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MORE LATIAN ANAGRAMS (*AEN.* 8.314–36)

Perhaps the best-known anagram in Latin literature appears in Book 8 of Vergil's *Aeneid*, when the Greek king Evander relates to Aeneas the early history of Latium. About halfway through the speech Evander explains the origins of the name Latium as an etymological play on the verb *latere* ("to hide"), since the god Saturn "had hidden" in the region after fleeing from his son Jupiter. Frederick Ahl and Damien Nelis have both noted that line 323 contains anagrammatic wordplay in addition to the etymology (8.321–27):[1]

> is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
> composuit legesque dedit, **Latium**que vocari
> **maluit**, his quonia**m latui**sset tutus in oris.
> aurea quae perhibent illo sub rege fuere
> saecula: sic placida populos in pace regebat,
> deterior donec pa**ulatim** ac decolor aetas
> et belli rabies et amor successit habendi.

> He brought together the untaught race, scattered among
> the high mountains, and gave them laws, and chose to call the land
> Latium, since he had hidden in safety on these shores.
> The Golden Age they speak of occurred under his
> reign: thus in tranquil peace he ruled the peoples,
> until little by little an inferior and tarnished age
> succeeded, and frenzy for war and desire for rule.[2]

One of the leading scholars of Vergilian wordplay, James O'Hara, has expressed skepticism about the importance and frequency of significant anagrams in Latin literature compared with the ancient poets' habitual use of etymological puns and other kinds of paronomasia.[3] The particularly ostentatious anagrams in Evander's speech, however, are generally considered above reproach, as they are by O'Hara himself.[4] As Ahl and Nelis have noted, not only does the theme of hiding suggest the nature of anagrammatic concealment of one word within another, the surrounding vocabulary of disordering (*dispersum*) and ordering (*composuit*) further draws attention to not one but two verbal rearrangements of *Latium*.[5] Beyond the

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1. Ahl (1985, 47–48) notes the exact anagram of *Latium* with *maluit*; Nelis (2006, 6 n. 4) reports identifying the anagram independently of Ahl and adds the observation that when taken together with the final letter of the preceding word (*quoniam*), *latui-* becomes an exact anagram of *Latium*.

2. Quotations of Vergil are from Mynors 1969. All translations are our own.

3. O'Hara 1996, 62 n. 318. Krasne (2012, 45–46 n. 149) notes general skepticism of Cameron (1995, 479) and Harrison (1986, 237), while pointing out that Cameron's argument that the *Latium* anagram is fundamentally etymological in nature (on his view like all deliberate anagrams in Latin literature) misses the anagram with *maluit* and its non-etymological significance. On the possible influence of Lucretian atomology on Vergil, see O'Hara 1996, 54–55. The classic account of Lucretian anagrammatic wordplay is Friedländer 1941, which builds on Deutsch 1978 (originally published as a Bryn Mawr dissertation in 1939) and is further developed by Snyder 1980.

4. O'Hara 1996, 62 n. 318, 207–8. Cf. also Ahl 1985, 48 on *pulsa palus* (7.702).

5. Note that the earlier occurrence of *componere* (8.317), along with *iungere* (316) and *parcere* (317), already possesses a double meaning: "They belong to the world of agriculture ('yoke', 'store', 'ration') and also

etymological anagram of *Latium* contained within *quoniam latuisset* there is also the exact anagram in *maluit*, which has no etymological connection to Latium. Yet *maluit*'s proximity to *Latium*, separated by only one word, and the surrounding etymological wordplay credential it as a potentially meaningful anagram.

Although silent about any anagrammatic play, Servius observes the appropriateness of *maluit* given that the land is indeed better known as Latian rather than Saturnian (Serv. ad *Aen*. 8.322): *maluit* therefore indicates an individual naming preference that is ultimately realized in widespread practice. Francis Cairns, moreover, has interpreted *maluit* as a kind of Alexandrian footnote adverting to a heterodox tradition of a peaceful transfer of power from Saturn to Jupiter—with Latium a negotiated choice rather than a refuge—although the suggestion has faced strong objections from Richard Thomas, and its relative absence from subsequent scholarship may indicate that it has not found general favor.[6] What is perhaps more straightforward to accept is that two motives underlie the naming of Latium in this passage: first, the simple preference of the namegiver, Saturn; second, the etymological and mythical connection to Saturn's exile. We will return to this duality—individual creation on the one hand, cultural construction on the other—at the end of the note, but for now it is sufficient to say that it is crucial to much of the *Aeneid*, whether at the level of Augustan politics or Vergilian metapoetics.

Despite the extraordinarily close attention given to this passage, no commentator, as far as we are aware, has observed yet another rearrangement of the same letters appearing only three lines further below, within the word *paulatim* (8.326). The objective of this note is to justify and explain the existence of this further anagram, and to add to it still further anagrams hidden elsewhere within the same speech—this time not of *Latium*, but of *Roma*. Key to the argument will be not only the kind of signaling effected by words like *dispersum* and *composuit*, but also a larger thematic connection between verbal structure and ethical changes, such as moral decline, fundamental to the speech and to the epic as a whole.

Nelis posits an analogy between the process of ordering involved in the *Latium* anagrams and a similar process in Saturn's constitution of a Latian people.[7] *Latium* is thus explained not only through its etymology but also through its aggregative history; it is an entity composed of scattered people given unity and meaning by the authority of its lawgiver and namegiver.[8] The concepts of order and creation, therefore, are at least as important as (if not more important than) etymology in explaining the significance of the Latian anagrams. The bringing together of disparate parts into a greater whole—the act of unification—is represented especially clearly in the second anagram, in which *Latium* is split over two separate words, *quonia**m latui**sset*. Evander goes on to describe Saturn's rule as a Golden Age, a period familiar from mythology as a time of peace and plenty. The consequence of Saturn's order, then, is not merely the creation of Latium but its perfection. Implicitly, the anagrammatic play turns disparate parts not only into a more significant whole but into a perfect union: the word *Latium*, like the place itself, would seem to have achieved a settled state destined to last through generations.

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to that of politics" (Gransden 1976, 125). As so often in Vergil, the reader is primed to look beyond superficial meaning.

6. Cairns 1989, 64 n. 16; Thomas 2004–2005, 132 n. 23. On the association between Saturn and Italia rather than Latium per se, cf. Tert. *Apol.* 10.7–8.

7. Nelis 2006.

8. For an approach to the significance of the anagrammatic play derived from continental theory concerning law and society, see Haverkamp 2005, 997; Lowrie 2005, 969–70. On the metapoetic flavor of *composuit*, see Novara 1993, 36.

As Evander relates, however, and as readers know from the familiar myth of the ages, perfection was not to last: an inferior age follows, one characterized by bellicosity and greed. It is here that we find a third, and hitherto unremarked on, anagram of *Latium* within the word *paulatim*. Against the context of moral collapse, we can see a further effect of Nelis' interpretation of the earlier anagrams. Read not as straightforward etymology but rather as a graphical representation of ordering, the anagrammatic play on *Latium* takes on a new meaning as the constituent letters are once again disordered into the word *paulatim*. Here in a new and worse age the word, like the state, is dissolved. The anagrammatic relationship between *paulatim* and *Latium* is inexact, in that the latter can be assembled from the former but there is not a one-to-one correspondence of letters. Whereas the inexactness of *latuisset* can be rescued by the preceding "m" of *quoniam*, there is no possibility of lexical reunification in *paulatim*. *Latium* is not only disordered once again; it is now muddled further by the incorporation of two extraneous letters. The effect of the disintegration is further enhanced by the reading aloud of the line: the final sound of *paulatim*, and hence of *Latium*, elides into the next vowel. Indeed, the very same consonant ("m"), which earlier had been separated from the rest of the letters forming *Latium* and had to be recomposed back into a single word and a new foundation, now becomes obscured again through the process of elision.

That *paulatim* itself is an especially appropriate descriptor of this incremental dissociation requires little comment. The whole sequence of wordplay thus casts the post-Saturnian decline of the Golden Age as a continuous rather than discrete process. This processual view of societal evolution contrasts with the typical narratives of the metallic ages, such as we find in Hesiod (*Op.* 109–201), Aratus (*Phaen.* 96–136), and Ovid (*Met.* 1.89–150), in which a succession of distinct races appear, one after the other.[9] The idea of a single, developing entity rather than multiple, mutually exclusive states is also present in the image of the *deterior ac decolor aetas*. The Golden Age loses its luster and becomes worse; it is not simply yet mysteriously replaced by another age. The image is perhaps even more suggestive: *decolor* connotes a form of transmutation, whether the tarnishing of gold or, more unsettlingly, the exposure of what had seemed to be gold as merely a gilded layer concealing what is in fact (implicitly) iron.[10]

Although at the thematic level the successive anagrams reflect first the creation and then debasement of societal order, as verbal puzzles they exhibit a progression of a different kind: from exactness to inexactness, from lesser to greater difficulty, and demanding an increasing flexibility from the reader.[11] Following the exact anagram of *Latium* and *maluit*, the reader is then challenged to identify two subtler variants. The first, *quoniam latuisset*, is formally tricky because of the separation over two words, but the reader's attention is drawn to the anagram by the explicit context of etymology and naming. The second variant, *paulatim*, is different again in that its inexactness consists not in separation over two words but rather

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9. On other models of cultural change possibly underlying the Vergilian passage, see Thomas 1982, 95–97.

10. See Paschalis 1997, 282: "The next age is one of decline; it is referred to as 'decolor' (= 'ferrea'), in contrast to the 'aurea saecula.'" Cf. the allusion to Vergil at *Oct.* 417 (*deterior aetas*), albeit within a more conventional account of the metallic ages. On the semantics of gold in the Vergilian passage (with pertinent comments on Ovid), see Feeney 2007, 134–35.

11. Shelton (2014, 397–98) identifies similar patterns of increasing complexity in sequences of etymological wordplay: "It is as if the poet primes the audience for ever more involved etymologizing by presenting simple initial etymologies to work with. Or perhaps it would be more appropriate to think of these Augustan poets priming themselves in the composition process. Simple etymologies set a pattern of poetic thought, and the poet begins to see more subtle etymological possibilities in the expanding poem."

inclusion of extraneous letters. What makes this instance the most challenging of the three, however, is not the particular form of inexactness but rather the subtler signaling: no context of etymology and naming, and a greater distance from the master term *Latium*. We view this sequence as a kind of didactic progression: given proper attention even the chaos of the *decolor aetas* can be made comprehensible, and historical process can be rendered in literarily palpable form.

It takes little imagination to see Latium's early history, on Evander's account, foreshadowing that of Latium's ultimate descendent, Rome. The trajectory of civilization followed by decline maps neatly onto the standard rhetorical graph of Roman history, in which the republican system—rather than a monarch—enables the flourishing of the state, which peaks with the Punic Wars before a collective descent into moral and social crisis (e.g., Sall. *Cat*. 10 and *Iug*. 41). Moreover, Evander's language is sufficiently general for it to evoke any period of turmoil in Italy, perhaps especially the Social War, the effects of which on the epic have been the subject of much recent scholarship.[12] At the same time, however, contemporary political ideology forces a quite different interpretation on the text. Evander looks back to a Latian Golden Age (*aurea saecula*) under Saturn's rule that resembles nothing so much as the Golden Age associated with Augustus' reign, a resemblance Vergil had made explicit through the words of Anchises in the underworld (6.792–94):

> Augustus Caesar, divi genus, aurea condet
> saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arva
> Saturno quondam . . .

> Augustus Caesar, offspring of a god, who will found a Golden
> Age again in Latium throughout the fields where Saturn
> once reigned . . .

Whereas Anchises, and hence Aeneas, is granted the kind of vision only obtainable in the afterlife, Evander has a weaker connection with prophecy, guided to Pallanteum by his mother Carmentis and Apollo but otherwise unaware of the full significance of the place.[13] In Evander's speech, unlike Anchises' prophecy, Rome must therefore remain an unconscious allusion, an unspoken reference never intended by the speaker but perfectly transparent to the poem's audience. Indeed, Vergil even highlights this asymmetry in knowledge by drawing attention to what the sites viewed by Aeneas will one day be called, for instance—immediately following Evander's speech—the place that "the Romans commemorate as the Gate of Carmentis" (*Carmentalem Romani nomine portam / quam memorant*, 8.338–39).[14]

Nevertheless, there is reason to think that Vergil meant his readers to see the presence of Rome even where it cannot belong in any literal way. The last line of our passage speaks of the madness of war and the passion to rule—*et belli rabies et amor successit habendi* (8.327)—a description we have suggested maps onto the trajectory of Roman historical development, in particular the events of the Marian and Sullan conflicts, the Social War, and the two civil wars that marked the first century BCE. If the unspoken referent is Rome, and is understood as such by the reader, then *amor* may in turn be taken as a hint to that

12. E.g., Toll 1997; Ando 2002; Marincola 2010; Ferriss-Hill 2011, 281. The discussion will be much advanced by the forthcoming publication of Alessandro Barchiesi's 2011 Sather lectures.

13. Note Vergil's near equivocation on this matter: on the one hand the narrator describes Carmentis as prophecying the greatness of Aeneas' descendants (8.340–41), but on the other hand Evander himself shows no clear knowledge of this prophecy on meeting Aeneas and hearing his story. Contrast the detailed prophecy Evander explicitly hears from his mother at Ov. *Fast*. 1.509–36, on which see Green 2004, 216–18, 234–37.

14. For an Althusserian reading of this passage as interpellating Roman identity, see Apostol 2009, 144–52.

effect. Palindromic wordplay on *amor-Roma* is well-known, and other passages of the *Aeneid* appear to exploit it, including Aeneas' (tone-deaf) *hic amor, haec patria est* addressed to Dido (4.347).[15] Later evidence corroborates the idea that Evander's *amor* may be a pointer to *Roma*. Early in his *Bellum civile* Lucan seems to echo Vergil's language while spelling out the missing term (Luc. 1.21–23):[16]

> tum, si tantus **amor belli** tibi, **Roma**, nefandi,
> totum sub **Latias leges** cum miseris orbem,
> in te verte manus.
>
> Then, if you have such great desire for abominable war, Rome,
> when you have made the whole world submit to Latian laws,
> only then turn your hands against yourself.

Here in Lucan *amor belli* refers not only to Rome's imperialism but also to its civil wars, in particular the Caesarian-Pompeian war. The anagrammatic or palindromic play makes the desire for war seem almost genetic to Rome, and it is tempting to see mention of Latian laws in the next line as further recognition of the genealogical link in Vergil between Latium's Saturnian laws and subsequent *amor belli*.[17]

Yet this may not even be our first glimpse of Rome in the passage. Evander's speech is introduced and opens as follows (8.313–14):

> tum rex Evandrus Romanae conditor arcis:
> haec nemora indigenae Fauni Nymphaeque tenebant.
>
> Then King Evander, founder of the Roman citadel, said:
> "These woods the indigenous Fauns and Nymphs used to inhabit."

The second word of Evander's speech, *nemora*, is a near anagram of *Romanae* in the previous line, missing only a second "a"; it also, a fortiori, contains the word *Roma*. These woods are of course Rome, a fact disclosed by the omniscient narrator in his introduction but, on our view, also latent at the beginning of Evander's own speech, yet as invisible to him as to his equally mystified interlocutor, Aeneas. Furthermore, Evander's first two words might be reread as a question: *haecne mora?* ("Is this a delay?")—an apposite query when one considers, following Ahl, that Aeneas might simply have taken over Pallanteum and anticipated Romulus by five centuries.[18] *Mora*, moreover, stands in a well-known anagrammatic relationship to *Roma* (and *amor*), as J. D. Reed has recently discussed in reference to the *Aeneid*.[19] If *haecne mora* (and, further, *haecne Roma*) is indeed suggested, the wordplay partly resembles one present in the very first speech of the epic, noted by William Levitan,[20] wherein Juno's *mene incepto* echoes the first word of the *Iliad* (a beginning further highlighted by the word *incepto*). Here in Book 8, too, the sound of the words creates a secondary significance as Evander's deictic gesture to the place before him (*haec nemora*) can at the

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15. Skulsky 1985, 449–50; for further references to *amor-Roma* wordplay, see Skulsky 449 n. 5; Cairns 1989, 118 n. 19.

16. Reed (2016, 89–90) highlights the Lucanian passage, but as a response to general Vergilian usage rather than *Aen.* 8.327 in particular.

17. Cf. Ovid's quotation of Vergil's *amor habendi* at *Fasti* 1.195, sandwiched between explicit mention of *Saturno* (193) and *Roma* (198). Later in the same passage Ovid recapitulates the etymology of Latium from Saturn's hiding (235–38).

18. As Ahl repeatedly emphasizes, Aeneas has Rome within his grasp and yet the "city's foundation is postponed for a half-millenium" (Ahl 2007, 398 ad 8.100, but see 398–404 passim).

19. Reed 2016. Cf. Reed 2007, 42–43, 149–50.

20. Levitan 1993.

same time, however fleetingly, be heard as a note of uncertainty about the precise meaning of this place and of Evander's role.[21] Is Evander here to reveal important truths about this land and its peoples, or is he in fact a source of misinformation and distraction, turning Aeneas in the wrong direction from the actual site of Rome to a long war with the Latins? The proto-Romans will have to relocate more than once before finally settling in this place, repeating in microcosm the larger movements performed by Aeneas and Evander. The idea of "delay" (*mora*), then, is highly suggestive in its application to the events leading up to the actual foundation of the city many generations after the initial arrival of Aeneas in Latium.

The notion of a hidden place will of course become explicit only a few lines later in the discussion of Latium. But already in line 313 lies a hint of a larger problem of concealment. Evander is described as a proto-founder of Rome in the phrase *tum rex Evandrus Romanae conditor arcis*, but if we view him as a distraction rather than as a guide, the word *conditor* takes on a different sense: not someone who founds the city but instead someone who hides it. As Sharon James has shown, Vergil uses *condere* to mean "to conceal" almost as prominently as "to establish."[22] Let us push this characterization to its limits, if only for a moment: whereas the shade of Anchises was explicit, unerring, and truly deictic, Evander, the Greek son of a prophet, is suggestive, inadvertent, and ignorant of what he is really pointing out.

There is perhaps one more future hidden in Evander's speech, a place firmly located in deep mythological time and simultaneously of the utmost contemporary importance. As so often, a functional gloss by Servius can yield potentially richer rewards (Serv. ad *Aen.* 8.313):

> ROMANAE CONDITOR ARCIS conditor Pallantei, ubi nunc Palatium est: quod non est re vera arx, sed tenet rerum omnium principatum.

> FOUNDER OF THE ROMAN CITADEL Founder of Pallanteum, where the Palatine is now: it is not in truth the citadel, but it holds chief place among all things.

Servius points out the obvious: Pallanteum is the future Palatine.[23] What is of greater interest to us, however, is the fact that Palatium is an exact anagram of *paulatim*. The Palatine is certainly a presence throughout this portion of the book, the site of Hercules' struggle with Cacus, narrated by Evander just before this speech, and also the site of the Lupercal, mentioned shortly after. Further support for this parsing of *paulatim* might be

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21. The passage's concern with sound and (mis)interpretation is bolstered by Vergil's allusion to Lucretius' account of echoes, specifically 4.580–81: *haec loca capripedes satyros nymphasque tenere / finitimi fingunt et faunos esse loquuntur*. The intertext is briefly noted by a number of commentators, including Eden (1975) and Fratantuono and Smith (2018), but the best discussion is by Apostol (2009, 104–6), who, among other observations, links Vergil's mention of fauns in *Eclogue* 6 to that poem's play with echoes. For the purposes of our current argument, however, we would emphasize the importance of the Lucretian context (4.572–94) to the possibility of hearing Evander's words in multiple ways. Lucretius here discusses the workings of human speech and hearing, especially the materiality of the voice. Thus he remarks on the relation between the clarity of our comprehension of speech and the distance over which the voice must travel, with further distances resulting in apparently garbled words and misunderstanding. Vergil's allusion to Lucretius thus not only concerns anthropology or mythology but also points to Lucretius' thinking about how one hears and understands words when transmitted over distance. In Vergil's case, it is distance in time rather than in space, as we "hear" Lucretius' words, slightly garbled, and comprehend or miscomprehend them in their new Vergilian context. The allusion is therefore of a piece with a larger Vergilian engagement with the question of what exactly we hear and understand in the words presented to us, as embodied in the anagrammatic play marking Evander's speech as a whole.

22. James 1995. Cf. Rimell 2015, 39–62.

23. Cf. Varro *Ling*. 5.53; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.31.4.

found in *rabies* one line below, a sign of wolfishness highly appropriate for the Luper-cal.[24] This kind of connection is not unprecedented. Ahl has already discovered other Vergilian wordplays linking the Lupercal and the Palatine: Evander will point out the Lu-percal on the Palatine, his language emphasizing the wolfish element not only in the et-ymology of *Lupercal* (343) from Latin *lupus*, but also in the name *Lycaei* from Greek λύκος in the next line (344).[25] Ahl further understands the association between wolf and Palatine as a reference not only to past mythology but also to contemporary tyranny, es-pecially the rule of Caesar and Augustus. Is it possible, then, that the *deterior ac decolor aetas* surrounding *paulatim* is subtly associated with the Palatine? Evander's *aetas* is scru-pulously free of historical specificity, but the poets of the period invest the word with a significance derived from their immediate context: Vergil's own *ultima . . . aetas* (*Ecl*. 4.4), and Horace's subsequent evocation of an emphatically Augustan Age (*tua, Caesar, aetas*, *Carm*. 4.15.4).[26] Evander's imagery, by contrast, suggests an age of bronze or iron, a pe-riod either to be distinguished from any contemporary Golden Age (and hence supportive of the conceptual framework) or to be identified with it (and hence subversive of the framework). For those willing to entertain the latter interpretation, the anagrammatic sub-suming of Latium into Palatium (i.e., *paulatim*) is not merely a Lucretianesque wordplay but rather a verbal illustration of a historical process. In this way the duality of Latium's Saturnian foundation is resolved in contemporary Augustan history, not an ambiguous balance between individual creation and cultural construction, represented by *maluit* and *quoniam latuisset*, respectively, but rather the almost complete dependence of the latter on the former—in other words, the subordination of social convention to private fiat.

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We have argued that Evander's elliptical, unconscious allusions to Rome are a special, and especially subtle, case of a characteristic feature of the poem described by Reed: "Yet as an etiology, and especially as one whose fulfillment is not part of the narrative, the *Aeneid* must speak of Rome proleptically, as a future entity. One effect of this narrative condition is that Rome typically comes into the poem at second or third hand in speeches by its characters, and is subject to the vicissitudes of those discourses."[27] The two objections typically lodged against interpretations of anagrams are, first, that the existence of the anagram is mere coincidence, that form of wordplay simply being less common than critics would like to believe, and second, that even if wordplay were intended by the author, its significance is circumscribed. The anagrams in Evander's speech, however, are able to meet both objections: the explicit anagrammatic play on *Latium* makes the reader especially conscious of other verbal rearrangements in the vicinity, and the passage as a whole dwells on the significance of names—those created and those lost—that to-gether constitute Roman identity.[28]

Earlier we remarked that Evander's generic language of decline and strife following the Saturnian Golden Age allows a reader to see in Latium's mythical past the characteristics of Rome's own history, perhaps especially the Latin Wars of the fourth century BCE and

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24. Paschalis 1997, 282: "Half of the occurrences of 'rabies'/'rabidus' in the *Aeneid* refer to dogs and wolves."
25. Ahl 1985, 84–87 (referring also to Ov. *Fast*. 2.423–24); cf. Fratantuono and Smith 2018, 447–48. For further etymological and aetiological detail on this passage, see Apostol 2009, 152–55.
26. On the relationship between Horace's Augustan *aetas* and the Golden Age, see Breed 2004, esp. 245–48.
27. Reed 2010, 66.
28. On the importance of naming and plays on names in Evander's speech, see O'Hara 1996, 208–9; Nelis 2001, 223–24; Thomas 2004–2005, 139; Nelis 2006; Reed 2007, 4; Fletcher 2014, 234–36. Cf. also Ahl 1985, 307–8.

the more recent Social War. The nature of the relationship between Latium and Rome here, and indeed in the *Aeneid* as a whole, is left studiously vague: Is it historical exemplar, representation in miniature, or poetic allegory? To some extent all of these perspectives are involved in any parsing of what Vergil's various cities and peoples signify, including Latium. This fundamental uncertainty about the relationship between microcosm and macrocosm, part and whole, and ingredient and product applies equally well to—and is encapsulated by—anagrammatic play, in which we weigh exact anagrams against approximate ones, the integrity of a single word against the bridging or extraction of letters from more than one word. A formal conceit can thereby take on a historical significance, for the contemporary evidence suggests that the question of the prototypical, analogical, or metonymic relationship between Latium and Rome was very much a live concern in the Augustan period.

One might reasonably query why this might have been the case so many centuries after the incorporation of the Latin states into the Roman empire. But the Social War had placed front and center the question of the relationship between Rome and Italy, as had the more recent civil wars. More compelling still, the literary and documentary evidence of the period attests to the explicit attention given to the relation between the history and culture of Latium, in particular, and Rome: from Horace's pairing of Roman and Latian fortunes in the *Carmen saeculare* (65–68) to Ovid's emphatic designation of the subject of his *Fasti* as the Latian calendar (1.1–2).[29] Indeed, as the *Fasti* go on to describe, Latium had come to be both a part of Rome—literally a suburb—and a continuing source of religious and cultural vitality that was as much Greek in origin as it was Roman in its contemporary following.[30] Much of this intercultural thinking finds a clear precedent in *Aeneid* 8, and especially in Evander's Greek narrative of Latian history foreshadowing a Roman future. But if critics have been alert to such an analysis of Evander's speech, what they have not noticed is the stunning aptness of the passage's anagrammatic play for conveying the larger questions about the formation of identity and character in which the Augustan writers, and Augustan culture writ large, are so invested, a culture in which ideas of deformation and reconstitution held particular poignancy.[31]

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ORPHEUS' HEAD AT THE MOUTH OF THE MELES: CONON *NARRATIVES* 45

Regrettably, we do not possess the original text of the *Narratives* (Διηγήσεις), a diverse collection of fifty stories composed by the Augustan-era mythographer Conon.[1] A papyrus fragment that preserves some of the contents of *Narratives* 46 and 47 provides valuable insights into the nature of this lost work,[2] but for the most part our only access to the *Narratives* comes in the form of an epitome prepared by Photius in his *Bibliotheca* (cod. 186).[3] In his commentary on Conon, Malcolm Brown compares part of the papyrus (frag. 2.20–37) with the corresponding section of Photius' epitome and concludes that, "on the whole," the patriarch appears to be "a reliable guide to the contents of the *Diegeseis*, at least in the longer summaries."[4] Nevertheless, the mediation of Conon's writing through Photius represents an "inevitably distorting" factor in our interpretation of the *Narratives*,[5] which in its present condition often features obscurities that, one suspects, would be resolved by our possession of the original text.[6]

1. Introductions to Conon's *Narratives* can be found in Egan 1971; Henrichs 1987, 244–47; Ressel 1996–97; Brown 2002; Boulogne 2007; Ibáñez Chacón 2007a; Blakely 2011; see further Lightfoot 1999, 227–30. For Conon's date, see, e.g., Martini 1922, col. 1335; Ramelli 2004, 221–23, with the caveats noted by Wilamowitz (1895, 183 n. 1). A papyrus fragment provides a sure *terminus ante quem*, at least, of the second century CE (Bianchi and Schiano 2016, 1069 n. 2). On other possible works by Conon, see Ceccarelli 1989, 924–26; Ressel 1996–97, xiii–xviii; Ibáñez Chacón 2006; 2007b.

2. *P. Oxy.* 52.3648, edited by Harder in Cockle 1984, 5–12. Hilkens (2016) has recently identified a summary of the Romulus and Remus myth in a Syriac chronicle as another fragment of Conon, which would correspond to *Narr.* 48.

3. For Photius' epitomizing process generally, see, e.g., Hägg 1973; vis-à-vis Conon specifically, see Brown 2002, 35–39.

4. Brown 2002, 39; for similar judgments, see Ressel 1996–97, lx, lxv; Bianchi and Schiano 2016, 1079–80 nn. 196, 209. In the case of frags. 1, 2.1–19, however, the papyrus reveals that in *Narr.* 46, Photius has greatly condensed the Roman version of the Aeneas myth, which Conon actually did relate at some length (Ressel 1996–97, liii, lvii; Brown 2002, 317; Bianchi and Schiano 2016, 1079 n. 195; Ibáñez Chacón 2016, 141–44); evidently the patriarch felt free to abbreviate Conon's better-known stories (Ressel 1996–97, xxxii; Brown 2002, 39; Ibáñez Chacón 2019, 520). See also Ibáñez Chacón 2019 for the differences between the papyrus and our manuscripts of Photius vis-à-vis paratextual materials (i.e., section titles, numbering of narratives, etc.). There is also evidence that Photius has omitted source citations that Conon may have originally included (Cameron 2004, 72).

5. Boulogne 2007, 27 ("inévitablement déformante"). Likewise Ressel 1996–97, i: "[O]gni considerazione sulle *Narrationes* si basa sulla testimonianza più o meno deformante di Fozio." Cf. the notoriously optimistic position of Treadgold (1980, 9), who asserts that Conon's *Narratives* "seems to be the work that Photius preserved most completely," to the extent that, in his opinion, "it is hardly to be considered a 'lost' book."

6. For instance, Photius' summaries are sometimes so condensed that they skip over what must have been essential plot points in the original telling. Such narrative gaps occur even within the first three stories (see, e.g., Wilson 1994, 178 n. 3), which Photius claims to have practically transcribed (*Narr.* 3.30–31).