

VATES

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Edited by Mark Walker
@vatesthepoet

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Editorial

I have been asked on occasion to ensure that all submissions to this journal meet certain prescribed standards – usually prosodic ones. But for me this seems to be missing the point of *Vates*, which has always been to put the *poetry* first. The technicalities of versification may be a necessary but are not always a sufficient condition: a well-formed Latin stanza does not of itself constitute a poem. As Latin poets we do tend, I feel, to get hung up on prosody – important though it is – to the detriment of the actual poetry. Which is why in this issue’s ‘Advice for Beginners’ column I hesitantly remark on the closing of a hexameter line – hesitantly because this is one of those areas where knowing the textbook-prescribed ‘rule’ is one thing, but making one’s own poetical contribution might just be something else entirely.

Also in this issue – aside from a wealth of new poems – Stephen Coombs, whose own collection of original verse was reviewed last issue, makes some fascinating observations on the subtle relationship between poetical content and form (verse metre) in his reflections on the art of translating from one language to another, while Barry Baldwin ambles amiably through Thomas Gray’s Latin.

I’m pleased to note the positive response to my *Vates Anthology* proposal mentioned in the last issue. Over the coming months, as time allows, I will begin the job of compiling material and contacting individual contributors.

* * *

As always I offer my deep gratitude to all the contributors. If you haven’t yet contributed a poem, do please consider having a go. The purpose of this publication is to provide a platform for anyone to try their hand at this ancient art – and I really mean **anyone** – so I encourage you to do so. Don’t forget: if you missed previous issues, please visit the [Vates webpage](#) to download your free copies.

Vates is now on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vates>

Mark Walker, Editor
[@vatesthepoet](#) / [@vatesjournal](#)

Carmina Latina

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

Auletes

Stephen Coombs

[See the author's 'Translation and Self-Translation' below for a commentary on this piece.]

*exstitit auletes in imagine teleuisionis,
uir non iam iuuenis, caluus prope, cui tamen profundi
fulgentesque oculi - pater hercule noscitur Nearchi!*

*expertem uitii uitam tulit halitu Camenis:
nunc formata sono puro labra non secus libido
labe carente satu lucenteque reddidit cubili.*

*uenosis agilis manibus mouet ad foramina ille
nunc digitos olim nostrum quibus egit in theatrum
auricomum aurora claro puerum aetheris nitore.*

*in genito genitorem haesisse quit approbare uultus,
descendisse tyrannum obscurius artis ad nouellum
edendum, imperio ius unius unicum negasse.*

*ecce, uiden? gestum dubiae nimis asperaeque felis
quo mihi sat noto plausum capit et diu peritus
seque recedentem defendere filius scit aequae.*

* * *

Metre: Greater Archilochian

Translation: *The Flautist*

A flautist has appeared in the television image,
a man no longer young, nearly bald,

but with deep and shining eyes - ye gods,
one can see he is Nearchus's father!

With his breath he presented to the Muses a living being
free from flaw; the lips formed now for a pure tone
were in the bedchamber shaped in identical manner
by desire at an unblemished and lucent procreation.

Nimbly with veined hands he now moves to apertures
fingers with which he once delivered
into our theatre a golden-haired boy
with the gleaming clarity of upper air at dawn.

The begetter's face suffices to prove that he has subsisted
in the begotten - that having absolute mastery of his art
he has clandestinely lowered himself to a bringing forth of the new -
that he has denied unique rightness to the sovereignty of one alone.

There! Do you see? The look of an all too doubting
and surly cat, with which (I am quite familiar with it)
even he with his long experience receives applause
and likewise the son has the knack of defending himself as he
retreats.

* * *

The English sonnet of which the Latin verses are a reworking:

The Flautist

The flautist on the television screen,
an ageing, balding man with bright, deep eyes,
brought breath to flawlessness. I realise
these lips that pout for a pure tone have been
conspirators of passion at that clean
and clear conception: nimbly he applies
to fingerholes veined hands which piped the sky's
blond-burnished piccolo on to our scene.
Features conform, confirm the fatherhood:
art's autocrat resorts to samizdat!
Now there, d'you see? The look I never could
mistake of a farouche, untrusting cat
with which the parent still meets his applause
and the son shields himself as he withdraws.

Stephen Coombs 29 December 1968, later revised

* * *

Ars Poetica

Catherine B. Krause

*Jorge Camacho e versione esperantica Catharina B. Krause
interpretata est*

*sententiam contra salsam sed vanam Roberti Frost, poesis
quae interpretatione amittitur non est sed quae manet.*

*homoeoteleuta
numerus
situs verbi alicuius
- ecce medicamen faciei.*

*imagines
sententiae
comparationes et oppositiones
- ecce essentia.*

*alioquin, nemo carmen Gilgami legeret
neque Odysseam,
carmina Domus Tang,
haicua iaponica et tancas
aut tetrasticha Omari Khayyam.*

poesis est quae manet.

* * *

Translation: *Art of poetry* by Jorge Camacho. Translated from Esperanto into English by Catherine B. Krause

despite the witty but ultimately vain words of robert frost, poetry isn't what's lost in translation but what remains.

rhymes
rhythms
the landscape of some word
- that's all cosmetic.

images
concepts

comparisons and contrast
- that's the essence.

otherwise, no one would read the epic of gilgamesh the odyssey
poems from the tang dynasty japanese haiku and tanka the
rubáiyát of omar khayyam.

poetry is what remains.

Original Esperanto version:

<http://jorgecice.blogspot.com/2011/10/arto-poezia.html>

* * *

Epitaphium Ad Me Ipsum

Raúl Lavalle

Raúl writes: I am old, because I passed the *Mimnermi sexaginta*. So it's time to think about death. If you have a little time, noble reader, here is my epitaph.

*lapidem uide pusillum:
ossa quiescunt heic Radulfi.
humilis magister erat
uersus duros et faciebat.
familiam suam amauit,
si non bene, quantum potuit.
forsitan suis amicis
aliquid boni fecerit.*

* * *

Metre: Rhythmic Trochaic

Translation:

Look at this little stone:
Here rest the bones of Radulfus,
Who was a simple teacher
And even wrote hard verses.
He loved his family
Not well but did his best.
Perhaps to his friends
He did some good thing.

* * *

Venustas et Vetustas

Michiel Sauter

Michiel writes: This poem is based on a true story about a bright young woman who went scantily clad to a job interview. She got the job and proudly posted pictures online of herself with her new, yet slightly older employer.

*quid clamitabas? te putasne delectam
ob indolem uel magnitudinem solum?
o gratulemur! o puella uersuta!
apparuisti seminuda patrono
nam uix papillas uix natesque uelasti.
tu foeda non es, caecus ille nequaquam;
Di, num est uetustas fortior uenustate?*

* * *

Metre: Choliambic

Translation:

Why were you shouting out loud? Do you think you have been
chosen
just because of your talent or your brightness?
Oh congratulations! Oh cunning girl!
You showed up half-naked before your employer,
hardly hiding your breasts and buttocks.
You are not ugly, he is by no means blind.
Oh Gods, old age is not stronger than beauty, is it?

* * *

Post Nativitatem Dies Secunda

Joseph Tusiani

*in stabulo solus, sine cantibus et sine donis,
paruulus ecce Puer dormit primumque beatum
somnia habet. sed nunc quid clausos turbat ocellos?
quid tenerum corpus subito fremitu tremefecit?
res dolorosa noua est quam paruus somniat Infans,*

res cui nomen "Crux" damnati dant morituri.

*heu, mala Crux, fuge ab hoc sancto Puero benedicto:
iste Puer non est quem quaeris. eum sine belle
dormire et belle gremium cognoscere matris.
dormi, Infans dulcis. tibi tres reges uoluerunt
cunctorum primum donorum abscondere: somnum.*

Iosephus Tusiani

Novi Eboraci, die xxvii Mensis Decembris MMXIV

* * *

Editor's translation:

In the stable alone, without songs and without gifts,
behold the little Child sleeps and has his first blessed dream. But
now what disturbs those closed eyes? What shook that soft body
with a sudden tremor? The little Infant dreams a new and
sorrowful dream,

which those damned to die call "The Cross".

Alas, baleful Cross, flee from this holy, blessed Boy:
He is not the Boy whom you seek. Allow him to sleep peacefully
and peacefully to know his mother's lap. Sleep, sweet Infant. Three
kings wished to hide the first of all gifts from you: sleep.

* * *

N. pseudonarcissus
(a haiku sequence)

Jacinta Smallhorn

Jacinta writes: Writing first the vernacular version of this haiku sequence, I took no care to count syllables, favouring spontaneity over form. But the subsequent rendering in Latin adheres to the prescribed 17 per stanza. The scientific name for the daffodil's 'trumpet' is *corolla* – a non-Anglicised word which unfortunately translates as 'little garland' (my original English line was 'crisp corolla of sound' – the only part I had to alter in light of the Latin rendering). I don't know which Latin word might otherwise serve...?

I owe the idea for a Latin poem in this form to Catherine B. Krause's *Tres Haicua* in *Vates #11* – many thanks.

Narcissi pseudonarcissi:
mille cornus
uer nuntiantes

labri aurei
rident garriunt basiant –
soni corolla

flos humilis pannose –
nullum possum uidere
praeter te

Zephyri uincunt
inodorationem,
odor ocelli

narratio, nomen,
Linnaeus, Proserpina –
quam falsi in te!

et doctrinae et fabulae
metiuntur aegre
tantum Croceum

*subridens saltans,
saltans moriens,
praecursor euanide*

* * *

Translation: *Daffodils*

a thousand trumpets
heralding the spring

(their) golden lips
laugh, chatter and kiss –
[little garland*] of sound

ruffled rag of lowly bloom –
I can't see past you
to anything else

vernal airs outdrown
(your) scentlessness,
fragrance of the eye

tale, taxonomy,
Linnaeus, Persephone –
how deceived in you!

both lores and legends
can very little span
so much yellow

smiling as you dance
dancing as you die
ephemeral pioneer

*see note above

* * *

Amalasuīntha Lux Hesperīae / Theodahatus Tyrannus

Marco Cristini

Marco writes: Amalasuīntha was the daughter of Theoderic, king of the Ostrogoths, and of Audofleda, a Frankish princess. She grew up in Ravenna together with Cassiodorus and Boethius. Around 515 she married Eutharicus, a Goth from Spain. He should have inherited the kingdom, but he died suddenly in 522, leaving his wife alone with a child, Athalaric. In 526 also Theoderic passed away and Amalasuīntha became regent of Italy. Athalaric was a boy, so she had the real power. Amalasuīntha was a learned woman and a great queen, perhaps the best Italy has ever had. But the Goths didn't like her: she was too 'Roman' and they claimed that Athalaric should be brought up according to the Gothic traditions. The queen had to agree, but it was a bad choice: the young king died in 534 of drunkenness. At this point Amalasuīntha was in a difficult situation: a woman could not reign alone. So she associated to the throne her cousin Theodahad. He promised to leave her all power, but then he exiled and killed her in 535.

Theodahad had two hobbies: philosophy and the neighbour's land. When he lived in Tuscany he used to rob the other landowners of their estates. In 535 he decided to become a kingdom-robber, but he soon understood that ruling Italy was not a pleasant job. So he tried to sell the country to the emperor Justinian. The talks went on for a year, but the Goths suspected Theodahad, so in 536 they elected a new king, Witiges. Theodahad ran away at once towards Ravenna (he was probably going to sail to Byzantium), but a Gothic soldier cut his head before he could reach the city. As the reader will see, I am not very fond of Theodahad. And I'm not the only one: the *Cambridge Medieval History* (Volume II, p. 15) describes him as "impressionable, changeable, unsteady, unreliable, and, in addition, a coward".

Amalasuīntha Lux Hesperīae

*olim regina Gothorum,
olim decus Amalorum,
olim spes Urbis Romanae,
nomen triste nunc inane
in astris abscondita.*

*magno rege Gotho patre,
est nata Francaque matre.*

*adoleuit cum romanis,
christianis et mundanis
libris semper dedita.*

*liberos rex non habebat,
sic regni heres fiebat
qui ducebat hanc uxorem.
nupta patitur dolorem
morte uix credita.*

*post obitum Eutharici
mater est Athalarici
facta mox regina Gothum.
Mulier habet regnum totum,
res numquam tradita.*

*Amalasuintha sola
sed non est magnaue mola
est regni Cassiodoro
quoque sumpta cum decoro,
nulla fama perdita.*

*Gothi tandem non omnino
reginam corde Latino
ferunt et antiquo more
uolunt regem cum clamore
cresci, fide abdita.*

*Athalaricus uitiis
fauet Gothis cum sociis.
Baccho nimis eneruatus
munus obit insectatus,
uita dis impedita.*

*corde matris sic occiso
regina bello prouiso
ad Theodahdo seruandum
nubit regnum, at nefandum
nescit uirum prodita.*

*malus proditor uxoris,
uir prauis saeuique moris
reginam rapit et necat.*

*Sic is spei fila secat
auri ui recondita.*

*Amalasuinthae finis
haec uitae, sed non Latinis
lucis reginae Gothorum,
quae nunc splendet Romanorum
terris iam expedita.*

* * *

Translation: *Amalasantha, The Light of Hesperia*

Once queen of the Goths,
once glory of the Amals,
once hope of the city of Rome,
now sad and empty name,
she is hidden among the stars.

Her father was a powerful Gothic king,
she was born from a Frankish woman.
She became adult among the Romans,
reading very often Christian
and pagan books.

The king did not have sons,
so kingdom's heir would become
the man who'd marry her.
She wed, but suffered a great pain,
because of an unpredictable death.

After Eutharic passed away
the mother of Athalaric
was queen of the Goths.
A woman had a whole kingdom,
no one had ever seen such an event.

But Amalasantha is not
alone and the heavy millstone
of the reign is also sustained
honourably by Cassiodorus,
with no loss of fame.

The Goths, however, didn't love
utterly a queen with a Latin heart
and they claimed loudly that the king
should be brought up according to the barbarian
traditions, having lost the trust in their queen.

Athalaric behaved viciously
with his Gothic friends.

Weakened by Bacchus,
he died having despised his duty,
his life was forbidden by the gods.

The mother's heart was almost transfixed,
but she saw in advance the impending war,
so she married Teodahad
in order to save the kingdom,
but she, betrayed, did not know the man.

The evil traitor of his wife,
a man perverse and cruel,
kidnapped and slaughtered the queen.
Thus he cut the hope's threads
because of the hidden force of gold.

This is the end of Amalasantha's
life, but not, for the Latins,
of the Gothic queen's light,
which now shines free
above the Roman country.

* * *

Theodahatus Tyrannus

*fur Theodahadus
regni uero gradus
dolo conscendisti
et clam necauisti
reginam, tyranne!*

*Tusci latro agri,
rex mentis onagri,
philosophe uilis,
dux Gothis hostilis,
proditor, tyranne!*

*coronam foedasti,
fidem uiolasti,
regnum tradidisti,
pauide fugisti
ad hostes, tyranne!*

*at sors imminebat,
hora nam ruebat:
Gothus tibi cepit*

*caput, non deceptit
fatum tunc, tyranne!*

* * *

Translation: *Theodahad the Tyrant*

Thief Theodahad,
the kingdom's stairs
thou climbed deceitfully
and thou killed in secret
the queen, tyrant!

Thief of the Tuscan land,
ass-minded king,
coward philosopher,
ruler enemy of the Goths,
traitor, tyrant!

Thou polluted the crown,
thou dishonoured the promises
thou surrendered the kingdom,
thou ran away trembling
to the enemies, tyrant!

But the lot overhung,
the hour was rushing away:
a Goth cut your
head, you didn't
deceive the fate, tyrant!

* * *

Sciurus Interfectus

Kyle Gervais

Kyle writes: This past (Canadian) Thanksgiving I had the distinct displeasure of seeing one of London, Ontario's plucky black squirrels run over by an SUV. Overwhelmed by the injustice of the universe, I fought back with an elegy and an invective. I borrow (consciously) from Horace, Catullus, and Virgil, all of whom knew better than I how to deal with these disasters of life.

*parue, miser, subito interfecte, o pulle sciure,
summa brevis uitae spes hiemis secuit.
monstrum ingens praeceps celeres frustra obruit artus,
uoluens per gelidam corpus inane uiam.
irrita uita fuit, mors illacrimabilis (esto):
fama perennis erit, pulle sciure, tua.*

*inflammabo ego te atque uerberabo,
monstrum ingens, nocuum nigro sciuro!
conculcabo (mihi illa sit potestas)
rectorem quoque conscium atque caecum!
tabes corpora uestra digna edet mox;
fama et gloria erit perennis illi.*

* * *

Metre: Elegiac couplets and hendecasyllables

Translation: Poor little suddenly slaughtered black squirrel,
your brief lifespan has cut off your hopes for the winter.
A huge, hurtling monster has crushed your vainly skittering
limbs,
rolling your dead body down the cold road.
Your life was fruitless, your death unmourned (so be it):
the story of you, little black squirrel, will endure.

I'll scorch you and scourge you,
huge monster who hurt the black squirrel!
And I'll stomp (if only I could)
on your driver, so guilty and blind!
Worthy rot will eat your two bodies soon enough;
his glorious story will endure.

* * *

Epitaphs

Paul Murgatroyd

Paul Murgatroyd writes: These are all genuine epitaphs. I took them from G. Grigson *The Faber Book of Epigrams and Epitaphs*, W.H. Beable *Epitaphs Graveyard Humour and Eulogy*, and W.H. Howe *Here Lies*. The metre is Elegiac couplets.

(1)

*hic iacet uxor nostra, recens quae fata subivit;
risus nemo edit, nemo ciet lacrimas.
coniugis umbra meae quid agat, quas venerit oras,
non ullus nunc scit, scire nec ullus avet.*

My wife is dead, and here she lies,
Nobody laughs and nobody cries:
Where she is gone to and how she fares,
Nobody knows, and nobody cares.

(2)

*bustum hoc vincent nulla dehinc monumenta, viator.
hic iacet Augustus: respice, siste, caca.*

Posterity will ne'er survey
A nobler grave than this:
Here lie the bones of Castlereagh:
Stop, traveller, and piss.

(3)

*certe nos cuncti morti debemur acerbae.
fugit vita mihi; iam tibi vita fugit.*

We must all die, there is no doubt;
Your glass is running, mine is out.

(4)

*in tumulto mortem video nunc vincere vitam:
una cum geminis coniugibus iaceo.*

Death here advantage hath of life I spye
One husband with two wives at once may lye.
(Thos. Alleyn and his two wives, 1650)

(5)

*lumina aperta mihi; prospexi lumine cauto;
prospectus piguit; mox mihi carpta quies.*

Oped my eyes, took a peep;
Didn't like it, went to sleep.
(of a baby one month old)

(6)

*qui legis hoc, epulas ego multas usque peredi;
sed me nunc multi vermiculi peredunt.*

Gentle Reader, Gentle Reader,
Look on the spot where I do lie.
I was always a very good feeder,
But now the worms do feed on I.

(7)

*pauper ego vixi, pauper vitamque reliqui.
pauper erat funus; nullus erat gemitus.*

Poorly lived
And poorly died
Poorly buried
And no one cried.

(8)

*ingenio fuit illa bono, nec mente maligna;
docta fuitque loqui, nec fuit illa loquax.*

Her manners mild, her temper such!
Her language good, and not too much.

(9)

*huic nitor (ut queritur lunae de luce viator)
nempe venustus erat, nempe nimisque brevis.*

She had no fault save what travellers give the moon:
Her light was lovely, but she died too soon.

(10)

*ille obiit. paulum conata est illa sine illo
vivere nec potuit. protinus illa obiit.*

He first deceased; she for a little tried
To live without him, liked it not, and died.

(11)

*hac frutices tellure sero, carissima coniunx:
sic isto tumulto vivet adhuc aliquid.
o bene quod quondam frutices, quibus est pereundum,
ad vitam redeunt, tu tamen haud redies.*

I plant these shrubs upon your grave, dear wife,
That something on this spot may boast of life.
Shrubs must wither and all earth must rot;
Shrubs may revive: but you, thank heaven, will not.

* * *

Mea Amica

Catherine B. Krause

Catherine writes: I wrote this as a 'persona poem', from the perspective of a jealous boyfriend dating a language learner.

*mea amica dextera in lingua est
tamen nuper locuta non mihi sed barbaris ...*

* * *

Translation:

My girlfriend is skilled with her tongue,
although lately she has spoken, not to me, but to barbarians...

* * *

Quid Dicat Ille?

Mark Walker

Mark writes: A question I would like all devotees of ancient teachers to ask themselves.

*quid dicat ille rector et magisterque
uestri, quid, ipse nobilis vir, admiror,
quid, si uolubilesque uerba spargentes
uos audiat uetusta, de suis priscis
uerbis loquentes, de suis profundisque
sententiis, itemque de sua mente?
satis benigna uerba, sat, puto, docta
olim fuisse, nec tamen satis certa:
praecepta recte sed modesta narrata,
a posteris piis in arduas sancte
fides pieque nunc fideliter uersa:
quid dicat ille dux modestus admiror?*

* * *

Metre: Scazons ('Limping' iambs)

Translation:

I wonder what would he say, that teacher and guide of yours, that noble man, if he could hear you loudly spreading his dignified words, talking about his ancient pronouncements, about his profound opinions, even about his own mind? They were once reasonably good-natured words, I suppose, and learned too, but not so dogmatic; precepts delivered truthfully but modestly, now by pious posterity piously and faithfully transformed into a hard faith: what would he say, I wonder, that modest leader?

* * *

Book Notice

Anulorum Erus Pars Prima: Anuli Sodalitas

ex Anglico sermone in Latinum conversa a Ricardo
Sturch

428pp hardback. Privately pulished.

Latin-reading Tolkien fans have long waited for someone to take on the almost mind-bogglingly daunting task of translating the whole of *The Lord of the Rings*. The Editor of this journal, having had his own all-too-painful recent experience in this very area, can only marvel that *Vates* contributor Richard Sturch has now completed the first third of his self-imposed labour of love and produced this handsome hardback volume of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Readers have already been treated to a couple of examples of his verse translations (*Vates* #5) and will therefore be in no doubt that when it comes to Tolkien's many songs, Richard has a sure ear for a Latin rendition. To take one small example, Bilbo's "The Road goes ever on" from the very first chapter becomes:

*'Ostium relinquit Via
Pergit in perpetuum;
Via longe praecucurrit,
Sequi est propositum.
Pede persequar beato
Donec fit concursio
Plurimarum semitarum;
Quo me ducant, nescio.'*

The book has been privately printed: all enquiries should be addressed to the Editor here at *Vates* (you can tweet or message on our *Vates* Facebook page if you prefer), who will forward your emails to Richard.

Fifty (-47) Shades of Gray

Barry Baldwin takes a look at the Latin poetry of Thomas Gray

(Albeit comporting much new *Vates*-related material, some of what follows is excerpted from my much more detailed study in the *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 1.1, 1994, 71-88; for permission, I am most grateful to myself)

Thomas Gray's poetry had but three hues: English, Latin, and (occasionally) Greek. 1742 was his watershed year. He abandoned writing Latin verse for English and began the one piece for which he is still remembered, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, which took him at least five years to complete – as Virgil, he composed *more ursae* (“like a mother bear licking her cubs”).

The *Elegy* is one of the English poems most often translated into Latin (sometimes Greek: William Cork's edition (1785) of Aristotle's *Poetics* contains the first known Hellenization, postluded (1871) by that of G. Denman). Usually into elegiacs, less frequently hexameters. Thomas Turk's 'Search and Rescue: An Annotated Checklist of Translations of Gray's *Elegy*.' *Translation and Literature* 22 (2013), 45-73, itemizes 44 Latin versions, a tally matched by Donald Gibson and colleagues in *Thomas Gray's Elegy: Latin Translations 1762-2001* (2008), and C. S. Northrup's Bibliography in the on-line Thomas Gray Archive, 115-120.

Christopher Ansley and William Hayward Roberts set the Latin wheels in motion in 1762, a decade after the original's publication, helped by Gray himself, perhaps for once alert to potential publicity and profits. This industry has paid off handsomely in terms of Google: 3,620,000 sites – a Gray eminence indeed! A letter from Gray to William Mason expresses his pleasure at 'Bob' Lloyd's translation published this same year. Horace Walpole provides similar epistolary evidence (to the Rev. Mr Cole, December 10, 1775) of a Latin version by one “E.B.G.”, identifiable as Edward Burnaby Greene – a brewer, no less. Others soon in the field include Robert Langrische (1775), John Wright (1786), William Woty (1789), and Joh Dupré (1794)

The 19th Century saw a steady periodical flow of Latinizations, frequently anonymous, in (for examples): *Anti-Jacobin Review* 20, May 1805, 443-46; *The Albion* 1, 1823, 247; *Censura Literaria* 10, 1809, 319-24. Individual names pullulate: Nelson Kerr (1802), C. A. Wheelwright (1810), Charles Caleb Colton (1822), D. Barnfield Hickie (1823), Dr Francis Adams (1796-1881, translation date

unverified), Rev. William Hillyard (1839), Henry Liddell (aka Earl of Ravensworth, 1860), J. Pyecroft (1879), Henry Dodwell (1884), Canon J. W. Sheringham – not Teddy S! (1901), William Clarke (1903). Also anonymous ones (1876, 1884).

An especially notable addendum is the elegiac version (1900) by Sir Alexander James Edmund Cockburn, 12th Baronet (1802-1880), a Scotchman celebrated both as advocate and judge, also as socialite and womaniser. A 2011 reprint (Nabu Press), juxtaposing Gray's English and Cockburn's Latin is listed by Amazon.

Also on Amazon is the bilingual *Fallentis Semita Vitae* (1938), its Latin elegiacs the work of the Rev. Percival Robert Brinton (not to be confused – alas – with the homonymous Worcestershire cricketer of that period), a worthy follow-up to his Latin rendering (1934) of Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark*. Professional classicists were frequently attracted to the task, notably Gilbert Wakefield (1788), H. A. J. Munro (1884), S. G. Owen (1898), and most delightfully Benjamin Kennedy (1804-1869), who Latinized two-thirds of his version during an 1887 train journey from Cambridge to Devonshire – how many modern dons could do that? Kennedy's famous *Latin Primer*, which fellow *Vates* veterans were doubtless, as myself, brought up on, was immortalized in the cartoon 'Kennedy captures the gerund and brings it back into captivity' included in G. Willans' Molesworth story *Down With Skool!* (1960). The shorter version (actually his daughters' work) had a comparable distinction, being quoted in Benjamin Britten's opera *The Turn of the Screw* (1952) – at his prep school, Britten was known to be "scared by Latin unseens".

Special mention must also go to no less than Percy Bysshe Shelley, whose *Epitaphion* (1856) puts verses 117-128 of Gray into Latin Sapphics, published in Thomas Medwin's *Life* (1847) and *Nugae* (1856). On Shelley's school Latin verses (unnoticed in Bradner's *Musae Anglicanae: A History of Anglo-Latin Poetry 1500-1925*, 1940), done at Syon House Academy, see the edition (1999) of D. H. Barman and Neil Fraistat, 435-437.

In the abominable (despite Albert Finney and Greta Scacchi) 1994 remake of *The Browning Version* – an insult to the shade of Terence Rattigan – the desiccated Andrew Crocker Harris orders his form to turn into Latin the first four stanzas of Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalot*, "an exercise as pointless as it was prestigious," quips Mary Beard (*Confronting the Classics*, 2013). The infinitely superior 1951 film begins with Michael Redgrave excoriating his pupils for their latest dismal Latin verses. Recurring to Gray,

Kipling's instruction "to elegize the *Elegy*" is taken to mean putting it into Latin by Isabel Quigly in her 1987 edition of *Stalky & Co.*

Sixty-some years ago, our Classical VIth was set to similar muttons. I recall being quite proud of my *Iam campana sonat* for "The curfew tolls..," at least until our Classics beak sniffed, "Well, Baldwin, at least you're in good company." Many years later, I discovered that a goodly number of translators had come up with the identical opening.

The last word on this business may go to James Garrison's *A Dangerous Liberty: Translating Gray's Elegy* (2000), mainly and often rebarbatively (see especially p. 154) dissecting the plethora of Latin efforts

Bradner (241-244) thought highly of Gray's Latin poetry, especially his sapphic ode on the Grande Chartreuse, concluding that "His style is a happy medium between modern originality and classical imitation ... his lines have a thoroughly classical flavor; yet his subjects, in the odes, are characteristically original. The greatest triumph of these poems is their ability to build up an effective atmosphere within a few stanzas" – on this reckoning, Gray would have been a master of the short story.

His best modern editors, H. W. Starr and J. R. Hendrickson (1966) have no doubt (p. 109) that "The Latin Poems, which comprise the greater part of his earlier work, are essential to an understanding of Gray's development both as a writer and as a person" (going on to lament their modern neglect). Likewise, one of his most influential biographers, Robert Mack (*Thomas Gray: A Life*, 2000) insists on the impact of Gray's Latin poetry on his English.

Back in his own time, Samuel Johnson, notoriously no lover – the *Elegy* apart – of Gray's English verses, pontificated: "It may be collected from the narrative of Mr Mason (sc. Gray's friend and biographer -BB), that his first ambition was to have excelled in Latin poetry: perhaps it were reasonable to wish that he had prosecuted his design, for though there is at present some embarrassment in his phrase, and some harshness in his lyric numbers, his copiousness of language is such as very few possess, and his lines, even when imperfect, discover a writer whom practice would quickly have made skillful" (*Life of Gray* 7).

This is the moment to observe that both Gray and Johnson were omitted from J. W. Binns' seminal *The Latin Poetry of English Poets* (1974), who (x) dismissed Gray's as "with the exception of a few odes, unremarkable," and Johnson's on the grounds that they were largely unpublished before his death, being written only for

private amusement – bizarre reasoning. Johnson at least would have appreciated the irony; Gray might well have missed it.

“I asked Mr Gray if he recollected when he first perceived in himself any symptoms of poetry; he answered that he believed it was when at Eton he began to take pleasure in reading Virgil for his own amusement, & not in school-hours, or as a task. I asked Mr Bryant who was next boy to him at Eton, what sort of scholar Gray was he said a very good one & added that he thought he could remember part of an exercise of his on the subject of the freezing and thawing of words, taken from the *Spectator*, the fragment is as follows. .. *pluviaequae loquaces/Descendere iugis, et garrulus ingruit imber*” (“And the babbling rains came down from the heights, and a shower of words fell thick and fast.”)

Thus Norton Nicholls (*Reminiscences of Gray*, 1805, adding much on his classical tastes and gift for coining Greek neologisms), quoting what may be the earliest extant specimen of Gray’s Latin verses. Bryant’s own version mentions that Gray was “rather low in the fifth form when he wrote it. Gray was at Eton 1725-1734; the school’s register for December 1732 places him in the fifth form. One or two other Latin pieces survive that most probably come from his Eton days. His schoolmate was Jacob Bryant (1715-1804), later secretary to the Duke of Marlborough, in which capacity he showed Johnson around Blenheim’s library. He is probably the J. Bryant whose satirical hexameters on the Gin Act of 1736 were printed in the first issue (1755) of *Musae Etonenses*; Bradner (286-289) offers generous extracts and high praise: “As a piece of gay exuberant fun it has few equals in Latin verse. That it should have been done as a school exercise is little short of marvelous.”

As D. C. Tovey (*Gray and his Friends*, 1890, 272) was the first to observe, these lines were not in fact based on anything in the *Spectator* (I confirmed this by browsing through the relevant volumes in D. F. Bonds’ 1965 edition) but on a piece in the *Tatler* (no. 254) on how even words froze in Arctic islands. This essay (by Addison) on what was a popular theme (copiously illustrated in Bonds’ 1967 edition) ranges in quotation from Samuel Butler’s *Hudibras* 1. 1. 48 (“Like words congealed in Northern air”) to the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, whose exile poems written at Tomi (modern Constantza, Romania) with their similar lamentations must also have contributed to this *topos*.

Horace, Ovid, and Virgil are here palpable sources (full details in my *IJCT* forerunner), perhaps also Calpurnius Siculus, assuming an Eton fifth-former would know such an author. In *garrulus imber*, Master Gray seems to have hit off a novel phrase;

the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* affords no example (cf. the *OED*'s 1989 sole pertinent citation, "the stream stayed its garrulous tongue," from L. Morris' *Epic Hades* (1877, 2. 177).

A final point, not previously made. The *Tatler* essay had been published in 1710, in one of its last issues. This use of it, some twenty years later, throws an interesting and perhaps unexpected light on education at Eton at the time: how common was it to base themes for Latin verse on such old magazines? – my school library abounded in nineteenth-century issues of *Punch*, but they were never thus exploited.

As Bradner (242) remarks, it was a common habit of friends in the eighteenth century to exchange letters in Latin verse. Do any *Vates* readers keep up this custom? A close school chum and I used to do this in the long vacation; fortunately, no example survives. The only extant examples are those between Gray and his dear friend and fellow-poet Richard West. The latter's efforts may be seen in William Mason's *Memoir of Gray* (1820) and *Musae Etonenses* (1755), I. 21 & II. 80, plus one sample in Bradner.

West's (1716-1742) early death may have been a key factor in Gray's abandonment of original Latin verse, unless we follow the wondering of A. L. Lytton Sells (*Thomas Gray: His Life and Works*, 1980, 218, attributing this suggestion to his wife, who clearly went beyond the then traditional chore of typing hubby's manuscript) "whether he did not, like Andrew Marvell, first write some of his poems in Latin and then translate them."

This notion certainly eclipses Sell's earlier (216) contention apropos Gray's renderings from the *Greek Anthology* (more on these anon) that "the notion of translating Greek epigrams into Latin could have occurred to no one but a young man." Likewise, nothing justifies the idea floated by Starr and Hendrickson that West's translation of an *Anthology* poem (7. 170 – he teased Gray by not revealing the Greek author) prompted Gray to begin his own work thereon as part of their regular literary rivalries. Against Sells, most moderns (including, eventually, Starr and Hendrickson) assign Gray's versions to his later years. Perhaps rightly. There is no need to compartmentalize them to any particular period. Johnson, to take an obvious parallel, did not do his large sheaf until the last winter of his life, but he had long ago published a couple in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (annotated texts and translations in my *The Latin and Greek Poems of Samuel Johnson* (1995).

This watershed year of 1742 saw Gray's last datable Latin poem, an elegy for the just-deceased West, comprising the 29 hexameters

that are all he achieved of book two of his didactic epic in Lucretian mode *De Principiis Cogitandi*. Far too long to reproduce here, it represents (cf. Bradner, 274-280) a popular contemporary genre.

From the pace-setting John Mitford (1816) on, all Gray's editors have sought for and spelled out the classical echoes and quotations in his (and others – they dominate my notes on Johnson's) Latin verses. This brings up a major issue. Although holding intrinsic interest for students of the classical tradition, compilations of verbal parallels can very quickly become a tedious grind for the readers. But they serve (or should do) as a deterrent against fancy modern 'deconstructions'.

By way of example, consider Jean Hagstrum (*Fearful Joy: Papers from the Thomas Gray Bicentenary Conference at Carleton University*, ed. J. Downey & B. Jones, 1982, 13) on the supposed meaning of Gray's description of the sense of touch in *De Principiis Cogitandi* I. 64-84. According to this commentator, "Touch in Gray's Latin verse is a stunning parallel to the torturing passions of the early odes, those passions that define manhood as a doom. It is an equally stunning description of progenital, pancorporal sexuality, the physical love of boyhood, the kind preferred by those who shun normal adult responsibilities and attach themselves to an earlier, more manageable, and what is regarded as a more pleasurable stage."

Text, translation, and linguistic commentary (too long to reproduce here) are available in my *IJCT* article (73-75). What emerges is the usual farrago of classical tags, lashings of Lucretius along with Ovid, Virgil, and others. It is not easy to reconcile these derivative and sometimes tortured verses with Hagstrum's fanciful findings. Of touch, Gray himself in a sub-heading in the margin of his *Commonplace Book* (preserved at Pembroke, his old Cambridge college) says only that it is "our first and most extensive sense," while about the poem itself (significantly left unfinished) he is flippant and dismissive. In one letter about it, West is told that "poems and metaphysics are inconsistent things. A metaphysical poem is a contradiction in terms. It is Latin too to increase the absurdity. It will, I suppose, put you in mind of the man who wrote a treatise of Canon Law in hexameters." In another epistle, he reports to Wharton that "Master Tommy Lucretius is but a puling chitt yet, not a bit grown to speak of (*sic*). I believe, poor thing! It has got the worms that will carry it off at last."

Even if there is more to the poem than plain cento, and allowing for the fact that original ideas may be expressed in unoriginal language, the sheer accumulation of classical borrowings and

Gray's own dismissive attitude towards a work that (it is worth repeating) he did not trouble to complete, militate against Hagstrum's extravagant interpretation, which is best consigned to *Private Eye's* Pseuds Corner.

In June 1738, Gray sent West a letter, most of which was taken up with a poem in sapphics (Its opening, *Barbaras aedes aditure mecum* – “O Thou about to come with me to barbarous abodes” - indicates a predictable Horatian pedigree) addressed to his friend. There follows a paragraph in Latin, in which he describes his newfound mood of melancholy – also an affliction of Johnson and affectation of Boswell, followed up with no more ado by this single alcaic stanza:

*O lacrimarum fons, tenero sacros
ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
felix! in imo qui scatentem
pectore te, pia Nympha sensit!*

(“O fountain of tears that draw their sacred sources from a tender spirit; four times blessed is he who has felt you, holy Nymph, gushing forth from the bottom of his heart!”)

Although ignored by H. M. Griffin (‘Thomas Gray: Classical Augustan,’ *Classical Journal* 36, 1941, 477 n. 8), and made light of by West himself (“Nor must I forget thanking you for your little alcaic fragment. The optic Naiads are infinitely obliged to you.”), this fragment has been regarded as one of the loveliest things Gray ever wrote in any language. Mason gushed, “No poet of the Augustan age ever produced four more perfect lines, or what would sooner impose upon the best critic, as being a genuine ancient composition.” Likewise, John Sparrow (*Poems in Latin*, 1941, 11, re-echoed in his ‘Gray’s Spring of Tears,’ *Review of English Studies* 14, 1963, 58-61): “At once perfectly Horatian and wholly unlike Horace: so Horace would have said what Horace could never have felt.”

Neither Mitford nor Starr & Hendrickson provide any parallels to this stanza. Sells (156) struck a defiantly dissident note: “It is difficult to understand the motive, or the point, of these verses, particularly the use of the word *quater*. This last can easily be explained by our old friend the classical echo: you can choose between (e.g.) Horace, *Odes* 1. 31. 13, *Dis carus ipsis, quippe ter et quater*, or *Satires* 2. 3. 8, *quattuor ima*; Propertius 3. 12. 15, *ter quater in casta felix*; Virgil, *Aeneid* 1. 94, *O terque quaterque beati*. For (e.g.) Gray’s figurative use of the verb *scatere*, there are

detectable sources in both prose (a letter of Marcus Aurelius to Fronto, also Livy 45. 28. 2) and poetry (Horace again, *Odes* 3. 27. 26-27, and Lucretius 5. 598).

Sparrow went further back, to Biblical sources: Psalm 84 and Jerome's Vulgate ("pools filled with water" and "vales of misery"). A reasonable notion, attractive to some (both Starr & Hendrickson and Roger Lonsdale in his 1969 edition are drawn to it). But I doubt we can go further than allowing this as a possible source, not *the* certain one. For not only is the stanza the usual ragbag of classical tags, the central notion of a fountain of tears is itself pagan, notably in the Attic tragedians, e.g. Sophocles, *Antigone* 803 and *Trachiniae* 852, also Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 888. That these were in Gray's mind cannot be doubted, for the Latin note that prefaces it ends with a close adaptation in Greek of a fragment of Euripides.

It is worth adding how often this image and language recur in Gray's post-Latin English poems: *Agrippina* 182, "Dried the soft springs of pity in my heart;" *Ode to Adversity* 32, "And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear;" *The Bard* 41, "Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart;" *The Power of Poesy* 94, "Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

Citing *Agrippina* is my cue for quoting Johnson's crushing verdict (*Life of Gray* 5): "It was certainly no loss to the English stage that it was never finished."

As prelude to consideration of Gray's Latin translations from the *Greek Anthology*, we must bring his own Hellenic efforts into play. Although he must have done many as schoolboy and undergraduate, if not for personal pleasure in later life, Gray's only extant Greek poem is a four-line epigram about huntsmen's need to respect the grove of Artemis, written in 1742, preserved both in another (no. 110) letter to West and in his *Commonplace Book*.

Gray dubbed it an inscription for a wood in a park. Mitford printed it without title or notes. Starr & Hendrickson call its Greek "a strange mixture of Epic, Doric, and Attic," adding that Gray would have defended it by adducing Pindar. In fact, there is nothing odd about the *mélange* if one looks in the right place, not Pindar but Theocritus (cf. K. J. Dover's 1971 edition (xxvi-xlv) for a clear and detailed exposition), an author we know from an earlier letter (no. 107) to West that Gray was studying in the same month he penned the epigram.

In one of his earliest surviving letters (no. 3, November 17, 1734, to Horace Walpole), the undergraduate Gray kicks off a semi-

serious diatribe against the excessive smoking and carousing of his Cambridge college with a single Greek hexameter:

Pánta kónis, kaì pánta piós, kaì pánta tóbakko
("All is dust, and all is pie, and all is tobacco.")

This verse is a close and agreeable parody of the opening line of an epigram in the *Greek Anthology* (10. 24) by Glycon. It is not included in editions of Gray's poetry, though does scrape a perfunctory mention in a note of Starr & Hendrickson (269).

Labouring explanations of humour are dull affairs, and digging for subtleties beneath a simple text a downright dangerous one. But Gray's parody is cleverer than has been realised. The note by P. Toynbee & L. Whibley in their standard edition (1935) of Gray's Letters states only the obvious: "Gray's *piós* is a pseudo-Greek word to represent 'pie,' as an equivalent of 'pudding.'" Had Gray not been explicit on the pudding business (he here jokes about the universe as "a pudding of elements"), we might have wondered why he did not fabricate *pípos* rather than *piós*, thereby keeping all three nouns in tune with smoking.

I fancy another reason was that Gray was aware that *piós* makes a pun on *péos*, a crude Aristophanic term for penis. This suits his letter, which ranges from overt allusion to a Wycherley joke on making water to upbraiding his college fellows for their "bawdy oaths," also his epistolary relationship with Walpole, to whom four years later he was writing (no. 46) in both suggestive and vulgar terms about low ballads.

Gray might also intend a subsidiary pun on the Shakespearean oath "By cock and pie" (e.g. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* 1. 1. 238. He would later conclude his *William Shakespeare to Mrs Anne* thus: "While Nancy earns the praise to Shakespeare due/
For glorious puddings and immortal pies." He is also (see below) credited with a Latin version of the first dozen lines of John Philips' *The Spenid Shilling*, verses 11-12 of which run "Meanwhile he smokes, and laughs at merry tale,/ Or pun ambiguous, or conundrum quaint."

Likewise, *tóbakko* is surely a conscious pun on the name of Bacchus. This not only fits the general atmosphere of riot and debauchery, but plays with a popular etymology that made Bacchus the discoverer of tobacco. This is developed at length in the Latin epic *Hymnus Tabaci* by Raphael Thorius (d. 1625; cf Bradner, 73), and was still current in a nineteenth-century history of the weed by R. A. H. Morrow, 'Tobacco and its History, in *Prize*

Essays on Tobacco (1889), 7, citing a Reverend Hitchcock. Thorius also inspired a disquisition on the medicinal and other virtues of tobacco by James Howell. *Epistolae He-elanae* (1646), ending with the Latin distich *Ignis amor si sit, tabaccum accendere nostrum, / Nulla petenda tibi fax nisi dantis amor*, rendered by Howell himself as “If Love be fire to light this Indian weed./ The donor’s love of fire may stand instead.”

Starr & Hendrickson (269) adduce this parody as a “slight indication” that Gray’s translations from the *Greek Anthology* come early in his literary chronology. But in fact he would not even need a text of it. Glycon’s original *pánta gélos, kai pánta kónis, kai pánta tò medén* (“All is laughter, and all is dust, and all is nothing”) enjoyed a life of its own as a ‘quotable quote’. Prior had used it as the motto of his *Alma*, thus helping Goldsmith’s crushing verdict, “What Prior meant by this poem I can’t understand: by the Greek motto to it one would think it was either a laugh at the subject or his reader.” Goldsmith himself used *pánta gélos* as the motto for a humorous essay (*Lloyd’s Evening Post*, January 25-27, 1762; cf. Addison’s essay, *Spectator* 72, May 23, 1711) on London clubs which includes remarks about smoking.

There is another tobacco-related item. As said, a hexameter translation of the first twelve lines of John Philips’ *Splendid Shilling* (1701) has been doubtfully attributed to Gray. It is peppered with adaptations and filchings from classical poets, *non deficiente crumena* (= Horace, *Epistles* 1. 4. 11) being the most blatant. A mild obscenity (*non lateri parcat*), not in the original is introduced. A metrical detail of note is the short *a* before *sp* in *scommata spargit*. None of this enhances or weakens Gray’s claims to authorship. However, one trial balloon may be launched. In 1736, Isaac Hawkins Browne published *A Pipe of Tobacco*, a collection of burlesques including one of Philips’ poems. In a letter (no. 144) of 1748, Gray wrote to Walpole, “I gladly pass over H. Brown and the rest to come to you.” If Gray did compose this Latin translation of Philips, it may have been some sort of reaction to Browne, either in or soon after 1736, or around 1748 when Browne was also in his mind. If the latter, it confounds Griffin’s sneer (477 n. 8) that “Gray did later dabble from time to time in Latin verse without, however, executing anything worthy of note.”

According to Mitford (lx), Gray “bestowed uncommon labour on the *Anthologia Graeca*, inserting critical emendations and additional epigrams, besides a copious index.” He gives no examples, or indication of when. Gray left thirteen translations or

imitations in his *Commonplace Book*. All are in elegiacs. Seven come from book sixteen, the Planudean Appendix. They are little read and little regarded (See, e.g., Griffin 477 n. 8 and Sells 216 for typical disparagements). Indeed Latin versions of Greek epigrams might seem to comport small interest, albeit Englishmen had been doing them since Thomas More and Lilly: “Of all Greek writings the *Anthology* exerted the greatest and most pervasive influence on neo-Latin poets” (Bradner 7). But Gray chose to do them (as do some *Vates* contributors); these are not school or college impositions. At the very least, it is interesting to see how he coped with the Greek and problems of translation. What else they tell us about him is open to seek, but one notices how love, passions, and beauty provide most of the themes.

Gray used the 1566 edition of Henri Etienne (aka Stephanus), sometimes absurdly Anglicized as ‘Henry Stephen’. His own copy has so far eluded discovery, going unmentioned in A. Dobson’s ‘Gray’s Library,’ *Eighteenth Century Vignettes* (1892, 136-146). Most convenient nowadays is still W. R. Paton’s Loeb with that series’ standard juxtaposition of Greek texts and English translation, marred only by bowdlerization of sexual content. J. W. Hutton’s two books, *The Greek Anthology in France* (1946) and *The Greek Anthology in Italy* (1935) richly demonstrate the role played by it in European literature to the end of the eighteenth century.

No space here to dissect Gray’s versions; full details in my *IJCT* article, 81-86. Sells (216) regards his rendering of 11. 363 (Agathias) in which a farmer consults a seer-cum-meteorologist about his harvest prospects as the only one of interest or merit. The last one he did was of 5. 74 (Rufinus) on the beauty of lowers and women as equally ephemeral. A much-translated epigram (it was one of Johnson’s), Gray producing a predictable Virgilian pastiche, going so far as to lift wholesale from *Eclogue* 3. 63 the ending *suave rubens hyacinthus*, albeit this flower is not in the original.

Despite its popularity, I am tempted to connect Gray’s choice (also the previous one) with his own keen interest in flowers and weather, movingly evinced in his diary for 1753 in which he painstakingly notes individual blooms, including all the ones in this poem, with sad remarks on their transience, interspersed with Latin descriptions (Johnson here again provides a parallel) of his own ill health at the time; cf. my essay on all this in the sadly defunct *The British Diarist*, November 2003, 187-195.

Likewise, two unremarkable couplets Latinizing 16. 57 & 129) on the common Byzantine theme of strikingly lifelike statues; see

below for the more metrically interesting 16. 119 on the same subject. Art and sculpture tend not to be visible preoccupations of Gray; they do not feature in the indexes of the Toynbee-Whibley edition of his Letters, nor (e.g.) in those of his biographers Sells or R. W. Ketton-Cramer (1955), who pre-Mack held the field. But architecture does. and the study by K. Maclean ('The Distant Way: Imagination and Image in Gray's Poetry,' *Fearful Joy* 136-145) shows an alertness to classical buildings and artworks that more than offsets v. 79 of his *Elegy*: "With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked."

Gray also offers versions of three epigrams (9. 627, 16. 210 & 211) on the theme of the sleeping Cupid, working in the usual tributes to the power of his darts. There are the customary classical tags, mainly from Virgil. More interesting are the hints of personal taste in his marginal notes, e.g. "breathes the softness of Catullus." As their letters (nos. 52, 98, 108) show, both Gray and West thought highly of this Roman poet. In one of these pieces, Gray borrows from him (64. 331) the rare epithet *languidulus*. Also in these versions and their Greek originals are intimations of Gray's English poetry, above all vv. 27-29 of *The Progress of Poesy*: "O'er Idalia's velevelt-green/ The rosy-crowned Loves are seen/ On Cytherea's day."

It was not uncommon for translators of *Anthology* poems to adapt them to contemporary persons or events. Gray may on occasion have done this. Starr & Hendrickson were puzzled by his substitution in 11. 391 of Argus for Asclepiades, the miser in the original. This might be no more a pun on the Greek word *argós* which can refer to money lying idle, obviously in tune with a poem on an ancient Scrooge. Another approach, though, would be to take Argus as a nickname recognisable to Gray's contemporaries. We know from his letters that he regularly dubbed the Duke of Newcastle *Fobus*. It proves nothing, but is worth noting that in his version of the same epigram, Gray's French coeval Poan Saint-Simon (1727-1814) altered the name to *Hermon*, whilst in another one (so Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in France* 574-575) he "applies his version to some personal loss." As a final wrinkle, one notices that *Argus* is an anagram of *Sugar* (did Gray know anyone by this name?), also of *Graus*, dog-Latin for Gray himself.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* (July 1801, 591), Edmund C. Mason stated that, after taking his A.B. degree, Gray was inspired by a discussion over the charms of rival mistresses to hit off "a very masterly imitation of Martial," printing this with an alleged Greek

version by West. I did not think I was very brilliant in recognizing that the poem as given is in fact Catullus 86, with the proper names Quintia and Lesbia changed to Fulvia and Caelia. Yet Starr & Hendrickson printed it as possibly by Gray. Only then was the Catullan pedigree pointed out, by E. J. Kenney (*Notes & Queries* 212, 1966, 464), thus eliminating the piece from Lonsdale's edition, not to mention my own brief hopes of a scoop!. Kenney ended with the expostulation "But what a commentary on the state of classical education in England between 1801 and 1966 that I should have had to write this note!"

This delayed recognition (I am amazed that Mitford with his sensible reservations about absence of any manuscript or other corroboration did not spot it) may enhance the need for a classical presence amongst interpreters of the Latin verse of English poets. Still, it is not impossible that Gray might have knocked off this squib, dampish though it seems to us. The point would obviously be in his substitute names. For easy instance, Fulvia could suggest the name Brown(e) or simply the colour of the lady's hair, whilst Caelia might smack of bibulous habits, *caelia* being a Latin word for beer. Mason disguises the English names as Miss D-me and Miss C-t-y, afterwards Mrs H-g-m. I can find no one to match, but perhaps some more expert prosopographer of the period might.

Seems only right and proper to end a *Vates* piece with a few metrical matters; I imagine its contributors have their problems of prosody. When translating *Anthology* 16. 119, Gray changed the animals in the punchline from cattle to sheep, suggesting he could devise a pentameter ending with *oves* but not *boves*. Also here, his short *o* in *leo* is against classical practice, especially before the double consonant *sp*; he has obviously overlooked the metrics if not the verbal similarities of Virgil, *Aeneid* 10. 454, *utque leo specula!* But when he elsewhere (*Sophonisba Masinissae* 43), *molle spirare*, lengthens a short *e* in such a position, Mitford observes that "Gray has in this instance preserved a metrical canon, which has been broken through by many of the modern Latin poets."

In v. 7 of his version of *Anthology* 9. 627, Starr & Hendrickson and Lonsdale print without comment the unmetrical *Demens! nam nequit saevam...* Some earlier editors save the day by altering to *nequii*, perhaps rightly; the change is minimal and the corresponding verb in the next line (*traxit*) is also perfect. Something has gone drastically wrong in *Hymeneal* 12, *irasque, insidiasque, et tacitum sub pectore vulnus*, an obvious concoction from Virgil, *Aeneid* 4. 67 & 12. 336. Mitford was inclined to blame

Gray, Starr & Hendrickson the printer. The fault could be healed by removing the copulatives in favour of an asyndeton.

There is an interesting moment in v. 6 of the sapphics to West where Gray has *temere iacentem*. Sells (156), ignoring the metrical point, claims this is the only Latin phrase carried over into Gray's English verse ("at ease reclin'd"). Mitford argued at length that the final *e* of *temere* is always elided and always short. Starr & Hendrickson deny both claims. However, as Page observes in his note on Horace, *Odes* 2. 11. 14, *pinu iacentes sic temere et rosa*, which Gray clearly had in mind, "the final *e* of *temere* is of doubtful quality and is always elided." Nor do his editors allow for the possibility that he was influenced by the likes of (e.g.) Milton, *In Obit. Praesul Eliensis* 29, *quid temere violas* – Milton's Latin prosody often wobbled, as the late English classicist-novelist Simon Raven pointed out to me on a postcard (What's a postcard, Dad?).

Mitford can be silly, e.g. in his repeated violent objections to Gray's lengthening of the *o* in *ego*, and ill-informed as when he claims the lengthening of *que* (*Gaurus* 25, *fumumque flammamque...*) is too rare to warrant imitation, thereby misleading Starr & Hendrickson; it is (of course) a distinctively Virgilian touch.

One final example of how to approach such matters comes in v. 5 of his Paraphrases of Psalm 84, in alcaics, where Gray has *quo rapit impetus*. Editors note a variant, *rupit*. But apart from metrical considerations, *rapit* is confirmed by the same phrase in Ovid, *Tristia* 1. 4. 15. Disputes over his Latinity (it may be subjoined) should be handled the same way. Two examples will do. Mitford challenged the propriety of Gray's *imbibit ignes* (*Luna Habitabilis* 35), a criticism tamely reproduced by Starr & Hendrickson; Grattius, *Cynegetica* 59-60, *ignibus...imbiberint*, vindicates the usage. In v. 31 of his version of *Away, Let Naught to Love Displeasing*, Gray uses *vestris* for *tuis*, an idiom regarded by Tovey (the piece's first publisher) as a peculiarity bred of immaturity, and by Starr & Hendrickson as "an obvious error" – a good deal less obvious than the one they made (251) in blasting Tovey for wrecking the metre in v. 2 of this same poem by altering *cara* to *caro*: Tovey did no such thing! In point of fact, Gray has respectable precedents in Catullus 39. 20 & 99. 6, also Ovid, *Amores* 2. 16. 24.

There, I think I have stretched my Gray Matter far enough. As Apuleius adjured the readers of his *Metamorphoses* (aka *Golden Ass*), *lector intende, laetaberis* – *Vates* readers may wish to emend the verb ...

Translation and Self-Translation

Stephen Coombs asks can poetry ever be translated satisfactorily from a modern language into Latin? Or vice versa? If so, how?

It has become more and more clear to me that translation, as we normally conceive it, is sometimes impossible where poetry (rather than prose) is concerned. It is attainable to a certain degree when the original is loose in form, not couched in particular structures of rhyme or rhythm – what we call free verse. It is also attainable to a degree when both the language of the original and that of the translation are linked to poetic traditions that resemble each other in their compositional procedures.

Such a relationship exists for instance, despite the dissimilarity at the level of actual sounds, between English and German. Of course not all translations of poetry between these two languages are successful. J. B. Leishman's translations of Rilke are celebrated but I find his treatment of the formally precise *Sonette an Orpheus* disappointing. Whereas the element of contrivance in Rilke's poetic language strains in order to express something already thought and felt inarticulately within the poet, Leishman's contrivings are secondary and obtrusive.

I was glad when I recently found a contrary example. In 1944, while the Second World War was still being waged, Kegan Paul in London published a bilingual selection, entitled simply *Poems*, of Stefan George's poetry (no less formally precise than Rilke's *Sonette*) with excellent translations by Carol North Valhope and Ernst Morwitz. I assume that the two worked together throughout and brought to their task the advantage of each being a native speaker of one of the two tongues.

English and French conventions for making poetry differ greatly. Roy Lewis's valuable study *On Reading French Verse* (Oxford 1982) provides an account of the rigorous constraints within which French poets from the fifteenth century to modern times have mostly worked. Yet a casual English reader of French verse finds enough superficial similarity with the tradition to which he is more used for the differences not to impose themselves on his consciousness.

There is however a patent discrepancy between Latin quantitative verse and the rhyming verse to which Europeans have long been used. It is often said that quantitative verse cannot be written in a

modern language such as English. I believe that it could be done. The fact is that no-one has tried sufficiently hard – on the one hand to evolve satisfactory conventions for chiselling out quantitative English verse, comparable with those gradually established by Latin poets intent on imitating Greek models, and on the other hand to acquire the skills necessary in order to work within these conventions. At the end of this article readers will find my attempt to reproduce the content of a well-known ode of Horace in English quantitative verse.

What is absolutely not acceptable, to my mind, is to assume that some sort of equivalents to hexameters, elegiacs and Horatian strophic forms can be produced by organising material in particular patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables. One or two great poets have made verses in German (and less great in English and Swedish) according to this recipe, and these verses must be judged on their merits, but they are emphatically not hexameters etc. as hexameters etc. are understood by lovers of Latin or Greek.

Why do I make such a peremptory judgement? For two reasons.

Firstly: I maintain that the charm of classical quantitative verse lies just in the contrasting play of metre and accent against each other; if only accent matters much is lost. (And it is after all a pretty undemanding assignment to churn up four instances of either *dum-de-de* or *dum-de* in any order and follow them with a *dum-de-de dum-de* to make a “stressed hexameter line”.)

Secondly: the effort to arrange words in quantitative structures is in itself beneficial. The poet is obliged to focus on the essential elements in what he (or she, of course) wants to express. He becomes increasingly sensitive to slipshod formulations and increasingly adept at putting them right with the same eagerness as when he takes care (we hope!) of any errors of metre and syntax that may vitiate his first sketches. Concentration on essentials is also assisted when a poet of recent centuries labours at rhyme – but the quantitative principle, being more demanding than rhyme, must surely provide the greater advantage.

I have taken up some of these points in the Afterword appended to my recent collection of Latin poetry *In Perendinum Aevum*, discussed by David Money in *Vates* #10. (Readers wishing to know more about the book or to acquire a copy should mail me at stephen.coombs@ymail.com.)

In connection with the compiling of *In Perendinum Aevum* I have found myself forced to confront some difficult choices: Is it defensible, is it indeed necessary to provide modern-language texts

to make the Latin more accessible? In principle I wish it were not, but I believe that at this stage in the decline of Latin education both questions must be answered affirmatively.

This decision having been taken one might move directly to the preparation of more or less literal prose cribs such as those we are used to in Loeb editions of poetry or those of the I Tatti Renaissance Library. But there are other options. Prosaic language presented as prose will always be read as prose: whereas we are nowadays accustomed to seeing both prose-like language presented as poetry (i.e. divided into lines) for special effect and poetical language presented as prose (so-called prose poems). In either case it is our sense of poetry that will be engaged, not as it were our prosaic gear. Nowadays, in any case, the distinction between prose and poetry has become altogether much less clear than heretofore. My instinct told me that *In Perendinum Aevum* would do better to present whatever direct translations there might be, however literal, in the outward guise of poetry. In this way the reader will always be reminded that it is the poetical sense that is being appealed to, whether his eyes happen to light on the English of the left-hand page or the Latin of the right.

The Latin poems are sometimes reworkings of others that I had previously written in English; for instance ten slender sonnets – six syllables per line – dating from the 1970s have been reborn in the form of as many 12-line (3×4) Latin stanzas under the heading *Fragmenta Mythica*. In such cases there was sufficient congruity between the English original and the new poem, I thought, for the former perhaps to serve as a guide by which to grasp the Latin, albeit in a very general way.

The result is that the Latin poems which are the heart of *In Perendinum Aevum* are accompanied by “parallel texts” in English whose exact relationship with the Latin varies from literalism to quite free paraphrase – and with several steps too between these extremes, since I came to relish the freedom of approach which the scope of variation seemed to offer. It would be most interesting to hear how these matters strike the reader. I admit that my solutions to the problems are inconsistent and experimental.

My latest Latin poem *Auletes* (see above, p. 3) can be taken as a case in point. With it I have provided an English translation of a literal kind, first put together as a prose version and subsequently without further retouching divided into lines. The reader can judge the effect of line division on his own sensibility. Both can then be compared with the earlier English sonnet. What would the reader make of the sonnet and the Latin alone as “parallel texts”?

There can never be any objection to a person using the content of an earlier piece he or she has written in one language as the basis for a new piece in another language. Reworking is the key term here, since it implies full possession not only of the written evidence of an idea but also some memory of the motivation underlying the written evidence. In other words, the initial inspiration is sufficiently alive to enable the poet to make fully justified additions, changes or deletions the second time around.

The term paraphrase on the other hand seems to be appropriate when a poem is based on another poet's original work. Perhaps it hints at an inevitable weakening of truth to the underlying concept. The paraphrast will be less sure (than the reworker is) of his licence to add, change or remove material, yet at the same time he may find himself compelled to do just those things.

Attempts to transfer the stuff of modern language poem into Latin must be made carefully. The British tradition in schools and universities of making hexameters or elegiacs out of anything and everything is fatally misguided (see my Afterword mentioned previously). Sometimes the shape of a poem in a modern language on paper will suggest a particular classical form as an equivalent. I have struggled to render a favourite piece by A. E. Housman in Alcaics and another by Stefan George in Hipponactean – without yet being satisfied. *In Perendinum Aevum* contains two Latin versions from Lewis Carroll (clearly a less formidable poet!) with which I feel reasonably pleased: one, in quatrains of anapaestic dimeter, does resemble in look its English counterpart; the other paraphrases Carroll's six-line stanzas in iambic trimeter *kata stichon*. It seems that both approaches can be valid – mirroring the outward form of the original or disregarding it entirely

But cannot we say something more definite and fundamental on how poetry in a modern language ought to be transposed into Latin? I believe that just as we would naturally employ free verse in a new language to correspond to free verse in the original, so we should use bound verse (an expression more common in German and Swedish than in English) – “unfree verse” of whatever kind – to correspond to bound verse in the original. The reader can judge whether my English sonnet *The Flautist* has maintained or even increased its validity, whatever that may be, in its guise as *Aulettes*, very un-sonnet-like, in five three-line helpings of Greater Archilochians.

The same ought to apply in reverse direction – when we try to bring a Latin poem to life in a modern language. Highly crafted quantitative Latin (or Greek) would need to be imitated in some

kind of highly crafted (quantitative or intricately rhymed) English, French, German or whatever. Tightness can never be imitated by looseness – this, I suggest, would be the cardinal principle.

To put this thesis to the test I come to my English quantitative rendering of Horace's fifth Ode in Book I. For the proper effect to be attained the quantities of the Fourth Asclepiad format must be fairly strictly adhered to, whether one reads the English aloud or to oneself silently. No metronomic accuracy should be aimed at but rather the same naturalness with which a good musician distinguishes between his crotchets and quavers (for American readers: his quarter notes and his eighth notes). I crave pardon in advance from any Horatiophile who may find the opening a tad sacrilegious!

*So who's this skinny kid thrusting against you, drenched
in wet scents, Pyrrha, there deep in a cosy cave,
roses piled up around him -
whom you charm with a plainly neat
golden bundle of hair? How often he'll bewail
fate and faith that have (ah!) changed for the worse, as he
wide-eyed and unaccustomed
scans waves roughed in a murky wind,
though sure now you are pure gold - loving all of it,
trusting you to appear welcoming all the time,
always sweet - unaware how
false your breeze! Such a shame about
those you've just had a first chance to bedaze: but I've
not been wrecked. As a plaque fixed to the wall of a
shrine says: "THANKS TO THE SEA-GOD",
brine-soaked clothes hanging up beside.*

* * *

Advice for Beginners

In this instalment of the semi-regular column, editor Mark Walker takes a brief look at hexameter endings

In the ‘Advice for Beginners’ in *Vates #8* I mentioned the relation between word stress (pronunciation) and metrical *ictus* (the pulse or rhythm of a line). At the beginning of a hexameter line stress and *ictus* must coincide (since the hexameter begins on a heavy syllable), but elsewhere matters are more at the poet’s discretion. In the middle of the line rhythmic pulse and word stress can and frequently do fall out of synch – musicians call this syncopation, and just as in a good jazz tune it’s all about playing ‘off the beat’. Here is where the mid-line *caesura* (or break) comes into its own: by forcing a word to end in the middle of (usually) the third foot, the *caesura* has the effect of breaking the rhythm and word stress apart. Typically, however, this tension is resolved in the final two feet, as metrical rhythm and the stress accent at last come together in an audibly satisfying cadence (again, the parallel with music is clear). This cadence is known as an Adonic – a dactyl followed by a spondee (or a trochee – the final syllable regarded as ‘heavy’). In English the rhythm and stress are as in the phrase ‘strawberry jam-jar’, *dum-diddy dum-dum*.

Let’s take once again the famous opening line of the *Aeneid* as our example:

1	2	3	4	5	6
- ~ ~	- ~ ~	- -	- -	- ~ ~	- -
<i>arma virumque canō, Troiae quī prīmus ab ōrīs</i>					

Here, word stress and accent are ‘syncopated’ or out of synch in feet 2, 3 and 4. The *caesura* in the middle of the third foot means that the stressed first syllable of *cano* falls ‘off the beat’ at the end of the second foot and a new word – *Troiae* – now has to begin on the ‘offbeat’ of the third. Notice that the metre would permit the poet to swap the words *Troiae* and *qui* around – *qui Troiae* scans equally well – but if he had done so *Troiae* would have occupied the fourth foot all on its own, the stress-accent coinciding with the beat, something he presumably wanted to avoid. The line concludes with that resonant dactyl-spondee ‘strawberry jam-jar’ (the primary stress accents are in bold):

prī -mus ab | ōr - īs

Remember Classical Latin verse doesn't rhyme, so this Adonic cadence provides readers/listeners with an audible signal that we have reached the end of the line. Most examples of Classical hexameters conform to this pattern, which is typically achieved by ending the line with either a three-syllabled (stress on the second syllable) or a two-syllabled (stress on the first syllable) word, both of which can be seen in the opening of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*:

*Aeneadum genetrix, hominum diuomque uoluptas,
alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa* (DRN, I.1-2i)

Where the stress-accent and *ictus* fall:

5 6
| - ~ ~ | - -
(diu-) | **om**que uol- | -**up** - tas

(lab-) | **ent**ia | **sig** - na

Notice the addition of *-que* turns *diuom* (an archaic genitive plural) into a three-syllabled word and so shifts the stress to the second syllable (same goes for Virgil's *uirumque*). But Lucretius being Lucretius, his work is chock full of (by later Augustan standards anyway) exceptional usages such as big pentasyllabic endings that fill both fifth and sixth feet – e.g. **composituras**, **exorerentur**, **simplicitate** – or monosyllables for the final foot like *quae sunt, per se, ab re*. He is also happy to finish a line with such things as *quae cum animi ui* (I.159), with its elision of the first (stressed) syllable of **animi**:

| *quae c(um) anim-* | -i ui

Less exceptionally, Augustan Latin poets (including Virgil) could and did sometimes break away from the Adonic to introduce spondees into the fifth foot – the *Aeneid* has lines ending with **comitatu** and **ululatu**. But Lucretius has many more such 'heavy' four-syllabled words: examples include **subsidente**, **perturbentur**, **obbrutescat** and **sustentare** – though he was, we should remember, struggling to express some pretty knotty technical issues in verse form. But these are the kind of thing that later poets generally avoided – let us take, by way of a *Sortes*

Nasonianae, the regular Adonic endings of the first four lines of the *Metamorphoses*:

dicere | **formas**
(*mu-*) | **-tastis et** | **illas**
(*or-*) | **-igine** | **mundi**
tempora | **carmen**

Easy to see why Ovid is the textbook darling of metrical correctness. But to conclude with one more exceptional modern example: way back in *Vates #2* Dirk Sacré first introduced us to the work of Prof. Joseph Tusiani whose unique ear for the musicality of Latin can produce a line like this:

fulgere oh pergat super umbras, umbras, umbras

Repetition of three remarkable heavy spondees in a row is something you won't find in Ovid!

So what about advice for actual composition? Generally speaking the Adonic has proved to be so satisfying a termination that you will doubtless find yourself actively wanting to use it *most* of the time – which means in practice that you will be looking for patterns to match the *dum-diddy dum-dum* rhythm, ensuring that word stress falls on the first beat of both fifth and sixth feet and frequently concluding each line with a two-syllabled (stress on first syllable) or three-syllabled (stress on second syllable) word. The knock-on effect of which will make you (like Virgil above) want to avoid the coincidence of stress accent and metre in the third and certainly the fourth feet.

Just as Baroque composers like Vivaldi and Handel finished a musical phrase with *dum-di, dum-di daaaaah*, or a guitarist like Eric Clapton throws in that distinctive run at the end of a 12-bar blues, the Adonic is the ideal way to round off your line. Though exceptions both in Classical and Neo-Latin verse demonstrate that it's not a hard-and-fast rule; you are the poet, after all, and the decision is ultimately yours not the textbook's.

- ❖ More technical analysis can be found in D.S. Raven's *Latin Metre* (Faber & Faber, 1965) Sections #69-76
- ❖ G.B Nussbaum's *Vergil's Metre* (Bristol Classical Press, 1986) has some excellent guidance on word accent and rhythm

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Contributors

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.

Stephen Coombs is the author of *In Perendinum Aevum*, reviewed in *Vates* #10. He was born in Britain but has been resident in Sweden since 1967, initially to teach English, then music. In 1994 he co-founded a 'humanistic-Christian' private school (*Katarinaskolan*, St. Catherine's School) in Uppsala where he continues to teach Classical Language Tradition.

Marco Cristini was born in 1992 in Brescia, Northern Italy (60 km far from Virgil's Mantua). He studies Literature at the Catholic University of Brescia. He loves reading Latin poetry and prose since the high school and few years ago he has begun to write Latin poems. He is also interested in Late Antiquity, especially in the Ostrogothic Kingdom of Italy. He has written a novel about the queen Amalasantha and Cassiodorus (*I Cavalieri del Crepuscolo*, *The Twilight's Knights*, available on Amazon in ebook format).

Kyle Gervais is an assistant professor of Classics at the University of Western Ontario and finds little times during the week to write poems about rodents.

Catherine B. Krause has a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Dickinson College and hopes to one day go back to school to study linguistics. Under the name Benjamin C. Krause, her English poetry has appeared in *Rabbit Ears: TV Poems*, *Gargoyle* and *Reckless Writing: The Modernization of Poetry by the Emerging Writers of the 21st Century*. Her Esperanto poetry has appeared in *Penseo*. She created the form of the 'quincouplet' poems that appeared in *Vates* 8 from Autumn 2013.

Raul Lavalle (latine *Radulfus Bonaerensis*) was born in 1953 and teaches Latin in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He wrote several articles, translated some Greek and Latin texts and has a blog devoted to literature (www.litterulae.blogspot.com).

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*.

Michiel Sauter teaches German, Dutch, Greek and Latin in Nijmegen, the Netherlands

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Joseph Tusiani was born in Italy but emigrated to the USA in 1947. Before his retirement he taught at the City University of New York (Herbert H. Lehman College), at Fordham University, and was Director of the Catholic Poetry Society of America as well as Vice President of the Poetry Society of America. His extensive list of publications includes poetry in English, Italian and Latin – he has been hailed as the greatest living neo-Latin poet.

Mark Walker (@vatesthepoet) is the editor of *Vates*. As his quite remarkably insightful biography on Amazon states, “Forced to earn a pittance so that he can clothe his 35 children in squalid rags and feed them boiled cabbages, Mark has recently translated into Latin J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (as *Hobbitus Ille*, HarperCollins, 2012), and translated from Latin into English verse Geoffrey of Monmouth's 12th-century poem *Life of Merlin* (Amberley Publishing, 2011), for which Herculean labours he has so far received little praise from an indifferent world.” As a penance for his many and varied crimes (probably) he currently occupies the post of Head of Classics at a Preparatory School near London. But he'd much rather be playing the mandolin.

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.

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