Local and Global Contexts: Some Aspects of Neo-Latin Poetics

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Abstract David Porter argues for the inclusion of neo-Latin, as a transnational language, in the corpus of world literature. He discusses two poems by the sixteenth-century Northern humanist Jacobus Susius, Francis Paget's nineteenth-century Lucretian poem, Sol Pictor, in comparison with Pope Leo's epigram on the art of photography and finally an elegiac satire Adolf Eichmann by Harry C. Schnur in order to show how Latin literature was adapted to divergent contexts and milieus and functions both as part of a specific local and historical context and as part of an established literary tradition. Emphasis is placed on these works of well-known but technically accomplished poets in order to highlight the large corpus of neo-Latin works available and their critical neglect in non-specialist literary studies.
Key words Neo-Latin, Translation, Poetics, Epigrams, Classical Tradition
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Introduction

Anyone now writing in Latin is no longer writing in the *lingua franca* of science, theology, education or an international language of correspondence, but it is impossible to write in Latin without being aware of that tradition. Although Latin's presence in common discourse and education has diminished, it has, at the same time, become astonishingly easy to access and read even rare or obscure works in Latin. Numerous volumes of older works, free from copyright, have been digitised

by such projects as *Google Books* or *The European Digital Library,* and are now freely available. There are in addition a number of specialised projects dedicated to different areas of Latin studies, such as the *Library of Humanistic Texts* (Sutton), which provides hypertext editions and translations into English, mostly of poetry and plays from Great Britain between the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, or *CAMENA: Latin Texts of Early Modern Europe* (Kühlmann), which stores numerous texts related to early modern Germany. Twenty-first-century readers of Latin have numerous resources and online communities in which to share their works. Scholarly editions and critical studies of post-classical, medieval and neo-Latin texts are appearing in increasing numbers. What is also needed for the appreciation of later Latin literature is a drive towards its (re-)acceptance in the broader canons of world literature. In light of the ongoing critical evaluation of the vast corpus of Latin tests, it is necessary for more non-specialist readers to consider seriously, first the Latin works of multilingual canonical authors (if necessary, with the help of translations) such as Joachim du Bellay, George Herbert and Giovanni Pascoli, which often rival their vernacular compositions, and second to reclaim the works of once internationally-acclaimed authors such as Johannes Secundus, George Buchanan, Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski and John Owen (Audoenus). Surveys and anthologies of western and world literature should consider more of post-classical Latin than the usual snippets of medieval Latin lyrics and Thomas More's *Utopia,* which are often all that are included, to represent a literary tradition that has had a central place throughout most of western history.

Latin is a global, or at least an international language, and in the interest of maintaining that function, its discourse risks accusations of uniformity or artificiality in contrast to so-called "living" vernacular languages. For that reason, Latin vitality and connections to various local contexts in time and place often require reclaiming. In the preface to his study of English literature of the sixteenth century, having to grapple with neo-Latin works with which he was not entirely sympathetic, C.S. Lewis wrote:

> Where I have quoted from neo-Latin authors I have tried to translate them into sixteenth-century English, not simply for the fun of it but to guard the reader from a false impression he might otherwise receive. When passages from Calvin, Scaliger, or Erasmus in modern English jostle passages from vernacular writers with all the flavour of their period about them, it is fatally easy to get the feeling that the Latinists are somehow more enlightened, less remote, less limited by their age, than those who wrote English. (VI)

On the one hand, it is perhaps the privilege of Latin authors to appear "less remote." Lewis's style of translation highlights the tension between a seeming agelessness of Latin and the connection between individual compositions and a fixed time and place. Although not an immutable language, the Latin of the sixteenth century resembles the Latin of the twenty-first century in a way that the language of the Elizabethan poets does not resemble our own. The benefit of Lewis's approach establishes a parallel linguistic divide to English, but only through subverting the intentions of Latin authors, who were choosing Latin, in part, for its distancing from the inconstancy of vernacular writing. Written texts reflect where they are created, but the strength of Latin is that it extends that into less temporally restricted and often broader trans-national contexts. The complexities and tensions involved in that endeavour require exploring, not obscuring.

Jacobus Susius and Northern Christian Humanism

Jacobus Susius (also Jakob Suys and Jacques De Suys, 1520–92)—not to be confused with the Flemish Jesuit Jacobus Suys (1590–1639)—was lord of Nederveen, Tolsende and Greysoord, and studied law at Leuven in the years 1537–41. Born in Zierikzee, where he later served the city council and then was mayor, he went to Mechelen in 1552 and settled in Liège by 1590.[1] He was known as a Catholic humanist and manuscript collector, with extensive connections in scholarly circles of the Low Countries, but he published little, save a small volume of poetry released near the end of his life in 1590, which, as the title suggests, contains poems on both sacred and secular topics. The collection begins with a prefatory letter to a friend:

> D. Iano Dousae Toparchae a Noortwiick, Viro incomparabili.
> Mitto ad te V[iri]. Cl[arissimi]. ut tandem lucem videant Carmina mea aliquot interdissipatas schedas nuper a me reperta, prout horum superiorum exulceratissimorum. Ea quaeso te nunc hilari fronte accipete digneris, Amicitiae inter nos mutuae perpetua ac luculenta futura pignora. M. Manilio tandem aliquando manum admovebo: quem tibi cum Arato Germanici Caes. quam emendatiss. propediem daturum recipio, una cum Iconibus Astrorum perantiquis, si quidem peritum sculptorem per te nactus fuero. Vale amicorum

1 On these and other details of Susius's life, see Bostoen, Binnerts-Kluyver, Hattink and van Lynden-de Bruïne.

integerrime.
Lugduni Batavorum, Kalend. Augusti: An. M. D. XC. Tuus ex Animo. Iacobus Suys.

To Janus Dousa toparch to Noortwiick, man with no equal:
I send word to your most illustrious self that at last some of my poems, which I recently found scattered about on various scraps of paper which were previously festering away, might see the light. I now beseech you to accept, with a light-hearted disposition, whatever pieces you deem worthy as enduring and bright pledges of our mutual friendship that will continue between us. At some future time, I will send to you a copy of Manilius and with it Aratus with the accompanying translation by Germanicus Caesar, which I endeavour soon to furnish with emendations, along with some very ancient drawings of the stars, if at last I shall receive a skilled engraver from you. Farewell most virtuous of friends. Leiden, August 1590 Yours in spirit, Jacobs Suys. (Susius 3–4)[1]

The addressee is Janus Dousa (1545–1604), statesman and scholar and then librarian at the University of Leiden. The offering of verse in a depreciating manner is conventional, but the letter serves to publicise the connections between the senior scholar and Susius's own academic endeavours. The promise to send Dousa copies of the works of the ancient poets Manilius and Aratus advertises his personal ownership of these manuscripts and generosity in sharing his library, a virtue not universally upheld in early modern circles. These manuscripts in fact survive: the Aratus is now in Leiden University Library, and the Manilius in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I at Brussels (Bostoen et al.). Anthony Grafton has described Susius's labours in copying Manilius as "painfully slow-working" (I. 190), but in his lifetime, Susius's erudition was well-respected amongst his wide network of friends. Susius's book of poetry includes two satires and an elegiac poem lamenting the destruction of the Spanish wars, various psalm paraphrases, epigrams, and short translations from Greek. The publisher was Franciscus Raphelengius (Frans van Ravelingen), then professor of Hebrew at Leiden University, and individual poems are dedicated to various well-known scholars, including the aforementioned Janus Dousa, the printmaker Arnault Nicolai, Justus Lipsius, Abraham Ortelius, and Hadrianus Junius, who died prior to publication in 1575. These dedications assert the author's connections to well-known Low Country humanist scholars,

1 All translations are my own.

establishing his credentials in the "Republic of Letters" in general and more specifically as part of the circle of scholars connected to Leiden University (then becoming one of Europe's leading universities), where Dousa was librarian and Lipsius was professor of history. In this way, the publication serves a means of securing one's intellectual standing. In turn, it provides a context for reading these poems. For a prominent owner of Greek manuscripts, translation is a natural preoccupation. One departure from his interest in Greek is Susius's translation from the Italian of Petrarch of the penultimate sonnet in his collecting *Il Canzoniere* (365), originally known by the Latin title *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*:

I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi
I quai posi in amar cosa mortale,
Senza levarmi a volo, abbiend'io l'ale,
Per dar forse di me non bassi exempi.
Tu che vedi i miei mali indegni et empi,
Re del cielo invisibile immortale,
Soccorri a l'alma disvïata et frale,
E 'l suo defecto di tua gratia adempi:
Sí che, s'io vissi in guerra et in tempesta,
Mora in pace et in porto; et se la stanza
Fu vana, almen sia la partita honesta.
A quel poco di viver che m'avanza
Et al morir, degni esser Tua man presta:
Tu sai ben che 'n altrui non ò speranza.

I go on weeping for my times past, / that I spent in loving a mortal thing, / without elevating myself in flight, / I having wings, with which perhaps / I might have made not a low example of myself. / You who see my shameful and ungodly sins, / invisible and immortal king of heaven: / help this straying and frail soul, / and fill its shortcomings with your grace, / so that, if I have lived in war and in storm, / I may die in peace and in port; and if my stay / was in vain, let my departure at least be honourable. / To what little of life that remains to me / and at my dying, deign your hand to be present: / you know well that I have no hope in any other. (186)

The translation by Susius is entitled *De Petrarchae epigrammate LXXXXVI*:

Transmissos ego plango dies: fleo inutile tempus,
In quo mortalis me res deuinxit amore,
Non me sublimem in caelum sustollere curans,
Ventorum et leuibus seu commisisse procellis,
Grandia sic de me fors Orbi exempla daturus.
Tu mala qui cernis multa, atque indigna relatu,
Rex Caeli invise, ac longo immortalis honore
Auxilio propere me nunc defendere cura,
Defectusque implere meos, ne forte fathiscam.
Et si nunc vixi in bello, saeuisque procellis,
In pace exspirem, portuque: et mansio si fors
Vana fuit, saltim discessio honesta sequatur,
Hoc paruo vitae spatio quod viuere spero,
Inque tua o mihi morte manus velit esse parata.
Etenim quod non alio spes ultima nixa est.

I lament the days past. I cry for wasted time, / in which a mortal thing bound me in love, / Not caring to raise myself to lofty heaven / or if I was to be entrusted to the flurries of the winds or to the storms, / so that the world's fortune would be given great examples from myself. / You who see many evils and things unworthy to relate, the king of heaven, invisible, immortal and with boundless honour, / deign to protect me quickly now with your remedy, / and deign to fill my shortcomings, lest by chance I tumble into pieces. / And if now I have lived in war and savage storms, / let me die in peace and port, and if perchance my stay / was in vain, at least allow an honourable withdrawal to follow. / In this mean interval of life that I hope to live in, / oh say that your hand desires to be procured at my death. / Indeed, acknowledge that the last hope is fixed on no other. (19)

Petrarch was a bilingual poet, who wrote in Latin and Italian. His written vernacular was not the strict language of speech, but a literary blending of Tuscan with Occitan, the usages of the Sicilian school poets, and Latin. Latinisms can be observed in this sonnet, such as *exempli*, *defecto* for *colma*, and *honesta* for *dignitosa*. Although Susius's translation is only barely expansive in accommodating the text to the prescriptions of Latin metre, and in many parts meticulously follows the original, the divergences from the original have transformative effects on the poem. On one hand, Susius maintains the structure of the original and is careful to replicate such

effects as the parallelisms of war and storms with peace and port. On the other, his departure from the original starts with his choice of metre. Susius rejects the traditional metres of Latin love poetry, including the elegiac couplets of the Roman poets Ovid, Propertius, and Tibullus and the hendecasyllabic verse used by Catullus in his erotic epigrams. Yepes notes that their understanding of the Roman love poets often influenced Dutch Neo-Latinists' readings of Petrarchanism (94). Neo-Catullan verse, along with Petrarchanism, enjoyed a considerable vogue in earlier part in the sixteenth century (Ford 55–96). However, Susius diverts Petrarch's sonnet from these modish genres as well as the tradition of Latin love poetry. Instead, Susius utilises dactylic hexameters, more commonly for epic or narrative poetry but also the most common metre of Latin poetry. A reworking of the poem occurs around the subtle rendering of "cosa mortale" into "res mortalis." In Italian, Dante had used *cosa mortale* as an epithet for Beatrice, the object of his devotion, in the fourth stanza of his *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore* (43), and then later in *Purgatorio,* Beatrice admonishes Dante for fixing his desire on a "mortal thing" after her own death (XXXI. 53). Petrarch's sonnet 90 uses the phrase in describing Laura's movements as angelic, and not those of a mortal being. The epithet occurs again in Petrarch's Latin work *Secretum*, a dialogic examination of faith aided by St. Augustine as an interlocutor, in which Franciscus (who stands for Petrarch) affirms: "neque enim, ut tu putas, mortali rei animum addixi; nec me tam corpus noveris amasse quam animam" ("For I have not, as you suppose, yielded my mind to a mortal thing, nor have I, as you know, loved a body as much as a soul"; 210). Although sonnet 365 depreciatingly laments Petrarch's time spent loving a mortal thing, in the *Secretum* he denies ever having wasted his time in such a manner. There is little reason to demand consistency between the two works under such scrutiny, yet this contradiction picks up on the varying ambiguity of the epithet, which Susius further stretches in his translation. In the Italian poetry of Dante and Petrarch, *mortale* suggests an object of affection that is transient and not divine. But Susius's extends that into something more perilous.

Petrarch refers to his time "posi in amar" ("spent in loving" 2), where Susius uses the verb *devincio* to describe the poet as "bound" or "fettered" in love. In the original, the *cosa mortale* is the object of verb expressing the poet's love, but in the translation, *res mortalis* is the subject of the verb binding the poet. The word order is arranged so the poet in the first person, "me," is placed between the surrounding "mortalis" and "res," emphasising the poet's confinement (2). Although throughout his sonnets, Petrarch often elevates his affections from Laura towards the divine, this tradition is absent in the love poetry of the pagan Roman poets. Perhaps the

movement of amatory poetry between languages suggested to Susius the need to strengthen the Christian tone of Petrarch's verse. Perhaps the laywer Susius grasped the use of *res mortalis* in a legal context to refer to a slave, a "human object," suggesting a more negative connotation and debasement and sanctioning a more stringent metaphor in describing the poet's captivity in love (Ulpian, *Dig*. 4.4.11.4–5 in Kreuger, Mommsen et al.; cf. Courtney 247). Susius's metrical choices signal a rejection of amatory poetics, which is then emphasised through poetic effect, setting the tone for the remainder of the poem in a more direct Christian context, stressing the need to place God in a preeminent position in one's devotion.

Aside from this restructuring, Susius draws on the traditions of Latin poetry in his translation. Line four, for example, offers a learned reminiscence that echoes Jean de Gorris's translation of Nicander of Colophon's *Alexipharmaca*, in "ventorum levibus voluit servire procellis" ("he wished to be a slave to the wind's fickle storms" 173), and the phrase 'indigna relatu' is a well-known tag from Virgil's *Aeneid* (IX. 595). These references, though not allusive, illustrate Susius's humanistic poetic training. He utilises translation to refocus Petrarch in the context of the Christian humanism of the Low Countries, bringing Petrarch into Latin and into circulation within the scholarly network of his friends, addressed through his collection. This repurposing of secular letters occurs again in another poem Susius wrote, "De vita Christianorum beata, Martialis μίμησις' ("Concerning the happy life of Christians, imitating Martial"):

Vitam quae faciunt quietiorem,
Optatissime Christiane, sunt haec:
Mens non adsita humo, sed apta Coelo,
Non ignara sui DEIque cultus,
Diues pauperibus reclusa bulga:
Culta, at non Domino invidenda, villa,
Ventrem quae satient dapes inemtae:
Nati candiduli, patris gemelli;
Non fastu tumida, actuosa vita,
Prudens simpliciter: gravisque amanter.
Ode quae faciat DEO propinquum,
Fortunamque animus ferens utramque,
Pro CHRISTO haud timidus subire lethum.

O most fortunate Christian, these are the things / that provide a more tranquil

life: / a mind fixed not on earth, but fastened onto Heaven, / a mind not unmindful of itself, but devoted to God, / a rich purse open to the poor, / a well-tilled farm / but not one which arouses envy from the Lord, / a belly filled with home-grown food, / bright children, their father's equals, / not bursting with pride, an active life, / being innocent but sensible, loving yet serious-minded, / savouring what makes one closest to God, / a spirit that endures both one's fortune whether for good and for ill, / and by no means being afraid to submit to death for Christ. (33)

This is a response to Martial's famous epigram on the happy life:

Vitam quae faciant beatiorem,
Iucundissime Martialis, haec sunt:
Res non parta labore, sed relicta;
Non ingratus ager, focus perennis;
Lis numquam, toga rara, mens quieta;
Vires ingenuae, salubre corpus;
Prudens simplicitas, pares amici;
Convictus facilis, sine arte mensa;
Nox non ebria, sed soluta curis;
Non tristis torus, et tamen pudicus;
Somnus, qui faciat breves tenebras:
Quod sis, esse velis nihilque malis;
Summum nec metuas diem nec optes.

O dearest Martial, these are the things / which make for a happier life: / possessions not laboured for but inherited; / a not unfruitful field, an ever-glowing hearth, / no litigation to attend to, rare duty and a tranquil mind; / a natural vigour, a healthy body, / wise simplicity, friends who are one's equals; / amiable companions, a simple table, / a night spent sober and carefree; / a bed that is not disagreeable and yet modest; / sleep which makes the night-hours seem brief; / that you be what you wish to be and prefer to naught else; / neither fearing your final day nor wishing for it. (X. 47)

Again, Susius illustrates the sixteenth-century humanist poets' strain between secular and Christian traditions of poetry, between scholarly preoccupation with the literary past and spiritual concerns about the future. The communication and

reinforcement of shared values of Christian piety are at play here, but this assertion of shared morality is in the context of a Catholic poet in a circle of scholars centred on the Protestant University of Leiden. In his satiric poems, Susius decries the Duke of Alba's destructive campaign during the Dutch Revolt, which he personally witnessed at Mechelen (Porter 162). The shared values of Christian humanism expressed in his poetry are against a backdrop of religious conflict and violence not far from the life of the poet. They are an affirmation of common values and irenic discourse as a challenge to those conflicts. They stand as an elevation of the Christian scholars and a common language of learned Latin against a political reality of sectarianism and embattled interests.

Another Latin translation of Petrarch's sonnet worth comparing was composed by the Dutch Calvinist Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687). Huygens, a multilingual poet, wrote fluently in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch and English, as well as translating from those languages in addition to Greek and Italian (see Hermans). He rendered Petrarch's sonnet 365 into three languages, Dutch, French and Latin, over five days in February 1664 (Angelini 138). A fourth translation, possibly in English, is lost (Mönch 144). Huygens held a long-standing interest in Petrarch, even going to visit Laura's grave in 1665 (Mönch 144). His Latin translation into elegiac couplets of *I'vo piangendo i miei passati tempi* runs as follows:

Praeteritos, male praeteritos mihi conqueror annos
Mortalis misere captus amore rei,
Dum propriis ab humo pennis non evolo quo me
ngenii poterat vis rapuisse mei.
Magne deus, quem nemo videt, cui cuncta videntur,
Visaque sunt quorum me pudet esse reum,
Erranti succurre animae, succurre labanti,
Gratia defectus impleat ista meos.
Ut male jactato Bellique Marisque procellis
In portu liceat perpete pace frui,
Et, si vana fuit vitae statioque tenorque,
Ex illa quali cunque decenter eam.
Sis mihi perpetuus comes ac tutela, per istos
Quos super haut longos suspicor esse dies;
Denique sis praesto morienti, Maxime; nosti
Nempe meae solum te caput esse spei.

> I lament to myself the years past, passed wickedly, / wretchedly captivated by the love of a mortal thing, / while I do not fly up on my own wings from the ground from which / the strength of my mind could have carried me. / Great God, whom no one sees, to whom all things are seen / and whose witness renders me ashamed to be the culprit, / Aid my errant soul, aid me in my fall, / fill my shortcomings with your grace. / So that wickedly tossed in War and the storms of the Sea / I might be permitted to enjoy port and perpetual peace / And, if both the station and course of life was vain, / let me depart from it, such as it was, becomingly. / Be my constant companion and guardian, though / day which I hardly suspect there to be any length of time beyond. At the end be present at death, Highest one, you know/ truly that you are the only source of my hope. (VII. 32–33)

Huygens translates into the elegiac couplets of Latin love poetry. Where Susius has the poet fettered, Huygens adopts the Virgilian phrase "captus amore" (2, cf. *Ecl*. VI. 10), which suggests possession or capture by one's beloved. But Huygens's translation, though less strict in following the original than Susius's, bears closer to Petrarch's sense of the predicament of lamenting past love. Huygens, for example, is freer with the text in not trying to duplicate Petrarch's use of parallelisms as Susius does; yet, Huygens crafts his translation elegantly.[1] His effort confirms that Susius's interest in Petrarch's poem was not unique to that one, but that this sonnet held an extended interest for the Northern humanist poets (cf. Yepes 144, 266 *et passim*).

The Art of Photography in Nineteenth-Century Latin Verse

Departing from the humanist Latin of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, very different approaches to Latin poetry can be found in the nineteenth century, when Latin maintained a strong presence in education but was displaced from its formerly

1 For a detailed account of the Latin style of this translation, see Angelini 138–44. However, some caution is needed where Angelini finds the departures from classical precedents. For example, she faults Huygens for the apparently metrical *cui*: "au vers 4, Huygens nous propose « vī|dēt, cŭī | cūnctă vī|dēntūr », et ce obligatoirement, vu la scansion du dactyle cinquième et la quantité des voyelles du verbe « videt »; or la grammaire classique nous enseigne que l'*i* de « cui » est normalement long! (« cuī »)" (Angelini 140). This, however, is incorrect: *cui* was both often pronounced as a monosyllabic diphthong (which would scan here) and also frequently treated as pyrrhic by the silver Latin poets, no differently than how Angelini scans the line (Allen 42). Less common, in fact, is Huygens's use here of *nemo* as a trochee instead of a spondee, though that not without classical precedent (Cf. "Nemo se credet miserum; licet sit," Seneca, *Troades* 1017).

preeminent place in scholarly discourse and international communication. Francis Paget (1851–1911), later the Anglican bishop of Oxford, was as an undergraduate, the author of a 210-line poem on photography entitled *Sol Pictor* (*The Painter Sun*), for which he won the Chancellor's Latin Prize at the University of Oxford (Paget and Crum 24). The title is a pun on *Sol Victor,* an epithet for Zeus. The poem begins:

> Non equidem arva canam, nedum praeconia regum,
> Nec Bacchi laudes, nec moenera militiai,
> Pectora nec blanda cuppedinis icta sagitta;
> Res nova carmine pangendast poscitque poetam.
>
> For my part I shall not sing of fields, still less the praises of kings, / Nor the commendations of Bacchus, nor the military tributes, / nor flattering hearts stuck with the arrow of love: / A new thing is to be put in verse and requires a poet. (1–4)

This rejection of pastoral, encomia, and other genres of poem forms a traditional *recusatio*, but with a twist as the poet is turning not any higher form of poetry, such as the epic traditionally announced in such a statement, but something entirely new. The style already signals that Lucretius is the poet's model, through the use of archaic *cuppedinis* for *cupiditatis* (cf. Luc. V. 45), the Lucretian stylistic features such as a strong predilection to frequent elision, alliteration and anaphora, such as *non, nedum, nec, nec, nec*. The model of the didactic verse of Lucretius for a technical topic has classical precedent, but is a departure from the normal models of Virgilian hexameter poetry taught in the schools. It is a means for the poet to exhibit his skill in verse composition, and display his mastering of an unusual model. The exercise also provides the poet an opportunity to demonstrate the poetic vigour of the Latin language through explaining modern innovation in a deliberately archaic style. A former student recalled that Paget's method of composition was "immensely laborious" (Paget and Crum 46–47), requiring working constantly with a dictionary and verifying everything. This is evident in his careful attention to stylistic features and the diction of Lucretius. The employment of archaisms characteristic of Lucretius's style is meticulous: one finds the first declension genitive singular *–ai*, as in *vitai* (8, 28), *naturai* (50) and *flammai* (87, 119), the third declension genitive plural *–um* instead of *–ium* as in *sapientum* (47) and older forms such as as *potis est* (135, 180) for *potest* and *alid* for *aliud* (88, 157). Also characteristic of Lucretius, one finds aphaeresis after a closing *–m*, for example, *pangendast* (4), *perfusast*

(27) and *suppostast* (89) as well as the suppression of final *–s* as in *semotu'* (13), *omnibu'* (48), and *compostu'* (67). Paget also borrows both distinctive words such as *maximitatum* (57, cf. Luc. II.498) and phrases such as "lumine solis" (117, cf. "lumina solis" Luc. I. 5, II.114 et al.), "quippe etenim" (161 cf. Luc. III. 440, IV. 860, et al.) and "genus omne animantum" (201 cf. Luc. I. 4) from his model. Stylistic and metrical features of Lucretian verse, such as very frequent elision, alliteration and assonance, and other repetitions, such as duplicate words from the same root, for example, "imitari imitamen" (174) are incorporated into the poem. Curiously, however, Paget does not follow Lucretius's distinctive coining of compound words, such as *silvifragus* or *caecigenus,* avoiding even those used by Lucretius as well as the invention of new ones.

Sol Pictor often emphasises the newness or novelty of its subject, and the poet reflects on the challenge he has undertaken: "Quam sit difficile antiquis exsolvere dictis" ("How difficult it is to explain in ancient diction" 45). The struggle over using ancient words for new purposes and avoiding neologisms is evident, for example, in the poet's use of *gausapa* (100), originally referring to a type of woolen clothing or tablecloth, for the covering of the camera box. A trickier challenge is reforming a description of a chemical process in Latin:

> Diluit ille etenim argentum medicamine tali
> Ut nova materies concresceret in crystallum,
> Qualiter in glaciem concrescit liquor aquai.
> Deinde hac materie chartas ille imbuit albas
> Sub noctis prudens tenebris, ut luce carerent;
> Quae porro eductae dias in luminis oras
> Ante oculos admirantis nigrescore pergunt.
>
> Indeed he washes the silver with such compound / that the new material hardened into glass / just as liquid water hardens into ice. Then with this material this skilled man soaked the white papers / during the dark night, so that they were free from light / which hereafter he brought out into the bright shores of light / where they proceeded to blacken before his astonished eyes. (146–52)

As Paget explains in a footnote, this refers to the scientist Carl Wilhelm Scheele's discovery "that the chloride of silver spread on paper was speedily darkened in the blue rays" (Paget 11). Paget provides Robert Hunt's *Researches on Light*,

published in 1844, as a reference. The Latin passage is not exceedingly technical in its description of the experiment, but rather emphasises the refiguring of Lucretius's poetic style through continued use of alliteration, elision, poetic effects, as with the poetic plural "noctis [...] tenebris," and Lucretian archaisms such as the third declension accusative plural *–is* instead of *–es* ending in *admirantis* or the use of antique *materies* for *materia*. Some phrasing is plucked directly from Lucretius's poetry, such as "dias in luminis oras" (I. 22) and "liquor aquai" (I. 454). The repetitions *concresceret* / *concrescit* echoes Lucretius's own *crescunt* / *concrescunt* (VI. 527–28).

Appreciation requires an understanding of Lucretius's poetry on a stylistic and technical level, along with an interest in adaptation and Latin verse composition. It was a success, as illustrated by the author winning an award and the poem meriting publication, but its success points to a contemporary fascination with technological advancement and occupation with Latin education. Its appeal was that it brought together those two interests at a time where they were often in conflict in pedagogical debate. As Susius's dedications of friendship and pious poetry obfuscate the factional divisions in his social and religious reality, or at least present the world of irenic Christian scholars as an alternative, Paget's rendering of a modern scientific discussion into classical Latin hides the reality that research science was challenging the primacy of classical education. However cleverly scientific theory might be couched in classical verse, the challenge of the rapid development of the sciences and technology against an educational model that emphasised learning to write in ancient languages remained. The clash between science and Latin might not be a visceral one, but it is notable that as Latin retreats from academic discourse, didactic poetry on scientific themes, closely modeled on ancient authors, becomes more frequent in Latin writing.

One off-hand comment in James Joyce's "Grace" was: "'I remember reading,' said Mr. Cunningham, 'that one of Pope Leo's poems was on the invention of the photograph – in Latin, of course'" (Joyce 121, see Brown 27–28). The poem referred to was "Ars Photographia" written in 1867 by Vincenzo Gioaachino Pecci (1810–1903), who later became Pope Leo XIII:

Expressa solis spiculo
Nitens imago, quam bene
Frontis decus, vim luminum
Refers, et oris gratiam.

O mira virtus ingeni,
Novumque monstrum! Imaginem
Naturae Apelles aemulus
Non pulchriorem pingeret.

(Formed by the beam of the sun, / A brilliant likeness. How well / it renders the beauty of the brow, the energy of the eyes / and the grace of the mouth. / O amazing power of genius / new miracle! / Jealous Apelles never painted / a more beautiful image of nature. (44–45)

The meter of this epigram is iambic dimeter. The opening line recalls "percussa solis spiculo" ("Stuck by the sun's beam") from Prudentius's *Morning Hymn* (*Hymni* II. 6), with which Leo would have been familiar from his Roman Breviary. The epigram is short, but struck a chord, and was reprinted and translated numerous times in nineteenth-century and early twentieth- century periodicals.[1] Its appeal stems from a dual fascination with technology and invention and its implications for the future contrasting with language and allusions (such as to the painter Apelles) of the distant past.[2] Although in earlier centuries, a Latin poet could write about

1 For a few—far from exhaustive, and only from English-language publications—examples, see "Pigeonhole Paragraphs" 107, "Ars Photographia" 456, "A Royal Charity Album*"* 67, "The Pope as Poet" 105 (itself quoting a previous article in the *Times*) and "News and Notes" 250.

2 My analysis conflicts with a recent close reading. Miller claims the poem expresses the "acheiropoietic notion of photographs" (22), but this interpretation, however, is undermined by apparent difficulties in understanding the text. "O mira virtus ingeni, / Novumque monstrum" is translated "O new born, wonderful and virtuous entity [or monster/creature]" (25), where every word is misconstrued: the noun *virtus* is mistaken for an adjective modifying *monstrum*, *ingenium* and the enclitic *que* are omitted, and although *monstrum* ("prodigy" or "miracle") in other circumstances could refer to a "monster," it is incomprehensible what beast would be referred to in this poem; it follows that "new born" should be just "new." Often Miller relies on an English translation by T.H. Henry, but that is still usually problematic. For example, Miller complains that Henry "inserts the human mind into the middle of Leo's argument" (25) in rendering the above mentioned "O mira virtus ingeni" as "O miracle of human thought," but as *ingenium* often refers to human qualities such as wit, talent and character, the translation is not far off. In another passage, Miller expounds on "the magic of the sun" (22), seemingly unaware that this supernatural quality denoted by the word "magic" is only present in Henry's translation, and no magic is mentioned in the Latin. The result is that Henry's translation is faulted where is follows the Latin correctly and relied upon when it departs from the original. These troubles with the text are detrimental to the

science and invention in Latin as the natural language of learned discourse, for the nineteenth-century poet, it is an assertion of Latin's vivacity in performing a literary function that it was less frequently relied upon to perform. The epigram celebrating a new invention, and the technological and artistic revolution it represents, thereby asserts the ongoing power of Latin to contend with change and innovation while remaining true to its classical form. In a minor way, Leo's poem established a new genre. The poet Harry Schnur also wrote several epigrams on photography and similar inventions (Schur 44, see Sacré 80) and the poet Joseph Tusiani wrote an ekphrastic epigram on a seaside photograph, "Photographema maritimum" (see Kirby 77–79). The tradition continues also in the skillful Sapphic verse of Anna Elissa Radke's (1940–) "Telephonum":

> Quae vias nectis, Trivia o Diana,
> machinam dignare meam tueri,
> machinam peritam et amantium con-
> nectere voces.
> Te, Venus, voco volucrum imperatrix,
> mitte machinae tacitae catervas
> passerum, ut stridore mihi indicetur

---

interpretation. Henry is faulted again for translating "oris gratiam" into "lip's fine chiseling":

> Henry unnecessarily imposes upon the poem the suggestion of mimesis, especially in the word "chiseling," whose Latin equivalent is "*scalprum*." As *scalprum* does not appear in the Latin original, "chiseling" thus serves more to obfuscate how the "frontis" (forehead), "vim" (strength) and "oris" (mouth) of the photographic subject are depicted by means of the sun itself' (25).

But s*calprum* refers to a chisel, not "chiselling," and it is not "strength" that is depicted in the photograph, but *vis luminum,* the power of the eyes. While the epithet "fine chiselling" might be allowed for the forehead's *gratia* ("grace"), as a concession to the needs of the rhyme scheme, the objection is illuminating: removing any mention of human artifice in the poem supports the assertion that "Leo's speaker opens with declaration about the unhandmade power of photography, implying that there is no *techne* (skill) to photography; no element of craft; no human tampering; no fiddling or signs of workmanship that could diminish the truth that this "fair" images expresses" (24). But this reading is irreconcilable with the Latin poem as well as the technical skill involved in nineteenth-century photography, which would require the human *ingenium* mentioned in the poem. The author was a cleric, and *acheiropoieta* are religious images; the connection is otherwise tenuous.

vox aditura.

O Diana of the Crossroads, who connects the lines / that are deemed worthy for my machine, / and maintains the skilfully constructed machine / that connect the voices of lovers.
Venus, mistress of birds, I call on you: / send a crowd of sparrows to a silent machine, / so that the incoming call is announced to me / by a ringing sound. (*Carmina latina recentiora* 25)

Through these poems, it is evident that Leo's poem inspired a minor poetic tradition and an ongoing fascination with the adaptation of Latin verse to new challenges. Paget and Leo demonstrate a keenness for innovation. An emerging quality of Latin composition of the past two centuries is an increasing inventiveness, whether following unusual models, or in experimenting with new forms as *vers libre* or haiku (syllabic meters lend well to Latin), or a fashion for translating children's books into Latin. In the decades shortly after its invention, there was a fascination with photography and the new form of mimesis it presents. Paget offered to explore that new invention and interest in the theories behind for a classically-educated audience. Leo matches technological innovation with inventive versification, providing Latin poets with a new model of poetry. Paget's poem has been forgotten, but still represents the potential of Latin verse, even following restrictive models, for adaption and communicating ideas in new settings.

Harry C. Schur's Poem on Adolf Eichmann

The final poem studied here is by Harry C. Schnur (1907–1973), who adopts the Latin name Caius Arrius Nurus. Born in Berlin to a Jewish family and trained as a lawyer, he escaped the Nazis, first to the Netherlands and then to Britain, where he and his family were placed in internment camps for six months and where he later served in the Home Guard. In 1947, he moved to the United States, where he began studying classical philology, earning a PhD in 1956. He later moved to St. Gallen in Switzerland in 1973 and died in Hong Kong during a world tour.[1] Schnur himself commented of a limited scope of composing Latin verse:

We cannot strive for poetic originality: if we can achieve a neatly turned phrase, some polished elegance, a few lines a Roman could have understood because they sound like Latin verse-then we have attained our aim, and upon

1 On the details of his life, see IJsewijn; on his Latin verse, see Sacré.

> our modest endeavors the Muse will have smiled. ("Do-It-Yourself" 357)

It could, however, be claimed that most ancient Latin poets, happy to follow Greek models, do not often boast of originality. Sacré relates this statement to Schnur's emphasis on technical perfection in Latin composition (72). Nevertheless, much interesting poetry has been and continues to be written in the Latin language. And there is no reason to suppose that no major works of Latin literature will appear any more than to claim any other lesser-used language cannot ever produce a world class author.

Schnur grouped his poem "Eichmann," which contains over 100 lines in elegaic couplets, with his satires, and although it owes something to the savage indignation of Juvenal, it is more emotionally charged than Roman satire. The subject of the poem, Adolf Eichmann, was one of the key organisers of the Holocaust. Schnur noted that the poem was written in June 1961 (Sacré 76, fn. 28) which places it after the start of Eichmann's trial in Israel but a year before his execution. It opens: "Hic stetit, infandae fabricator caedis – et iste / (Mirum!) non monstro Tartareo similis. ("Here stood, the maker of unspeakable slaughter – and that man (wonderously!) did not resemble a Tartarean monster" 1–2). Soon the poem turns to a domestic scene:

> Uxorem amplexus dat dulcibus oscula natis,
> qui patriis caligis substituunt soleas.
> "Durus erat tibi, Adolfe, dies?" — "Mediocriter," ille,
> "plus nam debuerant suppeditare gasi."
> "Religiosus, vir, nimium es nimiumque laboras." —
> "Pro duce, pro patria nil mihi difficile est."
>
> Embracing his wife gives kisses to his dear children, / who bring him his loafers to replace their father's army boots. / "Was it a rough day, Adolf?" — "Only a little," he answers, / "more gas had to be supplied." / "You are so devout, husband, you work so hard." — / '"For the Führer, for the fatherland, there is nothing difficult for me." (5–10)

The normalcy of the scene conjures to mind Hannah Arendt's comments on the "banality of evil" in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, published two years after the composition of this poem. The familial character of the domestic scene is made to contrast with the horrors being discussed. The poem transitions to rage, which

contemplates on the incitements against Eichmann:

> ISTVM IVDAEAM CONATVM EXCIDERE GENTE
> CRIMINIBVS QVAE GENS INSIMVLARE CVPIT? —
> Nemone? Ecce iterum: PARVOS DE PECTORE MATRVM
> QVI RAPVIT, FLAMMIS VT DARET ATQVE NECI [...]?
>
> That design to exterminate the Jewish people / what people desire to make indictments? No one? Look again: the little ones who were seized from their mother's breasts, to be surrendered to flames and death [...]? (83–86)

Schnur's capitals express his outrage at Eichmann for remaining, though on trial, still unpunished for his crimes against humanity. The text contains miscellaneous footnotes with references and quotations to texts such as the Bible, Maimonides and the poet Heinrich Heine, drawing largely on Jewish literary traditions. After the domestic scene in the early part of the poem, Schnur digresses on various injustices. He challenges the proponents of passive resignation to the crimes of Nazis (Sacré 77) and challenges the presence of divine justice: "At iustum esse Deum, quis dubitare potest?" ("But who can doubt that God is just?" 40) As a historical reflection on Anti-Semitism, Schur cites from Heinrich Heine's poem "An Edom!":

> Ein Jahrtausend schon und länger,
> Dulden wir uns brüderlich,
> Du, du duldest, dass ich lebe,
> Dass du rasest, dulde Ich.
>
> For a thousand years so far and longer / We have had a brotherly forbearance / You, you tolerate my breathing, / and I tolerate your raging (quoted in Schnur, *Pegasus Claudus* 208)

Schnur renders this in Latin as "Iam dudum inter nos dulcis tolerantia fratrum : / Vivere me toleras, te furere at tolero." ("Now long since there has been a kind mutual tolerance among us / You endure me to live, where I endure your rage"; 71–72). The brotherly endurance refers to Edom and Jacob, representing Christians and Jews.

Latin poems on photography marvel at human inventiveness. Schnur is brought to reflect on the machinations of the Holocaust, which utilised human ingenuity for

genocide. In a chapter on the voices of the Holocaust, Hart wrote: "The violence of modernity and its increasing machinery and systematic killing are part of the story in which the industrial, political, and technical revolutions have come into being since the late fourteenth century" (193). Violence has a history, and Schnur utilises that history; through this web of allusions, he invokes the violence of Edom against Jacob, the violence of anti-Semitic hostilities explored in Heine's poetry, and the Holocaust. Schnur expresses horror at Eichmann's apparent humanity and false justifications, while challenging those who would cast blame on the victim or passively wait for divine justice. Schnur might have striven for technical mastery in Latin verse, but writing about the genocide of one's own people is not a game of versification. Schnur's poem illustrates the potential for poets to charge Latin writing with emotive efficacy and address themes that are personal and of grave moral import. Schnur commented in the early 1960s: "That our century, although threatened by the mechanized bestiality that would engulf it, has produced so much original Latin poetry (and much of it on a gratifyingly high level) is a cause for much rejoicing" ("Neo-Latin Poetry" 134). This poem is very much as responsible to the worst excesses of 'mechanized bestiality.' His assertion might be surprising to someone who had never considered contemporary Latin as worthy of notice, but as Schnur exemplifies, like any language, Latin has as much vitality as a poet brings to it. Very few have spoken Latin as a native language, with the famous exception of Montaigne and some early modern scholars such as Isaac Casaubon, whom Cardinal Du Perron asserted spoke French like a peasant while speaking Latin as if it were his mother tongue (Pattison 88), but this no more prevents a prospective poet from success in Latin than it prevented Joseph Conrad from writing in Engish, or Ágota Kristóf in French, both of who mastered their literary languages later in life.

Latin poets operate in a longstanding and ancient literary tradition that has developed alongside those of western vernacular literatures. Rather than limiting poets, it provides them with a wealth of potential resources to draw upon and to respond to in the formation of their own poetry. Susius's translation of Petrarch's sonnet transfers the Italian poem into the context of Northern humanism and rewrites it for his friends and community of readers. It fixes on Christian hope without sectarian divisions at the heart of the conflict around him. Paget scrupulously transfers scientific discussions on light and photography into carefully wrought Lucretian diction, affirming the capacity of Latin in a restrictive and difficult form for meeting the demands of scientific discourse, at a time when science was supplanting the pedagogical system that relied on meticulously teaching Latin (and Greek) composition. Pope Leo more successfully responds to the marvels

of technology, and his imitators demonstrate the potential for new literary traditions to emerge in Latin. Schnur, on the one hand, matches the technical demands of a skilful versifier, while at the same time bringing a deeply personal rage and indignation to the forefront of his Latin poem. This does not hope to exhaust the limits of Latin poetic expression, but express how in the past Latin poetry has been rooted in specific cultures, times and places and reflected those roots both explicitly and implicitly in the poets' manner of composition and personal expression. The poems explored have only circulated in small communities of readers. There is potential in a globalised world, where technology can bring both texts and communities of readers and writers together. Perhaps somewhat uniquely, Latin offers potential for a small community as seeking alternative means of expression from one's own vernacular or for those who would resist English because it lacks Latin's neutrality or from concerns about cultural imperialism, or who are drawn to creative imitation or experimentation with a language with thousands of years of literary tradition.

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