

veral new pronunciations) of Latin developed, and at the same time there was a new type of poetry which was based on the new pronunciation: rhythmical poetry, which is organized not by syllabic quantity, but by the order of word accents and sometimes by rhyme, as in verses like *Cunctis pulcrrior puella / clara fulgens velut stella*. Nevertheless, poets continued to compose verses according to the classical rules of quantity; but from this time onwards, this was an art which had no foundations in the spoken language and consisted in the rules which had been inherited from antiquity. One could say that, just as the language of Latin had to be learned in medieval times and in the Renaissance as a second language, classical metrics was an additional set of rules which had to be learned as a third step. The difference between quantitative metrics and "normal", non-quantitative Latin is to some extent comparable to the difference between this "normal" Latin and the vernacular languages.

It would, by the way, be wrong to set apart quantitative metrics of classical times as a living art from medieval and Renaissance quantitative metrics as an art merely learned from books. For the change in Latin pronunciation had already taken place in antiquity itself, particularly in the third century A.D. This means that for the poets of late antiquity, Boethius for instance, or Venantius Fortunatus, classical metrics were already just as artificial as they were for Walter of Châtillon or Sannazaro. The Middle Ages and the Renaissance thus only continued what had become a long established trend.

The most important effect of this development for the practice of the poet was that the question of what was right or wrong in metre had to be answered in a completely different way. For Horace or Vergil, metrical theory was only in a very limited way a real base for production; and they certainly did not feel bound by the metrical or prosodic rules of the older Latin poets, for instance Ennius or Lucretius.⁴ After the end of classical antiquity, though, the texts of the poets and the schoolbooks on metrics were the only criteria for the correctness of a verse. The theory of metrics, whose purpose in an-

⁴ For instance, the monosyllabic use of forms such as *suis* and *suam* or the prosodic loss of final *s* as in *infantibus parvis*, which are common in Ennius, are never found in any poem of the classical age.

tiquity was primarily a descriptive one, was mainly prescriptive in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance: it conveyed the knowledge that was needed for writing poetry.⁵ And it is for that reason that any analysis of medieval or Renaissance verses has to take into account the metrical theory of these times.

Because the theory of metrics is so important, it is worthwhile to look at the main stages of its development starting in late antiquity. I did this several years ago⁶ and can only briefly summarize my findings now.

It is not so much metrical theory in a stricter sense which is interesting. Here one concentrated mainly on transmitting the tradition of the grammarians of late antiquity and on convenient, handbook-like summarizing of the structure of types of verses. Much more interesting is the history of prosodic theory. Antiquity had dealt with it only at a rudimentary stage, because, as we have seen, the prosody was that of every-day language and therefore needed no further explication. But in later times prosody became the central point in all metrical treatises.⁷

Today this is no longer the case because we can resort to a dictionary where questions of prosody are concerned. But in the Middle Ages and also still in the Renaissance one tried to write proper theoretical manuals for the quantities of syllables. One reason for this was certainly the necessity for arranging the material for the purpose of learning. But the deciding factor, it seems to me, was a practical consideration: every reference book which marks long and short syllables with lines above or below the syllables, as it is done today, would have become completely worthless within a very short time because of mistakes which occurred unavoidably when books were copied.⁸ It actually took until the eighteenth century before this way

⁵ J. Leonhardt *Dimensio syllabarum. Studien zur lateinischen Prosodie- und Verslehre von der Spätantike bis zur frühen Renaissance* Hypomnemata 92 (Göttingen 1989) 16f.; Ruiz Arzalluz (1991) 19.

⁶ Leonhardt (1989) *passim*.

⁷ For the very beginnings of prosodic teaching in late antiquity see Leonhardt (1989) 28ff. It seems that the first special treatises were not written to inform poets, but to enable the correct use of quantitative *clausulae*, see *ibid.* 38ff., 50ff.

⁸ Leonhardt (1989) 112ff.

of marking quantities in Latin dictionaries was generally established.⁹

From this point of view the medieval way of teaching prosody turns out to be surprisingly practicable. First more general rules, based on the grammarians of late antiquity, were compiled, which would each cover many single cases: for instance, the rule that two consonants make the preceding syllable long, that diphthongs are always long, and so on. The quantities of radical syllables of words remained, as for instance *hab* in *habere* and *can* in *cano*, just those syllables which we have to look up in a dictionary today. These so-called *primae syllabae* (in fact the radical syllable is normally the first syllable of a word) have received proper treatment in special manuals since the eleventh century.¹⁰ Three ways of presentation were developed. The first way (which may not have been the first chronologically) was to compile *Florilegia prosodiaca*, in which the quantities of each word were illustrated by a verse in which the word appeared. This is the principle of the later *Gradus ad Parnassum*:¹¹

abacus	Ornamenta abaci nec non et parvulus infra	Iuvenalis ¹²
abies	Et nobisque abies curvata est glandibus ilex	Ovidius
abundo	Quam dives nivei pecoris quae lactis abundans	Vergilius

However, if several thousand words had to be covered in this way,

⁹ The quantity of the *syllaba paenultima* has been given in many dictionaries since the late Middle Ages (e.g. the *Catholicon* of Johannes de Balbis), because it shows the correct accentuation. But here also the signs \bar and \sim are avoided; we find such remarks as, for instance, *pen<ultima> cor<repta>* or *pen<ultima> pro<ducta>*.

¹⁰ It was Dicuil at the beginning of the ninth century who wrote first about *primae syllabae* (see Leonhardt 1989 79ff.); but nobody, as far as we know, seems to have followed him in the next two centuries.

¹¹ Of course this method had been in use long before; but the prosodic florilegia of the 8.-10. centuries (the *Exempla diversorum auctorum*, the *Opus prosodiacum* of Mico of St Riquier; see P. Klopsch *Einführung in die mittellateinische Verslehre* [Darmstadt 1972] 62f.) 1) do not treat the *primae syllabae*, but the *paenultima* in order to inform readers of the correct accentuation, and 2) do not cover all Latin words, but only special cases, in which the quantity was dubious; see Leonhardt (1989) 81ff.

¹² I quote the first lines of the *Florilegium prosodiacum* in Magl. I, 10 (saec. XIII), fol. 1; cf. Leonhardt (1989) 110ff.

this would result in rather thick volumes.¹³ Thus one looked for a shorter way. A second method therefore compiled words quite mechanically without regard to sense in hexameters, as in:

Aridus, aerius, acies, avis, ales, avena
Anulus, hamus, anus, apis, adicit, ater, abissus.¹⁴

This meant that several words could be contained in one verse and still be protected from copyist's errors through their versified form. Out of this method a very particular third system developed which gave rules for the different types of syllables: the first syllable *hab* in *habeo* would appear under the group *a ante b in primis syllabis*, and here the rule said that *a* in such cases was short; exceptions like *fabula* etc. were explicitly stated. *Can* in *cano* had to be looked up under *a ante n*, and here, too, the rule said that the syllable was short. To give an example, I quote from the work *De primis syllabis* of Tebaldu of Piacenza, which was written in the eleventh century:¹⁵

Ante b fit brevis a retinet quam syllaba prima
fabula vel fabor cum stat pro decido labor
et pariter labes pariter quoque pabula tabes,
flabat cum flabit cum nabat denique nabit,
...
Ante c ...

"A before *b* is measured short. It is long in the first syllable in: *fabula*, *fabor*, *labor*, if it stands for *decidere* (i.e., only the verb, not *labor*, *-oris*), likewise in *labes*, *pabula*, *tabes* ..."

This strange system was incredibly successful; it was (partly under the name *regulae speciales*) in common use not only in the late Middle Ages but also in the Renaissance, and therefore constitutes a link between medieval and humanistic metrics.¹⁶ Of course some hu-

¹³ The florilegium quoted above contains about 2400 verses.

¹⁴ *Summarium Heinrici* ed. by R. Hildebrandt, vol. 1: Textkritische Ausgabe der ersten Fassung, Buch I-IX (Berlin, New York 1974) V. 1; see Leonhardt (1989) 88f.

¹⁵ See Leonhardt (1989) 90ff.; list of manuscripts 201.

¹⁶ From the nearly 200 metrical treatises printed before 1600 which are listed

that this was always so: at the end of antiquity it was forgotten that *est* and *es* constituted a special case and only modern linguists discovered this again in the nineteenth century. For analysis of metrical poems of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance it is therefore perfectly irrelevant to discern between synaloephe and aphaeresis. Some existing statistics are thus to be corrected accordingly.

Moreover, modern research into metrics has always been particularly interested in the question of how often a poet allowed syllables to run together, and whether there is a preference for any position; there are already some statistics for medieval metrics, too. I do not deny that through examinations of this kind a sort of metrical profile of an author can indeed be found. One should be aware, though, that neither ancient nor medieval nor post-medieval metrical theory gave any precise instructions on this matter. At most, we find a few references in metrical or poetical treatises to the fact that elision was allowed or should be avoided. This means that for the poet both of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance frequency and position of synaloephe are not a question of a metrical rule, but of imitation of antiquity and belong with those regulations whose details poets themselves probably were not consciously aware of. For them this was an aesthetic rather than a metrical question.

3) The same can be said about the frequency and position of caesura, the distribution of dactyls and spondees in the first four feet of the hexameter and the form of the verse ending. It should be noted that of these metrical features only the caesura was dealt with in the metrical treatises,³² and it is evident that the poets of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were influenced in the arrangement of word boundaries by the theory of caesura. But for those who wanted

³¹ Cf. J. Leonhardt "Die Aphärese bei 'est' in der Geschichte der lateinischen Metrik" *Glotta* 66 (1988) 244-252.

³² A good survey from late antiquity until the early Middle Ages is given by Klopsch (1972) 66f. The various types of hexameter which spring from the various distribution of dactyls and spondees are listed already in late antiquity (Marius Victorinus VI, 210f. Keil; see Klopsch [1972] 63), but there are no rules about the frequency of each type, from which modern statistics (for instance the statistics given by d'Angelo [1986] for *Waltharius*) try to deduce typical patterns for each poet (see also Klopsch [1972] 87 n. 22). This was a field in which poets were led by unconscious imitation.

to imitate classical models as much as possible, metrical theory, I believe, was of no great importance. A rhythmical feeling for the right proportion and boundaries of words comes naturally to someone who is very familiar with a poetic text, say, the *Aeneid*, and if we were to find, as I suspect, that some Renaissance poets came very close to the ancient practice of caesura, this would not really say anything about the author's knowledge of metrical rules but, above all, something about his skill in direct *imitatio*.

This applies even more to the other metrical features which were discussed neither in medieval nor Renaissance theory. It will be enough to have a closer look at one of them: the use of monosyllables in hexameter verse. The only rule which has been formulated since antiquity is that a monosyllable must not form the end of a line;³³ accordingly, some medieval poets consistently avoid monosyllables in this position.³⁴ On the other hand, poets saw that in antiquity such ends of verses were not generally tabooed; Horace and Lucretius quite often finish the line with monosyllabic words. In particular, the Renaissance poets who strove to follow ancient models precisely have such lines ending in a monosyllable as a result of immediate imitation of ancient verse. In all other positions, theory says nothing about monosyllables; where post-classical practice agrees with the classical one, the reason is therefore a good feeling for ancient verse, not a sign of metrical knowledge. Some time ago, I examined several poets to discover where they position a certain type of monosyllable, namely monosyllabic forms of nouns and verbs (as for instance in the famous line of Horace *parturiunt montes nascetur ridiculus mus*). It turned out that this is concentrated in certain positions in the verse. Firstly, the figures for Vergil and Ovid:³⁵

³³ Quint. 8,3,20.

³⁴ See Klopsch (1972) 68ff.

³⁵ The graph is based on Verg. *Aen.* I-III and Ovid *Met.* I-III.

the *Elementarium* of Papias, which was written in the eleventh century and which was rather popular. Little is known (as in most fields of literature) about the metrical treatises of the late Middle Ages. There are, however, some copious works which await editing, or at least study.⁴⁰ The most important and most interesting of them seems to me to be a long treatise of Petrus Cremonensis, an author of the thirteenth century who is better known for his Latin grammar, which has survived in many copies. In the metrical treatise⁴¹ virtually all the metres which occurred in ancient poems are collected and brought into a new system. The careful study and the wide range of the ancient authors covered shows an interest in classical poetry which is unusual for this period. The treatise seems to have been written in Italy, and it is, although we have no precise knowledge of its origin, certainly of comparable importance to the metrical study of Lovato Lovati, about whom I shall have something to say later.

In the Renaissance most authors of metrical treatises gave only short descriptions of the most common verses for school purposes.⁴² Among those who provided more detailed descriptions and tried to treat the subject more systematically Johannes Despauterius and Jacobus Micyllus⁴³ again deserve special mention, together with the French humanist Robert Gaguin,⁴⁴ the Italians Niccolò Perotti⁴⁵ and Aldus Manutius⁴⁶ and also Julius Caesar Scaliger.⁴⁷ Their attempt at the systematization of metrics, though, is, as has already been said, wholly influenced by ancient theoretics and cannot be compared with modern schemes which are entirely based on the analysis of the poets. But excellent analyses of single phenomena are often found not only in treatises of metrics, but also in works of general philological content.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ See the list Leonhardt (1989) 208ff., which is by no means exhaustive.

⁴¹ See Leonhardt (1989) 137ff.; list of manuscripts *ibid.* 214ff.

⁴² About 200 treatises are listed by Leonhardt (1989) *Quellenteil B* (pp. 236-283).

⁴³ See above.

⁴⁴ *De arte metrificandi*; Leonhardt (1989) 255.

⁴⁵ See above.

⁴⁶ *Institutiones grammaticae*; first printed in 1501. See Leonhardt (1989) 16f., 263.

⁴⁷ *Poetices libri septem*, first printed Lyon 1561.

⁴⁸ For instance, Niccolò Perotti was able to correct the text of Catullus 1,1 by

5) The metrics of Latin drama present one of the most complex problems of the history of metrics and can therefore not be dealt with in just a few sentences. The reason why the metrics of drama are so special lies in the fact that its metre, especially that of Latin comedy, i.e. Plautus and Terence, is based on an earlier stage of development of the Latin language than Vergil or Ovid's metre. Many prosodic phenomena were out of use in classical times and were never covered by ancient theory, especially two: a) the shortening of a long syllable under the influence of word accent, (e.g. in the word *vōlūptatem* the second syllable is actually long, but the word can be measured *vōlūptātem*); b) the prosodic loss of *s* at the end of a word (e.g. *quibus nunc* can be measured *quībŭs nūnc* instead of *quībūs nūnc* because *s* at the end of *quibus* can be neglected). Even prior to late antiquity it was no longer really known how Terence and Plautus were to be metrically analyzed. Accordingly the arrangement of verses is much disturbed in many manuscripts. In the Middle Ages and as late as the early Renaissance, Terence certainly was often read as prose. This does not mean that the fact that Terence's comedies were written as verse had been wholly forgotten or neglected. I once examined about forty printed editions of Terence which were edited before 1500 and found that approximately two thirds of them show an arrangement of the text in verses; in the others, I would suggest, the prose arrangement in the majority of cases has been chosen deliberately for school purposes and therefore says nothing about the metrical knowledge of the editor.

A reliable base for the verse arrangement was established by the rediscovery of a fifth-century manuscript of Terence, the so-called *Codex Bembinus*, and its collation by Poliziano.⁴⁹ During the sixteenth century scholars tried harder and harder to succeed in a correct metrical analysis of the text and to explain its special features; there were special treatises by Erasmus,⁵⁰ Julius Caesar Scaliger,⁵¹ An-

observation of the metrical rules Catullus was following in composing phalaecean hendecasyllables; see A. Dihle "Niccolò Perottis Beitrag zur Entstehung der philologischen Methode" *RPL* 9 (1981) 75.

⁴⁹ See the study of R. Ribuli *La collazione poliziana del codice Bembino di Terenzio, con le postille inedite del Poliziano e note su Pietro Bembo* (Roma 1981).

⁵⁰ *De metris Terentianis* (1532); Leonhardt (1989) 252.

tonius Goveanus,⁵² Henricus Loriti Glareanus,⁵³ Benedictus Philologus (Benedetto Riccardini)⁵⁴ and Iohannes Rivius.⁵⁵ But it says a great deal about these treatises that they were never connected with other, so to speak "normal", handbooks of metrics. They primarily fulfilled the purpose of analyzing and explaining whereas, even in Renaissance times, most treatises of metrics are still just instructions for making verses. Therefore the treatises dealing with the metrics of comedy appear mostly as appendices to editions of Plautus or Terence, where they were sometimes collected and supplemented by a running scansion of the text.⁵⁶

The poets of Neo-Latin dramas themselves were therefore confronted with severe difficulties if they wished to imitate the metres of Plautus and Terence, and very different sorts of solutions were found.⁵⁷ Some poets did not even try to write according to strict rules and believed that every line which did not exceed a certain number of syllables and had a short penultimate could pass for a iambic senarius. Other poets based their metrics on the descriptions of iambic and trochaic verse they found in the ancient grammars (which were of course insufficient but were often repeated in Renaissance metrical theory). Whether the special metrical analyses and explanations of the ancient comedies by Erasmus, Scaliger and others, which are mentioned above, had any influence on the production of Neo-Latin drama is not yet clear; I believe that some poets, such as Nicodemus Frischlin, did indeed try to imitate the special rules they supposed had been observed by Terence. But there remains a wide

⁵¹ *Liber de comicis dimensionibus*; first printed Lyon 1539; Leonhardt (1989) 277.

⁵² *De metris Terentianis*; Leonhardt (1989) 257.

⁵³ *In P. Terentii carmina per omnes comoedias iudicium* (1540); Leonhardt (1989) 256.

⁵⁴ *Praefatio super P. Terentii Comoediis, ad Petrum Crinitum in Terentius, Comoediae* (Basel 1519); Leonhardt (1989) 243.

⁵⁵ *Praefatio* to his edition of the comedies of Terence; Leonhardt (1989) 274.

⁵⁶ A particular fine example of such an edition is the Terence which was printed in 1560 in Lyon.

⁵⁷ Cf. S. Mariotti "La Philologia del Petrarca" *Humanitas* 3 (1950) 191-206, and L. Braun *Scenae suppositiciae oder Der falsche Plautus Hypomnemata* 64 (Göttingen 1980) 74-82.

these descriptions through his observations on the text of Seneca.⁵⁸ Strangely enough, his results were forgotten again; for a long time later theories did not go back to him, but to ancient grammar again. Here once more it can be clearly seen how much the Renaissance relied on the ancient *grammatici Latini*, the only reason being that their writings were precious documents of classical antiquity.

⁵⁸ See A.C. Megas 'Ο προουμανιστικός κύκλος της Παδούας (*Lovato Lovati – Albertino Mussato*) καὶ οἱ τραγωδίες τοῦ *L.A. Seneca* (Thessalonike 1967) 105, and Leonhardt (1989) 143.