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Introduction

When Julia Kristeva invented the term intertextuality, she knew very well that the definition she provided for it would create a problem for scholars involved in traditional forms of source criticism, even if she was certainly not thinking first and foremost of classical philologists. Consider three of her formulations:

“[T]out texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d’un autre texte.”¹

“Le livre renvoie à d’autres livres [...] et donne à ces livres une nouvelle façon d’être, élaborant ainsi sa propre signification.”²

“Le signifié poétique renvoie à des signifiés discursifs autres, de sorte que dans l’énoncé poétique plusieurs autres discours sont lisibles. Il se crée, ainsi, autour du signifié poétique, un espace textuel multiple dont les éléments sont susceptibles d’être appliqués dans le texte poétique concret. Nous appellerons cet espace intertextuel. Pris dans l’intertextualité, l’énoncé poétique est un sous-ensemble plus grand qui est l’espace des textes appliqués dans notre ensemble.”³

Confusion between Kristeva’s intended meaning and what others would make of her ideas was inevitable from the outset. And she herself, as neatly pointed out by J. Culler, was not always good at maintaining clear distinctions, when it came to the business of analyzing texts: “Anyone thinking that the point of intertextuality is to take us beyond the study of identifiable sources is brought up short by Kristeva’s observation that ‘in order to compare the presupposed text with the text of *Poésies II*, one needs to determine what editions of Pascal, Vauvenargues and La Rochefoucauld Ducasse could have used, for the versions vary considerably from one edition to another’ ”.⁴ It did not take very long for Kristeva herself to become weary of confusion about what she meant by intertextuality. Already in 1974 she wrote: “Le terme d’*intertextualité* désigne cette transposition d’un (ou de plusieurs) systèmes de signes en un autre, mais puisque ce terme a souvent été entendu dans le sens banal de ‘critique des sources’ d’un texte, nous lui préférons celui de *transposition*.”⁵ It seems fair to say that her preferred alternative has not caught on.

1 Kristeva (1969) 85.

2 Kristeva (1969) 121.

3 Kristeva (1969) 194.

4 Culler (1981) 106.

5 Kristeva (1974) 59–60.

Leaving aside the question of exactly what Kristeva meant by her use of the term and the fact that the complexity and the incompleteness of her original formulations easily gave rise to modifications and differing applications of her ideas (e.g. by Barthes, Riffaterre, Jenny, Genette), one can easily appreciate the attractiveness of a term such as intertextuality for students of Latin poetry as a whole and of Flavian epic poetry in particular. The epic poetry of Valerius Flaccus, Statius and Silius Italicus forms a corpus ideally suited to theorizing of this kind. The Flavian epic poems had always been read as imitative and derivative in nature. But by the 1970s the pressure was increasing on Latinists to come up with meaningful literary interpretations of cases of *imitatio*, rather than simply indulging in the pleasure of collecting and listing verbal similarities. When one adds in a timely dose of New Critical concern about authorial intention and, by the 1980s, an evolving sense of the metapoetic implications of many of the Latin texts' own nods to matters of literary history, belatedness and rewriting, the term intertextuality came along as a very welcome addition to the vocabulary with which one could talk about imitation and literary history. And so, in the vocabulary of Latinists it came to be added to such frequently used terms as allusion, reference, borrowing, echo, influence, and so on. When such influential anglophone scholars as Oliver Lyne and Richard Thomas began using the term in the titles of articles and books, intertextuality entered standard usage and became widely used as a catch-all way of referring to text reuse.⁶ Use of the term has now become so common as to go quite unremarked. For example, in two recent volumes on Flavian epic specifically and, for the sake of comparison, one on Senecan tragedy, it is used pervasively.⁷

It is in this research context that we have used the word intertextuality in the title of this collection of essays. It is also used by many of the individual contributors, but not by all. Certainly, in organizing both this volume and the conference that gave rise to it the editors gave no guidelines whatsoever concerning terminology to the participants. And there is surely no need to offer here a detailed definition of exactly what we mean by our use of the term. Like so many scholars, we use it as a useful term for talking about the relationships between texts on a number of different levels, just as other terms such as allusion, reference, borrowing, echo, influence, and so on have been used by Latinists for a long time. Intertextuality helpfully covers the interaction between referential allusion in the

⁶ See Lyne (1994), Thomas (1999). The conversation was of course not confined to the field of classics. See, e.g., the survey of modern theorists provided by Allen (2011) that touches *inter alia* on Barthes, Genette, Riffaterre, and Bloom.

⁷ Manuwald/Voigt (2013), Augoustakis (2014), Trinacty (2014).

form of obvious verbal citation of an earlier text and the reuse of standard generic features that function on a more thematic level. It also facilitates thinking about highly complex patterns of poetic imitation that involve several texts at the same time. It seems slightly easier to say, for example, that there is an intertextual relationship between Statius, Lucan, Vergil and Homer rather than to say that Statius is alluding to Lucan, Vergil and Homer, suggesting that he has in mind all three at the same time and in the same way. In the end, both formulations can amount to exactly the same thing when it comes to arguing for the presence and meaning of a particular example of imitation or text reuse, but individual scholars can be troubled by the associations of certain terms, such as when Richard Thomas chose to use reference in preference to allusion, thinking the latter “far too frivolous to suit the process”.⁸ It thus seems useful to adopt a term with which a majority of scholars now seem happy and make the most of the capaciousness it offers.

Questions of terminology aside, therefore, we would like to make use of this introduction to put forward for consideration a few remarks about the current state of practice in relation to the study of intertextuality as employed by Valerius Flaccus, Statius and Silius Italicus. We have three main aims in publishing this volume: first, to offer to interested readers a selection of papers that is representative of the kinds of work currently being done on Flavian epic by providing examples of research that takes as its starting point a fundamentally intertextual approach and successfully demonstrates the centrality of this method; second, to draw attention to recent developments in digital humanities that seem certain to play an important role in the years to come; third, to suggest that a considerable amount of systematic work still remains to be done on the *Argonautica*, the *Thebaid*, the *Achilleid*, and the *Punica*.

1 Overview of Contributions

In relation to the first of these points, the papers collected here have been organized in the following way. First comes a group of four papers (Lovatt, Stover, Nelis, Marks) that deal mainly with defined sections of text and have an interest in the use of specific models as well as imitative narrative structures and allusive techniques. Then come three papers of similar type (Dewar, Bessone, Augoustakis) but with a focus on tracing wider influences and dealing also with matters of generic

⁸ Thomas (1999) 115.

shifts and tone. The next three papers treat specific characters (Heerink, Battistella/Galli Milić, Ripoll), before the following three deal with epic character types from a wider perspective (Fucecchi, Rosati, Baier). Two papers then handle matters of space and topography (Keith, Newlands). Finally, four papers deal with digital matters (Bernstein, Heslin, Coffee/Gawley, Hinds), describing recent developments in this area and looking forward to future work. The individual contributions are as follows.

Helen Lovatt opens the first group of papers with an examination of the intertextual role of Statian scene transitions, in her essay “Meanwhile Back at the Ranch: Narrative Transition and Structural Intertextuality in Statius *Thebaid* 1.” Writing against the context of the ever-increasing sophistication and pervasiveness of computational tools for detecting textual similarities at the lexical level, Lovatt observes that the limits of a word-based approach are, more than ever, as apparent as its power. Frequently, as Lovatt notes, verbal correspondences are only meaningful when their narratological context is taken into account. In this paper, Lovatt illuminates some of the complex ways in which features at different levels—scene, word, and sub-word—interact to open an intertextual space in which multiple connections, between and within works, can resonate. In particular, Lovatt demonstrates that structural intertext is more than the parallel alignment of scenes. Rather, the transitions between scenes themselves take up space on the page, and carry their own textual reminiscences. These may be code-model similarities, establishing the transition as a kind of type-scene in itself; or more directed links to specific referents. Lovatt does not treat structural connections as independent of word-level features, but shows the ways in which individual words such as *interea* (“meanwhile”) or *at* (“but”) may shift between semantic and structural significance.

Tim Stover demonstrates the value of intertextual evidence to a historicising reading of Valerius Flaccus in his chapter, “Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* 3.598–725: Epic, History, and Intertextuality.” Stover’s subject is a pivotal moment in the Argonauts’ journey, their debate over whether to abandon the missing hero Hercules, and the resonance of this passage with the tumultuous politics of 68–69, the infamous ‘Year of the Four Emperors.’ Specifically, he examines the role of Valerius’ Meleager, who is characterized by the poet as a perfidious demagogue even as he successfully persuades the Argonauts to depart without Hercules, asking to what degree Meleager finds a model in Tacitus’ representation of the general Antonius Primus. Stover brings intertextual evidence to bear on this question in two, complementary ways. First, drawing on close verbal connections with Bacchylides, Vergil, and Ovid, he illuminates Meleager’s longstanding literary rivalry with Hercules and his affinity for duplicity (evoking models in both

Ulysses and Aeneas). Second, he tackles the problem of direct intertextual connections to Tacitus' *Histories* themselves, showing not only the potential of such connections to add meaning our reading of the epic, but also some of the difficulties which must be overcome in order to thoroughly disentangle the web of literary relationships among Valerius, Tacitus, and their common sources.

In "Allusive Technique in the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus", Damien Nelis takes a close look at a short passage at the opening of Valerius' fifth book. His aim is to combine study of narrative structure and verbal allusion, in order to demonstrate that the two are inseparable, given the compositional techniques of ancient epic poets. In this particular case, Nelis is able to show that Valerius Flaccus' planning of the whole structure of his epic narrative is built on close study of the intertextual relationship between Vergil's *Aeneid* and the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius. The Flavian author is thus able to indulge in a continuous process of two-tier allusion to both models, as he consistently bases his imitation of the *Aeneid* on his profound knowledge of Vergil's large debt to his key Hellenistic model.

Raymond Marks begins his paper "Searching for Ovid at Cannae: A Contribution to the Reception of Ovid in Silius Italicus' *Punica*" by pointing out that the presence of Ovid in the *Punica*—even if it is not directly signalled, as is the case with Vergil or Ennius—is especially pervasive within the narrative of the books 8–10 on the battle of Cannae. The quarrel between Paulus and Varro, the description of the Marsian contingent in the catalogue, and the story of Satricus and Solymus are some of the passages where Marks detects several striking verbal and thematic allusions to the biographical Ovid as depicted in the *Fasti*, the *Metamorphoses*, the *Tristia* and the *Ibis*. This network of references as well as some Alexandrian footnotes, an acrostic and the recurring imagery of civil strife and shipwreck allow the reader—Marks goes on to argue—to make an analogy between the self-destructive character of this battle and the construction of the biography of Ovid in exile as a "self-inflicted downfalls" (p. 103), as a ruin because of his own poetry (cf. the famous *carmen et error*). This supports the compelling idea of D. Krasne that Silius has read the *Ibis* as an invective against Ovid himself and/or the poetry that has played a part in his punishment at Tomis.

In his contribution, "The Flavian Epics and the Neoterics", Michael Dewar sets out first to establish a chain of continuity between the reading practices of the Flavian period and the literature of the middle of the first century BCE. In doing so he defends his use of the debated term 'neoterics' as a useful designation for a recognizable literary-historical phenomenon to which it is convenient for modern scholars to attach a name. He then goes on to establish that Catullus and Calvus were still being read and imitated in the Flavian period, before surveying

the evidence for possible traces of the influence of a series of specific works, Cinna and his *Propempticon Pollionis*, Calvus' *Io*, and Cornificus' *Glaucus*. Overall, he reaches the conclusion that despite the highly fragmentary state of the remains of the neoteric poets, with the exception of Catullus, it is possible to argue with reasonable certainty that they were indeed read and imitated by all of the three surviving Flavian epicists. In particular Dewar singles out Statius as the Flavian poet "who is probably more familiar with recherché poetry of all kinds, Greek and Latin, than almost any Roman poet except Ovid" (p. 130).

Federica Bessone explores the range of Statius' antiphrastic intertextual modes in her chapter, "Allusive (Im-)Pertinence in Statius' Epic." Allusions that ironize, undercut, or work against the grain of their source material are for Bessone a window onto the larger landscape of Statian style. Statius' use of 'impertinent' allusions is complex, comprising a spectrum of behaviours from the comic to the grimly ironic, from the diffuse to those of cento-like density. In particular, Bessone demonstrates how Statius deploys antiphrastic intertextual material to different effects in the *Thebaid* and the *Achilleid*. So, for example, in the introduction of Oedipus at the *Thebaid*'s opening two dense constellations of allusive references—one concerning darkness and light, the other, winged predators—collide and interact to surprising effect. In the *Achilleid*, elegiac aspects of the relationship between Achilles and Deidamia are illuminated by a series of allusions that seems to dance precariously on the edge of parody. In several of these cases the key allusion is a window reference, and the tone of Statius' impertinence must be read against that of an intermediary (often Ovid). Throughout the chapter, Bessone reflects on the process of discovery and reading, documenting the diversity of textual features that signal allusion—*iuncturae*, *incipits* and *clausulae*, syntactic structures, and phonetic elements smaller than words—and noting in particular which features are amenable to computational analysis and which, with present technology, are not.

In his article, "Collateral Damage? *Todeskette* in Flavian Epic," Antony Augoustakis argues that the lists of the warriors slain by great epic chieftains that are a stock feature of epic are fashioned with considerable creativity by the Flavian poets. Augoustakis demonstrates through examples from Valerius, Statius, and Silius Italicus the depth of interplay in the names of the slain, which repurpose and combine names from the epic tradition, create irony, evoke associations of place and person, and generally provide the reader with the various pleasures of recognition and variation, up to and including the innovative catalog of burned ships supplied by Silius Italicus in book 14 of his *Punica*. Augoustakis succeeds in showing how, for their contemporary readers and for us today, epic lists of the slain are hardly rote recountings but packed with significance.

In “Replaying Dido: Elegy and the Poetics of Inversion in Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*,” Mark Heerink takes as his starting point influential work by M. Putnam, S. Hinds and F. Cairns on the interplay between epic and elegy within Vergil’s *Aeneid*. The Dido episode plays a crucial role in this approach to a poem that begins with ‘arms and the man’, but which must pass through the love story that dominates much of the first half of the poem before getting to Latium and the outbreak of war in book 7. Heerink goes on to show how Valerius interprets and responds to this Vergilian dynamic by means of verbal allusion and thematic and structural reworkings, looking in particular at the massacre on Lemnos and the role of Hypsipyle, the many connections between Lemnos and Colchis and their Vergilian background, and the Hylas episode. He arrives at the conclusion that the *Argonautica* is an elegized *Aeneid*. He concludes by arguing that this elegiac rewriting of the *Aeneid* plays a role in Valerius’ creation of a pessimistic vision of the contemporary Roman world under Vespasian and his inability to believe in his Vergilian model’s positive Augustan vision of *imperium sine fine*.

In their co-written paper “Foreshadowing Medea: Prolepsis and Intertextuality in Valerius Flaccus,” Chiara Battistella and Lavinia Galli Milić explore the role of the prolepsis as an idiosyncratic device of Valerius’ Medea and consider proleptic passages as strategic places for Valerius to challenge his literary predecessors. They focus on the description of the first meeting between Medea and Jason in book 5 and on the monologue delivered by Hecate in book 6. A close reading of these passages allow them to detect some new intergeneric, intra- and intertextual connexions between the Valerius’ Medea and the tragic Medea as well as other female figures, Dido in particular, and Venus. Battistella and Galli Milić argue that the Flavian poet is recasting essential epic patterns (as the simile between the female character and a goddess, the reference to the beauty of the male hero) bringing into them tragic irony and proleptic undertones—that were absent from the Homeric archetype—through verbal and thematic allusions to Vergil’s *Aeneid* (book 1, 4, 7), Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and Seneca’s *Medea*. This tragedy, in particular, has to be taken as the textual backdrop against which Valerius shapes the sympathetic Hecate’s monologue that participates in the multifaceted generic profile of Valerius’ Medea.

In his article “Ulysses as an Inter-(and Meta-)textual Hero in the *Achilleid* of Statius,” François Ripoll provides a new way of understanding Statius’s Ulysses. While on one level the Ulysses of the *Achilleid* is fashioned from the stock features of his representation in the tradition, when seen in full with his complement of intertextual resonances, Ulysses becomes a richly meaningful character who even stands for the whole project of the *Achilleid*. Ripoll shows how Statius endows his Ulysses with three different intertextual aspects. He is at times a ‘super-

Ulysses,' with his typical craftiness and eloquence highly amplified. He can be a 'proto-Ulysses,' with traits prefiguring events in his destiny after the episode on Scyros. And he can be a 'meta-Ulysses,' employed as an approving observer of the Achilleid itself. Ripoll's multi-tiered analysis not only neatly unfolds of the character of Ulysses, but also provides an exemplary case study in the complexity of Statius's intertextual artistry.

In his article "Constructing (Super-)characters: The Case Study of Silius' Hannibal," Marco Fucecchi builds upon the issue of the multiple intertextuality at work in the characterisation of Silius' Hannibal. He focuses in particular on the way Silius merges features drawn from the antagonist figures of Caesar and Pompey, as they occur in Lucan's *Civil War*. His approach is based on the close reading of the end of the *Punica* 17—where Hannibal's departure from Italy and his flight from Zama are narrated—that allows Fucecchi to illustrate the subtle intertextuality of the poem, combining Lucanian patterns for Caesar and Pompey and verbal references to passages from Ovid *Metamorphoses*, *Amores*, *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and from the *Elegy for Maecenas*. Furthermore, Fucecchi highlights that the super-character of Hannibal, as a syncretic figure of loser and winner, has been already anticipated in the extradiegetic allusion to his death in exile (end of books 2 and 13). To conclude, Fucecchi convincingly points out that the Flavian poet, by deconstructing and reassembling the material of his models, "stand[s] as a critic of a whole literary tradition" (p. 279) and invites the reader to explore deeper the relationship between the Caesar/Pompey opposition in the original Lucanian context.

In his article "The Redemption of the Monster, or: the 'Evil Hero' in Ancient Epic," Gianpiero Rosati assembles the cast of 'evil heroes' in classical epic, warriors whose martial prowess and courage are unquestionable, but whose motives, methods, and appearance put them beyond the pale. Rosati takes as his focus Statius's Capaneus, a powerful warrior who openly scorns and even physically attacks the gods. The legacy of Capaneus, Rosati argues, traces back to Homer's Cyclops, Stesichorus's Geryon, and Vergil's Mezentius. Each of these monstrous figures has at least one redeeming feature. Through the exploration of this strand of the epic tradition, Rosati demonstrates the distinctiveness of Statius's approach to endowing Capaneus, as well as even the cannibalistic Tydeus, with sympathetic virtues through the full description of the fidelity with which their wives honor them after their deaths.

Thomas Baier ("Flavian Gods in Intertextual Perspective. How Rulers Used Religious Practice as a Means of Communicating") turns his attention to religion, in particular how the interactions between humanity and the divine can be used

as a means of gaining political authority. Because they provide examples of heroes in contact with the gods, epic texts can explore contemporary political concerns, simply by permitting readers to make the shift from the deeds of an epic hero to consideration of the role of a statesman who wields power in the real world. In this area as in others, the Vergilian model provides Flavian authors with much food for thought, and Baier's case studies are devoted principally to Valerius' and Statius' reactions to the *Aeneid*, with passing consideration of other texts that can teach us about the Flavian age, those of Tacitus and the Gospel of Mark. The combination of religion and power in the Augustan epic opens the way to consideration of the Flavian dynasty in both the *Argonautica* and the *Thebaid*. By drawing attention to the constant connections between *religio* and *imperium* in both Augustan and Flavian epic poetry, Baier offers yet another way of thinking about the intertextual relationship between Vergil and his Flavian successors.

Alison Keith explores the role of intertextuality in architectural ecphrasis. Starting out from Homeric precedent and quickly surveying later examples in a rich tradition of epic descriptions of buildings, she devotes her paper ("Palatine Apollo, Augustan Architectural Ecphrasis, and Flavian Epic Intertextuality") to tracing the influence of Vergil's description of the Cumaean temple to Apollo in *Aeneid* 6 and Ovid's account of the Palace of the Sun in *Metamorphoses* 2 on two architectural ecphrases in Flavian epic: the temple of the Sun at Colchis in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* 5 and the temple of Apollo at Cumae in Silius Italicus' *Punica* 12. By detailed comparison and close analysis of precise patterns of verbal allusion she demonstrates just how richly intertextual these ecphrastic passages are, with a particular emphasis on the presence of many-layered allusions, combinatorial reference and intermedial poetics.

In her article "Statius' Post-Vesuvian Landscapes and Vergil's Parthenope," Carole Newlands deals with the poetic geography of the Bay of Naples in the *Silvae* as a mirror of the generic lability of the poem and as one of the ways chosen by Statius to posit himself within the literary tradition. She explores in particular how Parthenope, the mythical founder of Naples, is shaped in *Silvae* 3.1, 3.5, 4.4 and 5.3 against Vergil's Parthenope in *Georgics* 4. In a post-Vesuvian world, the local Parthenope is shown as a heroic epic figure exceeding the boundaries of pastoral poetry. Furthermore, a selective topography of the region and the recurrent idea that, here, nature is dominated by art play a part in Parthenope's myth making. Through the Siren, Newlands argues, Statius challenges the literary discourse about contemporary Campania by associating this mythical figure with the Greek tradition and by questioning Rome's cultural primacy. Finally, Newlands addresses the metaliterary implications of this figure and concludes that

Stattius closely assimilates his poetic self to Parthenope in order to fashion himself as the actual successor of Greek peaceful poetry and philosophy.

Neil Bernstein opens the group of papers devoted to digital matters by exploring the productive relationship between traditional and computational philological methods in his paper, “Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives on the Use of Poetic Tradition in Silius Italicus’ *Punica*.” Taking the point of view of the commentator, he demonstrates how digital search results can support the philologist’s intertextual analysis at both the micro and macro scales. Work at the micro scale—i.e. traditional close reading—is illustrated by detailed studies of two images in *Punica* 2 with dense intertextual associations: the image of a woman with bared breast and shoulder, used by Vergil, Valerius Flaccus, and later Claudian to depict a host of goddesses and female warriors; and the image of light reflected on water, linking Apollonius Rhodius’s Medea to Silius’ Hannibal by way of Vergil, Ovid and Lucan, and connecting the inner workings of a leader’s troubled mind to the physical destruction of cities. Bernstein demonstrates how digital search can aid the commentator’s work of collecting and making sense of these associations by providing large numbers of candidate passages, marked by textual similarity, for evaluation. This widens the net but does not necessarily make the philologist’s task easier—rather, notes Bernstein, by shifting the burden from discovery to interpretation, it “productively complicates” the work of scholarly reading (p. 386). At the macro-level, digital tools allow quantitative studies of intertextual practice that would be impossible to complete by hand, for example, to compare the intensity of intertextual relationships between a large work such as the *Punica* and every other hexameter text in the Latin corpus. An important side-effect of this kind of computational research is that the scholar must formalize the question before a computer can calculate the result. For example, Bernstein collaborates with a statistician to define in mathematical terms what it is he really means by the “intensity” of an intertextual relationship between two poems. He notes that others might define “intensity” differently. He therefore conceives of the use of computational tools as a dynamic extension of the philologist’s personal intellectual practices, rather than a source of fixed standards for evaluation.

In his contribution “Lemmatizing Latin and Quantifying the Achilleid,” Peter Heslin argues for statistics and macroscopic analysis as a complementary approach to the traditional close reading of Latin texts. He assumes that the Ovidianness of the Achilleid is not limited to the erotic and elegiac colour of the Scyros’ episode achieved through specific references drawn from the *Amores*, the *Ars Amatoria* and the *Heroides*. Intertexts from the *Metamorphoses*, especially books 12 and 13, suggest that Stattius is challenging and subverting the canonical Trojan

Homeric tradition. With this in mind, Heslin undertakes some tests of lemma similarity between the epic poems of Vergil, Ovid, and Statius, in order to demonstrate to which extent the language of the *Achilleid* is different from the language of the *Thebaid* and it is instead influenced by the *Metamorphoses*. Focusing on the problems of Latin lemmatization, the author gives an overview of some current projects for automated morphological analysis as Morpheus, Collatinus, LemLat, Classical Language Toolkit and proposes his own implementations and improvements. Subsequently he goes on to study word frequency in the R language statistical environment through word-clouds and various metrics (term-frequency/inverse-document-frequency, cosine similarity), explaining clearly how these metrics work and pointing out some caveats (for instance the bias caused by the shortness of the *Achilleid* compared to full-length epics or by editorial inconsistency and incomplete lemmatization). To conclude, Heslin emphasizes the role of statistics in highlighting places to look for literary influence and strongly reasserts the need for a better-tagged Latin corpus.

In their article “How Rare are the Words that Make Up Intertexts? A Study in Latin and Greek Epic Poetry,” Neil Coffee and James Gawley attempt to provide an empirical answer to a basic question about intertextuality. Repetition of very common words, such as *aut ... aut*, is not usually thought to constitute a meaningful intertext. They support this conclusion by arguing for the inverse, finding that words identified by scholars as parts of intertexts are relatively rare in the corpus, meaning rarer than random words taken from the same texts. They base this conclusion upon the frequency of individual words in intertexts between Vergil’s *Aeneid* and Lucan’s *Civil War*, and between Homer’s *Iliad* and Apollonius’ *Argonautica*. They go on to spot a difference between Greek and Latin epic: the words in Apollonius’s intertexts are relatively rarer than those in Lucan’s. Their contribution is a step toward quantifying the language features that contribute to creating intertextuality and how to describe and detect them.

In “Pre- and Post-digital Poetics of ‘Transliteration’: Some Greco-Roman Epic Incipits,” Stephen Hinds examines the phenomenon of cross-linguistic intertextuality. He demonstrates that, in their poems, epic poems engage in highly self-reflexive ways with Greek verse. In his judgment, this self-reflexivity, and the irony and other gestures produced, remain far over the horizon of digital detection, if they will ever be reached at all. How, he asks, would a digital search detect the fact that Livius Andronicus’s *versutum* was not just a translation of Homer’s *πολύτροπον* as “experienced,” but, with its connotations of “turning” and “translation,” a winking acknowledgement of Livius’s act of translating Homer’s *Odyssey*? Hinds goes on to illustrate how the rich cross-linguistic interplay in epic poems poses a bracing challenge for those wishing to approximate human-level

sensitivity to intertextuality, even as the field relies upon “that intertextual cyborg of our time, the digitally equipped historian of Greco-Roman literature” (p. 443).

2 Intertextuality and Digital Methods

This closing group of papers leads naturally to some more general considerations about the second of our three aims in this volume, that of the digital turn. The Tesseract Project (<http://tesseract.caset.buffalo.edu>) launched the first web tool for automatic intertextual discovery in classical texts in 2008. Now, a decade later, after the continued development of Tesseract and emergence of similar and related tools—prominent examples include Filum (www.qcrit.org/filum), Musisque Deoque (<http://mqdq.it>), and TRACER (<https://www.etrapp.eu/research/tracer/>)—it is worth taking stock of how digital resources have aided and altered the field. The contributions to this volume, from a wide range of scholars on some of the most densely intertextual Latin poets, illustrate the current climate and speak to the significant impact the digital humanities have had upon intertextual study and on our understanding of classical literature more broadly in the intervening years.

A few things can be said unequivocally. Digital search has obviously expanded the comprehensiveness with which scholars can investigate instances of intertextuality, in the process shifting the goalposts with respect to what potential sources are worth considering, and what kinds of correspondences are reported. “How many times does this phrase occur in ...” is a question we now unhesitatingly ask even of unfamiliar texts. Searching for exact repetitions or slight variations of an expression across the entire classical Latin corpus takes an instant with the free PHI tool. With some of the software mentioned above, one can equally search for more subtle echoes, without necessarily knowing ahead of time exactly what one is looking for.

Indeed, digital methods have allowed us to pose entirely new questions about intertextuality. Thus, common observation suggests that, all other things being equal, a phrase with rare words is more likely to recall a previous similar passage than one with common words. But how rare does a word have to be? This is the question Coffee and Gawley take up in their contribution. Here the digital approach involves not search within primary texts, but rather the collation of intertexts from commentaries and the evaluation of the frequencies of the words within them. At the other end of the scale, Bernstein expands the scope of earlier work by Knauer and Nelis to a new order of magnitude, analyzing whole texts or even authors for their aggregate levels of intertextuality not simply with other

specific texts or authors, but across an entire genre.⁹ Neither of these questions would have been realistically tractable without digital methods.

At the same time it is also unequivocal that, as much as digital tools can aid intertextual research in ways that are functionally impossible for scholars to do unassisted, they are also far from replicating what a scholar can do. The piece by Hinds in this volume points not only to the limitations in performance of current search functions, such as the ability to find intertexts across Greek and Latin, but also to the formidable challenge of interpreting the full web of context and significance surrounding a given passage in order to arrive at a satisfyingly holistic understanding of the effects of a complex and meaningful intertext. At a time when advances in natural language processing and information retrieval seem ever to be accelerating, it is futile to predict which of these challenges will eventually be met—as, for example, important hurdles to automated translation or self-driving cars have been overcome. Nevertheless, although it is certain that the tools of textual analysis will continue to improve, as it stands an autonomous, working model of the human experience of intertextual discovery and interpretation remains distant.

Amid these clearer points, there is another important one worth considering, even if it is difficult to maintain with certainty. This is the question of how far digital methods have already altered practices of intertextual research and even our theories of the nature of intertextuality. Aristarchus, were he alive today and studying intertextual resonances, would surely check his interpretations against the results provided by digital tools, just as he would consult any relevant commentaries. If we assume most living scholars already do the same, then we must wonder if the use of computational methods is affecting how they view their texts.

In general, they seem to be encouraging the *operationalization* of interpretive problems. The ongoing process of definition, modelling, breaking seemingly intuitive actions down into component steps which underpins the development of computational tools appears to be exerting a force on scholarly practices, nudging scholars toward being more explicit, or at least more conscious, of the criteria for their interpretive decisions. There is a new incentive to create definitions and identify objects and boundaries within the texts. In this volume, Lovatt places the text under a microscope by asking which linguistic or literary elements serve to demarcate scene boundaries and to signal intertextual correspondences. While her paper is not a digital study, her precise insights can be read as a response to

⁹ Knauer (1979² [1964]), Nelis (2001).

digitally-driven research. They also contribute back: Lovatt's work will be especially beneficial to efforts to extend current word-based digital tools to more abstract, structural intertextuality.

One thing we can say for certain is that digital tools present us with many more potential connections. They also therefore challenge scholars to define what they will accept (and publish) as meaningful. Before the introduction of digital tools, scholars periodically published works that disrupted standard narratives of literary inheritance, as when Nelis demonstrated that we could not skip from Homer to Vergil without accounting for the influence of Apollonius. Now, an even broader vista opens up, particularly for densely intertextual poets, proceeding down to all grades of nuance to the plain use of language. It is a landscape that brings us back to Kristeva's original, all-encompassing definition of intertextuality. As Bernstein observes, the burden is shifting from the discovery to the interpretation of intertexts. Amid this embarrassment of riches (and false positives) does the scholar's conception of intertextuality necessarily change? Does it look less like a sly game among learned authors and more like a fixed feature of language that authors sometimes elaborate? Digital methods seem like they will tilt the balance toward the latter view, though how far remains to be seen.

3 Future Work on Flavian Intertextuality

Concerning our third aim, the desire to insist on the idea that a considerable amount of work still remains to be done on Flavian intertextuality, let us look closely at a specific passage. At the beginning of the seventh book of the *Thebaid* Jupiter sends Mercury to Thrace. His aim in doing so is to speed up the Argive advance towards Thebes and so ensure a rapid outbreak of hostilities. It is to this end that Mars is called into action. Statius opens the encounter with a description of the shrine of the god of war (7.40–63). In his highly informative and deservedly influential commentary on *Thebaid* 7, J.J.L. Smolenaars begins his discussion of this passage by drawing attention to Homeric precedent, citing *Iliad* 6.152ff and 13.32ff and also Val. Fl. 4.181–186, all examples of cases where the narrative stops for a moment and there occurs a detailed description of a particular place. He then goes on to note that the position of this Statian description within a scene involving an intervention in human affairs by Jupiter corresponds to Hom. *Od.* 5.55–74 and Verg. *Aen.* 4.259–264. Next, Smolenaars points out that in terms of both structure and content Statius also has in mind Vergil's description of the palace of Latinus at *Aen.* 7.170–186, before adding that the poet is also fleshing

out his description of the shrine of Mars “from ‘secondary’ passages in Homer, Vergil, Seneca and Valerius”.¹⁰

As he works his way through the passage phrase by phrase and line by line, Smolenaars points out a series of further similarities between Statius and earlier texts, this time on the purely verbal level. For example, that Statius is indeed thinking of Valerius Flaccus’ description of the cave of Amycus is suggested by the fact that *Theb.* 7.39 (*palla, nec Arcadii bene protegit umbra galeri*) imitates Val. Fl. 4.138 (*tempora Parrhasio patris de more galero*).¹¹ Similarly, Smolenaars states that Statius’ triple reference to iron (*ferrea ... ferro ... ferratis*) is a deliberate variation on Vergil’s triple reference to bronze (*aerea ... aere ... aenis*) in his description of Juno’s temple at *Aen.* 1.448–449. For the use of verb *incumbo* with the dative case (*incumbunt tecta columnis*) he cites Verg. *Ecl.* 8.16 (*incumbens tereti ... olivae*), while also comparing *Aen.* 7.170, *tectum ... sublime columnis*. On line 45 he notes that the expression *Phoebi iubar* to refer to the radiance of the sun also occurs at Sen. *Ag.* 463 and in Statius’ own *Silvae* at 2.2.46.

There is of course much more to Smolenaars’ excellent commentary than this, but we have highlighted these details for two reasons: firstly, they show an expert commentator at work on a passage of Flavian epic poetry and, secondly, they are, it seems fair to say, quite typical of the ways in which modern commentators go about doing their job. If one dips into any of the major commentaries on individual books of the *Thebaid* that we now have available, we very quickly find numerous examples of exactly the same kind of procedure.¹² The key point to be made here is that the now standard approach to reading Statius’ *Thebaid* is profoundly intertextual in its basic approach to the elucidation of the text. And exactly the same is true of work on the *Achilleid* and on Valerius Flaccus and Silius Italicus.¹³ Of course, commentaries are not alone in this. A quick glance at some recent monographs leads to the same conclusion.¹⁴

This state of affairs is far from new. Already in the 19th century work on the Flavian epics was often intertextual in approach, and those scholars in turn were

¹⁰ Smolenaars (1994) 22.

¹¹ The point here is that *Parrhasio* = Arcadian, while *galerus* is a very rare word in Latin epic.

¹² To name but a few recent examples, see Briguglio (2017) on *Thebaid* 1, Gervais (2017) on *Thebaid* 2, Micozzi (2007) and Parkes (2012) on *Thebaid* 4, Augoustakis (2016) on *Thebaid* 8.

¹³ E.g. Ripoll/Soubiran (2008), Nuzzo (2012) and Uccellini (2012) on the *Achilleid*; Manuwald (2015) on *Argonautica* 3, Fucecchi (1997), Baier (2001), and Fucecchi (2006) on *Argonautica* 6, Lazzarini (2012) and Pellucchi (2012) on *Argonautica* 8; Bernstein (2017) on *Punica* 2, Littlewood (2011) on *Punica* 7 and Littlewood (2017) on *Punica* 10.

¹⁴ See, for example, Heslin (2005), Ganiban (2007), Tipping (2010), Stover (2012). The contents of several companions and collections of papers point in the same direction.

drawing on earlier work that provided massive documentation about models and imitation.¹⁵ But the very persistence of this way of reading and the impressively high quality of so much of the work done in recent years, particularly in the form of commentaries on individual books, may paradoxically give rise to some concerns, when one turns to consider the future. The theoretical debates of the 1980s and 1990s about the nature and the limits of referential allusion in Latin poetry have come to a close. There can be little doubt that a number of important contributions (e.g. by A.J. Woodman and D. West, R. Thomas, G.B. Conte, A. Barchiesi, S. Hinds, L. Edmunds, J. Farrell, D. Fowler, J. Wills, to name but a few) have greatly sharpened critical faculties, and there is good reason to believe that the study of Flavian epic has been one of the major beneficiaries of scholarly debates that were as fruitful as they were sometimes fractious.¹⁶ The resultant consensus that now seems to reign in many quarters has undoubtedly created the feeling that it is now possible to get down to the business of intertextual analysis without having to go over the much-trodden ground of theoretical considerations. Also prevalent is the related idea that most of the basic work of recovering parallels, imitations or allusions has already been done and that there is little new of any value to be discovered about the basic facts of text reuse. Both of these assumptions require further thought.

Commentators on Latin texts must be selective. They cannot comment on everything, and so difficult decisions have to be made about where the main difficulties lie, what requires comment, what can be assumed to be common knowledge, which passages require translating, how much metrical analysis is required, and so on. And while the quotation and analysis of verbal allusions seems now to be taking up more space than before, commentators still have much else to think about, with textual, and linguistic details, historical contexts, and so on all jostling for space and attention. There is a case to be made, therefore, that the standard philological commentary may no longer be the best format for detailed study of texts that are agreed by all to be fundamentally intertextual in nature.¹⁷ The capacities and interfaces offered by modern digital systems may provide greater scope for the collection of the mass of information that already exists, scattered across numerous theses, articles and monographs in addition to commentaries. They also allow for efficient visualisation and fast retrievability of what is a highly complex data set. Furthermore, new on-line tools such as Tes-

¹⁵ See Berlincourt (2013).

¹⁶ That said, see now Conte (2017) for a contribution that may stir things up again.

¹⁷ See Heslin (2016).

serae and Musisque Deoque, when used alongside the Classical Latin Texts database of the Packard Humanities Institute, the Biblioteca Teubneriana Latina on-line, and the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae on-line, are surely pushing open the door to a new age in the study of intertextuality.¹⁸ A quick look at how much remains to be said even about a relatively straightforward passage so expertly handled by Smolenaars will illustrate what is at stake here. In each case, a few minutes of digital searching easily turns up new information that complements Smolenaar’s findings. Statius’ description of the shrine of Mars begins thus (*Theb.* 7.41–43):

hic steriles delubra notat Mavortia silvas
(horrescitque tuens), ubi mille furoribus illi
cingitur averso domus inmansueta sub Haemo.

Here he marks barren woods, Mars’ shrine, and
shudders as he looks. There under distant Haemus
is the god’s ungentle house, girt with a thousand Rages.

(Trans. Shackleton Bailey)

These lines resemble Lucan 9.966–969, where Julius Caesar visits Troy:

iam silvae steriles et putres robore trunci
Assaraci pressere domos et templa deorum
iam lassa radice tenent, ac tota teguntur
Pergama dumetis: etiam periere ruinae.

Now barren woods and trunks with rotting timber
have submerged Assaracus’ houses and, with roots now weary,
occupy the temples of the gods, and all of Pergamum
is veiled by thickets: even the ruins suffered oblivion.

(Trans. Braund)

Lucan describes barren woods (*silvae steriles*; cf. Statius’ *steriles ... silvas*) at the moment when a visitor arrives and sees the home of Assaracus (*domos*; cf. Statius’ *domus*) and temples of the gods (*templa deorum*; cf. Statius’ *delubra Mavortia*). In turn, Statius’ expression *domus inmansueta sub Haemo* is comparable to *Aen.* 12.546, where Vergil has *domus alta sub Ida*, also closing the hexameter. In each case the patterning of *domus* followed by an adjective plus *sub* with the name of a mountain is identical. In addition, the verse-ending *sub Haemo* has already been used by Statius at both *Theb.* 1.275 (cited by Smolenaars) and 5.16

¹⁸ See Coffee *et al.* (2012) and Coffee (2018).

(not cited by Smolenaars). If we look at the following sentence, this kind of exercise can be easily repeated:

ferrea compago laterum, ferro apta teruntur
limina, ferratis incumbunt tecta columnis.

The sides are of iron structure, the trodden thresholds
are fitted with iron, the roof rests on iron-bound pillars.

(Trans. Shackleton Bailey)

The combination of the nouns *compago* and *latus* first occurs at *Aen.* 1.122 *laterum compagibus*, with *laterum* in precisely the same metrical position in each case. Compare also *Man. Astr.* 1.840, *laterum compagine*. And finally to the third sentence:

laeditur adversum Phoebi iubar, ipsaque sedem
lux timet, et durus contristat sidera fulgor.

Phoebus' opposing ray takes hurt, the very light
fears the dwelling and a harsh glare glooms the stars.

(Trans. Shackleton Bailey)

As already stated, Smolenaars notes that the expression *Phoebi iubar* to refer to the radiance of the sun occurs at *Sen. Ag.* 463 and Statius' own *Silv.* 2.2.46. He does not mention *Val. Fl.* 5.331 (cf. also 3.559–560 for *Phoebi* and *iubar* in close proximity, but not grammatically connected).

The aim of all this is in no way to imply criticism of any kind of Smolenaars; his is still one of the very best commentaries on any Flavian poetry book. When it comes to the accumulation and evaluation of intertextual parallels his book sets a high standard, particularly in relation to multi-tier allusion and the relationship between verbal and structural allusion, that few other commentators have attained. The point is simply that there is always more to be said than space allows and that modern digital searching has greatly facilitated work of this kind in ways Smolenaars could not even begin to imagine when he was writing his commentary. The more general point to be made is that even in terrain that has been much trodden over, there is still more to be found. And all the while, excellent new work is sharpening perspectives and opening up new visions.¹⁹ If this volume succeeds in promoting an interest in Flavian intertextuality among a new generation of scholars, then its editors will be happy enough.

¹⁹ See for example Hutchinson (2013), Feeney (2016), Lyne (2016).

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