

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The Beginnings of Roman Epigram and Its Relationship with Hellenistic Poetry

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24.1 Epigraphy and Literature: A Monumental Style

The *elogia Scipionum* are the earliest Roman epigrams we know. The oldest ones are eulogistic epitaphs, written in Saturnian verse on the burials of L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus and of his son Lucius. The epigram for the latter (*CIL* 1².9) was probably written shortly after Lucius' death (ca. 230 BCE), while the poetic epitaph for the father Barbatus (*CIL* 1².7), carved on the tomb long after his death (ca. 270 BCE), was probably inspired by the *elogium* of the son:¹

Honc oino ploirume cosentiont R[omane]
duonoro optumo fuise viro,
Luciom Scipione. Filios Barbati,
consol censor aidilis hic fuet a[pud vos].
Hec cepit Corsica Aleriaque urbe, 5
dedet Tempestatebus aide mereto[d].
(*CIL* 1².9)

Most Romans agree that only this man was the best of good men, Lucius Scipio. A Barbatus' son, he was consul, censor and aedile among you; he

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conquered Corsica and the town of Aleria, to the deities of Weather he dedicated a temple, in return for benefits.

Cornelius Lucius Scipio Barbatus
 Gnaivod patre prognatus, fortis vir sapiensque,
 quoius forma virtutei parisuma fuit,
 consol censor aidilis quei fuit apud vos,
 Taurasia Cisauna Samnio cepit, 5
 subigit omne Loucanam opsidesque abdoucit.
 (CIL 1².7)

Cornelius Lucius Scipio Barbatus, an offspring of his father Gnaeus, a valorous and wise man, whose good looks matched his boldness, who was consul, censor and aedile among you. He conquered Taurasia, Cisauna, and Samnium, he overcame all of Lucania and brought hostages.

The grave of Barbatus (the founder of the clan) is located down the main corridor of a large underground shrine, just outside Porta Capena. The magnificent sarcophagus is adorned in a syncretistic fashion, with moldings at the base, a central Doric frieze, and an Ionic volute crowning at the top; the tomb of Lucius is placed almost in front of it, on the left side of the corridor. The graves were originally decorated with two red paint inscriptions bearing the names of the two deceased, and, in Lucius' case, a very short *cursus*. Epigrams were added later, first for the son, and then for the father. We may infer that the *elogia* were part and parcel of a complex strategy, which evolved in more than one stage: the shrine became a sort of memorial of the family (several sarcophagi were later added to the first one), a Hellenizing sepulchral counterpart of the parade of memories and ancestors' masks in the very center of the house's atrium. Only in the last decades of the third century BCE were more elaborated *tituli* added: they combine private memories and public celebration, Roman and Hellenistic eulogistic strategies, *laudatio funebris* and Greek epigrams, literature and epigraphic prose eulogy.² The hypogeum was a private monument: access to it was perhaps not easy for passers-by, but this does not mean that formulaic idioms such as CIL 1².7.4 *consol censor aidilis hic fuet a[pu]d vos*] (or the similar CIL 1².9.4), were intended exclusively for the members of the clan (see *contra* Lamoine 1999–2000); the Roman community is clearly involved (see CIL 1².9.1 *hono oino ploirume cosentiont R[omane]*). The epigraphic dialogue between the “voice” of the tomb (or the deceased) and the passer-by has been re-interpreted: the allocution *apud vos* is addressed to Rome and the Romans (see Morelli 2000, 28–29). A nationalistic mood also pervaded early Roman epos and, in general, poetic literature: the aristocratic elites were at this stage, in Gramsci's

terms, the “general class,” proud interpreters of a national culture. Certainly, the reception of the epigrammatic genre was integral to the cultural movement which re-adapted Hellenistic epos in the last decades of the third century BCE. The Roman Saturnian verse adopted features of the elegiac distich, the standard meter of the Greek epigram: the *elogia* are both organized in three couplets matching three different sections of the poems (lines 1–2 *virtutes*; 3–4 name, family origins, and *cursus*; 5–6 deeds: the ordering is sophisticatedly interlocked in lines 1–4 of Barbatius’ epigram).

Matteo Massaro (2008, 38–40) suggests that the two Scipionic *elogia* could be reproductions of the *tituli* which decorated the portraits or the masks of the ancestors (*imagines*) in the atrium of the house. This sounds attractive, but there is unfortunately no evidence of verse inscriptions adorning aristocratic *imagines*, at least not in this period. The “setting” of the shrine was probably inspired by that of the public hall in the family house; it is equally undeniable that the *elogia* worked perfectly, as we have them, as honorific Hellenizing epigrams decorating the graves of two prominent figures in the history of both the family and the nation. Nonetheless, Massaro’s suggestion lets us focus on a key issue of the history of Roman epigraphic verse, that is, its relationship with literary epigram. The (slightly later) distich of Ennius on a portrait of himself (*fr. var.* 15–16) has characteristics largely resembling those of the Scipionic *elogia*:

Aspicite, o cives, senis Enni imaginis formam:
hic vestrum pinxit maxima facta patrum.³

O citizens, look at the portrait of Ennius, in his old age: he painted the greatest deeds of your fathers.

Cicero, who quotes the epigram (*Tusc.* 1.34), does not specify what kind of *imaginis forma* is in question. It is uncertain whether the distich is a funerary one, as the *imago* is probably a statue or a painting; nonetheless, several idioms and topics are also typical of the funerary tradition: both the tomb and the *imago* present a prominent person as an *exemplum virtutis* to the Roman public.⁴ The ephrastic and sepulchral epigrams share a common celebrative tone. The aristocratic elites valorized the eulogistic potential of the Hellenistic epigram, and Ennius associates himself with the elites he had celebrated in his poetry (in Cicero’s words, “he demands the glory as reward from those whose fathers he gave glory”). His *imago* is shown to admiring *cives* (they are not simple passers-by or anonymous addressees), in the same way he showed them the “painting” (*pinxit*) of their fathers’ deeds. This poem plays, then, a key role in the affirmation of the social function of the

poet in Rome (see Suerbaum 1968, 215). The same can be said of *fr. var.* 17–18 (also quoted by Cic. *Tusc.* 1.34, and at 117):

Nemo me lacrimis decoret nec funera fletu
faxit: cur? Volito vivos per ora virum.

Let none bejewel me with tears, or attend my funeral with cries: why? Living,
I fly from mouth to mouth.

Once again the linkage is with some conventions of both the Hellenistic epigram and the Roman epigraphic *elogium*. In line with the usual funerary habit, mourning was mostly suited to the *mortui ante diem*, but a notable exception is provided by the Hellenistic epigram, where weeping for great poets is a consolidated *topos* (Suerbaum 1968, 304–5). It can also be found in Naevius' and Plautus' self-epitaphs, transmitted by Gellius (*NA* 1.24.1–3) and probably of a considerably later date (not later than Varro, though, because his *De poetis* is Gellius' source at least for Plautus' epigram; see Courtney 2003, 47–48; Morelli 2000, 44–48; Suerbaum 2007). In Enn. *fr. var.* 17, the perspective of an everlasting fame prevents mourning (*nemo me lacrimis decoret*).

Ennius' epigrams for Scipio Africanus have a Hellenistic eulogistic tone. At the same time, they also have important things in common with two later *Scipionum elogia*, *CIL* 1².10 and *CIL* 1².11: they honor two members of the clan who died at a young age.⁵ Ennius shows his readiness to merge a Hellenistic genre and its meter (the elegiac distich) into a Roman tradition, as he did also with epos. And through epigram Ennius heroizes Scipio.

The text of the two epigrams is as follows (Enn. *fr. var.* 21–22 and 23–24):

A sole exoriente supra Maeotis paludes
nemo est qui factis aequiperare queat.

From Sun rising, over the marshes of Maeotis, there is no one who can equal
his deeds.

Si fas endo plagas caelestum ascendere cuiquam est,
mi soli caeli maxima porta patet.

If there is anyone who may go up to the celestial fields, for me alone the great
gate of the heavens is open.

In the first distich the somewhat bombastic sentence *nemo ... queat* hints at Alexander the Great and his deeds; *fr. var.* 23–24 imitates *AP* 9.518 (Alcaeus of Messene), an epigram dedicated to Philip V of Macedon (see Skutsch

1985). Cicero quotes these lines in his *De re publica*: he is probably reinterpreting Ennius' euhemeristic tone and tendency to apotheosis (strongly influenced by Hellenistic court poetry) in more reassuring Pythagorean and Platonic terms (in order to turn Africanus into the "guiding spirit" of Aemilianus through the celestial Spheres).

In *fr. var.* 19–20 Roman epigraphic tradition is reinterpreted not only in a more hyperbolic fashion, but also with subtle polemic aims (no citizen could reward Scipio's deeds, as he is dead in exile ...; Morelli 2000, 36–40; Courtney 2003, 40–42; Cugusi 2007, 17–19; Morelli 2007, 526–29; Massaro 2008, 73–74).

Hic est ille situs, cui nemo civis neque hostis
quirit pro factis reddere opis pretium.

Here lies the man, whom no citizen nor foeman could reward for his deeds.

Any sympathetic correspondence between deceased and national community is broken up, but the epigraphic language and topics remain the traditional ones (at line 1 the sentence *hic est ille situs* adapts an old cliché to the elegiac meter; at line 2 the *facta* of the dead are the tangible demonstration of his supremacy in Rome). *CIL* 1².11.4 *is hic situs, qui nunquam victus est virtutei* (cf. n. 5) is notably similar to line 2 and to *Enn. fr. var.* 22, and this is all the more noteworthy since the epitaph is dedicated to Lucius Scipio, dead at 20. Even in an epitaph for such a young man we can notice the usual topics concerning the excellence of the dead within his family and his nation. There is no space for mourning; rather, the contrast between great *virtus* and adverse fate gives rise to abstruse jokes and parallelisms (*CIL* 1².11.1 *magna sapientia multasque virtutes* vs. 2 *aetate cum parva*; 3 *vita* vs. *honos*, polyptoton *honos honore*; 5 *is loceis mandatus* vs. 6 *honore qui minus sit mandatus*). In the slightly earlier *CIL* 1².10, these ideas find expression in a second conditional sentence (lines 3–4 *quibus sei in longa licu[i]set tibe utier vita, / facile facteis superases gloriam maiorum*; cf. n. 5), a feature not uncommon in Hellenistic epigraphic poetry; in the final lines there is an indirect reference to aristocratic funeral customs and the Roman *conclamatio* (the triple invocation of the deceased's name).⁶

From the second half of the second century BCE onward, the eulogistic habit remained a notable feature of Latin sepulchral poetry, even in case of *ante diem* death. Members of the rising classes, who could now afford these services (artisans, freedmen, merchants), were provided with verse epitaphs that drew on the tradition, while necessarily manipulating the rhetoric of aristocratic *virtutes*. For example, we rarely find allusions to the relationship between the dead and the national community: references are now to more

restricted social milieu (*populus*, mostly in the generic meaning of “people,” *amici*, *parentes*, *patroni*, etc.). In *CLE* 69 = *CIL* 1².1924 (from Urbs Salvia, Picenum, middle of the first century BCE),

Parentibus praesidium, amiceis gaudium
 pollicita pueri virtus indigne occidit.
 Quoius fatum acerbum populus indigne tulit
 magnoque fletu funus prosecutus est.

A safeguard for parents, a joy for friends,
 the boy's promising virtue was sadly extinguished.
 People dejectedly lamented his untimely fate,
 and his funeral was accompanied by great weeping,

the young C. Turpidius Severus is held in high esteem by *parentes*, *amici*, *populus*; he is praised as *praesidium* and *gaudium* (filial duties and youthful charm are connected); his *virtus* was promising, but it has been broken before time (a similar use of this *topos* in *CIL* 1².10.3–4; Paci 2004, 264–66; Cugusi 2007, 19 and *passim*; Massaro 2007, 147–48). The vocabulary of the *immat-ura mors* (2–3 *indigne*; 3 *fatum acerbum*) is meshed with a grandiloquent eulogy: this is particularly clear in line 4. There is an overall taste for solemn alliteration in the poem, but *fletu funus* is remindful of Enn. *fr. var.* 17 *funera fletu*. The intrinsic pathos of a young death is here occasion of a public display in the course of the *funus*, in which the community of the town expresses the exceptionality of the loss. In *CIL* 1².3197 (= *AE* 1968.142, from Beneventum), the *eximia virtus* of the freedwoman Pomponia *peperit laudem*:⁷

Heic est illa sita felix Pomponia Eleusis,
 quae eximia virtute animi peperit sibi laudem.
 [Se]x sibi praemeisit simili virtu(te) et amore
 qum gemitu [[Rufi]] Rufi, nomine ut est Helenus.
 Nei mirere, hospes, quis eam seic laudibus laudet, 5
 ut meruit parque est patronus qui manumeisit.⁸

Here lies the renowned, blessed Pomponia Eleusis, who by her outstanding virtue procured herself praise. Six children preceded her, similar in virtue and devotion, accompanied by Rufus' mourning, whose name is Helenus. Do not be astonished, passer-by, reading that she is so praised with praises, because she did deserve them, and her patron did too, who freed her.

Virtus and *laus* are so connected throughout the whole poem that the final allusion to the reader sounds as a kind of *excusatio*. Line 5 shows the same

topics and language, and a similar taste for polyptota and plays on words, as in *CIL* 1².11 (see *laudibus laudet* and *CIL* 1².11.3 *honos honore; ne mirere* and *CIL* 1².11.6 *ne quairatis*): in *CIL* 1².11 the *excusatio* is for the lack of *honores*, in *CIL* 1².3197 it is for the abundance of *laus*. Aristocratic values are reinterpreted by the *CLE* of the republican age, new *virtutes* (*pietas, pudor*) take the place of the old ones (*honor, fama, gloria*) in a laudatory device which maintains many of its features.

24.2 Literary Epigram: From Lucilius to Catullus

When the verse epitaph became relatively widely used by the emerging social classes, aristocratic culture abandoned it. The last Scipionic *elogium* (*CLE* 958 = *CIL* 1².15), the first in elegiacs, is to be dated approximately at 135 BCE:⁹ after this date, there are some celebrative epigraphic epigrams for prominent aristocrats (see *CIL* 1².2662, of 101 BCE, from Corinth, exalting the proconsul Marcus Antonius; Morelli 2000, 90; Courtney 2003, 44–45, and 231–33; Cugusi 2007, 10 and 56; Massaro 2007, 137), but none is sepulchral.¹⁰ In the Augustan age, too, none of the *elogia* in the *Forum Romanum* and in the *Forum Augusti* are in verse. On the other hand, the Hellenistic literary epigram was a very fashionable genre in the Greek culture of the Eastern Mediterranean during the last decades of the second century BCE (poets such as Antipater of Sidon were very renowned), and Roman aristocratic elites experienced first-hand new aspects of it.

After Ennius, the *eques* Lucilius, a member of Scipio's circle, also wrote literary epigrams. This was, however, a poetic experiment conducted within the "mixed genre" *par excellence*, the satire. We can still read some fragments in elegiac distich from the twenty-second book of Lucilius' *Satirae*: the epitaph for the slave *Metrophanes* had a noteworthy success in the age of Martial and later, presumably, within the archaistic movement of Fronto and Gellius.¹¹ In adapting the solemn formulaic language of the *elogia* to a slave (see the list of *virtutes* at line 1 or the idiom at line 2 *hic situs est*), Lucilius renovated the sepulchral tradition. Along with ironic intents, we may also recognize a realistic mood (present in other elegiac scraps of the twenty-second book as well).¹² The author is surely alluding to the increasing social and cultural diffusion of the verse epitaph.

Lutatius Catullus (ca. 150–87 BCE) is the first known author who dedicated himself to the erotic epigram, introducing a new subgenre; he is also the first member of the Roman aristocratic elite who wrote poetic texts in Latin under his own name (see Suerbaum 2002, 89). This represents an important

turning point in the history of Roman literature, especially if we consider that Catulus did not write in a *genus sublime*, but in a humble genre like the epigram. Among the so-called “preneoteric” epigrammatists, he certainly played a prominent role.

Catulus was one of the most important politicians of his age, an influential member of the *optimates*, and a partisan of Sulla. He was *collega* of C. Marius during the Cimbric campaign in 102–101 BCE. This distinguished Roman nobleman has often been considered a “dilettante” poet of sorts, an amateur who wrote small poems *à la mode*. This is only partly true, a distortion induced also by a famous passage in Plin. *Ep.* 5.3.5 (see the discussion in Citroni 2003). Epigrams often were nothing more than a *salon* fashion for Roman aristocracy of the late republic and of the imperial age, but the original use of the Hellenistic erotic epigram was restricted to small *avant-gardes* and very refined aristocratic circles.

It is not easy to define Catulus’ relationship with the two Latin poets Valerius Aedituus and Porcius Licinius, whose epigrams are quoted together with one of Catulus in Gell. 19.9.10–14 (see also Apul. *Apol.* 9). We do not know whether they were members of a “poetic circle” of Catulus. Without doubt, however, Catulus was in contact with other outstanding Greek epigrammatists and Latin poets.¹³ Like the almost contemporary Sulla Felix (Plin. *Ep.* 5.3.5), he regarded the erotic epigram as a kind of *lusus* for a cultivated aristocracy, part of the Hellenizing *paideia* of a nobleman. The choice of the erotic epigram confirms that literary poetry may also be disengaged from civic life. Writing epigrams became a kind of distinction mark, a demonstration of cultural refinement and social superiority. This was something totally new in Roman aristocracy’s self-presentation. It is the fruit of Roman expansion: the vanguard poetic Hellenistic genres (and, *in specie*, the erotic epigram) started to be of some interest not only for subaltern professionals, but also for social elites.

Catulus was not an amateur in the worst sense of the word. *FPL* Q. Lutatius Catulus 2 is the only poem of the “preneoteric” epigrammatists known from a source other than Gellius (Cicero *Nat. D.* 1.79):

Constiteram exorientem Auroram forte salutans
cum subito a laeva Roscius exoritur.
Pace mihi liceat, caelestes, dicere vestra
mortalis visus pulchrior esse deo.

I stood by chance to greet the uprising Aurora, when suddenly, on the left,
Roscius rose up. Please, o heavenly gods, give me leave to say that a mortal
seemed to me more handsome than a god.

The beloved Roscius is the famous actor, probably very young in age: his epiphany replaces the expected appearance of the sun. The *ego* is presented in an unsuitable way for an aristocrat, while bombastically celebrating the graces of a well-known boy (called by his real name). Immediately before the quotation Cicero tells us that Catulus *dilexit* (“loved”) Roscius, and the other examples he adduces in this passage concern archaic Greek pederastic customs and literature. The question of whether the relationship between Catulus and Roscius was actually erotic or not is not relevant here. What is interesting from our perspective is that the literary representation and models are erotic. Literary *lusus* constructs an image of aristocratic refinement: Catulus in his *otium* poses as a homosexual gallant, without worrying about scandal (see Morelli 2000, 152–64; on *FPL* Q. Lutatius Catulus 1 see, after Morelli 2000, 164–77, Gärtner 2010).

The topics, the language of *urbanitas*, the taste for wit and conceit, and for emulative competition with literary models: all this has its counterpart in Greek contemporary epigrams. The comparison between the beloved and the sun (or the moon and the stars) is an old poetic motif, particularly frequent in the Hellenistic epigrams between the second and first centuries BCE. With a touch of ironic blasphemy, the beloved is often celebrated as superior to the gods. This motif, common in courtesan poetry, had its origins in the laudatory literature for the Hellenistic sovereigns, although it was not unknown also in earlier periods.¹⁴ Many epigrams included in the *Garland* of Meleager are similar in topics and style, and this raises an important historical question: are Catulus’ epigrams influenced by the *Garland*, which, from its first appearance, immediately had a profound impact on Romano-Hellenistic culture? Lorenzo Argentieri has carefully re-examined the question, demonstrating that the publication of the *Garland* must be postdated to the late 80s BCE (Argentieri 2007; see Maltomini in this volume). This would make it almost impossible for Catulus to have known it. On the other hand, a “mannerism” in the erotic epigram existed already before the *Garland* and could very well have influenced both Meleager and the first Roman epigrammatists.

Like Hellenistic epigrams, Catulus’ poem on Roscius is largely influenced by the language of comedy. The informal narrative style is typical of the *sermo* both in Plautus and Terence. The “divinization” of the boy ironically alludes to both the hyperbolic comparisons in Plautus’ comedy and to the celebrative tradition of the Roman epigram (and, most likely, in particular to Ennius’ poems for Scipio).

In Catulus’ and the preneoterics’ view, the epigram functions as a literary medium in which Greek lyric and elegiac poetry motifs are merged and reinterpreted. This is particularly evident in the first poem of Valerius Aedituus

quoted by Gellius (*FPL Valerius Aedituus* 1),¹⁵ an imitation of Sapph. 31 V. Sappho's sublime psychic agitation is transformed into the *pudor funestus* of a male lover, who cannot bring himself to propose. The long traditional list of love symptoms is condensed into a couple of verses and in two features, the lover's silence and excited perspiration. This poem is only the last of a list of Hellenistic imitations of Sapph. 31 V.: it is clear that Aedituus follows the trend of contemporary Greek epigram in "actualizing" the classical past of Greek erotic poetry. This is a key element to understand Catullus' slightly later approach to Sappho (but also to Archilochus or Theognis).

The erotic epigram in elegiacs had a rapid success in Rome, especially after the publication of Meleager's *Garland*. This is also demonstrated by the extraordinary cycle of Tiburtinus' poems carved on a wall of the Odeion in Pompeii, probably in the 70s BCE.¹⁶ In the last years of Sulla's age, the erotic Hellenizing epigram is part of an (originally) aristocratic fashion. *Paignia* and *ludicra*, that is, small, polymetric poems, are in vogue: there is a social play in "Romanizing" Greek meters and genres (archaic and Alexandrian lyrics, iambs, satiric verses, and so on). The original morphology of the Roman epigram as an "open genre" can be traced back to the kaleidoscopic state of this age, in which it is often not easy to distinguish between professional poets and aristocratic *litterati et patroni* (it is noteworthy that Cinna, who composed epigrams and *nugae*, was another aristocrat, and a *sodalis* of Catullus and Calvus), or between cultural fashion and literature. As a consequence, it would be a mistake to look for an exact literary Hellenistic counterpart of every kind of neoteric *nugae*.

A case in point is the satiric epigram. Some epigrammatic lampoons of the first half of the first century BCE have been transmitted by our sources: their topics are often traceable back to the Greek satirical tradition. An anonymous distich of the first half of the first century BCE (*FPL Incertorum* versus 41) re-uses the old motif of the "small, or unproductive, estate": *extractam puteo situlam qui ponit in horto / ulterius standi non habet ipse locum* ("who puts on the land a pail pulled up from the well, / he has no more space even to stand"). This is a very common theme in Roman epigram (see Catull. 26, 114 and 115; Cic. *Epigr.* 3 Soub. = Quint. *Inst.* 8.6.73; Mart. 11.18): it is present in a comic fragment transmitted by [Longinus], *Subl.* 38.5–6 as a rhetorical model of amusing hyperbole.¹⁷ Notably, in Greek epigrams we have only a much later example of the topic, *AP* 11.249 (Lucillius). The epigram in distichs of an (otherwise unknown) Papinius on the *mésalliance* between the young Casca and his old wife is echoed by a lampoon in two iambic senarii (!) by Manilius:¹⁸ the satire on the old, sexually still active woman is quite common starting from the Greek comedy onward, but nothing similar to Papinius' and Manilius' poems is to be found in Hellenistic epigrams. The *skomma* (attack in verse)

remained outside Meleager's "canon:" we can still read, of course, some epigrammatic lampoons composed in the third to first centuries BCE,¹⁹ though it is safer not to assume the existence of a "submerged continent" of Greek satiric epigram supplying literary models (forms, topics, meters, language, etc.) for every kind of neoteric aggressive *mugae*. Certainly, Roman satiric epigrams of the first century BCE were based on Hellenistic ones, but also on archaic Greek poetry (the iambus in particular), comedy, and stage genres; rhetorical literature about *ridiculum* / γελοῖον was also of great importance, as well as a half-learned tradition on symposium puns and witticisms, which produced handbooks like *P.Heid.* 190 (third century BCE) and, later, the *Philogelos* (see Bremmer 1997 and now Floridi 2012); lastly, the influence of Roman native culture must be considered, including both the literary tradition (comedy, satire, and so on) and the "popular" one (Fescennine, *versus populares*, political puns, *carmina triumphalia*,²⁰ often written, still in the middle of the first century BCE, in the old meters of the stage). Apart from the traits that are peculiar to Roman culture, the Hellenistic scoptic epigram is largely based on the same elements: at different times and in different cultural milieus, we find epigrammatic jokes on the same topics (although couched in different literary forms), as, for instance, in Catullus, Lucilius, or Nicarchus.²¹ Greek and Roman epigrammatic *skomma* flourished in different periods and underwent different "canonizing" processes (with, for example, polymetry remaining very limited in the Hellenistic epigram, including the scoptic subgenre): their histories run in many ways along similar lines, with abundant analogies and points of contact, but also with a large mutual autonomy.

NOTES

1. My interpretation of the monumental setting (with related chronology of the *elogia*) mostly follows the seminal work of Coarelli (1972); see also Buecheler (*ap. CLE* I, 5–6), Van Sickle (1987; 1988); Courtney (1995, 217); Morelli (2000, 14–16; 2007, 521–24); Massaro (2002, 18–19 n. 4); Cugusi (2007, 5). *Contra*, see Wachter (1987, 301); Flower (1996, 170–76); Kruschwitz (1998; 2002, 35). Massaro (2008, 33–41) remarks that the formula *filios Barbati* is strange (the father is called with his *agnomen*, not with his *praenomen*) and hard to justify, unless we assume that the poet kept in consideration Barbatus' *elogium*. In my opinion, it is likely that the *agnomen* of Barbatus was well known at that age; moreover, the *elogia* follow poetic conventions that in many details emphatically modify the epigraphic standards (see the ordering of the *cursus* at line 4 of both poems, the use of *prognatus* instead of *filius* at *CIL* 1².7.2, the inversion *Cornelius Lucius* in the father's poem, and the omission of *Cornelius* in the son's one, where *filios Barbati* can simply be written for variation's sake after *Luciom Scipione*).

2. Triumphal *tabulae*, official votive *tituli*, and so on: see Cugusi (2007, 8–11), who assumes that these inscriptions, more than the *laudatio*, influenced the *elogia*. However, the three-folded ordering of them (*virtutes, cursus, facta*: see below) recalls Roman aristocratic funerary speech (see for inst. Plin. *HN* 7.139f., on Q. Caecilius Metellus, d. ca. 221 BCE) more than the *tabulae triumphales* et sim. (see for inst. *CLE* 3, on C. Mummius). Both *elogia* and *laudatio* enhance (dead) persons, not single deeds, organized as they are in a similar laudatory pattern; on the other side, *elogia* and further eulogistic inscriptions share epigraphic conventions, and a concise way of articulating the speech in single, pregnant Saturnian *kommata* (see *CLE* 3 *ductu auspicio imperioque eius / Achaia capta* “under his guide, auspice and command, / Greece has been conquered,” and *CLE* 7.5 *Taurasia Cisauna / Samnio cepit*).
3. *Pinxit* is sound, see Bettini (1979, 79–84) and Cugusi (2007, 20). *Enn. fr. var.* 15–18 are very early, if not authentic, and may be dated to the second century BCE; see Morelli (2000, 47).
4. See Suerbaum (1968, 208–15 and 333–36); Bettini (1979, 84); Morelli (2000, 41–42); Courtney (2003, 42–43 and 502, with further bibliography); Cugusi (2007, 20).
5. *CIL* 1².10: *Quei apice insigne Dial[is fl]aminis gesistei, / mors perfe[cit] tua ut essent omnia brevia, / honos fama virtusque, gloria atque ingenium. / Quibus sei in longa licu[i]set tibe utier vita, / facile facteis superases gloriam maiorum. / Quare lubens te in gremiu, Scipio, recip[i]t / terra, Publi, prognatum Publio, Corneli* (“You, adorned with the cap of the flamen Dialis, Death shortened everything for you, honour, fame, courage, glory, and talents. If you had enjoyed them in a long life, you would easily have surpassed your ancestors’ glory. Therefore, o Scipio, Earth gladly receives you, o Publius Cornelius, you, son of Publius.”). *CIL* 1².11: *Magna sapientia multasque virtutes / aetate quom parva posidet hoc saxsum. / Quoiei vita defecit, non honos, honore, / is hic situs, quei nunquam victus est virtutei, / annos gnatus (viginti) is l[oc]eis m[an]datus, / ne quairatis honore quei minus sit mand[at]u[s]* (“Great wisdom and lots of virtues together with a brief life, that is what this stone holds. A man whom lack of age, not of honour, prevented the honour of public offices, here he lies, he who was never surpassed in merit. He has been entrusted to this place at the age of twenty, so that you may not ask why no public offices has been entrusted to him”).
6. After Courtney (1995, 40–43 and 226–28), and Morelli (2000, 49–55), see Kruschwitz (2002, 14–15 and 70–89); Cugusi (2007, 13–15); Massaro (2008, 64–86, with further bibliography).
7. The juncture is solemn, see the para-tragic Plaut. *Amph.* 643 *laude parta*.
8. See Morelli (2000, 67–68); Cugusi (2007, 16); Massaro (2007, 134–35, with further bibliography).
9. On the layout of the inscription with indented pentameters, see Morelli (2000, 64 and 75–100); Massaro (2013).
10. An important exception could be the self-epitaph of Sulla: see Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 38.4 *κεφάλαιόν ἐστιν ὡς οὔτε τῶν φίλων τις αὐτὸν εὔ ποιῶν οὔτε τῶν*

- ἐχθρῶν κακῶς ὑπερέβαλετο (“in short the epigram says that no one of the citizens by his deeds, nor anyone of the enemies by his evil enterprises could surpass him”). It has been compared with Enn. *Var.* 19–20 V.², see Courtney (2003, 40), but also Morelli (2007, 527); on Sulla’s epigrammatic activity, see below.
11. 579–80 Marx: *Servus neque infidus domino neque inutilis quaquam / Lucili columella hic situs Metrophanes* (“A servant here lies, who was truly faithful and useful to his master, Lucilius’ little pillar, Metrophanes”): see Mart. 11.9.4; Donat. *Ter. Phorm.* 287; Morelli (2000, 112–21); Cugusi (2007, 25–26); Morelli (2007, 530–31).
 12. 581–584 Marx. It is uncertain whether these fragments were part of epigrammatic poems, see Morelli (2000, 121–31).
 13. Catulus was in contact with Antipater of Sidon (Cic. *De or.* 3.194) and Archias (Cic. *Arch.* 6). He also knew Furius Antias (Cic. *Brut.* 132), and surely had wide literary interests, also in historiography. On the historical problem of Catulus’ literary “circle,” see Vardi (2000), and Morelli (2007, 531, with further bibliography).
 14. In *AP* 5.146 (Callimachus) there is a comparison between a statue of Queen Berenice and the Graces. Meleager imitated it (*AP* 5.148), but this time the epigram is erotic and dedicated to the *puella divina* Heliodora. See Morelli (2000, 159–60).
 15. I do not accept Usener’s suggestion at line 3 <subido> (approved by Courtney 2003, 70, and by Blänsdorf in the *FPL*): <subido> would be an inappropriate anticipation of the *pointe* in the last line (*subidus*), see Morelli (2000, 186–89 and 340).
 16. *CLE* 934 = *CIL* 4.4966–73: see Morelli (2000, 237–57 and 341–42, pictures at 104–7); Courtney (2003, 79–81, 506); Milnor (2014, 141–60).
 17. *PCG* 8, 456. See already Strabo 1.2.30 and the remarks of Quint. *Inst.* 8.6.73 on this kind of hyperbole.
 18. See *FPL* Papinius etc.; *FPL* Manilius 1 (in senarii). Both poems are quoted by Varro *Ling.* 7.28: the first is dedicated to a *Casca*, the second to a *Cascus*. See Mart. 4.20 and Courtney (2003, 109).
 19. The most common form is the parody or the ironic re-use of other epigrammatic subgenres (sepulchral, votive, erotic, and so on): see Floridi (2010). Papyrus scraps and ostraka confirm this: see, for instance, P. Viereck, *Raccolta Lumbroso* 257 = *SH* 975 (third century BCE). On the Hellenistic scopic epigram, see also Blomquist (1998). New evidence comes from *P.Vindob.* G 40611 (see Maltomini in this volume).
 20. For *versus populares* see, e.g., *FPL* Incertorum versus 45 d, a *versus quadratus* on C. Papirius Carbo, people’s tribune 90 BCE, which is quoted (once again in a grammatical/rhetorical script) by Sacerd. *Gramm.* VI 461 as an example of *astismos*. Political puns are, e.g., *FPL* Incertorum versus 45 c, a senarius against C. Memmius, people’s tribune 111 BCE, and *FPL* Versus populares in Caesarem et sim. 8, a poem in senarii against the consul Ventidius (43 BCE). These lines inspired [Verg.] *Catal.* 10, see Courtney (2003, 471). Famous *carmina triumphalia*

are the verses sung by Caesar's soldiers at the Gallic triumph, *FPL Versus populares in Caesarem et sim.* 2–3 (*ap. Suet. Iul.* 49–51): 3.1 is an aggression against Caesar's sexual attitudes which is very similar to some Catullan puns (see Catull. 57).

21. See, e.g., Catull. 69 and 71 and *AP* 11.139–40 (Lucillius) = 93–94 Floridi, on bad corporal smells (Morelli 2012).

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