

On the treatment of short final vowels before *s impure* in classical Latin poetry*

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ABSTRACT

It has long been remarked that the classical Latin poets avoided putting a short final vowel before words beginning with *sc sp sq st*. Although various theories have been put forward to account for this tendency, the few exceptions to it have received less attention, and many remain only partially explained. The object of this paper is to show that by eliminating textually dubious cases of lengthening and non-lengthening before *s impure*, and thus whittling down the range of authors who allow it to a kindred few, the literary and generic affiliations of this feature can be more clearly discerned and appreciated. New conjectures are offered on the text of Enn. *Ann.* 91 Skutsch (*stabilitaque regni*); Catul. 4.18 (*impotentias freti*), 17.24 (*potis stolidum*), 22.12 (*modo aut scurra*), 44.18 (*nefarias chartas*), 63.53 (*gelida ad stabula*); Prop. 3.11.67 (*Scipiadae classes ubi nunc*), 3.19.21 (*data uenum*), 4.1.41 (*spondebant bene iam*); Ov. *Her.* 7.152 (*sceptra superba*); Manil. 3.364 (*ac leuem*); Sen. *HF* 950 (*frigida in spatio*); Sil. *Pun.* 9.575 (*iam magnum or astridens*), 12.209 (*quae*); Stat. *Theb.* 6.551 (*agile his studium*); Mart. 2.66.7–8 (the athetesis thereof), 5.69.3 (*nostrorum*); and many forgotten suggestions are newly defended.

KEYWORDS: *s*-clusters, *s impura*, *s impurum*, Extrametricality, Extrasyllabicity

No Verse can moan a limping Foot
But he applies his Plaister to't:
With pious Care binds up the Sore,
And kindly bids it hop no more!

Thomas Newcomb, *Bibliotheca* vv. 1140–43

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Whether in Latin a final syllable ending in a short vowel ought to be scanned as light or heavy before an initial *s* followed by a voiceless stop (*sc- sp- sq- st-*)¹ may seem a question of less consequence in the twenty-first century than it was in the nineteenth, when the art of verse composition still flourished in England, and prosodical niceties were matter not only of speculative interest to the scholar but also of practical importance to many a schoolboy.² Modern scholarship, however, has shown no flagging interest in the problem, both owing to the light which it shines on the nature of Latin syllabification in general,³ and because the practice of the classical poets in this matter is itself intriguingly inconsistent.⁴ For turn to any catalogue of verses in which a short final vowel precedes *sc sp sq st*, and one swiftly discovers that about as many ancient versifiers treat such syllables as light as treat them as heavy, and a few even treat them by turns as both.⁵ Quite what explains this divergence in ancient practice has been the subject of much thought and speculation, and various theories have been advanced;⁶ but what is consistently factual is that both scansions, the light and the heavy, are in truth very seldom to be met with in classical poetry at all.⁷ As H.M. Hoenigswald observes:

*In post-scenic verse, words ending in a short vowel are not permitted before words beginning with s impure, exceptions being limited to the ancipitia of the iambic trimeter or senarius, or else being of the same statistical order as other sporadic anomalies.*⁸

¹ That is, whether the *s* in such clusters was resyllabified across a word-boundary as the coda of the preceding syllable, thereby making it phonologically ‘closed’ and thus ‘heavy’ or metrically ‘long’ (*ecce sceclus* → *ec.ces.ce.lus*, – – – –), or whether it was not so resyllabified, leaving the preceding syllable phonologically ‘open’ and thus ‘light’ or metrically ‘short’ (the *s* being ‘tautosyllabic’, *ec.ce.sce.lus*, or ‘extrasyllabic’, *ec.ce.{s}.ce.lus*, – – – –); cf. Cser 2012. Such clusters are commonly felt to pose a challenge for theories of syllabification in general, inasmuch as they violate typical phonotactic constraints, e.g. the principle, common to most languages, that segments ought to rise in sonority towards the syllable nucleus and fall in sonority towards the margins (sibilants being more sonorous than stops); cf. Goad 2011. For a glossary of linguistic terms see Crystal 2008. The *s* in question commonly goes under the name of *s impure*, *s impura*, or *s impurum*; the terms ‘*s*-cluster’ and ‘*s*-group’ denote such an *s* combined with any consonant (so also ‘*s*C-cluster’); the word ‘sigmatism’, used by e.g. Bornecque (1933: 23) to denote a situation where a short vowel-final syllable scans as light before such a cluster, is best avoided, as it can also denote ‘the marked repetition of *s*’ (OED s.v. a).

² Witness, e.g., the keen controversy over this question in the *Classical Journal* 1 (1810) 71–81, 283–98; 2 (1810) 517–18; 9 (1814) 340–41; 10 (1814) 122–30; 11 (1815) 174 n. 1; 12 (1815) 10–22; the *Monthly Review* 64 (1811) 223; 65 (1811) 111; and the *Critical Review* 1 (1812) 481–83.

³ In the classical period, it was usual for the *s* in such clusters to be heterosyllabic within words (even across morpheme boundaries), such that *hostes* → *hos.tes* and *ne-scio* → *nes.ci.o* (Ter. Scaur. *GL* VII.11.9–12.3); but in ‘pre-inscriptional’ Latin, it appears the *s* was tautosyllabic, as evinced by such words as *mönstrum* < **mo.ne.strum*, since short-vowel syncope occurred only in open syllables. The difference between the hetero- and tautosyllabic treatment can be hard to hear in English, but compare e.g. ‘discover’ [diˈskʌvə] and ‘discolour’ [dɪsˈkɒlə]. On syllabifying *s*-clusters in Latin, both initially and word-medially, see Marotta 1999: 300–01; Nishimura 2011: 17–20; Cser 2012; DeLisi 2015; Machajdíkóvá and Buzássyová 2021: 223–27. On the ‘extrametricality’ of word-final *s* in Latin, see Kostakis 2017: 337–41 and 351–57, esp. 348 n. 19.

⁴ For previous scholarship, see Zinzerlingius 1610: 183–98 (reprinted by Gaisford 1810: 209–16); Vossius 1635: 203–05; Barth 1650: 391–92; Dawes 1745: 2–5 (reprinted with useful notes by Burgess 1781: 4–7, and with a superbly learned commentary by Kidd 1817: 2–26); Schneider 1821: 694–710; Santen and van Lenep 1825: 411–20; Wagner 1832: 533–36; Schwencckfeld 1836; Ramsay 1859: 273–80; Müller 1894: 381–91; Hoenigswald 1949; Collinge 1970; Beck 1993: 550–53; Cser 1999: 178–80 and esp. 2012 (summarized and corrected in Cser 2020: 70–77); Dammer 2003; Hejduk 2018. For some more recent (light-hearted) animadversions, see the fifth and sixth paragraphs of Probert 2021.

⁵ Kidd 1817: 2–26; Schwencckfeld 1836; Ramsay 1859: 273–79; Müller 1894: 381–91; Hoenigswald 1949: 276–80; Cser 2012: 370–73. Terentianus Maurus, *De Syllabis* 1048–106, asserts that *s* is the only letter which in combination with *c p q t* can lengthen a preceding final syllable ending in a short vowel if at the same time the vowel which follows *sc sp sq st* is naturally long or if the whole syllable is positionally long: a useful technique for scanning hexameters, but not a very helpful description of linguistic reality. On the various difficulties of Terentianus’ exposition, see Beck 1993: 548–55. Later grammarians depend entirely on examples adduced or produced by Terentianus, and on a single line of doubtful authenticity in Virgil (*Aen.* 11.309: see below): Diom. *GL* I.429.32–34; Serv. *GL* IV.422.22–24, 424.16–20; Serg. *GL* IV.479.3–6; Cleidon. *GL* V.29.24–27; Consen. *GL* V.399.20–22 (with Mari 2021: 293–95); Pomp. *GL* V.109.14–17, 117.23–28; Victorin. *GL* VI.72.29–73.2; Bed. *GL* VII.231.8–29 (with Heikkinen 2012: 29–34).

⁶ An influential theory holds that the light scansion reflects the natural syllabification of the Latin language, in which word-boundaries were strongly marked, while the heavy represents a studied attempt at imitating Greek practice, according to which σκ-σπ-στ- etc. regularly made position (e.g. Hom. *Il.* 11.540 ἐπεπωλείτο στίχας ἀνδρῶν): cf. Hoenigswald 1949.

⁷ Of the c.10,217 occurrences of words beginning with a sibilant-stop cluster in the classical poetic corpus, only 49 (0.48 per cent) are found after a short final vowel, according to Cser 2012: 367. This avoidance is commonly ascribed to the uncomfortable tension subsisting between the imported Greek metrical system and the native prosody of Latin (n. 6): so Hoenigswald (1949: 275–76), followed by Kuryłowicz (1966: 201), Zirin (1970: 35–36), Allen (1973: 139–40), Pensado (1975: 127), Sampson (2010: 48). Critiques of this view are offered by Collinge (1970) in a computational study of *s*-clusters in prose, and by Cser (2012: 369), who points out that initial mute-liquid clusters (e.g. *pl-*, *pr-*) are not so avoided after short final vowels, despite also being treated somewhat differently in Greek.

⁸ Hoenigswald 1949: 272 (his emphasis). Wordsworth (1887: 47–8) speaks likewise of ‘that well known canon of Latin prosody which forbids a short vowel to stand before a word beginning with *sc*, *sp*, or *st*’. Among the several canons which bear the name of (Richard) Dawes is that which stipulates, in the English paraphrase of Ramsay (1859: 272), that ‘the Latin poets, after the time of Lucretius, lengthened a naturally short vowel at the end of a word, when the following word begins with SC, SP, SQ, ST. But this is not observed by the Satirists, in whose compositions, which are *sermoni propria*, such minute accuracy could not be expected’ (cf. Dawes 1745: 4).

The qualification ‘or else being of the same statistical order as other sporadic anomalies’ is an intriguing one, and prompts a series of further, as yet unanswered, questions. For if the poets had reason—whatever it might have been—to avoid putting short final vowels before words beginning with *s impure*, what explains the few exceptions? How certain is the textual evidence that they did so put them? By what criteria is one to judge? As a help to answering such queries, P. Maas offers the following sage advice:

As a rule, no writer will aspire to an anomaly for its own sake; an anomaly is a consequence of his desire to say something out of the ordinary for which the normal mode of expression was found to be inadequate. If we can show that he could, without any sacrifice, have expressed in a normal way what the tradition expresses anomalously, then the anomaly is probably based on a corruption; at the very least the question arises *why* the writer has rejected the normal, and so long as this question has not been satisfactorily answered the text remains doubtful.⁹

My purpose in this paper is to demonstrate that Maas’ principle—that the more easily a stylistic (in our case, metrical) anomaly can be removed by emendation, the less confidently can it be imputed to the author—may be profitably applied to the problem of *s*-clusters in classical Latin verse.¹⁰ It will be argued, firstly, that a great many instances of *s impure* after a short vowel-final syllable, whether heavy or light, can be emended away with less critical ingenuity than might have been expected of a genuine licence, and secondly, that by whittling the authors who admit this feature down to those in whom it is hardest to emend away, we can arrive at a clearer and more coherent picture as to its literary and generic connotations. Such a study will have the ancillary benefit of clarifying in which authors it is lawful to postulate further instances by conjecture—a consideration to which textual critics hitherto have paid little heed, as the following lists evince:

1. Conjectural emendations which entail short scansion before *s impure*:

Enn. Ann. 358 Skutsch *delata †ceterisque*] *elata specus* Scaliger • Lucil. 394 Marx *Scipiadae magno improbus*] *improbus Scipiadae magno* Βοιωτός • Catul. 6.10 *tremulique quassa*] *tremulique spissa* Pleitner • 61.92 *nupta si*] *nupta st* Vossius • 95.4 <*in pede stans*> Parthenius, <*scripta stilo*> Unger Hor. *Serm.* 1.15.30 *opprobria fingere*] *opprobria stringere* Heinsius • 2.5.22 *aerisque ruam*] *aerisque struam* Schrader • Prop. 1.1.24 *posse Cytalinis*] *posse Scytalinis* Bonazzi • 1.11.2 *semita litoribus*] *semita strata uiis* Ayrmann • 1.11.3 *subdita regno*] *subdita stagno* Heinsius • 1.20.52 *credere uisus*] *credere stultus* Paldam • 1.22.1 *unde genus*] *unde scelus* Bonazzi • 3.1.27 <*prole scamandro*> Wolff • 3.7.40 *Graecia tracta*] *Graecia strata* Heinsius • 3.11.10 *proelia seuit*] *semina spargit* Giardina • 3.16.4 *Aniena lacus*] *Aniena specus* Heinsius • 3.17.24 *funera grata*] *funera sparsa* Heinsius • 4.1.61 *sua dicta*] *sua scripta* Burman • 4.4.55 *sic hospes patriamne*] *sit rata spes patriamne* Havet • 4.7.51 *reuolubile carmen*] *reuolubile stamen* Guyet • 4.7.57 *stuprum uehit altera*] *uehit altera stupraque* Lütjohann • 4.8.84 *limina tergit*] *limina spargit uel sparsit* Heinsius • 4.8.87 *singula pallia*] *singula stragula* Heinsius • Ov. *Her.* 11.1 *errabunt scripta*] *errantia scripta* Heinsius • 7.119 *patentia fixi*] *patentia struxi* nescioquis apud Jahn • 20.207 *certa furoris*] *certa stuporis* Heinsius • *Ars* 2.659 *crassa est*] *qua straba est* Heinsius • 3.289 *inamabile ridet*] *inamabile stridet* Heinsius • *Met.* 6.201 *ite satis*] *ite stat* Anderson • *Tr.* 5.1.16 *scripta quod ista*] *tristia scripta* Riese • Manil. 1.277 *uertice tantum*] *uertice scandunt* Jacob • 2.586 *uix noxia poenis*] *uadimonia sponsi* Scaliger • 3.364 *comitantia semper*] *comitantia spira* Bentley, *comitantia spera* Housman • 3.604 *forma vel forma est*] *forma stetit* Scaliger • Luc. 1.548 *flebile saeui*] *flebile scaeui* Kortte • 3.414 *robore pallor*] *robore squalor* Heinsius • 6.436 *nulla licentia*] *nulla scientia* Canterus • 9.729 *Africa ducitis*] *Africa scinditis* Kortte • Phaed. 3.6.9 *ubi tricandum*] *ubi strigandum* Gruter • Sen. *Epigr.* 463.5 Riese *nosse †senex*]

⁹ Maas 1958: 11–12 = 1957: 10.

¹⁰ A similar point of view is articulated by Bettini (1990: 357–58) respecting a metrical problem in Plautus. For a more open-ended discussion of the problem, see Butterfield 2024.

nosse scelus Pithoeus • [Sen.] Oct. 153 †*scelerumque capax*] *capaxque scelerum* Ascensius • Val. Flac. 1.455 *celsaque semiferum*] *celsaque spumiferum* Kleywegt • Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.42 *lumina caelo*] *lumina stellae* Heinsius • 2.6.70 *modo †carmen*] *modo stamen* Heinsius, *modo stamine* nescio quis • 4.3.81 *ago seruitusque*] *ago stringeretque* Heinsius • 4.8.26 *robore sed*] *robore spem* Hertz • 5.1.110 *gaudia †cenae*] *gaudia scenae* Slater • 5.3.72 *mihi limine*] *mihi stamine* Markland • 5.3.92 *pede ducere*] *pede scindere* Campana

2. Conjectural emendations which entail heavy scansion before *s impure*:

Lucr. 1.389 *compleri spatium*] *complere spatium* Gifanius • Catul. 17.24 *potest olidum*] *pote stolidum* Victorius • 42.23 *potestis*] *pote stic* Baehrens • 67.32 *suppositum specula*] *supposita speculae* Pontanus • Lucr. 3.493 *animam spumans*] *anima spumas* Tohte • Prop. 4.1.41 *iam bene spondebant*] *digna spondebant* Kidd • Manil. 5.136 †*suspensas trepidus*] *suspensa strepitus* Jacob

3. Elucidations which entail heavy scansion before *s impure*:

Virg. *Aen.* 5.163 *laeua* (nom. sg.) *stringat* edd. quidam • Prop. 2.13.19 *longa* (nom. sg.) *spatietur* dub. Heyworth • Ov. *Met.* 4.45 *uersa* (acc. pl.) *squamis* dub. Cser • *Fast.* 6.140 *horrenda* (acc. pl.) *stridere* Bömer • Val. Flac. 5.602 *Rhipaea* (nom. pl.) *stupuerunt* dub. Cser • 6.229 *densa* (acc. pl.) *spargens* Lagen inter al. • Stat. *Theb.* 1.332 *arte* (abl. sg.) *scopuloso* dub. Lactantius (‘anguste siue doctrina’) • Sil. *Pun.* 10.122 *terna* (acc. pl.) *spicula* Dammer

It will be seen in the course of our investigation that many of the foregoing conjectures have been made in poets whose willingness to admit *s impure* after short vowels is open to serious doubt, and to whom ascribing further instances should be considered as illegitimate.

In what follows I examine the text of all classical verses in which a final syllable ending in a short vowel precedes an instance of *s impure*, relying on examples gathered from the lists above mentioned (n. 5), and supplemented by my own systematic perusal of the relevant authors, to wit: Catullus, Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Propertius, Tibullus, Ovid, Grattius, Manilius, Columella, Phaedrus, Seneca, Persius, Lucan, Petronius, Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, Statius, Martial, Juvenal, the anonymous poets of the *Appendix Vergiliana* and *Tibulliana* and of such minor works as the *Elegiae in Maecenatem*, *Epicedion Drusi*, *Laus Pisonis*, and *Ilias Latina*, as well as various fragmentary authors (Ennius, Lucilius, and others *apud* Blänsdorf) and, what has not previously been studied in this connexion, well-formed epigraphic poetry (*CLE* I–IV, etc.); I leave out of account, however, the early scenic writers, *viz.* Plautus, Terence, and their fragmentary fellows (save a lyric portion of Accius).¹¹ I do not take into consideration Greek words of bacchiac prosody (*viz.* *Scāmander*, *smāragdus*), nor those beginning with the non-native sounds *sm* and *z* (initially [z], medially [zz]); for these appear so often after short final vowels as to be very probably exempt from the rule of avoidance.¹² To keep my discussion within reasonable limits I will not usually treat verses in which a MS variant would dispose of the anomaly, or to which only part of the MS tradition is witness; but in order to illustrate at the outset the propensity of scribes and compositors to introduce such corruptions by accident, I subjoin the following lists:¹³

¹¹ The difficulty of finding definite examples of the light scansion before *s*-clusters in the iambo-trochaic metres of scenic verse, so replete with *syllabae ancipites*, is addressed by Collinge (1970: 196). Present opinion holds that the regular scansion is the light one: Hoenigswald 1949: 237; 1985: 377 and 381 n. 6; Questa 1978: 132; 2007: 212 n. 3. Drexler (1967: 12–13 n. 10) cites the example of Pl. *Cas.* 937 and *Rud.* 198, to which I should add *Poen.* 1190 and *Pseud.* 1315. A full collection of verified instances remains a desideratum.

¹² *Scamander* Catul. 64.357, Prop. 3.1.27 (coni. Wolff); *smaragdus* (or *zmaragdus*) Lucr. 2.805, Prop. 2.16.43, Tib. 1.1.51, 2.4.27, Ov. *Am.* 2.6.21, *Met.* 2.24, Luc. 10.121, Stat. *Theb.* 2.276; *smaris* (or *zmaris*) [Ov.] *Hal.* 120; *smerdalea Priap.* 68.8; *Smyrna* (or *Zmyrna*) Suet. *De Gramm.* 18 (= Courtney 1993: 306); *Zacynthos* Virg. *Aen.* 3.270, Ov. *Her.* 1.87, Sil. *Pun.* 1.290, Juv. 15.114; *zelotypus* Juv. 5.45, 6.278; *Zephyri* Sen. *Ag.* 433, *Oed.* 541; *Zethus* Sen. *HF* 916; *Zoile*: Mart. *Epigr.* 2.58.1, 11.85.1; *zona* Manil. 3.319, 3.625, Sen. *Oed.* 421, *Thy.* 845, Petron. fr. 59.2 Müller, Mart. *Epigr.* 14.151.2; *zythi* Col. *RR.* 10.116.

¹³ These readings have been gathered from the *apparatus critici* of modern editions and the catalogues of Kidd 1817: 2–26; Ramsay 1859: 273–79; Hilberg 1894: 3; Wagner 1832: 533–36. Ovid’s heavy representation in the data is undoubtedly owed to the size of his corpus and the relative generosity of editors in citing variants from his MSS.

1. MS variants which entail light scansion before *s impure*:

Virg. Aen. 5.143 (= 8.690) *rostrisque tridentibus*] *rostrisque stridentibus* • Tib. 2.1.8 *stare boues capite*] *uertice stare boues* • Ov. Her. 5.2 *littera facta*] *littera scripta* • 6.27 *pectore ruptis*] *pectore scissis* • 12.87 *conscia sit*] *conscia scit* • 12.94 *uomere findis*] *uomere scindis* • 16.249 *pectora laxa*] *pectora scissa* • 17.2 *rescribendi*] *mihi scribendi* • 18.4 *mea uerba*] *mea scripta* • 19.208 *pectora finde*] *pectora scinde* • 20.213 *scripti sententia quae sit*] *quae sit sententia scripti* • Am. 2.3.2 *gaudia nosse*] *gaudia scire* • 2.16.3 *sidere findat*] *sidere scindat* • 3.8.10 *sanguine pastus*] *sanguine sparsus* • Rem. 530 *tua saeuus*] *tua scaeuus* • Met. 3.66 *spinae curuamine fixum*] *fixum curuamine spinae* • 7.186 *murmure serpit*] *murmure stertunt* • 10.123 *modo texebas*] *modo sternebas vel spargebas* • 10.695 *sacraria probro*] *sacraria stupro* • 11.335 *spicula crabronum*] *spicula scrabronum* • 12.243 *fragilesque cadi*] *fragilesque sciphi* • Fast. 3.384 *dicere clausit*] *dicere sculpsit* • 4.484 *utrumque ciet*] *utrumque sciet* • Fast. 4.728 *laurea misit*] *laurea spargit* • 6.305 *scamnis considerare longis*] *longis considerare scamnis* • Tr. 1.4.9 *pinea texta*] *pinea stranta* • 1.10.36 *moenia tendat*] *moenia scindat* • 2.86 *pondere tracta*] *pondere strata* • 3.11.23 *stantia moenia*] *moenia stantia* • 4.2.20 *oppida capta*] *oppida scripta* • 4.2.43 *germania passis*] *germania sparsis* • 5.1.7 *iuenilia lusi*] *iuenilia scripsi* • 5.6.40 *grana reperta solent*] *pondera magna student* • 5.12.35 *nulla mihi sunt scripta*] *sunt mihi scripta aut nulla* • 5.12.35 *aut qualia cernis*] *sed aspera scribo* • Pont. 1.5.2 *sua uerba*] *sua scripta* • 1.8.10 *facta leges*] *facta scias* • 2.2.34 *porrigit ... spinas duraque saxa ...*] *saepe creat molles aspera spina rosas* • 2.4.7 *posita est*] *tua stat* • 2.9.37 *tua castra*] *tua scepra* • 3.5.30 *pignora mitte*] *mittere scripta* • Manil. 3.604 *forma est et*] *forma stetit* • Sen. Phoen. 448 *membra passim*] *membra sparsim* • Calp. Sic. Ecl. 2.32 *gramine pingit*] *gramine spargit* • Petron. Sat. 134.12.2 *uolo siccatis*] *uolo spissatis* • Val. Flac. 6.693 *tenuere cytaeis*] *tenuere scytheis* • Sil. Pun. 1.424 *proelia canentem*] *proelia spumantem* • 5.335 *lusitana ciebat*] *lusitana sciebat* • 13.770 *uia fare*] *uia scire* • 14.259 *perflataque trogilos*] *perflataque strogilos* • 14.296 *qui sponte*] *quia sponte* • Stat. Silv. 4.3.81 *ago seruiusque*] *ago structus atque vel structiusque* • 4.6.86 *coniuuia Syllae*] *coniuuia Scyllae* • 5.3.293 *Apolline Sulla*] *Apolline Scylla* • Theb. 1.516 *certatim accelerant uario strepit*] *accelerant uarioque strepit domus* • 1.554 *laude ciet*] *turba sciet* • 4.131 *ferrea suta*] *ferrea scuta* • 10.777 *sanguine tunc spargit*] *sanguine spargit tunc* • 11.686 *crede licet*] *crede sciet* • Ach. 1.348 *sparsosque tumet*] *sparsosque studet*

2. MS variants which entail heavy scansion before *s impure*:

Lucr. 6.696 *mari speluncae*] *mare speluncae* • Virg. Ecl. 5.68 *duos statuam*] *duo statuam* • Aen. 6.687 *tuaque exspectata*] *tuaque spectata* • 9.37 *tela ascendite*] *tela scandite* • 9.267 *capere Italiam sceptrisque*] *Italiam capere sceptrisque* • 10.251 *supera adspectans*] *supera spectans* • 12.537 *fixo stetit*] *fixa stetit* • Aemilius Macer fr. 8.1 Blänsdorf *terga exspirant*] *terga spirant* • fr. 18 *maior ape est crabrone minor*] *ape scrabrone* • Ov. Her. 15.1 *adspecta est studiosae*] *adspecta studiosae* • Am. 3.7.83 *intactam scire*] *intacta scire* • Met. 4.790 *ante exspectatum*] *ante spectatum* • 8.5 *ante exspectatum*] *ante spectatum vel spectatos* • 15.389 *putrefacta est spina*] *putrefacta spina* • Luc. 4.353 *orbis patimur*] *orbe spatium* • Stat. Theb. 5.135 *nudo stabat*] *nuda stabat* • Ach. 2.126 *facta exspectabat*] *facta spectabat* • 1.613 *attonito stat*] *attonita stat* • Sil. Pun. 11.63 *ora adstare*] *ora stare* • Juv. 6.109 *semper stillantis*] *saepe stillantis* • 6.274 *atque exspectantibus*] *atque spectantibus* • Ital. Ilias Lat. 453 *confossi spargit*] *confossa spargit*

3. Variants in early editions entailing light scansion before *s impure*:

Hor. Serm. 1.3.140 *peccaro stultus*] *peccauero stultus* • Ov. Her. 15.213 *mare praestat*] *mare sternit* • Am. 3.3.6 *ante fuit*] *ante stetit* • Ars 2.671 *uomere findite*] *uomere scindite* • 3.726 *feruida pulsat*] *feruida spargit* • 3.741 *iam spiritus*] *mihi spiritus* • Met. 1.38 *et stagna immensa*] *immensaue stagna* • 4.280 *femina Sithon*] *femina Scython* • 7.440 *ille sinis*] *ille scinis* • Pont. 3.7.7 *scripti sententia nostri*] *nostri sententia scripti* • App. Verg. Priap. 83.16 *arua pallidus*] *arua squalidus* • Aetna 81 *sollicitantque siti*] *sollicitantque scinim* • Catalept. 5.9 *dicta Sironis*] *dicta Scironis* • Sen.

Phaed. 223 *canisque diras*] *canisque Stygias* • *Stat. Silv.* 2.6.83 *tibi saeua*] *tibi scaeua* • 4.3.81 *ago seruitusque*] *ago strictiusque*

4. Variants in early editions entailing heavy scansion before *s impure*:

Quintus Tullius Cicero fr. 1.12 Blänsdorf *iubar est spirans*] *iubare spirat* • *Sil. Pun.* 3.111 *gelidos ut scandere*] *gelidosne scandere*

5. Verses (involving light scansion before *s impure*) deleted by editors:

Ov. Her. 5.26 *littera scripta* (25–26 dell. edd.) • *Met.* 12.438b *foramina spissus* (434b–438b deest in codd. multis) • *App. Verg. Moretum* 35b *calcanea scissa* (deest in codd. quibusdam)

Such catalogues, which could no doubt be greatly extended, show us what to be wary of when examining a lection for which a metrically sound MS variant is not available: light scansion caused by an interpolated synonym (e.g. *Ov. Am.* 2.3.2 *gaudia nosse* → *gaudia scire*, *Met.* 10.695 *sacraria probro* → *sacraria stupro*, 12.243 *fragilesque cadi* → *fragilesque sciphi*) or transposition (e.g. *Ov. Fast.* 6.305 *scammis considerare longis* → *longis considerare scammis*, *Tr.* 3.11.23 *stantia moenia* → *moenia stantia*); heavy scansion caused by the omission of a small word (e.g. *Ov. Her.* 15.1 *adspecta est studiosae* → *adspecta studiosae*) or prefix (e.g. *Juv.* 6.274 *atque expectantibus* → *atque spectantibus*) or by a mere change of case (e.g. *Ital. Ilias Lat.* 453 *confossi spargit* → *confossa spargit*). Equally, the limits of the emendatorially possible should always be kept in view: *in uitium ducit culpa fuga, si caret arte*.

1 LIGHT SCANSION

I consider here the text of poets whose MSS exhibit light scansion before initial *s*-clusters, and where no MS variant eradicates the anomaly: Accius, Lucilius, Varro (Reatinus), Lucretius, Virgil, the poets of *Culex* and *Ciris*, Horace, Propertius, Ovid, Manilius, Germanicus, Phaedrus, the poet of *Octavia*, and Statius.

Two suggestive pieces of evidence for the avoidance of this feature by post-Republican poets are worth flagging at the outset. Firstly, it is well known that dactylic poets typically (though not always) put adjectives before their head-nouns whenever the two are metrically equivalent: e.g. *Virg. Aen.* 1.167 *intus aquae dulces uiuoque sedilia saxo* (less often, *saxo ... uiuo*).¹⁴ The usual order, however, is reversed if the noun begins with *s impure*: *Virg. Aen.* 8.662 *scutis protecti corpora longis*, 7.369 *sceptris terram quae libera nostris*; *Ov. Met.* 8.33 *stratis insignia pictis*, 10.267 *stratis concha Sidonide pictis*, 14.166 *spinis conserto tegmine nullis*, *Pont.* 3.1.59 *scaena spectabere magna*; *Manil.* 1.465 *stellis ostendere sidera certis*. Secondly, poets sometimes resort to a rare by-form of a word to avoid having a short final vowel before *s impure*: Martial, for instance, where possible, prefers *nīsī* to *nī*, save once before an *s*-cluster (11.90.8 *dispeream, ni scis, mentula quid sapiat*).

1.1 Accius

W. M. Lindsay cites one example in anapaestic dimeters:¹⁵

quod di in terram infernam penitus
depressum altis clausere specis

trag. 18.1–2 Schultheiß

As no plausible emendation of the second line presents itself, this instance can be considered as authentic.¹⁶

¹⁴ Winbolt 1903: 219.

¹⁵ Lindsay 1922: 257.

¹⁶ The only two examples of a short vowel before *s impure* in Pacuvius both fill an anceps element in a trochaic septenarius: *trag.* 42 Schierl *hic sollicita, studio obstupida, suspensio animo ciuitas*; 256 – *quid cessatis, socii, eicere spiras sparteas?*

1.2 Lucilius

Five examples (of which only two are certainly in hexameters) are citable from the fragments of Lucilius:

solem auram aduersam segetem inmutasse statumque	292 Marx
- - - - - atque accurrere scribas	375 Marx
quamuis desubito trinis deducere scalis	392 Marx
- - - - - Albesia scuta	1150 Marx
- - - - - Pyrgensia scorta ¹⁷	1271 Marx

At 392 one could transpose *trinis* with *scalis*, and at 292 E. H. Warmington reads *segetem immutasse satumque*, ‘change the cornfield and the crop’;¹⁸ but F. Marx’s proposal that *status* refers to the diminished ‘condition’ of the speaker, querulous of the weather and poor harvest, seems enough to defend it from emendation, and thus to support 392.¹⁹

To these five examples the anonymous critic ‘Βοιωτός’ would add another, emending the mono-dactylic third foot of 394 *Scipiadae magno improbus obiciebat Asellus* (avoided except where a monosyllable succeeds, as at 1076, 1338) with the transposition *improbus Scipiadae magno*.²⁰ His conjecture is not incompatible with the reason for which Gellius cites the line, but would obscure his point slightly: ‘*obiciebat*’ ‘*o*’ *littera producta multos legere audio, idque eo facere dicunt, ut ratio numeri salua sit*, ‘I hear that many persons read *obiciebat* with a long *o*, and they say that they do this so as to preserve the metre’ (NA 4.17.1).

1.3 Varro Reatinus

Varro’s admission of short final vowels before *s impure* has eluded the noticed of recent authorities. He supplies one example of the light scansion in an anapaestic dimeter:

tertia poenarum
infamia stans nixa in uulgi
pectore, flutanti intonsa coma
sordida uestitu, ore seuero.

Menipp. 123 Astbury

It will be observed that Varro could have written *stans infamia nixa in uulgi* (for the dactylic second foot cf. 203.1); but the Accian example above, also in anapaestic dimeters, affords a compelling parallel. The two examples from his iambic trimeters both fill an anceps element: 8.4 *ideoque scapulae metuunt uirgidemiam* and 248.1 *hic ut quadrato latere stipatae strues*.

1.4 Lucretius

Ten examples of the light scansion come from a poet whose *s*’s sometimes fail to make position even at the end of words:²¹

cedere squamigeris latices nitentibus aiunt	1.372
unde sciat quid sit scire et nescire uicissim	4.475
inde statu prior hic gestum mutasse uidetur	4.772
[inde statu prior hic gestum mutasse uidetur] ²²	4.801
multo antiquius est quam lecti molliā strata	4.849

¹⁷ The MSS of Servius give *scorta Pyrgensia*: the transposition is due to Müller.

¹⁸ Warmington 1938: 96.

¹⁹ Marx 1905: 2.110. For *status* as the object of *mutare*, see Cic. *Leg.* 3.32, Col. RR 6.5.1, Plin. *HN* 6.106.

²⁰ Βοιωτός 1827: 319.

²¹ On the prosodic omission of word-final *s* (‘sigmatic ecthipsis’) in Lucretius, see Butterfield 2008b.

²² Deufert (2018: 257) follows Lachmann in making this deletion.

quidue <u>superbia</u> <u>spurcitia</u> ac <u>petulantia</u> ? <u>quantas</u>	5.47
libera <u>sponde</u> sua <u>cursus</u> <u>lustrare</u> <u>perennis</u>	5.79
speluncasque uelut <u>saxis</u> <u>pendentibus</u> <u>structas</u>	6.195
sudent <u>umore</u> et <u>guttis</u> <u>manantibus</u> <u>stillent</u>	6.943
tenuia <u>sputa</u> <u>minuta</u> , <u>croci</u> <u>contacta</u> <u>colore</u>	6.1188

C. Bailey goes too far when he declares that in each case ‘a rearrangement or change of phraseology could have avoided the necessity of the “licence”’.²³ True, 6.195 and 6.943 could have been ordered differently (*structas pendentibus saxis, stillent manantibus guttis*); and his claim that *inde statu* at 4.772 (and 4.801) could have been swapped for, say, *inde loci*, is not outlandish. But the difficulty of finding equally good emendations of 1.372 *cedere squamigeris*, 4.475 *unde sciat*, 4.849 *mollia strata*, 5.47 *superbia spurcitia*, and 6.1188 *tenuia sputa*, cautions against making any change in any place.²⁴ Since the MSS of Lucretius never show him allowing a light syllable to be made heavy by initial *s impure*, conjectural readings which require him to do so are best avoided.²⁵ It remains to note the intriguing distribution of instances: eight (or nine) in Books 4 5 6, none in Books 2 and 3, one in Book 1. Bailey gives the order of the books’ composition as 1 2 5 4 3 6, which, if right, weakens the suggestion that Lucretius warmed to *s impure* as time wore on.²⁶

1.5 Virgil

A. Cser in his list includes *Aen.* 8.425 *Brontesque Steropesque* (= Hes. *Th.* 140 Βρόντην τε Στερόπην τε),²⁷ but this example is plainly owing to another cause, namely the licence, common in Virgil and Ovid, of allowing *-que* to fill a metrically long position in the second and fifth feet of the hexameter, provided that (a) the preceding word fills a whole foot, (b) the following word is a spondee or anapaest, and (c) a second *-que* is subjoined.²⁸ The lone transmitted example occurs in Latinus’ speech to the Latins:

spem si quam ascitis Aetolum habuistis in armis
 ponite: spes sibi quisque sed haec quam angusta uidetis.
 cetera qua rerum iaceant perculsa ruina,
 ante oculos interque manus sunt omnia uestras. *Aen.* 11.308–11

This admission of a short final vowel before *sp-*, supposed by some to be mitigated by the pause after *ponite*,²⁹ is nowhere else evidenced in Virgil’s writings: every one of his c.1100 other examples of initial *sc sp sq st* occurs after a long vowel or single consonant or at the beginning of a line. Virgil must have had a very good reason for departing from his usually high standard of versification; and yet it is hard to find such a reason in v. 309, which, far from being crucial to its context, is described even by its sympathizers as merely ‘parenthetical to the train of thought continued in 310’.³⁰ It is known that Virgil left some lines of the *Aeneid* incomplete, three being of one dactyl in length: 3.640, 10.580, 11.375. Might 11.309 have been one of those *uersus imperfecti* which, Donatus (*Vit.* 41) informs us, *multi mox supplere conati sunt*?³¹ R. Dawes thought so:

²³ Bailey 1947: 1.127.

²⁴ For 4.849 *lecti mollia strata* one could envisage *strati mollia lecti* (cf. Prop. 3.6.11, Ov. *Fast.* 2.337); but the paradosis is supported by e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 8.415 *mollibus [...] stratis*.

²⁵ Tohte (1878: 130) incautiously proposes *animā spumas* at 3.493 for the MSS’ *animam spumans*. I am more disposed to accept Goebel’s *spumas*, Lachmann’s *ut*, and the *exempli gratia* transposition proposed by Deufert (2018: 162–63) of *uis animae* for *uis morbi* in 492 and *morbo turbat agens* for *turbat agens animam* in 493 (alternatively: *turbat agens morbo spumas*): cf. 4.916–17 *distracta per artus | uis animae* and 6.793 *spumas qui morbo mittere sueuit*.

²⁶ Bailey 1947: 36.

²⁷ Cser 2012: 370.

²⁸ For this formulation, see Housman 1927: 11–12; and for examples in Virgil, Thompson and Zair 2020: 581–82; 604. The same verse has misled Lehmann (2005: 185) into the view that the leftward syllabification of *s impure* at word-boundaries was the norm in Latin.

²⁹ See, e.g., Allen 1973: 140. If this consideration weighed with Virgil, why not with Lucretius?

³⁰ Williams 1973: 402. The observation of Horsfall (2003: 203), that ‘V. avoids in general this terse lapidary manner of formulation’, might have inspired more suspicion than it did.

³¹ On the question of interpolated lines in Virgil, see Sparrow 1977: 46–52.

Hodie autem fecerunt αἱ δευτεραὶ φροντιδῆς, ut nullus dubitem quin sic scripserit Virgilius:

*spem si quam accitis Aetolum habuistis in armis,
ponite.
caetera qua rerum &c.*

versus autem complendi consilium ab imperito nescio quo susceptum reliquis istis *spes sibi quisque* &c. ortum dedisse. Quid enim? Unicamne obsecro *spem sibi* quemque fuisse dicendum est, an vero aliquam tantum? Atqui hoc ineptum est, illud falsum. Porro, ut vere dici posset unicam sibi quemque *spem* fuisse, neque ullam ex toto sociorum numero oriri potuisse: quantae futilitatis esset tam serio monere istiusmodi *spem* esse angustam!³²

Today, however, second thoughts have made me certain that Virgil really wrote as follows:

[...]

And the plan of completing the verse was taken up by some unskilled person, who added the remaining words “each one has hope for himself”, and so on. What else? Is it really to be said that each man’s hope rested alone in himself, or indeed only some of it? But the latter is absurd, and the former is false. Moreover, if it could truly be said that each man’s hope rested alone in himself, and that no hope could arise at all from among the whole number of his allies, how foolish it would be to deliver so earnestly the warning that such a hope is narrow!

C. G. Heyne, wrongly assigning this conjecture to T. Burgess, regarded it favourably: ‘Melius Burgess. [...] divinavit, male suppletum esse verum, cum poeta tantum apposuisse *Ponite*. Et hoc verissimum.’³³ T. Kidd too endorsed the idea, as now does S. J. Heyworth, and before him J. W. Mackail, who thought *spes sibi* [...] *uidetis* the poet’s marginal revision of the foregoing line.³⁴ The knots into which commentators have tied themselves in deciding whether *haec angusta* be feminine with *spes* (309) or neuter with *cetera* (310) are happily undone by Dawes’ athetesis.

1.6 *Culex*

Only one example in this pseudo-Virgilian poem:

et ualidum dextra detraxit ab arbore truncum
(qui casus sociarit opem numenue deorum
prodere sit dubium, ualuit sed uincere talis
horrida squamosi uoluentia membra draconis)
atque reluctantis crebris foedeque petentis
ictibus ossa ferit, cingunt qua tempora cristae.

192–97

From W. Clausen’s apparatus it appears that in v. 194 the MSS give *uoluit* not *ualuit* (M. Haupt) and *tales* not *talis* (J. Sillig); that in v. 192 some give *dextra detraxit ab arbore truncum* (Γ), others *detraxit ab arbore dextera truncum* (SF), still others *dextra truncum detraxit ab ore* (CLV).³⁵ A. E. Housman took *tales* in v. 194 as a clue that in lieu of *horrida* once stood a noun, qualified by *tales* and governed by *uoluentia*; some such word as *spiras*.³⁶ He noticed, furthermore, that whereas in e.g. Virg. *Georg.* 1.163 *tarda* [...] *Eleusinae matris uoluentia plaustra* the adjective *tarda* serves as the secondary predi-

³² Dawes 1745: 349–50.

³³ Heyne 1787: 512. R. Porson corrected the misattribution in his 1793 reprint of Heyne; see Kidd 1815: 104.

³⁴ Kidd 1827:12; Mackail 1920: 167; Heyworth 2010.

³⁵ Clausen et al. 1966: 26–27.

³⁶ Housman 1902: 341.

cate of *uoluentia* (i.e. *tarda* is adverbial), no such relation can obtain in v. 195 between *horrida* and *uoluentia*: ‘uoluendi actio tarda esse potest, horrida non item.’ Myself I do not see why *horrida* and *uoluentia* cannot both be attributes of *membra* (‘the dreadful, rolling coils of a scaly snake’); and to understand Sillig’s *talis* in the pregnant sense ‘of such an exceptional character’ (*OLD* s.v. 3) is surely unobjectionable.³⁷ More challenging is the difficulty of telling where the parenthesis ends and the main clause resumes. For by dint of its initial conjunction, the clause *atque reluctantis crebris foedeque petentis | ictibus ossa ferit* (196–97) could legitimately be paired either with *ualuit sed uincere [...]* *membra draconis* in vv. 194–95, or with *detraxit ab arbore truncum* all the way back in v. 192. As these difficulties vanish with Heyne’s athetesis of vv. 193–95, *horridā squamosi* cannot be declared a certain or even probable example of the light scansion in a classical poet.³⁸

1.7 Ciris

No more than one purported example:

(nec fuerat) nisi Scylla nouo concepta furore 130

B. Kayachev gives a sound analysis of the MS readings in this verse, which appears only in Φ , a hyparchetype of Ω from which two branches stem, namely *Z*, which gives \acute{n} , and ρ , which gives *nisi*.³⁹ No significant difference in sense obtaining between *ni* and *nisi*, it is hard to see why our poet, who employs Scylla’s name on nine other occasions, and never places another instance of *s impure* after a short final vowel, would here favour the latter over the former. Perhaps he designed an allusion to *uenumdatā Scylla* in Prop. 3.19.21 (if this be the true lection), as Kayachev suggests, or a pun on the name of *Nisus*, like that in Tib. 1.4.63 (*Nisi [...] ni sint*), as Kayachev also suggests. But in places where either form of the word is admissible, that which imposes the least irregularity upon the metre is surely to be preferred, and Kayachev accordingly prints *ni*.

1.8 Horace

In Horace’s *Satires* eight lines exhibit the light scansion:

contra alius nullam, nisi olenti in fornice stantem	1.2.30
uelatumque stola, mea quum conferbuit ira	1.2.71
si quod sit uitium, non fastidire strabonem	1.3.44
linquimus, insani ridentes praemia scribae	1.5.35
saepē stilum uertas, iterum, quae digna legi sint	1.10.72
proceros odisse lupos? quia scilicet illis	2.2.36
quem mala stultitia et quemcumque inscitia ueri	2.3.43
haec mihi Stertinius sapientum octauus amico	2.3.296

To these examples Cser appends *Epod.* 17.26 *leuare tentā spiritu praecordia*;⁴⁰ but the final syllable of *tenta* occupies the *anceps* element of an iambic metron ($\times - | \vee -$), where the problem of whether *-tā* should scan as light or heavy does not arise.⁴¹ Since none but three of the examples from the *Satires* can be emended with even a modicum of plausibility (*ni stantem in fornice olenti* is possible at 1.2.30, *quod for quia* at 2.2.36, *mi* for *mihi* at 2.3.296), probably all should be regarded as right and lawful.⁴² Why Horace allowed himself to use this licence is a question to which several answers have been offered: (a) the *Satires*, purporting to resemble common speech (*cf.* 1.4.42), did not aspire to the

³⁷ Thus Leo 1891: 67–68.

³⁸ Heyne et al. 1832: 43–44.

³⁹ Kayachev 2020: 113.

⁴⁰ Cser 2012: 372.

⁴¹ Dammer 2003: 6. Against the examples of light scansion Lehmann (2005: 185) would urge *Serm.* 1.3.95 *commissa fide sponsum*, but the quantity of the final vowel of *fides -ei* ‘faith’ is long; contrast that of *fides -is* ‘chord, lyre’.

⁴² Schrader (1776: 72) adds another to the pile, altering *ruam* to *struam* at 2.5.22 (*cf.* 1.1.34, 2.3.96; [Tib.] 3.7.134).

same level of ἀκρίβεια in matters metrical as did poetry of the loftier kind (Dawes);⁴³ (b) Horace desired to evoke the usage of another eminent satirist, Lucilius, who, as we have seen, also admitted short vowels before *s impure* (Marx);⁴⁴ (c) Horace considered the use of *s impure* after short final vowels as a metrical ‘fault’, but deliberately used it ‘to teach the reader a quintessentially Horatian lesson about flaws, namely, that one should combine the acumen to discern such blemishes with the wisdom to forgive them’ (J. Hejduk).⁴⁵

1.9 Propertius

It is a curious fact that all six examples of the light scansion in Propertius occur in his third and fourth books: 3.11.53, 3.11.67, 3.19.21, 4.1.41, 4.4.48, 4.5.17. In contrast with the examples in Lucilius, Lucretius, or Horace, plausible emendations can be devised for them all. Let us begin with Propertius’ description of the death of Cleopatra (3.11.53–54):

bracchia spectauī sacris admorsa colubris,
et trahere occultum membra saporis iter.

As Propertius is hardly likely to have witnessed the historical person of Cleopatra be killed by two snakes, critics generally take *spectauī* as glancing at a triumphal procession in Rome, during which an effigy of Cleopatra was carried before the poet’s eyes. But, as A. Tronson remarks, ‘the sudden intrusion of the first-person voice [...] disrupts the sense’, for Propertius’ claim to have personally witnessed Caesar’s triumph follows most unexpectedly on the heels of the second-person *fugisti* and *nec cepere* (Markland: *accepere* codd.) *tuae* [...] *manus* in vv. 51–52, which clearly refer to the actions of the real Cleopatra, not to a hitherto unmentioned statue of her person.⁴⁶ The commonly accepted solution to this quandry is Markland’s *spectasti*, ‘you (sc. the historical person of Cleopatra) saw your arms be bitten by snakes’, for which Heyworth compares Hor. *Carm.* 1.37.25–27 *ausa* (sc. Cleopatra) *et iacentem uisere regiam* | [...] *fortis et asperas* | *tractare serpentes*.⁴⁷ But the situation is not quite the same: in Horace, Cleopatra watches the fall of her kingdom, not the snakes, which she instead ‘handles’; in Propertius, the point of saying that Cleopatra ‘saw’ the snakes, instead of e.g. ‘feeling’ their bite, is hard to discern. The conjecture *spectasti* also introduces a further oddity: Cleopatra may well have seen the snakes that bit her, but how did she propose to see also the ‘hidden path’ (54 *occultum* [...] *iter*) of their venom? Far better the conjecture of Kidd, *sensisti*: ‘you felt the bite of the snakes, and you felt their venom travel through your limbs.’⁴⁸ It will be asked how this came to *spectauī*. Though our earliest sources all give Cleopatra’s ‘arms’ as the body-part where she was pierced, it is notorious that later writers, beginning with Fulgentius, assign her ‘breast’ as the bitten place: *De Aet.* 14 [Augustus] *Aegyptiacam superatam reginam lactandas praebere mammas serpentibus persuasit*.⁴⁹ One suspects that a late reader of Propertius, more excited by the breast-bitten version of the story than the arm-bitten, added above or beside *bracchia* the correction *pectora*, which a later hand mistook as a correction of *sensisti*, thus generating *spectauī*.⁵⁰ The words *pectora* and *bracchia* are MS variants at *Ov. Met.* 3.167 and *Virg. Aen.* 10.571. Kidd also ventures to emend 3.11.67–68:

nunc ubi Scipiadae classes, ubi signa Camilli,
aut modo Pompeia, Bospore, capta manu?

His conjecture is *Scipiadae heu! ubi nunc classes?*⁵¹ But the Augustan poets never allow *heu, o*, or *a* to elide a long final vowel, nor does the phrase *heu ubi* ever stand within a verse, but rather always begins

⁴³ Dawes 1745: 4; Burgess 1781: 342.

⁴⁴ Marx 1905: 2.110; cf. Housman 1928: 4; Hoenigswald 1949: 279 n. 35.

⁴⁵ Hejduk 2018: 66.

⁴⁶ Tronson 1999: 179–81.

⁴⁷ Heyworth 2007: 340–41.

⁴⁸ Kidd 1827: 16. Smyth (1970: 105, 106, 116, 129, 140, 143) mistakenly attributes this and Kidd’s other conjectures to R. Dawes.

⁴⁹ See further Gurval 2011: 73–74.

⁵⁰ Heinsius *apud* Smyth (1970: 105) in fact conjectures *pectora* for *bracchia*.

⁵¹ Kidd 1827: 8.

it.⁵² Yet there is merit to Kidd's idea, more merit if it were taken further: I conjecture that Propertius wrote *Scipiadae classes ubi nunc?* For the trajection of *ubi nunc* after the noun phrase, immediately followed by another *ubi*, we may compare Val. Flac. 7.442 *Iuno ubi nunc? ubi nunc Tritonia uirgo?* For the displacement of *ubi nunc* after more words than one, witness Ov. *Her.* 2.31 *iura fidesque ubi nunc commissaque dextera dextrae?* 33 *promissus socios ubi nunc Hymenaeus in annos?* and 12.103 *dotis opes ubi erant? ubi erat tibi regia coniunx?* Kidd's endeavour to emend 4.4.47–48 wants no like improvement:

cras, ut rumor ait, tota †pugnabitur† urbe:
tu cape spinosi rorida terga iugi.

Propertius need not have said *spinosi* when Kidd's *dumosi* lay to hand. Another simple transposition will remove the anomaly in 4.1.41–42:

iam bene spondebant tunc omina, quod nihil illam
laeserat abiegni uenter apertus equi.

Read *spondebant bene iam tunc omina*.⁵³ And now for 3.19.21–22:

tuque o Minoa uenumdata Scylla figura
tondens purpuream, regna paterna, comam.

The phrase *uenum data* is often spelled in our texts as a compound (*uenumdo* > *uendo*), but sporadic appearances in tmesis indicate that the Romans did not always consider it as such: e.g. Liv. 24.47.6 *se uenum a principibus datos* and Claud. *In Ruf.* 1.179 *uenum cuncta dari*, as well as Sall. *Hist.* 1.55.17 Maurenbrecher *praedam uenum aut dono datam*. Could not Propertius have written *data uenum, Scylla?* Lucan puts *uenum* after a compound of this verb at 4.206–07 *sua tradita uenum | castra uidet;* and a second-century verse inscription allows the same after the simplex form: *ut mea cuncta dares uenum* (CLE 1178.41). Propertius is thrice elsewhere actuated by metre to give ∪ ∪ : | – – in lieu of – | – : ∪ ∪ (2.5.19, 3.22.13, 4.4.59). But if this transposition does not appeal, one can always adopt another conjecture of Kidd's: *uenalis*, 'bribeable'. A harder chestnut to crack lies in 4.5.17–18, where the bawd Acanthis is represented as a witch:

consulitque striges nostro de sanguine, et in me
hippomanes fetae semina legit equae.

For *consulitque striges* I have devised no very convincing emendation of my own, nor, I think, has Kidd, who confesses that his *consulitur strigibus* 'verecundiae fines in mutando transiret' (note too that *consulere* with the dative means, what we do not wish here, 'to consult the interests of': OLD 6).⁵⁴ But of novel conjectures there is no need, for some humanist MSS omit the peccant *-que* altogether; a solution which has the approbation of F. A. Paley and W. R. Smyth, who compare for the long *i* of *striges* Pl. *Pseud.* 820 *non condimentis condiunt, sed strigibus* (folk-etymologized from *stridere*: Ov. *Fast.* 6.139–40).⁵⁵ Heyworth adds: '[a]s this couplet [17–18] introduces a new thought, Acanthis' actions against Propertius, the conjunction is well lost.'⁵⁶ The fact that *striges* has a short *i* at 3.6.29 is not an irrefragable argument against the change, inasmuch as all the

⁵² Ov. *Am.* 3.8.18, *Her.* 4.150, 6.41, *Fast.* 3.485, 5.465; Stat. *Theb.* 5.350, 613, 8.174, 9.385, *Silv.* 3.5.44.

⁵³ In Propertius pre-caesural monosyllables preceded by pyrrhic words often adhere closely to a following word: 1.4.13, 1.6.9, 2.5.5, 2.16.37, 2.23.11, 2.29.11, 2.29.17, 3.3.35, 3.6.15, 3.11.51, 3.16.9, 3.16.25, 3.22.25, 4.4.1, 4.8.35. Here *iam* combines naturally with *tunc*, just as it combines with *cum* in a similar position at Ov. *Ib.* 563–64 *uel uideas quod iam cum flammae cuncta tenerent | Hectoreus patria uidit ab arce puer*.

⁵⁴ Kidd 1827: 16.

⁵⁵ Paley 1872: 244; Smyth 1956: 78.

⁵⁶ Heyworth 2007: 453. The defence of this line mounted by Dominicy (2010: 174 n. 95) consists merely of noting other places where Propertius appears to admit a short vowel before *s impure*; but since, as we have just seen, all of these are easily emended, they are of no weight with us.

Augustan poets are wont to employ modern and archaic prosodies of the same word or word-type: e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 1.432 *liquentia* ~ 5.238 *liquentia*; Tib. 1.6.54 *sanguis* ~ 1.6.66 *sanguis* (< *-ins); Ov. *Pont.* 3.1.113 *nihil* (< *ne hīlom*) ~ *nihil*.⁵⁷ As Statius appears to scan *strix* as a third-declension Greek noun at *Theb.* 3.511–12 *nocturnaeque gemunt strigēs* (= στρίγες) *et feralia bubo | damna canens*, we might even consider writing *consuluit strigas haec*.⁵⁸

1.10 Ovid

The shade of an Ovid partial to *s impure* has been resummoned of late by R. Dammer,⁵⁹ who defends the transmitted text of four lines in which a syllable consisting of a short final vowel apparently scans as light before *sc* or *st*:⁶⁰

est in qua nostri littera scripta manu	<i>Her.</i> 5.26
inque loco regis regia sceptrā tene	<i>Her.</i> 7.152
strataque Cretaeam beluā strauit humo	<i>Her.</i> 10.106
Hennaeosque lacus et olentiā stagna Palici	<i>Pont.</i> 2.10.25

By the principle invoked at the beginning of this paper—that the credibility of a metrical aberration is inversely proportioned to the ease of removing it—none of these examples constitutes strong evidence that Ovid admitted short vowels before initial *s*-groups. As regards *Her.* 5.26, W. Ramsay signals two other places where Ovid’s MSS corrupt *facta* into *scripta* (*Her.* 5.2, *Tr.* 5.12.35);⁶¹ and as *littera facta* appears to be Ovid’s preferred expression for ‘a written letter’ (*Tr.* 1.11.1–2, 4.1.96, *Pont.* 2.10.4; cf. also *Mart. Epigr.* 9.12.5), it is hard to see why he should here alone prefer *litterā scripta*. For a parallel to *Pont.* 2.10.25 *olentiā stagna Palici*, Dammer not unfairly adduces Ov. *Met.* 5.404–05 *olentia* [...] | *stagna Palicorum*; but his contention that J. Zinzerlingius’ *olentis stagna Palici*⁶² would only be required ‘wenn man von der Voraussetzung ausgeht, dass Ovid streng nach den Regeln der Schulgrammatik dichtet’, misses an important point: the question before us is not whether a metrically irregular reading must necessarily be false (by reason, e.g. of also being nonsense), but only whether it is probably false given what we know of Ovid’s otherwise fastidious versification.⁶³ To my feeling, at any rate, the conjecture that Ovid decided on this occasion alone to throw out a rule observed in nearly all other places where initial *s impure* is evidenced (c.2587 times in his poetry), seems markedly less probable than that a scribe wrote *-a* when he meant to write *-s*. I should add that *olentis* is actually older than Zinzerlingius’ pamphlet, appearing also in the text of the 1489 Venetian edition of B. Accursius and Val. Superchius (*ISTC* io00135000, sig. Y6^f).

At *Her.* 10.106 the reading *strauit* can be explained as a *Perseverationsfehler* arising from *strata* at the beginning of the line, as H. Dörrie, cited by Dammer, well notes (MS variants include *pressit*, *pulsat*, *textit*, *tingit*, *tinxit*).⁶⁴ The difficulties presented by the text of *Her.* 7.152 are knottier.⁶⁵ Our oldest MS, P (= Par. Lat. 8242, s. IX), gives *i///loco*⁶⁶ *regis sceptraque sacra tene* before correction, *inque loco regis sceptrā sacrata tene* after it. Our next oldest MSS, E (= Coll. Eton. 150, s. XI) and G (= Guelf. extrav. 260, s. XII), give *inque loco regis regia sceptrā tene*. As EG’s text yields a kind of sense, albeit tautological and metrically dubious (by classical though not medieval standards), whereas P’s makes little sense at all, one fancies the latter to be the more honest (i.e. less interpolated) witness,

⁵⁷ See Hopkinson 1982: 173–77.

⁵⁸ Platnauer (1951: 62) urges the Greek character of the word as the excuse for *-quē striges*, but that would surely demand positional length (n. 6).

⁵⁹ Hoenigswald (1949: 279 n. 37), by contrast, speaks of ‘the great purity in Ovid’s technique’.

⁶⁰ Dammer 2003: 12–16.

⁶¹ Ramsay 1859: 274–75.

⁶² Zinzerlingius 1610: 189. Whether the reading is his or that of a MS depends on how we interpret his punctuation: ‘Eod. lib. Eleg.

10. | & *olentia stagna Palici*. | Membranae: & *olentis stagna Palici*.’

⁶³ Compare the remarks of Trappes-Lomax 2013: 99.

⁶⁴ Dörrie 1971: 363–64; Dammer 2003: 12.

⁶⁵ Trappes-Lomax (2013: 93–95) ably expounds them.

⁶⁶ J. B. Hall plausibly suggests that beneath the erasure lies *inde*: Hall et al. 2023: 306.

and the better therefore to emend from.⁶⁷ If it be asked how *sacra* entered the text, I suggest that a scribe anticipated the sixth line below, 158 *perque fugae comites, Dardana sacra, deos*. If that is so, the correct reading may be something like *inque loco regis scepra superba tene*, ‘and wield the proud sceptre in kingly station’. The readings of P^{ac} and P^{pc} (and EG) will have arisen from competing attempts to repair the metre: *scepra superba* → *scepra sacra* (ex 158)⁶⁸ → *scepraque sacra* (P^{ac}), *scepra sacrata* (P^{pc}), *regia scepra* (EG). The appointments of Dido’s palace are twice described as ‘proud’ by Virgil, *Aen.* 1.639 and 697–98:

arte laboratae uestes ostroque superbo

[...]

cum uenit, aulaeis iam se regina superbis
aurea composuit sponda mediamque locauit.

A common phrase,⁶⁹ *scepra superba* would not be devoid of a special significance where Aeneas is concerned, famously enjoined to *debellare superbos* (*Aen.* 6.853), and thus here envisaged by Ovid as that which in Virgil he is meant to destroy.⁷⁰

To the aforegiven examples Cser adds *Ov. Met.* 4.45–46 *quam uersa squamis uelantibus artus | stagna Palaestini credunt motasse figura* and 12.438 *exprimitur per densa foramina spissus*;⁷¹ but *uersa* in the first is ablative with *figura* in 46, and 12.434–38 are missing in some MSS and athetized by R. J. Tarrant.⁷²

1.11 Manilius

The lone example generally accepted in Manilius arises from an emendation of R. Bentley’s, printed by Housman and by G. P. Goold:⁷³

inde tibi obliquo sex tantum signa patebunt
circuitu, nullos umquam fugientia uisus,
sed teretem †acclini† mundum comitantia semper. 3.362–64

The want of a head-noun for *acclini* prompted Bentley to exchange *semper* for *spira* (< σπειρα).⁷⁴ Housman assigns the Greek etymology of *spira* as the reason for its appearance after -ā, but aside from the fact that Greek prosody would mandate positional length (n. 6), his two supposed parallels, 319 *ordine zonae* and 625 *fastigia zonae*, exhibit not *sp-* but *z-*, which at word-beginning has the value of a single consonant (n. 12).⁷⁵ One is, moreover, loath to lose the happy contrast between *comitantia semper* in 364 and (*n*)*umquam fugientia* in 363. E. Flores chooses instead to doubt *acclini*, making out in M (= Matritensis 3678) the reading *aedun*, whence he derives the conjecture *ac dium*.⁷⁶ I find *ac* attractive, but *dium* is not an obvious epithet to pair with ‘round’ (*teretem*), nor does Manilius elsewhere admit it into his poetry; and the homoeoteuton with *mundum* is most unlovely. I suggest *teretem ac lēuem*: ‘round and smooth.’ Thus was the universe shaped by its creator, says Timaeus in Plato’s eponymous dialogue: λειῶν δὲ δὴ κύκλω πᾶν ἔξωθεν αὐτὸ ἀπικριβοῦτο πολλῶν χάριν

⁶⁷ Ovid usually employs the device of adjectival repetition only when the words juxtaposed might not have been expected to share the same epithet: see Wills 1996: 228–31, 275–78, cited by Trappes-Lomax (2013: 95), whose *regia iura* is open to the same objection.

⁶⁸ Having postulated this stage of the corruption, I discover from Hall et al. (2023: 308) that *scepra sacra* is actually a MS variant: Oxon. Bodl. Canon. class. lat. 8, s. xiv, and Vat. Ottob. lat. 1676, s. xiii (*ante correctionem*).

⁶⁹ Lucr. 5.1137, Tib. 1.9.80 (Heinsius: *regna codd.*), Sen. Ag. 10, Sil. Pun. 10.628, 13.605.

⁷⁰ For a complete list of the numerous conjectures made on this line, see Hall et al. 2023: 306–08.

⁷¹ Cser 2012: 372.

⁷² Tarrant 2004: 362. Hilberg (1894: 3) adds 23 more pentameters, but, as Platnauer (1951: 62–63 n. 3) observes, ‘justifiable excision or emendation has removed all these from the pages of Ehwald and Ehwald-Levy’.

⁷³ Housman 1916: 35; Goold 1998: 71.

⁷⁴ Bentley 1739: 160.

⁷⁵ Housman 1916: 35. The parallel of *Anth. Lat.* 678.1 Riese *siderā sphaerae* is too late to be of critical value.

⁷⁶ Flores 1995: 413; Flores et al. 2001: 42.

(33B = Cic. *Tim.* 18 *omni autem totam figuram mundi lēuitate circumdedit*); λείων καὶ ὀμαλὸν πανταχῆ τε ἐκ μέσου ἴσον [...] ἐποίησεν (34B = Cic. *Tim.* 20 *deus [...] lēuem illum [sc. mundum] effecit et undique aequabilem*).⁷⁷ Compare the philosopher's description of the atom: Diog. Laert. 9.44 τὸν τε ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην ἐκ τοιούτων λείων καὶ περιφερῶν ὄγκων συγκεκρίσθαι, and esp. Lucr. 3.205 *corporibus [...] lēuibis atque rotundis*. I conjecture that Manilius' *ac leuem* was corrupted first to *accliuem*, then to the MSS' *acclini*, perhaps under semantic pressure from *obliquo* in 362.

1.12 Germanicus

Germanicus' MSS at 405 give *tum mihi siccentur substricto cornua uelo*, where *siccentur* yields nonsense, and A. Le Boeuffle prints Gronovius' *spissentur*: 'then let the yard-arm be thickened by wrapping the sail around it', i.e. 'let them be furled'.⁷⁸ If this be the verb which Germanicus used, he could have placed it in a less offensive position: read *substricto spissentur* with Housman (adducing parallel corruptions) and D. B. Gain.⁷⁹ For the word-order cf. e.g. Luc. 10.143 *extenso laxauit stamina uelo*.

1.13 Phaedrus

Two examples in this pedestrian writer:⁸⁰

Aesopus ibi stans, naris emunctae senex
licet horreum mi pateat, ego scalpam tamen

3.3.14
App. 9.12 Zago

Phaedrus permits short final vowels before *s impure* in the ancipitia of the senarius, where the problem of light or heavy scansion does not arise; but anapaests are so infrequent in his second and fourth feet that *-us ibi* at 3.3.14 and *-at ego* at *App.* 9.12 Zago are probably to be analysed as tribrachs.⁸¹ Bentley for the first example offered to read *ibi tum*, F. H. Bothe *obstans*, sc. *obuiam ueniens* (cf. Pl. *Stich.* 287);⁸² but no easy remedy can be found for the second, and both therefore should probably stand.⁸³ Like those in the *Satires* of Horace and Lucilius, these examples may be owing to the generally 'pedestrian language' of Phaedrus' fables, which admit other linguistic features usually considered below the standard of high poetry.⁸⁴

1.14 Ps.-Seneca

O. Zwierlein and J. G. Fitch print the connecting halves of [Sen.] *Oct.* 152–53 as *iuuenis infandi ingeni, | capaxque scelerum*, adopting Ascensius' *capaxque scelerum* for the MSS' unmetrical *scelerumque capax*.⁸⁵ As neither Seneca nor the poet of *Octavia* elsewhere allows a final short-vowelled open syllable to remain light before *s impure* (follow E at *Phoen.* 448), and as there are other ways of emending 153 without exchanging a metrical impossibility for a metrical improbability, method requires that we seek a different solution. R. Ferri prints L. Müller's conjecture *scelerum capaxque*, adducing vv. 361 and 363 for the postponed *-que*.⁸⁶ If the coordination of an adjective with a genitive of quality seems too hard to stomach, R. Peiper's *scelerum capacis* is another possibility.⁸⁷ For a synonym of *ingenium* qualified by *capax*, compare Ov. *Met.* 8.243 *puerum [...] animi ad praecepta capacis*, Sen. *Phoen.* 159 *pectus corque tot scelerum capax*, [Quint.] *Dec. Mai.* 11.11; and see Hey, *TLL* 3.302.69–03.23.

⁷⁷ Housman identifies further echoes of *aetherius* [...] *Platon* (1.774) at Manil. 1.207 (~ *Tim.* 40A) and 2.66 (~ *Tim.* 30B).

⁷⁸ Le Boeuffle 1975: 26. I think it unlikely that *mihi* could have arisen from *mi*, as one of the anonymous readers suggests: this form of the pronoun is rare outside of Lucretius, Catullus, Propertius, and Horace *qua* satirist.

⁷⁹ Housman 1900: 32–33; Gain 1976: 103.

⁸⁰ See Havet 1895: 185.

⁸¹ Hoenigswald 1949: 280.

⁸² Bentley 1726: 34; Bothe 1803: 44.

⁸³ See Havet 1895: 185.

⁸⁴ See, e.g., Butterfield 2008a: 165 n. 48 on Phaedrus' use of the unpoetical *eius*.

⁸⁵ Zwierlein 1986a: 422; Fitch 2018: 2.538.

⁸⁶ Müller 1894: 387; Ferri 2003: 174. Zwierlein (1986b: 454–55) maintains that Ps.-Seneca only postpones *-que* out of necessity. For vowels before *s impure* in metrically indifferent positions (e.g., the third thesis of the iambic trimeter), of which there are some 22 examples in Seneca and [Seneca], see Hoenigswald 1949: 381–82 n. 9.

⁸⁷ Peiper and Richter 1867: 464.

1.15 Statius

One example, not hard to remove:

fas et mihi spernere Phoebum
si tibi conlatus diuum sator.

Theb. 7.733–34

It would be strange of Statius to pitch so unluckily upon *spernere*, when a metrically adequate synonym lay to hand in *temnere*, conjectured and justly printed by J. B. Hall.⁸⁸ Others print *me* before *spernere*, but Statius elsewhere favours the dative with *fas* over a double accusative and infinitive construction.⁸⁹

1.16 Miscellaneous Fragments

Of these I have found only one: a line cited or invented by Diomedes (*GL* I.499.12–14) to illustrate a type of verse whose every word is coincident with a foot: *miscent †fida† flumina candida sanguine sparso* (= *Vers. Incert.* 128 Blänsdorf = *Enn. Spur.* 14 Warmington). The unlengthened syllable could have been avoided by a transposition, but without knowledge of whence this fragment comes, if it is not a grammarian's invention, no change should be made.⁹⁰

1.17 Carmina Epigraphica

Metrical blemishes are ten a penny in Latin epigraphic verse, but a few otherwise well-formed hexameters and pentameters, apparently of classical date, exhibit the following short final vowels before *s impure*: *CLE* 457.2 = *CIL* XI.4311 *aspice quo fato raptus mihi spiritus or[e] est* (Interamna); *CLE* 1053.3 = *CIL* X.2752.5–6 *quam pater ac mater cupide seruare studebant* (Puteoli); *AE* 1972.36.2 *coniuage sperata semper amorem habuit* (Rome). Note also two of the seventeen so-called Bahareno *sortes*, probably of the first century BC, containing hexameters inscribed on small metal *lamellae*: *CLE* 331.2 = *CIL* I².2174 *credis quod deicunt? non sunt ita. ne fore stultu* (= *credis quod dicunt? non sunt ita. ne fores stultus*) and *CLE* 333.12 = *CIL* I².2184 *non sum mendacis quas dixisti consulis stulte* (= *non sumus mendaces quas [sc. sortes] dixisti; consulis stulte*). Of these two *lamellae* only the latter survives, conserved in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.⁹¹ Their odd grammar and prosody is thought to indicate a very early date (e.g. 16 *datur spernere* and 17 *quod rogas non est*, where *datur* and *rogas* appear to be subject to iambic shortening: 'hi hexametri Plautinos fere anapaestos aemulantur', F. Bücheler)⁹² or corruption of a more metrical original (e.g. 17 *qur petis postempus consilium* *qur petis consilium postempus* Maehly).

2 HEAVY SCANSION

In contrast with the light scansion before *s impure*, no examples of the heavy are entirely above suspicion. Editors should accept at most three examples: two (not unimpeachable) in Ennius, one (very hard to emend, though not hard to athetize) in Tibullus.

2.1 Ennius

O. Skutsch adduces three places in Ennius where the heavy scansion is found:⁹³

conspicit inde sibi data Romulus esse propritim
auspicio regni stabilita scamna solumque

Ann. 90–91 Skutsch

⁸⁸ Hall et al. 2007: 1.196. Again, *mi* for *mihi* seems to me an unlikely solution in Statius: n. 76.

⁸⁹ *Theb.* 2.167–68, 3.234–35, 6.692–93, 8.90–91, 9.667, 11.679, 12.79; *Silv.* 1.2.178–79, 2.1.82, 3.2.15, 5.3.182, 5.3.275; *Ach.* 1.73–74.

⁹⁰ For such a transposition see *Classical Journal* 10 (1814) 124.

⁹¹ Buchholz 2013: 120–24.

⁹² Bücheler 1895–97: 1.160

⁹³ Skutsch 1985: 57.

corpore tartarino prognata Paluda uirago
 cui par imber et ignis, spiritus et grauis terra
 sparsis hastis longis campus splendet et horret

Ann. 220–21 Skutsch
 var. 14 Vahlen⁹⁴

All could have been avoided with relative ease. At Ann. 91 Ennius might have written *stabilitaque regni* (for the absent caesura, compare 218, 221, 305), in which case (i) both *data* (*esse*) and *stabilita* (*esse*) would be governed by *conspicit* (‘sees that the base and bulwark of a kingdom were to him alone given and confirmed by auspices’); (ii) *auspicio* would be taken with each participle ἀπὸ κοινοῦ; and (iii) the genitive *regni* would be juxtaposed not with *auspicio*, to which it does not in any case belong, but properly with *scamna solumque*. At Ann. 221 Ennius could have written *ignis et imber*, as is found in the fragment of Empedocles cited *ad loc.* by Skutsch: DK 31 B 17.18 πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ γαῖα καὶ ἥερος ἄπλετον ὕψος (note, however, the inversion *spiritus et grauis terra*). And if var. 14 be a true hexameter (others would measure it in trochees),⁹⁵ a slight adjustment of the order would produce *sparsis hastis longis splendet campus et horret*.

On the other hand, the parallel of Virg. *Aen.* 1.743 *imber et ignes* supports *imber et ignis* at Ann. 221,⁹⁶ while the tendency of Latin poets to conclude a hexameter line with two verbs coordinated by *et* (e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 10.433, Ov. *Met.* 2.735, Juv. *Sat.* 15.71) cautions against writing *splendet campus* at var. 14.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, it is a curious fact that two of our three Ennian examples arise from words ending in *-s*. In our surviving fragments of the *Annales* (minus *dub.* and *spur.*) there are c.497 places where a short final open syllable (principally *-ā* and *-ē*) stands before a single consonant, as compared to c.140 places where a short final syllable in *-s* does so (108 in thesis, 32 in arsis).⁹⁸ If short final open syllables (*-ā -ē -ī -ō*) and short final syllables in *-s* were distributed before *s*-clusters in the same proportion as before single consonants, then as we have two examples of *-s* before such a cluster (Ann. 221, var. 14), we might have expected to find more than only one example of *-ā* or *-ē* before the same (Ann. 91 Skutsch).⁹⁹ The numbers are too low and the evidence too fragmentary for such an argument to be fully compelling, but perhaps for Ennius the positional force of final *-s* was not felt to be completely lost before *s*-clusters,¹⁰⁰ even for syllables in thesis.¹⁰¹ If so, suspicion of Ann. 91 mounts higher.

2.2 Catullus

Catullus’ *MS* tradition, universally esteemed as among the most corrupt of any classical Latin author, presents four examples, to which a fifth is commonly added by conjecture:

si pote stolidum repente excitare ueternum	17.24
hoc quid putemus esse? qui modo scurra	22.12
nec deprecor iam si nefaria scripta	44.18
ut apud niuem et ferarum gelida stabula forem	63.53
nulla fugae ratio, nulla spes, omnia muta	64.186

At 17.24 the *MSS*’ *potest olidum* is typically redivided with P. Victorius to yield *nunc eum uolo de tuo ponte mittere pronum*, | *si pote stolidum repente excitare ueternum*, ‘I wish now to send him headlong from your bridge, to see whether he can at once awake from his insensible lethargy’ (23–4). The

⁹⁴ To these should probably not be added Ann. 170–71 (*proletarius publicitus scutisque feroque | ornatur ferro*), for Ennius regularly allows *-s* to make position in arsis: see Skutsch 1985: 56. For the two ambivalent examples in his tragedies, see Enn. *trag.* 132.2 Manuwald (tr⁸) *latere pendens saxā spargens tabo sanie et sanguine atro*; 72 Manuwald (ia⁸) *o magna templa caelitum commixtā stellis splendidis*.

⁹⁵ See Jocelyn 1965 on this point.

⁹⁶ The same parallel leads one to speculate whether *cui par imber et ignis* should be the end of a hexameter, *spiritus et grauis terra* the beginning of the next.

⁹⁷ Note also Lucilius’ reported parody of this clausula as *horret et alget* (Serv. *Aen.* 11.601 = Lucil. 1190 Marx).

⁹⁸ These figures I have gathered, I hope accurately, by using the advanced search tool of the *PedeCerto* website (Colombi et al. 2011).

⁹⁹ In Lucretius the ratio is, as expected, 2:7.

¹⁰⁰ It is curious that Plautus (*Cas.* 937, *Pseud.* 1315) and Lucretius (6.195, 6.943) felt oppositely on this point.

¹⁰¹ On the infrequency with which *-s* makes position in the thesis of the Ennian hexameter, see Zair 2021, suggesting that it might have been appropriate to a high or formal register.

personal use of the adjective *pote* is paralleled at 45.5 and 67.11, and critics here take it as equivalent to *pote sit*, i.e. *possit*. This gives sense, but the metrical oddity is needless: simply read *potis stolidum*. Catullus has *potis* at 65.3 (*potis est*), 72.7 (*potis est*), 76.24 (*potis est*), and 115.3 (*potis sit* recc.: *potisset* OGR), while Virgil has it as a predicate without *est* or *sit* at *Aen.* 3.671. The case of *modo scurra* at 22.12 succumbs to emendation with equal ease: read *qui modo aut scurra | aut siquid hac re scitius uidebatur*, ‘who just now seemed either a clever man or something (if such there be) even cleverer’. For the use of *aut* to link correlatively a specific noun and an indefinite conditional introduced with *si quis*, compare Cels. *Med.* 5.17.2b *deinde mixtis iis instillatur aut acetum aut si quis alius non pinguis umor accessurus est*, ‘then when they have been mixed, either vinegar is dropped in or whatever other non-fatty liquid lies to hand’. I find an easy solution also to 44.18: for *nefaria scripta* consider *nefarias chartas*. This requires *scripta* to be an intrusive gloss upon *chartas*, a theory by no means hard to credit: *chartae* principally means ‘paper’ (OLD s.v. *charta* 1), whence by extension ‘writings, pages’ (OLD 3b), the latter a sense more commonly captured by *scripta* (OLD s.v. *scriptum* 5).¹⁰² Perhaps *chartas* is also an apter object of *recepso*: Catullus receives not so much the abstract ‘compositions’ of Sestius as his tangible ‘pages’. For literary *chartae* in Catullus see e.g. 1.6 and 22.6. Another supplement will remove the anomaly at 63.53: read *ut apud niuem et ferarum gelida ad stabula forem*. The tmesis is daring, though perhaps not inappropriate in Attis’ case. For *ad + esse* remark e.g. Pl. *Amph.* 1021, *Pseud.* 1236; Cic. *Verr.* 2.2.21, 2.4.4, *Tull.* 20, *Att.* 10.4.8, *QFr.* 2.3.3; Caes. *BGall.* 1.1.7, 5.13.1; Liv. 28.18.2.¹⁰³ Finally, at 64.186, one need only insert an *est* after *nulla* to set things right.¹⁰⁴ A neat symmetry would then follow from the delayed appearance of this verb in the following statement *omnia muta, | omnia sunt deserta* (186–87). Objection could be made to the clash of *-st sp-*, but Catullus does not shy from the yet more cacophonous *-st st-* in 78.5 *homo est stultus*, nor was the fine-eared Ovid troubled by *Ars* 2.645 *uisa est spatiosior* or 3.551 *scelus est sperare*. Housman’s claim that ‘of all Latin poets Catullus is the most sensitive to position’ thus requires some qualification, even taking into account our poet’s apparently similar treatment of mute-liquid clusters: 4.9 *Propontida trucemue*, 4.18 *impotentia freta*, 29.4 *ultima Britannia* (all in pure iambics).¹⁰⁵ For here too emendation is possible: at 4.9 A. Guarinus reports *Propontidem* from some late MSS;¹⁰⁶ at 4.18–19 one could read, what I think rather more poetical, *et inde tot per impotentias freti | erum tulisse*, ‘and thence have borne your master through so many rages’ (i.e. ‘storms’) ‘of the sea’, the plural *impotentias* denoting (by a common idiom) multiple particular instances of the abstract singular ‘violence, lack of restraint’ (OLD s.v. *impotentia* 2), on the model of e.g. Ov. *Met.* 11.729 *primas aequoris iras* or Luc. 10.316 *uiolenti gurgitis iras*; and at 29.4 one could simply adopt J. Dousa the Elder’s conjecture *ultima Britanniae*, ‘the British Isles’ (OLD s.v. *Britannia* 1b, citing, for the plural form, Plin. *NH* 4.102 and Apul. *Mun.* 7), and put the corruption *Britannia* down to the influence of the similar ending of *Gallia* above in v. 3.¹⁰⁷ All the mute-liquid examples come from pure iambics, which circumstance has been felt to excuse them, perhaps rightly, I admit. For the cases of *s impure*, however, this consideration does not apply, and editors ought therefore to regard them with rather more suspicion than has usually been the case, particularly those in galliambics and dactylic hexameters.¹⁰⁸

2.3 Propertius

There is but one example of the heavy scansion in Propertius, and that easily emended:

iura dare statuas inter et arma Mari

3.11.46

¹⁰² We may compare the gloss *·i carmina* above *chartae* at Hor. *Carm.* 4.8.21 in Paris. lat. 7972 (s. IX–X), f. 58^r.

¹⁰³ Further examples are collected in Kühner and Stegmann 1962: 519–20. Note also *ad* in conjunction with *apud* at Lucil. 994 Marx.

¹⁰⁴ So Eschenburg 1865: 43.

¹⁰⁵ Housman 1928: 4.

¹⁰⁶ Guarinus 1521: v^r.

¹⁰⁷ Dousa 1581: 21. Catullus seems to have *Britanniae* in the plural again at 29.20, although the exact form the text is marred with corruption.

¹⁰⁸ See Fordyce 1961: 102; Jocelyn 1999: 352.

The infinitive clause of 3.11.46 belongs to a sequence of other such clauses spanning 41–45, all syntactically coordinated (42 *et*, 43 *-que*, 44 *et*, 45 *-que*). It accordingly wants another conjunction to complete the chain, whence several editors print *et* after *dare*, or at least accept that *et* is a viable supplement.¹⁰⁹ If the postponement of *et* after two words instead of one (a feat not elsewhere exemplified in Propertius) causes alarm,¹¹⁰ editors may favour Palmer's *dares* (as the main verb of the sentence, with *scilicet*).¹¹¹

2.4 Tibullus

No short final vowel stands before *st* in 1.5.53 *ipsa fame stimulantē furens* (*pace* Cser),¹¹² for albeit of the third-declension *fames* regularly has a long *e* in the ablative.¹¹³ The sole *prima facie* example in Tibullus of the heavy scansion is this:

illa deo sciet agricolae pro uitibus uam
pro segete spicas, pro grege ferre dapem 1.5.27–28

And it has proven very tenacious of life indeed. J. Trappes-Lomax's *messi* for *segete* would be an attractive solution (more so than A's insertion of *et* before *spicas*),¹¹⁴ if the presence of some form of *seges* in our line were not certified by the remarkably strong resemblance of 27–28 to Ov. *Tr.* 5.6.43–44 *in litus harenas, | in segetem spicas, in mare fundat aquas*. I have wondered if 27–28 are an interpolated recapitulation of 21–26 (21–22 ~ 28; 23–24 ~ 27; 25–26 ~ 28); but though, if deleted, these verses would not be greatly missed, they are not in other respects incompetently executed, and the anaphora of *illa* in 27 and 29 is admittedly in the poet's style.¹¹⁵ With grudging and repining I therefore accept Tibullus' use of the heavy scansion here, in the only place in all his poetry where he appears to do so.¹¹⁶

2.5 Grattius

Two emendable examples:

post ubi proceris generosa stirpibus arbor | se dederit. 142–43
uulpina species: tamen huic exacta uoluntas 259

At 142 grammar permitted Grattius to write either one of *generosa*, the MS reading, or *generosam*, the conjecture of J. C. Wernsdorf.¹¹⁷ For the former with *se dare*, P. J. Enk compares Auson. *Mosell.* 448 *ast ego quanta mei dederit se uena liquoris*; for the latter, R. Verdière adduces Sall. *Iug.* 6.1 *qui [...] non se luxu neque inertiae corrumpendum dedit*.¹¹⁸ If between these modes of expression no substantial difference of meaning obtains, why should Grattius opt for the more metrically dubious of the two? Wernsdorf's *generosam* is adopted by Enk, by Verdière, and by J. W. Duff and A. M. Duff.¹¹⁹ Similar considerations apply to 259: if Grattius wanted to say that the *thoes* 'has a fox-like look', he could have written any one of *uulpinā specie* (J. Ulitius), *uulpinā specie est* (P. H. Damsté), *uulpinā speciest* (Verdière), or *uulpinā est species*, just as well as the *uulpinā species* of our MSS.¹²⁰

¹⁰⁹ Trappes-Lomax (2013: 98) observes that *dicere ius* or *ius inter statuas dicere et arma Mari* would give equivalent sense. Dominicy (2016: 181) transposes *Mari* and *dare*, which perhaps also works.

¹¹⁰ Heyworth 2007: 340.

¹¹¹ Further arguments in support of *dares* in Hardy 2022: 122–30.

¹¹² Cser 2012: 370.

¹¹³ See, e.g., Virg. *Aen.* 6.421; Ov. *Tr.* 1.6.9; Luc. 3.352; Mart. *Epigr.* 1.99.18; Sil. *Pun.* 2.683.

¹¹⁴ Trappes-Lomax 2013: 96–97.

¹¹⁵ See 1.2.17–20, 7.35–37, 9.61–63, 2.1.39–41, 2.3.53–57.

¹¹⁶ I dismiss as interpolated the testimony of the *Florilegium Gallicum* at 2.1.8, where *uertice stare boues* is given for *stare boues capite*; similar interpolations at 1.1.50, 2.1.40, 2.6.20.

¹¹⁷ Wernsdorf 1780: 41.

¹¹⁸ Enk 1918: 55; Verdière 1968: 2.263.

¹¹⁹ Enk *apud* Verdière 1968: 2.262–63; Duff and Duff 1934: 164–65.

¹²⁰ For these see the apparatus of Verdière 1968: 1.130.

2.6 Manilius

M at 3.89 gives *ut cumque stellae*, L *ut cum stellae*, G *sit cum stellae*. In the face of these unlikely variants Housman justly prints K. Rossberg's *cursu* for *cum(que)*, and is followed by Goold and Flores.¹²¹ Loss of *s* could easily reduce *cursu* to *curu* and thence to *cum*.

2.7 Phaedrus

P gives 3.pr.20 in the unlikely form *quamuis in ipsa natus sim pene* (i.e. *paene*) *schola*, where L. Havet with high plausibility writes *Phoebi*, a conjecture accepted by G. Zago.¹²²

2.8 Seneca

Two instances, neither hard to emend:¹²³

hiemsque gelido frigida spatio refert	HF 950
immugit omnes, undique scopuli adstrepunt	Phaed. 1026

At *Phaed.* 1026, B. Schmidt observes that Seneca was perfectly capable of writing, if he so wished, *adstrepunt scopuli undique* (for *undique* at line- and clause-end, see *Phaed.* 1266), while Havet *apud* L. Herrmann proposes to insert *en* after *undique*.¹²⁴ As there is no parallel in Seneca for the repetition of *en* in consecutive lines (1025–26), Schmidt's seems on the whole the more probable conjecture. As for HF 950, J. H. Withof comments on the 'elumbem, fulemque orationem & ταυτολογίας plenam gelido frigida',¹²⁵ and proposes to eradicate both that and the metrical anomaly with the following emendation: 949–51 *quidquid autumnus grauis | hiemsque gelido fulgidum spatio refert | uno impetu transiliet*, 'in one bound he will leap over whatever bright sign is brought round by oppressive autumn or by winter through the cold stretch of the year'.¹²⁶ This is neat but improbable: when Seneca elsewhere qualifies *quidquid* with an epithet such as *fulgidum*, these words never stand apart, but rather are always juxtaposed: HF 30 *quidquid horridum*; *Tro.* 281 *quidquid indignum aut ferum*; [Sen.] *HO* 57 *quidquid immane*. I propose the simpler expedient of inserting *in* after *frigida*. For this with *spatio* in a temporal sense, compare *Lucr.* 4.1287 *longo in spatio*, 'over a long period'; and for the loss of *in*, HF 654 (*om. A*), *Phoen.* 207 (*om. A*), *Ag.* 264 (*om. recc.*), *Thy.* 493 (*om. E*). If the epithet *gelido* continues to seem a little frigid, we may print Bentley's *gemino* (= 949 *autumnus*, 950 *hiems*), which has the added bonus of producing a nice numerical contrast with *uno impetu* in the next line.¹²⁷

2.9 Lucan

One example, readily got rid of:

quippe stimulo fluctuque furoris conpages humana labat.	5.118–19
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D. R. Shackleton Bailey in his revised text inserts after *quippe* a causal *ex*, the conjecture of J. Delz.¹²⁸ This clarifies the sense, and Lucan had no obvious reason not to write it. For *labare* with *ex* + ablative of cause, Delz adduces *Cels.* 7.12.1e *si ex ictu uel alio casu aliquid labant dentes*; note also *Ov. Met.* 6.629–30 *ex nimia mentem pietate labare | sensit*.¹²⁹

¹²¹ Rossberg 1889: 708; Housman 1916: 8 ('*utcumque* [...] metrum destituit'); Goold 1998: 62; Flores et al. 2001: 16.

¹²² Havet 1895: 48; Zago 2020: 57.

¹²³ A fact not sufficiently appreciated by Leo (1878: 203 n. 4) in his discussion.

¹²⁴ Schmidt 1860: 35–36; Herrmann 1924: 217.

¹²⁵ See, however, Boyle (2023: 390) on HF 284, listing other juxtaposed synonyms in this play.

¹²⁶ Withof 1749: 81.

¹²⁷ Bentley *apud* Stachelscheid 1882: 482.

¹²⁸ Shackleton Bailey 1997: 109.

¹²⁹ Delz 1998: 125–26.

2.10 *Aetna*

One instance, in a verse exhibiting other signs of corruption:

par lapidum domita₂ stanti pars robora pugnae

This verse, numbered 469 in J. Vesserau's edition, 470 in F. R. D. Goodyear's, and 471 in W. Richter's, survives with the preceding only in Cantabrigiensis Kk.v.34, s. x (= C).¹³⁰ Its meaning is obscure and much disputed, but on the assumption that everything up to *stanti* is true, why should the poet have left out an auxiliary *est*, when such a one would fit so snugly between *stanti* and *domita*? So Goodyear and Richter print the line, each with further alteration.

2.11 *Silius Italicus*

Three cases, none hard to emend:

immane ₂ stridens agitur crebroque coacta	9.575
ne qua ₂ spes fusos pacis uitaeque manere	12.209
diuersa ₂ spatio procul a certamine pugnae	17.546

Among other Silian passages in which a light open syllable before *s impure* is purported to be heavy, Dammer adduces 10.122 *at contra, horrendum, bis terna spicula dextra*, yet in error: *bis terna* can be taken with *dextra*, 'from six hands'.¹³¹ Only 9.575, 12.209, and 17.546 constitute *prima facie* evidence that Silius scanned such syllables as heavy, but in no case was he compelled to do so. Easiest to emend is that in 17.544–46:

haec ait et stricto sequitur mucrone uolantem,
donec longinquo frustratum duxit in arua
diuersa spatio procul a certamine pugnae.

It is a fundamental property of space that the distance between two points A and B is independent of the order in which they are considered (i.e. the distance from A to B is always the same as the distance from B to A under the same conditions). It follows that Silius need not have written '*remote* fields far from the strife of battle' when 'fields far from the strife of *remote* battle' was available to him: read *diuersae* with N. Heinsius.¹³² Our second example occurs in a passage concerned with trumpeting elephants (9.575–76):

immane stridens agitur crebroque coacta
uulnere bellatrix properos fert belua gressus.

It would be an odd thing if one of the only short final vowels before *s impure* in Silius' 17-book epic were to result from, of all things, an adverb: surely the least essential part of speech in any sentence, and the most easily replaced with another. I conjecture that *immane* is a corruption of *iam magnum*: '*now* the beast, trumpeting *loudly*, is driven onward'.¹³³ The resulting collocation, *magnum stridens*, would not be unique to Silius: witness Virg. *Aen.* 9.705 *sed magnum stridens contorta phalarica uenit*.¹³⁴ Nor would the corruption be unparalleled: the best MS of Seneca's tragedies gives HF 162–63 in the form *spes iam magnis urbibus errant | trepidique metus*, where for *iam magnis* Zwierlein and Fitch accept Schmidt's emendation *immanes*.¹³⁵ Else, given *stridens immane* at 10.205, we might instead consider *immane astridens*, 'trumpeting fiercely (at them)': Silius has

¹³⁰ Vesserau 1961: 32; Goodyear 1965: 87; Richter 1963: 70.

¹³¹ Dammer 2003: 4 n. 7.

¹³² Heinsius *apud Drakenborch* 1717: 876.

¹³³ I am grateful to M. Donninelli for the alternative conjecture *immanis*, though I feel *stridens* here calls for an adverb (e.g. 2.175, 10.205).

¹³⁴ For the related collocation *magnus stridor*, see Virg. *Georg.* 1.407, 2.162, *Aen.* 12.590; App. *Verg.* 539; Luc. 3.154–55; Val. Flac. 3.566.

¹³⁵ Schmidt 1860: 62–63; Zwierlein 1986a: 8; Fitch 2018: 1.26.

instridens, a hapax, at 14.436, while Statius has *astridentibus*, also a hapax, at *Theb.* 11.494. Finally, 12.207–09:

meruistis, ut omnis
ingruat Ausonia, et saeuo Mauorte parastis,
ne qua spes fusos pacis uitaeque maneret.

This example (*ne quā spes*) is not usually included in catalogues of *s impure*, perhaps for the reason that *qua* could be analysed as ablative ('*in no part*' or '*in no way* does hope of peace or life remain'); a nominative analysis, however, is greatly encouraged by e.g. Caes. *BC* 1.51.2 *ne qua spes in fuga relinqueretur* and Liv. 25.6.18 *ne qua spes ne qua occasio abolendae ignominiae [...] sit*. I conjecture that Silius wrote *quae*. For this in lieu of *quā* compare e.g. Lucr. 5.1209–10 *ne quae forte deum nobis immensa potestas | sit*, Hor. *Serm.* 1.4.93–95 *mentio si quae* (v.l. *si qua*) | *de Capitolini furtis iniecta Petelli | te coram fuerit*. Remark that *si quae* is likewise corrupted to *si quā* against metre at Ter. *Eun.* 315 and *Haut.* 44.¹³⁶

2.12 Statius

No more than one instance, and that easy to dispose of:

agile studium et tenuissima uirtus
pacis opus, cum sacra uocant, nec inutile bellis
subsidium, si dextra neget. *Theb.* 6.551–53

Simply insert *est* after *agile*, as later MSS give and as Hall prints: 'theirs is a lightfoot sport, a field for the frailest valour, a pursuit of peace.'¹³⁷ Such a word was easily lost before *studium*. Else, if the cluster *-st st-* be felt too cacophonous (though note *Ach.* 1.600 *est stat*), perhaps read *his*, making explicit the word 'theirs' in Hall's version.

2.13 Martial

No more than two instances, the first of which graces the final couplet of 2.66:

unus de toto peccauerat orbe comarum
anulus, incerta non bene fixus acu.
hoc facinus Lalage speculo, quo uiderat, ultra est,
et cecidit saeuus icta Plecusa modis (Palmer: comis codd.).
desine iam, Lalage, tristes ornare capillos, 5
tangat et insanum nulla puella caput.
hoc salamandra notet uel saeuā nouacula nudet,
ut digna speculo fiat imago tua.

'Some have found the tone of this epigram to be unusually bitter, approaching a Juvenalian note,' says C. A. Williams.¹³⁸ But this charge only really applies to the final couplet 7–8, with its curse that either a 'salamander' or a 'razor' remove the hair from Lalage's head—a rather unexpected execration after the gentler reproof of 5–6, in which Martial merely asks that Lalage refrain from having a servant style her hair again. The logic is puzzling: why urge a woman not to arrange her hair if you intend her to lose it anyway? Puzzling too is the simile in the wish 'may the hair on your head fall out, so that it appears as bald as your mirror is flat' (assuming this is what *ut digna speculo fiat imago tua* means).¹³⁹ I conjecture that 7–8 are an interpolation, for the above-given reasons and another. It is

¹³⁶ Pezzini 2024: 483–84.

¹³⁷ Hall et al. 2007: 1.156. I have adapted the translation of Melville 1992: 149.

¹³⁸ Williams 2004: 216.

¹³⁹ Heraeus and Borovskij 1974: xxix; Shackleton Bailey 1993: 173.

Martial's usual way to conclude an epigram by enjoining his addressee to stop committing an objectionable act, and the word with which he so enjoins them, *desine*, invariably comes at the beginning of the *first* line of the *final* couplet, not, as here, in the first line of the penultimate: 3.74, 5.50, 11.39. The only apparent exception to this tendency is 8.31, where *desine* indeed comes in the penultimate couplet; but in that poem the final lines are at least explanatory of the foregoing: they do not, like 2.66.7–8, form an afterthought that renders the poet's earlier point meaningless.

If 2.66.7–8 are indeed interpolated, the only remaining case in Martial is that in the third line of 5.69:

Antoni, Phario nihil obiecture Pothino
 et leuius tabula quam Cicerone nocens,
 quid gladium demens Romana stringis in ora?
 hoc admisisset nec Catilina nefas.
 impius infando miles corrumpitur auro, 5
 et tantis opibus uox tacet una tibi,
 quid prosunt sacrae pretiosa silentia linguae?
 incipient omnes pro Cicerone loqui.

Skutsch says of v. 3, 'the line is obviously corrupt, since *Romana ora* cannot mean "the mouth of Rome", which is the sense here required'.¹⁴⁰ This view is founded on a parallel in a similar epigram, 3.66.1–4:

par scelus admisit Phariis Antonius armis:
 abscidit uultus ensis uterque sacros.
 illud, laurigeros ageres cum laeta triumphos,
 hoc tibi, Roma, caput, cum loquereris, erat.
 Antoni tamen est peior, quam causa Pothoni: 5
 hic facinus domino praestitit, ille sibi.

Though accepted by N. E. Collinge, and supported by a similar metaphor in Front. *Ver.* 2.p.142 (*M. Tullius summum supremumque os Romanae linguae fuit*),¹⁴¹ Skutsch's view is not irrefragably true.¹⁴² For when Martial says 'why in your madness do you draw sword against *Roman* mouths?', he could well be generalizing from the particular: Cicero is 'the mouthpiece of the Romans', and so to shut his mouth is to shut theirs too. Be it noted that Skutsch's own proposal to correct this line, *quid gladium demens Romana <a!> stringis in ora*,¹⁴³ does not answer his own cavil, and furthermore employs *a!* in a manner quite contrary to Martial's typical use of this interjection.¹⁴⁴

M. M. Willcock's proposal, that we understand *Romana* [...] *ora* as ablative, 'upon the shore',¹⁴⁵ would be attractive if this poem were not otherwise so clearly concerned with stifled speech, and if *hoc admisisset nec Catilina nefas* did not follow in v. 4 (the claim 'not even Catiline would have drawn his sword *on Roman shores*' being absurd). Emendators have only two options: either to exchange *stringis* for a verb beginning with a vowel and consisting of three syllables, or to exchange *Romana* for another word qualifying *ora* and itself ending in a long vowel or consonant. The first of these is not a promising approach: *stringere* is the *mot juste* for drawing a weapon against an opponent (with *in* + acc. at Ov. *Am.* 1.6.14, *Rem.* 377; [Ov.] *Nux* 174; Stat. *Theb.* 8.140–41, *Silv.* 3.5.87), and Koch, *TLL* VI.2.2019.31–23.5 (s.v. *gladius*), furnishes no plausible alternative that will fit the metre. We are forced to try the other way. Since no neuter plural adjective in Latin

¹⁴⁰ Skutsch 1960: 196 n. 5.

¹⁴¹ For further sentiments of this kind, see Canobbio 2011: 525; 528.

¹⁴² Collinge 1970: 196 n. 5.

¹⁴³ Skutsch 1985: 57.

¹⁴⁴ The use of *a!* in Martial is confined to the fixed expressions *a! pudet* (4.67.7, 6.10.4, 12.15.9), *a! miser* (7.65.3), *a! quotiens* (14.115.2), *a! scelus* and *a! facinus* (11.70.5, 11.91.3).

¹⁴⁵ Willcock *apud* Howell 1995: 152.

ends in a long vowel or consonant, our only salvation must consist in a genitive. For *Romana* I therefore conjecture *nostrorum*: ‘the voice(s) of our countrymen.’ For this common employment of substantival *nostrī*, meaning ‘our people’ (especially ‘Romans’), see the examples given at *OLD* s.v. *noster* 7b, adding *Ov. Fast.* 6.545 and *Tr.* 4.2.33. The idiom is sufficiently well-evidenced in verse to be plausibly conjectured here, but rare enough to have perhaps invited the gloss *Romanorum*, which, ousting *nostrorum*, may then have been adapted for metre’s sake to *Romana*, or, if written with the scribal abbreviation ζ for *orum*, outright mistaken for it.¹⁴⁶ For such a gloss, consider *Juv.* 3.145, where on f. 97^r of Paris. lat. 7800A (s. x) a second hand has penned above *nostrorum* the elucidation *Romanz*, or 10.273, where above *nostros* the same hand has penned *Romanos* on f. 107^v. Havet posits the same corruption at *Phaed. App.* 8.16 Zago, suggesting *unum de nostris* for N’s unmetrical *unum de Romanis*.¹⁴⁷

2.14 Juvenal

Modern editors print 8.105–07 thus:

inde
sacrilegus Verres referebant nauibus altis
occulta spolia et plures de pace triumphos.

It was easily in Juvenal’s power to write, which Delz conjectures, *occulte*, ‘by stealth’.¹⁴⁸ Cicero twice uses the adverb in reference to Verres’ relieving the unhappy Sicilians of their public treasures, as Delz notes: *Verr.* 2.2.88 *hoc adhuc oppidum Verres prope solum inuenit [...] unde [...] nihil occulte [...] posset auferre*; and 2.4.23 *per istos quae uolebat clam imponenda, occulte exportanda curabat: nauem denique maximam [...] apud istos faciendam aedificandamque curauit*.

2.15 Miscellaneous Fragments

The text of Varro Atacinus fr. 11.3–5 Blänsdorf is transmitted in the form *quae maxima diuis | laetitia stat. tunc longe gratissima Phoebi | dextera consimiles meditatur reddere uoces*. J. Rutgerius offers *laetitia est. at tunc*, and all editors accept it.¹⁴⁹

2.16 Carmina Epigraphica

An epigraphic poem apparently of Flavian date contains the following couplet: *CLE* 1549.13–14 *quas ego, quas genitor pro te dabo, nate querellas, | raptumque Stygio detinet unda lacu*. Presumably the stonemason meant to write *raptum quem*, as Bücheler conjectures.¹⁵⁰

3 CONCLUSION

The classical poets in whose works we find short vowel-final syllables most frequently scanned as light before initial *s* *impure*, and whose use of this licence is least easily (or indeed cannot be) emended away, are Accius and Lucilius (2nd cent. BC), Lucretius and Horace *qua* satirist (1st cent. BC), and Phaedrus (1st cent. AD): five authors, all writing in different periods and different

¹⁴⁶ The text of Martial’s *Epigrammata* depends on two MS families, β and γ , save where an epigram is given in one of the florilegia that make up a third family α (= codd. HTRK). Where α is available, it not unfrequently reveals a reading in $\beta\gamma$ to be a gloss or banalization (e.g. 4.59.2 *gutta* T] *gemma* $\beta\gamma$; 12.94.5 *calabris* T] *doctis* $\beta\gamma$; 13.26.1 *tendentia* R] *durantia* β : *dica*-uel *ditantia* γ), so that, where α is not available, we should be particularly suspicious of readings in $\beta\gamma$ which could be explained, as here, by a gloss or trivialization. For glosses imported into only one of α or β or γ , note the following: 1.82.8 *ruit* β] *cecidit* γ (contra metrum); 1.90.6 *fututor* $\beta\gamma$] *adulter* α (contra metrum); 3.47.15 *urbem* β] *Romam* γ ; 4.14.7 *uagus* β] *uagus piger* γ (contra metrum); 4.66.3 *excussa* β] *tibi sumpta* γ ; 5.58.7 *serum* γ] *tardum* β ; 6.21.8 *uirum* β] *louem* γ ; 6.28.6 *integer* γ] *innocens* β ; 6.77.7 *ginno* Sciver] *mulo* β : *gybbo* γ ; 7.67.11 *redire* β] *reueri* γ ; 7.86.7 *Hispani* β] *argenti* γ ; 9.11.12 *rebellas* β] *repugnans* γ ; 13.65.1 *auis haec* α] *perdix* β : *aut haec* γ ; 14.81.2 *tetrico* γ] *tristi* T β ; 14.106.1 *panda* ζ] *pansa* γ : *laxa* β ; 14.126.2 *togula* T β] *laena* γ ; 14.146.1 *cosmi* T β] *nardi* γ .

¹⁴⁷ Havet 1895: 128.

¹⁴⁸ Delz 1998: 126. For *occulte* in verse see *Virg. Aen.* 12.418, [Tib.] 3.12.6, *Ov. Am.* 1.8.49, *Sen. Tro.* 908, *Stat. Theb.* 11.565.

¹⁴⁹ Rutgerius 1699: 250.

¹⁵⁰ Bücheler 1895–97: 2.739.

genres, but united by certain overlapping stylistic and metrical tendencies.¹⁵¹ Accius' *Tragedies* and Lucilius' *Satires* are plainly very far apart in content and purpose, so that for them this feature is perhaps best analysed as an ordinary and unmarked quality of Latin versification in the second-century BC. Lucretius, as a deliberate archaizer, presumably borrowed the device from earlier poetry for the same reason that he so vigorously cultivated 'sigmatic ecthipsis' and suchlike phenomena, *viz.* to give an ancient patina to his verse, and the appearance of venerable authority to his teachings.¹⁵² Horace, by contrast, wrote his *Satires* in an avowedly Lucilian vein, and took from his model not a few stylistic quirks which do not resurface in the more polished *Epistles*. In so doing with *s impure*, his intention may well have been to give a rough, possibly colloquial, and certainly Lucilian tint to his satirical poetry.¹⁵³ If short final vowels before *s*-clusters acquired an 'informal' or 'satiric' colouring from their appearance in Horatian and other satire (e.g. Varr. *Menipp.* 123.2 Astbury), that may explain why Phaedrus admits them into his moralizing and metrically unpretentious *Fabulae*.

Lucilius was deemed by Horace a 'harsh composer of verses' (*Serm.* 1.4.8 *durus componere uersus*),¹⁵⁴ and Lucretius, though an accomplished versifier in his own time, is now generally thought to have fallen 'below the standard of elegance attained by the Augustan poets'.¹⁵⁵ In light of these considerations, it seems both odd and hard to credit that Propertius, with his seven seeming examples, would imitate the metrical practice of authors whose poetic aims and style were so very distant from his own; and the ease with which these readings can be emended away gives one little confidence in their authenticity. Indeed, the desperate state of his MS tradition in general should relieve us of any scruples about banishing these apparent exceptions from modern texts.¹⁵⁶ Similar considerations apply to the MSS of Catullus: the four transmitted examples of the heavy scansion can be emended with minimal strain, and the fifth commonly accepted conjectural instance can readily be improved so as not to import the licence. The sole example in Tibullus is rather more difficult to emend (though not difficult to athetize); on the other hand, the few examples in Virgil, Ovid, Manilius, Lucan, Seneca, Silius, Statius, Martial, Juvenal, and the anonymous poets of the *Ciris*, *Culex*, *Aetna*, *Octavia*—limited in no case but Ovid's to more than two or three—either can be easily removed, or needs must be removed on grounds independent of the metrical oddity.¹⁵⁷ I conclude that Hoenigswald's 'rule of avoidance' was followed, more probably than not, with far greater strictness than our MSS have led us to believe.

What became of *s impure* in the verses of late antiquity?¹⁵⁸ One might have expected the light scansion, being by all accounts the better attested in the better writers, eventually to win out over the heavy; but such is not the case.¹⁵⁹ Of the heavy scansion there are c.153 examples in the works of Latin poets writing after Juvenal until Eugenius of Toledo (+657), of the light c.54.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, while those who favour the light scansion generally do so no more than once or twice, those who favour the heavy tend to do so from deliberate policy: e.g. Prudentius (41×), Sidonius Apollinaris (10×), Dracontius (20×), Venantius Fortunatus (19×). Perhaps it was by analogy to the heterosyllabic treatment of *s*-clusters within words that later poets began

¹⁵¹ It would hardly be controversial to say that the three hexametrist—Lucilius, Lucretius, Horace (in his *Satires*)—are more similar to each other in point of elision, hiatus, word-placement, enjambement, *etc.* than to poets such as Virgil or Ovid or Statius.

¹⁵² For the archaistic function of sigmatic ecthipsis in Lucretius, see Butterfield 2008b: 151; and on his archaizing use of early Latin in general, Taylor 2023.

¹⁵³ Thus Dawes 1745: 4 and Marx 1905: 2.110. See Chahoud 2018: 151 for Horace's stylistic and metrical borrowings from Lucilius, Gow 1901: xxv for other metrical features found in the *Satires* but not *Epistles*.

¹⁵⁴ Tyrrell (1876: 357) speaks of his 'carelessness of style, and ruggedness of metre'.

¹⁵⁵ Merrill 1924: 237.

¹⁵⁶ On the corrupt state of Propertius' text see e.g. Butrica 1997.

¹⁵⁷ No example seems to present itself in Persius, nor in Valerius Flaccus, on whom in this connexion see Liberman 2002: 1.162–63.

¹⁵⁸ For Prudentius' treatment of it, see Strzelecki 1930–31: 497–502; Palla 1983: 261–62; and for that of Venantius Fortunatus, Leo 1881: 426. For much later writers, see, e.g., on Aldhelm, Ehwald 1919: 755; Orchard 1994: 77–78; on Alcuin, Godman 1982: cix; and for medieval versification in general, Norberg 2004: 2.

¹⁵⁹ Hoenigswald 1949: 279–80; Müller 1894: 382, 386.

¹⁶⁰ This according to a perusal of the MQDQ database of Latin poetry (Mastandrea et al. 2007). I exclude Comedian, whose versification diverges too widely from the classical standard to be in any way comparable, and Terentianus Maurus, whose meta-discussions of *s impure* somewhat obscure the nature of his actual usage: for his use of the light scansion, note 1165 *litora Sciron*, 1122 *ostendere strages*; for the heavy, 282 *addita stili*, 1063 *quisque scire* [...] *quisque scribere*, 1064 *ante stare*, 1065 *ante Stesichorum*, 1082 *stare spumeus*, 1103 *unde scissa* [...] *unde spissa*, 1104 *ecce stagna*, 1199 *unde scire* [...] *percussa spumat*; for ancepts, 930 *namque spatia*, 1370 *negare spatia*.

to treat them also at word-beginning as capable of making position. Indeed, as the quantitative system of versification, with the passage of time, gradually ceased to reflect the patterns of actual speech, it is arguably no surprise to see later poets preferring straightforward rules over the intricate and by now archaic conventions of their classical forebears.

As for prose rhythm, no extensive study of *s impure* in that field has been conducted since Collinge,¹⁶¹ and the important question of whether rhythmical authors avoided clausulae which depended for their validity upon a short vowel before *s impure* has yet to be fully answered.¹⁶² That the natural scansion would be the light is suggested by the evidence assembled above (esp. Lucilius, Lucretius, Horace), but scholars of Latin prose rhythm have not uniformly adopted this view.¹⁶³ Decisive evidence from the usual tests, such as pre-consonantal *atque*, is not available in abundance: from Cicero one can cite only *Pis.* 19 *tamquam truncus atquē stīpēs* and *De Or.* 1.158 *doctores atquē scriptōrēs* (H: *scriptores atque doctores* L)¹⁶⁴—neither at the end of a sentence. But as further research into this interesting field of study would extend my paper well beyond its proper bounds, I leave it for others to look into.

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¹⁶¹ Collinge 1970.

¹⁶² Müller *apud* Müller and Ehlers (1983: 451) states that Petronius, at least, lengthens or shortens the preceding syllable according as it appears in the rise or fall of the foot.

¹⁶³ Zielinski (1904: 174–75) maintains that the proper scansion was the heavy; Hutchinson (1995: 486 n. 2) replies that the evidence 'strongly encourages the view that no consonant combinations lengthen a preceding final syllable'. Keeline and Kirby (2019: 166), in a recent computerized study of prose rhythm, state that they 'do lengthen a short final open syllable followed by an *s impura*'. But inspection of the Python code provided in their digital version of record reveals it to be actually so configured as to scan such syllables as light; and running it twice with both configurations shows that the data furnished on pp. 169–83 reflects the light scansion, not the heavy. For what it is worth, adopting the light scansion appears to yield more rhythms of the artistic variety in authors who already cultivate such rhythms (Cicero, rhetorical works; Velleius Paterculus; Seneca the Younger, *Epistulae Morales*; Q. Curtius Rufus; Pomponius Mela; Pliny the Younger; Suetonius, *Vitae*; Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*; [Quintilian], *Declamationes Maiores*), and fewer in those who favour more spondaic and heroic cadences (Livy, Sallust). Keeline *per litt.* kindly clarifies that 'do lengthen' on p. 166 should probably be considered as a miswriting for 'do not lengthen', since the latter more accurately captures his own intuitions as to how Latin was pronounced.

¹⁶⁴ Cicero seems to favour *actor* in this connexion: *De Orat.* 3.126 *doctores auctoresque*, *Brut.* 315 *auctore et doctore*; after *atque* at *Dom.* 142 and *Red. Sen.* 24.

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