

Federica Lazzerini

Merton College

Thesis for DPhil in Classical Languages and Literatures:

The scholar at work

Varro's study of the Latin language

Acknowledgements

I firstly want to thank my supervisors, Wolfgang de Melo and Luca Castagnoli, for taking me all the way through this doctoral journey, guiding me in my work, advising me in my decisions, and endorsing me in every way.

This work could not have been completed without the support provided to me by the Clarendon Fund, to which I am immensely grateful for making this wonderful experience possible for me. I also extend my gratitude to the University for setting up the Covid-19 Scholarships Extension Fund last year, which enabled me to continue working and to finish my dissertation despite the delays caused by the many challenges brought about by this global pandemic.

The activities and seminars at the Faculties of Classics, Philosophy, and Linguistics have been endless sources of inspiration for me and have allowed me to nurture my project in stimulating environments. In particular, I want to thank the scholars who examined my work for my Transfer of Status, Tobias Reinhardt and Alessandro Vatri, and for my Confirmation of Status, Barnaby Taylor and Philomen Probert: their comments and suggestions have all significantly contributed to improving my work and directed me to pursue paths and questions which proved rewarding.

Over these years I sought the advice of a number of scholars, who were so kind as to meet or correspond with me to discuss specific issues or expand on their views. I am fortunate to be able to count on the advice and guidance of Ermanno Malaspina, my former supervisor at the University of Turin. In-depths discussions with Alessandro Garcea, David Blank, Tobias Reinhardt, and Marion Durand were extremely enlightening, and I also benefited from consultations with Phillip Horky, Andreas T. Zanker, Adam Gitner, and Ilan Moradi. In addition, I learnt a lot from fruitful exchanges with Ólafur Arnason and Jenny Rallens, my colleagues and friends who share many of my research interests: our conversations on Varro, Augustine, and Stoicism sparked many a productive reflection.

Considerable endorsement came from my College, Merton, firstly, in the persons of Evert van Emde Boas and Rhiannon Ash, who were my Advisers and offered me guidance both with matters related to my thesis and with other projects. My College also supported me generously in attending international conferences, which have allowed me to share my work with experts in various subjects, receive insightful feedback, and form valuable connections. Beside academic and financial assistance, Merton also supported me on a personal level, helping me overcome personal challenges and fostering a thriving community which was sorely missed throughout 2020.

Finally, I am infinitely grateful to all my blood and chosen family. To my parents, for their constant love and support. To my siblings and cousins, for putting up with my stress over incomprehensible scholarly dilemmas. To Gemma Storti and Stefano Rozzi, my close friends and companions since the very beginning of this journey in the realm of Classics; although based in different places, we continue to walk this path together and support one another in the best alliance between friendship and work partnership. To all my friends, for being there, although scattered all around the globe. And above all to Francesco, for the patience, the adventures, the music, the love.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	1
ABBREVIATIONS AND CITATION FORMAT	3
INTRODUCTION	5
PART 1	19
1.1. <i>NATURA</i>	20
1.1.1. <i>Views on correct speech in antiquity</i>	22
1.1.2. <i>Varro's four criteria and different interpretations of natura</i>	26
1.1.3. <i>Nature, system, cosmos</i>	33
1.1.4. <i>Summary</i>	36
1.2. KINSHIP, FAMILIES, AND COMMON ROOTS	37
PART 2	47
2.1. THE STATE OF THE ARS: VARRO ON THE SCIENCE OF ETYMOLOGY	48
2.1.1. <i>The quattuor explanandi gradus</i>	50
2.1.2. <i>"To hunt for an opinion"</i>	57
a. The phrase in <i>De oratore</i>	60
b. The phrase in <i>De lingua Latina</i>	64
2.2. THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF ETYMOLOGY	67
2.2.1. <i>Etymology and philosophy of language before Varro</i>	67
a. The Presocratic cosmologists, the Atomists from Democritus to Epicurus, and the Sophists	69
b. Plato's <i>Cratylus</i> and the Stoics	74
c. Aristotle	80
d. Etymology in textual criticism	84
e. First-century grammar: Trypho	86
f. Etymology and antiquarianism	87
g. Summary	89
2.2.2. <i>Varro's theoretical principles: a reconstruction</i>	90
2.2.3. <i>Conclusion</i>	101
2.3. ETYMOLOGICAL PRACTICE	103
2.3.1. <i>The arrangement of the subject matter</i>	103
2.3.2. <i>Strings of letters and word-segmentation</i>	111
a. Etymological methods before Varro	113
b. Varro's method	121
2.3.3. <i>The Stoic (?) στοιχεῖα τῆς ἔτυμολογίας</i>	126
PART 3	137
3.1. ANALOGY	143
3.1.1. <i>Grammatical analogy</i>	143
a. The Alexandrians	144
b. The epigones	149

c. Analogists in Rome	158
3.2. ANOMALY	164
3.2.1. <i>“Logical” anomaly: Chrysippus</i>	164
3.2.2. <i>“Structural” anomaly: book VIII</i>	168
3.2.3. <i>Grammatical anomaly: Aristarchus and Crates</i>	171
a. Alexandria and Pergamum	171
b. Aristarchus	174
c. Crates	176
d. Roman grammatical literature	188
3.3. ANALOGY AND ANOMALY IN VARRO	191
3.3.1. <i>Systemic regularity or irregularity</i>	191
3.3.2. <i>Overall morphological regularity or irregularity</i>	193
a. Defending analogy in book IX	194
b. Varro’s theory of analogical proportions	201
c. Specific points on analogy	213
3.3.3. <i>Analogy as a tool of correction</i>	215
CONCLUSION	221
BIBLIOGRAPHY	227
EDITIONS OF ANCIENT TEXTS	227
SECONDARY LITERATURE	236

Abstract

As part of a bigger project to investigate the history and features of Roman culture, Varro set out to study the Latin language in all its components: where its vocabulary came from, and what such derivation revealed about the history of Latin speakers; how its words were arranged into classes based on their morphological features, and to what extent this arrangement was rationally motivated and self-consistent; and how various people used language differently, some employing distinct sections of its lexicon depending on their backgrounds or professions, others bending grammatical rules either out of ignorance or for literary purposes.

My thesis focuses on some of the main subjects explored in Varro's linguistic writings: "nature" as a criterion for *Latinitas*; the notion of "kinship" in language; etymology (both the theories underpinning it and the methods used to reconstruct the origin of a word); analogy and anomaly (notoriously the focal points of an ancient controversy and a *vexata quaestio* in Varronian scholarship). For each of these subjects, I inquire into how Varro engaged with the scholarship produced before him, what principles and methods he absorbed, and how he re-worked previous material to make it suitable for his own goals and readership. I use my findings to piece together a portrait of Varro as a scholar who had extensive knowledge of previous treatments of the subjects he tackled and drew on a multitude of sources, combining philosophical, literary critical, philological, and historical-antiquarian influences. I also highlight how Varro's production was aimed at contributing to the conversations ongoing in cultural circles in his own time, in which he was actively involved.

Abbreviations and citation format

- An.Gr.* *Anecdota Graeca*, ed. I. Bekker. 3 vols. (Berlin: G. C. Nauck 1814–1821).
- An.Ox.* *Anecdota Graeca e codd. manuscriptis Bibliothecae Regiae Parisiensis*, ed. J. A. Cramer (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1835–1837).
- BS* *Los filósofos estoicos: Ontología, lógica, física y ética*, eds. M. Boeri & R. Salles (Sankt Augustin 2014).
- CGL* *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum*, eds. G. Loewe & G. Goetz. 7 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner 1888–1901).
- CMG* *Corpus medicorum Graecorum*
- CPF* *Corpus dei papiri filosofici greci e latini: testi e lessico nei papiri di cultura greca e latina* (Florence: Olschki 1989–)
- CSEL* *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Prague; Vienna; Leipzig: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky 1895–1898).
- DK* *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. H. Diels & W. Kranz. 3 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann 1959–60 [1903]).
- EK* *Posidonius*, ed. L. Edelstein & I. G. Kidd. 3 vols. (Cambridge: University Press 1972).
- EM* *Etymologicum Magnum*, ed. Th. Gaisford (Oxford: University Press 1848).
- Et.Gen.* *Etymologicum Genuinum*, in *Etymologicum Magnum, Genuinum, Symeonis Etymologicum una cum Magna Grammatica, Etymologicum Magnum auctum*, eds. F. lasserre & N. Livadaras. 2 vols. (Rome: Edizioni dell’ateneo 1976).
- Et.Gud.* *Etymologicum Gudianum quod vocatur*, ed. E. L. De Stefani (Leipzig: Teubner 1909–1920).
- FDS* *Die Fragmente zur Dialektik der Stoiker*, ed. K. Hülser (Stuttgart: Frommann–Holzboog I–III 1987, IV 1988).
- FGrHist* *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, ed. F. Jacoby (Berlin; Leiden; Köln: Brill 1923–1958).
- FRL* *Fragmentary Republican Latin*, 5 vols., eds. S. M. Goldberg (vols. I–II), G. Manuwald (vols. I–V), (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press 2018–2019).
- GG* *Grammatici Graeci*, 4 vols., eds. G. Uhlig (vols. I/1, II/2), A. Hilgard (vols. I/3, IV), R. Schneider (vols. II/1, 3), A. Lentz (vol. III). (Leipzig: Teubner 1867–1901).
- GL* *Grammatici Latini*, ed. H. Keil (vols. I, IV–VII), M. Hertz (vols. II–III), H. Hagen (Suppl.) (Leipzig: Teubner 1855–80).
- GRF* *Grammaticae Romanae fragmenta*, ed. G. Funaioli (Leipzig: Teubner 1907).
- GRF Mazz.* *Grammaticae Romanae fragmenta aetatis Caesaris*, ed. A. Mazzarino (Turin: Loescher 1955).

- HRR* *Historicorum Romanorum reliquiae*, ed. H. Peter. 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner 1870–1906).
- LS* *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ed. A. A. Long & D. N. Sedley, 2 vols (Cambridge: University Press 1987).
- LSJ* *A Greek-English lexicon*, eds. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1925–1940).
- ROL* *Warmington, E. H. Remains of Old Latin*, ed. E. H. Warmington. 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass–London: Harvard University Press 1956–1959).
- SGLG* *Sammlung griechischer und lateinischer Grammatiker*, eds. K. Alpers, H. Erbse, A. Kleinlogel (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter 1974–).
- SVF* *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, ed. H. von Arnim (Stuttgart: Teubner I 1905, II–II 1903).
- ThLL* *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* (Leipzig 1900–).

Abbreviations of ancient authors by and large follow the *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* and *Liddle-Scott-Jones Dictionary*. Additions or variations: AESCHIN. *fals. legat.* (= Aeschines *De falsa legatione*); ARCHYT. (= Archytas Tarentinus); ASCLEP. (= Asclepiades Myrleanus); AUR. OPIL. (= Aurelius Opillus); CORN. *comp.* (= Cornutus *Theologiae Graecae compendium*); CURT. NIC. (= Curtius Nicias Ascaloniensis); D.T. *Ars* (= Dionysius Thrax *Ars grammatica*), *fr.* (= *fragmenta*); EPICUR. *ep. Hdt.* (= Epicurus *Epistula ad Herodotum*), *ep. Phyt.* (= *Epistula ad Phytoclea*); EUDOR. (= Eudorus); GAL. *comp. med.* (= Galenus *De compositione medicamentorum*), *PHP* (= *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*), *soph.* (= *De sophismatis in verbo contingentibus*); FRONTO *Parth.* (Fronto *De bello Parthico*); HERODIC. (= Herodicus); HP. *prisc. med.* (= Hippocrates *De prisca medicina*); HYPsicr. (= Hypsicrates); IUL. TOLET. (= Iulianus Toletanus); PH. *aet. mund.* (Philo Judaeus *De aeternitate mundi*), *decal.* (= *De decalogo*), *Deus* (= *Quod Deus sit immutabilis*), *leg. alleg.* (= *Legum allegoriarum*), *opif.* (= *De opificio mundi*); PHILOX. (= Philoxenus); PIND. (= Ptolemaeus Pindarion); ORIG. *orat.* (= Origenes *De oratione*); TYR. (= Tyrannio); VAL. SORAN. (= Valerius Soranus); VARRO *antiq. litt.* (= *De antiquitate litterarum*), *ARD* (= *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*), *ARH* (= *Antiquitates rerum humanarum*), *form.* (= *Περὶ χαρακτήρων [De formulis]*), *gent. pop. Rom.* (= *De gente populi Romani*), *gramm.* (= *Disciplinarum liber I de grammatica*), *orig. ling. Lat.* (= *De origine linguae Latinae*), *quaest. Plaut.* (= *Quaestiones Plautinae*), *serm. Lat.* (= *De sermone Latino*), *simil. verb.* (= *De similitudine verborum*), *util. serm.* (= *De utilitate sermonis*), *vita pop. Rom.* (= *De vita populi Romani*).

The numeral references to different sections of ancient works are as following: books are cited as Roman numerals; chapters, paragraphs, and pages of specific editions as Arabic numerals; sub-sections are separated by dots, lines on the pages of specific editions by commas. E.g.: QUINT. *inst.* I 5.6; A.D. *Synt.* p. 273,10–11.

Introduction

Gino Funaioli's 1907 collection of fragments of Roman grammar opens with a section on *grammaticae primordia*, which gathers the sporadic comments on rare words, etymologies, and the origin of the Latin alphabet by the earliest authors of the Latin canon. Funaioli placed the starting point of proper grammatical literature in the age of the Gracchi, dividing this literature into *grammatica antevarroniana* and *aetatis Varroniana*. For the first editor of the grammatical literature from Republican Rome, there was a clear watershed "before" and "after Varro".

One can develop this thought in different directions and even talk, as D. Taylor did, of a "Varronian revolution in linguistics".¹ I find it more congenial to frame Varro in a pivotal position, at the intersection of the past, present, and future of Roman linguistic thought. He was receptive of the scholarship on grammar, textual and literary criticism, and rhetoric that had been produced in the Greek world, engaged with it critically, and contributed to its integration into the cultural conversations in Rome; he participated actively in the debate on language with his contemporaries; and he became an authority for future developments of Roman grammar, among the scholars most frequently referred to by the late-antique grammarians. As such, Varro provides a vantage point of observation for any scholar interested in ancient linguistics.

This unique role derives, in part, from being in the right place at the right time. The life of Varro, who was born in 116 and died in 27 BCE, coincided with a period of intensive cultural exchange between the Roman and Greek worlds (in great part as a consequence of the many Roman campaigns in the East), especially concentrated in vibrant cultural centres such as Athens and Rhodes. In this century, scholars who had been trained in the Alexandrian and Pergamenian traditions and who worked in various centres in the Mediterranean gradually developed normative grammar; many of them either taught prominent Roman figures (such as Aelius Stilo and even Pompey) in Rhodes and Athens or even relocated in Rome, working as private tutors for the elite and fuelling the development of grammatical discourse there. Also in this century, movements of people and doctrinal contamination breathed new life into the main philosophical schools. Posidonius blended Platonic and Epicurean elements into mainstream Stoicism; the Academy entered its fourth phase under Philo of Larissa, who innovated its conceptions of knowledge and τέχνη and opened up to the teaching of rhetoric; Aenesidemus and Antiochus broke away from the Academy,

¹ Taylor (1996 p. 10).

the former to revive Pyrrhonism, the latter to begin a new school of thought which he maintained restored the philosophy of the *veteres* in its original form (the “Old Academy”). Noble Romans such as Cicero, Atticus, and Varro himself, who undertook educational journeys in the East, had the chance to hear Antiochus in Athens. Other encounters could take place in Rome itself, especially from the early 80s: Posidonius stayed at Cicero’s villa at *Tusculum* when he was sent as an ambassador from Rhodes; after Athens was devastated in the First Mithridatic War and the *scholae* of the Academy, the Peripatos, and the Stoa were closed, many philosophers (including Philo) fled to Rome and Sulla brought Aristotle’s and Theophrastus’ works to Rome; additional Aristotelian and Stoic literature was acquired by Lucullus after his campaign in Pontus in the 60s.

The mid-first century also saw the flourishing of Rome’s own philosophical literature, from the resurgence of Pythagoreanism (pursued, among others, by Nigidius Figulus, whose erudition apparently rivalled Varro’s)² to the monumental achievements in this field by Lucretius (whose acquaintance with Varro cannot be demonstrated, but some similarities suggest that the two were familiar with each other’s work)³ and Cicero (whose exchanges with Varro are well documented). Being involved in the cultural elite of Rome in this period also meant participating in the rich, diverse, and multi-layered conversation on language-related topics, on which converged the outputs of philosophical discourse, historical-antiquarian research, philological and textual-critical work, and rhetorical treatises.

But Varro’s generation also lived through all the phases of turmoil which marked the final act of the Republic, bringing it to an end among fratricidal strife and the dissolution of what had been regarded as the order of things. Even before the events leading up to the Civil War, Romans of Varro’s age were in their prime when the aftermath of the Social War brought about unprecedented transformations in the demographics of the Roman citizenry, the composition of its elite, and the inclusion of people with different backgrounds in Roman politics and culture. Being a Sabine from *Reate*, Varro had a special perspective on the question of who had the right to be considered a Roman and what Roman identity consisted of.

Surveying Varro’s production in light of these historical developments yields an interesting picture. The extensiveness of this production (which, according to the sources, amounted to tens

² GELL. XIX 14; see Flinterman (2014) and Garcea (2019).

³ Deschamps (1997, 1998), Galzerano (2015).

of titles and hundreds of books, spanning an impressive array of topics and genres)⁴ inspired awe already in antiquity⁵; although most of these works only survive in fragments (or do not survive at all), it is possible, by combining cross-references, to distinguish a series of phases. Among the earliest works were the *Saturae Menippeae*,⁶ which bear traces of Varro's fascination for Oriental cults and his struggle to reconcile their practices with the Roman *mores*⁷: the later satires already convey a sense of malaise facing a Rome that was changing and becoming unrecognisable.⁸ The years from 78 to 48, when Varro was involved in military campaigns at Pompey's side, were presumably the period during which he wrote technical treatises which, because of their nature, would have been useful for the activities that he or others around him were undertaking.⁹ He returned to technical literature in his old age, writing the *Res rusticae*, his only work to have survived in its entirety; the juridical and historical-biographical works are in large part difficult to date. The bulk of Varro's antiquarian and linguistic writings were produced in the course of the 40s and one is led to think that this concentration in this period was not coincidental. One might point out that such a substantial production (and one which required a lot of research) would have been difficult to accomplish before 48, when Varro returned to Rome after following Pompey for almost thirty years. However, the 40s were not quite an uneventful decade for Varro either, as his safety was put in danger first by Antony's ambition to acquire his estate at *Cassinum*¹⁰ and then by the proscriptions after the Ides of March; furthermore, the works produced outside this period would have required research work too. Therefore, although the practical circumstances may have played a part in determining this phase of Varro's production, the choice of the subject to which he devoted so much work (Roman culture) and the abundance of its outputs suggest a more compelling motive and a greater goal.¹¹

Varro's monumental research project on the history of Roman culture included several antiquarian books (all fragmentary) which tackled the subject from different angles. The *Antiquitates*

⁴ A catalogue of Varro's works was transmitted by St. Jerome (*GRF* VARRO T23). On the full catalogue in detail, see Dahlmann (1935); for an overview, see Werner et al. (2006).

⁵ QUINT. *inst.* XII 11.24: *Quam multa, paene omnia tradidit Varro!*

⁶ Cichorius (1922 pp. 207–26) and Cèbe (1972 pp. xv–xviii) dated the Satires between 80 and 67; for Salanitro (1990 p. 11), some satires were added in a later period, up to 55. Others argue that the composition of the satires spanned the entirety of Varro's life.

⁷ E.g. in the satire *Eumenides*: see Rolle (2017).

⁸ E.g. in *Sexagesis*: see Leonardis (2014, 2015).

⁹ For instance, geographical works like *De ora maritima*, *De litoralibus*, *De aestuariis*, and *Peri okeanou* may have been written when Varro was naval commander against Mithridates in 67–66; the *Ephemeris navalis ad Pompeium* was written when Pompey was about to leave for Spain in 77.

¹⁰ Antony desisted after Caesar's intervention (*Cic. Phil.* II 103).

¹¹ I discussed this view in greater detail in a conference paper (2019), now in preparation for publication.

rerum humanarum et divinarum reconstructed the origins and developments of the Roman state and civilization: the *res humanae* covered the history of Rome's topography, state organisation, notable buildings and objects, etc.; the *res divinae* included the Roman religious apparatus, places of worship, priesthoods, etc.¹² *De vita populi Romani* dealt with the historical background of various Roman customs and practices, *De gente populi Romani* with the ethnicity and genealogy of the Roman people.¹³ The *Aetia*, as the title and the six extant fragments indicate, investigated the "causes" behind some typical Roman traditions. To this list we may add a sort of handbook *De officio senatus habendi*, which Varro himself called Εἰσαγωγικός, written for Pompey upon the latter's request when he became consul (in 71)¹⁴: the book, which broke down the standing orders of the Senate, also included—with an antiquarian flavour—digressions on places, words, and traditions connected to the tasks of the Senate.

Varro's works on language seem to have been an integral part of the same project to study Roman culture: in fact, the recent studies on ancient antiquarianism have underscored that philological research was conceived as an asset to the study of antiquities.¹⁵ Therefore, framing Varro as a grammarian would be an incomplete characterisation¹⁶: his linguistic writings, from what we can tell from the titles and extant fragments,¹⁷ were not aimed at studying "language" per se, but specifically the language of the Roman people, a token of their past and present culture as much as their monuments, sacred sites, and festivals.

De antiquitate litterarum, written under the influence of Accius, Varro's first teacher, and dedicated to him,¹⁸ illustrated the history of the Latin alphabet and Roman writing conventions.

There have been discussions about the three fragments which Goetz & Schoell (authors of the 1910 edition of *De lingua Latina* and the other grammatical fragments) ascribed to *De origine*

¹² The *ARD* can be dated to 47–46: they were dedicated to Caesar as *pontifex maximus*, a title he had held since 63, but it is unlikely that the dedication happened before Pharsalus, nor when the *pontifex maximus* was absent from Italy, as Caesar was when he left for Spain in November 46: see Horsfall (1972). There is less information about the *ARH*, but it is unlikely that a big chronological gap separated them from the *ARD*, as the two works were conceived as complementary parts of a whole (Cic. *ac.* I 9).

¹³ *Vita pop. Rom.* was written between 49 (as frs. 118–119 mention events which took place during the Civil War) and 32 (when Atticus, the dedicatee of the work, died). *Gent. pop. Rom.* probably dates to 43, as it discussed extensively the deification of kings, a crucial topic in the city's political discussions since Caesar's assassination and Octavian's ensuing endeavours to obtain his deification: see Ross Taylor (1934), Horsfall (1972), and Baier (1999).

¹⁴ All information on this book comes from GELL. XIV 7: Gellius says that the book was lost and summarises its content, which Varro had repeated in outline in his *Epistularum quaestionum libri*.

¹⁵ See the introduction to Arena & Piras (2018) and, below, §2.2.1.g.

¹⁶ More accurate was Cicero's description, in *Brutus* (written at the beginning of 46), as *diligentissimus investigator antiquitatis* (*Brut.* 60).

¹⁷ In addition to the references given in n4, see the overview in Collart (1954b pp. 19–31).

¹⁸ This provides a *terminus ante quem* for the date: Accius' death in 86.

linguae Latinae (45–47). Only fr. 46¹⁹ is explicitly attributed to that work: it concerns the spelling of words with palatal nasals (such as *angulus*, *anceps*, etc.) and because Varro reported different spelling conventions (<GG>, used by “the Greeks and our own Accius”, and <NG>) and remained non-committal, F. Della Corte surmised that this work must belong to Varro’s old age, when Accius’ influence had subsided.²⁰ For this chronological reason, Della Corte ruled out that fr. 45²¹ belonged to the same work, since it is attributed to a work dedicated to Pompey, which cannot be dated after Pharsalus; he suggested attributing the fragment to Εἰσαγωγικός. He also disputed the attribution of fr. 47, quoted from a “fifth book on the Roman language”,²² because, according to St. Jerome’s catalogue, *De origine linguae Latinae* only had three books.

The two fragments for which Della Corte rejected the attribution to *De origine linguae Latinae* both concern the composition of the Latin language from a blend of various idioms: they show that Varro endorsed—to an extent—the then popular theory that Latin derived from Greek, specifically the Aeolian dialect.²³ In fr. 45, Varro says that Romulus and his people absorbed the Greek language from “Evander and the other Arcadians” who “came to Italy then and passed the Aeolian language on to the barbarians”. In fr. 47, it is said that Varro distinguished various idioms (Aeolian, Gallic, the language of the *Tusci* and that of the *Etrusci*) “from [whose] blend originated what is now the Romans’ prevailing language”.²⁴ For Varro, Greek was one of the layers on which contemporary Latin had been built, but he also acknowledged that many other idioms had flowed into it, including the languages of all the Mediterranean and Celtic peoples with which Rome had formed commercial relationships over the centuries (even if their contributions only extended to lexicon) and the language of the Sabines, which Varro placed in a privileged position because of the aboriginal status of its speakers.²⁵

¹⁹ Ap. PRISC. gramm. p. 30,15–30.

²⁰ Della Corte (1981 pp. 155–6).

²¹ Ap. LYD. *Mag.* I 5.

²² Ap. LYD. *Mag.* II 13.

²³ On this topic see De Paolis (2016) and, specifically on Varro, Gitner (2015).

²⁴ This passage has puzzled scholars for two main reasons: one, there seems to be a double mention of the language of the Etruscans; two, there is no mention of the Sabine language, all the more baffling given Varro’s pride of his heritage and notorious tendency to underscore and sometimes exaggerate the Sabines’ contribution to Roman history and culture. I discussed these problems in my 2019 talk. See also n24.

²⁵ This vast and engrossing topic cannot be discussed within the scope of this dissertation. See Collart (1954b pp. 205–50), Pascucci (1979), Briquel (2001), and Russo (2011): the latter’s interpretation of fr. 47 seems the most persuasive one.

Della Corte would rather attribute fr. 47 to *De sermone Latino*, of which a good number of fragments survive but rather little can be said for certain.²⁶ The content of the fragments is very diverse, ranging from questions of orthography and prosody, etymology, metre, and words of dubious inflection, so that it is difficult to establish in what respect *De sermone Latino* differed from the almost contemporary *De lingua Latina*. It may be, as J. Collart suggested, that the latter “dealt with language itself (*lingua*), a purely grammatical treatise”, the former “with style (*sermo*), a treatise with a more literary colour”²⁷; or *sermo* might indicate colloquial language rather than a formal system.²⁸

Questions of inflection were also the subject of *De similitudine verborum* (the two extant fragments deal with specific dubious nouns) and *Περὶ χαρακτήρων*, which probably dealt with Latin flexional prototypes (*formulae*).²⁹ Scholars who endorsed the traditional interpretation of the controversy about analogy and anomaly (see §3) were inclined to assume that *De similitudine verborum* illustrated the theory of analogy, while *De utilitate sermonis*, its antithetical counterpart, discussed “the variations in usage”³⁰; this hypothesis rests more on the assumptions underpinning that interpretation than on the fragments themselves (three between the two works), which do not warrant any conclusive judgement on the content of the works.

The first of the *Disciplinarum libri*, on *grammatica*, may have been the first Roman treatise *On grammar* similar to the *Techne* attributed to Dionysius Thrax. As for the books of *Quaestiones Plautinae*, though included among the grammatical writings by Funaioli and Goetz & Schoell, they are probably better placed in the section of Varro’s textual-critical works³¹ rather than within the project on the history of Roman culture.

Finally, we have *De lingua Latina*: the product of an exceptional enterprise, to gather all existing knowledge in the fields of etymology, morphology, and syntax, into a single compendium dedicated to the Latin language, written, for the first time, by a Roman for a Roman readership.³² The

²⁶ Wilmanns (1864 pp. 49, 97) dated the work after 46, when Cicero wrote to Atticus seeking to obtain Tyrannio’s recently published treatise *On accents* (*Att. XII 6.2*), which Varro certainly used to build his own theory of prosody (see §3.1.1.b).

²⁷ Collart (1954b p. 29).

²⁸ *Sic* Werner et al. (2006).

²⁹ Funaioli (1907 pp. 206–7): “Graecis autem nominibus χαρακτήρ τύπος ὑπόδειγμα latine figuram formulam formam respondere ex CGL (s. his vocibus) perspicitur”. See *CGL II* s.vv. χαρακτήρ, τύπος, ὑπόδειγμα. The date and number of books of *Περὶ χαρακτήρων* are not known.

³⁰ *Sic* Collart (1954b p. 29), following Funaioli (*GRF* p. 185).

³¹ This production included *De comoediis Plautinis*, *De actibus scaenicis*, *De scaenicis actionibus*, and *De personis*.

³² On Greek precedents, such as Tyrannio’s *Περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς διαλέκτου* and Philoxenus’ *Περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτου*, see §3.1.1.b.

treatise comprised twenty-five books, divided into three main sections which, as Varro said, reflected the natural tripartition of speech into lexicon, morphology, and syntax and/or semantics.³³ After a first, introductory book, followed two hexads dedicated to lexicon (books II–VII) and morphology (VIII–XIII), then the remaining books concerned the formation of *sententiae* (XIV–XXV). The lexical hexad focused on the relation between names and things, analysed through the methods of etymological analysis; the morphological hexad focused on derivation and inflection and specifically analysed “analogy”, namely regularity and similarity in patterns of word-alteration. Both hexads were structured similarly: they comprised first a theoretical triad, where the doctrinal foundations of, respectively, etymology and analogy were probed and weighed up through a rhetorical scheme known as *disputatio in utramque partem*, which entailed exposing the arguments in favour of a principle and then those against it (or vice versa).³⁴ Then followed sets of three books where the principles of etymology and analogy were put in practice. Only books V–X (namely the practical books on etymology and the theoretical books on analogy) have survived almost in their entirety (although with some lacunae); of the content of books XIV–XXV very little can be said: Varro’s description in VIII 1 (that they discuss *ut ea* [scil. *verba*] *inter se ratione coniuncta sententiam efferant*) indicates that they dealt with syntax and/or semantics, but the few transmitted fragments are not very revealing.³⁵ With six (almost) complete books out of twenty-five, the remaining of which only survive in fragments, *De lingua Latina* is the best preserved of all of Varro’s linguistic writings, and therefore the most studied one.

The structure of the surviving books can be sketched out as following (grey shading marks the books which have survived almost wholly):

³³ *Ling.* VIII 1: *Quom oratio natura tripartita esset, ut superioribus libris ostendi, cuius prima pars, quemadmodum vocabula rebus essent imposita, secunda, quo pacto de his declinata in discrimina ierunt, tertia, ut ea inter se ratione coniuncta sententiam efferant* (“Seeing as speech is by nature threefold, as I showed in the previous books: the first part [deals with] how words were assigned to things, the second in what way the forms derived/inflected from these were marked by distinction, the third how these, combined with each other through an ordered construction, make up a sentence”).

³⁴ The seminal study of this scheme in Varro, who was influenced by its use in Cicero’s philosophical argumentations, is Ax (1995).

³⁵ See de Melo (2019a p. 93).

branch of linguistics > topic > analysed aspect of the topic	analysis of the topic	book	details of structure: (<i>ling.</i> VII 109–110)
lexicon > imposition of names > etymology	<i>de disciplina verborum originis</i> = theory: <i>disputatio in utramque partem</i>	II (0 frr.)	arguments against considering etymology an <i>ars</i> and useful
		III (3 frr.)	arguments for considering etymology an <i>ars</i> and useful
		IV (1 fr.)	description of the system of etymology
	<i>de verborum originibus</i> = practice	V	etymologies of names of places and things that are in places
		VI	etymologies of names of times and things that happen in time
		VII	etymologies of names of places and times taken from the poets

branch of linguistics > topic > analysed aspect of the topic	analysis of the topic	book	details of structure: (<i>ling.</i> VIII 24)
morphology > derivation and inflection > analogy (regularity, similarity)	<i>de earum declinatione disciplina</i> = theory: <i>disputatio in utramque partem</i>	VIII	arguments against regularity in morphology
		IX	arguments against irregularity / for regularity in morphology
		X	description of the system of morphology
	<i>de eius disciplinae propaginibus</i> = practice	XI (16 frr.)	specific points on inflection: nominal gender?
		XII (0 frr.)	specific points on inflection
		XIII (2 frr.)	specific points on inflection

syntax / semantics (<i>ling.</i> VIII 1)	XIV–XXV (6 frr. plus 8 <i>incertae sedis</i>)	<i>varia</i>
--	--	--------------

On the basis of on internal evidence, Rösch-Binde concluded that books II–IV (dedicated to a certain Publius Septumius)³⁶ were finished shortly after the end of the Civil War in the Spring of 45.³⁷ The whole treatise was promised to Cicero and was a long time in the making, as attested by Cicero’s expressions of impatience in his letters, especially from June 45 on: the treatise was yet to appear by the time of publication of Cicero’s *Academica*,³⁸ which was dedicated to Varro in exchange and thanks for *De lingua Latina*; the fact that, in the morphological books, Varro took positions in contrast with Caesar’s linguistic views may suggest that Varro delayed the publication until after Caesar’s death³⁹; and the death of the treatise’s dedicatee (December 43) gives us a *terminus ante quem*.

Therefore, all of Varro’s linguistic writings whose date can be reconstructed (with the exception of *De antiquitate litterarum*) were written in the same time-span as the antiquarian books: throughout the 40s. The loss of the majority of these books through centuries of transmission—despite their being a mine of useful information for a great number of later authors (from Gellius to Pliny, Augustine, the late-antique grammarians, and many others) who profitably harvested the fruits of Varro’s research in such a broad range of subjects—can be explained in different ways, but it is possible that it had to do, at least in part, with the quality of Varro’s prose. Although the scholarly judgement of Varro’s style has considerably backtracked since E. Norden infamously pronounced him the worst Latin writer before the Middle Ages,⁴⁰ the best that can be said, even by commentators who give a fair and balanced assessment, is that his prose is “serviceable”,⁴¹ not exactly elegant and pleasing—nor was it designed to be so.

Before being a writer, Varro was a scholar, and a good one at that. All the subjects he wrote about required extensive research, be it into the records of Roman laws and institutions, technical monographs on geographical and agricultural matters, the treatises of Roman antiquarians and lexicographers, the handbooks of Greek grammarians, and different doctrines about the nature of things transmitted by philosophical schools all around the Mediterranean world. The challenges to such an enterprise went beyond the hardship of acquiring research material, which was mostly

³⁶ *Ling.* V 1, VII 109.

³⁷ Rösch-Binde (2001).

³⁸ The earlier edition of the *Academica* had been completed in May, the second was finished by late July and saw a final revision in late August (Cic. *Att.* XII 44.4, XIII 12.3, 13–14.1, 14–15.1–2, 16.1, 17–18, 19.3–5; 21a.1, 22.1, 23.2, 24.1, 25.3, 44.2; *fam.* IX 8).

³⁹ This is V. Lomanto’s speculation: see §3.3.2.c.

⁴⁰ Norden (1898 pp. 194–200).

⁴¹ De Melo (2019a p. 237). See other assessments by Collart (1954b pp. 336–40) and Laughton (1960).

within reach for wealthy Romans well connected enough to have access to private libraries all around central Italy; furthermore, from 46 on, Varro found himself in a privileged position to carry on his research as Caesar appointed him as head of the first state library. But beyond the practical difficulties, Varro's task, particularly for the linguistic writings, entailed engaging with knowledge that was transmitted before subjects were systematized and standard definitions were agreed upon. Varro wrote about grammar at a time when this was still a discipline in the making, and the property of its concepts was contended between exegetists, philosophers, rhetoricians, and antiquarians, all of whom approached, framed, and analysed topics like etymology, word-alteration, and linguistic correctness from different perspectives and with different goals. The frustration of a scholar who had to draft coherent theories from previous unsystematic scholarship sometimes emerges: for example, *ling. X*, where Varro breaks down the doctrine of analogy, opens with the claim that this subject had been poorly treated before, and basic concepts like similarity and proportion needed to be clarified once and for all. There is also a clear desire on Varro's part not just to assemble a patchwork of previous contributions to the various topics, but to harmonise them into organic pieces of scholarship—scholarship, moreover, suitable and profitable for a Roman readership, which therefore often required adapting terminology and classifications developed in the Greek world to a different system.

In fact, while Varro's vocation was clearly that of a researcher more than a best-selling author, it would be a mistake to take his sober, not-too-polished prose as indication that he was mainly writing for himself, to keep a record of his own studies. On the contrary, the desire to produce accessible scholarship which would benefit his readers is a visible drive behind Varro's study of language and, more broadly, his project on Roman culture.⁴² This brings us back to the observations made above about the convergence of Varro's antiquarian and linguistic writings (with few exceptions) in the same time-frame. The central decade of the first century not only saw the unfolding of the Civil War, but also revealed the long-term impact on Roman society of at least two monumental encounters between Rome and "others": the Italians, who transitioned from enemies to fellow citizens after the Social War, and the peoples beyond the Alps, with Caesar's Gallic campaigns. Varro's urge to write so much on how all the tokens of Roman culture had come to be reads like a desire to probe what it meant to be Roman, at a time when the notion of Romanness (as it had been handed down by the tales of past greatness, heroic figures, and sacred institutions) was

⁴² This has also been stressed by D. Spencer in all her work on Varro, especially (2011) and (2019).

called into question and demanded rethinking, and to bestow this knowledge onto Varro's fellow citizens, as a precious gift.⁴³ Therefore, Varro's books on Latin (as well as those on other aspects of Roman culture) would not only have been targeted at an audience of readers and writers of antiquities, but also at any intellectual who was invested and took part in the discussion on Romanness ongoing in those troubled times. From this perspective, the dedication of *De lingua Latina* to Cicero—aside from fulfilling a long-standing promise—appropriately matches such a work with the author of *De re publica*.

Varro's resolution to dig into the past and seek out the roots of his own people to find answers about his present is, I believe, something that many classicists and ancient historians can relate to, and one of the reasons why Varro has always appealed to me as an author. Therefore, while any study of Varro's work must keep sight of all the layers of his identity (the man of Pompey, the Sabine in an increasingly multi-cultural state, the well-connected noble intellectual, the owner and manager of a wealthy estate, the antiquarian, the linguist), my aim in this dissertation is to piece together a portrait of Varro the scholar. How did his education, obtained through poets (Accius), philosophers (Antiochus), and antiquarians with a pronounced interest in lexicology (Stilo), shape him as a researcher? What previous scholarship on the topics he researched did he have access to, and what was he likely to choose to (so to speak) keep on his work desk? What did he draw from those sources, and how did he re-work and innovate them for his own purposes? To what extent was he involved in the controversies and discussions under way in the cultivated circles of his day, and how did his own work contribute to them? I will pursue these questions in relation to some of the main subjects which he explored in his linguistic writings.

Part 1 addresses two notions related to philosophy of language which play a transversal role across Varro's linguistic theory. Starting from an analysis of Varro's catalogue of criteria for correct Latin (*Latinitas*), I will assess various interpretations of the most obscure criterion, *natura* (§1.1): I will justify my endorsement of the interpretation of this concept as "linguistic system" and suggest a rationale for Varro's terminological choice. In §1.2, I inquire into the idea of "kinship" between words and things, words and words, and different languages which pervades *De lingua Latina*.

Part 2 is dedicated to etymology. Firstly (§2.1), I will inquire into how Varro shaped etymology as a discipline, describe how he articulated its objects of study and methods, and analyse the ep-

⁴³ Undoubtedly the most eloquent recognition of this achievement is Cicero's praise in *ac.* I 9.

istemic role that he ascribed to it. The following two chapters look back on etymology in the Graeco-Roman world before Varro (from the Presocratics to Roman antiquarians): §2.2 reviews the various philosophical and scientific perspectives from which etymology was approached and the doctrines underpinning those different uses, §2.3 assesses the different methods through which etymological derivations were reconstructed and justified. In both chapters, I work comparatively to gauge Varro's reception of previous ideas and methods and his innovations in the field.

Part 3 revolves around analogy and anomaly. The first two chapters are aimed at reappraising the traditional interpretation of the controversy represented in *ling.* VIII–IX by retracing the evolution of analogy (§3.1) and anomaly (§3.2) and the different meanings that these concepts were charged with in various settings (from the Alexandrians to Varro's contemporaries). In §3.3, I will differentiate the roles that analogy and anomaly play across Varro's linguistic writings and compare them to previous grammatical and philosophical outlooks.

My study is intended to encompass all Varro's linguistic writings, but the disproportionate amount of available material necessarily awards the lion's share of the corpus to *De lingua Latina*.

H. Dahlmann's *Varro und die hellenistische Sprachtheorie* (1932), J. Collart's *Varron grammairien latin* (1954b), and Y. Lehmann's *Varron théologien et philosophe romain* (1997), can all be regarded as precedents of this work in some respect. Dahlmann's monograph focused on *De lingua Latina* and checked book by book against the background of Hellenistic philosophy; Collart dissected all aspects of Varro's linguistics (phonology, morphology, etymology, and dialectology), providing background but mainly focusing on Varro's own theory; Lehmann's study stood out for considering Varro's authorial profile beyond his linguistic writings, and proceeding by mainly two criteria, one thematic (religion, politics, ethics, etc.), one source-based (the influence by Aelius Stilo, Tyrannio, Aristotle, etc.). Especially Lehmann's study had the merit of surpassing the long-standing tendency to trace most of Varro's views on the universe and human culture back to Stoic philosophy, underscoring instead the multitude of influences on his perspective. My thesis builds up on all three works—as well as many others from the recent revival of Varronian studies—by adopting a thematic approach (restricted to the linguistic works, but not just *De lingua Latina*) and contextualising each topic within its doctrinal background, stretching back before the Hellenistic age and up until Varro's own time. The three works indicated also require updating because they predated important studies in ancient scholarship which, in the past few decades, have

changed deeply our understanding of the development of normative grammar and the notorious analogy vs. anomaly controversy.

Editions of *De lingua Latina* essentially rely on one main manuscript: Codex Laurentianus LL. 10 (abbreviated to F).⁴⁴ Passages of *De lingua Latina* are quoted from de Melo's edition (2019a); fragments of *De lingua Latina* follow Kent's numeration (subsequently de Melo's), those from other linguistic writings Goetz & Schoell's. Where relevant, an essential critical apparatus is provided, accounting for important alterations. A complete prospect of the other editions is reported in the Bibliography, along with the editions of other ancient works. The translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.

⁴⁴ On the transmission of the treatise, see de Melo (2019a pp. 5–19) and Piras (2000).

PART 1

Preliminary notions of philosophy of language

1.1. *Natura*

One of the defining aspects of Varro's work on language is the way in which he grappled with the challenges posed by inquiring into new topics and ideas. Some of the subjects he treated in his linguistic writings had never been included in Roman scholarship, and those that had drawn the interest of Roman scholars before him often lacked a stable framework and terminology. In many instances, much like Lucretius did in his endeavour to make Epicurean philosophy accessible to a Roman readership, and Cicero in his translation works and his philosophical and rhetorical treatises, Varro had to create a technical language of grammar from scratch. To do so, like Lucretius and Cicero, sometimes he resorted to calques from Greek, other times he translated Greek terms, and other times he relied on Latin's lexical resources to find terms that could convey the appropriate nuances that he needed to fit his models.

Varro's terminological experiments yielded various outcomes. In some cases, the labels he introduced defined well-identifiable, self-contained concepts and can be seamlessly translated into modern linguistic terms (e.g. the distinction between *infectum* and *perfectum* for imperfective and perfective verbal aspects).¹ In other instances, however, Varro's technical words conflate items that are nowadays defined separately (like derivation and inflection, both called by Varro *declinatio*, as we will see), and the most challenging parts of his theory are those in which his words are not technical at all.

One example of the latter kind is his "technical" use of a word which is possibly one of the most polysemic in the Latin language: *natura*. Across Varro's linguistic writings, and even within *De lingua Latina*, the word is used with such a diversity of meanings in different contexts that any attempt to bind these uses together in search for consistency is bound to fail.² Rather than employing precise and unambiguous terms (or, when lacking, coining new ones) to fit the various parts of his linguistic theory, Varro frequently resorted to this word with an incredibly rich semantic spectrum and relied on its ability to convey a specific nuance from time to time. In §3.3.2.a we will see how "nature" resurfaces to indicate various kinds of limits to the application of analogy

¹ *Ling.* IX 32, 96–101, X 33, 48. The terms are not found outside Varro and may have been his coinage.

² For a detailed inquiry into the uses of *natura* in *De lingua Latina*, see de Melo (2019b) and Zetzel (2019): the latter straightforwardly stated that "the only way to understand this incoherence is to acknowledge that it is incoherent" (p. 194) and I agree. On *natura* in grammar, see also Pellicer (1966 pp. 438–40).

in *ling.* IX. In this chapter, we will address a most peculiar occurrence of *natura* in a passage from a very different context.

The passage in question is a fragment containing a definition of *Latinitas*, namely the ability to express oneself in Latin in a way that is grammatically correct, stylistically appropriate, and aesthetically pleasing. The fragment is transmitted, with few differences, by the grammarians Diomedes (who explicitly attributes it to Varro) and Charisius³:

5 Latinitas est incorrupte loquendi observatio secundum Romanam linguam. Constat autem, ut
adserit Varro, his quattuor, natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate. Natura verborum
nominumque inmutabilis (est) nec quicquam aut minus aut plus tradidit nobis quam quod
accepit. Nam siquis dicat *scrimbo* (pro eo) quod est *scribo*, non analogiae virtute sed naturae
10 ipsius constitutione vincitur. Analugia sermonis a natura proditi ordinatio est secundum
technicos neque aliter barbaram linguam ab erudita quam argentum a plumbo dissociat.
Consuetudo non ratione analogiae sed viribus par est, ideo solum recepta, quod multorum
consensione convaluit, ita tamen ut illi artis ratio non accedat sed indulgeat. Nam ea e medio
loquendi usu placita adsumere consuevit. Auctoritas in regula loquendi novissima est.
10 Namque ubi omnia defecerint, sic ad illam quem ad modum ad ancoram decurritur.

1-2 Latinitas est . . . auctoritate : constat ergo Latinus sermo natura analogia consuetudine auctoritate
CHAR. 3 (est) CHAR. 4 (pro eo) CHAR. 5 secundum technicos ap. CHAR. deest 6 post dissociat, plenius
autem de analogia in sequentibus Romanum disseruisse invenies ap. CHAR. 7 ratione : arte CHAR. 8
Nam ea . . . consuevit ap. CHAR. deest 10 ancoram : aram sacram CHAR.

Latinity is the observance of a pure way of expressing oneself according to the language of Rome. As Varro says, it rests upon four elements: nature, analogy, common usage, and authority. The nature of verbs and words is unchangeable and has transmitted to us no more and no less than what it has received. For, if one said *scrimbo* instead of *scribo* ("I write"), they would be proven wrong not by the power of analogy, but by the way nature itself is arranged. Analugia is the regulation of the language brought forth by nature according to [the technical principles established by] the experts, and it separates an instructed use of language from a flawed one just like it separates silver from lead. Common usage equals analogy not in regulation abilities, but in effectiveness; the language established by it is only accepted insofar as it has been sanctioned by a consensus of many, but in such a way that the regulating action of analogy does not conflict with it, but supports it. For it [*scil.* analogy] is accustomed to drawing its principles from the everyday use of language. Authority comes last in the regulation of language: for one resorts to it as if to an anchor, in case all the others were lacking.

Some commentators have expressed reservations about the exactness of this quotation or even disputed that it goes back to Varro; but before we address these (see §1.1.2), we have to put this passage in its context. This list of criteria for *Latinitas*, in fact, falls into the broad, diverse, and

³ VARRO fr. 115 ap. DIOM. gramm. p. 439,15–27, CHAR. gramm. p. 62. Here I report Diomedes' text; the points where Charisius' text differs are signalled in the apparatus.

long-standing tradition of literature on correct speech and writing, which involved the contributions of philosophers, rhetoricians, and grammarians in different measures. Let us take a look at it.

1.1.1. Views on correct speech in antiquity

The roots of discourses on correct speech⁴ extend back to the fifth century BCE in the Greek world, when questions of *ὀρθοέπεια* (“correct diction”) and *ὀρθότης τῆς ὀνομάτων* (“correctness of names”) became an important part of philosophical discussions.⁵ Later, correct speech became intrinsically connected to the notions of *ἑλληνισμός* (“[correct] Greek”) and *ἑλληνίζειν* (“to speak [correct] Greek”); at the same time, these notions acquired significance as markers of Greek identity (*ἑλληνισμός* being understood as “Greekness” or “Greekspeak” and *ἑλληνίζειν* as “to speak like a true Greek”).⁶ Aristotle assumed grammatical correctness as the foundation of eloquence⁷ and inaugurated the tradition of discussing the *ἀρεταί τῆς λέξεως* (“virtues of diction”) or *τοῦ λόγου* (“of speech”) on which the ability to speak and write well rested and on whose basis it could be judged.⁸ This tradition was picked up and expanded by Theophrastus⁹ and then further developed by the Stoics.¹⁰ The discussion of faults (*κακία*) of speech also began in a philosophical context, with Aristotle including *βαρβαρίζειν* and *σολοικίζειν* (initially used as synonyms for “to speak ungrammatically”) as possible outcomes to which a certain sophistic or eristical argument could lead the interlocutor.¹¹ Later, barbarism and solecism were redefined as specific to the discourse on language: for the Stoics, barbarism was a fault of “diction” (*λέξις*), solecism a fault of “speech” (*λόγος*), i.e. of grammar.¹²

⁴ The bibliography on this subject is extensive. The most comprehensive study of the doctrines of *Sprachrichtigkeit* is Siebenborn (1976). More recently, see Pagani (2011, 2014a, 2014b). This section only gives a condensed overview.

⁵ On the correctness of names see further §2.2.1.

⁶ See e.g. PL. *Men.* 82a: {ΣΩΚΡ.} Ἕλληνα μὲν ἐστὶ καὶ ἑλληνίζει? {ΜΕΝ.} Πάνυ γε σφόδρα, οἰκογενὴς γε. (“{SOCR.} Is he a Greek? Does he speak Greek? {MEN.} Why, of course! He is homebred”).

⁷ ARIST. *Rh.* 1407a19: ἔστι δ’ ἀρχὴ τῆς λέξεως τὸ ἑλληνίζειν. On *ἑλληνισμός* see Vassilaki (2007).

⁸ In *Rh.* 1404b1–4, Aristotle only mentions one virtue: *σαφήνεια* (“clarity”).

⁹ Cicero (*de orat.* III 37) reports that Theophrastus added three virtues to Aristotle’s clarity (*plane* [scil. *dicere*]): *Latine* (“grammatical correctness”), *ornate* (“formal elaboration”), and *apte congruenterque* (“appropriateness”). See also CIC. *orat.* 79. Garcea notes (2012 p. 51) that Theophrastus’ model is significantly different in that grammatical correctness, which for Aristotle was an indispensable prerequisite, is placed on the same level as the other virtues. See also Calboli (1993 pp. 300–3).

¹⁰ DIOG.BAB. (?) ap. D.L. VII 59 (*FDS* 594; *BS* 5.15) added *συντομία* (“conciseness”) to Theophrastus’ list.

¹¹ *SE* 165b20–21.

¹² DIOG.BAB. (?), see n10. *Λέξις* refers to the “corporeal” or physical component of language, that is either the voiced utterance or the writing; both correspond to the *signifiant* in F. de Saussure’s terminology. Accordingly, barbarism is a fault of either pronunciation or spelling. *Λόγος* involves the meaning (Saussure’s

Eventually landed in Rome, the doctrine of virtues and faults of speech (*virtutes* or *vitia orationis/sermonis/dicendi*) was very successful among rhetoricians, from the *auctor ad Herennium* to Caesar, Cicero, and others who contributed to developing a theory of *elegantia* based on these virtues.¹³ Grammatical purity (called *Latine dicere* or *Latinitas*, “Latinity” or “Latinspeak”, the Roman counterpart of ἑλληνισμός)¹⁴ and clarity were given special prominence and posited as the foundations of eloquence.¹⁵

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (dated to either 88/86–82 or 86–75/70 BCE)¹⁶ only touches on purity, which the author defines as the absence of *barbarismi* (errors occurring in one word—implying pronunciation or morphology) and *soloecismi* (errors occurring in combinations of words)¹⁷; the author deferred a deeper discussion of how to avoid such faults to a treatise on grammar which has not survived or was never written.¹⁸ Cicero gave more detailed instructions in *De oratore* (55 BCE): while he, too, recommended minding one’s pronunciation and respecting morphosyntactic rules, he stressed that such norms could only become ingrained in one’s speech if continually practiced at home and that they had to be consolidated through primary education and cultivated reading of ancient orators and poets.¹⁹ In the gallery of portraits of orators in *Brutus* (46 BCE), Cicero highlighted how these very factors contributed to each orator’s qualities and excellence.²⁰ It has been argued that it was in reaction to Cicero’s downplaying of grammatical purity and the *ars* which disciplined and facilitated its achievement that Caesar wrote *De analogia* (54 BCE),²¹ giving questions of grammatical correctness the space that he thought they deserved and highlighting their importance for an orator’s success.²²

As for clarity, the authors who discussed the virtues of speech agreed that it rested primarily on the selection of words. The *auctor ad Herennium* prescribed the use of “words in current use and proper” (*usitata verba et propria*); he clarified that “current words are those which are used

signifié), not of the individual word, but of the proposition built up by syntactic constructions. See Blank (1998 pp. 232–3).

¹³ See Garcea (2012 pp. 49–77). On Caesar, see also Lomanto (1994a).

¹⁴ For a good overview of *Latinitas* and its evolution, see Díaz y Díaz (1951).

¹⁵ According to *Rhet. Her.* IV 12.17, *elegantia* consists of speaking *pure* and *aperte*. In *de orat.* III 37–38, Cicero presents purity and clarity as *virtutes necessariae*, while all the others are *virtutes adiectae*.

¹⁶ Calboli (1993 pp. 12–7).

¹⁷ This definition of barbarism and solecism, which is different from the one first stated by the Stoics (see n12), will become established in the grammatical tradition: see e.g. QUINT. *inst.* I 5.6, 16; A.D. *Synt.* p. 273,10–11.

¹⁸ *Rhet. Her.* IV 12.17.

¹⁹ *De orat.* III 39–48.

²⁰ See the list, with references, in Garcea (2012 pp. 53–68).

²¹ For the date, see Garcea (2012 pp. 24–5).

²² Pezzini (2017).

in everyday speech” (*quae versantur in consuetudine cotidiana*).²³ Cicero echoed the recommendation of *usitata verba et propria* and added that clarity could also be impeded by ambiguity (*ambiguo verbo aut sermone*).²⁴ However, Cicero also acknowledged that “unusual” words ([*scil. verba*] *inusitata*), neologisms (*novata*), and metaphors (*translata*) had value as tools to adorn one’s speech with formal elaboration (*ornatus*).²⁵ For his part, Caesar, whose rhetorical practice served a political rather than an aesthetic purpose and who therefore valued clarity more than elaboration, claimed in *De analogia* that lexical selection was “the foundation” or “primary cause of eloquence”²⁶ and advised to “avoid any unusual and unheard word as you would mortal danger”.²⁷

These discussions often address the problem of when the practice of following common usage (*consuetudo*) and the attention to preserving the purity of grammar conflict with one another. In Cicero’s *Brutus*, “Atticus” (reporting Caesar’s words in *De analogia*)²⁸ acknowledges that language inevitably changes and sometimes for the worse. In particular, at *Brut.* 258, the second century BCE is identified as a period when common usage was predominantly correct and innate to the speakers rather than the product of erudition; but over time the purity of Latin speech began to deteriorate as irregularities and redundancies set in at the levels of phonetics, orthography, morphology, and syntax. When common usage has given way to corruption, “one must purify language and employ a rational criterion, which does not change, as a touchstone”.²⁹ As Garcea explained,

“*ratio*—the unvarying component of language concerned with the actual structure of the system and the laws of analogy governing it—does not conflict with the historical and evolutionary dimension of language but helps the latter to attain its best functional performance”.³⁰

A prominent Roman inheritor of this tradition was Quintilian, whose definition of *sermo Latinus* and its criteria³¹ is the closest parallel to Varro’s (and frequently compared to it): the two canons are similar in structure, but distinctly different in the elements they emphasise. Quintilian

²³ *Rhet. Her. ibid.*

²⁴ *De orat.* III 49.

²⁵ *Ibid.* §152, expanded in §§153–172.

²⁶ Fr. 1a ap. Cic. *Brut.* 253: *verborum dilectum originem esse eloquentiae*; fr. 1c *ibid.* 258: *solum quidem — inquit ille—et quasi fundamentum oratoris vides locutionem*.

²⁷ Fr. 2 ap. GELL. I 10.3–4: *tamquam scopulum, sic fugias inauditum atque insolens verbum*.

²⁸ In this fragment (1c), it is difficult to establish whether what is introduced as a Caesarean quotation (*inquit ille*) then merges into what could be a paraphrase or even Cicero’s own addition: the belief that the age of the Scipios had been the heyday of the Republic (also from a linguistic point of view) was shared by Cicero and Caesar. I thank Alessandro Garcea for clarifying this point for me.

²⁹ *Ibid.*: *expurgandus est sermo et adhibenda tamquam obrussa ratio, quae mutari non potest*.

³⁰ Garcea (2012 p. 100).

³¹ QUINT. *inst.* I 6.1–3.

also listed four criteria for good speech: *ratio* (which is “accounted for by analogy and sometimes etymology”), *vetustas* (“antiquity”), *auctoritas*, and *consuetudo*. The evident differences from Varro’s catalogue are the bifurcation of *ratio* into analogy and etymology, the absence of *natura*, and the addition of *vetustas*, all of which have been explained in different ways, usually on the basis of certain interpretations of Varro’s *natura* (for which see below, §1.1.2) and often by speculating that another scholar (Caper, Pansa, or Pliny the Elder) mediated between the two canons.³² In Quintilian’s list, *ratio* weighs sensibly less than the other criteria: the use of “old words” (*vetera*) is invested with “a certain grandeur and, so to speak, religious awe” (*maiestas quaedam et, sic ut dixerim, religio*); the importance attached to authority is such that it is said to even excuse grammatical mistakes in everyday speech, when the same have been made by eminent orators and historians; and common usage is declared *certissima loquendi magistra*. This disproportion, as scholars agree, is explained by the fact that Quintilian’s main concern was to provide future orators with criteria for speaking eloquently and effectively, rather than for maintaining grammatical purity.

While the Roman tradition thus built up on the doctrine of *virtutes* in a rhetorical perspective, scholarship in the Greek world—where grammar had emerged from, and remained rooted in, textual work (see §3.1.1.a)—continued to develop the technical dimension of this subject, compiling lists of κανόνες (“criteria”) for orthography and for prosody.³³ Correct spelling and diction were said to depend on analogy (ἀναλογία), dialectal variation (διάλεκτος), etymology (ἐτυμολογία), and previous uses of words and forms by prestigious authors (ἱστορία). In the late Roman Empire, facing the growing situation of diglossia, a rediscovered interest in the technical application of this doctrine to grammar led to the production of similar lists of canons in Latin.³⁴

In sum, we can identify a number of trends in this long and complex tradition of ancient scholarship. Some sets of virtues and faults were produced with reference to grammatical or orthographical purity, other times purity itself was considered one of a set of criteria for eloquence

³² See Cavazza (1981 pp. 143–9), Lomanto (1994b), and Grebe (2001) with previous bibliography. My brief outline does not pretend to do justice to this topic, but only to complete the background on Varro’s views on correct speech.

³³ Fehling (1956 p. 219), Schröter (1960 p. 35), and Siebenborn (1976 p. 54) refer to: *An.Gr.* p. 1127; *An.Ox.* IV p. 331,31; *EM* s.v. “ΦΗΙΣ”, “ΧΙΛΙΟΙ”; *Et.Gud.* s.v. “σήμερον”; ANON. ap. Reitzenstein (1897 p. 386). For the κανόνες of prosody see HDN. I p. 5,1. Since Herodian was identified as the ultimate source for the κανόνες, Siebenborn (1976 pp. 169–163) argued that their original model must date back to the first century BCE, when Trypho, Herodian’s model, wrote (see §3.1.1.b). See also Garcea (2012 pp. 31–3).

³⁴ E.g. SCAUR. gramm. p. 12,5–22. An interest in the criteria for correct speech is already documented in Gellius, although not in the form of a list: he discusses individually *analogia*, *etymologia*, *consuetudo*, *auctoritas*, *vetustas*, and *euphonia* (see Cavazza 1987 p. 93 for a list of all the occurrences).

(thus for speaking not just correctly, but also elegantly and effectively). The two perspectives do not necessarily exclude one another, and in fact, it is not rare to find the same concept (e.g. analogy or usage) employed as a criterion both to speak correctly and eloquently. It all depends on the focus and primary aim of the individual author.

1.1.2. Varro's four criteria and different interpretations of *natura*

With this background in mind, let us now go back to Varro. First of all, determining the place of the passage among Varro's linguistic studies requires a careful assessment: different arguments have been put forth to attribute the fragment to one writing or another,³⁵ and Varro's authorship has sometimes been questioned or rejected.³⁶ It is true that an explicit statement of the criteria for *Latinitas* does not come up anywhere else in Varro's extant works, and even if the quotation is authentic, its contamination by later sources cannot be ruled out. Nevertheless, the criteria themselves are all linked to prominent subjects in the doctrine that emerges from *De lingua Latina* and we will go back to them on many occasions. Authority is evoked at many turns as an exemption to the rules that most speakers have to abide by,³⁷ and authoritative figures are granted the space of an entire book (the seventh, dedicated to the etymologies of words introduced by poets). Analogy is the very pivot of the morphological section of the treatise (books VIII–XIII) and the contended object of the *disputatio in utramque partem* of books VIII–IX. Common usage resurfaces continually: it is what alters the outward shape or meaning of words, which complicates the job of the etymologist (see §2.1); and it is regularly cited together with analogy, sometimes to contrast the two things, other times to say that they go hand in hand. Therefore, the question whether Diomedes and Charisius' fragment is a quotation of Varro or not, and if so, to what extent its wording

³⁵ Wilmanns (1864 p. 79) attributed this fragment to *De sermone Latino*, followed by Fehling (1956 pp. 230–2), Cavazza (1981 pp. 149–50), and Zetzel (2019 p. 194). *Contra* Usener (1913 p. 297 n89, 310), who attributed it to the *Disciplinarum libri* and specifically to the first book, *De grammatica*. Funaioli (*GRF* p. 206) remained sceptical that any fragments apart from one (fr. 218 ap. GELL. X 1.6) could be confidently ascribed to the *Disciplinae* and grouped this passage among the fragments *incertae sedis*. Goetz & Schoell followed Usener.

³⁶ Díaz y Díaz (1951) argued that the concept of “correct use of language”, in Varro's time, was only referred to as *sermo Latinus*, while *Latinitas* had a solely rhetorical meaning (apart from *Rhet. Her.*, Díaz y Díaz cited Cic. *Att.* VII 3.10.). The scholar argued that, since the conflation between *sermo Latinus* and *Latinitas* only became common in late antiquity, the passage bears the signs of contamination by a scholar who post-dated Varro (Díaz y Díaz pointed to Caper). Schenkeveld (1996 pp. 29–32, 1998 pp. 456–8) also refuted Varro's authorship, but on the grounds of different meanings of *natura* in *De lingua Latina*, and, building up on Mazzarino (1948), he attributed the fragment to Pliny the Elder.

³⁷ See §3.3.3.

may have been altered by other authors, does not take away from the fact that the passage accurately represents Varronian views.³⁸

Now, this testimony fits the tradition on correct speech in an interesting way. On the one hand, we find in it all the elements involved in the discourse on the *virtutes orationis* emphasised by the Roman authors who had preceded Varro; on the other hand, these elements are put in the service of a method aimed at speaking correctly, not achieving eloquence (unlike in the cases of Caesar, Cicero, and Quintilian)³⁹: these are not *virtutes orationis*, but *Latinitatis*. Let us consider how they function as normative criteria.

Cultivated reading, which Cicero had highlighted as a good way to strengthen one's knowledge of good Latin, correlates with *auctoritas* and is adopted as the last resort—"an anchor"—in the effort to achieve purity. Basically, when the correctness of a word form or a syntactic construction cannot be ascertained with the other criteria, one checks it against the standard established by literary models.

The discussions on the virtues of speech that we saw always included a mention of lexical selection, although in different roles within the various systems (Caesar claimed it to be "the foundation"/"primary cause" of eloquence, while Cicero expanded on its usefulness to adorn one's speech, thus in service of one of the "additional virtues"). In the passage attributed to Varro, *consuetudo* implies lexical selection, but the fact that it is put in relation with analogy indicates that it bears on morphology as well: the author means that one must strike a sensible balance between applying technical principles of grammar and respecting the speakers' common way of speaking (which may sometimes contradict those principles). The interaction between usage and grammar will be analysed in more in detail in §3.3.3.

It is safe to say that the *ratio* evoked by Caesar (or Cicero, or both) as a tool to amend the irregularities and redundancies produced by corrupt usage corresponds to Varro's *analogia*, which "regulates language" according to the rules and principles dictated by *ars grammatica*; indeed, Varro even echoes the metallurgical metaphor put forth in Cicero's passage (*tamquam obrussa*) by saying that analogy "separates an instructed use of language from a flawed one just like it separates silver from lead". What analogy is and how it is supposed to operate is far from straightforward and Varro dedicates three books of *De lingua Latina* to exhausting the subject; but at least in

³⁸ This is also Grebe's conclusion (2001 pp. 137–138 n13).

³⁹ In what follows, I will only touch on Quintilian tangentially and focus on the testimonies predating Varro's contribution.

principle, the notion that technical rules—in some way and to a certain extent—stand as a benchmark for correct speech is fairly self-evident.

The difficulties in this passage centre around *natura*, the only criterion with no direct obvious parallel in any of the other catalogues of *virtutes* of speech or orthography. This raises the question whether it is just a matter of terminology, and the concept it represents is found in other catalogues under a different name, or it expresses a unique principle. The text says that nature “is unchangeable and has transmitted to us no more and no less than what it has received”, and that what it “produces” is then subject to “regulation” through analogy.

Several interpretations sought to match Varro’s four elements with the orthographic catalogues on the one hand and Quintilian’s canon on the other hand, and suggested identifying Varro’s “nature” with etymology.⁴⁰ Since Quintilian split his *ratio* into *etymologia* and *analogia*, it was assumed that the same two elements had to be found in Varro, with etymology disguised under a different name and, admittedly, Varro’s example of *scrimbo* vs. *scribo*, at face value, does seem to contrast an etymologically incorrect word to a correct one. Moreover, since etymology does figure as a criterion in the catalogues about orthography, it could easily be taken as a criterion for correct speech. However, as said above, Quintilian’s canon differs from Varro’s in many respects and does not lend itself to straightforward equivalences.⁴¹ Perhaps more cogent is the fact that Varro’s entire theory of etymology proceeds from the acknowledgement that words do change over time and that recovering the original form of a word is not always easy: this position cannot be reconciled with the description of *natura* in this passage (“unchangeable”, etc.).

Equally unsuitable are the suggestions that *natura* points to the original stock of *primigenia verba*, i.e. words that are not derived from other words (of which Varro talks in *ling.* VI 36–37).⁴² Varro says clearly that these words amount to a small number and that the Latin lexicon is made up by primitive and derivative words jointly. In addition, this interpretation cannot fit with the

⁴⁰ Wilmans (1864 p. 80); Usener (1913 p. 297, repr. from 1892), followed by Reitzenstein (1897 p. 185); Colson (1914 p. 33); Barwick (1922 pp. 183–4; 214); Strzelecki (1950 p. 98); and, recently, Zetzel (2019 pp. 196–7). *Contra* Dam (1930 pp. 13, 67 n3), Fehling (1956 pp. 231–2, 253 n1), Siebenborn (1976 pp. 152–3).

⁴¹ A nuanced position is Cavazza’s (1981 pp. 143–53), who saw Varro’s *natura* as twofold and corresponding partly to Quintilian’s *etymologia*, partly to his *vetustas* (which he linked to the orthographic criterion ἰσότης).

⁴² Woldt (1911 pp. 25–7); Fehling (1956 p. 253); Uhlfelder (1966 p. 592). *Contra* Siebenborn (1976 pp. 151–2). Schenkeveld (1996 pp. 28–9), who questioned Varro’s authorship of this passage (see n36), also implied that *scribo* is an example of a *primigenium verbum*, but he understood this as “a hidden polemic against etymology. [...] If one, therefore, denies to *natura* the possibility of undergoing changes, one implies at the same time that this language system has no need for etymology”; Schenkeveld denied that the true meaning of *natura* in this passage could be ascertained (1996 p. 31 n48).

characterisation of nature as “unchangeable”: if the kind of change implied here is derivation, then primitive words *are* changeable by definition; if it refers to the modifications caused by inflection, these apply to primitive and derivative words alike.

Other commentators underlined this element of immutability and defined *natura* by conceptually opposing it to the forces which bring about change in language (i.e. normative grammar, evoked by *analogia*, and usage). Their interpretations therefore framed nature as “linguistic raw material”, subject to the action of those transformative powers.⁴³ A similar idea seems to inform E. Siebenborn’s interpretation, which also took *natura* as the foundation prior to technical refinement, but, significantly, shifted the focus from language itself to the speakers: *natura* would be the innate linguistic intuition which all speakers have and which precedes learning.⁴⁴ This tantalizing hypothesis matches the indication that nature is unchangeable and that its product is subject to regulation by normative grammar; however, the notion of “Sprachgefühl” is a little too abstract and generic to be framed within a doctrine of, specifically, *Latinitas*. What is not clear from these interpretations is in what way such “raw material”, supposedly inert and passive, could function as a criterion for correct speech. If *natura* is the basis or the primary product of speaking and writing, later built upon by forces of change like *ars* and *usus*, then it must be something which exists irrespectively of these forces: but if so, how can it be appealed to as a gauge of correct language?

The most accurate reading of the passage, in my opinion, was given by V. Lomanto and, following her lead, Garcea.⁴⁵ According to their interpretation, Varro’s *natura* implies, in Garcea’s words,

“the linguistic system, seen in all its levels (phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, lexical), that each individual inherits from previous generations”.⁴⁶

Conceptualised this way, the appeal to nature as a criterion for correctness is clearer: to speak Latin correctly and appropriately, one must, firstly, keep within the structural boundaries and distinguishing features of the Latin language. The specification of Latin is essential, because Varro was not writing, in philosophical terms, about the humans’ inner compulsion and ability to speak

⁴³ Dam (1930 pp. 11–4); Collart (1954b pp. 201, 270), followed by Holtz (1981 p. 136), who explicitly glossed *natura* as “la masse inerte du langage, et qui va de soi”. Zetzel (2019) seems to think along similar lines: (p. 198) “[Varro’s *natura* is related to] something built into us, a raw force that can be mastered”; (p. 200) “Nature is what underlies technical refinement, [...] *ars* works on *natura*”.

⁴⁴ Siebenborn (1976 p. 153).

⁴⁵ Lomanto (1994b pp. 237–9), Garcea (2012 pp. 31–2).

⁴⁶ An interpretation of “nature” as “abstract system” had already given by Taylor (1974 pp. 37–41); however, his analysis concerned another occurrence of *natura* and *naturalis* (*ling.* X 15–16), for which see below, and was not applied to this passage.

(as Siebenborn's *Sprachgefühl* suggested), nor was he discussing generically what forces shape language in a contrast between inheritance and change. Just like in all his other works Rome was central, Varro's writings on language were always specifically and clearly centred on the *Latin* language, and the four criteria in question—as said clearly in the passage—aim at “Latinity”, that is “the observance of a pure way of expressing oneself *according to the language of Rome*”.

In light of this, the *scrimbo* vs. *scribo* example is explained by the fact that *scrimbo* is a barbarism and not part of the Latin lexicon.⁴⁷ As for the other levels of the linguistic system, we can infer that speaking “according to nature” (we must add: “the nature of the Latin language”) entails using sounds that are part of the phoneme inventory of Latin; writing with the Latin alphabet and according to the Latin spelling conventions; using Latin declensions and conjugations; in short, employing the resources that are specific to the Latin system. One might object that these norms are the purview of *analogia*, the second criterion in the catalogue. But analogy is a tool of correction: its function is to regulate, to distinguish between a use of language that conforms to the rules and one that diverges from it, and rein in flawed usage, bringing it back to the standard. This standard is nature. Therefore, whereas in other interpretations *natura* and *analogia* were contrasting concepts, Lomanto and Garcea made *natura* the encompassing framework within which, and with respect to which, *analogia* operates. We could turn the statement that “*ars* works on *natura*”⁴⁸ into “*ars* works within *natura*”.

Lomanto's and Garcea's interpretation recognises that the most direct parallels to Varro's criteria for *Latinitas* are not the canons of orthography (as other hypotheses implied), but the theories of language and eloquence developed in Roman literature. In fact, when checked against that background, Varro's *natura* appears to draw on the notion of *ratio* discussed in Cicero's elaboration on Caesar's words in *Brut.* 258. As we saw above, *ratio* there identified “the unvarying component of language concerned with the actual structure of the system and the laws of analogy governing it”, thus encompassing a descriptive and a normative dimension. It appears that Varro appropriated this same notion in his passage, but bifurcated it into *natura* on the one hand (the structural features and rules of the system, i.e. the descriptive dimension) and *analogia* on the other (the corrective tool to ensure that those rule are respected, i.e. the normative dimension).⁴⁹

⁴⁷ This was already suggested by Uhlfelder (1966 pp. 593–4).

⁴⁸ See n43.

⁴⁹ Thus, the bifurcation of *ratio* produces different results compared to Quintilian. It is interesting to note that two fragments by later grammarians, pseudo-Augustin and Victorinus (V 454, VI 189), where the same

The intention to preserve the fourfold structure of the canon, which was traditional (as we saw) in discussions on correct speech and which is itself very common in Varro's writings on language, is also likely to have played a part in Varro's decision to split *ratio* into two elements.

This observation justifies the claim that Varro's four criteria can be grouped together two by two: nature and analogy represent "the supra-individual and regular dimension of the language", while the latter two criteria have to do with "the subjective dimension"⁵⁰ i.e. the actual use of language in context, either by the general community of speakers (*consuetudo*) or by individual authors recognised as literary models (*auctoritas*).

The interpretation of nature as "linguistic system" makes sense for the purpose of the passage and is consistent with the description: nature "has transmitted to us no more and no less than what it has received" in the sense that native speakers of a certain language "receive" the particular configuration of that language from the previous generation and from the speaking community within which they evolve. Their competence in this language is ingrained in them, not so much by virtue of an innate predisposition, but simply because it is the language in which they learnt to decode and express their experience of the world. The statement that this *natura* "is unchangeable" is explained by the fact that the structural features of a language are incomparably more resistant to change than its lexicon, and modifications to, for example, the inflectional system or the phoneme inventory are hardly seen from one generation to the next. The description of *natura* in the sense of system as unchangeable also becomes more relevant in contrast with *consuetudo* and *auctoritas*, which are in constant fluctuation and evolution.

The passage on *Latinitas* is frustratingly short and its wording is liable to be called into question, being transmitted by a much later source than Varro; fortunately, however, this interpretation of *natura* finds support in *De lingua Latina*.

In the treatise, Varro famously detailed the distinction between derivation and inflection, two kinds of *declinatio*, which we could translate with an umbrella term such as "word-alteration": we will come back to this topic in Part 3. For now, let us pause on the fact that inflection is called *declinatio naturalis*⁵¹:

passage reported by Diomedes is quoted verbatim, reverse Varro's bifurcation and list *ratio auctoritas consuetudo*.

⁵⁰ Garcea (2012 p. 31).

⁵¹ The same characterisation of inflection as "natural" is found in two passages on the parts of speech (*ling.* VIII 44; X 17): in both cases, the classification is based on the words' inflectional properties (whether

Ling. X 15–16⁵²:

5 (15) Secunda divisio est de his verbis quae declinari possunt, quod alia sunt a voluntate, alia a natura. Voluntatem appello, cum unus quivis a nomine (aliquo rei) aliae imponit nomen, ut *Romulus Romae*; naturam dico, cum universi acceptum nomen ab eo qui imposuit non requirimus quemadmodum is velit declinari, sed ipsi declinamus, ut *huius Romae, hanc Romam, hac Roma*. De his duabus partibus voluntaria declinatio refertur ad consuetudinem, naturalis ad [o]rationem. (16) Quare proinde ac simile conferri non oportet ac dicere, ut sit ab *Roma Romanus*, sic ex *Capua* dici oportere *Capuanus*, quod in consuetudine vehementer natat, quod declinantes imperite rebus nomina imponunt, a quibus cum accepit consuetudo, turbulenta necesse est dicere.

2 add. Mette : aliae (rei) Goetz et Schoell 5 del. Augustinus

(15) The second distinction⁵³ is that, of these words which can be inflected or derived, some are changed in obedience to will, others to nature. I call it will, when any individual, from some name, assigns a name to something else (as *Romulus* assigned a name to *Roma*); I call it nature, when all of us take the name thus assigned and do not need to ask those who have assigned it how it should be inflected, but know it by ourselves (as *Romae, Romam, Romā*). Of these two parts, the voluntary alteration [i.e. derivation] is governed by usage, and the natural [i.e. inflection] by the system of rules. (16) Therefore, one should not establish a similarity and say that, because from *Roma* comes *Romanus*, so from *Capua* should come *Capuanus*; for there is extreme fluctuation in usage, because those who derive are incompetent in assigning names; and once common usage has adopted these names, it is inevitable to use these names derived in such a confused way.

The distinction between the two *declinationes* is built on the same ideas which make it plausible to interpret the *natura* of the passage on *Latinitas* as “linguistic system”.⁵⁴ The outcomes of derivation (*declinatio voluntaria*) depend on an individual’s will: the person who first coins the word for “Capuan” may choose from all the allomorphs available to express that meaning, and whether they will use *-an-* and obtain **Capuanus* or *-ens-* and obtain *Capuensis* is unpredictable.⁵⁵ But once the name *Capuensis* has been assigned, all Latin speakers (*universi*) know how to inflect it. This is only possible because inflection rests on a system of classes and rules (*ratio*) that are

they express cases, tenses, both, or neither) and is said to be *secundum naturam* or *a natura*. The two classifications are not identical (see de Melo 2019a p. 132), but for our purpose it is relevant that a distinction based on morphology is said to be “according to nature”.

⁵² This elucidation of the difference between derivation and inflection is also found, identical in substance, in VIII 21–23.

⁵³ In §14, Varro had drawn a “first distinction” between words that can be inflected (or derived) and words that cannot. See §3.2.2.b.

⁵⁴ Thus Taylor (1974), as mentioned above (n45), explained *natura* in this passage as “abstract system”.

⁵⁵ Of course, there is the fact that some inflectional classes are more productive than others, which makes the outcome of derivation somewhat more predictable; but this is beside Varro’s point. The reference, in the passage, to competent or incompetent choices has to do (by virtue of the fact that derivation involves an element of coinage of new words which is absent from inflection) with Varro’s views on names being imposed according to a natural standard of correctness: see §§2.2 and 3.3.2.b.

stable, shared by all speakers (of a certain language) and—crucially—ingrained in them: therefore, they are known intuitively and their outcomes are predictable.

The fact that this underlying system is characterised in this way and assigned such a foundational role in *De lingua Latina* proves that the interpretation of *natura* in the passage on *Latinitas* discussed above is consistent with Varro's ideas. Furthermore, although in the fragment the only given example for the first criterion is *scrimbo* vs. *scribo*, the fact that, in *De lingua Latina*, this concept comes up in connection to morphology justifies extending it (as Garcea does) beyond the level of lexicon and understanding it as an all-encompassing notion: an ordered framework articulated into various levels and categories, bound together consistently. In other words, a system.

1.1.3. *Nature, system, cosmos*

Now, an interesting question is why Varro chose the word “nature” to express the concept.

J. Zetzel made a convincing case, based on a detailed and nuanced comparative study,⁵⁶ that appeals to nature—especially frequent in texts written in Varro's time—do not yield a consistent pattern: it is precisely because “nature” and “natural” can mean countless different things, but have a strong rhetorical power,⁵⁷ that they can be used as wild cards in any argument or exposition of a doctrine. Therefore, one could explain Varro's word choice as yet another instance in which an author invoked that rhetorically charged term “in the attempt to turn normative statements into descriptive ones, to offer an explanation of the unintelligible and the inexplicable”.⁵⁸

This is a compelling argument and the doctrinal versatility of the word *natura* is very likely to have influenced Varro's choice to use it in the passage on *Latinitas* and in those on derivation and inflection. I would suggest, however, that in this particular instance a more precise link between the word and the concept it expresses can be identified.

We have established that the first criterion for *Latinitas* defines an abstract “system” characterised as a unified whole, self-contained, immutable, rationally ordered, made up by items related

⁵⁶ Zetzel (2019).

⁵⁷ The appeal to nature is “an attempt to find a principle of explanation that goes behind mere positive law or habit, one that is used to justify human behavior on grounds that are not merely empirical or capricious” (*Ibid.* p. 210).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* (p. 211).

to one another according to a rational structure. There are numerous attestations of *natura* conveying all those shades of meaning individually, but it is difficult to find instances where it is used to mean all of them collectively.⁵⁹

There is, of course, the Greek word σύστημα, which, according to A. Bronowski's reconstruction,⁶⁰ was initially used to indicate "a closed, fixed, ordered group", and was later charged with philosophical significance by the Stoics, who "root[ed] it in ontology, as the term qualifying the fundamental relations which support the structure of reality".⁶¹ It is this notion of σύστημα, Bronowski argues, that was implied in the Stoic definition of τέχνη (and sometimes ἐπιστήμη) as "a system of cognitive states (καταλήψεις)".⁶² This conception of *ars* gained success among Roman scholars⁶³ and we have some examples of Latin renditions of the Greek definition; interestingly, however, most of these state that *ars* "results from" *perceptiones* or *cognitiones*, but omit the word σύστημα.⁶⁴ Two Ciceronian passages are an exception: in one he rendered σύστημα as *constructio*,⁶⁵ in the other he resorted to a lengthy paraphrase: "something constituted by an internal rationale and also by an order".⁶⁶ Both *constructio* and the paraphrase come very close to the meaning of Varro's *natura* as we have established it, and Varro might well have had these passages in mind when he compiled his canon of criteria for linguistic purity. However, Cicero's renditions do not hit the mark entirely: they emphasise the internal structure and rational order of the system, but not its being unified and immutable.

Outside the domain of *artes*, we do not know of many successful translations of the Greek σύστημα or its kin. Lucretius' *concilium*, according to R. Coleman,⁶⁷ is intended to translate

⁵⁹ We have to prescind from the range of uses of *natura* (usually combined with *rerum*) as φύσις, the subject matter of physics, which may well present those characteristics, but does not lend itself to this kind of abstraction and would take us off course, back to the misguided assumptions that the first criterion refers to the "language mass" subject to rational scrutiny and manipulation.

⁶⁰ Bronowski (2019 pp. 52–77).

⁶¹ *Ibid.* (pp. 53–54).

⁶² The definition τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ is given, with minor differences, by various sources reported in *SVF* I 73, II 93–97, III 112; *FDS* 336, 378–379, 385, 403, 405; *LS* 41H; *BS* 7.11–14.

⁶³ Rodríguez Mayorgas (2004) traced back to the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (especially I 2, IV 56) the earliest connotation of *ars* as a system in Roman literature, that is, the first text to emphasise that an *ars* has to be founded on principles (*praeceptos*) organised with one another in an organic and coherent structure.

⁶⁴ *Cic. ac.* I 22 (*ars vero que potest esse nisi quae non ex una aut duabus sed ex multis animi perceptionibus constat*); *nat. deor.* II 148 (*ex quibus [scil. perceptis] collatis inter se et comparatis artes quoque efficimus partim ad usum vitae [...] necessarias*); *QUINT. inst.* II 17.41 (*ille [scil. Cleanthes] ab omnibus fere probatus finis artem constare ex perceptionibus consentientibus et coexercitatis ad finem utilem vitae*).

⁶⁵ *Ap. DIOM. gramm.* p. 421,5–7: *ars est perceptionum exercitarum constructio ad unum exitum utilem vitam pertinentium*. The association of *ars* with *utilitas* was also stressed by Varro: see §2.1.

⁶⁶ Bronowski's translation (2019 p. 56) for *fin.* III 18 ("Cato" is speaking): *Artes [...] constant ex cognitionibus et contineant quiddam in se ratione constitutum et via*.

⁶⁷ Coleman (1989 p. 80).

σύγκρισις (“the ‘convergence’ of atoms”) and ἄθροισμα (“the resultant ‘conglomerate’”),⁶⁸ but, much like Cicero’s *constructio*, it only expresses part of what a σύστημα is; furthermore, the Epicurean concept expressed by Lucretius refers to random and changeable aggregates, far from the rational order implied by the Stoic σύστημα.⁶⁹ *Constitutio* and *compositio* are of course very versatile terms, but they tend to be combined with a modifier, not used on their own⁷⁰; and *systema* is not attested before late antiquity.

There is, however, another Greek term which denotes a self-contained, all-encompassing whole: κόσμος. In Stoic literature in particular, the cosmos is described as “a system” made up of parts bound together rationally to form a complete, self-preserving whole⁷¹; the Stoic cosmos allows change and individual will to find expression, but it ties these, on a greater scale, to rational pathways and boundaries which are themselves prevailing and stable. In light of the points raised in the discussion so far, I suggest that it is this notion of cosmos that informed Varro’s conceptualization of the linguistic system.

The direct Latin equivalent of κόσμος is *mundus*, as Roman scholars (and Varro himself) were aware.⁷² But *natura* was also a well-established term to express the same concept,⁷³ and furthermore, it lent itself to abstraction better than its competitor,⁷⁴ which made it a better choice for Varro’s purpose. If one then considers the numerous ways in which the two terms are fastened together in Stoic literature, the suggested explanation for Varro’s choice gains further credibility.⁷⁵ What is original, it appears, is the description of a language (like Latin) as a cosmos: but this idea

⁶⁸ ἄθροισμα was also sometimes used in Stoic literature to define a τέχνη, e.g. S.E. *M.* VII 373.

⁶⁹ As Bronowski also said (*ibid.*), an ἄθροισμα is “a random grouping”, opposite to the “configured, constructed association” that is a σύστημα.

⁷⁰ Cic. *fin.* IV 15; *off.* I 142; Sen. *dial.* VII 15.7; VitR. VI 1.1.

⁷¹ D.L. VII 138; Eus. *PE* XV 15.3; Stob. *Ecl.* I 29.5.3; and others. As Bronowski emphasised (2019 pp. 71–2), the fact that “the cosmos [...] is one unified thing” is “what is fundamental for the Stoics”. Bronowski built up on Harte (2002 pp. 158–67) in distinguishing between “a whole which *has* a structure and a whole which *is* a structure”: in the latter, “it is not that the components are not separable, it is that they depend on the ordering principle which governs the structure”. Bronowski concluded that “it is this second model which fits the characterization of the Stoic *systema*”.

⁷² Varro *Men.* fr. 420; Cic. *Tim.* 35.10; Plin. *nat.* II 8; Apul. *mund.* 22.1–8, 29.13–18.

⁷³ ThLL s.v. coll. 181–183. Perhaps no example is more illustrious than Lucretius’ *De rerum natura*: to cite just one example, I 949–950 (*dum perspicis omnem / naturam rerum qua constet compta figura*).

⁷⁴ See Pellicer (1966 pp. 242–55) on *mundus* being “the main competitor” of *natura* in the sense of “‘l’univers’ [...] mais avec la nuance d’un *ordre* universel, et souvent d’un ‘bel ordre’ [...] : *natura*, ‘nature universelle’, c’est, entre autres choses, un agencement matériel, une harmonie des différentes parties qui la composent : κόσμος-*mundus*”. Pellicer also discussed *mundus* as “more concrete” than *natura*.

⁷⁵ In the Stoics fragments we read not of an identity, but a connection, between φύσις and κόσμος: nature, by virtue of being divine, is the principle that ensures that order that characterises the cosmos. The two things collapse into Varro’s *natura*.

too is backed by the instances in *De lingua Latina* where Varro draws parallels between language and the universe.⁷⁶

1.1.4. Summary

The analysis of the fragment attributed to Varro concerning the criteria for Latinity, both against the background of previous literature on correct and/or effective speech and within the frame of Varro's other linguistic writings, leads to the most persuasive interpretation of *natura*, the first criterion, as "abstract linguistic system". Understood this way, *natura* is the all-encompassing framework of classes, constructions, and rules from which usage sometimes deviates, and in obedience to which technical grammar operates. This *natura*, coupled with *analogia*, makes up the objective and supra-individual dimension of the Latin language, a conception evidently indebted to the Roman development of the tradition on correct speech and especially close to what Caesar-Cicero had articulated as *ratio*.

This interpretation of *natura* is further supported by passages of *De lingua Latina* where the word is used to link an item or phenomenon to morphology and implies an underlying system which prescinds from individual uses of language.

Finally, I have suggested an explanation for the choice of the term *natura* to express this concept, which seems to correspond to the Greek notion of σύστημα, and specifically to its connotation in Stoic literature, which is the basis of a certain definition of *ars*. The link between *natura* and σύστημα is conceptually mediated by the notion of κόσμος-*mundus*, which is characterised as a σύστημα in Stoic philosophy and can be rendered as *natura* (often with a more abstract sense) in Latin literature.

⁷⁶ The most significant example is *ling.* IX 23–30, where the analogist's case for the existence and prevalence of analogy in language builds up on the demonstration that it exists and prevails in the cosmos. See §3.3.1.

1.2. Kinship, families, and common roots⁷⁷

Varro's theory of language is permeated by the idea that a sort of "kinship" exists either between languages or within each language system, binding together words or structural features. This concept (which Varro expressed with different names, *societas*, *cognatio*, *agnatio*, *gentilitas*) comes up many times through *De lingua Latina*, but in diverse contexts, and while it is never properly theorised (at least in the extant books), Varro resorted to different ways to explain what he meant (including figurative language).

The first time we encounter it is the beginning of book V, as the last of a series of remarks concerning the methodology that Varro will follow in his three books on etymology. In §§ 11–13 he states that he will arrange his etymologies according to the thematic categories of "places and things that are in places" and "times and things that happen in time" (see §2.2.1): the former will be discussed in book V, the latter in book VI (and both, partly, in book VII as well). However, Varro warns his reader that he will not always follow this order:

Ling. V 13:

[...] Sed qua cognatio eius erit verbi quae radices egerit extra fines suas, persequemur. S(a)epe enim ad limitem arboris radices sub vicini prodierunt segetem. Quare non, cum de locis dicam, si ab *agro* ad *agrarium* hominem, ad *agricolam* pervenero, aberraro. Multa societas verborum, nec *Vinalia* sine *vino* expediri nec *curia calabra* sine *calatione* potest aperiri.

[...] But we will follow the kin of that word [which is under discussion] where it is, even if it has extended its roots beyond its own territory. Often, in fact, the roots of a tree near a boundary advance⁷⁸ under the field of a neighbour. Therefore, although I will be talking about places, if from *ager* ("field") I come to *agrarius* ("landowner") and to *agricola* ("farmer"), I shall not have gone astray. The partnership of words is manifold,⁷⁹ and neither can *Vinalia* ("wine festival") be explained without mentioning *vinum* ("wine") nor the *Curia Calabra* ("Announcement Hall") be opened up without the *calatio* ("announcement").⁸⁰

⁷⁷ I am grateful to Phillip Horky for sharing with me the manuscript of a paper that he and Grant Nelsestuen gave at the 2018 SCS, to Andreas T. Zanker for sharing his unpublished paper, and to Adam Gitner for discussing his. This chapter benefited greatly from those manuscripts and further discussions with their authors.

⁷⁸ I take *prodierunt* as a gnomic perfect, and that Varro was describing a general behaviour of language. Unless he meant that this had happened in the history of Latin and that is why the language was set up as it was in his day, in which case *prodierunt* would be resultative.

⁷⁹ The sentence could also be taken as "There is an abundance of partnership among words".

⁸⁰ The condensation of the theory in this passage is remarkable. The choice of *ager* as an example perfectly complements the *radices* which had been just mentioned (metaphorically) for words (Horky & Nelsestuen 2018 n19). *Expedire* referred to the *Vinalia* is a wordplay, meaning both "to explain" (etymologically) and "to prepare" or even "set in motion" the festival (which indeed "cannot be done without 'wine'"). And *aperire* referred to the *Curia Calabra* is both a wordplay (the Announcement Hall was literally "opened" with a ceremonial "announcement") and a significant term when used in the sense of etymological explanation, as we shall see in §2.2.2.

In this passage, we are dealing with a “kinship of words” which nicely conveys the concept of lexical family. Here and elsewhere,⁸¹ Varro’s remarks are necessary to justify why he is not always consistent with the thematic arrangement of etymologies according to the quadripartition outlined previously⁸²: words sometimes exist in clusters which (we would say) share the same lexical base, but expand in different directions, employing derivational morphology, and sometimes even into different parts of speech, as the example of *ager agrarius agricola* shows. Similarly, in X 39–40, it is said that words like *sodalis* and *sodalitas* (“companion”, “companionship”) and *civis* and *civitas* (“citizen”, “citizenship/citizenry”) are “from the same origin” (*congenerata*) and share “so strong a kinship” (*tanta cognatio*) that they depend on one another: there can be no *sodalitas* without *sodalis*.⁸³ A comparable reasoning is behind the observation, in IX 59, that “masculine and feminine genders have a sort of kinship (*habent [...] quondam societatem*) between each other”, referred to family names or zoonyms which have two forms for the masculine and feminine genders (*Terentius Terentia, equus equa*).⁸⁴

In other contexts, however, the “kinship of words” describes not the relation between words of the same lexical family, but the one which binds together forms of the same inflectional paradigm. In VIII 3, it is said that, if languages did not employ inflection, “it would not be obvious, from the [words] which we have learnt, what kind of kinship exists between them” (*neque quae didicissemus, ex his, quae inter se rerum cognatio esset, appareret*). This is exemplified by *legi* (“I have read”), which “is an offshoot” (*propagatum [est]*) of *lego* (“I read”): the base (*leg-*) shows that the two forms are kin and the endings show that this particular kinship is grammatical, as the

⁸¹ VI 1: *Origines verborum qua(e) sunt locorum et ea quae in his in priore libro scripsi. In hoc dicam de vocabulis temporum et earum rerum quae in agendo fiunt aut dicuntur cum tempore aliquo, ut sedetur, ambulatur, loquuntur; atque si qua erunt ex diverso genere adiuncta, potius cognationi verborum quam auditori calumnianti geremus morem.* (“In the previous book I gave the etymologies of words about places and things in places. In this book I shall discuss words about times and those things which take place through actions or are said in the course of time, like *sedetur* (‘he sits’), *ambulatur* (‘he walks’), *loquuntur* (‘they speak’). And if some words of a different kind will be included, we shall abide by the kinship of words rather than by the objections of the listener”).

⁸² Varro’s mysterious tendency to set up rigorous schemes and classifications only to abandon them has been noticed in other writings as well. See Volk (2019).

⁸³ Here, too, the choice of words to exemplify kinship is not accidental: *sodalitas, civitas*.

⁸⁴ Varro does not talk consistently about gender, which even in modern linguistics defies categorisation. In the case of Latin adjectives, gender tends to be considered an inflectional marker, because it is obligatory, regular, available for all declensions, and productive: Varro seems to talk about gender as inflectional in X 8. By contrast, gender in nouns (where it is not fully regular and only moderately productive) is considered derivational, and so in Varro’s example above (IX 59), where *equa* is derived from *equus*, and in IX 56, where *columbus* is derived from *columba*. See further §3.3.2.a.

difference between the two is the tense they express. Kinship means “grammatical relation” also in VIII 4 (*agnationes, gentilitates*).⁸⁵

Elsewhere, this idea of affinity is extended to the relation between different languages. Thus VI 40:

[...] Verborum quae tempora adsignificant ideo locu[tu]s difficillimus [est] ἔτυμα, quod neque his fere societas cum Graeca lingua, neque vernacula ea quorum in partu[m] memoria adfuerit nostra. [...]

Therefore, the etymology of the words which indicate tenses⁸⁶ is a most difficult topic, because when it comes to those, on the one hand, there is hardly any relation to the Greek language, on the other hand, those at whose birth our memory was present are not native.

Here, the *societas* that Varro claims to be lacking refers to structural features which are very different in Latin and Greek (specifically, their verbal systems).⁸⁷ The fact that he talked about the relation between the two languages in these terms is explained by the fact that Varro, as many authors in his time, was convinced that they were related—although this intuition never adumbrated the idea of a common ancestor (Indo-European). While Varro did not wholeheartedly endorse the popular thesis that Latin straightforwardly derived from Greek, he claimed (as mentioned in the Introduction) that this idiom had laid one of the foundational layers in the history of Latin, before the more recent wave of influence brought about a multitude of Greek loanwords.

So, Varro’s idea of linguistic “kinship” was multifaceted and applied to different levels, both within the Latin system and across different languages. It is worth inquiring whether a specific doctrine inspired it.

⁸⁵ *Ut in hominibus quaedam sunt agnationes ac [corr. Spengel₁ for ad] gentilitates, sic in verbis. Ut enim ab <A>emilio homines orti agnati [corr. Crawford ap. Cheeseman (1994) for emiliis] ac gentiles, sic ab <A>emilii nomine declinatae voces in gentilitate nominali. Ab eo enim quod est impositum recto casu <A>emilius, orta <A>emilii, <A>emilium, <A>emilios, <A>emiliorum, et sic reliquae eiusdem quae sunt stirpis* (“Like among people there are some familial and clan relationships, so among words. So, like from [the man] Aemilius have descended people of the same family and clan, so from Aemilius’ name words have been derived of the clan kind. From what has been imposed as *Aemilius* in the nominative, have derived *Aemilii* (genitive singular), *Aemilium* (accusative singular), *Aemilios* (accusative plural), *Aemiliorum* (genitive plural) and all the other forms of the same stock”).

⁸⁶ Both a general and a technical sense are implied here. On the one hand, Varro is picking up on the categories of his thematic arrangement, in obedience to which, in book VI, he deals with words about “times”. On the other hand, *tempora* technically means “tenses”: thus “the words which indicate tenses” gives a precise definition of verbs.

⁸⁷ In other aspects, Varro detected and flagged structural similarities between Latin and Greek, such as the existence of four parts of speech based on morphological traits (one with cases, one with tenses, one with both, one with neither) (IX 31). Varro had derived this classification from Greek writings (see §3.3.2.b), but he noticed that it mapped on to Latin.

Horky & Nelsestuen suggested a connection to the early Pythagorean notion of κοινωνία (“community”) which binds together “things in the universe that are related or akin”.⁸⁸ In their interpretation, the *cognatio rerum* which Varro claims to be reflected by the *cognatio verborum* is a kinship among primary categories (the categories of place, body, time, and action, whose combination accounts for the various derivations from a word).⁸⁹ A different interpretation was given by D. Blank, who argued that Varro adapted the Stoic theory of οἰκείωσις (“appropriation”), “by which rational creatures understand our own nature and needs and the relations in which other things stand to that nature and those needs”.⁹⁰ The Stoic sources describe both an appropriation towards ourselves and our nearest familial and social circle, and one towards external things, which we choose to be ours because we understand them to be good for us⁹¹; from some Stoic texts it can be gleaned that the same act of appropriation is involved in the language process.⁹² Blank suggested that this theory informed Varro’s description of derivation, in that the formation of a word from another word (such as *agrarius* from *ager*) reflects the relation that the individual who has assigned the new word perceives between the two things that those words designate: so that “words are derived from one another via their relation to us”.⁹³ For Blank, then, Varro’s *cognatio rerum* denotes not a kinship among categories, but directly among the things themselves designated by words.

The links between Varro’s claimed kinship among words of a lexical family and the Stoic texts pointed out by Blank are very compelling; however, the doctrine of οἰκείωσις does not seem equally suitable for the other applications of this notion that we have observed above. By Varro’s own statement, inflection “abides by nature” i.e. pre-existing morphological patterns which must be followed by all speakers (as seen in §1.1): therefore, the role of an individual who comes to understand (through appropriation) the relation between two or more things and confirms that

⁸⁸ TIMAE. ap. D.L. VIII 10 (*FGrHist* 566 fr. 13b): εἰπέ τε πρῶτος, ὥς φησι Τίμαιος, κοινὰ τὰ φίλων εἶναι καὶ φιλίαν ἰσότητα (“He [*scil.* Pythagoras] was the first to say, according to Timaeus, that ‘friends have things in common’ and ‘friendship is equality’”).

⁸⁹ On these categories (discussed by Varro in V 11–13) see §2.2.1.

⁹⁰ Blank (2019 p. 122).

⁹¹ HIEROCL. *Elementa moralia* col. IX 3–10; ANON. in *Thet.* col. VII 26–37; CIC. *fin.* III 20–22.

⁹² Significantly, the words οἰκειότερον and οἰκείως recur in Chrysippus’ naturalistic explanations of certain bodily gestures and vocalisations: e.g. when we articulate ἐγώ (“I”) we drop the lower lip and point to our chest, whereas the articulation of ἐκεῖνος (“that one, he”) suggests distance (ap. GAL. *PHP* II 2.10–11 = *SVF* II 895; *FDS* 560; see Garcea 2019 pp. 82–6). In addition to this example, Blank also pointed to Philo of Alexandria’s description of the first human naming things according to his perception of their relation to himself, thus through appropriation (*opif.* 149–150); however, it is difficult to isolate the Stoic elements in Philo’s Middle Platonist account. Another noteworthy parallel is Posidonius’ explanation of the name of the people of *Eremboi* (Blank 2019 pp. 136–9; Verlinsky 2019 pp. 27–30).

⁹³ Blank (2019 p. 140).

understanding by choosing a word which mirrors that relation does not fit with inflection as it does with imposition and derivation. Nor can the affinity between languages, which do or do not have comparable structural features, be explained as the outcome of appropriation.

Even in the context of derivation, where Varro's discourse can be accommodated by the frame of οἰκείωσις, Varro seems to shift the emphasis to a different element of the picture. The doctrine of οἰκείωσις accentuates the cohesion of various parts of a whole: in fact, the process of "appropriation" of the self, then the nearest, then the wider social circles was even graphically described as a series of concentric circles.⁹⁴ By contrast, in most instances where Varro talks of *societas* or *cognatio*, he gives prominence to the articulated character of this relationship, the fact that a plurality of items spring from the same origin but branch out in different directions.

This brings to mind the particular kind of κοινωνία that was central to Aristotle's political theory. In the *Politics*, Aristotle defined the city-state as a community,⁹⁵ but he emphasised the compound nature of such community,⁹⁶ and how it involved progressive levels of aggregation, from the individual, to the family (made up by the husband, wife, children, and slaves), to the village (of which the "most natural" form is the ἀποικία, the extended family), to the state (an aggregate of villages).⁹⁷ In fact, in explicit contrast to Socrates' suggestion in Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle maintained that it was the diversity of its parts which ultimately ensured the stability of the city-state and that "extreme unification" was to be avoided.⁹⁸ Then again, one of the bases on which Aristotle refuted the model of the *Republic* was that communal property does not work, because people only care for what they consider their own, and no property would be valued and cared for if it were shared by all alike.⁹⁹ This aspect overlaps with the Stoic "appropriation" by which individuals recognise the kinship of things to themselves and among each other.

These two ways of talking about partnership—one which stresses the unity and a centripetal attraction of things towards a centre, one which stresses the multiplicity and a centrifugal movement of expansion from a centre towards the outside—are not incompatible ways of looking at the same picture. It is a matter of nuance and emphasis on different aspects. Both, it seems, are

⁹⁴ HIEROCL. ap. STOB. IV 27.22, p. 671,7–673,11 (*LS* 57G; *BS* 22.20).

⁹⁵ 1252a1–2 πᾶσαν πόλιν ὁρῶμεν κοινωνίαν τινὰ οὕσαν καὶ πᾶσαν κοινωνίαν ἀγαθοῦ τινος ἔνεκεν συνεστηκυῖαν ("As we see, every city-state is a community of some kind and every community is established to the end of some good").

⁹⁶ Especially at 1261a18: πλῆθος γὰρ τι τὴν φύσιν ἐστὶν ἡ πόλις ("A city-state is by nature a plurality").

⁹⁷ 1252a24–b30.

⁹⁸ 1261a1–b16.

⁹⁹ 1261b16–1262a24.

implied in Varro: his idea of kinship is based on the notion that lexemes, inflectional forms, and languages are bound together by affinities, but it is the ability of these items to divert their course from one another that allows for the expansion of the Latin lexicon, the functionality of morphological endings, and the travel of words from one language to the other. The best configuration to express figuratively such a kinship is precisely the one that Varro employs most frequently—that of a tree.¹⁰⁰

An organism made up by jointed parts, whose bifurcating configuration can be replicated further (the trunk splits into several roots and branches and each offshoot can split further into other roots or branches, or leaves, or fruits): a tree lends itself perfectly to conveying this idea of different entities which can grow very apart from each other but are ultimately connected to the same core. In V 13, where this image is first made explicit (“Often the roots of a tree near a boundary advance under the field of a neighbour”), the very choice to use the lexical family of *ager* to exemplify the principle just stated appears deliberate.¹⁰¹ When Varro does not spell out the metaphor minutely, he still leans heavily on words that imply it: as we saw above, in VIII 3 he uses *propagari* to define the inflection of a form from another, and in VIII 4 he describes the paradigm to which many forms belong as a *stirps*. Even when Varro resorts to other analogies, like when he uses familial and blood relations (embedded in the etymologies of *cognatio*, *agnatio*, *(con)generare*, *gentilitas*), the tree-metaphor is not far away, since genealogies are also often described through the images of roots and branches (the word *stirps* itself is a good example).

If we depart from the contexts which explicitly mention “kinship” and follow the thread of this metaphor, we find even more passages where figurative “roots”, “branches”, and “fields” are involved.¹⁰² Aside from V 13 quoted above, the metaphor resurfaces in V 74, where Varro says that some theonyms “have roots in both languages, just as the trees that have sprung up on a boundary creep into both fields”.¹⁰³ In V 93, he defers to book VI the etymologies of the verbs *mederi* (“to

¹⁰⁰ On this metaphor in Varro, see Spencer (2011 pp. 58–60, 2019 pp. 42–67), MacDonald (2018), Gitner (forthcoming), and Zanker (forthcoming).

¹⁰¹ As Horky & Nelsestuen (2018) put it: “It is worth noting the parsimony of the theory: a linguistic ‘tree’ must exist in a place, i.e. the field (*ager*); this is ‘where’ they need to undertake their investigations (*qua...persequemur*). This is not sloppy philosophical argumentation, as some might believe”.

¹⁰² Zanker (forthcoming) even suggests fascinating interpretations in an agricultural sense for other key-terms of Varro’s linguistics, like *declinatio*, *impositio*, *transferre*, *disputatio*.

¹⁰³ *in utraque lingua habent radices, ut arbores quae in confinio natae in utroque agro serpunt*. This passage is especially noteworthy for the use of the expression *utraque lingua* for Latin and Sabine. Normally, the phrase was referred to Latin and Greek (Cic. *orat.* 235; *off.* I 1; *fin.* I 10, to mention the occurrences prior or contemporary to *De lingua Latina*; but it appears in many later writings as well). See Horsfall (1979); Dubuisson (1981); Dench (2005 pp. 304, 317).

cure”) and *suere* (“to sew”), which he claims to be the ultimate “roots” (*radices*) of, respectively, *medicina* (“medical art”) and *medicus* (“medical doctor”), and *sutrina* (“shoemaking art”) and *sutor* (“shoemaker”).¹⁰⁴ In V 123, Varro says that the name of a type of wine vessel, *lepesteae*, has entered the Latin vocabulary from the Sabine tradition; but then he adds: “in the ancient Greek writers I have found that a type of cup was called δεπέστα: therefore, its roots probably set out from there into the Sabine and Roman field”.¹⁰⁵ In VII 28, the Sabine language is claimed to “have driven its roots all the way into the Oscan language”.¹⁰⁶

It has been noted that the tree configuration is not used consistently throughout the treatise: from time to time, the “roots” correspond to derivative words (V 13), primitive words (V 93), etymological forms (V 74), or the origins of loanwords (V 123); they are sometimes described as what “travels” and changes, other times as the originating and unmoving source. “Fields” may denote the semantic (or ontological) category of a word (V 13) or different languages (V 74, 123); and the products of derivation are sometimes compared to “branches” (V 93), other times to “fruits” (VII 4). I agree with A. T. Zanker that “the image appears to be adopted for the purpose of *ad hoc* visualization rather than designed to be [...] internally coherent”.¹⁰⁷ It follows that words like “roots”, “branches”, and “fields” themselves should not be considered fixed Varronian terminology.

Varro’s intuition of partnership among languages or linguistic elements is less plain than one might initially assume. As J. Ferriss-Hill noted,¹⁰⁸ his perception of the relationship between neighbouring languages as something deeper and more complex than mutual borrowing of words was unprecedented; the scholar argued that Varro even pioneered the identification of what we now

¹⁰⁴ It is important to keep in mind that Varro’s *radix* never exactly overlaps the modern definition of “root”, for neither he nor any other ancient grammarian of Latin and Greek isolated lexical or grammatical morphemes and analysed them as such (see more in detail §2.3.2). When Varro said that *mederi* is the “root” of *medicina* and *medicus*, he certainly did not have the root *med-* in mind. Rather, he stated that the three words had the same semantic content at their core and also shared some similarities in their phonological form, which is true, but not precise enough to match our specific concepts of root or even stem. See Matthews (1991 pp. 185–97).

¹⁰⁵ *Apud antiquos scriptores Graecos inveni appellari poculi genus δεπέσταν [con. Müller for flepeste]; quare vel inde radices in agrum Sabinum et Romanum sunt profectae.*

¹⁰⁶ *origo Sabina, quae usque radices in Oscanam linguam egit.* Ferriss-Hills (2014 p. 92) highlighted the contradiction between this claim and what is stated in the next paragraph (29), that the Samnites—who spoke Oscan—descended from the Sabines.

¹⁰⁷ Zanker (forthcoming).

¹⁰⁸ Ferriss-Hill (2014).

call cognate relationships. The tree metaphor is one of the pivotal arguments of Ferriss-Hill's thesis,¹⁰⁹ notably its use in V 74 (quoted above), which the scholar suggested could be taken as an embryonic exercise of comparative philology¹¹⁰: the fields would represent the different Italic languages, the tree a common "parent" of these languages (i.e. Proto-Italic), and the outward motion of the roots the growth of Proto-Italic into different languages. This one-for-one correspondence of the parts of Varro's metaphor with specific components of modern comparative philology goes perhaps a little too far. Firstly, as we said, the metaphor is not used consistently; and in general, while Varro's ideas on language were often ahead of his time, crediting him with even primordial outlines of the comparative method seems anachronistic. That being said, there is no denying that the metaphor he chose is remarkably effective in conveying his meaning of words (and languages) being connected in more organic ways than had previously been implied. In fact, when comparative philology was developed between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it resorted precisely to the same image, with the *Stammbaumtheorie*.

Finally, we might ask what led Varro to choose this specific metaphor.¹¹¹ As Zanker lucidly illustrates,¹¹² various factors are likely to have contributed: on the one hand, there is Varro's documented interest in farming, both its concrete practice (in which he had personal experience and which his *Res rusticate* are testament to) and its symbolic value (farming being traditionally associated with moral evaluation). Furthermore, the tree-metaphor had advantages over other analogies. Firstly, it was convenient for Varro's didactic purposes, being clear and easy to visualise and understand; it also facilitated the conceptualisation of linguistic areas and boundaries by framing it within Rome's juridical context, where ownership and property was often defined by agricultural criteria.¹¹³ Secondly, the tree-metaphor was flexible, as the same configuration, as we saw, lent itself to different applications: this advantage is visible, for example, in comparison to the

¹⁰⁹ The others are (1) that Varro understood some points that are "foundational to any theory of linguistic affiliation" (p. 86): that changes occur both within a language and across languages, and that a language like Latin could descend from a mix of different idioms; and (2) that Varro's formulae in the etymologies reveal patterns which account for his perception of some languages as kin.

¹¹⁰ Pp. 87-88.

¹¹¹ It is difficult to track down notable precedents, for such a metaphor, easily accessible and even basic in its content, could have been used in a multitude of contexts. The Stoics did compare their division of philosophy in physics, ethics, and logic to a field: logic would be like the fence that encircles it, physics like the ground and the trees, and ethics like the fruits born from the trees (ap. D.L. VII 39-41 = *SVF* I 45-46, II 37-38, 41; *LS* 26B; *FDS* 1; *BS* 1.2); but they described the division by a number of other metaphors (*ibid.*), so this precedent does not seem significant.

¹¹² Zanker (forthcoming).

¹¹³ Gitner (forthcoming); Zanker (forthcoming).

metaphor of the river, which sometimes Varro used to explain the etymology of words of foreign origin (V 29) or inflection (X 50).¹¹⁴

Finally, we might add a suggestion put forward by A. Gitner,¹¹⁵ according to whom the choice of the metaphor may even have served a purpose rooted in Varro's present. Trees could demarcate property boundaries and, as such, have a role in legal contestations about ownership¹¹⁶; but according to the jurist Gaius, "a boundary tree, if it extends roots into the adjoining land, belongs to both neighbours in common"¹¹⁷: transferring this practice onto language, "words with roots in two languages are no longer the possession of any single language but have become common property".¹¹⁸ Property boundaries would have grown more contested in the post-Social War Republic, and not only on the level of actual agrarian possessions: following the concession of Roman citizenship to all Italian peoples and the subsequent change in Roman demographics, the fabric of its society, and the ethnic composition of its elite, the question of what part of the Roman territory, culture, and identity belonged to whom was central to the political and cultural debate of Varro's time. I mentioned in the Introduction that Varro engaged in his research on the history of Roman culture and identity precisely in response to that ongoing conversation and with the aim of promoting a narrative from which the Roman people emerged as a blend of different ethnicities and cultures.¹¹⁹ Gitner's hypothesis offers further confirmation of this idea: Varro's use of the tree metaphor would have been instrumental to conveying that message of community and sharing of cultural heritage.

In this way, the notion of kinship of words, structural linguistic features, and languages not only provided Varro with an effective image in which to ground the architecture of his elaborate theory of word-derivation and inflection, but also served the higher purpose of passing on the idea of a community which can transcend boundaries.

¹¹⁴ Zanker (forthcoming).

¹¹⁵ Gitner (forthcoming).

¹¹⁶ XII Tab. fr. 7.9a–b, 10 (*ROL* IV).

¹¹⁷ GAIUS ap. *Dig.* 41.1.7.13.

¹¹⁸ Gitner (forthcoming), quoted by Zanker.

¹¹⁹ I discussed this more extensively in my 2019 talk.

PART 2

Etymology

2.1. The state of the *ars*: Varro on the science of etymology

Since book I of *De lingua Latina* did not survive, we have lost whatever Varro may have written by way of introduction to his whole treatise (and, perhaps, on the subject of language as a system). However, some sections of the surviving books provide substantial information on the methods which Varro used to study each subject and the rationale behind the way in which he presented them to his Roman readership. The opening section of book V, for instance, is very informative on how Varro worked on the triad of books on etymology “in practice” (V–VII) and also allows for inferences on how Varro defined and articulated etymology as a technical discipline.

Let us begin from §§1–6. This prologue of a sort to the etymological books is not at all dissimilar to what we would expect to read in the introduction of a modern monograph. To begin with, Varro outlines how his treatment of the topic will be arranged in the next three books and how this topic fits in the wider structure of the treatise (§1). Then he proceeds to make some methodological remarks: first, he clarifies how he has narrowed down the topic, by distinguishing between etymology and semantics (§2). Then he breaks down the difficulties involved in researching the subject (§3, subsequently expanded on in §§5–6). The challenges to etymological reconstructions amount to four: (1) some words are no longer in use (*vetustas quosdam delevit*); (2) of those still in use, some have been imposed inappropriately (*nec quae extat sine mendo omnis imposita*); (3) of those still in use and imposed appropriately, some have undergone diachronic changes (*nec quae recte est imposita, cuncta manet*), both in the form (*multa enim verba litteris commutatis sunt interpolata*) and in the meaning (*multa verba aliud nunc ostendunt, aliud ante significabant*); (4) some words in the Latin lexicon have been borrowed from other idioms (*neque omnis origo est nostrae linguae e vernaculis verbis*).¹ Finally, Varro gives more details on the method he will follow in his specific task (the etymological reconstructions, §4), listing two sets of four kinds of “alterations” (*commutationes*) which an etymologist must reverse in a word: see §2.3.2.b.

The separation of the two “dimensions” (*naturae*)² of each word allows Varro to single out the outward shape of words (their *signifiant*) as the object of study of etymology, while casting their meaning (*signifié*) as the purview of a different branch of learning, semantics. Such a distinction

¹ Some scholars (e.g. Schröter 1963 p. 86 and de Melo 2019a p. 654) distinguish the phonetic and the semantic changes as two separate reasons, thus bringing the list up to five elements.

² For *natura* in this context, see de Melo (2019b pp. 106–7).

is not mirrored by today's linguistics, where the meaning of a word also falls under the umbrella of etymology; however, Varro's etymological analysis focuses on the form. It is not clear whether he dealt with lexical semantics elsewhere: the kind of semantics that had to be involved in books XIV–XXV, as hinted at in the exposition in VIII 1,³ must have rather been at the level of propositions. The absence of lexical semantics could be explained in various ways: such a topic may have been perceived as pertinent to philosophy rather than the still developing discipline of grammar; or it could be due to Varro's own personal inclinations, which may have led him to gravitate towards the study of words' origins and historical development rather than their relation to the concepts that they were meant to express.

As R. Schröter observed, Varro's insistence on the difficulty of his task answers to a precise τόπος, aimed at achieving the twofold goal of making the readers sympathetic towards the author's task (*benevolum facere auditorium*) and sparking their interest.⁴ In the study of etymology, this τόπος is chiefly embodied by *vetustas*, which underlies the first and third challenges to the etymologist's task. Varro compares time's eroding effects on words to its power to transform people's appearance, sometimes beyond recognition,⁵ and this sets *vetustas* apart from *oblivio*: while the latter causes things (objects and living beings as well as words) to be lost forever, the former merely alters them, and hides their true identity under a disguise.⁶ Thus, the task of the etymologist is one of recovery, recognition, and restoration.⁷ Elsewhere in the treatise, Varro himself resorted to language which brought the etymological analysis close to an archaeological excavation.⁸

In the following paragraphs, Varro unfolds his well-known model of the “four levels” or “degrees of explanation” involved in etymology, which requires a dedicated analysis.

³ *ut ea [scil. verba] inter se ratione coniuncta sententiam efferant*. See the Introduction.

⁴ Schröter (1963 p. 85).

⁵ Cf. VII 3, where Varro evokes the examples of Epimenides (the sixth-century Cretan prophet and thaumaturge who, according to a legend, fell asleep in a cave and woke up fifty years later, entirely changed in his appearance) and of Teucer (a character created by Livius Andronicus, whose relatives were unable to recognise him after a fifteen years' period of distance). The legend of Epimenides bears a close resemblance to Varro's own Menippean satire entitled *Sexagessis* (“The sixty-year-old”), revealing a particular interest of Varro in this motif, which has been interpreted as the expression of Varro's own feelings of malaise in a particularly distressing historical period. See Leonardis (2014, 2015) with bibliography.

⁶ The distinction was eloquently put by Cicero in *Deiot.* 37: *quae umquam vetustas obruet aut quae tanta delebit oblivio*.

⁷ See Moatti (1997) and Romano (2003).

⁸ VI 2: *obruta vetustate ut potero eruere conabor*. See similar linguistic associations in *ENN. ann.* VIII 282, *Cic. Mur.* 16, and *Liv. IV* 23.3.

2.1.1. The quattuor explanandi gradus

The model of the *quattuor explanandi gradus* is detailed in *ling.* V 7–9; the paragraphs are affected by several textual problems, notably one sentence (*Quartus... aucupabor*) which will be the core of the analysis in this chapter. I present the text as established in de Melo's edition, except for that sentence, which is reported (with expanded spacing) as transmitted in the manuscript F and its literal translation:

(7) Nunc singulorum verborum origines expediam, quorum quattuor explanandi gradus. Infimus [in] quo populus etiam venit. Quis enim non videt unde *ar(g)e(n)tifodin(a)e* et *viocurus*? Secundus quo grammatica [d]escendit antiqua, quae ostendit quemadmodum quodque poeta finxerit verbum, quod confinxerit, quod declinarit. Hic Pacui: rudentum *sibilus*, hic: *incurvicervicum* pecus, hic: Chlamyde *clupeat* b(r)acchium.⁹ (8) Tertius gradus, quo philosophia ascendens pervenit atque ea quae in consuetudine communi essent aperire coepit, ut a quo dictum esset *oppidum*, *vicus*, *via*. Quartus ubi est aditus et initia regis quo si non perveniam · scientiam ad opinionem aucupabor · quod etiam in salute nostra nonnunquam facit cum (a)egrotamus medicus. (9) Quodsi summu gradum non attigero, tamen secundum praeteribo, quod non solum ad Aristophanis lucernam, sed etiam ad Cleant(h)is lucubravi. Volui praeterire eos, qui poetarum modo verba ut sint ficta expediunt. Non enim videbatur consentaneum qua(e)re(re) me in eo verbo quod finxisset Ennius causam, negligere quod ante rex Latinus finxisset, cum poeticis multis verbis magis delecter quam utar, antiquis magis utar quam delecter. An non potius mea verba illa quae hereditate a Romulo rege venerunt quam quae a poeta Livio relictas?

3 descendit F, Goetz et Schoell : descendit Scioppius, Spengel₁, Mueller, Canal, Kent, Collart : ascendit con. Spengel₂ | antiqua quae F, Spengel₁, Mueller, Canal, Goetz et Schoell, Kent : atque Scioppius : antiqua del. Spengel₂ 3-4 qđ cfinxerit · qđ declinarit codd : quod(que) confinxerit, quod(que) declinarit Goetz et Schoell : utrumque quod del. Spengel₁, Mueller, Canal : quemadmodum confinxerit, quemadmodum declinarit Spengel₂ 5 ascendens F, Mueller, Canal, Spengel₂, Goetz et Schoell, Kent, Collart : descendens Scioppius, Spengel₁ 11 qua(e)re(re) Augustinus : quare F

(7) Now I shall explain the origin of each word; there are four levels of this explanation. The lowest level even the common people can reach: for who does not see where *argentifodinae* ("silver mines") and *viocurus* ("overseer of the roads") come from? Then there is a second level, which the ancient grammatical tradition has attained, illustrating how a poet has created, composed, and derived each word¹⁰: for example, Pacuvius' "*sibilus* ('swish') of the hawsers", "*incurvicervicum* ('bowed-necked') herd", or "he *clupeat* ('shields') his arm with the chlamys". (8) Then a third level, to which philosophy has ascended and laid the foundations to explain words of common usage, such as *oppidum* ("fortified town"), *vicus* ("village"), *via* ("road"). Then a fourth one, where lies the entrance and the origins of the king; and if I shall not arrive there, I shall hunt for knowledge in order to arrive at an opinion, which is what our also doctor

⁹ PACUV. fr. 263, 238, 134.

¹⁰ This translation for *finxerit confinxerit declinarit* will be explained in §2.2.2, with an additional suggestion to translate *poeta* as "the poet" instead of "a poet".

sometimes does, in matters of our health, if we are sick. (9) But if I do not reach the highest level, I shall nonetheless go beyond the second, for I have spent my nights working not only by the lamp-light of Aristophanes, but also of that of Cleanthes. I wanted to do more than those who merely explain how the words of poets are created. It did not seem appropriate that I should investigate the cause why Ennius had created a word, but ignore what king Latinus¹¹ had formed before, since many poetic words are more pleasing than useful to me, the ancient words are more useful than pleasing. Or are the words which have come down to us from king Romulus not more my words than those left to us by the poet Livius [*scil.* Andronicus]?

Like §§1–6, this passage bears resemblance to something that is usually included in modern monographs: an account of previous studies of the subject. By the time when Varro undertook his task to map the etymologies of the Latin lexicon, there was already a long-standing tradition of interest in the origins of words (which we will see in detail in the next chapter): previous investigations had been done in different contexts and with different approaches and goals, from the interest in proper nouns in the Homeric texts, to their study by textual and literary critics, to the various positions taken by philosophers over the centuries. What is interesting is that Varro did not choose to recount a history of etymological studies in a diachronic perspective, as a branch of learning that went through progressive developmental stages and was perfected over time; instead, he included various approaches to etymology in a synchronic model where the four *gradus* represent not chronological stages, but degrees of depth of analysis, which apply to different objects of study (types of words) and demand different qualities of expertise.¹² Not all of these approaches would we call “etymology” nowadays, but Varro seems to encompass under this label all kinds of word-analysis.

The first *gradus* corresponds to the simple analysis of compound words and can be accomplished by any Latin speaker (*quo populus etiam venit*); not all compounds can be solved as easily, so this kind of “etymology” only applies to common nouns with a clear structure (like *argentifodinae* and *viocurus*).¹³ Less clear compounds (such as *incurvicervicum*) and otherwise uncommon words (*sibilus*, *clupere*) used in poetic texts are left to the experts of textual and literary criticism (*quo grammatica escendit antiqua*) who had been honing their methods of analysis for decades.¹⁴ That this level singles out the philologists of Alexandria as the main experts in the field

¹¹ Pfaffel’s alternative translation for *rex Latinus* is intriguing (see n20).

¹² On the lack of balance and coherence in the series of the *quattuor gradus*, see Muller (1910 pp. 171–4), Olo (1937 pp. 164–7), and Piras (1998 p. 70).

¹³ On compounds at different levels of the scale, see Schröter (1960 p. 778).

¹⁴ As remarked by de Melo (2019a p. 655), “The hyperbaton *grammatica . . . antiqua* is probably intended to emphasize the adjective”.

is indicated by Varro's statement in §9: "But if I do not reach the highest level, I shall nonetheless go beyond the second, for I have spent my nights working not only by the lamp-light of Aristophanes, but also of that of Cleanthes". The same statement allows the identification of the Stoics as the philosophers alluded to on the third level (*quo philosophia ascendens pervenit*) who developed a method to explain the origins of words in common usage (*oppidum, vicus, via*). The fact that the transmitted text contrasts *grammatica descendit* to *philosophia ascendens pervenit* raises the question whether Varro was effectively positing the superiority of philosophical to grammatical etymology, which has led many scholars to accept Scioppus' emendation *[d]escendit*.

The fourth *gradus* is the one in which Varronian scholars most, to borrow a Varronian expression, *suos contendunt nervos*.¹⁵ The transmitted text—which literally translates to "The fourth [level is] where lies the entrance and the origins of the king; and if I shall not arrive there, I shall hunt for knowledge [in order to arrive] to an opinion"—is clearly problematic from both a linguistic and an exegetical point of view. What "entrance" is Varro talking about? Which "king"'s "origins" and in what sense? And how can one "hunt for knowledge to attain an opinion"?

Let us begin with the first half (*quartus ubi est aditus et initia regis*).¹⁶ A first point of contention among scholars has been whether to read *aditus* as transmitted or to give credit to the second hand who added an interlinear correction in the manuscript F, a horizontal stroke just above the final -s which indicates that the word should be read as *aditum* (= *adytum*).¹⁷ Those who retained *aditus* often paired this choice with the emendation of *et initia* to *ad initia* ("the access to the origins").¹⁸ *Initia* itself has been attributed different meanings: alongside the straightforward "origins, beginning", the choice to read *adytum* has sometimes suggested the meaning "initiations", "mysteries". The most numerous and diverse speculations were made around the mysterious *rex*, which some have identified with a specific Roman king (mainly Romulus or Latinus, since they are explicitly mentioned in §9),¹⁹ who would embody the figure of a mythological name-giver²⁰; oth-

¹⁵ *Ling.* VIII 63, referred to the "Aristarcheans": see §3.3.2.a.

¹⁶ I also analysed this pericope in Lazzerini (2017, forthcoming).

¹⁷ The correction was first noted in Spengel's posthumous second edition (1885), revised and published by his son Andreas (henceforth Spengel²). For an eloquent case for *aditus* as *vera lectio*, against the correction, see Schröter (1963 p. 113). *Aditus* was also preferred by Birt (1928 p. 41) and Michel (see n18).

¹⁸ Augustinus (1557), Müller (1833), Schröter (1963). Slightly differently, Michel proposed (Schröter 1963 p. 116) to consider the two words as a "doublet" or a hendiadys of a sort.

¹⁹ In fact, Spengel¹ conjectured *initia* (*verborum Latini*) *regis*.

²⁰ *Sic* Michel (1965), Pfaffel (1981 pp. 240–1), and Piras (1998 pp. 67–8). Pfaffel (p. 241 n4) interestingly and uniquely speculated that the word order in §9—*quod ante rex Latinus* (not *Latinus rex*) *finxisset*—compels not to read this as a reference to "king Latinus", but to "the Latin king" i.e. "the name-giver of the Latin language".

ers, in line with the reading *adytum et initia* as pertaining to the mysteries, have identified the *rex* with the *rex sacrorum*, the high priest of the ancient Roman religion.²¹ But the word has also been edited in various ways to support specific interpretations. The emendations *rerum* or *rei*, found in the earliest editions of the treatise,²² are not helpful, as an allusion to “the origins of nature” (or perhaps “of history”) is not much clearer than “the origins of the king”; the same goes for *regni* or *regia*,²³ since they do not alter substantially the sense of the transmitted *regis*. The conviction that what sets the fourth level apart from the third is the exceptional character of the expert figure in this kind of etymology suggested *regi<on>i*s or *<eg>regi<i>s*²⁴ and the influence of the “mystery” idea compelled the proposals of *<Ce>reris*²⁵ and *<intima Samoth>reces*.²⁶

Various considerations compel me to reject the idea that mysteries are involved in the fourth *gradus*. The first one is the context. A reference to a magical power of words, whose hidden meaning can only be recovered by means of practices which transcend rational principles and rely on some sort of divine revelation, would be out of place here, not only because it hardly counts as word analysis, but also because it would make words instrumental (as vessels of a “magical” or religious meaning) rather than the focus of analysis.

The second consideration is what distinguishes the fourth *gradus* of etymology from the others: I am not convinced that the heightened character of this level rests on the figure presented as its expert, who is supposedly versed in “superior” matters than philosophy. The articulation of the four levels does not reflect a hierarchy between disciplines: it hinges on the idea that different word-types call for different methods of analysis, and the fact that different branches of knowledge have mastered tools and methods which better apply to one word-type or the other is secondary. For the same reason, I see no grounds to claim that Varro’s model implies that philosophy is superior to philology: they may be better suited to deal with words which are more diffi-

²¹ Spengel², followed by Kent (1938), Collart (1954a, 1954b p. 274), and de Melo (2019a). *Contra* Schröter (1963 p. 94), Boyancé (1975 p. 108), and Piras (1998 pp. 66–7): all observed that the role of the *rex sacrorum* had nothing to do with the mysteries as such.

²² Augustinus (1557) *initia rei*; Vertranius (1563) *initia rerum*, followed by Müller (1833).

²³ Birt (1928 p. 41) *initia regia*; Dahlmann (Schröter 1963 p. 108) *initia regni*, disputed by Schröter (*ibid.* p. 112).

²⁴ Skutsch (1897 pp. 96–7) *initia regi<on>i*s; Walter (1918 p. 41) *initia <eg>regi<i>s*.

²⁵ Canal (1874 col. 344) *adytus et initia <Ce>reris*.

²⁶ Vetter (1958 p. 272). This suggestion does not hold water. Firstly, it rests on a series of elements (the loss of *intima* after *initia* by quasi-haplography, the loss of *Samot(h)-* after *intima* due again to formal similarity, and the corruption of *regis* for *-reces*) which individually are only tenable if the others are: the loss of *Samot(h)-* only makes sense if we accept that it came after *intima*, and there is no point in correcting *regis* to *-reces* (*vox nihili*) unless it is to be attached to *Samot(h)-*. Secondly, the suggestion is inconsistent with Varro’s *usus*, since, for one occurrence (duly noted by Vetter) of the Ionic form *Samothreces* (*ling.* VII 34), four others present the ethnonym in the Attic form *Samothraces* (V 58–59).

cult to etymologise, but, here and elsewhere, Varro allocates strengths and weaknesses to both disciplines. If the fourth level alluded to religion and mysteries, it is not clear what kind of words would require such an approach to be analysed.

The third consideration derives from the purpose of *De lingua Latina*. There is no question that Varro was interested in the Roman religious practices (to which he dedicated fifteen books of *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*) and also that he had knowledge of—and perhaps was intrigued by—more esoteric cults like those imported from the East.²⁷ Nevertheless, it was not in *De lingua Latina* that he pursued such interests: with this treatise, he aimed to present the readers with a comprehensive description of the Latin language. Arguably, it would make no sense to even mention practices restricted to initiates, and whose secrets are not to be divulged, in such books. In fact, in the surviving etymological books, the idea of mysteries plays no part,²⁸ whereas the theme of *vetustas* is pervasive.

It is much more plausible that the object of the fourth level was the ancient linguistic material which had most been affected by *vetustas*: ancient words which had fallen out of use and ancient forms of words which were still in use but had undergone important alterations.²⁹ The interest in the origins of the Latin language is perfectly consistent with the profile of Varro as an author; it follows that the only appropriate meaning of *initia* is “origins”. If that is correct, then, if a specific branch of knowledge must be associated with the words analysed at this level, it should be antiquarianism (see §2.2.1.g).

What, now, of *aditus* and *regis*? The arguments for identifying the *rex* with Romulus, Latinus, or even Numa seem persuasive: all three kings are mentioned by Varro in the prefaces to the etymological books,³⁰ and moreover, all could stand as embodiments of the “origins” of the Roman people. As for *aditus* or *aditum* (*adytum*), neither variant can be ruled out based on philological arguments, since the second hand in F is not always more reliable than the first one. If we chose *aditus*, it would read better if followed by *ad initia* as has sometimes been proposed: in that case, one could interpret the fourth level as the one which provides “access to” (in the sense of “insight into”), the “origins”. Such an interpretation does justice to Varro’s intention to use etymology to

²⁷ See Rolle (2017) on the cults of Cybeles, Isis, and Serapis in Varro’s works.

²⁸ Egyptian deities do come up occasionally (e.g. V 57), but it is never suggested that anything related to these cults is the subject matter of *De lingua Latina*.

²⁹ Pfaffel (1981 p. 238), building up on Schröter (1963).

³⁰ Romulus and Latinus in V 9, Numa in VII 3; see Schröter (1963 p. 94).

aid his mission to reconstruct Rome's past, which also fits the profile of other antiquarian etymologists (see §2.2.1.g).

Whereas the alternative, *adytum*, is not convincing if taken as an allusion to a sacred place, on the other hand, one could suggest that the word here means “sanctuary” in the sense of “asylum”, and that it specifically refers to the one which Romulus is said to have founded. In fact, there is a case to be made that this reference would be relevant in this context. According to the accounts,³¹ before Romulus had to deal with the lack of women in his newly founded city (which led to the Rape of the Sabine women), he had to remedy a lack of manpower; to that end, he had a temple built in a glade on the Capitoline hill, which stood as an asylum. Beseechers, drawn to the asylum for different reasons,³² were accepted regardless of their place of origin and social status; from this diverse multitude of people, made up of essentially migrants and refugees, the first core of Rome's citizenry was formed (so the story goes). This episode had significant implications for the evaluation of “the Roman people”, especially within the discussion (very lively in the late Republic, as said above) on what it meant to be Roman and what communities were included into such a definition. For the peoples who claimed a pureblood Roman status on the grounds of autochthony,³³ the episode of the asylum could be an embarrassing legacy, which is why, in that sort of discourse, it was sometimes glossed over, other times openly denigrated.³⁴ Varro, on the other hand, can be presumed to have viewed this episode in a positive light,³⁵ considering that his research project on Roman antiquities often emphasised the involvement of a multitude of communities and races in its making.³⁶ We already mentioned that Varro presented the Latin language as formed by the contribution of various languages (diachronically and synchronically), and the ep-

³¹ LIV. I 8.6; PLU. *Rom.* 9.3; FLOR. I 1.9; VELL. I 8.5–6; D.H. II 15.3–4. On the differences between these accounts, see Dench (2005 pp. 17–20).

³² Part of them was “eager for novelties” (*avida novarum rerum*), as Livy says, others were “fleeing from the calamities in their home” (τὰ οἰκεῖα γεύγοντες κακά), as Dionysius says. Some, as per Plutarch's account, were fleeing magistrates or creditors, meaning that at least some of these beseechers would have been outlaws.

³³ See Farney (2007) on how ethnic identity factored into competition between families in the late Republic and Dench (2005) on the significance of Romulus' asylum in this frame.

³⁴ Cicero remarked through “Scaevola” in *de orat.* I 37 that Romulus had “gathered together shepherds and tramps”; he was more explicit when he wrote to Atticus (II 1.8) that Cato spoke “as if we were in Plato's ideal state, not in Romulus' crap.”

³⁵ There is even an attested mention of the asylum in Varro's fragments (although it concerns the remains of the physical asylum, not Romulus' foundational act): in *De vita populi Romani* (fr. 4 ap. NON. p. 44,4), Varro traced the etymology of *Porta Pandana* to the verb *pandere* < *panem dare, quod in asylum qui confugisset, panis daretur* (“because those who had fled to the asylum were given bread”). Incidentally, this has been marked as the earliest occurrence of the Hellenism *asylum* in Latin (Maltby 2001), although Aelius Stilo might have used it before, since at least a part of Varro's fragment quotes him.

³⁶ I discussed this in my 2019 talk.

isode of Romulus' asylum as related by the historico-mythological accounts would have provided an excellent foundation to the claim that the Roman people had been multi-layered from the start. In fact, from this perspective, the asylum could be regarded as the very founding act of the Roman people—and also of its language, which would have resulted from a blend of the idioms spoken by the various beseechers who fled to the asylum.

The hypothesis that “the sanctuary and the origins of the king” refers to Romulus' asylum can be supported by two different analyses. On the one hand, one can take *adytum* as “asylum” in this sense, although it would constitute a *hapax*, both in general terms—one would have to admit that, since the semantic spectrum of *asylum* includes some of the meanings more frequently expressed by *adytum* (“place of worship”, “sacred part of a temple”),³⁷ the reverse could happen too—and specifically, because all surviving literature refers to Romulus' asylum by *asylum*. A stronger argument can be made that Varro's text originally read *asylum*, not *adytum*. Palaeographically, this would be plausible: *i* and *y* mix-ups are quite frequent in F, and confusions of *asilus* for *asylum* are attested in the transmission of Latin literature.³⁸ Swaps of *l* and *t* (more likely to have occurred at the earlier stage of a majuscule script) are less common in F, but examples can be found.³⁹ Attempts to remedy a corrupted *asitum* or *asilus* could well have produced either *adytum* or *aditus*.

In conclusion, I am inclined to read either *quartus ubi est*

(a) *aditus ad initia regis* (like Müller and Schröter)

or (b) *asylum et initia regis*.

Both texts would convey an essentially chronological indication, which narrows down the scope of the most difficult level of etymology to the one which tackles the oldest words of the Latin language, coined at the time of the earliest kings of Rome's historico-mythological history. Text (b) delivers a stronger connection with Romulus, whose kingship marked the original foundation of the Roman people as a unified entity and of its language, and with a specific act by which he brought about such foundation. I advocated the hypothesis that this passage alludes to Romulus' asylum with more conviction in the past,⁴⁰ and while I still find it tantalizing, I recognise that it requires some concessions: firstly, singling out one specific king from the general reference to a

³⁷ *Thll* s.v. *asylum*, II 990,42–56.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 990,55.

³⁹ *Ling.* V 46: *Latinum* for *Tatium*, an emendation of Franciscus Puccius confirmed by SERV. *Aen.* V 560; VI 36 *admitte* for *ad mille*, another emendation, corroborated by the context; VII 57 *libi* for *tibi*, a sound emendation because the corrupted word is embedded in a known quotation (PLAUT. *Trin.* 455–456).

⁴⁰ Lazzerini (2017).

rex, whereas other figures could fit the context, including Latinus and Numa; secondly, this hypothesis strains a fairly elaborate allusion out of a very condensed expression. Text **(a)** does not cause these problems, and it might just be that, for once, *lectio facilior potior*.

2.1.2. “To hunt for an opinion”⁴¹

Varro’s model of the *quattuor gradus* acknowledges previous contributions to the science of etymology and provides a set of methods which apply to different objects of study. But in addition to that, I suggest that the model also serves the function of demonstrating that etymology meets certain requirements which allow it to qualify as an *ars*.

From *ling.* VII 109, we know that the lost books II–IV made up the theoretical counterpart to the practical etymologies in books V–VII; we also know that that discussion on the theoretical aspect of etymology revolved around the question “whether etymology is a science (*ars*) and is useful”, explored through *disputatio in utramque partem*. *Ars* and *utilitas* are also closely associated in a quotation of Varro, that “the principles of all arts exist for some kind of usefulness” (see below, §b): a fragment *incertae sedis* whose content (if not the wording itself) may well have been stated in one of those theoretical books. Varro says that book II contained the arguments against such a view, book III the arguments in favour, and book IV described “how the system of etymology [works]” (*quae forma etymologiae*). We can safely rule out that Varro endorsed the position expressed in book II (*cur ἐτυμολογική neque ars sit neque ea utilis sit*), if nothing else, on account of the very existence of book IV and the three following books of actual etymologies. Rather, based on the comparison with how the debate over analogy is treated in books VIII–X, we should assume that Varro’s own position was a compromise between the two stances expressed in the previous two books. Therefore, Varro’s view on the criteria to verify that etymology is a useful and worthwhile discipline have important implications for his methodological remarks in the opening of book V.

But what definition of *ars* could underlie such a discussion? I propose to address this question taking precisely the fourth *gradus* in Varro’s model as our point of departure. Specifically, I will argue that that text contains a quotation of a passage from Cicero’s *De oratore* where a crucial point about *ars rhetorica* is made and then refuted, and that the purpose of Varro’s quotation is to signal the author’s agreement with the new conception of *ars* promoted by Cicero in that dialogue.

⁴¹ The material in this section is also discussed in Lazzerini (forthcoming).

Regardless of how one decides to amend and interpret the text in V 8, clearly the fourth level of the etymological analysis is the hardest and applies to the words that are most difficult to grasp. Concerning this level, the transmitted text reads: *quo si non perveniam scientiam ad opinionem aucupabor* (with punctuation after *perveniam* in the manuscript): the text as it is clearly cannot be accepted, as there is no logic to the claim to “hunt for knowledge in order to attain an opinion”. Editors and commentators have therefore proposed various emendations.

Scioppius first replaced *ad* with *at* (“if I shall not arrive there [*scil.* to the fourth level], I shall however hunt for an opinion”), but this solution leaves *scientiam* with no syntactic function.⁴² L. Spengel, author of the first modern edition of *De lingua Latina* (1826, = Spengel₁), transposed *ad* before *scientiam*; this emendation restored the logic of the sentence, but some commentators raised the problem of having *perveniam* take two complements of “place whereto”: the relative adverb *quo* (“if I shall not arrive there”) and the prepositional complement *ad scientiam* (“if I shall not arrive at knowledge”). The two constructions are not attested in combination with *pervenire*. Most scholars have subsequently taken Spengel₁’s version as their point of departure and tinkered with it to remedy its oddities, starting with Spengel₂, where *quo* was edited to read *quo*⟨*d*⟩ (“for, if I shall not arrive at knowledge, I shall hunt for an opinion”), although this is scarcely convincing.⁴³ R. Kent (1938), combining Spengel₁’s version and Scioppius’s correction, proposed *quo si non perveniam* ⟨*ad*⟩ *scientiam*, *at opinionem aucupabor* (in his own translation, “if I shall not arrive at knowledge there, at any rate I shall cast about for a conjecture”). The loss of *ad* by quasi-haplography with the following *at* is plausible enough, and Kent’ version was accepted by Collart (1954a)

⁴² Jahn (1867 pp. 246–7) replaced the accusative with an instrumental ablative (*scientia*) and interpreted full knowledge as the means which would enable Varro to reach the fourth level (and if it fails, Varro would “at least hunt for an opinion”); however, the idea of knowledge as a means instead of an end is not convincing. The same objection applies to the suggestion of Brakman (1932 pp. 1–2) to supply ⟨*per*⟩ before *scientiam*, supposedly lost by haplography after *perveniam*. Goetz & Schoell printed *at opinionem* like Scioppius, but signalled a lacuna between *perveniam* and *scientiam* and conjectured a substantial integration: *si non perveniam* ⟨*ut rerum intimarum consequar*⟩ *scientiam*. Walter (1918 pp. 484–5), who also adopted Scioppius’s correction, took care of the problem by simply (and tacitly) deleting *scientiam*.

⁴³ Palaeographically, the mistake is only acceptable if one supposes that it occurred at a stage in the textual transmission where the conjunction or relative pronoun *quod* would not have been abbreviated, as it is, consistently, in F (qđ). But more importantly, the previous three levels all have *quo*.

and de Melo.⁴⁴ All these three editors translated *quo* as locative (meaning “place wherein” instead of “place whereto”), which is acceptable and has parallels in Varro.⁴⁵

Little weight has been given to the fact that this segment of *De lingua Latina*—even in its transmitted and problematic version—reads strikingly similar to Cicero’s *de orat.* II 30, where rhetoric is defined as a thing *quae ad scientiam non saepe perveniat, quae opiniones hominum et saepe errores aucupetur* (“which does not often arrive at knowledge, and hunts for the opinions and often the delusions of men”).⁴⁶ The parallel does not seem to have drawn much attention in Varroian scholarship⁴⁷ despite the fact that the lexical and syntactic correspondence is so close, and the use of *aucupari* with reference to opinions so unusual (it only has parallels, precisely, in Cicero), that it seems unlikely that it indicates a mere stylistic influence, and it certainly does not reflect a common idiom.⁴⁸ One feels compelled to conclude that we are dealing with an intentional quotation; in light of this, Kent’s version of the text (and subsequently Collart’s and de Melo’s) seems by far the best.

⁴⁴ Other versions were proposed in the round-table discussion in Schröter (1963): Dahlmann (p. 108) accepted Scioppius’s text but edited *scientiam* to *scientiae*, which, however, does little to solve the existing problems; Waszink (*ibid.*) suggested restoring a second *si non*, supposedly lost by haplography, before *scientiam* (“if I shall not arrive there, I shall hunt for, if not knowledge, at least an opinion”), but this would imply that the search for an opinion falls back to the third level, where instead the possibility to attain knowledge was not called into question.

⁴⁵ *Rust.* I 48.1. See Pfaffel (1981 p. 232 n1).

⁴⁶ The text of this passage poses no challenge. The words *quae ad scientiam non saepe perveniat* were bracketed by Ellendt (1840) “cum latine dici non possint, nisi de eo qui scientiae cupidus est”, an emendation accepted by Kayser (1860) and Bake (1863). However, since Wilkins (1892) clarified that “*pervenire* is often enough used of things, both in its literal and in its applied meaning; hence there is no objection to the words, and they are really needed after ‘actio opinionibus non scientia continetur’”, this *constitutio textus* has not been contested.

⁴⁷ The similarity had been signalled by Spengel¹ in support of his change of position of *ad* (which, in fact, brings the two texts even closer together) and the same reference to *de orat.* II 30 figured in the *apparatus critici* of Spengel² and Goetz & Schoell. Nevertheless, in none of these editions is the reference explored as anything more than a *locus similis*, useful for syntactic and perhaps stylistic comparisons. At least for Goetz & Schoell, there is strong indication that the similarity was not considered beyond a mere stylistic parallel, given that, unlike Spengel, they did not print a version of the text modelled on Cicero’s passage, and instead proposed an altogether different integration (see n42).

⁴⁸ *Aucupari* in a metaphorical sense—where it loses its specific connotation of “to hunt birds” < *auceps*, and retains a more general meaning of “hunting”—has of course many more occurrences (it is frequent, for example, in Plautus), but not with *opinio*. Cicero often pairs the verb *aucupari* or the noun *aucupium* with “words” or other concepts related to speech (again in *de orat.* II 256, but also in *Caecin.* 52.3, 65.10, 88.17; *Cluent.* 105.3; *Sest.* 119.6; *Pis.* 57.5; *leg.* III 35.7), sometimes with “pleasure” or other states of being (*orat.* 63.5, 84.6, 197.5; *fam.* V 12.6.6; *Att.* VI 8.4.5), with various objects in *S. Rosc.* 22.8 (*tempus*); *Verr.* I 1.9.4 (*haec omnia*); *Flacc.* 92.2 (*imbecillitatem*); *de orat.* II 59.9 (*utilitatem*). Quite significant is the occurrence in *fin.* II 71.13, very close to the *De oratore* passage: *ut nostram stabilem conscientiam contemnamus, aliorum errantem opinionem aucupemur* (“and, in a way, you bid that we dismiss our own stable knowledge, and chase after the fallacious opinion of others”): see further below.

To understand Varro's purpose in quoting Cicero when illustrating his theory of etymology, we must consider the meaning and role of this phrase (*ad scientiam pervenire* vs. *opinionem aucupari*) in *De oratore*.

a. The phrase in *De oratore*

Cicero's dialogue on the qualities of the ideal orator begins on the first day (book I) with a discussion on how to define an "art" of speaking and what training is required to make a good orator. The most eloquent opinion on these matters is articulated by the character of "L. Licinius Crassus", who relates Cicero's point of view; in the role of the opponent is "M. Antonius", who challenges various aspects of "Crassus'" position,⁴⁹ including—what is most relevant for the present analysis—his judgment of rhetoric as an *ars*.

Rhetoricians in the Greek world had been accused—especially by philosophers—of pursuing an unworthy practice since the fourth century BCE.⁵⁰ Plato had unfolded his criticism of rhetoric particularly in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedrus*, from which three main objections emerge, as summarised by C. Brittain:

"it is an irrational τριβή, a knack rather than a methodical or technical procedure; it has no knowledge of its subject matter (justice in the *Gorgias*), or of theorems actually required to speak persuasively (the dialectic and psychology of the *Phaedrus*); and it is a kind of flattery directed at pleasure rather than genuine benefit (*Gorgias*)."⁵¹

On the seminal ground of Plato's objections, the Hellenistic philosophers later developed more systematic criticism against rhetoricians which specifically targeted their claim that rhetoric was a τέχνη: in the mid-second century, the main pursuers of this line of attack were the Peripatetic Critolaos and the Stoic Diogenes of Babylon⁵² (and, according to Brittain, the Academic Charmadas

⁴⁹ Görler (1974 pp. 54–5, 61) placed "Crassus", "Antonius", and "Sulpicius" on a hierarchy from the highest to the lowest level according to the "Stufenschema" that, he argued, underlies all the instances in which Cicero appears to take contradicting positions concerning a certain topic.

⁵⁰ See Leeman et al. (1996 pp. 95–101), Wisse et al. (2008 vol. 4 pp. 95–101), and Brittain (2001).

⁵¹ Brittain (2001 p. 300).

⁵² For Critolaos, rhetoric would be a κακοτεχνία (see S. E. M. II 68) and a mere τριβή (QUINT. inst. II 15.23). For Diogenes, it would be οὐ πρέπουσα ἐλευθέροις (ap. PHLD. Rh. II pp. 68, 99, 283). A clear account of the "general lines of attack" pursued by the philosophers is offered by Brittain (2001 pp. 299–300). The scholar countered (pp. 306–10) the traditional view that these philosophers' attacks had been motivated by the success of the theories promoted by the rhetorician Hermagoras of Temnos (fl. 150 BCE); instead, he argued that Hermagoras' success post-dated the contributions of Diogenes and Critolaos, and that philosophers consequently had to adapt their line of attack to allow for some spaces which technical rhetoric could claim as its purview. In fact, "Crassus'" account in *de orat.* I 45–47 shows that, by 110 BCE, the philosophers' stance had shifted to admit that orators should be confined *tantum in iudicia et contiunculas*.

as well).⁵³ The debate surrounding rhetoric as a τέχνη was certainly well known in Rome as well,⁵⁴ and Cicero has his characters relate it in book III of *De oratore*; but, as mentioned, the topic is already a point of disagreement between “Crassus” and “Antonius” in book I. First, “Antonius” had reported Charmadas’ words on what makes a discipline an *ars* (τέχνη):

(92) Artem vero [*scil.* Charmadas] negabat esse ullam, nisi quae cognitis penitusque perspectis et in unum exitum spectantibus et numquam fallentibus rebus contineretur.

(92) According to Charmadas, nothing could be an art unless it consisted of matters that were known and thoroughly scrutinized, directed toward one end, and completely certain.⁵⁵

Later, “Crassus” had reprised this “strict” definition and opposed it to a “looser” one:

(108) Nam si ars ita definitur, ut paulo ante exposuit Antonius, ex rebus penitus perspectis planeque cognitis atque ab opinionis arbitrio seiunctis scientiaque comprehensis, non mihi videtur ars oratoris esse ulla; sunt enim varia et ad vulgarem popularemque sensum accommodata omnia genera huius forensis nostrae dictionis. (109) Sin autem ea, quae observata sunt in usu ac tractatione dicendi, haec ab hominibus callidis ac peritis animadversa ac notata, verbis definita, generibus inlustrata, partibus distributa sunt—id quod video potuisse fieri—, non intellego, quam ob rem non, si minus illa subtili definitione, at hac vulgari opinione ars esse videatur.

(108) For if *ars* is defined in the way that Antonius described a little while ago, as consisting of matters that are thoroughly scrutinized and clearly known, and that are beyond the control of mere opinion, but grasped by exact knowledge, then it seems to me that an art of oratory does not exist. After all, every aspect of our judicial and political speaking is variable and adapted to an ordinary and popular way of thinking. (109) If, however, the procedures that have been followed in the actual practice of speaking have been observed and recorded by skilled and experienced people, and described through definitions, and clarified by division into classes and subclasses—and all this has obviously been possible,—I don't see why this shouldn't be called an art, if not according to that precise definition, then at least in the ordinary sense in which we use the word.⁵⁶

In both passages, the strict definition visibly employs Stoic language and hinges on the Stoic notion of κατάληψις. Throughout book I, “Antonius” seemingly endorses this strict conception, which leads him to conclude that rhetoric cannot be considered an *ars*; and, on the second day of

⁵³ Brittain (2001 pp. 319–28) argued that (p. 319) “a determinate conception of rhetoric underlies Charmadas’ argument in *De Or.* 1. 84–93: rhetoric is a (non-technical) faculty of persuasion, which is attained by experience, and for the perfection of which philosophical training is a necessary condition”. As such, Charmadas, too, would have denied that rhetoric qualified as a τέχνη, but still defended its validity and usefulness as a faculty.

⁵⁴ It is commonly assumed that the famous philosophical embassy of Diogenes, Critolaos, and Carneades in 155 BCE fuelled the debate significantly, especially in the wake of Carneades’ notorious public lectures on justice, when he reportedly argued on both the opposite sides of the subject. However, see Powell (2013) for a reappraisal of the historicity of this event.

⁵⁵ Transl. May & Wisse.

⁵⁶ Transl. after May & Wisse.

the dialogue (book II), when invited to resume the discussion (§26), the character reiterates this negative portrait of rhetoric in the very passage where the phrase reprised by Varro is found (§30):

‘res mihi videtur esse’ inquit ‘facultate praeclara, arte mediocris; ars enim earum rerum est, quae sciuntur; oratoris autem omnis actio opinionibus, non scientia, continetur; nam et apud eos dicimus, qui nesciunt, et ea dicimus, quae nescimus ipsi; itaque et illi alias aliud eisdem de rebus et sentiunt et iudicant et nos contrarias saepe causas dicimus, non modo ut Crassus contra me dicat aliquando aut ego contra Crassum, cum alterutri necesse sit falsum dicere, sed etiam ut uterque nostrum eadem de re alias aliud defendat, cum plus uno verum esse non possit. Ut igitur in eius modi re, quae mendacio nixa sit, quae ad scientiam non saepe perveniat, quae opiniones hominum et saepe errores aucupetur, ita dicam, si causam putatis esse, cur audiat.’

He continued, “It seems to me that oratory, when considered as an ability, is a splendid thing, but that it is no more than average when viewed as an art. After all, an art deals with such things as are known, while the whole activity of the orator is based not on knowledge but on opinions. We speak before audiences that are ignorant, and we also say things about which we are ignorant ourselves. Accordingly, on the same issue they have now one view and judgment, then another, while we ourselves often plead opposite cases. I mean the latter not only in the sense that Crassus sometimes argues against me or I against him—and in that case, either of us must necessarily be saying something that is not true—, but also in the sense that, on the same issue, each of us supports now one opinion, then another—whereas not more than one can be true. Knowing, then, that this is a subject that relies on falsehood, that seldom attains full knowledge and chases after people’s opinions and often their delusions, I shall speak about it—if you think you have a reason for listening.”⁵⁷

In this passage, “Antonius” repeats the objections which a cultivated reader in Cicero’s time, with knowledge of the long-standing debate between rhetoricians and philosophers, would have recognised as the archetypal arguments against rhetoric. This is emphasised by the character’s very choice of words, which echo Plato’s *Phaedrus*.⁵⁸

However, the following paragraphs 32–38 reveal that “Antonius” does not genuinely endorse that anti-rhetoric stance at all: on the contrary, his position is revealed to be in complete agreement with that of “Crassus” as he had stated it in book I. Confronted with this discrepancy (§40), “Antonius” gleefully admits having previously played devil’s advocate “in order to refute you [*scil.*

⁵⁷ Transl. after May & Wisse.

⁵⁸ Compare the statement that rhetoric is *mendacio nixa* with *Phdr.* 260e: [*scil.* ἡ ῥητορική] ψεύδεται καὶ οὐκ ἔστι τέχνη ἀλλ’ ἄτεχνος τριβή (“rhetoric is deceptive and is not a rigorous discipline, but an unsystematic practice”), and the very sentence *quae ad scientiam non saepe perveniat, quae opiniones hominum et saepe errores aucupetur* with *Phdr.* 262c: λόγων ἄρα τέχνην, ὧ ἑταῖρε, ὁ τὴν ἀλήθειαν μὴ εἰδώς, δόξας δὲ τεθηρευκώς, γελοῖαν τινά, ὡς ἔοικε, καὶ ἄτεχνον παρέξεται (“Then, my friend, he who does not know the truth, but chases after opinions, will, it seems, attain an art of words which is ridiculous and not rigorous at all”).

Crassus] and allure these pupils [*scil.* Catulus and Caesar] away from you”.⁵⁹ Likewise, it is revealed that “Antonius” does not even truly uphold the “strict” definition of *ars* which he had supported in book I and which is echoed in II 30 (*ars enim earum rerum est, quae sciuntur*): both he and “Crassus” concede that rhetoric is not an *ars* by those strict criteria.⁶⁰ But, instead of embracing the radical anti-rhetoric position, the two interlocutors converge on the looser definition given in I 109: that a discipline can be held as an *ars* if its principles “have been observed and recorded by skilled and experienced people, described through definitions, and clarified by division into classes and subclasses”. According to such a definition, “Antonius” concludes in II 32, rhetoric will be revealed to be, *si non plane artem, at quasi artem quandam* (“if not quite an art, at least something like an art”). This is likely to reflect Cicero’s own position, who wavers between “Crassus” idealisation of the perfect orator as not only an outstanding speaker, but also an accomplished philosopher, shrewd politician, and in short a master of all arts, and “Antonius” more concrete expectation that an orator is highly trained, but not all-knowing.

This intermediate position must have been inspired by Cicero’s teacher, Philo of Larissa. Philo’s predecessors in the Academy had held true to the path indicated by Plato and, at least up until 110 BCE, in agreement with the Stoics and the Peripatetics, they “drove the orator from the helm of State, and excluded him from all learning and from knowledge of the more important subjects, pushing him aside and confining him only to the courts and petty public meetings, like a slave put to a treadmill”.⁶¹ By contrast, Philo demonstrated a more accepting approach to rhetoric. From *de orat.* III 110⁶² we learn that he had begun to teach forensic rhetoric in a technical form, at least by

⁵⁹ *Tum Antonius ‘heri enim’ inquit ‘hoc mihi proposueram ut, si te refellissem, hos a te discipulos abducerem’.*

⁶⁰ The reasons for “Antonius” deception are not stated explicitly by Cicero, but can be drawn indirectly. Firstly, such an act appears to be consistent with what had been presented as a typical quirk of the character, namely the habit of putting up a show in front of his audience (*de orat.* II 4; See Leeman et al. 1985 p. 222). In addition, “Antonius’ about-face, far from being a simple trick [...], exactly fits (and illustrates) the technique of “arguing both sides of an issue” (*in utramque partem dicere*), which was central to Cicero’s conception of the ideal orator” (May & Wisse 2001 p. 16). Because one of the two sides is ultimately refuted, “Antonius” speech does not strictly qualify as an argument *in utramque partem* in a philosophical sense (which would result in suspension of judgment); it does, however, from a rhetorical point of view.

⁶¹ *De orat.* I 45–47, transl. May & Wisse.

⁶² In III 109, “Crassus” had given the distinction (first established by Hermagoras) between *θέσις* and *ὑπόθεσις*; in §110 he expands on how this distinction is used in rhetorical teaching (*etiam hac (in) instituendo divisione utuntur*), including by Philo (*nunc enim apud Philonem, quem in Academia [maxime] vigere audio*). See Reinhardt (2000) and Brittain (2001 pp. 328–42).

the time when the dialogue is set (90 BCE)⁶³; Philo's acceptance of rhetoric and its integration into his philosopher's practice must have involved a reappraisal of the definition of τέχνη itself.⁶⁴

According to Cicero's looser conception of *ars*, rhetoric needs not provide a guaranteed path to scientific knowledge to be considered a creditable discipline and a worthy subject for an erudite conversation between honest and cultivated people. This, conversely, is precisely what the most tenacious opponents of rhetoric denied. Therefore, in *de orat.* II 30, the statement that rhetoric is something *quae ad scientiam non saepe perveniat, quae opiniones hominum et saepe errores aucupetur* allowed Cicero to give a nod to his readers and go along with a line of argument which he expected them to pick up on, being familiar with the famous debate on the status of rhetoric and the signature arguments of its main contenders.

b. The phrase in *De lingua Latina*

Going back to Varro, the information he gives about the content of books II–IV allows us to see a parallel between the question addressed there (“whether etymology is an *ars* and is useful”) and the one debated in *De oratore*. As we saw, the *disputatio in utramque partem* had been both used in practice and theoretically analysed in *De oratore*,⁶⁵ and it seems safe to assume that Varro had read Cicero's work.⁶⁶ It also seems reasonable that the question central to books II–IV would have demanded first coming to an agreement on how to define *ars*, just like in book X, after having reported the debate on analogy in books VIII–IX, Varro starts from the basic definitions of *similitudo*, *ratio*, and *proportio* (see §3.3.2.b).

Cassiodorus quoted Varro as explaining *ars* through an etymology: it “is so called because it, as it were, ‘binds’ [*artet*] and ‘restricts’ [*constringat*] us with its rules” (or, read as a hendiadys,

⁶³ According to Brittain, it is possible that Philo was teaching rhetoric before that date, but in the non-technical form established by Charmadas (pp. 312–28). On how Philo turned the Academic dialectical practices into rhetorical exercises and the form that rhetoric took in the fourth Academy, see Reinhardt (2000).

⁶⁴ This was necessary in order to fit with Philo's epistemological views—which, in the 90s, consisted in the acceptance of ἀκατάληψία (the notion that nothing can be known, at least in the form of the Stoic κατάληψις), but the rejection of ἐποχή (suspension of judgment). “Since the thesis of *acatalepsia* formed the basis of the Philonian/Metrodorian position to which Philo subscribed in this period, he could not have consistently taught a technical rhetoric with any other conception of its technicality: the epistemic status of his rhetorical theory could not exceed the ‘probable’” (Brittain 2001 p. 331).

⁶⁵ See Ax (1995) on the connection between the use of the scheme in *De lingua Latina* and *De oratore*; Ax focused on the scheme itself, but did not venture inferences on a Ciceronian influence on the content of the argumentation, as I am suggesting here.

⁶⁶ One can only wish it were possible to find records of Varro's appreciation of Cicero's innovation of the conception of *ars*, but none survives. Not even Cicero's letters can be of help, for the few mentions of Varro from November 55 (when *De oratore* was finished) are not related to that piece of work, and from June 45 on, when Varro's presence in the letters becomes pervasive, it is all about the writing of the *Academica* (and Cicero's impatience to receive the promised dedicated work).

“binds us with the restrictions’ of its rules”).⁶⁷ This succinct definition is reconcilable with both the “strict” and “loose” definitions of *ars* proposed in *De oratore*. On the other hand, Varro’s definition of *ars grammatica* and description of its tasks,⁶⁸ which traces over that of Dionysius Thrax, suggests a closer association with the loose Ciceronian definition than with the strict one, despite the notable replacement of ἐμπειρία with *scientia*, which seems to take heed of Asclepiades’ modification of Dionysius’ definition (see §3.1.1.b): the emphasis is not on grammar’s ability to deliver scientific knowledge, but on its articulation in different *officia* and its being built on an architecture of principles which have been studied by competent scholars. It might still be bold, given that almost nothing of books II–IV has survived, to claim that Varro followed the lead of Cicero’s characters and concluded that etymology too is, “if not an *ars*, then at least something like an *ars*”, adopting the loose definition given in *de orat.* I 109. However, such a conclusion would provide a suitable foundation for *ling.* V 7–8.

In fact, per “Crassus” definition, a discipline must firstly be founded empirically. In the case of rhetoric, everyone has experience of the power of a speech to persuade and stir passions; for etymology, every speaker has the notion that the origin of a word can be retraced if the process which transformed it is understood (as is shown in Varro’s model by the example of *argentifodinae* and *viocurus*, the first *gradus*). This, however, is only the foundation: the principles of a discipline must also be compiled by experts and formalised in a taxonomy. For rhetoric, this was done in the treatises on the subject, and for etymology, one could refer to the work of the philologists who recognised phonological patterns in the language of the texts that they analysed (see §2.3.2). Finally, the application of those principles must be consolidated and perfected through long-standing practice: for rhetoric, one hardly needs to mention the long and rich history of oratorical practice in both Rome and Greece; for etymology, Varro’s model acknowledges the contributions by philologists and philosophers (and, at the fourth level, antiquarians).

Thus, the first three *gradus* of Varro’s model ensure that etymology satisfies these requirements. Admittedly, the transfer of this defence of rhetoric to etymology is not seamless. The em-

⁶⁷ Fr. 117 ap. CASSIOD. gramm. p. 213,13–17: *Scire autem debemus, sicut Varro dicit, utilitatis alicuius causa omnium atrium exitisse principia. Ars vero dicta est, quod nos suis regulis artet atque constringat. Alii dicunt a Graecis hoc tractum esse vocabulum, ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, id est a virtute doctrinae, quam disertī viri unius cuiusque bonae rei scientiam vocant.* The segment *Ars vero... constringat* is not explicitly attributed to Varro, but the etymology reads as plausibly Varronian, and moreover, it seems reasonable to consider it part of the quotation because the following *Alii* clearly introduces an alternative opinion (in fact, that part seems unjustifiably included in Varro’s fragment).

⁶⁸ Frr. 107–110.

pirical foundation of rhetoric is rendered more effective by the fact that one can observe a rhetorician's performance and take cues from them, which cannot quite be done with an etymologist; and the long and rich tradition of oratorial practice both in Rome and Greece does not compare to the scattered series of attempts at etymology before Varro.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, this seems to be an imperfect endeavour to defend the validity of *ars etymologica* based on recognised criteria.

But the crucial point in this structure is the fourth *gradus*. In *De oratore*, the contrast between *ad scientiam pervenire* and *opinionem aucupari* was brought into play with reference to what one can expect to obtain from rhetoric: ultimately it led the characters to agree that, although rhetoric is not the kind of discipline which secures a path to scientific knowledge, it must not be dismissed as a haphazard practice with no rigorous foundation. In *ling.* V 7–8, it appears that Varro makes a similar claim about etymology. His model shows that the etymological methods secure certain results when applied to self-explanatory compounds (like *argentifodinae* and *viocurus*). As we progress through the other *gradus*, and apply these methods to more challenging words, such as poetic creations (by nature rarefied and removed from everyday speech) or ordinary words which have changed over time in their form or meaning, we can still expect reliable results, but must concede that errors might occur in the process. And when we examine the oldest Latin words, coined at too distant a time for us to firmly grasp them in our day, we necessarily enter the realm of the “probable”. This does not mean that the results will be utterly random, for Varro trusted the principles of the etymological analysis developed by the grammarians and the philosophers to be sound and reliable (in fact, he himself applied them in books V–VII). However, here he recognises that the ratio of certainty and speculation in a word's reconstruction will vary. In fact, Varro openly acknowledges that it is not possible to give the etymology of all words, and that sometimes one is able to retrace the origin of an entire lexical family, but not of the primitive word which stands as its root.⁷⁰

Therefore, although the statement on *scientia* and *opinio* is found at the fourth level, its significance seems to encompass the whole *ars etymologica*, because it means that this branch of learning cannot guarantee the attainment of full knowledge of the things it investigates at all the stages and contexts of its application. Despite this limitation, however, etymology is vindicated as a reliable discipline.

⁶⁹ Only Chrysippus and Apollodorus are known to have written treatises on etymology (see §2.2.1).

⁷⁰ VII 2–4.

2.2. Theoretical principles of etymology

Etymology is literally “the study of the truth [ἔτυμον]” of words, that is, of their true meaning; but in its modern application, the term actually defines the study of the *original* meaning of a word, recovered through the study of its history and its derivation from other words. Even in antiquity, the term was not employed in all contexts, and while it acquired a more general meaning (akin to the modern one) in later periods, those who first began to use it took the “truth” aspect seriously, as it reflected a doctrinal stance. Although in this chapter and the rest of the dissertation I will employ the word “etymology” in the general modern sense, the nuances of this term when used in the ancient texts must be kept in mind.

In fact, the reasons why, in Varro’s time, etymology had come to be widely considered a valuable research tool derived from certain philosophical conceptions of the nature of language, the relation between words and named things, and the path to knowledge. The philosophical underpinning for Varro’s methodology developed over a long time and went through several phases of re-evaluation, adjustments, and developments from the Greek to the Roman world.

2.2.1. *Etymology and philosophy of language before Varro*

We mentioned in §1.1 that questions about the “correctness of names” had been part of philosophical discussions since way before various authors began to spell out the criteria of linguistic correctness. This, in fact, constitutes one of two long-standing debates in which scholars, philosophers, and literary authors engaged over a period that spans Classical antiquity almost entirely: on the one hand, how names came to be; on the other hand, whether names were naturally correct. The interest and value that different authors placed on etymology depended on where they stood on these two issues. Although they were discussed separately in antiquity, they are often conflated with one another in scholarship; part of the reason for this confusion is that both debates, at least in Greek literature, pivoted around the same key-terms, used with different meanings: φύσις and θέσις.

In the discussion on the origin of names, the most common view in antiquity was that they had come to be “through imposition” (θέσει), in other words, that they had been invented by somebody: in this context, θέσις is used as *nomen actionis* of the verb τίθημι. Only a few voices in the debate argued that names had originated “spontaneously” or “naturally” (φύσει): these belonged

to the atomistic tradition, perhaps already from Democritus and down to Lucretius. When it comes to the question of the correctness, however, to say that names are φύσει implies that they are “by nature” correct, or that they reflect the “nature”, the innate characteristics, of the named things. By contrast, the claim that names are disconnected from reality, and that their relation to the named things is “conventional”, is expressed by the word θέσις, here used metonymically to indicate what has been “set down by *agreement*”, and sometimes by the closely related νόμος (“law, convention”) and ἔθος (“custom”). The positions in the two debates do not overlap congruently. The thesis of origin by imposition is compatible with the claim that this imposition produced names that are naturally correct, or conventional, or anything in between: “you can posit a name either in accordance with nature, or in accordance with an agreement you have made with other men, or in accordance with nothing but your own choice”.⁷¹ And the thesis of the natural correctness of language can be argued either on the basis of a spontaneous evolution of language which produced names that naturally befit the named things, or of a wise imposition by gods or savants or even ordinary men; naturalism can associate with a variety of perspectives.⁷²

Another aspect to keep in mind when engaging with the discussion of these topics in antiquity is that the term ὀνόματα and its Latin counterpart *nomina* are intended to encompass a broader class of words than just “nouns”: they refer to all words with a full lexical meaning (mostly names and verbs, but also adjectives and adverbs). In what follows, for the sake of simplicity, I shall also talk about “names” with this broad meaning.

Varro was clearly well aware of what had preceded him in the field of etymology, and this awareness, made explicit in the layout of the four *gradus* discussed in §2.1 and demonstrated throughout the etymological books, implies that he must have reckoned with the previous discussions of those issues which underly a theory of etymology.

There is evidence of interest in these topics by the ancient epic and tragic poets, several of the Presocratic philosophers (from the sixth- and fifth-century cosmologists to the Sophists), Plato, Aristotle, the Hellenistic philosophers (notably the Stoics, but also the Epicureans), the Hellenistic editors and grammarians, and Roman antiquarians. Not all of these sources would have been found on Varro’s work desk, but they might have been explicitly discussed in, or might have influenced, works that were available to Varro.

⁷¹ Robinson (1955 p. 230).

⁷² Excellent overview in the introduction to Pezzini & Taylor (2019), where different kinds of linguistic naturalism are distinguished (referential and functional).

The following overview proceeds by and large chronologically, but occasionally it prioritises doctrinal filiation over historical precedence.

a. The Presocratic cosmologists, the Atomists from Democritus to Epicurus, and the Sophists

Many of the Presocratics had received ample attention in the Roman Republic, and not just in doxographical writings, as recent literature has shown. Heraclitus' ideas must have been known at least insofar as they had been absorbed by the Stoics, since we find allusions to his philosophy from the late Republic; even some of his writings probably circulated in a Latin translation, since Cicero and others sometimes quoted him.⁷³ Cicero's *Academica* details the ways in which the philosophers of the New Academy appealed to Democritus, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Parmenides, and Xenophanes.⁷⁴ The doctrine of the Atomists was of course foundational to Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, but the influence of Democritus was also heavy on Cicero,⁷⁵ and the impact of Empedocles' philosophy on Latin epic poetry was so significant that P. Hardie connected Lucretius, Horace, and Virgil as links in a chain which he called "Empedoclean Epos".⁷⁶ The Pythagorean philosophy had flown into Rome even earlier than the doctrines from the East and had taken firm hold: Pythagoras, whose statue was erected in the *Comitium* as early as the third century BCE, was revered as the wisest of the Greeks and connected to king Numa, who was purported to have been his pupil.⁷⁷ Beyond this legend (which was already disputed in Varro's time),⁷⁸ the influence of Pythagoreanism remained constant through the middle Republic and increased substantially in the late Republic: sources ascribe Pythagorean leanings to Nigidius Figulus and Varro himself, and commentators have detected a Pythagorean imprint in Cicero's work.⁷⁹

Given the solid presence of Presocratic doctrines in the late Republican intellectual circles, and Varro's own potential leanings towards some of these, it is plausible that he took into consideration how these philosophers approached the questions of the origin of language and of the correctness of names.

⁷³ Lévy & Saudelli (2014).

⁷⁴ Brittain & Palmer (2001).

⁷⁵ Morel (2018); Vimercati (2018).

⁷⁶ Hardie (2009); see also *id.* (2018) and Nelis (2018).

⁷⁷ PLIN. *nat.* XXXIV 26; PLU. *Num.* 8.10. See Gruen (1990 pp. 158–62); Humm (1996 pp. 345–50).

⁷⁸ CIC. *rep.* II 28–29; D.H. II 59.1–2. See also LIV. I 18.1–3.

⁷⁹ On the Roman Pythagoreans, see Flinterman (2014). In addition, see Lehmann (1997 pp. 299–314) on the question of Varro's own Pythagoreanism and Balbo (2018) on Pythagoras in Cicero.

G. Calogero famously theorised that the Greek Archaic age was characterised by a lack of distinction between the dimensions of reality, truth, and thought⁸⁰; accordingly, the Presocratic philosophers' views on language derived from their ontology. Thus, the ancient **Pythagorean** tradition, which depicted the cosmos as a harmony governed by a focal principle of ultimate wisdom (the τετρακτύς), considered "he who assigned names to things" as the second "wisest thing", after Number, implying that names had been assigned wisely, therefore appropriately.⁸¹ For **Heraclitus** (fl. 500 BCE), names reflect the constant change and the contrast of opposites which are at the basis of What-Is⁸²; and language is part of the λόγος of the world, which is constantly "speaking" the truth of What-Is to humans (although they mostly cannot comprehend it), therefore revealing truths about the nature of the named things.⁸³ In opposition to Heraclitus, **Parmenides** (fl. early fifth century) asserted the fundamental uniformity and immutability of What-Is and that, as a consequence, only what *is* can be thought and said; but the language used by humans, based on multiplicity and opposition of contraries, reflects their fallacious perceptions and opinions of What-Is.⁸⁴ The influence of Parmenides' conception of language as an expression of false δόξαι is visible in the pluralists of the mid-fifth century, **Empedocles** and **Anaxagoras**, who also maintained that people had a misguided understanding of reality and that their language reflected it.⁸⁵ Empedocles, in particular, seems to have been the earliest Presocratic to have explained the humans' linguistic designations as a νόμος.⁸⁶

Aside from Pythagoreanism, where a wise name-giver is explicitly evoked, it is not easy to pin down where the other Presocratics stood with respect to the question of how names had come to be: for most of them, the matter remained in the background and the focus on language—as far as we can tell from the fragments—was elsewhere. By contrast, to **Democritus** (whose interest in language

⁸⁰ Calogero (1967 pp. 39–47).

⁸¹ DK 58C4.

⁸² DK 22B48 on the substantial unity of "life" (βίος) and death, brought about by a "bow" (βιός), despite the opposition between the "name" (ὄνομα) and the "work" (ἔργον); B67 on the opposites which are united in the god and change their names as they change their being.

⁸³ DK B1 on the λόγος; B25, 32, 60, 114 on verbal similarities with philosophical significance. See Kirk (1954 pp. 116–20) and Hülz Piccone (2013).

⁸⁴ DK 28B2.7–8, B8.7–9, 16–18, 38–41, 53–56. See Woodbury (1958, 1986) and McKirahan (2008).

⁸⁵ For Anaxagoras, the nature of the physical world is such that everything is mixed, and "all things have a portion of everything" (DK 59A60, B1). It follows that the humans' perception of any certain thing cannot capture the reality of all the elements that make it up, but only the "ingredients" that are predominant: something is perceived as gold because it contains much gold, although it also contains other stuffs (A41; see Furley 2002). And since names reflect the humans' opinions (B17), names are also inadequate representations of the reality of things. See, however, Gemelli Marciano (2013 pp. 120–1) on how the motif of "criticising the humans' designations" presupposes a different context from Parmenides'.

⁸⁶ DK 31B9. See Ademollo (2011 p. 89).

is attested by the catalogue of his writings)⁸⁷ have been traced back three later accounts by Diodorus Siculus, Vitruvius, and Lactantius⁸⁸ of the development of human civilisation which detail the origin of language. The three narratives distinguish an earlier stage where communication between humans was limited to unarticulated, animal-like sounds and the use of gestures (the latter element is absent from Diodorus), followed by a later stage where accidental circumstances (Vitruvius: *eventu fortuito*) compelled people to develop new means of communication and to assign better articulated names to things. Diodorus' and Vitruvius' passages emphasise that the assignment was done at random (ὥς ἔτυχε, *ut obtigerant*) and that the relation between names and things was entirely arbitrary; Diodorus adds that this fact explains the multiplicity of languages. So, in terms of the question of the correctness of names, Democritus can be ranked in the θέσει party; in terms of origin of language, while he certainly theorised human imposition, there is room for debate whether an "evolutionist" component was involved in his theory as well.⁸⁹

Epicurus' own account of the origin of language,⁹⁰ innovative and highly influential on later literature, built significantly upon Democritus' and distinguished two stages in the development of language as part of the development of culture and civilisation. However, Epicurus explicitly denied that names had originated through imposition "from the beginning" (ἐξ ἀρχῆς) and stated that they had been brought about by natural causes: the particular way in which each person or community was compelled to articulate sounds to designate objects was dictated by their "individual feelings and impressions" on the one hand, and by geographical factors on the other. These sounds were already ὀνόματα in the sense of articulations with lexical meanings, associated with particular things or objects,⁹¹ and, at a second stage, they were subjected to a conscious revision by communal agreement (κοινῶς), aimed at removing ambiguity and improving conciseness. Therefore, human imposition of names *ex nihilo* is not contemplated at any point of Epicurus' account: names emerged through a natural process,⁹² which Epicurus' faithful disciple, and Varro's contemporary, Lucretius condensed

⁸⁷ DK 68A33 lists a section "On literature and music" which includes titles like Περὶ εὐφώνων καὶ δυσφώνων γραμμάτων, Περὶ Ὀμήρου ἢ ὀρθοεπειῆς καὶ γλωσσέων, Περὶ ῥημάτων, and Ὀνομαστικῶν.

⁸⁸ D.S. I 8.3–4 (DK 68B5); VITR. II 1.1; LACT. *inst.* VI 10.13–14. See Cole (1990 pp. 60–9) and Verlinsky (2005).

⁸⁹ Cole (1990 p. 69) concluded: "there is thus no evidence against, and some evidence for, the assumption that Democritus envisioned a gradual growth of language through piecemeal, conventional accretions", and speculated that Democritus "considered the development of technology and language in conjunction with each other", like Epicurus would.

⁹⁰ EPICUR. *ep. Hdt.* 75–76 (LS 19A). The text is only a summary of a theory which Epicurus expounded in detail in his lost treatise Περὶ φύσεως.

⁹¹ Reinhardt (2008 p. 128).

⁹² In Epicurus' short summary, there is no clear statement that humans had the ability to control these utterances and use them appropriately from the start. Reinhardt (2008) pointed to "hints" in the text (re-

beautifully in two lines: *At varios linguae sonitus natura subegit | mittere et utilitas expressit nomina rerum*.⁹³ Another point in which the Epicurean tradition departed from Democritus' theory—as suggested by a comparison with Ptolemy⁹⁴—is the idea that the correspondence between words and objects is naturally correct: humans were compelled to (in the first stage) utter sounds and (in the second stage) perfect the articulation of names “in accordance with features of the named things”.

Going back to the mid-fifth century, we find a significant change of perspective from the earlier Presocratics, who approached the question of language as part of a quest to understand the structure and governing laws of the world, to the Sophistic movement, whose chief interest were human beings, their actions, and their roles within their societies. Beyond this common outlook, the individuals Sophists (all active between the mid-fifth and the early fourth centuries) were quite different from one another. Their views on language did proceed from the same anthropocentric perspective, which led to considering language not as an emanation of the λόγος of the world, but as a human tool; and this perspective, in turn, placed the main focus on the use of language rather than its origin. Nevertheless, the Sophists came to different positions when it came to the “correctness” of language and names. **Protagoras'** λόγος is a distinctly human rational principle and is mainly a tool for people to rationally inquire into and understand reality.⁹⁵ His famous aphorism, “Of everything and anything the measure is humanity”,⁹⁶ might have expressed a form of ontological relativism. However, this tenet does not imply *linguistic* relativism,⁹⁷ and Protagoras is said to have been very concerned with the “correctness” of names and speech⁹⁸; for instance, he protested that the grammatical gender of names did not always reflect the supposedly “masculine” or “feminine” nature of the people or named

capped on p. 138: “the reference to the first words as δηλώσεις and [...] the implication that first words were used as communication as soon as they emerged”) which imply that they did, and bolstered his argument with a persuasive analysis of Lucretius' account.

⁹³ LUCR. V 1028–29; the full passage continues until line 1090 (LS 19B). Finding a suitable and expressive translation of *natura subegit mittere* and *utilitas expressit nomina* into English is very challenging: see Reinhardt (2008 pp. 130–4), who carefully weighed up the multiple correspondences in Lucretius' analogy, in 1028–32, between humans first learning to speak and non-verbal children pointing to things. On the scholarly debate on how to match Lucretius' *natura* and *utilitas* with Epicurus' two stages, see Verlinsky (2005 pp. 83–6) and Reinhardt (2008 p. 130).

⁹⁴ PTOL. *Iudic.* 4.2–6: see Verlinsky (2005 pp. 71–7). The Epicurean influence on Ptolemy was established in the Liverpool-Manchester seminar on this author (Huby & Neal 1989).

⁹⁵ Schiappa (2003).

⁹⁶ DK 80B1, Schiappa's translation. See his analysis and interpretation of the fragment (2003 pp. 117–33), with bibliography.

⁹⁷ This was stressed by Ademollo (2011 pp. 77–80).

⁹⁸ DK A24 on Protagoras teaching the ὁρθότης τῶν ὀνομάτων; A26 on his studies being concerned with ὁρθοέπεια.

things.⁹⁹ A younger Sophist, **Prodicus**, was known for paying close attention to speaking as accurately as possible, refusing to conflate different words as synonyms and instead arguing that every single word was semantically and substantially unique¹⁰⁰: for him, too, “[language] attempts to recapture the nature of things”.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, **Gorgias** argued that nothing exists; that even if something did exist, it could not be known; and even if it could be known, it would not be possible to “disclose” or “communicate” (μηνύεσθαι) such knowledge to others.¹⁰² The latter claim rests on the idea that what is communicated are words, but words are distinctly different from the things that are.¹⁰³ “Λόγος cannot furnish, constitute, or represent the external reality”¹⁰⁴: therefore, its function is rather practical, that of a rhetorical tool that people employ to persuade.¹⁰⁵ Closer to Protagoras’ position was the anonymous sophistic treatise *Dissoi logoi*, which restated the correspondence between name and thing.¹⁰⁶

The extent of the knowledge that Republican Romans had of the Sophists is not entirely clear. On the one hand, Cincius Alimentus is reported to have written a biography of Gorgias¹⁰⁷; but by scarce evidence, it is difficult to tell how much authentic Sophistic material was available in Rome beyond the version reported by Plato, who is notoriously guilty of sometimes misrepresenting, exaggerating, or caricaturing the profiles and doctrines of his opponents to strengthen his own points in his dialogues. Therefore, while the Sophist’s views on language (framed within the parameters of the fundamental opposition between φύσις and νόμος, which informed many of the Sophistic debates on moral and social norms, like justice and virtue) made up a nuanced spectrum, it is well possible that Varro would have known only the extremely polarised representation of the debate in Plato’s *Cratylus*.

⁹⁹ DK 80A28 on the Homeric μῆνις (“wrath”) and πῆληξ (“helmet”) being grammatically feminine, but “masculine” in nature. Protagoras’ attention to the correspondence between gender and nature was famously mocked by Aristophanes (*Nu.* 658ff).

¹⁰⁰ Prodicus’ preoccupation with synonyms was caricatured by Plato in various works (DK 84 A13–18). See also A19.

¹⁰¹ Wolfsdorf (2011 p. 145)

¹⁰² DK 82B3. However, there is disagreement as to whether this was Gorgias’ own philosophical position or only a sample of argumentative skill.

¹⁰³ (*ibid.*) λόγος δὲ οὐκ ἔστι τὰ ὑποκείμενα καὶ ὄντα.

¹⁰⁴ Mourelatos (1987 p. 138).

¹⁰⁵ Calogero (1977 p. 262).

¹⁰⁶ DK 90 1.11: ὥσπερ καὶ τῶνυμα, οὕτω καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα. The dates of the *Dissoi Logoi* are disputed: see Robinson (1984 pp. 34–41) and Conley (1985).

¹⁰⁷ FULG. *serm. ant.* 8.

b. Plato's *Cratylus* and the Stoics

Plato's dialogue on the ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων attacks both Sophistic relativism (in terms of language and ontology) and the Presocratic ontological fluxist theories (namely of Heraclitus and the Atomists).¹⁰⁸ Plato stages a φύσει vs. θέσει debate on the correctness of names in extreme terms (not reflected by the actual sources): on the one end, a naturalist position maintaining that there is natural coincidence between a thing and the way it is called, which entails that that thing could not be called correctly by any other name; on the opposite end, a "conventionalist" position maintaining that humans impose names on things utterly arbitrarily and with haphazard results.¹⁰⁹ The latter position is embodied by "Hermogenes",¹¹⁰ the former by "Cratylus".¹¹¹ In the dialogue, "Socrates" intervenes in an ongoing dispute between the two and deconstructs both positions in turn, proving that the correctness of names must involve both a foundation of naturalism and an element of conventionalism. The arguments articulated throughout the dialogue make up a nuanced doctrine which influenced all the later developments of philosophy of language. We can break down these arguments as follows:

- We begin with an argument against ontological relativism. Things have an "essence" (οὐσία) of their own, which is "stable" (βέβαιος) and does not depend on the people's opinions or perceptions of them¹¹²; therefore, things are separate from the actions that involve them.
- Naming is also an action¹¹³ and a name is a "tool" or "instrument" (ὄργανον) of naming, just like a drill is the instrument of drilling and a pin-beater of pin-beating.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸ Although it is usually assumed that the main target of Plato's polemic was Heraclitus, the fluxist tenets that Plato attacks were compatible with other Presocratics too: Ademollo (2011 pp. 213–5) pointed to Leucippus and Democritus (implicitly, for Democritus is never mentioned in Plato's works), Horky (2013 pp. 153–61) to the Pythagoreans Philolaus and Epicharmus.

¹⁰⁹ Long (2005 p. 43) applied an alternative reading to the dialogue and distinguished five different positions: moderate, radical, or formal conventionalism, and formal, etymological, of phonetic naturalism.

¹¹⁰ 384c10–e2: "{HERM.} Well, Socrates, though I have often discussed both with Cratylus here and with many others, I cannot be persuaded that there is any other correctness of a name than convention and agreement [συνθήκη καὶ ὁμολογία]. For it seems to me that, whatever name one imposes on something, this is its correct name; and that, if one changes it by imposing another one again, and does not call the thing by the former name any more, the new name is no less correct than the old, as when we change the name of our slaves. For no name belongs by nature to anything [οὐ γὰρ φύσει ἐκάστῳ πεφυκέναι ὄνομα οὐδὲν οὐδενί], but in virtue of the custom and habit (νόμῳ καὶ ἔθει) of those who made names into habits and those who call things by them." (transl. Ademollo).

¹¹¹ 383a4–b2: "{HERM.} Cratylus here, Socrates, says there is a natural correctness of name for each of the beings [ὀνόματος ὀρθότητα εἶναι ἐκάστῳ τῶν ὄντων φύσει πεφυκυῖαν], and what some conventionally agree to call something, uttering a bit of their voice and applying it to the thing, is not a name; but there is a natural correctness of names for both Greeks and barbarians, the same for all." (transl. Ademollo).

¹¹² 386de.

¹¹³ 387cd.

¹¹⁴ 387e–388b.

- All tools have a function, and the function of names is “to distinguish (διακρίνειν) and inform (διδάσκειν) about the essence” of things.¹¹⁵ Names, by themselves, cannot signify or reveal truths about the things, for one must know the things irrespectively of how they are named. Rather, names are “means to show” (δηλώματα) the things, i.e. to draw our interlocutor’s attention to a thing in its stable essence and elicit their “understanding” or “recognition” (διάνοια) of it.¹¹⁶
- All tools require two separate skills: making them and using them. Both skills require mastering a τέχνη, and therefore are not tasks for everyone, but only expert craftsmen.¹¹⁷ The expert of making the name-instrument is a “lawgiver” (νομοθέτης), or as it were a “name-maker” (ὀνοματουργός)¹¹⁸; the expert who is to use the name-instrument is “one who knows how to ask and answer questions”, i.e. a dialectician (διαλεκτικός).¹¹⁹
- The reason why those who make and use names must be experts is that not all names are equally suited to perform their function. Rather, “one must find out the instrument naturally fit for each thing [τὸ φύσει ἐκάστῳ πεφυκὸς ὄργανον] and embody it in that material whence one makes his product—not such a tool as he wants, but such as is naturally fit”.¹²⁰
- The “natural suitability” of a name does not consist of its ability to “imitate” (μιμεῖσθαι) the thing: for every imitation achieves not reduplication, but an imperfect resemblance.¹²¹ In a name, the primary elements which are to make it resemble the truth of the thing are the letters, or phonemes: but although these can be associated with certain feelings or qualities (by virtue of what we would call phonosymbolism), they are rarely distributed consistently in names.¹²² Therefore, if the correctness of names rested on their ability to imitate reality, names would be found inadequate.

¹¹⁵ 388b7–c2.

¹¹⁶ 434e6–8, 435b3–6. See Aronadio (2002 pp. 125–69).

¹¹⁷ 388cd.

¹¹⁸ On the difficulty to translate νόμος and νομοθέτης in this context, see Ademollo (2011 p. 118). Ὀνοματουργός is a Platonic coinage. The similar term ὀνοματοποιός is not found before Plato either; on the other hand, the verb ὀνοματοποιεῖν occurs in Isocrates (fr. 9) and will be frequently employed by Aristotle. On the hermeneutical level, there is no point in trying to identify the figure evoked by this designation: the νομοθέτης “is there not as a piece of history but as a mythical device to make it easier to develop an abstract theory” (Robinson 1955 p. 225).

¹¹⁹ 390bc. Commentators debate whether the two τέχναι require two distinct figures or can be mastered by the same person: see Baxter (1992 p. 46); Sedley (2003 pp. 9, 73); Ademollo (2011 pp. 142–4).

¹²⁰ 389c (transl. Ademollo).

¹²¹ 431d9–432b5.

¹²² This is shown through the example of σκληρότης “hardness” (434ce): firstly, the word contains a *lambda*, which evokes smoothness and softness; secondly, if the same concept is called σκληρότης (with a *rho* and a final *sigma*) by the Athenians and σκληρότηρ (with two *rhos*) by the Eretrians, it follows that the correspondence between the sound and the concept need not be so strict.

- Since the function of names is not to signify or imitate reality, but they are instruments used to “talk” (in a philosophically meaningful way, διαλέγεσθαι) about reality, their correctness will depend on how they lend themselves to being used in a dialectical discourse that fits the way in which reality is truly configured and articulated.¹²³
- On the other hand, even if a name is naturally suited to be used to “show” a certain thing, it can only perform its function if it has become common knowledge: therefore, the imposition of names still requires an element of convention.¹²⁴

The *Cratylus*—which never questions the assumption that names came to be through imposition—offers the first close insight into the role of etymology within a certain theory on the correctness of names.

About halfway through the dialogue, just after he convinced “Hermogenes” that his position is faulty, and before proceeding to dismantle the foundations of “Cratylus” naturalism, “Socrates” entertains the hypothesis that names indeed are naturally correct and searches for proof by inquiring into the origins of names. The “swarm of etymologies”, as F. Aronadio calls it,¹²⁵ fills over half of the dialogue (391e–421c) and includes the names of Homeric characters, gods, cosmological entities, virtues, vices, states of being and many other words.¹²⁶ Almost all reconstructions produce faulty results by modern standards, as is often the case with ancient etymologies in which authors took much liberty when breaking down the words into individual sounds (see §2.3.2.a). Thus, the name ἄνθρωπος is explained by claiming that the human being is ἀναθρῶν ἃ ὅπωπε (“examines what he has seen”)¹²⁷; the soul (ψυχή) is so called because it φύσιν ὀχεῖ καὶ ἔχει (“carries along and holds nature”)¹²⁸; and so on. These explanations presuppose the idea that “words encode descriptive content that can be recovered by finding the words from which they are derived”,¹²⁹ and Plato’s focus, towards the end of the dialogue, fixes on the validity of the descriptions thus restored. Some of the given etymologies can be reconciled with Platonic ideas,¹³⁰ but many others, especially from 400d on, yield a represen-

¹²³ Aronadio (2002 pp. 148–9, 167): “[Il reale] è per natura costituito da unità con una loro propria configurazione stabile, con una loro identità e, di conseguenza, con una loro identificabilità, epistemica o anche solo linguistica [...] Con l’uso dialettico dei nomi non si rappresenta né si indica la realtà, ma si delineano le forme e i contorni di un suo mostrarsi secondo la sua articolazione”.

¹²⁴ Allen (2005 pp. 22–3).

¹²⁵ Aronadio (2011).

¹²⁶ See §2.3.1 for an analysis of the arrangement of the etymologies in this section and parallels with Varro.

¹²⁷ 399c.

¹²⁸ 400b1–3.

¹²⁹ Allen (2005 pp. 14–5).

¹³⁰ See Sedley (2003 pp. 90–7) and Ademollo (2011 pp. 191–7).

tation of reality that is rather consonant with Heraclitus' theory of flux: while Plato accepted some aspects of that theory for what concerned the sensible world (mutable, constantly changing, and elusive), he argued that reality was grounded in stable forms, hence some of the fluxist etymologies given by "Socrates" would not have been acceptable for him.¹³¹ Therefore, many commentators interpreted this etymological section as deliberately satirical and aimed at ridiculing "Cratylus'" position. By contrast, others have argued that nothing suggests a satirical intent¹³²: while Plato ultimately aimed to demonstrate that the fluxist worldview was misguided, there is no indication that he did not consider the etymologies thus reconstructed a valid insight into such worldview.

According to the doctrine exposed in the dialogue, names per se do not reveal any truth about the things they name: they are tools crafted by people, and can be more or less correct depending on whether they allow people to discuss the things of the world in a way that is appropriate to its true structure. If people buy into a faulty conception of the world, they may well craft names that fall short of the standard of correctness when used to discussing ontology truthfully¹³³; but this does not take away from the validity of etymology as a resource for inquiring into the ancient name-givers' perceptions of the world. As Sedley put it, those etymologies are "philosophically [in]correct", but "exegetically correct".¹³⁴

The *Cratylus* was a watershed in the history of philosophy of language and it is very likely that anyone who theorised etymology in Rome was familiar with its doctrine. Concerning Varro in particular, it is worth reminding that one of the fundamental tasks of Antiochus' Academy was to reconstruct Plato's "most complete philosophical system"¹³⁵ through a systematic reading of the dialogues, aimed at revealing the coherence of his doctrine¹³⁶: therefore, it seems fair to presume that Varro, Antiochus' disciple, would have seen the value of going back to the original Platonic text when theorising etymology. Even if he did not do so, however, Varro would have come to

¹³¹ E.g. Ἑστία ("Hestia") < ὥσία, Doric for οὐσία < τὸ ὠθοῦν ("that which gives an impulse") (401d); φρόνησις ("wisdom") < φορᾶς καὶ ῥοῦ νόησις ("intellection of movement and flux") and νόησις < νέου ἔσις ("aiming at the new") (411d4–9); σοφία ("intelligence") < ἐφάπτεσθαι φορᾶς ("to latch onto the movement") (412b1–2), etc.

¹³² See the arguments in Sedley (1998, 2003 pp. 25–50).

¹³³ This is spelled out clearly at 439bc: "Again, let us investigate this further point, in order that these many names which point in the same direction do not deceive us, if those that imposed them did impose them believing that all things are always moving and flowing—for it does seem to me that they too had this belief—whereas this is perhaps not so, and it is rather that they, having fallen into a sort of vortex, are themselves whirled around and, dragging us to them, try to make us too fall inside" (transl. Ademollo).

¹³⁴ Sedley (2003 p. 28).

¹³⁵ Cic. *ac.* II 15.

¹³⁶ See Cic. *ac.* I 17, with Karamanolis (2006 p. 51) and Bonazzi (2012 p. 309).

know the *Cratylus* indirectly insofar as it substantially influenced Stoic views of language and etymology.

The **Stoics**, too, aligned with the party of the origin of names by imposition¹³⁷ and argued for the natural correctness of names, but they did so on a different basis than Plato: while he had theorised a natural fitness of names for their *function* (to be used to discuss reality truthfully), the Stoics got behind the idea of a natural match between names and things at the level of ontology. The exact nature of this connection is difficult to ascertain (see below); but this natural match, however conceived, had profound implications for the main token of legacy that they took up from the *Cratylus*: an interest in etymology. Indeed, the earliest attestation of the word *ἐτυμολογικά* figures in the catalogue of Chrysippus' writings, representing the first known monograph on etymology¹³⁸; and according to our sources, the Stoics' interest in the subject was so pronounced to elicit mockery.¹³⁹

Like in the *Cratylus*, etymological analysis for the Stoics was based on the principle that names are condensed descriptions: as such, etymologies were considered a philologically sound method to obtain information on the opinions and perceptions that the ancient name-givers had of the things they had named. A crucial difference, however, was that, whereas Plato used the etymologies as part of his argumentation aimed at deconstructing the ontological worldview of the Presocratics and show that it was misguided, the Stoics believed that the first humans had an intimate connection with nature (conceived as a perfectly ordered cosmos, designed according to and governed by divine rationality) which endowed them with exceptional wisdom and an enlightened understanding of nature's true rational causes.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, the names believed to have been imposed by these wise ancestors were taken as matching the named things as accurately as ever was within the humans' possibilities. It follows that, for the Stoics, names could also be a source of knowledge of the true nature of the things themselves (something which Plato had denied): they were philologically *and* (mostly) philosophically correct.¹⁴¹ This fact explains why etymologies acquired, with the Stoics, an

¹³⁷ Chrysippus talked often about the *θέσις* of names (e.g. ap. EUS. *PE* VI 8.8; ap. PH. *opif.* 148; ap. GAL. *comp. med.* vol. 13 p. 407,13).

¹³⁸ D.L. VII 200 (*SVF* II 16; *FDS* 194).

¹³⁹ CIC. *nat. deor.* III 62–63 (*SVF* II 1069; *FDS* 606). Many examples of Stoic etymologies have survived: see *FDS* 650–680.

¹⁴⁰ CORN. *comp.* p. 76: οὐχ οἱ τυχόντες ἐγένοντο οἱ παλαιοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνιέναι τὴν τοῦ κόσμου φύσιν ἱκανοὶ καὶ πρὸς τὸ διὰ συμβόλων καὶ αἰνιγμάτων φιλοσοφῆσαι περὶ αὐτῆς εὐεπίφοροι. ("The ancient people were not just anybody, but able to grasp the nature of the universe and apt to philosophise about it through symbols and enigmas").

¹⁴¹ Galen, who had dedicated a book *On the correctness of names*, now lost, to exposing etymology as "an impostor" (*ἀλαζών*) and demolish the scientific validity of etymology as an epistemological tool, criticised Chrysippus for exploiting etymology, among other things, as "witnesses to the premises that he postulated" (*PHP* II 2.5).

unprecedented philosophical significance, which they took beyond the application to the exegesis of the Homeric texts (where it remained confined with other scholars, see below).¹⁴² Therefore, Stoics, like Epicurus, conceived etymology in its literal sense—an inquire into the *true* meaning of words.

Concerning the nature of the relation between names and things, the most eloquent source is Origen, who reported that, according to the Stoics, “the first articulations [πρῶται φωναί] imitated things, and from these came names, and on this basis they [*scil.* the Stoics] also draw some principles of etymology”.¹⁴³ Such technical principles (the so-called στοιχεῖα τῆς ἐτυμολογίας) are, in theory, detailed by Augustine in his *De dialectica*, chapter 6; however, the *Quellenforschung* for the material of this chapter is controversial and may involve contamination from Varro himself—with substantial repercussions for the possibility of checking Varro’s method against the allegedly Stoic one reported by Augustine (see §2.3.3). For now, let us consider the first part of this testimony: not only does it characterise the relation between names and things as imitative, but it also implies a theorisation of the evolution of language from imitative sounds to more articulated names. Both aspects strongly resemble the Atomistic and Epicurean accounts, but neither emerges from other surviving Stoic texts—with the exception of one notable Stoic (Posidonius), and Origen might have conflated his views with those of the school considered broadly.

Posidonius seems to have imprinted a distinctive mark on the mainstream Stoic account of the origin of names and Varro was very likely to have known his work; it is often even assumed that Posidonius was Varro’s teacher (although I am not convinced that conclusive evidence of that exists).¹⁴⁴ He is the only Stoic known to have attempted to shield the traditional thesis from a doctrinal

¹⁴² Long (1996) argued against the widely shared idea that the Stoics read Homer through an allegorical lens due to their conviction that the poet had been a sort of “proto-Stoic” whose worldview was similar to the Stoic one, but in a literary disguise. Stoics, Long maintained, did not read Homer and Hesiod allegorically, but etymologically, precisely by virtue of their belief that “Greek gods have the names and epithets that they do—‘earth-shaking Poseidon’, etc.—because in their original usage these names represented the way people understood the world”. Cf. Boys-Stones (2001 pp. 31–43).

¹⁴³ *Cels.* I 24 (*SVF* II 146; *LS* 32; *FDS* 643). In the same testimony, Origen also summarises, equally imprecisely, the Epicurean position: ὡς διδάσκει Ἐπίκουρος, ἑτέρως ἢ ὡς οἴονται οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς, φύσει ἐστὶ τὰ ὀνόματα, ἀπορρηξάντων τῶν πρώτων ἀνθρώπων τινὰς φωνὰς κατὰ τῶν πραγμάτων (“Epicurus teaches that names are by nature, but in a different way than the Stoics think: the first people would have burst out certain utterances in response to things”).

¹⁴⁴ I frequently found this idea reiterated as an established piece of knowledge. However, neither Varro nor Posidonius are ever mentioned in each other’s surviving texts. It is true that Varro—as was customary for many members of the noble families in Rome at that time—set out for a grand tour in Greece to complete his education in 84–82 BCE, but the only certain stopover of that journey is Athens, where he attended Antiochus’ lectures (*Cic. Att.* XIII 12.13). One could attempt to reconstruct the rest of his journey by comparing it to others on which we are better informed (as Lehmann 1997 pp. 132–4 did), but we cannot know for a fact that he stopped by Rhodes, where Posidonius had settled and taught philosophy. Therefore, there does not seem to be any evidence that a student-teacher relationship between the two existed. Of course, there is no evidence against that either; but there is no need to conjecture that kind of relationship *ex silentio* to admit that Varro could have been able to consult Posidonius’ writings and make use of them.

problem which the early authors—as far as the evidence shows—were not able to solve. By accepting names as truthful renditions of the nature of the named things, the Stoics incurred the contradiction already identified by Democritus: if names are naturally correct, how to explain the multitude of languages, in which the same things are called by different names?

Posidonius' theory of how language had originated was embedded—as it had been for Epicurus and Democritus—in his broader theory of cultural development: language was one of the philosophical inventions brought about by outstanding individuals who guided humankind towards progress; in addition, environmental factors (namely the κλίματα, the latitudes at which various peoples lived) influenced the kind of articulation that made up the individual languages.¹⁴⁵ Thus Posidonius' account built on Epicurus insofar as it investigated the causes of human discoveries and the ways in which culture had developed (including language). But, unlike the Epicurean tradition, and in line with mainstream Stoicism, Posidonius maintained that this progress had been instigated and guided by the gods' providential care and emphasised the crucial role of human rationality in these achievements (both of which Epicurus had denied or downplayed in favour of a deterministic explanation). Furthermore, while Epicurus had maintained that the sounds that humans were compelled to articulate in response to certain emotions and impressions were already proto-names naturally matched with their referents, "the emotion-dependent elements of language in Posidonius were only the material from which the imposers of words created the further etymologically appropriate words and the further structure of language".¹⁴⁶ Therefore, although Posidonius took natural factors (geography, climate, emotions, environment) into consideration, his was ultimately a theory of origin by imposition, where human rationality controlled and built up on the natural factors. But the involvement of environmental influences in his explanation provided protection for the tenet that words are always etymologically appropriate against the objection of language multiplicity.

c. Aristotle

The success of Aristotle's philosophy in the late Roman Republic is a subject well studied and recent contributions have highlighted the role that Antiochus and his disciples had in fuelling the revival of his doctrines.¹⁴⁷ Copies of Aristotle's esoteric writings were certainly available in at least

¹⁴⁵ See Verlinsky's analysis (2019), which takes into account the criticism to Posidonius by Strabo (II 3.7 = POSID. fr. 49.310–63 *EK*) and Seneca (*Ep.* 90.35). For the influence of geographical factors on language, see fr. 280–21 *EK*.

¹⁴⁶ Verlinsky (2019 p. 41).

¹⁴⁷ Lévy (2013), Garcea (2016).

two important collections in Rome, the libraries of Lucullus and Sulla, and could be consulted by wealthy citizens who were well connected “within [the] network of social relationships that criss-crossed intellectual society in the late Republic”.¹⁴⁸ Varro never acknowledges having taken Aristotle’s thoughts on names and etymology into account, but he had access to his writings and cited him on some occasions, especially in the context of morphology (see §3.3.2.b).

That Aristotle was a conventionalist was already received wisdom by the time Origen wrote *Contra Celsum* (late second century CE) and encapsulated such interpretation in a passage mentioned above concerning the Stoics. In the section immediately before the statement on the *πρῶται φωναί*, Origen said that the “deep and ineffable question” of the nature of names sets apart those who say that names are conventional (θέσει), “as Aristotle believes”, and those who say they are by nature (φύσει), “as those from the Stoa think”. We have already seen that the Stoic position was probably more nuanced than Origen makes it to be, but he might misrepresent Aristotle’s thought too.

The consensus has it that Aristotle claimed that words are “symbols” (σύμβολα) which stand for things, and that they were assigned to things “by agreement/convention” (κατὰ συνθήκην). This understanding is based on a certain interpretation of some Aristotelian passages¹⁴⁹:

(T1) the beginning of *De interpretatione*, where Aristotle is taken to say that “spoken sounds/words are symbols of mental impressions/affections of the soul”¹⁵⁰;

(T2) below in the same text, a passage where he is taken to say that “a name is a voice which has a meaning by agreement”¹⁵¹;

and (T3) a passage of the *Sophistici Elenchi* where he is taken to say that “we use names as symbols [to talk about things] instead of the things [themselves]”.¹⁵²

But according to F. Lo Piparo, “the historiographic thesis of Aristotle as a champion of linguistic conventionalism was forged in the philosophical contexts of Christianity and Neoplatonism”,¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Tutrone (2013 p. 158). After capturing Athens in the late February of 86, Sulla brought to Italy the library containing Aristotle’s and Theophrastus’ original copies, previously held by the collector Apellicon of Teos, in 84; it is debated whether the library was ever in Rome before it was ultimately sent to Cumae, where Sulla retired and where it was passed on to his son Faustus. Lucullus’ library, acquired after his victory in Pontus in 66, was held at his villa at Tusculum and contained both Aristotle’s writings and Stoic literature (Cic. *fin.* III 7–10). See Tutrone (2013) and Rawson (1985 pp. 38–42).

¹⁴⁹ My translations for these passages are not quotations, but are meant to condense the meaning that prevails in most published translations.

¹⁵⁰ *Int.* 16a3–8: “Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί· ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρῶτων, ταῦτα πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα πράγματα ἦδη ταῦτα.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.* 16a19–29: “Ὄνομα μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φωνὴ σημαντικὴ κατὰ συνθήκην.

¹⁵² *SE* 165a6–17: ἐπεὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα διαλέγεσθαι φέροντας, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἀντὶ τῶν πραγμάτων χρώμεθα ὥς συμβόλοις.

¹⁵³ Lo Piparo (2003 p. 73).

which failed to understand the true meanings of σύμβολα and κατὰ συνθήκην in Aristotle and—through Ammonius’ commentary and Boetius’ translation—resulted in an inaccurate interpretation of his linguistic theory which holds fast to this day. According to the Neoplatonic exegesis of (T1),¹⁵⁴ Aristotle envisaged a hierarchy of four ontological levels (things, impressions, spoken and written language) of which each depends on the previous one to obtain. But this interpretation, Lo Piparo argues, cannot be reconciled with other data from Aristotle’s corpus on language: first, that words can also signify things that do not exist and vice versa¹⁵⁵; second, that metaphors are used in daily conversation and transmit additional knowledge about things¹⁵⁶; third, that it is impossible to inquire into the things that exist (τὰ ὄντα) without considering the different ways in which people talk about them¹⁵⁷ (let us note that the last tenet contradicts the fundamental thesis of the *Cratylus*).

Carrying out a fresh appraisal of the passages, Lo Piparo showed that, firstly, σύμβολον was not used (*pace* Ammonius and Boetius) as a synonym for σημεῖον (“sign, signification”), nor to mean *aliquid stat pro aliquo* as is the case for “symbol” nowadays.¹⁵⁸ In Plato’s and Aristotle’s corpora, σύμβολα are always a pair, two parts of a whole, opposite and complementary to each another, neither preceding nor being superior to the other, and both actively reaching for each another¹⁵⁹; Aristotle’s innovation was to transfer this notion (which had previously played a role in relation to biology and economic trades and contracts) to language. His semantic theory cannot be reduced to a certain conception of the relation between “things” and “names”, or even *signifiés* and *signifiants*. The theory considers, on the one hand, the human voice or διάλεκτος, which is a specific kind of “meaningful voice” (φωνή σημαντική) defined by being articulated in phono-graphic units (γράμματα-

¹⁵⁴ The traditional exegesis, adapted from Lo Piparo’s paraphrase (2003 pp. 37–8), is that “there is a world of things [τὰ πράγματα] whose specular copies or images [ὁμοιώματα] generate impressions in the soul [τὰ παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς]. The function of spoken language [τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ, φωναί] is to signify [σύμβολα, σημεῖα] on the outside those impressions of the soul; written language [τὰ γραφόμενα, γράμματα], similarly, signifies spoken language”.

¹⁵⁵ *APo.* 92b29–30; *Int.* 16a16–18, 17a26–29.

¹⁵⁶ *Rh.* 1404b34, 1410b14–15.

¹⁵⁷ *Metaph.* 992b18–19.

¹⁵⁸ One might put forward Democritus’ fragment (*DK* 68B5, see n88) as an exception, where we are told of people “establishing for one another symbols [σύμβολα τιθέντας] for each existing thing” to communicate to one another. Although it must be kept in mind that this is a fragment, transplanted from its source into a different textual context, by a much later author who may have paraphrased.

¹⁵⁹ In Plato’s *Symposium* (191d), σύμβολα are the two complementary halves of the human being severed by the gods, forever searching for each another; in the *Republic* (371b), the coin is the σύμβολον allowing the trade between goods and services, which are mutually necessary. Σύμβολον defines the nature of sexual attraction also in Aristotle (*GA* 722b10–12) and is connected to his notion of systemic contrariety (ἐναντιώσεις), according to which opposites “desire each other so as to create a single means from the pair” (*EE* 1239b23–37). See Lo Piparo (2003 pp. 55–65).

στοιχεῖα)¹⁶⁰; on the other hand, the παθήματα of the human soul, i.e. the logical-cognitive operations¹⁶¹ by which humans understand, interpret, and categorise “facts” (πράγματα), which are themselves cognitive entities that can be true or false and need not correspond to “what exists” (τὰ ὄντα).¹⁶² Names are σύμβολα in the sense that they are compound entities, resulting from the “combination” (συνθήκη) of these dimensions, different and complementary to each other: the παθήματα and the human voice articulated in phono-graphic units.¹⁶³ Therefore, the phrase κατὰ συνθήκην is not to be taken as an equivalent of θέσει (as it was by all commentators from Ammonius onwards), but is linked to that concept of σύμβολον.¹⁶⁴

This concept does not, in fact, entail conventionalism. If we retain Lo Piparo’s understanding of συνθήκη, Aristotle’s definition of “name” – intended in the broad sense touched on above and not just as “noun”—in (T2) is not “a voice meaningful *by convention*”, but “*by composition*”. In fact, little below in the same passage, Aristotle explains the being κατὰ συνθήκην because “no name is [such] by nature, but [it is such] when it becomes a symbol”.¹⁶⁵ In this definition, “the distinction is not between nature and non-nature, but between two kinds of natural expressions: of non-human and human animals. To the former, simple inarticulate sounds are sufficient; the latter requires a complexity—also natural—which allows the elaboration and expression of ‘good and evil, right and wrong’, and one must add, for Aristotle, of true and false”.¹⁶⁶ The same conceptualisation applies to the statement in (T3), which—Lo Piparo argues—does not mean that names are symbolic (in the modern sense) tokens for facts, but that “we use names *in that they are symbols*”, i.e. they are a combination of our cognitive notions of the facts and the phono-graphic creations by which those notions are voiced.

While Lo Piparo explains convincingly how what he argues to have been Aristotle’s original meaning was distorted through a Stoic and Neoplatonic filter, it seems more difficult to square his argument with Cicero, who, in his own *Topica*, chooses to translate ἐτυμολογία as *notatio*—rather than what would be its literal calque, *veriloquium*—purposely to adhere to Aristotle’s statement about

¹⁶⁰ HA 488a31–33, 535a27–28, 536a33–b3; Pr. 895a11–14, 898b21. On the coalescence of the distinct concepts of phonemes and graphemes into a single theoretical notion (γράμματα-στοιχεῖα), see Lo Piparo (2003 pp. 48, 94–101).

¹⁶¹ Lo Piparo (2003 pp. 43–7).

¹⁶² Rh. 1354a26–28; Metaph. 1024b17–24; Cat. 4b8–9.

¹⁶³ Therefore, Lo Piparo’s translation (2003 p. 66) of Int. 16a3–8 (see n150) is: “Le articolazioni della voce umana e le operazioni logico-cognitive dell’anima umana sono tra loro differenti e complementari così come lo sono le articolazioni scritte e quelle della voce.”

¹⁶⁴ The phrase would hinge on a different semantic nuance of συντίθημι: “to put together constructively, so as to make a whole” (LSJ A.II.1).

¹⁶⁵ Int. 16a26–28: τὸ δὲ κατὰ συνθήκην, ὅτι φύσει τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐδὲν ἐστίν, ἀλλ’ ὅταν γένηται σύμβολον. The passage is reported wholly in §2.3.2.a.

¹⁶⁶ Lo Piparo (2003 p. 88), with reference to Pol. 1253a9–30.

names being σύμβολα for things, explaining that *nota* is the Latin equivalent of σύμβολον and echoing Aristotle with the words: *sunt verba rerum notae*.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, Lo Piparo does not account for the fact that there are visible similarities between (T2) and “Hermogenes” conventionalist position as articulated in *Cratylus*.¹⁶⁸ But this is a problem beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Then again, Lo Piparo’s interpretation of κατὰ συνθήκην explains better Aristotle’s views on how etymologies should be reconstructed (which we will see in §2.3.2.a). Assuming that this interpretation is accurate: whether the outcome of this complex generative process of composition is itself “naturally correct”, in other words, whether the complementary parts of the σύμβολα (the combinations of phono-graphic units and the logical-cognitive operations of the soul) are considered correctly matched “by nature” is not clear. If the Aristotelian conception of σύμβολον entails that the complementary parts are “different” from one another, then, if a natural correspondence was envisaged, it was not on the basis of similarity. But a match could be considered “natural” even if between entities considered opposite, like hot/cold or wet/dry.

d. Etymology in textual criticism

Scholars who performed editorial and hermeneutical work on ancient texts were often confronted with words that had fallen out of use or had undergone phonetic or semantic transformations by their time. On such occasions, they resorted to etymology either to decide between competing variants in manuscripts, or to establish the correct spelling or accentuation of a word, or to shed light on the meaning of a passage. For this reason “the discovery of etymology” (έτυμολογίας εὑρεσις) was included among the six parts of grammar in the Τέχνη γραμματική,¹⁶⁹ and for the same reason Varro, as we saw, included the etymology carried out by *grammatica antiqua* on the second level of his fourfold model in *ling. V* 7–9.

Uses of etymology for the purposes listed just now are attested across the board of editors and grammarians, including Aristophanes of Byzantium, Aristarchus of Samothrace, and Apollodorus of Athens (scholars of Alexandria) and Crates of Mallos (scholar of Pergamum), all of whom Varro mentions and quotes in *De lingua Latina*.

It has been claimed that **Aristophanes** used etymology comparatively less than other Alexandrian scholars.¹⁷⁰ It is worth pointing out that the disproportionate number of fragments with ety-

¹⁶⁷ Cic. *Top.* 35. The passage is not analysed by Lo Piparo.

¹⁶⁸ See n110 above.

¹⁶⁹ D.T. p. 5.

¹⁷⁰ Nauck (1848 pp. 268–9); Callanan (1987 p. 97).

mologies attributed to Aristophanes which survived compared to Aristarchus hinders an objective assessment of this fact: the fragments were quoted for specific purposes and may not constitute a representative sample of Aristophanes' contribution to etymology. There is no way to know for certain—but perhaps we should take seriously the fact that Varro names precisely Aristophanes to epitomise the Alexandrian influences on his own etymology (*ling.* V 9). Aristophanes did, in fact, gather all the contributions to the field of lexicology made by scholars before him in a dedicated treatise (Λέξεις)¹⁷¹ and later authors quoted him as explaining the meaning of many words by retracing their etymology.¹⁷² Such etymological researches were an integral part of Aristophanes' study of the ancient authors: by illustrating the meaning of words found in ancient texts, Aristophanes clarified, for the sake of his readership, the ancient worldviews which had led to their coinage and the underlying ratio of the author's employ of them.

Aristarchus¹⁷³ stood out among the Alexandrians for his distinctively linguistic focus in etymologies, for which he could count on his sharp perceptiveness of phonological and morphological changes and of the structural features of words (which enabled him to implement more solid etymological methods than many of his coeval and even later scholars, as we shall see in §2.3.2). However, it is by now clear that Aristarchus' purpose in using etymology was the same as Aristophanes': it was a useful tool to restore the most accurate version of Homer's transmitted text and to better understand and explain its content¹⁷⁴; he had no interest in pursuing philosophical questions on the nature of names and their role, if any, in an epistemological framework.

This set the Alexandrians apart from the scholars of Pergamum, who interpreted the Homeric texts through the lens of the Stoic philosophical worldview that inspired them. The extant etymologies by **Crates**, for instance, show that he used similar methods to Aristarchus', but his explanations, reconstructions, and editorial choices based on etymology served his purpose of bolstering arguments consistent with Stoic physics and tracing them back to Homer.¹⁷⁵ Specifically, Crates sought to demonstrate that the Homeric poems presupposed the view of the cosmos as spherical, with the

¹⁷¹ See Pfeiffer (1968 pp. 197–202).

¹⁷² See Callanan (1987 pp. 97–102). Slater's edition gathers several Aristophanean etymologies.

¹⁷³ On Aristarchus' etymology, see Schironi (2018 pp. 340–76).

¹⁷⁴ E.g. Sch. Hom. ad Λ 155b on how to interpret the adjective ἄξυλος, referred to a forest to which Agamemnon's raging attack on the Trojans is compared; Sch. Hom. ad Γ 36b on the epithet ἀγέρωχοι ("honourable"), which some glossographers explained as deriving from ἀγείρειν ὄχλῳ ("to gather food") and referred to the Rhodians who, as islanders, brought food from the outside, while Aristarchus derived the adjective from οἱ ἄγαν γεράοχοι ("those full of honour") and observed that Homer referred it to other peoples too, who were not islanders.

¹⁷⁵ On Crates' Stoicism see further §3.2.3.c.

earth at its centre: a theory known as σφαιροποιία which was common in his own time.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, overall,

“both Crates and Aristarchus probably believed that they discovered the ‘real’ meaning of a word through their etymologies. Yet Crates’ use of etymology exposes him as biased toward the meaning that best helped him in his pursuit of a different agenda than understanding the meaning of the word [...]. On the other hand, since he was not interested in anything other than the word’s true meaning from a merely linguistic point of view, Aristarchus could be much more unbiased and objective—or, at least, linguistically grounded”.¹⁷⁷

Taking the baton from Aristarchus, **Apollodorus** also integrated etymology into his own interpretative work of Homer, but he went further than his teacher in being the first Alexandrian to write a monograph on the subject (possibly inspired by the Stoic tradition, as he had previously been a pupil of Diogenes of Babylon).¹⁷⁸ Aside from this fact, however, he does not seem to have been motivated by a different approach to the study of word-origins than his Alexandrian predecessors: the only surviving etymologies attributed to him concern Homeric words, and Apollodorus’ explanations are primarily aimed at either arguing for a certain *distinctio* of the transmitted text¹⁷⁹ or at clarifying a passage.¹⁸⁰

e. First-century grammar: Trypho

This overview would not be complete without mentioning the scholars of the generation after Aristarchus, which saw a progressive detachment of grammatical studies from textual criticism and a growing interest in language as an autonomous subject. Because this topic is inextricably connected to the doctrine of analogy, it will be better discussed in §3.1. However, at least the views on etymology of **Trypho** of Alexandria are worth sketching out here.

Trypho’s *On modifications* [πάθη] in linguistic usage, “the earliest attempt to explain sound and word changes, as well as linguistic irregularities of dialect forms”,¹⁸¹ was the grammatical source of

¹⁷⁶ The theory of *sphairopoiia* is attested since Plato (*Phd.* 108e4–109e8) and had been accepted by the Stoics (*SVF* II 555). On Crates’ *sphairopoiia*, see Mette (1936), Porter (1992), and Broggiato (2001 p. li–lv). An eloquent example of Crates using etymology to prove his cosmological theory is Sch. Hom. ad Λ 754a, concerning a problem of division of the transmitted ΔΙΑΣΠΙΔΕΟΣΠΕΔΙΟΙΟ: some scholars read διὰ σπιδέος πεδίοιο, from σπιδής (“long and wide”), others δι’ ἀσπιδέος πεδίοιο, with the adjective ἀσπιδής (“shield-like > rounded”). The latter reading was supported by Zenodotus of Mallos, Crates’ pupil, and according to Porter (1992 pp. 103–4), Crates also advocated the same since the characterisation of a plain as “rounded” confirmed his *sphairopoiia*. However, see Schironi’s appropriate observations (2018 p. 370).

¹⁷⁷ Schironi (2018 p. 375); see her detailed comparison between Aristarchus’ and Crates’ use of etymology on pp. 365–370.

¹⁷⁸ Pfeiffer (1968 p. 260).

¹⁷⁹ E.g. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 235 (Sch. Hom. ad Ω 213).

¹⁸⁰ E.g. *FGrHist* 244 fr. 256 (*Et.Gen.*, *Et.Gud* s.v. κρόταφοι).

¹⁸¹ Baumbach (2002).

the doctrine of συμπάθεια, whose basic tenet is that the outward shape of a word is “sympathetically” affected by its meaning. Although the doctrine of συμπάσχειν originates in Stoicism, it has been argued that it could not have been applied to language by a Stoic source as the implication that something incorporeal (the meaning) could affect something corporeal (the utterance) conflicts with the basics of Stoic linguistics.¹⁸² The novelty of Trypho’s συμπάθεια compared to other stances of linguistic naturalism is that he took the idea of participation between the *signifié* and the *signifiant* not just to operate at the level of word-imposition, but of derivation and inflection: for example, λιμός (“hunger”) is derived from λείπω (“to leave”) and the reduction of the diphthong (ει > ι) is supposed to reflect the meaning of “hunger”, that is “lack of food”.¹⁸³

Varro never mentions Trypho in his surviving writings, but (as I will argue in §3.3.2.a) it is plausible that he took Trypho’s views into account to relate the analogist point of view in book IX. Furthermore, it has been recognised that Trypho’s συμπάθεια is the only doctrine which explains coherently the stances on phonological, graphemic, and grammatical phenomena taken by Lucilius.¹⁸⁴ Varro never mentioned the Roman satirist for his linguistic views, but he quoted his poems fairly frequently, so it cannot be ruled out that he absorbed or at least was aware of those views.

f. Etymology and antiquarianism

In the last few decades, the discussion on Roman scholarship and erudition has begun to extricate itself from the rigid interpretative model, ultimately derived from Arnaldo Momigliano, which cast antiquarianism as a genre defined by its opposition against historiography. The recent contributions to the subject have countered this model on various grounds, and have also drawn attention to the fact that ancient antiquarian studies were very closely linked to philology. As V. Arena and G. Piras summarised in the preface of their 2018 edited volume,

“Not only did textual exegesis combine philology with an understanding of the history of religion, legal practices, and literary works, but also classical lexicography took precisely the form of the study of etymology. Whether investigating Roman history, language, family genealogy, jurisprudence, religious lore, or political procedure, antiquarian tools were historical research and etymology, a genealogical-reconstructive method which was substantially inductive and aimed to work back from the present to the past”.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² See Sluiter (1990 pp. 26–33) and Chahoud (2019).

¹⁸³ TRYPHO fr. 130 (*EM* s.v. λιμός); see also fr. 131 (*EM* s.v. φιλήτης).

¹⁸⁴ See Chahoud (2019 pp. 55–9), with bibliography.

¹⁸⁵ Arena & Piras (2018 p. 95).

Indeed, Varro was not the only Roman antiquarian to have combined studies on Roman antiquities with interests in philological matters (although he is certainly the most eminent one nowadays and may well have been at his own time). Comments on the origins of words are reported for some of the earliest Roman historians, like Fabius Pictor¹⁸⁶ and Cincius Alimentus, who is also ascribed a treatise *De verbis priscis* and whose explanations of the origin of words were frequently cited by Festus.¹⁸⁷ Cato, whose *Origines* have been reappraised as an antiquarian as well as historical work,¹⁸⁸ is also attributed some etymologies¹⁸⁹ and comments on the exact meaning of words.¹⁹⁰ Of the scholar and poet Q. Valerius Soranus (†82) Varro quotes an etymology¹⁹¹ and a comment on inflection.¹⁹² But the greatest influence on Varro from this branch of study must have been **Aelius Stilo Praeconinus**, who taught both him and Cicero.

Cicero described Stilo as:

“an excellent man in all respects, among the best Roman knights, highly knowledgeable equally of Greek and Latin literature; he had a scholarly knowledge of our history as a record both of innovations and achievements, and of our early writers. Our friend Varro, who received this expertise from him and increased it of his own accord, demonstrated it in several valuable writings”.¹⁹³

Indeed, Stilo was a very versatile author¹⁹⁴ and became a distinguished and influential scholar. His studies may have included lessons from Dionysius Thrax when he followed Q. Metellus Numidicus to Rhodes in his exile in 100 BCE.¹⁹⁵ As a literary critic, he studied and commented on the *Carmen Saliare*, the Twelve Tables, and Plautus, combining philological work (he also introduced in Rome the use of critical signs first developed by Aristarchus) with an analysis of all the religious, juridical, and historical aspects involved in the texts. By virtue of his approach, he is considered an antiquarian scholar and many of his observations on the language of the texts he studied served the purpose of a broader analysis (like in the case of Aristarchus). Nevertheless, Stilo must have pursued linguistic interests beyond the scope of textual analysis, since he wrote a book on propositions (*proloquia*,

¹⁸⁶ HRR I 4; GRF p. 7.

¹⁸⁷ FEST. pp. 166,37,40, 170,61, 173,9, 174,20, 193,5, 218,19, 241,21, 265,16, 277,4,18, 329,19, 330,35, 339,7, 352,26, 363,30, 376,23. Cincius also held an opinion on Rome's acquisition of the alphabet (HRR I 1; GRF p. 2). Other etymologies are attributed to Cincius ap. SERV. Aen. I 10 (HRR I 2; GRF p. 7), II 225.

¹⁸⁸ Herklotz (2007 pp. 128–31).

¹⁸⁹ GRF CATO 1–†9, †13, 16–*17.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. 10–*12, 14.

¹⁹¹ Ling. VII 65 (GRF VAL. SORAN. 2).

¹⁹² Ling. X 70 (GRF VAL. SORAN. 3).

¹⁹³ CIC. Brut. 205. Transl. after Douglas (1966 p. 149).

¹⁹⁴ Stilo's fifty extant fragments (plus thirty *dubia*) span some twenty pages of GRF.

¹⁹⁵ SUET. gramm. 3.2. The conjecture of a relation to Dionysius Thrax is Marx's (1894 p. 139).

ἀξιώματα), a notion on which many Stoic fragments expand.¹⁹⁶ Stilo, in fact, was a self-proclaimed Stoic.¹⁹⁷ We have no attestation of his views on language explicitly spelled out, but it is assumed that his Stoicism informed them on the grounds that he wrote on propositions and that the many surviving etymologies attributed to him show that he used the same methods as the Stoics (see §2.3.2).

g. Summary

To sum up, when setting out to elaborate his theory of etymology and its role in respect to the origin of names and their relation to the named things, Varro would have had a variety of earlier perspectives to draw on:

- The Platonic stance (developed in reaction to Presocratic cosmology and Sophistic anthropology), according to which etymology was a valuable device to learn about the ancient name-givers' perceptions and opinions of the world; these, however, were often misguided and, in any case, etymology should not be considered a source of knowledge of the things themselves.
- The Stoic stance, both the mainstream version and the one enriched by the nuances brought by Posidonius' elaboration of Epicurean elements. According to the Stoics, etymology also provided an insight into the truth and reality of the things themselves, because the ancient name-givers were outstanding and wise individuals whose naming had been providentially guided by nature and rationality, and therefore had produced naturally correct names.
- The Epicurean stance (strengthened and revived in Rome by Lucretius' poem), which, although from the opposite perspective and on the basis that names had not been imposed but had developed naturally, had the same implications for etymology: because names are naturally correct, etymology is a means to learn truths about the named things.
- Aristotle, for whom words bring an essential contribution to our knowledge of things and who conceived names as intrinsically compound entities.

¹⁹⁶ VARRO *ling.* fr. 28 ap. GELL. XVI 8.2–3. On the Stoics on the ἀξιώματα see *SVF* II 193–220; *FDS* 874–913; *LS* 33–35; *BS* 8.2, 8.6.

¹⁹⁷ CIC. *Brut.* 205.

- The literary-critical outlook, whose main objective was the interpretation of ancient texts and which only turned to etymology insofar as it was useful to that end, not out of an interest in language per se.
- The Roman antiquarian outlook, which considered old words as one type of evidence of facts and uses of the past (on the implied grounds that words were assigned to reflect the thoughts of name-givers) and thus resorted to etymology as one of its tools of research.

2.2.2. Varro's theoretical principles: a reconstruction

It goes without saying that the place in which it would be natural to search for details of Varro's etymological theory are books II–IV; but the few surviving fragments are not informative. It is still possible, however, to sift some doctrinal elements out of the books that we have.

As a preliminary remark, let us note that the broader sense of “name” that we saw in the various treatments of etymologies above does not have a single equivalent in Varro: *nomina*, *verba*, and *vocabula* (all three of which also sometimes have specific and more technical meanings)¹⁹⁸ occur interchangeably with the all-encompassing function that the Greek *ὀνόματα* and Lucretius' *nomina* had.

(1) *Origin of names* A first principle, fundamental and unambiguous, is that names originated through human imposition. That much is restated time and time again throughout books V–VII and always as a postulate.¹⁹⁹ It may be that an argument in support of this tenet was made in books II–IV, and if so, Varro might have addressed there the evolutionist account developed by the Atomists and their successors; but there is no way of knowing that, and it is risky to speculate about how Varro might have handled that alternative hypothesis (although he must have known that at least through Lucretius). The thesis of origin by imposition is not incompatible per se with the idea of a primordial stage at which humans uttered unarticulated sounds which were later perfected by rational creations: we saw how Posidonius reconciled the two perspectives and Varro could well have aligned himself with him. On the other hand, he could also not have ven-

¹⁹⁸ De Melo (2019a pp. 224, 233–4).

¹⁹⁹ (V 1) *Quemadmodum vocabula essent imposita rebus in lingua Latina, sex libris exponere institui. [...] a quibus rebus vocabula imposita sint in lingua Latina*; (V2) *Cum unius cuiusque verbi naturae sint duae, a qua re et in qua re vocabulum sit impositum*; (VII 1) *obscurior fit voluntas impositoris*; (VII 5) [*verba*] *quae a poetis sunt posita*; other occurrences *passim* throughout the books.

tured an opinion on this question at all and could have just focused on the art of etymology, taking existing words as his point of departure. At any rate, whether he endorsed, rejected, or even considered an earlier stage in the development of language, he distanced himself from the Epicurean and Lucretian thesis insofar as he highlighted the role of human will: he consistently talks about words resulting from a deliberate assignment. Whereas, in Lucretius' words quoted above (§2.2.1.a), nature is entirely responsible for the evolution from unarticulated sounds to articulated and semantically rich words, in Varro, nature is a "guide" to the people's actions (see (5) below), but people have full control over their ability to heed nature's suggestions and follow them in their imposition. Such a tenet is quintessentially Stoic, although it is not possible to say whether it draws more on the mainstream Stoic tradition or on Posidonius' stance.

(2) *Names ~ things* Before we inquire further into the character of this imposition, we have to clarify what Varro thought that names are in relation to things. For some words, Varro gives etymologies on an onomatopoetic or semi-onomatopoetic basis: that is the case for the names of animals like birds, which reproduce their cries²⁰⁰; words "transferred [*tralata*] from the cries of animals" which describe the sounds they make²⁰¹; or verbs like "to shout" or "to scream" whose phonological make-up evokes the kind of sound produced.²⁰² In *De lingua Latina*, these kinds of acoustic imitation only involve names and verbs which make sounds in reality, but elsewhere, Varro alluded to the phonosymbolic power of sounds: in a fragment which Goetz & Schoell attributed to *De grammatica*, he talks about "some syllables [being] harsh, others smooth, [...] some hard, others soft".²⁰³ Implications of phonosymbolism were already adumbrated in the *Cratylus*, as we saw.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, this idea does not seem to have informed Varro's etymological analyses in *De lingua Latina* and it may have been confined to his theory of phonology.

²⁰⁰ (V 75) *upupa* ("hoopoe"), *cuculus* ("cuckoo"), *corvus* ("raven"), *hirundo* ("swallow"), *ulula* ("screech owl"), *bubo* ("horned owl").

²⁰¹ E.g. (VII 103) *dibulare* ("to bleat"), *hinnire* ("to neigh"), *ululare* ("to howl").

²⁰² E.g. (VI 67-68) *murmurare* ("to murmur"), *clamare* ("to shout"), *crepare* ("to rattle"); (VI 45) *tremere* ("to tremble"); (VI 84) *sorbere* ("to suck"), *bibere* ("to drink").

²⁰³ Fr. 113. Examples of "harsh" (*asperae*) syllables are found in *trux* ("harsh"), *crux* ("cross"), *trans* ("beyond"); "smooth" (*leves*) syllables in *lana* ("wool"), *luna* ("moon"); "hard" (*durae*) in *ignotus* ("unknown"); "soft" (*molles*) in *aedes* ("temple"). The passage also distinguishes "extended" (*procerae*) and "shrivelled" (*retorridae*) syllables, based on the length of the penultimate vowel, and "foreign" (*barbarae*) and "half-Greek" (Sluiter's (1990) translation for *Graeculae*), based on the syllable featuring sounds that are part of Latin's phonematic inventory or not. Thus, Varro merges three unrelated classifications here, two of which based on objective phonological patterns and one based on a subjective perception of certain sounds evoking certain feelings. On similarity grounded in phonosymbolism, see further §2.3.3.

²⁰⁴ For the example of σκληρότης, see n122.

Etymologies based on imitation only make up a small part of Varro's research. The vast majority of words in *De lingua Latina* are analysed as the condensed versions of longer descriptions of the function or purpose of the named objects, compressed and fused into a single word: *capitium* ("woman's tunic") < *capit* (because it "holds" the breast)²⁰⁵; *aratrum* ("plough") < *arat terram* ("ploughs the land").²⁰⁶ Similarly, for verbs, more explicit descriptions of the actions performed are restored: *cogitare* ("to think") < *cogere* because "the mind 'brings together' [*cogit*] several things into one place"²⁰⁷; *curare* ("to care") < *cura* < *cor urat* ("it [supposedly] burns the heart")²⁰⁸; *maerere* ("to grieve") < *marcere* ("to wither", because "grief" [*maeror*] makes the body "become withered" [*marcescere*])²⁰⁹; *loqui* ("to talk") < *locus* (because to talk is to utter all parts of speech in their right "place", as opposed to uttering unarticulated sounds)²¹⁰; *putare* ("to think", but also "to make tidy") < *putum facere*, whereby *putus* is glossed as an ancient form of *purus*.²¹¹

So, the envisaged kinds of relation between names and things are (a) mimetic, (b) descriptive. The latter kind is at the basis of all the attested Stoic etymologies, and also of those preserved in the *Cratylus*: it implies that names originated as the result of the humans experiencing the world, opining about the purpose and nature of each thing, and sealing this opinion in a specific definition. But the mimetic component of certain words suggests an influence of the Epicurean thesis too, with the caveat that people still have control over the imposition of any name. The harmonisation of these two theories was possibly facilitated by Posidonius, who had already combined elements from both accounts.

(3) *Correctness of names* The Stoic and Epicurean theories, albeit from different starting points, converged on the conclusion that names are correct by nature. When Varro says that one of the reasons why reconstructing the etymologies is difficult is that "not every word that is still in use was assigned without fault",²¹² or that "those who derive assign names to things without

²⁰⁵ V 131.

²⁰⁶ V 135.

²⁰⁷ VI 43.

²⁰⁸ VI 45. De Melo noted (2019a p. 849): "the subjunctive is quotative, ascribing the etymology to others, but it is probably also used because it increases the phonological resemblance to *cūra*".

²⁰⁹ VI 50.

²¹⁰ VI 56.

²¹¹ VI 63.

²¹² V 3. On this passage, see §2.1.

skill”,²¹³ the implication is that for him, too, there is a standard of correctness of names. Based on what we established in (2), we can infer that, in the case of descriptive etymologies, a word is assigned correctly when it results from the compression of an *accurate* description of the thing, which in turn derives from an *accurate* understanding of the thing’s properties and/or function; and in the case of mimetic etymologies, the simplest explanation is that words which signify sounds (or things that make sounds) were assigned correctly if the phonological fabric replicates those sounds as closely as possible.

Varro provides further detail: “and not every word assigned correctly remains entirely intact (for many words were altered by the change of letters)”.²¹⁴ In descriptive etymologies, a name will have been imposed correctly if its outward shape retains enough resemblance with the longer description it results from that the connection can still be recognised. By this standard, *capitium* < *capit* is more correctly imposed than *aratrum* < *arat terram* or *cilliba* (“eating-table”) < *cibus* (“food”),²¹⁵ and *cogitare* < *cogit* is more correct than *maerere* < *marcere*. In mimetic etymologies, presumably names are more correct when fewer phonological units which do not resemble the sound of the things get in the way: by this standard, one might consider *cuculus*, which sounds very similar to the cuckoo’s cry, more correctly imposed than *hirundo*, which is far more complex an articulation than the swallow’s chirping sound. However, Varro never explicitly makes such comments when discussing individual names: the outcomes of his generic remarks on correctness when practically applied to names can only be an object of conjecture.

(4) *Function of etymology (I): knowing opinions* One must, again, regret the loss of books II–IV, where Varro claims to have discussed the usefulness of etymology²¹⁶; but by putting together the data we have so far, we can infer something about the function that he attributed to this discipline. If names were created by people in ancient times, most of them can be restored to a description of the things, and at least some names survived to Varro’s day in a state close to their original form at the time of their creation, then etymology offers an insight into what the ancient

²¹³ X 16. As mentioned, *declinare* was elsewhere used to mean “to inflect”, but the context and especially the association with imposition here indicate that the appropriate translation of *declinantes* is “those who derive”. On the notion of people assigning names ignorantly see also §3.3.2.b.

²¹⁴ V 3.

²¹⁵ V 118.

²¹⁶ VII 109.

people thought of the things that they named. This tenet is underscored by references to “the reason and origin of words”²¹⁷ and to the operation of “unearthing the intention of the name-giver”.²¹⁸

For example, the name-givers named the nightingale *lusciniola* because they thought that it sang “sorrowfully” (*luctuose*)²¹⁹; and they named the estate *fundus* either because they deemed field-land to be “the foundation” (*fundamentum*) of livestock and wealth”, or because they observed that “it pours out [*fundit*] many things every year.”²²⁰ More complicated is the origin of *caelum*,²²¹ but the reasoning remains the same; Varro challenges Stilo’s hypothesis that the word came either from *caelatum* (“engraved”) or from *celatum* (“hidden”): both etymologies are descriptions of some sort, the former of how the sky may appear in certain weather conditions, while the latter is explicitly derived by contrariety (it is *not* hidden). Varro dismisses the former on philological and logical grounds (deeming it more likely that *caelatum* comes from *caelum* than the opposite) and accepts the latter, although he points out that it could indicate opposite things about the name-givers’ thoughts: they could have derived the name of the sky from *celatum* either out of their observation that it is hidden (by clouds) by day or that it is not hidden by night. In the end, Varro thinks it more credible that the name-givers saw the sky in the same way as Pacuvius, who described it as “this around and above which holds the earth in its embrace”,²²² and therefore traces the word back to *cavum* (“hollow”), this to *choum* (“vault of the sky”), and this to *chaos* (“empty space”).

In book VI, the root of names in the name-givers’ experiences is further emphasised by the fact that Varro distinguishes names of “natural times”, i.e. those dictated by astronomical facts (days and nights, seasons, etc.), from “man-made times”, i.e. “concepts arising from human needs and wishes”.²²³ Among the latter are *lustrum* (“period of five years”), so called because at the end of each one people “settle” (*luere*) their taxes,²²⁴ and all the names of festivals²²⁵; *saeculum* (“century”) because “they believed this to be the longest time for people to ‘grow old’ [*senescere*]”.²²⁶ But certain beliefs are explained as the source of verbs too: e.g. *lubere* (“to be pleasing”) comes from the

²¹⁷ (V 2) Etymology is the discipline *ubi cur et unde sint verba scrutantur*. See also V 10 (*cur, unde*); VII 4 (the cause or basis [*causa*] of words cannot always be reconstructed).

²¹⁸ VII 2.

²¹⁹ V 76.

²²⁰ V 37.

²²¹ V 18–20.

²²² *Trag.* fr. 79.

²²³ De Melo (2019a p. 807).

²²⁴ VI 11.

²²⁵ VI 12–28.

²²⁶ VI 11.

belief that “the mind is ‘slippery’ [*lubrica*] and ‘glides forward’ [*prolabitur*]”²²⁷; *videre* (“to see”) < *vis* because sight is considered the greatest of the five senses.²²⁸

With the claim that etymology was an instrument of knowledge of the name-givers’ opinions, Varro aligned himself with the Stoic stance, which was already Plato’s (if one takes the etymologies in the *Cratylus* seriously). Where Plato and the Stoics differed, as we saw, is the judgement of the accuracy of the name-givers’ views of the world. Since the Stoics maintained that the ancient people’s wisdom was superior, and therefore that their understanding of things, encapsulated in condensed descriptions of the same, would have been mostly correct, for them etymology was, indirectly, also a source of knowledge of the true nature of the things themselves. Plato strongly countered this assumption, not just because he argued that the ancient people had a faulty conception of the world, but also because he denied that the function of names was to describe things and maintained that things must be known for themselves. Where did Varro stand on this question?

(5) *Function of etymology (II): knowing things* To some extent, Varro appears to endorse the Stoic stance on etymology as an instrument to learn about things. He does say that “nature guided humans in the imposition of names”²²⁹ and he accepts some of the name-givers’ opinions reconstructed through etymology as accurate representations of the nature of things. His chosen etymology for *caelum*, for example, is consonant with the representation of the sky as a hemisphere which he endorses²³⁰; the same goes for *mundus*, which is made to derive from the “movement” (*motus*) of the celestial bodies because “the world-cosmos is connected with the entire sky”²³¹; neither does Varro question the explanation of *metuere* (“to fear”) as “a certain ‘motion’ [*motus*] of the spirit, when the mind shrinks back from the misfortune which it believes is going to befall it”²³²— although, one must say, Varro does not pretend to have gathered this knowledge through the etymologies alone. All in all, however, *De lingua Latina* is not a philosophical treatise and Varro was not as invested in inquiring into the nature of things as the Stoics were. What he aimed to shed light on were facts and antiquities of the Roman past. To this end, etymol-

²²⁷ VI 47.

²²⁸ VI 80.

²²⁹ VI 3.

²³⁰ IX 24.

²³¹ VI 3.

²³² VI 48, transl. de Melo.

ogy was in fact a useful epistemological tool²³³ in that it provided information on the uses and traditions of the past.

There are countless examples. From the etymology of *puticuli* (“grave-pits”) one learns that “people used to be buried in the wells [*putei*]”.²³⁴ From that of *centuria* (“century”), that it initially comprised “one hundred” (*centum*) *iugera*, whereas it was two hundred in Varro’s time.²³⁵ From that of *flamines* (“flamens”), for which an original form *filamines* is postulated, one learns that “in Latium [the flamens] always kept their heads covered and tied their heads with a ‘yarn’ [*filum*]”.²³⁶ From that of *urbs* (“city”), that many towns were founded according to the Etruscan rite, which entailed drawing a “circle” (*orbis*) around the intended perimeter with a furrow.²³⁷ The names of the months and festivals of the Roman calendar are a rich source of information on the origin of the rites performed on such occasions.²³⁸ One could go on for much longer.²³⁹

Concerning this theoretical point, therefore, Varro proves not so much an inheritor of the Stoic use of etymology as much as an author devoted to the antiquarian approach: his use of etymology served the broader purpose of acquiring or affirming knowledge of facts and events of the past, which could not be observed directly, but required doing research through various means and by examining various types of evidence. Words were one such type of evidence, carriers of information on the Roman past.

(6) *Limits to the function of etymology* We saw in §2.1 that Varro identified a number of factors which made research into the origin of words difficult, and that most of these had to do with the passage of time and its altering effects. This translates into a limit to the knowledge that

²³³ That Varro used etymology as an epistemological tool for the things of the past was argued by Blank (2008), although the scholar grounded his argument in a theory that he attributed to Antiochus of which different readings can be given, e.g. Reinhardt (2018). I analyse this issue more extensively in Lazzerini (forthcoming) and I thank Tobias Reinhardt for discussing it with me.

²³⁴ V 25. This is Varro’s chosen etymology and is, in this sense, more informative than Stilo’s (*ibid.*), who wrote that the grave-pits were so called because “the corpses thrown in there rotted [*putescebant*]”.

²³⁵ V 35.

²³⁶ V 84.

²³⁷ V 143.

²³⁸ E.g. (VI 13) the *Lupercalia*, which took place on the nones of February (*Nonae Februariae*), involved a rite of “purification” (*februatio*): Varro says that the Sabines still called a purification *februm* in his day, and a gloss by Servius which may go back to Varro (*Aen.* VIII 343), adds that *februm* was originally the name of the goat-hide from which a thong was taken to strike the girls at the *Lupercalia*. It is telling that, in this passage, Varro himself refers to his *Antiquitates* where the subject of the *Lupercalia* was treated.

²³⁹ The examples of this sort are more frequent in book V because this deals with names of objects, and items of material culture are more informative on a people’s uses and traditions than verbs. For instance: V 36 (*campus, colles, saltus*), 41 (history of names of the Capitoline Hill), 43 (*Aventinus, Velabrum*), 89 (*milites*), 105 (*panis*), 116 (*lorica*). From book VI, the most notable examples are the names of festivals.

etymology can provide of both the facts and events of the past and of the name-givers' opinions on things. I discussed in §2.1 the theoretical background on which, in Varro's eyes, this limitation did not impair the validity of etymology; however, Varro remained aware that his research would stumble upon blind spots.²⁴⁰ When dealing with words "lost to oblivion" (*oblivia*), Varro declared that he would leave aside (*relinquam*) most of them, but added: *quorum partim qu[o]i⟨d⟩ ta⟨men⟩ invenerim aut opiner scribam* ("on some of them, however, I will write what I have found or believe"). This corrupted segment has been discussed almost as much as the passage on the four *gradus*,²⁴¹ but the restoration reported here (which is Kent's and de Melo's) tallies with Varro's scarce preoccupation with obsolete words; it also further substantiates the claim that the fourth *gradus* of etymology is concerned with the oldest words of the Latin lexicon.

Words of unclear origin are, for example, *Esquiliae* ("Esquiline Hill"), on which Varro reports some hypotheses and then discusses an argument in support of one of those²⁴²; between different hypotheses of the origin of *Palatium* ("Palatine Hill")²⁴³ and *Veliae* (hilltop of the Palatine),²⁴⁴ he cannot decide himself; he provides two alternatives for *puls* ("porridge"), the oldest food.²⁴⁵ In book VI, Varro straightforwardly says that old verbs are very difficult to etymologise because they share "hardly any relation to the Greek language" (which would allow helpful comparisons),²⁴⁶ and new verbs, coined during Varro's time (*quorum in partu memoria adfuerit nostra*), are Greek loanwords, thus outside the scope of *De lingua Latina*: of such old words, he reiterates, he shall say "what he can" (*quae poterimus*). Varro is also in the dark on the origin of *temo* ("wagon-pole", name of the constellation of Bootes), but he offers his opinion (*arbitror*).²⁴⁷

²⁴⁰ (V 5) "The things which oblivion has taken away from our ancestors, not even the zeal of Mucius and Brutus can recover".

²⁴¹ *quorum partim cum ita invenerim ut opiner* [*opiner* Augustinus] Rholandellus, Traglia; *quorum partim cum ita invenero ut opiner, scribam* Spengel¹, Collart; *quorum partim quo ita invenerim ⟨partim quo⟩ ita opiner scribam* Müller; *de obliivis relinquam plurimum, partim, quo⟨d⟩ ita invenerim aut opiner, scribam* con. Canal; *quorum partim quid [ita] invenerim aut opiner scribam* Spengel²; *quorum partim quae ita ⟨ut⟩ invenerim, ita opiner scribam* con. Goetz & Schoell; *quorum partim quo l⟨oco⟩ ta⟨men⟩ invenerim ⟨et cur⟩ ita opiner scribam* Fay (1914 p. 150); *quorum partim quo[i]ta⟨m quomque⟩ invenerim, ita ⟨ut⟩ opiner scribam* Vetter (1958 p. 290); *quorum partim quo[i]ta⟨m quomque⟩ invenerim, ⟨quo⟩[i]ta⟨m⟩ opiner scribam* Pfaffel (1981 pp. 242–3).

²⁴² V 49.

²⁴³ V 53.

²⁴⁴ V 54.

²⁴⁵ V 105.

²⁴⁶ VI 40. The passage is reported and discussed in §1.2.

²⁴⁷ VII 73.

Now that we have gathered some data to piece together a Varronian theory of etymology, let us combine these findings with further detail from the passage on the four *gradus* in V 7–9 and the fields of study it distinguished (see §2.1). There, Varro says that simple compounds like *argentifodinae* and *viocurus* can be solved by any Latin speaker, and in fact he wastes no time on them in books V–VII; on the other hand, he claims he can deal with the poetic words and tackle the words of everyday use (*secundum* [scil. *gradum*] *praeteribo*) and that he will do his best (*opinionem aucupabor*) with the oldest Latin words.

Poetic words are analysed in the seventh book of *De lingua Latina*—and, sporadically, also in the fifth and sixth—and Varro says that his approach to their study was informed by the Alexandrian grammarians (“I spent my nights working [...] by the lamp-light of Aristophanes”). Ancient grammar, he says, has shown *quemadmodum quodque poeta finxerit verbum, quod confinxerit, quod declinarit*. Establishing the exact meaning and mutual difference of these three apparently technical terms (*fingere confingere declinare*) has given way to much scholarly discussion. According to Barwick, these terms went back to a theory of word coinage developed by the Stoics²⁴⁸; Schröter, instead, traced such theory back to the Peripatetics and compared Varro’s *fingere* with Cicero’s *facere* and *novare* and Quintilian’s *facere* and *fingere*, which identify different kinds of word formation.²⁴⁹ Piras compared meanings of *fingere* in Varro (generic linguistic coinage, derivation or inflection, onomatopoeic coinage).²⁵⁰

However, since Varro’s explanation specifically referred to the activity of the ancient grammarians, perhaps it is more fruitful to check his words against that background. Thanks to Schironi’s work on Aristarchus, we can appreciate the range of situations in which the Alexandrian scholar resorted to etymology, and these seem to match well Varro’s definition in V 7. The fact that—rephrasing—“grammarians explained the *fictio* of a word by a poet” could refer to Aristarchus’ use of etymology to clarify words unattested (*hapax legomena*) or rarely used outside Homer, or words used by Homer with a different meaning from what was standard in Aristarchus’ time: these special coinages and uses collectively made up almost a language of its own, hence referring to them as creations (although technically they are not) is not inappropriate. In support of this suggestion, we could add that Aristotle had identified poetic coinages (πεποιημένα

²⁴⁸ Barwick (1957 pp. 80–2).

²⁴⁹ Schröter (1960 pp. 778–93).

²⁵⁰ Piras (1998 p. 74).

ὀνόματα) as a separate category of names.²⁵¹ *Confictio*, if analysed literally (*cum* + *fictio*), could refer to these same “creations”, but obtained through the “addition” or “omission” of letters²⁵² or by combining roots with modifiers,²⁵³ since Aristarchus had a very advanced grasp of the idea of morphemes. In addition, I suggest that Varro’s *fingerere* and *confingere* relate to the technical term σχῆμα, which in ancient scholia meant “figure of phrases” or “of words”: in the latter sense, it indicated “changes in morphology”, i.e. “the forming or shaping of a word out of a certain inflectional or derivational pattern”, and “Aristarchus applie[d] the verb σχηματίζειν or the noun σχῆμα to Homer, who ‘fashioned’ a form in a specific way”.²⁵⁴ Some of Varro’s poetic etymologies involve words that were “fashioned” according to a pattern which had changed by his time.²⁵⁵ *Figura* was often the Latin equivalent of σχῆμα²⁵⁶ and this connection may have underpinned Varro’s notion of *fingerere* in this context. As for *declinatio*, there is no reason to assume that Varro used this word with a different meaning from the technical one he introduced in the morphological section of *De lingua Latina*, where it means “word-alteration” either by inflection or derivation; Aristarchus often explained a Homeric word by tracing it back to its root, thus reversing the process of *declinatio*.²⁵⁷

We might even go further and say that the wording in the passage (*quemadmodum quodque poeta finxerit verbum, quod confinxerit, quod declinarit*) does not suggest that Varro referenced, generically, “a poet”, as some translations assume. The text reads *poeta*, singular (with corresponding verbs in the singular), and adds no indefinite qualifier. If Varro was indeed giving a precise description of etymology in the activities of Alexandrian scholars, then the generalisation is unwarranted: ancient grammarians worked chiefly, and some almost exclusively, on Homer—“the poet” *par excellence*.²⁵⁸

²⁵¹ Po. 1457b33–35: πεποιημένον [*scil.* ὄνομα] δ’ ἐστὶν ὃ ὅλως μὴ καλούμενον ὑπὸ τινῶν αὐτὸς τίθεται ὁ ποιητής (“‘forged’ is [a name] imposed by the poet himself which absolutely nobody uses”). See also §3.3.3.

²⁵² E.g. εἴσω < εἰς by addition (pleonasm) of ω (Sch. Hom. ad Φ 125); ἐπικάρ (“headlong”) < ἐπὶ κάρα (“along the head”) by omission (paralepsis). An interesting kind of “composition” is explained through the Aristarchean notion of “sharing of letters”, for which see §2.3.2.

²⁵³ E.g. ἀσβέστη (“unquenchable”) < ἀ- (privative prefix) + σβεστή (“quenchable”) (Sch. Hom. ad Π 123).

²⁵⁴ Schironi (2018 pp. 397–8).

²⁵⁵ E.g. Lucilius’ *canes*, more commonly *canis* (“dog”) and Ennius’ *trabes*, later shortened to *trabs* (“beam”) (VII 32–33).

²⁵⁶ Also, for example, in the catalogues of *rationes analogiae*, for which see §3.2.1.

²⁵⁷ E.g. ὠτειλή (“wound”) < οὐτάμεναι (“to strike with a weapon in hand”) (Sch. Hom. ad Λ 266); καταιγίδες (“storms”) = αἱ κάτω αἰσσοῦσαι (“those who shoot downward”) < (κατ)αἰσσεῖν (“to dart (downward)”) (Sch. Hom. ad Λ 297a; P 594a).

²⁵⁸ In Cic. *Top.* 55 and Sen. *epist.* 58.17 it is acknowledged that it was common in Greek to refer to Homer as “the poet”. This reference κατ’ ἐξοχήν (*par excellence*) is also found in Latin texts of the Imperial Age: notable is Quintilian’s remark (*inst.* VIII 5.9) *ut Homerus ‘poeta’, ‘urbs’ Roma dicitur*.

Varro analysed the words of the Roman poets (Ennius, Pacuvius, Plautus, Accius, and others) as Aristarchus had analysed Homer's words.²⁵⁹ For both scholars, the study of these poets went beyond the explanation of their peculiar vocabulary; but Varro's literary-critical studies formed a separate part of his corpus²⁶⁰ and in *De lingua Latina* he focuses on the words alone, only bringing the context into play when necessary to support his etymologies. It has been pointed out that Varro never explicitly says whether the poets themselves invented the words that he analyses: in other words, whether he included poets among name-givers.²⁶¹ The interpretation of *fingerere confingere declinare* based on Aristarchus' activity suggests that, to some extent, he implied so: the use of a word unattested elsewhere, but with a recognisable lexical base, does count as an original creation,²⁶² as well as words and phrases obtained through innovative combinations of other words.²⁶³ The fact that such words are not, strictly speaking, creations *ex novo* may not have mattered much to him, since we do not know whether he expressed an opinion on the specific mechanism by which humans came to articulate certain sounds from which they developed language. *Fingere confingere declinare* are all variations of the same concept of *impositio* theorised in the way we saw above.

Concerning the third level, Varro says that philosophy "laid the foundations to explain words of common usage" (*ea quae in consuetudine communi essent aperire coepit*). The term *aperire* suggests an acknowledgement, on the part of Varro, that words carry hidden messages on the true nature of things, in a Stoic vein. But in light of the relation between names and things that we gleaned from Varro's books, the word here might simply refer to the belief that the phonological make-up of names can be stretched out to a longer description: to "disclose" or "open up" words is to reveal the original definition that was attached to the thing, and thus the thought that compelled it. This operation also presupposes a Stoic framework (which assumes that names are condensed descriptions of things), which is in fact made explicit by Varro's declaration that he studied "not just by the lamp-light of Aristophanes, but also of that of Cleanthes"; but the focus with which

²⁵⁹ On the seventh book, the poetic citations contained in it, and Varro's canon of authors, see Piras (1998) and the introduction to Flobert's edition (2019).

²⁶⁰ For an overview of Varro's "literarhistorischen Schriften", see Dahlmann (1894 cols 1220–1229).

²⁶¹ Cupaiuolo (2000 p. 299).

²⁶² E.g. Pacuvius' *aequor* ("level sea") because "it is 'level' (*aequatum*) when not moved by the sea" (§23) and *cicurare* ("to tame") < *cicur* ("tame") < *ciccum* ("membrane > thing of little worth") (§91); Lucilius' *ambages* ("circumlocutions") < *ambe* ("around") (§30).

²⁶³ E.g. Pacuvius' *incurvicervicum* (V 7), Naevius' *Luca bos* ("Lucan cow > elephant") (VII 39) and *consponsus* ("bound by mutual pledges") i.e. "asked to make a 'counter-promise' (*contra sponsum*)" (§107).

the Stoic theory is applied is different, as we saw: more on the name-givers' opinions than on the true nature of things.

The Stoic approach guides Varro's analysis of the vast majority of words in books V–VI. When discussing very old words, whose origins are buried under many layers of history and time (the fourth *gradus*), we saw that Varro sometimes suspended judgement; when he did venture an opinion, he did so on the back of research of the antiquarian kind, taking into consideration the suggestions of previous scholars, combining historical, archaeological, and narrative material.

2.2.3. Conclusion

Having reached the end of this survey, the conclusion seems inescapable that Varro's etymology was very extensively influenced by Stoicism, as it stands established in modern scholarship; but the picture emerges as more nuanced than it is sometimes suggested, and although Stoicism got the lion's share, other perspectives fed into Varro's theory to various degrees. The belief that names originated by imposition was not exclusive to the Stoa, but was common ground for most schools of thought in antiquity and only Epicurus and his successors stood out with their evolutionist account. The latter appears to have informed Varro's theory at least insofar as words denoting things or actions that involved sounds were concerned, where an imitative relation between words and things was postulated; unless it resulted from the consultation of Posidonius alone, who integrated Epicurean elements into his own theory of the origin of language. Varro then traced out the work of the Hellenistic grammarians when it came to the analysis of poetic words, expanding the notion of *impositio* to encompass different kinds of poetic creations (*fictiones*, *confictiones*, *declinationes*).

The stronger presence of Stoic thought is undeniable. The pioneering doctrine of etymology built by Plato only shows through its Stoic adaptations. Traces of Aristotelian thinking may underpin Varro's concept of *finctio verborum* by the poets, but if he did read *De interpretatione*, we can only conclude that he disregarded the notion of ὄνομα as a compound entity which only has meaning in its entirety and in combination with the cognitive process that produced it, or deflected it in favour of the Stoic conception of names as condensed versions of longer verbal descriptions.

Overall, however, it is the antiquarian outlook that prevails, for even the Stoic doctrine that Varro endorses seems to only interest him insofar as it provides a method to extract information

on the Roman past from words. The nature of things is not probed or discussed beyond what sheds light on facts like what the ancient Romans used to eat, what utensils they used, how they administered their wealth, what their old towns looked like, what public rites they performed, and so forth. The innovative aspect of the theory which Varro adopted from different traditions derives from his own identity as a scholar: as an antiquarian and a literary critic, he left the investigation of *rerum natura* to other authorities, and at the centre of his research he placed people.

2.3. Etymological practice

In the previous chapter, we unfolded the theoretical background which guided Varro's etymological tasks and what previous traditions he was likely to retain as his reference points for this subject. Let us now turn to how he went about to actually reconstruct his etymologies. Firstly, we shall have a look at how he distributed his collection of etymologies across the books; then, we shall analyse what principles he applied to derive a word from another and how they compare to previous methods; finally, we shall weigh up possible connections to the Stoic doctrine of one testimony concerning principles which can be found in Varro.

2.3.1. *The arrangement of the subject matter*

The project of reconstructing the origins of the Latin lexicon required an organisational principle: where to begin, in what order to proceed? Varro's choice was to adopt an arrangement based on place and time, first for the words of everyday use (books V–VI), then for poetic words (book VII). The *locus* and *tempus* bipartition, however, stems from a superordinate set of four elements, as detailed in V 11–13:

- (11) Pythagoras Samius ait omnium rerum initia esse bina, ut finitum et infinitum, bonum et malum, vitam et mortem, diem et noctem. Quare item duo, status et motus. Quod stat aut agitur, corpus, ubi agitur, locus, dum agitur, tempus, quod est in agitu, actio. Quadripartitio magis sic apparebit: corpus est ut cursor, locus stadium qua currit, tempus hora qua currit, actio cursio. (12) Quare fit, ut ideo fere omnia sint quadripartita et ea aeterna, quod neque unquam tempus, quin fueri[n]t motus: eius enim intervallum tempus; neque motus, ubi non locus et corpus, quod alterum est quod movetur, alterum ubi; neque ubi is agitur, non actio ibi. Igitur initiorum quadrigae locus et corpus, tempus et actio. (13) Quare quod quattuor genera prima rerum, totidem verborum; [enim horum] [d]e quis <de> locis et iis rebus qu(a)e in his videntur in hoc libro summatim ponam. [...]

2 utrumque quadripartitum *post* et motus *add. Spengel₂* 8 *del. Spengel₁* 9 [d]e quis <de> locis *corr. Spengel₂* | iis *Spengel₁* : his *F*

(11) Pythagoras of Samos says that the principles of all things come in pairs, like limited and unlimited, good and bad, life and death, day and night. So, in the same way, we have the pair of rest and motion. What is at rest or in motion is body; where it is in motion is place; while it is in motion is time; what is in the movement is action. The quadripartition will be clearer thus: the body is, as it were, the runner, the place is the racecourse where it runs, the time is the period during which it runs, the action is the running. (12) So, in this way, all things are generally fourfold and they are eternal: for there has never been time without motion (for time is an interval of it); nor is there motion where there are no place and body (for the latter is what is in motion, the former is where it is in motion); nor is there no action where the

body is in motion. Therefore, there exists a scheme of four principles: place and body, time and action. (13) So, since there are four primary categories of things, there are as many categories of words: from these, in this book I shall give a summary account about places and those things which are observed in them. [...]

Varro begins by stating a fundamental rule of duality, which he attributes to Pythagoras and which is shown to operate in a series of opposites: he cites “limited”/“unlimited”, “good”/“bad”, “life”/“death”, “day”/“night”, and “rest”/“motion”. From this last pair he develops a scheme of four items, in relation to which the state of motion occurs and unfolds: “body”, “place”, “time”, and “action”; “body” is the only item presented as either at rest or in motion, while the other items are only connected to motion. He presents these items as inextricably interconnected, each necessary for the others to obtain. Then, this quadripartition is transferred to the domain of lexicon and is used to identify four groups of words: words denoting places, words denoting bodies (objects, plants, animals) existing in places, words denoting times, and words expressing actions (i.e. verbs). This word classification will constitute the backbone of the etymologies in the next three books, which are arranged according to a simplified version of the scheme: *loca* and *corpora* are dealt with in book V and the first part of book VII (§§6–71), while *tempora* and *actiones* (as Varro says elsewhere)²⁶⁴ are discussed in book VI and the second part of book VII (§§72–106).

This combination and overlap of theoretical classifications and thematic arrangement yields the following layout:

²⁶⁴ *Ling.* V 10, VII 110.

PART 2 – ETYMOLOGY

classification by two (A)		classification by four (B)	thematic arrangement (C)	book where the subject is dealt with
<i>finitum/infinitum</i> <i>bonum/malum</i> <i>vita/mors</i> <i>dies/nox (...)</i>				
1. <i>status</i> 2. <i>motus</i>	→	absence or presence of motion is seen in relation to	→	
		1. <i>corpus</i> (what is at rest or in motion)	}	places and bodies that exist in places
		2. <i>locus</i> (where it is at rest or in motion)		
		3. <i>tempus</i> (while it is at rest or in motion)	}	times and things that happen in time
		4. <i>actio</i> (what is intrinsic in its being at rest or in motion)		
				book V, book VII 6–71
				book VI, book VII 72– 106

The tradition of a Pythagorean bipartition (A) of “principles” (*omnium rerum initia*) derives from Aristotle, who had presented a set of ten opposites not matching Varro’s list either in number (Varro mentions five) or in quality (“life”/“death” is absent from Aristotle).²⁶⁵ However, in Varro, *ut* introducing the first four pairs and *quare item* before the final pair advise against giving too much weight to his choice of items and number. Rather, it seems that Varro, having stated the rule of duality, simply selected a few pairs from the transmitted list and included them by way of examples.

The following quadripartition (B) has been recognised, ever since Dahlmann,²⁶⁶ as deriving from a combination of Stoic principles. Chrysippus had first established the primary division of the “spaces” of the cosmos based on the “bodies” which lived in them: the sky (dwelling of the

²⁶⁵ *Metaph.* 986a22–26: ἕτεροι δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων τὰς ἀρχὰς δέκα λέγουσιν εἶναι τὰς κατὰ συστοιχίαν λεγομένας, πέρας [καὶ] ἀπειρον, περιττὸν [καὶ] ἄρτιον, ἓν [καὶ] πλῆθος, δεξιὸν [καὶ] ἀριστερόν, ἄρρεν [καὶ] θῆλυ, ἡρεμοῦν [καὶ] κινούμενον, εὐθὺ [καὶ] καμπύλον, φῶς [καὶ] σκότος, ἀγαθὸν [καὶ] κακόν, τετράγωνον [καὶ] ἑτερόμηκες (“Others of the same group [*scil.* the Pythagoreans] say that the ten principles (*ἀρχαί*) are those which are said to be in pairs: limited and unlimited, odd and even, one and plurality, right and left, male and female, at rest and in motion, straight and curved, light and darkness, good and bad, square and oblong”). Cf. EUDOR. fr. 3, 5 (ap. SIMP. *in Ph.* p. 181,7sq, 19sq). See Horky & Nelsestuen (2018).

²⁶⁶ Dahlmann (1932 pp. 16–7, 37–43).

gods) and the earth (dwelling of animals, humans, and plants).²⁶⁷ In book V, Varro first gives the etymologies of the *prima loca*, i.e. the earth and the sky (§§16–17); then come the names of the natural objects of the sky (§§18–20) and of the earth (§§21–56), the element of water having been set apart (§24); then he moves on to the *corpora immortalia* and *mortalia* inhabiting the sky (§§57–76), the water (§§77–79), and the earth (§§80–101), followed by the plants (§§102–104); he concludes with the products of human activity (§§105–LACUNA–183). As for *tempus* and *actio*, Varro’s definition of time as “an interval of motion” replicates Zeno’s.²⁶⁸ Book VI begins with the etymologies of *tempus* and its related concepts (§3), then the various parts of the day (§§4–7) and the year (§§8–11) and all the festivities in the Roman calendar (§§12–34); subsequently come the etymologies of a series of verbs (§§35–96); since verbs express actions, which develop in time, this relation fits with the definition of time as “an interval of motion”. The adaptation of the order of books V–VI to book VII is less seamless and appears out of place,²⁶⁹ but it is nonetheless what Varro explicitly purported to do.

It is worth pointing out that Varro’s arrangement has another illustrious precedent. In §2.2 we saw that Plato emerges from Varro’s ideas on etymology through Stoic mediation. We also discussed the section where Socrates gives etymologies of a series of names, as part of his argumentative strategy to ultimately refute Cratylus’ radical naturalism. It has been noticed that, in the *Cratylus*, these names are not listed haphazardly, but according to a calculated order²⁷⁰:

²⁶⁷ Ap. STOB. *Ecl.* I p. 184 (SVF II 527; BS 12.1); ap. EUS. *PE* XV 15 (SVF II 528; LS 67L; BS 12.4). In both fragments, with minor differences, we read of the cosmos as a σύστημα “made up by the sky and the earth” and by “the beings” (αἱ φύσεις) which live in them, all of which are bodies. On the cosmos as a σύστημα, see §1.1.

²⁶⁸ In STOB. *Ecl.* I p. 104 (SVF I 93; FDS 808), time is defined as κινήσεως διάστημα.

²⁶⁹ Dahlmann (1932 p. 44); see however Traglia (1963 p. 35).

²⁷⁰ Baxter (1992 pp. 91–3); Sedley (1998), whence the following table is borrowed, with modifications; Ademollo (2011 pp. 189–91).

391e–396c	introduction: etymologies of Homeric names
397b–410e	cosmology
397c–400c	preliminaries of theology (θεοί, δαίμονες, ἥρωες, ἄνθρωποι; ψυχή, σῶμα)
400d–408d	theonyms: the traditional Homeric pantheon; divine natural entities
408d–409c	astronomic entities (ἥλιος, σελήνη, ἄστρα, ἀστραπή) + μείς
409c–410c	elements (πῦρ, ὕδωρ, ἀήρ/αἰθήρ, γῆ)
410ce	partition of time (ᾠραι, ἐνίαυτος, ἔτος)
411a–421c	knowledge, virtue, and truth
411a–416d	virtues and values
416e–419b	useful and harmful
419b–420b	feelings and dispositions of the soul
420bc	cognitive stages and faculties of the soul
420de	will and necessity
421ac	logic and ontology

This succession of etymologies (especially their falling into three main classes) brings to mind the tripartition into physics, ethics, and logic that informed the Hellenistic philosophical schools, Stoicism included, and it has been suggested that it even anticipates the tripartition to a certain extent.²⁷¹ But what has not been highlighted before is that the order of etymologies in the *Cratylus* overlaps to a great extent with Varro's books V–VI:

²⁷¹ Sedley (2003 pp. 157–8), who noted that the only difference is that, in the *Cratylus*, “logic and metaphysics are a subdivision of ethics, because they represent the objects and contents of wisdom, a predominantly intellectual virtue which is treated along with the moral virtues”.

<i>Cratylus</i>		<i>De lingua Latina</i>	
397c–400c	preliminaries of theology: θεοί, δαίμονες, ἥρωες, ἄνθρωποι	V 57	supreme divine entities (<i>Caelum, Terra</i>) and their equivalent (<i>Serapis, Isis; Saturnus, Opis</i>)
	ψυχή, σῶμα	V 59	<i>anima, corpus</i> and their equivalent (<i>calor, frigidum; ignis, humidum</i>)
400d–408d	theonyms: the traditional Homeric pantheon; divine natural entities	V 65–74	theonyms: the traditional Roman pantheon
408d–409c	astronomic entities (ἥλιος, σελήνη, ἄστρο/ἀστραπή) + μείς	V 68	astronomic entities (<i>sol, luna</i>)
409c–410c	elements (πῦρ, ὕδωρ, ἀήρ, αἰθήρ, γῆ)	V 70	elements (<i>ignis</i>)
410ce	partition of time (ῥοαί, ἐνιαυτός, ἔτος)	VI 3–34	<i>tempus</i> ; partition of the day; annual cycle of the sun; partition of the year

One would like to ascertain whether this similarity results from Varro following directly the *Cratylus* or a mediating (presumably Stoic) source, but unfortunately, the extant collection of scattered Stoic etymologies does not allow to reach a conclusive answer. We may reiterate that Antiochus encouraged going back to the original Plato, bypassing Hellenistic in-between sources, and Varro might have absorbed this practice. In any case, even if Varro did use an in-between source, this must have reproduced the original authority very faithfully, since Varro's and Plato's lists remain very close; and if this source did follow Plato closely for the etymologies grouped under the physics section, it seems reasonable that it would have done the same for ethics and logic as well. The reason why we do not find etymologies related to these domains in Varro probably has to do—again—with the fact that Varro wrote *De lingua Latina* with a different purpose: he was not interested in building a comprehensive system that encompassed all areas of people's experience of the external world, of their relationship with one another, and of their approach to knowledge and cognition. He was interested in uncovering the origins of the Roman people (their territory and their relationship to it, their customs and traditions, their technological developments): for this purpose, the etymologies related to space and time were sufficient.

My comparison with the *Cratylus* does not contradict Dahlmann's observations. Varro's arrangement mirrors Plato's and it may or may not have mirrored the arrangement of a lost Stoic source too, but in any case, it reflects Stoic ideas.

Going back to the question of the quadripartition (body, place, time, action): according to Dahlmann, Varro grounded his couple *locus* + *corpus* in Stoic cosmology, then added the couple *tempus* + *actio* (also a Stoic association) to obtain his four principles, thus reconciling the two otherwise conflicting classifications (one by two, one by four) by harmonising Pythagoreanism and Stoicism. I rather see this relation as hierarchical. Varro's four *initia* stem from the primary dichotomy of *status* and *motus*, so that the quadripartition falls under the bipartite scheme attributed to Pythagoras; furthermore, in the thematic arrangement of the treatise (C), "bodies" and "places" are dealt with jointly in book V, and "times" and "actions" in book VI, effectively breaking the four categories into two groups which correspond to the concepts of "rest" and "motion".

But while Varro may have constructed his quadripartition by combining Stoic ideas, place, body, time, and action are never attested together as a self-contained scheme in the Stoic fragments. In fact, in the Stoic ontological framework, these items are neither homogeneous nor at the same level: bodies are "somethings" (τινά) that "exist" (εἶναι), place and time are two of the incorporeal "somethings" that do not exist but only "subsist" (ὑφίστάσθαι); bodies are the things that occupy place and action is not included in the metaphysical system.²⁷² D. Blank suggested that Varro's *initiorum quadrigae* ("an ontological classification, beginning with body, followed by three necessary conditions for the existence of body") could result from a reconfiguration of the Stoic system and of the relation between the concepts.²⁷³ This hypothesis, however, might overlay Varro's investment in reinterpreting Stoic metaphysics, especially in the context of this passage.

Recently, Horky & Nelsestuen argued that Varro's quadripartition must be framed within the context of the debate on Aristotle's categories between the Hellenistic philosophical schools in the first century BCE. A comparison between the main adaptations from Aristotle's original list which were known at that time²⁷⁴ shows that Varro's scheme does not overlap with any of them. The lists of the early Platonists, of pseudo-Archytas, and of the Stoics are all similar to one another in that "they proceed from a primary substantial genus (which for ps-Archytas and Menaechmus is

²⁷² SEN. *Ep.* 58.13–15 (SVF II 332; LS 27A; BS 2.1); ALEX.APHR. in *Top.* 301,19–25 (SVF II 329; LS 27B; BS 2.3); S.E. *M.* X 218 (SVF II 330; LS 27D; BS 2.5), VIII 409 (SVF II 85; LS 27E; BS 2.5).

²⁷³ Blank (2008 p. 59): "This could be an ontological classification reflecting one possible interpretation of the Stoic *tina* in relation to Stoic being (*corpus* and *actio*, i.e., body and an action, which just is a body in a certain condition), together with two of the four Stoic incorporeals, place and time; the other two incorporeals, *lekta* or meanings, and the void external to the world, would be omitted, unless *actio* represents instead the *lekta* under the guise of predicates".

²⁷⁴ Horky & Nelsestuen (2018) compared the list transmitted in a pseudoepigraphon attributed to Archytas (PSEUDO-ARCHYT. p. 22,6–31), the one attributed to the mathematician and early Platonist Menaechmus (ap. PROCL. in *Eucl.* p. 78,10–13), the middle Platonist Eudorus of Alexandria (fr. 15, 17), and one related by Philo of Alexandria (*decal.* 30–31).

‘substance’ or οὐσία; for the Stoics, it is the ὑποκείμενον) to three other non-substantial genera”. Only the first category matches Varro’s *corpus*, and the lack of the category of “quality” (ποιόν), which was paramount in the Stoic category system,²⁷⁵ is a conclusive argument against the identification of Varro’s *quadrigae* with Stoic categories.

Other scholars, focusing on the fact that Varro’s classification is fourfold, argued that this is a recurrent scheme in all of Varro’s production,²⁷⁶ with valuable discussions of how the use of such a structure had been canonized in the Roman traditions of rhetoric and historiography, and how Varro was likely to have been susceptible to this influence.²⁷⁷

On the other hand, even if Varro’s desire to adhere simply to a fourfold structure played a part, there seems to be more to the quadripartition *corpus locus tempus actio*: in the passage, these *initia* are qualified as *aeterna* and posited as the foundations of both “things”²⁷⁸ and words (*quod quattuor genera prima rerum, totidem verborum*). Furthermore, the links with Stoic ideas identified by Dahlmann remain compelling, although they cannot be connected to a comparable pre-existent set of four principles. But this need not have been a problem, considering that Varro’s purpose in this passage was essentially to justify the criterion he was going to employ to organise his etymologies. It might be simpler to assume that Varro just adopted some Stoic principles and combined them to suit this particular need, without worrying too much about the fact that his quadripartition did not fit, as such, within any defined philosophical system. Varro had absorbed a good deal of philosophy and various doctrines show through his works, but we must again reiterate that, in *De lingua Latina* and the other linguistic and antiquarian writings, his first concern was to convey knowledge about the subjects at hand, which were not philosophical. Instances such as this one are easier to make sense of if we position ourselves in that perspective and conclude that he primarily searched for a sensible arrangement of his subject matter and then strived to back it up with philosophical principles, prioritising clarity rather than doctrinal coherence.

To summarise, my understanding of *ling.* V 11–13 is that Varro adopted a bipartite scheme which he credited to Pythagoras (A), according to which he singled out the two principles of “rest”

²⁷⁵ Menn (1999).

²⁷⁶ Indeed, we have seen this with the four criteria for *Latinitas* (§1.1) and the *quattuor gradus* of etymology (§2.1). The criteria for *Latinitas*, as we have seen, could also be simplified into a twofold structure.

²⁷⁷ Skydsgaard (1968 pp. 92–3), Piras (1998 pp. 25–56), and Blank (2008 pp. 59–61); however, see McAlhany (2003 p. 65): “the pervasiveness of this structure cannot be doubted, but that it was the only one Varro used, or that he applied it unthinkingly and without modifications to his material, becomes untenable upon closer scrutiny” (see his thorough analysis on pp. 63–87).

²⁷⁸ *Res* here must imply both physical things that exist in the world and conceptual entities.

and “motion”; he then further developed these principles to generate a quadripartite scheme (**B**), subordinate to rest and motion (“space”, “body”, “time”, and “action”); this scheme was Varro’s own creation and resulted from a unique combination of selected Stoic ideas. Finally, Varro simplified his quadripartition, grouping the categories two by two, to convert the scheme into a thematic structure (**C**) for his etymological books.

2.3.2. *Strings of letters and word-segmentation*

Modern etymology is done on the basis of two assumptions. One, that sound change over time is regular and, once the regular phonological patterns are known, one can revert the process and restore the original form.²⁷⁹ Two, that, given a difference between “content-words” (words with a full lexical content, such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc.) and “function-words” (clitics or affixes with a grammatical function, such as conjunctions, prepositions, etc.), each content-word contains a root²⁸⁰; this carries its lexical meaning and is found in all the derivations from that word (albeit often undergoing sound changes). Modifications to that word happen through the combination of the lexical word with grammatical morphemes: prefixes, infixes, and suffixes which either integrate that word into the syntax of the sentence, thus carry grammatical information (inflectional morphemes), or create new words, with different semantic traits, from that original one (derivational morphemes).

Therefore, in a word like *fundamentum*, we can first analyse *funda-ment-um*: the suffix *-ment-* (< IE **-mṇ-* + **-to-*) derives nouns from verb; the inflectional suffix *-um* shows that the word is integrated into the pattern of the Latin second declension as a neuter noun and carries the information of the case (nominative) and number (singular) of the word. The verb that *fundamentum* is derived from is *fund-o*, *fund-a-re*, where the inflectional suffixes *-o* and *-re* create some of the possible forms of the verb’s conjugation and *-a-* is the thematic vowel of the first verb class. *Fundare* itself is a denominative from *fund-us*, where *-us* is the inflectional suffix which shows that the word belongs to the second declension as a masculine noun and carries information about the case and number (nominative singular). The word’s stem, *fund-*, derives from an IE root **b^hud^h-n-ó-* which underwent certain sound changes that are regular in Latin in

²⁷⁹ This is known as the Neogrammarian hypothesis: see de Melo (2019a pp. 60–1).

²⁸⁰ This is true, in principle, at least for old Indo-European languages.

certain phonological contexts, and which can be retraced in other cognate IE languages under other sound changes.²⁸¹

Varro, however, derived *fundus* from either *fundamentum* or *fundere*,²⁸² which shows that he isolated *fund-* as a part shared between the three words²⁸³ and established a connection on that basis alone. All Varro's etymologies are based on words sharing some letters, and in many cases they hit the mark: he was right, of course, to detect a connection between *iudex* ("judge") and *iudicare* ("to judge")²⁸⁴ and between *aurora* ("dawn"), *aureus* ("golden"), and *aurescere* ("to turn golden"),²⁸⁵ although he frequently mistook the derivative for the original form.²⁸⁶ Other times, his analysis lead him to connect words that are not etymologically related, like in the case of *fundus* and *fundere* or other examples we saw in the previous chapter (*capitium* and *capere*, *videre* and *vis*), and further *vita* ("life") < *vis*,²⁸⁷ *turma* ("squadron") = ***terima* < *ter* ("three times"),²⁸⁸ *arma* ("arms") < *arcere* ("to ward off").²⁸⁹

The real challenge came from words whose root was not preserved intact from the original word to the one etymologically derived from it, but had either undergone some kinds of sound changes or had been combined with derivational morphemes which remained undetected. On occasion, Varro showed remarkable awareness of regular phonological changes: like vowel weakening in *cānere* ("to sing") > *tubicīnes* ("trumpeters"), *liticīnes* ("cornetists"), *cornicīnes* ("hornplayers")²⁹⁰; change of initial *du-* to *b-* in *Duellona* > *Bellona* ("goddess of war") and *duellum* > *bellum* ("war")²⁹¹; dissimilation in *medīdies* > *merīdies* ("midday")²⁹²; rhotacism in *foedesum* > *foederum* ("of treatise"), *plusima* > *plurima* ("most things"), *meliose* > *melio* ("better", acc.), *asenam* > *arenam* ("sand", acc.).²⁹³ But he was not always as successful.

My aim in this sub-chapter is not to weigh up the soundness of Varro's etymological method and the accuracy of his results (a task already achieved by accomplished linguists, including in the

²⁸¹ De Vaan (2008) s.v.

²⁸² *Ling.* V 37.

²⁸³ In fact, *fundere* is not etymologically related to *fundus*: see de Vaan s.v.

²⁸⁴ VI 61.

²⁸⁵ VII 83.

²⁸⁶ E.g. precisely with *iudex* and *iudicare*; *lacus* ("lake") < *lacuna* ("pool") (V 26); *Succusa* < *Succusanus* ("Succusan district") (V 48); *mundus* ("women's toiletries") < *munditia* ("neatness") (V 129).

²⁸⁷ V 63.

²⁸⁸ V 91.

²⁸⁹ V 115.

²⁹⁰ VI 75.

²⁹¹ V 73, VII 49. See de Melo (2019a pp. 959–60).

²⁹² VI 4.

²⁹³ VII 27.

two most recent editions of the text).²⁹⁴ Rather, I want to situate his method against the background of his predecessors to retrace the authorities that he drew on.

a. Etymological methods before Varro

Much of the material illustrated in the previous chapter concerning pre-Varronian etymological doctrines is also revealing of the most common etymological methods. Let us begin by considering some examples of the etymologies in **Plato's** *Cratylus*, some of which we already mentioned in the previous chapter:

Τάνταλος (“Tantalus”) < ταλάντατος (“most wretched”)²⁹⁵
οὐραγία (“heavenly sight”) < ὀρῶσα τὰ ἄνω (“looking at the things above”)²⁹⁶
ἄνθρωπος < ἀναθρῶν ἃ ὀπωπε (“examines what he has seen”)²⁹⁷
ψυχή < φύσιν ὀχεῖ καὶ ἔχει (“carries along and holds nature”)²⁹⁸
Ποσειδῶν (“Poseidon”) < ποσίδεσμος (“foot-shackler”)²⁹⁹
Ἥφαιστος (“Hephaistos”) < φάεος ἵστορα (“expert of light”)³⁰⁰
αἰσχρόν (“shameful thing”) < ἀεί ἵσχον τὸν ῥοῦν (“always restraining the flux”)³⁰¹

Clearly, the rationale behind these etymologies is that the phonological make-up of a name can be expanded and certain sounds can be mapped on to a group of words. In principle, the idea is not far from the foundation of modern etymology; but in Plato's etymologies there is no clear recognition that words have certain roots—susceptible, yes, of phonological changes, but overall retaining integrity. As such, the correspondences between the explained word and the explanation rests on an utterly discretionary selection of some sounds which are found to be present in both words (underlined in the examples above) and admits equally discretionary additions and removals of other sounds. Plato randomly added a /-s-/ to derive ψυχή (/ps-/) from φύσις (/ph-/) and seemingly isolated -χη and -χε(ι) as two similar syllables, although the two /e/-sounds belong to two different inflectional endings. The adjective αἰσχρός derives from αἴσχος (“shamefulness”), which goes back to IE **aid-* (the same root of αἰδομαι “to be ashamed”) + the suffix -*sk*-³⁰²; therefore the stem αἰσχ- should not be split into ἀει-ισχ; -ρ- is an adjectival suffix and -ον is the inflec-

²⁹⁴ I refer to de Melo's integral edition (2019a) and Flobert's edition of book VII (2019).

²⁹⁵ *Cra.* 395d3–e5.

²⁹⁶ 396c1.

²⁹⁷ 399c.

²⁹⁸ 400b1–3.

²⁹⁹ 402d11–e6. The name is explained “because the nature of the sea held him back as he was walking and did not let him go, but was to him like a ‘feet shackle’ [δεσμὸς τῶν ποδῶν]”.

³⁰⁰ 407c3–4.

³⁰¹ 416a10–b5. The etymology is purported to reflect the point of view of name-givers who endorsed the fluxist ontology.

³⁰² Beekes (2010) s.v.

tional ending, nothing to do with ῥοῦν or its non-contracted form ῥόον, whose stem ῥο- is an apophonic variant of the verb ῥέω (“to flow”). Plato sometimes guessed accurately: modern philology does not rule out the connection between Τάνταλος and the adjective τάλας (stem: ταλαν-).³⁰³ But the reasoning seems to be the same which led him to match ἄνθρωπος (whose origin is unclear) with ἀναθρῶν: while the two syllables ἀνθρω- may look similar to ἀναθρω- (with the addition of an unexplained -α-), ἀν- in ἀναθρῶν is the elided form of a prefix (ἀν(ά)-ἀθρέω), thus not part of the verb’s stem. Plato even acknowledged—probably ironically—the randomness of some letters’ addition concerning the etymology of Ποσειδῶν from ποσίδεσμος, where, he mooted, “the ε [in Ποσειδ- vs. ποσιδ-] might be there just for show”.

This approach to etymology takes words as strings of letters whose sequence is, as it were, arithmetic: in αἰσχρόν, there is no stronger relation binding together αἰσχ- than the one which binds αἰσχ- to -ρ- and this to the following -ον, but all sounds are related to one another equally. It follows that each phono-graphic unit can be separated from or collapsed with other units at will. In short, according to this (very loose) method, etymology is not constrained by morphology.

This method is the same found in **Stoic** etymologies.³⁰⁴ For example:

διδάσκω (“I teach”) < **διάσκω < τὶ ἀσκῶ (“I practice something”)³⁰⁵
λύπη (“pain”) < λύσις (“undoing” [scil. of a person])³⁰⁶
φειδωλός (“miser”) < φεύγειν τὸ δοῦναι (“to avoid giving”)³⁰⁷
ἄγκων (“elbow”) = **ἐγκών < ἐγκεῖσθαι (“to lay”)³⁰⁸
ἀλάστωρ (“avenging spirit”) = ἐλάστωρ (“driver”) < ἐλασις (“striking”), ἐλαύνεσθαι (“to strike”)³⁰⁹
Κρόνος (“Cronus”) < χρόνος (“time”)³¹⁰
Λύκειος (“Lycius”, epithet of Apollo) < λευκαίνεσθαι (“to appear white”) / λύκος (“wolf”)³¹¹
Saturnus (“Saturn”) < *se saturat annis* (“is sated with years”)³¹²
Iuppiter (“Jupiter”) < *iuvans pater* (“helping father”)³¹³
Neptunus (“Neptune”) < *nare* (“to swim”)³¹⁴

³⁰³ *Ibid.* s.v.

³⁰⁴ The vast majority of surviving Stoic etymologies are attributed to Chrysippus, some to Cleanthes, and very few to other philosophers.

³⁰⁵ CHRYSIPP. ap. *EM* s.v. (*FDS* 668).

³⁰⁶ *Id.* ap. *Cic. Tusc.* III 25 (*FDS* 672).

³⁰⁷ *Id.* ap. *Cyr.* s.v. (*FDS* 678).

³⁰⁸ *Id.* ap. *EM* s.v. (*FDS* 662).

³⁰⁹ *Id.* ap. *PHOT.* s.v. (*FDS* 664).

³¹⁰ CHRYSIPP. sive CLEANTHES ap. *Cic. nat. deor.* II 64 (*FDS* 655).

³¹¹ ANTIPATER/CLEANTHES ap. *MACR. Sat.* I 1736 sqq (*FDS* 657).

³¹² See n310.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.* §66.

Mavors (ancient name of Mars”) < *magna vertit* (“subverts great things”)³¹⁵

Like in Plato, the word and its etymology are linked by sounds present in both. Often derivations hinge on postulated sound changes (the same principle observed in modern etymology), but with mixed results. Some sound changes implied by Chrysippus are not tenable: *ἀγκών* can in no way be matched with *ἐγκεῖσθαι*, since *ἐγκ-* combines a prefix (*έν-*) and the actual stem (*κει-*) and therefore cannot be isolated as a constituent; furthermore, there is no basis to argue that an original *ε* would change to an *α* in that phonological context, and the same goes for *άλάστωρ*, which Chrysippus equalled with *έλάστωρ* to explain the (correct) derivation of the latter from *έλαύνεσθαι*.³¹⁶ Other sound changes on which some derivations are based are not unreasonable: for *φειδωλός* < *φεύγειν τὸ δοῦναι*, *δω-* and *δου-* are variations in the stem of *δίδωμι*, and the same is with *vertere/vortere* for *Mavors* < *magna vertit*; for *Iuppiter* < *iuvans pater*, the weakening of *a* > *i* in words where the accent recedes is well documented (also recognised by Varro, as seen above); some sounds belong to the same articulatory class, like *κ* and *χ* (*Κρόνος* < *χρόνος*) and *δ* and *τ* (***διάσχω* < *τὶ άσχω*). But the fact that these sounds can be matched in theory does not make all those derivations valid. *Φειδωλός*, for one, should be analysed as *φειδω-λό-ς*, with the stem deriving from *φειδῶ* (“sparing”), a derivative of *φείδ-ομαι* (“to spare”), whose root comes from PIE **b^heid* (found in its Latin cognate *find-o*)³¹⁷: it cannot be associated with *φεύγ-ω*, whose root comes from PIE **b^heug-* (Latin cognate: *fug-io*)³¹⁸; in general, no justification is given why the *γ* should be dropped in the derivation from *φεύγειν* to *φειδωλός*. This is the main problem with many Stoics etymology just as it was for Plato’s: the removal, swap, or addition of certain sounds is not justified by any principle (like in *λύσις* > *λύπη*, where only the first syllable is similar; *nare* > *Neptunus*, where only the first *n* is shared between the two words; or ***διάσχω* > *διῑάσχω*, where the derivation “by insertion of the *δ*” is not explained as much as merely acknowledged).

The Stoics’ faith in this method was such that, apparently, they were convinced that there was “no name whose origin could not be explained conclusively”.³¹⁹ Yet, the arbitrariness of their selection of letters was already found at fault in antiquity: Cicero, for example, in *De natura deorum* has “Cotta” object against the Stoic “Balbus” that “since you believe that *Neptunus* was named after

³¹⁵ *Ibid.* §67.

³¹⁶ Beekes (2010) s.v. *έλαύνω*.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.* s.v.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.* s.v.

³¹⁹ AUG. *dial.* 6.9. On this text, see below (§2.3.3).

nare, there will be no name for which you will not be able to explain the origin from a single letter!”³²⁰

That the Stoics remained true to the Platonic approach despite its problems—or that they did not perceive or acknowledge those problems—is noteworthy given that that method had been challenged by **Aristotle**. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle theorised that ὀνόματα can be made up of a different number of parts³²¹; he also outlined a tripartite model according to which some of these parts can change from Homeric to Attic Greek, through³²²:

- lengthening or addition of sounds/letters (ἐπεκεκταμένον “extended” ὄνομα), e.g. πόληος vs. πόλεως (“of the city”), Πεληιάδεω vs. Πηλέως (“of the son of Peleus”);
- removal of letters (ἀφρημένον “shortened” ὄνομα), e.g. κῤῥῖ vs. κῤῥιθῆ (“barley”), δῶ vs. δῶμα (“house”);
- change of letters (ἐξηλλαγμένον “altered” ὄνομα), e.g. δεξιτερόν vs. δεξιόν (“right-hand”).

However, in a passage of *De interpretatione* mentioned in the previous chapter Aristotle clarified that a name becomes meaningful only when all its parts were combined.³²³ It is worth considering the whole passage (*Int.* 16a19–29):

“Ὄνομα μὲν οἷον ἐστὶ φωνὴ σημαντικὴ κατὰ συνθήκην ἄνευ χρόνου, ἥς μὴδὲν μέρος ἐστὶ σημαντικὸν κεχωρισμένον· ἐν γὰρ τῷ Κάλλιππος τὸ ἵππος οὐδὲν καθ’ αὐτὸ σημαίνει, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ καλὸς ἵππος. οὐ μὴν οὐδ’ ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς ἀπλοῖς ὀνόμασιν, οὕτως ἔχει καὶ ἐν τοῖς πεπλεγμένοις· ἐν ἐκείνοις μὲν γὰρ οὐδαμῶς τὸ μέρος σημαντικόν, ἐν δὲ τούτοις βούλεται μὲν, ἀλλ’ οὐδενὸς κεχωρισμένον, οἷον ἐν τῷ ἐπακτροκέλης τὸ κελῆς. τὸ δὲ κατὰ συνθήκην, ὅτι φύσει τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐδὲν ἐστίν, ἀλλ’ ὅταν γένηται σύμβολον· ἐπεὶ δηλοῦσί γέ τι καὶ οἱ ἀγράμματοι ψόφοι, οἷον θηρίων, ὧν οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ὄνομα.

A name is a voice meaningful by composition, without chronological specification, of which no part has meaning without the rest. In the name Κάλλιππος (“Callippos”), for instance, -ἵππος means nothing on its own, as it does in the phrase καλὸς ἵππος (“a good horse”). But in simple names it is not the same as in compound names. In the former, the part has no meaning at all. In the latter, it pretends/professes [βούλεται] to mean something, but means nothing if separated from the rest, like -κελῆς in ἐπακτροκέλης (“pirate-vessel”). As for the being by composition, it is because no name is [such] by nature, but [it is such] when it becomes a

³²⁰ III 62. Cotta then adds, with a pun on *nature*: “in this matter you actually seem to me to be swimming [i.e. lost at sea, fluctuating] more than Neptune himself”.

³²¹ *Po.* 1457a.

³²² *Po.* 1457b35–58a7.

³²³ This is Lo Piparo’s take of the definition “a name is a voice meaningful by composition/combination [κατὰ συνθήκην]”: see §2.2.1.c.

symbol. Inarticulate sounds like those made by animals, in fact, do mean something, but none of them is a name.³²⁴

Aristotle's remarks appear to be a direct reference to the *Cratylus*³²⁵: he denied that a name could be broken down into autonomous meaningful parts and made it an indispensable requirement for something to qualify as a name that “no part has meaning without the rest”. Aristotle's argument is not exempt from criticism either: although he did not unreasonably suggest that ἵππος or κέλης have no meaning at all (both nouns were of course commonly used on their own), he did claim that, in a compound, they have no meaning without the rest. This can only be admitted to an extent, for in compounds, each component yields part of its semantic value, but also retains some: the proper noun Κάλλιππος may not mean “good horse” when assigned to a person, but its origin most likely comes from there, and somebody may have been first called that on account of, for example, his love or possession of good horses; and ἐπακτροκέλης surely retains part of the semantic content of ἐπάγω (“to drive/lead”) and κέλης (“ship”). Nevertheless, Aristotle's argument brings an important contribution to the discussion on etymology: a word cannot be split arbitrarily, and individual parts cannot be just assumed to have a certain meaning.

The Alexandrian philologists seem to have been receptive to Aristotle's lesson, for they proved much more cautious than the Stoics when breaking a word into different units: the etymologies of **Aristophanes** and especially **Aristarchus** show a clear intention to keep the unity of the roots and only split the word at morpheme boundary. Thus, some of the Alexandrians, on the one hand, were able to isolate grammatical morphemes (prefixes, infixes, endings which have no lexical content, but convey morpho-syntactical information) and recognise them as regularly recurring in certain contexts; on the other hand, having removed the confusion of non-lexical morphemes, they had a more solid basis than the Stoics to find correspondences between the lexical roots in different words. Aristarchus even had a name for this phenomenon: “sharing of letters” or “consonants” (κοινωνία τῶν στοιχείων/συμφώνων)³²⁶; he was also better than the Stoics at identifying true sound changes. His etymology of λικριφίς (“leaping sideways”) < λέχριος (“slanting”)³²⁷ is instructive, as it implies the following analysis:

³²⁴ Transl. after Lo Piparo.

³²⁵ Lo Piparo (2003 p. 78 n15).

³²⁶ See Schironi (2018 pp. 344–6).

³²⁷ Sch, Hom. ad Ξ 463a.

“λικριφίς is divided into λ(ι)-κρ(ι)-φίς, where -φίς can be ignored since it is an adverbial ending, and λέχριος is divided into λ(έ)-χρ(ι)-ος, where -ος can also be ignored since it is an adjectival ending. At this point, the two forms are reduced to the same sequence of consonants λ(+ vowel)-κρ(+ ι) and λ(+ vowel)-χρ(+ ι), with the only difference being the voiceless velar κ in one and the corresponding aspirate velar χ in the other.”³²⁸

Other Aristarchean etymologies show the same kind of method:

λευγαλέος (“deadly”) = λ(ευ)-γ-αλέος < λοιγός (“ruin”) = λ(οι)-γ-ός³²⁹
 ὀμιλεῖν (“to join battle with”) = ὀμ-ιλ-εῖν < ὀμοῦ τὰς ἱλας συμβάλλειν (“to bring the troops together”)³³⁰
 αὐτῆαχος (“with intense cries”) = αὐ-τῆαχ-ος < ἄγαν ἰαχῶν (“crying very much”)³³¹

In these cases, the selection of phono-graphematic units to compare with other words is not discretionary: the units excluded are parts of grammatical morphemes, and the units retained for the comparison make up the root with lexical meaning, on which the relation to other words is based. This method does not take words as strings of letters to be collapsed or expanded at will, but as the product of combined segments, and the internal cohesion of the letters in each segment is safeguarded.

Apollodorus, Aristarchus’ pupil, also proved able of implementing sensible word-segmentation and identifying regular sound changes. For example, concerning δισθανέες (“twice dead”), he remarked: “δῖς and τρίς drop the *sigma* in compounds, like in δίπους (‘two-footed’) and τρίπους (‘three-footed’); on this basis, he argues, the correct form should be διθανέες.”³³² He connected ἀρήγω (“to help, support”) to ἀρηγός, a variant of ἀρωγός (“helper, aiding”), pointing out that the same apophonic variation is found in other words like ῥηχμός/ῥωχμός (“fissure”), παρώχηκε/παρώχωκε (“had gone”)³³³; and by deriving κύβος (“dice”) from κυφότης (“being bent”), he proved aware of the variation κυβ-/κυφ-/κυπ-, which is also the root of κύπτω (“to bend forward”).³³⁴

³²⁸ Schironi (*ibid.*).

³²⁹ Sch. Hom. ad β 61.

³³⁰ Sch. Hom. ad Λ 502, 523. This is a case where Aristarchus distinguished a word being used “peculiarly” (ἰδίως) by Homer, as opposed to “according to the standard usage” (κυρίως): the standard meaning of ὀμιλεῖν, in Aristarchus’ time, was “to consort with”. See Schironi (2018 p. 352).

³³¹ Sch. Hom. ad N 41a.

³³² *FGrHist* 244.244a (Sch Hom. ad μ 22).

³³³ *FGrHist* 244 236 (*Et.Gen.* s.v. ἀρήγω).

³³⁴ *FGrHist* 244 257 (*Et.Gen.*, *Et.Gud.*, *EM*, *Suidas* s.v. κύβος). Other examples of correct matches between words in which the same root has undergone phonetic changes are found in fr. 222 and 241.

On the other hand, in some of Apollodorus’ etymologies we find traces of the same method based on arbitrary phonological correspondences that we saw employed by the Stoics, with incorrect results:

ἄνεμος (“wind”) < ἀνύειν (“to effect, accomplish”)³³⁵

κέραμος (“potter’s earth; pottery”) < κεκευαμένη ἔρρα (“burnt earth”)³³⁶

κρόταφοι (“sides of the forehead > sides”) < συγκεκρότηνται ἀμφοτέρωθεν (“have been struck by both sides”).³³⁷ The etymology glosses the Homeric passage in question: Apollodorus correctly connected κρόταφοι with κροτέω (“to strike”), but ἀμφοτέρωθεν seems to have been added to account for the -αφοι part, which instead could derive from a -πτω verb with expressive aspiration.³³⁸

ταῦρος (“bull”) < τείνειν τὴν οὐρὰν (“extends its tail”)³³⁹

Therefore, Apollodorus’ method was somewhat less consistent than Aristarchus’, possibly precisely because of a Stoic influence through his first teacher, Diogenes of Babylon. Nevertheless, it is with the Alexandrians—albeit with varying results from scholar to scholar—that we find the first development of a rigorous method which provides a more solid basis for etymology than the Platonic-Stoic one.

About **Trypho**’s etymology, we already saw that his theory of συμπάθεια between *signifiant* and *signifié* breached the constraints of Stoic linguistics (§2.2.1.e); however, as far as his practical methods go, he did not seem to stray much from Stoic etymologising. Derivations such as λιμός (“hunger”) < λείπω (“to leave”) or φιλήτης (“thief”) < **ὕφειλέτης, with the stem ὕφειλ- [ὕφαιρέω “to steal”]³⁴⁰ are not underpinned more advanced by morphological sensitivity than the basic notion that some letters must be shared between the word and its etymology.

A more rigorous method informed the etymologies of **Philoxenus** of Alexandria, one of the first-century Greek grammarians mentioned in §2.2.1.e. In a treatise *On monosyllabic verbs*, Philoxenus theorised that all ῥήματα could be etymologically traced back to monosyllabic roots which, when they had disappeared from contemporary language or were no longer recognisable, could be deduced by analogy (see §3.1.1.b). Philoxenus’ etymologies achieved mixed results: for example, he correctly derived ζαχρηῖς (“rushing violently”) from χραύω (“to wound, scratch”) and traced this back to the monosyllabic root χρῶ by analogy with φαύω (“to touch”), for which

³³⁵ FGrHist 244 233 (*Epim. Hom.* s.v. ἀνέμοιο).

³³⁶ FGrHist 244 249a (ap. ORION s.v.).

³³⁷ FGrHist 244 256 (*Et.Gen., Et.Gud* s.v.).

³³⁸ Chantraine (1968) s.v. κόλαφος.

³³⁹ FGrHist 244 277 (Sch. A.R. I 292; *EM* s.v.).

³⁴⁰ TRYPHO fr. 131.

he reconstructed φῶ, which is not acceptable.³⁴¹ The actual results of this etymological method are worse than the rationale it is based on (analogy, which, as we will see, Philoxenus applied fairly consistently); nevertheless, it is a noteworthy contribution to etymological studies, which builds up on the Alexandrian principles for isolating stems and morphemes.

As shown in §2.2, Varro's approach to etymology was significantly influenced by the use that the **Roman antiquarians and grammarians** made of it. Let us consider some etymologies attributed to such scholars (some of which we mentioned in the previous chapter):

caelum ("sky") < *caelatum* ("engraved") / *celatum* ("hidden")³⁴²
assiduus ("tributepayer") < *assem dare* ("to give a coin")³⁴³
deliciuus ("lacking") < *liquidum* ("liquid")³⁴⁴
latro ("brigand") = *latero* < *latere* ("to hide, lurk")³⁴⁵
miles ("soldier") < *molle* ("soft"), *quod nihil molle, sed potius asperum quid gerat*³⁴⁶
nuscitiosus ("suffering from night-blindness")
 < [*non cognoscere*] *nisi quod usque ad oculos [admovisset]*
 ([not to recognise] anything but what [comes] straight in front of one's eyes)³⁴⁷
 < *nocturnas caecitudines* ("instances of nightly blindness")³⁴⁸
pituita ("mucus, phlegm") < *petere vitam* ("to strive for life")³⁴⁹
scrupipedae ("bony-legged") = *scauripeda* < *scaurus* ("having deformed ankles") + *pes* ("foot")³⁵⁰
 < *scrupea, scrupus* ("full of sharp stones") + *pes*³⁵¹
puticulae ("gravepits") < *putescere* ("to rot")³⁵²
volpes ("fox") < *volare pedibus* ("to fly with its feet")³⁵³

These etymologies reveal a conspicuous influence of the Platonic-Stoic approach, with many derivations falling into the same traps, in a setback compared to the Alexandrian achievements in the identification of stems and morphemes. Thus, Aelius Stilo would compare *ass-* in *assiduus* (where it is a prefix combined with the stem: *ad-siduus*) with the stem *ass-* in *as*, or collapse two stems, *vol-* and *ped-*, to derive *vol-pes* (whereas the stem is *volp-*, *vulp-* in Classical Latin).³⁵⁴ Taking

³⁴¹ PHILOX. fr. 5 (*Et.Gen.*, EM s.v.).

³⁴² GRF STILO 7.

³⁴³ *Id.* 6.

³⁴⁴ GRF AUR. OPIL. 5.

³⁴⁵ GRF STILO 11.

³⁴⁶ *Id.* 11.

³⁴⁷ *Id.* 24.

³⁴⁸ GRF AUR. OPIL. 10.

³⁴⁹ GRF STILO 29.

³⁵⁰ GRF AUR. OPIL. 15.

³⁵¹ GRF VAL. SORAN. 2.

³⁵² GRF STILO 31.

³⁵³ *Id.* 46.

³⁵⁴ De Vaan (2008) s.v. *volpes*.

a leaf out of Chrysippus' book, Stilo also postulated an equivalent, unattested form *latero* to justify his derivation of *latro* from *latere*; and the cases of *miles* < *molle* and *nuscitiosus* < *nisi quod usque ad oculos* clearly show that Stilo did not shy away from venturing etymologies based on very few shared sounds. This method was not just taken on by Stilo, a self-professed Stoic who might have learnt his etymological techniques from Stoic literature, but also by other scholars for whom other allegiances are attested: Opillus, for instance, was the freedman of "a certain Epicurean" and taught (presumably the same) philosophy.³⁵⁵

b. Varro's method

To his credit, Varro endeavoured to account for the method he followed in his etymologies. In V 6, he listed "two sets of four reasons" why a word's outward appearance may change in the course of time. Four affect the letters: *demptio* ("removal"), *additio* ("addition"), *traiectio* ("transposition"), *commutatio* ("replacement"); four the syllables: *detractio* ("removal"), *adiectio* ("addition"), *productio* ("lengthening"), *correptio* ("shortening"). The etymologist may need to reverse these alterations to recover the original form of a word.³⁵⁶ This catalogue, dubbed *quadripertita ratio* by Quintilian³⁵⁷ and which became an important asset to Latin grammar after Varro,³⁵⁸ ultimately stemmed from Aristotle's tripartite model (lengthening, shortening, and change), whose reception and adaptation in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in relation to *paronomasia*,³⁵⁹ as Garcea recently argued, were a fundamental point for the convergence of rhetoric and grammar in the first century BCE.³⁶⁰

However, the institution of a formal catalogue of changes and corresponding operations to perform in etymology does not, per se, guarantee that the removal, addition, change, or substitution of letters is done on the basis of solid morphological principles and not arbitrarily, as was the case for many of Varro's predecessors. In fact, the many examples already cited of Varro's etymologies show that his method very much followed the Roman grammatical and antiquarian tradition in this respect. A passage showing Varro's engagement with this tradition is very instructive: Gellius

³⁵⁵ SUET. *gramm.* 6.

³⁵⁶ See also *ling.* VII 1: *Non reprehendendum igitur in illis qui in scrutando verbo litteram adiciunt aut demunt, quo facilius quid sub ea voce subsit videri possit.*

³⁵⁷ *Inst.* I 5.38.

³⁵⁸ Desbordes (1983); Ax (1986).

³⁵⁹ *Rhet. Her.* IV 21.29 lists six categories of change: addition, removal, contraction, change in the quantity, inversion, and replacement of sounds or letters.

³⁶⁰ Garcea (2018).

reports that Servius Sulpicius sought Varro's counsel to learn the meaning of the term *favisae Capitolinae*, which he had found in the records of the censors; Varro wrote to explain that the *favisae* were underground reservoirs near temples, for the conservation of ancient statues and other consecrated items. Gellius continues:

And then Varro goes on to say in the same letter, that he had never found any explanation of the term *favisae* in literature, but that Q. Valerius Soranus used to assert that what we called by their Greek name *thesauri* ("treasuries") the early Latins termed *flavisae*, their reason being that there was deposited in them, not uncoined copper and silver, but stamped and minted money [*flata signataque pecunia*]. Varro's theory therefore was, he said, [*coniectare igitur se*] that the second letter had dropped out of the word *flavisae*, and that certain chambers and pits, which the attendants of the Capitol used for the preservation of old and sacred objects, were called *favisae*.³⁶¹

This is a typical example of an antiquarian etymology according to the principles seen in §2.2.1.f: Soranus' main goal in explaining the origin of *favisae* was to recover information about the origin of a custom which clearly had changed over time (it used to be stamped and minted money that were stored in those reservoirs, not copper and silver as was the case—so we can infer—in his time). The etymology rests on a posited intermediary form, ***flavisae* (unattested): the same kind of arbitrary conjecture done by other antiquarians and by Chrysippus. The etymology is ascribed to Soranus, but it is Varro who gave the linguistic justification, conjecturing that "the second letter [l] had dropped out". This kind of reasoning fails to recognise the unity of either stem, *fav-* (which, given the meaning, is presumably related to *faveo* "to be favourable", *faustus* "fortunate", and all the derivatives of the root implying propitiousness and worship) and *flav-* (whence *flavus* "yellow, blonde"). The idea of letters randomly dropping (or appearing) has nothing of the rigorous identification of prefixes, infixes, and suffixes that we saw in Aristarchus.

Varro, however, had had the opportunity to draw on both traditions, the Platonic-Stoic and the Alexandrian. In fact, he acknowledged both debts in *ling. VI* 2:

Huius rei auctor satis mihi Chrysippus et Antipater et illi in quibus, si non tantum acuminis, at plus litterarum, in quo est Aristophanes et Apollodorus, qui omnes verba ex verbis ita declinari scribunt, ut verba litteras alia assumant, alia mittant, alia commutent, ut fit in *turdo*, in *turdario* et *turdelice*. Sic declinantes Graeci nostra nomina dicunt *L[e]ucienum* Λευκηνόν et *Quinctium* Κοῖντιον et (nos illorum) Ἀρίσταρχον *Aristarchum* et Δίωνα *Dionem*. Sic, inquam, consuetudo nostra multa declinavit [ut] a vetere, ut ab *sodio sol(i)um*, ab *Loebeso Liberum*, ab *Lasibus Lares*; quae obruta vetustate ut potero eruere conabor.

³⁶¹ GELL. II 10. Loeb translation, with modifications.

For this subject, I have as sufficient authorities Chrysippus, Antipater, and those endowed with, if not equal insightfulness, at least more erudition, among whom are Aristophanes and Apollodorus. All of them write that words are derived from words in such a way that some words take, others lose, and other change letters, as happens for example in *turdus* (“thrush”), *turdarium* (“enclosure for thrushes”), and *turdelix* (“mistle thrush”). In this way the Greeks, adapting our names, call *Lucienus* Λευκιηνός and *Quintus* Κοῖντιος, and we call their Ἀρίσταρχος *Aristarchus* and Δίων *Dio*. And in this way, I say, our usage has altered many names from the old usage, such as *solium* (“chair”) from *sodium*, *Liberum* (“Liber”, acc.) from *Loebesom*, and *Lares* (“household gods”) from *Lases*. These words, obscured by old age, I will try and restore as I can.

As often, Varro’s *declinatio* encompasses different meanings here. The *declinatio* exemplified by *turdus* > *turdarium*, *turdelix* is morphological derivation: morphemes are added to the same root and the resulting word is semantically different from the original. The alterations from *Quintus* to Κοῖντιος and from Ἀρίσταρχος to *Aristarchus* do not entail semantic changes, but only concern individual sounds (and the corresponding spelling) and endings, necessary to integrate a loanword into the phono-graphic and inflectional systems of the borrowing language. Finally, changes like those from *Lases* to *Lares* are exclusively phonological.

Varro merges these three kinds of word-alteration because all of them involve what he boils down to addition, loss, or change of letters—a description not inaccurate, but incomplete. As we said, this tripartite model of word-alterations evokes Aristotle’s; but Varro says that his authority for this subject are Chrysippus, Antipater of Tarsus, Aristophanes, and Apollodorus. Callanan is right that Varro’s generic *scribunt*, lumping together four chronologically distant scholars of different learnings, hardly proves that they all wrote monographs on the subject of word-alteration.³⁶² This seems rather an allusion to the two traditions which, in the Hellenistic period, developed principles and methods of etymology in parallel: the Stoics (represented by Chrysippus and Antipater) and the Alexandrians (Aristophanes and Apollodorus).

But the Stoics and the Alexandrians “added, removed, or replaced letters” based on different rationales. The Stoics (certainly Chrysippus; of Antipater there are not enough examples to tell)³⁶³ chose the letters to change on a mostly arbitrary basis, regardless of whether they were part of the stem of a prefix or suffix, and with suggested consonant and vowel changes which could not be found to occur regularly. The Alexandrians (certainly Aristarchus, less consistently Apollodorus) correctly isolated morphemes and worked their way back to the original form of the word

³⁶² Callanan (1987 p. 98). We know that Chrysippus and Apollodorus wrote monographs on etymology, but there is no evidence that either of them formulated specific sets of principles.

³⁶³ Only one etymology seems to have been attributed to him: see n311.

based on shared roots and regular sound changes. Varro's observation that the Stoic etymologists had more "insightfulness" and the Alexandrians more "erudition" is indication that he did perceive—at least to an extent—the difference between the validity of their methods. A modern scholar might agree with this judgement: the Stoics were sloppy with their etymologies, but they used their findings to bolster acute philosophical arguments; the Alexandrians had a more sophisticated approach, but they did not use their findings to any purpose beyond the reconstruction and interpretation of the Homeric text. And yet, Varro's own etymologies were not thoroughly immune to the faults associated with the Stoic approach to "letter manipulation". We saw some examples of this sort in the previous chapter: *cura* < *cor urat*; *maerere* < *marcere*; *lusciniola* < *luctuose*; *saeculum* < *senescere*. We can add two further examples from VI 45: in deriving *metuo* ("I fear") from *mens mota* ("mind moved [in a certain way]"), Varro collapsed two stems into one, and in *timuisti* ("you feared") from *tremuisti* ("you trembled"), he added a sound which was not there and whose loss could not be explained.

It must be noted, however, that Varro, unlike Stoic and other Roman etymologists, did not propose etymologies that collapsed prefixes or suffixes with the main stem. That he had a clear understanding of such grammatical morphemes, their function, and their productivity is made explicit in *ling.* VI 38, after he touched on "base words [*primigenia verba*] like *lego* ('I read'), *scribo* ('I write'), *sto* ('I stand'), *sedeo* ('I sit'), and the others which do not come from some other word but have their own roots"³⁶⁴:

A quibus iisdem principiis antepositis praeuerbiis paucis immanis verborum accedit numerus, quod praeuerbiis [mutatis] additis atque commutatis aliud atque aliud fit. Ut enim (pro)cessit et recessit, sic accessit et abscessit, item incessit et excessit, sic successit et decessit, (dis)cessit et concessit.

2 del. Laetus | add. Fritzsche 3 add. Goetz et Schoell

From the same [*scil.* base words] an enormous number of words is added by preposing a few prefixes, because by the addition and change of prefixes a word continuously undergoes change. For just as there is *prōcessit* 'he went forwards' and *recessit* 'he went backwards', so there is *accessit* 'he went towards' and *abscessit* 'he went away', and in the same way there is

³⁶⁴ On *radices* here, see §1.2. At §39, Varro mentions Democritus and Epicurus for the theory of infinite *principia*, drawing a parallel between the *principia rerum* and the *primigenia verba*: of the former, the Atomists "do not say where they are from [*unde sint*], but only of what type they are [*cuiusmodi sint*], and they show what in the world consists of them [*quae ex his constant in mundo*]". Similarly, "the etymologist may at least occasionally be at a loss as to the origin of a morpheme. However, even if he cannot state the origin, he will still achieve great things by showing how morphemes can be combined into countless words" (de Melo 2019a p. 845).

incessit ‘he went in’ and *excessit* ‘he went out’, so also *successit* ‘he went up’ and *dēcessit* ‘he went down’, and *discessit* ‘he went off’ and *concessit* ‘he went aside’.³⁶⁵

The subject of *primigenia verba* had been broached in Roman scholarship before, at least by the grammarian Cosconius, to whom Varro gives credit in §36 and of whom little else is known.³⁶⁶ One may speculate that Philoxenus’ theory of a few monosyllabic roots at the origin of the entire Greek lexicon could have boosted ideas along those lines. It is difficult to say how much of Varro’s awareness of productive prefixes came from Cosconius or how widespread knowledge of this subject was in Rome in general; at any rate, some grammarians of Varro’s time etymologised in such a way that excluded a firm understanding thereof. By contrast, Varro noticed that *pro-* carries a similar semantic value in *procedere*, *pronuntiare* (“to announce publicly”), and *proludere* (“to play beforehand”)³⁶⁷; he recognised that the same stem *ment-* combined with prefixes yields *reminisci* (“to recall”), *comminisci* (“to think up”), and *commentum* (“what has been thought up”).³⁶⁸ Aside from prefixes, we saw that Varro included derivation through infixes and suffixes among word-alterations by means of addition or change of letters; and the second surviving half of *De lingua Latina* accounts for an advanced understanding of derivation and inflection (see §3.3).

Occasionally, Varro even ventured etymological explanations for these prefixes and suffixes: he suggested that *re-* in *reminisci* came from *repetere* (“to fetch back”), because, in the act of recalling, “the things held by the mind [*mens*] and memory [*memoria*] are fetched back”.³⁶⁹ Varro’s explanation—albeit a bit clumsy—has a solid semantic basis and speaks to progress compared to Chrysippus’ and Stilo’s etymologies: they had tried to derive stems from prepositional verbs (ἀνκῶν < ἐγκεῖσθαι) or to match a lexeme to a combination of prefix plus stem (*assiduus* < *assem dare*), but had not attempted to explain the origins of such grammatical morphemes which carried a stable semantic value. However, Varro himself did not invest too much in such a difficult task: *re-* in *reminisci* is a rare example, and in fact, just shortly before that paragraph Varro had warned his readership that not all parts of a word can be explained.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁵ Transl. de Melo.

³⁶⁶ His linguistic interests, other than the grammatical notion of primitive words attested by Varro here, focused on lexicology (notably toponyms connected to Aeneas’ voyages: SOL. II 13). He also wrote about jurisprudence (Varro reports a title, *Actiones*, in *ling.* VI 89). His writings are lost.

³⁶⁷ VI 58.

³⁶⁸ VI 44.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ See n364.

To conclude, it seems that Varro occupied a place somewhere between the more primitive methodology based on discretionary manipulation of letters and the more advanced word-segmentation techniques mastered by Alexandrian scholarship at its peak. For the most part, he followed the example of the Roman antiquarian etymologies and abided by few constraints when tinkering with word stems. He was more often than not guided by common sense, so that even his incorrect etymologies (such as *metuo* < *mens mota*) were hardly as far-fetched as some of Plato's (e.g. ἄνθρωπος < ἀναθρῶν ἃ ὅπωπε), Chrysippus' (e.g. φειδωλός < φεύγειν τὸ δοῦναι), or even Stilo's (*nuscitiosus* < *nisi quod usque ad oculos*); but he had yet to accomplish sophisticated identification of recurrent sound changes in Latin stems such as Aristarchus had for Greek stems.

We can think of a few explanations for this setback. Varro might have understood the mechanics of Aristarchus' word-segmentation only to an extent and have failed to grasp some of his principles; or he may have struggled with applying these principles, which had been practised in a Greek-speaking and -writing setting, to the Latin world, since he was one of the very first ones to attempt to do so. Either way, what he did absorb from his reading of Alexandrian literature enabled him to acquire an understanding of the role of grammatical morphemes and their main semantic content: this made him closer to the end-goal of morpheme-segmentation than his teacher and other Roman scholars of his time.

2.3.3. *The Stoic (?) στοιχεῖα τῆς ἐτυμολογίας*

We saw in §2.2.2 that Varro essentially dealt with two kinds of etymologies: mimetic and descriptive derivations. The mimetic kind presupposes that some sort of imitative relation binds together the name and its referent—but in what sense, on what level, does the name “imitate” the thing? In the previous chapter, we touched on the Epicurean belief that the first utterances reproduced the people's “feelings” (πάθη) and “impressions” (φαντάσματα), but this implies a resemblance to the speakers' inner compulsion, not the *nominatum*. We discussed this idea of imitation of the *nominata* in Varro in relation to onomatopoeias, characterised by acoustic similarity; but further particulars can be drawn from Augustine's testimony, which provides a well-structured model of etymological similarity.

Let us consider again Origen's condensed report of the Stoic position on the origin of names³⁷¹:

³⁷¹ *Cels.* I 24. See §§2.2.1.b and .c.

ὥς νομίζουσιν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς, φύσει [*scil.* εἰς τὰ ὀνόματα], μιμουμένων τῶν πρώτων φωνῶν τὰ πράγματα, καθ' ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα, καθὸ καὶ στοιχεῖά τινα τῆς ἐτυμολογίας εἰσάγουσιν.

The Stoics believe that names are by nature: the first articulations would have imitated things, and from these came names. On this basis, they also draw some principles of etymology.

As mentioned above, an evolutionist account of language development such as the one implied by Origen is not found in any other extant Stoic text (with the exception of Posidonius). As for the “principles of etymology” (στοιχεῖά τῆς ἐτυμολογίας) that Origen credits to the Stoics, there is only one surviving text which provides a detailed description of what those were: the sixth chapter of Augustine’s *De dialectica*.

This treatise, which Augustine had started working on in 387 CE as part of his project to write on the liberal arts and was never completed,³⁷² has long been recognised as being influenced to a great extent by the Stoic theory of dialectic.³⁷³ Augustine had planned to discuss firstly words considered on their own (*verba simplicia*), then in combination with one another, i.e. joined syntactically (*verba coniuncta*); but only the first ten chapters were finished, which deal with the phonology, origin, and semantic content of “simple words”. It is of course the chapter on the origin of words (the sixth), that concerns us at present.

The chapter opens (§§8–9) with Augustine recapping the aspects which are subject to investigation in each word: its phonological make-up (*id quod sonat*); its origin (*origo sua*); its semantic content (*vis*),³⁷⁴ its inflection (*declinatio*) and its syntactic role (*ordinatio*). Leaving then aside the phonological aspect, which he argues is not the purview of *ars dialectica*, Augustine homes in on “the investigation of where a word comes from and why it is in a certain way”, i.e. etymology. He begins by polemicising against those who attach great importance to this subject (with a nod to Cicero’s mockery in *De natura deorum*, see §2.2.1.b), also pointing out that etymologising risks becoming an endless, circular process: for, once one has broken the word down into smaller bits and argued that those derive from other words, those bits may be broken down into even smaller

³⁷² AUG. *retract.* I 5. The text gives a precise chronological indication: *Per idem tempus, quo Mediolani fui baptismum percepturus, etiam disciplinarum libros conatus sum scribere*. Augustine had returned from Cassiciacum to Milan in March 387 and was baptized in late April of the same year. See Jackson & Pinborg (1975 p. 3).

³⁷³ There are many conspicuous and significant reprises of Stoic language and concepts, from the definition, division, and scope of dialectic (1.5, 4.6–7, 8.14), to the treatment of phonology, the concept of *dicibile* (= λεκτόν), and the nuanced discussion of semantic ambiguity and equivocation (7.12–9.20).

³⁷⁴ Jackson’s translation of *vis* as “force” may be literal, but it obscures the implications of what must be considered a technical term. *Vis* is certainly a calque of the Platonic δύναμις (*Cra.* 394a), which defines a word’s meaning: see Ademollo (2011 pp. 175–7).

bits, and so forth until one reaches the individual letter/phoneme. The Stoics, Augustine reports (§10), defended their faith in the etymological process by arguing that there was a determinate end point to it: “one must search until one reaches the point where the thing and the sound of the word are bound by some kind of similarity”.³⁷⁵ This similarity between the *nominatum* and the sound of the *nomen*, in fact, was the first step in what Augustine presented as a sort of “scale of similarity”:

<i>similitudo rerum et sonorum</i>	<	(1) imitative / quasi-imitative	<i>tinnitus</i> (“clink”, of coins); <i>hinnitus</i> (“neighing”, of horses); <i>balatus</i> (“bleating”, of sheep); <i>clangor</i> (“clang”, of trumpets); <i>stridor</i> (“rattle”, of chains)	
		(2) phonosymbolism / synaesthesia	<i>lene</i> (“smoothly, softly”); <i>asperitas</i> (“roughness”); <i>voluptas</i> (“pleasure”); <i>crux</i> (“cross”); <i>mel</i> (“honey”); <i>acre</i> (“bitter”); <i>lana</i> (“wool”); <i>vepres</i> (“brambles”)	
<i>similitudo rerum ipsarum</i>	<	(3) semantic proximity (<i>vicinitate</i>)	based on physical similarity	<i>crura</i> (“legs”) < <i>crux</i>
			transferred meaning	<i>minutum</i> (“lessened” > “small”) < <i>parvum</i> (“small”); <i>piscina</i> (“fish-pond” > “baths”: contain water) < <i>piscēs</i> (“fishes”: live in water)
		(4) semantic contrariety (<i>contrario</i>)	<i>lucus</i> (“sacred grove”) < “has very little light” (<i>minime lucet</i>); <i>bellum</i> (“war”) < “it is not a nice thing” (<i>bella res</i>); <i>foedus</i> (“alliance”) < “it is not a dishonourable thing” (<i>res foeda</i>)	

This is not merely a classification of four existing kinds of similarity: there is a progression from the first, straightforward to the fourth, most complex kind of similarity, which allows us to trace an evolution in the act of naming. Thus, Augustine provides the only surviving testimony—aside from Posidonius’—of a Stoic account of the development of language comparable to the Epicurean one. What distinguishes this account is that the stage in the evolution is measured on the basis of the similarity between the word and the thing it was derived from, which grows progressively more abstract. The first two stages comprise levels of similarity between the signifier and the referent. In the first stage, words were coined which “sound[ed] like the things themselves which they signif[ied]”³⁷⁶: these coinages were based on acoustic imitation or quasi-imitation. A

³⁷⁵ *Et quia hoc modo eos urgere facile fuit, si diceret hoc infinitum esse, quibus verbis alicuius verbi originem interpretatis, eorum rursus a te origo (quaeratur, aiunt hoc) quaerendum esse, donec perveniatur eo, ut res cum sono verbi aliqua similitudine concinat.*

³⁷⁶ (§10) *haec verba ita sonare ut ipsae res quae his verbis significantur.*

more abstract kind of sensorial (not just acoustic) similarity brings phonosymbolism into play: when the individual sounds are associated with certain sensations, which are part of the semantic content of the word.³⁷⁷ In *lene*, /l/ and /n/ “touch the ears *smoothly*”, like the word’s meaning. In *mel*, there is a further cognitive shift, for its coinage combines two senses through synaesthesia: the sweetness of the taste is equalled to the softness of the touch and the latter guides the choice of the sounds with which to mould the name.³⁷⁸ Thus, the “cradle of words” (the first stages in the development of names) is “where the sensorial perceptions of things are in harmony with the sensorial perceptions of sounds”.³⁷⁹ It is only from this moment, Augustine writes, that “the licence of naming” (*licentia nominandi*) proceeded, suggesting that the first two stages did not involve name-assignment proper, or at least required less control on the part of humans. In the coinages of words at the third and fourth stages, no similarity between the *nomen* and the *nominatum* is required any more: the coinage is based on people’s ability to recognise the features that things themselves have in common with one another. In Augustine’s example, the name *crux* was coined based on synaesthetic similarity, but the word *crura* was coined with similar sounds as those in *crux* because there is something in the physical shape of the legs which reminds of a cross, not because the sounds in *crura* evoke in any way the sensorial perceptions of legs.³⁸⁰ There is still contiguity, but not between the *nomen* and the *nominatum*: phonological contiguity between the two *nomina* reflects similarity between the two *nominata*. A further cognitive development allowed the coinage of words from the similarity between two *nominata* by transferred meaning. Beside some generic examples (reported in the table above), Augustine then details different types of metonymical transfer (§§10–11)³⁸¹: *per efficientiam/per effecta*: *puteus* (“well”) < *potatio* (“drinking”)³⁸²; *per id quod continetur/id quod continent*: *urbs* (“city”) < *orbis* (“cicle”), *horreum* (“granary for barley”) < *hordeum* (“barley”); *per abusioem*: *triticum* (“wheat > granary for wheat”) < *horreum*; *a parte totum/a toto pars*: *mucro* (“point of a sword > sword”) < *gladium*

³⁷⁷ (*Ibid.*) *Sed quia sunt res quae non sonant, in his similitudinem tactus valere, ut, si leniter vel aspere sensum tangent, lenitas vel asperitas litterarum ut tangit auditum sic eis nomina peperit.*

³⁷⁸ (*Ibid.*) *Mel, quam suaviter gustum res ipsa, tam leniter nomine tangit auditum.*

³⁷⁹ (*Ibid.*) *Haec quasi cunabula verborum esse crediderunt, ubi sensus rerum cum sonorum sensu concordarent.* The metaphor appears to be original and suggests a parallel between the birth of language and an infant gradually developing verbal skills.

³⁸⁰ (*Ibid.*) *cum verbi causa crux propterea dicta sit, quod ipsius verbi asperitas cum doloris quem crux efficit asperitate concordat, crura tamen non propterea asperitatem doloris sed, quod longitudine atque duritie inter membra cetera sint ligno (crucis) similia, sic appellata sit.*

³⁸¹ The classification of types of metonymy is actually a more complex and debated subject of cognitive linguistics. Here I stick to Augustine’s classification.

³⁸² Augustine’s example of transfer *per efficientiam*, *foedus* < *foeditas* (“filthiness”) of the pig, is not clear. See Jackson & Pinborg (1975 p. 128 n13).

(“sword”), *capillus* (“hair”) < *capitis pilus* (“hair of the head”). Another shift in coinages based on the relation between things derives from contrariety: the name for a thing (e.g. *bellum* for “war”) is coined by phonological association with another word whose meaning is perceived as opposite (*bellus* “nice”).

This account outlines a very lineal model according to which the invention of names proceeded in a specific order: words based on semantic proximity were not (indeed, could not) be coined before people learnt to assign words whose sound did not reproduce the sound of the *nominatum* but evoked a sensation, which required a further cognitive development from the first stage. Such a lineal model of stages acquiring progressively more complexity and abstraction is very Stoic in character. It compares, for example, to the *scala naturae*, a hierarchical classification of the bodies from the least to the most “qualified” (based on the fundamental dualism between matter, inert and passive, and the πνεῦμα or breath, the divine principle, active and qualifying): from organic elements to plants to animals to humans, differentiated by the degree to which the πνεῦμα permeates and qualifies them.³⁸³

Augustine’s account does not explicitly mention name-givers, but in his unfinished commentary on Genesis *Contra manichaeos*, written in 388–390 (shortly after *De dialectica*), he glossed the verse 2.19 (*formatis igitur Dominus Deus de humo cunctis animantibus terrae et universis volatilibus caeli | adduxit ea ad Adam ut videret quid vocaret ea*) as following:

“Therefore, first God showed man how superior he was to cattle and all irrational animals, and this is what it means, that it is said that they were all brought before him so that He would see what he would call them and that he assigned names to them. From this it is clear that man is superior to cattle by virtue of reason itself: because it is none other than the reason that evaluates them which is able to distinguish and know them by name”.³⁸⁴

These lines cast Adam as a name-giver in the Platonic-Stoic conception: a rational being whose reason enables him to form judgements on the things that surround him and name them according to his judgement. *Imponere nomina* is the iconic expression for naming in literature derived from the Hellenistic discussions on the origin of names (also recurring in Varro); even characterising naming as what enables one to *distinguere* and *discernere* brings to mind the Platonic definition of

³⁸³ Sources for the *scala* include: ORIG. *orat.* 6, vol. II p. 311,16 (SVF II 989); PH. *Deus* 35–45 (SVF II 458; LS 47Q; BS 12.7), *leg. alleg.* II 22–23 (SVF II 458; LS 47P; BS 12.8); S.E. *M.* IX 78–80 (SVF II 1013; BS 12.9).

³⁸⁴ *Gen. c. manich.* II 11.16: *Primo ergo demonstravit Deus homini quanto melior esset pecoribus, et omnibus irrationabilibus animantibus: et hoc significat quod dictum est, adducta esse ad illum omnia animantia, ut videret quid ea vocaret, et eis nomina imponeret. Ex hoc enim apparet ipsa ratione hominem meliorem esse quam pecora, quod distinguere et nominatim ea discernere, non nisi ratio potest, quae de ipsis iudicat.* I owe the suggestion of this parallel to my colleague Jenny Rallens.

ὄνομα as an instrument that distinguishes (διακρίνειν) and teaches (διδάσκειν) about the essence of things.³⁸⁵ That God brought the animals before Adam “to see what he would call them” confirms the active role and freedom that Adam had as a name-giver, to assign names as his own reason compelled him.

This text shows that, at least at the time when he wrote *De dialectica* and *De genesi contra manichaeos*, Augustine thought about name imposition in these terms. Therefore, although in the account in *De dialectica* the origin (in fact, “the cradle”) of the act of naming is situated in what strikes the senses, it is plausible that even at this stage Augustine conceived imposition as an act on which people have agency and control (although less than at the other stages), not a reaction compelled by passive and involuntary affections: people notice that the word *balatus* sounds similar to the sheep’s cry and that *lene* and *lana* evoke sensations of smoothness, and *therefore* choose to assign these names to those items. Every next stage in the evolution of naming involves more complex mental representations and formations of concepts. This model agrees with the Stoic epistemological theory, which starts from “impressions” (which are generated by sense perception and are already conceptualised, not passive affections) and are then subject to rational evaluation (“assent”).³⁸⁶

Fourfold models are also a recurrent scheme in Varro, as we reiterated many times. Indeed, there are many points of contact between this testimony and Varro’s etymologies, and most of the different types of similarity discussed by Augustine have matches in *De lingua Latina*: derivations on an imitative or quasi-imitative basis³⁸⁷; semantic derivations through proximity, comprising three main kinds of transfer of meaning³⁸⁸—metonymy,³⁸⁹ catachresis,³⁹⁰ and antonomasia³⁹¹; and (to a much lesser extent) semantic derivation through contrariety.³⁹² Even some of Augustine’s

³⁸⁵ *Cra.* 388b7–c2. See §2.2.1.b.

³⁸⁶ *LS* 39–41; *BS* 6–7.

³⁸⁷ See §2.2.2 under the heading (2) *Names ~ things*.

³⁸⁸ Collart (1954b pp. 286–90).

³⁸⁹ Of various kinds: e.g. *lactuca* (“lettuce”) < *lac* (“milk”), because of its juice (V 104); *cilliba* (“eating-table”) < *cibus* (“food”) (V 118); *fons* (“spring”) < “pours out [*fundit*] of the earth” (V 123). Varro refers to synecdoche more technically as *verba appellata/nominata a parte* (V 141, 155).

³⁹⁰ Some examples in V 77 of *vocabula translata a terrestribus ex aliqua parte similibus rebus*: e.g. *anguilla* (“small snake > eel”), *pectunculus* (“small comb > scallop”); other names likewise names *ab similitudine* in V 117, 161: *aries* (“ram > beam for support”), *testudo* (“tortoise > military formation”).

³⁹¹ Proper nouns turned common: *Tuscanicum* (“Etruscan style”) < *Tusci* (“Etruscans”) (V 161); common nouns turned proper: *Comitium* (“Assembly place”) < *comitia curiata* (“curiate assemblies”) (V 155); proper nouns turned adjectives: *Martialis* (“of Mars”) < *Mars* (V 84); adjectives turned proper nouns: *Vinalia* (“Wine festival”) < *vinalis* (“related to wine”) < *vinum* (VI 16).

³⁹² The most conspicuous example is *caelum* (“sky”) < “not hidden [*celatum*]” (V 18), although this is Stilo’s etymology, which Varro rejects.

examples have exact correspondences in Varro: the latter discusses *horreum* and *triticum* in the same passage,³⁹³ suggests the same connection between *puteus* and the root of *potare*,³⁹⁴ and also derives *urbs* from *orbis* because, as Augustine says, “it is custom, having taken auspices, to draw a circle [*orbis*] around the area”.³⁹⁵ In addition, some of the words with sounds evoking certain sensations (*crux*, *lana*) are present in both Augustine and Varro’s fragment from *De grammatica* mentioned in the previous chapter.³⁹⁶

These similarities did not go unnoticed. Schmidt³⁹⁷ had already flagged connections between *De dialectica* and Varro’s writings, but ever since, many scholars have discussed more in detail the likelihood that some parts of Varro’s work which are lost to us had been the main source of Augustine’s *De dialectica* and weighed the similarities and connections to pre-Varronian literature as well. The derivation from Varro stands by now mostly uncontested, and some editors included Augustine’s passage among Varro’s fragments³⁹⁸: the discussion rather revolved around which Varronian work was Augustine’s model.

Scholars initially supposed that Augustine had mainly drawn on *De lingua Latina*,³⁹⁹ on account not only of the literal reprises of Varronian etymologies exemplified above, but also of the fact that the two works follow roughly the same succession of topics, from imposition of words to derivation/inflection to combination of words (syntax and/or semantics). Others argued that Augustine’s source had been Varro’s own *De dialectica*, the second book (entirely lost) of his *Disciplinarum libri IX*⁴⁰⁰; in particular, M. Baratin⁴⁰¹ observed that, despite the shared basic succession of themes between Augustine’s treatise and *De lingua Latina*, “the difference in the topic distribution must reflect a difference in the overall perspective”,⁴⁰² which one would expect, after all, between a treatise on dialectic and one on language. If we take the comparison beyond the individual treatises, this hypothesis becomes even more credible. Augustine’s *De dialectica* was

³⁹³ V 106.

³⁹⁴ V 25, from *potus* (“drinking”).

³⁹⁵ V 143.

³⁹⁶ §2.2.2 n203.

³⁹⁷ Schmidt (1839 p. 27 n45).

³⁹⁸ Fr. 130.

³⁹⁹ Wilmanns (1864 pp. 16–22); Reitzenstein (1901 pp. 69–76); Collart (1954b pp. 42–3, 253 n7).

⁴⁰⁰ Funaioli (*GRF* p. 187); Fischer (1912); Dahlmann (1894 col. 1259); Barwick (1957 pp. 8–28). Accordingly, neither Kent’s nor de Melo’s editions of *De lingua Latina* include Augustine’s passage among the fragments of the book.

⁴⁰¹ Baratin (1989 pp. 205–52, 2001).

⁴⁰² *Id.* (2001 p. 24).

conceived as one of seven books on the liberal arts,⁴⁰³ and it is quite persuasive that his model for such project were Varro's own *Disciplinae*: aside from the fact that the two sets of treatises shared the same title, structure, and didactic inspiration, a poem that Augustine's disciple Licentius wrote to his teacher around 395⁴⁰⁴ confirms that "Augustin had put his pupils in contact with Varro's textbooks, which proves that he used them to write his own".⁴⁰⁵ That the Varronian books in question were exactly the *Disciplinae* is proven by the fact that Licentius mentions Varro's expositions of astronomy and geometry (in fact, declaring despair at their obscurity).

To bring this discussion back to our main concern (Varro's etymological methods): if taken at face value, Augustine's text would be an eloquent piece of evidence that Varro followed specific Stoic principles of etymology very closely. But two problems advise caution.

The first one comes precisely from the fact that Augustine's *De dialectica* ultimately derives from Varro: this makes it is a slippery base on which to build a *Quellenforschung* on the same author. More information on Varro's *De dialectica* would help us substantiate what we can speculate based on intertextual comparisons; but the fact that Augustine's treatise follows a Stoic design and reiterates Stoic ideas does not inevitably mean that that was the case for Varro's *De dialectica*. In fact, Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis philologiae et Mercurii*, whose book IV *De dialectica* was also based on Varro,⁴⁰⁶ is overall closer to Aristotelian philosophy. Baratin offered different solutions to this contradiction: initially, he suggested that Varro's *De dialectica* was not designed to adhere closely to any particular school or thematic arrangement, but to be a sort of a "draft" and to provide a classification of concepts which was flexible and could be adapted to different purposes.⁴⁰⁷ He later homed in on the two directions in which Varro's treatise had been developed in its *Nachleben*—one Stoic, one Aristotelian—and suggested that *De dialectica* specifically transmitted the Stoic and Aristotelian theories of dialectic, two traditions based on different doctrines and practices and whose distinction is also found in Cicero's *Orator*.⁴⁰⁸ This hypothesis seems plausible because the practice of reporting different points of view on a topic, usually before siding with one of them, is typically Varronian: it is the essence of the two *disputationes in utramque partem* recreated in *De lingua Latina* and is also something that Augustine had noticed in Varro's *Liber de*

⁴⁰³ Although Varro wrote on nine liberal arts, the canonical number was established at seven in the medieval tradition, probably much due to Augustine's influence.

⁴⁰⁴ AUG. *epist.*, vol. 1 pp. 90–95.

⁴⁰⁵ Solignac (1958 p. 121).

⁴⁰⁶ The author acknowledges his source at §335.

⁴⁰⁷ Baratin (1989 pp. 205–55).

⁴⁰⁸ CIC. *orat.* 113–116. Baratin (2001 pp. 31–2).

philosophia.⁴⁰⁹ This would also explain why Augustine would have extensively used Varronian material to write his *De dialectica* without citing him as his authority, which he normally did: if Varro was simply presenting an account of the two doctrines, and if he was not alone in doing so, Augustine may have not felt the need to acknowledge this debt.

What all this entails for our problem is that we cannot straightforwardly trace all the material in Augustine's *De dialectica* back to a Stoic doctrine just because he derived it from Varro's *De dialectica*, for this probably incorporated material from other doctrines. This means that the στοιχεῖα τῆς ἐτυμολογίας reported by Augustine could have been known as Stoic material already by Varro's time, but they could also have been later developments by other traditions. Even though the model of the evolution of names presented by Augustine strongly suggests associations with the Stoic doctrine, its application to etymology in practice in previous Stoic works cannot be just assumed.

This links to our second problem: the corroboration of what Augustine says by pre-Varronian texts—or lack thereof. All the information on the early Stoic etymological method that can be inferred from their etymologies themselves, which we discussed in §2.3.2, is that the Stoic looked for phonological similarities between words and chose the sounds to compare rather freely: there is no attestation, prior to Augustine, of a set of principles based on the idea of similarity growing progressively more abstract, from acoustic to synaesthetic imitation, to shared semantic traits, to contiguity, to contrariety. Origen's testimony already contained a suggestion along these lines, but the idea that “the first articulations imitated things, and from these came names” is not exclusive to Stoicism (we saw that it was a key-element in the Epicurean theory) and the claim that “on this basis, the Stoics draw some principles” could refer to specific principles of similarity *in sono* or *in re* like the ones detailed by Augustine just as much as to the general guideline that phonological correspondences must exist; furthermore, Origen himself was writing after Varro. Of course, lack of evidence is not itself evidence, but it is possible that Augustine attributed to “the Stoics” some specific principles that early Stoic etymologists such as Chrysippus and Cleanthes had not applied, but which were developed later through the contribution of other traditions.⁴¹⁰ In fact, as men-

⁴⁰⁹ VARRO ap. AUG. *civ.* XIX 1.3 (concerning the various philosophical theories on the ultimate good): “I have presented these findings from Varro's book as concisely and clearly as I could, unfolding his reports with my own words. But it would be long to demonstrate how he, having refuted the other theories, chooses one, which he believes to have been that of the Old Academics [...]”.

⁴¹⁰ Allen also admitted this possibility (2005 p. 16): “for all we know, the material in Augustine that is not in Origen could belong to a Stoic account which went beyond that on which Origen's report is based. The state of the evidence leaves us little choice but to speak without distinction of the Stoics and their views,

tioned above, Augustine's discussion of the synaesthetic power of sounds recalls Varro's own description of syllables,⁴¹¹ whereas there is no hint at such an idea in the pre-Varronian Stoic etymologies that have been transmitted to us.

In conclusion, the evidence is too scant to assert that, by applying the principles of etymology accounted for by Augustine, Varro was following a previous tradition. That might be the case, but he also could have built up on a pre-existing, more vague notion of similarity or integrated other doctrines to design a more defined set of principles which he followed in his etymological work.

even though it is a plausible assumption that those views changed over time and, in particular, that the account preserved by Augustine is the product of a fairly late effort at tidying-up, which may have gone beyond anything to be found in the old Stoa". Long took a more committing position (2005 p. 37): "Even if [Augustine's] report is contaminated by non-Stoic theory or by theory developed only by some later Stoic, we can probably accept the gist of it as applicable to orthodox members of the school from Chrysippus onwards". Such an inference is certainly sensible, but the difference between "the gist" and a structured model of principles becomes important when aiming to assess where Varro might have taken these particular methods from.

⁴¹¹ See Sluiter (1990 p. 35) and Long (2005 p. 41).

PART 3

Analogy and anomaly

As illustrated in the Introduction, both theoretical halves of the two hexads of etymological and morphological books of *De lingua Latina* were arranged as a *disputatio in utramque partem*; Varro chose to present the arguments for and against the debated subject as if related by their proponents themselves, so that more voices are added to Varro's in these books.

The theoretical discussion focuses on two morpho-syntactic operations: derivation and inflection (both called *declinatio* by Varro, *voluntaria* the former, *naturalis* the latter). Varro, who reiterates the distinction in several passages of books VIII–X, is the first known author in Graeco-Roman antiquity to have distinguished between the two¹ and the terminology he adopted to label them is very insightful.² Derivation, which creates new lexical words from pre-existing ones (and thus involves an act of *impositio*), depends on the “will” of the individual: a Latin speaker, from the word *ovis* (“sheep”), may choose to coin a word for “sheepfold”, and if so, they may either build it through the derivational suffix *-ili-* (and obtain *ovile*) or through *-ario-* (and obtain **oviarium*).³ By contrast, inflection does not create new words, but marks existing words with morpho-syntactic information and thus allows one to use that word in a sentence: one says *ovile* to say “the sheepfold” (subject or object), *ovilis* to say “of the sheepfold”, *ovili* to say “to the sheepfold”, and so forth. The individual speaker does not choose how to inflect the word: they follow the patterns in place in the system of the Latin language, and for this reason Varro calls inflection “natural”.⁴ The technical term *declinatio* literally translates the Greek κλίσις, from κλίνω (“to bend, flex”), and translates into English as “inflection”; but Varro stretches the meaning of the term to encompass derivation as another kind of modification of words. To retain the generalness of Varro's terminology, I shall translate *declinatio* as “word-alteration” or include both “derivation and inflection”, unless one of the two can be singled out.

The theoretical books on morphology pose one fundamental question: are derivation and inflection regular or irregular? Upon an analysis of the books, it becomes evident that the two contending sides in the *disputatio* phrased this question differently, but for now let us stick to a non-committal formulation.

¹ The statement that Varro puts in the mouth of unnamed “analogists” in *ling.* IX 34, that “some say that there are two kinds of analogy, one natural [...], one voluntary”, might refer to some previous treatments of the topic; it also might allude to previous works of Varro himself.

² We already discussed one of the passages where he explains this topic, X 15–16, in §1.1.2. See also §3.3.2.b.

³ VIII 54, where the derivations *ovis* > *ovile* and *sus* (“pig”) > *suile* (“pigsty”) are contrasted with *avis* (“bird”) > *aviarium* (“aviary”).

⁴ See §1.1 on *natura* as “linguistic system”.

The discussion on analogy and anomaly sparked the interest of scholars since antiquity and is one of the most studied topics concerning Varro.⁵ Since the earliest critical studies, by far the most common trend has been to read books VIII–IX in light of a polarisation between, on the one side, the scholars of Alexandria, advocates of analogy as the prevailing principle in language; on the other side, the scholars of Pergamum, presumed to be deniers of analogy and proponents of anomaly. Equally common is the reduction of these contending parties to two coeval authors, Aristarchus and Crates, who were the leading figures in those two respective milieus in the second century BCE and whose names are explicitly mentioned by Varro in these books (although these mentions must be weighed up, as we will see).

Despite its popularity, the narrative which opposes Aristarchus the analogist to Crates the anomalist rests on some ill-advised assumptions due to a number of factors, from the strained transmission of Varro's text to the ambiguity of some quotations. Nonetheless, at the current state of play, scholarly consensus against this traditional narrative is still not unanimous, and while a certain trend of research has long dismissed it as inaccurate, it is still reiterated in some contributions to this day.⁶

The beginning of book IX of *De lingua Latina* has been relied on as the most eloquent piece of evidence for the standard narrative: that Crates, relying on the doctrine established by the early Stoics, argued that speech was predominantly irregular and, in doing so, pitted himself against Aristarchus, who instead argued that speech was mainly regular. The passage (which we will refer back to many times in Part 3) begins after a lacuna which continues from the end of book VIII:

5 ...(*Insignis eorum est error qui malunt quae*) *nesciunt docere quam discere quae ignorant. In quo fuit Crates, nobilis grammaticus, qui fretus Chrysippo, homine acutissimo qui reliquit περὶ ἀνωμαλίας* IV libros contra analogian atque Aristarchum est nixus, sed ita, ut scripta indicant eius, ut neutrius videatur pervidisse voluntatem, quod et Chrysippus de inaequabilitate cum scribit sermonis, propositum habet ostendere similes res dissimilibus verbis et dissimili[bus] similibus esse vocabulis notatas, id quod est ver[bu]m, et quod

⁵ For a good overview of the scholarship, see now Matthaios (2020 pp. 100–7).

⁶ While the reality of the controversy per se (or at least in the way it is related by Varro) had been subject to critical inquiries at least since Fehling (1956–1957), it was not until the early 1980s that the identification of Crates as the source of the book against analogy in Varro began to be seriously called into question (most strongly by Blank, see §3.2.3.c). Since then, a number of scholars have more or less endorsed such refutation: see e.g. Pagani (2014a pp. 239–41), Pezzini (2017 pp. 176–7), Schironi (2019 pp. 475–6), and Chahoud (2019 p. 57). Broggiato (2001 pp. xxxvi–xxxl), Garcea (2012 pp. 103–9), and Matthaios (2014 p. 541) took a more cautious position. The traditional reading was not challenged by Duso (2017) and de Melo (2019a). Matthaios (2020) reframed the narrative in an original way, but did not question the identity of Crates and the anomalist of book VIII.

Aristarchus, de aequabilitate cum scribit et de verborum (similitudine), similitudinem qua[ru]ndam inclinationes sequi iubet, quoad patiatur consuetudo.

1 add. *Boot* (1894 p. 411) 3 IV libros *Wilmanns* : III (vel III) libros *Spengel* (1858 p. 9) : lei libri *F* 5 dissimili[bu]s similibus *Wilmanns* : dissimilibus similes *F* 6 ver[b]um *Aldus* | quod *Müller* : cum *F* | cum scribit *Müller* : conscribit *F* 7 add. *Dahlmann* | qua[ru]ndam *Groth*

... [Great is the error of those who prefer] to teach [what] they do not know rather than to learn what they ignore. Among these people was Crates,⁷ a distinguished grammarian, who, relying on Chrysippus (a most clever man, who left four books *On anomaly*), argued against analogy and Aristarchus; but he did so in such a way that, as his writings show, he seems to have understood the intent of neither. For, on the one hand, when Chrysippus writes about the irregularity of speech, he aims to show that similar things are denoted by/expressed through different words and different things by/through similar words, which is true; on the other hand, when Aristarchus writes about regularity and the similarity of words, he bids the inflection follow a certain similarity insofar as usage allows it.

Given the proemial tone of the passage, it is not likely that much was lost at the beginning of the book. There are other textual issues, but their corrections are fairly straightforward. The real problem with this passage is that it leaves many questions unanswered.

Here is what the passage tells us:

- (a) Chrysippus had written about anomaly, and by that concept he meant that “similar things [*res*] are denoted by/expressed through different words [*verba*] and different things by/through similar words”;
- (b) Aristarchus wrote about regularity in grammar; he recommended maintaining conformity to regular inflectional patterns (i.e. analogy), but only insofar as it did not offend usage;
- (c) Crates appealed to Chrysippus’ authority to argue “against analogy and Aristarchus”;
- (d) Crates misunderstood the intent of both.

Of these pieces of information, (b) is the one we have the best vantage point to assess: for the history of grammatical analogy and its use by the Alexandrian grammarians (and especially by Aristarchus) have been thoroughly discussed in several important studies (see §3.1.1.a). Conversely, the information that Varro gives here about Chrysippus and Crates is much more difficult to evaluate due to the scarcity of primary sources. This passage is the most explicit testimony on the subject, but deceptively so, for virtually all the facts stated in (a), (c), and (d) are left unclari-

⁷ Most translations connect *quo* with the “mistake” or “trap” that was lost in the lacuna (Kent, Duso, de Melo). I would rather take *in quo* as a partitive phrase which does not agree with its antecedent, a construction which Varro uses elsewhere: *ling.* V 16, 108; VI 2 (especially similar to the passage at hand), 55; VII 82, 105; IX 8.

fied. How are we to understand the definition of “anomaly” that Varro ascribes to Chrysippus (which, to begin with, could be translated in different ways)? How did Crates misunderstand it? How did he misunderstand Aristarchus, and in what way did he argue against analogy?

In the following chapters, I will address all these questions and attempt to clarify what we can gather indirectly from the extant evidence and what can (or cannot) legitimately be assumed on its basis.

A first assumption which should be called into question has commonly led scholars to associate (and, in fact, superimpose) the beginning of book IX with another passage (VIII 23–24), where Varro, after some prefatory remarks on derivation and inflection, clarifies how he will present the debate about analogy:

(23) Quod utraque declinatione alia fiunt similia, alia dissimilia, de eo Graeci Latinique libros fecerunt multos, partim cum alii putarent in loquendo ea verba sequi oportere, quae ab similibus similiter essent declinata, quas appellarunt ἀναλογίας, alii cum id neglegendum putarent ac potius sequendam (dis)similitudinem, quae in consuetudine est, quam vocarunt ἄνωμαλῶν, cum, ut ego arbitror, utrumque sit nobis sequendum, quod (in) declinatione voluntaria sit anomalia, in naturali magis analogia. (24) De quibus utriusque generis declinationibus libros faciam bis ternos, prioris tris de earum declinationum disciplina, posteriores de eius disciplinae propaginibus. De prioribus primus erit hic, quae contra similitudinem declinationum dicantur, secundus, quae contra dissimilitudinem, tertius de similitudinum forma.

(23) Because either kind of word-alteration [i.e. derivation and inflection] produces some things similar and others dissimilar, the Greeks and Romans have written several books about it, partly because some believed that, in speaking, one should follow the words that had been inflected/derived from similar words in a similar way, which they called “analogies”, and others that this should be disregarded and one rather ought to follow dissimilarity, which occurs in common usage and which they called “anomaly” (although, as I believe, we must follow both things, because anomaly is more common in derivation, analogy in inflection). (24) About both kinds of word-alteration I shall write two series of three books, the first three [VIII–X] about the doctrine of these alterations, the last three [XI–XIII] about the practical outcomes of that doctrine. Of the first three book this [VIII] will be the first one, about the arguments advanced against similarity; the second [IX] about the arguments against dissimilarity; the third [X] about the system of similarities.

Upon closer inspection, this passage does not overlap with IX 1 at all, where Varro gives no information on how the morphological books are structured, let alone connects Crates with book VIII and Aristarchus with book IX. In this passage, we read the last of Varro’s own authorial voice (*ego arbitror*) before he gives the floor to the party against analogy and then to the one in favour

of analogy, resuming then his own voice at the end of book IX—although the separation is not always clear-cut.⁸

And who are these parties? In this passage Varro does not say that they were Crates and Aristarchus. In fact, the words *Graeci Latinique libros fecerunt multos* should warn against singling out a unique source on either side: they rather suggest that Varro himself compiled a list of arguments that he found in a variety of sources and authored a synthesis which may have never been exposed as such in any particular source. In order to assess the traditional interpretation of the controversy, then, it is best to forsake all attempts to treat Varro's words as verbatim quotations, and instead weigh up the compatibility between the substance of the arguments and the known doctrines, principles, and methods of Aristarchus, Crates, and other authors who discussed these topics.

Although a substantial part of Varronian studies are channelled towards the subject of the controversy, Varro's own contribution to the doctrine of analogy and anomaly was a milestone in ancient scholarship, a fundamental link between previous textual, philosophical, and grammatical studies and the Imperial and late-antique *ars grammatica*. The following chapters will firstly deal with the evolution of the concepts of analogy and anomaly prior to Varro (§§3.1–2) and then consider the various roles that these play across his own writings (§3.3). The information on pre-Varronian analogy and anomaly that derives from books VIII–IX and the issues with Varro's report will be discussed as they arise in the course of the analysis.

⁸ Ax (1995 pp. 154–6); cf. Blank (2005 p. 219 n29).

3.1. Analogy

The concept of analogy has a very long history.⁹ When the term ἀναλογία was first formulated, in the field of mathematics (its first documented use is found in Archytas, fl. early fourth century), it had a very specific meaning: it defined the relation between the terms in a geometric proportion as equal¹⁰ ($A : B = B : C$, A is to B what B is to C). Later, a proper theory of proportions was developed by Eudoxus of Cnidus, Archytas' pupil and Euclides' teacher.

This mathematical concept provided a useful process for philosophical argumentation.¹¹ It was Aristotle, it seems, who introduced the distinction between two kinds of geometric proportions, one “conjoined” (συνεχής), in which the middle term is repeated ($A : B = B : C$), one “disjoined” (διηρημένη), in which the four terms are all different ($A : B = C : D$).¹² In all likelihood, analogy was applied to other branches of knowledge as well: in fact, Proclus quoted Eratosthenes of Cyrene (the third librarian at Alexandria, one generation before Aristophanes and two before Aristarchus) as stating that “analogy is said to be, and is, one of the things common to all sciences [μαθήματα]”.¹³ There, “in the cultural forge and melting pot of Alexandria, where scientists and literary scholars met”,¹⁴ analogy was transferred to the field of grammar. Let us take it from there.

3.1.1. Grammatical analogy

What contribution could analogy bring to grammar? Suppose Apollodorus wanted, to take an example from §2.3.2.a, to justify his etymology for ἀρωγός (“helper”) from ἀρήγω (“to help”), considering that the stems look different. Could this be a regular apophonic variation? Apollodorus compared this uncertain form (ἀρωγός) to other known forms with a similar variation to the one he suggested, like ῥηχμός/ῥωχμός (“fissure”). His explanation implies—although it is not phrased as such in the fragment—the visualisation of a disjoined proportion: $\acute{\rho}\omega\chi\mu\acute{o}\varsigma : \acute{\rho}\eta\chi\mu\acute{o}\varsigma = \acute{\alpha}\rho\omega\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma :$

⁹ See Siebenborn (1976 pp. 56–84), Duso (2006 pp. 9–15, 2017 pp. 46–51), Schironi (2019). On the Greek and Latin technical terms used for analogy, see Schironi (2007). Duso (*ibid.*) also includes a helpful overview of how the concept evolved in modern linguistics from the emergence of comparative philology to our present day.

¹⁰ ARCHYT. fr. 2. As Schironi clarified (2019 p. 480), “even though Archytas calls all these means [arithmetic, geometric, and harmonic] ἀναλογίαι, the term ἀναλογία was generally intended as ‘sameness of ratios’, and thus particularly suitable for defining the geometric analogy of the type $A : B = B : C$ ”.

¹¹ We find examples in Plato, Aristotle, and some Hellenistic authors. See Duso (2006, 2017 pp. 47–8) and Schironi (2019) with bibliography.

¹² EN 1131a29–b17.

¹³ PROCL. in Eucl. p. 43.

¹⁴ Duso (2017 p. 49).

x. By calculating that the ratio between the first and the second pair was the same, he could deduce that ἀρωγός was a variant of ἀρηγός (x): hence the derivation from the verb ἀρήγω.

Thus, analogy allowed a grammarian to discover or confirm an uncertain form through a comparison with a known form. This was a most useful resource for someone who performed editorial work on ancient texts and their interpretation: aside from its use for the purpose of etymology, analogy could help establish the correct reading of a transmitted form and understand the syntax of the passage at issue. For example, concerning a line of the *Iliad* (Ω 8: ἀνδρῶν τε πτολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων),¹⁵ Herodian reported that there was uncertainty about how to accent the last participle, ΠΕΙΡΩΝ, from πείρω (“to run through”).¹⁶ The grammarian Pamphilus read it as perispomenon (πειρῶν), while Aristarchus correctly argued that it was paroxytone, and explicitly explained his reasoning through an analogical proportion. He took another, known form of the conjugation of πείρω, (ἔ)πειρε; he then took from another verb, κείρω (“to cut, destroy”), the same two forms, which were not contested: κείρων and (ἔ)κειρε. He put these forms in a four-term proportion ($A_1 : A_2 = B_1 : B_2$): ἔκειρε : κείρων = ἔπειρε : x, and obtained the correct accentuation of the participle of πείρω.¹⁷

In recognition of the usefulness of this tool, Dionysius’ Thrax included the “calculation of analogy” (ἀναλογίας ἐκλογισμός) among the parts of grammar in the opening of his *Techne*.¹⁸ Dionysius had learnt to use this tool at the Alexandrian school where he received his philological training and where the use of analogy in the context of grammar is first attested.

a. The Alexandrians

The employ of analogy entails an important methodological constraint: the analogical comparison is only successful if the terms of the proportion are typologically comparable. Comparing, say, πείρων (a participle nominative singular) with όνείρων (“of dreams”, a noun genitive plural) would produce aberrant conclusions. The Alexandrians were aware of this: Charisius reported that Aristophanes already introduced a series of “criteria” or “rules” (*rationes*) of analogy, i.e. features that the forms had to share to be compared analogically: they had to have the same gender,

¹⁵ “Making it through wars of men and painful waves”.

¹⁶ Sch. Hom. ad Ω 8a. See Schironi (2018 p. 402) disputing Erbse (1980 pp. 237–9).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*: ὡς γὰρ ἔκειρε κείρων, οὕτως ἔπειρε πείρων.

¹⁸ Schironi (2019 p. 486) noted: “The word ἐκλογισμός is derived from ἐκλογίζομαι, whose primary (and usual) meaning is ‘to compute’, ‘to reckon’. This phrase, thus, keeps a link between this particular part of grammar and mathematics”. See further below (§b).

case, ending, number of syllables, and accent.¹⁹ Aristarchus added a sixth rule: that compounds should not be compared with simple words.²⁰ Such shared features were essentially the “accidents” (παρεπόμενα, συμβεβηκότα) of nouns, a notion rooted in Aristotle’s categories and well-established across sciences in the Hellenistic age.²¹ The catalogue of *rationes analogiae* was subjected to revisions for centuries, up until late-antique grammar²²; Varro reports that a series of second- and first-century scholars established different numbers of *discrimina* between inflectional paradigms, which is just another way of discussing the same subject (see below, §b). Among them, **Parmeniscus**,²³ a contemporary of Aristarchus, established their number at eight; but beside this testimony, no other evidence survives of Parmeniscus’ discussion of analogy or use of analogical proportions. The earliest version of the *rationes analogiae* dates back to Aristophanes, the first known Greek scholar to have used analogy in philology.

There is too scant material to form a detailed picture of **Aristophanes’** use of analogy.²⁴ Varro’s statement—laconic as per usual—that “about the analogy of grammatical substance and sounds both Aristophanes and others have written”²⁵ is one of the most substantial testimonies available, but it just says that Aristophanes discussed analogy at some point. Charisius’ testimony mentioned just above adds that Aristophanes listed five *rationes* to compare two nouns in an analogy. Not much more can be said of Aristophanes’ theory of analogy.

There are, however, a few surviving fragments which bear evidence of analogical proportions. For instance, he explained the formation (and perhaps the meaning) of ἀνεψιαδοῦς (“first cousin’s son”), from ἀνεψιός (more used in Attic Greek, whereas the common word for “cousin” in Hellenistic Greek was ἐξάδελφος), by comparing it to ἀδελφιδοῦς (“sibling’s son”). The comparison is not quite expressed as a four-term analogy (“Also ἀνεψιαδοῦς, just like ἀδελφιδοῦς, [is] the cousin’s son”), but the reasoning implies it (ἀδελφός : ἀδελφιδοῦς = ἀνεψιός : ἀνεψιαδοῦς).²⁶ Closer to the mathematical formulation is another fragment in which Aristophanes explains μήτρως (“maternal uncle”): Eu-

¹⁹ CHAR. gramm. pp. 149–150.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ See Garcea (2009, 2012 pp. 176–7).

²² See Garcea (2012 pp. 169–79) on the evolution of this tradition, with a comparison between the different versions and a reconstruction of the contamination behind the changes.

²³ See Ippolito (2002).

²⁴ See Callanan (1987 pp. 107–22).

²⁵ Ling. X 68: *Tertium genus [scil. analogiae] est illud duplex quod dixi, in quo et res et voces similiter portione dicuntur [...], de quorum analogia et Aristophanes et alii scripserunt.* On Varro’s three kinds of analogy see §3.3.2.b under heading (5).

²⁶ Fr. 259: Καὶ <ἀνεψιαδοῦς>, ὥσπερ ἀδελφιδοῦς, ὁ τοῦ ἀνεψιοῦ υἱός.

stathius reports him saying that “Μήτρως is found by similarity to πάτρως (“paternal uncle”): for, like [ὥς] in Herodotus πάτρως is the uncle from the paternal side, so [οὕτω] now μήτρως is [the uncle] from the maternal side”.²⁷

The use of analogy by **Aristarchus** is better documented,²⁸ attested by a great number of scholia. He used analogical operations to solve questions related to either prosody (to determine the accent of a form, since the manuscripts with which he worked had been written before diacritic signs became common) or morphology (to determine to what inflectional pattern a word belonged or to check whether a form strayed from a regular inflectional pattern).²⁹ He used two-term comparisons ($A = B$), most frequently four-term ($A_1 : A_2 = B_1 : B_2$), and sometimes six-term proportions ($A_1 : A_2 : A_3 = B_1 : B_2 : B_3$). Here are some examples:

- Concerning the uncertain accentuation of ΘΑΜΕΙΑΙ (“crowded”, nom. pl. fem.),³⁰ Pamphilus argued it should be perispomenon (θαμεῖαι, “like ὀξεῖαι” (“acute”), attested in other Homeric loci (Λ 268; τ 517) (θαμεῖαι = ὀξεῖαι); Aristarchus read it as oxytone (θαμειαί), “like πυκιναί” (“narrow”, Δ 281 and elsewhere) (θαμειαί = πυκιναί). This testimony shows two grammarians using analogy in similar ways, but reaching different conclusions.
- To verify the accentuation of ΘΗΛΥΣ (“female”, adjective, nom. sg. masc.),³¹ Aristarchus took another form from the same paradigm, θήλεας (acc. pl. masc., attested in E 269) and compared to πήχεας (“arms”, also acc. pl. masc.), whose nominative singular is perispomenon, πῆχυς; therefore he accented the uncertain form in the same way, θῆλυσ (θήλεας : πήχεας = θῆλυσ : πῆχυς).
- Disputing Zenodotus, who wrote that the vocative of Κάλχας (“Calchas”) was Κάλχα, Aristarchus argued that “[nouns] ending in -ας and inflecting through -ντ- in the genitive have the vocative in -ν”,³² and put forward the comparison with Θόας -αντος (“Thoas”) and Αἴας -αντος (“Ajax”), whose attested vocatives in Homer are respectively Θόαν (N

²⁷ Fr. 229B: Μήτρως μὲν εἴρηται καθ' ὁμοιότητα τοῦ πάτρως ὥς γὰρ παρ' Ἡροδότῳ πάτρως ὁ ἀπὸ πατρικοῦ ἀδελφοῦ θεῖος, οὕτω νῦν ὁ ἀπὸ μητρικοῦ μήτρως.

²⁸ See chiefly Schironi (2018 pp. 377–412), also reprised in (2019). The subject is also treated in Matthaios (1999).

²⁹ Schironi (2018 pp. 394–8).

³⁰ Sch. Hom. ad A 52: θαμειαί: Πάμφιλος ὅτι θαμεῖαι λέγει ὥς ὀξεῖαι, Ἀρίσταρχος δὲ ὥς πυκιναί · ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὸ ταρφειαί.

³¹ Sch. Hom. ad T 97a.

³² Sch. Hom. ad A 86: τὰ δὲ εἰς ας λήγοντα, διὰ τοῦ ντ κλινόμενα ἐπὶ τῆς γενικῆς, ἔχει τὴν κλητικὴν εἰς ν.

222 and elsewhere) and Αἴαν (H 234 and elsewhere). Therefore, the vocative of Κάλχας must be Κάλχαν (Θόας : Θόαντος : Θόαν = Αίας : Αἴαντος : Αἴαν = Κάλχας : Κάλχαντος : Κάλχαν).

- Concerning Γ 152, which reads δένδρῳ ἐφεζόμενοι (“standing on a tree”), Zenodotus corrected the dative to δένδρῃ, arguing that the noun was δένδρος in the nominative and thus inflected like κάλλος (“beauty”) (κάλλος : κάλλει = δένδρος : δένδρῃ). Aristarchus argued that, if the noun were indeed δένδρος in the nominative, Zenodotus would have been right; likewise, if the noun were δένδρον in the nominative, like βάθρον (“bench”), it should be δένδρῳ in the dative (βάθρον : βάθρῳ = δένδρον : δένδρῳ). However, Aristarchus pointed out that in Homer the noun was δένδρεον in the nominative, as one could tell from N 437: it was inflected like χάλκεον (“of bronze”), and therefore the dative δένδρῳ was correct (χάλκεον : χαλκέῳ = δένδρεον : δένδρῳ).

The scholarship on the use of analogy by the Alexandrians is inextricably intertwined with the long-standing debate on how advanced the knowledge of grammar was when Hellenistic scholarship was at its peak.³³ Aristarchus’ analogies are part of the main body of evidence on which scholars have based their arguments over the decades, the thesis being that the application of analogy in the ways that we saw entails advanced knowledge of the Greek morphological system. This is not the place to revisit that much-vexed question. Let it suffice to report Schironi’s summary:

“Without any doubt, Aristarchus was working within a sophisticated grammatical conceptual framework, as Matthaios has demonstrated.³⁴ Yet, at least in his work on Homer, he seems to have used this background only for the purpose of intralingual translation [i.e. from Homeric to koine Greek]. [...] Nevertheless, despite his acute awareness of the main Homeric syntactic features, Aristarchus never seems to have explained *why* Homeric language was different from Koine. [...] These two languages are compared and contrasted to better understand the former, but they are not analyzed in a diachronic perspective. [...] Aristarchus’ interest in grammar, at least as it emerges from the Homeric scholia, was not a theoretical or a historical one. His goal was not to analyze the Greek language per se; nor did he look for grammatical rules or canons, valid in general ‘outside Homer’. Rather, he had a practical, problem-solving approach. He applied grammatical concepts to Homeric philology. Yet grammatical categories interested him only to the extent that they helped him to prepare his edition and explain Homeric idiolect to his readers. [...] As Wolfram Ax very aptly put it, Aristarchus had a ‘Gram-

³³ Fundamental contributions include Fehling (1956, 1957), who, after the appearance of Siebenborn (1976), reconsidered his position in his review of the work (1979); Di Benedetto (1958); Pinborg (1975); Erbse (1980); Ax (1991); Schenkeveld (1994); Lallot (1995); dedicated studies to Aristophanes (Callanan 1987) and Aristarchus (Matthaios 1999); more recently, Pagani (2011) and Schironi (2018).

³⁴ Matthaios (1999).

matik im Kopf’,³⁵ a ‘*mental grammar*’, which helped him to understand and, if necessary, to correct the Homeric text, figuring out the most correct form. Yet he did not venture into a full-fledged grammatical description of the Greek language”.³⁶

This “mental grammar” thus enabled the application of analogy to language in a way that, as the fragments of Aristophanes, Aristarchus, or other grammarians like Pamphilus clearly show, retains the original structure it had in mathematics. It was one of the tools in the editor’s toolkit, a criterion to establish the correct reading of a transmitted form and its syntactic role within a passage, all with the ultimate goal of producing a reliable edition of the Homeric text. It was an instrument of correction³⁷ or of selection when in doubt between two forms or inflectional patterns.

It is this concept of analogy that Varro associates with Aristarchus in *ling.* IX 1. In addition, he says that “when Aristarchus writes about regularity and the similarity of words, he bids the inflection follow a certain similarity insofar as usage allows it”. The fragments confirm this—but we must understand the “usage” in question, which Aristarchus deferred to in all instances, not as the spoken language of his own time (koine Greek), but Homer’s. The δένδρεον example above shows this clearly: if Aristarchus had advocated the unconditional application of analogy to level out all morphological irregularities, he would have either taken Zenodotus’ side, classifying the noun into the inflectional pattern of εσ-stems, or equalled it to the koine form (δένδρον). Instead, he defended the transmitted form based on what was common usage *for Homer*. There are many more examples of this kind. Aristarchus defended the aberrant dative ἀλκί instead of ἀλκῇ (from ἀλκή “might”) because, in Homer and Hesiod, other $\tilde{\alpha}$ -stems are sometimes inflected as palatal stems (see further §3.2.3.b).³⁸ Similarly, in Π 354, he defended the transmitted διέτμαγεν (“were scattered about”) in lieu of the regular form διετμάγησαν by comparing it to another similar morphological use.³⁹

³⁵ Ax (1991 pp. 276, 288).

³⁶ Schironi (2018 pp. 213–6).

³⁷ *Ibid.* p. 396: “analogy was never employed [by Aristarchus] to explain the text but always to ‘correct’ it (in terms of orthography), or to decide whether a reading was acceptable or not”.

³⁸ Sch. Hom. ad E 299b: ἀλκί ὡς σαρκί, καὶ ἔστι κατὰ μεταπλάσμον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀλκή. Τρύφων δὲ ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας ἀναγνώσεως [fr. 97] φησὶν ὅτι Ἀρίσταρχος λέγει ὅτι ἔθος αὐτοῖς ἔστι λέγειν τὴν ἰωκὴν “ἰῶκα” καὶ τὴν κρόκην “κρόκα” καὶ τὴν ἀλκὴν ἄλκα ὡς σάρκα. εἰ δὲ σάρκα ὡς ἄλκα, καὶ (ἀλκί) ὡς σαρκί. (“[The form] ἀλκί [is] like σαρκί by metaplasm from ἀλκή. Trypho says, in his *On ancient reading*, that Aristarchus says that it was their usage to say ἰῶκα instead of ἰωκὴν (‘pursuit’, acc.sing.) [Λ 601], κρόκα instead of κρόκην (‘thread’, acc. sig.) [HES. *Op.* 538], and ἄλκα like σάρκα instead of ἀλκήν: thus also ἀλκί like σαρκί”). Concerning the identification of that “αὐτοῖς”, which could refer to the Aeolians, see Schironi (2018 p. 399).

³⁹ Sch. Hom. ad Π 354a, with reference to Γ 1, which reads κόσμηθεν instead of κοσμήθησαν (“were put in order”).

b. The epigones

The story of grammatical analogy did not end in Alexandria. First of all, Alexandria was not the only cultural hub where philological work was being performed on ancient texts in the third and second centuries BCE: equally intense was the scholarly activity at Pergamum.⁴⁰ However, the question whether analogy was used there as well requires a careful assessment (see §3.2.3.c).

When Ptolemy VIII usurped the throne in 145 BCE and began persecuting those who had been tied to his murdered nephew (Ptolemy VII), Aristarchus, who had tutored the previous king, was also targeted and forced to flee from Alexandria. Many of his pupils followed him in what Pfeiffer called *secessio doctorum*⁴¹ and were scattered around the Mediterranean world, some landing in Rhodes, others in Athens or in Rome. This generation of “epigones” continued to develop the study of grammar, which gradually extricated itself from textual work and took shape as a discipline in its own right. As summarised by M. Callipo,

“fu il I sec. a.C. lo spartiacque tra la grammatica ancella della filologia [...] e il decollo di una grammatica autonoma, descrizione sistematica della lingua e insieme di regole invariabili e indipendenti dagli usi particolari dei singoli autori”.⁴²

The protagonists of the transition to a normative approach, which went hand in hand with the doctrine of analogy, in the first century were the likes of Dionysius Thrax, Tyrannio, Asclepiades, Philoxenus, and Trypho, but also a number of less renowned scholars whom Varro refers to in book X as his predecessors in the doctrine of analogy. Let us begin from these.

In X 10,⁴³ Varro says that Parmeniscus, Dionysius of Sidon, Aristocles of Rhodes, and “others” gave different numbers of features based on which inflectional paradigms were distinguished. We touched on Parmeniscus; of the latter two, little survives to show their interest in analogy beside Varro’s testimony. To justify **Dionysius**⁴⁴ figures (seventy-one *discrimina*, forty-seven of which pertaining to

⁴⁰ Unlike for Alexandria, it is not accurate to describe the scholars of Pergamum as members of a school (specifically, “Crates’ school”), as has sometimes been done (e.g. Susemihl 1891 vol. 2 p. 1 and Sandys 1903 pp. 144–164). In fact, as Broggiato observed (2014 pp. 1–2), “non possediamo documenti che attestino una successione regolare di maestri e allievi, come accadde invece ad Alessandria [...]. Possediamo però i frammenti di un gruppo di personaggi che le fonti antiche collegano esplicitamente all’attività e all’insegnamento di Cratete. Alcuni di essi sono designati con l’epiteto di ‘crateteo’”. *Sic* also Pfeiffer (1968 p. 235).

⁴¹ Pfeiffer (1968 p. 212)

⁴² Callipo (2011 p. 30).

⁴³ *Nam alii de omnibus universis discriminibus posuerunt numerum, ut Dionysius Sidonius, qui scripsit ea[s] esse septuaginta unum, alii partis eius quae habet casus, cuius eidem hic cum dicat esse discrimina quadraginta septem, Aristocles rettulit in litteras XIII, Parmeniscus VIII, sic alii pauciora aut plura.*

⁴⁴ See Meliaddò (2018). Most scholia reporting Dionysius’ opinions concern matters falling under “explanation” of ἱστορίαι, i.e. “information about myths, characters, geography, customs and rituals described in

nominal forms), we have to assume that he “treated accentual differences between nouns of the same declension as equally important as differences in declension class”, as was customary among Greek grammarians.⁴⁵ One fragment shows corrective use of analogy: Dionysius corrected οἷ (“to him”, dat. sg. masc.) in E 800, which he judged “irregular” (παράλογος), to οἷ in analogy with ἐμοί and σοί because “[pronouns] with the same ending [should also] have the same accent in every person”.⁴⁶ To **Aristocles**,⁴⁷ known as a rhetor, lexicographer, and interpreter of Plato, are also attributed fragments in which he analysed prosody rules in certain declensions⁴⁸: for him, too, one can speculate that his number of *discrimina* (eight) took prosody into account.

Aristocles is also cited by Varro in X 75 among scholars who wrote about analogy as a criterion for correct speech (ἐλληνισμός), to Varro’s judgement, “with more care than clarity”.⁴⁹ In the same passage he mentions Aristeas of Rhodes, Aristodemus of Nysa, and “others”. Reitzenstein suggested that here Varro was quoting from a pre-existing list of Alexandrian scholars, alphabetically ordered,⁵⁰ against which Fehling pointed out the conspicuous lack of Aristophanes and Aristarchus from Varro’s list.⁵¹ This, however, need not present a contradiction: if such a source existed, it would attest to a recognition, already before Varro, of a branch of scholarship specifically dedicated to the doctrine of analogy; since second-century Alexandrian philologists, as we saw, did not make analogy itself an object of study, their exclusion from such a catalogue may be perfectly consistent. Only five fragments survive of **Aristeas**,⁵² which show his interest in lexicology; nothing else is known about his writings on analogy. The same goes for **Aristodemus**,⁵³ for whom it is worth mentioning that he was called to Rome by Pompey, whom he had met in Rhodes, to tutor his children, and continued teaching grammar and rhetoric there.⁵⁴

the text, as well as historical facts” Schironi (2018 p. 96). The “explanation [ἀπόδοσις] of rare words [γλῶσσαι] and matters of facts [ἱστορίαι]” is the third part of grammar in D.T. 1.

⁴⁵ De Melo (2019a p. 1201).

⁴⁶ Ap. A.D. *Pron.* pp. 80,24–81,5.

⁴⁷ See Corradi (2019).

⁴⁸ E.g. *EM* s.v. κύμα; ap. *HDN*. III/1 pp. 525–526, III 2 p. 18.

⁴⁹ *Haec diligentius quam apertius dicta esse arbitror, sed non obscurius quam de re simili definitiones grammaticorum sunt, ut Aristee, Aristodemi, Aristocli, item aliorum, quorum obscuritates eo minus reprehendendae, quod pleraeque definitiones re incognita propter summam brevitatem non facile perspiciuntur, nisi articulatum sunt explicata(e).*

⁵⁰ Reitzenstein (1901 p. 65).

⁵¹ Fehling (1956 pp. 237–8).

⁵² See Pagani (2007b).

⁵³ See Ascheri (2018).

⁵⁴ *STR*. XIV 1.48. There is some uncertainty as to whom to attribute each of these facts, to the younger Aristodemus or his older cousin.

Although these are the only grammarians explicitly named by Varro in connection to analogy, the cursory mention to *alii* in both passages from book X suggests that his knowledge of the theories of analogy before him derived from other sources as well (whether he consulted them directly or read about them in the sources he cites). This becomes especially plausible if we endorse the hypothesis that Varro relied on a list of analogist grammarians from which he only quoted a representative sample. Therefore, let us consider who else made substantial contributions to the doctrine in the first century and can be expected to have been known to Varro.

The scholarly debate on the authorship of the *Techne grammatiké*, attributed to **Dionysius Thrax**, is well known.⁵⁵ At the current state of play, it is widely accepted that the theory contained in the *Techne* at least partially goes back to the second-century scholarship in Alexandria, but also bears traces of contamination from Stoic ideas⁵⁶; at the same time, whether Dionysius' authorship is accepted for the entire *Techne* or just a part, it does not take away from Dionysius' authority as a grammarian, which also emerges from the fragments transmitted in his name.⁵⁷ Dionysius had been a pupil of Aristarchus and relocated in Rhodes, where he pursued both textual-critical work on Homer (in line with the Alexandrian tradition) and, if we accept his authorship of the *Techne*, also studies of grammar in itself.

A connection between Dionysius' work and Varro can be established with certainty. Firstly, Dionysius taught Tyrannio (whom Varro at least knew of, see below) and Aelius Stilo (who in turn taught Varro). Secondly, it has been noticed that Varro's own definition of grammar (the first one attested in Latin) in the *Disciplinarum libri* is an almost perfect calque of Dionysius':

Ars grammatica quae a nobis litteratura dicitur scientia est (eorum) quae a poetis historicis oratoribusque dicuntur ex parte maiore.⁵⁸

Γραμματική ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένων.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ For a good overview of the studies, see Callipo (2011 pp. 28–34).

⁵⁶ See especially Matthaios (2002).

⁵⁷ Pagani (2010).

⁵⁸ VARRO fr. 107 ap. MAR. VICTOR. p. 4. Further details on the art of grammar are given in fr. 108–110.

⁵⁹ D.T. p. 5.

The only important difference in Varro's definition is the term *scientia* where Dionysius has ἐμπειρία. This seems to reflect the alteration that Asclepiades made to Dionysius' definition: Γραμματική ἐστὶν τέχνη τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν λεγομένων.⁶⁰

The fact that Dionysius concerned himself with analogy is not called into question by the issue of the *Techne's* authorship. As mentioned above, the "calculation of analogy" is listed as one of the parts of grammar in the first paragraph of the treatise, whose authenticity is not questioned. Furthermore, there is evidence that Dionysius himself employed analogy in his editorial work, just like his teacher Aristarchus had: he used it, "sometimes even more consistently than his teacher",⁶¹ to solve questions of orthography, prosody, and morphology. For example, he objected to Aristarchus having accented αἰδῶ ("what causes shame", acc. sg.) as perispomenon, but Πυθῶ ("Pytho") and Λητώ ("Leto") as oxytone, arguing that feminine nouns in -ω and -ως should be accented in the same way.⁶² Concerning inflection, Dionysius argued that the accusative singular of δονακεύς ("thicket of reeds") should admit two forms, δονακῆα (transmitted in Homer) and δονακῆεν, in analogy with πευκῶν ("pine-forest"), for which he admitted both πευκᾶεν and πευκῶνα.⁶³ These examples are very telling because they reveal a different method from Aristarchus, whose analogies only compared forms attested in Homer. The form αἰδῶ, proposed by Dionysius to replace αἰδῶ, does not conform to Homeric usage and for this reason Aristarchus did not accept it; Dionysius, conversely, chose to follow the rule of analogy over Homer's usage. His argument for δονακῆεν equally has no Homeric precedent and neither do the forms πευκᾶεν/πευκῶνα.⁶⁴ This attests to a significant step in the evolution of normative grammar, in which conformity to inflectional patterns was becoming a matter of interest beyond the support that this knowledge could give to textual editing and interpretation of a particular author.

In Rhodes, Dionysius taught **Tyrannio**, who later returned to his native Amisus in Pontus and began teaching in his turn. There, in 71, during the Second Mithridatic War, Tyrannio was captured by the legate L. Licinius Murena and then given to Lucullus, who freed him and brought him to Rome in 66.⁶⁵ Tyrannio became a highly influential figure who made significant contributions to the cultural

⁶⁰ ASCLEP. ap. S.E. M. I 74. See Duso (2017 pp. 34–8).

⁶¹ Linke (Linke et al. 1977 p. 12).

⁶² D.T. fr. 4. See also fr. 5 with Schironi (2018 pp. 405–6).

⁶³ Fr. 23.

⁶⁴ Πευκᾶεν is found in the tragic poets (A. fr. 84; E. Andr. 863), while πευκῶνα is unattested.

⁶⁵ *Suidas* s.v. Τυραννίων. The *Suidas* conflates some facts about Tyrannio the elder and his pupil Diocles, also known as Tyrannio (the younger), and reports under the lemma relating to the younger titles which are now believed to belong to the elder: see Haas (Linke et al. 1977 pp. 57–8). On the circumstances of Tyrannio's arrival in Rome, see also PLU. *Luc.* 19.8; *Explan. in Don.* 1 p. 529.

life of the Late Republic. Firstly, he was involved in the organisation and cataloguing of Sulla's library,⁶⁶ which facilitated the circulation of Aristotle's and Theophrastus' writings in Rome. Furthermore, he taught grammar (thus becoming "the first Aristarchean to teach in the city")⁶⁷ to the most prominent elite, including Caesar, Cicero, and Atticus.⁶⁸ To my knowledge, there is no evidence that Varro knew Tyrannio personally (although this is sometimes implied),⁶⁹ but it is certain that he read at least Tyrannio's treatise *On accents*, from which he adopted the theory which distinguished an acute, grave, middle, and circumflex accent.⁷⁰

Lehmann argued that Tyrannio's influence on Varro was pervasive and even reached beyond his linguistic works.⁷¹ He identified Tyrannio and his Aristotelian background as the ultimate authority for Varro's frequent use of quadripartitions, whereas, as we saw (§2.3.1), other scholars have suggested other inspirations for that scheme. He also implied that it was Tyrannio's acquaintance that inspired Varro to produce so many linguistic writings in the 40s; whereas, as already argued above, I rather think the reasons why Varro felt compelled to devote himself to the study of Rome's language and many other aspects of Roman culture in that period have more to do with the special post-Social War situation which had brought about a collective identity crisis.

That being said, it is certainly plausible that Tyrannio's activity in the city facilitated Varro's familiarity with the grammatical tradition rooted in Aristarchus' school. In line with such tradition was, as far as we can tell, Tyrannio's treatise *On the division of the parts of speech*, for which Dionysius' *Techne* is thought to have been "the inspiration and model".⁷² Tyrannio also wrote *On the Roman language* (Περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς διαλέκτου), which it is not far-fetched to presume that Varro either read or knew of, as it would have been a notable precedent of his own *De lingua Latina*; furthermore, the one extant fragment⁷³ reveals that Tyrannio endorsed the theory according to which Latin derived from Aeolian Greek and we saw that Varro accepted this theory to an extent (§1.2).

Tyrannio, heir of the Alexandrian tradition, produced much scholarship on Homer (including an edition); but that work too shows signs of the move towards normative grammar. In *On Homeric*

⁶⁶ STR. XIII 1.54; PLU. *Sull.* 26. See §2.2.1.c.

⁶⁷ Forbes et al. (2012) s.v. *Tyrannio*.

⁶⁸ On Caesar: *Suidas* s.v. σχολιόν. On Cicero and Atticus: CIC. *Att.* II 6.1, IV 4a.1, 8.2, XII 2.2, 6.2; *ad Q. fr.* II 4.2, III 4.5, 5.6.

⁶⁹ E.g. Lehmann (1997 p. 120).

⁷⁰ TYR. fr. 59 = VARRO fr. 84. See Haas (Linke et al. 1977 pp. 171–2), Lehmann (1997 pp. 122–5), and Probert (2019 pp. 2–4, 195–200).

⁷¹ Lehmann (1997 pp. 122–9).

⁷² Haas (Linke et al. 1977 p. 167).

⁷³ Fr. 63 (*Suidas* s.v. Τυραννίων ὁ νεώτερος).

prosody, Tyrannio endeavoured to account for any problem of accentuation that he found in the Homeric poems and, when he could not provide a grammatical justification to certain forms, “he reach[ed] for the rule of analogy, which however he follow[ed] so consistently that he [did] not tolerate any exception”.⁷⁴ He wanted to change ἀτάρ (“nevertheless”) to **ἄταρ in A 166, arguing that “no word ending with a short syllable in -ρ is oxytone”, like στέαρ (“suet”), θέναρ (“palm of the hand”), κέαρ (“heart”), and others; oxytone words in -ρ like πατήρ (“father”) or άνήρ (“man”), he added, were no exception, for the accent recedes in their vocatives where the last syllable is shortened (πάτερ, άνερ).⁷⁵ Both Tyrannio and Dionysius read ἄχρειος for ἀχρεῖος (“useless”) in B 269, both because they preferred an Attic form and because they wanted to follow analogy: just like the adjective ἄμουσος (“without song > discordant”), built as the negative of μουσα (“Muse”), is proparoxytone, so should ἄχρειος, built from χρεία (“use”) (μουσα : ἄμουσος = χρεία : ἄχρειος).⁷⁶

Very little can be said for sure about **Asclepiades**.⁷⁷ Originally from Myrlea in Bythinia, he settled in the region of Turdetania (later the Roman province *Baetica*), at the opposite end of the Mediterranean Sea, where he taught grammar for some time; he may have spent some time in Rome. Asclepiades’ work on Homer, informed by methods aimed at interpreting the text allegorically in light of particular cosmological views (especially visible in his monograph *On Nestor’s cup*), bears the hallmarks of Crates’ research; this does not necessarily mean that Asclepiades learnt from Crates or knew him personally, but it does suggest that at least part of his training was rooted in the Pergamenian tradition.

Most of Asclepiades’ writings were commentaries on Homer and other ancient and Hellenistic poets, where occasional discussions on particular phrases or expressions only formed a small part of the exegetical commentary (at least judging from the picture presented by the transmitted fragments, which, as always, may or may not be representative of the original works). There is, however, information on a monograph *On grammar*, for which the Asclepiadean authorship is nowadays mostly accepted.⁷⁸ Only three fragments survive, transmitted by Sextus Empiricus in *Against the grammarians*: the first (§§47–48) concerns the etymology of the term γραμματική, the second (§§72–74) the

⁷⁴ Haas (Linke et al. 1977 p. 99).

⁷⁵ Fr. 3.

⁷⁶ Fr. 8 = D.T. fr. 8.

⁷⁷ The *Suidas* entry certainly conflates two people and its information must be handled with care: see Pagani (2007a pp. 12–6).

⁷⁸ On this question, see Pagani (2007a p. 31 n80).

definition of grammar as a discipline, the third (§§252–253) the parts of grammar. To these quotations one can add other passages of Sextus in which “the presence of Asclepiadean material can be inferred based on the content”.⁷⁹ D. Blank has showed that Sextus’ discussion of topics in *Against the grammarians* follows the structure of a grammatical treatise and suggested this could have been authored by Asclepiades; however, Sextus, who discusses these topics critically, would not have been reading Asclepiades directly, but through an Epicurean mediation which attacked Asclepiades’ work.⁸⁰ While there is no evidence linking directly Asclepiades or his works to Varro, there are grounds to claim that Varro drew on some of this anti-Asclepiadean material (see below, §3.2.2). If Sextus’ case against the grammarians ultimately goes back to Asclepiadean material, then presumably Asclepiades also wrote about analogy, since Sextus dedicated an entire section to refuting its theoretical principles (§§176–240). However, as no Asclepiadean fragments discussing analogy survive, and Sextus does not mention Asclepiades in that section, this inference (though plausible) cannot be corroborated.⁸¹

More information is available on **Philoxenus**, who was born in Alexandria and worked as a grammarian in Rome⁸²; scholars have placed his life in the same period as Varro.⁸³ Nineteen titles are ascribed to him (although he probably wrote more than that), which range from Homeric commentaries, glossographical studies (on the Ionian, Laconian, and Syracusan dialects and the Latin language), a metrical treatise, and grammatical studies.⁸⁴ The glossographical books were likely to attract Varro’s attention, at least his *On the language of the Romans* (Περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαίων διαλέκτου), in which Philoxenus also presented Latin as a Greek dialect.⁸⁵ Philoxenus’ Homeric commentaries, like those of other coeval authors, present a picture of ancient scholarship as still in transition from a branch of research bound to textual work to an autonomous discipline. Aside from a treatise *On Hellenism* (which flowed into the trend of discussions of correct speech and orthography, for which see §1.1.1), Philoxenus wrote dedicated books on specific morphological topics (such as gradation and reduplication) and inflectional patterns (books *On conjugations* and *On μi-verbs*). His most famous and most cited work is the study *On monosyllabic verbs*, already discussed in §2.3.2.a., noteworthy

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* p. 33.

⁸⁰ Blank (1998 pp. xlv–l).

⁸¹ See also below, §3.3.2.a.

⁸² *Suidas* s.v.

⁸³ Theodoridis (1976 pp. 3–6).

⁸⁴ Wendel (1941).

⁸⁵ Fr. 323 (*GRF* Mazz. p. 396).

because Philoxenus argued that the monosyllabic roots which he postulated at the origin of all nouns and verbs could be reconstructed by analogy. He traced $\zeta\alpha\chi\rho\epsilon\iota\eta\varsigma$ back to $\chi\rho\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\omega$ and this to $\chi\rho\tilde{\omega}$ by analogy with $\varphi\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\omega$ ($\chi\rho\tilde{\omega} : \chi\rho\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\omega = \varphi\tilde{\omega} : \varphi\acute{\alpha}\upsilon\omega$); even the anaptyxis (insertion of a *iota*) was explained by analogy ($\zeta\alpha\chi\rho\epsilon\iota\eta\varsigma : \zeta\alpha\chi\rho\epsilon\iota\eta\varsigma = \acute{\alpha}\delta\epsilon\lambda\varphi\acute{o}\varsigma : \acute{\alpha}\delta\epsilon\lambda\varphi\epsilon\iota\acute{o}\varsigma$).⁸⁶ For $\varphi\rho\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ (“to indicate, tell”), Philoxenus postulated the root $\varphi\rho\tilde{\omega}$ and supported this derivation with a six-term analogical proportion ($\varphi\rho\tilde{\omega} : \gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega = \varphi\omicron\iota\tau\tilde{\omega} : \varphi\omicron\iota\tau\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega = \beta\tilde{\omega} : \beta\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$).⁸⁷ While these reconstructions are not always acceptable according to modern philology, the use of analogy is consistent and, at least in principle, correct.

Therefore, different meanings of analogy are recognisable in Philoxenus’ work (as will be the case for Varro). On the one hand, he used analogy in the same way as the Alexandrians (as a technical principle, modelled on mathematical proportions, to find the missing piece of a puzzle). On the other hand, he made $\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ one of the criteria for $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ (just like Varro and others did): in this sense, analogy is a tool to verify that spoken or written utterances conform to normative grammar and, if not, to rectify them.

Slightly younger than Philoxenus was **Trypho**⁸⁸ and the fact that he is considered “the founder of dialectology and linguistic pathology as well as a strict representative of analogy”⁸⁹ gives us at least three reasons why Varro might have kept his writings on his work-desk; to these we may add that Trypho authored a treatise *On nominal inflectional prototypes* ($\Pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\ \acute{\omicron}\nu\omicron\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\nu\ \chi\alpha\rho\alpha\kappa\tau\acute{\eta}\rho\omega\nu$) which might have been a precedent for Varro’s own $\Pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\ \chi\alpha\rho\alpha\kappa\tau\acute{\eta}\rho\omega\nu$.⁹⁰ Judging from the fragments of the thirty-two works ascribed to him,⁹¹ Trypho may have been the first known Greek grammarian to concern himself solely with strictly linguistic topics, unrelated to textual criticism. He wrote many books on the distinctive language of ancient authors and on the dialects spoken in certain Greek areas (Attica, Aeolia, Argos, and cities of Great Greece): Varro’s own dialectological inclinations could have been enriched by Trypho’s as much as Philoxenus’ models. Of Trypho’s *On modifications* [$\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\eta$] in *linguistic usage* we already assessed the merits and contributions to etymology.

Aside from the works on dialectology and linguistic pathology, Trypho’s fragments reveal extensive scholarship on specific grammatical topics—studied, as we said, as subjects in their own right

⁸⁶ Fr. 5.

⁸⁷ Fr. 27.

⁸⁸ *Suidas* s.v.

⁸⁹ Baumbach (2002).

⁹⁰ *GRF* pp. 206–7.

⁹¹ For the full catalogue see Wendel (1894).

and not in conjunction with editorial activity: monographs on the article, persons, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, clitics, participles; then further on compounds, comparatives, paronyms. In these treatises, Trypho frequently appealed to analogy to explain and assess various kinds of morphological alteration. Analogy itself was the focus of studies of inflection, as indicated by titles such as *On analogy in the nominative*, *On analogy in declensions*, *On analogy in ω-verbs*; in particular, *On analogy in monosyllables* countered the opinion of grammarians who denied that analogy applied to this category of words. Trypho's "blind faith in analogy", as Wendel put it,⁹² was such that it led him to advocate the systematic implementation of rules without concern for usage. For example, he argued that all ethnics should end in -εὺς, thus **Ἀπολλωνιεύς instead of Ἀπολλωνιάτης ("of Apollonia") and **Μυκαλεύς instead of Μυκαλήσιος ("of Mycale").⁹³ Similarly, he postulated that all adverbs in -στί derived from verbs in -ίζω, as is the case for Δωριστί ("in the Dorian dialect") < Δωρίζω ("to speak in the Dorian dialect") and Ἑλληνιστί ("in Greek") < Ἑλληνίζω ("to speak Greek")⁹⁴: thus he incorrectly derived μεγαλωστί ("far and wide"), ἱρωστί ("sacredly"), and νεωστί ("lately") from **μεγαλίζω, **ἱρωστίζω, and **νεανίζω.⁹⁵

Finally, a mention is due to **Ptolemy Pindarion**,⁹⁶ a pupil of Aristarchus who was very likely to figure among the sources that one would have consulted on the doctrine of analogy. Whether he is the same "Ptolemy" whom Apollonius Dyscolus described as ἀναλογητικός⁹⁷ or not, his interest in analogy is documented. He countered the objection that analogy pretended to regulate usage, but actually depended on usage for its examples, by clarifying that "analogy is agreed to proceed from usage, for it is a study of the dissimilar and similar, but the similar and dissimilar is grasped from approved usage, and that which is approved and most ancient is the poetry of Homer [...]. Thus, we shall follow in our speech the usage of Homer".⁹⁸ This position, far from representing a mediation between analogists and anomalists as was sometimes presumed, instead "reasserted the validity of analogy by capitalizing on the idea, present in Aristarchus, that Homeric language constituted a reference point for *Hellenismos*".⁹⁹

⁹² Wendel (1894 col. 733).

⁹³ Frr. 84–86.

⁹⁴ Fr. 48.

⁹⁵ Fr. 69.

⁹⁶ See Boatti (2002).

⁹⁷ PIND. fr. *14 ap. A.D. *Conj.* p. 241,13.

⁹⁸ Fr. 12 ap. S.E. *M.* I 202–203, transl. Blank.

⁹⁹ Pagani (2014b p. 815), with bibliography.

c. Analogists in Rome

Aside from Tyrannio, other grammarians of Greek origin who worked in Rome can be assumed to have influenced Varro's linguistic studies to an extent. Some of them seem to have mainly worked in the field of lexicology (at least as far as the fragments shows): like Hypsicrates of Amisus (whom tradition refers to as a *grammaticus* as well as a historian), who wrote about Latin words derived from Greek; Varro himself quoted him to reject one of his derivations.¹⁰⁰ L. Ateius Praetextatus, also called Philologus, was captured during Sulla's sack of Athens and brought to Rome as a slave and later freed; a historian, rhetor, and grammarian, he apparently wrote a great number of books, but only a few fragments survive. The grammatical fragments¹⁰¹ reveal an interest in etymology, rare words, and Latin words derived from Greek: he was most likely one of the *glossarum scriptores* that Varro mentions in *De lingua Latina*¹⁰² and whose opinions he sometimes reported, especially in book VII. Curtius Nicias of Ascalon, who was close to Cicero,¹⁰³ apparently was more of a *grammaticus* in the old sense of the word, mainly concerning himself with literary criticism on Homer. The transmitted fragments¹⁰⁴ of his commentaries all deal with questions of prosody, but the fact that they were selected by Herodian to transmit must be taken into account. He used two-term comparisons to solve such questions: for example, he accented Ὀλίζωνα like (ὥς) περίζωνα¹⁰⁵ and χεῖμαρροι ("winter-flowing") like εὖζωνοι ("well-girdled").¹⁰⁶ But aside from these few instances, in which the most basic type of analogy is used to support philological work, there is no evidence for these authors of an interest in regularity in the morphological system of the kind we saw in Philoxenus and especially Trypho.

The earliest trace of that kind of thinking is related to **Staberius Eros**, a Thracian by origin who was brought to Rome as a slave in 83 and manumitted for his intellectual merits.¹⁰⁷ He is reported to have written a treatise *De proportione*, of which only one fragment survives: a quotation of his statement that "impositions [*scil.* of names], on the basis of which analogy is sometimes unjustly

¹⁰⁰ *Ling.* V 88 = *GRF* HYPsicr. 1, see also fr. 2.

¹⁰¹ Fourteen edited in *GRF*.

¹⁰² VII 10. See Rawson (1985 p. 124).

¹⁰³ Berndt (1910); Rawson (1985 pp. 71–2).

¹⁰⁴ Twenty-three edited by Berndt.

¹⁰⁵ Fr. 1 ad B 717 ap. HDN. II p. 36,36. Herodian disagrees: the word should be perispomenon, "like Μεδεῶνα".

¹⁰⁶ Fr. 6 ad Δ 452 ap. HDN. II p. 46,30.

¹⁰⁷ Suet. *gramm.* 13. See Funaioli (1929).

accused, are not concerned by regularity”.¹⁰⁸ Concise and isolated as it is, this testimony transmits information very relevant to us: first, that claims that analogy was inconsistent (as found in *De lingua Latina*, see below) were made by a number of authors in first-century Rome; second, that some of these attacks bore on analogy (or lack thereof) in imposition and Staberius defended analogy on the ground that analogy is not to be sought in word coinage. This position is very close to the point that Varro will make between analogy in derivation and inflection (see §3.3.2.b).

Another significant testimony (albeit equally short and isolated) concerning the doctrine of analogy in Rome is related to **Antonius Gniphō**, another freedman of foreign origin (“native of Gaul but exposed [as a child], manumitted by the master who raised him, and who studied at Alexandria”, as Suetonius reports)¹⁰⁹ who taught Cicero, Caesar, and Praetextatus. Whether the story that he studied at Alexandria is true or not (which Suetonius himself doubted), at any rate it gives an indication of the kind of education that he received.¹¹⁰ He is said to have written commentaries on Ennius’ *Annales*; however, apparently Praetextatus claimed that he only personally wrote two books *De sermone Latino*, and the other writings had been authored by Gniphō’s students.¹¹¹ A fragment transmitted by Quintilian gives indication of Gniphō’s thinking along rigorous analogical lines:

There is, however, nothing which annoys me more in these people than their allowing themselves not only to discover but actually to change nominative forms on the basis of the other cases: thus in *ebur* (“ivory”) and *robur* (“strength”), which the highest authorities pronounce and write like that, they change the vowel of the second syllable to *o*, on the ground that we have *roboris* and *eboris*, while *sulpur* (“sulphur”) and *guttur* (“throat”) keep *u* in the genitive. *Iecur* and *femur* therefore also have given rise to controversy. This is no less arbitrary than if they were to foist an *o* on *sulpur* and *guttur* in the genitive, because there is one in *eboris* and *roboris*. Thus Antonius Gniphō, who allows *robur* and *ebur* and even *marmur* (“marble”) to be correct, wants the plurals to be *ebura*, *robura*, *marmura*.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Ap. PRISC. gramm. p. 385,1–3: *Staberius de proportione: non esse positiones regulae, a quibus interdum analogia calumniantur*, συκοφαντεῖται. Priscian quotes this fragment to show the passive use of *calumnior* and gives the Greek equivalent.

¹⁰⁹ SUET. gramm. 7.

¹¹⁰ Rawson (1985 pp. 16, 74). See also Goetz (1894).

¹¹¹ SUET. *ibid.*

¹¹² GRF GNIPHO 4 ap. QUINT. inst. I 6.22 (transl. after Loeb): *Ego tamen non alio magis angor quam quod obliquis casibus ducti etiam primas sibi positiones non invenire sed mutare permittunt, ut cum ‘ebur’ et ‘robur’, ita dicta ac scripta summis auctoribus, in o litteram secundae syllabae transferunt, quia sit ‘roboris’ et ‘eboris’, ‘sulpur’ autem et ‘guttur’ u litteram in genetivo servant: ideoque ‘iecur’ etiam et ‘femur’ controversiam fecerunt. Quod non minus est licentiosum quam si ‘sulpuri’ et ‘gutturi’ subicerent in genetivo litteram o mediam quia esset ‘eboris’ et ‘roboris’: sicut Antonius Gniphō, qui ‘robur’ quidem et ‘ebur’ atque etiam ‘marmur’ fatetur esse, verum fieri vult ex his ‘ebura’ ‘robura’ ‘marmura’.*

At the time of Quintilian's writing, the notion of paradigmatic regularity was more established and familiar to a Roman cultivated readership (probably, much thanks to Varro); but this testimony shows that the normalisation of irregular paradigms was already subject to discussion in Gniphō's time. Gniphō's proposal to change *marmor* to *marmur* in the nominative (in analogy with *ebur* and *robur*) and to change the stems in *-or-* to *-ur-* in all the other cases (in analogy with the nominative) reveals a radical analogical stance, which prioritises inflectional uniformity (both intra- and trans-paradigmatically) over forms established in usage.

It is against the background of already lively discussions among grammarians concerning morphological regularity, therefore, that **Julius Caesar's** treatise *De analogia* must be framed.

We already contextualised Caesar's treatise in respect to views on correct speech in antiquity (§1.1.1). *De analogia* was written, as Fronto later put it, *inter tela volantia*,¹¹³ in the Spring of 54 during Caesar's Germano-Gallic campaigns, as part of Caesar's wider cultural project which was conceived as "an instrument for controlling the new multi-ethnic situations arising from the most recent conquests".¹¹⁴ In *Brutus*, Cicero had established a model of a good orator which elevated urban accent (*color urbanitatis*) to one of the highest virtues of good Latin speech—essentially barring non-Roman Latin speakers from ever attaining that ideal¹¹⁵—and stressed the importance of being brought up in a family of speakers of that good (urban) Latin. This insistence on innate linguistic perfection may have emerged out of a desire to compensate for Cicero's own stigma as a citizen from *Latium adiectum*, for which he was subject to occasional jabs.¹¹⁶ In any case, such a model did not suit the situation in Gaul, where the elite were taking steps to integrate into the Roman state, and an important part of that process was learning and using the language on the same footing as their Roman counterpart. Cicero's model did not suit Caesar's political programme in Rome either, which aimed to present him as a man of the people and not an ally of the old *nobilitas*. In contrast to that model, Caesar "democratize[d] *Latinitas* by presenting it as subject to logical postulates and so easily reproducible by all those who ha[d] been taught its formulas".¹¹⁷

¹¹³ *Parth.* 9 p. 224.

¹¹⁴ Garcea (2012 p. 13).

¹¹⁵ *Brut.* 169–172. Dench rightly observed (2005 p. 300) that, in this passage, Cicero "dodges precise criteria" to clarify what *urbanitas* means: "he eliminates vocabulary that can be learned and resorts to the language of visual metaphor—'a certain urbane colouring'—and vague comments on the sound of urban speech".

¹¹⁶ E.g. Catiline called him an *inquilinus civis Urbis Romae* (SALL. *Catil.* 31.7), L. Torquatus a *peregrinus* (CIC. *Sull.* 22–25).

¹¹⁷ Dugan (2005 pp. 179–80). On Caesar's linguistic politics, see Garcea (2012 pp. 7–10).

Several fragments attest to Caesar's attempts to establish norms which improved the functionality of Latin, addressing questions of orthography, phonology, and morphology to make its rules more practical and its uses less redundant. For example, concerning the long-standing discussion on the so-called *sonus medius* (a vowel between a /i/ and a /ü/ in proximity to a labial) in words like *lacrimae/lacrumae* and *maximus/maxumus*, Caesar was known to write <I> and articulate [i], which became standard because of his authority.¹¹⁸ He stated that “no noun ends in two plosives”, rejecting *lact* as a nominative for “milk”.¹¹⁹ Based on the idea that the quality of Latin had reached its peak in the age of the Scipios and had deteriorated since then,¹²⁰ Caesar advocated analogy as a resource to contain the negative effects of language change and specifically the emergence of redundancies and irregularities which made language less functional and more convoluted. By analogy, Caesar wanted to inflect all phytonyms as *o*-stems¹²¹ and argued that names of uncountable things, like *harena* (“sand”), *caelum* (“sky”), or *triticum* (“wheat”), should be *singularia tantum*, but names of things that are always plural in reality should be *pluralia tantum*.¹²² Also by analogy, he made prescriptive remarks on how nouns belonging to certain inflectional classes should be inflected.¹²³

However, in some cases, when given the choice between forms established by analogy and forms used by second-century authorities, Caesar prioritised the latter, by virtue of that same belief that that period had seen the heyday of pure Latin. This is seen, for instance, in the dispute on how to write *i* as a semi-consonant in descending diphthongs followed by another vowel (in words like *maius*, *Pompeius*), which was called *consonans duplex* because it functions as a geminated consonant (*mai-ius*, *Popei-ius*). Priscian reports that, to reflect this value, the ancients used to write this “double consonant” as <II>. By this logic, strictly speaking, the genitive singular and nominative and vocative plural of *io*-stems should be written <III>: *mai-ii*, *Pompei-ii*. To avoid this, different spelling suggestions had been proposed: Accius, who had suggested marking long vowels by gemination, made an exception for *i*, for which he suggested <EI>¹²⁴; Lucilius recommended writing <Ī> for the genitive

¹¹⁸ Fr. 5. = VARRO fr. 68 ap. CASSIOD. p. 150,10–17. Garcea clarified: “In the quotation [...], the expression *solitum esse* seems to be a reference to his actual usage rather than to *De analogia*. Even though there is no source stating that Caesar carried out a theoretical analysis of the matter, we cannot completely exclude the possibility that one might have been presented in the section of his treatise dealing with *litterae*, especially in relation to the organization of noun paradigms.”

¹¹⁹ Fr. 7 ap. POMP. gramm. p. 199,5–19.

¹²⁰ See §1.1.1.

¹²¹ Fr. 25 = VARRO *gent. pop. Rom.* I fr. 1 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 163.

¹²² Fr. 11 ap. GELL. XIX 8.1–8.

¹²³ Frr. 13–26, 32.

¹²⁴ GRF ACCIUS 24 ap. MAR. VICTOR. p. 8.

singular and <EI> for the nominative plural.¹²⁵ Caesar's endorsement of the <III> spelling,¹²⁶ when <Ī> had become standard in usage, must be taken as a *reductio ad absurdum*: it "demonstrates the impossibility of reforming usage [...] without producing morphological monstrosities".¹²⁷ Another example of Caesar opting for second-century usage over analogy is his prescription that the dative of *u*-stems end in *-u* (not in *-ui*), as in Lucilius,¹²⁸ and that the nominative for "milk" should not be *lact* (the analogical form) nor *lac* (the form in use at the time), but *lacte*, attested in Plautus.¹²⁹

Some fragments show these prescriptions were phrased in the form of analogical proportions of the kind we saw in the fragments of the Alexandrians and the epigones. Caesar's argument that *turbo* should be *turbōnis* (not *turbīnis*) in the genitive both when the word means "whirlwind" and when it means "spinning top, spindle" is bolstered by a four-term comparison with *Cato* (*Cato : Catonis = turbo : turbonis*) and the rejection of a comparison with *homo* (*homo : hominis ≠ turbo : turbonis*).¹³⁰ Likewise is the rule that "neuters with a nominative singular ending in *-l* take the same ending as those with an ending in *-e*" defended with a six-term proportion comparing the nominative, dative, and ablatives singular of *animal* and *puteal* and an implied noun in *-e* (such as *mare*).¹³¹ Caesar also proposed creating a participle for *esse* (*ens*) through a six-term comparison with the paradigm of *posse* (*possum : potes : potens = sum : es : ens*).¹³²

All these testimonies by Caesar and other coeval or older scholars show that, by the time Varro began writing *De lingua Latina*, the doctrine of analogy was a long-standing and lively topic of discussion in the cultural environments in which he had been educated and participated. We also see that already in the work of the epigones analogy was appealed to for discussing irregularities on various levels of the linguistic system, mostly in morphology: this thematization culminated in Varro's representation of two sides of a debate on analogy and anomaly in the treatise. In Varro's *Nachleben*, viewing analogy and anomaly as antithetical sides of the same subject became a standard way of treating morphological discussions, as testimonies as early as Gellius' show¹³³; but both

¹²⁵ GRF LUCIL. 32 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 98.

¹²⁶ Fr. 4 ap. MAR. VICTOR. ap. PRISC. pp. 13,27–14,18.

¹²⁷ Garcea (2012 p. 146).

¹²⁸ Fr. 24 ap. GELL. IV 16.

¹²⁹ Bacch. 6.

¹³⁰ Fr. 21 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 183, although it is not certain that the analogical proportion is part of the quotation. Caesar's prescription, in any case, seems to aim to standardise the inflection of masculine *ōn*-stems inasmuch as possible: see Garcea's commentary.

¹³¹ Fr. 13 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 152.

¹³² Fr. 31 ap. PRISC. p. 239,1–11.

¹³³ See §3.2.3.c.

PART 3 – ANALOGY AND ANOMALY

before Varro and in his writings, the concept of analogy played different roles when used in different contexts.

The same is true for anomaly.

3.2. Anomaly

If the long history of analogy, how it emerged and changed through its application in various branches of knowledge, can be and has been retraced through its various metamorphoses, the meaning of ἀνωμαλία is clouded in more obscurity. The surviving attestations of the word span a variety of contexts where it takes different semantic shades of the idea of “disorder” and “irregularity”. Its most prominent applications before Chrysippus are found in the fields of medicine, where it means “disfunction” or “ailment”,¹³⁴ and natural sciences, where the term occurs in several authors. Aristotle, in particular, used it systematically in his writings on the practical sciences to talk about the “irregularity” of various kinds of motion,¹³⁵ the “lack of uniformity” in meteorological phenomena,¹³⁶ the “unevenness” of animals’ and humans’ voices and organs.¹³⁷ Theophrastus later adopted the term and made it part of his own scientific vocabulary as well: the word is repeatedly used with reference to the “unevenness” of the soil¹³⁸ and also occurs *passim* in reference to plants in *Historia plantarum* and *De causis plantarum*. Epicurus also used ἀνωμαλία to describe the irregular motion of celestial bodies¹³⁹ and Zeno for the uneven ground.¹⁴⁰ Other notable uses are found in oratory (Aeschines accuses his opponent of “inconsistency”)¹⁴¹ and political philosophy (Aristotle discusses the “inequality” of property”).¹⁴²

The word is not recorded in association with language until Chrysippus himself, but what he meant by that concept is open to debate.

3.2.1. “Logical” anomaly: Chrysippus

It is reported that Chrysippus wrote three or four books *Περὶ τῆς κατὰ λέξεις ἀνωμαλίας*.¹⁴³ Varro (*ling.* IX 1) is the only source of the views exposed in the treatise, which he summarised as following: “When Chrysippus writes about the irregularity of speech [*de inaequabilitate sermonis*], he aims to show that similar things [*similes res*] are denoted/expressed [*notatas esse*] by/through

¹³⁴ HP. *Acut. (Sp.)* 8.54; DIOCL.MED. ap. GAL. *passim*.

¹³⁵ *Cael.* 288a 26–28; *GC* 336a 30–32; *Ph.* 228b 21.

¹³⁶ *Mete.* 369b 1–3, 377b 15.

¹³⁷ *GA* 788a 24–30; *Pr.* 900a 15; *HA* 495b 2–4.

¹³⁸ *Phys. op.* 12.

¹³⁹ *Ep. ad Phyt.* 113.4.

¹⁴⁰ Ap. PH. *aet. mundi* 23 (*SVF* I 106).

¹⁴¹ AESCHIN. *fals. legat.* 7.5.

¹⁴² ARIST. *Pol.* 1270a 15.

¹⁴³ D.L. VII 192.

different words [*dissimilibus verbis*] and different things [*dissimiles res*] by/through similar words [*similibus verbis*].

Scholars have diverged on how to interpret Varro's synthesis. The earliest hypotheses envisaged that Chrysippus' notion of anomaly described phenomena which, from a modern perspective, fall into the scope of lexical semantics: Barwick initially suggested that Chrysippus was thinking of homonymy (or polysemy) and synonymy,¹⁴⁴ but later endorsed Dahlmann's view that the word rather described the situations in which the signifier (φωνή) does not "match" the signified or meaning (σημαινόμενον),¹⁴⁵ i.e. it diverges from that pattern of natural correctness of names which we saw that can be ascribed to the early Stoics (§2.2.1.b). Opposing Dahlmann, Belardi argued that Chrysippus' *inaequabilitas* described the occasional breaches in the isomorphism between the expressions (λέξεις, the corporeal elements of language) and the φύσις.¹⁴⁶ This interpretation (especially judging from the examples that the scholar offers to clarify it)¹⁴⁷ seems, again, to be about polysemy and synonymy (therefore, as I understand it, similar to Barwick's initial hypothesis). Belardi's argument hinges on two elements: Varro's own terminology (*res*, which he takes to indicate the referents, vs. *verba*), and the fact that the catalogue of Chrysippus' writings (which Diogenes Laërtius arranged by philosophical areas) places the books on anomaly in the bibliographic section about the λέξεις, whereas the books on the σημαινόμενα, incorporeal elements, are all grouped together in another section. Both these premises, however, are weak: Varro uses *res* inconsistently to indicate sometimes the meaning of a word, sometimes its referent; and, although Belardi's observation about the catalogue is correct (indeed, the title of the work itself clarifies that it dealt with the anomalies "with respect to the expressions"), there is a limit to the information that one can draw from ancient catalogues.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Barwick (1922 p. 179): "wenn der gleiche Begriff durch verschiedene Lautbilder (Worte) wiedergegeben wird, oder wenn bisweilen dasselbe Wort verschiedenartige Begriffe ausdrückt".

¹⁴⁵ Dahlmann (1932 pp. 52–3), Barwick (1957 pp. 53–5). *Sic* also Matthaios (2020 p. 99).

¹⁴⁶ Belardi (1990).

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* (p. 7): "Là dove la natura presenta una classe di cose omogenee il linguaggio risponde sovente in modo eterogeneo (viene in mente il classico esempio aristotelico dell'osso di seppia, della lisca e della spina dorsale); là dove la natura presenta cose eterogenee il linguaggio può rispondere in modo omogeneo per non dire univoco (un esempio potrebbe essere τὸ μῆλον)".

¹⁴⁸ Barnes (1996) argued that, despite some imperfections, and with the caveat that not only Chrysippus' own production, but also the end of Diogenes' book VII, have gone lost, Diogenes' catalogue is overall a reliable and informative source of Chrysippus' logical writings. However, Barnes also pointed out (p. 177) that "ancient book-titles—even when they were not deliberately allusive or fanciful—do not invariably give exact information about the contents of the books to which they are affixed" (some titles were merely incipits, others were often too vague to make much of them). Therefore, while such titles can offer reliable support if they constitute part of a wider set of evidence, it can be risky to rest one's argument mainly on them.

It stands to reason that Chrysippus' main concern with anomaly would have been that it generates ambiguity. However, Varro's words could imply different kinds of ambiguity: indeed, *res verbis notare* could be understood either as "to denote" or "designate things by words" (stressing the direct match between two items, things and words) or as "to express things through words" (which implies, more broadly, translating thoughts into language). When put in the context of Chrysippus' doctrine of logic, it seems unlikely that what was at stake for him was the correlation between signifier and referent, or even meaning, as the interpretations above contend. For Chrysippus, the purpose of dialectic was to build arguments in the right way in order to tell the true from the false¹⁴⁹. Therefore, he was not particularly invested in individual lexemes; his interest concerning ambiguity would rather have been on propositions (ἄξιώματα),¹⁵⁰ that is, how to use language in a way that revealed the right λεκτά.¹⁵¹ The mismatch that is anomaly would have been between the speakers' thought-content (Varro's *res*) and their attempts to express them, and the latter must have implied complete sentences.¹⁵²

To defend this interpretation, one must reckon with two potential challenges. One is Gellius' famous statement that "Chrysippus says that every word is by nature ambiguous, because from the same word two or more things can be understood".¹⁵³ The contradiction can be dispelled by checking Gellius' testimony against a passage of Galen's which distinguishes two kinds of ambiguity due to homonymy¹⁵⁴: on the one hand, a word can take different meanings which are disambiguated by the context (e.g. ἀνδρεῖος means "for men" when referred to a shirt, and "brave" when referred to a man); on the other hand, a word always has at the same time a referential meaning (e.g. ἄνθρωπος designates "a man") and an autonymous meaning (ἄνθρωπος signifies a nomina-

¹⁴⁹ Dialectic was defined by the Stoics as: "the science of correct discussion with respect to discourses conducted by question and answer" (D.L. VII 41–43); "the science of things true, false, and neither" (D.L. VII 62; S.E. *M.* XI 187); "the science of speaking well, where by 'speak well' they mean to say what is true and appropriate" (ALEX.APHR. *in Top.* I 8–14).

¹⁵⁰ Propositions were defined precisely as "what is either true or false" (D.L. VII 65; GELL. XVI 8).

¹⁵¹ I am grateful to Marion Durand for discussing this subject with me: I owe much of this analysis to her insight.

¹⁵² Pinborg (1975 pp. 94–8) gave a similar interpretation, but which still bore on individual words: "We use privatives for positive facts and conversely [examples are given in SIMP. *in Cat.* VIII 395.9–396.10 (SVF II 177)]; we use sentences including but one word though complex in meaning, the subject being implicit in the verb [...]. The derivative words are only isomorphic with meanings as to the formal principles of change; they are no longer images of their corresponding meaning". *Sic* also Blank (1994 pp. 152–3).

¹⁵³ GELL. XI 12.1: *Chrysippus ait omne verbum ambiguum natura esse, quoniam ex eodem duo vel plura accipi possunt.*

¹⁵⁴ GAL. *soph.* XIV p. 595,13–16.

tive singular masculine). According to C. Atherton,¹⁵⁵ Chrysippus had recognised that autonymy affects every element of language, and this explains Gellius' claim.

A second element which would suggest narrowing the scope of Chrysippus' anomaly down to individual lexemes is Varro's use of the word *notatas*. *Notare* occurs in other places in *De lingua Latina* with reference to the act of *impositio nominum*.¹⁵⁶ *Notatio*, as we already mentioned (§2.2.1.c), was also Cicero's translation for ἐτυμολογία in the *Topica*, explicitly aimed at reflecting Aristotle's words about names being σύμβολα for things. But perhaps, in Varro's testimony, words are brought into play in a looser sense than what a one-for-one correlation would imply: that is, the words that we use to build propositions. After all, even in Aristotle's passage the words themselves and their relation to the named things are not the main focus, but part of an argument on what distinguishes reasonings (συλλογισμοί) from refutations (ἐλεγχοί).

Therefore, Varro's report of Chrysippus' thesis can be read as essentially equivalent to "similar λεκτά are expressed through different propositions and different λεκτά through similar propositions". Such a notion pertains to logic and the intersection between reason and language: it is not a grammatical or even, strictly speaking, a purely linguistic notion. The same can be said of Varro's quotation of Chrysippus' in book X,¹⁵⁷ which has a very generic bearing, but it is cited in support of Varro's own grammatical argument.

As we saw many times (including with the *principia rerum* at the foundation of Varro's etymologies, §2.3.1), Varro gladly appealed to philosophical authorities and grounded his etymological or grammatical theories in metaphysical or physical frameworks, but that does not mean that he made such sources linguistic authorities when they were not. On the one hand, this strikes as an exercise of (unsystematic) doxography, as well as a nod to Varro's cultivated readership. But since Varro endeavoured to integrate these principles into—in fact, to make them the foundations of—the theories he endorsed, it is well possible that his philosophical upbringing truly shaped his interest in linguistics and other studies, and that to legitimise their validity with a philosophical pedigree was his genuine desire beyond a literary practice.

¹⁵⁵ Atherton (1993 pp. 273–304).

¹⁵⁶ E.g. *ling.* VII 110, VIII 7.

¹⁵⁷ X 59: *Nam nonnunquam alterum ex altero videtur, ut Chrysippus scribit, quemadmodum pater ex filio et filius ex patre, neque minus in fornicibus propter sinistram dextra stat quam propter dextram sinistra.* ("For sometimes two things can be seen from each other, as Chrysippus writes, like a father from the son and the son from the father, and in arches the right-hand side stands because of the left- no less than the left-hand side from the right-").

3.2.2. “Structural” anomaly: book VIII

Even when the meanings associated with the concept of anomaly (irregularity, unevenness, disruption of order) were applied to the field of language, there were different ways of framing this phenomenon. The kind of linguistic anomaly represented in *De lingua Latina* VIII is underpinned by a radical theoretical stance which sees irreconcilable contradictions and irregularities at the very foundation and basic structure of language.

The traditional interpretation of the controversy represented in books VIII–IX is that the objections against analogy in book VIII are the reported point of view of Crates, Pergamenean scholar of Stoic inspiration. But the identification of Crates as this source can be and has been challenged on multiple accounts (see §3.2.3.c). For now, let us consider the case against analogy as it is presented.

On the surface, the point-by-point discussion in books VIII–IX revolves around specific questions of regular or irregular morphology: why do not all nouns or adjectives have different endings for all three genders and two numbers? Why is derivational morphology unpredictable? Why do some nouns or verbs change in their stem in the course of their inflection? Why do some verbs have reduplication in the perfect and others do not?

But the underlying conflict implied is broader and more significant than that. The anomalists of book VIII do not merely question individual morphological rules, but radically reject the possibility that predictable, productive, and recursive rules can apply to language at all.¹⁵⁸ This is clear, firstly, from the fact that the individual cases discussed are not presented as specific points of objection, but as representative samples of systemic non-uniformity: for instance, the problem is not so much that *i*-stems have the ablative sometimes in *-e* and sometimes in *-i* (already a point of contention in discussions on analogy, as we saw), but that this allegedly proves that analogy does not exist at all, otherwise “no case should be said in two ways” (§66). Secondly, the wider breadth of the anomalist position emerges from some arguments which target not specific rules but the foundational idea of structuring language according to rules. The anomalists open their case with the assertion that “speech as a whole must be aimed at usefulness” (§26), i.e. mutual understanding in communication; and since the observation of common usage (*consuetudo*) alone is sufficient to meet that goal, it follows that the prescriptions of analogy are of no use (§§27, 33).¹⁵⁹ Further-

¹⁵⁸ See Blank (2005 p. 211).

¹⁵⁹ This idea was nicely summarised by Desbordes (2007 p. 99): “si la règle est conforme à l’usage, elle est inutile ; si elle est contraire à l’usage, elle est fausse”.

more, the anti-analogists point out that the criteria for the definition of similarity are all but clear and the analogists themselves have a hard time explaining them (§§39–41). They also accuse analogy of ineffectiveness, because the application of its principles often does not bring about the promised outcomes (§67).

Interpreting these arguments, we can gather, firstly, that what the anomalists of book VIII mean when they talk about “analogy” is not the technical meaning derived from mathematics and applied by the Alexandrians: they do not object to solving grammatical problems through analogical proportions—excepting one mention to an Aristarchean argument in which we can read a proportion between the lines (§43, see §3.2.3.b–c). But for the most part, they target a concept of analogy that is closer to the systemic regularity that we shall discuss below (§3.3.1): the idea that morphology is a uniform system, based on patterns similar to one another. Secondly, we gather that what is meant by “anomaly” is that linguistic phenomena answer to no other criteria than what is contingently useful and effective to achieve clarity in conversations: they are therefore unpredictable and necessarily give way to irregularity.

D. Blank has convincingly shown that these arguments against analogy resemble the documented attacks which followed the emergence and development of various τέχναι from the fifth century BCE on.¹⁶⁰ We already touched on this subject in §2.1.2, concerning the polemic that certain philosophers moved against rhetoric (criticised as unnecessary and unsuccessful) and which, as I suggested, Varro repurposed antiphrastically for the art of etymology. Similar criticism is documented for other τέχναι as well: specifically, it was demanded that a τέχνη be *useful* for ordinary life, *efficient*, and founded on *principles which could be explained and taught*.¹⁶¹ Moreover, as the development of the τέχναι in the mid-third century brought about an empirical reaction to excessive rationalisation,¹⁶² we find Epicurean and Pyrrhonian sources demanding, in addition to the above, that the τέχναι be *founded on empirical observation* (τήρησις) of the phenomena.¹⁶³ These

¹⁶⁰ Blank (1998 pp. xvii–xxxiv). In this century we find the earliest attestations of τέχναι such as the μαντική (A. Pr. 484; S. Ant. 1034; HDT. II 49, 83), ιατρική (HDT. II 84, III 129), ναυτική (HDT. VIII 1), ιππική (AR. Nu. 27), μουσική (Pl. O. 1.15). An eloquent source of the attacks on the τέχναι is Hippocrates: as he put it in *de Arte* 1, Εἰσὶ τινες οἱ τέχνην πεποιήνται τὸ τὰς τέχνας αἰσχροπεῖν.

¹⁶¹ These requirements can be drawn from sources defending a certain τέχνη from denigrating attacks, such as Hippocrates defending the art of medicine in *de Arte* I 9–14. These ideas are also eloquently expanded on by Sextus Empiricus concerning grammar in *M.* I 176–240.

¹⁶² See e.g. Hp. *prisc. med.* 20.

¹⁶³ Although, as Blank clarified (pp. xxxiii–iv), “we must be careful to distinguish Pyrrhonian passages from those of Epicurean inspiration when seeking information from *M.* 1–6, we can derive from Sextus some understanding of sceptical requirements on disciplines”; for the requirement about empirical observation, see *M.* I 55.

requirements are precisely what Varro's anti-analogists denounce as lacking in the theory of analogy. Furthermore, in book VIII we also find the use of a particular rhetorical strategy employed by sceptical sources to undermine the authority of those who claim expertise in a τέχνη: stressing the disagreement among its advocates (*argumentum e diaphonia*).¹⁶⁴

The comparisons with Sextus Empiricus' criticism of the art of grammar reveal cogent similarities with these objections, even in how they are phrased.¹⁶⁵ It is telling that Sextus himself, in his critique, conflates the rule of analogy with the art of Hellenism, just like the anomalists in book VIII make all-encompassing statements about what the criteria for good Latin are.¹⁶⁶

The conflict played out in books VIII–IX, then, must be framed as one of the controversies around the τέχνη: the fundamental question is whether an art of grammar should exist at all. Since, in comparable controversies, it was authors aligned with sceptical attitudes who sourced arguments against the validity of τέχνη (such as Pyrrhonians or Epicureans, but also what was the prevailing trend in the Academy in the third and second centuries), the anomalists of book VIII should be ranked among them as well. To quote Blank:

“the analogist side [the party voiced in book IX] was technical and rationalist, maintaining that language was a rationally ordered system which could be described and understood through precise rules allowing the solution of questions which might arise in the course of reading, writing and interpreting. The empiricist side [the party voiced in book VIII] argued that no complex expertise of grammar could exist, that the rules of technical grammar were incoherent, and that all one needed was the ability to observe common usage and model one's own linguistic practice on that”.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Blank (1998 p. xxxviii). The disagreement among the proponents of analogy must have been decried in the missing section at the end of book VIII as one can gather from the pro-analogy response in IX 111: *De eo quod in priore libro extremum est, ideo non esse analogiam, quod qui de ea scripserint aut inter se non convenient aut in quibus convenient ea cum consuetudinis discrepent verbis, utrumque est leve*. The fact that this attack did not specifically target grammar, but all the τέχνη (artes), is made explicit in the continuation of the same passage: *Sic enim omnis repudiandum erit artis, quod et in medicina et in musica et in aliis multis discrepant scriptores*.

¹⁶⁵ M. I 176–213. A few examples: (§179) “If the grammarians promise to transmit some kind of expertise [τέχνη] which they call ‘analogy’ [...] we must show that this expertise is incoherent, and those who want to speak correctly must attend the non-expert, simple observation [ἄτεχνος καὶ ἀφελὴς παρατήρησις] which is appropriate to everyday life and in accordance with the common usage of the majority”; (§181) “Usage [συνήθεια] becomes the criterion of what is Greek and what is un-Greek, and not some expertise of Hellenism”; (§191) “we do not need grammar to speak good Greek”; (§193) “observation of common usage [παρατήρησις τῆς κοινῆς συνηθείας] is useful for speaking good Greek, but not analogy. Transl. Blank. The fact that “many of the same arguments as the ‘anomalist’ in Varro's *De lingua Latina*” are found in Sextus Empiricus “to refute the possibility of grammatical science” had been already noticed by Pinborg (1975 p. 109) and adumbrated by De Marco (1957 p. 141).

¹⁶⁶ Also noticed by De Marco (1957 pp. 131–2).

¹⁶⁷ Blank (2005 p. 212). Already Mette (1952), had reframed the controversy as an opposition between τέχνη and ἐμπειρία, but he had identified the empiricist of book VIII with Crates. See the most recent take by Matthaios (2020).

Therefore, we can call the anomaly represented in book VIII “structural”, because it opposed the foundation of grammar as a τέχνη. This notion of anomaly is radical and, although it engages with the content of individual grammatical rules to make its point, it is the structure of the system of rules that is really targeted.

3.2.3. *Grammatical anomaly: Aristarchus and Crates*

a. Alexandria and Pergamum

Before we delve into the most problematic part of the controversy (the role of Crates), we should address long-standing postulations about the background of the alleged controversy between Aristarchus and Crates. The traditional narrative is underpinned by, and finds confirmation in, the idea that the cultural hubs of Alexandria and Pergamum were rivals. There is evidence—albeit not abundant—that there were contacts between the two centres, and it can be assumed that books could circulate quite easily between them¹⁶⁸; but the extent to which this interaction and competition involved ideological contrasts is debated.

For a long time, scholars worked on the assumption that the pioneering thoughts on language of Aristotle and the Stoics had led to the development, in the Hellenistic age, of two different conceptions of grammar: one held by the Stoics and inherited by the scholars of Pergamum, the other held by those of Alexandria. This belief began to be challenged around the mid-1950s, with the work of Fehling on the Alexandrians and of Di Benedetto on the *Techne* attributed to Dionysius Thrax.¹⁶⁹ Nowadays, most scholars in this field accept the historiographic thesis that Pinborg summarised some time later as following:

“The grammatical theory of Greece as we know it from the extant technical literature is a product of grammarians who use the observations of their predecessors and incorporate them into *one* grammatical system. We do not find different versions of Greek grammar: e.g., a Stoic-Pergamenic one which is at the base of Roman grammar, and an Alexandrian one, most perfectly embodied in the *Techne* of Dionysios, or an analogistic versus an anomalistic grammar, but we find one single grammatical science with uniform methods and a uniform approach to language, which is basically different from philosophical grammar.”¹⁷⁰

Indeed, such uniformity of methods can be appreciated when one considers how Aristarchus and Crates worked as editors. Although the amount of evidence for the two scholars is disproportional,

¹⁶⁸ Schironi (2018 pp. 584–5).

¹⁶⁹ Fehling (1956, 1957); Di Benedetto (1958).

¹⁷⁰ Pinborg (1975 p. 110).

tionate, the little extant material on Crates is sufficient to note that some of the typical features of the Alexandrian methods can be found in his work too, such as the close attention to Homer's *usus*¹⁷¹ and the use of athetesis in the editorial practice; both scholars resorted to etymology as an interpretative tool, as we saw above,¹⁷² and made comparisons between Homer and other authors.¹⁷³ It has also been suggested that both scholars used analogy,¹⁷⁴ but this claim requires further analysis (§3.2.3.c).

On the other hand, while the two groups of scholars shared similar exegetical methods and ideas about language, there were divergences. We know that both Parmeniscus and Dionysius Thrax wrote books *Against Crates*, although all we can tell from the only two attestations of these books is that they discussed some Homeric passages where Aristarchus' pupils reported their teacher's readings which differed from Crates'.¹⁷⁵ More in general, Crates was apparently less focused on strictly linguistic and grammatical issues and more invested in an interpretation of the Homeric poems in light of Stoic philosophy,¹⁷⁶ something we mentioned concerning his use of etymology; this is reflected by the well-known report of Crates proudly defining himself as a κριτικός, that is someone who approaches literary texts "with expertise of the whole range of the language science", in contrast with a γραμματικός, who only has knowledge of matters of accentuation and glosses.¹⁷⁷ This difference in focus seems to have been a general trait of the Pergamenean scholars and the most significant source of disagreement with the Alexandrians, of which we find further testimonies when we look beyond Crates. Herodicus of Babylon, who was at Pergamum not long after Crates,¹⁷⁸ wrote an eloquent epigram¹⁷⁹ where he urged the Aristarcheans to "abandon Hellas", which has been taken to mean metonymically ἑλληνισμός, the study of the Greek language. The Aristarcheans are mocked for being μονοσύλλαβοι ("narrow-minded scholars") and for the limited scope of their interest, focused on grammatical minutiae ("obsessed with σφίν and σφῶιν, μίν and νίν"). As has been noticed, Herodicus here refers to precise, documented

¹⁷¹ CRATES fr. 33, 35, 69.

¹⁷² Fr. 23. See §2.2.1.d.

¹⁷³ Fr. 30.

¹⁷⁴ Schironi (2004 pp. 453–4).

¹⁷⁵ PARMEN. fr. 2; D.T. fr. 15. In both fragments, Aristarchus is explicitly presented as Crates' adversary.

¹⁷⁶ Crates is defined as a φιλόσοφος Στωϊκός in the *Suidas* and Della Corte (1981 p. 20 n1) suggested that he learnt the doctrine of this philosophy from Diogenes of Babylon, who was teaching in Athens at the time when Crates was there (*FGrHist* 362 fr. 6–11). See also Calboli (2011).

¹⁷⁷ Fr. 94 ap. S.E. *M.* I 79. See Broggiato (2001 pp. xxviii, 249–50) and Schironi (2018 pp. 744–9).

¹⁷⁸ See HERODIC. TT 2, 3, 5, 6 in Broggiato (2014), with her introduction to the author and commentary.

¹⁷⁹ Fr. 1. On this epigram, see also De Martino (1997) and Manetti (2002).

grammatical observations of Aristarchus and his school.¹⁸⁰ The scope of such quarrels does not quite justify elevating the contrast between κριτικοί and γραμματικοί to an unbreachable barrier between the two centres, but it does expose an ideological difference with systematic repercussions on their scholarly activities.

To sum up, on the one hand, the infamous opposition between Alexandria and Pergamum has been reframed: the authors who worked in these two cultural hubs did not hold contrasting ideas of grammar, but applied the principles of the same τέχνη. This will be an important factor in the assessment of Crates' role. On the other hand, recent literature has emphasised that a difference of focus and goals in the scholarly activities of the two centres existed and was actively expressed in a mutual polemic.

So far so good. However, from this fact it does not follow that Aristarchus and Crates personally polemicised with one another. Schironi recently argued that even the fact that they knew each other's work should not be taken for granted¹⁸¹; concerning this matter, while it is true that Varro is the only source who explicitly says that at least one of the two replied to the other, I see no reason to doubt the authenticity of his testimony. But, again, this fact alone does not support the multi-layered architecture of assumptions that have often been made about Crates' and Aristarchus' respective ideological positions.

The Alexandrians and the Pergamenians or the Stoics come up in association fairly frequently throughout *De lingua Latina*, but that they emerge as antagonists is a subjective interpretation. The passage on the *quattuor gradus* of etymological analysis (V 7–9) accounts for both the grammatical and the philosophical approaches to etymology, but they are integrated as complementary and related to different kinds of words to analyse; furthermore, the Pergamenians would have held sort of a bridging position between those two approaches. In VI 2 (as seen in §2.3.2.b), Varro quotes Stoic philosophers (Chrysippus and Antipater) and Alexandrian philologists (Aristophanes and Apollodorus) as authorities for his etymologies, but the two sides are not cast as opposites, nor is it implied that they were adversaries because they had different etymological methods. Varro was simply citing his sources, and the Stoics and the Alexandrians were two of the main

¹⁸⁰ E.g. ARISTARCH. fr. 108–110, 116B Matthaios.

¹⁸¹ Schironi (2018 pp. 584–91): “while there is no secure evidence that Crates knew about Aristarchus' work, the Alexandrian might have been aware of Crates' work on Homer, provided that Aristonicus [in the scholia where he mentions Crates] reports only what he read in Aristarchus' *hypomnema*. This does not mean that Crates did not know about Aristarchus' work—there is simply no secure evidence of that”. Schironi excludes Varro's testimony from what counts as “secure evidence”.

traditions which developed principles of etymology in parallel in the Hellenistic Age; their methods had differences, but Varro did not even seem to be entirely aware of them, as we saw in §2.3. One final instance: in X 55 (discussing which research methodology is more effective at a conceptual level, to proceed from smaller to bigger scale or the other way around), Varro ranks the natural philosophers (*physici*) and the grammarians (*grammatici*) together as classes of savants who both start from the subject-matter as a whole (*omnis natura* the former, *oratio* the latter) and only get into the particulars at a later stage (*principia mundi* the former, *litterae* the latter).

With this background, let us take a closer look at the roles of Aristarchus and Crates in Varro's books on the polemic.

b. Aristarchus

The concept of anomaly is never discussed as such in Aristarchus' fragments, but he certainly paid attention to instances of grammatical irregularity: notably metaplasm, when certain nominal or verbal forms diverge from regular patterns of inflection. We saw some examples in §3.1.1.a. In E 299, Aeneas jumps in battle "like a lion who trusts his might" (λέων ὥς ἀλκὶ πεποιθώς): the regular dative singular of ἀλκή ("might") should be ἀλκῇ, not ἀλκί.¹⁸² But Aristarchus is said to have defended this form by reference to *usus*: that, since in Homer and Hesiod other first-declension nouns are sometimes inflected as third-declension nouns, the aberrant dative is acceptable.¹⁸³ Similarly, in Π 354, the Danaans are compared to sheep who "were scattered about" and the second aorist passive, third person plural is διέτμαγεν instead of the expected διετμάγησαν, which Aristarchus defended this form by reference to another similar morphological usage.¹⁸⁴ The scholar then athetized the line K 84a because the transmitted form, οὐρήων, means "of the mules" (from οὐρεύς), and Aristarchus believed that an interpolator had written it mistakenly, wanting to say "of the sentinels"; but the Homeric word for that is οὔρος, inflected as κοῦρος ("boy"), therefore, the correct genitive plural should be οὔρων.

These cases show a recourse to analogy to discuss potential cases of anomaly. Two elements are noteworthy in Aristarchus' method: first, it confirms that his constant benchmark was not an independent grammatical framework, but Homer's *usus*, of which he was an expert. This squares

¹⁸² Herodian explained (Sch. Hom. ad E 299b): ἀλκί ὥς σαρκί, καὶ ἔστι κατὰ μεταπλάσμον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀλκή ("[the form] ἀλκί [is] like σαρκί by metaplasm from ἀλκή"). Σαρκί is the regular dative of σάρξ ("flesh").

¹⁸³ See n38.

¹⁸⁴ See n39.

with Varro’s words in IX 1: “when Aristarchus writes about regularity and the similarity of words, he bids the inflection follow a certain similarity insofar as usage allows it”.

The second notable aspect is that, before pronouncing an unexpected form as incorrect, Aristarchus scrupulously considered all the attested forms of the word’s inflection, not just the occurrence at issue. The awareness that comparisons must be made between words considered as whole paradigms rather than between individual forms is another way of saying that the two *comparanda* in an analogical proportion must share a number of features: the *rationes analogiae* discussed in §3.1.1.a which had supported the doctrine of grammatical analogy ever since Aristophanes.

This awareness on the part of Aristarchus is also attested by Varro in three passages. In VIII 68 (a passage we shall analyse more thoroughly in the next section) and its reply in IX 91, Aristarchus is quoted as having said that, although the three names *Philomedēs*, *Heraclidēs*, and *Melicertēs* appear to be similar (all ending in *-ēs*), looking at their vocatives (*Philomedēs*, *Heraclidē*, and *Melicertā*) reveals that they are not. In IX 43, the analogists reply to an objection that “Aristarchus [...] prescribe[d] that one ought to verify that two nouns are similar not just on the basis of the nominative, but also of the vocative”,¹⁸⁵ which may well refer to the same example of *Philomedēs Heraclidēs Melicertēs* (although we cannot rule out that Aristarchus made the same argument about other nouns). Aristarchus’ quote is another way of saying that, by looking at different inflected forms of the same word, one can ascertain whether they follow the same pattern (and therefore can be compared through analogy) or not: the same thing cannot be divined from a single form. Φιλομέδης -ους is a third-declension εσ-stem, while Ἡρακλείδης -ου and Μελικέρτης -ου are both first-declension masculine ᾱ-stems, which normally end in -η in the vocative, but nouns in -της make a sub-group of their own, differing only in the vocative singular. This argument implies an advancement from the doctrine of *rationes analogiae* as transmitted by the sources. *Philomedēs Heraclidēs Melicertēs* meet all the conditions listed by Aristarchus according to Charisius: they share the same gender, case, ending, number of syllables, accent (they are paroxytone), and are all simple nouns. The one condition—missing from the catalogue as transmitted—by virtue of which the three nouns cannot be compared analogically is that they belong to different inflectional classes (although not all equally distant from one another), and Varro attests that Aristarchus recognised this fact.

¹⁸⁵ The passage is reported in full in §3.2.2.a.

This passage poses the greatest challenges in the reconstruction of Crates' role in the controversy, and especially how to interpret the beginning of book IX.

c. Crates

What were Crates' ideas of analogy and anomaly and what was his role, if any, in the controversy displayed in books VIII–IX?

We know considerably less about Crates than we do about Aristarchus¹⁸⁶: the gist of little information available already came up in the analysis so far. To recap: we know that the two were leading figures at Pergamum and Alexandria at around the same time, although the evidence that they actively wrote about one another's work essentially boils down to Varro. At Pergamum, Crates worked as an editor and critic much in the same way as the scholars in Alexandria did (he wrote commentaries on various ancient authors and was so renowned as a Homeric scholar that he was called Ὅμηρικός), but he was more invested in the allegorical and philosophical interpretation of the texts compared to the Alexandrians. And we know that the philosophical system that most reflected his ideas and through whose filter he interpreted Homer was Stoicism.

As scarce information as this is, it is sufficient to corroborate Blank's thesis that the anomalist position defended in Varro's book VIII (which we called "structural anomaly") could not have been sourced from Crates, contrary to the traditional interpretation of these books.¹⁸⁷ Those anti-analogists maintain that correct speech is only attained by empirical observation of usage, which fluctuates and inevitably brings about unevenness and diversity in the structures of language; that language cannot and should not be restricted by prescriptive rules, because these can only be insufficient, ineffective, and self-contradictory. Crates could not have got behind such a stance either as a Stoic or as a grammarian. While the Stoics—arguably the rationalists *par excellence* in the Hellenistic philosophical landscape—admitted that rational rules could be transgressed by humans who strayed from the path of virtue, we cannot deny that they had faith that such rules existed and governed all aspects of human life, including language. Furthermore, the idea that irregularities can and should be amended by means of human-crafted rational devices is among the foundations of Stoicism.¹⁸⁸ Finally, even the concept of anomaly that we attributed to Chrysippus

¹⁸⁶ On Crates' life and works, see Broggiato (2001 pp. vii–xlviii).

¹⁸⁷ Blank defended this thesis in various contributions (1982, 1994, 1998, 2005). I am grateful to the author for further discussing his ideas with me.

¹⁸⁸ Artificial objects, crafted by men to suit their needs, are included in the Stoic *scala naturae* (S.E. *M.* IX 78–80). Moreover, the Stoics contended that the entire cosmos had been providentially created for people's

is very different from the anomaly of book VIII: not only because it operates on a different level (logic in a broader sense, not grammar), but because it defines a sporadic phenomenon of disturbance in the expression of λεκτά through language, not the absence of order or structure of any kind in language. It remains to be clarified in what way Crates, as Varro says in IX 1, had misunderstood Chrysippus' conception of anomaly. As for Crates being a grammarian (a *nobilis grammaticus*, as Varro describes him), the scholars of Pergamum relied on specific methods and principles to guide them in their editorial work as much as the Alexandrians. It is difficult to envisage how Crates could have analysed an ancient text, argued for the athetesis of a section, decided on the spelling or accentuation of a word, reconstructed etymologies, and chosen one transmitted form over another without abiding by rational and recursive rules, and only paying attention to common (let alone contemporary) usage in speech.¹⁸⁹

Notwithstanding this incompatibility, and even when the affinity between book VIII and sceptical-empirical writings was recognised, the traditional interpretation of the controversy often prevailed: Mette even wanted to attribute to Crates all the passages in *Against the grammarians* where Sextus inveighs against analogy.¹⁹⁰ Yet Sextus himself ranks the Alexandrians and Pergame-nians together when he clarifies (§§45–56) that his criticism of grammar targets not “the general expertise of writing and reading” (which he calls γραμματιστική “grammatic” and judges a most useful thing), but “the complete grammar worked out by the followers of Crates of Mallos and Aristophanes”.

But if neither Chrysippus' idea of anomaly nor the one expounded in book VIII can be projected onto Crates, there is not a great number of alternative sources to turn to for information. The only surviving explicit mentions of “analogy” and “anomaly” with reference to Crates are *ling.* IX 1 (which, as we saw, almost leaves out more than what it says) and a testimony from Gellius¹⁹¹:

In Latino sermone, sicut in Graeco, alii ἀναλογίαν sequendam putaverunt, alii ἀνωμαλίαν. Ἀναλογία est similitudo similis declinatio, quam quidam Latine ‘proportionem’ vocant. Ἀνωμαλία est inaequalitas declinationum consuetudinem sequens. Duo autem Graeci grammatici illustres Aristarchus et Crates summa ope, ille ἀναλογίαν, hic ἀνωμαλίαν defensavit.

In the matter of speaking Latin, just like of speaking Greek, some maintained that analogy, others anomaly, was to be observed. Analogy is when similar things follow the same inflec-

sake, and even that nature itself tended to adapt to meet the requirements of humans (as is amply illustrated by “Balbus” in *Cic. nat. deor.* II).

¹⁸⁹ See Siebenborn (1976 pp. 129–32).

¹⁹⁰ Mette (1952). *Contra De Marco* (1957 pp. 134–5, 147).

¹⁹¹ CRATES fr. 105 ap. GELL. II 25.1–4.

tion; some call it *proportio* in Latin. Anomaly is the irregularity of inflection which follows common usage. Two illustrious Greek grammarians, Aristarchus and Crates, strongly endorsed, the former analogy, the latter anomaly.

The problem with this testimony is that its source is strongly debated. Fehling, convinced that Gellius tended to use single sources for each chapter in his *Noctes Atticae*,¹⁹² maintained that the passage was nothing but a blend of excerpts from Varro's books VIII and especially IX, merged together by Gellius who inferred—inaccurately—a certain meaning from them.¹⁹³ If this hypothesis is correct, then this testimony naturally cannot be used to shed light on the same passages on which it is based. The “one chapter, one source” idea for Gellius has been revisited and ultimately refuted in recent years, in favour of a more generous portrait of Gellius as a learned scholar who drew on a multitude of authorities¹⁹⁴; on this understanding, we cannot rule out that some pre-existing knowledge of the debate informed Gellius' testimony. However, concerning this particular *locus*, it is hard to counter Fehling.

Then we have two *loci* (fr. 102–103) where Crates is evoked in the context of the discussion on analogy in book VIII: and since we established that the *pars destruens* in that book builds up on a doctrine that does not square with Crates, one has to explain why he is mentioned there.

The first mention is embedded in an argument against the regularity of the system of nominal inflection (§§63–65):

(63) Relinquitur de casibus, in quo Aristarchei suos contendunt nervos. Primum si in his esse[n]t analogia, dicunt debuisse omnis nominat[i]v[o]s et articulos habere totidem casus; nunc alios habere unum solum, ut litteras singulas omnes, alios tris, ut *praedium*, *praedii*, *praedio*, alios quattuor, ut *mel*, *mellis*, *melli*, *melle*, alios quinque, ut *quintus*, *quinti*, *quinto*, *quintum*, *quinte*, alios sex, ut *unus*, *unius*, *uni*, *unum*, *une*, *uno*; non esse ergo in casibus analogias. (64) Secundo quod Crates. cur quae singulos habent casus. ut litterae Graecae. non dicantur *alpha*, *alphati*, *alphatos*, si idem mihi responderetur quod Crateti, non esse[nt] vocabula nostra, sed penitus barbara, qu(a)eram, cur idem nostra nomina et Persarum et ceterorum quos vocant barbaros cum casibus dica(n)t.

(63) It is left to discuss cases, in which the Aristarcheans exert their energies. Firstly, if there were analogy in these, they say that all nouns and articles [i.e. pronouns] should have the same number of cases. But some have only one, like all the letters; others three, like *praedium* (nom./acc./voc.) *praedii* (gen.) *praedio* (dat./abl.) (“farm”); others four, like *mel* (nom./acc./voc.) *mellis* (gen.) *melli* (dat.) *melle* (abl.) (“honey”); others five, like *quintus* (nom.) *quinti* (gen.) *quinto* (dat./abl.) *quintum* (acc.) *quinte* (voc.) (“fifth”); others six, like

¹⁹² Fehling (1956 pp. 223–4).

¹⁹³ In particular, the section *Duo autem... defensitavit* reads like a paraphrase of *ling.* IX 1. Fehling's hypothesis was also endorsed by Maselli (1979) and Taylor (1986 p. 181).

¹⁹⁴ See especially Holford-Strevens (2005 pp. 65–80). See also Howley (2018), who emphasised the active and interpretative nature of Gellius' reading of his sources.

unus (nom.) *unius* (gen.) *uni* (dat.) *unum* (acc.) *une* (voc.) *uno* (abl.) (“only one”). Therefore, there is no analogy in cases. (64) Secondly, because Crates [asked] why those which have a single case, like the Greek letters, are not said *alpha* (nom.) *alphati* (dat.) *alphatos* (gen.), if I receive the same reply as Crates (that those are not our words, but utterly foreign), I shall ask why the same people inflect our proper names and those of the Persians and of all the others that they call foreign.

This is no account of a polemic between Aristarchus and Crates. I shall expound below (§3.3.2.a) why the “Aristarcheans” who “exert their energies” in the topic of cases are more likely to refer to first-century epigones than Aristarchus and his colleagues; but neither is there any indication that the objection that not all nouns have “the same number of cases” (meaning case-forms) was voiced by Crates. All we are told regarding Crates in this passage is that he inquired why the letters of the alphabet are not inflected: this could have been part of an argument “against analogy and Aristarchus”, but it could also have been a stand-alone observation or part of a completely different argument for all we know. As for the reply to Crates’ doubt, one suspects that it came not from an Alexandrian scholar, but a later source: writings like Trypho’s *On analogy in monosyllables* attest that discussions on whether certain categories of words were exempt from analogy were ongoing in the first century. Overall, the entire passage seems to report a first-century discussion in which Crates is evoked at some point as a source who commented on the topic of letters, rather than an actual exchange between Crates and other scholars. At any rate, it gives little information on what Crates thought about analogy and anomaly.

The second *locus* (§§68–69) presents a more difficult case. The context is the argument that, “if there were analogy, similar words should give similar results in their inflections; but since it can be demonstrated that this does not happen, this rule must be dismissed” (§67).¹⁹⁵ The anomalists proceed to give examples showing that “similar” words are not inflected in the same way. One of these examples provides the chance to call into question the criteria to consider two or more words as “similar”, and here we find both Crates and Aristarchus mentioned. We already looked at Aristarchus’ quotation in the previous section; let us now consider the whole passage:

(68) Sic item quoniam simile est recto casu *surus*, *lupus*, *lepus*, rogant quor non dicatur pro portione[m] item *suro*, *lupo*, *lepo*. Sin respondeatur similia non esse, quod ea vocemus dissimiliter *sure*, *lupe*, *lepus* (sic enim respondere voluit Aristarchus Crateti; nam cum scripsisset similia esse *Philomedes*, *Heraclides*, *Melicertes*, dixit non esse similia, in vocando
5 enim cum ⟨E⟩ brevi dici *Philomede(s)*, cum E longo *Heraclide*, cum ⟨A⟩ brevi *Melicerta*), in hoc

¹⁹⁵ Item cum, si sit analogia, debeant ab similibus verbis similiter declinatis similia fieri et id non fieri ostendi possit, despiciendam eam esse rationem. The infinitives depend on an implied *dicunt* which refers to the anti-analogists.

dicunt Aristarchum non intellexisse quod qu(a)ereretur se non solvere[t]. (69) Sic enim, ut quicque in obliquis casibus discrepavit, dicere potuit propter eam rem rectos casus non esse similis; quom quaeratur duo inter se similia sint necne, non debere extrinsecus adsum(i) cur similia sunt.

(68) Likewise, since *surus* (“stake”), *lupus* (“wolf”), and *lepus* (“hare”) are similar in the nominative, they [*scil.* the anomalists] ask why one does not say, analogically, *suro*, *lupo*, and ***lepo* [in the dative or ablative] in the same way. But if one were to reply that those words are not similar, because we inflect them differently in the vocative, *sure lupe lepus* (this is how Aristarchus wanted to reply to Crates; when he [*scil.* Crates] wrote that *Philomedes*, *Heraclides*, and *Melicertes* are similar, he [*scil.* Aristarchus] wrote that they are not similar: for, in the vocative, *Philomedēs* has a short *E*, *Heraclidē* has a long *E*, *Melicertā* has a short *A*), they say that Aristarchus did not understand that he was not solving what he was being asked. (69) In this way, in fact, when there was a difference in the oblique cases, he [*scil.* Aristarchus] was able to say¹⁹⁶ that, for that reason, the nominatives were not similar. When one wants to know whether two things are similar, he [i.e. Crates?]/they [i.e. the anomalists] argued, one must not take the thing by virtue of which they are similar from the outside.

The entanglement of reported statements and implied subjects in this text makes it difficult to make out who said what; but it seems that here, too, there are different quotations to distinguish. The first two lines (*Sic... lepo*) give a bona fide argument for the case that morphology is irregular, similar to a point made by Sextus Empiricus.¹⁹⁷ Crates’ quotation begins at line 3 (*cum scripsisset*): we learn that it was Crates who had stated that *Philomedes*, *Heraclides*, and *Melicertes* were similar and that Aristarchus had responded by pointing out that they had different vocatives (as discussed above in §b). The following assertion (lines 5–6, “they say that Aristarchus did not understand that he was not solving what he was being asked”) can be attributed to the anomalists (*dicunt*), the same who gave the example of *surus lupus lepus*. And presumably it was Aristarchus who “in this way, when there was a difference in the oblique cases, was able to say that, for that reason, the nominatives were not similar” (6–7). But who countered this last statement with the claim that “one must not take the thing by virtue of which they are not similar from the outside” (7–8): Crates or the anomalists? And what does this claim entail?

¹⁹⁶ Kent, Dahlmann, and de Melo offer similar translations for *dicere potuit*; only Canal reads it as the apodosis of an unreal conditional sentence (and also makes the phrase impersonal: “poiché a questo modo basterebbe qualunque differenza de’ casi obliqui per togliere la somiglianza de’ retti”).

¹⁹⁷ In *M. I* 195 Sextus protested that, if we were to follow analogy, Ζεύς (“Zeus”) should be inflected as ***Ζεός Ζεϊ Ζέα* (not Ζηνός Ζηνί Ζῆνα), and κύων (“dog”) as ***κύωνος κύωνι κύωνα* (not κυνός κυνί κύνα). Also De Marco (1957 p. 146), although he unduly attributed to Crates the argument that Φιλομήδης Ἡρακλείδης Μελικέρτης *should inflect similarly* because they are similar in the nominative, flagged that Sextus makes the same argument with different examples: Ἄρης Χάρης Χάρτης, Μέμνων Θέων Λέων, Σκόπας Μέλας Ἄβας (§237).

G. Calboli suggested that the polemic as Varro represents it was centred on a specific theory of cases, and about this passage he interestingly emphasised the fact that whoever replies to Aristarchus in lines 7–8 takes a stance against appealing to something “from the outside” (*extrinsecus*) to verify the similarity between the two nouns.¹⁹⁸ The *extrinsecus*-argument (as I shall call it) is that to look at a different case (e.g. the vocative) to solve a problem about another (e.g. the nominative) is methodologically incorrect because it means appealing to an external element which has no bearing on the question at stake. Let us first of all discuss to whom it is plausible to attribute the source of this argument.

The wording in the text gives no clear-cut indication, but I am inclined not to take the statement *quom quaeratur duo inter se similia sint necne, non debere extrinsecus adsumi cur similia sunt* as part of Crates’ quotation. The infinitive *non debere* seems to depend on *dicunt* (line 5), whose subject are the anomalists—although the flow of reported statements is interrupted by *dicere potuit* (line 6), but one can blame Varro’s occasionally jerky syntax for that. It is true that, as Blank discussed in detail, there is much “narrative confusion around the citations of Crates” in the entire book,¹⁹⁹ so that, on its own, the wording in this passage is a thin piece of evidence. However, a similar statement is also found in another passage where Crates is not mentioned at all (§§42–43):

5 (42) Alterum illud quod dixi, quemadmodum simile spectari oporteret, ignorare apparet ex eorum praecepto, quod dicunt, cum transierit e nominandi casibus in eos quos appellant vocandi, tum denique posse dici rectos esse similis aut dissimilis. Esset enim ut si quis, Menaechmos geminos cum videat, dicat non posse iudicare similesne sint, nisi qui ex his sint nati considerarit num discrepa(n)t inter se. (43) Ni[c]hil, inquam, quo magis minusve sit simile quod conferas cum altero, ad iudicandum extrinsecus oportet sumi. Quare cum ignora[re]nt quemadmodum similitudo debeat sumi, de analogia dicere non possunt.

(42) The fact that they ignore that other thing which I said (how one should recognise something similar) is clear from their principle: they say that, when one moves from the nominative cases on to what they call the vocative cases, then it can be said that the nominatives are similar or dissimilar. But it would be as if somebody, seeing the Menaechmi twins, said that he cannot judge whether they look alike unless he had verified whether their children look different from one another. (43) To judge whether something is more or less similar to an-

¹⁹⁸ Calboli (2001 pp. 48–51), also reiterated in (2011). Beside the argument I discuss here, which is insightful and very on point, other parts of Calboli’s thesis are liable to criticism, notably the claim (2001 p. 37) that Varro postulated not six, but seven cases: see de Melo’s critique (2019a p. 1047). Furthermore, Calboli, like many others, reads these passages according to the traditional narrative and equals Crates with the anomalists.

¹⁹⁹ Blank (2005 pp. 223–5).

other thing. I say, nothing should be taken from the outside. Therefore, since they ignore how similarity should be taken, they cannot talk about analogy.

There is no doubt that the *extrinsecus*-argument here is put in the mouth of the anomalist. If we suggested that Varro incorporated some anonymous quotations of Crates inside other arguments which have been recognised to be incompatible with him (as a Stoic and a *nobilis grammaticus*), we would be going down the same road which led to the formation of the traditional narrative, based on unwarranted attributions. It is more reasonable to conclude that the argument does not go back to Crates, but to the same empiricist source that Varro used to represent the *pars destruens* in the debate.

This conclusion, however, potentially brings a new problem into play. Clearly the notion of paradigm was established at Alexandria at least from Aristophanes on, otherwise there would be no grounds for positing an analogical proportion. Most of the objections put forward by the anomalists in book VIII do presuppose an understanding of what a paradigm is, starting from the example of *surus lupus lepus* in §68, for which the anomalists expect a similar ending in the dative or ablative (*suro lupo* ***lepo*, not *lepori/lepore*).²⁰⁰ How to reconcile these objections with the claim that to look at a different case is “to take something from the outside”? Does this argument not signal failure to appreciate that case-forms are not independent from one another, but make up a self-contained unit?

Calboli maintained that the crucial factor in the argument is that it is not just any case that is pronounced as “external” to the comparison, but the vocative, whose status as a case was questioned in antiquity (as was the nominative, for different reasons).²⁰¹ The peculiar nature of the vocative in the system of cases was already noticed in antiquity, especially in the landscape of post-Aristotelian logic. Aristotle had defined “assertions” (ἀποφάσεις) as combinations of cases and predicates to form statements that can be true or false and are constituents of syllogisms.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Other examples: the fact that “some words have both nominative and oblique cases, others only nominatives, and others have only oblique forms” (§49); that, since the dative of *is* is *ei*, so the dative of *ea* should be *dae*, not *ei* (§51); that verbs like *curro* and *ambulo* should have three tenses in the participle, but instead there is no ***cursus sum* or ***ambulatus sum* (§59); that *gens* and *dens* should be similar in the genitive (not *gentium* and *dentum*) (§67); and others.

²⁰¹ There is a discussion on how the Peripatons considered the nominative, based on AMMON. in *Int.* pp. 42,30–43,24. According to Schenkeveld & Barnes (1999 p. 189), “Aristotle takes the nominative as the noun of which the other cases are πτώσεις”; for Belardi & Cipriano’s (1990 pp. 117–9), it was a duplex entity, both case and appellation (κλήσις); Calboli (2001), building up on this view, argued that it was considered a “paradigmatic case”. For the Stoics, conversely, the nominative itself was as a case because it “has fallen [πέπτωκεν] from the concept [νόημα]” of the named thing or person that the speaker has in their soul (*FDS* 776–784).

²⁰² *Int.* 17a8ff.

From the semantic point of view, the status of the vocative as a case could be doubted because it has no function in such statements: it is holophrastic (i.e. it can express a whole utterance by itself) and has a purely expressive value.²⁰³ But from the morphological point of view, the vocative is a formal modification of a stem as much as any other case, and as such, it figures among the five cases listed by Dionysius Thrax.²⁰⁴ How the vocative was considered by Chrysippus has been debated,²⁰⁵ but the general consensus is that the Stoics did consider the vocative as a case.²⁰⁶ It is certain that the vocative was considered a case by Trypho, an heir to the Alexandrian tradition but who also drew on Stoic doctrines.²⁰⁷

Certainly, in *ling.* VIII 68–69, Aristarchus implies that the vocative is a case when he invites Crates to look at the vocatives of *Philomedes Heraclides Melicertes* to see that the three names are actually not similar. But Calboli maintains that Aristarchus' reply would not make sense if he were pointing at the vocative as any "oblique" case (as in, any case other than the nominative): that this would "if anything, confirm that, descending from the *casus rectus, proportio* i.e. analogy does not work for the vocative as it does for other cases", and thus it would bolster the anomalist argument.²⁰⁸ For Calboli, Aristarchus' reply only works if he was aiming to cast the vocative as a "paradigmatic case", like the nominative, thus different from the oblique cases. I am not convinced by this reasoning. Aristarchus' focus was not which case had a special status in the theory of inflection—it is now established that he had no stake in such descriptions of grammar for their own sake. More probably, he was merely pointing out that the three names at issue followed different patterns and therefore did not meet the requirements to be compared through analogy: it so happens that, for those specific names, the vocative singular is the only case that reveals instantaneously that they follow different patterns. I see no indication that the anomalists handle the vocative differently from other cases in this passage either: right after reporting Aristarchus' observation about the different vocatives of *Philomedes Heraclides Melicertes*, they object that "in this way, when there was a difference *in the oblique cases*, [Aristarchus] was able to say that, for that reason,

²⁰³ Belardi & Cipriano (1990 pp. 120–1), Donati (2010 pp. 525–6).

²⁰⁴ D.T. *ars* p. 31.

²⁰⁵ The content of Chrysippus' treatise *On the five cases* (D.L. VII 192) is not known and scholars have debated whether the fifth case in question was the vocative (Schmidt 1839) or the adverb (*sic* Steinthal 1863, *contra* Barwick 1933, Pohlenz 1939, Calboli 2001).

²⁰⁶ Belardi & Cipriano (1990), Calboli (2001), Donati (2013). A significant part of the scholars' reconstructions hinges on the Varronian passages we are analysing, but the general conclusion fits with other aspects of Stoic logic and their theories of λεκτά.

²⁰⁷ Fr. 38, with Belardi & Cipriano (1990 pp. 138–41).

²⁰⁸ Calboli (2001 p. 50).

the nominatives were not similar". The *extrinsecus*-argument is an annexe to this objection and, by all indications, it applies to any case other than the nominative.

I am inclined to read less into the comparison with the Menaechmi twins in §42 than is sometimes done. The relation between the twins and their children is manifestly meant to reflect that between the nominative and the vocative or other cases, but I doubt that the implications go beyond the basic notion that other cases are derived from the nominative: that notion was standard in ancient linguistics, regardless of whether the nominative itself was taken as a case or something distinct.²⁰⁹ The analogists' reply to the accusation (IX 43, reported fully below, §3.3.2.a) can be taken as further confirmation that the vocative is not implied to be special: they counter that "*the oblique cases* do not make those nouns look similar in the nominatives as well, but they make it easier to see the extent of those nouns' similarity".

The most straightforward explanation of the exchange in §§68–69 seems to be that, for the anomalist, to look at any other case-form *B* to gain knowledge about a case-form *A* is unwarranted; it matters little whether *B* is the vocative, dative, or any other. In this sense, the *extrinsecus*-argument is not incompatible with the notion that nouns have paradigms, which the anomalists clearly are aware of. For them, the bottom line is that, if analogy existed, there should not be nouns that have similar endings in the nominative but different case-forms in the rest of their paradigms: any noun in *-us* should inflect either like *lupus -i* or like *lepus -oris*. On this understanding, from the anomalist point of view, Aristarchus' argument that not all nouns in *-us* are actually similar is grasping at straws: an attempt to safeguard the integrity of a theory (which the anomalists criticise as faulty and inconsistent) by further complicating its ramifications. It may even have been clear to them that Aristarchus was talking about the similarity of nouns (considered in their entire inflection) vs. individual forms, but their point was exactly that individual nominatives that look similar should, by virtue of analogy, have similar inflections and, since that does not always happen, one should not be able to explain away the inconsistency by claiming that those nominatives were not comparable to begin with. From this perspective, the fact that *lupus* and *lepus* have different vocatives proves their point: by analogy, they should not.

To recap, the exchange in §§68–69 can be summarised like this:

- Crates said that *Philomedēs Heraclitēs Melicertēs* are similar;

²⁰⁹ See also §3.3.2.b.

- Aristarchus pointed to their vocatives (*Philomedēs Heraclitē Melicertā*) to show that they are not similar. The implied argument is that analogy can only be expected to obtain between nouns that follow the same inflectional class, and the three names cited by Crates do not, although it may seem otherwise by just looking at their nominatives;
- the anomalists—whose standpoint was that, if analogy were valid, nouns with similar endings in the nominative would have similar inflections—said that it was unwarranted to appeal to another case in those nouns’ inflection to deny that they were similar: it was perceived as a way to escape an accusation by denying the obvious.

After this digression into the *extrinsecus*-argument, let us now go back to Crates and his role in the discussion. All that we can say with certainty based on the text is that “Crates wrote that *Philomedes*, *Heraclides*, and *Melicertes* are similar”²¹⁰; if, as we argued, the *extrinsecus*-argument in response to Aristarchus was not voiced by Crates, then what was Crates’ point in making that remark about the similarity of the three forms?

We can envisage two possible scenarios. The first one is related to Crates’ work as an editor. Based on Aristarchus’ use of analogical proportions, we could speculate that Crates, while working on an ancient text, posited an analogy to solve a certain problem: since three forms are cited, this would probably have been a six-term proportion, which Aristarchus normally used to determine the inflectional pattern of a form (often proper nouns).²¹¹ To make up an example, modelled on the kind found in Aristarchus’ scholia, Crates could have found himself having to verify, say, the genitive of *Φιλομήδης* and could have compared *Ἡρακλείδης : Μελικέρτης : Φιλομήδης = Ἡρακλείδου : Μελικέρτου : χ*.²¹² This would have justified Aristarchus to point out that the three names are actually inflected differently, therefore the proportion will not work.

How likely is this hypothesis? Claims that Crates and the Pergamenians used analogies like the Alexandrians have been made,²¹³ but this is not so easy to demonstrate. Out of Crates’ (not numerous) fragments, very few contain phrases which could be read as analogical comparisons. In fr. 21, various sources report that Crates read ΒΕΛΟΥ in O 23 and A 591 as βήλου (from βήλος, common

²¹⁰ This point is stressed by Blank (2005 p. 232), who is very careful to separate actual quotations of Crates from statements of dubious attribution.

²¹¹ Schironi (2018 p. 395).

²¹² A similar scenario was, in fact, reconstructed by Dahlmann in his edition of book VIII (1940 p. 163). Being convinced that the *pars destruens* against analogy went back to Crates, and that Sextus Empiricus later incorporated some of its argument into *Against the grammarians*, Dahlmann superimposed Crates’ quotation in Varro onto a passage where Sextus presents an example of inconsistent inflectional patterns (*M. I* 237). The text he obtained (τὰ κατὰ τὰς ὀρθὰς πτώσεις ἀνάλογα ὄντα καὶ ὅμοια, ταῦτα κατὰ τὰς πλαγίους ἀνομοίως τε καὶ οὐκ ἀναλόγως σχηματίζεται, οἷον (Φιλομήδης Ἡρακλείδης Μελικέρτης Φιλομέδους Ἡρακλείδου Μελικέρτου)) is Dahlmann’s own fabrication and cannot be assumed to accurately reconstruct Crates’ argument, *pace* Calboli (2001 p. 49).

²¹³ Schironi (2004 pp. 453–4), Blank (2005 p. 222).

name derived from Βῆλος, the Greek transliteration of the Chaldean god Baal), not βηλοῦ (from βηλός “threshold”); but only one source explains this choice with an analogical comparison with ἥλος (“nail”): Κράτης δὲ ὥς ἥλου (ἥλος : βῆλος = ἥλου : βήλου). Such a comparison—if it is part of Crates’ authentic quotation and not the scholiast’s addition—helps solve a problem of allegorical interpretation,²¹⁴ in line with the focus which characterised the scholars of Pergamum. A grammatical use of analogy is found in fr. 31 (cited by scholars to prove that Crates used analogy) corresponding to two scholia on the same line,²¹⁵ both transmitted by Herodian. The scholiast reported that Aristarchus and Crates disagreed on the interpretation of ΤΥΜΒΟΧΟΗΣ, Aristarchus reading it as an elided aorist infinitive (τυμβοχοῆσ(αι)) and Crates as a genitive singular (τυμβοχόης). In the first scholium, Crates’ reading is followed by the segment “and obviously [Crates] accented it like οἶνοχόης [ὁμοίως τῷ οἶνοχόης]”; in the second scholium, similarly, we have ὥς οἶνοχόης. In both texts, however, it is dubious whether the analogical comparison is part of Crates’ quotation or Herodian’s own expansion,²¹⁶ who was himself well acquainted with the method of analogy. The problem of distinguishing Herodian’s additions also affects his citations of another Pergamenian scholar, Herodicus: in some cases it is clearly Herodian who inserts analogical comparisons into his quotations,²¹⁷ but other cases are dubious.²¹⁸

This meagre evidence does not allow to reach a conclusion on whether the Pergamenian scholars used analogy to solve textual problems like the Alexandrians did. When analogies used for grammatical purposes are attested (in Crates and Herodicus), it is unclear whether they go back to the author or are the scholiast’s addition; and the fact that the scholiast who transmitted such instances is always Herodian raises suspicions. Therefore, the first conceivable scenario in which to place Crates’ observation about the similarity of *Philomedes Heraclides Melicertes* is not impossible, but secure evidence is lacking.

²¹⁴ Broggiato (2001 p. 181): “Cratete quindi opera un’identificazione della divinità caldeo-babilonese Bel con il cielo – la sfera più alta che racchiudeva il cosmo [...] Nell’esegesi cratetea del passo è implicito che l’universo omerico doveva essere di forma sferica, delimitato dall’οὐρανός, che ne costruiva l’involucro esterno”.

²¹⁵ Sch. Hom. A ad Φ 323b¹ and bT ad Φ 323b².

²¹⁶ Sic already Helck (1905 p. 65).

²¹⁷ E.g. HERODIC. fr. 2 (Sch. Hom ad N 29b), where Herodian presents three different readings of ΓΗΘΟΣΥΝΗ ΔΕ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΑ by Herodicus, Aristarchus, and Aristophanes, and propends for Aristophanes’ solution (γηθοσύνη), bolstering his choice with grammatical arguments based on analogy.

²¹⁸ E.g. HERODIC. fr. 3 (Sch. Hom. A ad Υ 53b¹), about the accentuation of ΘΕΩΝ: Ἡρόδικος βαρέως ἀνεγίνωσκεν ὥς τρέχων.

The other possible scenario plays on the question whether analogy should be used as a tool to level out irregular patterns. According to Blank,²¹⁹ we can read between the lines a question that Crates asked: “Since these nominatives are similar, why don’t they decline similarly?”. Blank continues: “such a question could be taken to imply either ‘they ought to decline similarly, and since they do not, there are no analogies in names’, or ‘since these nominatives are similar, is there anything to prevent us from using similar forms in all their cases?’”. The former implication is obviously the anomalists’ conclusion, which they purport to show with the example of *surus lupus lepus*: they aim to argue that nominal inflection is not governed by self-consistent rules, but unpredictable and only obedient to usage, and I agree with Blank that such an ideological position is at odds with Crates. For Blank, that only leaves us with the second implication; therefore, Crates’ reason to “argue against analogy and Aristarchus” (as Varro says in IX 1) would boil down to a disagreement on the extent to which analogy should be applied. Blank offered two possible articulations of such a disagreement²²⁰: either “Crates thought that analogical formations, while they have their use, ought to be substituted for the forms of common usage in even fewer situations than did Aristarchus” or, a bolder suggestion, “Crates may have advocated the application of analogy in places where Aristarchus did not”. In other words, either Crates wanted to use analogy less than Aristarchus did, or he wanted to use it more.

Both these options, however, rest on a postulate. From the fact that Crates would have endorsed a technical approach to grammar (as it is certainly reasonable to assume) it does not necessarily follow that he relied on analogical proportions to reveal and secure the regularity of morphology. Firstly, it cannot be conclusively demonstrated that Crates or other Pergamenian scholars used analogies. Secondly, even if they did, there is no indication that at that time even the Alexandrians were charging analogy with more significance than a useful tool for textual editing: nothing suggests that the contemporary Pergamenians were ahead of the game and already taking a normative approach to the study of language, as the next generations of scholars did.

But then, what are we to make of Varro’s testimony, that Crates “relying on Chrysippus [...], argued against analogy and Aristarchus; but he did so in such a way that, as his writings show, he seems to have understood the intent of neither”? If Crates was, in fact, arguing that anomaly in some sense prevails over analogy, it seems we do not have enough material to further explain this

²¹⁹ Blank (2005 pp. 231–2).

²²⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 237–8.

claim. It makes sense to reject the attribution of the sceptical conception of anomaly to him on ideological grounds (as Blank did), which is enough to refute the traditional interpretation of the controversy. But beyond this, there is little to work with.

The hypothesis which seems to me to clash the least with what we know about Crates and how analogy was used in second-century literary criticism is that Crates conceived anomaly in the same grammatical sense as Aristarchus did (essentially metaplasm) and argued that irregular forms are far too common in ancient texts for analogical proportions to be applied. Crates might have appealed to Chrysippus' authority (misunderstanding his intent) to give a philosophical justification to the abundance of irregular forms that he found in the texts he worked on; and since the principle of analogical proportions is that one can find the missing piece of a puzzle by searching for the same ratio in different *comparanda*, if Crates believed that irregular forms were too numerous, he might have questioned the effectiveness of the analogical method.

The merits of this hypothesis are only in negative. It avoids ideological contradictions (by not attributing to Crates positions irreconcilable with his activity and philosophical inclinations) and anachronism (by not projecting onto him approaches to the study of language which had not yet been developed at his time). Yet, it is a hypothesis that does not rest on direct textual evidence, but on data on other authors and stages in the development of normative grammar. Hopefully the problems that I have tried to highlight with previous reconstructions of Crates' position will be helpful to future endeavours to shed light on this blind spot in the history of ancient linguistics.

d. Roman grammatical literature

The earliest attestations of discussions on analogy in Rome coincide with the attempt to reckon with anomalies in morphology. Quintilian's testimony reported in §3.1.1.c attests to the fact that some scholars took issue with irregularities in certain stems, like nouns alternating *-ur* and *-or-* in their inflection, for which Gniphio advocated a radical standardisation. Also many of Caesar's fragments show the intention of explaining (and, when necessary, amending by means of analogy) various kinds of irregularity in inflection.

At the time when grammar was an accessory to textual criticism, the discourse on analogy was focused on inflection (which was more likely to pose challenges to the reconstruction of a line or the interpretation of the syntax of a passage) rather than derivation. The nature of this operation, which involves an act of *impositio*, is such that the subject lends itself to being discussed rather in

terms of etymology: for certain, the majority of etymologies attributed to Roman scholars, up until and including Varro, involve retracing the derivation of a word from another one (or more), and we saw (§2.3.2.a) that the Roman antiquarians—the class of scholars most invested in reconstructing the origins of words at that time—often lacked the ability to consistently recognise and isolate derivational morphemes. Therefore, even when the growing interest in grammar in its own right led scholars to devote attention to linguistic processes in themselves (prescinding from the contexts in which a word or phrase were used), apparently it took a while before either descriptive or normative approaches were extended to the rules that governed derivation. But as early as these began to be considered, it must have stood out that the processes involved in derivation were more difficult to rein in and classify into regular patterns than those underpinning inflection.

As such, the irregularities of derivation were integrated into the discussion on analogy, as emerges from the testimony of Staberius Eros (see §3.1.1.c), who defended analogy against the accusations moved against it “based on impositions” because these, he stressed, “are not concerned by regularity”. I take it as implied that Staberius’ *positiones* refers to derivatives and not primary words, simply because it is difficult to imagine how one might articulate the argument that word-coinage *ex nihilo* should be “regular”. Conversely, one could protest about the fact that derivatives which express the same semantic relation to the word they come from can be formed in different ways: taking up an example mentioned in the introduction to Part 3, *ovile* and *aviarium* have the same semantic relation (“enclosure of”) to *ovis* and *avis*, but the proportion *ovis* : *ov-il-e* ≠ *avis* : *avi-ari-um* is not analogical. Whereas the existence of different suffixes to express the same morphosyntactic properties (i.e. endings in declensions and conjugations) could be explained by reference to a system of inflectional classes (and the analogists strived to account for or level out exceptions to these patterns), allomorphy in derivation appeared more difficult to justify. Caesar attempted to explain the existence of two derivatives to indicate the citizens of *Alba* (*Albani* and *Albenses*) with the fact that they corresponded to two different cities: *Alba Longa* (in *Latium vetus*) and *Alba Fucen(tis)* (in the region of the *Aequi*)²²¹; the exact same example is brought forward by Varro’s anomalists in VIII 35 to demonstrate that derivation is irregular. But the existence of competing allomorphs cannot always be linked to different referents. Even with the resources of mod-

²²¹ Fr. 8 ap. POMP. gramm. p. 144,7–31. On the discussion on competing ethnonyms, see Garcea (2012 pp. 163–7).

ern philology, the employ of a certain derivational suffix over another can be traced back to a reproduceable pattern only to a limit; sometimes, the variety is unmotivated.

These testimonies indicate that, at the time when Varro wrote *De lingua Latina*, there was an awareness in Roman grammatical discourse that certain kinds of word-alteration challenged the doctrine of analogy more than others, and some attempts had been made to account for this fact. Varro's treatment of the subject shows a debt to this background, but also a significant advancement.

3.3. Analogy and anomaly in Varro

It is fairly straightforward that, in Varro, analogy and anomaly are frequently cited as opposites of one another, though not always. This in itself was not common: as we saw, both analogy and anomaly were often discussed as stand-alone concepts in the various fields where they began to be used. Even when analogy became an established notion in grammar, it was not always contrasted to an opposite item; and when grammarians did talk about morphological irregularities, they normally used “pathology” as a term.²²² It was after Varro’s authority that analogy and anomaly became so tightly bound together in linguistic discourse.

But while, in Varro, the role of these two concepts with respect to one another is constant, the pair are used in different contexts in and out of *De lingua Latina*, evoked on different levels of the study of language: accordingly, their meanings are manifold.

3.3.1. Systemic regularity or irregularity

Already in antiquity, the notion of “sameness of ratios” lent itself to being extended and transferred beyond its technical meaning, coming to be used to express a more general ideal of “similarity” or “regularity”. This general meaning, which Schironi called “‘weak’ analogy”,²²³ continued to exist in parallel with the technical meaning and it is the prevalent sense of the term “analogy” nowadays. In book IX of *De lingua Latina*, Varro developed this general meaning in, seemingly, an original way.

In book IX, before reporting the analogist response to the attacks in book VIII, Varro begins by equating analogy with systemic regularity and discusses its existence outside the context of grammar. Firstly, Varro purports to show that regularity exists and is pleasant in basic aspects of everyday life: for instance, people appreciate symmetry and order when furnishing their house (§9). Then Varro moves on to a proper philosophical and scientific excursus (§§23–30) to demonstrate that regularity governs the whole universe: he draws attention to the perfect symmetry of astronomical elements (§§24–25), the regularity of tides (§26), the consistency of seasonal alternation (§27), and the fact that all animals reproduce in such a way that the species are preserved unaltered (§§28–30).

²²² Blank (1982 pp. 41–9); Lallot (1995).

²²³ Schironi (2019).

One can assume that such a display of geographical-astronomical knowledge ultimately comes from a Hellenistic source²²⁴; yet some distinct traits of this text specifically point to Stoicism as the main inspiration. The content structure of the excursus (first the sky, then the sea and the earth, then corporeal beings inhabiting the sky, the sea, and the earth, including humans) is a small-scale replica of the way in which Varro arranged his etymologies in book V (see §2.3.1). If we accepted that the structure of that book bears the hallmarks of Stoicism, the same analysis must apply to IX 23–30. This conclusion stands established at the current state of scholarship.

In addition, it can be safely assumed that at least one part of this excursus was sourced from Posidonius. The philosopher’s notoriously extensive array of interests also included an unprecedented, “astonishingly complete theory of the lunar periodicity of tides, which rightly held sway until Newton”.²²⁵ It has been noticed that IX 26—a paragraph about tides—shows a striking similarity to the way in which the phenomenon was explained by Posidonius. Compare:

POSID. fr. 217 EK (ap. STR. III 5.8)	VARRO <i>ling.</i> IX 26
ἡμέρα μὲν γὰρ καὶ νύξ τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου περιφορᾷ μετρεῖται τοτὲ μὲν ὑπὸ γῆς ὄντος τοτὲ δὲ ὑπὲρ γῆς φαινομένου· φησὶ δὲ τὴν τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ κίνησιν ὑπέχειν ἀστροειδῇ περίοδον, τὴν μὲν ἡμερήσιον ἀποδιδούσαν, τὴν δὲ μηνιαίαν, τὴν δ’ ἐνιαυσιαίαν συμπαθῶς τῇ σελήνῃ· One day and night is a single revolution of the sun, part of the time below the earth, part shining above it. Posidonius says that the movement of ocean undergoes a cycle of a type like a heavenly body, exhibiting diurnal, monthly and annual movement in joint affinity with the moon.²²⁶	<i>At in mari, credo, motus non habent [dis]similitudines geminas, qui in XXIII(I) horis lunaribus cotidie quater se mutant, ac cum sex horis (a)estus creverunt, totidem decreverunt, rursus idem, itemque ab his. An hanc analogian ad diem servant, ad mensem non item, [alios] motus sic item cum habeant alios inter se convenientes? De quibus in libro quem de (a)estuariis feci scripsi.</i> But in the sea, I believe, the motions do not have twofold similarities, the motions which every day within twenty-four lunar hours change four times, and when the tides have risen in six hours and ebbed in just as many, the same ones rise again and likewise ebb from these. Or do they preserve this regularity for a day and not likewise for a month, since in this way they likewise have other motions agreeing with one another? About these things I have written in the book which I made on tidal channels.²²⁷

²²⁴ Traglia (1982 p. 489 n38).

²²⁵ EK vol. 3 p. 13.

²²⁶ Transl. EK.

²²⁷ Transl. de Melo (2019a).

The similarity started being flagged in the early twentieth century,²²⁸ and one might suggest that the pan-Posidonian climate which characterised scholarship of that period played a part in the identification of this source. However, Posidonius' authority for this passage was confirmed by more recent scholars²²⁹ and the similarity does seem undeniable, especially considering that Posidonius' accomplishments with his theory of tides apparently had no match before Varro.²³⁰ In fact, it is commonly assumed that Varro's own book *De aestuariis* (of which nothing survives except the title given in this very passage) was itself based on Posidonius' theory. Given the fragmentary state in which Posidonius' works have come down to us, it would be risky to suggest extending his influence to the entire section of §§23–30. Still, the fact that he evidently influenced at least one part is significant and further corroborates the Stoic inspiration of this excursus.²³¹

Yet, determining the source of the excursus is only one piece of the puzzle. The tenet that the cosmos is pervaded and governed by regularity and order is the core of Stoicism and Varro's illustration of this tenet may rely on Stoic material, but the association of this idea with the concept of linguistic analogy has no known precedent. It could have been taken from the same source who inspired the other arguments in book IX (see §3.3.2.a); however, this excursus is the only part of the analogist response with no counterpart in book VIII, which might indicate that it was not originally included among the arguments put forward in the scholarship on grammar that Varro was drawing on. The association could well be Varro's own invention.

3.3.2. Overall morphological regularity or irregularity

The excursus on universal regularity and uniformity provides a frame for what is the most often reiterated meaning of analogy and anomaly across Varro's linguistic writings: language, being part of the grand scheme of things governed by order and regularity, is also an overall regular system. In this sense Varro says that it is predominantly analogical, meaning governed by a uniform and ordered structure. However, he also makes room for patterns to stray in unpredictable directions and gives a plausible explanation for that. Let us look firstly at how Varro understood

²²⁸ First by E. Schwartz ap. Reitzenstein (1901 p. 60 n1), then reiterated by Dahlmann (1932 p. 61).

²²⁹ Sallmann (2013 p. 10), Duso (2017 p. 170).

²³⁰ On the exceptionality of Posidonius' study of the ocean, see Laffranque (1964 pp. 154–214).

²³¹ In addition, Duso (2017 pp. 166–71) suggested several points of formal and content similarity between this excursus and "Balbus'" exposition of Stoic cosmology in Cicero's *De natura deorum: ling. IX 24 ~ nat. deor. II 47–48, 54; §25 ~ II 50; §27 ~ II 120*. The parallels are very interesting; yet it is difficult to claim a Stoic origin for ideas which were commonly reiterated in the mathematical and astronomical traditions since Euclid or Aristotle (like the sphere being "the most excellent shape" or the philosophical implications of the regularity of orbits).

the arguments in defence of analogy in previous literature (which he summarised in book IX), and then at how, deeming those achievements unsatisfactory, he took it upon himself to lay the foundations of the doctrine and exhaust its content.

a. Defending analogy in book IX

We already saw briefly, in §1.1, that Varro made *analogia* one of the criteria for *Latinitas*, and we will discuss more thoroughly below (§3.3.3) how this principle is supposed to operate. Relying on analogy as a criterion for good Latin speech implies the assumption that the system of Latin morphology is made up by predominantly regular patterns. This assumption was countered by the same sources who objected to relying on a τέχνη γραμματική in *ling. VIII*: on the one hand, they maintained that variety and diversity in matters of everyday life is useful and pleasing (§§28–32); on the other hand, they put forward a series of inconsistencies in Latin inflectional patterns (§§44–84) which, they argued, led to the inescapable conclusion that Latin morphology was not a self-consistent, regular system, therefore speakers should not abide by artificial rules to implement artificial uniformity.

Book IX responds to these challenges almost point by point. First, as we said, the analogists argue that it is order and uniformity that is useful and pleasing in everyday life; then they proceed to demonstrate that the entire cosmos is regular. In §§34–50 they state overarching principles of linguistic analogy and then they counter the objections to specific grammatical points related to nominal (§§51–94) and verbal inflection (§§95–109).

The analogists first address the postulation of an opposition between analogy and usage: this was the foundation of the anomalist thesis, which they articulated with arguments about usage being a sufficient criterion to speak well and analogy being either superfluous (when it confirms what usage teaches) or false (when it prescribes rules which go against usage). In book IX, it is said from the beginning that analogy proceeds from usage:

(37) In quo animadvertito natura quadruplicem esse formam ad quam in declinando accommodari debeant verba: quod debeat subesse res qu(a)e designe[n]tur, et ut sit ea res in usu, et ut vocis natura ea sit quae significavit, ut declinari possit, et similitudo figura(e) verbi ut sit ea quae ex se declinatu genus prodere certum possit.

2 res quae *Rholandellus* : resque *F* | designetur *Laetus* | ea res *G H Laetus* : cares *F* 3 figurae *Müller* 4 declinatu *Spengel*₁ : declinate *F* | possit *Augustinus* : possunt *F*

(37) In this [in addressing each objection against analogy] you must observe that by nature there is a fourfold scheme to which words must adhere in the process of their derivation/in-

flection. The thing designated must exist; that thing must be in use; the nature of the signifier must be such that it can be inflected/derived; the similarity of the form of the word must be such that it itself reveals for certain, in the course of the inflection, the inflectional class.

This passage gives four conditions for morphological alteration to exist. The first three can apply to both derivation and inflection, the fourth one only makes sense for inflection. The term *figura* for “outward shape of the form” will be explained better in book X (see the next section): the fourth condition, put in modern terms, is that the stem of the noun or verb must remain similar enough throughout the inflection that one can clearly isolate the ending and thus recognise the inflectional class. But at present, it is the first two conditions that concern us: they state that the creation and use of forms in analogy with pre-existing patterns is restricted by limits posed by “nature” and “usage”.²³² Thereby, the anomalist thesis (that grammarians want to impose artificial rules to all words and flatten morphology to a uniform system, detached from real speech) is dismantled.

We already discussed the polyvalency of the term *natura* in Varro’s linguistic writings. In book IX, it comes up again and again in the various counter-objections, always representing a limit to the application of analogy, but in different senses. Sometimes we can tell from the context that *natura* means the innate qualities of the referents, other times it means semantics, elsewhere yet it means the grammatical features of the form. As for *usus*, it encompasses both the meanings of “linguistic usage” and “practical usefulness”.

An example in context is the discussion on gender in *nominatus* (nouns, adjectives, and pronouns). The anomalists had argued that the system is irregular because there are mismatches between the grammatical gender and biological sex of the referent²³³ and because not all *nominatus* have different endings for all three genders.²³⁴ The analogists explain the inconsistencies by appealing to *natura* (here meaning “qualities of the referent”) and *usus* (here, “usefulness”). Some nouns will “naturally” have a certain gender because this will match the sex of their referent, hence, for example, the absence of a masculine and neuter form of the noun *femina*.²³⁵ Notwith-

²³² On this pair, see Lomanto (1998).

²³³ VIII 81.

²³⁴ VIII 46–47. A distinction between adjectives and nouns would have helped explain quickly how come some words have different inflections for the three genders (e.g. *albus alba album* “white”), others have just one (the majority of nouns); but this distinction was not yet firmly established at the time. Even so, the question would have remained of why some nouns have two (like the *gentilia nomina* or some zoonyms like *equus equa* “make horse, female horse”).

²³⁵ This example is especially fitting because *femina*, other than meaning “female, woman,” is also the word for “feminine gender.”

standing this, the analogists admit that there are occasional mismatches: for example, many phytonyms are feminine, although plants are obviously neuter in sex. Earlier in the book, it had been clarified that such cases do not counter analogy either, because similarity is to be found in the outward shape of a word, not in its meaning.²³⁶ In that context, grammatical gender had been compared to clothing items: per Varro's example, some shoes are designed to fit a man and some to fit a woman, but it is always possible for a man to wear a woman's shoes, without this affecting his *natura*. As for *usus*, the analogists say that different forms for different genders will only be coined if they are useful: male and female horses are denoted by different names (*equus equa*) because this distinction has functional implications, for example, for the everyday life of a farmer and it is useful to have a linguistic shortcut to express it; by contrast, it is not as useful to distinguish male and female crows, hence only one form, *corvus*. Should the situation change, and the need arise for such a distinction to be expressed, analogy—heeding usage—would supply the means to create a new form from a pre-existing pattern: this is what happened when doves came into domestic use and it became useful to distinguish males from females (*columbus* “male dove” ~ *columba* “female dove”) in everyday language, whereas before only one form existed (*columba*).²³⁷ The same argumentation (appealing to the referent's qualities and usefulness) is used in response to the objections concerning nominal number²³⁸ and diminutives.²³⁹

The fact that gradation of adjectives and adverbs is not always possible²⁴⁰ is also explained by appealing to *natura*, but here it means “semantic restrictions”. It is semantics that says that one can be “more/most stupid” (*stultior*, *stultissimus*), but not “more/most blind” (**luscior*, *luscissimus*). Semantics also explains why not all verbal paradigms have three persons and three tenses²⁴¹: it makes no sense, for example, for the imperative to have past tenses.

With reference to participles, *natura* entails yet another meaning. The anomalists had objected to the absence of regularity in the series of participles for each Latin verb: transitive verbs like *amo* form two active participles (present, *amans*, and future, *amaturus*) and one passive (perfect, *amatus*); but intransitive verbs like *venio* have no passive form, so they can only form the two active participles (*veniens*, *venturus*); finally, deponents like *loquor* form a perfect participle iden-

²³⁶ IX 40–41.

²³⁷ IX 56.

²³⁸ VIII 48, IX 63–69.

²³⁹ VIII 79, IX 74.

²⁴⁰ VIII 75, IX 72–73.

²⁴¹ IX 101. The corresponding anti-analogist objections about verbs were lost in the lacuna at the end of book VIII.

tical to the one formed by transitive verbs, but with an active meaning (*locutus*). The analogists reply that analogy only ensures that inflection is regular according to a verb’s “nature”, meaning grammatical features: by analogy, all transitive verbs behave like *amo*, all intransitive verbs like *venio* and all deponents like *loquor*. To put it in modern terms, analogy works trans- as well as intra-paradigmatically, but only across paradigms which share some fundamental traits.²⁴²

The latter point is underpinned by the argument that we have reiterated many times in association with Alexandrian teaching: that analogy is not a comparison between any two (or more) forms, but between forms that share a number of features—the *rationes analogiae*. We already analysed the quotation of Aristarchus in book VIII where he recommended checking other case-forms of the three names that Crates had observed to be “similar” (§3.2.3.b–c); let us look at the full reply in IX 43²⁴³:

5 Quod dicunt simile sit necne nomen nomini impudenter Aristarc(h)um praecipere oportere spectare non solum ex recto, sed etiam ex eorum vocandi casu: esse[t] enim deridiculum, si similes inter se parentes sint, de filiis iudicare: qui errant, quod non ab eo(rum) obliquis casibus fit, ut recti simili facie ostendantur, sed propter eos facilius perspicui similitudo potest eorum quam vim habea[n]t, ut lucerna in tenebris allata non facit quae ibi sunt posita similia sint, sed ut videantur, quae sunt quous (mo)di[s] sint.

2 esse[t] del. Spengel² dubitanter, C.F.W. Müller (1865: 423–4 n. 2), Madvig (1973: 175) 3 eo(rum) suppl. Spengel² | simili Laetus : simile F 4 habea[n]t del. Laetus 5–6 quous (mo)di[s] suppl. et del. Spengel (1858: 14) : quous dissent F

As for the fact that they say that Aristarchus was shameless to prescribe that one ought to verify that two nouns are similar not just on the basis of the nominative, but also of the vocative (for, they say, it is ridiculous to judge whether two parents look alike by looking at their children), they are wrong. In fact, the oblique cases do not make those nouns look similar in the nominatives as well, but they make it easier to see the extent of those nouns’ similarity: quite like a lamp which, when brought in the darkness, does not make the objects that are there similar to one another, but makes it possible to see how they are and what they look like.

If my understanding of the anomalists’ argument in this instance is correct (see §3.2.3.c), then this is not a satisfactory answer to their concern: the fact that looking at other cases does not make the nominatives similar, but allows one to verify whether they are similar or not (like a lamp brought in the darkness), does not solve the problem raised by the anomalists. To them, creating multiple subsets of inflectional paradigms probably came across as a feeble excuse for the fact that words with similar nominatives do not always inflect similarly. The anomalists themselves had

²⁴² IX 110.

²⁴³ Aristarchus’ argument is also repeated in §91.

judged this argument inadequate in VIII 68 (“Aristarchus did not understand that he was not solving what he was being asked”). This is nothing strange, for Varro himself claims in book X that the theory of analogy has not been discussed as thoroughly and clearly as it should have: he purports to remedy gaps such as the one left from this exchange.

Aside from this quotation of Aristarchus, the principle that analogy compares paradigms, not individual forms, is articulated various times in book IX.²⁴⁴ This argument is also put forward to defend specific points about analogy:

- the existence of homonymous forms like *meto* (pres. indic. act. 1st person sg. *metere* “to reap”/Latinized form of Μέτων Μέτωνος, nom. sg.): these belong to different paradigms (and even different parts of speech) and therefore should not be compared²⁴⁵;
- the coexistence of tenses expressing different aspects (*infectum/perfectum*): in each verbal paradigm, the distribution of tenses expressing *infectum/perfectum* is symmetrical and consistent and this displays analogy²⁴⁶;
- the coexistence of active and medio-passive forms with the same meaning: different paradigms may exist and this does not contradict analogy, as long as one uses consistently one paradigm at a time (intra-paradigmatic analogy).²⁴⁷

Now that we presented an overview of the arguments in defence of analogy in book IX, let us consider whence Varro might have taken inspiration for them. On the one hand, it should by now be straightforward that the principle of comparing paradigms and not individual forms (or, seen from another angle, the doctrine of *rationes analogiae*) can be traced back to the Alexandrian school; we even have quotations of Aristarchus to underscore the authority.

However, the whole case for analogy (the thesis it purports to defend, how it is structured, the arguments it deploys) does not really square with a second-century Alexandrian source. Beside the doctrine of *rationes analogiae*, the other theoretical arguments have no match in the surviving

²⁴⁴ IX 43–44, 91, 103, 108.

²⁴⁵ IX 89; the issue is not raised in detail in book VIII. The good example of *meto* is preceded by another, less effective one. Varro compares *hic Argus* (male anthroponym or, alternatively, adjective “of Argos, Argive”) to *hoc Argos* (toponym of the Peloponnesian city, unusually written with a Greek ending) and to *Argi* (Latinization of Ἄργος or, alternatively, plural of *Argus*), which do not entirely fit the definition of homonymy. In Latin literature, the form *Argos* occurs only in the nominative and accusative, so it cannot display homonymy; as for *Argi*, it only presents homonymy with the plural of *Argus* if we treat the latter as an adjective (de Melo 2019a pp. 1174–5).

²⁴⁶ IX 96–100, 104.

²⁴⁷ IX 105–107.

fragments of those scholars. We do have their comments on many of the topics discussed between books VIII–IX (gender, number, gradation, tense and aspects...), but always in reference to specific Homeric *loci*, not to engage in a description of the Greek language per se—which, as is by now established, was not their interest. Also their use of analogy was limited to specific difficulties arising in the process of editing and commenting on Homer’s text. For these reasons, despite the anomalists at a certain point alluding to “the Aristarcheans” who “exert their energies” in the topic of cases,²⁴⁸ it was probably not Aristarchus and his colleagues who inspired Varro’s rendition of a thesis in favour of normative grammar.

But precisely the epithet *Aristarchei* points in a more convincing direction: the thesis defended in book IX fits well with the interest and scope of the studies on language developed by the generation of the Alexandrians’ epigones. De Marco’s and Blank’s suggestions that Sextus’ *Against the grammarians* ultimately goes back to a source which was refuting Asclepiades’ treatise *On grammar*²⁴⁹ already went along these lines, but no Asclepiadean fragments discussing analogy survived, and Sextus does not mention Asclepiades in the section where he refutes analogy (§§176–240). The inclusion of Asclepiades among the ranks of “Aristarchean” analogists is not unconvincing in theory, but it cannot be demonstrated.

On the other hand, for other Greek scholars of Asclepiades’ generation, enough material or at least information survives to substantiate the claim that their views fit with Varro’s analogists. Firstly, Varro himself cited Aristocles, Aristodemus, Dionysius of Sidon, and others among his predecessors who had written about analogy in a way that he judged insufficiently clear or thorough. But also Tyrannio, Philoxenus, Trypho, even (though not Greek) Antonius Gniphio, and others had been trained according to the tradition of Aristarchus’ school and produced writings in which they assessed the rules governing morphology. The opening argument of book IX, that analogy proceeds from usage, echoes the point made by Pindarion (although he had specifically referred to Homeric usage). Aside from him and the scholars cited in book X, Philoxenus and Trypho seem especially promising candidates as sources for the material used by Varro. The title of “Aristarcheans” would have been appropriate for them: both were born in Alexandria and their writings strongly suggest familiarity with the Alexandrian way of discussing grammatical topics; Trypho,

²⁴⁸ VIII 63.

²⁴⁹ De Marco (1957), Blank (1998). Siebenborn (1976 p. 107) made, in a way, an opposite suggestion: that Asclepiades had been the in-between source used by Varro for the anomalist book (VIII), which he ultimately traced back to Crates.

for his part, was the son of Ammonius,²⁵⁰ Aristarchus' pupil who took over after him as head of the school after the *secessio doctorum*. Unlike Aristophanes and Aristarchus, Philoxenus and Trypho did write dedicated studies on the parts of speech and inflectional patterns dissociated from textual work; they did compile sets of normative rules and describe their effect on Greek grammar; they did advocate the application of analogy across the board, making it not just a useful device to solve textual problems, but an overarching principle in morphology. Philoxenus even made analogy the main criterion to reconstruct what he argued were literally the bases of all verbs; and Trypho's "blind faith in analogy" led him to untenable and somewhat embarrassing conclusions.

Trypho's fragments also offer an insight into other voices in the debate over analogy which did not survive textual transmission: his *On analogy in monosyllables* attests to ongoing disputes among grammarians in the first century concerning the limits to the application of analogy. In another significant testimony, Apollonius Dyscolus remarked that Trypho, by discussing a topic incompetently, offered his flank to anti-analogistic criticism: failing to recognise that the coincidence of the nominative and vocative in the pronoun of the second person singular (σύ) is due to syncretism, and mistakenly suggesting that the pronoun "you" had the vocative only, "he offered the argument that there are nominatives without any corresponding vocative, as in the case of *ekeinos* ('that (one)') and *autos* ('he himself'), and the others which cannot form a vocative".²⁵¹ This seems exactly the kind of criticism expressed by Varro's anomalist in book VIII and against which his analogist in book IX have to defend their position.

With the conclusion that Varro's source for the thesis defended in book IX was probably one or more of the scholars of the post-Alexandrian generation, the deconstruction of the traditional interpretation of the analogy and anomaly controversy is complete. The narrative which traces book VIII back to Crates, a Stoic scholar of Pergamum, and book IX to Aristarchus, a grammarian of Alexandria, does not hold up. Book VIII represents the position of sceptical-empiricist attitudes towards grammar and the τέχναι in general, and book IX accounts for the most recent advancements in the field of normative grammar which had been developed by the generation prior to Varro and also by his own coeval scholars. Both sides occasionally appealed to the authorities of

²⁵⁰ *Suidas* s.v. Τρύφων.

²⁵¹ Fr. 38 ap. A.D. p. 302,9 (transl. Householder 1981).

Crates and Aristarchus, but not so as to make them their respective spokespersons, but more in the vein in which it was common, in *disputationes*, to evoke illustrious authorities anecdotally to bolster one's argument. In Varro's account of the debate over normative grammar, Aristarchus and Crates are merely accessories, not the protagonists of the story.

b. Varro's theory of analogical proportions

To an extent, Varro thinks that the anti-analogists of book VIII have a point. They had criticised the analogists for giving conflicting and unclear explanations of what similarity was, on what level it played, in what features it was to be found, etc. (§§39–40). When Varro resumes the floor in book X to illustrate himself the theory of analogy, he advances similar criticism: he laments confusion and lack of thoroughness in previous literature on the subject. For this reason, he pledges to contribute to the doctrine not only by giving a comprehensive account of the arguments put forward against it and in its favour (which he did in books VIII–IX), but also by “laying down its foundations” in this book, explaining the concepts it deals with and its theoretical basis (*ordo ac natura*) and “unfolding its structure”.²⁵² He purports to do so (§2) by clarifying the meanings of (a) *simile* and *dissimile*; (b) *ratio*, or λόγος; (c) *proportio*, or ἀνὰ λόγον; and (d) *consuetudo*.

Finally, then, we find here the technical meaning that was the original sense of analogy, grounded in mathematics and transferred to grammar in the milieu of Alexandria. It is clear from the beginning that the sources that Varro drew on made up a substantial body of literature, ranging from second-century Alexandrian to contemporary Roman scholarship; but Varro's illustration of analogy differs from the analogist defence relayed in book IX. Those analogists had replied to the anomalist objections by appealing to semantics or the characteristics of the referents; they also referred to the internal cohesion of paradigms, but their argument—at least as Varro relates it—was not conveyed with clarity and prompted criticism as being removed from reality, as with the example of the Menaechmi twins. Varro provides an entirely morphology-internal defence of the coherence of the doctrine of analogy; the main argument with which he meets the criticism is that this arises only because analogy has been sought where it was never to be found.

²⁵² X 1: *In verborum declinationibus disciplina loquendi dissimilitudinem an similitudinem sequi deberet, multi qu(a)esierunt, cum ab his ratio quae ab similitudine oriretur vocaretur analogia, reliqua pars appellaretur anomalia. [...] Quarum rerum quod nec fundamenta, ut debuit, posita ab ullo neque ordo ac natura, ut res postulat, explicita, ipse eius rei formam exponam.*

In this section, in which I go through the theory illustrated in book X, I will not entirely follow the order in which the topics are discussed, but proceed by theoretical points, which Varro blends as he addresses firstly nouns, then verbs, and so on.

(1) *Materia/figura* Varro begins by putting the basics of morphology in order. Let us start from the distinction between what pertains to the *materia* of words and the *figura* “which results from inflection” (§§11–12). The two concepts have been interpreted differently. For Kent, *materia* was the “form and ending” of a word, “in the form which is the starting point for inflection”, i.e. the nominative, and *figura* was “the inflectional form”, i.e. the other cases. For Traglia, *materia* was the stem of the noun, which identifies the lexeme, and *figura* the inflected form, made up by the stem plus the ending (thus essentially the same as Kent’s *materia*, but not specific of the nominative).²⁵³ Taylor, by contrast, explained that of *materia* and *figura* as “a metalinguistic dichotomy” distinguishing the *signifiant* from the *signifié* and, as such, virtually overlapping what Varro elsewhere calls *vox* and *res*: *materia* would be the morphological substance, i.e. the morphological factors inherent to a word, *figura* the “grammatical form”, i.e. ‘morphological configuration’ or ‘spelling’”.²⁵⁴ De Melo agreed with Taylor that *materia/figura* essentially overlaps with *res/vox*: *materia* is the “grammatical substance” or “internal features”, corresponding to categories like declension/conjugation class, gender, number, and the other so-called accidents of the noun and the verb. *Figura* defines the “outward shape”, as Taylor said; it does match Traglia’s “inflected form”, but on a different basis: it “refers to the phonological form of a word and its spelling, and, of course, this varies according to the case or tense a word is in”.²⁵⁵ We can add that in §27 Varro compares *materia* and *figura* to people and the clothes they wear, which confirms that Taylor and de Melo’s interpretation is accurate.

The chosen terminology, as often, is a delicate issue: *figura*, being the Latin equivalent of σχῆμα (technical term of the Greek literary-critical and philological tradition) and sometimes used in that sense (including by the late-antique Roman grammarians), has sometimes been matched to the Greek concept,²⁵⁶ but in this context it cannot be what Varro meant. As for *materia*, Aristotelian

²⁵³ Traglia (1974 p. 442 n11).

²⁵⁴ Taylor (1974 pp. 78–9, 1996 pp. 108–9).

²⁵⁵ De Melo (2019a pp. 218–9, 222, 1201).

²⁵⁶ Sic Dahlmann (1935 col. 268), Fehling (1957 pp. 74–5); contra Lomanto (2001 p. 174).

precedents immediately come to mind.²⁵⁷ However, the closest and most likely precedent for Varro's couple, as indicated by Taylor, is Lucretius, who, discussing the existence of void, compared a woollen and a leaden ball, identical in size from the outside (*figura*)²⁵⁸ and who regularly used *materia/materies* to denote "the underlying atomic constitution of objects".²⁵⁹

(2) *Morphological taxonomy* The distinction between *materia* and *figura* is pervasive and relevant to the entire system constructed by Varro in the book, which comprises at least five taxonomical levels. The first *divisio* is between unchangeable and changeable words (§§13–14), already touched on in the opening paragraphs of book VIII (§9), where Varro had called the former *genus* of words *sterile*, the latter *fecundum*. Words can be changed either through derivation (*declinatio voluntaria*) or inflection (*declinatio naturalis*) (§§15–16); we already discussed the significance of this terminology in §1.1. Inflectable words are divided into four classes based on whether they "express" (*adsignificant*)²⁶⁰ cases, tenses, both, or neither (§17). Nominal forms (which express cases, not tenses) are further divided into nouns and adjectives (*nominatus*, an open class) and pronouns (*articuli*, a closed class) (§§18–19); *nominatus* can be proper nouns (*nomina*) or common (*vocabula*) (§20), pronouns can be "definite" (i.e. demonstrative) or indefinite (§30).²⁶¹ Verbs are divided into personal and impersonal (§31). The description of participles and adverbs begins in §34 and then is lost in a lacuna; we can assume that this class of adverbs, grouped under changeable words, only included the kinds derived from nominal forms (Varro's examples in §17 are *docte* "learnedly" and *facete* "wittily"), not the kinds like *mox*, *vix*, *ideo*, *unde* etc.

In VIII 9–12, Varro had employed a slightly different classification of inflectable words. He had credited the distinction between words that express cases, tenses, and neither to Dio of Alexandria, the Academic philosopher who, like Varro, had been taught by Antiochus; then, he had traced Dio's distinction back to Aristotle, who talked of two parts of speech, nouns and verbs. Varro called

²⁵⁷ Garcea, for example, stated (2018 p. 254) that "the distinction between *materia* and *figura* [is] a clear reference to the Aristotelian pair of ὕλη/μορφή". On the Latin translations and reuses of ὕλη, see Malaspina (2006).

²⁵⁸ LUCR. I 358–363.

²⁵⁹ Taylor (1974 p. 106 n30).

²⁶⁰ The term *adsignificare* is itself very noteworthy: it is "a neologism derived from the Greek προσσημαίνειν, a technical term used by Aristotle to indicate that although the ῥῆμα shares with the ὄνομα the semantic content of the existing substrate, it 'also signifies' or 'carries as an additional signification' (προσσημαίνει) a temporal connotation" (Garcea 2018 p. 253). See also Garcea (2016 pp. 173–4) and de Melo (2019a pp. 213–4).

²⁶¹ Ample information on pronouns is expounded in the fragments (122–124), where they are called *pronomina* (not *articuli*), but this might reflect late-antique grammatical terminology. The fragments are *incertae sedis* and it would be difficult to fit them in the lacunae in book X.

these two classes (which included words like *homo* and *scribit*) *genera priora*, then added two *genera posteriora*, corresponding to adjectives and adverbs (like *doctus* and *docte*), so called because they were considered additions (we might say modifiers) to the former two classes: “for we say *homo doctus* and *scribit docte*”. Garcea convincingly argued that classifying adjectives and adverbs as *genera posteriora* reflects the Greek model, “where the terms ἐπώνυμα for adjectives and ἐπιρρήματα for adverbs express linguistically the subordinate nature of these morphological classes with respect to nouns and verbs”.²⁶² In book X, Varro retains the quadripartition, but discards the distinction between *priora* and *posteriora*—more representative of logical categories—in favour of an entirely morphological criterion, which accounts for the substitution of adjectives with participles.

All these divisions pertain to the *materia* of words, whereas the features which distinguish each subclass of words (overlapping with the so-called accidents to an extent) pertain both to the *materia* and affect the *figura*. Varro says that nominal forms are defined by five categories of which two are shared between *nominatus* and pronouns and three are specific of either of the two subsets, but scholars disagree on their identification based on Varro’s description (§§22, 30). According to de Melo, the two shared categories are gender and number (conflated into one category) and case; then, specific to nouns and adjectives is *species* (“kind”, meaning whether they are *nomina* or *vocabula*), to pronouns is definiteness, and the two subsets have different *exitus* (“endings”, i.e. which declension they follow): the latter category belongs entirely to the *figura*.²⁶³ Combining the categories of nominal forms, Varro evokes a checkerboard to create a visual representation of a paradigm, which he calls *forma* (§22): the set of cases represents the rows (progressing as *albus albi albo*) and that of genders the columns (*albus alba album*)²⁶⁴; the grid obtained is duplex, for singular and plural (*albi alborum albis, albi albae alba*), which adds credibility to de Melo’s suggestion that gender and number are subsumed under the same category. Also the two subsets of verbal forms have some specific categories (*species*) and some shared ones (§31).²⁶⁵ Personal verbs have six specific categories: tense, person, and four which we would not properly define as categories, but rather speech act types—question (which could be expressed either in the indica-

²⁶² Garcea (2016 pp. 172–3).

²⁶³ De Melo (2019a pp. 1214–5), who also pointed out the faults with Varro’s reasoning. For Taylor (1996 pp. 127–8), gender, number, and case are separate categories, all shared between *nominatus* and *articuli*. Traglia (1967, 1974 p. 452 n27) sought to match the categories with the accidents listed by Dionysius Thrax.

²⁶⁴ On this model, see Taylor (1977) and Garcea (2008).

²⁶⁵ Varro once again wavers in his terminology: *species* means “category” here, but when discussing the nominal forms, it defined one of the categories.

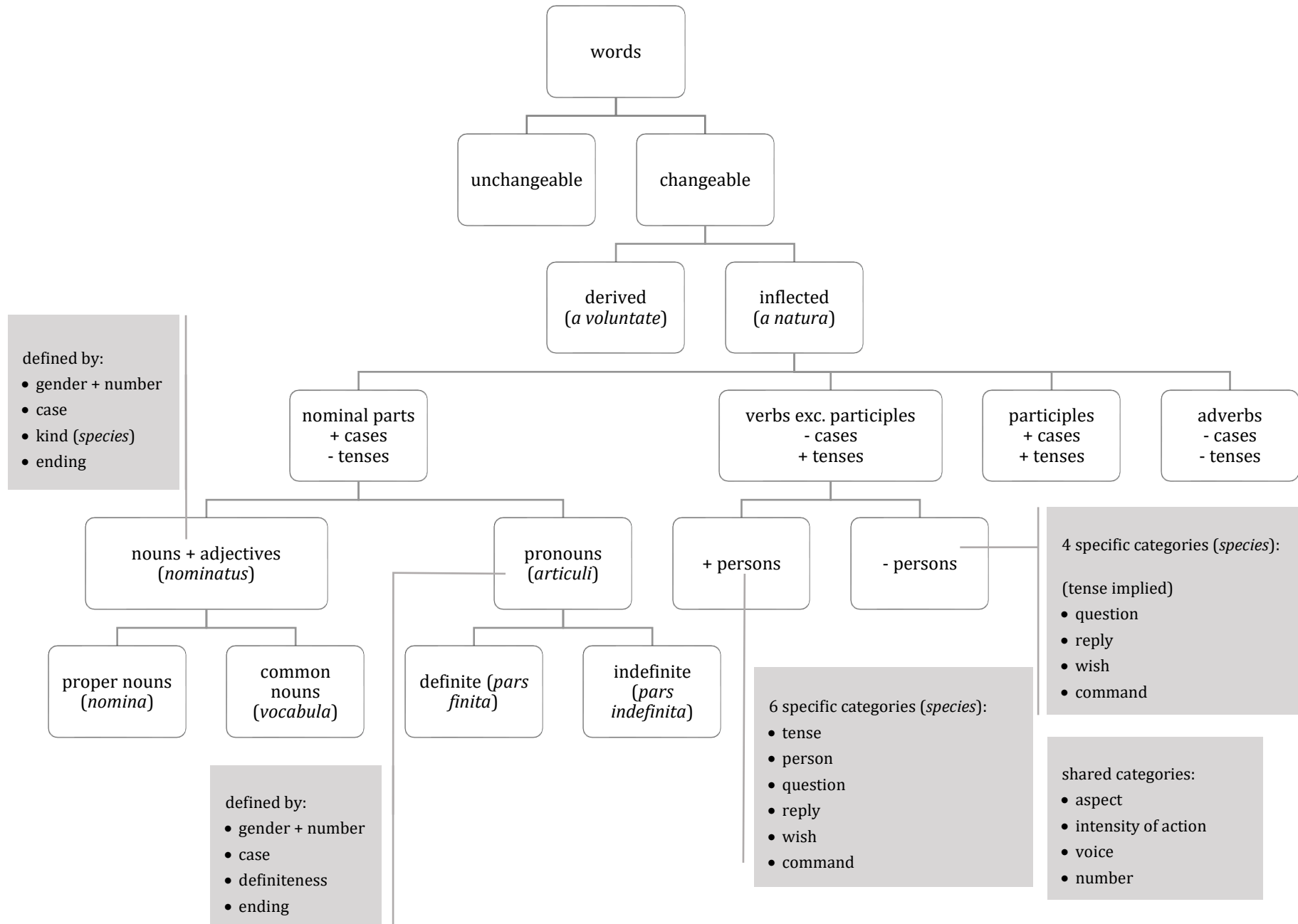
tive or subjunctive moods), reply, wish, and command (roughly corresponding to, respectively, the indicative, subjunctive, and imperative). The same speech act types are the four specific categories of impersonal verbs (although, as de Melo argued, the category of tense is implied)²⁶⁶ (§32). The two subsets then share four categories: aspect (*infectum/perfectum*), intensity or repetition (simplex/frequentative), voice (active/passive), number (singular/plural); a more detailed discussion about these categories is promised in books XI–XIII (§33), but of those we only have fragments.

How do these various features affect a word's *figura*? Changes in a word's phonological form can be seen at the beginning of the word (with changes in the stem, such as apophony), in the middle (with the insertion or change of infixes), or at the end (with the addition or change of suffixes i.e. endings): endings are the part most subject to change (§25). Varro must have discussed more extensively the flexional prototypes in Latin word-formation in his books *Περὶ χαρακτήρων*.²⁶⁷

We can represent Varro's taxonomy as follows:

²⁶⁶ De Melo (2019a pp. 1216–7).

²⁶⁷ The one extant fragment (48) discusses the comparative adverb *propius* ("nearer"), from which the superlative *proxime* is derived through an anomalous formation process. Cf. DIOM. gramm. p. 408,4–7, where *prope* is included among adverbs which *prototypum non habent*.



(3) *Similarity* As promised, Varro clarifies straight at the beginning what is meant by “similarity”. He gives a technical definition: *simile* is “what shows most features identical to those of the object it is similar to”, *dissimile* is the opposite.²⁶⁸ As such, similarity is not an either/or concept, but a quantitative spectrum: two things will be more or less similar based on how many features they share; all features shared equals identity. For analogy to operate, the features according to which the similarity between two words is evaluated must be on both levels: *materia* and *figura*.

As Varro proceeds with the illustration of his taxonomy, he pieces together a thorough description of where similarity is to be sought and therefore analogy can apply. Firstly, only in changeable words: comparing *nox* (common noun) with *mox* (adverb) would give aberrant results (§14); much later in the book (§§79–82), Varro picks up on this point to add that analogy should not be expected at all in unchangeable words like adverbs (except from derivative adverbs, classified among changeable words), conjunctions, and particles, nor in letters of the alphabet (an allusion to the point discussed in books VIII–IX and a subject contested in first-century grammatical literature), nor in completely anomalous nominatives such as *caput* (see further below). Secondly, among changeable words, it is much more frequent to find similarity in inflection than derivation, so that criticism of analogy based on its lack in derivation is misplaced; we shall come back to derivation below. Among inflectable words, similarity must be sought among words of the same class (§17): comparing (to take up an example seen in book IX) *meto* (verb) with *Meto* (proper noun) would give faulty results and lead to unjust criticism of analogy. As we descend through the various subsets, the principle remains that like must be compared with like: *nominatus* must be compared with *nominatus*, not with pronouns. In the latter category, “analogy is barely visible as a shadow” anyway, and “it is more a thing of the substance [*res* i.e. *materia*] than of the phonological form [*voces* i.e. *figura*]; by contrast, in *nominatus*, analogy is even more visible in their *figura*”.²⁶⁹ Also words in these subsets must be compared with their like: *nomina* with *nomina* and *vocabula* with *vocabula*, with the same gender, case, and of the same declension. The same applies to verbs: a form in the *inflectum* like *lego* (“I am reading”) is rightly compared with *legebam* (“I was reading”), but not with *legi* (“I have read”) which expresses the *perfectum* (§48).

²⁶⁸ §3: *Simile est quod res plerasque habere videtur easdem quas illud cuiusque simile; dissimile est quod videtur esse contrarium huius.*

²⁶⁹ §19: *In articulis vix adumbrata est analogia et magis rerum quam vocum. In nomin(at)ibus [Spengel₁] magis expressa ac plus etiam in vocibus (quam in rebus) [transp. Taylor], ac similitudinibus [quam in rebus] suam optinet rationem.*

Even at the level of the fifth division (where we get the subsets of nominal and verbal forms), in which similarity or dissimilarity is seen in the *figura*, the principle holds that it must be sought between words which share features at the level of *materia*.

(4) Ratio After the lacuna, in which the description of the words' features must have been completed with participles and adverbs, Varro moves on to the second concept he had promised to elucidate: *ratio* or λόγος (§35). He describes it as a systematic relationship which binds together two or more *comparanda*, which can either be a word and its derivative (analogy in derivation), or inflected forms (analogy in inflection), or a third kind, which is “a combination of the two”. The third kind is not clear: de Melo suggested it might refer to “loan words, which are imposed on the Latin language and may also have different inflectional properties”.²⁷⁰

Earlier in the book, Varro had stated that analogy is far less frequent in derivation than in inflection, which is to be expected for the reasons summarised above (§3.2.3.d). Varro himself says so clearly (§§15–16)²⁷¹: words changed “in obedience to will” come to be “when any individual, from some name, assigns a name to something else (as *Romulus* assigned a name to *Roma*)”; “derivation is governed by usage [...]. Therefore, one should not establish a similarity and say that, because from *Roma* comes *Romanus*, so from *Capua* should come *Capuanus*; for there is extreme fluctuation in usage, because those who derive are incompetent in assigning names”. This does not contradict what is said in §35: in principle, analogy in derivation can exist (one could cite for example that *Roma* is to *Romanus* what *Cuma* is to *Cumanus*). But because this ratio is not as binding and constant as other ratios which can be found in inflection, it would be unfair to deny the validity of analogy because there are inconsistencies in derivation. This theoretical point, which Varro stresses repeatedly throughout the morphological books, may have been influenced by Staberius Eros, who had defended analogy against this very objection (see §3.1.1.c).

It is interesting that Varro insists on human incompetence when discussing anomaly in derivation: in §56, he again contrasts *natura rerum*, an *incorruptum principium*, to *lubido hominum* (“the fancy of people”), which he reiterates in §60: “unskilled and scattered people assign names to things whichever way fancy compels them. Nature, for the most part, is incorrupt of its own ac-

²⁷⁰ De Melo (2019a p. 1218). Kent, conversely, had referred the first kind of analogy to primary lexicon, the second to paradigms, and the third to derivatives, but Varro never claims there to be analogy in primary imposition.

²⁷¹ The passage is reported fully in §1.1.2.

cord, unless somebody perverts it with ignorant usage”.²⁷² This argumentative point seems to aim at securing the legitimacy and coherence of the rational system and shielding it from attacks based on people’s inadequacy. This reasoning (and, indeed, ideology) strikes me as very Stoic: it transfers to grammar the view that cosmic life—nature—is governed by a rational order and that the path to virtue is manifest, but imperfect humans struggle to follow it and often go astray, and the rationally ordered nature itself is the benchmark of correction of their mistakes.²⁷³

(5) *Proportion* Let us go back to the definition of *ratio* (systematic relationship between two or more *comparanda*). Varro continues saying that *rationes* can be similar or dissimilar to one another (§36): for example, the *ratio* which binds *amor* to *amori* is the same which binds *dolor* to *dolori*, but not the same which binds *dolor* to *dolorem*; neither is the relationship between *amor* and *amoris* the same as between *amores* and *amorum*. The theoretical explanation for this was given in the previous part of the book: similarity must be sought in words which share similar features in *materia*, and the couples *amor/amoris* and *amores/amorum* differ by one parameter (number), which makes them non-comparable. Only *rationes* between *comparanda* similar in *materia* can be called “proportional”, or “analogical” (ἀνάλογος, from ἀνὰ λόγον, *pro portione* “according to proportion”) (§§37–39).²⁷⁴ Thus, we finally get to analogical proportions such as the ones already in use in second-century Alexandria: the proportion *amor : amori = dolor : dolori* is no different from the ones attested already for Aristophanes. Except now Varro has provided a comprehensive theoretical explanation for these proportions, starting from the basics (the definition of similarity) and drawing an ordered taxonomy. Even the doctrine of *rationes analogiae* (for which Varro credits the Alexandrians for using analogies “more carefully than others”)²⁷⁵ is now integrated into a coherent theory: these are nothing but the “categories” pertaining to the words’ *materia* and affecting their *figura*, which the *comparanda* of a proportion have to share for the comparison to be effective.

Varro also elaborates on the distinction, already made by Aristotle, between two *genera* of analogies, conjoined (*coniunctum*) and disjointed (*deiunctum*) (§45). For nominal parts of speech

²⁷² *homines imperiti et dispersi vocabula rebus imponunt, quocumque eos libido invitavit. Natura incorrupta plerumque est suapte sponte, nisi qui eam usu inscio depravabit.*

²⁷³ On analogy as a tool for correction see further §3.3.3.

²⁷⁴ On the terminology and its evolution from Greek to Latin, see Schironi (2007).

²⁷⁵ §42: *Hoc poetae genere in similitudinibus utuntur multum, hoc acutissime geometrae, hoc in oratione diligentius quam alii ab Aristarc(h)o grammatici.*

(especially *vocabula*), he says, one employs disjoined analogy (which is fourfold),²⁷⁶ of the kind *amorem : amori = dolorem : dolori* (§§36–42). This is justified in light of his description of paradigms as combinations of two patters (case and gender + number): if one compares e.g. the proper nouns *Albius* and *Atrius* (§44), through the crosswise pattern (distinguishing cases), one obtains analogies such as *Albius : Atrius = Albio : Atrio*; through the vertical pattern (distinguishing gender + number), one obtains analogies such as *Albius : Atrius = Albia : Atria* (Varro gives no example for a comparison in which number changes, but his model implies it). Conversely, verbs are compared through conjoined analogies, which are threefold, for the middle terms are the same (§§47–48), of the kind *legebam : lego = lego : legam*, which compares three tenses expressing the *infectum*, or *tutuderam : tutudi = tutudi : tutudero*, which compares tenses expressing the *perfectum*.²⁷⁷

Next, having clarified how analogical proportions work, and proceeding from the principle that one must compare forms of similar paradigms, Varro addresses a methodological question: which form of a paradigm is the best choice for a proportion? Caution had already been advised in §28, where Varro had touched on the fact that the same form may not be equally revealing of the inflectional pattern for all forms: if we compare *praetor* and *consul*, we can safely assume that their *figura* in the dative will be similar (*praetori, consuli*), because the stem does not change throughout the declension; but with *ro*-stems, from just looking at the nominative singular, one cannot know whether the *-e-* will be retained through the inflection (as in *socer* “father-in-law”, which becomes *socerum* in the accusative) or not (as in *macer* “lean”, *macrum*). In that context, Varro had provided a shaky explanation for this fact:

Hoc fit ideo quod naturarum genera sunt duo quae inter se conferri possunt, unum quod per se videri potest, ut *homo* et *equus*, alterum (quod) sine assumpta aliqua re extrinsecus perspicui non possit, ut *eques* et *equiso*; uterque enim dicitur ab *equo*.

This happens because there are two kinds of natures which can be compared with each other: one that can be seen on its own, like *homo* (“person”) and *equus* (“horse”); and another that

²⁷⁶ Aristarchus (and perhaps others) also used six-term analogies, as we saw; Varro says that “these, however, are comprised in the fourfold scheme, because two terms are compared together to one individual form” (§49).

²⁷⁷ As de Melo noted, although in theory both verbs could be compared through disjoined analogy and nouns through conjoined analogy, Varro’s distinction has theoretical justifications (2019a p. 1225): “In practice [...], Varro’s way of handling the forms is superior. For verbs, not only does it incorporate all three tenses of the present stem, it also shows how they are related to each other on the time axis. Thus, the present happens after the past, and the future happens after the present. For cases, Varro’s system is also preferable because cases express different syntactic and semantic roles which are not related to each other in as straightforward a way as tenses are. The relationship between nominative and dative is of a different nature than that between dative and accusative; the nominative indicates the syntactic subject and can be an agent (*John eats*), but also a patient (*the apple is eaten*), while the dative indicates a recipient or beneficiary, and the accusative a direct object (mostly patient)”.

can only be seen when something is taken from the outside [*extrinsecus*], like *eques* (“knight”) and *equiso* (“stable-boy”), both of which derive from *equus*.

A few notes on this passage. Firstly, we have yet another occurrence of *natura* with a different meaning from either “linguistic system” or “inflection” or “qualities of the referent” or “semantics”: here it seems to be just a synonym for *genus* or *species* in their most generic sense. Secondly, let us remark that the notion of “taking something from the outside”, central to the anti-analogist polemic against Aristarchus’ argument, re-emerges here and is vindicated; however, it is inappropriately referred not to taking forms of the same inflectional paradigms (as it was in books VIII–IX), but to derivatives and the primary word they come from.²⁷⁸ This is the third and most important issue with the passage: Varro himself had said, correctly, that inflectional and derivational forms should not be compared with one another, but here he brings derivation into play. Nevertheless, as de Melo observed, “this inconsistency is not as bad as it may seem at first sight”²⁷⁹: the nominative singular can be almost as little revealing of a noun’s declension as a derivative is of the word it comes from; we may add that the ancient disputes about the status of the nominative could have shortened the gap, in the mind of an ancient scholar, between a nominative and other cases versus a word and its derivative. Varro’s argument would have been better phrased as: for some nouns, the nominative singular may be deceptive and their mutual similarity or dissimilarity requires looking at other cases.

This may be the right place to state explicitly an idea which underpins not just Varro’s theory of morphology, but also of etymology. In all his comments about nominatives, imposition, and derivation vs. inflection, he takes it for granted that people firstly assign a name to a thing *ex nihilo* in the nominative, which may have such a *figura* that it allows speakers to immediately recognise the declension (such as *lupus* or *surus*), or it may be deceptive (such as *lepus*, which makes one think of the same declension as *lupus*, but it has a different one), or utterly aberrant and unparalleled, such as *caput* or *nihil*.²⁸⁰ From the nominative, regular inflection follows. This idea is implied in all the passages already examined where Varro contrasts imposition or derivation, which de-

²⁷⁸ A point made in *ling.* fr. 9 ap. POMP. gramm. p. 164,13–18, attributed to book XI, may be connected to this argument: Varro says that, when one is in doubt concerning the gender of a noun, looking at the gender that their diminutive takes is instructive (e.g. *arbuscula*, dim. of *arbor*). This operation is valid because “diminutives always agree in gender with the word they come from” (fr. 10 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 42). Diminutives are considered a hybrid category, divided between derivation and inflection, so arguably this example would count as “taking something from the outside” to learn something about a form.

²⁷⁹ De Melo (2019a p. 1213).

²⁸⁰ Examples cited in IX 53.

depends on the “control/will/fancy” of an individual who may very well be incompetent in name-assignment, to inflection, which “follows/is governed by nature” and as such is known to all speakers and predictable.²⁸¹ The idea is never adumbrated that the nominative in its configuration (sometimes anomalous) may result from phonological changes to an initially regular stem. For instance, already in V 4 Varro had justified his choice to sometimes look at different forms of a word to reconstruct the etymology because they might show the stem more clearly, and he gave the example of *inpos* (“lacking power”), where the stem *inpot-* is hidden in the nominative, but visible in the rest of the inflection: there is no suggestion that *inpos* results from assimilation or loss of *-t-* before *-s*; it is assumed that someone coined *inpos* as such, and inexpertly so, because the *figura* of this nominative does not immediately suggest what the declension will look like.

This idea has implications on multiple levels. For derivation, as we saw above, one cannot predict through which pattern a derivative will be formed, hence allomorphy (e.g. *Roma* : *Romanus* ≠ *Capua* : *Capuensis*). On the level of word-coinage (relevant to etymology), the consequence is that the thought which led to a certain coinage may not be obvious, as is well illustrated by an example in book VIII of different criteria for naming a slave.²⁸² On the morphological level of inflection, as we said, one may assign a nominative in a way that is more or less indicative of the following declension.

Therefore, the nominative is brought at the centre of the question of what form is most indicated for an analogical comparison. Varro says that one can proceed in three ways (§51–53): either “follow imposition” (*impositionem sequi*) i.e. start from the nominative and seek analogy in other cases, or “follow nature” (*naturam*) i.e. do the opposite, or “follow both” (*utrumque*) i.e. “observe a transition in one word and postulate a similar transition in another word”.²⁸³ Varro argues (§§55–62) that other cases are better starting points than the nominative in that they are less likely to be ambiguous.

²⁸¹ Also explicit in VIII 9: *Causa, inquam, cur eas [scil. voces] ab impositis nominibus declinarint, quam ostendi.*

²⁸² VIII 21–22: (21) *Declinationum genera sunt duo, voluntarium et naturale. Voluntarium est, quo ut cuiusque tulit voluntas declinavit. Sic tres cum emerunt Ephesi singulos servos, nonnunquam alius declinat nomen ab eo qui vendit Artemidorus, atque Artemam appellat, alius a regione quod ibi emit, ab Ion(i)a Iona, alius quod Ephesi Ephesium, sic alius ab alia aliqua re, ut visum est. (22) Contra naturalem declinationem dico quae non a singulorum oritur voluntate, sed a co(m)muni consensu. Itaque omnes impositis nominibus eorum item declinant casus atque eodem modo dicunt huius Artemidori et huius Ionis et huius Ephesi[s], sic in casibus aliis.*

²⁸³ De Melo (2019a p. 1228).

Picking up on the point made earlier in the book about certain similarities pertaining to *materia* and others to *figura*, Varro says that also the similarity between *rationes* can be on different levels (§§63–68). For example, the proportion *Iupiter* : *Iovi* = *Marspiter* : *Martis* is analogical only in *materia*: *Iupiter* (“Jupiter”) and *Marspiter* (“Father Mars”) are both proper nouns, masculine, singular, and the proportion shows similar relationships between the nominative and the dative. The proportion *nuptia* : *nuptiae* = *merula* : *merulae* is analogical only in *figura*: the formal modifications from the singular to the plural are the same, but *merula* (“blackbird”) is used both in the singular and plural, *nuptiae* (“wedding”), a *plurale tantum*, does not have an identical category of number in its *materia*.²⁸⁴ The proportion *bonus* : *malus* = *boni* : *mali* is analogical on both levels and is therefore a *perfecta analogia*, whereas the first two kinds are *inchoatae* (“incomplete”, §68). It is perfect analogies of the third kind that we need to rely on in order to improve the way we speak (§72; see further §3.3.3).

In the remainder of book X (before the text breaks off in §84), Varro proceeds to discuss *consuetudo*, but this will be better analysed in §3.3.3.

c. Specific points on analogy

Of the “practical” books where Varro addressed specific points of Latin morphology only a handful of fragments survive. From these and from other excerpts attributed to other linguistic writings, we can appreciate that Varro took positions consistent with the doctrine illustrated in book X, as far as concerns where and how analogy should be expected to operate.

This is where Varro got straight to the heart of the discussions ongoing in his own time among scholars who took different stances on the limits of normative grammar, often because they approached the matter from different perspectives and with different goals. In fact, I have heard the great scholar and my former teacher Valeria Lomanto say many times that it was no coincidence that Varro waited so long to publish *De lingua Latina*, in spite of Cicero’s impatience to receive his promised work: Varro, Lomanto surmises, was not in a rush to go public with a book in which he took stances in open contradiction of Caesar’s linguistic views. Caesar’s politics (in grammar and otherwise) compelled him to advocate phonological and morphological solutions aimed at achiev-

²⁸⁴ Although Varro’s point is valid, this example is faulty because it contradicts the *quadruplex formula* stated in IX 37: one of the conditions for analogy to obtain is that the thing compared must be in use, and *nuptia* in the singular is not.

ing clarity above everything else, and also favoured the usage established by authorities of the age of the Scipios over strictly analogical forms which had little resonance in either common or literary usage.

Varro took a more normative approach, which is already visible in the fragments in which he discussed nominal gender which editors attribute to book XI of *De lingua Latina*. Some fragments contain prescriptions aimed at achieving a regular system: although, in theory, only two *genera* should exist (masculine and feminine, for only the masculine and feminine sexes are biologically capable of “generating”, *generare*),²⁸⁵ Latin has three; but “it is in our power to give genders to things which do not have a gender from nature”²⁸⁶; insofar as possible, grammatical gender should be made to match the sex of the referent.²⁸⁷ Other fragments from the same book contain descriptive remarks, which however speak to the same normative mindset: since diminutives almost always agree in gender with the word they come from,²⁸⁸ they can help in situations in which the gender of the primitive word is dubious²⁸⁹; and Greek masculine nouns in -ης or -ας, if they do not retain their gender when integrated into Latin, change to feminine and are inflected as *a*-stems.²⁹⁰

Most of the extant grammatical fragments relate Varro’s opinions on specific disputed questions of phonology and morphology, like the spelling of [ps] in the nominative singular of labial stems,²⁹¹ the spelling and pronunciation of <H>,²⁹² or the contested declensions of certain nouns. In these instances, it is possible to make comparisons with other scholars, notably Caesar. It is Varro who transmitted Caesar’s treatment of the *sonus medius*,²⁹³ although, if Varro had a different opinion, it was not reported. Other instances are better documented. For example, whereas Caesar had recommended retaining the spelling <Ī>, most common at the time, for *i* as *consonans duplex*, Varro suggested writing <II>.²⁹⁴ Although Varro’s spelling eventually became standard, it “conflicts with both *consuetudo*—as established at least since Lucilius’ *Caelī* and *Numerī*— and *ratio*, in that the double *-ii* does not reflect the *consonans duplex* value of the intervocalic *-i-* in the suf-

²⁸⁵ *Ling.* fr. 7 ap. *Explan. in Don.* pp. 492,37–493,3, POMP. gramm. p. 159,23–6.

²⁸⁶ Fr. 6 ap. IUL. TOLET. gramm. p. 318,31–4.

²⁸⁷ Fr. 8 ap. CLED. gramm. p. 41,24–28.

²⁸⁸ Fr. 10 (see above, n278).

²⁸⁹ Fr. 9 ap. POMP. gramm. p. 164,13–18.

²⁹⁰ Fr. 14 ap. PRISC. gramm. p. 333,9–14, CHAR. gramm. p. 132, 138.

²⁹¹ Varro recommended writing <P> or in analogy with the stem seen in the rest of the inflection, thus *plebs plebis*, *Pelops Pelopis* (fr. 72 ap. SCAUR. gramm. p. 27,3–17).

²⁹² Frr. 77–82.

²⁹³ CAES. fr. 5; see above, §3.1.1.c.

²⁹⁴ Fr. 120 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 98.

fix”.²⁹⁵ It is, however, a solution that secures intra-paradigmatic analogy, for it results in a paradigm in which all forms in the singular have the same number of syllables. Equally justified by analogy is to establish *lact* as the nominative for “milk”,²⁹⁶ whereas Caesar had argued against it in *De analogia*. The same goes for *u*-stems, which Varro inflected *-uis* and *-ui* in the genitive and dative respectively,²⁹⁷ whereas Caesar preferred the dative in *-u* as in Lucilius’ use. And whereas Caesar prescribed that only feminine *i*-stems have an ablative in *-i*, Varro—who made the existence of allomorphs for the ablative singular of *i*-stems one of the anomalists’ objections in VIII 66—wanted all *i*-stems to have ablatives in *-e*,²⁹⁸ for the sake of uniformity.

3.3.3. *Analogy as a tool of correction*

We already discussed in §1.1 the four criteria for *Latinitas* (*natura analogia consuetudo auctoritas*) and their relation to previous and contemporary catalogues. *Analogia* seems to be one of the two constituents of what Caesar-Cicero²⁹⁹ called *ratio*: the objective, supra-individual side of language, comprehensive of a system of norms. While “nature” coincides with the system of the Latin language itself in all its levels, analogy is the corrective tool that ensures that the rules and limits of that system are observed. When one is unsure whether a certain form is acceptable by the standard of good Latin, one compares that to other forms which are not disputed. Forms that are found aberrant will be made to conform to standard patterns.

There are, however, exceptions to this practice, coming from the other two criteria for *Latinitas*: *consuetudo* and *auctoritas*. Concerning the former, the fragment states that “the language established by [common usage] is only accepted insofar as it has been sanctioned by a consensus of many [*multorum consensione*], but in such a way that the regulating action of analogy does not conflict with it, but supports it. For it [*scil.* analogy] is accustomed to drawing its principles from the everyday use of language”. That is to say that, in principle, normative grammar complies with the speech established in usage, based on a quantitative criterion (*multorum consensio*, contrasted to *singulorum voluntas*). But there is also a qualitative criterion, spelled out in *ling.* IX

²⁹⁵ Garcea (2012 p. 146).

²⁹⁶ See fr. 119: *lac non debemus dicere, sed lact*; Varro also says *lact* in V 104. Nevertheless, his usage fluctuated and elsewhere he employed the form found in Plautus, e.g. *Men.* 26A.

²⁹⁷ *Ling.* fr. 17 ap. GELL. IV 16. Kent’s fragment ends with the remark on the genitive, whereas in Goetz & Schoell it includes the one on the dative.

²⁹⁸ *Ling.* fr. 18 = CAES. fr. 16 ap. PLIN. ap. CHAR. gramm. pp. 56,24–157,2.

²⁹⁹ As we said above (§1.1.1 n27), this could either be part of the Caesarian quotation or Cicero’s addition.

18,³⁰⁰ which distinguishes a *consuetudo recta/melior* (which preserves regular patterns) from a *consuetudo mala/depravata* (which diverges from regularity): the former is to be followed, the latter to be corrected by analogy. Also in X 60–61 (seen above) Varro talked of “nature” (the system), “mostly uncorrupted”, being “perverted by ignorant usage” and advocated for “human fancy” to be “corrected by nature”.

Even so, Varro recognised that some forms, though non-analogical, are so firmly rooted in usage that regularising them would alienate speakers; in such instances, he did not recommend forcing standardisation:

ling. IX 16–17:

5 Cum sint (in) consuetudine contra ratione(m) alia verba ita ut ea facile tolli possint, alia ut videantur esse fixa, quae leviter h(a)erent ac sine offensione commutari possunt statim ad rationem corrigi oportet, quae autem sunt ita ut in praesentia corrigere nequeas quin ita dicas, his oportet, si possis, non uti. Sic enim obsolescent ac postea iam oblitterata facilius corrigi poterunt. (17) Quas novas verbi declinationes ratione[s] introductas respuet forum, his boni poetae, maxime sc(a)enici, consuetudine subigere aures populi debent, quod poetae multum possunt in hoc; propter eos quaedam verba in declinatione melius, quaedam deterius dicuntur.

1 *add. editio Ven.* | rationem *Laetus* 2 possunt *Aldus* : possint *F* | statim *Mueller* : si enim *F* 5 ratione *Laetus*

(16) Since in common usage there are some expressions which breach regularity in such a way that they can be easily removed, but others which seem to be entrenched, those which are still attached lightly and can be changed without friction must be reined back in immediately; but those which are such that you cannot correct them on the spot without explaining yourself, if possible, you must not use. This way, they will become obsolete and it will be easier to correct them later, when they have fallen out of use. (17) Public life will reject these new inflectional forms introduced by means of analogy: it is up to good poets, especially the dramatists, to subject the ears of the people to these forms. Poets have much power in this: because of their influence certain words are inflected more correctly, others more incorrectly.

This passage also introduces the second exception to the standardising effect of analogy: literary authors such as poets (but the category included orators as well, as shown by the passages below), by virtue of their *auctoritas*, are licenced to bend the rules for artistic purposes, and Varro recommends that they use this power of theirs to popularize analogical forms aimed at replacing faulty usage. See further:

³⁰⁰ *Quare qui ad consuetudinem nos vocant, si ad rectam, sequemur. In eo quoque enim est analogia. Si ad eam invitant quae est depravata, ni[c]hilo magis sequemur, nisi cum erit necesse, quam [Canal : sequar F] in ceteris rebus mala exempla.*

IX 5:

Alia enim populi universi, alia singulorum, et de iis non eadem oratoris et poetae, quod eorum non idem ius. Itaque populus universus debet in omnibus verbis uti analogia et, si perperam est consuetus, corrigere se ipsum, cum orator non debeat in omnibus uti, quod sine offensione non potest facere, cum poeta[e] transilire lineas impune possit.

For some things belong to the people as a whole and others to individuals, and of these what belongs to the orator and what belongs to the poet is not the same, because they do not have the same laws. Therefore, the people as a whole must use analogy in all words, and if it has acquired a wrong use, it must correct itself, whereas the orator must not use it in all words, because he cannot do so without offence, whereas the poet can leap across the lines with impunity.³⁰¹

IX 114–115:

(114) Quare cum in inclinationibus verborum numerus sit magnus a dissimilibus verbis ortus, quod etiam vel maior est in quibus similitudines reperiuntur, confitendum est esse analogias. Itemqu[a]e cum ea non multo minus quam in omnibus verbis patitur uti consuetudo co(m)munis, fatendum illud quoquo modo analogian sequi nos debere universos, singulos autem praeterquam in quibus verbis offensura sit consuetudo co(m)munis, quod ut dixi aliud debet praestare populus, aliud e populo singuli homines. (115) Neque id mirum est, cum singuli quoque non sint eodem iure. Nam liberius potest poeta quam orator sequi analogias.

2 confitendum *Augustinus* : conferendum *F* 3 itemque *Augustinus* : item quae *F* 4 quoquo modo *Canal* : quo quando *F*

(114) And likewise, since common usage allows us to employ it in almost all words, one has to admit this, that we all must follow analogy in every way, but that we as individuals must do so except in those words in which common usage will cause offence, because, as I said, the people must practise one thing, and the individual men from within the people another. (115) Nor is this surprising, since individuals are not subject to the same law either. For a poet can follow the analogies more freely than an orator.³⁰²

A different classification of usage, which agrees with the points articulated in these passages, is given in X 73: Varro distinguished a *consuetudo vetus* (words or phrases “used by the ancients and abandoned by us”) from *haec consuetudo* (words “used by us”) and a *neutra* (words not really used by anyone in everyday life, but “used by the poets”, i.e. literary archaisms),³⁰³ plus a fourth, “mixed” kind (which, as the example suggests, includes words used occasionally, coined through

³⁰¹ Transl. de Melo.

³⁰² Transl. de Melo.

³⁰³ This appears to owe a debt to Aristotle (*Po.* 1457b33–35), see §2.2.2. The implication that the *consuetudo* of poets is less familiar than that of the ancients (*neutra* vs. *vetus*) confirms what Varro had said in V 9: *An non potius mea verba illa quae hereditate a Romulo rege venerunt quam quae a poeta Livio relictas?* See §2.1.

analogy).³⁰⁴ There is indication that Varro took account of the poets' licence also when describing the inflectional prototypes of Latin, although we only have one fragment of *Περὶ χαρακτήρων*: commenting on the anomalous formation of the superlative *proxime* from *prope* and *propius*, he added that "in these [kinds of adverbs] Plautus frequently uses superlatives outside of common usage"; he gives examples of superlatives of *paene* ("almost"), *penitus* ("innermost"), and *oculus* ("my darling"),³⁰⁵ which should not admit superlatives for semantic reasons.

Various degrees of intensity of the corrective action of analogy are also taken into consideration in X 74. One can apply analogy radically to "the nature of words" and require that all similar words inflect similarly; the resulting forms will have to be followed by all speakers. However, since this radical application of analogy may clash with usage, one can take a moderate stance and only apply analogy "when common usage does not reject it" (*non repugnante consuetudine communi*): this moderate approach is recommended to "all individuals from the people", whom de Melo takes as a reference to orators,³⁰⁶ which is convincing because it is in the orators' interest not to alienate their audience. A mixed approach, which applies analogy "when common usage does not reject it to a certain extent" (*ex quadam partem*), that is, which takes more liberty with the violation of usage, is recommended to poets, who, as was said in IX 17, must "subject the ears of the people" to new analogical forms.³⁰⁷

Despite this precise allocation of responsibilities in *ling. X*, Varro's fragments suggest that he was not so strict even in situations in which the people's speech, not the orators', was at stake (but then, our sources do not specify the context of his remarks). For example, although he prescribed that all Greek loanwords in *-ma* (like *glossema*, *enthymema*, etc.) end in *-bus* in the dative and ablative plural,³⁰⁸ he is quoted as saying *aenigmatis* because he deemed that, despite the rule, "the shortening must however be conceded to common usage and what the ears like to hear".³⁰⁹

³⁰⁴ Example of the first: *cascus* ("old"), *surus* ("stake"); of the second: *albus* ("white"), *caldus* ("warm"); of the third: *scala* ("stair" in the singular), *phalera* ("ornamental boss"); of the fourth: *inimicitia* ("enmity", normally used in the plural, but with the singular modelled after *amicitia*).

³⁰⁵ Fr. 48: *In his extra consuetudinem commune frequenter perfectis uti solet Plautus, ut in Aulularia* [668]: *'ea sublevit os mihi p[er]enissime'* et in *Mostellaria* [656]: *'ita mea consilia perturbat paenissime'* et in *Cistellaria* [63]: *'quid faciam? In latebras condas pectori penitissimo'* et in *Curculione* [121]: *'salve oculissime homo'*. In de Melo's edition of Plautus, the superlative forms are respectively *paenissimum*, *penitissimum*, *oculissimum*.

³⁰⁶ De Melo (2019a p. 1241).

³⁰⁷ Further clarification on what is meant by *non repugnante consuetudine communi* and *ex quadam parte* is given in X 78.

³⁰⁸ Fr. 52 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 167, attributed to *De similitudo verborum*.

³⁰⁹ Fr. 53 ap. CHAR. gramm. p. 157, attributed to *De utilitate sermonis*.

By making room for exceptions to the standardising effect of analogy, Varro tacitly distanced himself from those protagonists of the transition to a normative approach to grammar who had advocated a radical application of analogy, such as Tyrannio, Philoxenus, Trypho, and Gniphio. It is reasonable to presume that Varro's position derived from an awareness of the discussions (to which Caesar's *De analogia* bear testimony) on the practicability of such radical standardisation, which could produce forms unpleasing to the ear or otherwise too removed from common speech.

Also Varro's concession to *auctoritates* indicates his receptiveness of the conversation among Roman scholars on how to deal with forms which contradicted regular patterns but had been validated by influential authors: Caesar's fragments offer, again, eloquent examples of spelling and morphological conventions being established as rules based on their use by Accius, Lucilius, and other authors of the Latin literary canon. A novelty of Varro's approach—unless of course something along these lines was recommended in previous texts lost to us—seems to be the attribution to such *auctoritates* of an active responsibility to use their privileged position to implement an amelioration of common usage. This point is underscored by the fact that, among poets, the dramatists are singled out in IX 17: these and orators were the authors who had the power to reach a large number of people, not just the cultivated elite.

Varro's model of how language should be made more correct involves the following stages:

- (1) the grammarian observes the forms that are in common usage, based on the *multorum consensio*;
- (2) he assesses these forms and, based on what conforms to regular patterns and what introduces anomalies into the system, defines them as *recta* or *mala consuetudo*;
- (3) when possible, he supplies forms which conform to regular patterns to replace the *mala consuetudo*; when the irregular forms are too firmly rooted to be seamlessly replaced, the process is delayed until the *mala consuetudo* falls out of use;
- (4) until the common people are ready to accept the newly introduced analogical forms, the most influential authors take the grammarian's heed and make those forms fashionable by using them in their literary production.

There is a hierarchy which places the grammarian above the literary author when it comes to the normalisation of language: one could almost say that, from this perspective, authors work for the grammarians. This is confirmed by Varro's canon of criteria for *Latinitas*, in which "authority comes last in the regulation of language: for one resorts to it as if to an anchor, in case all the others were lacking". This privilege given to *ratio* over even authoritative and highly influential usage differentiates Varro from later scholars, such as Quintilian, who will shift the balance towards subjective and authoritative use of language (as we touched on in §1.1); but it also sets Varro apart

from authors like Caesar, who was more often inclined to cast analogical forms aside in favour of uses made popular through literature or even simply what sounded better. As reiterated many times, these positions speak to different agendas on the part of the authors who contributed to the conversation on language.

Yet, even as Varro favoured *ratio* over authority, the rule of grammar itself proceeds from what is established by “the consensus of many”³¹⁰: analogy has the pivotal role in the entire process of language amelioration, but it is neither starting nor end point. This model reflects the position of a scholar who maintained a highly normative and rational approach to the study of language, but less abstract from the one which (as far as we can tell) was taken by some of the scholars of the previous generation. Varro’s stance was grounded in the reality of language as a feature and instrument of everyday life rather than an object of study for its own sake.

³¹⁰ That analogy proceeds from usage (rather than opposing it) was one of the first arguments in defence of analogy in book IX (see §3.3.2.a).

Conclusion

My guiding principle in this thesis has been to forgo clear-cut distinctions in favour of nuance. Many studies of Varro's linguistic work which adopted a thematic approach have tended to compartmentalize subjects like the theory of word-origin or the debate over analogy into distinct sections and ideological parties. In reality, we saw that the various catalogues of criteria for "correctness", even though they often pivoted around the same terms, do not seamlessly map onto one another nor make up one coherent tradition: they spoke to different rationales depending on whether they were part of the literature on correct speech and diction, on grammar, or on rhetoric. The stark opposition between "naturalists" and "conventionalists" which often underpins studies in ancient etymology only existed as such in the artificial layout of Plato's dialogues, and instead the question was approached and answered by various authorities and schools in ways that were integrated organically into their overarching doctrines. The monolithic interpretation of a controversy between Alexandrian grammarian analogists and Pergamenian Stoic anomalists has been eroded and gradually unpacked for decades now, but fresh and innovative outlooks on the subject continue to reveal the depths to which the landscape of textual and grammatical scholarship in the first century BCE blended ideas, principles, and methods from a range of traditions.

Varro's authorial profile has been dissected into a patchwork of allegiances and the fragmentation has been accounted for as eclecticism.¹ Often his etymological theory and methods are branded as quintessentially Stoic, his numerical models and supposed allusions to esoteric practices explained as manifestations of Pythagorean inclinations, his use of analogical proportions credited entirely to Aristarchus' accomplishments. But such a fractured portrait, resulting from a methodical exercise of *Quellenforschung*, hinders the appreciation of the ideological coherence which guides the work of every good scholar, such as Varro was. C. Smith put it very aptly in his review of a recent volume, significantly titled *Varro Varius*:

"We still do not have a good picture of what Varro was trying to do, and so we hypothesise various Varros—linguistic scientists, postmodern semioticians, Pythagorean mystics—and there is a risk that they are all just our own imagined solutions".²

¹ E.g. Taylor (2015 p. 22), whose balanced assessment "[Varro] assimilates, adapts rather than simply borrowing" then takes a more clear-cutting turn: "he is eclectic, mixing Stoic and Alexandrian language science, citing Pythagoras and Aristotle, and employing Epicurean language on occasion".

² Smith (2017 p. 172).

My research for this thesis suggests to me a different image of Varro as a scholar. He certainly did draw on a multitude of sources, but he integrated them in ways that reveal a coherent mindset and expose appeals to eclecticism as unsatisfactory.

Stoic ideas and models were clearly embedded in Varro's multi-layered linguistic theory to a degree that defies precise matchings between principles and sources. In many ways, Varro appeared to draw up his entire linguistic theory within a Stoic framework. He frequently drew parallels between language and the universe characterised in Stoic terms: this may be the idea behind his establishment of *natura* as a criterion for *Latinitas* and the choice to define processes and structures inherent to the linguistic system as *naturalis*; this also suggested the argument that morphology must be overall regular and proportionate because so is the existence and functioning of all the elements of the physical world. Varro's views on language change and control thereof seem to be informed by a core Stoic tenet: nature (the system of language) is in itself rational and incorrupt, humans operate within its limits but there is room for individual will, which may result in choices and behaviours which stray from the correct and rational path; when "incompetent people" bring anomalies into the system, these are to be corrected and brought back to the standard. These connections to Stoicism are more a matter of method than content: they seem to reveal Varro's *modus operandi* as an intellectual and a scholar, the categories according to which he interpreted and subsequently expanded on the topics he researched.

And the extent and depth of Varro's research activity, which earned him fame and praise aplenty, show through all his work. Even if we did not have the numerous ancient testimonies of Varro's immense learning,³ it would clearly emerge from his texts that he digested an impressive amount of scholarship before writing about any subject: in his linguistic works alone, one finds the influence of lexicographers, antiquarians, poets, literary critics and editors, and especially philosophers.

Among the latter, Hellenistic philosophers seem to be those who influenced Varro's etymology the most on the theoretical level: his ideas on how words came to be and how their origin can be reconstructed show parallels with Stoicism (as is well known), but also include elements of Atom-

³ To cite just a few, Quintilian defined him *vir Romanorum eruditissimus* (*inst.* X 10.95), Seneca *doctissimus Romanorum* (*dial.* XII 8.1), Apuleius *vir accuratissime doctus atque eruditus* (*apol.* 42.6). Gellius praised him repeatedly, often together with Nigidius Figulus: *M. Varronem et P. Nigidium, viros Romani generis doctissimos* (IV 16.1); *Aetas M. Ciceronis et C. Caesaris praestanti facundia viros paucos habuit, doctrinarum autem multifarium variarumque artium, quibus humanitas erudita est, columina habuit M. Varronem et P. Nigidium* (XIX 14.1)

istic or Epicurean views; as for the conceptualisation of *ars etymologica* itself and its function, I suggested that Varro was more aligned with the concept of *ars* developed in the wake of Philo's innovations to Academic epistemology (and fleshed out by Cicero in *De oratore*) than with the stricter definition held by the Stoics. In this field, one only catches glimpses of the influence of Plato and Aristotle: the etymological section of Plato's *Cratylus* may have been the direct model for Varro's arrangement of etymologies, and Varro's *quadripertita ratio* to restore a word's ancient form ultimately goes back to Aristotle's *Poetics* (although Varro might have been more influenced by the way in which it was developed in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*). Aristotle surfaces more in Varro's morphological theory, especially his classifications of the parts of speech; however, there is indication that Varro tapped into Aristotelian linguistics through the mediation of Academics such as Dio rather than directly. As for Varro's interest in Pythagoreanism, there are certainly grounds to discuss the topic in general or in relation to other writings, but there is little to support a Pythagorean influence on Varro's linguistics, except the appeal to Pythagoras' principle of duality which legitimises the arrangement of etymologies in *ling.* V 11–13, and discounting allusions to a mystical approach to words in *ling.* V 8, which I argued I find unconvincing.

Roman antiquarian studies clearly shaped Varro's attitude towards etymology more than any other source, from the ultimate function he assigned to this kind of research to the practice he implemented. For the latter, the antiquarian imprint was so strong that it prevailed over the example of authorities who had developed better methods to analyse words. To those authorities, conversely, Varro turned for his study of word-formation and inflection, although the scholarly appraisal of this legacy needs to be recalibrated to accurately reflect the fact that Varro's greatest debt in this field was to first-century literature (including authorities scattered around the Mediterranean and in Rome itself), rather than to the Alexandrian school of Aristarchus' time.

Yet, if retracing these influences requires a good deal of assessment, connecting the dots through speculation and inferences, it is because Varro seemed none too concerned about crediting the material he included in his work to its sources. When he did cite authorities (Chrysippus, Aristotle, Greek grammarians, Roman antiquarians, etc.), he did so in a rather cursory way—creating not a few issues for modern interpreters—and frequently even just referred to *alii* or *Graeci Romanique* and left it at that. It would of course be anachronistic to expect from Varro the kind of preoccupation with precisely backing up all data and statements with references to previous sources which is expected from a modern scholar; but Varro seemed hardly at all interested in

letting his readers in on the route by which he had obtained and processed the information he was now sharing with them. He positioned himself steadily between his sources and his readers, as the sole mediator between them and the knowledge that he had access to. Rather than presenting a neat account of other scholars' opinions that his readers might take in and process themselves, he seemed focused on providing them with his own version of the state of play.

This attitude seems to speak to practical concerns rather than to aim to create a persona for Varro as the sole point of reference in the Roman cultural landscape. Judging by the portrait transmitted by our sources, nothing suggests that Varro had the kind of character to seek such distinction (as Cicero did for the fields of rhetoric and philosophy); he was renowned for his erudition, but apparently had little interest in showcasing the extent of his learning for personal gain or glory. Conversely, we know that he was invested in the ongoing conversation on the features of Roman identity and culture, and presumably, being compelled to contribute to it, he simply aimed to present his readers with valuable information and made it his business to convey it in a lucid fashion—which, for every subject, entailed clarifying the basics and building up on them.

This involvement in the cultural landscape of the late Republic also emerges at all the levels of Varro's linguistics analysed in this thesis. Varro's theory of language change, how to gauge correctness, and how to implement strategies of correction followed the path already trodden by Caesar and Cicero; and the Latin morphological system designed by Varro took into account Caesar's prescriptions on analogy—as well as those of other Roman analogists, such as Staberius Eros, Gniphio, and other sources hidden behind Varro's cursory references—as much as the theories expounded by Greek grammarians.

The connections and contrasts between the linguistic theories of Varro, Cicero, and Caesar—the “three thinking minds” in the field of linguistics in the late Republic, as Valeria Lomanto often put it in our conversations—deserve being probed to a greater extent in the future. In particular, while one might admit that Varro missed or overlooked Aristotle's remarks on words being σύμβολα and κατὰ συνθήκην (and how to understand these terms remains an open issue, after Lo Piparo called into question the traditional interpretation), it is less likely that he had not read Cicero's *Topica*, which would have led one (especially an author interested in lexicography) to reckon with the notion that *sunt verba rerum notae*. Also the parallels flagged by Duso between *ling.* IX 23–30 and passages from *De natura deorum* II ought to be reviewed with greater attention.

The tight connection between the terminology and models used in grammatical and juridical literature during the late Republic (a topic touched on by Zetzel and well familiar to law historians)⁴ promises to be another fruitful subject to explore: to that end, an analysis of Varro's juridical treatises (or what is left of them) could help complete the picture of how Varro's views on language and grammar fit the context of his time.

Finally, although the question of Varro's Pythagorean leanings has been studied before (notably by Collart and Lehmann), there is room for further investigation, especially of how such affiliation—if indeed one can be demonstrated—could have influenced Varro's linguistics.

Sifting pieces of information out of indirect testimonies, confused reports, and transmission gaps may be the only way to assemble a picture of who Varro was as an intellectual, a scholar, and a writer; but the real challenge is to form a picture that is more than the sum of its parts, a reconstruction in which the fragments are integral to one another and yield a consistent pattern. I hope that my work in this thesis, albeit restricted to a selection of areas and topics, managed to achieve such a goal.

⁴ Zetzel (2019 pp. 208–10). The connection and its relevance were suggested to me by the law historian Carlo Pelloso at the panel discussion of the CCC in 2019.

Bibliography

Editions of ancient texts

In cases where multiple editions were taken into consideration, I give the reference one first, followed by others in chronological order.

A. Pr. = *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, ed. D. Page (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1972): Προμηθεὺς Δεσμώτης [*Prometheus vinctus*].

A. fr. = *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos*, ed. H. J. Mette (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1959).

ACCIIUS = *GRF: Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici*: L. Accius.

A.D. Conj. = *GG II: Apollonii Dyscoli quae supersunt*, fasc. 1: *De conjunctionibus*.

A.D. Pron. = *Apollonii Dyscoli quae supersunt*, fasc. 1: *De pronomibus*.

A.D. Synt. = *Apollonii Dyscoli quae supersunt*, fasc. 2: *De constructione*.

AESCHIN. fals. legat. = *Aeschinis orationes*, ed. F. Blass (Leipzig: Teubner 1896), 2: Περὶ τῆς παραπρεσβείας [*De falsa legatione*].

ALEX.APHR. in Top. = *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. II/2: *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis in Aristotelis topicorum libros octo commentaria*, ed. M. Wallies (Berlin: G. Reimer 1962).

AMMON. in Int. = *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. IV/5: *Ammonius in Aristotelis de interpretatione commentarius*, eds. A. Busse & M. Wallies (Berlin: G. Reimer 1897).

ANON. in Thet. = *CFP*, parte III: *Commentari: in Thaetetum*.

APUL. apol. = *Apulei Platonici Madaurensis, Pro se de magia liber (Apologia)*, ed. R. W. O. Helm (Leipzig: Teubner 1905).

APUL. mund. = *Apulée. Opuscules philosophiques (Du dieu de Socrate, Platon et sa doctrine, Du monde) et fragments*, ed. J. Beaujeu (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1973).

AR. Nu. = *Aristophanis Comoediae*, eds. F. W. Hall & W. M. Geldart. 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1900), vol. I: *Nubes*.

AR.BYZ. = *Aristophanis Byzantii fragmenta*, ed. W. J. Slater (Berlin–New York: De Gruyter 1986); see Nauck (1848).

ARCHYT. = *Archytas of Tarentum. Pythagorean, Philosopher and Mathematician King*, ed. C. Huffman (Cambridge: University Press 2005).

PSEUDO-ARCHYT. = *The Pythagorean texts of the Hellenistic period*, ed. H. Thesleff (Åbo: Åbo Akademi 1965).

ARIST. APo. = *Aristotelis opera ex recensione Immanuelis Bekkeri*, eds. I. Bekker & O. Gigon. 5 vols. (Berlin: De Gruyter 1960–1970), vol. I: *Organon: Analytica posteriora*.

ARIST. Cael. = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: De caelo*.

- ARIST. Cat.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: Categoriae*.
- ARIST. GA** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Parva naturalia: De generatione animalium animalium*.
- ARIST. GC** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: De generatione et corruptione*.
- ARIST. EE** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *Ethica Eudemia*.
- ARIST. EN** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *Ethica Nicomachea*.
- ARIST. HA** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Parva naturalia: Historia animalium*.
- ARIST. Int.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: De interpretatione*.
- ARIST. Metaph.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *Metaphysica*.
- ARIST. Mete.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: Meteorologica*.
- ARIST. Ph.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: Physica*.
- ARIST. Po.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *De arte poetica*.
- ARIST. Pol.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *Politica*.
- ARIST. Pr.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *Problemata*.
- ARIST. Rh.** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. II: *De arte rhetorica*.
- ARIST. SE** = *Aristotelis opera*, vol. I: *Organon: De sophisticis elenchis*.
- ARISTARCH.** = see Matthaïos (1999).
- ASCLEP.** = see Pagani (2007a).
- AUG. civ.** = CSEL XL/1–2: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Episcopi De civitate Dei libri XXII*, ed. E. Hoffmann. 2 vols. (1899, 1900).
- AUG. dial.** = see Jackson & Pinborg (1975).
- AUG. epist.** = CSEL XXXIV/1–2: *S. Aureli Augustini Hipponiensi Episcopi epistulae*, ed. A. Goldbacher. 2 vols. (1895, 1898).
- AUG. gen. c. manich.** = CSEL XCI: *Sancti Augustini opera. De genesi contra manichaeos*, ed. D. Weber (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 1998).
- AUG. retract.** = CSEL XXXIII: *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Retractationum libri II*, ed. P. Knöll (1896).
- AUR. OPIL.** = GRF: *Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici: Aurelius Opillus*.
- CAES. analog.** = *Caesar's De analogia*, ed. A. Garcea (Oxford : University Press 2012).
- CATO** = GRF: *Grammaticae primordia: Verborum enodationes: M. Porcius Cato*.
- CASSIOD. gramm.** = GL VII: *Scriptores de orthographia. Terentius Scaurus, Vellius Longus etc.:* Cassiodorus.
- CHAR. gramm.** = *Flavii Sosipatri Charisii artis grammaticae libri V*, ed. K. Barwick, addenda et corrigenda collegit et adiecit F. Kühnert (Leipzig: Teubner 1964).
- CHOEROB. in Theod.** = GG IV: *Choeroboscus, Scholia in Theodosii canones*.

- Cic. ac.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis Academicorum reliquiae cum Lucullo*, ed. O. Plasberg (Leipzig 1922, Stuttgart 1980, 1996: Teubner).
- Cic. ad Q. fr.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 38: *Epistulae ad Quintum fratrem, Epistulae ad M. Brutum, Commentariolum petitionis, fragmenta epistularum*, ed. Shackleton Bailey (Stuttgart: Teubner 1988).
- Cic. Att.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 34: *Epistulae ad Atticum*, ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey. 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner 1987).
- Cic. Brut.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis Brutus*, ed. A. E. Douglas (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1966).
- Cic. Caecin.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, eds. A. C. Clark (vols. I–II, IV, VI) & W. Peterson (vols. III, V) 6 vols. (Oxford: University Press 1901–1911), vol. 4: *Pro A. Caecina*.
- Cic. Cluent.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. I: *Pro Cluentio*.
- Cic. Deiot.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. II: *Pro rege Deiotaro*.
- Cic. fam.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 30: *Epistulae ad familiares. Libri I–XVI*, ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Stuttgart: Teubner).
- Cic. fin.** = *De finibus bonorum et malorum libri quinque*, ed. L. D. Reynolds (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998).
- Cic. Flacc.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. IV: *Pro L. Flacco*.
- Cic. de orat.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 3: *De oratore*, ed. K. Kumaniecki (Stuttgart; Leipzig: Teubner 1995); *M. Tulli Ciceronis de oratore libri tres*, ed. F. T. Ellendt (Regimontum, Pruss: fratres Borntraeger 1840); *Cicero. De oratore ad Quintum fratrem libri tres*, ed. C. L. Kayser (Leipzig: B. Tauchnitz 1860); *M. Tulli Ciceronis De oratore libri tres*, ed. J. Bake (Amsterdam: F. Muller 1863); *M. Tullii Ciceronis De oratore libri tres*, ed. A. S. Wilkins (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1892).
- Cic. nat. deor.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 45: *De natura deorum*, eds. O. Plasberg & W. Ax (Berlin: De Gruyter 1980).
- Cic. Mur.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. I: *Pro Murena; Pro Caelio*.
- Cic. off.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 48: *De officiis*, ed. C. Atzert (Leipzig: Teubner 1932).
- Cic. orat.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 5: *Orator*, ed. R. Westman (Munich–Leipzig: De Gruyter 2002).
- Cic. Pis.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. IV: *In L. Pisonem*.
- Cic. Rep.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 39: *De re publica*, ed. K. Ziegler (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter 2001 [1969]).
- Cic. S. Rosc.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. I: *Pro Sex. Roscio*.
- Cic. Sest.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. V: *Pro Sestio*.
- Cic. Sull.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. V: *Pro Sulla*.

- Cic. Tim.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 46: *De divinatione. De fato. Timaeus*, eds. O. Plasberg & W. Ax (Stuttgart: Teubner 1965).
- Cic. Top.** = see Reinhardt (2003).
- Cic. Tusc.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis scripta quae manserunt omnia*, fasc. 464 *Tusculanae disputationes*, ed. M. Pohlenz (Berlin–New York: De Gruyter 2007 [1982]).
- Cic. Verr.** = *M. Tulli Ciceronis orationes*, vol. III: *In C. Verrem*.
- CLED. gramm.** = *GL V: Ars Cledonii Romani senatoris Constantinopolitani grammatici*.
- CORN. comp.** = *Cornuti theologiae Graecae compendium*, ed. C. Lang (Leipzig: Teubner 1881).
- CRATES** = see Broggiato (2001).
- CURT. NIC.** = see Berndt (1910).
- D.H.** = *Dionysi Halicarnasensis Antiquitatum Romanarum quae supersunt*, ed. K. Jacoby. 5 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner 1885–1905).
- Dig.** = *Digesta Iustiniani Augusti*, ed. Th. Mommsen. 2 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann 1970).
- D.L.** = *Diogenes Laertius. Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, ed. T. Dorandi (Cambridge: University press 2013).
- D.S.** = *Diodori bibliotheca historica*, post I. Bekker et L. Dindorf rec. C. Th. Fischer (Stuttgart: Teubner 1985).
- D.T. ars** = *GG I/1: Dionysii Thracis Ars grammatica*.
- D.T. fr.** = *Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Dionysios Thrax*, ed. K. Linke (see Linke et al. 1977).
- DIOM. gramm.** = *GL I: Diomedis artis grammaticae libri III*.
- E. Andr.** = *Euripidis fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle. 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1984), vol. I: *Andromacha*.
- ENN. ann.** = *FRL vol. I: Ennius: Epic fragments: Annals*.
- EPICUR. ep. Hdt.** = *Epicurea*, ed. H. Usener (Cambridge: University Press 2010 [Leipzig: Teubner 1887]): *Epicuri ad Herodotum epistula prima de rerum natura*.
- EPICUR. ep. Phyt.** = *Epicurus. The Extant Remains*, ed. M. A. Cyril Bailey (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1926): *Epistula ad Phytoclea*.
- Epim. Homer.** = *Epimerismi Homerici*, ed. A. R. Dyck. 2 vols. (Berlin–New York: De Gruyter 1983, 1995).
- EUDOR.** = *Raccolta e interpretazione delle testimonianze e dei frammenti del medioplatonico Eudoro di Alessandria*, ed. C. Mazzarelli. 2 vols. (*RFN* 77/2, pp. 197–209; 4, pp. 535–555).
- EUS. PE** = *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte*, Bd. 43/2: *Eusebius*, Bd. VIII/1 *Die Praeparatio Evangelica*, ed. K. Mras & É. des Places (Berlin: De Gruyter 1982).
- Explan. in Don.** = *GL IV: Probi Donati Servii qui feruntur de arte grammatica libri: Explanations in artem Donati*.

- FEST.** = *Sextus Pompeius Festus. De verborum significatu quae supersunt cum Pauli epitome*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Stuttgart–Leipzig: Teubner 1997).
- FLOR.** = *L. Annaei Flori quae exstant*, ed. E. Malcovati (Rome: Libreria dello stato 1972 [1938]).
- FRONTO Parth.** = *M. Cornelii Frontoni epistulae*, ed. M. P. J. van den Hout (Leipzig: Teubner 1988): *De bello Parthico*.
- FULG. serm. ant.** = *Fabio Plancianide Fulgenzio. Definizione di parole antiche [expositio sermonum antiquorum]*, ed. U. Pizzani (Roma: Edizioni dell’Ateneo 1969).
- GAIUS** = see *Dig.*
- GAL. comp. med.** = *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, ed. K. G. Kühn. 19 vols. (Cambridge : University Press 2011 [Leipzig 1821–]), vols. XII–XIII: *Galen de compositione medicamentorum secundum locos*.
- GAL. PHP** = *CGM V/4.1.2: Galeni De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, ed. Ph. De Lacy. 3 vols. (Berlin: In aedibus academiae scientiarum 2005 [1978–1984]).
- GAL. soph.** = *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, vol. XIV: *Galen de sophismatis seu captionibus penes dictionem*.
- GELL.** = *A. Gellii Noctes Atticae*, ed. P. K. Marshall. 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1968).
- GNIPHO** = *GRF: Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici: M. Antonius Gniphos*.
- HDN.** = *GG III/1–2: Herodiani Technici reliquiae*.
- HDT.** = *Herodoti Historiae*, ed. K. Hude. 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1927 [1908]).
- HERODIC.** = see Broggiato (2014).
- HES. Op.** = *Hesiodi Carmina*, ed. A. Rzach (Leipzig: Teubner 1902): *Opera et Dies*.
- HIEROCL. Ele** = *CPF*, parte I: *Autori noti*, vol. 1: *Filosofi: Hierocles*.
- HP. Acut. (Sp.)** = *Hippocratis opera quae feruntur omnia*, ed. H. Kuehlewein. 3 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner 1894, 1902), vol. I: *De victu acutorum (spurium)*.
- HP. de Arte** = *CGM I/1: Hippocratis de arte*, ed. J. L. Heiberg (Leipzig–Berlin: Teubner 1927).
- HP. prisc. med.** = *CGM I/1*.
- HYPICR.** = *GRF: Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici: Hypicrates*.
- ISOC. fr.** = *Isocrates. Discours*, ed. G. Mathieu & É. Brémond. 4 vols. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1928–1962), tome IV: *Fragments*.
- IUL. TOLET. gramm.** = *GL V: Excerpta ex Iuliani commentario in Donatum*.
- LACT. inst.** = *L. Caelius Firmianus Lactantius. Divinarum institutionum libri septem*, eds. E. Heck & A. Wlosok. 4 vols. (Munich: K. G. Saur 2005–2011).
- LIV.** = *Titi Livi Ab Urbe Condita: Tomus I. Libri I–V*, ed. R. M. Ogilvie (Oxford: University Press 1974).
- LUCIL.** = *GRF: Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici: C. Lucilius*.

- LYD. *Mag.*** = *Ioannes Lydus. On powers of the magistracies of the Roman state*, ed. A. C. Bandy (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society 1983).
- LUCR.** = *Titus Lucretius Carus. De rerum natura libri VI*, ed. M. Deufert (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter 2019).
- MACR. *Sat.*** = *Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius. Opera*, ed. J. Willis. 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner 1970), vol. I: *Saturnalia*.
- MAR. VICTOR. *gramm.*** = *GL VI: Marii Victorini ars grammatica*.
- ORIG. *Cels.*** = *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte*, Bd. 3: *Origenes*, Bd. 2: *Buch V–VIII gegen Celsus*, ed. P. Koetschau (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs 1899).
- ORIG. *orat.*** = *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte*, Bd. 3: *Origenes*, Bd. 2: *Die Schrift vom Gebet* [Περὶ εὐχῆς], ed. P. Koetschau (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs 1899).
- ORION** = *EM*: vol. III.
- PACUV. *trag.*** = *Die Tragödien des Pacuvius*, ed. P. Schierl (Berlin: De Gruyter 2006).
- PARMEN.** = *De Parmenisco grammatico*, ed. M. Breithaupt (Leipzig–Berlin: Teubner 1915).
- PH. *aet. mund.*** = *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, eds. L. Cohn (vols. I, IV, V, VI), P. Wendland (vols. II–III), S. Reiter (vol. VI) (Berlin: G. Reimer 1896–1915), vol. VI: *De aeternitate mundi*.
- PH. *decal.*** = *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, vol. IV: *De decalogo*.
- PH. *Deus*** = *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, vol. II : *Quod Deus sit immutabilis*.
- PH. *leg. alleg.*** = *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, vol. I: *Legum allegoriarum*.
- PH. *opif.*** = *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, vol. I: *De opificio mundi*.
- PHLD. *Rh.*** = *Philodemi voluminal rhetorica*, ed. S. Sudhaus. 2 vols., suppl. (Leipzig: Teubner 1892–1896).
- PHILOX.** = see Theodoridis (1976).
- PI. *O.*** = *Pindarus. Carmina cum fragmentis*, ed. H. Maehler. 2 vols. (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter 2008 [Leipzig 1987–1989]), pars I: *Epinicia: Olympia*.
- PIND.** = see Boatti (2000).
- PL. *Cra.*** = *Platonis opera*, ed. J. Burnet. 5 vols. (Oxford: University Press 1900–1907), vol. I: *Tetralogia II: Cratylus*.
- PL. *Men.*** = *Platonis opera*, vol. III: *Tetralogia VI: Meno*.
- PL. *Phd.*** = *Platonis opera*, vol. I: *Tetralogia I: Phaedo*.
- PL. *Phdr.*** = *Platonis opera*, vol. II: *Tetralogia III: Phaedrus*.
- PL. *R.*** = *Platonis opera*, vol. IV: *Tetralogia VIII: Respublica*.
- PL. *Smp.*** = *Platonis opera*, vol. II: *Tetralogia III: Symposium*.

- PLAUT. *Bacch.*** = *Plautus*, ed. W. D. C. de Melo. 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2011–2013), vol. I: *Bacchides, or The Two Bacchises*.
- PLAUT. *Trin.*** = *Plautus*, vol. V: *Trinummus, or Three-Dollar Day*.
- PLIN. *nat.*** = *C. Plini Secundis Naturalis historiae libri XXXVIII*, eds. L. von Jan & K. Mayhoff (Leipzig: Teubner 1878–1909).
- PLU. *Luc.*** = *Plutarchi Vitae parallelae*, eds. K. Ziegler, ed. quintam curavit H. Gärtner. 4 vols. (Munich: K. G. Saur 2000–), vol. I/1: *Cimo et Lucullus*.
- PLU. *Num.*** = *Plutarchi Vitae parallelae*, vol. III/2: *Lycurgus et Numa*.
- PLU. *Rom.*** = *Plutarchi Vitae parallelae*, vol. I/1: *Theseus et Romulus*.
- PLU. *Sull.*** = *Plutarchi Vitae parallelae*, vol. III/2: *Lysander et Sulla*.
- POMP. *gramm.*** = (Partes I–II) *GL V: Artium scriptores minores. Cledonius Pompeius Iulianus etc.*; (Pars III) *Pompeii Commentum in artis Donati partem tertiam*, ed. A. Zago (Hildesheim: Weidmann 2017).
- POSID.** = *EK*.
- PRISC. *gramm.*** = *GL II: Prisciani institutionum grammaticarum libri I–XII*.
- PROCL. *in Eucl.*** = *Procli Diadochi in promum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii*, ed. G. Friedlein (Leipzig: Teubner 1873).
- PTOL. *Iudic.*** = *Claudii Ptolemaei Περί κριτηρίου καὶ ἡγεμονικοῦ libellus*, ed. F. Hanow (Leipzig: Progr. Küstrin 1870).
- QUINT. *inst.*** = *Institutionis oratoriae libri duodecim*, ed. M. Winterbottom. 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1970).
- Rhet. Her.*** = see Calboli (1993); Marx (1894).
- S. *Ant.*** = *Sophoclis Fabulae*, eds. H. Lloyd-Jones & N. G. Wilson (Oxford: University Press 1990, 1992): Ἀντιγόνη.
- S.E. *M.*** = *Sexti Empirici opera*: vol. II: *Adversus dogmaticos libros quinque (Adversus mathematicos VII–XI)*, ed. H. Mutschmann (Leipzig: Teubner 1914); vol. III: *Adversus mathematicos libros I–VI*, ed. J. Mau (Leipzig: Teubner 1961).
- SALL. *Catil.*** = *C. Sallusti Crispi Catilina. Iugurtha. Fragmenta ampliora*, ed. A. Kurfess (Leipzig: Teubner 1968).
- SCAUR. *gramm.*** = *GL VII: Scriptores de orthographia. Terentius Scaurus, Vellius Longus etc.*
- Sch. *A.R.*** = *Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium vetera*, ed. C. Wendel (Berlin: Weidmann 1935).
- Sch. *Hom.*** = *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Odysseam (scholia vetera)*, ed. W. Dindorf. 2 vols. (Oxford: University Press 1855); *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (scholia vetera)*, ed. H. Erbse. 7 vols. (Berlin: De Gruyter 1969–1988); *Scholia Graeca in Odysseam*, ed. F. Pontani. 3 vols. (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura 2007); *Scholia D in Iliadem*, ed. H. van Thiel (Cologne 2014).
- SEN. *dial.*** = *L. Annaei Senecae dialogorum libri duodecim*, ed. L. Reynolds (Oxford: University Press 1977).

- SEN. *epist.*** = *L. Annaei Senecae ad Lucilium epistulae morales*, ed. L. Reynolds. 2 vols. (Oxford: University Press 1965).
- SERV. *Aen.*** = *Servii grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii carmina commentarii*, eds. G. Thilo & H. Hagen. 2 vols. (Cambridge: University Press 2011–2012 [1883]), vol. I: *Aeneidos librorum I–V commentarii*.
- SIMP. *in Cat.*** = *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. VIII: *Simplicii in Aristotelis categorias commentarium*, ed. K. Kalbfleisch (Berlin: G. Reimer 1907).
- SIMP. *in Ph.*** = *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vols. X–X: *Simplicii in Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria*, ed. H. Diels (Berlin: G. Reimer 1882–1885).
- SOL.** = *C. Iulii Solini collectanea rerum memorabilium*, ed. Th. Mommsen (Berlin: F. Nicolai 1864).
- STILO** = *GRF: Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici*: L. Aelius Stilo.
- STOB. *Ecl.*** = *Ioannis Stobaei anthologium*, eds. O. Hense & C. Wachsmuth, vol. II: *Libri duo priores qui inscribi solent Eclogae physicae et ethicae* (Berlin: Weidmann 1884).
- STR.** = *Straboni Geographica*, ed. G. Kramer. 3 vols. (Berlin: F. Nicolai 1844–1852).
- SUET. *gramm.*** = *C. Suetoni Tranquilli praeter Caesarum libros reliquae*, ed. G. Brugnoli (Leipzig: Teubner 1960), pars I: *De grammaticis et rhetoribus*.
- Suidas** = *Suidae lexicon*, ed. A. Adler. 5 vols (Leipzig: Teubner 1928–1938).
- THEOPHR. *phys. op.*** = *Doxographi Graeci*, ed. H. Diels (Cambridge: University Press 2010 [Berlin 1879]), VIII: *De Theophrasti physicorum opinionibus*.
- TRYPHO** = *Tryphonis grammatici Alexandrini fragmenta*, ed. A. de Velsen (Berlin: F. Nicolai 1853).
- TYR.** = *Die Fragmente der Grammatiker Tyrannion und Diokles*, ed. H. Haas (= Linke et al. 1977).
- VAL. SORAN.** = *GRF: Grammaticae antevarronianae fragmenta: Grammatici*: Q. Valerius.
- VARRO *Aetia*** = *Aetia des Varro*, ed. L. Mercklin (*Philologus* 3, 1848, pp. 351–367).
- VARRO *antiq. litt.*** = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta*, eds. Goetz & Schoell (see Varro *ling.*): *De antiquitate litterarum ad L. Accium*, fr. 39–44; fr. 94, 103–105 Wilmanns; *GRF* 1–2, 241–242.
- VARRO *ARD*** = *Marcus Terentius Varro: Antiquitates rerum divinarum*, ed. B. Cardauns (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur 1976).
- VARRO *ARH*** = *De M. Terenti Varronis antiquitatem rerum humanarum libris XXV*, ed. P. Mirsch (*Leipziger Studien zur classischer Philologie* 6, 1882, pp. 1–144).
- VARRO *form.*** = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta*: *Περὶ χαρακτήρων* [*De formulis*], fr. 48; *GRF* 50.
- VARRO *gent. pop. Rom.*** = *Studi Varroniani: De gente populi Romani libri IV*, ed. P. Fraccaro (Padua: Angelo Draghi 1907).
- VARRO *gramm.*** = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta: Disciplinarum liber I de grammatica*, fr. 107–116; fr. 41–42, 49, 91–93, 95–96 Wilmanns; *GRF* 49, 220, 234–238, 243–244, 268.

VARRO ling. = see De Melo (2019a). Other editions: (complete editions) *M. Terentii Varronis De lingua Latina*, ed. P. Laetus (Rome: Georgius Lauer 1471 ca.); *M. Terenti Varronis De lingua Latina*, ed. F. Rholandellus (Venice 1478); *Cornucopiae sive linguae Latinae commentarii [...]* (= editio Aldina), ed. A. Manutius (Venice 1513); *M. Terenti Varronis pars librorum quattuor et viginti De lingua Latina* (= editio vulgata), ed. A. Augustinus (Rome: Vincentius Luchinus 1557); *M. Terentii Varronis pars librorum quattuor et viginti De lingua Latina*, ed. M. Vertranius (Lyon: Haeredes Sebastiani Gryphii 1563); *Adriani Turnebi commentarii et emendationes in libros M. Varronis De lingua Latina*, ed. A. Turnèbe (Paris: Andreas Wechelus 1566); *M. Terenti Varronis De lingua Latina*, ed. G. Scioppus (Ingolstadt: Adamus Sartorius 1605); *M. Terenti Varronis de lingua Latina libri qui supersunt* (= Spengel₁), ed. L. Spengel (Berlin: Dunckel & Humblot 1826); *M. Terenti Varronis de lingua Latina librorum quae supersunt*, ed. K. O. Mueller (Leipzig: Weidmann 1833); *De M. Terenti Varronis libris grammaticis*, ed. A. Wilmanns (Berlin: Weidmann 1864); *M. Terenti Varronis libri de lingua Latina et fragmenta quae supersunt omnia*, eds. P. Canal, F. Brunetti (Venice: Paravia 1874); *M. Terenti Varronis de lingua Latina libri* (= Spengel₂), eds. L. & A. Spengel (Berlin: Weidmann 1885); *M. Terenti Varronis de lingua Latina quae supersunt*, eds. Goetz & Schoell (Leipzig: Teubner 1910); *Varro: On the Latin Language*, ed. R. G. Kent. 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1938).

(partial editions) *Varro. De lingua Latina Buch VIII*, ed. H. Dahlmann (Berlin: Weidmann 1940); books VIII–X included in Mette’s work on Crates (see Mette 1952); see Collart (1954a); *Varrone. De lingua Latina. Libro VI*, ed. E. Riganti (Bologna : Pàtron 1978); *Varron. La langue latine : Livre VI*, ed. P. Flobert (Paris : Les Belles Lettres 1985); see Taylor (1996); Duso (2017); *Varron. La langue latine : Livre VII*, ed. P. Flobert (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 2019).

VARRO Men. = *M. Terentius Varro. Saturarum Menippearum fragmenta*, ed. R. Astbury (Munich; Leipzig: K. G. Saur 2002); see Cèbe (1972–1999).

VARRO orig. ling. Lat. = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta: De origine linguae Latinae ad Cn. Pompeium Magnum libri III (?)*, fr. 45–47; fr. 106–108 Wilmanns; GRF 3, 295–296.

VARRO quaest. Plaut. = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta: Quaestionum Plautinarum libri V*, fr. 49–50; fr. 51–52 Wilmanns; GRF 51–52.

VARRO serm. Lat. = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta: De sermone Latino ad Marcellum libri V*, fr. 54–106; fr. 43–48, 50–66, 68–78, 80–81, 83–90, 101 Wilmanns; GRF 33–46, 48, 239, 266–267, 269, 270–294, 322, 419, 421, 443–444.

VARRO simil. verb. = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta: De similitudine verborum libri III*, fr. 51–52; fr. 98, 109 Wilmanns; GRF 4, 256.

VARRO util. serm. = *M. Terenti Varronis reliquorum de grammatica librorum fragmenta: De utilitate sermonis*, fr. 53; fr. 110 Wilmanns; GRF 5.

VARRO vita pop. Rom. = *M. Terenti Varronis de vita populi Romani*, ed. B. Riposati (Milan: Vita e Pensiero 1939).

VARRO rust. = *Varron. Économie rurale*, eds. J. Heurgon (vol. I) & C. Giraud (vols. I–II) 3 vols. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1978–1997).

VELL. = *Vellei Paterculi historiarum ad M. Vinicium consulem libri duo*, ed. W. S. Watt (Stuttgart–Leipzig: Teubner 1998).

VITR. = *Vitruvii de architectura libri decem*, ed. F. Krohn (Leipzig: Teubner 1912).

Secondary literature

Ademollo, F. (2011) *The Cratylus of Plato: a commentary*. Cambridge: University Press.

Allen, J. (2005) 'The Stoics on the origin of language and the foundations of etymology'. In Frede & Inwood (2005) pp. 14–35.

Arena, V. & Piras, G. (eds.) (2018) *Reconstructing the Republic: Varro and Imperial Authors*. Rome: Salerno Editrice.

Aronadio, F. (1996) *Platone: Cratilo. Traduzione e Introduzione*. Bari: Laterza.

— (2002) *Procedure e verità in Platone* (Menone, Cratilo, Repubblica). Napoli: Bibliopolis.

— (2011) *I fondamenti della riflessione di Platone sul linguaggio: il Cratilo*. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.

Ascheri, P. (2018) 'Aristodemus [3]'. In *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*.

Atherton, C. (1993) *The Stoics on ambiguity*. Cambridge: University Press.

— (2005) 'Lucretius on what language is not'. In Frede & Inwood (2005) pp. 101–38.

Atti del Congresso internazionale di studi varroniani, Rieti, settembre 1974. (1976). Rieti: Centro di studi varroniani.

Ax, W. (1982) 'Aristarch und die "Grammatik"', *Glotta*, 60/1/2: 96–109.

— (1986) 'Quadripertita ratio. Bemerkungen zur Geschichte eines aktuellen Kategoriensystems', *Historiographia Linguistica*, 13/2/3: 191–214.

— (1991) 'Sprache als Gegenstand der alexandrinischen und pergamenischen Philologie'. *Sprachtheorien der abendländischen Antike*, pp. 275–301. Narr: Tübingen.

— (1995) 'Disputare in utramque partem. Zum literarischen Plan und zur dialektischen Methode Varros in de lingua Latina 8-10', *RhM*, 138: 146–77.

Baier, T. (1999) 'Myth and Politics in Varro's Historical Writings', *EMC*, 43/3: 351–67.

Bake, J. (ed.) (1863) *M. Tullii Ciceronis De oratore libros tres*. Amsterdam: F. Muller.

Balbo, A. (2018) 'Quelques estimations sur la présence de Pythagore dans les écrits de Cicéron : Les œuvres de 56-54 avant J.-C.' In Franchet d'Espèrey & Lévy (2018) pp. 85–115.

Baratin, M. (1989) *La naissance de la syntaxe à Rome*. Paris: Minuit.

— (2001) 'Sur le *De dialectica* de Varron'. In Calboli (2001) pp. 21–31.

Barnes, J. (1982) *The Presocratic philosophers*. Rev. ed. London–New York: Routledge.

— (1996) 'The Catalogue of Chrysippus' Logical Works'. In Algra K., Horst P. W. van der & Runia D. T. (eds.) *Polyhistor: studies in the history and historiography of ancient philosophy: presented to Jaap Mansfeld on his sixtieth birthday*, Leiden–New York–Köln: Brill, pp. 169–84.

Barwick, K. (1922) *Remmius Palaemon und die römische Ars grammatica*. Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

- (1933) 'Das Alter der Anordnung unserer Kasus und der Ursprung ihrer Bezeichnung als Fälle', *Gnomon*, 9: 587.
- (1957) *Probleme der stoischen Sprachlehre und Rhetorik*. Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Vol. 49. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Basset, L., Biville, F., Colombat, B., Swiggers, P. & Wouters, A. (eds.) (2007) *Bilinguisme et terminologie grammaticale gréco-latine*. Leuven: Peeters.
- Baumbach, M. (2002) 'Tryphon'. *Brills Neue Pauly*, pp. 885-886.
- Baxter, T. M. S. (1992) *The Cratylus: Plato's critique of naming*. Leiden: Brill.
- Beekes, R. S. P. (2010) *Etymological dictionary of Greek*. Leiden: Brill.
- Belardi, W. (1990) 'Aspetti del linguaggio e della lingua nel pensiero degli Stoici I. Il *De inaequabilitate sermonis* di Crisippo', *RAL*, 9/1: 5-14.
- Belardi, W. & Cipriano, P. (1990) *Casus interrogandi: Nigidio Figulo e la teoria stoica della lingua*. Viterbo: Istituto di studi romanzi, Università della Tuscia.
- Berndt, R. (1910) 'Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Nicias', *PhW*, 30: 508-12, 540-2.
- Birt, T. (1928) 'Marginalien zu lateinischen Prosaikern', *Philologus*, 83: 31-54.
- Blank, D. L. (1982) *Ancient philosophy and grammar: the Syntax of Apollonius Dyscolus*. Chico: Scholars Press.
- (1994) 'Analogy, Anomaly and Apollonius Dyscolus'. In Everson, S. (ed.) *Companions to ancient thought*, vol. 3: *Language*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 149-65.
- (ed.) (1998) *Sextus Empiricus: Against the grammarians (Adversus mathematicos I)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- (2005) 'Varro's anti-analogist'. In Frede & Inwood (2005) pp. 210-38.
- (2008) 'Varro and the epistemological status of etymology', *HEL*, 30/1: 49-73.
- (2012) 'Varro and Antiochus'. In Sedley (2012) pp. 250-89.
- (2019) 'What's Hecuba to Him? Varro on the Natural Kinship of Things and of Words'. In Pezzini & Taylor (2019) pp. 121-52.
- Boatti, A. (ed.) (2000) *I frammenti dei grammatici Tolemeo Pindarione e Tolemeo di Aristonico* (PhD diss.) Genoa.
- (2002) 'Ptolemaeus [8] Pindarion'. *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*.
- Bonazzi, M. (2012). 'Antiochus and Platonism'. In Sedley (2012) pp. 307-33.
- Boot, I. (1894) 'Varroniana', *Mnemosyne*, 22: 409-12.
- Boyancé, P. (1975) 'Étymologie et théologie chez Varron', *REL*, 53: 99-115.
- Boys-Stones, G. R. (2001) *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy: A Study of its Development from the Stoics to Origen*. Oxford: University Press.
- Brakman, C. (1932) 'Varroniana', *Mnemosyne*, 59: 422-6.
- Brandenburg, P. (2005) *Apollonios Dyskolos. Über das Pronomen: Einführung, Text, Übersetzung und Erläuterungen*. Munich: K. G. Saur.
- Briquel, J. (2001) 'La conception du latin comme langue mixte chez Varron'. In Moussy, C. & Dangel, J. (ed.) (2001) *De lingua Latina novae quaestiones: actes du Xe colloque international de linguistique latine, Paris, Sèvres, 19-23 avril 1999*, Louvain: Peeters, pp. 1033-43.
- Brittain, C. (2001) *Philo of Larissa: the last of the academic sceptics*. Oxford: University Press.
- Brittain, C. & Palmer, J. (2001) 'The New Academy's Appeals to the Presocratics', *Phronesis*, 46/1: 38-72.
- Broggiato, M. (ed.) (2001) *Cratete di Mallo. I frammenti*. La Spezia: Agorà.

- (2014) *Filologia e interpretazione a Pergamo: la scuola di Cratete*. Roma: Sapienza Università Editrice.
- Bronowski, A. (2019) *The Stoics on lekta: all there is to say*. Oxford: University Press.
- Butterfield, D. J. (ed.) (2015) *Varro Varius: The polymath of the Roman world*. Cambridge: Philological Society.
- Calboli, G. (ed.) (1993) *Cornifici rhetorica ad C. Herennium. Introduzione, testo critico, commento.*, 2nd ed. Bologna: Pàtron.
- (ed.) (2001) *Papers on Grammar VI*. Bologna: CLUEB.
- (2001) 'Varrone e la teoria dei casi'. In *Id.* (2001) pp. 33–59.
- (2011) 'A proposito di Cratete di Mallo', *Latomus*, 70/2: 317–29.
- Callanan, C. K. (1987) *Die Sprachbeschreibung bei Aristophanes von Byzanz*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Callipo, M. (2011) *Dionisio Trace e la tradizione grammaticale*. Rome: Bonanno.
- Calogero, G. (1967) *Storia della logica antica*, vol. 1: *L'età arcaica*. Bari: Laterza.
- (1977) *Studi sull'eleatismo*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- Cardauns, B. (ed.) (1963) *Varron: six exposés et discussions. Entretiens du 3-8 septembre 1962*. Vandœuvres-Genève: Fondation Hardt.
- Cavazza, F. (1981) *Studio su Varrone etimologo e grammatico*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- (1987) 'Gellio grammatico e i suoi rapporti con l'ars grammatica romana'. In Taylor, D. J. (ed.) (1987) *The History of Linguistics in the Classical Period*, Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 85–105.
- Cèbe, J.-P. (ed.) (1972–1999) *Varron, Satires ménippées*, 13 vols. Rome: École française de Rome.
- Chahoud, A. (2019) 'Lucilius on Latin Spellin, Grammar, and Usage'. In Pezzini & Taylor (2019) pp. 46–78.
- Chantraine, P. (1968) *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque : histoire des mots*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Cheesman, C. (1994) 'Two textual emendations in Varro's *De Lingua Latina*', *RPh*, 68/1: 101–5.
- Cichorius, C. (1922) *Römische Studien: historisches, epigraphisches, literargeschichtliches aus vier Jahrhunderten Roms*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Cole, T. (1990) *Democritus and the sources of Greek anthropology*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
- Coleman, R. (1989) 'The formation of specialized vocabularies in philosophy, grammar and rhetoric: winners and losers'. In Lavency M. & Longrée D. (eds.) *Actes du V^e Colloque de linguistique latine – Proceedings of the Vth Colloquium on Latin Linguistics, Louvain-la-Neuve/Borzée, 31 mars-4 avril 1989*, Leuven : Peeters, pp. 77–90.
- Collart, J. (ed.) (1954a) *Varron. De lingua Latina : Livre V. Texte établi, traduit et annoté*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- (1954b) *Varron, grammairien latin*. Paris: Les Belles lettres.
- Colson, F. H. (1914) 'The Grammatical Chapters in Quintilian I. 4-8', *CQ*, 8/1: 33–47.
- Conley, T. M. (1985) 'Dating the So-called *Dissoi Logoi*: A Cautionary Note', *AncPhil*, 5/1: 59–65.
- Corradi, M. (2019) 'Aristocles'. *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*.
- Cupaiuolo, F. (2000) review of Piras (1998), *BSL*, 30: 298–9.
- Curd, P. & Graham, D. W. (eds.) (2008) *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy*. Oxford: University Press.
- Dahlmann, H. (1932) *Varro und die hellenistische Sprachtheorie*. Berlin: Weidmann.

- (1935) 'M. Terentius Varro'. *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Dam, R. J. (1930) *De analogia: observationes in Varronem grammaticamque romanorum*. Utrecht, Campis.
- De Marco, V. (1957) 'La contesa analogia-anomalia I: Sesto Empirico', *RAAN*, 32: 129–48.
- De Martino, F. (1997) 'La πεῖρα degli Aristarchei. Erodico di Babilonia, fr. 494 SH', *Kleos*, 2: 366–75.
- De Melo, W. D. C. (2019a) *Varro. De lingua Latina: introduction, text, translation, and commentary*. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2019b) 'Naturalism in Morphology'. In Pezzini & Taylor (2019) pp. 103–20.
- De Melo, W. D. C. & Filos, P. (forthcoming) 'Linguistic terminology in Varro'. In *Proceedings of the XIXth International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics*. München.
- De Paolis, P. (2016) 'La parentela linguistica fra greco e latino nella tradizione grammaticale latina'. In Haverling, V. G. M. (ed.) *Latin Linguistics in the Early 21st Century. Acts of the 16th International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics, Uppsala, June 6th–11th, 2011*, pp. 610–24. Uppsala: Universitet.
- Della Corte, F. (1981) *La filologia latina dalle origini a Varrone.*, 2nd edition [1937]. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- Dench, E. (2005) *Romulus' asylum: Roman identities from the age of Alexander to the age of Hadrian*. Oxford: University Press.
- Desbordes, F. (1983) 'Le schéma "addition, soustraction, mutation, métathèse" dans les textes anciens', *HEL*, 5/1: 23–30.
- (2007) *Idées grecques et romaines sur le langage. Travaux d'histoire et d'épistémologie*. Lyon : ENS éditions.
- Deschamps, L. (1997) 'Lucrece et Varron'. In Algra, K., Koenen, M. H. & Schrijvers, P. H. (eds.) *Lucretius and his intellectual background*, Amsterdam–Oxford: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, pp. 105–14.
- (1998) 'Le chant V du *De rerum natura* de Lucrece et Varron de Reate', *Vita Latina*, 151/1: 6–18.
- Di Benedetto, V. (1958) 'Dionisio Trace e la *Techne* a lui attribuita', *ASNP*, 27/3/4: 169–210.
- Díaz y Díaz, M. C. (1951) 'Latinitas. Sobre la evolución de su concepto', *Emerita*, 19: 34–40.
- Donati, M. (2010) 'Vocative and Person in Priscian's metalinguistic reflections'. In Anreiter, P. & Kienpointner (eds.) *Latin Linguistics Today: Akten des 15. internationalen Kolloquiums zur lateinischen Linguistik, Innsbruck, 4.-9. April 2009*, Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachen und Literaturen der Universität, pp. 525–35.
- (2013) *Il vocativo nel processo identitario dell'interazione linguistica: prospettive dalle lingue classiche*. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Dubuisson, M. (1981) 'Vtraque lingua', *AC*, 50/1: 274–86.
- Dugan, J. (2005) *Making a new man: Ciceronian self-fashioning in the rhetorical works*. Oxford: University Press.
- Duso, A. (2006) 'L'analogia in Varrone'. In Oniga, R. & Zennaro, L. (eds.) *Atti della 'Giornata di Linguistica Latina', Venezia, 7 maggio 2004*, Venice: Cafoscarina, pp. 9–20.
- (ed.) (2017) *M. Terenti Varronis De lingua Latina IX*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag.
- Erbse, H. (1980) 'Zur normativen Grammatik der Alexandriner', *Glotta*, 58: 236–58.
- Farney, G. D. (2007) *Ethnic identity and aristocratic competition in Republican Rome*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Fay, E. W. (1914) 'Varroniana: De Lingua Latina: Part I', *AJPj*, 35/2: 149–62.

- Fehling, D. (1956–1957) 'Varro und die grammatische Lehre von der Analogie und der Flexion. Teile I–II', *Glotta*, 35: 214–70, 36: 48–100.
- (1979) review of Siebenborn (1976), *Gnomon*, 51/5: 488–90.
- Ferriss-Hill, J. L. (2014) 'Varro's intuition of cognate relationships', *ICS*, 39: 81–108.
- Fischer, B. (1912). *De Augustini disciplinarum libro qui est de dialectica* (PhD diss.) Jena.
- Flinterman, J.-J. (2014) 'Pythagoreans in Rome and Asia Minor around the turn of the common era'. In Huffman, C. (ed.) *A History of Pythagoreanism*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 341–59.
- Forbes, P. B. R., Browning, B. & Wilson, N. (2012) 'Tyrannio'. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Oxford: University Press.
- Franchet d'Espèrey, S. & Lévy, C. (eds.) (2018) *Les présocratiques à Rome*. Paris: PUPS.
- Frede, D. & Inwood, B. (eds) (2005) *Language and learning: philosophy of language in the Hellenistic Age: proceedings of the ninth symposium Hellenisticum*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Funaioli, G. (1929) 'Staberius [4]'. *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Furley, D. (2002) 'Anaxagoras, Plato and Naming of Parts'. In Caston, V., Graham, D. W. & Mourelatos, A. (eds.) *Presocratic philosophy: essays in honour of Alexander Mourelatos*, Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 119–26.
- Gagarin, M. & Woodruff, P. (2008) 'The Sophists'. In Curd & Graham (2008) pp. 365–82.
- Galzerano, M. (2015) 'Lucrezio, *De rerum natura* 2,1173–1174: in difesa di *ire ad capulum*', *Paideia*, 70: 243–53.
- Garcea, A. (2007) 'César et les paramètres de l'analogie'. In Basset et al. (2007) pp. 339–57.
- (2008) 'Varron et la constitution des paradigmes flexionnels du latin', *HEL*, 30/1: 75–89.
- (2009) 'Substance et accidents dans la grammaire de Priscien'. In Baratin, M., Colombat, B. & Holtz, L. (eds.) *Priscien: transmission et refondation de la grammaire de l'antiquité aux modernes: états des recherches à la suite du colloque international de Lyon ... 10-14 octobre 2006*, Turnhout: Brepols, pp. 125–38.
- (ed.) (2012) *Caesar's De analogia: edition, translation, and commentary*. Oxford: University Press.
- (2016) 'L'académicien Dion dans le *De lingua Latina* de Varron: un témoignage négligé'. In Galand-Hallyn, P. & Malaspina, E. (eds.) *Vérité et apparence: mélanges en l'honneur de Carlos Lévy, offerts par ses amis et ses disciples*, Turnhout: Brepols, pp. 165–76.
- (2018) 'Cornificius, Varro and the quadripertita ratio'. In Swiggers, P. (ed.) *Language, Grammar, and Erudition: From Antiquity to Modern Times. A Collection of Papers in Honour of Alfons Wouter*, Leuven: Peeters, pp. 247–56.
- (2019) 'Nigidius Figulus' Naturalism: Between Grammar and Philosophy'. In Pezzini & Taylor (2019) pp. 79–102.
- Gemelli Marciano, L. (2011–2013) *Die Vorsokratiker. Auswahl der Fragmente und Zeugnisse, Übersetzung und Erläuterungen.*, 2nd ed., vol. 1: Düsseldorf: Artemis & Winkler; vols. 2–3: Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Gitner, A. (2015) 'Varro *Aeolicus*: Latin's affiliation with Greek'. In Butterfield (2015) pp. 33–50.
- (forthcoming) 'Creeping Roots: Varro on Latin Across Time and Space'.
- Goetz, G. (1894) 'Antonius [59]'. *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Görler, W. (1974) *Untersuchungen zu Ciceros Philosophie*. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Grebe, S. (2001) 'Views of correct speech in Varro and Quintilian'. In Calboli (2001) pp. 135–64.

- Gruen, E. S. (1990) *Studies in Greek culture and Roman policy*. Leiden: Brill.
- Hardie, P. R. (2009) *Lucretian receptions: history, the sublime, knowledge*. Cambridge: University Press.
- (2018) 'Horace et le sublime empédocéen'. In Franchet d'Espèrey & Lévy (2018) pp. 263–82.
- Harte, V. (2002) *Plato on parts and wholes: the metaphysics of structure*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Helck, J. (1905) *De Cratetis Mallotae studiis criticis quae ad Iliadem spectant*. Noske, Leipzig.
- Herklotz, I. (2007) 'Arnaldo Momigliano's "Ancient History and the Antiquarian": A Critical Review'. In Miller, P. N. (ed.) *Momigliano and antiquarianism: foundations of the modern cultural sciences*, Toronto: University Press, pp. 127–53.
- Holford-Strevens, L. (2005) *Aulus Gellius: an Antonine scholar and his achievement*, Rev. ed. Oxford: University Press.
- Holtz, L. (1981) *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical. Étude sur l'Ars Donati et sa diffusion (IVe-IXe siècle) et édition critique*. Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique.
- Horky, P. & Nelsestuen, G. (2018) 'Varro the Pythagorean? An Inquiry into the Quadripartite Category Sysem of De lingua Latina 5.11-13 [seen in manuscript]'. Presented at the SCS Annual Meeting. Panel: Varro the Philosopher.
- Horky, P. S. (2013) *Plato and Pythagoreanism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Horsfall, N. (1972) 'Varro and Caesar: Three Chronological Problems', *BICS*, 19: 120–128.
- (1979) 'Doctus sermones utriusque linguae?', *EMC*, 23/3: 79–95.
- Householder, F. W. (1981). *The syntax of Apollonius Dyscolus. Translated, and with commentary*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Howley, J. A. (2018) *Aulus Gellius and Roman reading culture: text, presence, and imperial knowledge in the Noctes Atticae*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Huby, P. M. & Neal, G. C. (eds.) (1989) *The criterion of truth: essays written in honour of George Kerferd together with a text and translation (with annotations) of Ptolemy's On the Kriterion and Hegemonikon*. Liverpool: University Press.
- Hülsz Piccone, E. (2013) 'Heraclitus on Logos: Language, Rationality and the Real'. In Sider, D. & Obbink, D. (eds.) *Doctrine and doxography: studies on Heraclitus and Pythagoras*, Berlin: De Gruyter, pp. 281–301.
- Humm, M. (1996) 'Les origines du pythagorisme romain : problèmes historiques et philosophiques', *LEC*, 64: 339–55, 65: 25–42.
- Ippolito, A. (2020) 'Parmeniscus'. *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*.
- Jackson, B. D. (transl.) & Pinborg, J. (ed.) (1975) *Augustine. De dialectica*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Jahn, O. (1867) 'Satura', *Hermes*, 2: 225–51.
- Karamanolis, G. (2006) *Plato and Aristotle in agreement? Platonists on Aristotle from Antiochus to Porphyry*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Kirk, G. S. (1954) *Heraclitus: the cosmic fragments*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Laffranque, M. (1964) *Poseidonios d'Apamée: essai de mise au point*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.
- Lallot, J. (1995) 'Analogie et pathologie dans la grammaire alexandrine', *Lalies*, 15: 109–23.
- Laughton, E. (1960) 'Observations on the Style of Varro', *CQ*, 10/1–2: 1–28.
- Lazzerini, F. (2017) 'Romulus' *adytum* or *asylum*? A New Exegetical proposal for *De lingua Latina* 5, 8', *Ciceroniana On Line*, 1/1: 97–128.
- (2019) 'Rome in the mirror. Varro's quest for the past, for a present goal'. Presented at the CCC. Panel: Shaping Roman Identity, Coimbra.

- (forthcoming) 'The status of *ars etymologica* in Varro and its Ciceronian origins', *RhM*.
- Leeman, A. D. & Pinkster, H. (1981) *M. Tullius Cicero, De oratore libri III: Kommentar*, vol. 1: Buch 1, 1–165. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Leeman, A. D., Pinkster, H. & Nelson, H. L. W. (1985) *M. Tullius Cicero, De oratore libri III: Kommentar*, vol. 2: Buch I, 166–265; Buch II, 1–98. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Leeman, A. D., Pinkster, H. & Rabbie, E. (1989) *M. Tullius Cicero, De oratore libri III: Kommentar*, vol. 3: Buch II, 99–290. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Leeman, A. D., Pinkster, H. & Wisse, J. (1996) *M. Tullius Cicero, De oratore libri III: Kommentar*. vol. 4: Buch II, 291–367; Buch III, 1–95. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Lehmann, Y. (1997) *Varron théologien et philosophe romain*. Bruxelles: Latomus.
- Leonardis, I. (2014) 'Vetustas, obliuio e crisi d'identità nelle Saturae Menippeae. Il risveglio di Varrone in un'altra Roma', *Ἐπέκεινα*, 4: 19–58.
- (2015) 'Risvegliarsi in un'altra Roma. Crisi del presente e nostalgia del passato nelle *Saturae Menippeae* di Varrone'. In Angiolillo, R., Elia, E. & Nuti, E. (eds.) *Crisi. Immagini, interpretazioni e reazioni nel mondo greco, latino e bizantino. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Dottorandi e Giovani Ricercatori*. Torino, 21–23, Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, pp. 223–36.
- Lévy, C. (2013) 'Cicéron et l'artistotélisme d'Antiochus d'Ascalon'. In Lehmann, Y. (ed.) *Aristoteles Romanus: la réception de la science aristotélicienne dans l'Empire gréco-romain*, Turnhout: Brepols, pp. 227–43.
- Lévy, C. & Saudelli, L. (eds.) (2014) *Présocratiques latins: Héraclite. Traductions, introductions et commentaires*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Linke, K., Haas, W. & Neitzel, S. (eds.) (1977) *Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Dionysios Thrax. Die Fragmente der Grammatiker Tyrannion und Diokles. Apions Glossai Homerikai. SGLG Bd. 3*.
- Lo Piparo, F. (2003) *Aristotele e il linguaggio. Cosa fa di una lingua una lingua*. Bari: Laterza.
- Lomanto, V. (1994a) 'Cesare e la teoria dell'eloquenza', *MAT*, 18–19: 2–127.
- (1994b) 'Il sistema del sermo Latinus in Quintiliano'. In Bàrberi Squarotti, G. (ed.) *Voce di molte acque: miscellanea di studi offerti a Eugenio Corsini*, Torino: S. Zamorani, pp. 237–56.
- (1998) 'Varrone e la dottrina del genere'. In Rapallo, U. & Garbugino, G. (eds.) *Grammatica e lessico delle lingue 'morte'*, Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, pp. 89–106.
- (2001) 'Nomi a confronto'. In Calboli (2001) pp. 165–90.
- Long, A. A. (1996) 'Stoic readings of Homer'. In *Id.* (ed.) *Stoic studies*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 58–84.
- (2005) 'Stoic linguistics, Plato's *Cratylus*, and Augustine's *De dialectica*'. In Frede & Inwood (2005) pp. 36–55.
- MacDonald, C. (2018) 'Going Underground: Linguistic Metaphors and the Politics of Varro's *De lingua Latina* [seen in abstract]'. Presented at the SCS Annual Meeting. Panel: The Politics of Linguistic Metaphors in Latin.
- Malaspina, E. (2006) 'Hyle-silva (et alentour): problèmes de traduction entre étymologie et métaphore', *Interférences Ars Scribendi*, 4. DOI: http://ars-scribendi.ens-lyon.fr/article.php3?id_article=43&var_affichage=vf.
- Maltby, R. (2001) 'Greek in Varro'. In Calboli (2001) pp. 191–210.
- Manetti, D. (2002) 'La Grecia e il greco: la fuga dei filologi (Herodic. SH 494)', *Eikasmos*, 13: 183–97.
- Marx, F. (ed.) (1894) *Incerti auctoris De ratione dicendi ad C. Herennium libri IV*. Lipsiae: Teubner.
- Maselli, G. (1979) *Lingua e scuola in Gellio grammatico*. Lecce: Milella.

- Matthaios, S. (1999) *Untersuchungen zur Grammatik Aristarchs: Texte und Interpretationen zur Wortartenlehre*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- (2002) 'Neue Perspektiven für die Historiographie der antiken Grammatik: das Wortartensystem der Alexandriner'. In Swiggers, P. & Wouters, A. (eds.) *Grammatical theory and philosophy of language in antiquity*, Leuven: Peeters, pp. 161–220.
- (2014) 'Philologie'. In Zimmermann, B. & Rengakos, A. (eds.) *Die Literatur der klassischen und hellenistischen Zeit*, Munich: C. H. Beck, pp. 502–53.
- (2020) 'ἐμπειρία, τέχνη, and beyond. Recent controversies on the "analogy vs. anomaly quarrel" in historical and theoretical context'. In Cotticelli-Kurras, P. (ed.) *Word, phrase, and sentence in relation: ancient grammars and contexts*, Berlin: De Gruyter, pp. 95–115. De Gruyter: Berlin.
- Matthews, P. H. (1991) *Morphology*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: University Press.
- May, J. M. & Wisse, J. (2001) *Cicero: on the ideal orator (De oratore) Translated, with introduction, notes, appendixes, glossary, and indexes*. New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mazzarino, A. (1948) 'Una nuova pagina di Plinio il Vecchio. I. Pansa o Plinio?', *Maia*, 1: 200–22.
- McAlhany, J. (2003) *Language, truth, and illogic in the writings of Varro*. Columbia University, Ann Arbor.
- McKirahan, R. (2008) 'Signs and Arguments in Parmenides B8'. In Curd & Graham (2008) pp. 189–229.
- Meliadò, C. (2018) 'Dionysius [2]'. *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*.
- Menn, S. (1999) 'The Stoic Theory of Categories', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, vol. 17, pp. 215–47.
- Mercklin, L. (1848) 'Aetia des Varro', *Philologus*, 3: 267.
- Mette, H. J. (1936) *Sphairopoia: Untersuchungen zur Kosmologie des Krates von Pergamon*. Munich: C. H. Beck.
- (1952) *Parateresis: Untersuchungen zur Sprachtheorie des Krates von Pergamon*. Halle (Saale): M. Niemeyer.
- Michel, A. (1965) 'Le philosophe, le roi et le poète dans le De lingua latina', *RPh*, 39: 69–79.
- Moatti, C. (1997) *La raison de Rome: naissance de l'esprit critique à la fin de la République (IIe-Ier siècle avant Jésus-Christ)* Paris: Seuil.
- Morel, P.-M. (2018) 'Démocrite chez Cicéron'. In Franchet d'Espèrey & Lévy (2018) pp. 41–56.
- Mourelatos, A. (1987) 'Gorgias on the Function of Language', *Philosophical Topics*, 15/2: 135–70.
- Muller, F. (1910) *De veterum, imprimis Romanorum studiis etymologicis* (PhD diss.) Utrecht.
- Nauck, J. A. (ed.) (1848) *Aristophanis Byzantii grammatici Alexandrini fragmenta, collegit ed disposuit A. Nauck*. Halis: Sumptibus Lipperti et Schmidtii.
- Nelis, D. P. (2018) 'Une certaine idée de la tradition épique, d'Empédocle à Lucain'. In Franchet d'Espèrey & Lévy (2018) pp. 247–62.
- Norden, E. (1898) *Die antike Kunstprosa: vom VI. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Oko, J. (1937) 'De M. T. Varronis quattuor vocabulorum explanandorum gradibus (de L.L. V 7-70)', *Eos*, 38: 157–68.
- Pagani, L. (ed.) (2007a) *Asclepiade di Mirlea. I frammenti degli scritti omerici*. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.
- (2007b) 'Aristeas'. *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*.
- (2010) 'La *Techne Grammatike* attribuita a Dionisio Trace e la nascita della grammatica nell'antichità greca', *RFIC*, 138: 390–409.

- (2011) 'Pioneers of Grammar. Hellenistic Scholarship and the Study of Language'. In Montanari, F. & Pagani, L. (eds.) *From scholars to scholia: chapters in the history of ancient Greek scholarship*, Berlin: De Gruyter, pp. 17–64.
- (2014a) 'Hellenismos tra filologia e grammatica – riflessioni antiche sulla correttezza della lingua', *Philologus*, 158/2: 235–60.
- (2014b) 'Language Correctness (Hellenismos) and Its Criteria'. In Montanari, F., Matthaios, S. & Rengakos, A. (eds.) *Brill's companion to ancient scholarship*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 798–849.
- Pascucci, G. (1979) 'Le componenti linguistiche del latino secondo la dottrina varroniana'. In *Studi su Varrone, sulla retorica, storiografia e poesia latina: Scritti in onore di Benedetto Riposati*, Rieti: Centro di studi varroniani, pp. 339–63.
- Pellicer, A. (1966) *Natura : étude sémantique et historique du mot latin*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.
- Pezzini, G. (2017) 'Caesar the Linguist: The Debate about the Latin Language'. In Grillo, L. & Krebs, C. B. (eds.) *The Cambridge companion to the writings of Julius Caesar*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 173–92.
- Pezzini, G. & Taylor, B. (eds) (2019) *Nature and language in the classical Roman world*. Cambridge: University Press.
- (2019) 'Introduction: First Thoughts on Language and Nature'. In *Id.* (2019) pp. 1–14.
- Pfaffel, W. (1981) *Quartus gradus etymologiae: Untersuchungen zur Etymologie Varros in 'De lingua Latina'*. Königstein: Hain.
- Pfeiffer, R. (1968) *History of classical scholarship: from the beginnings to the end of the Hellenistic age*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pinborg, J. (1975) 'Classical Antiquity: Greece'. In Sebeok, Th. A. (ed.) *Historiography of linguistics*, The Hague: Mouton, pp. 69–126.
- Piras, G. (1998) *Varrone e i poetica verba: studio sul settimo libro del De lingua Latina*. Bologna: Pàtron.
- (2000) 'Per la tradizione del De lingua Latina di Varrone'. In Holtz, L., De Nonno, M. & De Paolis, P. (eds.) *Manuscripts and Tradition of Grammatical Texts from Antiquity to the Renaissance. Proceedings of a Conference held at Erice, 16-23 October 1997, as the 11th Course of International School for the Study of Written Records*, Cassino: Università degli Studi, pp. 747–72.
- Pohlenz, M. (1939) *Die Begründung der abendländischen Sprachlehre durch die Stoa*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Porter, J. (1992) 'Hermeneutic Lines and Circles: Aristarchus and Crates on the Exegesis of Homer'. In Keaney, J. J. & Lamberton, R. (eds.) *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes*, Princeton: University Press, pp. 67–114.
- Powell, J. G. F. (2013) 'The Embassy of the Three Philosophers to Rome in 155 BC'. In Kremmydas, Ch. & Tempest, K. (eds.) *Hellenistic Oratory: Continuity and Change*, Oxford: University Press, pp. 219–47.
- Probert, Ph. (2019) *Latin grammarians on the Latin accent: the transformation of Greek grammatical thought*. Oxford: University Press.
- Rawson, E. (1985) *Intellectual life in the late Roman Republic*. London: Duckworth.
- Reinhardt, T. (2000). 'Rhetoric in the Fourth Academy', *CQ*, 50/2: 531–47.
- (ed.) (2003) *Cicero's Topica. Edited with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary by Tobias Reinhardt*. Oxford: University Press.
- (2008) 'Epicurus and Lucretius on the Origins of Language', *CQ*, 58/1: 127–40.

- (2018) 'Antiochus of Ascalon on Epistemology in the Academic Tradition'. In Guillaumin, J.-B. & Lévy, C. (eds.) *Plato Latinus: aspects de la transmission de Platon en latin dans l'Antiquité*, Turnhout : Brepols, pp. 31–67.
- Reitzenstein, R. (1897) *Geschichte der griechischen Etymologika: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philologie in Alexandria und Byzanz*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- (1901) *M. Terentius Varro und Johannes Mauropus von Euchaita: eine Studie zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Robinson, R. (1955) 'The Theory of Names in Plato's Cratylus', *RIPh*, 9/2: 221–36.
- Robinson, T. M. (ed.) (1984) *Contrasting arguments: an edition of the Dissoi logoi*. Salem, N.H: Ayer Company.
- Rodríguez Mayorgas, A. (2004) 'El concepto de artes liberales a fines de la República romana', *Estudios clásicos*, 46/125: 44–64.
- Rolle, A. (2017) *Dall'Oriente a Roma. Cibeles, Iside e Serapide nell'opera di Varrone*. Pisa: Edizioni ETS.
- Romano, E. (2003) 'Il concetto di antico in Varrone'. In Citroni, M. (ed.) *Memoria e identità. La cultura romana costruisce la sua immagine*, Florence: Università degli Studi, pp. 99–117.
- Rösch-Binde, C. (2001) "'Ego exspectatione promissi tui moueor ut admoneam te, non ut flagitem". Zur Frage der zeitlichen Redaktion und Edition von Varros *De lingua Latina*'. In Calboli (2001) pp. 223–45.
- Ross Taylor, L. (1934) 'Varro's *De gente populi Romani*', *CPh*, 29/3: 221–9.
- Russo, F. (2011) 'Greco, Gallico ed Etrusco: Varrone e le componenti del Latino', *AC*, 80/1: 167–78.
- Salanitro, M. (1990) *Le menippee di Varrone: contributi esegetici e linguistici*. Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo.
- Sallmann, K. G. (2013) *Die Geographie des älteren Plinius in ihrem Verhältnis zu Varro: Versuch einer Quellenanalyse*. Berlin ; Boston: De Gruyter.
- Sandys, J. E. (1903) *A history of classical scholarship*, vol. 1. Cambridge: University Press.
- Schenkeveld, D. M. (1994) 'Scholarship and Grammar'. Montanari F. (ed.) *La philologie grecque à l'époque hellénistique et romaine: sept exposés suivis de discussions, Vandoevres, Genève, 16-21 août 1993*, Vandœuvres–Genève : Fondation Hardt, pp. 263–306.
- (1996) 'Charisius, *Ars grammatica* 1.15: The Introduction'. In Swiggers, P. & Wouters, A. (eds.) *Ancient grammar: content and context*, Leuven: Peeters, pp. 17–35.
- (1998) 'The idea of progress and the art of grammar: Charisius *Ars Grammatica* 1.15', *AJPh*, 119/3: 443–59.
- Schenkeveld, D. M. & Barnes, J. (1999) 'Language'. Algra K., Barnes, J., Mansfeld, J. & Schofield, M. (eds.) *The Cambridge history of Hellenistic philosophy*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 177–225.
- Schiappa, E. (2003) *Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.
- Schironi, F. (2004) review of Broggiato (2001), *Historiographia Linguistica*, 31/2–3: 449–56.
- (2007) 'Ἀναλογία, analogia, proportio, ratio: loanwords, calques, and reinterpretations of a Greek technical word'. In Basset et al. (2007) pp. 322–38.
- (2018) *The best of the grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the Iliad*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- (2019) 'Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἣν ὁ λόγος: The long journey of grammatical analogy', *CQ*, 68/2: 475–97.
- Schmidt, R. T. (1839) *Stoicorum grammatica*. Halis: Apud Eduardum Anton.
- Schmitter, P. (ed.) (1991) *Sprachtheorien der abendländischen Antike*. Tübingen: Narr.

- Schröter, R. (1960) *Studien zur varronischen Etymologie. Erstes Teil*. Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Abh. d. Geistes- und Sozialwiss. Kl., 1959. Mainz: Wiesbaden.
- (1963) 'Die varronische Etymologie'. In Cardauns (1963) pp. 79–116.
- Sedley, D. N. (1998) 'The etymologies in Plato's "Cratylus"', *JHS*, 118: 140–54.
- (2003) *Plato's Cratylus*. Cambridge: University Press.
- (ed.) (2012). *The philosophy of Antiochus*, Cambridge: University Press.
- Siebenborn, E. (1976) *Die Lehre von der Sprachrichtigkeit und ihren Kriterien: Studien zur antiken normativen Grammatik*. Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner.
- Skutsch, F. (1897) 'Coniectanea', *Hermes*, 32/1: 92–8.
- Skydsgaard, J. E. (1968) *Varro the scholar: studies in the first book of Varro's De re rustica*. Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard.
- Sluiter, I. (1990) *Ancient Grammar in Context: Contributions to the Study of Ancient Linguistic Thought*. Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.
- Smith, C. (2017) review of Butterfield (2015), *Mnemosyne*, 70/1: 170–2.
- Solignac, A. (1958) 'Doxographies et manuels dans la formation philosophique de saint Augustin', *RA*, 1: 113–48.
- Spencer, D. (2011) 'Ρωμαίζω ... ergo sum: becoming Roman in Varro's de Lingua Latina'. In Bommas, M. (ed.) *Cultural memory and identity in ancient societies*, London: Continuum, pp. 43–60.
- (2019) *Language and authority in De lingua Latina: Varro's guide to being Roman*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Steinthal, H. (1863) *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bei den Griechen und Römern: mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die Logik*. Berlin: Ferd Dümmler's Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Strzelecki, L. (1950) 'Quaestionum orthographicarum specimen', *Eos*, 44: 90–110.
- Susemihl, F. (1891) *Geschichte der griechischen litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit*. 2 vols. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Taylor, D. J. (1974) *Declinatio: a study of the linguistic theory of Marcus Terentius Varro*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- (1977) 'Varro's Mathematical Models of Inflection', *American Philological Association. Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 107: 313.
- (1986) 'Rethinking the History of Language Science in Classical Antiquity', *Historiographia Linguistica*, 31/2/3: 175–90.
- (ed.) (1996) *Varro. De lingua latina X*. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- (2015) 'The new Varro and the structure of his *De lingua Latina*'. In Butterfield (2015) pp. 19–31.
- Theodoridis, C. (ed.) (1976) *Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Philoxenos. SGLG Bd. 2*.
- Traglia, A. (1963) 'Dottrine etimologiche ed etimologie varroniane con particolare riguardo al linguaggio poetico'. In Cardauns (1963) pp. 33–78.
- (1974) *Opere di Marco Terenzio Varrone*. Torino: UTET.
- (1976) 'L'ars grammatica vista da Varrone in rapporto con le altre arti'. In *Atti del congresso internazionale di studi varroniani, Rieti 1974*, pp. 177–95.
- (1982) 'Elementi stilistici nel De lingua Latina di Varrone', *ASNP*, 12: 481–511.
- Tutrone, F. (2013) 'Libraries and intellectual debate in the late Republic. The case of the Aristotelian corpus'. In König, J., Oikonomopoulou, A. (eds.) *Ancient libraries*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 152–66.
- Uhlfelder, M. L. (1966) "'Nature" in Roman Linguistic Texts', *TAPhA*, 97: 583–95.

- Usener, H. (1913) 'Ein altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie'. In *Id.* (ed.) *Kleine Schriften*, vol. 2, Leipzig–Berlin: Teubner, pp. 265–314.
- de Vaan, M. A. C. (2008) *Etymological dictionary of Latin and the other Italic languages*. Leiden: Brill.
- Vassilaki, S. (2007) 'Ἑλληνισμός'. In Christidis, A., Arapopoulou, M. & Chriti, M. (eds.) *A history of ancient Greek: from the beginnings to late antiquity*, Cambridge: University Press, pp. 1118–29.
- Verlinsky, A. (2005) 'Epicurus and his predecessors on the origin of language'. In Frede & Inwood (2005) pp. 56–100.
- (2019) 'Posidonius' Linguistic Naturalism and Its Philosophical Pedigree'. In Pezzini & Taylor (2019) pp. 15–45.
- Vetter, E. (1958) 'Zum Text von Varros Schrift über die lateinische Sprache (I)', *RhM*, 101/3: 257–85.
- Vimercati, E. (2018) 'Cicéron et les atomistes'. In Franchet d'Espèrey & Lévy (2018) pp. 57–84.
- Volk, K. (2019) 'Varro and the Disorder of Things', *HSCP*, 110: 183–212.
- Walter, F. (1918) 'Zu Varro (de lingua Latina)', *Philologus*, 75/1–4: 484–5.
- Wendel, C. (1939) 'Tryphon (25)'. *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- (1941) 'Philoxenus (27)'. *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Werner, E., Sallmann, K. G. & Schmidt, P. L. (2006) 'Varro [1]'. *Brills Neue Pauly*.
- Wisse, J., Winterbottom, M. & Fantham, E. (2008) *M. Tullius Cicero, De oratore libri III: Kommentar*. vol. 5: Book III, 96–230. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Woldt, K. (1911) *De analogiae disciplina apud grammaticos Latinos*. Königsberg.
- Wolfsdorf, D. (2011) 'Prodicus on the correctness of names: the case of τέρψις, χαρά and εὐφροσύνη', *JHS*, 131: 131–45.
- Woodbury, L. (1958) 'Parmenides on Names', *HSCP*, 63: 145–60.
- (1986) 'Parmenides on Naming by Mortal Men: Fr. B8.53–56', *AncPhil*, 6: 1–13.
- Zanker, A. T. (forthcoming) 'Varronian Word Trees'.
- Zetzel, J. E. G. (2019) 'Natural Law and Natural Language in the First Century BCE'. In Pezzini & Taylor (2019) pp. 191–211.