien alma, exsul relegata haec litora noui  
marcentique elanore diu diademata feci.  
at si cantarem de nauibus, ecquis adiret  
me trans tam latum nauis uectura profundum?*

\* \* \*

**Metre:** (1) Goliardics, (2) Hexameters

**Translations:** From *The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring*, (1) Book I Chapter IX 'At the Sign of the Prancing Pony', (2) Book II Chapter VIII, 'Farewell to Lórien'. © J. R. R. Tolkien.

\* \* \*

## Ocelli Virides

Lucius Alter

*Lucius Alter writes:* Just an informational note on *smaragdis*: in Martial 5.11.1 the *a* in the second syllable is light: *Sardonychas, zmaragdus, adamantas, iaspidas uno...*

*Sarcion est tibi nil minime, gratissima domna,  
fulgenti smaragdis luminibusque tuis.*

\* \* \*

**Metre:** Elegiac

**Translation:**

‘Green Eyes’

Dearest lady, there is no cloud or flaw in you,  
And in your flashing emerald eyes nature shines true.

\* \* \*

## 7 Epigrams from A.P. 7

**Paul Murgatroyd**

*Paul Murgatroyd writes:* These translations from Greek originals in the Palatine Anthology are an attempt to do justice to the Greek epigrammatists.

7.33

*'tu, quod eras bibulus, cecidisti.' 'uerum ego uixi.  
non bibis ipse, tamen tu quoque nempe cades.'*

7.71

*hic iacet Archilochus. uiolans Heliconam cruore,  
felle ferox tinxit carmina uipereo.  
tu pede praeteriens tacito obmutesce, uiator,  
ne uespas moueas quae monumenta colunt.*

7.288

*me simul eiecto potiuntur terra fretumque:  
uiscera nam pisces, ora sed ossa tenet.*

7.308

*quinque annos uixi, uitaeque dies ego paucos  
carpsi, sed uitae sic mala pauca tuli.*

7.319

*mortuus est Timon. sed adhuc saeuissimus ille.  
morsus Timonis, Cerbere, tu caueas.*

7.461

*omniparens Tellus, subter te nunc iacet Aeson.*

*ne grauis esto illi: non fuit ille tibi.*

7.469

*hic iacet Hagniades, homines qui funditus omnes*

*fama praeteriit praeteritque malis.*

\* \* \*

**Metre:** Elegiacs

**Translations:**

7.33

'Because you were fond of drink you died.' 'Yes, but I lived life to the full. You don't drink yourself, but you too will certainly die.'

7.71

Here lies Archilochus. Profaning Helicon with blood, he ferociously drenched poetry in viper's gall. Be quiet as you pass by on silent feet, traveller, so you don't rouse the wasps that inhabit his tomb.

7.288

The land and sea together possess me cast ashore: for the fish have my flesh and the beach has my bones.

7.308

I lived for five years, and I enjoyed few days of life, but in this way I endured few of life's evils.

7.319

Timon is dead. But he is still very savage. Cerberus, be on your guard against Timon's bites.

7.461

Earth, mother of all, Aeson now lies beneath you. Don't be heavy on him: he was not [heavy] on you.

7.469

Here lies Hagniades, who completely surpassed all men in fame and surpassed them in misfortunes.

\* \* \*

## *A View of Old Oxford*

**Chris Kelk**

*Chris Kelk writes:* The poet John Barry and I were at grammar school together in Bradford and have remained friends. He is in the habit of sending me his poetry and I have quite a collection now. *A View of Old Oxford*, is, I think, his funniest.

*optima, care nepos, noua mittis. gratulor atque  
 magna dedisse tibi Flumina Bina Boum  
 praemia sum felix. essent quae facta requires,  
 dignane sint fama. sic tibi, Marce, loquor:  
 o! prius Hellespontem atrum (sum frigoris osor!)  
 horrificumque natem quam reuidere locos  
 illos constituam. cur? blanditiae mulieris  
 perpaucis aderant. Flumina Bina Boum  
 expertes Veneris nos acceperere, dolores  
 ut manifestarent – una puella uiris  
 tris tribus. excepit speratam singulus unus  
 laurum, nil octo, languidolenta sibi  
 murmura mussantes. hic docta est classica lingua  
 cuius nos unum novimus inde modum –  
 optatum. gladius, duo qui prope crura residet,  
 illa sibi mandate quae sibi mandat Amor.  
 in studiis nostris labuntur scripta Platonis,  
 ccandit, ut inficita praecipitetque calor  
 antiplatonius o! mentes, non corpora, nostrae*

*inde colebantur. forsitan illa dies*  
*adueniet tandem cum, Flumina Bina putabant,*  
*illi trans studiis sollicitata ferant*  
*ingenia, arte tamen nos auertere pudenda*  
*multimodis somnis uisa. dedere nihil*  
*nostris scripta Latina boni scrotisue perustis*  
*testiculiue nihil. 'somata nousi' (uides?)*  
*sunt immixta: magis gladiis quo corpora laesa*  
*sunt, o! sicut eo non potis aëra sunt*  
*mentibus alta peti. quocumque puella per aulas*  
*errabat, quidam 'femina bella prope!'*  
*omnibus inquit et insani tumidique studentes*  
*illam spectabant. et uagibundus, uti*  
*in uatis Stygiis umbris uir quisque petebat*  
*quae loca quaeque silent, anxius esse procul.*  
*nil insanius est quam hoc fata sagacibus esse*  
*decreuisse uiris; multa minora simul*  
*oppida quo discebatur sapientia magnos*  
*pulchrarum numeros cuique dedere uiro.*  
*sed riuis latis similes flauis in harenis*  
*pectora tangenda et uagina lubrica errant*  
*Fluminibus Binis, quas dilexere stuprosi*  
*quique libros spectant, ah! releuantque manu*  
*se in Collis Viridis ludo seducere discit*  
*quisque puer pueros. euge! geresque bene.*

*forsitan agnosces dominas se iungere genti  
humanae: uerum hoc dicitur esse mihi.  
tempora sed permutantur: tandem monachia  
nondum sunt illic (uae mihi!). uictor eris  
in ludis Veneris, lacrimis placates egebis  
uanis. esto aliis uana fuisse memor.*

\* \* \*

**Metre:** Elegiacs

**Translation:**

### ***A View of Old Oxford***

by John Barry

John Barry read Classics Mods and English at The Queen's College, Oxford from 1962 to 1966. He is a retired schoolteacher and lives in Leeds, UK.

Dear Billy, thank you for your letter.  
Fantastic news – I've not heard better  
For years and years.  
What an achievement – to have won  
An Oxford scholarship! Well done,  
Young genius. Cheers.

So now you write: "Dear Uncle John,  
When you were up, what things went on,  
And what befell you?  
Does it deserve its reputation?  
And what's the social situation?"  
Well, lad, I'll tell you.

The truth, mind, not a lot of flannel.  
And here it is. I'd swim the channel  
In March, both ways,  
(I, that can hardly swim five feet  
or bear cold) rather than repeat  
my Oxford days.

Surprised? I know the public thinks  
Of student frolics and high jinks,  
Larks and excitement.  
Why did I not find Oxford glamorous?

So little chance of being amorous –  
That's my indictment.

Our schools had all been single-sexed  
And up to Oxford we came next,  
To Queen's or Jesus.  
What woeful tidings faced us then?  
One female student per nine men!  
It didn't please us.

Write that in characters of flame:  
NINE LUSTING FELLOWS FOR ONE DAME.  
For every winner  
eight losers moped about and pined  
each like a hungry dog that whined  
wanting its dinner.

We learnt the Latin tongue and Greek  
And we could write them (though not speak)  
Like any native.  
Gender and tense we understood,  
Person and number, but one mood –  
Just the optative.

In such a case you don't need Freud  
To tell how harmony's destroyed,  
What ills accrue.  
However we ignore his cries,  
The little gent between the thighs  
Demands his due.

So, grappling with Platonic prose,  
Most unplatonic feelings rose  
To cause distraction.  
Engaged with Ciceronian speeches  
A stirring deep inside the breeches  
Demanded action –

But act on whom? No girls in sight.  
They trained our nous with all their might  
Ignoring soma.  
In colleges designed to bar us  
From all that Helen did with Paris  
We read our Homer.

Perhaps they hoped that sublimation  
Would foster mental exploration  
And there'd be sown  
A love of Greek and Roman splendour.  
But dreams of feminine pudenda  
Against our own

Expelled such visions from the head.  
All that Hellenic stuff we read  
In verse or prose  
Did not contribute one iota  
To soothing our tormented scrota.  
Which only shows



Body and mind are linked together.  
The mind has a restricted tether  
    If somewhat lower  
You feel a pain like prussic acid.  
But, if that fellow's limp and placid,  
    The mind can soar.

As we sat quiet, seeking knowledge,  
Sometimes a girl would pass the college.  
    "A lass, a lass!"  
someone would hollo to all present,  
and mad and sad, hungry, tumescent,  
    we'd watch her pass.

Or we would mope about the town  
Like, when Odysseus journeyed down,  
    The ghosts round Hades.  
We had no focus for our lusts.  
Our ancient halls were lined with busts,  
    But none were ladies'.

And this – that's what's completely zany –  
Was the result of being brainy.  
    HAPPY THE STUPID!  
While there was no-one to give US Sex  
The Oxbridge failures down at SUSsex  
    Made hay with Cupid.

They could enjoy their university,  
No constant state of woman scarcity  
    To get them down.  
A desert drier than Arabia  
For kissing lips and stroking labia  
    Was Oxford town.

Fond nursemaid of our tender years,  
Old Oxford, paradise for queers,  
    What delectation  
The memory of you inspires,  
City of sadly dreaming spires  
    And masturbation.

No need for you, Bill, to be pensive.  
You spent at Greenhill Comprehensive  
    Your adolescence.  
At lunchtime meetings in the cloakroom,  
The grope-and-tickle, grip-and-stroke room,  
    You learned your lessons.

You're now an expert in the chase.  
Besides which, coming from a place  
    With no sex-bar,  
You're maybe capable of seeing  
A woman as a human being.  
    (I'm told they are.)

So you have got a headstart, matey.  
But, more than that, in 1980  
    The old regime

In Oxford's past –the change is drastic.  
Gone are the ancient ways monastic.  
I'd like to scream!

It's not fair, Bill, you lucky lad.  
The thing that nearly drove us mad  
Went grimly on  
For generations, firm and fixed.  
Then all the colleges went mixed  
When we had gone.

So you'll knock thirty birds per annum,  
With "sana mens" have "corpus sanum",  
No empty tears.  
But when you're carving up your notches  
Think of the pain in all those crotches  
In former years.

\* \* \*

## FEATURES

### For Better or Verse

**Barry Baldwin** uncovers sometimes painful experiences of Latin verse writing in English Public Schools

Browsing for another purpose John Chandos' delightful *Boys Together: English Public Schools 1800-1864* (1984). I expiscated these few snippets relevant to *Vates* devotees.

The schools' academic elite functioned (to adapt the Beatles) as a collective Latin metre maid. When Clarendon in a House of Lords speech mangled a Martial verse (1.16.1) to produce *sunt bona sunt quaedam mediocra, sunt plura mala* ('there are some good things, some mediocre, more that are bad'), 'the bevy of headmasters on the steps of the throne shuddered as though the end of the world had come'.

How often is Latin heard in today's Parliament? I dare say it fell often from the lips of Enoch Powell, along with his many other languages. Winston Churchill once quoted *arma uirumque cano*, only to gloss it with a mistranslation, gleefully corrected by Hugh Gaitskell.

Below stairs, though, verse composition was not always the *summum bonum*. Despite 50 to 60 hours a week of parsing and scanning, facility eluded most boys, who at (e.g.) Rugby paid a heavy price from their equivalents of Horace's *plagosus Orbilius*,

being flogged four or more times a week ‘for failing to perform what was beyond their capacity’. As one sympathetic master (*rarissima avis*) put it, ‘How long shall we turn rapidly our gerundstones in the vain endeavour to turn sawdust into flour?’

Recalling his time at Shrewsbury, whence came the famous Neo-Latin collection *Sabrinae Corolla* (1850; rev. ed. 1890), one old boy wrote: ‘Especial attention was paid to verse making and this I could never do well. I had many friends and got together a good collection of old verses, which by patching together, sometimes aided by other boys, I could work into any subject.’

That Old Salopian was Charles Darwin ...

He would have envied the Etonian who (c. 1820) had amassed a collection of 3,000 ‘old copies, as they were called, a bank of verses for all seasons, even corrected by the original authors’ tutors. The unforeseen requirement to produce a verse on the death of George III was not beyond the capacity of this library, for its contents included verses on the death of George II, which with only small adjustment met the demand handsomely.’

*Tom Brown’s Schooldays* remains the *locus classicus* for vulgus books. Many a time I wished for some in the Classical Sixth. But the only such on show belonged to one of the beaks who settled all matters of poetic taste from a black-bound *Versus Wufrenses*, retained from his own days at the Wolverhampton School.

Neither Darwin nor Baldwin came up with this wheeze, described thus by Chandos: ‘A boy at Eton who remained

invincibly unable to construe a line – much less write an original verse – of Latin or Greek, and who progressed to the fifth form by means of having a clever friend who sat next to him in their division. When his turn came to “show up”, he invariably received a paper pellet which, when unrolled, revealed an appropriate few lines, sufficient in quantity and quality to pass muster but not so good or so long as to arouse suspicion.’

The classical dunce went on to a distinguished military career as General Sir Thomas Westropp Macmahon, Bart, 1813-92. His ingenious helper, Samuel Gambier, after shining at Cambridge, a Wrangler with first-class honours in Classics, promptly died – ‘Those whom the gods love ...’

An alternative punishment to flogging, meted out by the senior boy or *praepostor* in Eton’s nocturnal Long Chamber was ‘Subbs and Grubbs’, an order instantly to produce four-line epigrams in English or Latin. One smart little delinquent, his imposition doubled to eight for impudence, immediately dashed off:

*Carmina, carmina, carmina, carmina, carmina, carmen.*

*Carmina quanta vocas, carmina tanta dedi*

(‘Verses, verses, verses, verses, verses, one verse more / Here are just as many as you asked for.’)

Another lad’s English effort was spiced with bilingual lampoon:

One Larney, in his frantic hours  
 Endowed with great poetic powers  
 Last week or else the week before  
 Parsed *Niger Amor* 'blackamoor'!

Nowadays, he'd be stamped on for racialism. Apart from a touch of the Billy Bunters, Larney's gaffe recalls the *triste lupus stabulum* / sorrowful wolf episode that goaded Thomas Arnold into boxing the culprit's ears in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

Another glimpse into Eton's Latin verse dungeons is provided in this letter home:

'Butcher' Bethell, so called for the quality of the correction of his pupils' verses, had a favourite and ever recurring phrase which he used with a small variation for long and short verse: for the former, *sibi vindicat ipse*, for the latter *vindicat ipse sibi*. A boy asked by him what he would eat answered, 'Sir, I vindicate myself apiece of meat.' - the 'Owl of the Remove' again comes to mind.

In my verse-making days at the Lincoln School, there was still a whiff of the Victorian notion that Latin composition was integral to *mens sana in corpore sano*. That this is not always true is evidenced by the career of Etonian James Kenneth Stephen (1859-92), first cousin to Virginia Woolf. At school, he was trilingually adept - what the Roman poet Ennius called having *tria corda* ('three hearts') in Greek, Latin, and English verse. Then on to Cambridge where, in addition to a First in History and Fellowship

at Trinity, he tutored the future Duke of Clarence, even living for a while at Sandringham.

He was still churning out Latin verses at Cambridge, one specimen being this tribute to his contemporary Montagu R. James, destined to be famous as antiquarian and writer of ghost stories:

*Vivat J. K. Stephanus,*

*Humilis poeta!*

*Vivat Monty Jamesius,*

*Vivant A, B, C, D, E*

*Et totus Alphabeta!*

After which, it was downhill all the way. Failures in law and journalism, soured by repeated rebuffs from women, were compounded by a serious head injury on holiday at Felixstowe, the which precipitated him into violent insanity, resulting in his being put under physical restraint until his death, one week after that of Clarence, with whom he shares a place in ‘Ripperology’, being identified as Jack in Michael Harrison’s *Clarence* (1972).

Compared with all this, the Neo-Latin life as lived in *Vates* is indeed serene.

\* \* \*

## Verba Modulata

**Mark Walker** wonders why we Latin poets don't more often turn to writing song lyrics

In the last issue of *Vates* I mentioned a few of the problems Latin poets face in attempting to find an audience for their verses [*Verba Inaudita*, IV:40]. It is all very well to write *scribendi sui causa*, for one's own pleasure, but I worried there that no species of writing can thrive wholly without a readership. One possible outlet for new Latin writing which, I think, has not been sufficiently explored and exploited by modern Latinists, is music.



*Horace the songwriter?*

The connection between Latin verse and music is ancient and intimate. Horace may very well have written his *carmina* with musical accompaniment in mind<sup>1</sup>. The hymns

and sequences of the medieval church were all written to be sung, they form a central part of the classical music repertoire and to this day composers continue to set those texts – the *Requiem Mass*, for example, has received modern settings from composers as diverse as Benjamin Britten (*War Requiem*, 1962), György Ligeti



(1965), and Andrew Lloyd Webber (1982) among many others<sup>2</sup>. Alongside the sacred, secular Latin also features occasionally – most famously, perhaps, in Carl Orff’s setting of the ‘goliardic’ poems of the *Carmina Burana* (1936).

Latin also crops up fairly frequently in Hollywood. The opening *O Fortuna* from Orff’s cantata has appeared on the soundtracks of several movies, including *Excalibur* (1981) and *Natural Born Killers*



(1994). But there are also original musical settings, for example the two Latin songs that featured in Kenneth Branagh’s films of *Henry V* (1989) and *Hamlet* (1996). For the former, composer Patrick Doyle wrote (and sang) a setting of the Vulgate Psalm 113, *Non nobis,*

*Domine*; for the latter the same composer wrote the song *In Pace*, an adaptation of the Vulgate’s *Diligite iustitiam* (from the *Liber Sapientiae Solomonis*, 1.i), sung on the soundtrack by Placido Domingo<sup>3</sup>. Other prominent examples of Latin music in the movies are Jerry Goldsmith’s Oscar-winning score for *The Omen* (1976), which boasted the newly written and truly diabolical hymn *Ave Satani*, and Basil Poledouris’ epic score for *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), which features several choral pieces with new Latin texts in similar style to Orff’s cantata.

Latin occasionally gets an airing in popular music too. Folk-rock group Steeleye Span got to Number 14 in the UK charts in 1973

with their version of the medieval carol *Gaudete*<sup>4</sup>. A year earlier, singer Cat Stevens had included an original Latin song, *O Caritas*, on his album *Catch Bull at Four* (1972):

**O Caritas** (Cat Stevens, Andreas Toumazis, Jeremy Taylor)

*Hunc ornatum mundi nolo perdere  
video flagrare omnia res  
audio clamare homines  
nunc exstinguitur mundi et astrorum lumen  
nunc concipitur mali hominis crimen  
tristitate et lacrimis gravis est dolor  
de terraeque maribus magnus est clamor  
O caritas, o caritas nobis semper sit amor  
nos perituri mortem salutamus  
sola resurgit vita.*

I don't want to lose the harmony of the universe I see all things ... burning, I hear men ... shouting. Now is the light of the world and the stars going out. Now does the blame for the disaster fall upon men. Grief is heavy with sadness and tears. Great is the noise from the earth and the seas. O love, O love be with us always. We who will perish salute death. Life alone goes on<sup>5</sup>.

Several lines suggest an accentual trochaic rhythm (e.g. **Hunc ornatum mundi nolo perdere**), and there are rhyming syllables at the end of most lines (*res / homines; lumen / crimen* etc.). There is also a classical allusion to the gladiators' salute (*nos morituri te salutant*) in *nos perituri mortem salutamus*, but this is not poetry in the classical quantitative sense. Nor need it be: the point here is not to provide a poem for recitation, rather to fit words to a song melody. This type of composition goes back at least as far as the first centuries of Christianity, as Dag Norberg points out when speaking of the *Te Deum* hymn:

This poetry in prose had nothing in common with Greco-Latin versification. It is not possible to confine the structure of the verse within any particular form ... this poetry was written to be sung<sup>6</sup>.

In similar vein, Irish singer Enya has also recorded songs in Latin, all written by lyricist Roma Ryan, for example:

**Afer Ventus** (Roma Ryan)

*Mare Nubium. Umbriel.  
Mare Imbrium. Ariel.  
Et itur ad astra.  
Et itur ad astra.  
Mare Vndarum. Io. Vela.*

*Mirabile dictu. Mirabilia.  
Mirabile visu. Mirabilia.  
Et itur ad astra.  
Et itur ad astra.  
Sempervirent. Rosetum.*

*Afer Ventus. Zephyrus.  
Volturnus. Africus.  
Et itur ad astra.  
Et itur ad astra.  
Etesiarum. Eurus.*

Refrain:

*Suus cuique mos. Suum cuique.  
Meus mihi, suus cuique carus.  
Memento, terrigena.  
Memento, vita brevis.  
Meus mihi, suus cuique carus<sup>7</sup>.*

'Sea of clouds. Umbriel. Sea of showers. Ariel. And that is the way to the stars. Sea of waves. Io. Vela. Wonderful to say. Wonderful things. Wonderful to see. Wonderful things. And that is the way to the stars. They are evergreen. A rose-garden. African wind. Zephyr. South-east wind. African. And that is the way to the stars. Of the etesian winds. The east wind. Their own habit for each. To each their own. To me mine, there is own is dear to each. Remember, earth-born, remember, life is short.'



Enya's bestselling Shepherd Moons

This is a long way from classical quantitative verse. The repeated *Et itur ad astra* might be a paraphrase of Virgil's *sic itur ad astra* (*Aeneid*, 9.641), but its familiarity as a Latin tag casts doubt on any deliberate allusion. Likewise the refrain phrase *Memento, vita brevis* is a variant of the commonplace *memento mori* idea. Much of the rest is almost stream-of-consciousness in its association of ideas. In the first stanza: the *maria* of the moon, Io, one of Jupiter's moons, and the constellation Vela; all are astronomical phenomena linked with the title of the album from which this song is taken (*Shepherd Moons*, which is itself an astronomical term for moons that orbit near planets with rings<sup>8</sup>). In the second, *mirabile* seems to have suggested *mirabilia*; while the otherwise puzzling line *Sempervirent. Rosetum*, may serve as a transition to the earthly 'wonders', the winds of the final stanza.

Those whose musical tastes are more hard-hitting than Enya might be fascinated to discover that Italian 'Black Metal' band Nazgul (the name, of course, taken from *The Lord of the Rings*) released in 2002 a Tolkien-esque concept album entitled *De*



*De Expugnatione Elfmuth* by Nazgul

*Expugnatione Elfmuth*, the delightful subject-matter of which is the triumph of the Dark Lord's orcs and ogres over the puny forces of men and elves, with lyrics entirely in Latin<sup>9</sup>. One example will suffice to give a flavour of the whole:

**Elficidium** (Thornset and Zakrathor)

*Silva gravida est uligine sicut frons elforum qui  
 Percipiunt obscuram presentiam, statim murmur  
 Foliarum aperit veritatem ... duodecim hominum  
 Horribilium sine deo.  
 Terror serpit inter perturbatos elfos, qui non  
 Habent tempus fugiendi.  
 Monstra in iugula candida impetum faciunt  
 Laminis aspersis sanguinem concreto, stuprant  
 Honestas virgines ante earum filios, lacernat  
 Ventres elforum.  
 Igitur evanescent cum strepitu inter arbores  
 Percussas pavore cum tropaeis funebribus...  
 Auriculis elficis.*

The forest is full of dampness like the elves' face heads who perceive an obscure presence, suddenly a rustle of leaves shows the truth ... A dozen of abominable beings without god. Panic spreads among the lost elves who have no time to escape ... The ogres threw themselves on their candid throats with blades soiled with blood, they rape the virtuous women in front of their children they tear the elderly's abdomens and smash men's heads. They disappear noisily, among the horrified trees, with a macabre trophy ... Elfic ears<sup>9</sup>.

Admittedly they may not have created the poetical equivalent of a silk purse from all those mangled elvish ears, but only a serious curmudgeon would not applaud the quite literally bloody-minded ambition of songwriting and performing duo Thornset and Zakrathor (*sic!*).

A more genteel new Latin lyric is the *Hymnus Latinus Europae*, written in 2003 by Austrian professor Dr. Peter Roland and his colleague Peter Diem. This was their laudable attempt to provide the EU with its very own 'national' anthem – naturally enough composed in the original single-European language. The lyric is tailored to fit the melody of 'Ode to Joy' from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which (with the original text by Schiller) is the official

anthem of the European Union. The *stellae ... aureae* of the final stanza is a reference to the EU flag. Otherwise this is a straightforward exhortatory piece as befits a national anthem:

***Hymnus Latinus Europae*** (Peter Roland, Peter Diem)

*Est Europa nunc unita  
et unita maneat;  
una in diversitate  
pacem mundi augeat.*

*Semper regant in Europa  
fides et iustitia  
et libertas populorum  
in maiore patria.*

*Cives, floreat Europa,  
opus magnum vocat vos  
stellae signa sunt in caelo  
aureae, quae iungant nos.*

'Europe is united now, United may it remain; Our unity in diversity May contribute to world peace. May there forever reign in Europe Faith and justice And freedom for its people In a bigger motherland. Citizens, Europe shall flourish, A great task calls on you. Golden stars in the sky are The symbols that shall unite us'<sup>10</sup>.

Whatever their poetical merits – if it is even right to consider song lyrics as poetry – we can safely say one thing about these miscellaneous pieces: they have reached a far greater audience than any of the neo-Latin poetry that we typically feature in *Vates*. Enya's *Shepherd Moons* album alone has sold in excess of thirteen million copies<sup>11</sup>. We might reasonably doubt that many music fans are thereby stimulated to explore neo-Latin poetry as a result of listening to a Latin song by their favourite artist. Nonetheless, the very existence of such songs indicates an appetite for Latin among both singers and their audiences. And given the association of

Latin with classical music, it is a source of surprise that pop musicians seem to have more eagerly embraced new Latin texts than their classical counterparts. Some time ago I asked composer Debbie Wiseman, who has experience of setting texts such as the Latin Mass, if she had ever composed music for any new Latin verse. She replied:

I've never been asked to set a newly written piece of Latin verse to music ... The truth is that if I could find a home for this sort of work then I would definitely love to write it, but serious commissions for the concert hall are few and far between, and I'm more likely to be asked to compose a string quartet or a small chamber music piece. It is an interesting thought though, and there might even be an opportunity for setting Latin text for a solo singer in a film score, if the setting and subject matter was suitable. It's certainly something that I'll keep in mind for the future<sup>12</sup>.

Ian Stephens, another composer with experience of Mass settings, after admitting that he 'would readily agree' if asked to set a new Latin text, had a practical point to make:

I've found that pronunciation of Latin varies a great deal in different choirs, and in singing different repertoire ... A work setting a new text in Latin might do well to include a pronunciation guide<sup>13</sup>.

Given the right circumstances, then, it seems that composers are willing<sup>14</sup>. So where are all the Latin lyricists eager to have their verses set to music?

## *A challenge to Vates readers:*

Which brings me at last to a challenge for readers of this journal: why not have a go at writing some Latin lyrics (in any metre, or none) with the explicit aim of them being *sung*? Perhaps set them to a well-known melody (as in the EU hymn above), or compose your own tune. If singing Latin is good enough for Horace, the medieval church and Enya, why should we modern Latin poets refuse to join in the chorus? So have a go – and *Vates* will be delighted to print your lyrics. If you can provide readers with the accompanying music (notated or as a hyperlink to an audio file), so much the better.

\* \* \*

### **Notes:**

1. The case for 'Horace the Songwriter' is made in Lyons, S. (2007) *Horace's Odes and the Mystery of Do-Re-Mi*, Aris & Philips: Oxford.
2. 'The oldest Christian religious service was not at all lacking in songs or poems', Norberg (1958), *An Introduction to the Study of Medieval Latin Versification*, translated by G. C. Roti and J. de la Chapelle Skubly (2004), Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, p. 156. The tradition of setting Latin hymns to music continues with contemporary composers such as Cecilia McDowall, <http://www.ceciliamcdowall.co.uk/> and Carl Rütli, <http://www.ruettimusic.ch/>
3. The Latin lyric for *In Pace* was adapted by Russell Jackson. For Patrick Doyle's filmography, see his official site, [http://www.patrickdoylemusic.com/Patrick\\_Doyle\\_Music/Home.html](http://www.patrickdoylemusic.com/Patrick_Doyle_Music/Home.html). Doyle also used excerpts from the *Dies Irae* sequence in the horror movie *Needful Things* (1993).
4. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaudete>



5. The text and translation are those from the album sleeve. Also available online at various places, including:

<http://www.majicat.com/recordings/translations.htm>

6. Norberg, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

7. The Enya songs are *Cursum Perficio* from the album *Watermark* (1988), *Afer Ventus* from *Shepherd Moons* (1991), *Pax deorum* from *The Memory of Trees* (1995), and *Tempus Vernum* from *A Day without Rain* (2000). All texts can be found online at: <http://www.pathname.com/enya/>. The translation is mine.

8. For shepherd moons, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary\\_ring](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary_ring)

9. The text and translation are taken from the website

<http://www.metal-archives.com/bands/Nazgul/7829>

If you are feeling brave you can listen to *Elficidium* and the rest of the album on YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0QXnVeZHWk>

10. The text and translation of the anthem are from

<http://www.hymnus-europae.at>

11. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shepherd\\_Moons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shepherd_Moons)

12. For more on Debbie Wiseman, see <http://www.debbiewiseman.co.uk/>

13. For more on Ian Stephens, see <http://www.ianstephens.net/>

14. I recently (June 2012) stumbled across a new Latin choral work on YouTube, *Evolatio* by Daniel Halle, with text by Luke Ranieri:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7wsH8YiMKw>

\* \* \*

## Versus ex Machina

**Barry Baldwin** on a curious verse-making machine

At the Rugby of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), there were four methods of Latin (and Greek) Verse Composition, described at length by author Thomas Hughes, himself a pupil there under its celebrated Dr Arnold. Seriatim: Traditionary, Dogged, Artistic, Vicarious.



Tom himself followed the Traditionary, culling tags from a couple of inherited *Vulgus*-books, patching them together with the aid of his *Gradus* into scansion and sense, topping off the required eight-line minimum whenever the theme allowed with an all-purpose moralising couplet beginning *O genus humanum*.

Martin (nicknamed 'The Madman' for his obsession with birds' eggs and frequently disastrous scientific experiments in his study) pursued

the Dogged. Having no *Vulgus*-books, he jotted down an octet of English, then with *Gradus* and dictionary hammered these into

any Latin that would scan, regardless of sense, never going beyond the required quota.

Arthur the priggish swot cultivated the Artistic method, perhaps the only one to do so. Eschewing *Gradus* and other aids as much as possible, having considered how best to approach the set theme, he ‘clothed it in appropriate Latin or Greek’, expanding into ten or twelve lines if necessary.

The Vicarious method was practised by hulking lads, bullying or lazy, who simply coerced smaller clever ones to write their verses for them under threat of a thrashing. Hughes, of course, deprecates this (‘a method not to be encouraged, and which I strongly advise you not to practice’), predictably urging the Artistic method, albeit admitting (*experto crede*) to his own recourse to *Vulgus*-books.

Incidentally, Hughes is a bit muddled in his discourse on the Dogged method. Having said that Martin slogged his way ‘by main force of *Gradus* and dictionary’, he goes on to describe the latter’s rejoicing, when invited to use Tom’s study for homework. ‘in the abundance of *Gradus* and dictionary, and other conveniences almost unknown to him, for getting through the work’. What, by the way, were these ‘other conveniences’?

Things had not much changed a century later, judging by this purple passage in C. J. Ellingham’s (one of Kingsley Amis’ school teachers) ‘Apology for the Practice of Latin Verse Composition’, *Greece & Rome* 4, 1935, 151-152:

'We can picture the schoolboy, with Dictionary and *Gradus* and a small store of juvenile cunning, embarking upon a rendering of "Welcome, wild northeaster". He draws his seven vertical lines to mark the limits of the six feet, fills the last space with the obliging *Eurus*, eight points at most off the required bearing, consults the *Gradus* and helps himself to *turbidus* for the fifth foot and *ingenti strepitu* to start the line sonorously, pads the middle with *flabat iam*, and turns to the pentameter. He looks up "welcome" in the Dictionary and *gratus* in the *Gradus*, picks *amandus* as the most accommodating synonym, and in ten minutes, which is very good going, has produced his first couplet ... It looks somewhat diffuse, and he wishes he could hit upon a device for getting it into the present indicative, but at least it scans.'

At the Lincoln School where I versified in the Classical VIth, we had *Gradus*, dictionary, and A. C. Ainger's *Clivus* for Latin and *Iambica* for Greek – godsend both. No *Vulgus*-books, though, the only one in evidence belonging to the beak who took us for Latin Verse Composition, namely *Versus Wufrenses*, a volume preserved from his own schooldays at Wolverhampton, consulted by him as the ultimate authority. By singular chance (or was it more?), this dominie was also a Church of England parson, while the one who took us for Greek Verse was a Methodist lay preacher.

Although – that's my story and I'm sticking to it – aspiring to the artistic method (despite everything, I enjoyed verse composition), I spent a deal of time between Traditionary and Dogged – the Vicarious was not an option. I had no idea at the time, and neither master (assuming they knew) ever let on, that about half-way between Hughes' and Tom's Rugby days, an intriguing mechanical *Gradus-cum-Vulgus* had been sprung on London to great sensation. As described by the advertising handbill, this was:

THE EUREKA  
A MACHINE FOR  
MAKING LATIN VERSES  
EXHIBITED DAILY

From 12 to 5, and from 7 to 9 oClock

WITH  
ILLUSTRATIVE LECTURES  
ADMITTANCE ONE SHILLING

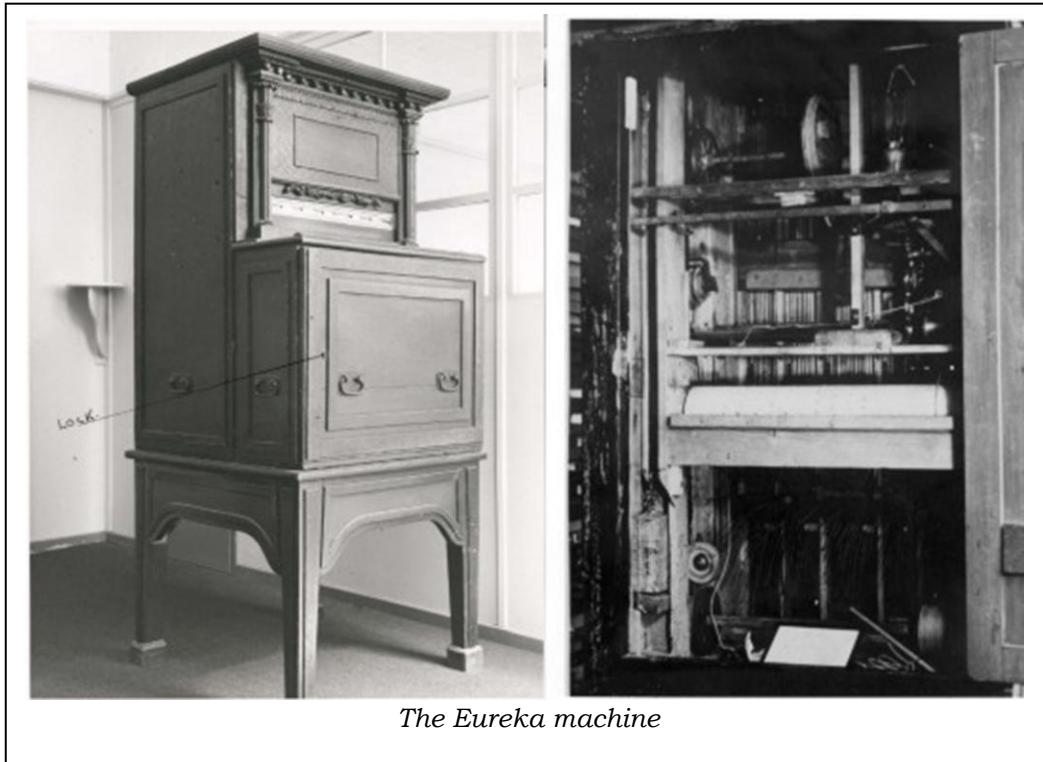
Despite this steep price – a bob was a bob in 1845 – *hoi polloi* flocked (how many would today?) to see it in action at the Egyptian Hall in Picadilly, realising much media attention and a handsome profit. The *Illustrated London News* (of hallowed memory: it used to be one of THE places to look for the latest archaeological discoveries) ran (July 19, 1845) a lengthy article (with picture), reproduced in full by the Wikipedia notice. Far too long for full transcription here, I give its salient points:

'The exterior of the machine resembles, in form, a small bureau book-case ... The rate of composition is about one verse per minute ... During the composition of each line, a cylinder in the interior of the machine performs the National Anthem ... As soon as the verse is complete, a short pause of silence ensues ... On the announcement that the line is about to be broken up, the cylinder performs the air of 'Fly not Yet', until every letter is returned into its proper place in the alphabet ...'

Its begetter clearly understood the value of lapel-grabbing techniques, with his dramatic pauses and musical *mélange* of patriotism and pop, albeit one anonymous visitor (Littell's *Living Age* 7, 1845, 214, quoted by a P. A. Nuttall) found the device 'without immediate utility', whilst it naturally prompted an immediate squib in *Punch* 9, 1845, 20, claiming that after its demonstration 'Several double-barrelled Eureka's were ordered for Eton, Harrow, and Rugby'. Looking at the picture induces in myself a conflation of Heath Robinson and the Wizard of Oz. I can save space by referring *Vates* readers to the full account by D. W. Blandford, 'The Eureka,' *Greece & Rome* 10. 1, March 1963, 71-78, available on-line, acknowledgely drawing upon the C. & J. Clark Records Office. Since Blandford (who likens it to an automatic vending machine) comports no other bibliography, I may add that a long article on the Eureka was published in Chambers's *Edinburgh Journal* 13, March 30, 1850. much of which is reproduced in an article by Edward Bensley in *Notes & Queries*, series 2 no. 3, April 1, 1911, 249-250, postluded by brief addenda specifying earlier N&Q items from contributors 'W. C. B.' and 'Diego' – all available on-line.

Restoration of the Eureka in 1951 inspired R. Clark's 'Barbara Froena Domi Promittunt Foedera Mala,' in (ed. P. Lovell) *Somerset Anthology* (York: Sessions, 1975), 96-102; also an unpublished 8-page memorandum dated March 8, 1951, 'Notes on the Mechanical Construction of the Machine for Composing Hexameter Latin

Verse,' by one C. Foster. Clark's title is a verse generated by the machine – note the 6th foot!. The Eureka is also featured in (ed.) Brian Randell, *The Origins of Digital Computers, Selected Papers* (Berlin: Springer, 3rd ed. 1982).



Jason David Hall, 'Popular Prosody: Spectacle and the Politics of Victorian Versification,' *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 62, 2007, 222-249, available on-line, reproduces much of Blandford (duly acknowledged), with bibliographical amplification, before seeking to place it (the influence of Christopher Stray's many books and articles is palpable) within the context of contemporary Latin Verse practice and debates over its methods and overall utility. There is interesting material here, spoiled by frequent abominations such as: 'There existed an intertextual dialectic in which the Eureka can be seen to operate synecdochically.' I subjoin the following horrors

from Hall's Abstract as an example of the current gruesome academic Newspeak:

'The Eureka was at once the uncanny technological embodiment and a parodic indictment of the Victorian science of prosody, and it functioned, moreover, as an interactive discursive site .. the Eureka figured as the material signifier of an education-minded reform agenda that was, by and large, hostile to the centrality of prosody in Victorian pedagogy.'

*Caveat Lector!* We may suppose that those who were challenging the need to abide by strict rules of classical prosody would have appealed to Tom Brown and Martin ('The Madman' would anyway have been fascinated by the technology that built the Eureka), though Arthur would naturally have been disapproving.

The Eureka was the brain-child of Somerset native John Clark. Born (1785) in Greinton, he attended school before living with an uncle at Glastonbury before moving to Bridgwater, where after a spell of grocering he became a printer, most notably publishing the first (1837) and final (1848) editions of his own *General History and Description of a Machine for Composing Latin Hexameter Verses*, still available according to Google.

Blandford somewhat unfairly characterises Clark as 'an eccentric genius'. 'Unbusinesslike' better suits. When not mechanising Latin Verse, he invented a pneumatic mattress (a similar device is later parodied in Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow*), also a waterproof cloth, the patent of which he unwisely sold to a cannier fellow who made a fortune by turning this into our familiar Macintosh raincoat.



After the 1845 show, Clark retired to Bridgwater with his takings, dying there in 1853.

As said, the machine and its workings are fully described and illustrated both by Blandford and the Wikipedia entry. A contraption working by a combination of weights, pulleys, and gear wheels, requiring frequent windings-up like a grandfather clock, it might be seen as a cross between primitive computer (coincident as Clark's first steps were with Babbage's steam-powered calculator 'Difference Engine Number One') and jukebox.

Its literary capacity was an impressive twenty-six million different Latin hexameters, at a Stakanhovite production rate of one a minute or if operating continuously without the stop about 1,440 verses per 24 hours or some 10,000 in a seven-day week. As A. S. Gratwick remarks ('The Latin Hexameter,' *Classical Review* 40, 1990, 341), 'this was a more fun way to engage with versification because you got your hexameter one tantalising word at a time'.

Unlike Martin's Dogged Method, the lines make sense. In quality, they resemble Tom's more than Arthur's. Most (Blandford's words) are 'solemn or prophetic, not to say trite', described by an inscription on the machine as 'eternal truths'. The scansion is unvarying, the verb always a *molossus* (three longs), never an elision. Blandford thought that more metrical variety would have been produced if Clark had programmed the so-called 'Golden Line', whilst admitting that fewer words meant fewer permutations.

In its present state, the Eureka's capacity is much diminished. Blandford provides lists of the words that can be formed from the six working drums. Apart from a trio of apparently non-existent words (*casuabunt*, *sequa*, *trucida*) and the odd misspelling, Blandford stigmatises three metrical errors, namely long -o in *cito* and *puto*, plus long first -a in *mala*: following (e.g.) the Oxford Latin Dictionary, we might reduce this list to a couple, the final -o in *puto* seemingly flexible, and one might adduce the frequent licence in such endings allowed to themselves by Silver Age Roman poets.

As Blandford reports, after Clark's death in 1853, the Eureka went first to his nephew Metford Thompson (who left some notes on it, reprinted in the June 1952 issue of the factory magazine *Clark's Comment*), then to his cousins in Street, Cyrus and James Clark, founders (1825) of the C. & J. Clark shoe business. After a sojourn at the Crispin Hall Museum in Street, it was moved to its present home in the Clark factory. Aubrey Clark, elder son of Cyrus, had diverted himself with it, but after his death in 1890, it fell into disuse until restored in 1950 by Charles Foster of the Powers Samas Company, which made calculating machines. He was assisted by 'valued help from Mr Husband, Head of the Technical School (who specialises in old clocks)', also by a somewhat mysterious pensioner, one Mr F. Berry. Foster deprecated Thompson's comparison of the Eureka to a kaleidoscope, also ridiculing any notion of its 'miraculous powers', this absurdity stemming from Thompson's claim that Clark's idea

‘was suggested by some papers connected with Glastonbury Abbey. It is certain that the machine was conceived at the Abbey by some of its former occupants.’

‘Certain’ is pushing it rather. But, it offers a cue for looking into other possible influences on Clark’s brainchild. On September 29, 1677, one John Peter distributed a pamphlet containing tables of letters under the title *Artificial Versifying: A New Way To Make Latin Verses*. He apparently had in mind a machine that could (paraphrasing his actual words) make people quite ignorant of Latin capable of constructing hexameters and pentameters that would scan and make sense.

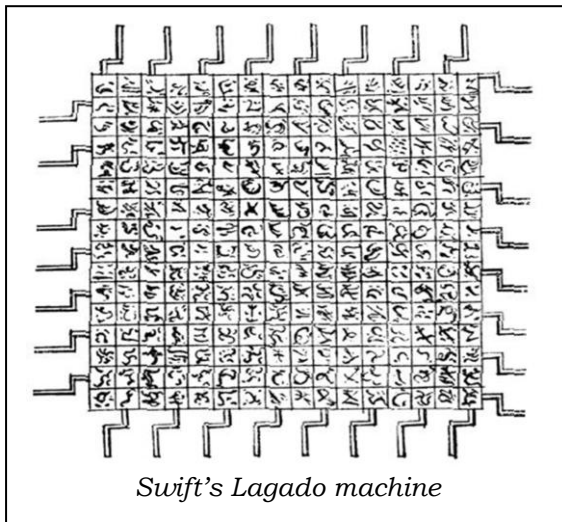
Peter was granted a patent on October 15, 1677. Little is known of him, save he was apparently a physician. His versifying method was developed with due acknowledgement (also crediting Peter with ‘an air of mystery’) by Solomon Lowe in his *Arithmetic: In Two Parts* (London, 1749), who calculated millions of possible verse combinations (detailed by Bensley, *Notes & Queries*, April 1, 1911, 249-50).

We can’t know if Clark was aware of these by now obscure texts. His deep and abiding interest in inventions and Latin verse may well have led him into investigating possible forerunners. And, if not, he would have been shaken by a letter in the *Athenaeum* (July 5, 1845, 669) pointing them out.

However, it is a very good bet that he had read *Gulliver’s Travels*, in whose Grand Academy of Lagado section (bk5 ch3) Swift

envisages a machine made of wood with bits of paper containing words, linked together with slender wires. In his own words:

'By the professor's contrivance, the most ignorant person, at a reasonable charge, and with a little bodily labour, might write books in philosophy, poetry, politics, laws, mathematics, and theology, without the least assistance from genius or study ... at every turn [sc. by pupils manipulating iron handles], the whole disposition of the words was entirely changed ... the engine was so contrived that the words shifted into new places, as the square bits of wood moved upside down.'



Have we here two possible inspirations for George Orwell's writing machine in 1984? His famous essay *Politics v. Literature* was on Swift, dubbing him 'one of the greatest imaginative writers

who ever lived'. His own imagined machine is described as 'a special kind of kaleidoscope known as a Versificator'. Orwell could have remembered hearing about the Eureka (why else call his machine a 'Versificator', this word being very rare in Latin and English) from his Eton classics teacher Andrew Farrar Sydenham Gow, a Greek poetry specialist with whom Orwell kept in touch until his death. Orwell, who did well in school Greek and Latin, stored up tidbits of exotic information throughout his life, for example recounting in a *Tribune* essay (July 7, 1944) the tale (now widely disbelieved) of Caliph Omar burning the Alexandrian

Library: 'I remember that when I read about this as a boy it simply filled me with enthusiastic approval. It was so many words less to look up in the dictionary – that was how I saw it.'

(A possible seed planted here for Syme's rhapsodic account of the destruction of words in the Newspeak Dictionary's latest edition?)

Now, some Eureka mysteries, unremarked by Blandford and everyone else, thanks no doubt to their obscure and unexpected sources. They begin with Clark the inventor's great-niece, Margaret Thompson Sturge, who records in her *Memories and Echoes of Earlier Days* (1904, here quoted from Clark's *Comments*, June 1952:

'Father would take us to call on John Clark at his house in Eastover. He would show us the Latin Verse-Making machine which he had invented, and let me put in a penny and see the couplet come out.'

This sets me humming Teresa Brewer's 1950 hit number 'Put another nickel in/ In the Nickelodeon/ All I want is Lovin' you/ And Music, Music, Music!' Penny-in-the-slot will also remind fellow-oldies of 'spending a penny' in public lavs. But there is no question that the Eureka was operated by a lever and disgorged not couplets but one verse at a time, hence this penny-dropping is either a childhood fantasy or some trick devised by Clark to entertain the little ones, whose interest in Latin verse was probably not great.

Tim Crumplin of the Clark factory has among many other kindnesses supplied me with both the Clark's *Comments* magazine

and an uncatalogued manuscript from the archives describing a planned BBC wireless programme on the Eureka in its Western regional series *On The Air*. The magazine reports that Mr A. Saintsbury, classics master at Millfield, was on hand, as the machine's trial run cranked out the line *fervida sacra foris producunt verbera mira* ('fervid sacred performances out-of-doors produce wonderful blows'), evoking Mr Saintsbury's spontaneous riposte, 'The Salvation Army, of course'.

The uncatalogued item (28 pages, abounding in typographical errors, marginal queries, and wholesale pencilled deletions) is clearly a draft or dummy of the half-hour programme, scheduled for 1952, the alleged centenary of Clark's death, a bit premature for one who actually died on May 23, 1853. Mine host was actor-writer Felix Felton (I recently saw him as the crusty mayor in that venerable British picture *It's Trad, Dad!* starring Helen Shapiro, Craig Douglas, and a host of jazz and pop performers with concomitant DJs). Felton recalls his own schoolboy Latin verse efforts, though is not quite accurate on hexameter rules, also misquoting the *Aeneid's* opening line.

How the programme turned out, neither Tim Crumplin nor I know. But, the biggest mystery looms. In his memoir *Two-Way Story* (1986, pb. 1987, 151), Cliff Michelmore, who with Jean Metcalfe presented the *Two-Way Family Favourites* of hallowed memory, describes the following episode of the BBC television

programme *Westward Ho!* in 1954 or 1955 (Cliff's chronology is a bit vague, but it can be narrowed down to one of these two years):

'We brought into the studio an ancient machine which had recently been discovered in a house in Bath. The machine purported to turn out Latin hexameters at the pull of a lever. As the man demonstrated this literary computer, it started to come apart at the joints, but, undeterred, he kept pushing and pulling at its levers. Latin words dropped into window slots with a clank and a clatter. I was totally bemused by the whole affair. In the studio that evening were two young men who had just been taken on by the BBC as general trainees. One of them came across the floor to take a closer look. 'But that is not an hexameter, it only has five instead of six feet.' Now as one who does not know a Latin hexameter from an iambic pentameter, I was quick to profess my ignorance. Just as well, really, as the young BBC trainee was Alasdair Milne, now Director General of the BBC.'

Milne began as trainee in September 1954, so the programme cannot have been before then. Questions tumble out like the Eureka's verses. What was the machine (Michelmores never calls it Eureka) doing in Bath, a city with which Clark and descendants have no evident connections, and not mentioned by Blandford and others in their accounts of the machine's various lodgings? Who was the anonymous man demonstrating the machine? Why was it so dilapidated after Foster's repairs? It was working in 1963 when the revamped factory magazine Clark's Courier reported a visit by some Westminster schoolboys to see in it action.

Tim Crumplin tells me he can find no corroboration of this programme. Both it and the 1952 wireless one (of which Michelmores shows no awareness) were made under the BBC's Western aegis. No sign of Michelmores or Metcalfe in the latter,

made with Felton as writer-host and Desmond Hawkins as producer.

Has Michelmores's memory played him false? Or, may we indulge in the ultimate fantasy of a second, otherwise unattested mechanical verse-maker?

Apropos of this, it is worth recalling that in 1846, one year after the Eureka's debut, also at the Egyptian Hall, also for a bob admission. Professor Joseph Faber exhibited his Euphonia, a polyglot (including Greek and Latin) automaton (full account in Richard D. Altick's *The Shows of London* (1978), 353-6; cf. 356 for the Eureka). Their similarities caused confusion between the two machines' inventors and dates in M. L. R. Breslar's 'Latin Hexameters by Machinery,' *Notes & Queries* March 4, 1911, 168, and the anonymous 'Latin Versification for the Million,' Chambers's *Edinburgh Journal* 13 (March 30, 1850), 205-207.

Before *Vates* readers start organising charabanc tours to Street, I must sadly (*O Mores! O Tempora!*) point out that the Eureka is currently unavailable for public viewing, being in temporary storage in the custody of the Alfred Gillett Trust, which is now responsible for the care of the company's heritage collections. But, in a welcome reversal of *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*, there are plans afoot to move the Eureka into a new home in Grange Street, Street, and make it available to the public, perhaps again in full working order, if planned efforts to achieve this by University of Exeter staff members come off – *Spes Manet ...*



*Post Scriptum:*

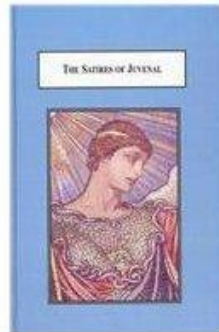
*Versificator ego tantum, non scribere possum  
carmina digna deo: ridet Apollo meis.  
machina sed Clarki manet immortalis in aeuum  
et quae produxit carmina semper erunt.*

(I am just a versifier, can't write poems worthy of a god: Apollo laughs at my efforts. But Clark's machine remains immortal, and the lines which it produced shall live for ever' – B.)

[A somewhat different version of this article appeared in *Fortean Times* 280 (July 2011), 38-40; I am grateful to editor David Sutton for permission to exhume the overlapping materials]

\* \* \*

## Book Review



### *The Satires of Juvenal: A Verse Translation*

by Chris Kelk

Edwin Mellen Press Ltd, 2010

ISBN: 978-0773414259

RRP £99.95 / \$149.95

This translation makes a very significant contribution to Juvenalian scholarship. Its major achievement is to give us back Juvenal the POET in a very literate and literary rendering which provides for those unable to read the Latin language a true taste of the poetry rather than just the content of Juvenal's satire. The recent translations by Green (revised) and Rudd are very much of the school of domestication (putting the source text into contemporary culture) and transparency (making the translator invisible by producing a translation that does not read as a translation). By way of contrast Kelk eschews their trendy and ephemeral tendencies, refuses to patronize his readers and goes instead for a version that brings out the foreignness of the source text and does much to capture the high style that is a distinguishing mark of Juvenalian verse. He also captures his author's linguistic force (for example, at 3.76 he has the admirable

‘scum’ for *faecis*, and at 5.73 the blunt ‘every piece of shit’ for *omnia...frivola*). In addition, it has been remarked shrewdly that translation is the most succinct form of commentary, and Kelk often presents his readers with startling new insights (for instance, at 10.18 for Juvenal’s *quanto delphinis ballaena Britannica maior* he has ‘as over dolphins looms the British whale’, which not only captures the Latin word order but also incorporates a vivid pictorial touch which has hitherto not been noted by scholars).

The start of his version of the third satire is a good example of his qualities:

*Though pained to see a longtime friend quit Rome,  
 Yet I applaud him, for he’s found a home  
 In bare Cumae: the Sibyl now can boast  
 Her one and only citizen; its coast  
 Is charming and secluded and the gate  
 To Baiae. Prochyta I’d surely rate  
 Far over the Subura. For what place  
 Is there so drab and distant that you’d face  
 Instead collapsing roofs, houses igniting  
 And countless other risks, poets reciting  
 Throughout all August?*

He may have been unable to work in the Latin poet’s *saevae urbis*, but he has caught a great deal with felicity and fidelity (faithful to

the spirit as well as the letter). There is the pointed rhyme *Rome-home* in the first two lines; Juvenal's *tam miserum, tam solum* is rendered with 'so drab and distant', combining the well chosen 'drab' with alliteration; and the pawky rhyme igniting-reciting at the end catches well Juvenal's humorous anticlimax. Here as elsewhere Kelk does not baby the reader with explicatory translation, does justice to tone and mood, and achieves clarity and ease of flow, despite the very real restrictions of a rhyme scheme. In fact his rhymes are seldom stilted and usually add force to his translation (as at 3.11f., where he says of the Greeks 'this nation/ Past masters at adulation'). Also worthy of comment is his feel for language, which is another characteristic that puts him head and shoulders above most other translators of the poet (so at 10.47f. he has 'bust a gut in gales of constant cachinnation', which presents us with the typically Juvenalian combination of high style and colloquialism that gives his satire so much of its power).

All in all this is a bold new rendering of Juvenal's verse as verse which performs a major service for Latinless readers.

**Paul Murgatroyd**

\* \* \*

## *De gustibus non est disputandum*

Letters to: [vates@pineapplepubs.co.uk](mailto:vates@pineapplepubs.co.uk)

Dear *Vates*,

*quomodo nunc poteris te ipsum superare? uidetur*

*hic VATUM quartus numerus pulcherrimus esse.*

*atqui, certus sum, te ipsum superabis, amice,*

*quando quinto ad nos certamine uenerit aura.*

*mens humana potest, doctissime Marce, animose*

*uincere quod numquam possunt mortalia uerba.*

*Cura ut semper valeas et accipe laudes magnas.*

*Iosephus Tusiani*

*Novi Eboraci, Cal. Nov. MMXi*

\* \* \*

Dear *Vates*,

I have been enjoying the latest issue of *Vates*, and was especially moved by Joseph Tusiani's poem, *Pro Senectute Mea* [IV:29]. I have, since adolescence, developed an idiosyncratic approach toward judging or appreciating a poem. I know that I am mining gold when I read something which causes me to say to myself, "I wish I had written that!"

*continue moueant pedes, et longa dies sit poetae nostro!*

Bob Zisk

\* \* \*

Dear *Vates*,

*Casanova, Latin Lover*

Writing about his relationship with Casanova, Mozart's librettist Lorenzo da Ponte records in his *Mémoires* (p. 117 in J. B. Lippincott's 1929 translation): 'A short time before I left Venice a difference of opinion as to some fatuous point of Latin prosody estranged him from me - that eccentric man would never be left in the wrong.'

This anecdote is hotted up in Edouard Maynial's *Casanova and his Time* (London, 1911, p. 203) to: 'They came to daggers drawn about it, after a puerile debate.' The prosodic point at issue is not disclosed, and Rodney Bolt has no disclosure in his superb biography of da Ponte, *The Librettist of Venice* (New York, 2006, p. 87). We must hope that our esteemed editor never finds himself thus duelling with some aggrieved neo-Latin poetaster.

When Casanova was 11, a dinner guest of his father's handed the lad a copy of the following couplet:

*discite, grammatici, cur mascula nomina cunnus  
et cur femineum mentula nomen habet*

One may wonder what sort of 'gentleman' would address such a question to a mere boy. Still, he was English, which may explain it. Undaunted, the lad promptly dashed of his answer in this pentameter:

*disce quod a domino nomina servus habet.*

Shades of things to come!

Barry Baldwin

\* \* \*

## *Contributors*

**Timothy Adès** has degrees in Classics and International Business. He translates mainly French, German and Spanish poems into English, tending to work with rhyme and metre. His three books to date are: Victor Hugo, [poems from] *How to be a Grandfather*, Hearing Eye 2002; Jean Cassou, *33 Sonnets of the Resistance (composed and memorised in a Vichy prison)*, Arc Publications 2002; Cassou, *The Madness of Amadis*, Agenda Editions 2008.

- <http://www.timothyades.co.uk/>

**Lucius Alter** currently lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has been a restaurateur, and has taught *World Religions* and *Classical Languages*. He has also taught courses on planning and zoning issues and construction and design topics as they relate to community based low income housing development. He was a proposal writer for not-for-profit community organizations involved in poor peoples' housing and in ex-offender training and reintegration, and he did stints as a community organizer, an advocate for the homeless, and Director of Technical Services for New York City's now defunct Division of Homeless Housing Development.

**Barry Baldwin** was born a true 'Lincolnshire Yellowbelly', but emigrated first to Australia, thence to Canada, where he is Emeritus Professor of Classics (University of Calgary) and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He has published 12 books and c.1000 articles/reviews *apropos* Greek, Roman and Byzantine history and literature, Neo-Latin Poetry, Samuel Johnson, Modern English Literature, and the more arcane field of Albanian history, language and literature. Has also published c.70 short stories, mainly mysteries, and freelances on a farrago of subjects for various magazines. He remains a far-off fan of Lincoln City and Nottingham Forest.

**Chris Kelk** has an MA from St. Andrews, a Dip. Ed. from Oxford and an MA and PhD. from McMaster in Hamilton, Ontario. He spent two years teaching Latin in Freetown, Sierra Leone from 1967 to 1969 and has been a professional actor since 1973. He also won a medal at the Boston Marathon in 1975 with a time of 2:28:38!

**Jan Křesadlo** was the primary pseudonym of Václav Jaroslav Karel Pinkava (1926-1995), a Czech psychologist, polymath and polyglot, composer, mathematician, prizewinning novelist and poet. An anti-communist, Pinkava emigrated to Britain with his wife and four children following the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. He worked as a clinical psychologist until his early retirement in 1982, when he turned to full-time writing.

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan\\_Křesadlo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Křesadlo)

**Paul Murgatroyd** is a professor in the department of Classics at McMaster University in Canada. He is the author of ten books and over 60 articles on Greek and especially Latin literature, and is at present working on a critical appreciation of Juvenal *Satire* 10. He has also published original Latin poetry and translations, a collection of which was issued by the Edwin Mellen Press in 1991 as *Neo-Latin Poetry A Collection of Translations into Latin Verse and Original Compositions*.

**Richard Sturch** is a retired clergyman of the Church of England who read Classics at school and at University, but had only sporadic contact with neo-Latin thereafter. (He recalls translating an 'Horatian ode' by the late Dr. Eric Mascall, himself the author of a splendid Latin parody of St Thomas Aquinas). He is currently engaged in translating Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* into Latin.



**Mark Walker** is the editor of *Vates*. His latest book, is [Hobbitus Ille](#), a Latin translation of Tolkien's classic, published by HarperCollins in September 2012. He has also translated Geoffrey of Monmouth's [Life of Merlin](#) from Latin into English verse (Amberley Publishing, 2011).

- [www.pineapplepubs.co.uk](http://www.pineapplepubs.co.uk)

**Brad Walton** lives in Toronto. He did a BA in Classics and graduate work in Theology, which seems to have been a dreadful mistake. His study of Jonathan Edwards (*Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections, and the Puritan Analysis of True Piety, Spiritual Sensation and Heart Religion*) was published in 2002. More recently an attempt at Menippean satire, *Peripedemi Perigesis*, was serialized in *Melissa*. His day-job is in the University of Toronto Library. In his spare time he plays theorbo for the Toronto Continuo Collective, directed by Lucas Harris.

\* \* \*

**Look out for the next issue of *Vates* in Winter-ish 2012/13**

*Vates* is available for [free download here](#)



[Pineapple Publications](#)