

VATES

The Journal of New
LATIN POETRY

Issue 16

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Notes for contributors (in English, with a summary in Latin) can be found at the end of *Vates* issue 15.

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Editor's Introduction

David Money

We have reached issue 16, the second of our new series: a little later than I had intended – I had been contemplating the spring rather than the autumn of 2026 – but hopefully worth the wait. I anticipate that we will continue in a similar fashion in the coming years, not being too precise about the date of the next publication, but trying to make sure that there is no excessive delay either. When there is sufficient enthusiasm from contributors, I would like the gap between issues to be less than a year.

When we compare this new issue with the previous one, there seems much to be pleased about. It would be natural to find issue 15 a hard act to follow – I was delighted to be able to assemble such a large number of participants for the restarted journal, and remain very grateful to all of them. At nearly 150 pages, issue 15 was considerably more substantial than any of the fourteen issues in our original series. We may be slightly smaller this time, overall, but the number of pages actually devoted to new poems in Latin, and their accompanying translations and notes, is quite similar (both more than a hundred pages, from more than twenty individual writers). We do have less in prose: on which more below.

So, while some of the remarks below are concerned with what is missing from this issue (and what I would like to see in future issues), please do not think that I am unimpressed by the collective achievement of the people who have been kind enough to send something for issue 16. I think it is splendid, and I hope many readers may agree, whether or not any particular item appeals to them. As for the focus on what is lacking: please put that down not to pure peevishness, but to an editor's natural desire for further improvement and development of the journal, just in case anyone does listen to his introductory remarks.

Hominum divumque voluptas

We do not do 'themes' for whole issues of *Vates*. I don't want to start doing so, because concentrating on one topic would tend to exclude the wider range of submissions that people may wish to make, on any topic that takes their fancy. Nevertheless, sometimes what one might call 'mini-themes' do emerge from the poems which people submit. In that case, grouping some related items together seems to make editorial sense, and is worth drawing attention to in this general introduction.

Love is always a popular topic. In this issue, there seem to be a particularly healthy number of poems addressing aspects of love: and, taking this as such a 'mini-theme', I have grouped most of them together at the start of the Poetry section, giving pride of place to the passionate verse of Barbara Dowlasz. Our poets treat love in many different ways, sometimes addressing a single lover, named or unnamed, sometimes taking a more abstract approach. Some reveal quite a lot about themselves – possibly even more than they intend – and some prefer to adopt a more distancing literary *persona*, not necessarily talking about their own experiences, or pretending not to, but about relationships between human beings in a more general sense. Some are quite coy, some are frank about sexual matters: one need hardly remind readers of Latin that some ancient poems are downright obscene; hopefully readers will not be unduly offended at any moments here that are more risqué than they are used to.

Next time: Science

I like the idea of having a ‘mini-theme’ from time to time: stressing the ‘mini’, for it should never overshadow the whole issue, and should never dissuade anyone from offering material on other, unrelated topics. It might, indeed, also be of interest to produce some volumes of new Latin poetry which *are* devoted to a single theme: love would be an obvious possibility. But I think I would prefer to keep that idea separate from *Vates* as a journal, and (at whatever future date there may be sufficient enthusiasm for it) to invite contributions from specific poets – rather than leaving access open to everyone who can produce something of a publishable standard, as has always been, and will remain, the policy of *Vates*.

I would like to propose another mini-theme for the next issue, number 17, to come out at some point in 2027 (perhaps late spring or summer if we can be very energetic; perhaps autumn again if we can’t). There seems little point in specifying a deadline now, as everyone ignores deadlines anyway. Whenever you can, make a start; whenever you have something finished, send it in. If you want to know, during the first half of 2027, how soon issue 17 may be ready and whether there will be time for your idea to bear fruit, please enquire at that time.

The theme I would like is – science. Please do not shy away in horror, if you feel yourself a person of purely artistic sensibilities, never sullied by the incomprehensible world of graphs and equations. Science, viewed in its widest sense, offers numerous enticing poetic possibilities. The best poetry is about the world as it is, and human life within it; so is much of science. We don’t have to understand everything about some scientific issue, in the way that a professional scientist is expected to, in order to give some poetic response. Poetry can sometimes cut to the key issues at the centre of scientific debate, and illuminate them in ways that it is hard to do in a paper for a scientific journal. Why not try talking to some scientists about what they do, or what they find interesting in the work of others, or what the most challenging problems are in their discipline, and see what poetic sparks may arise.

There is in fact a long and distinguished history of Latin verse on science (or ‘natural philosophy’, as it used to be called). We can be – but need not necessarily be – inspired by Lucretius. Neo-Latin has a wealth of didactic works on science (not to mention an *Anti-Lucretius*, by Cardinal Melchior de Polignac). Verse in modern languages, too, can engage with the scientific world, and may offer some inspiration.¹ We can try to explain specific theories, in a way that general readers may understand; or we can argue against a consensus that appears questionable – we need not be so blinded by science as to give up our own critical faculties, and our undoubted right to question what we are told. Even if facts may seem clear, there may be different interpretations possible, and different responses from the public or politicians. It was a not uncommon exercise for school or university pupils in the eighteenth century to compose epigrams on either side of a topic of debate: ‘Is the moon made of green cheese?’ Yes, it is – *affirmatur*; or, no, it isn’t – *negatur*. Try taking both sides of a question, and seeing what verse can do to sharpen our perceptions of them.

A famous phrase, coined by C. P. Snow, conjures up the supposed gulf between the arts and sciences: ‘The Two Cultures’.² Let us attempt some cross-cultural dialogue. We may learn much of interest, and enrich the corpus of contemporary Latin verse in the process; if we also demonstrate to one or two scientists that our language is not as dead as all that, and can still express modern ideas in a way that is amusing, attractive, or maybe even useful, that is all to the good.

¹ An example of a vernacular anthology: John Heath-Stubbs and Phillips Salman, eds., *Poems of Science* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984).

² The phrase was most famously used by Snow in a 1959 lecture, and a book in the same year; also in a previous article, 1956.

Verse in a violent world

It is right that poets should engage with controversial topics in current politics. It can be hard to do that, without causing offence to those who may disagree. While *Vates* will try to be sensitive to the risk of causing offence, I am very much opposed to the idea that a verse journal should avoid all risk, or should censor any opinions (as long as they are not libellous, and fall within the generally accepted bounds of free speech). I have had to give some thought to this potentially troublesome issue, on receiving the submission of some poems treating the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. There was a discussion about what the correct boundaries of such speech would be; and I am very grateful to the poet concerned (Orazio Antonio Bologna) for his generous understanding of how some readers might have interpreted a few of the more inflammatory stanzas, especially in translation, where many features of the original Latin can easily be blurred; I suggested the excision of some lines, and he kindly agreed. The overall sense, highly sympathetic to the Palestinians in Gaza, has not been affected.

Needless to say – or, I hope it should be needless – this is a painful issue where there are two sides to the question. I would be very happy to publish verse on the other side too (whether more sympathetic to Israel, or neutral – one can reasonably lament suffering inflicted by war on both sides, and comment critically on political decisions both sides have made). As for any verse journal, it largely depends on what readers are willing to submit. What I would say here, though, is that *Vates* does deplore the apparent rise in anti-Semitism (a very odious form of racism) in the privileged West: much of it from young people who think they know everything, and ought to know better. I chose to address that issue myself, as it affects Britain, in my poem entitled ‘Double Monty’, rather than saying anything (for now) directly about Israel and the Palestinians.

As you may have noticed, the war in Ukraine is still going on, and remains a suitable subject for poetry. Perhaps that might test the limits of our alleged tolerance for hearing from both sides. Would I really be willing to publish a pro-Russian poem? I don’t know – it would depend on what was said, I think. I am not aware of any morally respectable people, anywhere in the world, who would support Russia’s actions in Ukraine – though I know that many millions do lend them support, out of greed, or ignorance, or cowardice, or malice, or any other causes in the long catalogue of human failings. But if any pro-Russian writers want to prove me wrong, and can argue their case in competent Latin verse, which they have written for themselves,³ they are welcome to try. Perhaps more interesting, and more likely to succeed, might be a pair of poems, stating the case for each side: as noted above, early modern poems on topics of philosophical debate sometimes adopted a similar technique, where a proposition was affirmed or denied. What works for scientific topics might also work for political ones. Other wars, alas, are also available: as are numerous issues of international and domestic politics. You need not concern yourself, as poets or readers of poetry, with the troubles of the wider world, if you prefer not to: but political topics should not be off limits, either.

Prose with points to make

Turning to the short section of prose articles in this issue, it will immediately be noticeable that there are only two of them, by the same person, Marco Cristini. This splendid isolation was not deliberate (one can only publish what one receives), but it does seem appropriate, given the nature of these two pieces. I think they have greater general significance than most prose pieces that have appeared in *Vates* in the past, due to the wide relevance for us of the topics discussed.

³ Rather than cheating by using AI, which no doubt would be able to fool me: an empty feat.

Indeed, I would go so far as to say that these are essential questions for poets and Latinists to consider. It may not matter whether scholars read Cristini, or get the message from some other source (I am not aware of other similar discussions, but they may well have escaped me): the message itself is vital. Any professor of Latin, I would say, who fails to take any notice of the astonishingly large amount of modern Latin verse – as is clearly set out by Cristini – is something of a fool. Two objections might be made to that: perhaps one may say ‘I don’t care, because all I care about is the ancient world (or the middle ages, or Renaissance).’ A feeble argument indeed. How many Shakespearean scholars are there, who don’t think that anything later than their hero is of any value, and would not permit modern literature a place in an English department? I think none, or not many. Yet Shakespeare is just as important to English as the poets of the ancient ‘golden’ age are to Latin. Or perhaps: ‘I don’t care, because none of this modern Latin is any good.’ That too seems very blinkered. Modern English writing needn’t match Shakespeare, in order to earn some attention: it just needs to bring something worth reading. I wouldn’t suggest all modern Latin verse is excellent, in *Vates* or elsewhere: much of it is fairly trivial and forgettable (though, if in *Vates*, at least from now on, I hope it amuses somebody). Nor do I think every line written in antiquity that still survives is excellent (let alone all those lines that are lost). Much modern verse, one may argue, is at least moderately interesting, and some of it is very accomplished indeed, and can be compared favourably with some moderately good writing from past ages. There is so much, as Cristini proves, that to ignore it all seems perverse.

What about Crisiini’s other issue: permanence? I think any writer of modern Latin who ignores that is a bit of a fool, too. Poets need not choose *Vates*, of course – though I hope many may do so – but they do need to publish somewhere that offers proper publication, with some reasonable hope of permanence. Let us be clear: putting something on Facebook, or X, or a private website is *not* publication – even if it serves their temporary purpose well, and brings their verse immediately to many people’s attention – and offers little prospect of permanence. One may object: ‘I don’t care, because all that matters to me is today, not tomorrow.’ That is a real pity, because it wastes their talent and undersells their work, which future readers might very well want to see. Another might think: ‘I hesitate to publish formally, because I have little confidence in what I’ve written: it was just a bit of private fun, not worth sharing.’ I am sorry if people think that way, and I wish they wouldn’t. It is quite understandable that some light verse is just that, light, and not taken too seriously by its author. I’d still like current and future readers to have the chance to judge for themselves if it amuses them, rather than for it to disappear forever.

The expression *nugae* is sometimes used, in self-deprecation, by writers of occasional verse. Some can be pretty nugatory. But the same can be said of ancient *nugae*: is every single surviving epigram of Catullus or Martial, those two great poets, actually all that wonderful? They are hit and miss; and so are modern *nugae*. What would we not give, to have a few dozen more little poems, from each of (let us say) ten more contemporaries of Catullus or Martial? Even if those extra verses were not works of genius, they would provide invaluable context and points of comparison. Similarly, the best work of any other period can be illuminated by comparison with lesser parallels; judgements of what is ‘best’ and ‘lesser’ may conceivably change too. We need, and want, a wide range of verse to survive: not just what may appear to be the ‘best’ at any particular time. All this is intended to encourage any writer of verse, however modest they may be about their own talent, to take the plunge into the sort of relatively pain-free publication that *Vates* aims to offer. If something has flaws that make it unsuitable for publication, I will say so – as I have, with regret, said to some people – and perhaps also make some suggestions about trying something else, or making revisions of the original idea. You don’t have to match Martial at his best; and the bar for matching Martial at his most mediocre is not as high as some may think.

What did posterity ever do?

I remember having a number of conversations on the subject of posterity, and whether it mattered much to an academic or popular author, with an engaging dinner companion, who tended to come up with the phrase (which I don't suppose he imagined was original) 'What did posterity ever do for me?' – expecting the answer, 'nothing', as if that were a clinching argument. Perhaps it really was, for him; all that mattered was an immediate readership, and making a bit of money from it. He is, alas, no longer with us. He was a professional historian who wrote quite a lot of books. I am not sure how widely they are read, even a few years later – though perhaps some of them are. I would be quite surprised if they were widely read in fifty years' time.⁴

We tend to take a longer view – or at least, I hope we do, and I would like to encourage us to do so – in the world of Latin verse. We can look back a long time; let us look forward a long time as well. Fifty years is a mere nothing. Our perspective ought to run into centuries. I can feel at home in the company of someone who wrote his poems three hundred, or five hundred, years ago. Let's hope that our company might be welcomed by one or two people who will live five hundred years in the future. And how are they going to have the chance, and the choice to read us or to ignore us? Only if we make some effort towards permanence. Bad luck and future catastrophe can spoil all our efforts, as did happen for much of the assiduous copying of the ancient world: but if we make no serious efforts, we can be fairly sure of oblivion.

So, what did posterity ever do for me? Well, quite a lot. It has made me think about how today's Latin poetry can be preserved, and how a literary tradition that stretches back for two thousand years can be continued and enhanced for the benefit of the future, as well as the pleasure of those who happen to be alive at the moment. I try to express something of that in the little epigram 'Ad Posteritatem' with which the Poetry section closes.

Ituri in aciem

Here I propose to digress a little – come along with me, if you like: I hope the stroll will be a pleasant one, though I won't be offended if you choose to rush along to the destination. Thinking about posterity, in the context of Marco Cristini's arguments on permanence, made me wonder about various celebrated quotations mentioning the word, as recorded in dictionaries of quotations.⁵ How about Tacitus to start with: 'Et maiores vestros et posteros cogitate' – 'Think of your forefathers and posterity' (*Agricola* 32). The context is significant; those are the final words of the speech of (the heroic loser) Calgacus before the battle of Mons Graupius. Less often quoted is the start of the sentence, 'proinde ituri in aciem ...' ['Therefore, as you are about to go into battle ...']. The thought may not save you, but it should spur you on to a dignified death.

"We are always doing", says he, "something for Posterity, but I would fain see Posterity do something for us." – so wrote Joseph Addison in *The Spectator*, no. 583 (20 August 1714).⁶ The context of Addison's essay is planting trees on a gentleman's estate, which may be valuable future timber for the navy. It is amusing to find that the sceptic about posterity

⁴ I would be even more surprised if I were around myself, to find out whether that guess was right.

⁵ I used John Bartlett, *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (17th edition, ed. J. Kaplan; New York: Little, Brown, 2002) pp. 114 (Tacitus), 302 (Addison), 381 (Schiller), 409 (Clay); and E. Knowles, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (7th edition; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 685 (Schiller).

⁶ I used the text at the online Full Text archive (which takes its text from an edition of 1891): <https://www.fulltextarchive.com/book/The-Spectator-Volumes-1-2-and-3/51/> (accessed 1 September 2026). For a more authoritative edition see D. F. Bond, ed., *The Spectator* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965).

here is an academic, probably an Oxford one (Addison was most closely associated with Magdalen College): ‘I know when a Man talks of Posterity in Matters of this Nature, he is looked upon with an Eye of Ridicule by the cunning and selfish part of Mankind. Most People are of the Humour of an old Fellow of a College, who, when he was pressed by the Society to come into something that might redound to the good of their Successors, grew very peevish . . .’ [and gave us our memorable quotation].

Addison goes on: ‘But I think Men are inexcusable, who fail in a Duty of this Nature, since it is so easily discharged. When a Man considers that the putting a few Twigs into the Ground, is doing good to one who will make his appearance in the World about Fifty Years hence, or that he is perhaps making one of his own Descendants easy or rich, by so inconsiderable an Expence, if he finds himself averse to it, he must conclude that he has a poor and base Heart, void of all generous Principles and Love to Mankind.’ In the context of our own poetic endeavours, choosing to publish a poem, so that it might perhaps be preserved, is like putting an acorn into the ground, for the sake of one’s descendants. ‘There is one Consideration, which may very much enforce what I have here said. Many honest Minds that are naturally disposed to do good in the World, and become Beneficial to Mankind, complain within themselves that they have not Talents for it. This therefore is a good Office, which is suited to the meanest Capacities, and which may be performed by Multitudes, who have not Abilities sufficient to deserve well of their Country and to recommend themselves to their Posterity, by any other Method.’ Versifying may require a little more skill than acorn-dropping, but one need not be a genius to perform a ‘good office’ for the future of our art. Addison continues with praise of gardens, and a reminder that ‘Virgil in particular has written a whole Book on the Art of Planting’.

It is not all good news, perhaps; Schiller, in the prologue to *Wallenstein’s Camp* (1798) warns us that ‘Posterity weaves no garlands for imitators’. The *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* gives us the original German too: ‘Dem Mimen flicht die Nachwelt keine Kränze.’ Is that a lesson for Neo-Latin poets, followers of an art that tends to prize imitation, not to think much of themselves? Maybe; but we need not expect garlands, for doing our best to keep the art alive. Literary history should not be in the business of handing out rewards to especially deserving ancestors; what it wants – and what it will want from us – is evidence of what was written at any particular time, preferably untarnished by preconceived notions of what is worth saving. If in doubt, save it, imitative or not. There is a lot of posterity to come – in the words of Henry Clay (on the United States constitution) it is ‘unlimited, undefined, endless, perpetual’. Who knows what they will want to read?

Unless I were a bird

If one asks Google about the phrase ‘What has posterity ever done for us?’ one will find the famous attribution to Groucho Marx. But far more interesting is Sir Boyle Roche (1736-1807), an Irish politician, celebrated for absurd remarks. I think I can say with confidence that he is the most amusing person I have come across, while working on this issue of *Vates*. He reportedly said, during a debate in the Irish House of Commons about public debt: ‘Why should we put ourselves out of the way to do anything for posterity, for what has posterity ever done for us?’ Many politicians since have shown similar tendencies, without the courage to admit it.

Roche once gave an excuse for absence from Parliament: ‘Mr. Speaker, it is impossible I could have been in two places at once, unless I were a bird.’ This was not a foolish remark on his part, but a quite sophisticated literary allusion, to a play by Thomas Jevon, ‘The Devil of a Wife’. No doubt Roche knew that even birds cannot be in two places, though they can move

quite fast from one to another. In the year of America's 250th birthday,⁷ it is a pleasure to remind ourselves that not every Irishman, or indeed everyone on the American continent, favoured independence. Here is Roche, from a highly successful recruiting speech at Limerick (raising five hundred volunteers in a weekend, lubricated by five barrels of beer): 'his Majesty's deluded subjects in America are in open rebellion, and like unnatural children, wound their ever indulgent parent, forgetting the torrents of blood spilt, and heap of treasure expended for their preservation'. I wonder how many of the five hundred came home unscathed. An ungrateful posterity may not have agreed with Roche about Americans, by and large: but what would he care? He had as much scorn for the opinions of the future, as the future might have for him.⁸

Who can say what posterity will make of us? There is no purpose in trying to conciliate the goodwill of future people of whom we can know nothing. But – to return to my own point, and Cristini's – it is very much worthwhile to think of the permanence of the literature that we are trying to produce. Whether posterity wants it or not is their business; making it available to them is our business.

Seeking more prose

As I noted above, it was accidental, not a deliberate editorial policy, that left Marco Cristini's articles as the only prose this time. There was one other proposal for a short prose essay in this issue, which I felt obliged to turn down, chiefly due to excessive self-plagiarism. This can be a confusing matter, and is obviously not as culpable as plagiarism from other people. We are all prone to a bit of it; very likely Marco will want to say similar things elsewhere (including, obviously, his forthcoming book). Where I draw the line, in practice, is seeing exactly the same words in another online journal, also in 2026 (together with some other words which are also quite familiar).

Nevertheless, I do very much want to see more prose submitted. (And if there is a potential overlap with other works by yourself, feel free to discuss it.) As a reminder of what kind of essays would be particularly welcome: anything on Neo-Latin verse – it need not just be contemporary verse; anything that writers and readers of new verse might find especially relevant; anything that will amuse us – there is no need to be dull, in order to demonstrate your scholarly credentials; work by younger scholars with something fresh to say.

In issue 15 we introduced a section entitled 'What Excites Me' (please look back at it, if you haven't seen what I mean). In that issue, and in discussing *Vates* elsewhere,⁹ I made a particular plea for more very short pieces to continue that series. What response, so far? A big fat zero. It's not that it's hard to do: it's the easiest possible submission to *Vates*, deliberately designed to be equally accessible to professors and to students at school or university, and any other person who likes reading Latin verse (of any period: not just modern or Renaissance Latin). It's not that it's a bad idea: at least, I don't think it is, and quite a few people have told me they thought it was a good idea. It's just that people haven't bothered, or found the time yet (warning: as long as half an hour may be required).

So, if you are reading this, and haven't yet given serious consideration to writing two or three hundred words on 'What Excites Me': this means *you*. Yes, you personally, not that other gullible-looking person sitting over there, who might save you the trouble. If the word

⁷ Though declaring independence is not the same as achieving it; a better date to celebrate than 4 July 1776 would be 3 September 1783, when the Treaty of Paris did confirm the United States as a nation.

⁸ My information on Roche is largely from Wikipedia, which has a long and entertaining article, well worth a look; he also appears in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁹ Cf David Money, 'New Latin verse, please: reviving *Vates*', in *Antigone* [online journal], September 2025: <https://antigonejournal.com/2025/09/new-latin-verse-journal-vates/>

‘excites’ is too strong for you, I will settle for ‘moderately interests’.¹⁰ And you do find Latin verse just a little bit interesting, don’t you? I’d like to know why, and maybe posterity would, too.

The other series, which was not actually started last time, but was proposed in some detail in my general introduction, was a *Vates* teaching anthology of short poems by living authors (to be selected by people other than the poets themselves – though two poets can always get together to recommend each other’s work). To that idea, the response was not zero. No, there was a single suggestion received, and I am most grateful to the person who made it. I feel as if I ought to write a little epigram in their honour (and perhaps I will), as a tribute to ‘The one who responded’. It reminds me of a celebrated series of cartoons by H. M. Bateman (1887-1970), ‘The man who . . .’, which show comically absurd reactions of horror or delight at someone daring to do something out of the ordinary.¹¹ I thought that one example was not enough to get the anthology started: though I would like that proposal to be one of the first items, when we are able to get going. It would be nice if other suggestions could also be received spontaneously. If that isn’t going to happen, I guess I will have to start asking people personally to give it some thought.

I do think the anthology is a worthwhile idea. Let me know what you think. In fact, that view has been reinforced by Marco Cristini’s arguments about the sheer size of the twenty-first-century corpus of Latin verse. There is more there than anyone – at least, a normal person, without Marco’s extraordinary dedication – is ever going to get to grips with. How best to be guided through it? One can focus on *Vates*, of course, and the other journals that carry some new verse; one can look out for printed books, when they come to our attention – but outside one’s own country and circle of acquaintances, it can be hard to know what there is. Cristini’s *Conspectus* will offer a long list (and perhaps a few suggestions). But I think that making a manageable selection as accessible as possible, in an anthology explicitly aimed at teaching (though it may be that people reading for pleasure use it more than teachers and pupils), is a good way to widen understanding of what is out there. Some authors (and some journals) don’t make much effort to be accessible: no translation, no annotations, no explanation of what the point is – take it or leave it – is a depressingly common approach. I am a lazy reader myself, and I do like to have things explained to me, rather than having to do a lot of work that a kinder author could have done for me. Let us try, by whatever means, to raise awareness of those works that most deserve it. I do mean *living* authors, by the way, for the purpose of the anthology: though naturally, for those recently dead, I would be interested in a short prose article about their work, not for the anthology but for the normal prose section of *Vates*.

Spreading the word

It may be that the only reliable way of getting people to help is to ask them personally myself. But that does present a problem. I don’t know everyone personally, who is interested in Latin: not even in Cambridge or Tokyo, let alone worldwide. I don’t have everyone’s email address (and those addresses can change: I’ve changed my own). Mostly, even for contributors, I don’t have an alternative means of communication, like a telephone number or postal address. This can lead to failures in communication; rather farcically, I was trying to get in touch not long ago – desperately seeking Susan, as it happens – and failed for many weeks through my own inattention, in not spotting the difference between ‘.com’ and ‘.co.uk’ in an email address. And things that I send may not get through: they may be held up in a ‘spam’ or ‘junk’ folder, and

¹⁰ Or you can even tell me why you hate it: I included one such piece in *Vates* 15.

¹¹ Cf Anthony Anderson, *The Man who was H. M. Bateman* (Exeter: Webb & Bower, 1982); <https://www.hmbateman.com/gallery/the-man-who-.htm>

then lost forever. The same may happen to submissions to *Vates* (please keep trying . . . and also note that at some periods in a year, I am not looking at email for a while); I do supply postal addresses among the publication information on p. 2.¹² There have been occasions when something valuable has only just been saved, by good fortune, from the ‘spam’ folder.¹³ As for the messages I send out: I am not actually sitting in Nigeria trying to defraud you, but your computer may not be clever enough to know that. That problem is made much worse, when I am wanting to contact people I don’t know yet, with a view to raising awareness of *Vates* and seeking a wider range of submissions. Perhaps the majority of attempts will fail; and it gets rather tiring.

So I would be quite grateful if readers could help in spreading the word among their own social networks, both about the existence of *Vates* and about the kind of contributions it is looking for. Those who are adept on social media (which I most certainly am not) would be particularly well placed to spread our message more widely. Please do mention us regularly: it really would be appreciated.

Vates always wants new writers, while cherishing those we already have among our contributors. There are times when we are able to publish a quite significant body of work, from an author who may not previously have received due attention. One such, perhaps, is Clifford Weber, now an octogenarian, who has contributed generously both to this issue and the last (and the next, too, I hope); some of his work now being published here dates back decades, with origins in the 1980s or even the 1960s. It is reasonable to compare him, as a writer of Latin verse, with some of the American poets of the latter half of the twentieth century: Joseph Tusiani, or Ericus Livonius (Eric Johnson), or Harry C. Schnur (C. Arrius Nurus). Those names have probably been better known than Weber’s to many readers of modern Latin, particularly in Continental Europe.

In some regions of the world, *Vates* does seem to be adequately known (even if there is always room for improvement). In some other countries, I wonder if we have penetrated yet at all. And if it is possible, I’d like to start changing that. Can you help, with any contacts in places where *Vates* may be barely known? We seem to have had little contact, for example, with France. I do know that they speak French there . . . but I rather hoped that, nowadays, they might be magnanimous enough to rise above linguistic nationalism, and share their ideas with an English-language journal of Latin verse. Or is France, perhaps, now a kind of cultural desert, where no one cares about Latin any more? I would be very pleased to hear from them: to publish poems, if they have them, and in any case to receive some short pieces in prose. A reminder: perfection of English style is *not* expected, and please do not let any caution on that score act as a barrier. I am very happy to edit as necessary.¹⁴

There are other notable gaps, too. We don’t hear enough from Eastern Europe (apart from Barbara Dowlasz, a Pole living in Vienna). What about the Hispanic and Portuguese-speaking worlds, besides our friends from issue 15, Raúl Lavalle (Argentina) and Ignatius Armella (Mexico, though working in Italy at the *Accademia Vivarium Novum*)? Is anyone interested on the continent of Africa? What about the rest of Asia, besides Japan? Naturally Latin is better known and studied in some places than in others. I would like to think that there are just a few people, more or less anywhere, who might let us know that Latin poetry excites (or mildly interests) them. But let us start with France.

¹² For Cambridge and Brighton; not for Tokyo, because it is not my personal property; but please enquire, if you wish to send something to me by post in Japan rather than the UK.

¹³ Only the other day, I found in ‘spam’ my proofs from the *comptes rendus* of a distinguished Francophone print journal: a heinous act of digital *lèse majesté* indeed.

¹⁴ I have even gone so far, in the past, as to publish the perspective of a French scholar in French: cf Clément Oury, ‘La bataille d’Audenarde du côté français’, in D. Money, ed., *1708: Oudenarde and Lille* (Cambridge: Bringfield’s Head Press, 2008).

Carmina Amatoria

Barbara Dowlasz

Introduction:

All of these poems are addressed to a lover with whom the poet had a long-standing relationship. The curious reader will learn more about what happened by reading the texts themselves.

Metre: all in elegiac couplets

1. Ante diem IV Kal. Maias (carmen astrologicum)

Hora beata venit tam pulchro tempore veris:

Sidera concordant, dique favent animis:

Oppositus caelo Venerem geminam radiatus
aspiciebat erus Iuppiter omnipotens.

Mox animumque tuum solem dea forte tenebat; 5

Mox animam lunam rex habet ille meam!

Tum me cepisti Venerem divinus ocellis,
et tu vinctus eras, care, nitore meo.

A caelo iuncti iam multos vivimus annos:

Quod deus obstrinxit solvere nescit homo! 10

Translation:

‘On the 28th of April (an astrological poem)’

A joyful hour has arrived in such a beautiful springtime. The stars are aligned propitiously; the gods favour our souls. At that time, the almighty Lord Jupiter illumined Venus in the sign of Gemini, forming an opposition with her. Soon after, the goddess held your spirit – the sun – firmly. Soon, the king took possession of my soul – the moon! [7] Then, o divine one, you won me, your Venus, with your gaze, and you yourself were bound by my beauty. United by heaven, we have lived already for many years: what god has joined together, man cannot separate!

Notes:

3: On this day, Jupiter and Venus were in opposition, forming a 180-degree angle: Jupiter in Sagittarius, Venus in Gemini.

4: *Iuppiter erus*, Lord Jupiter: as he was in his house of rule, Sagittarius.

5: On this day, Venus formed a conjunction in Gemini with the addressee’s Sun. The Sun signifies the spirit.

6: On this day, Jupiter formed a conjunction in Sagittarius with the poet’s Moon. The Moon signifies the soul. Therefore, the Sun and Moon are in opposition (180 degrees).

2. Ad quandam

Vates, advenias! O care, impensius uror!

Suscipias cupiens suavem operam Veneris!

In viduo lecto rubet, en, lasciva puella,
 quae domino tardas vult aperire fores.
 Intima nos laetos reddet capienda voluptas: 5
 Gratus tu semper iam meus hospes eris!

Translation:

‘To a lover’

Poet, come to me! O beloved, how fiercely I burn! Take on the sweet service of Venus, longing for it! A lascivious girl blushes in her deserted bed, who longs to open the door to her lord at late hours. We will catch a deep pleasure that will delight us. You will always be my dear guest!

3. Catullianum de basioliis

Basiolum flagrans in labris dulce remansit:
 Nos memorat tacitas nuper adisse moras.
 Fervet basiolum, tenebras adducit amanti,
 Artus sub tenues mutua flamma ruit.
 Somnia basioliis geminis impleta vagantur: 5
 Iocundos gemitus ducit amasia avens.
 Basioliis egeo, mihi da nova basia mille
 Amplexusque tuos: Care poeta, veni!
 Basiolumque tuum suave imo corde remansit:
 Labris dulce meum nam tetigisti animam! 10

Translation:

‘A Catullan Poem on Kisses’

A hot kiss remains sweetly on our lips: it reminds us of our recent secret meeting. The kiss burns, darkening the lover's eyes: our shared flame scorches delicate limbs. Dreams filled with shared kisses wander: the longing lover utters pleasant moans. [7] How I need kisses! Give me a thousand again, and your hugs too: dear poet, come to me! Your sweet kiss remains in the depths of my heart, because you have sweetly touched my soul with your lips!

4. Desiderium

O desiderium, mea tu ilia saepe salutas,
 inguina debellas: hospes avens avidus!
 Gratus adis animam mentem mi nocte dieque,
 effigies affers, somnia, delicias!
 Care, veni cupidus! Dominam super aspice bellam: 5
 Gaudia promittit, dulcia basiola!
 Care, manumque meam teneas tam fortiter ardens –
 Me trahe, curramus! Fervida aperta patent!

Translation:

‘Desire’

O desire, you often greet my womb, you conquer my limbs: a thirsty, greedy guest! You gently approach my soul and mind, day and night. You bring me images, dreams, pleasures! Honey, come to me thirsty! Look down on your beautiful lady, who promises joys and sweet kisses!

Honey, hold my hand, desiring me so strongly: draw me after you, let us run! Hot and secret places lie open!

5. Puella et poeta

Sidera quot caelo, quot litore granaque harenae:

Tot veneres constat iam te habuisse tuas.

Perpetuo blandae te sponte sequuntur amantes:

Quot veniunt, abeunt – Sufficit una minus!

Care, potens generis, sic Iuppiter ille et adulter, 5
feminei, nunquam tu ipse fidelis eras.

Iam bene te novi. Miror nos vinculum amantes
iungere perpetuo, fortius et stabile.

Vivere nempe una minime, dilecte, queamus, 10
nec fieri possit, discidium ut valeat!

En, agimus iuncti modo lustra, puella, poeta,
quattuor, et cupio: Flammaque permaneat!

Translation:

‘The Girl and the Poet’

It is obvious that you’ve had as many women as there are stars in the sky, or grains of sand on the shore. Tempting lovers follow you constantly, of their own free will: so many come and go. One is not enough for you! [5] My dear, you have power over women, like Jupiter, that adulterer, and you have never been loyal. I know you so well. I wonder that we lovers are united by eternal bonds, so strong and stable. [9] We certainly wouldn’t be able to live together, my dear, but neither are we able to part. [11] It’s almost our twentieth anniversary: of the girl and the poet. And I have a wish: may our fire continue to burn!

Sappho

David Money

Introduction:

Written in Tokyo on 25 November 2024, together with a longer English poem (not included here) which explores in more detail some possible modern responses to the tragic loss of most of Sappho's works; given what we know of her ancient reputation, and what we can see from surviving poems and fragments, this must be one of the most unfortunate of literary disasters. The poems were dedicated to Yoshihiko Kutsukake, after a couple of agreeable attempts at multi-lingual conversation, often settling on Latin as the easiest medium. Kutsukake-san happens to be Japan's leading expert on Sappho; he remains an active writer in retirement on various academic topics, including Neo-Latin. Since his *magnum opus* on Sappho is in Japanese, needless to say I have not read it; but then, nor have I read a lot of other works in English, or other modern languages that I might possibly be able to struggle through. More importantly, perhaps, Kutsukake-san is entertaining company, and I like to think that Sappho herself might have got on well with him, and have appreciated his attention to what little of her great achievement has been preserved for posterity.

Femina docta fuit: sed fortunata? Poetae
Pars remanet. Fama est: femina docta fuit.
Fama salax homines tandem delusit: ab illa
Notum iam multis insula nomen habet.
Fortunae donum fuit invenisse magistrum
Qui tantae mentis vim celebrare potest.

5

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

She was a learned woman: was she lucky too?
A partial poet remains; and fame – a lot of fame.
But fame has been known to deceive: her name, her island's name
Have become, let us say, notorious. Would she have pride?
One gift of fortune was to have found a man of learning
Able, so far away, to celebrate her mind.

5

Ad Quasdam Puellas

Clifford Weber

Introduction:

A series of poems 'To certain girls', mostly dating from the 1980s and '90s. I have a record, more or less precise, of some of the dates of composition: (1) 31 October 1983; (2) 1983; (3) 28 January 1992; (4) 18 April 1992; (5) 15 June 1992; (6) 23 June 1992; (7) 26 August 1992; (8) undated, perhaps 1966; (9) undated, perhaps 1983; (10) undated. The poems do not have individual titles.

Metre: all in elegiac couplets

1.

Optima quae cupio si me sperare iubebis,

pessima, turpis eris, dura, pudore carens.

Si contra, ‘Fugiam quo non tua crura sequantur

tarda neque aspiciant lumina caeca, senex.

Noster Aprilis amor fuit; at nunc mense Decembri

amplexu pueri fota cubare volo' –

talia si dicas (aliter Venus annuat oro),

optima sis, vera voce locuta mala.

Torva tamen retices, quare neque honesta probari

nec tu culpari perfidiosa potes.

An magis ille placet cuius comes esse videris?

Mene putas hanc rem subitam tolerare nequire?

Transfer in hunc puerum, si vis, quo privor amorem;

quod mihi paene dabas, id meminisse satis.

Ipsa ego me saevis enitor solvere curis

denique ut hoc magno muter amore tuo.

At, mea vita, senis mutari tam pigra mens est

horrida quam glacies marmoraque alba gelu.

Translation:

If you bid me to hope for the best things that I desire, you will be the worst, disgraceful, unfeeling, shameless. If, on the other hand, you say ‘I will run away where your slow legs can’t follow or your blind eyes see, old man. Ours was an April love, but now in the month of December, I want to sleep warmed in a boy’s embrace’ – [7] if you should say such things (I pray that Venus grant otherwise), you would be the best for saying bad things with a truthful voice. Nevertheless, you maintain a grim silence, wherefore you can neither be approved as honest nor be blamed as perfidious. [11] Or is he more pleasing whose companion you seem to be? Do you think that I can’t bear this sudden thing? Transfer to this boy, if you wish, the love that I am deprived of; it is enough to remember what you were almost giving me. [15] Quite on my own, I am striving to free myself from a fierce passion in order finally to be released from this great love for you. But, my life, an old man’s mind is as slow to change as prickly ice and marble white with frost.

2.

Nataline tuo fugies et torva tacebis
nec tibi quae mitto mollia verba leges?
Quae mala cras patiar, quae post tormenta subibo
si tanta est hodie crux patienda mihi?

Translation:

On your birthday, will you flee and maintain a grim silence, and not read the gentle words that I am sending you? What evils will I suffer tomorrow, what torments will I later endure, if I must endure so great a cross today?

3.

Nocte mihi nuper quamquam tua venit imago,
hoc tamen ipsa velim tu videre die.

Translation:

Although your image has come to me recently at night, nevertheless, I could wish that you be seen today in person.

4.

Ista citis pedibus fugienda est arida zona:
flumina vere novo flos novus ampla cupit.

Translation:

That parched zone should be fled on swift feet: in early spring, a new blossom desires abundant streams.

Note:

1: The *arida zona* is the American state of Arizona.

5.

Qui furor aut quae nos insania nuper adorta est?
Turpe nefas ut amet pulchra puella senem.
Hoc nescis, mea lux? Non te hoc docuere magistri?
Non tibi talis erit despiciendus amor?

Translation:

What madness or what insanity has recently assaulted us?
It is a shameful sin that a beautiful girl love an old man.
Do you not know this, my light? Have your teachers not taught you this?
Will you not have to disdain such a love?

6.

Deterior non sum sermone neque indole peior;
nulla fides poterit certior esse mea.
Illius at iuvenis os, bracchia, corpus, ocellos –
haec bona qui sapiens, quae schola docta dabit?

Verba faceta placent, placet immutabile pectus;
at formam pueri diligit ipsa Venus. 5

Translation:

I am not inferior in speech or worse in nature; no fidelity will be able to be truer than mine. But that lad's looks, arms, body, eyes – what sage, what learned school will confer these possessions? Fine words are pleasing, pleasing too an immutable heart; but a boy's beauty Venus herself adores.

7.

Convenit aetati 'mulier' formaeque 'puella':
sic capis hoc fausto nomen utrumque die.
O quam te memorem? Sermo est muliebris et artes,
sed cum te aspiciam, rara puella nites.
Res dubia est aurine fides an detur oculo;
testis uter bonus et verus et aequus erit? 5

Translation:

'Woman' suits your age and 'girl' your beauty: so do you acquire both names on this auspicious day. How am I to mention you? Your speech and conduct are a woman's, but when I look at you, yours is the radiance of a peerless girl. It is unclear whether credence be given to the ear or to the eye; which will be a good, true, and impartial witness?

8.

Est tibi longinquus coniunx, festiva puella –
me quoque in externa sperat amica plaga.
Nonne tamen Circae gratus fuit hospes Ulixes?
Percute me prompto vimine, dira, tuo!

Translation:

You have a distant spouse, pretty girl – for me as well, a girlfriend longs in a foreign tract. Nevertheless, was Ulysses not a welcome guest for Circe? Strike me, dread girl, with your ready wand!

9.

Si me umquam iubeas carmen componere de te,
non tibi poscenti molle poema negem.
Unde capis nomen, victus es more modoque
sic hilaris quam me nunc celebrare iuvat.
Attamen hoc nequeo scriptis committere solum: 5
urere me Venerem semper amore tuo.
Blanda, dicax, elegans, grato sale praedita, dulcis –
his captum fugies, dura puella, bonis?
Isti quam metuo iuveni ne laesa queraris
oscula deformem foeda sitire senem! 10

Translation:

If you should ever bid me to write verse about you, I would not deny your request for a tender poem. Like the source of your name, you are so cheerful in the conduct and manner of your life that it gives me pleasure to celebrate you now. [5] Nevertheless, this alone I cannot commit to writing: that Venus is ever burning me with love for you. Charming, witty, elegant, endowed with a welcome sarcasm, sweet – will you, unfeeling girl, flee someone captured by these assets? [9] How I fear that, offended, you will complain to that lad of yours that an ugly old man is thirsting for filthy kisses.

Note:

3: The name is ‘Hilary’, derived from *hilaris*.

10.

Sol ubi lassus iter minimum per sidera currit
inque cubile cito praecipitare cupit,
hac ego luce brevi nequeo te credere natam.

Num tibi nascenti prima patebat hiems?
Vernus in arbustis Zephyrus crepitare videtur
praedita cum lepido verba loquare sale.
Veris in herbosis qualis color enitet arvis,
talis in ore tuo gratia mollis inest.

5

Ver risu, ver in facie, ver floret ocellis;
non tibi sunt aptae bruma, pruina, nives.

10

Septembri, Boreae, tenebras obducite caelo,
namque Diana nitens nata Decembre fuit.

Translation:

When the exhausted sun runs its shortest course through the stars and desires to hasten quickly to bed, that you were born on this short day I cannot believe. At your birth, was winter the first thing that was visible? [5] Spring’s Zephyr seems to rustle in the trees when you speak words endowed with fine wit; as the color that shines forth in the grassy fields of spring, such soft charm is present in your speech. [9] Spring blooms in your laugh, on your face, in your eyes; not suited to you are winter, frost, snows. Spread darkness, north winds, over September’s sky, for radiant Diane was born in December.

Note:

12: ‘Diana’ is Diane Sawyer, a well-known television journalist, who was born on 22 December 1945.

Sine Mora Amor

Michiel Sauter

Introduction:

How I wish I could give a really explicit translation of my poem, ‘if not at once the gods of chastity forbade’ to quote the few decent lines from this rather carnal catalogue. However, I took the liberty of borrowing many a word from my compatriots Janus Secundus (*Basium* 8) and Janus Dousa (*Ad Idam*). Hence, I suggest the eager reader find a clue in the translations of these two poems. Needless to say, I copied their metre as well. Another source of inspiration was Virgil, whose opening line of the Aeneid (*Arma virumque cano...*) I gladly parodied: *Armos natesque canto*: ‘Of shoulders and buttocks I sing.’

Sine mora amor

(Basium interdictum, secundum Janum Secundum)

‘Amasne me?’ rogasti.

Putasne me negare?

Tuos amo capillos,

hos paetulos ocellos

genasque quippe nasum

ac semper haec labella

haec colla mollicella.

Tuos amo lacertos

alasque saepe tangens

necnon tuas papillas

planissimumve ventrem;

admiror umbilicum

femur femurque pulchrum.

Ne cunnulum canamus

quem lingua nostra vellet

ad astra ferre nunciam

nisi statim vetarent

di castimoniarum.

Armos natesque canto

pedesque crura laudo

et corporis leporem:

nil non amore dignumst,

(nec indolem revelo

qua Gorgones fugantur;

sed corporaliter nunc . . .)

te diligo reapse!

Metre: iambic dimeter catalectic

Translation:
'Unconditional love'
(A forbidden kiss, after Janus Secundus)

'Do you love me?' you asked. Do you think I would deny? I love your hair, those squinting eyes, your cheeks, obviously, and nose and at all times these lips this tender neck.	5
I love your arms often touching the armpits and your breasts your extremely flat belly; I admire your belly button your nice thigh and your nice thigh. Let's rather not sing about your lap that our language would praise to the stars if not at once the gods of chastity forbade.	10
Of shoulders and buttocks I sing your feet and legs I praise and the charm of your body; nothing is unworthy of my love, (however, I do not reveal your character by which even the Gorgons are chased away but physically, right now . . .)	15
I love you indeed!	20
	25

Three Poems about Love

David Money

Introduction:

These are not recent poems; indeed, though I remembered the poems themselves, and thought they might fit well enough alongside some of the other love poems in this issue of *Vates*, I had entirely forgotten the circumstances of their composition. I find from the original documents, though, that they were all written in America, the first in 2010, the other two in 2011. The occasion was my presence at Latin-speaking workshops held in Lexington, Kentucky, to which Terence Tunberg had kindly invited me. Though not specifically devoted to verse, those weeks acted as a spur to composition, not least so that I could have something new to hand, when asked to read some verse aloud. There is a video available on the internet of such a reading, from the Michigan *Inter Versiculos* workshop of 2011:

<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inter-versiculos/going-public/2011-public-reading/>

These three poems are items 19, 20 and 21 (I notice, when accessed on 12 August 2026, with some embarrassingly awful computer-generated subtitles, which are best ignored).

The poems adopt various literary *personae*. The first is in the voice of an unnamed woman, taking Ovid to task on the biased assumptions behind one of his more memorable, but also more sexist, elegies, *Amores* 1. 9 (*Militat omnis amans . . .*). The other two are from a male perspective – in the case of the third poem, addressing the occasionally vexed issue of stubble on the chin, and its merits or demerits (and the separate question of whether a full beard is at all desirable). Naturally there is some frivolity here, and possibly some bad taste, though I hope it will not offend any sensitive readers too deeply.

Metre: all in elegiac couplets

1. Responsum Feminae Cuiusdam ad Ovidium

Militat omnis amans? Melius sed femina pugnat:

Debilis ardentis despicit arma viri.

Iste puer Veneris iactat puerilia tela,

Praesidium docta femina mente tenet.

Quaeris, quot mulier ferat instrumenta cruentas

5

Ad pugnas? Praedam quomodo certa petat?

Responsum'st: pulchras quot habet Tasmania chartas,

Quot vigiles oculis insidiaeque latent;

Umida quot praebet iam Lexingtonia guttas

Sudoris, tot sunt tela timenda viris.

10

Turpe senilis amor? Fortasse, sed omnibus aequum'st:

Rarior est qui non turpiter ardet amans.

Forsitan una soror seniores quaerit amantes,

Et petit aequales altera Marte soror.

Res facilis iuvenes est debellare superbos;

15

Maturo servo parcere maior honor.

Nasule, perspicuis loquitur tibi femina verbis:

Fortunatus eris si mea castra coles.

Translation:

‘A certain woman’s response to Ovid (*Amores* 1. 9)’

Does every lover make war? But a woman fights better; she despises an ardent man’s weak weapons. That child of Venus brandishes childish weapons; a woman keeps a garrison in her learned mind. [5] You ask, how many pieces of equipment a woman might bring to bloody battles? How can she be certain to win the spoils? The answer is: as many as Tasmania has beautiful maps; as many as the watchmen and ambushes that lurk in her eyes; as many as the drops of sweat that humid Lexington now offers – so many are the weapons that men need to fear. [11] Is an old man’s love a dirty thing? Perhaps; but it’s the same for all – it’s a rather rare lover whose passion isn’t dirty. Perhaps one sister seeks out older lovers, and another sister seeks to fight with those of her own age. [15] It’s an easy thing to bring proud youths to submission; a greater honour to be kind to a mature servant. Little Ovid, a woman tells you clearly: you’ll be lucky if you conquer me.

Note:

7: *Tasmania*: Tasmania is an island south of the Australian mainland – have a look at its shape on the map. There may be serious issues of rainforest conservation there, should Brazilian deforestation methods be applied.

(A vulgar aside, which the sensitive may ignore: this reference was included for an Australian friend, who introduced me to the (alleged) colourful Australian greeting, ‘show us yer map o’ Tazzie, darlin’ – not entirely polite, in the most genteel Australian social circles, and I don’t recommend using it; but I hope Ovid would not have been too shocked.)

I take *Tasmania* as scanning with the second ‘a’ long, in line with normal modern pronunciation in English: ‘Taz-may-ni-a’.

2. Ambiguae voces

Ambiguae voces certant, incertus et haeret

Auditor pendens omnia mente sua.

Dulcia quae spirant inter se verba repugnant;

Quid vult ex imo pectore cara loqui?

Cara quidem verbis mollisque puella videtur; 5

Alter quam ‘carus’ carior esse potest.

‘Care’ alio dixisse, alio ‘carissime’ quondam

Dicitur, atque novo verba referre viro.

Quot sunt orbe viri quibus haec ‘carissime’ dicat?

Et fortasse nimis sit numerare duos. 10

Quaeritur, ambiguo quid vult ea dicere verbo:

Significatve nimis, significatve nihil?

Translation:

‘Ambiguous voices’

Ambiguous voices compete, and the uncertain listener pauses, weighing everything up in his mind. Sweet-breathing words contradict each other: what does his dear one really mean to say? Indeed the girl seems dear and gentle in her words; but another can be dearer than her ‘dear’. [7] She is said to have once addressed one as ‘dear’, another as ‘dearest’, and to repeat the words to a new man. How many men in the world are there to whom she might say ‘dearest’? And perhaps to count two of them might be too many. The question is, what does she mean to say with an ambiguous word: does it mean too much, or does it mean nothing?

3. Stipula

Sunt quae despiciunt barbas, quibus horridus ardor Displicet, ut frustra barbarus usque petat. Rusticus apparet rudis atque hirsutus amator: Inculto teneras perfricat ore genas.	
Vero sunt aliae, quibus ingens barba placebit, Quae numquam digitis tangere densa timent.	5
Sunt mento segetes constanti messe metendae, Atque solent nitide radere menta viri. Agris ut stipulae, stipulae tamen ore latebunt: Post messem cautam plusve minusve manent.	10
Perque diem durant stipulae firmantque virorum: Non, dico, pueri corpore pluma levis. Abhorrent multae: tamen et muliebre per orbem Quod gaudet stipulis dicitur esse genus.	15
Non credis? Mirum est. Fateor me audivisse rogantem Quae petit has stipulas, quae rogat, urget, habet. Sentire ad mammas cupiebat, tangere vivam Duritiem stipulae deliciasque suas. 'Tange cutem stipulis' iussit, sua basia donans 'Suras tange meas, intima tange, frica.'	20
'Tange femur' iussit; tandem suspiria crescunt; Asperitas placuit multiplicata satis. 'Tange femur, fac, fac quod vis, fac' iussit, ut illa Dicat 'Io' clamans, et repetatur 'Io.'	25
Excita sic stipulis partes matrona petivit Scorti (vix possum credere; mira loquor): Hoc tamen audiui; mirandus denique mundus Gustibus apparet, foemineumque genus. Fabula si vera est, homines qui se sine cura Raserunt, quondam spem tetigere rudem.	30

Translation:

'Stubble'

There are women who despise beards, who are displeased by prickly passion, so that a barbarian might always woo them in vain. A rustic lover appears rough and hairy: he scratches their tender cheeks with his unshaven face. [5] But indeed there are others whom a huge beard will please, who never fear to touch thick [hairs] with their fingers. There are crops on the chin which need to be mown with a constant harvesting, and men tend to shave their chins smoothly. [9] But like stubble on the fields, stubble will lurk on the face: after a careful harvest, more or less of it will remain. As the day progresses, men's stubble endures and hardens: I'm not talking about the light down of a boy's body. Many women abhor it; nevertheless, there is said to be a type of woman throughout the world which rejoices in stubble. [15] You don't believe me? It is extraordinary. I admit that I've heard [of] a woman's requests, who seeks this stubble, who asks, demands, and gets it. She desired to feel it on her breasts, to touch the living hardness of stubble and her delights. 'Touch my flesh with stubble,' she ordered, giving her kisses, 'touch my legs, touch intimately, rub . . . touch my thigh,' she ordered; at last the sighs increase, the rough touch repeated sufficiently has pleased her. [23] 'Touch my thigh, do it, do what you want, do it,' she ordered, so that she might shout out 'oh,' and the 'oh' might be repeated. Thus

excited by the stubble a mature woman has sought the role of a slut (I can scarcely believe it: I'm telling an amazing tale). But that's what I've heard, anyway; in the end, the wide world, and the female sex, appear amazing in their tastes. [29] If this tale is true, men who have shaved themselves without much care did at one time attain a bristly hope.

Laus Helenae

David Omar Cohen

Introduction:

Written on 15 October 2025 in honour of my beloved Heleen Oomen, a clarinetist and music teacher of many talents, who had recently celebrated her 38th birthday.

Quis vatum valeat dominae componere laudes
Qui cantent hodie, carminibus lepidis?
Quique poëta decore puellae pingere possit
Flexanimam faciem dulciferamque meae?
Hanc Helenam cecinisse nihil valet ars hodierna: 5
Dicere Romanis fert animus pedibus.
Voce etenim totiens opulenta cantat et ipsa,
Sive novis tibiis quas vocitant ‘clarinet’,
Quamque, ut dicitur, ipsa Minerva instruxit ab arte 10
Lina polit calamo vel decorat tabulas.
Auriculae rident et ocelli, ridet et ipsa:
Talem quis maeret aspiciens dominam?
Invideant Troes, repetant acies Danaorum:
Est, scitote, mihi pulchrior ipsa Helena.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

‘Praise of Heleen [sic]’

Who of today’s singers might be able to praise their beloved in charming verse? Which singer could paint a gracious portrait of my lady’s sweet and moving countenance? To sing of this Helen, current art is of no use: my mind urges me to speak in Roman feet. [7] For she herself uses to sing quite often with a rich voice, or to play on a new sort of *tibiae* known as the ‘clarinet’, and by the very art which, rumour has it, Minerva herself taught her, she makes linocuts and paints portraits. [11] Radiant are her ears and eyes, and a radiant smile can be seen on her face: who could be sad when seeing a lady such as she is? Let the Trojans be jealous and let battle lines of Greeks come to take her back: know that to me, this Helen is more beautiful than Helen herself.

Tu, Mea Lux

Denise Ugliano

Introduction:

The following poem is part of a collection written during my first year of high school, when I was fourteen. Love generated in the depths of the ψυχή (*psyché*, soul) needs to be expressed in every known language. In fact, I happened to write poetry in English, French, and Latin and I have recently started writing in Spanish too. A strong source of inspiration allows potential poetry to flourish.

Etiam fleo et taceo
ac cordis bellum adior.
'Quo vadis?'

Quaero mihi
atque in caelo immenso
mea vox aberrat. 5

Omnis mea cogitatio
lata a vento it
inter undas maris
inter stellas caeli 10
sed semper redit,
quia tu,
solus tu,
mea lux es.

Metre: Free verse

Translation:

'You, my light'

I'm still crying and keeping quiet,
while I fight the war within my heart.
'Where are you going?'

I ask myself,
and in the vast sky
my voice is lost. 5

Every thought of mine
carried away by the wind, goes
across the waves of the sea
across the stars of the sky 10
but it always returns,
because you,
only you,
are my light.

De Lesbia, A Lesbia

Sarah Rahman

Introduction:

This poem was written as a challenge to myself: to give Lesbia a voice of her own with the filter of Catullus's adoration and loathing stripped away. What would she say to him? What is her version of their story? The poem is her direct response, engaging closely with Catullus's *Carmina* 2, 3, 5, and 11 and reworking the imagery, diction, and even his own words against him. At its heart, it takes the sparrow of *Carmina* 2 and 3, the pet Catullus envies for receiving so much of Lesbia's affection, and reverses the metaphor. Here, Catullus is the sparrow, caged and clinging to exclusive love. Where Catullus's *Carmen* 11 catalogues his future worldly travels to prove his independence after they part, Lesbia is already conquering this world and dismisses his posturing. The poem closes by echoing the opening line of *Carmen* 5 ('vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus'), but redirected: not a plea to ignore those who judge their affair, but an invitation for Catullus to abandon exclusivity altogether. Lesbia's philosophy, as she presents it here, is that love is freedom, not devotion. Whether objectively moral or not, this is what she believes.

Terrarum magis orbis est hic ingens
Quam quod tu reputas, miselle passer;
Pervadit populos tot illa hera orbis,
Quot flores subiguntur amplo aratro
In prato; graditur procul gradatim 5
Tunsa litora, sordidas nat undas,
Vincit culmina montium suprema.
Est mihi nimius quidem viro uni
Amor. Pectora danda cur tibi sunt
Artus mundo ubi pandere illa possit? 10
Passer in cavea eius aestimari
Potest haud ita (semper ut monebas,
Caritas vehemens tenenda non est).
Leva carcere; nam sinendus alte
Volare, ales hic, et procul volare, 15
Vero esse ingenio; veni esque mecum,
Mi passercule in aethere hoc sublimi;
Sic vivamus, ita et, Catulle, amemus.

Metre: hendecasyllables

Translation:

'On Lesbia, by Lesbia'

This sphere of lands is more vast than what you reckon, poor little sparrow: she, the mistress of the world, makes her way through so many peoples, as many as the flowers subdued by the plow in the wide meadow; she walks afar step by step on the beaten shores, she swims the sordid waves, she conquers the mountains' lofty peaks. [8] For me, indeed, too great for one man is Love. Why must her heart be given to you when she can open her limbs to the world? [11] The sparrow in its cage is not truly able to be valued (as you always used to advise me, a

strong attachment ought not to be indulged). Release it from confinement, for it must be allowed to fly high, this winged creature, and to fly far, to be in its true nature; come and be with me, my poor little sparrow, in this exalted heaven; thus, let us live, and thus, Catullus, let us love.

Note:

16: *veni esque mecum*: *es* here is imperative (rather than the more familiar indicative use of *es*), like *veni*: the two imperatives meaning ‘come and be with me’.

Julian Tunncliffe

In February 2005, Alan Millard won the ‘Jaspistos’ poetry competition in *The Spectator* with ‘On being small’. I submitted my version of his poem to the *Spectator* Classics Cup 2005, and was mentioned in dispatches. I am grateful to Alan Millard and *The Spectator* for their permission to reproduce his poem here. The Latin title is Alan’s suggestion.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Alan Millard's original:

‘On being small’

Through being short, each woman that I meet
Presents me with a disconcerting test,
For as we near each other in the street
My eyes are duly drawn towards her chest.
My New Year's resolution was designed 5
To prove that I was not enslaved to lust
And that, by looking up, or down, I'd find
A way to halt this focus on the bust;
I tried, but looking down brought no delight
And looking up was even worse because 10
To be aware of every woman's height
Reminded me of just how short I was.
My failure to succeed through being small
Will come to shorter men as no surprise.
It simply means that we who are not tall 15
Must be content with all that greets our eyes.

American Aedile

Charles O. Cummings

Introduction:

This poem originated as a challenge to a Latin rap battle. It therefore does not employ a conventional Classical Latin quantitative metre; instead, it uses propulsive spoken rhythm, end and internal rhyme, comic exaggeration, and deliberate ad libs and non sequitur. The translation likewise prioritizes rhythm, rhyme, and comic force over strict word-for-word equivalence.

Mihi nomen est Scipio,
Et baculum arripio
Et Iacobum interficio.
Concilium incipio.
Ciceronem amo 5
Et 'so' ego fluo, ho!

Omnes mortui sunt.
Florebunt mala – sepulchra vestra.
Vesta, Hestia, Proserpina, Athena,
Omnes amant me. 10
Sed edo infantes qui provocant me.
Ecce, alloquor te.

Agricola sum,
Sed neco ioco.
In Hispania me dicunt 'loco', 15
In Britannia illi dicunt 'oh no',
In America – sentis me? – 'fo sho'.

Metre: free verse

Translation:

My name is Scipio
And I seize the staff
And I kill Jacob's ass.
I start a new council.
My boy's Cicero 5
And so I flow, ho!

Everyone's dead.
Evils will bloom – your tombs.
Vesta, Hestia, Proserpina, Athena,
Goddesses all love me. 10
But I eat babies who provoke me.
Behold, that's ye.

I'm a farmer
But I kill for fun.
In Spain, they call me 'loco',
In Britain, they say 'oh no',
In America – y'all feel me? – 'fo sho'.

15

Two Poems, on Dido and Clouds

Tatyana Felder-Sinner

Introduction:

The poem about Dido was written in response to one of our A-level texts (Virgil, *Aeneid* 4) to decorate an empty whiteboard in our classroom. The other was written during the summer of 2026, and is about not knowing what to write: focusing on clouds, because the sky was completely grey when I began writing.

Metre: both in elegiac couplets

1. Ad Didonem

magnam reginam miseramur, deliciarum
Iunonis quondam: gentis honesta sator.
Cur abiit Veneris natus? sed ne reprehende
te Dido, ac noli quaerere 'mene fugis?'

Translation:

'To Dido'

We pity the great queen, once a favourite of Juno: [she is the] honourable founder of a nation. Why did Venus' son leave? But don't blame yourself, Dido, and don't ask 'Is it me you are fleeing?'

Notes:

- 1: *deliciarum* (genitive plural), meaning '[one] of the favourites'.
- 2: *gens* is used purposefully with connotations of Rome, as well as Dido's own Carthage; Dido is the subject of the phrase in the second half of the pentameter, a female, nominative *sator* (a word usually masculine, but here with a feminine adjective, for a female founder).
- 3: *ne* + imperative, as an alternative form of prohibition to *ne* + subjunctive (cf *Aeneid* 4. 338).
- 4: '*mene fugis?*' is quoted from Dido's speech at *Aeneid* 4. 314.

2. Ad Nubila

aetheris obscurant formosi nubila visum,
et speciem versus versiculiue tegunt?
quaerite, vos nubes, alium qui fortius ista
sustineat. video paene poema novum.
fortasse et stellas aperiteque, forte cometas
fulgentes inter sidera casca poli.
vel mihi cedite, si malitis, inania caeli,
praeter at illa mihi nubila ferte modo.

5

Translation:

‘To the clouds’

The clouds are obscuring sight of the beautiful sky, are they hiding the appearance of my verses too? You clouds, find someone else who can bear this better [than me]; I can almost see a new poem. [5] Show me, perhaps, the stars, or maybe even comets, shining among the ancient constellations of the sky, or reveal to me, if you prefer, the emptiness of the sky, but just bring me more than clouds.

Notes:

2: *versus versiculique* (genitive singulars): used here to mean a longer and shorter line respectively, hence the hexameter and pentameter that make up an elegiac couplet.

5: *fortasse* is paired with *forte*: ‘perhaps’ and ‘maybe’.

6: *cascus*, ‘old’. An old word, but attested in Varro and Ennius, among others.

A Pastiche

Alexander Pease

Introduction:

For the past year or so, I have been working on improving my Latin by translating the Roman poet Martial into English verse. At some point during the process, I happened on the famous imitation of 1. 32 (*Non amo te, Sabidi . . .*) by Restoration satirist Tom Brown, which runs more or less as follows (there are various versions):

I do not love you, Doctor Fell,
The reason why – I cannot tell;
But this I know, and know full well,
I do not love you, Doctor Fell.

Having several small children at home, this immediately put me in mind of an imitation of my own:

I do not like green eggs and ham.
I can't say why. That's how I am.
But I can say for certain, Sam,
I do not like green eggs and ham.

Which, now being rendered in Latin, completes the circle.

ova et perna virent; non possum dicere quare
non amo; sed possum dicere, Samie, non.

Metre: elegiac couplet

Translation:

Green eggs and ham? I can't say why I don't like them. But I can say, Sam, no.

Two Odes on Academic Retirements: William Anderson and Robert Bennett

Clifford Weber

Introduction:

William Scovil Anderson was my mentor at Berkeley from 1965 until 1975, when I finally completed a philological dissertation exceeding 300 pages in length. Full details concerning Anderson's active academic life after he retired at age 67 can be found online at the Database of Classical Scholars, <https://dbcs.rutgers.edu>. He remarried (age gap unknown) after the death of his first wife. The wish expressed in the final two lines was amply fulfilled when he died at age 95, though the wish in line 10 was not. The theme of a poet failing to travel abroad because of his girlfriend's objections (line 6) is also found in Propertius 1. 6. The first poem, in honour of Anderson, dates from 15 July 1994.

Robert Bennett was part of a Classics triumvirate that remained intact for thirty-four years at Kenyon College. Before his retirement, Bennett served as the faculty adviser to a college fraternity (lines 13-14) and acquired an M.A. from a Lutheran seminary in Ohio (line 32). As a retiree, he continued to sing in the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus (lines 25-26) and to act in student theatrical productions (lines 26-28). He kept a fish pond behind his house (lines 29-30) and enjoyed holding meetings (lines 11-12) more than I did. The second poem is dated 29 April 2006.

1. Gulielmo Anderson (1927-2022), in honorem ultimo munere academico nuper defuncto

Tandem docendi munere maximo

defunctus, ad quas ingenio tuo

terras inauditas vehere

qua tibi proposita corona?

Cessare mavis et requiescere?

5

Fortasse quaedam te retinet via?

Sunt quae puellarum peritam

clam cupiant Venerem senilem.

Seu gloriam seu deligis otium

servatus a dis incolumis diu

10

aetate longinqua fruaris

innumerabilium dierum.

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

'To William Anderson (1927-2022), written in honour of his recent completion of academic duties (in 1994)'

Having finally finished a most important service of teaching,

to what lands unheard of will you be carried

by your genius,

with what crown offered you?

Do you prefer to be idle and to rest? 5
 Perhaps a certain somebody holds you back from the road?
 There are some who secretly desire an old man's love
 for its experience with girls.
 Whether you choose glory or inactivity,
 long kept unharmed by the gods 10
 may you enjoy an advanced age
 of days without number.

2. In honorem Roberti Bennett ultimo munere docendi paene perfecto

Laudare numquam praeteritum soles
 tempus sed ardes rem potius novam;
 haerere desuetis docendi
 artibus atque modis recusas. 5
 Comis alumnos hic prope te vides;
 impellit omnis mens similis tuae,
 ipsos vetustatis relictæ
 immemores, hodierna amantis.
 Semper propinquat spe citior dies
 praecepta cum tu discipulo dabis 10
 nulli neque in coetum vocabis
 consilia ut capiantur ullos.
 Nullos sodales quomodo mitius
 ludant monebis, nulla tuas fores
 florens celebrabit iuventus, 15
 nullius ingenium fovebis.
 Quod credis et nunc, tum renues statim;
 mentem creabit vita novam prior,
 fiesque laudator peracti
 temporis et novitatis hostis. 20
 Nobis puellae quam puer attigi
 formam senilis secubitus refert;
 sic imber Aprilis quod auxit
 attenuat glacies Decembris.
 Tu voce magna maribus in choris 25
 canta vetustum carmen, et histrio
 succende consessum querelis
 flebilibus veteris tyranni.
 Saevas inermi pisce tuo fuga
 felis, amicos fortiter adiuva, 30
 tuque ipse constanti beëris
 pace deum pietatis ergo.

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

‘In honour of Robert Bennett, when he had almost completed his final duties as a teacher’

You are inclined never to praise time past,
but you rather burn for what is new;
 you refuse to cling to outmoded
 techniques and methods of teaching.
You see beside you here smiling protégés; 5
an attitude similar to yours moves them all,
 being themselves heedless of old times done and gone
 but loving the here and now.
The day draws ever nearer, sooner than you expect,
when you will impart your teachings to no student 10
 or summon any people to a meeting
 to reach decisions.
No fraternity will you advise to play more gently,
no youth in their prime
 will crowd your door, 15
 no one’s talent will you nurture.
What you believe even now you will then straightway deny;
your former life will beget a new attitude,
 and you will become a praiser of time gone by
 and an enemy of newness. 20
To me, sleeping alone in old age brings back the form
of the girl I embraced as a boy;
 in the same way, what April rain has caused to grow
 the ice of December diminishes.
But you, with a loud voice in choirs of men, 25
sing an ancient song, and, from the stage,
 fire the audience with the tearful laments
 of an old king.
Away from your defenseless fish, put to flight savage
cats; staunchly help your friends; 30
 and may you yourself be blessed with the constant
 peace of the gods on account of your piety.

Two Poems for Parental Birthdays

Gerd Allesch

Introduction:

Among the most common forms of Latin occasional poetry are birthday poems, two examples of which are offered here.

1. Patri meo octogesimum quintum diem natalem agenti

Sedens arator post casulam suam
ut est quietus nempe laboribus
 duris diei iam peractis
 vespere nunc fruiturque tecto
fumante – circum femina, liberi
amabiles, qui laetitiam adferunt
 cibisque mensam ornare certant:
 omnia splendida et otiosa.
Sic carpe vitam, seu tuus Hesperum
vultus serenat, surgere seu parat
 Phoebus relinquens strata pulchra,
 neu careant bona festa Baccho!

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

'To my father on his eighty-fifth birthday'

The farmer sits outside his modest hut, at rest now that the day's harsh toil is done, and in the evening enjoys the shelter of his smoking roof. [5] Around him are his wife and beloved children, who bring him joy and eagerly adorn the table with their offerings: all is bright and peaceful, full of ease. [9] Thus seize your life – whether your gaze brightens the evening star, or whether Phoebus prepares to rise, leaving his lovely bed – and may your good feast never lack for Bacchus!

2. Genethliacon matri octogenariae dedicatum

In levibus somnis provecta nocte videtur
adstare ad lectum matris imago mihi
Iuno vel genius natalis – doctus opinor –
increpat et dictis: ‘Desidiose, toro
surge age, quid dormis? Iam sunt bona verba loquenda
iam natalis adest, in patriam propera
et matrem celebra! quod non iam est illa puella:
octogesimus hic volvitur annus ei.
Dulcia quaerantur, digni solvantur honores,
vina coronentur, liba paranda tibi!

Urantur pia tura focus dixisse Tibullum
 arbitror: invenias propria verba tua!
 Non tamen errandum est propriis, sunt menda cavenda,
 comptus versus eat, quo metra convenient!
 Comptus et ipse adsis, saltem compone capillos, 15
 quos tam confusos pascere nonne pudet?
 Sordibus omissis et lautas indue vestes!
 Soccus quid sibi vult? ecce foramen habet.
 Iamdudum video – fuerat nova vestis emenda
 inter mendicos ni numerandus eris. 20
 Eheu iam capio pigrum te surgere nolle:
 te minimum vela, frigora ne capias!
 Evigilo ad finem atque citatus scribere nitor:
 nil venit in mentem: parce tuo, genetrix!

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

‘Birthday poem dedicated to my eighty-year-old mother’

Deep in the night, in a light and drifting dream, there seemed to stand beside my bed my mother’s figure, perhaps her Juno, or the birthday spirit – such would be my educated guess – and scolded me with these harsh words: [4] ‘You idle sluggard, rise at once from bed! Why are you still sleeping? The time has come for festive words! Your mother’s birthday has arrived – hurry home and celebrate your mother! She’s no longer a young girl: the eightieth year now turns for her. [9] Seek out sweet treats, let her receive the honours she deserves, crown the wine and cakes prepared by you! I think Tibullus said that pious incense should burn upon the hearth – but come up with your own lines too! You must not be at fault in your own work, make no mistakes, let the verses be well-combed and fit the metre properly. [15] And you yourself – appear well-groomed at least! Comb those tangled locks – are you not ashamed to let them lie so wild and unattended? Ditch the sloppiness and put on decent clothes! What’s with that sock? Look, it has a hole in it! I’ve seen it for a while now – you should have bought new garments, lest you be counted among the beggars. [21] Oh dear, I see you, lazy one, reluctant still to rise: at least cloak your body in the blanket, so you don’t catch a chill!’ I wake up at the end of this and hastily strive to write – but nothing comes to mind. Forgive your son, dear Mother!

Margaret's Eightieth Birthday

Susan Gee

Introduction:

When I went up to Oxford in 1971 to read Classics, I believe there was still an annual university competition for verse-writing, but I never considered it as something I could attempt (verse composition being more associated with private boys' schools). Fifty years later, retired from a career in business and after several happy years of teaching Latin for u3a, this was my lockdown project. My friend Margaret was one of my Latin students and also a fellow Soroptimist (*soror optima est*). She was also a lifelong enthusiast for all things Roman. I worked on the poem for six months, in the hope that her plan to celebrate her 80th birthday with a Roman banquet would be achieved. It was, we all dressed up and had a great time, and I read the poem aloud, with translations handed out to the guests. Margaret Toole sadly died on 19 March 2026; the publication of this poem may serve as a tribute to her, as well as a commemoration of a happy event. The poem is dated 31 July 2021.

benigna amica Margarita convocans	
gaudere tecum nos suaviter iubes	
ioque jubilare cum melodia	
natalem amicis ut celebres hanc diem.	
sed orta iam dies et hora nunc adest	5
qua vespero surgente cenandum optimum est.	
ut eleganter accubamus has stolas	
pulchre gerentes ad modum Romanicum.	
itaque est parata hic cena sumptuosa quam	
nobis fidele coxit ex Apicio	10
coquus peritus. illaque hospes assidens,	
dulcissimo dum tollimus vino graves	
cum gaudio una cantharos plenissimos,	
amica liberalis implet hospites.	
illi propino nunc quia soror optima est	15
concordet omnis 'Margarita, gemma tu'.	

Metre: iambic trimeters

Translation:

Margaret, kind friend, you call us together	
Sweetly bidding us to rejoice with you,	
And shout out our 'Hurrah!' melodiously	
So that you may celebrate this birthday with your friends.	
But the day has already dawned, and the hour is now here,	5
When, at the rising of the evening star, a dinner invitation is best.	
How elegantly we recline at the table,	
Wearing these robes so beautifully in the Roman fashion.	
Likewise sumptuous is the feast here prepared,	
Which has been cooked for us, according to Apicius's recipes,	10
By a skilful chef. And our attentive hostess herself,	

While we lift goblets, now made heavier by far
From being filled to the brim with the smoothest wine,
Our generous friend is filling up – her guests.
To her now I raise a toast, because she is our good sister, 15
Let everyone agree ‘Margaret, you’re a pearl!’

Editor’s Note:

2: *suaviter*: scanned here as four syllables, making two iambic feet. It is normal for *suavis* to be scanned only as a two syllable word, ignoring the ‘u’ and with a long ‘a’; but there are some occasional exceptions where it has three syllables, a short ‘u’ as well as a long ‘a’. I see a couple of late antique examples noted in L. Quicherat, *Thesaurus Poeticus Linguae Latinae* (Paris: Hachette, 1850), p. 1160. So it is an acceptable variant, albeit one I wouldn’t like to see too often in *Vates*. As for sounding the ‘u’ in the adverb *suaviter* here, it certainly fits Susan’s line nicely, and perhaps the extra syllable adds a little extra suavity and *joie de vivre* to her description of rejoicing. (D. M.)

Praise for a Compiler of Crosswords

Paul McKenna

Introduction:

At Wolfson College, Oxford in May 2025 a lunch was held to celebrate the 2,750th weekly 'Azed' crossword set by Jonathan Crowther for the *Observer* newspaper. That amounts to roughly 53 years – quite a feat. The point of my writing these two encomia in Latin verses was not lost on him, a Cambridge-educated classical philologist.

I trust that readers already understand the genre of encomium well enough for me to omit any further comment. However, non-crossworders may need a nudge to see what is happening towards the end of each poem.

In the puzzle published on the first Sunday of each month Jonathan only supplies a clue for 35 of the 36 words in the finished grid. We deduce that final word and write a clue for it. He judges our submissions and announces 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prize-winners, a dozen or so VHCs (very highly commended), and a number of HCs. His comments and thoughts on the competition are recorded in the 'Azed Slip' which is subsequently distributed.

The phrase '... not without a certain struggle' is something of a leitmotif of his.

1. In Laudem Aenigmatis Artificis

Hospitis cultum veneremur hymno
Sapphico. multas decades per edens
dona quae mentem recreant vigentem
facta magistro.

verba, Iohannes, bene colligebas
mentis arcanos faciens meatus.
auctor exornas species benignas,
callidus arte.

menstruo cyclo studiosa prima
turba contendit simulare signa.
nos decet multo vigili labore
scribere nostrum.

litterae tectae propriam revelant
vim tuis curis, aliquid novum fit.
praemio gaudens superat facetus
victor ad arcem.

Metre: Sapphic stanzas

Translation:

'In praise of a master puzzle-maker'

Let us celebrate our host's elegance in Sapphic
song. Through many decades publishing
gifts which refresh a vigorous intellect,
composed by a master.

You have bound words together well, Jonathan,
creating secret courses of the mind.

A clever author you embellish friendly images
 with art.
 On a monthly cycle, a keen crowd
 strives to copy pre-eminent clues. 10
 It is fitting for us, with much vigilant effort,
 to write our own (clue).
 Hidden letters reveal their own
 Force in your work, it becomes something new.
 Rejoicing with a prize, a fine winner 15
 rises to the top

2.
 Euge, vir ingenio qui miro sensibus aptis
 instruis in quadris verba ligata tuis.
 verbum post aliud sapienti mente reponis,
 ars tua secretum callida semper habet.
 ludere amas verbis, animos et signa gubernans. 5
 quam bene compositis nos recreare modis.
 candidus in nigris spatiis, dux mentis acutae
 fingis per nebulas lumina clara vias.
 nil tam difficile est quod non penetrare valebit.
 omne potest solvi, si modo tempus adest. 10
 mensibus in cunctis sequitur te turba perita.
 artis ob insignes praemia quaerit opes.
 gloria sit tibi qui miranda aenigmata ponis,
 ingenium nobis exacuisse iuvas.
 laeti non sine perfruimur certamine quodam. 15
 perpetuo duret nobilis ille labor.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

Bravo, a man of wonderful talent who with apt sense
 You arrange words constrained in your grids.
 One word after another you place with wise mind,
 Your cunning art always holds a secret.
 You love to play with words, guiding minds and clues 5
 How well you refresh us with composed measures.
 White in dark places, a leader of sharp mind
 You forge a clear path through dark routes.
 Nothing is so difficult that it cannot be penetrated,
 It's all able to be solved, if only there is time. 10
 In all months an expert crowd follows you.
 It seeks prizes through significant resources of art.
 Glory be to you, you who sets admirable puzzles,
 You help to sharpen our intellect.
 Happy we enjoy (it) not without a certain struggle. 15
 May that noble toil last forever.

Memories of Wilfried Stroh

Hirosius Harada

Introduction:

The distinguished German Latinist Wilfried (Valahfridus) Stroh was born on 26 December 1939, and died at the age of eighty-five on 15 July 2025; he was a great enthusiast for the speaking and singing of Latin. I wrote the first poem below early in August 2025, lamenting that I would never again see or hear such a remarkable man, a true *Musarum sacerdos*. The poem refers to the *Ludi Latini Frisingenses* of 1986 in which I participated, and to Professor Stroh's Latin *colloquium* at Munich (where I was studying from 1986 to 1988). The second poem here, the Sapphic ode 'Dea', dates from that time: I recited it at the *Ludi* of 1986.

1. In memoriam Professoris Valahfridi Stroh

Me quoque Frisingae celebrasse, Valahfride, Ludos
te meminisse puto, discipulusque fui.
Colloquio intereram, duxit quod Musa Latina
ingeniumque tuum clarius usque tulit.
tres annos Monaci tecum didicique bibique,
qui numquam pereunt, tempus in omne nitent.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

'In memory of Professor Wilfried Stroh'

I think you remember, Wilfried, that I too took part in the celebrations at Freising and was your student. I was present at the colloquium, guided by the Latin Muse, which brought your genius to ever-greater renown. For three years in Munich, I studied and drank in your company – years that never fade, but shine on for all time.

2. Dea

Nox erat quondam: tenebrae cacumen
montis occaso tetigere Phoebos;
arduo fessum iuvenem meatu
umbra premebat:
colle descendit neque cernit ille
tectis villarum neque sentit ignes,
sed viam quaerit baculo tremante
luce carentem.
'di' piis audet precibus 'deaeque,
quive me vel quae nemus inter altum
urbe defessum loca pura amantem
saepe levastis,
nonne nunc estis prope me? proculve
siquis haec vestrum bonus audit, oro,
ducat errantem tribuatque lumen!' lumen adibat:

arbores inter micat aura, ludunt frondibus luces, via clara fulget, quam per illustrem bene tutus iret montis amator.	20
quid sibi fiat, stupefactus ille nescit extemplo; tamen ore laeto mox via surgens pedibus levatis fundit in auram:	25
‘montium custos nemorumque, virgo, siderum regina, semel vocata, non ter, ut dicunt, mihi tune rides, diva triformis?’	30
Luna nil reddit, neque visa cedit diva mortali, sed, ut ante, claro fulget ex caelo comes alma ridens tuta petenti.	35
nec pavens ibat neque fessus ille iam dea ducente, recensque sistit tutus in campo, calidoque sursum respicit ore	40
‘gratias’ fundens, oculisque obortos reddit umores velut herba rore sparsa mox Phoebō redeunte, ‘grates’ fundit agitque.	45
‘quid tibi possim, dea, dic alumno, reddere, aut quaenam monumenta doni, da, tui condam foveamque semper, praecipe servo!’	50
nil dedit Phoebe, tamen ex Olympo fulsit indulgens semel et reductis nubibus iam iam comitata puris tectaque cessit.	55
cesserat; lapsis bene iam diebus crevit occulto pia cura corde et vota non vulganda ferebat ille condita mente.	60
atque fert: LVDIS etenim LATINIS iamque Frisingae patefacta reddit dona nunc quamvis miseranda Musis integra cordis:	65
‘iam diu, Phoebe, tibi quae ferebam vota nunc solvenda cano: benigne inter astantes, precor, hoc sodales accipe carmen!’	
tu meum silvis iter impeditum nocte servasti bene luce fusa; nunc fave LVDIS, dea clara, lucem funde Latinam!	
vivat in tempus pius omne Doctus Mons et in caelum resonet magistro	

nomen aeternum Domini Deique
 Corbiniano!
 nec moram, virgo, facias tuumque
 adde nunc LVDIS Latia nitorem
 splendidis lingua cathedramque Amori
 iunge beatam!’

70

Metre: Sapphic stanzas

Translation:

‘The goddess’

It was night: shadows touched the mountain peak as the sun set; darkness weighed upon the young man, weary from the steep ascent: he descended the hill, seeing no farmhouse roofs nor noticing any fires, but sought his path, without any light, with a trembling staff. [9] ‘Gods and goddesses,’ he dared to pray with devout words, ‘you who have often relieved me, weary of the city and loving these pure, secluded woods, are you not near me now? Or if any benevolent one among you hears this from afar, I beg you: guide the wanderer and grant him light!’

[16] Then light drew near: a glow shimmered among the trees, light played upon the leaves, and the path shone clear, a bright way for the mountain-lover to walk in safety. Stupefied, he does not immediately know what is happening to him; yet soon, with a joyful voice and lightened step, he pours these words out into the air: [25] ‘Guardian of mountains and groves, maiden, queen of the stars, do you, the three-formed goddess, smile upon me when called but once, and not three times as they say it should be?’ The moon makes no reply, nor does the goddess withdraw from the mortal’s sight; instead, as before, she shines from the clear sky, a kindly, smiling companion to the wayfarer. [33] No longer fearful or weary, for the goddess now leads the way, he comes to a halt, safe in the open field; looking upward with a glowing face, he pours out thanks; and, as grass sprinkled with dew gives back moisture when the sun returns, so he too pours forth his gratitude: ‘Tell me, goddess, what return I can make to you, my foster-mother, or what memorials of your gift I should offer; instruct your servant: I shall cherish them forever.’

[45] The moon-goddess granted nothing; yet once, from Olympus, she shone down graciously, and then she withdrew, as the pure clouds returned to accompany and cover her. She had departed; yet as the days passed, a devout concern grew within his heart, and he cherished vows, kept hidden in his mind, that were not to be voiced aloud. [53] And now he brings them forth: for at the Latin Games, now held at Freising, he offers to the Muses gifts that, however humble, spring from a sincere heart: [57] ‘Phoebe, I now sing the vows I have long held for you, and which must now be fulfilled: I pray you, graciously accept this song among the assembled company! You safely preserved my path, obstructed by woods, at night by shedding light abroad; may you now favour the Games, bright goddess, and pour out the light of Latin. [65] May the devout Learned Mount [Domberg] live on throughout all time, and may the eternal name of the Lord God resound to heaven through the teacher Corbinianus. Delay not, maiden; now add the lustre of the Latin tongue to the splendid Games, and join a blessed cathedral to Love.’

Notes:

25: Cf Horace, *Odes* 3. 22.

53: Hiroshi Harada recited this poem, ‘Dea’, at the Freising *Ludi Latini* on 25 October 1986.

65: Freising cathedral is situated on the Domberg (*Mons Doctus*), where the 1986 *Ludi* were held.

68: Corbinianus was the first bishop of Freising.

71: Love, as the guiding spirit of the Latin *Ludi*, is here associated with St Corbinianus.

Four Royal Poems

Giacomo dalla Pietà

Introduction:

This selection of poems is concerned with members of twenty-first-century European royal families, both reigning and deposed. The Greek princess Sophia became Queen of Spain. Although Greece was no longer a monarchy, in 2021 the Annunciation Cathedral in Athens was the stage for a dynastic wedding, fifty-seven years after the last royal rite performed within its walls: the marriage between Prince Philip of Greece, the youngest son of the last Hellenic sovereign Constantine II, and Nina Flohr. The poem to Frederik X, King of Denmark, was written shortly before his actual accession on 14 January 2024, looking forward to the transition from his mother's reign to his own, after she had announced her forthcoming abdication. Finally, there is a commemorative poem on Elizabeth II of Great Britain, who died soon after reaching the milestone of seventy years on the throne, her Platinum Jubilee.

1. Sophiae Hispaniarum reginae emeritae

Infantem Hymettus te tenuit satam, recepit idem teque puellulam civile bellum cum teneret Graecia saepe agitata curis.	
Graecosque semper tu reverens, prope thronum educata ad munera regia magni putabas, regna avita reddita cum genitor teneret.	5
Fratrem iuvabas pulvere Olympico tectum atque palmae sollicitum. Dedit flagrans amore et laeta semper praemia Parthenope beata.	10
Soror iuvare an tu poteras procul germanum amatum cum lupo abstulit infidus alta et magna sceptrum terrificus minitans Athenis?	15
Tartessus ipsam te tenuit procul. Hymen iugavit cum Carolo simul te. Nam maritus num valeret imperium populi rogabat	20
inferre regno, dum caderet vetus tyrannus amens opperens. Cadit, regnatque princeps rex beatus iam Carolus, populusque gaudet.	
Regina ovans tu participas thronum prolem superbam dasque viro tuo.	25
Experta quam saepe es dolorem tu patriaeque domus novaeque. Regno Philippo iamque dato, redis qua flexa ponti litora Sunion	30

urget, soles tu iam senex nunc
tempora commemorare vitae.
Regina prudens! Te Sophiae decus
deceat, decebit! Talis ut unica
Solis plagas iungas Cadentis
atque Orientis amans in unum.

35

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

‘To Sophia, Queen Emerita of Spain’

Hymettus welcomed you as a newborn baby, and the same mountain received you as a young girl, while Greece was suffering from civil war, frequently tormented by anxieties. [5] You, who have always shown respect for the Greeks, brought up near the throne for royal duties, placed great value on these things, when your father was restored to his ancestral throne. [9] You helped your brother, covered in Olympic dust and anxious for the palm [of victory]. Blessed Parthenope, burning with love and ever joyful, granted him prizes. [13] Could you, perhaps, as a sister, help from afar your beloved brother, when a treacherous wolf snatched the high command from him, terribly threatening the city of Athens? [17] Spain welcomed you far away. Hymen united you in marriage to Charles. [19] Indeed, your husband wondered if he could introduce the sovereignty of the people into the kingdom, while he waited for the old and mad tyrant to fall. [22] He falls, and King Charles, now a blessed prince, reigns, and the people rejoice. [25] You, an exultant queen, share the throne and give your spouse splendid offspring. How often you have experienced sorrow, both for your homeland and in your new home! [29] The kingdom having now been entrusted to Philip, you return to where the curved sea shore clasps Cape Sounion; you, now elderly, love now to recall the moments of your life. [33] Prudent queen! To you is suited, and will be suited, the honour of Sophia! You who, unique in your kind, unite the lands of the setting sun [the West] and of the East, loving them as one single thing.

Notes:

3-4: The Greek civil war (1946–1949) forced the royal family into exile when Sophia was still a young girl. Her father, King Paul I of Greece, succeeded in maintaining and restoring his position after wartime turbulence.

9-12: Her brother, Constantine II of Greece, won a gold medal in sailing at the 1960 Rome Olympics. Cf Horace, *Odes* 1. 1. 3 for the association with dust (in a rather different sport!). The sailing events were held in the Gulf of Naples (Parthenope).

14-16: The regime of the Colonels overthrew the Greek monarchy in 1967.

17-18: She married the Spanish prince Juan Carlos in 1962

22-24: The dictator Franco died in 1975, allowing Juan Carlos to become king.

29: Juan Carlos abdicated in 2014, in favour of their son Felipe.

2. Philippo Graeciae Principi qui nuper uxorem duxit

Qua surgunt apium sedes, iuga dulcis Hymetti,
Cephisi et currunt flumina dulcis aquis,
Adstat quippe hodie regum variata corona
quae puero pulchro nunc comitatur ovans.

Huic sociata sedet iuxta formosa puella est quam ducturus regius ecce puer!	5
Deiectus solio genitor subridet amatque, Graecia cui quondam subdita tota fuit.	
Iunior ille fuit quam qui diadema teneret, nocte abiit tristi collacrimans iuvenis.	10
Nunc privatus adest civis, benedicit amanti nato atque uxori. Graecia tota videt.	
Praesul magnus adest, ritum celebrare paratus (en concessus honos maximus est domui!).	
O utinam possit patriae prodesse superbae privatus quamvis regius ille satus!	15

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

‘To Prince Philip of Greece, on his recent marriage’

Where beehives rise, on the ridges of sweet Hymettus, and the rivers of Cephissus run with sweet waters, a varied crown of kings is present today, which now accompanies the handsome youth, exulting. [5] A beautiful maiden sits beside him, whom the royal youth is about to wed. His father, cast down from his throne, smiles and shows his affection; in the past, the whole of Greece had been subject to him. [9] He was too young to hold the diadem; he departed in a sorrowful night, weeping as a young man. Now he attends as a private citizen, blessing his enamoured son and his wife. The whole of Greece looks on. [13] The great Prelate is present, ready to celebrate the rite (behold, the greatest honour has been granted to the house!). Oh, may this young man of royal lineage be able to benefit his proud fatherland, though now a private citizen!

Notes:

3: The marriage took place on 23 October 2021.

10: Constantine II's failed counter-coup against the Colonels, and exile, 1967.

13: *Praesul*: the Orthodox Archbishop of Athens, Hieronymos II.

3. Friderico X Daniae Regi

Qua gelidum mare regnat et excavat unda recessus, Syren parva iacet qua mortua tristis amore, Dicit mater amans fore ut abdicet atque relinquit Nato regna suo. Gelidos gaudere Triones Iam video tanto nunc laetos rege superbo,	5
Maestos nempe simul, regina haec munere priva Cum secedat (nam senior quam quae teneat rem). Friderice veni, te expectant patria regna! Ocius ecquis te? Cursu tibi praestat et ecquis?	
Cives quippe tuos iussisti currere saepe, Certamenque tuo cursorum nomine gaudet.	10
Fortis, doctus ades! Tu prospera nunc rege regna! Et Maria australi de terra oriunda, remota Iuncta tibi maneat semper regina fidelis!	

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

‘To Frederik X, King of Denmark’

Where the frosty sea reigns and the wave carves out recesses, where lies the Little Mermaid, who died of a sorrowful love, a loving mother announces her abdication and leaves the realm to her son. [5] Already I see that the chilly North is now glad for the accession of so confident a king, yet at the same time mournful, as this queen withdraws relieved of her office (being now too advanced in years to rule). [8] Come, Frederik, the realms of your fatherland await you! Who is swifter than you? Who surpasses you in the race? You who have often commanded your citizens to run, and the runners’ competition rejoices in your name. [12] Be present, strong and wise! Now rule over prosperous realms! And may Mary, born of the remote southern land, remain forever united with you as a faithful queen!

Notes:

1-2: Copenhagen; famous for its statue of the Little Mermaid, from the story by Hans Christian Andersen.

3: *mater*: Queen Margrethe II.

4: *Triones*: the constellation associated with the North; the Wain (or wagon) of Ursa Major and Minor; *septentriones* is also often used to refer to northern regions.

9-10: Athletics is a particular passion of the sovereign: the Royal Run, a popular running race established by (then Prince) Frederik in 2018 for his fiftieth birthday, involves thousands of Danes every year.

13: Frederik’s queen, born as Mary Donaldson in Australia.

4. De Elisabetha II quae eodem anno vita excessit, paulo postquam septuagesimus expletus est annus a regno suscepto

Magnus Aquarius ut vestivit lumine terras

accepit diadema micans regina Britannia.

Bis septem sunt condita lustra ex tempore laeto

talia quo sunt facta. Simul iunguntur in illa

imperium populi, meritum cum nobilitate.

5

Haec tria nempe regunt nunc laeta Britannica regna.

haec tria quippe colit regina benigna senexque.

Mensibus exactis paucis, post innuba Virgo

terribilem exceptit placide quam laeta Leonem,

excessit regina, anno quo condita lustra

10

bis septem a diademate capto quippe fuerunt.

Laudibus extolli valeat regina supernis!

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

‘On Elizabeth II, who died in the year of her Platinum Jubilee’

As great Aquarius clothed the lands in light, the British Queen received her glittering crown. Seventy years have passed since that joyful hour of her accession. [4] In her unite the sovereignty of the people, merit, and nobility. These three, in truth, now rule the joyful British realms; these three the Queen sustains, benevolent and venerable. [8] But after a few months,

after the Virgin placidly and joyfully welcomed the fearsome Lion, the Queen departed this life, in the very year, indeed, when seventy years had elapsed since she assumed the crown. May the Queen be exalted with celestial praise!

Notes:

1: *Aquarius*: the sun enters Aquarius between January and February; Elizabeth II became Queen on 6 February 1952 upon the death of her father George VI.

3: A *lustrum* is a period of five years; *laeto*: ‘happy’ for the nation that received so successful a monarch; on a personal level, Elizabeth always considered the day more mournfully, as that of her father’s death.

8-9: *Virgo, Leo*: The sun leaves Leo to enter Virgo in late August. The Queen passed away on 8 September 2022, well within the period of Virgo, just months after marking her Platinum Jubilee.

Translations of Three Hymns

Philip Burton

Introduction:

Three celebrated Anglican hymns (or two hymns and a Christmas carol): the first, 'For all Thy Saints' was written by William Walsham Howe in 1864; the text given here reflects that commonly used today. The second, John Wesley's 'Lo! he comes, with clouds descending' (1758), is one of the 'four great' hymns of Anglicanism, according to a popular online encyclopaedia. Many people in Britain are familiar with the carol 'Good King Wenceslas' by John Mason Neale (1853). The real historical figure was a duke of Bohemia (posthumously promoted to kingship as well as sainthood) who banished his mother, and was murdered in 935 on the orders of his brother Boleslaus 'the cruel'.

There is some further background information on the carol at:

<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/real-story-good-king-wenceslas-carol/>

1. 'For all Thy Saints'

Christe, tibi, generis sanctorum nobilis auctor,
qui te confessi meritam sumpsere quietem,
omnia reddantur laetae per saecula laudes.

his tu praesidium, tuque arx et moenia Martis,
tu princeps, tu dux bellique acerrimus heros, 5
tu clarum media mundi caligine lumen.

sic tibi nunc fidum, sic audax militet agmen
antiquo veluti sanctorum tempore turma;
aurea sic cingat victricem laurea frontem.

O comites sancti, socii salvete beati! 10
Nos globus imbellis, vos at fulgetis in alto.
Omnes sed sumus una cohors; sumus illius omnes.

dumque ferox Mavors manibus furit usque cruentis,
vincentum tamen excipimus per proelia cantus: 15
corpora tunc rursus, rursus tunc corda valescunt.

aureus occiduas nunc inficit Hesperus auras;
iam tibi finis adest, miles defesse, labori:
tranquillae capies caelo pia praemia pacis.

Exoritur sed enim nunc longe clarior Eos: 20
agmina sanctorum surgunt splendentibus armis,
advenit et princeps, armis splendentior ipse.

Orbis ab extremis ingens exercitus oris
confluit, et complet bacatas carmine portas:
'Sit tibi laus, numen forma sub triplice simplex.'

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Howe's original:

For all Thy saints, who from their labours rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesu, be forever blessed.
Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress and their Might; 5
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well fought fight;
Thou, in the darkness drear, their one true Light.

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold. 10

O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song, 15
And hearts are brave, again, and arms are strong.

The golden evening brightens in the west;
Soon, soon to faithful warriors comes their rest;
Sweet is the calm of paradise the blessed.

But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day; 20
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;
The King of glory passes on His way.

From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son and Holy Ghost: 25
Alleluia, Alleluia!

2. 'Lo! he comes, with clouds descending'

Descendis, veniens caeli cum nubibus, olim
qui sceleris nostri, Christe, piamen eras.
Millia sanctorum stipant, pia turba, triumphum,
caelestisque cohors agglomeratur ovans.
Nunc dicamus io! tandem manifestus in orbe 5
Christus, initurus nunc sua regna, venit.

Illius en tremefacta oculis gens quaeque videbit
adventum, vestit quem metuendus honor.

Qui dominum sprevere suum, venumque dedere,
 qui punctum clavis imposuere cruci,
 his multus veniet gemitus, magnusque ululatus,
 verus ubi iudex rexque reclusus erit. 10

Illas ille notas candenti corpore gestat
 nunc etiam, mortis pignora cara suae.
 Laetitias capit hinc populus nunc ille redemptus 15
 perpetuas; hinc, hinc gaudia quanta fluunt!
 Nos quoque, nos rapti mentem nunc illa tuemur
 vulnera, miramur stigmata, Christe, tua.

Sic tibi contingat; totus te mundus adoret,
 quem nunc sublimem sella superna tenet. 20
 Gloria nunc tibi sit, tibi sitque potentia rerum,
 iam merito regnum tempore sume; tuumst.
 Rumpe moras! orbis nam te tuus advocat ultro,
 quique venis domini in nomine, Christe, veni!

Metre: elegiac couplets

Wesley's original:

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
 Once for favoured sinners slain;
 Thousand thousand saints attending
 Swell the triumph of his train.
 Alleluia! 5
 God appears on earth to reign.

Ev'ry eye shall now behold him,
 Robed in awful majesty;
 Those who set at naught and sold him,
 Pierced, and nailed him to the tree, 10
 Deeply wailing
 Shall their true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of His passion
 Still His dazzling body bears;
 Cause of endless exultation 15
 To His ransomed worshippers;
 With what rapture
 Gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
 High on thine eternal throne; 20
 Saviour, take the pow'r and glory,
 Claim the kingdom for thine own.
 O come quickly!
 Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

3. 'Good King Wenceslas'

Iam Stephani sollemne fuit. dux ille Bohemus
aspicit, ut niveo circum stent rura rigore.
Ecce, venit (gelido fulgebat lumine Phoebe)
rusticus, hibernos qui ligna legebat in usus.

'Tu, puer, hic adsta; si scis, quis rusticus illic? 5
quid tugurive habitat? ubinam positumve locorum?
'Est iter haud mediocre, pater; mons altus obumbrat;
Hinc fons Agnetis, nemus hinc incingit opacum.'

'Fer, puer, huc carnem vinumque et pinea ligna,
Pauper uti capiat regali ex munere cenam.' 10
Procedunt ambo, pariter princepsque puerque,
dum tristi strident glacialia flamina caelo.

'Ut, pater, assurgunt aerae, noxque ingruit atra!
Deest, heu, cor sonitu; procedere crura recusant.'
'Tu mihi signa pedum serva; sic fortior ibis; 15
experieris enim, Boreas quo mitius urat.'

Prosequitur famulus, dominique in gressibus haeret,
pressaue divino candet nix ipsa calore.
Inde memor retine, Christi pro nomine, dives:
pauperibus bene fac; dominus bene facta rependet. 20

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Neale's original:

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about
Deep and crisp and even;
Brightly shone the moon that night 5
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
Gath'ring winter fuel.

'Hither, page, and stand by me,
If thou know'st it, telling 10
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?'
'Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence, 15
By Saint Agnes' fountain.'

‘Bring me flesh and bring me wine, Bring me pine logs hither, Thou and I will see him dine When we bear them thither.’	20
Page and monarch forth they went, Forth they went together, Through the rude wind’s wild lament And the bitter weather.	
‘Sire, the night is darker now And the wind blows stronger; Fails my heart, I know not how, I can go no longer.’	25
‘Mark my footsteps, good my page, Tread thou in them boldly: Thou shalt find the winter’s rage Freeze thy blood less coldly.’	30
In his master’s steps he trod, Where the snow lay dinted; Heat was in the very sod Which the Saint had printed.	35
Therefore, Christian men, be sure Wealth or rank possessing, Ye who now will bless the poor Shall yourselves find blessing.	40

A Translation from Milton's *Paradise Lost*

Paul Murgatroyd

Agminibusque alii densis et coetibus audent
hanc tristem late terram explorare volantes,
inveniant si forte sibi sedem haud ita duram.
quattuor intrepidis pergunt per litora pennis.
quattuor e tenebris infernis flumina fundunt 5
umorem funestum in stagna flagrantia flamma:
Styx invisa, odii fluvius letalis abundans;
maestitiae maerens Acheron fons ater et altus;
Cocytus ducens de questu nomina claro
qui miseris sonat aequoribus; Phlegethonque cruentus, 10
cuius bilis atrox ardet torrentibus undis.
at procul illis amnis iners serpitque siletque.
flexibus innumeris caecisque oblivio Lethe
volvitur. continuo fluvii qui pocula potat
coepit non memor esse sui rerumque suarum, 15
nec non laetitiae, luctus, aerumna, voluptas
mente cadunt. ultraque patet tunc terra gelata.
illa plaga atra, ferox, semper subiecta procellis,
turbine quassatur, quassatur grandine dira,
quae non tabescens in tellure accumulatur 20
antiqui similis tecti vastique ruinis.

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Milton's original: *Paradise Lost* 2. 570-91

Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers that disgorge 575
Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon, 580
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former state and being forgets, 585
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms

Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile.

590

Frugum Numen

Arduino Maiuri

Flora virens, cui nomen erat tunc Chlora per urbes,
per nemora ac plantas frondibus alma viges.
Pascua conciliare potes contritaque saxa,
ac tot aquarum vis fontibus in rapidis.
Seminibus confers has terras omniparentes, 5
fructibus omnes nos magnificare soles.
Cum solis radii corollas floribus ornant,
tum foliae crescunt innumerae virides.
Magni iam lepide scripserunt carmina vates, 10
plurima te nobis tradita commemorant.
Longe nunc ab Apolline corpus abest Hyacinthi,
purpureus flos est perpetuusque manet.
Olim fulsisti, Narcissi vultus imago,
nunc in corde vires, splendide flos, croceo.
Sic ubicumque pererrat amor vivitque venustas: 15
sit tibi, Flora, modus cum tereti numero.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

‘The goddess of the harvest’

O green Flora, who in the cities once bore the name Chlora, through the woodlands you are lush with foliage, a giver of life. You know how to arrange pastures and crushed stones, and you want plenty of water in the fast-flowing springs. [5] You fill this earth, the creator of all things, with seeds, you are accustomed to magnifying us all with fruit. When the sun’s rays adorn the flowers’ corollas, then countless green leaves grow. [9] Great poets have already written graceful poems, many traditions have been passed down for us to remember you. Now the body of Hyacinth lies far from Apollo, but the flower is purple and remains eternal. [13] Once you shone, the image of Narcissus’ face, and now you live in a deep yellow heart, a splendid flower. Thus love wanders everywhere and beauty lives: may you have your rhythm, O Flora, with marvellous harmony.

Decem Carmina Latina

Horatius Antonius Bologna

Editor's Note:

This collection of ten lyric poems was submitted to *Vates* in October 2025 by Orazio Antonio Bologna, a distinguished Latin poet who had also kindly contributed to *Vates* issue 15. He said that some of them had been composed in recent months, and some of them quite clearly do reflect political, military and humanitarian crises that were taking place at the time, chiefly in Gaza. Others are on different topics, chiefly aspects of love, sometimes treated gently, sometimes more abrasively and satirically. On the question of poetic responses to live and controversial political problems, please see my further comments in the Editor's Introduction to this issue. And on a purely technical level, whatever one may think of the content, Bologna's handling of a wide range of metrical schemes, some of his own invention, remains impressive. (D. M.)

1. Gaza deletur

Tremet puellulus, conspiciens aedium ruinas,
viro necatos armis
nocentibus; celer confugiens, territus cavernam
petit, sperans salutem.

Aquam petit, pane caret, proximas per aedes, 5
quibus telum foramen
hians tulit volans. Missilibus territat sagittis
furens hostis fugatos.

Ferus domunculas arte solo miles aequat acri;
superbus turres delet 10
domosque divitum terrificis hostis ensibusque
cruentibus; mortali

fragore concidunt tecta, puer praecipit sororem
et armo fert robusto,
petens fuga locum praecipitem, qui tuetur ambos, 15
fames quamvis insistat.

Superba civitas principio Gaza prosperavit,
deum fruens favore:
peculium fuit conspicuum, commeatus ingens,
furentes territoris, 20

quibus manet dolor pectoribus barbaris dolentibus
solo amisso paterno;
feras mali patrant insidias: proximos Hebraeos
fatigant saepe caede.

Metre: four-line stanzas composed of two couplets, of which the first and third lines are scanned thus: $\cup -$, $\cup -$, $\underline{\cup} -$ / $- \cup \cup -$ / $- \cup$, $- \cup$, $- \underline{\cup}$
and the second and fourth thus: $\cup -$, $\underline{\cup} -$, $\underline{\cup} -$, $\underline{\cup}$

Translation:

‘Gaza is destroyed’

The child trembles when he sees the ruined houses, and men killed by destructive weapons; he flees quickly, terrified, he seeks a cave, tries to save himself. Having no bread, he seeks water in the nearby houses, in which the weapons have created large cracks. The furious enemy scares those already fleeing with projectiles. [9] The soldiers ferociously demolish the miserable houses with precise intent; the arrogant enemy destroys the skyscrapers, the homes of the rich with the terror of bloody weapons; the houses collapse with a ruinous crash, the boy grabs his sister and carries her on his sturdy shoulders, fleeing to seek a steep place, which will protect them both, even though they are exhausted by hunger. [17] Gaza was originally a beautiful city, and with divine help it prospered: money circulated, trade flourished, and terrorists thrived, who, in their barbarous hearts, brooded over the loss of their fathers’ territory; cruelly, they prepared ferocious ambushes; they often attacked the neighboring Jews.

2. De rerum hominumque fragilitate

Leves puellae Tammari populeas
ripas conspiciunt virentes;
cadente nocte, frigidum percipiunt
ad lympham lapidem silentes.

Viros ferentes pallidae Pieridum
spectant munera; pervagantes
per arva tardae, siderum conspiciunt
labentem faciem per atrum

5

locum. Fluente rivulo, Luna docet
illas cuncta perire: ‘Tempus’,
ait, ‘fugat silentio terrifico
omnes delicias amoris;

10

delet vorax volubiles divitias,
aufert exitio salutem
mortalibus miserrimis; tristitiam
bellorum, quibus insolenter

15

premit molestum spiritum; terrificum
perturbat populos acerbis
doloribus; Iovis feri consilio
calcari premit ima corda’.

20

Puella dulcis, osculum tu iuvenis
mitis carpe silens, fugaces
relinque spes: acerba mors continuo
pulsat pectora laetiora.

Metre: four-line stanzas composed of two couplets, of which the first and third lines are scanned thus: $\underline{\text{u}} - \text{u} -$, $\underline{\text{u}} - \text{u} - / - \text{u} \text{u} -$
and the second and fourth thus: $- -$, $- \text{u} \text{u}$, $- \text{u}$, $- \underline{\text{u}}$

Translation:

‘The fragility of man and things’

The carefree girls admire the green banks of the Tammaro, rich in poplars; as night falls, they silently feel the cold stone by the water. Pale, they await men bearing the gifts of the Pierides; they wander slowly through the fields, looking up at the stars, which roam through dark places. [9] As the stream flows, the moon tells them that all is over: ‘Time’, she says, ‘with terrifying silence puts to flight the joys of love; it voraciously destroys unstable riches, with harm it takes away the health of miserable men; [it brings] the sadness of war, with which it insolently crushes the afflicted soul; terrifying, it overwhelms the people with bitter pain; by the decision of cruel Jove, it crushes the depths of the heart with its spur.’ [21] Dear girl, silently receive the sweet kiss of a young man, abandon fleeting hopes: bitter death continually takes the happiest breasts.

Note:

1: The river Tammaro is in southwestern Italy, near Benevento in the region of Campania. Cf poem 4 below, ‘Amoenus Tammarus’.

3. Sicinnae cantus

In alta pergit culmina montium	
Sicinna castas ante puellulas;	
iam Luna fulget, per serenum	
aethera clara iubar profundit.	
Sonare valles murmura frondium	5
docent opacas noctibus humidis,	
cum noctuae lugent nefastae,	
castaneae tiliaeque odorae.	
Silvas per altas ipsa agitat faces	
furens coruscas, vocibus invocat	10
noctu deas terrae polique,	
limina congregiens, Sicinna.	
Fluente rivo montibus arduis,	
per saxa lymphae prosiliunt leves,	
quae prata fecundant aprica,	15
planitiem faciunt amoenam.	
Ducit choreas Pieridum leves;	
cadente Phoebos, prata per invia	
contendit in divi sacellum,	
quod decorat violis Sicinna.	20
Sonante lucu cantibus, inclitae	
dei puellae saltibus aream	
parvam premunt, laudes canentes,	
sidera dum peragrant per aethram.	
Risu sereno per vacuum silens	25
spectat choreas Luna puellulae,	

nudata quae pectus furore prata premit, comitante divo. Tacente silva, Pierides silent, sinus tenelli, membra puellulae sudore manant atque odore corda cient per aperta muta. Sicinna membris lassula cantitat: 'Superne nobis auxilium, deus, concede mitis nocte laetus, quae palcidas agimus choreas. Feras precamur dona benignior nobis puellis, virginibus tuis, lucum vagantur quae silentes, spicea dum manibus peritis hucserta ducunt; Pierides, deus aeterne, donant munere virgines, per prata mites cum vagentur, pectora sollicitant puellae, quae nocte fontem siderea petit sacrum Dianae, noctifugae deae, castae sorori, quam supernus protegis et radiis refulget tuis coruscis. Dive, furoribus nostras puellas conspicias tuis, quas, Phoebe, fecundes tenellas et pariant teneros puellos. Bacchae furentes prata per umida vagantur; herbae corpora fertiles nudata contingunt sub alto sidereo gelidoque caelo. Silvae propinquae noctibus osculis sonent serenisdulcibus, invium mollem nemus donet grabatum, qui renovet subitum furorem.'	30
Sicinna pectus candida mollius nudata pergit prata per invia, quaerens amores fervidasque delicias, resonante silva. Agunt puellae cantica, vestibus humi relictis, continuo faces silvam per altam permeantes noctibus exagitant calentes. Micante Luna, sidera lucida pudore celant lumina candido demissa, ne dulces puellae conspiciant tenerosque amores. Ducunt in antrum caeruleae viros Nymphae valentes fronde reconditum, quis ultimas laetae ministrant delicias teneraequae amoris.	35
	40
	45
	50
	55
	60
	65
	70
	75

Cantus Sicinnae personat ultimus
 vallem per imam, murmura frondium
 quem blanda diffundit frementem
 pectora per tenerae puellae,
 quam celsa fagus tegmine frigido
 celat gementem qua Zephyrus furit,
 Bacchae furentes pervagantur,
 delicias animis ferentes.

80

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

‘The Song of Sicinna’

Leading chaste girls, Sicinna heads toward the mountain slopes; the moon is already shining, shedding a luminous splendor in the clear sky. The scented chestnut and lime trees, rustling their leaves during the humid nights, make the dark valleys resound, when the sinister owls utter their laments. [9] The possessed Sicinna brandishes torches as she crosses the edge of the deep woods, and with her deputy she invokes the goddesses of earth and sky at night. A stream flows from the high mountains, its flowing water gurgles among the rocks, fertilizing the fertile meadows and making the plain pleasant. [17] Sicinna leads the graceful dances of the Pierides; at sunset she makes her way through previously untrodden meadows to the god’s temple, to adorn it with violets. The forest resounds with song; beautiful girls dance in the small space consecrated to the god, singing his praises, while at night the stars follow their orbits. [25] With a serene face, the moon, as she travels through the silence of the sky, admires the girl’s dances, who, with her bare chest, in the company of the god, possessed, treads the meadows. The forest is silent, the Pierides are silent, the girl’s tender breast and limbs drip sweat and with their scent excite hearts in the silence of the open spaces.

[33] Although physically tired, Sicinna sings: ‘O God, help us from the heights of heaven, grant us joy in the night, as we abandon ourselves to the sweetness of the dances. In your kindness we ask you to bring gifts to us girls, to your maidens, who wander in the silence of the forest, while with expert hands they carry wreaths of ears of corn; when the Pierian virgins, eternal god, bring gifts to the girls and wander through the meadows, they solicit the breast of the girl, who in the starry night goes to the sacred spring of Diana, goddess who lights the night, your chaste sister, whom you protect from above and who shines with your bright rays. [49] O god, with your prophetic delirium look upon the girls, so that, O Phoebus, you may still keep them fertile and they may give birth to tender children. The possessed Bacchae wander through the damp meadows; the fertile grasses touch their naked bodies under the high, cold, starry sky. The nearby woods resound with sweet kisses at night, the impassable grove offers a soft bed, which resounds with sudden madness.’

[61] Sicinna, with her plump breasts, wanders about in delight, naked through previously untrodden meadows, seeking love and fervent joys amid the rustling of the forest. The girls raise songs, cast off their garments, immediately light their torches, and excitedly move into the depths of the forest. [69] The moon shines, the bright stars, subdued in modesty, hide their shining eyes, so as not to see the sweet and tender lips of the girls. The blue nymphs vigorously lead the men into the leafy cave; to them they gladly offer the external joys and tenderness of love. [77] Sicinna’s song resounds into the depths of the valley, and is spread by the gentle rustling of the leaves, quivering in the tender breast of the girl, whom the tall beech tree with its cold shadow hides as she moans there where Zephyr blows; the possessed Bacchae wander and instill joy in the soul.

4. Amoenus Tammarus

Fronde populeas Tammarus adluit,
herbidas ripas, lapides, irriguos agellos,
molles avenas, litora pervia
vortice tardiore.

Ad flumen fruitur rusticus inclita
Pace tranquillum, nemoris somnifera Quiete
pastor calenti pectore. Caelitus
pennipotens Cupido

contendit per agros pulcher in oppidum
arduum, quaerens dubius sollicitam Quietem,
quam Martha mitis noctibus invocat
ad nemoris morantem

limen, dum trepidans anxia conspicit
damna bellorum, pueros perterritos fragore
dirae sagittae, missilium gravi,
hospitii ruinis.

Virtutes tenerae prata puellulae
uda conclamant validas, sollicitant amores
pastoris illos, quos memorat pater
ante focum senescens.

Lugens commemorat munera Tammari,
qui fluens tardus, laticem frigidulum ministrat
piscesque opimos pauperibus libens;
prosperat hic arundo,

quae nutrit foculum noctibus algidis,
tectis campestris tuguri continuoque praebebat,
minante caelo fulgura plumbeo,
imbre cadente nocte.

Funesti redeunt pauperibus dies,
Martha, quis panis genitis deficit inde somnos
fugatis quietos esuries vigil,
dum pueri necantur

longinquo in populo cuspide ferrea,
curribus firmis, iaculis, missilibus nefandis.
Quiete pulsa, Pax trepidans fugit,
prata serena quaerens.

Metre: four-line stanzas, of which the first line is a minor Asclepiadean, the second a minor Sapphic, the third an Alcaic hendecasyllable and the fourth an Aristophanic

Translation:

‘The pleasant Tammaro’

The Tammaro, with its rather slow current, bathes the poplar branches, the grassy banks, the rocks, the irrigated fields, the accessible shores. By the tranquil river, the farmer enjoys remarkable peace, the warm heart of the shepherd enjoys the quiet of the forest that brings sleep. [7] From heaven, winged Cupid makes his way across the fields to the high-lying village, doubtfully seeking anxious quiet, which gentle Martha invokes during the night as she lingers at the edge of the woods, and with anxiety and trepidation he observes the ravages of war, among the ruined houses the children terrified by the terrible hiss of bullets and projectiles hurled from afar. [17] The damp meadows praise the tender child’s great virtues, and in the shepherd they solicit the loves that her father, growing old, recalls before the fire. Through tears, she recalls the gifts of the slowly flowing Tammaro, which willingly supplies fresh water and fat fish to the poor; here the reed thrives, which fuels the fire in the cold night and often provides roofing for the hut in the fields, when the leaden sky threatens and the rain falls at night. [29] For the poor, Martha, sad days return, in which there is no bread for the children and hunger, which keeps them awake, chases away peaceful sleep, while among a distant people boys are killed by sharp weapons, by sturdy chariots, by javelins and by execrable weapons hurled from afar. With quiet banished, peace flees in fear and seeks serenity in the meadows.

5. Aniles amores

Alaxium petunt anus,
arte quas medicus brevi
puberas petulantes
tempore fecit.

Videntur ecce virgines:
veste crura tegunt levi,
quis viri alliciuntur
ante tabernas.

5

Canes velut famelicae
devorant homines leves,
quos agunt prope templa
noctis in umbra.

10

Carpuntne fructus ultimos,
quis iuventa fuit brevis?
quo feruntur amore,
stante senecta?

15

Fugere praepetes dies;
cura tum geniti gravis
abstulit tenerorum
gaudia amorum.

20

Viris carentibus, petunt
nunc Alaxia litora,

quae Cupido frequenti
ornat amore.

Huc divites pecunia
ducit atque puellulas,
quas anus resonanti
voce repellunt. 25

Certamen acre per vias
oppidi videas libens,
mente si miserarum
pectora fingas: 30

pelluntur acribus modis,
ditioribus insciis,
damna quae iuvenilis
deferat aetas. 35

Metre: four-line stanzas, of which the first line is an iambic dimeter, the second glyconic, the third pherecratean, and the fourth an adonic

Translation:

‘Late Loves’

Older women come to Alassio, whom the doctor has quickly transformed into aggressive young women with his art. They look like girls: they cover their legs with skimpy skirts, which men are fascinated by in front of bars. [9] Like ravenous dogs, they devour superficial men, whom they lead in the darkness of the night near isolated churches. [13] Do they, who had but a brief youth, gather the last fruits? As old age approaches, what love has seized them? The days have passed hastily; the careful care of their children has then taken away the joy of tender loves. [21] Without their husbands, they now seek the shores of Alassio, which Cupid adorns with regular passion. Hither money brings both rich men and young girls, whom the old women turn away with loud shouts. [29] In the streets of the town you can see bitter quarrels with amusement, if only you can also imagine the misery of those souls: by such harsh means the harm is prevented, which the young may cause to the oblivious rich.

6. Leandrae noctes

Amatur illa, quae procul domesticis
negotiis capit virum,
cadente nocte, ne loquatur invidus
videns amicam tristior. 5

Libens Leandra quod facit nocturnibus
horis, soror ne sentiat,
Cupido quid ferat levis volatibus
dulci puellae noctibus.
Silens amantem iam Leandra in lectulum
ducit gradu celerrimo;
iubet virum ne basium sonorius
domi excitet, qui dormiunt. 10

Mero Leandra comparato, in angulo libat remoto, industria	
nudat virum fremens et osculis levis silentibus ducit virum	15
in lectulo atque amantibus furentius praebet sinus libentius.	
Diu sonat grabatum et ipsa lucidum sidus tenella conspicit	20
per aetherem vagans silens, mortalibus ferens amoris munera.	
Ridet Venus. Leandra amoribus fruens, omnes amantes decipit.	

Metre: epode: alternating iambic trimeters and iambic dimeters

Translation:

‘Leandra’s Nights’

Dear is the woman who, at nightfall, welcomes her lover away from domestic duties, lest the envious man, seeing his friend, should murmur. Leandra willingly behaves this way at night, lest her sister discover what fickle Cupid brings to the sweet woman at night. Leandra silently leads her lover to the bed with a quick step. [11] She orders the man not to wake those sleeping in the house with too loud kisses. Leandra prepares the wine and toasts secretly in a corner; seized by frenzy, she carefully undresses the man and, kissing him in silence, quickly leads him to the bed and voluptuously offers her breast to her passionate lover. [19] The bed creaks for a long time, while the woman tenderly gazes at the bright stars, which silently wander in the sky and bring men the gifts of love. Venus laughs. Leandra, while she rejoices in her loves, deceives all lovers.

7. Bellorum horrores

Contristat animos bella, Fabi,
et pectus quatunt dolens;
territant orbem rapidis sagittis,
aethera quae peragrant ferentes

mortem civibus o terrificam, ulcus matribus impium et famem crudam miseris puellis, quae rapidam peragrant iuventam.	5
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Vivunt hic homines, sancte Deus, subter ruderibus casae, igne deletae, tonitrus fragore, hoste premente per aperta saevo.	10
--	----

Angustos homines confugiunt in fines miseri, velut horridi obscura in cavea leones, cum Libycas fugiunt arenas,	15
--	----

capti qui laqueos indomiti
demordent validos, fugam
noctibus temptant, resonante circo,
atque oculi sitiunt cruorem. 20

Quonam nunc Pietas, Castaliae,
tristis fugerit, anxia,
nunc graves dicatis, adhuc loquentes,
ante diem, redeunte sole.

Lugentes viduas luminibus 25
cernit flammiferis silens
invocantes voce gravi maritos,
finitimo populo necatos.

Damnant triste, Fabi, consilium
gentes, sed faciunt leves 30
quaeque primores iubeant superbi:
divitiae alliciunt misellos.

Metre: four-line stanzas, of which the first line is a dactylic hemistich followed by a choriamb; the second line a glyconic, the third a Sapphic hendecasyllable, and the fourth an Alcaic decasyllable

Translation:

‘The Horrors of War’

Wars, Fabius, sadden the soul and shake the grieving breast; now they terrify the world with swift missiles, which crisscross the sky and bring, alas, a terrible death to citizens, a cruel wound to mothers, and cruel hunger to wretched girls, passing rapidly through their youth. [9] Here, Holy God, men live under the rubble of houses destroyed by fire, by the roar of explosions, while the merciless enemy advances through open spaces. People take refuge in narrow spaces, like ferocious lions in a cage, when they leave the Libyan desert. After being captured, these untamed ones bite the strong bonds; at night they try to escape, while the circus resounds and their eyes thirst for blood. [21] Nymphs of Castalia, grieving, tell where sad Mercy has fled in anxiety before daybreak, while she still speaks and the sun rises. With burning eyes, she silently sees the widows weep, who with sorrowful voices call upon their husbands, killed by the neighbouring people. [29] The people, Fabius, condemn the sad decision, but compliantly carry out what the proud rulers order. Riches bewitch the wretched.

8. Christum orant miseri

Christe, cur Gazae pueri necantur
plumbeis telis, gremio iacentes
matris in dulci? cur iniqua pergit
mortis imago?
cur, Redemptor Christe, viros perire 5
Tu sinis? deserta cur et locorum
impio manant, cur agente nocte
sanguine vasta?

Nunc fame Gazae mulier puellum conspicit diro pereuntem acerba lumine; occultat miseranda membra, morte vorata pallida sensim; tuguri cadentis linteo telo tegitur furore solis ardentis pluviaeve densae, hoste premente.	10 15
Territantur corda per ora mortis, oblitae noctis tenebris in altis, gressibus tardis venientis, orto lumine solis.	20

Metre: Sapphic stanzas

Translation:

‘The Desperate Pray to Christ’

Why, Christ, are children killed by lead bullets in Gaza, while they are still in their mother's sweet womb? Why does the iniquitous image of death advance? Why, Christ the Redeemer, do you allow men to die? Why do even deserted places drip blood as the night passes? [9] Now in Gaza the mother watches with stony eyes her son dying from cruel hunger and hides his wretched limbs, gradually devoured by the pallor of death; in the crumbling tent she covers him with a linen cloth from the burning sun or the pouring rain, as the enemy approaches. [17] Death, which appears slowly at sunrise with its face frightens the heart, in the deep darkness of the now forgotten night.

9. Nocturna quies

Fulget Luna silens; claro lumine sidus fugit per alta nubila, vultum conspicuum celat, cum tenebrarum tremens caliginem timet.	
Dorsum cum pelagi turbat flamine ventus, humore litus tunditur salso, dum tremulum lumen limina signat maris silentis horrida.	5
Silvarumque comas venti flatibus urgent velut Cupido pectora pastoris teneri propter fluminis undas, ubi venit silentium.	10
In limo querulae ranae nocte quietem fugant sonoris vocibus, dum blandus Zephyrus mulcet pectora lenis, turbat silens arundines.	15

Umbris in tremulis tractat candida corda,
sinus tenellos pollice
uxoris tenerae pastor castus amore,
premente corda Cypride.

20

Cordis iam rapiunt singultus gemebundos
umbrae silentes; pectora
dono mirifico pennatusque Cupido
Venusque amore continet.

Metre: four-line stanzas, in which the first and third lines consist of a dactylic hemistich followed by a pherecratean; the second and fourth lines are iambic dimeters

Translation:

‘The Stillness of the Night’

The Moon shines silently; the star, with its white light, flees among the clouds, hiding its visible face, when, trembling, it fears the darkness of the shadows. When the wind with its breath ruffles the back of the sea, the salty wave breaks on the shore, while a trembling star marks the fearful boundaries of the silent sea. [9] The winds with their breath chase the treetops, as Cupid chases the breast of the tender shepherd near the waters of the river, where he arrives in silence. [13] On the mud the frogs croak and with their voices in the night drive away quiet, while the pleasant Zephyr caresses and softens the breast and disturbs the silence of the sea. [17] In the trembling shadows the chaste shepherd caresses the white breast of his tender wife and with his thumb brushes her tender curves, while Venus presses on their hearts. [21] The silent shadows already steal the heart’s groaning sobs. Winged Cupid with his wonderful gift and Venus with love envelop their breasts.

10. Atrox humani generis facinus

Stultis pectoribus silens invidus hostis
furentius mittit odium cruentum,
occidunt similes manu, sanguine tincta,
viri leves, corde qui carent sereno.

Decertant grave proelium pectora honesta,
patentibus civibus, furore mortis;
lugent hoc pueri fame tempore tristi,
carentibus bellico cibus timore.

5

Metre: four-line stanzas, in which the first and third lines consist of a glyconic followed by an adonic, and the second and fourth lines of an iambic metron followed by a trochaic dimeter

Translation:

‘The Atrocious Crime of Humanity’

With foolish hearts, the envious enemy silently hurls bloody hatred with increasing fury; senseless men, lacking a serene heart, kill their fellow men with bloody hands. [5] Honest men engage in bloody war; before the wide-open eyes of citizens, death rages; at this time, children cry, oppressed by the pangs of hunger: for fear of war, food is lacking.

Double Monty

David Money

Introduction:

The title needs some explanation. I chose to address the issue of rising anti-Semitism today, through the stories of two very different individuals who happened to share the name 'Monty'. The first is famous, and 'Monty' is a nickname by which he was almost always known: Bernard Montgomery (1887-1976), a leading British general (from 1 September 1944, field marshal) of the Second World War. This Monty has become controversial, in the view of some historians, for his undoubted vanity (and consequent friction with American colleagues – not themselves entirely devoid of vanity) and allegedly excessive caution. Nevertheless, he was generally a winner – not something that could be said of all his predecessors or critics – and his troops approved of his wish to save their lives, as far as that was possible in pursuit of victory.

The second Monty, my main inspiration, is not famous: but he was a British soldier in the Second World War, and has survived to the age of over a hundred. He is Jewish. His military service was not especially heroic or spectacular: he served in the Royal Artillery, defending Britain from attack from the air. He represents hundreds of thousands of others who also served and survived, but have not lived quite such a long and full life. He came to my attention only through a brief newspaper item (*The Daily Telegraph*, 3 August 2026, p. 7) noting that Monty Goldstein, a 102-year-old veteran, could remember personally what the rising anti-Semitism of the 1930s was like, and could see the parallels with today. Other news outlets also carried the story at various times.

As for the phrase 'Double Monty': it is inspired by a moderately well known film, 'I was Monty's Double' (1958), from a book by M. E. Clifton James (1954), though there is no other connection to the poem. I did think of a third relevant 'Monty', the historian Simon Sebag Montefiore, who in a wise interview (with Claire Allfree, *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 August 2026, p. 25) observed that 'If politicians continue to appease sectarian or ideological factions on important matters of life and death, on terrorism, on migration and on gender, then Western democracy will become ungovernable.' But 'Triple Monty' seemed too much. One could go on – there is 'The Full Monty' (a film of 1997), and indeed Monty Python. Wikipedia has a long list of those named 'Monty', whether as a given name, surname, or nickname, and a number of fictional characters. I thought it better to stop at two, lest the frivolous wordplay obscure the fundamental seriousness of the poem.

The metre is not a normal combination, though each half of a couplet is in itself a normal classical line. It was deliberately chosen to try to convey a sense of dislocation, that things are not as they should be.

Written in Tokyo on 12 September 2026.

Duxit tam cautus nostrorum Montius unus
Exercitum adrogansque, sed fuit victor.
Iussa tamen iuvenis per bellum Montius alter
Secutus est fidelis, et diu vixit.
Libertatem armis Europae primus adegit
Defendit alter patriam minis motam.
Nec non Iudaeos aliis cum gentibus ille
Liberat, et acta laudat ipse Iudaeus

5

Montius hic iuvenis, meminit qui gliscere contra Suos odia et implere noxiis urbem.	10
Mortuus unus; adest alter grandaevus, et annos Habet vicens ultra vir utilis centum.	
Stultitiam luget priscamque odiumque resurgens, Fatetur esse sicut ante erat virus.	
Nonne trucidatos iuvenes maerere decorum est? Sicarios sed urbis in viis laudant.	15
Nonne sibi similes saltantes morte perempti? Sentire possunt? Bile victimas culpant.	
De patria melius, qui quondam bella gerebant Merentur ambo Montii: quid observent	20
De caelo primus, grandaevus et alter apud nos? Imminuiturne gentis et labat virtus?	
‘Sto cum Iudaeis’ tamen audent dicere quidam: Quamquam inter iras haec honesta vox rara est.	

Metre: alternating dactylic hexameters and scazontes (limping iambs)

Translation:

One Monty was such a cautious and conceited leader of our troops – yet still a victor. But the other Monty was a young man who just followed orders faithfully through the war – and he has lived a long life. [5] The first Monty compelled Europe to accept liberty by force of arms; the second Monty defended his country when it was shaken by threats. The former brings freedom to Jews, amongst other peoples; and the latter, this youthful Monty, himself a Jew, praises his actions, and remembers how hatred increased against his own people and filled the city with vile harms.

[11] One of them is dead; the other lives as a very old man, and thrives as a worthy citizen beyond the age of a hundred. He laments ancient stupidity and resurgent hate, and admits that the poison exists just as it did before. Surely it would be a decent thing to mourn young people who have been slaughtered? Yet it is the murderers who are being praised in the city’s streets. Surely it was young people, dancing, very similar to themselves, who lost their lives: can they have no empathy for that? Yet with their bile it is the victims whom they blame. [19] Both Montys deserve better of their country, having once fought wars for her: what would they observe, the first from heaven, and the second as an old man amongst us? Is our nation’s decency diminished and unstable?

[23] But there are some who dare to say ‘I stand with the Jews’ – although that honourable voice is a rare one, among all the anger.

Note:

15-18: Numerous innocent young dancers were raped, or slaughtered, or abducted, at a music festival on 7 October 2023. One might have thought that young people in the West would be capable of empathy for the suffering of others so similar to themselves. In many cases, it seems not: they would prefer to lend their support to the murderers and rapists.

Versus post lectionem *Divinae Comoediae* aetate puerili scripti

Clifford Weber

Introduction:

These lines were written (and later revised) in 1961, when I was reading Dante in English as a nineteen-year-old freshman in college. Quite obviously, the substitution of Dante's Beatrice for an anonymous girl in Japan was the romantic fantasy of a male teenager. In 1961, I had no personal connection with Japan at all. Four years later, thanks to a generous cash prize for Latin and Greek conferred by my boarding school, I visited Japan for the first time. There I encountered my future wife in a remote temple (Koetsu-ji) in Kyoto. We were both tourists and the only visitors at the temple, and so ignoring each other without being rude was impossible. Two years later, I was back in Japan, where we married in Tokyo and then eloped to Berkeley, as her father's interference had become extreme. Now that sixty-one years have passed since my wife and I first met as tourists in Kyoto, the accuracy of Virgil's prophecy seems uncanny in retrospect.

Sollicitus quondam Stygiae sub nocte vagabar
urbis ubi neque vir quisquam neque femina visa est;
vix ego palantis potui caligine plantas
figere, iamque pedem certa sine mente ferebam.
Pungebantur item stimulis exilibus artus, 5
plurimus et ventrem gemitus quatiebat inanem,
labraque quaerebant gelidum sitientia fontem
divitibus lymphis corpus qui forte iuvaret:
sic ego per nebulas amens terrore trahebam
corruptum corpus morbo fessumque labore. 10
Non tamen erectus coeptis erroribus haesi,
sed tandem vires cessere, abiitque per umbras
mens mea, nescivique fuissem vivus an essem.
Stratus eram terra, celso caput aggere fultus.
Tum subito caelis nitidissima fulgura lucent, 15
volvitur et tonitrus, resonatque per aëra stridor.
Omnino mihi continui nihil incidit imbris,
sed manat gelidus tremefacto corpore sudor
atque nigras claris umbras obducit ocellis.
Attamen haec nondum tetigit nova fabula finem, 20
namque videre meum videor per opaca locorum
Vergilium (sicut patet); exin imagine moto
affulget mihi lux, multis quae solibus albet
acrior, et vates mihi surridere videtur
floridaque effusis imponere sarta capillis. 25
O tu, scriptorum pater optime, clare poesis
omnis progenitor, mea dilectissima vita –
tu, quocum soleo lector per amoena vagari
prata, modosque solo pariendi discere fructus,
Troïis et herois magnum novisse laborem – 30
coepisti proferre manus et talia fari:

‘Ne mirare, puer, qua te ratione per urbis reppererim, sectabar enim superatus amore; cognoram quoque pervigili te gaudia cura exoptata diu lepidae sperare puellae,	35
effecique igitur fugientis ut immemor horae carmina mente tua tristi meliora creares. Restat ut e vita propria documenta recludam utque tuam sortem loquar extremamque salutem.	
Desine Tartareae gentis curare dolores:	40
nunc aedes habitas Cocyti, nunc Rhadamanthi edictis regeris, nec sollicitudine cedes dum sextus fervere canis desistat in arvis.	
Interea, temptate malis, hanc dilige vitam invisam. Tecum si tristia dicta manebunt	45
“Sunt lacrimae rerum”, capiet te dulce levamen quod Venus hocce caput quoque livida fastidivit. Aeneas etiam patrias hac voce rogavit umbras: “Quae miseris lucis tam dira cupido?”	
Nunc tamen exponam curas ut pellere possis.	50
Est populus longe trans aequora lata remotus a nobis, ortu solis qui lumina cernit primus et assuevit modicos habitare penates.	
Plurima praeterea fructus maris insula praebet victibus, atque omnis superimminet aetherius mons	55
vertice quem tu prospicies egressus ab alto. Neve tamen maneat ibi neu vestigia tardes, talis enim virgo quali non ante fuisti obvius errat iners misereque exoptat amari.	
Iam pridem illa petit properatam pallida mortem,	60
saevus enim genitor natae sibi serviat usque imperat et carum vetat expectare maritum. Quomodo cognoscas famulam (pudor!) ipse docebo occultam iussisque trium fungare sororum.	
Illa licet vultu formoso praedita sit gens	65
mollibus et membris, cum te tamen aegra puella aspiciat, surget qualis rosa noctis in umbris marmorea siccata fereque occisa pruina florescit subito sole exoriente renata.	
Esse colore nigros onyches et amygdala forma	70
invenies oculos, vocemque poematis instar flebilis: o quantos tandem exuet illa dolores ob te magnanimum! Moneo tamen hunc fore coetum difficilem vobis facilemque Cupidinis armis:	
quamvis blanda tuum caput amplectatur et auris	75
carmine delectet, negleget secunda pericli ne simulacra quidem patrii. Mox deinde sequetur te coniunx parietque tibi nova tempora vitae.	
Nunc age, carpe tui dotes et praemia fati.’	
Dixerat. Inde furens vatem sic voce vocavi:	80
‘Fac mihi declares, sapiens atque alme magister,	

qua regione vagus videam, quae signa revelent,
 colloquar aut quocum' – sed nullo murmure vocis
 exierat. Rauci caelum turbare fragores
 destiterant, neque iam fulgur praestrinxit ocellos 85
 sanguineos, morbi neque corpora torruit aestus.
 Cum iubar Aurorae croceum dispelleret astra,
 denique composui mentem. Tum sustulit aether
 effusi domuum per tecta volumina fumi,
 qualiter ex calathis hebetes magus elicit anguis. 90
 Artifices pedibus lentis ad pensa redibant
 undique, meque illis iunxi mortalibus, anceps
 longius a domibus graderer propiusne venirem.
 Sic ego consumptis inveni segnibus annis
 te, dilecta mihi coniunx. Nunc pariete denso 95
 contactos foribusque domus concedere somno
 dedecet et clari lusus hebetare diei.
 Attamen ad noctem placidam sibi munera poscunt
 et Cytherea parens simul et Cythereia proles;
 fas, mea lux, mea servatrix, venarier ambo. 100

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

'Verses written at a young age, after reading Dante's *Divine Comedy*'

Full of anxiety, I was once wandering at night in a Stygian city where no man or woman was seen; in the darkness, I was scarcely able to direct my wavering feet, and no longer was I walking with a definite purpose. [5] Also, my limbs were being stung by tiny spurs, and many a groan was shaking my empty stomach, and my thirsting lips were searching for a chill spring to gratify my body perchance with rich waters: thus, beside myself with terror, I was dragging through the mists a body infected with sickness and weary from labor. Not upright, however, did I continue the wanderings I had begun, but my strength finally departed, and my wits went away through the shadows, and I did not know whether I had been alive or was still.

[14] I was stretched out on the ground, my head propped against a high wall. Then the brightest lightning suddenly shines in the sky, and thunder rolls, and a hissing sound re-echoes through the air; nothing at all of the incessant rain falls on me, but a cold sweat drips over my trembling body and draws dark shadows over my bright eyes.[20] Yet this strange tale has not yet reached its end, for through the shadows I seem to see my Virgil (so is it certain); then, moved as I was by the apparition, there shines on me a light that is a keener white than many suns, and the bard seems to smile at me and to place floral garlands on my dishevelled hair.

[26] Thou, most excellent father of writers, glorious progenitor of all poetry, first love of my life – thou with whom I, as reader, am wont to wander through pleasant meadows, and to learn ways of growing crops from the soil, and to know the great toil of the Trojan hero – thou didst begin to extend thy hands and to speak such words as follow:

[32] 'Do not wonder, lad, how I have found you through the cities, for I was following you, overcome by love; I also knew that, with ever watchful concern, you were hoping for the joys, long desired, of a charming girl, and so I made it that, unmindful of the fleeing hour, you created poems more sanguine than your mournful mind. It remains that I disclose examples from my own life, and that I speak of your destiny and final salvation.

[40] Cease to care about the sorrows of the people in Tartarus: now you live in the house of Cocytus, now you are ruled by the decrees of Rhadamanthus, and you will not cease from

anxiety until the sixth dog star stops burning in the fields; meanwhile, assailed by misfortunes, love this hateful life. If the sad words remain with you that “Life leads to tears” [literally “There are tears of things”, *sunt lacrimae rerum* = *Aen.* 1. 462], the sweet consolation will seize you that spiteful Venus despised this person also. Aeneas too asked his father’s ghost this question: “Why so wild a desire for life in these wretched creatures?” [*Aen.* 6. 721]

[50] Nevertheless, I will now explain how you can banish your cares. There is a people far removed from us across wide seas who are the first to see light at the rising of the sun and are accustomed to living in humble homes. Many an island besides provides the fruit of the sea for their sustenance, and over them all towers a lofty mountain with a peak that you will see when landing from the deep. [57] Do not remain there, however, or slow your steps, for such a girl as you have not met before wanders about idly and wretchedly yearns to be loved. Long since does that pale girl seek a speedy death, for her cruel father commands his daughter ever to be his slave, and he forbids her to hope for a dear husband.

[63] I will myself teach you how to recognize the hidden handmaid (the shame of it!) and fulfill the commands of the three Fates. Although that people is endowed with a beautiful countenance and soft limbs, nevertheless, when the sorrowful girl sees you, she will rise like a rose that, hardened in the darkness of night, and almost killed by marble-white frost, suddenly blooms, reborn as the sun rises. [70] You will find her eyes to be black onyxes in color and almonds in shape, and her voice to be like a mournful poem: ah, how many sorrows will she finally cast off because of your magnanimity! I warn, however, that this meeting will be difficult for both of you and easy for Cupid’s weapons. [75] Although she embrace your head alluringly and delight your ears with song, held in suspense, she will not overlook even semblances of danger from her father. Then, she will soon follow you as your wife and produce for you new circumstances of life. Come now, seize the dowry and rewards of your destiny.’

[80] He had spoken. Then, maddened, I called to the bard with these words: ‘See that you show me, teacher wise and kind, wandering in what region I am to see, what signs are to reveal, or with whom I am to converse’ – but with no murmur of his voice he had gone. [84] Harsh dins had ceased to agitate the sky, and no longer did lightning dull my blood-shot eyes or the heat of disease burn my body. When the saffron ray of Aurora was dispelling the stars, I finally calmed my mind, while the ether took up wreaths of smoke poured out through the roofs of houses, just as a sorcerer entices dull snakes out of baskets. With slow feet, craftsmen were returning to their duties from every direction, and I joined those mortals, doubtful whether I was walking farther from houses or coming closer. [94] So with the passing of sluggish years did I find you, my beloved wife. At present it is unbecoming, sheltered by the thick wall and the door of our house, to surrender to sleep and to dull the fun of the bright day. Nevertheless, toward placid night, both mother Cytherea [Venus] and her child [Cupid] demand tribute for themselves: it is meet, my light, my salvation, to venerate them both.

Somnium

Paul Murgatroyd

in somnis nuper nigra cum Morte vagabar
tristes per tractus, per loca senta situ.
mox adeo tacitam silvam fluviumque severum
qua spargunt lapsas frigida flabra comas,
flumina qua miserum terrent me turbida caeno;
sed retinet digitos ossea dextra meos.
tum mihi Mors torva subridens voce susurrat:
'carpe diem: nam nox carpere te properat.'

5

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

Recently in a dream I wandered with Death through dismal regions, through places rough with decay. Soon I approached a silent wood and a forbidding stream, where cold blasts of wind scattered fallen leaves, where rivers turbid with mud terrified me; but a bony hand held on to my fingers. Then Death, smiling, murmured to me in a grim voice: 'Seize the day: for night is hastening to seize you.'

An Ode from Argentina: The Night Ferry to Montevideo

Michael Atkinson

Introduction:

I started a Classics course at one university, but much to my subsequent regret I abandoned it and switched to a Spanish course at another university. In between, I spent a gap-year teaching at a school in Buenos Aires, but also practising Latin verse, especially lyric verse, which had been the one part of the Classics syllabus which I had loved.

I also travelled around Argentina. One of my first trips was by ferry to Montevideo, about 4 hours away. It was a low point. I felt I had really messed up my university career (*stultitia prior*). I was lonely, freezing, wet through, and longing to be back home in England in front of a roaring fire. The ferry crossing was bitterly cold with a heavy swell throwing up spray and squalls of heavy rain, though the clouds did part as we approached Montevideo to reveal a brilliant mass of stars (none of which I recognised – I remember that left me feeling even more destitute and homesick than before).

Castor and Pollux, the twin stars of Gemini, were seen as a guiding light for travellers, particularly sailors. For *geminus Pollux*, see Horace, *Odes* 3. 29. 64. The Lares were the household gods whose images normally stood in a small shrine close to the hearth; they were synonymous with the idea of home.

Nox et remotus me gelidis Plater
 incingit undis, et rigat imbrium
 me frigus Argentiniorum,
 stultitiaeque memor prioris
 fleo. Fluentes nil lacrimas adest
 quod seccet: umens rore tacet lyra,
 nec dulce nostrorum resultat
 colloquium. Super his nec oris
 Septemtriones, nec geminus mihi
 Pollux refulget, qui puerum ad Lares
 tutum reducebat perenne
 me patriique foci calorem.

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

I am surrounded by darkness and the icy waves of the far-off River Plate and soaked through by the cold of Argentinian downpours. I remember my previous folly, and I sob. [5] My tears gush, and there is nothing at hand to stop them. My guitar is wet with spray and won't play. I don't have here the easy back and forth of chat with my mates. [8] The Plough doesn't shine down on me above these shores, nor the twin stars of Gemini which in my boyhood unfailingly used to lead me safely back to my home and the warmth of my family hearth.

Ex Annis Iuvenalibus

Clifford Weber

Introduction:

These verses were written when I was a freshman in college (1961-62) reading the *Odes* of Horace in a class taught by Steele Commager (1932-84). The first poem was clearly motivated by the technical challenge of writing pure iambs. The context of the second poem is an American football game, which I rarely attended. The third poem inverts the usual cliché of a divinity urging a poet to abandon monumental themes, as at the beginning of Virgil's *Eclogue* 6.

1.

Ab omnibus maligna bruma ducitur amantibus molesta, sed mihi movet libidines et arma dira provocat Cupidinis. Diebus – at pudet meas ineptias referre – concito pedes	5
et ora congelatus usque quaerito cuius labella me vocare gaudeant et interesse basiationibus. Quid angiportuum esse cognitissimum mihi negare, quidve trinitum, potest?	10
Nihil potest, neque ulla nempe pernegat puella sustinere difficillime preces meas et esse questionibus iniqua. Tu, cubile, quam diu feres inane non levare membra virginis	15
et alveo tenere lacrimas tuo meas, nefasta dum procella diruit ulmos gementis et gravata robora?	

Metre: iambic trimeters

Translation:

Barren winter is considered by everyone troublesome for lovers, but in me it inspires desires and calls forth the dread arms of Cupid. By day (but it's embarrassing to relate my folly) I quicken my pace	5
and, my face iced over, constantly seek someone whose lips will rejoice to call me and to be part of kisses. What street can deny being very familiar to me, or what footpath?	10
None can, and no girl denies enduring my entreaties with the greatest obstinacy and being hostile to my complaints. As for you, empty bed, how long will you bear	

not supporting a girl's limbs
and holding my tears in your cavity,
while a wicked storm destroys
creaking elms and burdened oaks? 15

2.

Splendent beato sole novi dies
laetisque noctes luminibus nitent
 cum victa tu mecum rogante
 pollicearis adesse ludis.
Campum remissi fervere fortibus 5
viris apricum saepe videbimus,
 plaudentque pugnaces catervae
 ceu proprii sibi sint honores.
Ignes diurnos cum superaverit
nox atque roris sidera miserint 10
 guttas inauditae, Falerni
 pocula consociemus ambo.
Oro recuset neu Cythereia
ridere nobis prospera neu vigil
 Diana custodire nostras 15
 delicias thalamumque pernox.

Metre: Alcaic stanzas

Translation:

New days are bright with a happy sun
and nights shine with lights full of joy
 since you, convinced by my request,
 promise to attend the games with me.
Chilling out, we will often see the sunny field 5
being hot with brave men,
 and combative legions of fans will applaud
 as if the glory were theirs.
When night has overcome diurnal fires
and stars have sent drops of silent dew, 10
 let's both share
 cups of Falernian.
I pray that neither Cytherea refuse
to smile favorably on us nor watchful
 Diana to guard our 15
 frolics and our bedroom all night.

3.

Postquam immania monstra nocte prima
coeperunt ululare, semisomno
improvisa mihi puella venit
quae versus peteret laboriosos:

‘Antiquae iuuet, o diserte vates, laudare imperium decusque Romae, aut fortasse libros replere longos Graecorum ingenio scientiaque – compone autem aliquod perenne carmen.’	5
Sic fatur rogitans; deinde, ‘Iam nunc,’ inquam, ‘depereo miser puellam Colcho, credo equidem, parente natam; quare versiculi mei aemulari nolunt hexametros tonantis Enni: hos autem hendecasyllabos habeto.’	10 15
Tum, ridentibus oribus renidens, discessit foribus fugax apertis. Destiterant questu gravi minaces bubones volucresque lacrimosae.	

Metre: hendecasyllables

Translation:

After savage monsters had begun to shriek early at night, when I was half asleep an unexpected girl came to me to ask for weighty verses: ‘May it please you, eloquent bard, to praise the rule and the glory of ancient Rome, or perhaps to fill long books with the Greeks’ ingenuity and erudition – compose, however, some immortal song.’	5
So does she speak with her request; then, ‘At the moment,’ say I, ‘I am head over heels for a girl born, I do believe, to a Colchian father; therefore, my verses are unwilling to rival the hexameters of thundering Ennius: take, however, these hendecasyllables.’	10 15
Then, cheerful with laughing face, she swiftly departed through the open door. Threatening owls and doleful birds had ceased from their grave complaint.	

Tiliae sub tegmine

Andreas Petrides (Andy Peetermans)

Introduction:

To Germanic and Central European habits of mind, the title's mention of a linden tree immediately evokes the encounters of young lovers, from Walther von der Vogelweide's 'Unter der Linden' (c. 1200) to O-Zone's 'Dragostea din tei' (2003). It is also more generally a place of peaceful encounters and constructive dialogue, a place where community is made. To name a more classical association, it is also the tree into which the kind and hospitable Baucis, Philemon's beloved wife, is transformed in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

The title of course also gestures toward the opening of Vergil's first *Eclogue* (*patulae sub tegmine fagi*), and thus to all that is pastoral. Yet, not unlike in Vergil's work, behind this idyllic world of young love under the linden tree there looms a harsher reality: a world of war, violence, and vengeance, a world coloured in starkly Lucanian tones. Gradually, these two realities become ever more intricately entwined, tightening into a seemingly impossible knot. By the final verse, what began as a sweet scene of love has taken a decidedly bitter turn. And yet it all seems tragically avoidable, if only we could come to a fuller recognition of our shared humanity . . .

Dulce libet, iuvenis, tiliae sub tegmine amari.
Sunt nemora haec apibus pergrata simul Venerique,
saepeque subridens caecum longinquus arator
se simulat, vocem mellifluam et ora recordans
uxoris, veterum memor almi foederum amoris. 5
Non raro tamen ingentes Texandria quassus
quadrupedum tremuit (ne fata sinant), bipedumque
motus ambiguos (vetet hoc fors) letiferorum.
Dulcia sub tiliis fervens, Hadriane, Garitae
nunc labiis oculis manibus tu munera cura: 10
forma papillarum, quas ipsa volens tibi nudat,
pectus mox quoque et ingenium spectare docebit
dilectae, lenteque animum cognoscere fantis,
si dabitur, tranquillo Marte, adolescere tempus.
At nondum genus hoc hominum maturuit: unum 15
omnibus esse bonum nobis nescimus inepti.
Qui patriam linquit depulsus milite pastor
ipse aliena miser mox depraedabitur arva.
Nostri dissimilem quam prompte fingimus hostem –
humanum fateamur, eodem a sanguine ductum! 20
Vult alius teneram stupro tractare puellam:
illum continuo genitor demens iugulabit.
Num cui proderit hoc crimen? Pacemne iuvabit?
Quis laetabitur hac culpa palmisque cruentis?
Sic ulciscendi rota volvitur, omnia vastans; 25
victrix una premit pedibus cuncta armipotens Vis.
Quis furor! O puerile genus! Quis credat inesse
fraternas animis tantas mortalibus iras?

Non semel oppressit pugnax torquataque turba
 Marte furente virum, luctantem morte propinqua
 Illyrios blandae cupidos defendere amicae,
 virgo dum pectus iam pallida denudatur
 et violata premuntur acerbe mitia poma,
 risus et resonant tiliæ sub tegmine amari.

30

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

‘Under a linden tree’

It is a sweet pleasure, young man, to be loved under a linden tree. These groves are beloved by bees and Venus alike, and often a ploughman in the distance, smiling to himself, pretends he does not see, while he calls to mind the honeyed voice and face of his wife, remembering the old covenants of their love. [6] Still, it is not uncommon for Texandria to tremble at the thundering of four-legged beasts (may the fates not allow it) and the treacherous movements of two-legged ones (may luck forbid it) bringing death. Now, under the lindens, you, Adrian, hot with desire, should with your lips, eyes, and hands attend to Margie’s sweet gifts. The beautiful shape of her breasts, which she herself willingly unveils to you, will soon lead you to observe the heart and character of your beloved as well, and to slowly come to know her mind as she speaks, if, Mars remaining at peace, you are granted time to grow.

[15] But humanity has not yet matured: foolish as we are, we do not know that we all share one common good. A shepherd whom soldiers have driven from his homeland, wretched, will soon himself be plundering someone else’s fields. How readily we imagine one who is different from ourselves to be an enemy – let us acknowledge that they are human, sprung from the same blood! [21] Another man wishes to drag and defile a tender girl; immediately that girl’s father, driven mad, will cut his throat. Will this crime benefit anyone? Will it help peace? Who will rejoice in such guilt and in hands stained with blood? Thus the wheel of vengeance keeps turning, laying waste to everything; the only winner, trampling everything beneath its feet, is powerfully armed Force. What madness! O childish race of men! Who would believe that such brotherly hatreds dwell in mortal hearts?

[29] More than once a warlike, torque-wearing band has, when Mars goes wild, pinned down a man who, close to death, struggles to keep the eager Illyrians away from his charming sweetheart; meanwhile, already the pale maiden’s breast is exposed, her tender fruits are roughly squeezed and defiled, and under the linden tree bitter laughter echoes.

Notes:

1: Cf Vergil, *Eclogues* 1. 1.

2: Bees are indeed attracted to the flowers of the linden tree, a fact also referenced by Vergil, *Georgics* 4. 183.

6: Texandria refers to the Kempen region in the north of present-day Belgium. The poem originally accompanied a historical novella in Dutch called *Dassendragers*, written by my good friend Raf Van Rooy. In this novella, set in the early seventeenth century, a town in the highly rural Kempen is plagued by horse-riding Croatian mercenaries.

9: In Raf’s novella, a central role is played by the budding romance of two young people called Adriaan and Greetje. In Latin, I have baptized them Hadrianus and Garita, and in the English translation I have tried to approximate the feel of the Dutch names by opting for Adrian and Margie.

11: For *forma papillarum*, cf Ovid, *Amores* 1. 5. 20.

15: This verse reflects the inspiration of *La infana raso* ('The Child Race'), the major work of the prolific Esperanto poet William Auld (1924-2006). In this valuable and ambitious work, first published in 1956, Auld portrays humankind as still being in its childhood and therefore prone to childishness, which lies at the root of many of the world's problems. For an interesting philosophical parallel, see Seneca, *Epistles* 1. 4. 2.

17: Cf Vergil, *Eclogues* 1. 3-4, 1. 70-71, where the shepherd Meliboeus is driven from his native lands, which are taken over by a soldier.

27: For *Quis furor!*, cf Lucan 1. 8, 1. 681, 7. 95. *O puerile genus* again refers to Auld's *La infana raso*.

28: Cf Vergil, *Aeneid* 1. 11: *Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*

29: In the historical novella mentioned earlier, the Croatian mercenaries wear their typical cravats, which reminded me of the Gaulish torques.

31: The *Illyrii* are of course the Croatian mercenaries.

33: For *mitia poma*, cf Vergil, *Eclogues* 1. 80.

34: The opening verse's sweet pleasures of love (*dulce libet amari* 'to be loved is sweetly pleasant') have been replaced by bitter laughter (*risus amari*). This is an example of the figure of speech 'antanaclasis'.

Carmina

Arduino Maiuri

Carmina, sublimes Harduini tollite versus,
qui nunc afflatu nititur aëreo.
Harduinum madefacto vos, pulcherrima, tactu,
carmina, fingite mox, quo levior vireat.
Harduinus dulces sentit per pectora versus 5
et reserata patent rorida verba foras.
Harduinus reparata sibi petit arma Minervae
arte labore manu, carmina, concelebrans.
Omnibus insequitur vobis reliquisque fugatis
curis adtollit laetificans animum. 10
Harduinus vos spectat habens in corde et ocellos:
corpora complexus intuitusque tenet.
Lector, te Harduinus verbis amplectitur ipsum,
verba parata tibi pulchra repente iuvent!
Vos celebro, bona carmina, quo monumenta triumphi 15
ter geminante manu iam propius remigent . . .

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:
'Poems'

Poems, lift up the verses of Arduino, who now draws on airy inspiration. You most beautiful ones, with a fragrant touch, o poems, quickly shape Arduino, so that he can grow more delicately. [5] Arduino feels the sweet verses in his chest, and the dewy words are unfolded and revealed to the world. Arduino seeks for himself the weapons of Minerva, newly procured, o poems, celebrating them with art, commitment, and energy. [9] He follows you all and, casting aside every other worry, he lifts you up, making his soul joyful. Arduino gazes at you, his eyes also on his heart: embracing your bodies with his gaze, he holds you. [13] O reader, it is you that Arduino envelops with words, may the beautiful words prepared for you suddenly benefit you! I celebrate you, good poems, so that the memories of triumph with triple applause may now be upon us . . .

Five Choruses and a Speech from *Titanis Demersa*

Brad Walton

Introduction:

Somewhere Walter Lord described the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912 as ‘a perfect Greek tragedy’. I took up this hint and laid out the story of the *Titanic's* final hours, if not exactly as a Greek tragedy, at least as a sort of Senecan drama. In the following excerpt, I present a series of choruses (plus one short speech, number 5), portraying the various classes of people on board: the officers, the First Class men and women, the Second Class men, and Second Class women (represented by the speech of a single woman, a wife and mother), and the Third Class men and women together. There is an extended note at the end which analyses the verse forms used.

1. Praefecti navis

Tepidum, comites, liquimus amnem, frigentes qui ducit ad oras mites zephyros flava gerentes lilia campis, segetes agris, herbas pecori, gaudia caris omnibus illis qui prospiciunt nostros reditus.	5
anima est cano nebulosa gelu, digitique rigent frigore capti. caecam naso glaciem sentis, et hyperborei senis observas clara vitreas lampade barbas. ipse insolitus, mirus vultus maris immoti, proni, taciti, congelat ossa.	10 15
iam voce caret reboans altum. iacet immotus turbidus aestus. haud conspicitur plus semel aevo mare tam dispar maris ingenio, speciosum omen, tamen infaustum. nonne, sodales, commeministis signum gravius?	20
vela ut dedimus litore caro discedentes, nostrae navis alveus ingens tantas pelagi submovit aquas, ut traheretur nos in pavidos nostramque ratem altera puppis non mediocri condita mole contra proram flumine fertur. utrique rati gravis impendit diraque clades. sed lintricius ingens animis	25 30

intervenit (nec nimium mox)
nasoque suo fata repulsit.

35

Metre: anapaests

Translation:

‘Chorus of ship’s officers’

Mates, we have left the warm Gulf Stream that brings to our chill shores the gentle west winds that bear lillies to the meadows, crops to the fields, grass to the cattle, joy to all those dear ones who look forward to our return. My breath is a cloud of white frost, and my fingers are stiffly gripped with cold. [10] You can smell the unseen ice and, in the deck lights, you can see the glassy whiskers of the old man of the North. The strange, uncanny face of the still, flat, silent ocean chills to the bone. Now the thundering deep has lost its voice. The turbulent billows lie motionless. Hardly once in a lifetime is seen a sea so unlike the sea, a lovely but unlucky omen. [21] Do you not remember, mates, a more threatening portent? When we set sail, leaving our native shore, the vast hull of our ship displaced so great a wash of water, that another ship, and of no small bulk, was pulled toward us as we trembled, carried on the current against our prow? A grievous and ominous disaster threatened both ships, but a tugboat of heroic spirit interposed itself (not a moment too soon) and with its bow repelled catastrophe.

Notes:

1: They have left the Gulf Stream and entered the frigid Labrador current.

12: Needle-like shards of ice, called ‘whiskers’ could be seen in the deck lights.

20: On the night of 14 April, this sector of the Atlantic seemed preternaturally calm and flat.

28: On 10 April, the S.S. *New York*, docked in Southampton harbour, was torn from her moorings by the wash of the *Titanic* as it passed by her. A collision was narrowly averted.

32: *lintricius*, ‘tugboat’.

2. Matronae primi ordinis

Hic trans ambiguum pavendus
hactenus pelagus meatus
iam fuit pariter lenis et otiosus
ac cursus placidae purpureaeque vitae
annos quo terimus soporos.
tam suaves epulae, tam generosa vitae
quam gravant abacos fulgida Gallicos.
omnis innumerabiles laboris
sectantes famuli periti
cuilibet desiderio ministrant,
pulchras esurientibus placentas,
pulvinaria languidis,
murrea pocula siccis,
et caeli querulis stragula frigidi.
aurae cum vegetant corpus Atlanticae
unicus est nobis pelago lacus
et venusta patet lympa natantibus.
languores relevat, tristitiasque lenit
subtilisque animae sollicitudines
mitigat digitis permadidis oliva
lucidis dum nos Phrygiae lautitiis iacemus.

5

10

15

20

Metre: free aeolics

Translation:

‘Ladies of First Class’

This fearful passage across the doubtful ocean has so far been as smooth and as undisturbed as the path of the placid, purple life in which we pass the sleepy years. The meals are as agreeable, the shimmering wines as noble as those that burden French tables. [8] Countless attentive stewards, skilled in every kind of work, minister to every desire: lovely pastries to the peckish, pillows to the languid, fine chalices to the thirsty, and blankets to those complaining of cold weather. [15] When the Atlantic breezes enliven the body, we have the only swimming bath at sea, and enticing water lies open to swimmers. If we are weary, a masseuse relieves our langours, tames our sorrows and, with fingers dripping with oil, allays the anxieties of a refined soul, while we recline amid the luminous luxuries of Phrygia.

Note:

16: The *Titanic* and her sister, the *Olympic*, were at the time the only passenger liners to offer swimming pools to their (first-class) passengers.

3. Viri primi ordinis

Ingenio prudentia nascitur,
e prudente animo conamina,
de conaminibus fit copia,
copia parturit artes, artibus
omnipotens natura evincitur,
in mitem conversa ministram.

5

Metre: dactylic tetrameter

Translation:

‘Gentlemen of First Class’

From intelligence arises forethought, from forethought, effort. Effort creates wealth. Wealth creates technology. By technology all-powerful nature is conquered, transformed into a gentle servant.

4. Vectores ordinis secundi

Nos agit officium trans hoc profundum,
coniugibus comitantibus satisque,
opperientibus aut domi satorem.
nos opus et probitas regunt severos.
nullum ineunt temere manus laborem,
nullas praecipites fert lingua voces.
res gestas fugimus pulchras et altas,
spernimus et subtile cogitatum.
principium nostrae felicitatis
sunt labor et tempus. constat voluptas
e laribus, pueris, arca, quiete.

5

10

Metre: half hexameter + anceps + trochaic metron

Translation:

‘Male Second Class passengers’

Duty drives us across this ocean, our wives and children accompanying us or waiting at home for father. We are governed by labour and moral integrity. Our hands undertake no labour unadvisedly. Our tongue never utters a hasty word. [7] We avoid grand and exalted achievements. We disdain subtlety of thought. Our happiness is founded on hard work and time. Our pleasure consists of home, children, savings, and tranquility.

5. Ester, matrona ordinis secundi

invita et obtestata conscendi ratem
quam saeculum vocavit immersabilem.
monui virum, sed ille derisit metus.
generis profani ne tumor sacros citet
metuo furores. ergo, dum somno iacent
nata et maritus, tristes excubias ago
ego dum quiesco, lucido gaudent die,
obscura ne nos clades incautos ferat

5

Metre: iambic trimeter

Translation:

‘Ester Hart, a lady travelling in Second Class’

Unwillingly and under protest I boarded the ship that the world has called ‘unsinkable’. I warned my husband, but he laughed at me. I fear that the arrogance of a profane race might provoke divine wrath. While my husband and daughter sleep, I dejectedly keep watch; while I sleep, they enjoy the sunshine, lest a dark disaster take us unawares.

Note:

Ester Hart (1863-1928), was a second-class passenger emigrating with her husband and daughter to Canada. According to her daughter, Eva Hart (1905-1996), Ester experienced the one and only premonition of her life in reference to the Titanic, which she was convinced would come to disaster.

6. Vectores ordinis tertii

vetus orbis, vale! iam petimus novum.
vita paterna, vale! renascimur aquis.
valete, tenues, egeni lares,
madentes pluviis, rigentes gelu,
manus comprimentes, et artus forantes.
rara seges, vale, Cererisque macies!
egestas agrorum, tenuitas bidentum,
cellula cassa, vale! mensula sparsa, vale!
rugitus stomachi, dolores capitis!
pauperies soli, dira fames, vale!

5

10

pauperies non est mysterion,
qua nihil humanum vulgarius.
semper ubique exuta, famelica

saeviter imperitavit et imperat.
 paupertate tamen longe magis
 arcana atque fugax opulentia.
 haec non illa caret rationibus.
 at quod obumbrat Sphinx aenigmate
 luce recludet opima Columbia.

15

Metre: dochmiacs interspersed with bacchiacs, followed by dactylic tetrameter

Translation:

‘Third Class Passengers’

Old world, farewell! We are headed for a new one. Ancestral life, good-bye! We are being reborn on the water. Farewell, tiny, impoverished home, soaked with rain, rigid with cold, squeezing our hands, piercing our joints. Scant crop and meagre harvest, farewell! Impoverished land, scrawny flocks, farewell! Little cottage, farewell! Sparse table, farewell! Grumbling stomach, aching head, poverty of soil, dreaded famine, farewell!

[11] Poverty is not a mystery. Nothing in human affairs is more common. Always and everywhere naked, hungry, it has held sway and still holds sway. But wealth is far more mysterious, more elusive than poverty. Wealth, not poverty, requires explanation. But what the Sphinx shrouds in a riddle, wealthy America will bring to light.

Lyric metres used in *Titanis Demersa*

Editor’s note:

I thought it might be helpful for readers to have a little further explanation of some of the less familiar metres used in these extracts (some of them certainly not very familiar to me), which Brad has kindly supplied. (D. M.)

1. Praefecti navis: ‘tepidum, comites, liquimus amnem’

This chorus is written in anapaests. In anapaestic verse the *metron*, or unit of movement, comprises two anapaests (◡◡ – ◡◡ –). However, in place of the anapaest both the spondee (– –) and the dactyl (– ◡◡) are admitted. In rare instances the anapaestic foot can be resolved into a proceleusmatic.

Tepidum comites, liquimus amnem,	◡◡ – ◡◡ – / – ◡◡ – –
frigentes qui ducit ad oras	– – – – / – ◡◡ – –
mites zephyros flava gerentes	– – ◡◡ – / – ◡◡ – –
lilia campis, segetes agris.	– ◡◡ – – / ◡◡ – – –

In Greek anapaests, poets took care that the final syllable of each line be long by nature or position in relation to the opening word of the following line, and that no cross-line elision should occur. Seneca is much less fastidious about this rule.

2. Matronae primi ordinis: ‘hic trans ambiguum pavendus’

This chorus is written in ‘free aeolics’, a verse form found especially in Seneca’s *Oedipus* and *Agamemnon*, where he mixes together in a seemingly *ad libitum* fashion all kinds of aeolic

lines. What makes the lines ‘aeolic’ is that each of them is built around a choriambic nucleus. So, to extract and scan some lines from this chorus, I have written, for instance:

hic trans ambiguum pavendus	-- / - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ - x (Hipponactean)
iam fuit pariter lenis et otiosus	- ∪ / - ∪ ∪ - / - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ - x (lesser Asclepiad)
omnis innumerabiles laboris	- ∪ / - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ - ∪ - ∪ (Phalaecian hendecasyllable)
cuilibet desiderio ministrant	- ∪ / - - / - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ - - (Sapphic)
pulvinaria languidis	-- / - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ - (glyconic)

3. Viri primi ordinis: ‘ingenio prudentia nascitur’

This chorus is written in dactylic tetrameter. In each of the four feet one finds either a dactyl or a spondee. Seneca uses this metre without observing synaphaea.

Ingenio prudentia nascitur	- ∪ ∪ / - - / - ∪ ∪ / - ∪ ∪
e prudente animo conamina	- - / - ∪ ∪ / - - / - ∪ ∪
de conamibus fit copia	- - / - ∪ ∪ / - - / - ∪ ∪
copia parturit artes, artibus	- ∪ ∪ / - ∪ ∪ / - - / - ∪ ∪
omnipotes natura domatur	- ∪ ∪ / - - / - ∪ ∪ / - x
in mitem conversa ministram	- - / - - / - ∪ ∪ / - x

4. Viri ordinis secundi: ‘nos agit officium trans hoc profundum’

This chorus is written in a line constructed of a dactylic hemipes (- ∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ -) plus a linking syllable, plus a trochee (- ∪ - x)

nos agit officium trans hoc profundum	- ∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ - / - / - ∪ - -
coniugibus comitantibus satisque,	- ∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ / - ∪ - -
opperientibus aut domi satorem.	- ∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ - / ∪ / - ∪ - -

5. Ester, matrona ordinis secundi: ‘invita et obtestata conscendi ratem’

This speech is in iambic trimeters, as is normal for speeches in Greek and Latin tragedies.

Invita et obtestata conscendi ratem	- - ∪ - / - - ∪ - / - - ∪ -
quam saeculum vocavit immersabilem	- - ∪ - / ∪ - ∪ - / - - ∪ -
monui virum, sed ille derisit metus.....	∪ ∪ - ∪ - / ∪ - ∪ - / - - ∪ -

6. Vectores ordinis tertii: first part: ‘vetus orbis, vale! iam petimus novum’

This chorus is my attempt at writing Latin dochmiacs interspersed with bacchiacs. I do not believe that there are any surviving dochmiac verses in Latin from antiquity. The basic metron is ∪ - - ∪ - , and a line can consist of either one metron or two. Many substitutions are permitted, so that any short can be turned into a long, any long can be resolved into two shorts. Also two shorts can substitute for one short.

Vetus orbis, vale! iam petimus novum	⏑⏑ – – ⏑ – / – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ – (dochmiacs)
vita paterna, vale! renascimur aquis.	– ⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – / ⏑ – ⏑⏑ ⏑ – (dochmiacs)
Valete tenues, egeni lares,	⏑ – ⏑⏑ ⏑ – / ⏑ – – ⏑ – (dochmiacs)
madentes pluviis, rigentes gelu,	⏑ – – ⏑⏑ – / ⏑ – – ⏑ – (dochmiacs)
manus comprimentes, et artus forantes.	⏑ – – ⏑ – – / ⏑ – – ⏑ – – (bacchiacs)

Second part: ‘pauperies non est mysterion’

This stanza, which closes this chorus of third-class passengers, is written (like number 3, the chorus of first-class male passengers) in dactylic tetrameters.

Pauperies non est mysterion	– ⏑⏑ / – – / – – / – ⏑⏑
qua nihil humanum vulgarius	– ⏑⏑ / – – / – – / – ⏑⏑

Are all the passengers safe?

David Money

Introduction:

The Italian liner SS *Andrea Doria* was built in Genoa (laid down in February 1950, launched in June 1951), named after a famous Genoese admiral of the sixteenth century. Her maiden voyage in January 1953 produced an ill omen: struck by a huge wave, she listed 28 degrees. Her final voyage began on 17 July 1956: first from Genoa to Cannes, then Naples. She entered the Atlantic, heading for New York, on 20 July. The smaller Swedish liner MS *Stockholm* left New York for Gothenburg on 25 July; to save time, she chose to sail in an incorrect sea-lane, crossing the path of westbound ships. The two ships met in a fog bank, the *Stockholm* advancing at 18 knots. *Andrea Doria* had slowed to 22 knots, and used her foghorn. It was not enough. They were on a collision course, at a combined speed of 40 knots (46 miles per hour). Aware of each other only by radar, both altered course to the south. By the time they saw each other, it was far too late. Soon after 11 p.m. on 25 July, the *Stockholm*'s bow, reinforced against ice, smashed into *Andrea Doria*'s hull, penetrating it to 40 feet (12 metres) and causing fatal damage.

Within half an hour Captain Calamai knew his ship could not be saved. Though the evacuation faced difficulties, the disaster involved far less loss of life than the *Titanic*. Many lives were saved by the French liner *Ile de France*, initially sceptical that she would be needed, others by several American ships. At 6 a.m. on 26 July Calamai left *Andrea Doria*; four hours later she sank. Fifty-one lives were lost; forty-six from *Andrea Doria*, together with five of the *Stockholm*'s crew. *Stockholm* was still seaworthy, and returned to New York. In 1993, having been bought by Star Lauro lines, *Stockholm* turned up in Genoa – rather tactlessly, perhaps. The Genoese press referred to her as 'La nave della morte'. The wreck of *Andrea Doria* lies just 162 feet (49 metres) below the surface: it has proved a fatal temptation to twenty-two divers so far.

Piero Calamai (1897-1972) came from a naval family; his father Orestes founded a naval magazine, his younger brother Marco, a rear-admiral, was lost at sea in 1957. Piero had a distinguished naval career in both world wars. He died shortly before the news could reach him, from an American who had studied the collision, that the Swedes were indeed at fault; the initial investigation had suggested some fault on both sides – the *Andrea Doria* travelling too fast in fog, the *Stockholm* in the wrong sea-lane – and a confidential settlement had been reached. It was reported that Piero Calamai's dying words were 'Sono tutti salvi i passeggeri?' That haunting phrase seemed a good title for the poem: I have given it above in English, but use the Italian if you prefer.

The topic offered various parallels: two quite similar ships (both liners, the *Andrea Doria* newer and more luxurious), a collision at sea that only one of them survives, the contrasting fates of passengers – some miraculous stories of escape, some horrific ends. To bring out those parallels and contrasts I have chosen to use rather more repetition than one might normally do.

Sources: the *Andrea Doria* tragedy is well known, but I am chiefly indebted to a newspaper article by Chris Leadbeater, in *The Sunday Telegraph*, 9 August 2026 (*Sunday* section, pp. 4-5); some other details were found in English and Italian Wikipedia.

Morte iaces distans, Genuensis *Doria*, morte
Non sine perpetuis etiam submersa periclis

Tactilis. Omen erat: primo trans aequora cursu Ingens unda ferit subitoque inclinat ab ipso More procul recto, titubat cito, dein recipit se <i>Doria</i> continuatque viam. Tres navigat annos, Luxuriam praebet populis; aestateque coepit Italiae fidens iter id fatale calentis.	5
Nox erat: oceanus densa caligine tectus. <i>Holmia</i> abit, cursum rapidum caligine quaerens, Tam rapidum, ut dubium temere tunc transeat aequor Adsignatum aliis; venit ardens <i>Doria</i> . Sero Agnoscent ambo. Concurrent. <i>Holmia</i> vertit, <i>Doria</i> se vertit, sed eandem denique partem Ponti implent. Miseram rostro transfigit inepta <i>Holmia</i> , nec vitat fatalem <i>Doria</i> plagam.	10
Non <i>Titanis</i> erat vasta cum clade secunda: Effugiunt plures, fluitatque ipsa <i>Holmia</i> post rem Terribilem. Navis conservat Gallica multos, Primo discedens auditu incredula, cursum Dein repetens. Homines paucos miracula servant; Horribile at pauci fatum patiuntur. Ab una Nave eiecta locum vi mutat viva puella. Femina sed rostro moritur transfixa; maritus Vivit. Ad externos veniens praeclara Baratta Occumbit cantrix. Alius qui carmina vulgo Composuit, superat: carmenque hic de cane sentit Egrediens iterum vicisse, rogatque ‘Quis Elvis?’	15
<i>Holmia</i> post multos mutatis advenit annos Sub dominis Genuam: navis maledicta vocatur Morte; situm quaerunt quo restat <i>Doria</i> multi, Non omnes redeunt. Visendi infesta cupido Viginti atque duas animas iam perdidit acres. Altior e tanto potuit <i>Titanis</i> abysso Perdere visentes. Rector cui <i>Doria</i> quondam Parebat, bello quondam decoratus, ab undis Protinus abscessit, dicens ‘Maris aequor amabam, Nunc odi.’ Posthac vitam aegre cladis agebat Usque memor, nimia vult se reprehendere culpa, ‘Suntne viatores salvi?’ moriensque rogavit.	20
	25
	30
	35
	40

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

You lie far away in death, *Andrea Doria* of Genoa, and even submerged in death you can be touched, though not without constant dangers. There was an omen of misfortune: on her maiden voyage a huge wave strikes the ship; she suddenly lists far from her correct position, quickly shudders, then the *Doria* recovers herself and continues on her course. [6] She sails for three years after that, offering luxury to international travellers; and she faithfully begins her fatal journey in the summer heat of Italy.

[9] It was night, the sea was covered by a dense fog. The *Stockholm* leaves port, seeking a rapid course through the fog – so rapid, that she rashly crosses an incorrect sea-lane, one

allocated to other ships. The keen *Doria* rushes on. Too late, they recognise each other. They meet. The *Stockholm* turns, *Doria* turns herself too. But in the end they occupy the same piece of sea. The inept *Stockholm* transfixes poor *Doria* with her bow, nor can *Doria* avoid the fatal blow. [17] This was no second *Titanic*, with huge casualties. Most people can escape, and *Stockholm* herself is still afloat after the terrible event. A French ship saves many lives: at first she sailed on, not believing what she had heard, but then retraced her course. A few individuals are saved by miracles; but a few suffer a horrible fate. [22] A girl was thrown from one ship onto the other, alive. But one woman dies impaled on the *Stockholm*'s bow; her husband lives. The famous soprano Baratta perishes on the way to an audition among foreigners. Another man, who composed popular songs, survives: on disembarking at last he hears that his song 'Hound Dog' has topped the charts for a second time, and asks 'Elvis who?'

[29] Many years later, the *Stockholm*, under new owners, comes to Genoa. She is called the ship cursed by death. Many divers seek out the place where *Doria* lies on the sea bed; they do not all return. The dangerous desire to see her has already taken twenty-two brave lives. Far deeper, the *Titanic* too has been able to bring about the destruction of her visitors. [35] The captain who once commanded the *Doria*, and had also been decorated in war, retired straight away from the sea, saying that 'Before, I used to love the sea. Now I hate it.' After that he lived on unhappily, always remembering the disaster, and blaming himself too much for it; and he asked as he died, 'Are the passengers safe?'

Notes:

22-23: Linda Morgan, the fourteen-year-old daughter of Edward P. Morgan, an ABC radio commentator, had a miraculous escape: thrown from her bed on the *Andrea Doria*, she landed, injured, on the *Stockholm*'s deck. Her father initially did not know that she had survived.

24-25: Jeanette Carlin, a first-class passenger, is believed to have been impaled on *Stockholm*'s bow and dragged through the hole in *Andrea Doria*'s side as *Stockholm* bounced back. Her husband survived.

25-26: Agnes Baratta, a leading soprano at La Scala, died on her way to audition for the San Francisco opera.

26-28: Mike Stoller. With his song-writing partner Jerry Leiber he composed 'Hound Dog', a hit for Big Mama Thornton. The story goes that when he disembarked after being rescued from *Andrea Doria*, and was told that his song had reached no.1 again with a different artist, he asked 'Elvis who?'

32-33; The first death of a diver attempting to examine the wreck of the *Andrea Doria* occurred in 1956, not long after the sinking. Further tragedies followed regularly until 1981; the most recent appears to have been in 2017.

34-35: The *Titan* submersible imploded on 18 June 2023, killing five people, during an expedition to view the wreck of the *Titanic*.

Carmina Navalia: Ships of the Royal Navy

Takahiro Omiyama

Introduction:

Presented here are several poems about warships of the Royal Navy. These poems were previously posted on X (Twitter), but have since been deleted.

I first became interested in this subject through a Japanese online game called *Kantai Collection* (*Kancolle*), which personifies historical warships from around the Second World War. When I looked into their histories, I discovered that many British warships carry Latin mottoes, which inspired me to compose these Latin verses.

The long tradition of Latin poetry, which extends from antiquity through the medieval and early modern periods to the present day, seems particularly well suited to historically rich subjects such as warships, which often preserve the names of historical figures, deities, and cities, as well as Latin mottoes.

Sources:

V. Cassells, *The Capital Ships: Their Battles and Their Badges* (East Roseville, NSW: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

J. Jortin, *Lusus Poetici* (London: William Bowyer, 1748; third edition).

A. E. Weightman, *Heraldry in the Royal Navy: Crests and Badges of H.M. Ships* (Uckfield: Naval & Military Press, 2018; first published 1957).

1. An Epigraph

Dicitur et nostros cantare Britannia versus
navibus insignis, *Vatis* et ore legor.

Metre: elegiac couplet

Translation:

Britain, distinguished by her ships, is said to sing my verses too, and on the lips of *Vates* ('The Bard') I am read.

Note:

1: Borrowed from Martial 11. 3. 5.

2. The Royal Navy

Vides ut altis fluctibus horridus
pontus minaci murmure dum fremit,
nunc transeat classis per undas
Anglica dulce canenda Musis?

Metre: Alcaic stanza

Translation:

Do you see how, while the sea, rough with high waves, roars with a menacing murmur, the English fleet now passes through the waves, to be sweetly sung by the Muses?

Poems 3-9 on individual ships:

Metre: all in dactylic hexameters

3. HMS *Warspite*

Motto: *Belli dura despicio*

Inclita tot bellis annosaque navis in armis
fluctisonas superans undas, exercita fato,
en aderat semper pugnans, ubi Martia flamma,
duraque despiciens belli nec mersa sub aequor
felix et fortis; sic ducta per aspera ad astra.

Translation:

(Motto: I despise the hardships of war)

A ship, renowned for so many battles and grown old in arms, overcoming the wave-resounding waters, tested by fate, lo, she was always present fighting where the martial flame burned, and despising the hardships of war, nor was she sunk beneath the sea, fortunate and brave; thus was she led through hardships to the stars.

Note:

The motto, a memorable Latin phrase, resonates with one possible interpretation of the ship's name ('contempt in war').

4. HMS *Nelson*

Motto: *Palma qui meruit ferat*

Regia victoris servabat nomina navis
magnanimi, cuius se gloria vexit Olympo,
quo duce fracta mari iacet imo Gallica classis;
nomine digna viri tota se mole ferebat,
fulmina contorquens, patriae dum palma daretur.

Translation:

(Motto: Let him bear the palm who has deserved it)

The royal ship preserved the name of the valiant conqueror, whose glory rose to Olympus, and under whose leadership the French fleet lies broken at the bottom of the sea; worthy of the man's name, she moved forward with her whole mass, hurling her thunderbolts until the palm of victory was granted to the fatherland.

Note:

The motto granted to Horatio Nelson (1758–1805), *Palmam qui meruit ferat*, which was also adopted as the ship's motto, is itself a glyconic line, taken from the poem 'Ad Ventos' by the accomplished Anglo-Latin poet John Jortin (1698–1770), included in his *Lusus Poetici*.

5. HMS *Ark Royal*

Motto: *Desir n'a repos*

Fata iubent illam studio bellare perenni
per freta lata; viris vis et concordia crescunt;
ardua terga sequens atra sub nocte sagittam
dirigit in tenebras nervo pulsante volucrem;
illa volat rutilas spargens per caerula flammās.

Translation:

(Motto: Zeal has no rest)

The fates command her to fight in war with unceasing zeal across the broad seas; strength and harmony grow among the men; pursuing the towering back, in the black of night, she directs a swift arrow into the darkness as the string twangs; it flies, scattering ruddy flames through the azure gloom.

Notes:

HMS *Ark Royal* carried a French motto. While I have chosen to use the more refined form *Desir n'a repos*, the motto of Charles Howard, Lord Howard of Effingham (1536–1624), who commanded the original *Ark Royal* as his flagship against the Spanish Armada in 1588, the version *Desire n'a pas repos* is often cited for the aircraft carrier described in this poem. I am grateful to the Caird Library and Archive at Royal Museums Greenwich for kindly checking the entry for *Ark Royal* in LAU/158/2 and LAU/159, both of which record the form *Desire n'a pas Repos*.

3: Pursuing the German battleship *Bismarck*.

3-5: In the game *Kancolle*, the flight deck of an aircraft carrier is often represented as a bow, from which planes are discharged like arrows.

6. HMS *Jervis*

Illa mari pugnat, nec abest Fortuna benigna;
navita nullus obit bello sua fata sub armis;
sive tuens classem fertur per tela, per hostis,
plurima seu caelo demittitur incita flamma,
quisque manet vivus, nec mergitur ipsa profundo.

Translation:

She fights on the sea, nor is Fortune's favour absent; no sailor meets his fate under arms in war; whether she rushes through weapons, through foes, while guarding the fleet, or whether many a flame falls rapidly from the sky, everyone remains alive, nor is she herself sunk in the deep.

Notes:

The motto of *Jervis* has not been identified.

3: *per tela, per hostis*: Virgil, *Aeneid* 2. 358, 527; Silius Italicus 4. 459.

7. HMS *Janus*

Pax abit orbe; furit pelago quoque Martius ensis
imminet et patriae; compescere limina Iani
quisque cupit pariter; quae praedita nomine divi
prora ferens sociis magna virtute salutem,
qua patet unda, volat; bellorum meta propinquat.

Translation:

Peace leaves the world; the martial sword rages also on the deep and threatens the fatherland;
everyone equally desires to shut fast the thresholds of Janus; the ship, endowed with the god's
name, bringing safety to allies with great valour, flies where the wave lies open; the end of war
draws near.

Notes:

The motto of *Janus* has not been identified.

2: *compescere limina Iani*: cf Lucan 1. 62.

8. HMS *Sheffield*

Motto: *Deo adiuvante proficio*

Prora gravis meritis, urbis decus, aequora vasti
Oceani sulcat – fulgent penetralia passim –
quaque ruit victrix pelago quod despicit Arctos,
semper ubique favent superi, nec mergitur undis;
iam campana sonat; vigilat fortissima navis.

Translation:

(Motto: With God's help, I prosper)

A ship weighty with merits, the glory of her city, she cleaves the waters of the vast ocean – her
inner spaces gleam here and there – and where she rushes victorious upon the deep on which
the North Star looks down, always and everywhere the gods above favour her, nor is she sunk
in the waves; now the bell rings; the bravest ship keeps watch.

Notes:

3: *despicit Arctos*: Lucan 1. 458. Referring to the Arctic waters, primarily the Barents Sea.

4: (Editor's Note) There were two famous *Sheffields* – a Second World War light cruiser, to
which *nec mergitur undis* can apply, and the later destroyer which was in fact sunk in 1982
during the Falklands conflict (as the editor well remembers).

9. HMAS *Perth*

Motto: *Floreat*

Nomine mutato portum patriamque reliquit,
cumque Notum peteret, mundus caligine belli
conditus; at floret virtus Mavortia navis;
marmore Neptuni liquido, dum tela supersunt,
advolat in Graium pelagus, mox currit ad Austrum.

Translation:

(Motto: May she flourish)

With her name changed, she left her native harbour, and while she was making for the South,
the world was shrouded in the darkness of war; yet the martial valour of the ship flourishes;
over Neptune's liquid marble, so long as her weapons last, she flies to the Greek deep, and soon
rushes to the South.

Note:

1: Referring to her transfer from the Royal Navy (as HMS *Amphion*) to the Royal Australian Navy.

Three Survivors at Chatham

David Money

Introduction:

One of the nice things about editing *Vates* is that one gets to see what some other people have written, well in advance of publication. The initial thought behind these poems came to me while editing the epigrams of Takahiro Omiyama about ships of the Royal Navy: so I am grateful to Omiyama-san for that. Why not, I thought to myself, try some verses of your own about individual ships? And I remembered having visited these three ships not many months before at the Chatham Historic Dockyard in Kent.

The oldest of the them is the sloop HMS *Gannet*, combining wood and iron, steam and sail. By a nice coincidence, I find that she is a contemporary of HMS *Pinafore*; she was launched at Sheerness on 31 August 1878, while *Pinafore* was launched at the Opéra Comique on 25 May 1878. Those familiar with Gilbert and Sullivan will probably have no difficulty in recognising the phrase adapted as my title for the first poem. ‘A British tar [= sailor] is a soaring soul, / As free as a mountain bird’ – how appropriate for *Gannet* – and that ‘in spite of all temptations / To belong to other nations’ it is ‘greatly to his credit / That he is an Englishman.’ Those unfamiliar with this peculiarly British form of musical theatre may be assured that any jingoism is (largely) tongue-in-cheek, that Sullivan’s music is often very attractive, and Gilbert’s satire very sharp.

The Royal Navy could be a source of amusement to Victorian theatre audiences, precisely because it was large and powerful, and really did ‘rule the waves’. One of its most worthwhile tasks, in which *Gannet* participated, greatly to her credit, was the suppression of the East African slave trade: something often forgotten, overshadowed by greater interest in the Transatlantic slave trade, which the Royal Navy also worked against earlier in the nineteenth century.

HMS *Gannet* was decommissioned in 1895; she was repurposed as a static training ship and dormitory ship for boys, until 1968, under the new name of *President*.

The second poem celebrates a much more modern warship, the Oberon-class diesel-electric submarine HMS *Ocelot*, which was actually built at Chatham (launched in 1962, commissioned in 1964), and was the last submarine built there for the Royal Navy (three more of the same class were constructed for the Royal Canadian Navy); she was decommissioned in 1991, after a career of secret missions during the Cold War.

The third poem commemorates both a ship, HMS *Cavalier*, and an impressive bronze in high relief that stands next to it: together they form the National Destroyer Memorial. Designed by Kenneth Potts, the bronze was unveiled in 2007; it includes a list of 142 names of ships of this particular type which were lost during the Second World War.

HMS *Cavalier* was one of 96 war emergency destroyers which were ordered between 1940 and 1942; laid down at East Cowes in March 1943, she was launched on 7 April 1944, and commissioned in November 1944, in time to see action. She can therefore stand as a fitting representative of her entire class.

One of the things that struck me, on looking at the list of 142 names, was how few destroyers were lost at the beginning and end of the war, and how many in the middle. For 1939 (three names) and 1945 (two), there is room to mention each ship in the poem; the figures for the other years are shockingly high, and it would take an epic to do justice to each ship’s story (1940: 35 ships lost; 1941: 21; 1942: 46; 1943: 18; 1944: 17). I decided to take the single year 1942, the middle year of the war, and the one with highest losses, to represent the whole; the high losses are understandable, as the Navy was hard-pressed in the Atlantic, Arctic,

Mediterranean, and Far East. I noticed that most of the alphabet was represented in the first letters of those ships' names (all but seven letters): literally from A to Z, *Achates* to *Zulu*. That curious coincidence led me to choose those two ships, both of which fought bravely and had poignant ends, and to describe in a few lines how they came to earn their place in the melancholy, heroic list.

Among other sites, images of the memorial can be seen at:

https://www.maritimequest.com/misc_pages/monuments_memorials/national_destroyer_memorial_chatham.htm

1. 'Greatly to her credit': HMS *Gannet*

Morus eras; numquam stupida es sub nomine *Mori*

Aut alio rupis nomine *Sula* volas.

Aequor Pacificum visisti; per Mare Rubrum

Mercatus certas suppressere omne malum.

Illic contra hostile semel vim fulmine pleno

5

Exerces litus: crescit et ira semel.

Dupliciter curris: modo navem machina agebat

Fumando, ventis tu modo vela dabas.

Aequalem iactas scenae bene carmine fictam:

Patria tunc risit, visque regebat aquas.

10

Emerita atque dies puerorum immota tueris

Ut *Praeses* patiens nomine prisca novo.

Sula tamen semper signum rostro eminet ales;

Sedula tu famae semper avara bonae.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

You were a [kind of] booby, though you never acted stupidly under such a name; or, you fly under another name, as *Sula* of the rock. You have visited the Pacific Ocean; throughout the Red Sea you struggle to suppress all the evil of the [slave] trade. There, on one occasion, you make use of the full force of your main guns against a hostile shore: and, just once, your anger arises. [7] You can run in two ways: at one moment, a steam engine used to move the ship, and at another moment you used to set your sails to the winds. You can boast a well known fictitious sister of your own age, from the musical stage: the nation then laughed at her, while at the same time naval force was ruling the seas. [11] And in immobile retirement you watch over the days of boys in training, as the *President*, a patient old ship under a new name. Yet the bird, the gannet, still shines forth as a sign on your prow; you are always diligent and greedy for a good reputation.

Notes:

1-2: The gannet is closely related to the booby (so called for the 'foolish' lack of fear of human predators shown by breeding colonies); they share the genus *Morus* and family *Sulidae*. The Northern gannet is called both *Morus Bassanus* and *Sula Bassana*, after the large colony on the Bass Rock; *sula* or 'solan goose' is a Scots word of Old Norse origin.

3: In the Pacific HMS *Gannet* observed the war between Chile and Bolivia.

5-6: HMS *Gannet* fired her main armament in anger in 1888, against the coast of Sudan.

13-14: The figurehead of a gannet. The bird has a reputation for a voracious appetite; I suggest the ship's appetite is to earn a good reputation.

2. Hard to spot: HMS *Ocelot*

Ultima pro nobis pergebas sub mare fuscum,
Ultima quam nostrae quondam navalia classi
Struxere haec, licet et sociis fecere sorores
Tres tibi tam similes, opus et finitur honoris.

Pardus ocellatus nomen dedit; aptat ocellos 5
Silvarum tenebris, vadit per flumina feles
Versuta – haud aliter furtim tu bella gerebas
Frigida. Secretum manet illud tristeque munus,
Verum de factis etiam nunc conditur omne.

Artis atque locis habitabant non sine risu 10
Nautae, angusta domus nabas armisque referta
Oceanum peragrans, explorans furta futuri
Hostis, ut assiduo conatu commoda serves.

Fabula narratur: deus olim barbarus illam
Pardalem formam caelo deiectus ab alto 15
Induit ut circum veniatque necatque gigantes.

Tuque ita pro nobis in pontum missa profundum
Tute sat vires hostem delere tenebas.

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

You used to travel on our behalf under the dark sea, the last of your kind which this dockyard constructed for our fleet: though they also made three sister vessels, so similar to you, for our allies – and thus the honourable labour comes to an end. [5] A cat with spots like eyes gave its name to you; it adapts its eyes to the gloom of the forests, this versatile cat passes through rivers – in a similar fashion you waged a cold war by stealth. [8] That work remains sombre and secret; even now, the full truth about your deeds is kept hidden. [10] The sailors used to live, not without good humour, in cramped spaces; you used to swim as their narrow home, filled with munitions, traversing the ocean, seeking out the tricks of a potential future enemy, so that you could preserve our advantages by constant effort. [14] There is a myth that a foreign god once took on the form of an ocelot, having been thrown down from heaven, in order to circumvent and kill the giants that opposed him. [17] You too, sent out for us into the deep sea, used to hold safely sufficient strength to destroy an opponent.

Notes:

4: *opus*: the work of shipbuilding at Chatham dockyard.

5: The ocelot is *Leopardus Pardalis* (Linnaeus called it *Felis Pardalis* in 1758). The etymology may refer to Latin *ocellatus* (little eyes, or eye-like spots), or to Nahuatl *ocelotl* (a kind of jaguar). A medium-sized wild cat, it climbs, leaps and swims with agility, and is well camouflaged: a fitting name for a submarine that relies on deception to hunt and survive.

8: *frigida*: cold in more ways than one: the chill waters beneath the surface, and the 'Cold War'.

14-16: A Mexican myth: the god Tezcatlipoca, cast down from heaven by Quetzalcoatl, transformed himself into an ocelot, and arose to kill some giants. Salvador Dalí also had a pet ocelot called ‘Babou’: but I didn’t think I could fit that in without sounding too surreal . . .
 18: *sat vires*: meaning only conventional weapons that could sink individual ships: HMS *Ocelot* did not carry nuclear weapons.

3. HMS *Cavalier* and the National Destroyer Memorial

Suavis *Eques* celeri sulcabas marmora cursu;
 Bellum vidisti, meruisti laudis honorem
 Cum Borealis hiems belli loca nota gelabat
 Tuque lupos arcens munus pastoris agebas.
 Proelia post bellum tibi erant pugnaeque minores 5
 Atque Oriente labor sudanti, dum tibi finis
 Praematurus adest. Variis revocata per orbem
 Muneribus tandem frueris; dein haud procul oris
 A nostris clades ignominiosa, remulco
 Dum traheris, nocuit. Pristinam rursus habes vim: 10
 Fit certamen; amor currendi impellit et urget
 Rivales; *Rapidam* victrix praevertis; ob illum
 Tu ‘classis gallus’ iam diceris esse triumphum.
 Gloria non longa est, nec equis neque navibus: anno
 Desinit officium tibi denique visque sequenti. 15
 Nunc hic, nunc illic primo spectacula praebes
 Civibus, at posthac monumentum electa perenne
 Stas pro tot mersis aequalibus una superstes.
 Tot periere viri, naves periere sorores
 Tam multae celeres, ferro tot vulnera passae. 20
 Quarum nomina perlegimus sacro aere sororum:
 Nomina tot: plusquam centum scribuntur in aere,
 Multo plus: tot enim medios periere per annos.
 Tres tantum primis merguntur mensibus, *Alba*
 Atque *Ducissa*, *Vagansque*, duae cum denique finis 25
 Paene aderat belli: fuit audax *Tramitis* una
Inventrix, tenuit magni ducis altera nomen.
 Damna quidem, sed non classis sunt pessima magnae
 Damna: oculis tabulas madidis medii inspicere amaras
 Anni: huius generis naves merguntur in altum 30
 Quadraginta et sex, nautisque immane sepulchrum
 Oceanus fit totus: abest vix littera fastis.
 Dimidium gelidae gregis undae amisit *Achates*
 Fida; alios fortes servabat barbara *Zulu*,
 Africa dum nostris dubium se litus iniquum 35
 Militibus monstrat. *Zulu* submergitur almum
 Quaerendo reditum, satis haud sibi sorte remulci
 Auxilium iniusta. Desidit saucia, gestis
 Clara suis. Illam cepit tam mortifer anni
 Autumnus, dura at fidam delevit *Achates* 40
 Ultima nox. Supplere tamen quo tempore damnum

Arcessita recens *Eques* est, et copia plena.
 Talibus undecies perduntur mille virorum
 Navigiis vitae, quae pars est quinta per omnem
 Iacturae classem. Tanta est impensa salutis.
 Nominis et cuius (licet est vis maior) habemus
 Sex tantum naves. Sat erit? Speramus inermes.

45

Metre: dactylic hexameters

Translation:

Delightful *Cavalier*, you used to cut swift furrows through the sea's surface. You saw the [Second World] War, and you earned a battle honour when the Arctic winter chilled familiar areas of battle, and you fulfilled the role of shepherd, warding off the wolves. You also faced conflicts and small battles after the [World] War ended, and work in the sweating Orient, until your duties came to a premature end. [7] Recalled at last, you perform various tasks throughout the world – then, not far from our own shores, while under tow, an ignominious accident damaged you. [10] You recover your former energy. There is a competition. The love of running fast pushes and urges on two rivals: the winner, you outstrip *Rapid* – for this feat, you are now called 'cock of the fleet'. [14] Glory does not last long, neither for horses nor for ships: in the following year your work and your force come to an end at last. [16] At first you provide an entertainment for the citizens, now here, now there; but after that you were chosen to be a permanent monument, and you stand, as a lone survivor, on behalf of so many other similar ships which were sunk.

[19] So many men perished, so many swift sister-ships perished after suffering wounds to their metal. We can read the names of those sisters recorded on sacred bronze: so many names – more than a hundred are inscribed in bronze, far more; for so many perished during the middle years [of the Second World War]. [24] Three only are lost in the first months [of fighting in 1939]: *Blanche*, *Duchess*, *Gipsy*; and only two, as the end of the war was, at last, almost at hand [in 1945]: one of them was the bold *Pathfinder*, the other took the name of a great [political] leader [*Walpole*]. Those were losses, indeed, but far from the worst losses suffered by this great fleet. [29] Read, with tear-filled eyes, the bitter columns listing ships lost in the middle year [of the war: 1942]. Forty-six ships of this type [destroyers] are sunk into the deep, and the whole ocean becomes an immense tomb for their sailors; scarcely a letter is missing from the list. [33] The loyal *Achates* lost half her crew to the chill waves; the wild *Zulu* preserved other brave lives, while Africa showed herself to be a doubtful and hostile shore for our soldiers. *Zulu* is submerged while seeking a welcome return: by unjust fate, the help of a tow-rope proves insufficient to save her. Wounded, she sinks, famous for her great deeds. [39] The autumn of that year, a season that brought so much death, took away *Zulu*; as for *Achates*, the very last harsh night [of 1942] destroyed her. [41] Yet at [about] that time the newly created *Cavalier* was summoned to replace the loss, along with a full supply of others. [43] In ships like these, eleven thousand sailors' lives were lost, which was a fifth of the losses among the entire fleet. So great is the cost of [national] survival. [46] And of this type (though admittedly the force of a modern [destroyer] is far greater) we now have only six ships. Will that be enough? Those of us who are unarmed had better hope so.

Notes:

2-4: HMS *Cavalier*, after her commissioning on 22 November 1944, served on Arctic convoy duty, earning a battle honour in February 1945.

5-7: In the Far East, she fired on Indonesians and Indian rebels, before being paid off in 1946 and held in reserve; she was recommissioned in 1957.

8-10: She was damaged by a collision in 1964, while under tow in the English Channel southwest of Brighton.

11-13: HMS *Cavalier* earned the title 'Cock o' the Fleet' (a term for the winner of any kind of inter-ship contest) after a race on 6 July 1971 against the frigate HMS *Rapid*; *Cavalier* won by 30 yards, at an average speed of nearly 32 knots, after *Rapid* blew a valve.

14-15: HMS *Cavalier* was decommissioned in 1972.

16-17: In her early years as a museum ship, HMS *Cavalier* was moored in various locations (Southampton, Brighton marina, the Tyne), before finding a permanent home at Chatham in 1998.

22-23: The names of 142 lost ships are recorded on the National Destroyer Memorial.

32: *abest vix littera fastis*: as noted in the introduction to these three poems, a slight exaggeration. Destroyers whose names begin with 19 of the 26 letters of the alphabet were lost in the single year 1942 (the ones not represented are 'D', 'N', 'O', 'R', 'U', 'X' and 'Y').

33-41. HMS *Achates* was sunk on 31 December 1942 during the battle of the Barents Sea; 113 of her crew were lost, and 81 rescued (one of whom subsequently died). HMS *Zulu* took part in the naval covering force for Operation Agreement, an unsuccessful commando raid on Axis-occupied Tobruk; she was attacked by aircraft, and after rescuing survivors from other ships, she sank while under tow a hundred miles from safety in Alexandria, on 14 September 1942.

43-45: Over 11,000 sailors were killed in destroyers, out of a total of 51,000 dead for the Royal Navy in the Second World War.

46-47: Cf *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 August 2026, p. 11, under the headline 'We lack firepower to defend ships from Russia, says ex-Navy chief': 'The [Royal] Navy now has just two aircraft carriers, six destroyers and five frigates in its surface fleet.' Since modern ships are far more powerful, one is not comparing like with like; nevertheless, any ship can be sunk, and can only be in one place at a time (it is not a bird, after all, as Sir Boyle Roche would remind us). It is worth noting that the losses of Royal Navy destroyers during the Second World War – from which the Royal Navy emerged as a large and confident fleet on the winning side – would consume the entire modern destroyer force more than twenty times over.

Ad James Brown (1951-2020): Sic Transit Gloria Mundi

Clifford Weber

Introduction:

The following is quoted from publicity issued by Bonhams auction house, to which I consigned a superlative painting by James Brown before moving to Japan in 2020. 'Writing in *Arts* magazine in 1989, the late Robert Pincus-Witten transferred the sobriquet "the three B's" from Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms to the three young painters who he thought were the shining lights among East Village artists of the early '80s. These were Jean-Michel Basquiat [1960-1988], James Brown, and Donald Baechler [1956-2022]. Four years earlier, in a conversation published in *Interview*, Madonna was asked who were her favorites among young American painters. She named Basquiat and Brown in the same breath: "I love this guy named James Brown." Even if largely dismissed toward the end of his life, Basquiat is now a household name, while Brown's celebrity has faded, due in part to a radical change of style. This painting, held in a private collection for the past thirty years, is a classic example of the work that put Brown on a level with Basquiat in the golden age of painting that the East Village was in the early '80s.'

James Brown and his wife were killed in a car crash in Mexico in 2020. When I contacted Christie's concerning my painting in 2019, the 'expert' there had never heard of the painter James Brown.

The poem dates from 31 July 1989, when Brown was still alive, and not particularly old.

Prisca iuventutis vixdum retinetur imago:

Cur, pictor, periit pristinus iste color?

Ante tuis inerant violaria verna tabellis;

sol erat et tenera lilia mixta rosa.

Nunc autem video folia arida, sicca virecta,

5

gramine nudatum passeribusque nemus.

Conveniunt sterili res illae, candide, brumae;

nondum nostra cadunt in capita alba nives.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

The former image of youth is scarcely retained:

Why, painter, has that original color of yours vanished?

Before, spring beds of violets were in your paintings;

there was sunlight and lilies mixed with tender rose.

Now, however, I see arid leaves, dry greenswards,

5

a grove stripped of grass and sparrows.

Those things, splendid man, befit sterile winter;

not yet do snows fall onto our white heads.

An Elegy for e

Zach Shah

Introduction:

In 1917, Ronald Knox made a poem for his friend to help him remember the digits after the decimal point of π . Each word of Knox's couplets consists of the same number of letters as the corresponding digit of π after the decimal point. In 2017, Tom Keeline did the same for τ (defined as 2π). His ingenious verses are published at: *The Classical Outlook*, 92.3 (2017), pp. 102-104.

Both overlooked, however, the second most famous constant in mathematics: Euler's number e (2.71828...), discovered by the eighteenth-century Swiss polymath Leonhard Euler. I attempted the same task as Knox and Keeline, not only to help readers memorize e , but also more importantly to celebrate Euler and his number as a fundamental part of calculus and the mathematics of growth.

I used the following decimal approximation for e : 2.7182818284590452353602874713526

Those who wish to see a further two million digits may do so at:

<https://apod.nasa.gov/htmltest/gifcity/e.2mil>

Maximus 'e' Basileae et fingitur e numerato:

7 1 8 2 8 1 8

ex infinita nunc serie efficitur.

2 8 4 5 9

sane Euler, da ita curam ubi versas in novitate

04 5 2 3 5 3 6 02 8

inventata hinc generas (a jam!) opere et studio.

7 4 7 1 3 5 2 6

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

Even the greatest [number] 'e' of Basel is fashioned from enumeration: out of an infinite series it is now being made. Rational Euler, thus give [your] attention whenever you reflect upon new things. Hence you bring forth inventions (now alas!) through [your] zealous work.

Notes:

1: e scans long. Euler was born in Basel.

3: The name *Euler* is disyllabic.

Me Perec heredem esse velle

Andreas Petrides (Andy Peetermans)

Introduction:

In 1972, the French writer Georges Perec (1936-1982) published a short novel titled *Les revenentes* ('The returning women', but tellingly misspelled). The work belongs to the tradition of constrained writing for which Perec and the Oulipo group to which he belonged became famous. A few years earlier, Perec had published his better-known work *La disparition* ('The disappearance', with the English title, in Gilbert Adair's translation, of *A Void*), a novel from which the letter 'e' is entirely absent. In *Les revenentes*, by contrast, 'e' is, at least in principle, the only vowel permitted. Nothing else about the book is constrained: Perec's wildly exuberant narrative centres on a group of women trying to steal valuable gemstones kept at a cathedral during a party that gradually escalates into an orgy. It was translated into English by Ian Monk as *The Exeter Text: Jewels, Secrets, Sex*.

Interestingly, *Les revenentes* is preceded by a short Latin epigram composed under the same constraint; whether it was written by Perec himself is unclear to me. The present poem is an attempt to imitate and expand upon that model, honouring Perec by playing his game. A technical note: following Perec's example, I do not count 'u' in the combination 'qu' as a vowel.

En, reverende Perec, me teste et te referente,
hercle! revertentes legeque vesteque egent.
Heredemque decet semper – te, celse, sequentem –
'E' petere et leves edere mente pedes.
Ne peccet (quererere!); pedes sese repetentes
vel Venere expertes (flente legente) vetet!
Reddere percelebrem Lethesque retexere rete
certet, quemque premens: 'Expete, prende, lege!'

5

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

'I want to be an heir of Perec'

Why, esteemed Perec: while I am witness and you narrate – good heavens! – the returnees lack both law and clothing. Your heir should always – following in your footsteps, sublime one – seek the letter 'e' and bring forth smooth verses from his mind. Let him not make mistakes (you would complain!); let him shun verses that repeat themselves or are devoid of charm (making the reader weep)! Let him strive to make you famous anew and unweave the net of Lethe, urging everyone: 'Seek, seize, read!'

Notes:

1: The Latin epigram that opens *Les revenentes* contains the phrase *me referente* 'while I narrate', inspiring my ablative absolute *me teste et te referente* 'while I am witness and you narrate'.

2: The realisation that Perec's title *Les revenentes* could opportunely be rendered in Latin with the present participle *revertentes* is what first made me think of writing this poem. The described lack of law and clothing of course refers to the nature of the events taking place in Perec's novel.

- 4: How to discuss the writing of poetry in this constrained version of Latin, such lexical staples as *carmen*, *versus*, *poema*, *poeta* and *vates* being strictly off-limits? We are saved by *pes*, the metrical foot.
- 5: The form *quererere* is the syncopated equivalent of the imperfect subjunctive *quereretur*, used here to express a counterfactual.
- 6: All forms of words such as *voluptas*, *venustas*, *lepos* or *deliciae* are of course off-limits. Luckily, the goddess Venus's name can do the trick.
- 7: Lethe, deriving from the Greek word for 'forgetting', is the name of a river in the underworld.

Carpe Mortem

Michiel Sauter

Introduction:

In his opus magnum *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (1919), Johan Huizinga quotes the medieval poem 'Cur mundus militat sub vana gloria' as an example of the 'Ubi sunt'-topic, the mourning for the people who are no longer among us. This 'Ubi sunt'-topic is inextricably linked with the medieval concept of *vanitas*: everything is bound to perish, nothing remains. After the Middle Ages, *vanitas* reoccurred, not least in baroque literature. In his *Ode Ad Petrum Altenhofium*, the German Jesuit Jacob Balde derides the pomp of monumental graves as pure vanity. From Huizinga's quotation and from Balde, I borrowed a few words to write my own *vanitas* sonnet.

Carpe mortem

(Magistri Testamentum)

'Viator stupe, sta ad sedes mortuorum
hic iacent nobiles, hic splendent gloriae
et urnas habeant porro reliquiae
quiescant procures in tumulis maiorum.'

Ubi Diogenes, deridens hoc decorum?
Hic foetent nomina, vanae fallaciae
nunc esca vermium, tunc patres patriae
putrescunt principes in luto sepulchrorum.

5

O mundi vanitas! Spero luxuriam
sub gravi lapide non bene dormiam
cadaver meum da chirurgi studiosis:
docebo mortuus quod vivus nequeo
disiecta membra post spargas in hortulo
et fiam prandium pro cattis, rattis, rosis.

10

Metre: sonnet: rhyming accentual iambic alexandrines

Translation:

'Seize death'

(A Teacher's Last Will)

'Traveller, be astonished, stand at the seats of the dead
here lie the nobles, here glories shine
and let the remains have urns
and let the nobles rest in the tombs of their ancestors.'

Where is Diogenes, mocking this decorum?
Here names stink, vain fallacies
now food for worms, then fathers of the country,
princes rot in the mud of tombs.

5

Oh, the vanity of the world! I despise luxury
under a heavy stone I will not sleep well
give my corpse to the surgeon's students:
and being dead I will teach what I cannot teach alive
afterwards scatter my severed limbs in the garden
and I will become a meal for cats, rats, and roses.

10

Ad Posteritatem

David Money

‘Quid mihi fecisti?’ Declamatoria res est.

Nil? Minime: multum mi dare rite soles.

Reri me cogis: cur scribam? Voxque futuri

Quid de conatu sentiat atque petat?

Non pro me tantum compellit vana cupido:

5

Non pretium vivens circulus omne tenet.

Longinquae nec ero laudis captator avarus

Exoptans nimio saepe favore frui.

Iudicis haud refert misero sententia functo;

Os nequit absentem triste movere reum.

10

Colloquium quoddam cupii trans saecula, sensum

Ex aetate mea convehere inque tuam.

Metre: elegiac couplets

Translation:

‘To Posterity’

‘What have you done for me?’ It’s a rhetorical question. Nothing? Far from it: you tend to give me a great deal. You make me think: why am I writing? What would the voice of the future feel about, or want from, my attempt? [5] It is not only an empty, selfish vanity that pushes me forward; an audience living today is not the only worthwhile reward. Nor shall I be eager to hunt for far off praise, desperate to receive excessive favour. [9] The judge’s verdict hardly matters to a deceased wretch, nor can his harsh frown have any effect on a defendant who is absent. I wanted to have some kind of conversation across the centuries, to convey a feeling out of my own age and into yours.

Exegi monumentum aere perennius?
Present-Day Latin Poetry and the Problem of Permanence

Marco Cristini

Horace's *Odes* 3. 30 is often one of the first Latin poems that students encounter. While the verses' scattered references to places, peoples, and deities require significant explanation from the teacher, they also convey two immediately understandable messages, which are fundamental to the study of the classical world: the enduring nature of classical poetry, said to be more lasting than bronze, and the eternity of Rome itself. To be sure, the latter prediction did not prove entirely correct, but the former still holds true. It is therefore understandable that a faint echo of Horace's verses lingers in the minds of many present-day Latin poets as they circulate their own works, hoping that their creations will not be destroyed by 'the countless run of years or the flight of time'. However, this ambition must contend with an often-overlooked issue: the problem of permanence.

Present-day society appears to be much better positioned than any past age to ensure that works of literature survive well beyond the author's lifetime. Books can be purchased cheaply online, self-publishing has never been simpler, digital communication allows us to easily connect with writers from other countries in a matter of seconds, access to libraries is readily granted, and the internet is a treasure trove of information. Still, not all that glitters is gold.

Firstly, the issue of permanence cannot be addressed without considering the author's own stance toward it. In other words, not all poets are comfortable with the idea that their verses can be read by everyone and preserved for future generations. A notable example is the Italian classicist Alfonso Traina (1925–2019), one of the foremost Latin poets of the early twenty-first century. Traina, who taught Latin literature for almost fifty years at the universities of Padua and Bologna, wrote verses in both Italian and Latin and circulated them in booklets printed by a well-known Italian publisher, Pàtron Editore. However, these booklets were not sold but rather distributed by Traina to his relatives, friends, and colleagues. When I started composing my conspectus of twenty-first-century Latin poets, I contacted the publisher to inquire about purchasing the booklets or obtaining copies, but this proved impossible. The publisher acknowledged the existence of the booklets while simultaneously stating that Traina had not intended for them to be public. Fortunately, some of these booklets had found their way into Italian libraries, and I was eventually able to borrow, read, and scan each of them. I later discovered that Traina had published an anthology of his Latin poems (*Pura sub nocte*, Tre Lune Edizioni: Mantova, 2010), which included many of the verses first issued in his booklets. Unlike the booklets, the anthology is available in bookshops and e-commerce websites.

This case study highlights the far-from-straightforward approach to publication adopted by several poets. Traina ostensibly refused to share his verses with a wide audience, yet he did share them with a select group of people, thereby effectively losing the ability to control their future circulation. In cases like this, a determined reader can eventually obtain the poems. Moreover, Traina himself later agreed to reissue some poems in a book that was allowed to circulate without restriction. Was permanence actually unimportant, or even undesirable, in his eyes? If so, are we entitled to read, study, and preserve his verses? These are not easy questions, but I believe that no one feels excruciating pangs of conscience when reading the *Aeneid*, even though Vergil explicitly ordered his work to be destroyed shortly before his death. In short, if poets take the step of circulating their verses even among a small group of friends, and especially if they do so in print or in a public digital venue, then we must presume that they are

willing to allow others to see the products of their poetic work. Therefore, we are entitled to study them and do our best to ensure that future generations can do the same.

This brings us back to the issue of permanence. Traina's example shows that one of the best ways to ensure it consists in publishing Latin poetry in books that are both available for purchase and held in public libraries. However, few present-day Latin poets have the financial means or fame necessary to persuade a publisher to print many copies of a book of poetry in a language commonly regarded as dead. This is why the majority of books of Latin poetry are privately published in small quantities, often without an ISBN (International Standard Book Number, a unique 13-digit identifier assigned to each distinct edition of a book). To ensure that these publications will be available to readers and scholars in the coming decades, poets should always donate a copy to at least one public library, where it will hopefully be registered in an online catalog. Several countries have developed search engines that allow users to look for a specific book in all libraries within that country (e.g., the National Library Service in Italy, <https://opac.sbn.it/>). This means that even if a book is present only in the library of a small village, one should theoretically be able to find it with a few clicks and request either an inter-library loan, or photocopies or scans. However, books can be damaged, lost, or destroyed. Therefore, the perfect solution would be to donate a copy to at least three public libraries, ideally the library of the town or village where the poet lives, the library of the nearest major city (or the place where the poet works), and the national library of his or her country. By doing so, future researchers can easily find the publication by knowing where a poet lived or worked. Turning to traditional (i.e., paper) journals and magazines, which represent another prominent publication avenue for Latin poems, some copies are customarily sent to university or national libraries, thus ensuring their long-term permanence. I have found out that this is often the case even for minor journals. For instance, the French poet Geneviève Immé, also known as Geneviève Métais (1929–2012), published for several years a Latin journal titled *M.A.S. (Memento Audere Semper)*, which included several poems of uneven quality in each issue. It was a most unusual publication, often consisting of stapled photocopies of press clippings, sketches, and even handwritten letters sent by readers. Immé left a copy of each issue in the Archives départementales des Pyrénées-Atlantiques, the public archives of Pau, her hometown, where they are still preserved.

When dealing with poems issued in non-Latin journals, on the other hand, the main problem is not so much their preservation as knowing that they exist. Even the most conscientious scholar would hardly look for Latin verses in a minor journal published in a remote valley of Northern Italy (*La Val. Notiziario del Centro Studi per la Val di Sole*), where Guido Donini (born 1939) published a poem in honor of an Italian astronaut in 2015. In cases like these, poets should be encouraged to place a copy of their verses in open-access online repositories such as Academia or ResearchGate to ensure that people interested in Neo-Latin poetry can eventually find them.

The issue of permanence becomes much more complicated, and controversial, if we move to poems published online. Whatever avenue they choose, poets who place their verses online are often unaware that the internet has become an immense graveyard, filled with faint traces of defunct webpages and broken links (see a 2025 BBC paper on this topic: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20250731-a-journey-into-the-heart-of-the-forgotten-internet>). A single example will suffice. One of the first – if not the first – websites to host Latin poems was *Poesis Latina Hodierna* (<https://www.suberic.net/~marc/poesislatina.html>), created by Marc Moskowitz in or before 1998. The website still exists, but many of its links no longer lead to the webpages that once hosted Latin poems. These poems have been lost forever, if they were not saved elsewhere. However, it is difficult to address globally the issue of Latin poetry published on the internet, since poets have used a wide range of digital media, each with its own peculiarities. Broadly speaking, we can split the avenues of these *carmina interretialia*

into four categories: online journals published in PDF format (such as *Vates*), websites, social media, and files uploaded to websites.

The first category is the most straightforward, as these online publications are structured like traditional journals, with a cover, numbered pages, and a clear indication of their issue date. They can be easily printed, saved, and catalogued, either on a PC or in internet repositories. Moreover, those that fulfill the requirements of legal deposit and are provided with an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number, an eight-digit code used to uniquely identify serial publications) can usually be preserved in the electronic archives of national libraries. However, the latter are by no means a guarantee of permanence. For instance, a cyber attack in October 2023 disrupted the legal deposit service of the British Library, and the damage had not been completely mended by October 2025, two years later. Moreover, electronic journals such as *Epistula Leonina* (or indeed the old series of *Vates*) were originally not conceived as traditional periodicals, and their editors hardly considered the issue of legal deposit, since they regarded their journals as mere venues for discussion among people willing to write in Latin. To prevent them from disappearing from the web, the most easily accessible and practical solution is to turn to the Internet Archive.

The Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/>) is an American non-profit organization founded in 1996 that provides free access to collections of digitized media, including print materials, software, music, videos, and websites. The latter are preserved in a section of the Internet Archive called the Wayback Machine (<https://web.archive.org/>), which currently hosts more than 1 trillion webpages. Each internet user can capture a webpage in the Wayback Machine multiple times and access all captures. Thanks to this massive archive, countless webpages that hosted Latin verses have been preserved, and past issues of both *Epistula Leonina* and *Vates* can be downloaded freely, provided that one knows their exact URL or at least the URL of the webpages hosting them. Still, the Internet Archive is by no means immune to digital threats. In October 2024, it suffered a heavy cyber attack that made many of its services unavailable for several days. It goes without saying that the destruction of parts of the archived materials would lead to the irretrievable loss of millions of webpages, along with the Latin poems they contained.

Turning now to websites, several poets have their own sites, which are mainly or entirely devoted to the publication of Latin verses. While reading the last issue of *Vates*, I noticed that several contributors had circulated a sizable amount of verses on their own websites and was mildly disquieted by the fact that at least two of them had seemingly never been captured by the Wayback Machine. While I hope that these websites will have a long and happy life for many decades, it is no secret that the amount of time, energy, and money each of us can devote to such undertakings invariably changes with the passing of the years. To put it more bluntly, these are the websites most likely to disappear without leaving any trace. This is why they should be saved at fixed intervals on the Wayback Machine. Even if the poets themselves regard their verses as mere *nugae*, they should be preserved for posterity, keeping in mind that Catullus too probably considered some of his poems as little more than trifles. These are the very same poems that generations of students, scholars, and philologists have been pondering for centuries.

Latin poems can be found on a wide range of other websites, from a British one devoted to Classical Studies (*Antigone*: <https://antigonejournal.com/>) to a blog of the Italian Television about poetry, which hosted some verses by Gianluca Furnari:

(<https://www.luigiasorrentino.it/2017/05/15/ad-patrem-carne-elegiaco-di-gianluca-furnari/>), and the site of a Russian high school, whose teachers translated some famous songs (such as ‘Yellow Submarine’ and ‘The Show Must Go On’) into Latin: (<https://610.ru/rest/lastrings/latinsongs.html>).

A change in the teaching priorities of the school, the discontinuation of the blog, or a lack of

donations for *Antigone* could mean that the poems published on these websites disappear overnight. One website that has hosted a considerable amount of Latin poems is *Ephemeris. Nuntii Latini universi*, an online newspaper written entirely in Latin, publishing short articles about current events, movies, books etc. The newspaper was hosted by the website <http://ephemeris.alcuinus.net/> from 2004 to 2022 and then moved to: <https://ephemerisnuntii.eu/>. The old website is still accessible online (as of October 2025), but it may well be closed one day, thereby condemning to sudden oblivion all the poems it hosts.

When dealing with contemporary Latin literature, it is deceptively simple to reduce the issue of permanence to the alternative between a poem's hoped-for survival and its irretrievable loss. Unfortunately, the situation is more complex. Authors famously tend to correct, revise, polish, and improve their works for a long time. Of course, they can do so even after publication. In fact, the history of literature is full of second, third, or fourth editions of famous works that are noticeably different from the first. The problem is that while we mostly have the first editions of printed works, we may never retrieve them if a poem was published on a website and later modified. This means that the concept of publication itself loses some of its meaning, since online texts remain fluid and authors can change them multiple times without readers being able to keep track of these revisions. This may appear to be a minor issue for casual readers, but it can become a veritable nightmare for future philologists.

This brings us to the third category of *carmina interretialia*: those circulated on social media. Here, I am uncomfortable with using the concept of publication, since these texts are fundamentally different from those published in either print media or the so-called 'surface web', which can theoretically be read by everybody. On the other hand, people who are not on Facebook, X, or Instagram cannot gain full access to the profiles hosting Latin poems and are frequently unable to either capture them on the Wayback Machine or merely save or print large sections of these pages due to privacy settings and crawling restrictions. Moreover, several poems are circulated in private groups or as private messages, thereby making them invisible even to the overwhelming majority of users of the social media platform hosting them. Obviously, these poems are lost when a profile is removed, old content is deleted, or a platform's capricious chairman opts for some drastic change. When reflecting on this matter, I cannot help but recall Catullus' *in vento et rapida scribere oportet aqua* (70. 4: 'one should write [them] in the wind and on swift water') . . .

The last group of internet Latin poems includes all those texts that are not transcribed directly on a site or included in a journal, but rather placed in files (usually in PDF or Word format) that are uploaded to a webpage. These files are often not indexed by search engines and tend to become unavailable more easily than standard pages. With the passing of time, there is a further risk: that the file format becomes obsolete, thereby preventing readers from readily opening it. Moreover, the Wayback Machine does not capture these files automatically unless you either transcribe their exact URL or save the webpage hosting them and tick the 'save outlinks' box. This makes the survival of poems circulated in this way considerably more hazardous than the others, which is regrettable, since they include several poems that have won awards in Latin poetry competitions.

To conclude, we should give some thought to the fact that almost all Latin poems published in print during the twentieth century have come down to us despite two world wars, numerous minor conflicts, countless man-made disasters, and innumerable natural catastrophes. In sum, libraries have proved to be a remarkably secure place to keep Neo-Latin poetry safe. On the other hand, several Latin poems circulated online have already disappeared, and many more will become unavailable in the coming years, especially if AI fundamentally changes the way we browse the web, enabling us to obtain information without actually visiting any site. Of course, I am not arguing that Latin poets should all publish their verses in print. That would be anachronistic and discourage a sizable portion of those who are trying their hand

at classical poetry. Rather, I think that poets should be encouraged to circulate their verses in journals like *Vates*, which has many of the advantages of online publications without their worst drawbacks, or to preserve them by capturing at least once the webpage on which they publish a new poem, using the Wayback Machine. It takes only a few seconds and can serve as a useful backup for the author. As for social media, I hope that the best verses circulated there will be published in other, more permanent venues. Otherwise, they will be quickly lost forever.

Note: All websites mentioned in this paper were last accessed – and those about Neo-Latin poetry captured in the Wayback Machine – on 9 October 2025.

What We Can Know: Some Thoughts and Numbers on Twenty-First-Century Latin Poetry

Marco Cristini

Reports of the death of Latin poetry have been greatly exaggerated. The readers of *Vates* may find this statement unsurprising, since they have contributed personally to the survival of this venerable intellectual tradition. However, most people – even those with a classical education or who teach Latin – may be puzzled by reading this sentence, since it is common knowledge that Latin poetry flourished during the early Empire, declined during the Middle Ages, resurfaced briefly in the Renaissance, and finally faded in the following centuries. Some are vaguely aware that the Italian poet Giovanni Pascoli wrote verses in Latin, while others may have heard of the *Certamen Poeticum Hoeufftianum*, the annual international competition held in Amsterdam between 1844 and 1978. Nevertheless, I am under the impression that the overwhelming majority of people would agree that Latin poetry is now dead for all practical purposes, with only a handful of poets producing occasional verses. After devoting a considerable part of my spare time over the last five years to the study of twenty-first-century Latin poetry, I can only conclude that such an assumption is entirely misplaced.

It would be pointless to linger on every detail of my research; readers who are interested may wish to consult my book, *Conspectus poetarum Latinorum saeculi vicesimi primi (2000-2025)*, forthcoming in the *Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia* series published by Leuven University Press. However, a brief summary of the results may be of some interest. In the *Conspectus*, I took into consideration original Latin poems and poetic translations published in books, booklets, or periodicals between 2000 and 2025. Poems published exclusively online were excluded, with the exception of those appearing in electronic journals with paginated PDF issues, such as *Vates*. Anonymous verses and untitled poems embedded within prose narratives were similarly omitted. Based on these criteria, I have catalogued more than 413 Latin poets and 7,000 individual works, totaling roughly two hundred thousand verses. And this may be only the tip of the iceberg.

I have done my best to leave no stone unturned in my search for contemporary Latin poetry, yet I am aware that I have likely missed many poems – especially those published in local newspapers, university or high school magazines, small journals, and privately circulated booklets. How many? It is, of course, impossible to provide an accurate figure, but I estimate that I have found between one-half and three-quarters of the Latin verses published from the year 2000 to the present. However, even including the texts that escaped me, this represents only a fraction of twenty-first-century Latin poetry. Many poems are now published exclusively on websites, social media, and blogs. Although I did not include these verses in my *Conspectus*, I have devoted an appendix to them. How many are there? Again, this is mere guesswork, but I suspect that at least as many hexameters and elegiac couplets have circulated online during this century as have appeared in print. I cannot consider these poems ‘properly published’ (see my other paper in this issue for a further discussion of this subject), yet I cannot ignore their existence either.

Then, there is the *mare magnum* of all the poems that have been written and perhaps shared with relatives, friends, lovers, or colleagues, but never printed or circulated in any form. I suspect these are at least as numerous as all poems that have been circulated, if not more so. To provide some examples of the unfathomable depths of this ‘hidden’ poetry, we can consider

the Italian competition dedicated to Francesco Moggio in 2000.¹ The judges mentioned all participants, of whom there were more than thirty, yet twenty-nine of them are absent from my survey. Even if half had written their entries in prose, I estimate that fifteen or more composed poetry; these men and women were clearly comfortable enough to submit their verses to a jury, likely because they had already produced other work. Let us also consider the *Certamen Poeticum Nubicentauricum* held in 2023:² three out of the four winners are absent from the *Conspectus*. Similarly, in the *Certamen Sarbievianum* of 2025, twenty poets were reported to have taken part; among those who received a prize or an honorable mention, three out of seven are missing from the survey.³ Finally, if we turn to the ‘Stregghetta Prize’, we find that a poet named Fernando Salvoni received an award three times, yet he has published no poetry since the year 2000.⁴ When I wrote to him to inquire whether he had ever made his work public, the poet’s daughter replied that her father – who has since passed away – had composed many poems but had never sought to print them.

Turning to more recent events, I attended the Nineteenth Congress of the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies in Aix-en-Provence in July 2025. There, I gave a short presentation on my *Conspectus* to an audience of about twenty or thirty listeners, several of whom spoke with me after the session. I soon discovered that two scholars, one Canadian and one Lithuanian, had published Latin poems that were entirely unknown to me, despite my survey having passed the threshold of 400 poets just a few days earlier. Shortly thereafter, David Money sent me issue 15 of *Vates*, which contained verses by twenty-nine poets; nearly a third of them – nine in total – had escaped my notice, even though I had been searching for Latin poems for four years by that point.

Analyzing contemporary Latin poems that have never been published is an arduous task, as poets are notoriously reluctant to discuss the contents of their desk drawers or wastepaper baskets. Thus, I can only speculate on the quantity, quality, and nature of these ‘invisible’ verses by resorting to common sense and my personal experience – which, while by no means representative, may nonetheless offer some food for thought.

In March 2026, I looked through the folder on my computer where I keep (almost) all of my own unpublished Latin poems. Why did I never circulate them? In the case of a Virgilian *cento* written during a rather tedious conference, I never had the time or inclination to revise it, and I must confess that the initial results were quite uninspiring. Other poems were written for specific occasions – such as thanking a colleague for a dinner invitation or reciprocating a gift – and would likely be of little interest to anyone but the addressees. I even rediscovered seven rhythmic stanzas that I had entirely forgotten, written as a kind of poetic abstract for my Master’s thesis. Others are simply too personal to share. A couple of poems were mere exercises to see if I could produce something readable in hexameters or elegiac couplets; for the sake of intellectual honesty, I had to answer in the negative.

There is a handful of haikus too, some of which might one day see the light of day, while others look now pretty dull. I even found a political epigram written a decade ago that would now be difficult to decipher – or might perhaps be dismissed as hopelessly naïve – given the sharp decline in the caliber of politicians we have witnessed in recent years. Finally, there is an audacious – or rather, reckless – attempt to compose a poem by alternating stanzas in four languages (Italian, English, German, and Latin), with a final verse in Greek. There are likely a few more poems I never bothered to transcribe into a digital file; I suspect they lie forgotten among university papers or tucked inside a book, unceremoniously serving as bookmarks. On

¹ *Certamen Francisco Moggio dicatum. Scripta praemio cohonestata*, Bolzano 2000, pp. 27-30.

² <https://www.layoutmagazine.it/certamen-poeticum-nubicentauricum/> (last accessed 4 March 2026).

³ <https://certamensarbievianum.wordpress.com/2025/08/04/carmina-poetarum-anno-mmxxv-laureatorum/> (last accessed 4 March 2026).

⁴ See the report on the competition published in *Sistematica* 118-19 (2001-02), pp. 177-180.

the whole, my unpublished verses slightly outnumber my published ones (including two that appeared online), though I dare to hope that the quality of the latter is somewhat superior to the former.

I do not know whether these case studies can be generalized, but they certainly point toward several broad categories of ‘invisible’ literature. To these, I would add those poems submitted to competitions that failed to receive any distinction. While some poets choose to publish such entries anyway, many prefer simply to bury them in a desk drawer or consign them to the digital depths of a hard drive.

Some readers might note a few passing similarities between the situations and poems I have described and the 2025 novel by Ian McEwan, *What We Can Know*. Set in the year 2119 in a Britain transformed into a flooded archipelago, the story follows an academic obsessed with finding a legendary ‘lost poem’ (‘A Corona for Vivien’), read only once at a party in 2014. His quest through the digital and material ruins of our era uncovers a web of entangled loves and a long-hidden crime, forcing him to confront how little we can ever truly know about the past. While I discovered no entangled loves while working on the *Conspectus*, I did find out that one Latin poet was – much like McEwan’s protagonist – a murderer. Beyond this parallel, the novel is a powerful reflection on literature, poetry, and the true meaning of their study, which could apply to the field of Neo-Latin as well. There are many ways to explain what we can know of present-day Latin poetry; I have touched upon some in these pages and explored others at length in my *Conspectus*. To conclude, I would like to offer some final numerical data.

If we accept as likely the rough estimate of approximately 200,000 verses published in traditional media (a figure calculated with the aid of ChatGPT, which I believe to be plausible if not guaranteed), and we suppose that I have missed a further 25%, we arrive at 250,000 traditionally-published verses. Adding another 250,000 online verses and approximately 500,000 ‘invisible’ verses, we reach a total of one million Latin verses written since the year 2000. This figure is, of course, an educated guess, yet I trust it is not far from the truth. To put these figures into perspective, the entire corpus of surviving Latin poetry from Livius Andronicus to the seventh century AD encompasses roughly 350,000 verses.⁵ Once again, it seems to me that reports of the death of Latin poetry have been greatly exaggerated.

⁵ See <https://www.pedecerto.eu/pagine/arte> (last accessed 3 March 2026).

List of Contributors to *Vates* issue 16

ALLESCH, Gerd (Gerardus Alesius): He is a lecturer in Latin at the University of Vienna and has been writing and publishing Latin poetry since his early student years. His work includes collections of odes and epigrams, published both in book form and, more recently, online via Twitter (now X).

ATKINSON, Michael (Mike): He studied Classics at Cambridge University, trained as a coal-miner and an accountant, and later worked in the UK Treasury and Department of Energy. He now lives in Sussex. His Latin is growing rusty with neglect, but he remains a great fan of Horace and is a keen reader of Greek plays and poetry.

BOLOGNA, Orazio Antonio (Horatius Antonius): Born in 1945. He has taught Latin and Greek at various high schools and at the Università Salesiana in Rome; and has received awards at the *Certamen Capitolinum* and the *Certamen Vaticanum*. His Latin poems are collected in two volumes: *Carmina Latina* (2022) and *Latina Siren* (2024).

BURTON, Philip: He works at the University of Birmingham. His publications include *The Old Latin Gospels: A Study of their Texts and Language* (2000) and an edition of Sulpicius Severus' *Vita Martini* (2017); he co-edited the definitive edition of the Latin versions of the Gospel according to John. He has also published on the reception of the classical world in authors such as Rudyard Kipling, J. R. R. Tolkien, Robert Graves, and Rosemary Sutcliff.

COHEN, David Omar: Born in 1994. He is an independent scholar who read Classics in Amsterdam and Berlin, where he finished his studies with a doctoral thesis on idiolect and characterization in Ancient Greek tragedy. Contemporary literature in Latin and Ancient Greek are among his many fields of interest.

CRISTINI, Marco: Born in 1992: lecturer in Medieval History. Apart from looking for bright subjects in the Dark Ages, he is also interested in Neo-Latin. He has published a book about the First World War in Neo-Latin literature, a couple of papers on the Neo-Latin poet François Xavier Reuss, and some articles on Tolkien and Latin.

CUMMINGS, Charles (Charlie): He is a veterinarian specializing in epidemiology and zoological medicine. He lives with his fiancée in Chicago where he enjoys writing, among other things.

DALLA PIETÀ, Giacomo: Born in Venice in 1976. He has researched on late antique and medieval culture (earning a doctorate from Bari, 2006); and has published numerous Latin poems in *Latinitas* and elsewhere.

DOWLASZ, Barbara: Born in 1985 in Szczecin (Stettin), Poland. She studied Latin and Greek in Kraków (Cracow) and Vienna. She wrote her doctoral thesis on the reception of Catullus in recent Latin poetry. She lives in Vienna, where she works as a teacher in a gymnasium (high school).

FELDER-SINNER, Tatyana: Born in London in 2009. She is currently studying Latin and Greek in school, and began working on Latin verse composition around a year ago.

GEE, Susan: She studied Classics and Italian at St Anne's College, Oxford. Following a career as a computer programmer and internal auditor, she is now retired and lives in Redditch, Worcestershire. She rediscovered the pleasure of reading Latin poetry while teaching the Cambridge Latin Course for Redditch u3a, and is a novice in writing it.

HARADA Hiroshi (Hirosius): Born in Japan in 1955. He was taught Latin by Aritsune MIZUNO (Arituneus) of Kyoto. He enjoys daily recitation of Horatian odes from memory.

MCKENNA, Paul: He is a crossword setter and long-time 'Azed' clue-writing competition stalwart; he continues to read Latin and Greek poetry as the early stages of retirement from the oil and gas pipeline construction industry set in. Writing verses is a natural progression from reading and one which provides much joy and satisfaction.

MAIURI, Arduino: Teacher at the *Cornelio Tacito* State High School in Rome; PhD in Greek and Latin Philology (2002), Religious History (2012), and History, Anthropology, and Religions (2019) at the *Sapienza* University of Rome. In 2024 he translated Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* into Latin (*De parvulo principe*, Mondadori Education).

MONEY, David: Born in London, 1966. Studied at Oxford (MA) and Cambridge (PhD). He has previously taught Classics and Neo-Latin literature at the University of Cambridge, and English literature at the University of Sunderland. Editor of *Vates* from 2025; contributor to various issues from 2010 to 2018.

MURGATROYD, Paul: He was a professor of Classics, specializing in Latin and Greek literature. After retiring he took up creative writing and has had numerous poems (in English), prose poems and short stories published. At present he is working on a readable and reliable translation of the major tragedies of Euripides.

OMIYAMA Takahiro: He is a doctoral student at Kyoto University in Japan, working on Classical and Neo-Latin literature, from Homer's *Iliad* to Latin texts related to Japan.

PEASE, Alexander: He is Assistant Editor of Poetry at *The Colosseum*. He has been published in *Light* and elsewhere.

PEETERMANS, Andy (Andreas Petrides): Born in Belgium in 1990, he studied Latin, Greek, Italian and some Hebrew at the University of Leuven. He also did a doctorate and postdoc there, working on the reception of Graeco-Latin grammar in early modern Europe and colonial America. Currently, he teaches Latin at both secondary-school and university level. His first Latin verses were published in *Vates* in 2013, under the pen name 'Andreas Lovaniensis'. He has also composed a handful of Greek verses: a hexameter was used in the film *Frogs* (2023).

RAHMAN, Sarah: She is a high school senior at Commonwealth School in Boston, Massachusetts; she has studied Latin since middle school. A lifelong writer, she is working on a novel and writes for her school newspaper. She plans to major in Classics and English in college. This is her first Latin poem and her first publication in a Latin journal.

SAUTER, Michiel: Teacher of Latin, Greek, German and Dutch in Nijmegen (The Netherlands), where he also works as a multilingual tourist guide and as a translator (Latin to Dutch). He writes both accentual verse and quantitative poems in Latin. His work has appeared in *Latinitas*, *Vox Latina*, *Melissa*, *Vates* and *The Vates Anthology of New Latin Poetry*.

SHAH, Zach (Zacharia): He studied Classics alongside the life sciences at Georgetown University, and is now a first-year medical student at Virginia Commonwealth University. He writes Neo-Latin verse that incorporates other disciplines into classical form.

TUNNICLIFFE, Julian: He went to the Perse School and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he had ample opportunity to learn Latin verse composition. Having failed to do so, he has tried to teach himself.

UGLIANO, Denise: She graduated in 2014 in Classical Philology (MA) from *Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II*, where she is currently a research fellow (*borsista di ricerca*) for the MAGIC project and assistant for exams in Latin Literature and Language (*cultrice della materia*). She has also taught Italian, Latin and Greek at high school (*liceo classico*). She is preparing a research project on the manuscripts of Seneca's tragedies in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

WALTON, Brad: He grew up in Toronto, Canada. His academic studies were in Latin, Greek, and Christian theology. He has contributed Latin prose and poetry to several publications over the years, including *Memento Audere Semper*, *Melissa*, and *Vates*. He has also written some plays in English, as well as a comic opera which was performed in Toronto.

WEBER, Clifford (Cliff): He joined the Classics department of Kenyon College, Ohio, in 1969, and remained there until his retirement in 2003. In 2020, reacting to Donald Trump's Presidency, he emigrated to Japan, where his new illiteracy appears to refute *nihil novi sub sole*, offering a fresh experience for a quondam academic.