AETNA MIHI CARMEN ERIT:
A Commentary on the pseudo-Virgilian *Aetna*, lines 1-300.

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature: …………………………………………………………………..

ABSTRACT

This thesis provides the first monograph-length literary critical study of the pseudo-Virgilian *Aetna*, a 645-verse Latin didactic poem of anonymous authorship on the workings of Mount Etna. The thesis accomplishes this via the hybrid approach of extended discursive introductory essays on the entirety of the poem and line-by-line commentary on the first 300 verses of it. The introduction is structured as follows: firstly, I provide an evaluation of the issues of the poem's authorship and dating, arguing for a dating-scope of c. 65-79 AD, and suggesting that the authorship question be regarded as of secondary importance to that of analysis of the text itself. Secondly, I discuss the Greco-Roman literary tradition associated with Mount Etna prior to the *Aetna*, in order to illustrate the backdrop to the composition of the poem. Thirdly, I evaluate the influence of the *Aetna*'s various models over it, and argue that the poem should not be assigned to a particular philosophical school. Fourthly, I address the *Aetna*'s self-conscious aspects, arguing that the poem can be read as a comment on the futility of its own didactic genre. To conclude my introduction, I provide an evaluation of the textual transmission of the poem and of previous editions of it. Many of the themes addressed in the introduction are those that emerge most prominently in the line-by-line commentary. The commentary itself aims to make this difficult text more accessible. It has a strong focus on literary interpretation of the poem, but also addresses textual issues where necessary. Working hand-in-hand with the introductory essays, it aims to demonstrate that the *Aetna* is a far more interesting and significant composition than it has previously been credited as.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PREFACE

Purpose and Method of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to provide the first monograph-length literary critical study of the pseudo-Virgilian *Aetna*. This thesis follows in the wake of a host of recent scholarship conducted on both the *Appendix Vergiliana* and the *Aetna* specifically. In regard to the former, it is particularly indebted to the pioneering works of Peirano (2012), and Franklinos and Fulkerson (2020), which together have collectively ensured that the Virgilian appendices have moved from the fringes of Classical studies and into focus.[1] In regard to the *Aetna* specifically, the works of Volk (2005), Welsh (2014) and Williams (2017, 2020) have been particularly influential.[2] This wave of scholarly interest in both the *Appendix Vergiliana* broadly and the *Aetna* specifically provides an ideal backdrop for the composition of this thesis, which both synthesises previous scholarship, and builds on it. The thesis comprises a line-by-line commentary on the first three-hundred verses of the *Aetna*, prefaced by an introduction containing discursive, thematic studies that take account of the entire poem.[3] This hybrid approach

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[1] Peirano (2012) initiated the scholarly shift in approach from reading certain poems of the *Appendix Vergiliana* as forgeries and instead as pieces of reception, which openly engage with their Virgilian models: see, e.g., Peirano, 7-12. Given that, as Peirano puts it, the *Aetna* does not 'purport' (79) to be the work of Virgil's (see intr. I.1, 3.II for more on this), she does not address it in her work. Nevertheless, the Peirano angle has been a helpful one when it comes to evaluating the relationship between the *Aetna* and its many models: see intr. III. The influence of Peirano over studies in the *Appendix Vergiliana* is similarly evident in Franklinos and Fulkerson's 2020 volume, which brings together papers from a variety of scholars on all of the Virgilian, Tibullan and Ovidian appendices. Many of these studies explicitly or implicitly treat these works as pieces of reception: see Franklinos and Fulkerson's introduction (2-18), in addition to pieces by, e.g., Augoustakis (24-36), Fulkerson (37-47), Franklinos (70-83), and on the *Aetna*, G. D. Williams (112-30). Holzberg's 2005 edited volume on the *Appendix Vergiliana* is a useful precursor to the works discussed above, and contains Volk's seminal article on the *Aetna* (68-90), mentioned below.

[2] Volk (2005) is a discussion of the *Aetna* as the consummate didactic poem, an opinion that is in line with my own thinking at, e.g., intr. IV; Welsh (2014) provides excellent interpretation of literary aspects of the poem; G. D. Williams (2017) is a detailed evaluation of the ancient literary tradition associated with Mount Etna, and is used throughout my intr. II, whilst his 2020 piece evaluates the relationship between the *Aetna* and Manilius' *Astronomica*. Other recent pieces of scholarship on the poem, which have been particularly influential over this thesis, include Glauthier (2011), on the *Aetna*'s poetological aspects; Kruschwitz (2015), on its structure; Payne (2016), on the relationship between its author and subject matter; and Most (forthcoming), on its relationship with the canonical works of Virgil.

[3] The choice of commenting on the first 300 lines was a practical one, based on the constraints of time and word count. The hope is that, post-doctorate, the thesis can be converted into a commentary on the entirety of the poem. This hybrid approach of both line-by-line commentary

seemed the best way to tackle the challenges presented by the *Aetna*'s content, style and textual corruption, whilst giving space for broader interpretation of the poem.[4] Given the particularly literary critical aim of the thesis, I have not produced my own text of the *Aetna*, and instead use Goodyear's 1966 Oxford Classical Text, which is itself largely based on that of his 1965 'Cambridge Orange' commentary on the poem. Whilst the one-sided nature of Goodyear's commentary – that of largely textual criticism – provided a strong motivation behind the writing of my thesis, I am greatly indebted to his efforts at producing a workable text of the poem.[5]

My introduction is indicative of my approach to the text. In part I of it, I evaluate the questions of the *Aetna*'s authorship and dating that have long vexed scholars. My attitude to the authorship question follows that of the majority of recent scholarship on anonymously authored texts in considering it of secondary importance to analysis of the text itself.[6] Given how much Latin literature has been lost, an attempt to ascribe a name to an anonymous Latin text on the basis of parallels of expression or poetic style is likely to be unconvincing.[7] On the question of the poem's date, I fully subscribe to the modern scholarly consensus of dating the poem in the period from the mid-60s AD to 79 AD.[8] As I discuss, this dating-scope allows me to rule out, with some conviction, certain past candidates for authorship, such as Virgil and Cornelius Severus, and to keep in consideration one of the past scholarly favourites, Lucilius Junior.[9] Nevertheless,

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and discursive essays is in keeping with that of the 'Cambridge Orange' series of Classical commentaries (see, e.g., Gibson [2003]), and that of the recently initiated Oxford *Pseudepigrapha Latina* series (see, e.g., Fulkerson [2017]), both of which have been influential over my own approach.

[4] On, historically, the most famous challenge presented by the *Aetna*, its textual corruption, see intr. V.

[5] On the one-sided nature of Goodyear's commentary, see Courtney (1966b) 49, Gibson (2015) 362. See intr. V for more on the relationship between this thesis and Goodyear's work.

[6] See, e.g., the majority of those pieces contained within Franklinos and Fulkerson (2020), with the exception of Kayachev (below).

[7] In regard to lost Latin literature, see the fate of the works of Cornelius Severus (discussed at intr. I.2). See Kayachev (2020) for a range of interesting parallels between *Catalepton* 9 and the fragments of Valgius Rufus (in addition to other Latin poets), but an ultimately unconvincing argument that Rufus wrote the poem.

[8] My reasoning behind my dating-scope is explained fully in intr. I, but to summarise, my proposed *terminus post quem* for the poem (the mid-60s AD) is based on the fact that it engages with Seneca's *Natural Questions*, and my *terminus ante quem* for it is based on the fact that it does not mention Vesuvius as an active volcano. This dating-scope is upheld by most modern scholarship on the poem.

[9] Originally proposed by Wernsdorf (1785); see intr. I.3 for further discussion.

in the firm belief that attempting to read into a poem uncertain authorial biography is an unhelpful practice, throughout the thesis I refrain from doing so, referring to my author as [V.] (short for pseudo-Virgil), only for convenience's sake.[10] This approach is in keeping with a general scholarly move in literary studies over the past fifty years away from assessing the thorny issue of authorial intention, and instead evaluating what each work means to each individual reader.[11] This scholarly shift in perspective is undoubtedly a reason behind the recent surge of interest in ancient anonymous texts; with the author truly 'dead', the commentator is compelled to – but also free to – provide a particularly personal reading derived from the text and only the text.[12]

I use this angle of reception in parts II and III of my introduction, on the ancient literary tradition associated with Mount Etna and the key Latin hypertextual influences behind the *Aetna* respectively.[13] Part II traces the development of Mount Etna as a *topos* of great literary significance for the ancient Greeks and Romans, as a site at which the two contrasting spheres of scientific thought and mythological superstition collide. Whilst some of the material covered in this study has been addressed to an extent in recent scholarship, it provides important context for an argument that I make throughout the commentary:[14] that the *Aetna* is steeped in the trappings of the literary tradition associated with Mount Etna that

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[10] Throughout the thesis, I refer to the author with masculine pronouns, but this is largely to follow scholarly convention. The overwhelming likelihood is that [V.] was male, but this cannot be an absolute certainty. For more on female authorship in Ancient Rome, see, e.g., Fulkerson (2017) 46-53.

[11] Seminal works that inspired the move towards reader-response and closely linked reception criticism include those of Barthes (1967), Jauss (1970) and Iser (1974). For a summary of reader-response criticism and its prevalence in Classics, see Schmitz (2007) 86-96.

[12] For the 'death of the author', see Barthes (1967); discussion of its uses in Classics at Hitchcock (2008) 56-64. For the successful use of the angle of reception in works on anonymously authored Latin poetry, see, e.g., Peirano (2012) and Fulkerson (2017); cf. acknowledgement of the difficulties of this shift in perspective for the traditional Classicist at, e.g., Hinds (1998) xi-xii.

[13] The term 'hypertextual' refers to the theory of hypertextuality, which was devised by Genette in his 1982 work *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. It is defined by the author as the 'relationship uniting a text B [the hypertext] to an earlier text A [hypotext], upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary': see Genette, 5. Given that the *Aetna* and other poems of the *Appendix Vergiliana* are inherently 'literature in the second degree', i.e. closely modelled on literary predecessors (see intr. III), Genette's framework and the terminology associated with it is particularly appropriate; hence I use it throughout the thesis. Naturally, hypertextuality sits well with reception theory (see discussion above). For the extensive use of hypertextuality in modern Classical scholarship, see Schmitz (2007) 80-3.

[14] For the ancient literary tradition of the volcano, in addition to intr. II, see Glauthier (2011) 85-129, Buxton (2016) and G. D. Williams (2017) 23-71.

precedes it, and as a poem encapsulates this conflict between myth and science that is associated with the volcano in ancient thought.

An important argument of my commentary is that the *Aetna* demonstrates particular awareness of its place in the tradition of Latin didactic poetry.[15] Throughout my commentary, I demonstrate its close hypertextual relationship with its immediate Latin didactic predecessors, namely Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, Virgil's *Georgics* and Manilius' *Astonomica*. In part III of my introduction, I provide a broader perspective on the 'dynamics of appropriation' that are at play between the *Aetna* and each of these hypertexts.[16] In addition, I address the evidently heavy influence of Seneca's *Natural Questions* over the *Aetna*, before discussing the vexed issue of the poem's allegiance to a particular philosophical school, or (more likely) lack thereof. In contrast to Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* or even Manilius' *Astronomica*, the *Aetna* is not clearly aligned with either Epicureanism or Stoicism.[17] Nevertheless, scholars have felt compelled to argue for its alignment either way, often isolating lines or parts of the poem that suit their particular argument.[18] In part III or my introduction and throughout my thesis, I am critical of this approach, given that it disregards the *Aetna*'s intrinsically polyphonous nature.[19]

In part IV of my introduction, titled 'The *Aetna* as a Meta-Poem', I provide a reading of the poem, in which I argue that the *Aetna* operates as a commentary on the ultimate futility of its own genre, thus making it self-conscious beyond the level recognised by scholarship thus far.[20] In this study, I assess whether [V.] delivers on his own programmatic claims of providing didactic truths, arguing that, via his choice of ending, his seemingly self-undermining *miranda fabula*, he does not. Alongside this, I track the development of an important theme of the poem that emerges in my commentary: man's relationship with his environment. I argue

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[15] In this regard, I follow in the wake of particularly Volk (2005), who tellingly titles her work '*Aetna oder Wie man ein Lehrgedicht schreibt*'.

[16] For 'dynamics of appropriation', see Hinds (1998).

[17] Whilst Lucretius explicitly espouses the doctrine of Epicureanism in the *De Rerum Natura* (see, e.g., 1.62-79; De May [2009]), Manilius' *Astronomica* espouses a Stoic impression of the universe, without naming it as such: see, e.g., 4.387-407; Volk (2009) 227-34, Habinek (2011).

[18] For an intrinsically Epicurean *Aetna*, see, e.g., Wernsdorf (1785), Jacob (1826), Rostagni (1933), De Lacy (1943) and Stoneman (2020); in contrast, for a fundamentally Stoic *Aetna*, see, e.g., Sudhaus (1898), Lapidge (1989) and Fanti (forthcoming).

[19] See, e.g., my criticism of De Lacy (1943) at intr. III.3.

[20] Goodyear (1984: 356) describes the *Aetna* as a didactic '*tour de force*', whilst Volk (2005: 68) titles it '*Wie man ein Lehrgedicht schreibt*'.

that an important tension develops between [V.] and his subject matter; whilst on the one hand, [V.] depicts himself as a champion of his subject matter, Mount Etna, and of its creator *natura*, on the other, he casts his didactic aim as that of the taming, or even Romanising, of his resistant subject matter. I argue that, in this respect also, the *Aetna* operates as a deliberate didactic failure, as once again [V.]'s own ending to his poem reveals that nature can never be tamed fully by humankind. This reading, I argue, demonstrates that the *Aetna* should be regarded as a far more significant Latin didactic poem than it has previously been credited as, and reveals its ending to be one that is remarkably well worked.

My introduction concludes with an evaluation of the *Aetna*'s famously corrupt manuscript tradition (part V), followed by a review of previous editions of the poem, and the contribution of each of them to my own thesis. This study provides an important backdrop to discussion of textual issues throughout the commentary. Of particular methodological importance is my assessment at V.2 of the quality of the reported readings of the lost Codex Gyraldinus – readings that litter Goodyear's text and subsequently my own.[21]

In line with the aims of the thesis, the commentary proper is heavily focused on issues of literary interpretation. It contains notes varying in length from discussion of extended sections of the poem (see, e.g., comm. 219-81n.), to those on smaller sub-sections (see, e.g., comm. 257-62n.), to those on individual lines, phrases and words. Throughout, the reader is pointed to further discussion of particular issues in my introduction, and wider scholarship where appropriate. The hope is that the reader will be able to trace the development of an interpretative idea from the comment on an individual word, via a longer discursive note, to broader discussion in my introduction. Though, as stated, my commentary has a heavy literary critical focus, and uses as its text that of Goodyear (see fig. 2 for divergences), given the extent of the corruption in the *Aetna*'s manuscript tradition, it would be fundamentally misleading of me to comment on the poem as if it were a clean text. Hence, throughout the commentary, I alert the reader to the points of potential corruption, and often concede that the text is corrupt to the point of complete uncertainty about its meaning.[22] In addition, in the many places where Goodyear has made a particular

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[21] See intr. V.2 for detailed discussion of the provenance and quality of these readings, in addition to Goodyear (1965) 29-52.

[22] See, e.g., respectively, comm. 5-6n., 14-15n.

choice in regard to which manuscript reading, or scholarly conjecture, he should follow, I discuss how meaning would be affected by an alternative, often challenging Goodyear's opinion and occasionally fully diverging from his text.[23] When textual issues are discussed in the commentary, I reprint the relevant parts of the OCT's apparatus criticus in the footnotes, for ease of use.

My firm hope is that the reader of this thesis can be convinced that even a work as textually corrupt as the *Aetna* is worth a discursive commentary such as this. Whilst I acknowledge that a small amount of interpretative notes are potentially compromised by textual uncertainty, I am convinced that my broader interpretation of the poem is not.[24] In the long term, I hope that this thesis will lay the groundwork for further studies into this still under-appreciated poem.

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[23] See, e.g., respectively, comm. 76n. and 262n; see fig. 2 for full list of divergences from Goodyear's text.

[24] See, e.g., comm. 14-15n.

INTRODUCTION

I. Authorship and Dating

The issues of the *Aetna*'s authorship and dating have vexed scholars since antiquity.[25] Whilst ascertaining a precise candidate for the identity of the *Aetna*-poet (labelled, as explained in the preface above, as [V.] throughout this thesis) remains impossible, a strong modern scholarly consensus over the dating-scope of the poem allows us to rule out, with a degree of conviction, several candidates that have in the past been suggested. This dating-scope, the case for which my thesis should strengthen, gives the poem's almost certain *terminus ante quem* as 79 AD, and likely *terminus post quem* as c. 65 AD.[26] The reasoning behind this proposed *terminus ante quem* is the fact that a Latin poem about volcanology, even more so one that includes a catalogue of Italian volcanic landscapes (see 429-40), would surely make mention of the catastrophic eruption of Vesuvius, were its poet aware of it.[27] The poem's proposed *terminus post quem* of the mid-60s AD is more disputable, but is in my opinion utterly convincing. The reasoning behind this proposed *terminus post quem* is the close relationship between Seneca's *Natural Questions* and the *Aetna*.[28] My commentary is littered with examples of passages in which either the *Aetna* is drawing on the *Natural Questions*, vice versa, or both works are using a common source.[29] I follow Volk in the firm belief that parts of the *Aetna* are modelled very carefully on sections of the *Natural Questions* specifically.[30] Analysis of one pair of similar passages suffices to demonstrate this:

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[25] See [Donat.] *Vit. Verg.*17-19, discussed in detail at intr. I.1.

[26] This dating-scope is followed by, e.g., Goodyear (1984), Volk (2005), Glauthier (2011) Welsh (2014), Kruschwitz (2015) and Verde (2020).

[27] The reasoning behind this proposed *terminus ante quem* for the poem has been followed for some time; see, e.g., Ellis (1901) xxvi.

[28] Seneca's *Natural Questions* has as its *terminus ante quem* the philosopher's death in April 65 AD, and was being composed throughout the early 60s, as evidenced by Seneca's reference at *Nat. Quest* 6.1.1-3 to the 62 / 63 AD Campanian earthquake as 'recent': see G. D. Williams (2012) 26n. for more on the dating of the *Natural Questions*.

[29] From only one section of the poem, see, e.g., comm. 96-8n., 98-101n., 110-16n.

[30] See Volk (2005) 70; also Goodyear (1984) 350-3.

Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.14.1:

non tota solido contextu terra in imum usque fundatur, sed multis partibus *cava* et:
> *'caecis suspensa latebris.'*

'The whole earth is not constructed of solid texture all the way to the bottom, but is hollow in many places and: *suspended over dark recesses*.'[31]

Aetna 96-8:

> non totum est solidum: denso namque omnis hiatu
> secta est intus humus, penitusque cavata latebris
> exiles suspensa vias agit.

'[The Earth] is not entirely solid, because beneath the surface it is undercut densely by fissures. It is hollowed out in the depths by hidden passageways, and it overhangs the slender vents that it creates.'[32]

The similarities between the two passages are plain to see. The giveaway as to the fact that it is [V.] quoting / paraphrasing Seneca, and not vice versa, is provided by the fact that the quotation used by Seneca – *caecis suspensa latebris* – is a playful manipulation not of [V.]'s words, but of those of Ovid at *Metamorphoses* 1.388: *caecis obscura latebris*, which are themselves part of a passage that has nothing to do with the topic in question.[33] Given his consistent and often playful use of Ovidian quotation, Seneca, as per this example, often does not name Ovid as his source.[34] Nevertheless, in places he does so.[35] In contrast, nowhere does Seneca mention our poem by name, or reveal its author, making it unlikely that he had ever read the *Aetna* and used it in his work. Seneca

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[31] Ed. and trans. Corcoran (1971). Throughout my introduction, the texts and translations used of those works beyond the *Aetna* are largely those of the Loeb series. I indicate when this is not the case.

[32] All translations of the *Aetna* provided in the introduction and commentary are my own, though may have been influenced by those of Wight Duff and Duff (1934) and Hine (2012).

[33] The Ovidian quotation refers to the *verba* given in an oracle by Themis to Deucalion. For more on the complexity of the interaction between Ovid, Seneca, [V.] and others here, see comm. 96-8n.; Oltramare (1961) 214.

[34] For more on Seneca's often manipulative and playful use of quotation and allusion in the *Natural Questions*, see, e.g., Mazzoli (1970), Trinacty (2018).

[35] See, e.g., Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.1.1.

also never directly quotes the *Aetna*, making it similarly unlikely that he himself wrote it.[36] Note also, from the above comparison, the way in which [V.]'s passage is a mélange of the Ovidian quotation and its Senecan surroundings; the poet is clearly interacting with the Senecan passage first and foremost.[37]

With a *terminus post quem* of 65 AD and a *terminus ante quem* of 79 AD established for the *Aetna*, we are able to rule out several candidates for authorship that have been suggested by past scholars.[38] Nevertheless, it is important that I discuss some of the stand-out examples of these, given, as will become apparent, the significance of the vexed authorship question to the transmission of the poem from antiquity to now. Historically, the stand-out candidates for authorship of the poem have been 1) Virgil (impossible by my dating of the poem), 2) Cornelius Severus (impossible) and 3) Lucilius Junior (possible). I shall say a few words about how and why, at certain points of time, each of these figures has been the favoured candidate for authorship of the poem, and the effect that the attachment of the poem to each of them has had on its transmission.

1) Virgil

The *Aetna* is stated as a work of Virgil in the ninth-century catalogue of the library of Kloster Murbach.[39] In addition, our earliest manuscript of the poem, the tenth-century Cantabrigiensis K.k.v.34, assigns the poem to Virgil. As with several of the other poems of the *Appendix Vergiliana*, the *Aetna* likely owes its initial, incorrect attribution to the Virgilian corpus to the extensive Virgilian late-antique biographical tradition. In his *Life of Virgil*, the fourth century Virgilian biographer Aelius Donatus writes:

> *deinde Catalepton et Priapea et Epigrammata et Diras, item Cirim et Culicem, cum esset annorum X[X]VI [Vergilius scripsit] […] scripsit etiam de qua ambigitur Aetnam.*

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[36] The opinion of Zotto (1900).

[37] For other examples of interaction between the *Aetna* and Seneca's *Nat. Quest.* such as this, see comm. 96-8n., 98-101n., 110-16n.

[38] Most notably, Virgil and Cornelius Severus, discussed in intr. I.1 and I.2 below, but also Manilius (von Barth [1650] 1044), Ovid (Bähr: see Vessereau [1905] xxxi) and even Augustus himself (Lemaire [1824] 18).

[39] For more on which, see Zogg (2016) 82-3.

'Then [Virgil wrote] the *Catalepton*, *Priapea*, *Epigrams* and *Dirae*, as well as the *Ciris* and *Culex*, though he was only sixteen [twenty-six] years old […] It is also debated whether he wrote the *Aetna*.'[40]

As Peirano outlines, dating this catalogue and the Donatan biography more broadly is a vexed issue; it is impossible to say for certain which parts of it are Suetonian and which are Donatan, or indeed which have been interpolated after Donatus.[41] If this list (as printed here) is indeed genuinely Suetonian, and the *Aetna* in question is our poem, it gives the scholar's attribution of it to Virgil and doubts in this regard a remarkably (perhaps unfeasibly) early *terminus ante quem*; indeed my dating-scope places the *Aetna* potentially within Suetonius' lifetime (69-122 AD). For that reason, I suspect that either the Suetonian / Donatan list dates from later, and / or the poem mentioned is a different *Aetna* to our own. Goodyear cautiously floats the idea of a young Virgil having written a different *Aetna*,[42] an argument that perhaps garners greater strength when we factor in another early (c. 400 AD) testimony to an ancient *Aetna*-poem, the Virgilian commentator Servius' note on *Aen.* 3.571, in which he outlines the *causa huius incendii secundum Aetnam Vergilii* ('the cause of its [the volcano's] fire according to the *Aetna* of Virgil').[43] Both Goodyear and subsequently Zogg have pointed out that it is unclear whether Servius' note summarises the poem that it mentions. Furthermore, if the Servian note is indeed a summary of a poem called *Aetna*, its content indicates that said poem is not 'our' *Aetna*.[44] The hypothetical existence of another genuinely Virgilian *Aetna*, which came to be lost and

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[40] [Donat.] *Vit. Verg.* 17-9 (ed. Bugnoli / Stok [1997]; trans. Pullan).

[41] See Peirano (2012) 77-8. For more on the debate over the extent to which Donatus used Suetonius, see Naumann (1990) and Horsfall (1995). In addition, as Vessereau (1905: xxxii) points out, the *Codex Sangallensis* does not print *etiam de qua ambigitur*, presenting the *Aetna* as just another item on the list of Virgilian appendices.

[42] See Goodyear (1965) 56; (1984) 358-9.

[43] The full note on *Aen.* 3.571 reads thus: *'tonat aetna ruinis' sensus est: portus quidem securos nos faciebat, deest enim 'quidem', sed Aetna terrebat. et causa huius incendii secundum Aetnam Vergilii haec est: sunt terrae desudantes sulpur, ut paene totus tractus Campaniae, ubi est Vesuvius et Gaurus montes, quod indicat aquarum odor calentium. item novimus ex aquae motu ventum creari, esse etiam concavas terras. Aetnam constat ab ea parte, qua Eurus vel Africus flant, habere speluncas et plenas sulpuris et usque ad mare deductas. hae speluncae, recipientes in se fluctus, ventum creant, qui agitatus ignem gignit ex sulpure: unde est quod videtur incendium. hoc autem verum esse illa conprobat ratio, quia et aliis flantibus ventis nihil ex se emittit et pro modo flantum Euri vel Africi interdum fumum, interdum favillas, nonnumquam vomit incendia: quod et hoc loco ostendit; nam effectum indicat, supprimit causas* (ed. Thilo and Hagen [1881].

[44] See Goodyear (1965) 56; (1984) 358-9; Zogg (2016) 80.

superseded by our poem by the ninth century, provides a temptingly neat solution to the problem of our poem's attribution to Virgil, but is problematised by, as Goodyear puts it, the 'deafening silence' of Seneca on such a source.[45] We will likely never know the exact nature of the error, or chain of errors that resulted in our *Aetna* coming to be assigned to Virgil, but to my mind, the most likely explanation is that there were several poems about Mount Etna (in the words of Seneca, nothing short of a *sollemnem omnibus poetis locum*)[46] in transmission throughout antiquity, and that by late antiquity, one or some of these were associated with Virgil, but that our *Aetna* was the only one to survive the Dark Ages.

Despite the *Aetna*'s attribution to Virgil in the majority of manuscripts, the question of its Virgilian authenticity was seemingly put to bed in the Renaissance, as critics began to recognise the unlikelihood of this. That was, until the turn of the twentieth century, when first Kuczkiewicz (1884), then Alzinger (1896), Vessereau (1905, 1923) and Walter (1920-1) each re-asserted the case for Virgilian authorship, all largely basing their arguments on one passage from the poem, [V.]'s list of various works of art as tourist attractions at 594-7. These scholars argue that, since the *Medea* of Timomarchus was brought to Rome by Julius Caesar in the mid-40s BC (see Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 35.26), and the *Venus* of Apelles and *Heiffer* of Myron subsequently, they are inappropriate exempla of tourist attractions, should the poem post-date the mid-40s BC. This is an overly simplistic argument, given that it seemingly presumes that [V.] was an inhabitant of mainland Italy – an assumption that is not based on evidence.[47] Indeed Vessereau reveals a telling ulterior motive behind his support for this simplistic argument for an earlier dating when he remarks on [V.]'s linguistic defects: '*Elles s'expliqueraient d'elles-mêmes, si nous admettions que la poème date d'une quarantaine d'années avant Jésus-Christ; elles constitueraient un défaut bien plus grave, si nous prétendions que l'oeuvre appartient à l'époque d'Auguste ou à celle de Néron.*'[48]

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[45] Ibid. Given the frequency with which Seneca quotes Virgil's canonical works in his *Natural Questions*, he would surely have quoted a poem of Virgil's on volcanology.

[46] Sen. *Epist.* 79.5. Further discussion of the Etna-*topos* in Greco-Roman poetry at intr. II.

[47] Indeed, even if [V.] were an inhabitant of the mainland, why does the location of a work of art at Rome preclude it from being considered a tourist attraction that draws in observers from far and wide?

[48] Vessereau (1905) xlvii.

For the sake of scholarly understanding of the poem, thankfully this resurgence of the idea of its Virgilian authenticity was short lived. It is now generally recognised that, despite having the sort of 'Virgilian' colouring that one would expect from a didactic poem following in the wake of the *Georgics* (see intr. III.1), the *Aetna* firstly cannot have been written by Virgil, and secondly, to use Peirano's term, does not 'purport' to be written by Virgil in the manner of some of the other Virgilian appendices; [V.] is no more a *Vergilius personatus* than he is of Lucretius, Ovid or Manilius.[49] The comprehensive rejection of Virgilian authorship of the poem has allowed scholars to date with conviction the *Aetna* as a poem of the Neronian / early Flavian period, which engages with the canonical works of Virgil in the manner one would expect of a poem of that era.[50]

2) Cornelius Severus

By the Renaissance, critics had seemingly begun to recognise the issues associated with Virgilian authorship of the *Aetna*, and thus to search for other candidates. Two of our later manuscripts of the poem, Vaticanus 3272 (V) and Sloanius 777 (Sl), both dating to the late 1400s or early 1500s, ascribe it to the Augustan epic poet Cornelius Severus, who we know wrote a *Bellum Siculum*, praised by Quintilian at *Inst*. 10. 1. 89 for its quality, and an annalistic epic entitled *Res Romanae* (see Ov. *Pont*. 4. 16. 9), presumably alongside other now-lost works.[51] Following these later manuscripts, many of the earliest editions of the *Aetna* name both Virgil and Severus as potential authors.[52] The attribution of the poem to Severus by Joseph Scaliger (Scaliger the Younger) in his seminal 1572-3 edition of the *Appendix Vergiliana* seemingly ensured that Severan authorship of the *Aetna* became the consensus, largely unchallenged, for the ensuing two-hundred years. My dating of the poem very likely rules out Severan authorship of the *Aetna*. Nevertheless, it is worth evaluating why the poem came to be associated with this obscure Augustan epicist, if only to illustrate the sort of flawed critical processes that have plagued studies of the poem. As Ellis and Goodyear

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[49] In contrast to, e.g., the *Culex*, *Ciris* and *Catalepton*; for more on this, see Peirano (2012) 77-9.

[50] For further discussion of the hypertextual relationship between the *Aetna* and Virgil's canonical works, see intr. III.1.

[51] See *OCD* s.v. Cornelius Severus (Courtney).

[52] Goodyear (1965) 57.

have recognised, the *Aetna*'s Severan authorship tag likely owes itself almost entirely to Seneca's seventy-ninth epistle, in which, whilst encouraging his student Lucilius Junior to climb Mount Etna and subsequently treat it in a poem, Seneca remarks:[53]

> *quid tibi do, ne Aetnam describas in tuo carmine, ne hunc sollemnem omnibus poetis locum adtingas? quem quo minus Ovidius tractaret, nihil obstitit, quod iam Vergilius impleverat. ne Severum quidem Cornelium uterque deterruit.*

> 'Nay, what am I to offer you not merely to describe Aetna in your poem, and not to touch lightly upon a topic which is a matter of ritual for all poets? Ovid could not be prevented from using this theme simply because Vergil had already fully covered it; nor could either of these writers frighten off Cornelius Severus.'[54]

Scaliger the Younger, who was almost uniquely enamoured by the quality of the *Aetna*, and no doubt therefore wanted to assign it to a 'great' author, presumably took this Senecan anecdote as a chance to gift it to an appropriate candidate, Severus.[55] However, as had been pointed out first by Wernsdorf, and subsequently by Munro, Goodyear et al., the Senecan passage suggests that the three named poets, rather than writing a poem solely devoted to Mount Etna, addressed it as a set-piece descriptive *topos* within a longer narrative poem.[56] External evidence supports this interpretation; whilst, as mentioned above, we cannot rule out the chance that Virgil and / or Ovid wrote an *Aetna*-poem at some point during their careers, we know for a fact that both of them addressed the volcano in their canonical epics.[57] It is therefore likely that Severus emulated his epic predecessors / contemporaries by including in his Sicilian epic a description of Mount Etna. This opinion was first aired by Wernsdorf in 1785 as a premise for his proposition of a new authorship candidate, the addressee of Seneca's seventy-ninth epistle, Lucilius Junior himself. Following Wernsdorf's seminal thesis, Lucilius Junior immediately superseded Severus as the premier candidate

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[53] Ellis (1902) xxiii-iv; Goodyear (1965) 57.

[54] Sen. *Epist.* 79.5 (ed. and trans. Gummere [1917]).

[55] On his attribution of the *Aetna* to Severus and therefore an Augustan / Tiberian date, Scaliger remarks: '*quo neque post tempora Tiberii Caesaris cultius poema neque mendosius ullum ad nos pervenit.*' See Munro (1867) 26, 32.

[56] See Munro (1867) 33; Goodyear (1965) 57.

[57] See, respectively, Virg. *Aen.* 3.570-87, Ov. *Met.* 15.340-55.

for authorship of our poem, and such is his apparent appropriateness that he has never lost this position. I shall now summarise and assess his credentials.

3) Gaius Lucilius (Junior)

The best I can say for the case of Lucilius Junior as the author of our *Aetna* is that it is highly unlikely, but at least not impossible. For, unlike our previous two candidates, he was likely alive during at least some of the period of time (c. 65-79 AD) that is the modern scholarly consensus for the dating-scope of the *Aetna*.[58] Other pieces of circumstantial evidence combine to make Lucilius' authorship of the poem an admittedly tantalising, if unlikely, possibility. First and foremost is Seneca's seventy-ninth epistle, in which, as we have already seen, the Stoic sage requests his student both to climb Mount Etna, and describe it in a poem as his predecessors had done.[59] Whilst it is likely that Seneca here meant 'as part of that poem more broadly about Sicily that you are already writing' (see discussion above), we cannot make assumptions about what precise literary output Lucilius' ascension of the volcano inspired (or of course, whether he ever actually followed out his mentor's request).[60] What can be said with a degree of conviction on the basis of *Epistula* 79 and other Senecan titbits is that Lucilius spent time in Sicily as a procurator, and was a poet.[61] A second, and arguably more significant, factor to consider is Lucilius' close literary relationship with Seneca (Lucilius is the addressee of both Seneca's *Natural Questions* and his *Epistles*), something that would provide a perfect explanation for the difficult issue of the unusually close intertextual relationship between the *Aetna* and the *Natural Questions* (a relationship so close that the one text paraphrases the other: see discussion above).

More tenuously, a case might be made for matching the depiction of Lucilius from the *Natural Questions* and *Epistles* as Seneca's challenging interlocutor and struggling Stoic *proficiens* (perhaps formerly Epicurean) onto the philosophically

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[58] We know that Lucilius was alive when the *Natural Questions* was published at c. 65 AD, given that he is the addressee; we do not know when he died.

[59] See Sen. *Epist.* 79.

[60] In this regard, I agree with the opinion of Ellis (1901) xxxvii.

[61] For Lucilius' procuratorship in Sicily, see Sen *Epist.* 31. 9, 45. 2, 79. 1; *Nat. Quest.* 4. *praef.* 1. For Lucilius as a poet, see *Nat. Quest.* 4. *praef.* 14, 4.2.2. For his poetic fragments (two iambics and two hexameters), see *Epist.* 8.10, 24.21; *Nat. Quest.* 3. 1. 1.

eclectic voice of [V.], who throughout his poem blends doctrines and approaches.[62] There is no doubt that Lucilius Junior, as this Senecan-inspired Sicilian Procurator / poet, could be seen to fit the bill as the author of our poem rather well. However, we ought to remind ourselves just how unlikely a proposition that is. We likely would not have ever considered suggesting Lucilius as a candidate for the poem's authorship were it not for *Epistula* 79, which, after all, could be a complete 'red herring'. And even if Lucilius did follow out his mentor's request and write a poem about Mount Etna, how could one say for certain that it is our extant *Aetna*, given the amount of classical literature that is lost?[63] For these reasons, I re-state my earlier conviction that the best one can say for Lucilian authorship of the poem is that it is unlikely, but at least not impossible.

4) The real *Aetna*-poet

Given the uncertainty that shrouds the *Aetna*'s authorship question, throughout my commentary, I avoid speculation. Despite my continued uncertainty over the identity of the *Aetna*-poet, I stand by with absolute certainty my dating of the poem as from the period of 65-79 AD, and use this dating-scope as an essential premise of the commentary. I am certain that, at the very least, [V.] has accessed all of Lucretius, Virgil, Ovid, Manilius and Seneca.[64] Whether [V.] had access to other Neronian authors, such as Lucan, I am less certain, though evidence from the poem suggests to me that he might have done.[65] Given the *Aetna*'s 'closeness' to the *Natural Questions*, I suspect that it dates from the first half of this fifteen-year dating-scope. Given the way in which the Gigantomachy is often used as a metaphor for civil war in Latin poetry, I have wondered whether [V.]'s mock-heroic account of this mythological conflict (see 41-73n.) provides a clue to a more precise dating of the poem in the immediate aftermath of the Year of the

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[62] See the laborious and inconclusive efforts of Munro (1867) 33-7. For more on [V]'s philosophically eclectic voice, see intr. III.3-5.

[63] See the fate of Cornelius Severus' works, discussed above.

[64] See intr. III for more on this.

[65] In regard to the dating of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, we know that three books of it were published in 62/63 AD, and a *terminus ante quem* for the rest of the poem is provided by the poet's death in 65 AD: see *OCD* s.v. Lucan (W. B. Anderson, P. R. Hardie). For a moment in the poem at which [V.] may be engaging with Lucan, see, e.g., comm. 43-4n.

Four Emperors and the rise of the Flavian dynasty (i.e. 69-70 AD), but this is no more than a hunch, and cannot be used with anything close to certainty. For this reason, I deem it safest and best to maintain as my dating-scope for the poem the fifteen-year period from 65-79 AD.

As a final word on the authorship question, personally I consider it most likely that the author of the *Aetna* is not a name known to us today, and that, by little more than chance, his version of the *Aetna* came to be the one that survived antiquity, only to be used by scholars to fill in gaps in the oeuvres of his more illustrious poetic predecessors. As I discuss in my preface, the lack of authorial biography associated with the poem is, in one respect, grounding – the commentator is compelled to base his or her arguments on purely what is in the text – but also, in a way, liberating; the commentator is free from the methodological issues associated with authorship, and able to provide a particularly personal reading of the text. In the following sections of my introduction, I discuss in detail some of the points of interest that emerge from my reading of the text and its predecessors: firstly (in part II), illustrating the literary backdrop to the composition of the poem, the development of the Etna-*topos* in Greco-Roman poetry; secondly (in part III), evaluating the poem's hypertextual relationships with its most influential models, before (in part IV), providing a reading of the poem as a deliberate didactic failure.

II. The Development of the Etna-*topos* in Greco-Roman Poetry

> *quid tibi do, ne Aetnam describas in tuo carmine, ne hunc sollemnem omnibus poetis locum attingas? quem quo minus Ovidius tractaret, nihil obstitit, quod iam Vergilius impleverat. ne Severum quidem Cornelium uterque deterruit.*

> 'Nay, what am I to offer you not merely to describe Mount Etna in your poem, and not to touch lightly upon a topic which is a matter of ritual for all poets? Ovid could not be prevented from using this theme simply because Virgil had already fully covered it; nor could either of these writers frighten off Cornelius Severus.'[66]

So remarks Seneca to his student Lucilius Junior in *Epistula* 79. Whilst Seneca's description of Mount Etna as nothing short of a *sollemnem omnibus poetis locum* suggests that the extant Greco-Roman poetry on the subject matter is just the tip of the iceberg, we are nevertheless fortunate to have several poetic descriptions of the volcano from antiquity, alongside some revealing literary criticism of them. This introductory piece will provide a survey of the extant poetic depictions of Mount Etna – and ancient commentary on them – up until the publication of the *Aetna* in the second half of the first century AD.[67] It will operate as a point of reference for quotation and further analysis of several passages of literature beyond the alpha text that are cited regularly throughout the commentary proper. In doing so, it will demonstrate how Mount Etna becomes a Greco-Roman literary *topos* of great significance, and so illustrate the context for the composition of the *Aetna*. It will trace the origins of the themes, motifs and tensions that are apparent throughout the poem. Chief amongst these will be the development of Mount Etna as, in the literary *imaginaire*, a *locus classicus* for the intersection of the conflicting spheres of rational science and imaginative mythology, a tension that underpins the *Aetna*.[68]

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[66] Sen. *Epist.* 79.5 (ed. and trans. Gummere [1917]).

[67] See intr. I for my dating of the poem. A similar analytical survey of ancient depictions of Mount Etna has been conducted by G. D. Williams (2017) 23-71. Williams' is an excellent piece, and there is a degree of crossover between his and my own conclusions, which I acknowledge throughout. Despite the crossover, this piece is essential to the functioning of the commentary as a whole.

[68] A tension that has already been recognised and discussed by scholarship: see, most notably, Glauthier (2011) 85-129, Buxton (2016) and G. D. Williams (2017) 23-71.

1) Archaic Greek Origins: Hesiod, Pindar and Aeschylus

Our earliest extant example of Mount Etna being used as a set-piece poetic *topos* is Pindar's depiction of it in his first *Pythian Ode*. However, in order to understand the potential context to that passage, it is necessary to look further back, to Hesiod. One of the concurrent features across many of the accounts that will be discussed in this study is the association of Mount Etna firstly with Typhon and the Typhonomachy, and then subsequently with Enceladus and the Gigantomachy. Hesiod provides perhaps the original 'canonical' account of the Typhonomachy at *Theogony* 820-68, and perhaps our first extant association of Typhon with Mount Etna at *Theo.* 859-61:[69]

> φλὸξ δὲ κεραυνωθέντος ἀπέσσυτο τοῖο ἄνακτος
> οὔρεος ἐν βήσσησιν ἀιδνῆς [ἀϊτνῆς] παιπαλοέσσης
> πληγέντος.[70]

'A flame shot forth from that thunderbolted lord in the mountain's dark, rugged dales [in the dales of the mountain, rugged Aetna] as he (Typhon) was struck.'[71]

As pointed out by West (n. ad loc.), Tzetzes at *Lycophron* 688 understands Hesiod to be speaking of Etna here, as does the scholiast on *Prometheus Bound* 351. Nevertheless, as West comments, despite the obscurity of the adjective ἀιδνῆς, for several reasons, the alternative reading ἀϊτνῆς is deeply unlikely.[72] Regardless of what were or were not the original words of the *Theogony*, on account of perhaps a misreading of line 860, or the prevalence of an alternative pre-Hesiodic source, by the time of Pindar (the early fifth century BC), Mount Etna had seemingly come to be associated with Typhon.[73] In Pindar's first *Pythian Ode*

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[69] [V.] uses Hesiod's Titanomachy (*Theo.* 820-68) as a model for his account of the Gigantomachy: see comm. 41-73n.

[70] See West (1966) 143 for apparatus criticus.

[71] Hes. *Theo.* 859-61 (trans. Most [2018]).

[72] West argues 1) that the prosody required is unparalleled, 2) that it is unlikely that such a familiar name would be corrupted to such an obscure adjective, and 3) that the story does not work; even if ἀϊτνῆς is read, in Hesiod's account, Typhon is not placed under the mountain, but on it, and then taken to Tartarus.

[73] For the tradition of Typhon's burial under Etna deriving from an alternative source, see Burton (1962) 98; comm. 41-73n. There is of course a chance that the Typhonic association with Etna is a Pindaric invention.

(addressed to Hieron, tyrant of the newly founded city of Aetna, on winning the Delphic chariot race in 470 BC), having delivered an invocation to the power of music (1-12), the epinician poet provides our first extant set-piece depiction of the volcano:

> ὅσσα δὲ μὴ πεφίληκε Ζεύς, ἀτύζονται βοὰν
> Πιερίδων ἀΐοντα, γᾶν τε καὶ πόντον κατ᾽ ἀμαιμάκετον,
> ὅς τ᾽ ἐν αἰνᾷ Ταρτάρῳ κεῖται, θεῶν πολέμιος,
> Τυφὼς ἑκατοντακάρανος: τόν ποτε
> Κιλίκιον θρέψεν πολυώνυμον ἄντρον: νῦν γε μὰν
> ταί θ᾽ ὑπὲρ Κύμας ἁλιερκέες ὄχθαι
> Σικελία τ᾽ αὐτοῦ πιέζει στέρνα λαχνάεντα: κίων δ᾽ οὐρανία συνέχει,
> νιφόεσσ᾽ Αἴτνα, πάνετες χιόνος ὀξείας τιθήνα:
>
> τᾶς ἐρεύγονται μὲν ἀπλάτου πυρὸς ἁγνόταται
> ἐκ μυχῶν παγαί: ποταμοὶ δ᾽ ἀμέραισιν μὲν προχέοντι ῥόον καπνοῦ
> αἴθων᾽: ἀλλ᾽ ἐν ὄρφναισιν πέτρας
> φοίνισσα κυλινδομένα φλὸξ ἐς βαθεῖαν φέρει πόντου πλάκα σὺν πατάγῳ.
> κεῖνο δ᾽ Ἁφαίστοιο κρουνοὺς ἑρπετὸν
> δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμπει: τέρας μὲν θαυμάσιον προσιδέσθαι, θαῦμα δὲ καὶ
> παρεόντων ἀκοῦσαι,
> οἷον Αἴτνας ἐν μελαμφύλλοις δέδεται κορυφαῖς
> καὶ πέδῳ, στρωμνὰ δὲ χαράσσοισ᾽ ἅπαν νῶτον ποτικεκλιμένον κεντεῖ.

'But those creatures for whom Zeus has no love are terrified when they hear the song of the Pierians, those on land and in the overpowering sea, and the one who lies in dread Tartarus, enemy of the gods Typhos the hundred-headed, whom the famous Cilician cave once reared; now, however, the sea-fencing cliffs above Cymeas well as Sicily weigh upon his shaggy chest, and a skyward column constrains him, snowy Aetna, nurse of biting snow all year round, from whose depths belch forth holiest springs of unapproachable fire; during the days rivers of lava pour forth a blazing stream of smoke, but in times of darkness a rolling red flame carries rocks into the deep expanse of the sea with a crash. That monster sends up most terrible springs of Hephaestus' fire – a portent wondrous to behold, a wonder even to hear of from those present – such a one is confined within Aetna's dark and leafy peaks and the plain; and a jagged bed goads the entire length of his back that lies against it.'[74]

Having introduced Typhon as a θεῶν πολέμιος ('enemy of the gods'), Pindar delivers a vivid, ekphrastic depiction of Mount Etna. His use of imagery plays with the inherently paradoxical nature of the volcano; many of the contrasts that come to be associated with Etna in later Greco-Roman literature derive themselves

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[74] Pind. *Pyth.* 1.13-28 (ed. and trans. Race [1997]).

from this passage.[75] One of these is the paradox that something could be, at the same time, both so cold and so hot.[76] Pindar introduces Etna, in verse 20, as νιφόεσσ᾽ Αἴτνα (the epithet meaning 'snow-clad'), πάνετες χιόνος ὀξείας τιθήνα ('who is frost-bound all year round'), before providing a stark contrast in verses 21-2, which emphasise the heat of the volcano by focusing on its ἀγνόται ('sacred') founts of fire.[77] The poet then stresses another of the volcano's inherent paradoxes – its supposedly contrasting appearance and volatility by day and night; Pindar remarks how, by day (ἀμέραισιν), 'rivers of lava pour forth a blazing stream of smoke', but that 'in the dark' (ἐν ὄρφναισιν), the mountain bursts into life, its crimson fire sweeping up rocks and casting them into the sea with a crash (σὺν πατάγῳ).[78] Whilst such a contrast seems hyperbolic, one needs only imagine the spectacle of a volcano erupting by night to understand what Pindar is envisaging.

In his depiction of Mount Etna, Pindar personifies – or perhaps animalises – his subject matter, in order to emphasise its Typhonic associations.[79] In verses 25-6, the poet describes how 'that monster (κεῖνο ἑρπετόν) sends up most terrible springs of Hephaestus' fire (Ἁφαίστοιο).' Pindar's use of ἑρπετόν here refers both to the mountain itself, and the hundred-headed creature trapped beneath it, Typhon; it is as if it is Typhon himself who is issuing the mountain's fount of fire.[80] Note also the way in which Pindar highlights the mythological associations between Mount Etna and the forge of Hephaestus by using Ἁφαίστοιο metonymically at verse 25 – an association of the volcano that [V.] takes pains to dismiss at *Aetna* 29-35.[81]

Pindar ends his description of Etna by emphasising the volcano's 'wondrous' quality,[82] describing it as both a θαῦμα ('wonder') to look upon, and to listen to, before reiterating the fact that the monster – Typhon – remains within it.[83] *Pythian*

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[75] See, e.g., the description of the volcano by Virgil at *Aen.* 3.570-87, discussed in section 2 below.

[76] Something that later intrigued Seneca: see *Epist.* 79.4.

[77] For the depiction of Mount Etna's fires as holy, cf. *Aetna* 187 (comm. n. ad loc.).

[78] Pind. *Pyth.* 1.22-4.

[79] See intr. IV.2.iii for the way in which [V.] similarly personifies the volcano.

[80] Cf., in relation to the monster as the source of Etna's fires, Aesch. *P.V.* 363-72, Virg. *Aen.* 3.578-87. and *Aetna* 71-3 (see comm. n. ad loc.).

[81] See comm. n. ad loc.

[82] A key tension of the *Aetna*: discussion of which at intr. IV.4.i.

[83] Pind. *Pyth.*1.26-9.

1's status as epinician poetry has encouraged commentators to speculate about a 'message' or 'moral' from the Typhon-focused depiction of Mount Etna for Pindar's audience and addressee, the tyrant Hieron. The specifics are debated, but there is a scholarly consensus that the lingering presence of Typhon as this 'monster under the mountain' is a reminder from the poet to his addressee to stay on the right side of Zeus.[84]

Given this passage's extensive use in later poetry and literary criticism (to be discussed), we know that Pindar's description of Mount Etna was widely read and appreciated in antiquity.[85] Though the priority of the two texts in question is uncertain, likely the first reception of this Pindaric passage is in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, whose protagonist (in conversation with Oceanus), remarks at 351-72:

>τὸν γηγενῆ τε Κιλικίων οἰκήτορα
>ἄντρων ἰδὼν ᾤκτιρα, δάιον τέρας
>ἑκατογκάρανον πρὸς βίαν χειρούμενον
>Τυφῶνα θοῦρον: πᾶσιν ὅς ἀντέστη θεοῖς,
>σμερδναῖσι γαμφηλαῖσι συρίζων φόβον:
>ἐξ ὀμμάτων δ' ἤστραπτε γοργωπὸν σέλας,
>ὡς τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδ' ἐκπέρσων βίᾳ:
>ἀλλ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ Ζηνὸς ἄγρυπνον βέλος,
>καταιβάτης κεραυνὸς ἐκπνέων φλόγα,
>ὃς αὐτὸν ἐξέπληξε τῶν ὑψηγόρων
>κομπασμάτων. φρένας γὰρ εἰς αὐτὰς τυπεὶς
>ἐφεψαλώθη κἀξεβροντήθη σθένος.
>καὶ νῦν ἀχρεῖον καὶ παράορον δέμας
>κεῖται στενωποῦ πλησίον θαλασσίου
>ἱπούμενος ῥίζαισιν Αἰτναίαις ὕπο:
>κορυφαῖς δ' ἐν ἄκραις ἥμενος μυδροκτυπεῖ
>Ἥφαιστος: ἔνθεν ἐκραγήσονταί ποτε
>ποταμοὶ πυρὸς δάπτοντες ἀγρίαις γνάθοις
>τῆς καλλικάρπου Σικελίας λευροὺς γύας:
>τοιόνδε Τυφὼς ἐξαναζέσει χόλον
>θερμοῖς ἀπλάτου βέλεσι πυρπνόου ζάλης,
>καίπερ κεραυνῷ Ζηνὸς ἠνθρακωμένος.

'And I have seen and pitied the earth-born inhabitant of the Cilician cave, a fierce monster with a hundred heads, now subdued by force—furious Typhon, who once rose up against the gods, hissing terror from his formidable jaws

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while a fierce radiance flashed from his eyes, with the intention of overthrowing the autocracy of Zeus by force. But there came against him the unsleeping weapon of Zeus, the downrushing thunderbolt breathing out flame, which struck him out of his haughty boasts—for he was hit right in the centre of his body, and his strength was thundered out of him and reduced to ashes. And now he lies, a sprawled, inert body, near the narrows of the sea, crushed under the roots of Mount Etna; on its topmost peaks Hephaestus sits forging red-hot iron, and from thence one day will burst forth rivers of fire, devouring with their savage jaws the smooth fields of Sicily with their fine crops. Such is the rage in which Typhos will boil over, raining hot darts of fiery breath that no one can touch, even though he has been calcinated by the thunderbolt of Zeus.'[86]

The broad similarities between this Aeschylean Typhonic episode and its (likely) Pindaric predecessor are plain to see.[87] Griffith draws up a useful list of close parallels, the strongest of which are Κιλικίων (*P.V.* 351; cf. *Pyth.* 1.16), τέρας (*P.V.* 352; cf. *Pyth.* 1.26), ἀντέστη θεοῖς (*P.V.* 354; cf. *Pyth.* 1.15 θεῶν πολέμιος), Ἥφαιστος (*P.V.* 367; cf. *Pyth.* 1.25) and ποταμοὶ πυρὸς (*P.V.* 368; cf. *Pyth.* 1.22).[88] Whereas Pindar's passage is a set-piece depiction of the volcano first and foremost (with admittedly very strong links to the Typhon myth), Aeschylus' (through the mouth of Prometheus) is primarily a digression on this 'foeman of the gods'. Whereas Pindar keeps it (at least to an extent) ambiguous as to whether Etna's fires are created by the monster (see *Pyth.* 1.25-6), Aeschylus attributes the volcano's fires fully to the villain trapped beneath it (see *P.V.* 368-72). Much to the annoyance of [V.] (presumably), the other headline detail of the Aeschylean account is the presence of Hephaestus.[89] Similarly to his treatment of Typhon, the ambiguity inherent in Pindar's account has been clarified by Aeschylus; whereas, in the Pindaric version, Ἁφαίστοιο (25) is used as a suggestive metonym for fire, in the Aeschylean version, Hephaestus

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[86] Aesch. *P. V.* 351-72 (ed. and trans. Sommerstein [2009]).

[87] The likelihood (promoted by Griffith [1978] 105-40, [1982] 351-72n; accepted by G. D. Williams [2017: 29] and Stamatopoulou [2017: 55]) is that Pindar's passage predates that of Aeschylus. In his earlier piece, Griffith gives several convincing reasons as to why the Pindaric passage likely predates the Aeschylean one; these, summarised, are: 1) the way in which the Aeschylean passage shows unmistakable echoes of Hesiod, but the Pindaric seemingly does not (though cf. the contrasting opinion upheld by Debiasi [2008: 79-94] and Stamatopoulou [2017: 53-63]); 2) the early date required of *P.V.* were it to predate *Pythian* 1; and 3) the unlikelihood of Pindar taking his set piece from an essentially random bit of *Prometheus Bound.* Whilst I agree with Griffith on the unlikelihood of the Aeschylean passage predating the Pindaric passage, I do not rule out von Mess's 1901 suggestion that both sources drew independently on a common source, a likely post-Hesiodic epic variant: see comm. 41-73n. for more on potential ancient variants of the Hesiodic Typhonomachy.

[88] For the rest of these parallels, see Griffith (1978) 135.

[89] Cf. comm. 29-35n.

(alongside Typhon) features as a character.[90] Aeschylus' account helps enshrine these two myths associated with Mount Etna into the poetic canon. I shall now address how these authors were used and adapted by their Latin poetic successors.

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[90] Aesch. *P.V.* 366-7.

2) Virgil and his Readers: Creation of a *topos*

If this study were strictly chronological, I would here address Lucretius'
rationalising account of the workings of Mount Etna at *De Rerum Natura* 6.680-
702, but given the fact that, as early as the second century AD, commentators
were evaluating the use of Pindar in Virgil's own description of Etna (*Aen*. 3.570-
87), it makes sense to discuss the Virgilian passage next.[91] The context for this
description of Etna is Aeneas' arrival in Sicily and ensuing struggles with the
variety of *monstra* associated with the island – the Cyclops, Scylla and Charybdis.
Virgil casts Mount Etna as a *monstrum* itself:

> Portus ab accessu ventorum immotus et ingens
> ipse: sed horrificis iuxta tonat Aetna ruinis,
> interdumque atram prorumpit ad aethera nubem
> turbine fumantem piceo et candente favilla,
> attollitque globos flammarum et sidera lambit;
> interdum scopulos avulsaque viscera montis
> erigit eructans, liquefactaque saxa sub auras
> cum gemitu glomerat fundoque exaestuat imo.
> fama est Enceladi semustum fulmine corpus
> urgeri mole hac, ingentemque insuper Aetnam
> impositam ruptis flammam exspirare caminis,
> et fessum quotiens mutet latus, intremere omnem
> murmure Trinacriam et caelum subtexere fumo.
> noctem illam tecti silvis immania monstra
> perferimus, nec quae sonitum det causa videmus.
> nam neque erant astrorum ignes nec lucidus aethra
> siderea polus, obscuro sed nubila caelo,
> et lunam in nimbo nox intempesta tenebat.

'[Aeneas speaking:] There lies a harbour, safe from the winds' approach and
spacious in itself, but near at hand Etna thunders with terrifying crashes, and
now hurls forth to the sky a black cloud, smoking with pitch-black eddy and
glowing ashes, and uplifts balls of flame and licks the stars—now violently
vomits forth rocks, the mountain's uptorn entrails, and whirls molten stone
skyward with a roar, and boils up from its lowest depths. The story runs that
Enceladus' form, scathed by the thunderbolt, is weighed down by that mass,
and mighty Etna, piled above, from its burst furnaces breathes forth flame;
and ever as he turns his weary side all Trinacria moans and trembles, veiling
the sky in smoke. All that night we hide in the woods, enduring monstrous
horrors, and see not from what cause comes the sound. For neither did the
stars show their fires, nor was heaven bright with starlight, but mists darkened
the sky and the dead of night held fast the moon in cloud.'[92]

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[91] See Gell. 17.10.8-19, discussed below.

[92] Virg. *Aen*. 3.570-87 (ed. and trans. Fairclough [1916]).

It becomes apparent to the reader that much of the Pindaric vivid description and personification of the mountain has been heightened by Virgil. Etna thunders (*tonat*) with *horrificis ruinis* ('terrifying crashes'), and in a clear recall of the Pindaric colour-contrasting, hurls forth a 'black cloud' (*atram nubem*), smoking with a 'pitch-black eddy' (*turbine piceo*) and glowing ash (*candente favilla*). Pindar's anthropomorphic / animalistic impression of Etna is heightened by Virgil, who presents his reader with the vivid images of the volcano lifting up balls of flame, licking (*lambit*) the stars, and, most dramatically, violently vomiting (*eructans*) rocks and its own *avolsa viscera* ('uptorn entrails'). Virgil's image of the volcano spewing up its own innards is particularly effective, evoking the idea of volcanic eruption being, on the one hand, a process of landscape self-destruction, but on the other, one of regeneration or metamorphosis of landscape.[93] Whilst describing the acoustics of the mountain, the Augustan poet delivers his most obvious 'borrowing' from Pindar, strongly echoing the Pindaric σὺν πατάγῳ with his own *cum gemitu* in verse 577.[94] Virgil's use of his model here epitomises the dynamics of appropriation that are more broadly at play between the Augustan poet and his Greek predecessor. Virgil's Latin *gemitus* ('groan', 'sigh', 'wail' or 'lament') has anthropomorphic connotations lacked by Pindar's Greek πάταγος, which is notably never used in classical Greek to refer to human sounds.[95] What might seem at first to be a straightforward translation of the text from Virgil is actually, to use Genette's term, a 'transformation' of it, which contributes to the passage's heightening of the Pindaric personification of the mountain.[96]

Whilst Virgil maintains this Pindaric focus on the 'monster under the mountain', he has changed the identity of that monster, replacing Typhon with Enceladus, one of the giants. Unsurprisingly for a poet so heavily influenced by his Alexandrian predecessors, there is a likely Callimachean hypotext behind this move.[97] In the proem to the *Aetia* (fragment 1), Callimachus' speaker wishes:

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[93] This transformative effect of eruption can be seen to an astonishing extent if one compares images of Mount St. Helens pre- and post- its catastrophic 1980 eruption.

[94] See Horsfall n. ad loc.

[95] See Liddell and Scott s.v. πάταγος.

[96] See Genette (1982) 26, summarised at Schmitz (2007) 81.

[97] See Horsfall n. on *Aen.* 3.570-87.

αὖθι τὸ δ' ἐκδύοιμι, τό μοι βάρος ὅσσον ἔπεστι
τριγλώχιν ὀλοῷ νῆσος ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδῳ.

'[Would] that I may then shed old age, which weighs upon me like the three-cornered island upon deadly Enceladus.'[98]

It is important to note that Virgil here uses *fama est* to introduce the Enceladean association with Etna, the cue-phrase for one of his signature 'Alexandrian footnotes'.[99] In this way, Virgil both distances himself further from the account (the fact that Aeneas is the speaker of it already distances him from it to an extent), and 'nods' to the multiplicity of variants of the myth.[100] This is something that [V.] seemingly misses (or more likely deliberately plays with) when he castigates his predecessor for associating Etna with Enceladus with the deeply ironic remark: *haec est mendosae vulgata licentia famae* ('This [the poetic association of Enceladus with Etna] is the popularised licence of fraudulent rumour.')[101]

As demonstrated by this likely Callimachean influence, and his transformation of the Pindaric material, Virgil's description of Mount Etna is far from a straightforward rehash of Pindar's version.[102] It is a passage that draws on a variety of different literary sources, whilst applying virtuoso *auxesis* to its primary Pindaric model. Fascinatingly, this view was not held by some of Virgil's ancient critics. In *Attic Nights* 17.10, the second century grammarian Aulus Gellius cites the viewpoints of the sophist Favorinus on Virgil's description of the volcano.[103] Gellius reports that Favorinus had addressed the passage in question in the context of Virgil's supposed deathbed-request that his friends burn the *Aeneid*, on the grounds that it was not yet complete:

"in his autem," inquit, "quae videntur retractari et corrigi debuisse, is maxime locus est qui de monte Aetna factus est. nam cum Pindari, veteris poetae,

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[98] Call. *Aet.* Frag. 1.35-6 (ed. and trans. Trypanis [1973]).

[99] G. D. Williams (2012) 35. For Virgil's use of this technique elsewhere, cf. e.g. *Ecl.* 6.74; discussion at Peirano (2009), (2011) 193-4; comm. 74n.

[100] See Horsfall n. on *Aen.* 3.570-87.

[101] See comm. 74n. for further discussion thereof, and for a comparison with the *Ciris*-poet's similar treatment of *Ecl.* 6.74.

[102] On the variety of sources used by Virgil here, see Thomas (1999) 283-6, Horsfall n. on *Aen.* 3.570-87, G. D. Williams (2012) 35.

[103] Gellius' account of Favorinus' monologue is also paraphrased at Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 5.17.8-14.

carmen quod de natura atque flagrantia montis eius compositum est, aemulari vellet, eiusmodi sententias et verba molitus est, ut Pindaro quoque ipso, qui nimis opima pinguique esse facundia existimatus est, insolentior hoc quidem in loco tumidiorque sit."

'He [Favorinus] said: "Now among those passages [of the *Aeneid*], which particularly seem to have needed revision and correction is the one which was composed about Mount Etna. For wishing to rival [*aemulari vellet*] the poem which the earlier poet Pindar composed about the nature and eruption of that mountain, he [Virgil] has heaped up such words and expressions that in this passage at least he is more extravagant and bombastic [*insolentior tumidiorque*] even than Pindar himself, who was thought to have too rich and luxuriant a style."'[104]

Favorinus' criticism of the Virgilian depiction of Mount Etna derives from its excess. Gellius reports that Favorinus then clarified his point by comparing the two passages side by side.[105] It becomes apparent very quickly that Favorinus was not a particularly imaginative reader of Virgil. In the passage cited above, we see that he criticises the Augustan poet for the very act of attempting to engage competitively with his predecessor (*aemulari*). He goes on to criticise Virgil as a straightforward translator of the Pindaric material, seemingly either missing the point of Virgil's transformation completely, or simply not accepting *aemulatio* as a valid literary approach.[106] All of Virgil's clever heightening of the Pindaric imagery and personification comes under fire from Favorinus as mis-rendering of the original Greek, before the Sophist concludes with the ironically apt: *omnium, quae monstra dicuntur, monstruosissimum est* ('this is the most monstrous of all monstrous descriptions.')[107] This is ironic because Virgil's 'monstrous' transformation of Pindar's description of Mount Etna is, in fact, perfectly appropriate for its context (something Favorinus disregards). One ought to remember that Virgil's description of Etna is not delivered through the mouth of an omniscient narrator, but through that of Aeneas – Aeneas who, at this point of his narrative, is seeking to illustrate to his Carthaginian audience all the horrors of Sicily. Virgil's anthropomorphic mountain, which spews forth blood-red *viscera*,

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[104] Gell. 17.10.8 (ed. and trans. Rofle [1927]).

[105] Gell. 17.10.9-19

[106] Gell. 17.10.11-19. For *aemulatio* (rivalry) and *imitatio* (imitation) as modern literary critical terms, see, e.g., Russell (1979). I use them throughout my thesis.

[107] Gell. 17.10.19; see Horsfall n. on *Aen.* 570-87.

perfectly sets up the reader for the account of Polyphemus given by the abandoned Trojan Achaemenides, only a few verses later.[108]

Whilst I have been heavily critical of the views expressed on the Virgilian passage by Favorinus, Gellius and Macrobius (who paraphrases the Gellian passage at *Saturnalia* 5.17.8-14), their opinions on it reveal much about the approach of the ancient reader / literary critic, and the status of Mount Etna as a poetic *topos*. The Gellian view on poetic *aemulatio* contrasts heavily with that of Seneca expressed in *Letter* 79, to which I shall return, but not before I have discussed the treatment of Mount Etna by Lucretius and Ovid.

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[108] *Aen.* 3.588-654. On the relationship between Aeneas' description of Etna and Achaemenides' account, see Hardie (1986) 263-7; G. D. Williams (2017) 35-9.

3) Backdrop to the *Aetna*: Lucretius, Ovid and Seneca

Alongside a variety of other natural phenomena, Lucretius offers a rationalised explanation of the workings of Mount Etna in book 6 of his *De Rerum Natura*. His explanation of the volcano is preceded by a long introduction in which the Epicurean philosopher-poet first admits that the destruction caused in Sicily by the eruption of Etna (in most likely 122 B.C.) was 'no common devastation' (641), before arguing that even so, the volcano's destructive power should not be an excessive source of fear and wonder, given its insignificance in comparison to the entirety of the *mundus*.[109] Lucretius eventually explains the causes of the volcano's destructive power thus:

> Nunc tamen illa modis quibus inritata repente
> flamma foras vastis Aetnae fornacibus efflet,
> expediam. primum totius subcava montis
> est natura fere silicum suffulta cavernis.
> omnibus est porro in speluncis ventus et aer.
> ventus enim fit, ubi est agitando percitus aer.
> hic ubi percaluit cale fecitque omnia circum
> saxa furens, qua contingit, terramque et ab ollis
> excussit calidum flammis velocibus ignem,
> tollit se ac rectis ita faucibus eicit alte.
> fert itaque ardorem longe longeque favillam
> differt et crassa volvit caligine fumum
> extruditque simul mirando pondere saxa;
> ne dubites quin haec animai turbida sit vis.
> praeterea magna ex parti mare montis ad eius
> radices frangit fluctus aestumque resolvit.
> ex hoc usque mari speluncae montis ad altas
> perveniunt subter fauces. hac ire fatendumst
> * * *
> et penetrare mari penitus res cogit aperto
> atque efflare foras ideoque extollere flammam
> saxaque subiectare et arenae tollere nimbos.
> in summo sunt vertice enim crateres, ut ipsi
> nominitant, nos quod fauces perhibemus et ora.

'Nevertheless I will now explain in what ways the flame is excited which suddenly breathes out of the vast furnaces of Etna. Firstly, the whole mountain is hollow beneath, being supported for the most part upon caverns in the basalt rock. In all the caverns, moreover, is wind and air; for wind arises when the air is excited by driving about. When this wind has grown hot, and has heated all the surrounding rocks by its fury wherever it touches, and also the earth, and from these has struck out hot fire with quick flames, it rises and

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[109] Lucr. 6.647-79; cf. [V.]'s similar programmatic aim of demystification, discussed at intr. IV.3.iii.

throws itself upwards has grown straight through the mountain's throat. Thus it carries its fire afar, scatters ashes far abroad, rolls the smoke all thick and black, thrusts out at the same time rocks of wonderful weight; so that you may be sure that this is the turbulent force of air.

Besides, around a great part of the mountain's roots the sea breaks its waves and sucks back its surf. From this sea, caverns reach underground right to the lofty throat of the mountain. By these we must admit that [wind mingled with water] passes in, and that the nature of the case compels [it often to rise] and to penetrate completely within from the open sea, and to blow out the flame and so to uplift it on high, and cast up the rocks and raise clouds of sand; for on the topmost summit are craters, as they themselves call them, what we speak of as the throat or the mouth.'[110]

Lucretius offers a bipartite explanation of the destructive force of Etna. The first factor mentioned by the Epicurean poet is that one favoured by [V.]; namely that the volcano's power comes from supercharged subterranean winds.[111] Unsurprisingly, Lucretius avoids [V.]'s preferred, stoically charged term for 'wind', *spiritus*, preferring the less suggestive *ventus*.[112] The second half of the passage is devoted to Lucretius' somewhat bizarre theory that seawater further enhances the volcano's volatility.[113] As pointed out by Williams, despite Lucretius' dry, rationalised treatment of the volcano here, the Epicurean philosopher is not averse to using the mythology associated with the volcano to suit his purposes.[114] At *DRN* 1.68-9, Lucretius famously associates Epicurus' inquiry into the nature of the divine positively with the Gigantomachy.[115] Williams, following Hardie, argues convincingly that Virgil 'corrects' the sterile Lucretian impression of Gigantomachy in his digression on Mount Etna at *Aeneid* 3.570-87 by re-mythologising the volcano, and recasting Gigantomachy in its rightful place as a force of cosmic chaos.[116] Another author who seemingly plays with the Lucretian

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[110] Lucr. 6.680-702 (ed. and trans. Rouse [1924]).

[111] See, intr. III.4.

[112] Though it is not clear whether *spiritus* was used with particularly Stoic connotations prior to the writings of Cicero: see, e.g., Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 3.11.28. For [V.]'s use of this word, see, e.g., intr. III.4; comm. 188-219n.

[113] At 289-300, [V.] also seemingly proposes watery causes of volcanic activity: see comm. n. ad loc.; cf. e.g. also Arist. *Met.* 366a.31-366b.2; Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 23.4.

[114] G. D. Williams (2017) 38-45

[115] See Volk (2001) 107. G. D. Williams (2017: 42-3) argues that, alongside associating his most important philosophical model – Epicurus – with Gigantomachy, Lucretius does the same with his most important poetical model, Empedocles, at *DRN* 1.722-5.

[116] G. D. Williams (2017) 38; cf. Hardie (1986) 263-7.

impression of the volcano is Ovid, who at *Metamorphoses* 15.340-55, has Pythagoras comment:

> nec quae sulphureis ardet fornacibus Aetne,
> ignea semper erit, neque enim fuit ignea semper.
> nam sive est animal tellus et vivit habetque
> spiramenta locis flammam exhalantia multis,
> spirandi mutare vias, quotiensque movetur,
> has finire potest, illas aperire cavernas;
> sive leves imis venti cohibentur in antris
> saxaque cum saxis et habentem semina flammae
> materiam iactant, ea concipit ictibus ignem,
> antra relinquentur sedatis frigida ventis;
> sive bitumineae rapiunt incendia vires,
> luteave exiguis ardescunt sulphura fumis,
> nempe, ubi terra cibos alimentaque pinguia flammae
> non dabit absumptis per longum viribus aevum,
> naturaeque suum nutrimen deerit edaci,
> non feret illa famem desertaque deseret ignis.

'And Etna, which now glows hot with her sulphurous furnaces, will not always be on fire, neither was it always full of fire as now. For if the earth is of the nature of an animal, living and having many breathing-holes which exhale flames, she can change her breathing-places and, as often as she shakes herself, can close up these and open other holes; or if swift winds are penned up in deep caverns and drive rocks against rocks and substance containing the seeds of flame, and this catches fire from the friction of the stones, still the caves will become cool again when the winds have spent their force; or if it is pitchy substances that cause the fire, and yellow sulphur, burning with scarce seen flames, surely, when the earth shall no longer furnish food and rich sustenance for the fire, and its strength after long ages has been exhausted, and greedy Nature shall feel lack of her own nourishment, then she will not endure that hunger and, being deserted, will desert her fires.'[117]

Williams argues convincingly that, whilst there is clearly a Lucretian timbre to this passage (see, for example, its philosophical tone and use of trademark Epicurean multiple explanation [*sive* […] *sive*…]), Pythagoras' impression of Mount Etna challenges the earlier one of the Epicurean philosopher.[118] Only one of the three theories about Etna's volatility posited by Pythagoras clearly aligns with that of Lucretius, namely the second one, posited at 346-9, which states that the source of the volcano's fire is its subterranean winds. Pythagoras' first theory

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[117] Ov. *Met.* 15.340-55 (ed. and trans. Miller [1916]).

[118] G. D. Williams (2017) 55-6. For more on Epicurean multiple explanation, and [V.]'s use of it, see comm. 110-16n.

(342-5) seems to be a direct challenging of his Lucretian model; whilst, seemingly, it argues something similar to the second theory posited – that the earth is hollow and has underground air-currents – it is construed via an impression of an anthropomorphised earth. This image of a living, breathing earth, powered by *spiritus*, has considerable Stoic resonance.[119] What is more, the personification of subterranean forces re-associates the volcano with the 'monster under the mountain' myth. Williams argues that Pythagoras' supposedly rationalised impression of Mount Etna is further problematised by Calliope's heavily 'mythologised' impression of Sicily at *Met.* 5.346-56 (in which the island is essentially depicted as the defeated giant), and by Pythagoras' seeming devotion to the myths of the poets and paradoxography, which surrounds his discourse on Etna.[120] In essence, the reader struggles to take the Ovidian demythologised impression of Etna seriously. In the Lucretian and Ovidian descriptions of Mount Etna, we see the development of the tension between myth and science that underpins [V.]'s discourse on the volcano.[121] When Pythagoras imitates Lucretius by providing his own (likely ironic) rationalisation of the volcano, it becomes apparent that the Etna-*topos* has transcended the sphere of literary aesthetics and interaction, and become a vehicle for the espousing of a philosophical world view. This is the immediate backdrop to [V.]'s creation of a 645-verse expansion of Lucretius' rationalisation of the volcano's workings.[122] From here, I shall return to our starting point for this discussion, Seneca's *Letter* 79.

In this fascinating document, Seneca demonstrates a remarkable awareness of the literary dynamics involved in the establishment of the Etna-*topos*. Having introduced the volcano to his addressee Lucilius as a *sollemnem omnibus poetis locum* ('solemn *topos* for all poets'), and having proclaimed, on account of this, how irresistible the subject matter was to Virgil, Ovid and Cornelius Severus, Seneca remarks:

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[119] G. D. Williams (2017) 56; cf. e.g., Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.14.1 (discussion at intr. III.4; comm. 96-8n.).

[120] Ibid.

[121] Discussion at intr. IV.2.

[122] Though see intr. III.3-5 for the way in which [V.] diverges from his Lucretian model; see intr. IV.2 for [V.]'s self-contradictory poetic approach.

omnibus praeterea feliciter hic locus se dedit et qui praecesserant, non praeripuisse mihi videntur, quae dici poterant, sed aperuisse. multum interest, utrum ad consumptam materiam an ad subactam accedas; crescit in dies et inventuris inventa non obstant. praeterea condicio optima est ultimi; parata verba invenit, quae aliter instructa novam faciem habent. nec illis manus inicit tamquam alienis. sunt enim publica.

'Besides, the topic has served them all [Virgil, Ovid, Severus] with happy results, and those who have gone before seem to me not to have forestalled all that could be said, but merely to have opened the way. It makes a great deal of difference whether you approach a subject that has been exhausted, or one where the ground has merely been broken; in the latter case, the topic grows day by day, and what is already discovered does not hinder new discoveries. Besides, he who writes last has the best of the bargain; he finds already at hand words which, when marshalled in a different way, show a new face. And he is not pilfering them, as if they belonged to someone else, when he uses them, for they are common property.'[123]

In stark contrast to Favorinus, whose simplistic misreading of Virgil's description of Etna results in his criticism of the Augustan poet as a bad translator of his Greek model, Seneca here recognises the appeal to the poet of dealing with what Bloom labels as the 'anxiety of influence'.[124] This is the challenge faced by every poet of having to navigate the vast body of literature on any given subject that precedes them; does the poet choose to avoid crossover with his predecessors, or challenge them head-on, and if the latter approach is adopted, which hypertextual strategy does he use? In this study, we have seen a variety of different strategies deployed in this regard, whether that be the way in which Pindar noticeably avoids engaging with Hesiod; the contrasting transformations of Pindar by Aeschylus and Virgil (the former quietly respectful, the latter loud and potentially overbearing); or Ovid's direct challenging of the Lucretian perspective on Etna. The reader of *Letter* 79 gets the impression that, for Seneca, it is precisely the volcano's rich literary history, its 'palimpsest-like' landscape, as Williams puts it, that makes the writing of a poem on it such a mouth-watering prospect.[125] What is more, in *Letter* 79, we see further evidence of the other aspect of the significance of the Etna-*topos*, its philosophical / scientific importance. Seneca uses Lucilius' quest to summit Etna as a metaphor for his

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[123] Sen. *Epist.* 79.5-7 (ed. and trans. Gummere [1917]).

[124] Bloom (1973); Bloom uses his own set of terms to describe the various strategies a poet might deploy to deal with the influence of his predecessors.

[125] Sen. *Epist.* 79.7; G. D. Williams (2017) 73.

student's journey towards acquiring wisdom, and ultimately, Stoic *virtus*.[126] The philosopher blurs the lines between Lucilius' physical ascent of the mountain and the poetic product that will be the result of it. The reader gets the impression that Lucilius' composition of a (presumably) stoically inclined poem on Etna is, in Seneca's opinion, an important step on his journey to becoming a Stoic *sapiens*. Whilst, in my opinion, *Letter* 79 should not be used as the basis of an argument about the authorship of the *Aetna* (see intr. I.2-3), it is undoubtedly a fascinating piece of contextual evidence for the immediate backdrop to the composition of [V.]'s poem, given its likely dating to 64 AD.[127] The motives that Seneca cites to Lucilius for his suggested writing of a poem on Mount Etna – the rich literary and philosophical tradition of the *topos* – are exactly the same ones that would have inspired our poet to tackle the theme.

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[126] Sen. *Epist.* 79.7-18.

[127] If Seneca's *Letters* are ordered chronologically, *Letter* 79 could be dated to the spring / summer of 64 AD, given that *Letter* 67 refers to the spring of that year (see *Ep.* 67.1), and 91 to the Great Fire of Lugdunum that occurred late that summer. If the *Letters* are not ordered chronologically, then we have as their *terminus post quem* Seneca's withdrawal from public life in 62 AD (see *Ep.* 8) and as their *terminus ante quem* his death in the spring of 65 AD. For my dating of the *Aetna,* see intr. I.

III. [V.] and his Poem: Models and Influences

As the commentary reveals, the *Aetna* has a particularly close hypertextual relationship with a number of other works of Latin literature, namely Virgil's *Georgics*, Manilius' *Astronomica*, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and Seneca's *Natural Questions*.[128] This study aims to complement the commentary by providing extended analysis of the *Aetna*'s engagement with each of these hypotexts. In addition, it evaluates the issue of whether the *Aetna* espouses a recognisable philosophical doctrine in the manner of some of its models.[129] I argue that the poem should not be read as doctrinal, and that attempts to read into it clear-cut alignment with one philosophical school or the other do it a disservice as a composition, by overlooking the extent of its polyphony.[130] The *Aetna* ought to be seen as essentially pluralist, as a poem first and foremost, rather than as doctrine transmitted by poetry.

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[128] It is important that I state here what this study does not do. The 'models' for the *Aetna* addressed in this piece (and largely throughout the commentary) are those that have had an evident influence over the text. Hence, I do not attempt to hypothesise the influence of lost Greek prose writings over the *Aetna*, an intriguing question though it is. Sudhaus (1898: 60-72) seeks to demonstrate that the Stoic philosopher Posidonius was a major influence over the *Aetna* by producing a list of possibly relevant testimonia. The most interesting of these, as Goodyear (1984: 351), Garani (2009: 120) and Verde (2020: 92-4) recognise, are firstly, that according to Strabo, Posidonius wrote about Sicily (Strab. 6.2.1, 7 [Edelstein / Kidd Pos. frags. 249-50]); secondly, according to Strabo, Posidonius wrote about Etna specifically and an equivalent of [V.]'s *lapis molaris* (Strab. 6.2.3 [Pos. frag. 234]; cf. *Aetna* 399-567); and thirdly, that according to Seneca, Posidonius attributed volcanic activity to *spiritus* in the same way as [V.] (Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.26.4-7 [Pos. frag. 228]; cf. *Aetna* 188-218n.).

Whilst Goodyear (1965: 19) was initially critical of Sudhaus' certainty over his theory of Posidonean influence, he later came around to it (1984: 353), accepting that, as a potential major source of the *Aetna*, 'Posidonius undoubtedly fits: on that Sudhaus was right.' Goodyear's viewpoint is followed by Garani (2009: 120) and Verde (2020: 92-4). I have very little to add; given the evidence, there is a chance that [V.] may have used Posidonius as a source, but this cannot be stated with any sort of certainty.

Scholarship has also hypothesised that Theophrastus might have been an important source for [V.], largely on the basis of the testimony at Diog Laert. 5.2.49 that he wrote a περὶ ῥύακος τοῦ ἐν Σικελιᾳ: see Goodyear (1984) 347, Garani (2009) 120-1 and Verde (2020) 92-3. Garani (ibid.) and Verde (ibid.) hypothesise that Theophrastus may have been the original model for [V.]'s use of πλεοναχὸς τρόπος: see comm. 102-17n. In addition, Verde (2018b) speculatively suggests that [V.]'s account of the *lapis molaris* might have been influenced by Theophrastus' *De Lapidibus* 22. Generally, the question of whether the *Aetna* drew on Theophrastus' works involves even more speculation than that of the Posidonian influence; the best I can say is that it is a possibility.

[129] For Lucretius' Epicureanism, see, e.g., De May (2009); for Manilius' Stoicism, see, e.g., Volk (2009) 227-34; for Seneca's Stoicism, see, e.g., G. D. Williams (2012). In contrast, it is famously hard to ascribe the world view of the *Georgics* to a particular doctrine: see, e.g., Freer (2019), Braund (2019) 288-98.

[130] For the *Aetna* as a broadly Epicurean poem, see, e.g., Wernsdorf (1785), Jacob (1826), Rostagni (1933), De Lacy (1943) and Stoneman (2020); for the *Aetna* as a broadly Stoic poem, see, e.g., Sudhaus (1898), Lapidge (1989) and Fanti (2020).

1. 'The Model': Virgil's *Georgics*

As discussed in intr. I.1, since antiquity the *Aetna* has been associated with the poems of the *Appendix Vergiliana*. Rightly, its place within the appendices has always been questioned; unlike, say, the *Ciris* or the *Culex*, the *Aetna* in no way 'purports' Virgilian authorship (to use Peirano's term).[131] However, the poem has an indisputably 'Georgic' colouring (beyond the obvious fact that it is a hexametric didactic poem). This colouring is due to both the *Aetna*'s close structural imitation of the *Georgics*, and its particularly Virgilian take on farming and man's relationship with his environment more broadly: for more on which, see intr. IV.4.

I shall first demonstrate the way in which [V.] models his didactic poem closely on Virgil's, to the extent that the *Aetna* presents itself as a *Georgics* in microcosm; the *Aetna* evokes the corresponding part of the *Georgics* at its beginning, middle and end. As addressed in detail at comm. 1-4n., the opening of [V.]'s didactic poem is closely modelled on that of Virgil's:

> Aetna mihi ruptique cavis fornacibus ignes
> et quae tam fortes volvant incendia causae
> quid fremat imperium, quid raucos torqueat aestus
> carmen erit.[132]

> 'Etna, and her fires burst from concave furnaces – what are the causes, so strong, which roll her fires, what chafes at authority, what whirls the noisy blasts of heat? – this will be my song…'

Likewise, [V.]'s ending, the *miranda fabula* of the pious Catanian brothers' miraculous escape from Mount Etna, has an unmistakably Virgilian timbre. On a basic level, [V.] follows Virgil (and likely Manilius and Lucretius)[133] by ending his

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[131] See the Donatan passage quoted at intr. I.1. For more on the various hypertextual relationships between Virgil's canonical works and the appendices, see Peirano (2012) 77-9.

[132] Cf. Virg. Georg. 1.1-5 quid faciat laetas segetes, quo sidere terram | vertere, Maecenas, ulmisque adiungere vites | conveniat, quae cura boum, qui cultus habendo | sit pecori, apibus quanta experientia parcis, | hinc canere incipiam ('What makes the crops joyous, beneath what star, Maecenas, it is well to turn the soil, and wed vines to elms, what tending the cattle need, what care the herd in breeding, what skill the thrifty bees – hence shall I begin my song.' [ed. and trans. Fairclough [1916]). See comm. 1-4n. for full discussion of the interaction between the two texts; intr. IV.1.i for [V.]'s metapoetical game-play.

[133] Lucretius seemingly ends the *DRN* with an account of the Plague of Athens (see Lucr. 6.1138-286) whilst Manilius almost ends his *Astronomica* with an account of the Pereus and Andromeda myth: see Man. 5.538-630. Whilst, historically, it has been debated by scholarship whether the Plague of Athens narrative was Lucretius' original ending to the *DRN*, modern scholarship largely

poem with a digression in narrative mode. Just like Virgil's ending to the *Georgics* (the Aristaeus epyllion), on the surface [V.]'s is similarly vexing, though as I argue at intr. IV.4, can in fact be seen to provide excellent resolution to a number of concurrent themes and tensions of the poem.[134] In addition, [V.]'s concluding *miranda fabula* of the pious Catanian brothers' escape from Etna's fires is a fanfare to arguably the defining Virgilian value, *pietas* (espoused throughout the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*). In an attempt (perhaps), as Most puts it, to 'one-up' *Aeneid* 2, [V.]'s concluding *miranda fabula* depicts the two brothers recuing *both* their parents from the fires of Mount Etna.[135] Furthermore, in order to make his model or target clear, during his account, [V.] uses *pietas* or its adjectival form *pius* six times in the space of 41 hexameters, and ends the poem with the thoroughly Virgilian statement: *securae cessere domus et iura piorum*.[136] In this way, [V.] ensures that the canonical works of Virgil frame his poem.

There is an additional level to [V.]'s structural imitation of the *Georgics*. Another of the more vexing parts of Virgil's didactic poem is its 'proem in the middle', which straddles the end of book 2 and the beginning of book 3, in which Virgil pauses from his didactic exposition to reflect on his own poetic career (seemingly). At the crux of Virgil's internal *recusatio*, he issues this famous *makarismos*:

> Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
> atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum
> subiecit pedibus strepitumque Acherontis avari.
> fortunatus et ille, deos qui novit agrestis,
> Panaque Silvanumque senem Nymphasque sorores.

'Blessed is he who has succeeded in learning the laws of nature's working, has cast beneath his feet all fear and fate's implacable decree, and the howl

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reads it as so: see, e.g., D. Clay (1983) 239-66, Segal (1990) 228-37, Gale (1994a) 225-8, Stover (1999) and Morrison (2013).

[134] See Thomas (1988: 204), on the Aristaeus narrative at the conclusion of the *Georgics*: 'The question of the meaning of these lines, and of their relationship to the first half of the book and the *Georgics* as a whole, is perhaps the most difficult exegetical problem in Roman poetry, and it is certainly the most written-about.' See Griffin (1979: 61) for a catalogue of seventeen different interpretations of the second half of *Georgic* 4 over a twelve-year period.

[135] Most (forthcoming). This is in contrast to the way in which Virgil has his hero only succeed in rescuing one of his parents from the burning Troy.

[136] 645: see further discussion of which in part 3 of this piece. For [V.]'s usages of *pius* / *pietas*, see 604, 624, 633, 634 and 639.

of insatiable Death. But happy, too, is he who knows the rural gods, Pan and aged Silvanus and the sisterhood of the Nymphs.'[137]

Just like the Aristaeus narrative, much ink has been spilt by scholars attempting to ascertain the precise purpose of this vexing passage, but one of the most convincing interpretations of it is that Virgil pits his own 'down-to-earth' brand of didactic against the supposedly more ambitious efforts of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*.[138] Regardless of the various modern scholarly interpretations of the Virgilian passage, as outlined at comm. 226n., it is in this manner (i.e. as a *recusatio*, in which Virgil pits himself against a didactic predecessor) that [V.] reads it. For, as discussed in detail at comm. 219-81n., as the centrepiece of his own poem, [V.] digresses from his exposition to deliver his own didactic *recusatio*. Whereas Virgil contrasts his poetry with that of Lucretius in a largely respectful manner, [V.]'s *recusatio* amounts to out-and-out polemic against his own immediate didactic predecessor, Manilius. [V.] makes it clear that his 'proem in the middle' is modelled on Virgil's, by echoing the Augustan poet's *makarismos* with his own commendation of those who attempt to *nosse fidem rerum dubiasque exquirire causas* ('know the truth of things, and inquire into doubtful causes.')[139] In a manner reminiscent of the way in which Virgil contrasts his own didactic programme with that of Lucretius, after initially commending those who inquire into the *causas rerum*, [V.] goes on to criticise those who take this too far, and inquire into the causes of the divine (i.e. Manilius), whilst overlooking the wonders of the earth.[140] The way in which [V.] evokes the corresponding part of the *Georgics* at all of the beginning, middle and end of his poem ensures that he characterises it as a successor to Virgil's didactic poem.

In addition to drawing structural influence from the *Georgics*, [V.]'s poem has a notably 'Georgic' timbre in regard to its content and ethos. Whilst [V.]'s impression of agriculture as greedy and exploitative has, in the past, been interpreted as a critique of the *Georgics*, it in fact largely corresponds with Virgil's

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[137] Virg. *Georg.* 2.490-4 (ed. and trans. Fairclough [1916]).

[138] For interpretations of the Virgilian passage from broadly this school of thought, see Buchheit (1972) 55-77, J. S. Clay (1976) 239-40, Hardie (1986) 43-7, Mynors (1990) n. on *Georg.* 2.490, Schäfer (1996) 91, Gale (2000) 8-12, and Volk (2002) 141-5; cf., in contrast, Ross (1975) 29-31 and Thomas (1988) n. on 2.483-4, who argue that the contrast presented by Virgil is that between his own works, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*.

[139] 226; cf. Virg. *Georg.* 4.490. Discussion of the relationship between the two passages at Effe (1977) 219; Volk (2005) 86-7; comm. n. ad loc.

[140] See further discussion in section 2 below; in addition to comm. 219-81n., section 1.

own impression of the pursuit.[141] [V.] first provides this distinctly Virgilian impression of agriculture when, as part of his dismissal of the Golden Age as a poetic theme, he casts it as a time *cum domitis nemo cererem iactaret in arvis* ('when no-one threw grain into subdued fields').[142] This corresponds with the impression of the Golden Age as a time prior to the dominion of man over his environment, as depicted by Virgil at *Georgics* 1.125-8:

> ante Iovem nulli subigebant arva coloni:
> ne signare quidem aut partiri limite campum
> fas erat; in medium quaerebant, ipsaque tellus
> omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat.

> 'Before the reign of Jove no tillers subjugated the land: even to mark possession of the plain or apportion it by boundaries was sacrilege; man made gain for the common good, and earth of her own accord gave her gifts all the more freely when none demanded them.'[143]

In the *Georgics*, the result of decline from the Golden Age for humankind is the grim prospect of *labor improbus*.[144] [V.] heightens this Virgilian impression of *labor* in his critique of farming at 257-71, which he introduces with a remark that evokes the *Georgics*: *torquemur miseri in parvis premimurque labore* ('miserable, we torture ourselves over the trivial and are oppressed by toil').[145] Scholars (most notably Volk) have tried to argue that [V.]'s critique of farming that follows is particularly poetological, and that it is an attack on the *Georgics* as a poem; their argument is that, as in the *Aetna* does criticism of astronomy amount to criticism of Manilius' *Astronomica*, so must criticism of agriculture amount to criticism of Virgil's *Georgics*.[146] However, as I explain in detail at comm. 263-72n., due to the lack of close verbal parallels between [V.]'s passage and any of the *Georgics* (despite the attempts of Welsh [2014: 103-6] to prove otherwise), I prefer to read this passage as a critique of farming more generally, corresponding with the

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[141] Cf. the opinions of Di Giovine (1981), Volk (2005) 87 and Welsh (2014) 103-5. Further discussion at comm. 219-81n., 263-72n.

[142] 10. See comm. 9-16n. for more on [V.]'s digression on the Golden Age.

[143] Ed. and trans. Fairclough (1916).

[144] See most notably *Georg.* 1.145-6 *labor omnia vicit | improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas*: 'Unrelenting toil conquers all, and need that burns in hard times.' Ed. and trans. Fairclough (1916).

[145] 257: see comm. n. ad loc.

[146] See Volk (2005) 87; Di Giovine (1981); Welsh (2014) 103-6.

poem's broader impression of man's relationship with his environment – which if anything is aligned with that of the *Georgics*.[147]

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[147] See intr. IV.3.ii for more on [V.]'s 'Georgic' impression of agriculture.

2. 'The Target': Manilius' *Astronomica*

In contrast to [V.]'s largely respectful interaction with the canonical works of Virgil, his engagement with Manilius' *Astronomica* is often polemical.[148] Whilst [V.] often models sections of his poem on parts of the *Astronomica*, usually his imitation of this text entails *aemulatio in imitando* (sometimes subtle, sometimes obvious).[149] Nowhere is this more obvious than in [V.]'s didactic *recusatio* (219-81), in which the poet carefully imitates several passages of the *Astronomica* (discussion of which in detail at comm. n. ad loc.), whilst seemingly commending astronomy as a scientific pursuit, before drastically turning on his model thus:

> sed prior haec homini cura est, cognoscere terram
> quaeque in ea miranda tulit natura notare:
> haec nobis magis adfinis caelestibus astris.
> nam quae mortali spes est, quae amentia maior,
> in Iovis errantem regno perquirere divos,
> tantum opus ante pedes transire ac perdere segnem?[150]

'But a more important concern [than knowledge of the stars] for humankind is this: to understand the earth, and to take note of all the wonders that nature has bore on it; this is more appropriate for us than the stars of heaven. For what greater hope, what greater madness is there for mortal kind than to wander into the kingdom of Jove looking for gods, whilst overlooking and neglecting in its idleness such a great work beneath its feet.'

As discussed in section 1 above, the model for such a poetological contrast is that of Virgil versus Lucretius at *Georgics* 2.490-4. However, [V.] has transformed the Virgilian didactic *recusatio* from something subtle and respectful into something outrightly polemical. Here, [V.] depicts astronomy as both sacrilegious and insane (*amens*). What is more, as Lühr originally pointed out, [V.]'s criticism of astronomy as an attempt to access the kingdom of Jove is a particularly pointed barb directed at the poetic programme of Manilius, given that

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[148] A *terminus post quem* for Manilius' *Astronomica* is established by the reference to the 9 AD Battle of the Teutoburg Forest at 1.898-903. Volk (2009: 137-61, 2011: 4-5) presses hard for an Augustan dating of the poem (i.e. between 9-14 AD), though it has been argued that Manilius' composition of the poem bridged the Augustan and Tiberian principates (see, e.g., Conte [1994] 429), or that it should be considered a fully Tiberian poem: see, e.g., Neuburg (1993). Despite the scholarly uncertainty over the precise dating of the *Astronomica*, as either Augustan or Tiberian it is a predecessor of the *Aetna*: for my dating of which, see intr. I.

[149] See, e.g., comm. 8n.

[150] 251-6.

the astronomical poet casts his own project as precisely this (an inquiry into the kingdom of Jove) at *Astronomica* 4.905-8:[151]

> stetit unus in arcem
> erectus capitis victorque ad sidera mittit
> sidereos oculos propriusque aspectat Olympum
> <u>inquiritque Iovem</u>.

'[Man] alone stands with the citadel of his head raised high and, triumphantly directing to the stars his star-like eyes, looks ever more closely at Olympus and inquires into the nature of Jove himself.'[152]

Once this association on the part of [V.] between impiety and the poetic programme of the *Astronomica* is recognised, further anti-Manilian poetological barbs – thinly veiled by [V.] – reveal themselves. As part of his dismissal of the myth associating the forge of Vulcan with Mount Etna, [V.] remarks:

> non est tam sordida divis
> cura neque extremas ius est demittere in artes
> sidera: subducto regnant sublimia caelo
> illa neque artificum curant tractare laborem.[153]

'The divine have no such sordid a care, nor it is it right to denigrate the stars to base crafts. They rule sublime in the remote sky, and do not care to engage with the toil of craftsmen.'

Given Manilius' self-presentation of his poetry as an inquiry into the divine, it is hard not to read [V.]'s disassociation of the divine from the *labor* of craftsmen as criticism of the Manilian poetic programme.[154]

Perhaps [V.]'s most ingeniously worked criticism of his predecessor is his intelligent use of the Gigantomachy *topos*. As has been discussed extensively by Volk, Manilius takes pains to disassociate himself from poetic Gigantomachy, which unlike Lucretius, he regards as impious.[155] This is a concern of his

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[151] See Lühr (1971) 144-7; followed by Effe (1977) 204-20, Volk (2005) 82-90, Welsh (2014) 101-4 and G. D. Williams (2020).

[152] Ed. and trans. Goold (1977).

[153] 32-5.

[154] See comm. 33-5n. for further discussion.

[155] See Lucr. 1.62-9, 5.110-25; Man. 4.883-5; discussion at Volk (2001). For further discussion of the significance of the gigantomachic *topos* within the didactic genre, see comm. 41-73n.

predecessor that [V.] cleverly exploits to his advantage. These are the opening lines of [V.]'s gigantomachic digression:

> temptavere, nefas, olim <u>detrudere mundo</u>
> <u>sidera</u> captivique Iovis transferre gigantes
> imperium et victo leges imponere caelo.[156]

'They [the giants] once attempted an unspeakable act: to wrench down the stars from the firmament and to transfer the kingdom of a captive Jove and impose laws on a conquered sky.'

Whilst scholarship has long recognised that Manilius is the likely target of [V.]'s polemic at 251-6, as far as I am aware, it has not yet commented on his presence here. The *Astronomica* opens thus:

> carmine divinas artes et conscia fati
> <u>sidera</u> diversos hominum variantia casus,
> caelestis rationis opus, <u>deducere mundo</u>
> aggredior.

'[I aim] by the magic of song to draw down from heaven god-given skills and fate's confidants, the stars, which by the operation of divine reason diversify the chequered fortunes of mankind.'[157]

In particular, [V.]'s depiction of the giants' aim as that of *detrudere mundo | sidera* recalls closely that of Manilius' poem: in essence, *sidera* […] *deducere mundo*. The remarkable similarities between each poet's choice of verb, and the placement of the key phrase in the same metrical *sedes*, suggests that the correspondence between each phrase is more than coincidental. [V.] enhances the anti-Manilian force behind his opening to the Gigantomachy by pointedly transforming Manilius' choice of verb (*deducere*), with its connotations of gentle spinning, to the considerably more forceful *detrudere*.[158] [V.] is correcting Manilius' own self-presentation of his poetic programme; what Manilius presents as intellectual inquiry through the subtle and aesthetic medium of didactic poetry, [V.] presents as an act of sacrilegious aggression akin to the Gigantomachy. Once [V.]'s correspondence between the Gigantomachy and the Manilian poetic

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[156] 43-5.

[157] Man. 1.1-4 (trans. Goold [1977]).

[158] See *OLD* s.v. *deducere / detrudere*; comm. 41-73n. for further details.

programme is noted by the reader, further anti-Manilian *double-entendre* reveals itself. The image of the 'captive Jove' (44) and the giants' aim of 'imposing laws onto a conquered sky' (45) read as critiques of the Manilian aim to map out the cosmos, and more than this, gain power over it, a desire of Manilius as expressed at *Astronomica* 4.390-2.[159]

Via this consistent *aemulatio* achieved by intelligent poetological gameplay, [V.] establishes a particularly close polemical hypertextual relationship between his own poem and that of Manilius. My opinion is that, in the case of the *aemulatio* between the *Aetna* and the *Astronomica*, the issue at stake is a particularly poetological one. Given the limited interest in the divine on the part of [V.] apparent elsewhere in the *Aetna*, I cannot believe that he was genuinely offended by the poetic programme of the *Astronomica*. Rather, the grounds on which [V.] criticises Manilius' poem (that it amounts to poetic Gigantomachy) provide a platform from which to defend his own poem from the imagined charge that its theme (earthly affairs) be not as ambitious and appealing as that of its immediate didactic predecessor. Via his particularly direct engagement with Manilius, [V.] ensures also that he is writing his poem into the tradition of Latin didactic, of whose poems, following the original *De Rerum Natura* ~ *Georgics* hypertextual relationship, close *imitatio* / *aemulatio* of an immediate predecessor is a defining characteristic.

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[159] conaris […] mundo[que] potiri.

3. 'The Perspective': Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*

In contrast to [V.]'s generally polemical stance against Manilius' *Astronomica*, and his largely consistent one with Virgil's *Georgics*, the hypertextual relationship between the *Aetna* and Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* is harder to define. Undoubtedly, the broadly Lucretian perspective of poetic rationalism is apparent throughout the *Aetna*. As discussed in detail at intr. II.3, in *De Rerum Natura* 6.639-711, Lucretius delivers a rationalised interpretation of the workings of Etna, a passage that clearly influenced [V.]'s own theorising on volcanism, to the extent that Welsh hypothesises that it might have been the overarching influence behind the composition of the *Aetna*.[160] [V.] alerts his reader to his indebtedness to this Lucretian passage with his poem's opening hexameter – *Aetna mihi ruptique cavis fornacibus ignes* – which, as outlined at comm. 1n., recalls a couple of lines from the *DRN*.[161] Furthermore, a generally Lucretian timbre pervades much of [V.]'s extended proem, in which he first dismisses a variety of hackneyed, mythologically charged poetic themes (see comm. 1-28n. for details), before seeking, in Lucretian style, to demythologise the various poetic falsities associated with his subject matter, Mount Etna.[162] Given that all of these myths associated with Mount Etna are found in the Virgilian canonical works, Most has argued relatively convincingly that, in this section of the poem, [V.] reads Virgil through 'Lucretian spectacles', and thus attempts to demythologise much of what Virgil had remythologised from Lucretius.[163] Though I have some reservations about the specifics of Most's argument,[164] his overarching point is undoubtedly given strength by the way in which [V.] follows his dismissal of the poetic falsities associated with Etna with an eight-verse dismissal of poetic underworlds, a

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[160] Just like [V.] (see comm. 188-218n.), Lucretius emphasises the fact that underground winds are the cause of volcanic activity; see further discussion of the hypertextual relationship between the two passages at Welsh (2014) 124-5; intr. II.3.

[161] Cf. Lucr. 6.202, 6.681; see comm. 1n. for more on the interaction.

[162] 29-73. These falsities are, namely, 1) that Mount Etna is the home of Vulcan (29-35), 2) that it is where the Cyclopes forged Jove's thunderbolt (36-40), and finally 3) that Enceladus was buried under the volcano at the conclusion of the Gigantomachy (41-73). For more on these, see respectively comm. ns. ad loc.

[163] Most (forthcoming) argues that for *Aetna* 29-35, cf. Virg. *Aen.* 8.416-22; for *Aetna* 36-40, cf. *Georg.* 4.170-5 / *Aen.* 8.424-8; and for *Aetna* 41-73, cf. *Aen.* 3.578-82. For Virgil's remythologisation of his Lucretian model, see, e.g., *Aen.* 3.578-87; discussion at intr. II.2-3, also Hardie (1986) 263-7, Horsfall (n. ad loc.), G. D. Williams (2017) 38.

[164] Chief amongst which is the way in which all these passages interact with a variety of sources beyond the Virgilian canon: see comm. ns. on 29-40, 41-73, 74-93 for specifics.

passage which is obviously greatly indebted to that of Lucretius at *DRN* 3.978-1023.[165]

Whilst this generally Lucretian timbre pervades much of the *Aetna,* the poem does not espouse clear-cut Epicurean doctrine in the manner of the *DRN*.[166] Nevertheless, scholars (most notably De Lacy) have sought to argue that [V.] follows an intrinsically Epicurean epistemological method.[167] Whilst I approve of De Lacy's caution (he acknowledges that his is in no way an argument that the *Aetna* is 'Epicurean through and through'), I disagree with his central thesis that [V.] is a proponent of Epicurean perception by senses, as opposed to the Stoic system of rational judgment of sensory response.[168] De Lacy cites as evidence for his opinion the words of [V.] at 135-6:

> certis tibi pignora rebus
> atque oculis haesura tuis dabit ordine tellus.

'In due order will the earth provide you with pledges of clear-cut things, indeed proofs that will fix your eyes.'

Undoubtedly, this phrase, isolated as it is, suits De Lacy's opinion of [V.]'s supposed Epicurean system of epistemology well.[169] However, one only need look eight lines further on to find a phrase which, taken in isolation, evidently contradicts his thesis:

> tu modo subtiles <u>animo</u> <u>duce</u> percipe causas
> occultamque fidem manifestis abstrahe rebus.

'<u>With your mind as guide</u>, grasp the subtle causes, and extract hidden truth from things that are visible.'[170]

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[165] See comm. 76-84n. for more on this.

[166] Cf. the way in which Lucretius states his allegiance to Epicureanism at, e.g., *DRN* 1.62-79, and espouses a recognisably Epicurean doctrine throughout.

[167] See De Lacy (1943), followed by Stoneman (2020). Earlier proponents for a fundamentally Epicurean *Aetna* included Wernsdorf (1785), Jacob (1826) and Rostagni (1933); cf. the opinion of a fundamentally Stoic *Aetna* held by Sudhaus (1898), Lapidge (1989), and Fanti (forthcoming). The examples of this supposedly Epicurean epistemological approach from [V.] that De Lacy cites are 135-6 (see n. ad loc.), 191 (see n. ad loc.), 461, 520 and 549.

[168] For the intrinsically Epicurean system of understanding via perception, see e.g. Lucr. 4.499; discussion at Striker (1977), Sedley (1998) 87-90. For the intrinsically Stoic system of qualifying perception with judgment, see e.g. Posidonius at Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 1.5.10-11.

[169] See comm. 135-6n. for more on this.

[170] 144-5; see comm. n. ad loc. for Senecan parallels; 117-45n. for further discussion.

By De Lacy's own reckoning, this second quotation, in which [V.] encourages sensory perception qualified by mental assessment, is decidedly Stoic. De Lacy adopts a similarly flawed methodological approach to that which he criticises his predecessors, Sudhaus and Rostagni, for using: namely, that of taking lines or sections of a polyphonous poem in isolation.[171]

Parts of the *Aetna* are distinctly un- or even anti- Epicurean. Perhaps the most obvious of these is [V.]'s concluding *miranda fabula*. This account, aspects of which contradict much of [V.]'s earlier poetological discourse (for more on which, see intr. IV.4), contrasts starkly with Lucretius' own concluding narrative of natural disaster, his account of the Plague of Athens.[172] On a fundamental level, the *DRN*'s ending operates as a demonstration of the fruitlessness of reliance on divine intervention in the face of natural disaster, and thus as a final encouragement of the Epicurean approach of fearlessness in the face of death.[173] [V.]'s *miranda fabula* seems to correct pointedly Lucretius' account. Whereas, in Lucretius' concluding narrative, the people cannot be saved by the gods, in [V.]'s *miranda fabula* they explicitly can be. For, as discussed earlier, [V.] makes it clear that it is the Catanian brothers' *pietas* that saves them. On account of the youths' virtue, the fires give way to them:

                              o maxima rerum
        et merito pietas homini tutissima virtus!
        erubuere pios iuvenes attingere flammae
        et quaecumque ferunt illi vestigia cedunt.[174]

'O piety, greatest of things and the most protecting virtue for the deserving man! The fires blushed to touch the pious brothers and gave way to them wherever they went.'

In addition, [V.] chooses to end his poem on a note that is anything but Epicurean:

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[171] See De Lacy (1943) 169-70.

[172] See fn. 133 on the question of whether the 'Plague of Athens' was Lucretius' original ending to the *DRN*.

[173] See, in particular, Lucr. 6.1272-81, in which Lucretius pointedly emphasises the fact that the plague ravaged the temples. See scholarship cited at fn. 133 for more on this.

[174] 632-5. Note also the depiction of *pietas* as a *virtus*, a word with strong Stoic connotations.

illos seposuit claro sub nomine Ditis,
nec sanctos iuvenes attingunt sordida fata:
securae cessere domus et iura piorum.

'To them Dis has assigned a special place and glorious name; nor does a
sordid fate await the sacred young men – their due is a dwelling free from care
and the rewards of the pious.'

The fact that [V.] ends his poem with such a resounding rejection of the
Epicurean view of the finality of death ought to be conclusive enough evidence
that the poem is fundamentally not Epicurean.[175] There are other points in the
poem at which [V.] seemingly goes out of his way to reject Epicurean doctrine as
espoused by Lucretius. One of these is [V.]'s generally scathing treatment of the
Gigantomachy, and maintenance of the divinity of the stars.[176] As scholars have
pointed out, Lucretius uses the Gigantomachy as a positive analogy for
Epicureanism.[177] This is apparent most obviously in two passages of the *DRN*:
namely 5.110-25, in which Lucretius explicitly compares the challenge presented
by his own poetic programme – an Epicurean inquiry into what has been labelled
as 'divine'– to that of the assault of the giants on Olympus; and secondly at *DRN*
1.62-79, in which Lucretius casts Epicurus as a gigantomachic figure. In contrast,
as I have demonstrated already, [V.] casts Gigantomachy as the consummate
sacrilegious act, as an attempt to interfere with the inaccessible divine sphere.[178]

Another part of the *Aetna*, at which [V.] seemingly opposes the Lucretian world
view, is the quotation or paraphrasing of a teaching of Heraclitus at 536-9. The
OCT prints this passage as it appears in the mss.:

quod si quis lapidis miratur fusile robur,
cogitet obscuri verissima dicta libelli,
Heraclite, tui: nihil insuperabile gigni
omnia † quae rerum natura † semina iacta.[179]

'But if anyone is surprised that the strength of the stone is fusible, let him
consider those most true words of your obscure book, Heraclitus: [perhaps]

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[175] For the Epicurean viewpoint of the finality of death, see, e.g., Ep. *KD* 2, *Epist. ad Men.* 3; Lucr.
3.830-977; discussion at Bailey n. ad loc.

[176] See comm. 29-40n., 41-73n.

[177] See Hardie (1986) 209-13; Volk (2001) 105; G. D. Williams (2017) 40-1.

[178] See comm. 41-73n. for full discussion.

[179] **538** ab igni *Scaliger*   **539** quo *Scaliger*

nothing comes into existence indestructible, all the seeds which have been thrown by the nature of things.'

As Goodyear (n. ad loc.) suggests, depending on whether one follows the ms. reading here or Scaliger's emended version (which found favour with Munro [n. ad loc.]), [V.] is recalling either a Heraclitean teaching on the universe being in a constant state of flux, or one on the concept of *ekpyrosis*, a theory that was favoured post-Heraclitus by some of the early Stoics.[180] The textual uncertainty here makes it hard to pinpoint how definitively Stoic this quotation is, but what is clear is that [V.] is responding specifically to Lucretius' depiction of – and criticism of – Heraclitus (and particularly his extolling of the theory of *ekpyrosis*) at *DRN* 1.635-44. [V.]'s introduction to the Heraclitean teaching as *obscuri verrisima dicta libelli* (537) evokes the scathing way in which Lucretius introduces Heraclitus in the *DRN*:

> Heraclitus init quorum dux proelia primus
> clarus ob obscuram linguam magis inter inanis
> quamde gravis inter Graios qui vera requirunt.

'Of these [supporters of *ekpyrosis*] Heraclitus opens the fray as first champion, one illustrious for his dark speech rather amongst the frivolous part of the Greeks than amongst the serious who seek the truth.'[181]

As Pingoud suggests, [V.]'s use of *verrisima dicta* in reference to Heraclitus' teaching is a particularly direct response to Lucretius' criticism levelled at the pre-Socratic philosopher that his words appeal only to those unconcerned with seeking the truth.[182] Surprisingly, Pingoud does not mention the strength added to this argument by 539, which, as a minimum, alerts [V.]'s reader to his target by evoking the title of Lucretius' work, and potentially adds further rhetorical weight.[183] Given that Lucretius' critique of Heraclitus is levelled over the latter's extolling of *ekpyrosis* in particular, accepting Scaliger's reading *ab igni* at 539 strengthens this point further (something that likely influenced Scaliger's

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[180] For a Stoic use of *ekpyrosis*, see, e.g., Plutarch on Chrysippus at Mor. 1053b. However, cf. Mansfield (1983: 218-20) for differing Stoic opinions on it.

[181] Lucr. 1.638-40 (ed. and trans. Rouse [1924]).

[182] Pingoud (2008) 213.

[183] If one takes Scaliger's reading of these two lines, they can be translated as a pointed correction of Lucretius: 'nothing is unconquerable by fire, in which all seeds are sown by the nature of things…'

emendation), but regardless of which specific Heraclitean teaching [V.] has in mind, it is clear that he is trying to redress the Lucretian dismissal of the philosopher.[184] Thus [V.] once again distances himself from, or even presents himself in opposition to, Lucretius.

Another potentially anti-Lucretian moment in the *Aetna* comes at the crux of [V.]'s didactic *recusatio.* At 247-50, [V.] summarises his encouraged approach of inquiry thus:

> et quaecumque iacent tanto miracula mundo
> non disiecta pati nec acervo condita rerum,
> sed manifesta notis certa disponere sede
> singula, <u>divina est animi ac iucunda voluptas</u>.[185]

> '[in short, one ought] not allow any of the wonders of the world to lie confused and buried in a mass of things, but should mark each one clearly in its proper place – this is the divine and joyful pleasure of the mind.'

Here, in a statement generally full of Lucretian diction,[186] [V.] encourages his addressee to ensure that none of the *miracula mundi* lie unexplained 'buried in a mass of things' (*acervo condita rerum*), labelling this pursuit as the *divina [est] animi ac iucunda voluptas.* Verse 250 is clearly 'Lucretian', but more than this, can be read as a direct allusion to two specific, particularly programmatic passages of the *DRN*.[187] Whilst Lucretius nowhere attaches both epithets – *divina* and *iucunda* – to his oft-used *voluptas* (as [V.] does here), he does use each of them attached to *voluptas* once. He uses *divina* + *voluptas* following his praises of Epicurus at the opening of *DRN* 3, to express the sensation experienced as a result of enlightenment:

> his ibi me rebus quaedam <u>divina voluptas</u>
> percipit atque horror, quod sic natura tua vi
> tam manifesta patens ex omni parte retecta est.

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[184] Indeed Pingoud (2008: 212) accepts the manuscript reading, and interprets the quotation as [V.] aligning himself with the programme of Heraclitus' *Peri Physeos*, as opposed to Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. He furthermore goes on to argue that [V.] derives his 'poetics of paradox' and ambiguous treatment of myth from Heraclitus. See fn. 210 for my criticism of Pingoud's broader conclusions.

[185] 247-50.

[186] See comm. 247-50n.

[187] The Lucretian parallels in *Aetna* 250 were brought to my attention by E. Mitchell at AMPAL 2018. They have subsequently been observed by Most (forthcoming).

'Thereupon from all these things a sort of divine delight gets hold upon me and a shuddering, because nature thus by your power has been so manifestly laid open and uncovered in every part.'[188]

And Lucretius uses *iucunda* + *voluptas* at the opening of *DRN* 2, at which (whilst discussing the pleasures of philosophical sanctuary from real-word problems), the Epicurean qualifies his statement that it is *suave* to observe strife at sea from shore thus:

> non quia vexari quemquamst <u>iucunda voluptas</u>,
> sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.

'Not because any man's troubles are a delectable joy, but because to perceive what ills you are free from yourself is pleasant.'[189]

Returning to *Aetna* 247-50, the poet's use of the word *voluptas* at 250 – with its obviously strong Lucretian connotations (see the proem to *DRN* 1), and also those of *animus*, suggest particularly direct allusion here. [V.]'s use of such markedly Lucretian terminology to define a broadly 'Lucretian' approach might be read as clear-cut alignment with Lucretius and Epicureanism.[190] However, an alternative interpretation presents itself: namely, that *Aetna* 248-51 is a pointed 'correction' of the Lucretian approach; that, for [V.], rather than *divina voluptas* deriving itself from the enlightenment of Epicureanism, and *iucunda voluptas* from the sanctuary from real-world problems provided by philosophy, they are in fact derived from the act of inquiry itself (as proclaimed at *Aetna* 247-50). Such a subversion of Lucretius would be entirely in keeping with [V.]'s general reception of the *DRN*, which as we have seen, involves considerable distancing from the Epicurean world view espoused in it.

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[188] Lucr. 3.28-30 (trans. Rouse [1924]).

[189] Lucr. 2.3-4 (trans. Rouse [1924]).

[190] As Most (forthcoming) does; cf. the concerns in this regard of Glauthier (2011) 105.

4. 'Another Perspective': Seneca's *Natural Questions*

An additional issue for those who maintain that the *Aetna* is inherently Epicurean is its remarkably close hypertextual relationship with Seneca's *Natural Questions*, a text that espouses a broadly Stoic world view.[191] The sections of the *Aetna* that are most obviously modelled on parts of the *Natural Questions* are 96-8 (a paraphrase of *Nat. Quest.* 5.14.1), on the hollow nature of the earth; 98-101, containing a simile in which [V.] compares the earth to the human body, deeply reminiscent of *Natural Questions* 3.15.1 and 6.14.1; and *Aetna* 110-16, in which [V.] compresses *Natural Questions* 6 to present a variety of potential *causae* for the cavernous nature of the earth.[192] [V.]'s extensive use of the *Natural Questions* demands an evaluation of how Stoic the *Aetna* is. Put simply, the poem does not espouse an out-and-out Stoic world view. However, given the extent of [V.]'s use of the *Natural Questions*, naturally some of his diction and methodology has Stoic resonance. One of the more obvious potentially Stoic aspects of the poem is [V.]'s adoption of the Senecan emphasis on the importance of *spiritus* to the functioning of the earth. Seneca often uses this word as a translation of the Stoic πνεῦμα, the 'breath of life' that pervades everything.[193] In the *Aetna*, having depicted the earth as akin to the human body in his Senecan simile at 98-101, full of hollowed-out 'veins', over the course of the next 120-odd lines, [V.] casts *spiritus* as the force that provides the earth with its seismic volatility.[194] However, as indicated at 213 (*spiritus inflatis nomen, languentibus aer*), [V.] uses the term *spiritus* in a particular manner, to mean supercharged air, rather than in the broader sense of πνεῦμα.[195] As demonstrated at comm. 111n., all of [V.]'s usages of *spiritus* are in this manner; whilst the word has admittedly strong Stoic connotations, [V.] does not use it with a doctrinal agenda.[196]

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[191] For more on the hypertextual relationship between the *Aetna* and Seneca's *Natural Questions*, and how I use it in my evaluation of the poem's authorship and dating questions, see intr I. For the fundamentally Stoic world view espoused by the *Natural Questions*, see, e.g., G. D. Williams (2012).

[192] See comm. ns. ad loc. for detailed discussion of the modelling in each case.

[193] See Hine (2002) n. on Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.1.3; G. D. Williams (2006) 134-46; comm. 111n., 188-218n.

[194] See, in particular, comm. 111n., 153-4n., 188-218n.

[195] See comm. n. ad loc. for further discussion of 213.

[196] Having said this, [V.] does not avoid using this word on account of its Stoic connotations, as Lucretius does: see, e.g., *DRN* 6.685; discussion of which at Intr. II.3.

Another particularly 'Senecan' part of the *Aetna*, which perhaps hints at a Stoic [V.], is the discussion of the causes of earthquakes at 171-4:

hinc venti rabies, hinc saevo quassa citatu
fundamenta soli trepidant urbesque caducae.
inde, neque est aliud, si fas est credere, mundo
venturam antiqui faciem, veracius omen.

'From this [supercharged *spiritus*] comes the raging of the wind, from this do the foundations of the earth, shaken by violent jolting, and collapsing cities tremble. If it is right to trust in this, we have no truer omen than it that the earth will return to its form of old.'

The idea of natural disaster being evidence for the mortal status of the earth is particularly Senecan. [V.]'s discourse here recalls, e.g., *Natural Questions* 6.2.9:

si cadendum est, cadam orbe concusso, non quia fas est optare publicam cladem, sed quia ingens mortis solacium est terram quoque videre mortalem.

'If I must fall, let me fall with the world shattered, not because it is right to hope for a public disaster but because it is a great solace in dying to see that the earth, too, is mortal.'[197]

As pointed out by Munro, the idea depicted by [V.] that the earth will one day return to its original form of primeval chaos is particularly Stoic; in contrast, the Epicureans taught that the earth would one day dissipate into its atomic parts, and be as though it had never been.[198] Whilst I acknowledge the Stoic potential of *Aetna* 173-4, for two reasons, these lines cannot be used as hard and fast evidence for a Stoic [V.]. For one thing, though to my mind [V.]'s words undoubtedly reveal an opinion on the end of the world closer to that of Stoicism than Epicureanism, one could conceivably make them fit the Epicurean opinion on the end of the world, given that [V.] does not explicitly state what is the earth's 'form of old'.[199] The other issue with using this statement as 'evidence' of [V.]'s

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[197] Ed. and trans. Corcoran (1972).

[198] Munro (1867) 35-6. For the Epicurean opinion on the end of the world, cf. e.g. Diog. Laert. 9.31, 32; 10.73.

[199] Cf. also the supposedly Epicurean but destructive impression of the end of the world depicted at Lucr. 2.1144-5; discussion of which at W. M. Green (1942) 53.

hypothetical Stoicism is that, in doing so, we are once again guilty of taking a couple of lines in isolation from the rest of the poem.

There are some broader themes of the poem that perhaps suggest a world view on the part of [V.] closer to that of Stoicism than Epicureanism, but none can be used as conclusive evidence that the poem is outrightly Stoic. One of these is [V.]'s resentment for man's greed at the expense of nature (discussed at intr. IV.3). This voice of the poem is aired particularly strongly in [V.]'s criticism of mining at 257-62 (itself modelled on Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.15: see comm. n. ad loc. for details), and in the concluding *miranda fabula*, where the greedy meet their end.[200] Likewise, an argument for the *Aetna* as a Stoic poem might point towards its depiction of an aspect of the natural environment, namely the long-suffering lava-stone (*lapis molaris*), ever resistant to Etna's fires, which [V.] eulogises for over a hundred lines in the sort of diction that might be used to describe a Stoic *sapiens*, such as: *profecto, | miranda est lapidis vivax animosaque virtus.*[201] ('In truth, one ought to be amazed by the vitality and spirited virtue of the stone.') Another aspect of the poem that might suggest a Stoic [V.] is his characterisation of Etna's fires as divine: see comm. n. on 187b. This, alongside the Heraclitean quotation (discussed in section 2 above), and the fact that the poem concludes with an inferno (see intr. IV.4), might point towards the doctrine of *ekpyrosis*, though this is tenuous, and it is debatable how explicitly Stoic that doctrine is.[202] In support of an intrinsically Stoic *Aetna*, one might also cite [V.]'s maintenance of the divinity of the stars (see, e.g. comm. 251-2n.), though as we have seen (in section 2 above), the poet uses this largely as a rhetorical platform from which to criticise the poetic programme of his (Stoic) predecessor Manilius for over-ambition.[203] Given all the above, one might argue that the *Aetna* espouses a world view closer to that of Stoicism than Epicureansim, but it cannot be argued that the poem is outrightly Stoic.

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[200] See intr. IV.3-4.

[201] 416-7; further discussion of which at intr. IV.3.i.

[202] For differing attitudes amongst the early Stoics towards *ekpyrosis*, and its loss of support by the first century AD, see Mansfield (1983) 218-20.

[203] In addition, [V.] subverts Manilius' Stoic impression of a universe governed by God at 228-46: see comm. n. ad loc.

5. 'The World View': The *Aetna*-poet

This piece has sought to demonstrate the extent of the *Aetna*'s hypertextual interaction with its Latin literary models. It has argued that the result of the poem's engagement with a wide array of influences is an intrinsically pluralistic product. Furthermore, given the extent of the poem's polyphony, I have argued that it is wrong to attempt to read into it a clear-cut alignment with either Epicureanism or Stoicism that is simply not apparent in the text. Having said this, if pressed, I would say that the poem espouses a world view closer to that of Stoicism than Epicureanism, but this is largely on account of its use of Seneca's *Natural Questions* as a source. As stated at the beginning of this piece, the *Aetna* should be read as a polyphonous poem first and foremost, and as a hymn to its natural subject matter, rather than as doctrine espoused by poetry. In the next section of my introduction (part IV), I shall expand further on [V.]'s relationship with his subject matter; how he attempts to tame nature via didactic poetry, but ultimately fails.

IV. [V.] and his Poem: The *Aetna* as a Meta-poem

This study addresses one of the defining features of the *Aetna*, its highly self-conscious nature. Previous scholarship has recognised this as an important characteristic of the poem – indeed Volk sub-titled it '*Wie man ein Lehrgedicht schreibt*' ('How to Write a Didactic Poem') – however, here I shall argue that not even this does justice to the level of self-consciousness apparent in it.[204] I shall argue that, more than being a didactic '*tour de force*', as Goodyear (1984: 356) puts it, the *Aetna* operates as a comment on the ultimate futility of the didactic genre, by exposing via demonstration the inherent impossibility of the didactic aim to deliver poetic truth. I shall argue that the crux of this metanarrative of the *Aetna* resides in its previously under-appreciated ending, its concluding *miranda fabula*, which, in turn, reveals said ending to be considerably more conclusive than it has previously been credited as. In addition, I shall demonstrate the importance of a previously under-valued tension of the poem – its depiction of the conflict between man and his environment – to this broader metanarrative. In order to illustrate all of this, I shall demonstrate how [V.] 1) establishes his work as a self-conscious poem; 2) more than this, casts his poetic programme as self-contradictory; 3) establishes the poem's crucial tension of man versus the environment; and 4) provides resolution to much of this in his concluding *miranda fabula*.

1) Establishment: A Self-conscious Poem

For years a feature of the poem that went overlooked by commentators, the extent of the *Aetna*'s poetic self-consciousness has been the subject of several recent pieces of scholarship.[205] A 'self-conscious poem' can be loosely defined as a poem that shows awareness of its status as such. Whilst virtually all ancient poetry is self-conscious to an extent, didactic poetry, with its inherent instructive intent (and other distinct characteristics), has rightly been identified as a genre

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[204] Volk (2005) 68; for other recent studies of this aspect of the poem, see Volk (2008), Glauthier (2011), Welsh (2014), Kruschwitz (2015) and G. D. Williams (2020).

[205] See fn. 204, above.

that is particularly self-conscious.[206] Whilst Volk did not address the *Aetna* in her seminal 2002 work on the didactic genre, in a subsequent stand-alone 2005 article she rightly identified it as something of a meta-poem, as arguably the most self-conscious of all the Latin didactic poems.[207] Here, I shall discuss some of the trademark metapoetical games played by [V.], which contribute to the impression of his poem as highly self-conscious from its very beginning. I revisit all of these ploys later in the piece to demonstrate their broader contribution to the *Aetna*'s metanarrative.

i) The opening sentence: *Aetna mihi* […] *carmen erit.*

The *Aetna* opens thus:

> Aetna mihi ruptique cavis fornacibus ignes
> et quae tam fortes volvant incendia causae,
> quid fremat imperium, quid raucos torqueat aestus,
> carmen erit.[208]

'Etna, and her fires burst from concave furnaces – what are the causes, so strong, which roll her fires, what chafes at authority, what whirls the noisy blasts of heat? – this will be my song…'

In a long sentence, spread over four hexameters, [V.] clearly expresses the didactic intent of his poem: Etna, her fires, and their causes will be the theme of his song (*carmen*). Of course, [V.]'s use of the word *carmen* here makes his verse self-conscious to an extent, but this is nothing out of the ordinary for Latin poetry.[209] [V.]'s opening statement is made particularly self-conscious by the inherent ambiguity of its main clause, which is essentially: *Aetna mihi* […] *carmen erit*. The variety of potential translations of this phrase illustrates its inherent ambiguity well; one might legitimately translate it as anything from 'Mount Etna

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[206] See Volk (2002) 6-43. Alongside 1) 'explicit didactic intent', Volk identifies three other defining characteristics of didactic poetry, 2) a 'teacher-student constellation', 3) 'poetic self-consciousness' [which I think encompasses all of these other criteria to an extent] and 4) 'poetic simultaneity'.

[207] See Volk (2005). Her analysis is focused on the way in which, in his methodological digression (see comm. 219-81n.), [V.] casts his poem as '*den goldenen Mittleweg*' of Latin didactic poetry: see intr. III.2 for my issues with Volk's interpretation.

[208] 1-4. See comm. n. ad loc. for further discussion.

[209] Cf. e.g. *Georg.* 1.1-5; discussion at intr. III.1, comm. 1-4n.

will be the theme of my poem', to 'Mount Etna will be, for me, a poem', to 'The *Aetna* will be my song'.[210] In addition to his sentence structure and choice of diction, [V.]'s word placement demonstrates that he intends to make the most of the ambiguity of this statement.[211] By placing his subject matter (*Aetna*) and himself (*mihi*) as the first two words of the poem, [V.] establishes a particularly close relationship between himself as poet and *Aetna* as his subject matter. A deeply self-conscious poem begins with an appropriately self-conscious opening.

ii) The *Leitwort*: *Opus*

[V.] uses the word *opus*, which broadly means a 'work' (technological, artistic, literary etc.), twenty-two times in his poem.[212] Of these usages, eleven are primarily in reference to the volcano itself: see, for example, the first of these at 25 *qui tanto motus operi*.[213] Scholarship has recognised that, via his usage of this word in reference to his volcanic subject matter, [V.] implies that Mount Etna should be seen as a piece of technology, or perhaps a literary / artistic work.[214] [V.] alerts the reader to the inherent ambiguity of his preferred noun to describe the volcano, and the metapoetical game that he is playing, by using the more usual meanings of *opus* elsewhere in the poem: at 32, he uses it in reference to the 'workings' of Vulcan's forge (see comm. n. ad loc.); at 294, in reference to a piece of technology, the *hydraulis* (see comm. n. ad loc.); and at 598, in reference to works of art. He even uses the word *opus* explicitly in reference to his own line of inquiry, or perhaps poetic programme, at 188.[215] Similarly to the *Aetna mihi* […] *carmen erit* poetological ploy, [V.]'s clever use of the polysemous *opus* ensures that his poetic subject matter – Mount Etna – becomes inextricably entwined with his poetic product, the *Aetna*. As I shall discuss in more detail, the

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[210] For further discussion thereof, see Glauthier (2011) 114, Welsh (2014) 129 and G. D. Williams (2020) 115.

[211] The structure of [V.]'s opening sentence (i.e. my theme … will be my *carmen*) is, as far as I am aware, unparalleled amongst opening statements in extant Latin poetry. Cf. the common 'I shall sing of this theme' of, e.g., Virg. *Georg.* 1.1-5.

[212] See comm. 25n. for a detailed breakdown of these usages.

[213] Ibid.

[214] For Mount Etna as a piece of technology, see Glauthier (2011) 111-2; for it as a work of art, see Welsh (2014) 119-20.

[215] Having used it at 187b (only two lines previously) in reference to his subject matter, Mount Etna: *haec operis visenda sacri faciesque domusque*.

result of this is that, when [V.] remarks at 600 that, instead of looking at the mythologically inspired *opera* of human artists (598), one should: *artificis naturae ingens opus aspice* ('look on this great work of the artist nature!'), the reader cannot help but interpret [V.]'s contrast as that of mythologically charged poetry versus his own *ingens opus*, a poem of Nature, the *Aetna*.[216]

iii) The proem: Truth and fiction

[V.] opens his work with an extended, 93-verse proem, which operates as a lesson to his reader on the supposed mendacity of poetry. In this highly poetologically charged passage, [V.] issues a remarkable level of polemic against his own kind, poets. He first mocks the hackneyed nature of mythological poetry, which he summarises dismissively as *quicquid in antiquum iactata est fabula carmen* ('anything in which myth has been thrown in with ancient song').[217] As discussed in detail at comm. 23n., this is the first time that [V.] presents what in his mind is a dichotomy between *carmen* ('the poem') and *fabula* ('myth' or 'fable'), something that becomes an integral poetological tension of the *Aetna*.[218] Though here [V.] casts these two things as complete anathema to one another, as we shall see in section 4.i below, by the time he has ended his poem with an account of his own *miranda fabula*, this impression has been complicated greatly. Returning to the *Aetna*'s proem, having dismissed poetry that is generally mythological in nature, [V.] turns his attention closer to home, and attacks specifically three poetic myths that are associated with his own subject matter, Mount Etna, which are namely 1) that the volcano is the home of Vulcan (29-35); 2) that it is site of the forge of the Cyclopes (36-40); and 3) that it is the site of the Gigantomachy (41-73).[219] [V.] introduces each of these with a scathing poetological barb. He prefaces his dismissal of the myth of Mount Etna as the

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[216] [V.]'s exploitation of the metapoetical potential of *opus* might also be seen as another strategy contributing to the taming of his subject matter, as discussed in section 3.iii below. Given the way in which [V.] blurs the lines between *opus* as Mount Etna and *opus* as the *Aetna*, it is as if poem and subject matter have become one and the same; the destructive potential of the resistant subject matter is contained within the confines of [V.]'s explanatory hexameters. For a similar viewpoint on Pliny's use of the word *opus*, see Carey (2003) 20, G. D. Williams (2012) 40-1.

[217] 23. See comm. n. ad loc. for the possible textual issue here. See comm. 1-28n. for further discussion of [V.]'s opening section.

[218] See Kruschwitz (2015) 86-91; section 4.i below.

[219] See intr. III.3 for the Lucretian backdrop to these sections; comm. 29-40n., 41-73n. for further discussion.

abode of Vulcan with the remark: *principio ne quem capiat fallacia vatum* ('firstly, let no-one be deceived by the lies of the poets.');[220] likewise, he introduces his dismissal of Etna as the site of the forge of the Cyclopes with: *discrepat a prima facies haec altera vatum* ([perhaps:] 'this other error of the poets differs from the first one.');[221] before he labels the Gigantomachy as an *impia fabula* (42), prior to indulging in a 31-verse dismissal of it.[222]

[V.]'s polemic does not finish there. He proceeds to issue an attack on the *mentiti vates* ('lying bards': 79), who attempt to depict the Underworld in poetry (74-84: see comm. n. ad loc.), and those who address divine affairs (85-90: see comm. n. ad loc.), before ending his extended proem with a resounding statement of his own supposed poetic superiority at 91-3:

> debita carminibus libertas ista, sed omnis
> in vero mihi cura: canam quo fervida motu
> aestuet Aetna novosque rapax sibi congerat ignes.[223]

> 'A degree of licence is owed to poetry, but the truth is my only concern: I shall sing by what motion fervid Etna boils and rapaciously gathers fresh fires to herself.'

In these lines, [V.] places himself on a poetic pedestal. Though he here acknowledges that poets are entitled to a degree of licence (*libertas*), in contrast to the base *vates* around him (perhaps Manilius: see intr. 3.ii), he claims that the 'truth' will be his only concern. In this way, via his complex 93-verse poetological proem, [V.] sets himself a famously challenging poetic standard by which to abide.[224]

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[220] 29. See comm. n. ad loc. for further discussion.

[221] 36. See comm. n. ad loc. for further discussion and the potential textual issue.

[222] See comm. 41-73n. for detailed discussion of this digression.

[223] See comm. 91-3n. for the way in which this statement echoes earlier parts of the proem.

[224] See comm. 74-93n. for discussion of this.

2) Establishment: Poetics of Paradox

As we have seen, [V.] sets himself a particularly challenging poetic standard by which to abide; he claims that, in contrast to the poetry of his contemporary *mentiti vates*, his will deliver absolute truth. It becomes apparent to the reader remarkably quickly that [V.] fails to deliver on this claim. This next section of my study will demonstrate just how often [V.] resorts to drawing his imagery from supposedly the most impious of myths associated with his subject matter, Mount Etna, to assist him in depicting it. Regarding [V.]'s use of supposedly 'impious imagery', I shall argue that, far from this being laxness on the poet's part, it is a deliberate ploy, which contributes to the establishment of his self-contradictory poetic programme, something that is in turn all-important to the poem's broader metanarrative of didactic futility (see section 4, below).

i) *Fornaces*

As mentioned, the first two myths associated with Etna that [V.] dismisses in his extended proem are 1) its reputation as the home of Vulcan (29-35), and 2) its association with the forge of the Cyclopes (36-40). [V.]'s scathing diction towards the use of these myths perhaps comes as a surprise to the reader, given the poem's opening line: *Aetna mihi ruptique cavis fornacibus ignes* ('Etna, and her fires burst from concave furnaces…') This suggestive, figurative use of *fornax* by [V.] occurs again during a dramatic rhetorical question at 554-7:

> quae maiora putas autem tormenta moveri
> posse manu, quae tanta putas incendia nostris
> sustenari opibus, <u>quantis fornacibus Aetna</u>
> <u>uritur</u>, arcano numquam non fertilis igni?

> 'What greater engines do you think could be moved by human hand, what fires do you think could be maintained by our resources, which are as great as those furnaces (perpetually rich in ancient fire) by which Etna burns.'

[V.] uses *fornax* figuratively once again during the opening to the poem's concluding *miranda fabula* at 605-7:

> nam quondam ruptis excanduit Aetna cavernis
> et, <u>velut eversis penitus fornacibus</u>, ingens

> eiecta in longum rapidis fervoribus unda.

'For once upon a time, Etna burned white from its ruptured caverns and, as if its furnaces had been overturned deep below ground, a great river of volatile heat was propelled at length.'

Glauthier (2011: 99) provides a typical misreading of such a reference when he comments on [V.]'s usage of *fornax* in verse 1: 'The key point is that the poet de-mythologizes this language – our poem may contain *fornaces*, but no Cyclopes will toil away at them.' I disagree entirely; the Cyclopean connotations of [V.]'s use of the word *fornax* in this context are inescapable for the reader. As I shall demonstrate, [V.]'s use of supposedly impious imagery to depict his subject matter ought to be considered as a trademark of his poetics.

ii) Gigantomachy

The myth associated with Mount Etna that seemingly bears the brunt of [V.]'s ire in his proem is the Gigantomachy, which he dismisses scathingly at 42 as an *impia fabula*, before delivering a 31-verse account of it that is full of irony.[225] As discussed at comm. 41-73n., [V.]'s gigantomachic digression plays an important programmatic role in the *Aetna*, as it introduces several tensions that underpin the entirety of the poem. In addition, as discussed at intr. III.2, [V.] uses the Gigantomachy theme as a means by which to issue polemic against his poetic rival Manilius. These factors, alongside the fact that [V.] indulges in this extended digression on the Gigantomachy, despite its supposed status as poetic anathema to him, are enough already to make the reader question the sincerity of his criticism of it as a poetic theme. Any doubts in this regard should be laid to rest by the way in which [V.] uses gigantomachic imagery at important moments throughout his poem.

Following [V.]'s first description of an eruption of Etna, the reader is treated to a particularly surprising piece of poetic colour at 201-6:

> fragor tota nunc rumpitur Aetna,
> nunc fusca pallent incendia mixta ruina.
> ipse procul tantos miratur Iuppiter ignes,
> neve sepulta novi surgant in bella gigantes,

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[225] See comm. 41-73n. for detailed discussion of the timbre of this digression.

> neu Ditem regni pudeat, neu Tartara caelo
> vertit.

'Now a crash breaks across the entirety of Etna, now fires mixed with dark ruin pale. From far away, Jupiter himself wonders at such fires, fearing lest new giants are rising up to fight long-buried wars, or that Dis is afraid of his kingdom and is transferring Tartarus to heaven.'

As discussed in detail at comm. 203-6n., this passage is deeply surprising for a number of reasons. Alongside the obvious gigantomachic reference, these lines contain: 1) clear Stygian imagery (*fusca ruina*, *pallent*, *neu Ditem regni pudeat* etc.), despite the fact that poetic underworlds are castigated as impious by [V.] at 74-84; and 2) the king of the gods cast as one of the unenlightened fools who *mirari* at the volcano on account of its association with these *fabulae*.[226]

[V.] uses gigantomachic imagery (of varying levels of 'impiety') to depict Mount Etna several more times in the poem, firstly at 332-5, when in reference to the cloud that perennially shrouds the summit of Etna, he remarks:

> quamvis caeruleo siccus <u>Iove fulgeat aether</u>
> purpureoque rubens surgat iubar aureus ostro,
> illinc obscura semper caligine nubes
> prospectat sublimis opus vastosque recessus.

'Although the ether gleams dry with sky-blue Jove, and golden daybreak reddens as it rises with vivid dye, there a cloud, dense with gloom, always keeps watch from on high over the mountain's activity and its huge recesses.'

Then, more explicitly, at 558-60, in reference to the volcano's fires:

> hic non qui nostro fervet moderatior usu,
> sed caelo proprior, vel <u>quali Iuppiter ipse</u>
> <u>armatus flamma est.</u>

'This is not the sort of fire that we use, which burns more moderately, but nearer to that of the heavens, or the sort of fire with which Jupiter himself is armed.'

And finally, in a simile at 608-9, in reference to the violence of Etna's eruption:

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[226] Cf. 278-9n.

haud aliter quam cum <u>saevo Iove fulgurat aether</u>
et nitidum obscura telum caligine torquet.

'[The eruption of Etna is] not unlike when the ether gleams with savage Jove and flings his shining weapon through the obscure mist.'

The constant reminders of the Gigantomachy via this imagery throughout the poem ensure that, though the reader has been told by [V.] that it is an inappropriate subject matter, in reality, it is at the forefront of their mind. This seemingly bizarrely self-contradictory poetic strategy from [V.] compels the reader to question the sincerity of his earlier dismissal of the Gigantomachy as a poetic theme.

iii) *Fauces*

A specific aspect of the gigantomachic association with Etna, which is supposedly dismissed as impious by [V.] during his digression on the subject, but nevertheless finds its own way into the poet's bank of imagery, is the myth that Enceladus was trapped under the volcano at the conclusion of the battle, and that Etna's fires are the ailing monster's gasps for breath. As shown in intr. II, this tradition of the 'monster under the mountain' has rich literary precedence, treated as it is by Pindar, Virgil and others.[227] It ought to be said, once again, that even when [V.] is supposedly straightforwardly dismissing this myth, the reader is unconvinced, given that the poet has devoted the last thirty-one hexameters to a virtuoso digression on the subject matter. By the time that [V.] concludes his digression, he is in full narrative mode:

gurgite Trinacrio morientem Iuppiter Aetna
obruit Enceladon, vasto qui pondere montis
aestuat et petulans expirat faucibus ignem.[228]

'By the Trinacrian whirlpool Jupiter buried under Etna the dying Enceladus, who, groaning under the great weight of the mountain, burns and exhales fire out of his throats.'

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[227] See Pind. *Pyth.* 1.13-28 and Virg. *Aen.* 3.578-82; discussion at intr. II.1-2, comm. 71-3n.

[228] 71-3.

This vivid description, which engages closely with the rich literary tradition of the myth (see comm. 71-3n.), is hardly the language of dismissal. Of course, [V.] wakes the reader (and himself) up from his digression in the following hexameter, in which he remarks: *haec est mendosae vulgata licentia famae* ('This is the popularised licence of fraudulent rumour.'), but by now the damage to [V.]'s impression of sincerity has arguably already been done.[229]

What is more, throughout his poem, [V.] reminds his reader of the Etna-Enceladus association by consistently personifying the mountain. For example, in reference to the volcano's interior, he uses the word *fauces* ('throat') nine times (including at 73, cited above). In addition, the reader is treated to such vivid descriptions as that of the eruption (the centrepiece of the poem) at 324-8:

> spiritus involvensque suo sibi pondera nisu
> densa per ardentes exercet corpora vires
> et, quacumque iter est, properat transitque moramen,
> donec confluvio, veluti siponibus actus,
> exilit atque furens tota vomit igneus Aetna.

'Drawing up heavy masses in its struggle, *spiritus* propels these bodies with its flaming strength, and – wherever a path is found – it surges on and passes every delay – until, as if forced out by siphons, it gushes out in a single stream, and in a fiery frenzy vomits itself all over Etna.'

Here, far from being cast by [V.] as something demythologised and sterile, Etna is depicted as a living, breathing, vomiting monster.[230]

iv) Lucretian honey and the purpose of didactic

As I have demonstrated, throughout his poem, [V.] resorts to a bank of supposedly impious mythology associated with his subject matter, Mount Etna, in order to depict it. The question that now presents itself is why he does this. One could argue that this is [V.] exercising his right to a 'degree of poetic licence', as expressed at 91-2.[231] However, given that [V.] places his own poetic aim – complete truth (see 92-3) – in direct contrast with the supposedly lax standards

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[229] See Berrino n. ad loc.

[230] Cf. those anthropomorphic depictions of Etna by Pindar at *Pyth.* 1.13-28 and Virgil at *Aen.* 3.578-82; discussion of both of which at intr. II.1-2.

[231] See discussion at section 1.ii above, in addition to comm. 91-3n.

of his poetic colleagues, but then proceeds to fail to abide by those standards, I think that there is more to it than this: that [V.]'s self-contradictory 'poetics of paradox' are a particularly poetological comment on probably the greatest challenge faced by the didactic poet – in short, depicting prosaic subject matter via the medium of verse. This generic crux is epitomised well by Lucretius' famous simile at *DRN* 1.931-50, reiterated at 4.8-25, which compares the way in which the *De Rerum Natura* transmits Epicurean doctrine via *suaviloquenti carmine Pierio* ('sweet-speaking Pierian song') to the way in which, when treating children, doctors use honey to 'help the medicine go down'.[232] Whilst, as discussed in intr. III, in the case of the *Aetna*, we are not dealing with such an obviously doctrine-espousing poem as the *DRN*, the idea expressed in the Lucretian simile is relevant. By setting himself such high standards, and then so blatantly failing to abide by them, [V.] sacrifices his own poem to demonstrate just how challenging, and ultimately futile, is the aim of the didactic poet: to deliver 'hard truths' through the medium of appealing verse. The significance of this tension to the poem becomes fully apparent in its concluding *miranda fabula* (to be discussed in section 4 below).

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[232] See Bailey's lengthy n. on Lucr. 1.921-50 for more on the uncertainty about the placement of these lines, in addition to Gale (1994b); for additional interpretation of them, see Nethercut (2018).

3) Establishment: Man versus Nature

Another tension of the *Aetna* that has been under-appreciated by scholarship, but, as I shall demonstrate, contributes heavily to the poem's metanarrative of didactic futility, is that of man versus his environment. I shall now illustrate how [V.] establishes this tension in his poem.[233]

i) Geology

Throughout his poem, [V.] casts himself as a champion of his subject matter and its creator *natura*.[234] At 399-567, he delivers what might be described as a panegyric to the *lapis molaris* ('the lava-stone'), which he describes as Mount Etna's *custodia flammae* ('guardian of the flame'). He casts this rock as a living creature, professing at 416-7: *profecto | miranda est lapidis vivax animosaque virtus.* ('In truth, one ought to be amazed by the vitality and spirited virtue of the stone.') Furthermore, he depicts the stone as a sentient being, able to feel pain, remarking at 402-4: *nec fervere putes, ignem nec spargere posse. | sed, simul ac ferro quaeras, respondet et ictu | scintillat dolor* ('You would not think that it was able to burn, nor discharge fire, but as soon as you test it with iron, it responds and its pain from the blow shines out').

This impression of the inanimate geology of the earth being alive and able to feel pain inflicted on it by humans is given its strongest expression in the *Aetna* during [V.]'s critique of mining at 257-62:

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[233] In this section I adopt a loosely 'ecocritical' approach. Ecocriticism has its origins in ecologically concerned works such as Carson (1962), but was coined as a literary critical term in Rueckert (1978), who, in addition to advocating a greater awareness of environmental concern within literary circles, argued that the dissemination of literature – the writing, reading, teaching and studying of it – is an inherently 'ecological' process.

Since these early remarks were made, ecocriticism as a perspective has diversified and metamorphosed considerably. Indeed, it is commonly accepted that we have seen two (but in the opinion of some, three or even four) 'waves' of literary ecocriticism. Though the boundaries of each 'wave' are not clearly defined, to provide a simplistic point of difference between the two, one might say that first-wave ecocriticism tended to celebrate 'nature' and 'nature writing', whilst second-wave ecocriticism demonstrates a greater awareness of the problematic status of man's relationship with 'nature' and of the very word itself. For more on this, see Buell (2005); Clark (2011) 1-12; and Garrard (2014) 1-22.

[234] See, e.g., 600 *artificis naturae ingens opus aspice*, or the homage to *spiritus* at 188-218: discussion at comm. n. ad loc.

torquemur miseri in parvis premimurque labore,
scrutamur rimas et vertimus omne profundum,   276
quaeritur argenti semen, nunc aurea vena,   277
torquentur flamma terrae ferroque domantur,   278
dum sese pretio redimant, verumque professae
tum demum *viles taceant* inopesque relictae.[235]

'Miserable, we torture ourselves over the trivial and are oppressed by toil; we scrutinise fissures and uproot the depths in their entirety. At one time a fleck of silver is sought, at another a vein of gold. Parts of the earth are tortured by flame and oppressed by iron, until they yield themselves for a price – at which point, having admitted their secret, they are left *silenced*, poor and worthless.'

The impression of mining that is depicted by [V.] here is reminiscent of – and likely owes something to – that of Seneca at *Natural Questions* 5.15.[236] Like Seneca, [V.] emphasises the greed of mining, lamenting the fact that we as humans are willing to 'torture ourselves' over but a *semen* of silver or a *vena* of gold. Nevertheless, whereas Seneca's critique of mining is based on the damage that the pursuit inflicts on the *self,* [V.]'s is based on the damage that the pursuit inflicts on the *earth*.[237] His lament is heavily pathos-charged, as he personifies the earth, depicting it at 278 (260) as the passive victim of humankind's greed, tortured (*torquentur*) by flame and oppressed (*domantur*) by iron (using chiasmus here to enhance effect). If one follows the ms. reading here, which I deem it inexplicable not to, given its contribution to meaning, [V.] plays with the idea of the earth having a voice; to escape its torture it is forced to 'profess its truth' (279), as in reveal its resources, and when it does, it is 'silenced', abandoned to poverty.[238] This image of the earth as the tortured, exploited victim of humankind's greed, which is finally left bereft and silent, is very familiar to us today. Whether or not [V.] had any awareness of the finity of the earth's resources (and I suspect not; i.e. that his is more a critique of destruction of the natural environment than of humankind's journey towards self-destruction), his rhetoric

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[235] See comm. 257-62n. for further discussion of these verses, and their textual issues; see in particular, comm. 261-2n. for my acceptance of the ms. reading *viles taceant* over Maehly's conjecture (accepted by Goodyear) *vilesque iacent*.

[236] At *Nat. Quest.* 5.15, Seneca uses an anecdote told by Asclepiodotus about Philip II of Macedon's miners finding underground lakes as a vehicle to criticise the *luxuria* of mining. For more on this, and on the contrasting depiction of mining given by Cicero at *De Nat. Deo.* 2.60.151, see comm. 257-62n.

[237] Cf. my argument made at intr. III.4 that the *Aetna* is not an explicitly Stoic text.

[238] See comm. 261-2n.

seems to prefigure to a remarkable extent that used during the environmental movement of the second half of the twentieth century.[239]

ii) Farming

[V.]'s use of the verb *domo* (to 'master', 'tame', or 'dominate') at 260 (278) recalls his depiction of the Golden Age in the poem's opening.[240] Here, using markedly Virgilian diction, [V.] describes the *aurea saecula* as a time, *cum domitis nemo cererem iactaret in arvis* ('when no-one threw grain in subdued fields').[241] [V.] depicts the Golden Age as an idealised era prior to the dominion of man over his environment. His use of *domo* here to cast farming as an oppressive pursuit is in keeping with his generally critical attitude towards agriculture, which at 263-77, he casts as a greedy, exploitative enterprise, damaging to the self:

> noctes atque dies festinant arva coloni
> callent rure manus, glebarum expenditur usus:
> fertilis haec segetique feracior, altera viti,
> haec plantis humus, haec herbis dignissima tellus,
> haec dura et melior pecori silvisque fidelis,
> aridiora tenent oleae, sucosior ulmis
> grata. leves cruciant animos et corpora causae,
> horrea uti saturent, tumeant ut dolea musto,
> plenaque desecto surgant faenilia campo:
> †sic avidi semper qua visum est carius istis.
> implendus sibi quisque bonis est artibus: illae
> sunt animi fruges, haec rerum maxima merces,
> scire quid occulto terrae natura coercet,
> nullum fallere opus, non mutum cernere sacros
> Aetnaei montis fremitus animosque furentis […][242]

'Night and day, farmers hurry to work their fields; their hands harden in the country. The use of different soils is evaluated; one is fertile and more accommodating for corn, another for the vine; this soil is best for shoots, this earth for grass; this one is firm – better for cattle and reliable for woodland; olives own the drier parts, the moister are better for elms. Trivial causes torment minds and bodies: that granaries are full, that jars overflow with must, and haylofts rise full with the trimmed meadow. † Thus does everything seem

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[239] Cf. e.g. Carson's seminal 1962 title *Silent Spring*.

[240] See comm. 9-15n.

[241] 10. As suggested at comm. n. ad loc., cf. e.g. Georg . 2.114 *aspice et extremis domitum cultoribus orbem.*

[242] 263-77; for further discussion, see comm. 263-72n.; for discussion of the textual crux at 272, see comm. n. ad loc.

dearer to the greedy than themselves. † Each person ought to acquit themselves to noble arts. These are the harvests of the mind, the greatest profit of all: to know what nature conceals in the inner depths of the earth, to give no false report of her work, not to perceive dumbly the sacred roaring and raging spirit of the Aetnaean mount. […]'

In these verses, [V.] makes his views on farming plain, depicting it as a greedy, exploitative pursuit, and contrasting it with what he wittily labels as the 'harvest of the mind', the study and appreciation of the earth – something that, as he reveals at 275-81 (see comm. n. ad loc.), amounts to his own poetic project.[243] However, as I shall demonstrate, there is a flaw in [V.]'s reasoning: namely that, as much as he resents humankind's attempts to tame nature through force, his poem itself can be read as an attempt to do just that.

iii) Didactic poetry

Whilst [V.] is critical of practices such as mining and farming, which entail the mastery of the natural environment by man, a considerable aim of his poem, arguably, is to tame or control its natural subject matter. This is apparent from the *Aetna*'s opening sentence, which I quote again:

> Aetna mihi ruptique cavis fornacibus ignes
> et quae tam fortes volvant incendia causae,
> quid fremat imperium, quid raucos torqueat aestus
> carmen erit.[244]

'Etna, and her fires burst from concave furnaces – what are the causes, so strong, which roll her fires, what chafes at *imperium*, what whirls the noisy blasts of heat? – this will be my song…'

Whilst elsewhere [V.] expresses his wonder at the natural world, the overarching aim of his poem (as stated here) is to deprive its subject matter of its mystique. The overload of interrogatives (*quae* […] *quid* […] *quid*) demonstrates that this *carmen* will be a didactic poem in the truest sense, all about explaining Etna.[245] [V.]'s third programmatic rhetorical question – *quid fremat imperium*

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[243] For more on this, see Welsh (2014) 107.

[244] 1-4.

[245] See intr. III.1, comm. 1-4n. for its engagement with hypotexts.

('what chafes at *imperium*?') – is particularly telling;[246] here, the poet not only depicts his inanimate subject matter as resistant (which is surprising enough), but more than this, as resistant to the particularly Roman value of *imperium*. Whilst *imperium* has many meanings, from 'command', to 'power', to 'authority', to 'rule' to 'empire' (to name but a few), it is almost always suggestive of human influence.[247] Furthermore, given the *Aetna*'s dating in the prime of the Empire, the word's connotations of one-man Roman rule would be inescapable here. I interpret [V.]'s use of *imperium* here as deeply self-reflexive: he casts his didactic aim as the challenge to tame-by-Romanising a resistant subject matter.[248] One of the ways in which he seeks to achieve this aim is via what might be labelled as 'verbal imperialism' – using the diction of his own familiar sphere to master his unfamiliar subject matter. Given the nature of his subject matter, [V.] draws a remarkable amount of his imagery from the sphere of empire-building. In addition to his use of *imperium* in verse 3, see, for example, his tribute to *spiritus* at 216-8:

<div style="text-align:center">nullus</div>
impetus est ipsi; qua spiritus imperat, audit;
hic princeps magnoque sub hoc duce militat ignis.[249]

'Itself, it [fire] has no power; where *spiritus* orders, it obeys. *spiritus* is the emperor; under this great general, fire serves as a soldier.'

The overload of imperial diction here – *impetus*, *impero*, *princeps*, *dux*, *milito* – speaks for itself. Furthermore, throughout his work, [V.] delivers several extended similes in which, amongst other comparisons, he compares the fabric of the earth to an animate (likely human) body (98-101: see comm. n. ad loc.), the workings of the volcano to instruments (293-300: see comm. n. ad loc.) and the debris of a pyroclastic flow to a Roman army (470-5). Whilst these similes undoubtedly bring the poet's subject matter to life (indeed they are some of the

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[246] 3. For the meaning of *fremere* here, as suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), cf. Servius n. on Aen. 1.56: *quidam hoc loco 'fremunt', id est, 'imperia recusant' intellegunt, ut apud Cassium in Annalium secundo: 'ne quis regnum occuparet si plebs nostra fremere imperia coepisset', id est, 'recusare'.*

[247] See *TLL* 7.1.568.8-582.25.

[248] Such an 'imperial' motive would not be unique amongst first-century nature writers. On this characteristic of, e.g., Pliny's *Nat. Hist.*, see Carey (2003) 32-40.

[249] See comm. n. ad loc. for full discussion.

most artistic and engaging parts of the work), their primary purpose is to familiarise-by-Romanising the mystical *mons*.[250] As I have demonstrated in this section of the study, this is one strategy deployed by [V.] to enact his programmatic aim of taming a resistant subject matter. In part 4 of this study, I shall demonstrate how [V.]'s chosen ending, his concluding *miranda fabula*, provides excellent resolution to this and other tensions of the poem.

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[250] For more on [V.]'s use of simile in this manner, see Goodyear (1984) 360-4.

4) Resolution: *Miranda Fabula*

Having discussed certain defining features of the *Aetna*, namely 1) its use of poetological gameplay, 2) its self-contradictory poetic programme, and 3) its concurrent tension of the conflict of man versus his environment, I shall now demonstrate how [V.]'s concluding *miranda fabula* operates as an entirely appropriate ending to the poem, providing closure to many of these themes and tensions.

Following in the wake of his Latin didactic predecessors, [V.] ends his poem with an extended digression in narrative mode.[251] The account that he delivers – one of the pious Catanian brothers' rescue of their parents from the fires of Etna – has long been considered as something of an enigma; scholarship has struggled to pinpoint its role within the poem as a whole.[252] This study will argue that [V.]'s account of the *miranda fabula* is in fact a remarkably well-conceived ending to the poem: that its 'contradictions' provide resolution to [V.]'s poetic programme, and that, appropriately for a poem so steeped in poetological discourse, it provides [V.] with a platform to air his views on the status of the Latin didactic genre.

i) Contradiction: *(im)pia fabula*

The impression of [V.] as a poet who does not abide by his own standards (as outlined in section 2 above) is confirmed by his concluding *miranda fabula*. [V.] sets up his ending by further complicating the tension of poetic truth versus fiction that has been at play throughout his work.[253] For thirty-two verses (568-599), he has lambasted those who are obsessed with visiting the cities of the world on

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[251] See, in chronological order, Lucr. 6.1138-286 (the Plague of Athens); Virg. *Georg.* 4.315-558 (Aristaeus' *bugonia* / Orpheus and Eurydice); and arguably Man. 5.538-630 (Perseus and Andromeda). See fn. 133 for more on these.

[252] For previous versions of the account, see [Arist.] *De Mundo* 400a-b, Strab. *Geog.* 6.2.3 and Sen. *De Benef.* 3.37.2.
  Scholarship has largely limited itself to discussing the hypertextual relationship between the *miranda fabula* and *Aeneid* 2, or its broadly 'contradictory' nature – both of which are plainly evident. For the former, see Santelia (2012) and Most (forthcoming); for the latter, see Pingoud (2008) 207-11, Taub (2008) 53-5, (2009) 135-7. A notable exception to these trends is Welsh (2014: 109-18), who does address the role of the *miranda fabula* within the poem more broadly, arguing that the mode and content of the account – narrative and *fabula* – is suggestive of the volcano's divinity.

[253] See section 2; Taub (2008) 53-5 and (2009) 135-7.

account of their association with myth, before exclaiming in anguish at 600: *artificis naturae ingens opus aspice!* ('look on this great work of the artist nature!') On a basic level, this *opus* is of course Mount Etna, and [V.]'s aim is to encourage his reader to appreciate its natural beauty, instead of obsessing over the sites of a mythical past. However, as discussed in section 1.ii (above), interpreted metapoetically, as the diction used throughout this section of the poem demands, [V.]'s aim is to urge his reader to appreciate his own poetry – the *Aetna* – rather than that of the *vates* about the aforementioned cities and the myths associated with them. This metapoetical significance of the build-up to [V.]'s concluding account reminds his reader that, throughout his poem, he has constantly self-styled his own poetry as that of the 'truth', in contrast to those impious, mendacious, fabulous accounts of the *vates*.[254] Given this backdrop, it comes as a dramatic surprise to the reader when [V.] remarks at 603: *insequitur miranda tamen sua fabula montem* ('nevertheless a wondrous *fabula* of its own attends the mountain'), before proceeding to tell said tale. Until now, [V.] has depicted both the noun (*fabula*) and the adjective (*miranda*) as complete anathema to his poetic project. [V.]'s three prior usages of the term *fabula* have each been deployed to emphasise his utter disdain for its use in poetry, whilst at 247-50 he has urged his reader not to be awe-struck by the *miracula* of the world and leave them disordered and unexplained, but instead to order and decipher them, something he labels as the *divina* [*est*] *animi ac iucunda voluptas* ('the divine and joyous pleasure of the mind').[255]

Additional aspects of the account contribute to this impression of its contradictory nature. One of these is the way in which, via this *pia fabula*, [V.] seems to look back to his dismissal of the *impia fabula* of the Gigantomachy at 41-73 (see comm. n. ad loc.). One might be tempted to follow Taub's interpretation that, by pairing the Gigantomachy and the *miranda fabula*, [V.] 'delineates a boundary for the use of legend and the role of the gods [in poetry]';[256] that, by delivering an *Aeneid*-esque fanfare to the Roman value of *pietas*, [V.] demonstrates the sort of *fabula* that can be used in poetry (in contrast

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[254] See section 2; comm. 41-73n.; comm. 74-93n.

[255] For these usages of *fabula*, see 23 *quicquid et antiquum iactata est fabula carmen* (comm. n. ad loc.); 42 *impia sollicitat Phlegrais fabula castris*; 511 *si firma manet tibi fabula mendax*. See further discussion at comm. 23n.; Kruschwitz (2015) 86-7.

[256] Taub (2009) 136.

to sacrilegious subject matter such as the Gigantomachy). However, this is problematised both by the insincere nature of [V.]'s original dismissal of the Gigantomachy (see comm. 41-73n.), and by his use of the myth's impious imagery throughout the poem (see section 2.ii above). Indeed, in order to remind his reader of the connection between the two accounts, [V.] opens his *miranda fabula* with a simile steeped in gigantomachic imagery:

> nam quondam ruptis excanduit Aetna cavernis
> et, velut eversis penitus fornacibus, ingens
> eiecta in longum rapidis fervoribus unda,
> <u>haud aliter quam cum saevo Iove fulgerat aether</u>
> <u>et nitidum obscura telum caligine torquet</u>.[257]

'For once upon a time, Etna burned white from its ruptured caverns and, as if its furnaces had been overturned deep below ground, a great river of volatile heat was propelled at length – not unlike when the ether gleams with savage Jove and flings his shining weapon through the obscure mist.'

This simile, which draws on supposedly impious imagery, encapsulates the contradictory nature of [V.]'s concluding narrative. The poem's closing lines seem similarly to contradict much of what [V.] has said about poetry previously:

> illos mirantur carmina vatum,
> illos seposuit claro sub nomine Ditis,
> nec sanctos iuvenes attingunt sordida fata:
> securae cessere domus et iura piorum.[258]

'To them [the *pii fratres*] do the songs of the *vates* pay honour; them Dis has assigned a special place and glorious name; nor does a sordid fate await the sacred young men – their due is a dwelling free from care and the rewards of the pious.'

In these concluding verses, even the Underworld, which has previously been lambasted by [V.] as a poetic theme in the same category of impiety as the Gigantomachy at 76-85 (see comm. n. ad loc.), makes a comeback in a positive light, as the *securae domus et iura piorum*. Perhaps even more surprisingly, the figure of the *vates*, much maligned throughout the poem, is depicted positively;[259]

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[257] Note also the way in which these lines strongly recall the opening of the opening of the poem, 1-4.

[258] 642-5. See further discussion of this passage in the context of [V.]'s world view at intr. III.3.

[259] For [V.]'s negative impression of the figure of the *vates*, see comm. 29n.

the fact that the *pii fratres* will be honoured in the songs of the *vates* is cast as their fittingly glorious fate. The irony here, of course, is that [V.] is fulfilling his own prophecy, and in doing so, is admitting that he also should be counted amongst the ranks of bards whom he has previously slandered. I shall return to these poetological contradictions on the part of [V.] once I have addressed the way in which his concluding *miranda fabula* resolves the *Aetna*'s concurrent tension of the conflict between man and his environment.

ii) Resolution: Nature and greed

[V.] uses his *miranda fabula* as a *locus* to resolve another tension that he has been steadily building throughout his poem, that of the relationship of humankind with its environment.[260] [V.] characterises the disaster of the eruption of Mount Etna as a process of purification, describing the volcano's fires at 623-4 as ones 'set on sparing no-one, or only the pious.' To this end, whilst the honourable *pii fratres* escape Etna's violent eruption, those who have been criticised for their greed throughout the poem do not. The farmers – castigated by [V.] for their greed at 263-72 (see section 3.ii above) are the first to go, as the poet remarks at 610-1 *ardebant agris segetes et mitia cultu | iugera cum dominis* ('corn-crops and fields soft for cultivation were razed together with their masters'). [V.]'s depiction here of farmers as *domini* over their environment recalls his earlier depiction of the Golden Age as a time of purity, *cum domitis nemo cererem iactaret in arvis* ('when no-one threw grain into subdued fields').[261] It is also reminiscent of the moment at which [V.]'s disdainful opinion of humankind's greed and abuse of its environment is aired most clearly, his critique of mining at 257-62 (see section 3.i above).

In the *miranda fabula*, it is telling that such devotion to material wealth and lack of respect for the environment proves to be the undoing for many of the inhabitants of Catania. Faced with oncoming onslaught, the citizens of the city react thus:

> tum vero ut cuique est animus viresque, rapina
> tutari conantur opes. gemit ille sub auro,

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[260] See section 3 above.

[261] 10. For further discussion of [V.]'s depiction of the Golden Age, see comm. 9-16n.

colligit ille arma et stulta cervice reponit
[…]
et, quod cuique fuit cari, fugit ipse sub illo.
sed non incolumis dominum sua praeda secuta est;
cunctantis vorat ignis et undique torret avaros,
consequitur fugisse ratos et praemia captis
concremat.[262]

'Then, with as much courage and strength as each could summon, the throng try to protect their wealth by plundering it. One groans under his gold, another collects his armour and places it over his stupid neck once again; […] each flees under the weight of what he holds dear. But not unscathed does the plunder of each attend its master; the fire devours those who linger, and cascades from all sides over the greedy. It follows those under the impression that they have escaped and incinerates all the plunder alongside those it has captured.'

Indeed, the *pii fratres* aside, the only other potential survivor of the disaster is a *pauper*, 'swift under his tiniest of loads'.[263] Thus, in this cascade of molten flesh and possessions, does *natura* through Etna claim a most savage of vengeances against those who have abused it. In this way, [V.]'s *miranda fabula* rounds off his critique of those who exploit the resources of the earth, something that has been an underlying tension of the entirety of the poem, with a stark reminder that *natura* can reclaim its wealth in the most violent of ways.

iii) Resolution: Nature and didactic poetry

I deliberately left out from my quotation of [V.]'s description of the carnage caused by Etna's eruption one contentious verse, 617: *defectum raptis illum sua carmina tardant* ('another, tired under what he has seized, is slowed down by his own poems'). Goodyear (n. ad loc.) finds the image depicted by the mss. of a poet struggling under the weight of his verses to escape Etna's fires ridiculous, and so accepts Gorallus' conjecture *crimina* instead, but in doing so, he ruins a critical detail of the *miranda fabula*; [V.]'s image of a poet's pathetically futile struggles to preserve himself and his work from the volcano's fires is in fact deeply self-conscious. Via this image, [V.] depicts and acknowledges the ultimate impossibility of his own didactic aim: to tame the power of *natura* through verse.

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[262] 614-23.

[263] 618.

As I demonstrate throughout the commentary, and in section 3.iii of this study, [V.] is constantly trying to restrict the power of his resistant subject matter, Mount Etna, by demystifying it. As [V.] ends his poem with the image of the volcano's fires engulfing the inhabitants of Catania, including tellingly its local bard, the reader is left with the resounding impression that the poet has taken on too tough a challenge: *vates* may sing of subjects such as the *pii fratres* all they like (see 642), but they are inadequately equipped to address such an incomprehensible natural phenomenon as Mount Etna.

This acknowledgement from [V.] of the ultimate futility of his own didactic programme is another important moment of resolution provided by the *miranda fabula*. As we have seen, in his proem (1-93), [V.] sets himself a seemingly impossible poetic standard by which to abide, and then ultimately proves this to be the case in his concluding *miranda fabula*. In this way, the *Aetna* reveals itself to be an even more self-conscious composition than previous commentators have recognised. More than being a didactic *tour de force*, the poem can be read as a comment on the ultimate futility of the genre:[264] the impossible challenge faced by the didactic poet-*persona* to deliver poetic truth. Read in this way, the poem's contradictions suddenly make more sense. I think that it is important to note that the point at which this all becomes clear, the moment at which [V.]'s didactic programme unravels (or reveals its true nature), is that part of the poem which is, ironically, arguably its most obviously generically 'didactic': its concluding narrative.[265] If the moral of [V.]'s *miranda fabula* might be described as 'respect the power of *natura*', an impression that emerges from it just as strongly is the inadequacy of didactic poetry to address such a theme. The crucial role played by the *miranda fabula* in [V.]'s metanarrative of construction then deliberate deconstruction of his poetic programme reveals it to be a far more conclusive ending than it has been credited as previously. This metanarrative as a whole, and its wider implications for didactic poetry, likewise reveals the *Aetna* to be a far more significant work within that genre than it has been credited as previously.

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[264] For *Aetna* as a didactic '*tour de force*', see Goodyear (1984) 356; for it as '*Wie man ein Lehrgedicht schreibt*', see Volk (2005) 68-90.

[265] Following those of Lucretius, Virgil, and perhaps Manilius (see fn. 251).

V. The Text

Although, as outlined in my preface, the primary aim of this thesis is to provide a literary interpretation of the *Aetna*, and not to produce a new edition of its text, it would be wrong to gloss over the severely corrupt status of the text as it has been transmitted to us. Therefore, though my text is considerably indebted to Goodyear's 1966 OCT, throughout my commentary, where I deem it appropriate, based on my own understanding of the text and (in certain cases) inspection of the manuscripts, I discuss Goodyear's textual choices, sometimes challenging them and sometimes fully diverging from them.[266] This introductory section therefore operates as a preface to the discussion of the poem's textual issues that occurs throughout the commentary. It is sub-divided into three sections: firstly, a discussion of the extant manuscripts, in which I outline the provenance and relative merits of the ms. families on which the text is based; secondly, a discussion of the reported 'Gyraldine' readings, on which both Goodyear's and subsequently my own commentary rely heavily; and thirdly, a review of the most important previous editions of the poem, in which I discuss in what ways I have followed, and in what ways I have diverged from, prior editors.

Given my heavy reliance on them in the part of the poem for which they are available, I go into considerable detail on the vexed issue of the transmission of the *lectiones Gyraldinae*. Though, as I outline in this piece, I rank these reported readings as the superior source of the part of the text for which they are available (138-286), it would be wrong to use them without stating outrightly the issues of their transmission. In this piece and throughout the commentary, I hope to justify just how important these reported readings are to producing a workable text of the poem.

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[266] For an example of the former, see, e.g., comm. 76n.; for the latter, see, e.g., comm. 262n. For a full list of divergences from Goodyear's text, see fig. 2.

1. The Extant Manuscripts

The oldest and best of the extant *Aetna* mss. is C, Cantabrigiensis Kk v 34, housed at the University Library, Cambridge. It came to Cambridge along with the rest of the Bishop of Ely's collection in 1715. It is universally regarded as both very old (dating to the tenth century at the latest) and very well written for its time. I myself have inspected this manuscript of the poem and can vouch for its quality.[267] Since C was (re-)discovered by Munro in 1866, its text has formed the backbone of every ensuing edition of the poem worth its salt.[268] In Goodyear's 1966 OCT, C is considered the superior source of the text where the Gyraldine readings ('G' – to be discussed) are not available.

Closely related to C is S, the fragmentum Stabulense, part of Parisinus Latinus 17177, housed at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Though this ms. only contains lines 1-345 of the poem, and is in part illegible, of all the *Aetna* manuscripts it is the second oldest after C (dating from likely the tenth or eleventh century), and is perhaps a twin of it; Goodyear counts only a handful of cases in which S diverges from C.[269] For this reason, in his 1965 commentary on the *Aetna*, Goodyear assigns both C and S to the hyperarchetype α. Given that this siglum was not used in the subsequent OCT, I largely avoid using it.

The second family of the extant ms. tradition, labelled by Goodyear under the hyperarchetype β, consists of at least twelve manuscripts, all dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; Goodyear divides the family into two branches, one half of it deemed by him generally more reliable than the other, with one ms. occupying an intermediary position between the two.[270] According to Goodyear, the less interpolated branch of the β family consists of:

H, Helmstadiensis 332, housed in the Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.

A, Arundelianus 133, housed in the British Library. I myself have inspected this manuscript.

R, Rhedigeranus 125, housed in the City Library, Breslau.

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[267] For similar attestations of the quality of this ms., see Munro (1867) 28-30; Ellis (1901) liii-lxi; Goodyear (1965) 3, 23-4.

[268] Though see Ellis (1901: liii-iv) for the degree of awareness of C prior to Munro.

[269] For more on the close relationship between C and S, see Wagler (1884) 3-6; Ellis (1901) lv; Goodyear (1965) 3-4.

[270] See Goodyear (1965) 4-6.

V, Vaticanus 3272, housed in the Vatican Library, which contains *Aetna* 1-433. This ms. is considered by Goodyear as an intermediary between the two branches.

The more interpolated branch of Goodyear's β consists of:

P, Vaticanus 3255, housed in the Vatican Library.
U, Urbinas 353, housed in the Vatican Library.
N, Neapolitanus iv E 7, housed in the National Library, Naples.
Sl, Sloanianus 777, housed in the British Library.
Cors, Corsinianus 43 F 21, housed in the Corsini Library, Rome.
Rehd, Rehdigeranus 60, housed in the City Library, Breslau.
Chig, Chigianus H V 164, housed in the Vatican Library.

This second branch of β, which Goodyear labels under the hyperarchetype γ, formed the basis of the text of most of the early editions of the *Aetna*.[271] However, after the (re-)discovery of the earlier and better half of the tradition (α [CS]), it became apparent just how drastically interpolated γ was. Consequently, the contribution of this ms. family to Goodyear's OCT is limited.[272]

Generally close to the readings of CS are those of the excerpts, preserved in three manuscripts. In the OCT's stemma codicum, they are presented as another branch of the tradition (φ), but this somewhat overstates their importance. In total, the excerpts amount to only 40-odd lines of the poem, generally agree with or present a reading very close to CS, and in Goodyear's opinion, only in a few cases perhaps single-handedly preserve the truth.[273]

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[271] Most notably that of Scaliger (1573).

[272] Though see Reeve (1975) 241-6, which criticises the OCT for not adequately distinguishing V from HAR, and Sl (which Reeve labels W) from the rest of γ (labelled by Reeve as ρ). This is an article written by and for a true textual critic; given the relative insignificance of the entirety of the β family, its importance for us is limited.

[273] Goodyear (1965) 6. For lines at which φ's reading perhaps single-handedly preserves the truth, see, e.g., comm. 233n., 267n.
    Distinct from φ are the Excerpta Pithoena (Exc. Pith.), which are preserved in ms. D' Orville 195 (housed in the Bodleian Library), under the title '*Notae et emendationes Petri Pithoei in librum, cui titulus est Epigrammata et poematia vetera, Parisiis* 1590'. In Goodyear's opinion (1965: 10), these notes contain 'several excellent readings', many of which are likely conjectures, but three of which agree with G.

2) The *Lectiones Gyraldinae*

The third branch of the *Aetna*'s ms. tradition (GL) comprises largely the reported readings of what is believed to be the lost Codex Gyraldinus (known as G). Given the importance of these readings firstly to Goodyear's text of the *Aetna* and subsequently to my own commentary on the poem, I shall address directly the vexed issue of their transmission.

The question of how to deal with these readings, many of which undoubtedly improve the text of the part of the poem for which they are available (138-286), has been a battleground for editors of the poem for centuries. Given the use of G (to varying extents) by all of Munro, Sudhaus, Ellis and Goodyear, many of its readings now feature in all important modern editions of the poem.[274] Goodyear, in particular, has a very favourable opinion of G, deeming the tradition 'older than and superior to α [CS] and β';[275] because of this, its readings litter the OCT's rendering of the verses of the poem for which it is available, and subsequently most modern scholarly articles on the poem.[276]

Despite the undoubted quality of many of G's readings, the story of their transmission is an admittedly vexing one. I shall summarise it here.[277] In his 1545 account of the poet Claudian, the humanist Gyraldus (Giglio Gregorio Giraldi) comments that, alongside various other works of that poet, there is assigned to him, but of debatable authorship, a poem about Mount Etna, a very old and pure manuscript of which he had read and copied. According to Gyraldus, this manuscript had been formerly owned by the fourteenth-century Italian scholar Franceso Petracco (Petrarch).[278] Gyraldus' text and the supposedly ancient manuscript that he collated have never been found. However, we have extant an

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[274] For generally favourable verdicts on G, see Munro (1867) 30-2; Sudhaus (1898) i-x; Goodyear (1965) 6-10, 29-52; cf. the considerably less favourable verdict of Ellis (1902) lxiv-lxxxiv. See Goodyear (1965: 6, fn. 2) for a full account of past scholars' views on G.

[275] Goodyear (1965) 6.

[276] See Goodyear (1965: 29-52) for a detailed analysis of the readings of G against Ω. The headline of Goodyear's study is that 49 of G's variants are, in Goodyear's opinion, certainly or probably right, as opposed to 27 being certainly or probably wrong. For examples of modern scholarly works that make extensive use of G's readings, see Volk (2005) 82-90 and Welsh (2014) 101-9, both studies on *Aetna* 219-81.

[277] Using Goodyear (1965) 6-10; see ibid. for fuller discussion.

[278] See Giraldi (1545) 372: *extat item poema de Aetna monte, quod an ipsius legitimum sit nec probare nec refellere ausim. ex antiquissimo certe et castigato codice qui Francisci Petrarchae fuisse creditur, illud ego ipse exscripsi.*

ms. of Claudian, housed at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence, dating from the late fifteenth century, which contains a version of *Aetna* 268-86 that evidently derives itself from a markedly different ms. archetype to the other extant manuscripts (Ω).[279] The readings from this Claudian ms. are labelled as 'L' in the OCT's apparatus criticus. As Goodyear suggests, based on the evidence of Gyraldus' report (see fn. 278) and L, it is a reasonable hypothesis that there was a fifteenth-century manuscript of Claudian's works that contained a text of at least some of the *Aetna*, which was itself substantially different to Ω.[280]

The Dutch Classical scholar Nicolaas Heinsius the Elder (1620-81) endeavoured in vain to find the Gyraldine manuscript, but did obtain in Florence a manuscript containing *Aetna* 138-286, which he collated.[281] Three copies of Heinsius' collation remain; the manuscript itself and his original collation of it are lost.[282] From these copies, it is clear that Heinsius' manuscript was from a tradition likely much older and better than the extant *Aetna* codices. Its readings of 268-86 are almost exactly the same as those of L, likely making it part of the same family as that manuscript, and perhaps a copy of, or even the very same manuscript that Gyraldus saw.[283] Despite the uncertainty over their provenance, Heinsius' reported readings have come to be known in modern editions as the *lectiones Gyraldinae* (G). Given the number of hands that these readings have been through to be extant today, they have naturally been treated with a degree of suspicion by some scholars.[284] However, such is the general quality of G's readings, that even Ellis (possessor of, in Goodyear's words, an 'unreasoned prejudice' against the tradition) is compelled to accept that at least thirteen of them are 'of undoubted goodness and hardly to be arrived at by conjecture.'[285] It

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[279] Laurentianus plut. 33.9.

[280] Goodyear (1965) 7.

[281] For various sources relating Heinsius' search for G, see Goodyear (1965) 7, fn. 1.

[282] According to Goodyear (1965: 8), the best copy of Heinsius' collation was produced by Burman.

[283] See Goodyear (1965: 8-10) for an inconclusive assessment of the likelihood of these possibilities.

[284] See fn. 274 above.

[285] Goodyear (1965) 19; Ellis (1902) lxxv-vi. Cf. the highly favourable verdict on G of the original champion of C, Munro (1867: 31): 'To doubt its [G's] essential genuineness is monstrous: in 150 vss. it gives ten times as many brilliant and certain corrections of the other mss. as a Scaliger can make in the whole poem. Quite as incontestable in my opinion is its superiority over α [Goodyear's C] in these vss. as is the superiority of α [C] over all other mss.: when one finds so much here that can be understood only from β [Goodyear's G], one trembles to think how much must remain uncorrected in the rest of the poem.'

cannot be doubted that, from my own perspective (that of the twenty-first century commentator on the poem), G's readings improve the text of the *Aetna*. I count at least six interpretative notes of mine on individual lines of the poem which are reliant on G's readings, and many more lines of the poem which would be nonsensical or borderline nonsensical were it not for them.[286] Moreover, whilst none of my broader opinions on the poem are entirely reliant on G's readings, some of my arguments made in extended notes in the commentary would undoubtedly be weakened, were I not to use these readings.[287] Whilst it is important that we bear in mind the vexed manner in which G's readings have been transmitted to us, given that they have been used with conviction in many of the most important recent pieces of scholarship on the poem, and have thus contributed to a sort of scholarly consensus being formed on the part of the poem for which they are available, it would be an error for me not to make use of them.[288] Though I am unable to prove it, I am fully in agreement with the verdict shared by Munro and Goodyear that the extant G readings are the remnants of an ms. tradition of the poem older and far superior to Ω.[289] Naturally, this verdict has serious implications for our confidence in the parts of the text for which G is not available.

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[286] See comm. ns. on 151, 187b, 227, 234, 235b, 253, 279; in contrast, for notes based on Ω's reading instead of G's, see comm. 228n., 236n. 260n., 261n.

[287] See, for example, the contribution of G's reading of 253 (see comm. n. ad loc.) to my broader point about [V.]'s polemic against Manilius made at comm. 219-81n.; cf. also the significance of G's ordering of 276-8 (see comm. 258-60n.) to my point made at comm. 257-62n.

[288] G's readings certainly improve [V.]'s methodological digression (219-81), which has been discussed recently by Volk (2005) 82-90 and Welsh (2014) 101-9.

[289] See Munro (1867) 31; Goodyear (1965) 6, 52.

3) Editions

I shall now say a few words about the editions of the poem, which I have made considerable use of in compiling my commentary (albeit to varying extents).[290] The oldest edition of the poem that I have used extensively is the seminal one of Hugh Andrew Johnson Munro (1867). With good reason have I chosen not to delve any further back; Munro was the first editor of the poem to make proper use of the oldest and best of the extant manuscripts, C. Indeed, by Munro's own admission, his almost accidental (re-)discovery of C, and subsequent recognition of its superiority over the manuscripts of the β family, was his only motive behind working on the *Aetna* at all.[291] Munro must have been an exceptionally productive scholar; within a few months of his first look at C, he had collated several manuscripts of the β tradition and inspected the preserved readings of G, and subsequently produced perhaps the most influential text and apparatus criticus of the poem ever.[292]

To his text, Munro added a short, but informative, introduction, in which he outlines his methodology in dealing with the poem's mss., and provides a comprehensive evaluation of the poem's authorship and dating; he settles rightly in my opinion on a dating for the poem in the Silver Age, and, of all the past candidates for authorship suggested, on Lucilius Junior as the most likely.[293] Munro's commentary is similarly brief, and focused solely on explaining his text, but some of his notes (e.g. his 6n. [on the *Dodona* of the mss.]) demonstrate remarkable learnedness. Goodyear claimed that the 'faults of Munro's edition are grave', criticising his predecessor's blinkered devotion to C, and sometimes misplaced conviction behind his conjectures, but this is an extremely harsh verdict.[294] Given that Munro did not claim his edition to be anything other than what it is (an almost impromptu airing of an important manuscript discovery), and

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[290] See Goodyear (1965: 10-15) for comments on editions prior to Munro (1867).

[291] See Munro (1867) 25. The scholar had been charged by Prof. Ribbeck to collate the *Culex* of Kk v 34, and upon completion of this task, inspected the text of the *Aetna* that follows in that ms.

[292] All of Sudhaus (1898), Ellis (1901), Vessereau (1905, 1923) and Goodyear (1965, 1966) follow Munro's basic template of prioritising C over the other extant mss. (though they have differing attitudes towards G: see fn. 274).

[293] See Munro (1867) 32-8; cf. my discussion of Lucilius Junior's authorship credentials at intr. I.3.

[294] Goodyear (1965) 16-17.

that it in fact amounts to a piece of work far beyond this, it can only be commended.[295]

Chronologically, the next book-length edition of the poem that I have made extensive use of is that of Siegfried Sudhaus (1898). The premise of Sudhaus' edition was a controversial one: namely that the editor would base his text almost entirely on seemingly our best sources, C and G, and would avoid using readings from the γ family or modern scholarly emendations if at all possible.[296] The methodological inconsistency of such an approach is summed up by Goodyear:

'If he [Sudhaus] is right to accept many readings of G where G is available, readings differing wildly from those of C, it follows that C is likely to be wrong in a similar proportion of places in parts of the poem where G is not available.'[297]

Sudhaus' argument in defence of this approach, that the text of C is less corrupt where G is unavailable (the opening and second half of the poem), is unconvincing.[298] The modern critic might have some sympathy with Sudhaus' approach of sticking to the ms. tradition of this difficult text if at all possible, but his 'anti-textual' method irked Robinson Ellis to such an extent that it compelled him to produce his own edition of the poem as a polemical response to that of Sudhaus.[299] In contrast to the reception of Sudhaus' text, the discursive sections of his commentary have been widely acclaimed.[300] Indeed, out of all editions of the poem discussed in this section, Sudhaus' is the only one that devotes any length to ancient attitudes towards volcanology, and possible influences over the

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[295] See Munro's own words at (1867: 37): 'I have already said, our Cambridge manuscript is my sole inducement to publish this edition: it seemed to me, considering the good age of the poem, worth while to give it to the world in an improved shape. Its attractions are too small to make me care to keep it longer by me and try to correct more completely its exceedingly corrupt text. I give it therefore to the world well aware how much has yet to be done; how much, that appears to me satisfactory, will be found defective by intelligent readers.'

[296] See Sudhaus (1898) v-viii.

[297] Goodyear (1965) 18.

[298] See Sudhaus (1898) v-viii; cf. Goodyear (1965) 18.

[299] Ellis (1901) ix-xii.

[300] See Ellis (1901) ix; Goodyear (1965) 19.

Aetna.[301] His central thesis that Posidonius is an important source behind the poem eventually won over Goodyear.[302]

Sudhaus' conservative treatment of the mss. motivated Robinson Ellis, who, at the time, had already been inspecting manuscripts of the *Aetna* for several years, to publish his own edition of the poem.[303] Ellis' resultant work provides a revealing insight into his scholarly approach, which was idiosyncratic to say the least. In his introduction, Ellis remains entirely neutral on the issues of the poem's authorship, dating and use of sources.[304] Given the resultant roundabout and inconclusive manner in which he treats these subjects (and the volume of words that this approach entails), Ellis' work has justly been criticised as an exercise in showing off its author's learning for its own sake.[305] Similarly, Ellis' commentary is full of long notes, which bring together an impressive range of sources and contextual information, but very rarely enhance the reader's understanding of the part of the poem in question. Ellis' textual approach has also been heavily criticised over the years. Most controversial of all is his attitude towards G. In contrast to many of his predecessors and successors, Ellis prioritised CS over G, resulting in a rendering of 138-286 that is very different to that of the OCT. Ellis' approach is compromised by the fact that he accepts into his text many readings from the worse half of the extant ms. tradition, and uses his own and other scholars' conjectures regularly. In typically direct style, Goodyear castigates the flawed methodology of his predecessor thus:

> 'His [Ellis'] treatment of G is typical. If many of G's readings were known to be conjectures of Scaliger or Schrader, without a semblance of authority, Ellis would have accepted them gladly. Since they are from G and since a reasonable suspicion has developed into an unreasonable prejudice, he will have nothing to do with them.'[306]

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[301] Sudhaus (1898) 52-80.

[302] See fn. 128 for the vexed question of extensive Posidonean influence over the *Aetna*; cf. the contrasting verdicts on the importance of Posidonius expressed at Goodyear (1965) 19 and (1984) 353-5.

[303] See Ellis (1901) ix-xii. For his early work on the poem, see Ellis (1888), (1892), (1894), (1895), (1899), (1900); summarised at Volk (2008).

[304] See Ellis (1901) xxi-lii.

[305] See Murray (1913) 286; Goodyear (1965) 19-20; Volk (2008) xvii. Ellis' approach is typified by his bizarre 'Excursus on Perseis' at xlviii-lii.

[306] Goodyear (1965) 19.

Given that my text is based on the OCT, which prioritises G, naturally it differs greatly from that of Ellis. Nevertheless, Ellis' voluminous, eccentric edition and commentary has undoubtedly been very useful to me, particularly in providing a contrasting opinion on the text to that of Goodyear, whose edition, it seems, was written with a purpose of burying that of his predecessor.

Frank Goodyear's 1965 edition (with commentary) of the poem, which subsequently became the OCT in 1966, is far and away the most widely used in modern scholarship.[307] This is with good reason; Goodyear's methodology in compiling his text is, in my opinion, the most balanced of all modern editors of the poem. His text is equipped with an extensive introduction, in which he evaluates the merits and flaws of all branches of the poem's ms. tradition;[308] likewise, his apparatus criticus is the most comprehensive of all editions of the poem that I have accessed.[309] Goodyear's attitude towards the superiority of the various branches of the ms. tradition of the poem is convincing. He ranks G as generally superior in the part of the poem where it is available, and CS (his α) as superior where G is not available. Nevertheless, Goodyear is flexible enough to compromise on this where he deems it appropriate, whether that entails using CS over G, or accepting readings from the worse half of the ms. tradition or modern scholarly conjectures. He will often attempt to find what he deems as the true reading in an intermediary between those of Ω and G, an approach which, though it is not always entirely convincing (see, e.g., comm. 261-2n.), ought to be commended for its endeavour. Goodyear's text is also admirable on account of its self-restraint; he uses the obelus readily and usually judiciously.[310] On account of all of these reasons, I deem Goodyear's text of the *Aetna* the best of those available.[311]

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[307] In the years between those of Ellis and Goodyear, editions of the poem were produced by Vessereau (1905, 1923), Schwartz (1933) and Richter (1963), all of which I have read and made use of, though not enough to warrant full discussion here.

There are only a handful of places at which the text of Goodyear (1965) and ibid. (1966) differ: see, e.g., comm. 293n.; cf. others outside the section of the poem covered by the commentary at Hine (2012) 317, fn. 6.

[308] See Goodyear (1965) 3-10, 23-52; though cf. Reeve (1975) 241-6, which criticises Goodyear's somewhat dismissive treatment of the γ ms. family.

[309] Some, such as Reeve (1975: 245-6), argue excessively so.

[310] Though cf. fn. 312 below.

[311] Try as I might to access fully the more recent Italian editions of the poem by De Vivo (1987), Iodice (2002) and Berrino (2011), I have not succeeded. Hine (2012: 317, fn. 5) notes that De Vivo diverges from Goodyear in a number of places; Volk (2008: xx) notes that Iodice's text is heavily based on the 1966 OCT.

However, Goodyear's approach to the text is not without fault. In pursuit of 'Latinity', he is sometimes too cautious (obelising sentences that make perfectly tolerable sense in the mss.) and sometimes too bold (accepting modern conjectures over tolerable readings from the mss.).[312] Goodyear's decisions in this regard are often argued with an overconfidence that mars much of his commentary.[313] Despite these faults, modern studies in the *Aetna* are greatly indebted to Goodyear's extensive work on the text of the poem. They are less indebted to Goodyear's contribution to interpretation of said text, which initially was negligible.[314] The introduction to Goodyear's edition gives only six pages to 'sources' and 'authorship and dating', and his commentary is almost entirely devoted to explaining his textual choices. Even at the time of publication, Goodyear's work was considered anachronistic, reviewer Edward Courtney providing the damning but ultimately true verdict on it that 'it is not a commentary on the *Aetna*, but represents a revival of the out-dated *commentarius criticus* genre.'[315] As both Courtney at the time and subsequently Gibson have pointed out, Goodyear's commentary is unnecessarily one-sided; whilst consideration of the textual tradition of a work is a trademark of the 'Cambridge Orange' series of classical commentaries, according to the aims of the series, this is meant to go hand-in-hand with due consideration of other issues.[316] As I outline in my preface, the shortcomings of Goodyear's work are a strong motivation behind my thesis. It is high time that Goodyear's text of the *Aetna* is equipped with an English commentary that examines the poem from all appropriate angles of interpretation.

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[312] For the former, see, e.g., comm. 76n.; for the latter, see, e.g., comm. 262n.

[313] See, e.g., Goodyear (1965) 18-19n., 75-6n.

[314] Goodyear subsequently did turn his hand to literary interpretation of the *Aetna* in an influential 1984 article on the poem.

[315] Courtney (1966b) 49.

[316] See ibid; Gibson (2015) 362.

Fig. 1 SIGLA (Taken from the 1966 OCT)

G = lectiones vulgo dictae Gyraldinae, quae in vv. 138-286 praesto sunt

L = Laurentianus plut. 33.9, saec. xv (vv. 268-75 et 279-86 praebet)

φ = florilegium, saec. xii ut videtur, conservatum in

    p = Parisinus 7647, saec. xii-xiii

    r = Parisinus 17903, saec. xiii

    e = Escurialensis Q I 14, saec. xiii-xiv

    (habent vv. 222-3, 228, 226 et 229 in unum v. conflatos, 231-4, 235-50, 224-5, 257-9, 278, 276-7, 260-8, 633-4)

Ω = consensus codicum praeter *GLφ* omnium (post 345 *CZVγ*, post 433 *CZγ*)

C = Cantabrigiensis Kk v 34, saec. x

S = Stabulensis, nunc Parisinus 17177, saec. x (vv. 1-345 praebet)

β = consensus codicum *HARV* et *γ*, post 433 *HAR* et *γ*

Z = consensus codicum *HAR*

H = Helmstadiensis 332, saec. xv

A = Arundelianus 133, saec. xv

R = Rehdigeranus 125, saec. xv

V = Vaticanus 3272, saec. xv (vv. 1-433 praebet)

γ = consensus codicum *PUNSl Cors Chig Rehd* vel plurimi ex eis

δ = vel unus vel aliquot e codicibus *PUNSl Cors Chig Rehd*

P = Vaticanus 3255

U = Urbinas 353

N = Neapolitanus Borb. 207 (= iv E 7)

Sl = Sloanianus 777   omnes saec. xv vel saec. xvi ineuntis

Cors = Corsinianus 43 F 21

Chig = Chigianus H V 164

Rehd = Rehdigeranus 60

c = Corsinianus 43 F 5, saec. xiv (vv. 1-6 praebet)

Exc. Pith. = Excerpta Pithoeana quae dicuntur, in Cod. Bodl. D'Orville 195 servata

Lectiones quas praebet *H²* inter lectiones *γ* vel *δ* adscriptas adferuntur

Fig. 2 Divergences from Goodyear's Text

Line	Goodyear (1966)	Wight Duff and Duff (1934)	Pullan
15	† *tum*	*tum*	† *cum*
23	*et*	*in*	*in*
79	† *canentes*	*canesque*	† *canesque*
84	*ulterius … terret*	*interius … terra est*	*interius … terra est*
139	*ruina est*	*ruinae*	*ruinae*
185	*indomitae*	*domitae*	*domitae*
262 (259)	*vilesque iacent*	*vilesque tacent*	*viles taceant*

COMMENTARY

1-28

[**1-4**] *Poet's statement of theme: Mount Etna, and its workings.* [**4-8**] *Invocation to Apollo and profession of poetic originality.* [**9-16**] *Dismissal of the Golden Age as appropriate poetic subject matter.* [**17-23**] *Dismissal of a variety of poetic topoi deemed hackneyed.* [**24-8**] *Restatement of his own poetic programme.*

1-28 The proemium. [V.] opens his work with a lengthy proemium that is structured in the form of a quasi-*recusatio*; put simply, in his proem, [V.] states his own poetic theme, dismisses those addressed by others, before finally restating his own.

His proem sets the tone for the rest of the work. It is notably self-conscious, by the standards even of didactic poetry (see 1n.). The poem's intense engagement with its Latin didactic hypotexts is something that defines the entirety of it (see intr. III), and is apparent from its very beginning. Its opening verse recalls a number of lines from Latin didactic poetry (see 1n.); its opening sentence recalls very closely that of the *Georgics* (see 1-4n.); and its entire proem is modelled on the Manilian *recusatio* at *Astr.* 3.1-42 (see, esp., 6-8n., 17-23n.).

Whilst the Latin *recusatio* is usually playful, [V.]'s is particularly so, being a pastiche of Alexandrian poetic ideals. As with any *recusatio*, dismissal of a poetic topic or approach provides the poet with a chance to turn his hand to it – something [V.] clearly relishes: cf. his dismissal of the Gigantomachy at 41-73n. His dismissal of the various Alexandrian-coloured mythological poetic *topoi*, which he deems hackneyed, is a *tour de force* in the levels of concision and allusiveness aspired to by that school of poetic approach (see 17-23n.). [V.] demonstrates the supposedly over-familiar nature of these *topoi* by referring to them in allusive Alexandrian 'short-hand'; so, e.g., the *aversum diem* (20) equates to the myth of Thyestes' cannibalistic banquet. In addition to this, [V.] lays on his own claims to poetic originality somewhat too thickly to be taken seriously. As well as delivering a ridiculously obscure and verbose invocation to Apollo at 4-8 (see n. ad loc.), he twice (at 8 and 24) evokes the hackneyed Callimachean metaphor for poetic originality of the 'path less trodden': see ns. ad loc. Thus, in regard to its treatment of Alexandrian or Neoteric poetic values, [V.]'s *recusatio* is in the same camp as that of Virg. *Ecl.* 6, which can also be read as a pastiche

of these ideals (see Clausen [1992] intr. ad *Ecl.* 6). The proem's highly self-conscious nature (its status as almost a meta-*recusatio*) is reminiscent of that of those of both the pseudo-Virgilian *Ciris* and, in particular, the *Culex*: see 4-8n. for more on the hypertextual relationship between [V.]'s proem and that of the latter.

For a summary of the passage in question, see Goodyear (1965) on 1-93; for a study of its densely allusive and carefully constructed nature, see De Vivo (1992); for discussion of its engagement with Alexandrian poetic ideals, see Glauthier (2011) 99-100 and Payne (2016) 95.

1-4 The poet's opening statement of theme. For detailed analysis of the *Aetna mihi* […] *carmen erit* poetological game played by [V.] in his opening statement, see intr. IV.1.i; also Glauthier (2011) 114, Welsh (2014) 129, Payne (2016) 95 and G. D. Williams (2020) 114-5.

As De Vivo (1992: 669) suggests, for the structure of [V.]'s opening statement (a succession of indirect questions with anaphora followed by a delayed main clause amounting to 'I shall sing of': *quae… quid… quid… carmen erit*), cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.1-5 *quid faciat laetas segetes, quo sidere terram | vertere, Maecenas, ulmisque adiungere vites | conveniat, quae cura boum, qui cultus habendo | sit pecori, apibus quanta experientia parcis, | hinc canere incipiam*, an opening to which the *Aetna* is obviously indebted. In this way, from the very beginning, [V.] seeks by means of *imitatio* to characterise his work as a successor to the *Georgics*. For more on [V.]'s use of Virgil's didactic poem as a model, see intr. III.1, 219-81n., 263-72n.; also Di Giovine (1981), Volk (2005) 87, Welsh (2014) 103-5 and Most (forthcoming).

Cf. also, as perhaps a direct allusion, Lucr. 6.639-41 *nunc ratio quae sit, per fauces montis ut Aetnae | expirent ignes interdum turbine tanto, | expediam*. The broad Lucretian influence over [V.]'s rationalistic perspective is plainly evident (see intr. III.3), as is that of Lucr. 6.639-702 over the *Aetna*'s theory of volcanism (see intr. II.3), to the extent that scholarship has suggested that the Lucretian passage was the original influence behind the composition of the *Aetna*: for this, see, e.g., Welsh (2014) 123-6. For the broad Lucretian influence over the *Aetna*, see intr. III.3; also Lassandro (1993), Santelia (2012) and Most (forthcoming).

1 Aetna mihi ruptique cavis fornacibus ignes: [V.] demonstrates his indebtedness to Lucretius in his first verse, which particularly evokes two of the

DRN's hexameters: cf. Lucr. 6.202 [*venti*] *rotantque <u>cavis</u> flammam <u>fornacibus</u> intus*, 6.681 *flamma foras vastis <u>Aetnae fornacibus</u> efflet*.

The *Aetna*'s opening verse also strongly evokes, potentially via a common Lucretian model, Virg. *Georg.* 1.472 *vidimus undantem <u>ruptis fornacibus</u> Aetnam*, and 4.263 *aestuat ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis* (in reference to the bees). Cf. also, in terms of verbal similarities, Ov. *Met.* 15.340-1 *nec quae sulphureis ardet <u>fornacibus</u> Aetna, | ignea semper erit, neque enim fuit ignea semper.*

It is as if [V.] has tried to open his work with the archetypal hexameter on his subject matter. Thus he characterises his work from the outset as 'literature in the second degree' (Genette [1983]), as a poem that is aware of its indebtedness to the tradition of hexametric poetry on volcanoes. As evidenced by Seneca's description of Etna as a *sollemnem omnibus poetis locum* (*Epist.* 79.5), it was a poetic *topos* of great appeal to the Romans: for more on which see intr. II. De Vivo (1992: 668-9) convincingly interprets this *imitatio* as Alexandrian *oppositio in imitando*; [V.] carefully places his work within the tradition of Latin didactic, only to turn on said tradition at 219-81 (see n. ad loc.; further discussion at intr. III.1-2).

Aetna mihi: The poem's first word is a clear statement of theme, indicative of [V.]'s programmatic approach. The juxtaposition of subject matter and speaker as the poem's first and second word encapsulates the intimacy with which [V.] treats his topic throughout: for more on this, see intr. IV; also Glauthier (2011) and Payne (2016).

By claiming Mount Etna as his own, [V.] attempts both to characterise his as the sort of definitive treatment of the volcano suggested by Seneca to his student Lucilius in *Epist.* 79 (see intr. 2.III), and, I would argue, to tame his resistant subject matter: see intr. IV.3.iii.

rupti ignes: For this usage of *rumpo*, as in 'erupted', cf. 605 *nam quondam ruptis excanduit Aetna cavernis*. As Goodyear (n. ad loc.) observes, [V.] favours this unusual, particularly vivid usage of it in the middle voice: cf. 59 (n. ad loc.), 201 and 362.

Goodyear also suggests cf. Gratt. 432 *alta premunt ruptique ambustis faucibus amnes*; he cites this as a parallel of usage, but the clear similarities between this Grattian hexameter and the *Aetna*'s opening line suggests to me a

stronger relationship between the two.[317] The Grattian verse comes from the *Cynegetica*'s digression (at 430-66) on a Sicilian volcanic grotto, to which plague-stricken dogs were supposedly brought to be healed. Welsh (2014: 116-7) argues that the *Aetna* demonstrates awareness of Grattius' poem, positing that *Aetna* 340-57 recalls the digression. The manner in which [V.] engages systematically with his Latin didactic predecessors throughout his work (see intr. III) makes such a hypertextual relationship between him and Grattius a plausible possibility.

fornacibus: See discussion at intr. IV.2.i.

2 et quae tam fortes volvant incendia causae: 'and what causes, so strong, roll its [Mount Etna's] fires.'

volvant incendia: For *volvere incendium*, cf. perhaps Virg. *Aen.* 2.706 *propiusque aestus incendia volvunt*, though Serv. n. ad loc. points out the difficulty of ascertaining the subject of the Virgilian sentence. For similar usages of *volvo* from [V.], cf. 200, 211.

3 quid fremat imperium: 'what chafes at authority.' For the way in which [V.] establishes his subject matter as resistant to authority here, and how this contributes more broadly to the tension of man versus his environment that is concurrent throughout the poem, see intr. IV.3.iii.

This prosaic-sounding phrase is the only example in Latin verse of *fremo* with a direct object (*TLL* 6.1.1285.68). However, as Goodyear (n. ad loc.) points out, its usage is excellently explained by Serv. n. on *Aen.* 1.56 ([*venti*] *circum claustra fremunt*): *quidam hoc loco 'fremunt', id est, 'imperia recusant' intellegunt, ut apud Cassium in Annalium secundo 'ne quis regnum occuparet, si plebs nostra fremere imperia coepisset', id est, recusare.*

quid raucos torqueat aestus: 'what whirls the noisy blasts of heat.' For the same usage of *torqueo*, cf. 197 *nec tamen est dubium penitus quid torqueat Aetnam*. These intratextually related lines operate as narratival signposts, providing [V.]'s didactic lesson with an impression of structure; for more on this,

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[317] A *terminus ante quem* of 8AD (and therefore its status as a predecessor of the *Aetna*) is established for Grattius' poem by Ov. *Epist. ex Pont.* 4.16.34 *aptaque venanti Grattius arma daret*, a reminiscence of *Cyn.* 23 *carmine et arma dabo et venandi persequar artes*; see Fanti (2018) and Tsaknaki (2018) for the *Cynegetica*'s place within the tradition of Latin didactic.

see 188-218n., 197-8n. There are no parallels for the striking, cross-sensory *raucos aestus* (*TLL* 11.2.238.48).

4 carmen erit: In regard to the delayed subject of [V.]'s programmatic opening statement, cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.5 …*hinc canere incipiam*. For the poetological repercussions of *Aetna mihi* […] *carmen erit*, see 1-4n., intr. IV.1.i.

For a detailed study of [V.]'s loaded use of the word *carmen*, and how it contributes to the structuring of his work, see Kruschwitz (2015) 87-91*,*

4-8 [V.]'s invocation to Apollo. [V.] invokes both Apollo and the Muses (see 6-8n.) to guide him on his poetic enterprise. As Bickel (1930: 283) notes, [V.]'s invocation to Apollo shares some striking similarities with that of [Virg.] *Culex*: see ns. on 4, 5-6, 6-8 and 8. Though we cannot date the *Culex* with absolute certainty, given the Suetonian anecdote about Lucan's reference to it (see Suet. *Vit. Luc.* 5), the poem was well known by the mid-60s AD, thus making it likely a predecessor of the *Aetna*: see intr. I for my dating of the latter in the period from c. 65-79 AD. Whilst, unlike the *Culex*, the *Aetna* in no way 'purports' Virgilian authorship (see intr. III.1, Peirano [2012] 77-9), it is clearly a poem steeped in the trappings of the Virgilian tradition; as demonstrated in detail at intr. III.1, structurally, it is modelled closely on Virgil's *Georgics*. Likewise, as Most (forthcoming) has addressed, its concluding *miranda fabula* is a fanfare to the same value – *pietas* – that the *Aeneid* espouses. Given [V.]'s clearly excellent awareness of Virgil's canonical works, it would make sense that he was also well acquainted with the *Culex*, a poem that was regarded as the work of a young Virgil in his day: in addition to the Suetonian anecdote cited above, cf. Stat. praef. ad *Silv.* 1. [V.]'s use of the *Culex* here is likely owing to the similarly Alexandrian colouring of the *Culex*'s proem: see 1-28n. for more on the Alexandrian timbre of [V.]'s proem.

4 dexter venias mihi carminis auctor: Poetic inspiration is an important theme of [V.]'s proem; he links carefully the speaker (himself), his subject matter (Mount Etna) and his inspiration (Apollo). Whilst calling Apollo the *auctor* of the poem (its full-on composer rather than an inspiration) might seem excessive, for parallels, cf. Tib. 2.4.12 *nec prosunt elegi nec carminis auctor Apollo*, and

particularly, [Virg.] *Culex* 12 *Phoebus erit nostri princeps et carminis auctor*: see 4-8n.

mihi: For the particularly personal nature of [V.]'s poetic programme, cf. 1n.

dexter: For *Apollo dexter*, cf. Prop. 3.2.9-10 *miremur, nobis et Baccho et Apolline dextro, | turba puellarum si mea verba colit?*; Ov. *Trist.* 5.3.57 *sic igitur dextro faciatis Apolline carmen.*

5-6 seu te Cynthos habet, seu Delo gratior Hyla | seu tibi Dodone potior:[318] One of the more vexing textual cruxes of the *Aetna*, due to the obscurity of the content. As printed in the OCT, this phrase translates thus: 'whether Cynthos claims you [Apollo], or Hyla be more pleasing to you than Delos, or Dodona be preferable to you…' This reading requires the emendations of Sudhaus (*Delo*) and Munro (*Hyla*) to C's *seu te Cynthos habet, seu Delos gratior ila | seu tibi Dodona potior.* The corrections are justified. C's reading seemingly contrasts Cynthos and Delos as rival sanctuaries of Apollo, despite the fact that they amount to one and the same place (Cynthos is a mountain on Delos). The OCT's rendering of verse 5 converts the *Cynthos / Delos* hash into artful *variatio* on the part of the poet. Munro's *Hyla* for C's nonsensical *ila* is an elegant and plausible correction, based on the fact that there was a cult of Apollo Ὑλάτης in the demos of Kourion, Cyprus (perhaps in a specific place called 'Hyla'): cf., as cited by Munro (n. ad loc.), Steph. Byz. s.v. Ὕλη, πόλις Κύπρου ἐν ᾗ Ἀπόλλων τιμᾶται Ὑλάτης; schol. ad Lyc. 448 Ὑλάτου· τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος· Ὕλη γὰρ ἐστὶ περὶ τὸν Κούριον, τόπον τῆς Κύπρου ἱερὰ Ἀπόλλωνος· ἀφ' ἧς Ὑλάτην τὸν θεὸν προσαγορεύουσιν; and others at Munro n. ad loc.

These corrections neatly resolve the issues apparent in verse 5, but problems remain with the rest of the phrase, chief amongst which is, as Goodyear (n. ad loc.) puts it, the issue of 'what is Apollo doing at Dodona?' Despite the attempts of Bickel (1930: 279-302) to prove otherwise, Apollo seemingly had nothing to do with Dodona, home of a famous cult of Zeus. Given that no one has yet suggested a plausible correction for *Dodona*, we may have to ascribe this oddity to poetic

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[318] **5** Delo *Sudhaus* (*iam* Delost Munro) : delos (dolos *S*) Ω   Hyla *Munro* : ila *C* : om. *H* : illa *SARVγ* : Hyle *Sudhaus*   **6** dodone δ : dodona *CSAV*δc : dodonae δ : do dodona *R* : dobona *H* : Ladonis *Munro*

error, or some obscure knowledge now lost to us.[319] Even if we accept *Dodona* of the mss., to fit the metre it requires emendation to the Greek form *Dodone* (the reading of δ).

As a possible Latin model for this list of homes for Apollo with striking polysyndeton, cf. [Virg.] *Culex* 12-15 *Phoebus erit nostri princeps et carminis auctor | et recinente lyra fautor, sive educat illum | Arna Chimaeraeo Xanthi perfusa liquore | seu decus Asteriae seu qua Parnasia rupes*: see 4-8n. for more on the relationship between [V.]'s invocation to Apollo and that of the *Culex*-poet.

More speculatively, as a possible Greek model for this list, as Bickel (1930: 282) suggests, cf. the similarly phrased (and potentially very similarly dated) invocation to Asclepius at the conclusion to Andromachus' *Theriaca* (170-1) εἴτε σε Τρικκαῖοι, δαῖμον, ἔχουσι λόφοι | ἢ Ῥόδος ἢ Βούρινα καὶ ἀγχιάλη Ἐπίδαυρος. Given the systematic manner in which [V.] engages with his recent didactic predecessors (see, e.g., his potential 'nod' to Grattius at 1n.), there is a possibility of a hypertextual relationship between his poem and that of Andromachus, though given the obscurity of both works, I am somewhat sceptical of this.

Cynthos: For *Cynthius* as a substantive epithet for Apollo, cf. e.g. Virg. *Ecl.* 6.3, *Georg.* 3.36; and other examples at *TLL* O.2.792.68-81.

Delo: For *Delius* as an epithet for Apollo, cf. e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 3.162, Hor. *Carm.* 3.4.64.

potior = 'preferable': for the basic sense, cf. Virg. *Georg.* 4.100 [in reference to the two varieties of 'king' bees] *haec potior suboles.*

6-8 [V.]'s invocation to the Muses and profession of poetic originality. Alongside his invocation to Apollo (see 4-8n.), [V.] calls on those other providers of poetic inspiration, the Pierian Muses. In doing so, he places himself within a didactic tradition that goes back, via Manilius (see *Astr.* 3.1-3: discussion at 6-8n.), Lucretius (see *DRN* 4.1-5) and Aratus (see *Phaen.* 16-17) to the father of the genre, Hesiod: see *Theo.* 1-115, *W&D* 1-4. Following in the wake of Hesiod's account of his interaction with the Muses on Mount Helicon (see *Theo.* 22-34), and the extended invocation that surrounds it, the poet's call for assistance from the Muses becomes a particularly self-conscious feature of Greco-Roman poetry.

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[319] Munro's conjecture *Ladonis* (as a supposed patronymic for Daphne, the name of a park outside Antioch which was the site of a temple to Apollo and Artemis [see *OCD* s.v. Daphne]) is undoubtedly ingenious, but cannot be accepted given that nowhere does *Ladonis* = *Daphne*.

By [V.]'s time, no doubt heavily influenced by the playful re-workings of the Hesiodic image by the Hellenistic poets Callimachus (see *Aet.* Frag 1.21-8: discussion at 8n.) and Theocritus (see *Id.* 7.37-51), this most traditional of poetic moments has become a place to state one's novelty: see Hunter (2006) 7-41. The irony of this is evidently not lost on [V.], who uses this moment to issue his first jibe at Manilius, contained within a playful take on the Callimachean image of the poetic 'path less trodden' (see 8n.).

6-8 tecumque faventes | in nova Pierio properent a fonte sorores | vota: 'and with you [i.e. Apollo] may the sisters [the Muses] hasten from the Pierian fount, granting favour on my new enterprise.' Cf. Man. 3.1-3 *in nova surgentem maioraque viribus ausum | … ducite, Pierides*; also, as the likely model for the Manilian opening, Ov. *Met.* 1.1-2 *in nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas | corpora.* Given that the opening to Ovid's cross-generic 'epic' poem is a *locus classicus* for Latin poetic innovation, it is unsurprising that it is evoked by both Manilius and [V.] during their own expressions of poetic originality: see Bömer n. on Ov. *Met.* 1.1. For a further similar Manilian statement of originality, cf. Man. 1.4-5 *aggredior primusque novis Helicona movere | cantibus*: discussion of which at Volk (2009) 211.

Cf. also [Virg.] *Culex* 18 *quare, Pierii laticis decus, ite, sorores*, a similar address to the Muses, which follows an invocation to Apollo that is very reminiscent of that of [V.]: see 4-8n.

8 per insolitum Phoebo duce tutius itur: 'it is safer to journey the unwonted path with Apollo as guide.' Cf. Man. 3.2-3 *nec per inaccessos metuentem vadere saltus | ducite, Pierides.* Here, [V.] engages in *aemulatio* with Manilius; in his programmatic passage, Manilius calls on only the Muses – and not Apollo – to assist his journey into uncharted poetic territory. [V.]'s *Phoebo duce* thus reads as a pointed response to his predecessor's *ducite*, a 'correction' that is entirely in keeping with his generally polemical engagement with Manilius: for more on which, see, e.g., 219-81n., intr. III.2; also Lühr (1971), Effe (1977) 204-20, Volk (2005) 82-90, Welsh (2014) 101-4 and G. D. Williams (2020).

per insolitum […] tutius itur: The third-century B.C. Alexandrian scholar-poet Callimachus was (most likely) the first to use the image of the 'untrodden path' as a metaphor for poetic originality: see Call. *Aet.* Frag. 1.25-28 πρὸς δέ σε

καὶ τόδ᾽ ἄνωγα, τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἄμαξαι | τὰ στείβειν, ἑτέρων δ᾽ ἴχνια μὴ καθ᾽ ὁμά | δίφρον ἐλᾶν μηδ᾽ οἶμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους | ἀτρίπτους, εἰ καὶ στεινοτέρην ἐλάσεις. [V.]'s take on this image is playful; implicit in his use of the word *tutius* is the ridiculous idea that the writing of a poem about a volcano is a dangerous pursuit: cf. similarly 24n. De Vivo (1992: 672) argues that [V.]'s use of *insolitum* as a neuter substantive (its only usage in extant Latin in this way) is representative of his claims to poetic innovation. If this is the case, it is used with a heavy degree of irony, going hand in hand with the sententious-sounding *itur*. For a similar interpretation of [V.]'s use of Callimachus here, see Glauthier (2011) 99-100, and for interpretations of it as more serious, Volk (2005) 83, Payne (2016) 95.

Phoebo duce: Cf. its placement in the same metrical *sedes* at [Virg.] *Culex* 36 *viribus apta suis Phoebo duce ludere gaudet*: see 4-8n. for more on the hypertextual relationship here.

9-16 Dismissal of the Golden Age as appropriate poetic subject matter. The diction used by [V.] to depict the Golden Age as overused poetic material is reminiscent of that of Virg. *Georg.* 1.125-8, and the section has a recognisably Virgilian timbre more broadly: see, e.g., ns. on 10 and 12. The significance of the Golden Age as an epic theme derives itself from early Greek oral poetry (see, most obviously, Hes. *W&D* 109-200) – and its influence is plain to see across pretty much the entirety of Greek and Latin hexametric poetry prior to the *Aetna*. The Golden Age's Hesiodic associations and special place in the Greco-Roman version of humankind's history made it a particularly appealing topic to Greek and Latin poets of didactic epic. At *Phaen.* 96-136, Aratus delivers his first extended mythological *excursus* on the topic of the ages of man, a section which is characteristically 'Hesiodic': see Kidd (1997) 8-10; also Kidd n. on Arat. *Phaen.* 96-136. The myths of the ages of man are a premise for Virgil's *Georgics*, being the origins of *labor*: for discussion of which, see Perkell (1989) 90-115, Thomas (1990) n. on *Georg.* 1.118-46 and Jenkyns (1993). During the Augustan period, the Golden Age acquired further significance, thanks to the *princeps*' own ideological programme, something which is evidenced by its treatment by the Augustan epicists; Ovid delivers an extended description of the ages of man at *Metamorphoses* 1.89-150, whilst the Saturnian Golden Age is an important

theme of the second half (in particular) of Virgil's *Aeneid* (see, e.g., Virg. *Aen.* 8.319ff.).

Thus the Golden Age acquires in extant Latin hexametric poetry a status broadly akin to that of the Gigantomachy (see 41-73n.; Hardie [1986] 85-156), in the sense that, whilst it is not the obvious subject matter of any single extant poem, it is clearly a deeply significant *topos*. It is typical of [V.]'s generally polemical attitude towards his predecessors – and arguably of the inferiority complex that characterises much of the literature of his period (for more on which, see Gowers [1994]) – that, despite the Golden Age's place in both the tradition of didactic poetry and Latin epic, he (akin to his treatment of the Gigantomachy [see 41-73n.]), dismisses it nonchalantly as hackneyed poetic subject matter.

In order, presumably, to imitate those poets he is criticising, [V.] uses a striking amount of metonymy in this section: at 10, he uses *Ceres* = 'grain', at 13, *Bacchus* = 'wine', and at 14, *Pallas* = 'olive-oil' (though see n. ad loc. for the textual issues). Given the generally scathing tone adopted by [V.] in this section, it is likely that he is drawing on Lucretius' own attack on metonymy at *DRN* 2.655-60. Lucretius' diatribe has often been interpreted by scholars (e.g. Bailey [n. ad loc.], Ernout and Robin [n. ad loc.]; cf. the contrasting opinion of Montarese [2012] 203-6) as an attack on the Stoic penchant for regarding the names of gods as personifications: see, e.g., the words of Chrysippus at Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 1.15.40. In contrast, [V.]'s is a jibe at poets' lazy overuse of metonymy as a literary device. Given [V.]'s frequent polemical engagement with the *Astronomica* (see intr. III.2), and the similarity of context between the two passages, a likely target here is Manilius' metonym-laden tribute to Hesiod at *Astr.* 2.19-21 *quin etiam ruris cultus legesque notavit | militiamque soli, quod colles Bacchus amaret, | quod fecunda Ceres campos, quod Pallas utrumque.* That [V.] is willing to imply criticism of Hesiod in this way should not come as a surprise, given his broadly dismissive attitude towards the Golden Age, a famously Hesiodic poetic theme.

In [V.]'s dismissal of the Golden Age *topos*, we get the first indication of his despising attitude towards farming, which he depicts as a greedy, exploitative pursuit throughout his poem: see, e.g., 10n. For more on this, and in particular how it fits into the broader tension of nature versus man that is concurrent throughout the poem, see intr. IV.3.ii.

9 aurea securi quis nescit saecula regis: Note this verse's dense texture, typical of the Alexandrian poetic style that characterises this entire section.

aurea saecula: Cf. Germ. *Arat.* 103 *aurea pacati regeres cum saecula mundi*; Sen. *Epist.* 115.13 *quod optimum videri volunt saeculum, aureum appellant.* Given the notably Virgilian colouring of the poem (see intr. III.1), the reader is also here compelled to consider the words of Anchises to Aeneas about Augustus at Virg. *Aen.* 6.791-4 *hic uir, hic est, tibi quem promitti saepius audis, | Augustus Caesar, diui genus, aurea condet | saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arua | Saturno quondam.* Whether or not [V.] has this specific Virgilian quotation in mind, his depiction of the Golden Age as an overused poetic subject matter is greatly at odds with Virgil's own pro-Augustan impression of it.

quis nescit: Cf. a similar usage of it at Virg. *Georg.* 3.4-5 *quis… | …nescit.* The use of the negative 'who does not know of…' emphasises the hackneyed nature of the myth.

securi regis: 'of the care-free king.' *securus* is here a transferred epithet, being a quality of Saturn's entire age, rather than of the king specifically. This Alexandrian allusiveness and concision is typical of this section of the proem: see 1-28n.

10 cum domitis nemo Cererem iactaret in arvis: 'when no-one threw grain into subdued fields.' [V.] insinuates that, following the 'care-free' Golden Age, agriculture brought with it the forcible taming of nature by man: for exploration of this theme throughout the poem, see intr. IV.3.ii.

This impression of the aftermath of the Golden Age is given clear expression in the *Georgics*: cf. e.g. 1.99 *exercetque frequens tellurem atque imperat arvis*, 125 *ante Iovem nulli subigebant arva coloni*; 2.114 *aspice et extremis domitum cultoribus orbem*.

The diction of the verse in question is also generally Virgilian: cf. e.g. Virg. *Georg.* 1.104 *quid dicam, iacto qui semine comminus arva*; for the verse-ending, cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.151 *segnisque* [*carduus*] *horreret in arvis*.

cum: See *OLD* s.v. *cum*, sense 11b: 'during which time'. The use of the imperfect subjunctive here is implicit of the continuous, general nature of the actions mentioned.

domitis arvis: See intr. IV.3.ii.

Cererem: On [V.]'s use of metonymy here, see 9-16n. Ceres' status as goddess of grain gave her particular significance during the late Republic and early imperial period: see *Brill's New Pauly* s.v. Ceres (Graf [2008]).

11 malas herbas = 'weeds': cf. Cat. *De Agr. Cult.* 50.1.3 *ubi favonius flare coeperit, cum prata defendes, depurgato herbasque malas omnis radicitus effodito.*
prohibeo: See *OLD* s.v. *prohibeo*, sense 1c.

12 annua sed saturae complerent horrea messes: The 'full' nature of this verse (it is almost a golden line) reflects its meaning. As Goodyear (n. ad loc.) suggests, both *annua* and *satura* are transferred epithets, gaining improved sense when ascribed to *messis* and *horreum* respectively. This verse has a *Georgics*-colouring, and indeed shares its ending with *Georg.* 1.49 *illius immensae ruperunt horrea messes.* Here, Virgil is talking about the 'field that responds to the prayers of the *avarus agricola* (47-8)'; [V.] seems to respond to this notion, emphasising his impression of the Golden Age as utterly *securus*, prior to the need for technical expertise, greed and entreaty of the gods (all mentioned at *Georg.* 1.47-9).

13 ipse suo flueret Bacchus pede: 'and Bacchus himself flowed from his own foot.' Contrary to the reservations of Goodyear (n. ad loc.), the only plausible meaning of this line is that, during the Golden Age, wine was produced immediately from the act of pressing. Goodyear's concerns regarding this being a 'false metonymy' (i.e. its casting of Bacchus as both wine and wine-maker) are alleviated by [V.]'s somewhat excessive pursuit of Alexandrian concision in this section; the highly-compressed phrase is in keeping with the rest of 9-16: see n. ad loc.
Regardless of this, the supposed parallels for this image listed by Waszink (1949: 231-2) are unconvincing.

13-14 mellaque lentis | penderent foliis: 'and honey dripped from sticky leaves.' *lentus* = slow, but [V.] here (as at 9 and 12) transfers it from *mel* to *folium*. Note the artistic enjambment to reflect the image of the honey 'hanging' from the

branches. Honey as an easily accessible commodity is part of Virgil's impression of the Golden Age: cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.131 [*Iovis*] *mellaque decussit foliis.*

14-15 penderent foliis et pingui Pallas oliva, | † secretos amnis ageret cum gratia ruris:[320] It is difficult to extract sense from these lines, due to corruption of the text. For detailed discussion of the variant readings here, and the problems with each of them, see Goodyear (n. ad loc.).

In short, the issue in question for the editor is whether to punctuate after *oliva* (if that be the correct reading) or *ageret*. The former interpretation makes *Pallas* a metonym for 'olive-oil' and another subject, alongside *mella*, of *penderent*, giving the first phrase of the sentence in question (the second half of 14) the meaning 'and olive-oil dripped from the rich olive-tree'. Depending on what one takes *secretos* (correct or not) to mean, 15 would then mean something along the lines of: '…when (*tum / cum*) the grace of the countryside drove *secretos* [secret? secluded? refined?] streams.' The alternative punctuation (i.e. after *ageret*) requires Ellis' choices of *pinguis* and *olivae*, and would give phrase 1 the meaning provided by Wight Duff and Duff (1934): 'and Pallas made flow her own especial streams of rich olive-oil'. But what then does one do with the remainder of 15 (*tum gratia ruris*)? To extract any sort of sense out of it, one has to provide [*erat*], but, as Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), a meaning such as 'then had the countryside grace' is 'banal even for the *Aetna*.'

I follow Goodyear in cautiously favouring the first interpretation, making the text of the two relevant phrases (13-15) *mellaque lentis | penderent foliis et pingui Pallas oliva, | † secretos amnis ageret cum gratia ruris…* This reading is in keeping with the timbre of the rest of the section. Whilst the image of olive-oil hanging from tree branches (achieved by the implied metonymy *Pallas* = olive-oil) is arguably 'grotesque and ridiculous' (Goodyear [n. ad loc.]), Goodyear is right to point out that both the metonymy and the image have close equivalents; *Pallas* equating to olive oil matches with [V.]'s use of *Ceres* (10) and *Bacchus* (13), while the image is not far removed from that of honey hanging from leaves (13-14). Nevertheless, admittedly, the utterly obscure nature of 15 leaves this interpretation deeply problematic. In addition, by this interpretation, the *tum* of

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[320] **14** oliva *ARVγ* : olivae *CSH*   **15** securos *DeRooy*   omnes *Gorallus*   aleret *DeRooy*   tum *CSARδ* : cum *HVγ*

CSARδ is less than ideal, following on from *cum* (10). One solution for this is to accept the *cum* of HVγ, which I do cautiously, but regardless, these two verses ought to be regarded as one of the frustratingly many parts of the poem in which clear-cut interpretation of meaning is not possible, due to the uncertainty of the text.

14 penderent foliis et pingui Pallas oliva: This verse's plosive alliteration and spondaic metre might reflect the heaviness of the harvest being described.

15 † secretos amnis ageret tum gratia ruris: 'when the grace of the countryside drove special rivers [of olive-oil?].' An impossibly obscure phrase. *gratia ruris* – though vague – is passable as an abstract quality of the Golden Age, but the intended meaning of *secretos amnis* is unclear. Some sort of sense is provided if we read it as an expansion of 14 and presume that they are *secretos amnis* [*olei*], which would contribute to the impression of the Golden Age as one in which nature provided for man willingly, but this is not at all explicitly suggested. As Goodyear comments (n. ad loc.), corruption is likely.

secretos amnis: *secretus* is not applied to *amnis* elsewhere in Latin, making the extraction of meaning from this phrase very difficult. The phrase perhaps contains a hint of the Callimachean idea that the 'slender stream is better than the great river', expressed at Call. *h. Apoll.* 105-13 (discussion at Kahane [1994]), particularly given the excess of Alexandrian poetological terminology in the proem: see 1-28n., 8n.

[V.] may be using such terminology ironically, given that he is addressing a poetic *topos* – the Golden Age – which he defines as hackneyed, and therefore as anathema to Alexandrian poetic ideals – ideals which themselves had long become a source of poetic parody by the first century A. D. (see Clausen [1992] intr. ad *Ecl.* 6).

16 non cessit cuiquam melius sua tempora nosse: 'To none was it ever granted to know more joyously their own times.' A somewhat bombastic way of saying that those who lived in the Golden Age had the best of it. [V.]'s highfalutin style here reinforces his impression of the Golden Age as overused poetic subject matter.

17-23 Dismissal of a variety of poetic *topoi* deemed hackneyed by [V.]. In rapid-fire style, [V.] delivers a list of various worn-out poetic topics. This list is presented via three separate rhetorical questions, each introduced by *quis* + a different verb: *quis tacuit* (17); *quis non deflevit* (18-20); *quis non doluit* (21-3). The common characteristic between the *topoi* cited is, as the poet laments at 23, their reliance on myth. As De Vivo (1992: 675) suggests, the poet emphasises the well-known nature of these *topoi* by referring to them in a compressed, highly allusive, almost short-hand style. This also points to the sort of work [V.] has in mind, that learned brand of mythological poetry encouraged by the Alexandrian school, whose ideals had such an influence over late Republican and Augustan poetry, but had, by the second half of the first century AD, become 'old hat'. For more on this, see 1-28n.

[V.]'s quasi-parody of a *recusatio* is closely modelled on that of Manilius at *Astr.* 3.1-42. Indeed four of the five poetic *topoi* mentioned by [V.] are in Manilius' list, namely: 1) the Argonautic expedition (*Aetna* 17; cf. Man. 3.9-13); 2) the Fall of Troy (*Aetna* 18; cf. Man. 3.9-10); 3) Medea or Hecuba [?] (*Aetna* 19; cf. Man. 3.9-13); and 4) Thyestes' cannibalistic banquet (*Aetna* 20; cf. Man. 3.18-19). [V.]'s *recusatio* also has an Ovidian timbre; not only do all the *topoi* mentioned feature in the *Metamorphoses*, but [V.]'s list is also very reminiscent of that given by Ovid at *Am.* 3.12.19-40. Indeed De Vivo (1992: 674) goes as far as to say that [V.] presents Ov. *Am.* 3.12 as a target of his poem. This seems to me to be a mis-reading of the Ovidian hypotext; if anything, [V.] aligns himself with Ovid, who likewise stresses the worn-out and fallacious nature of the mythological poetic *topoi* that he cites (cf. 29n.); I prefer to regard the Ovidian passage as something of a *locus classicus* for the dismissal of hackneyed mythological poetry, one that provides the model for that of both [V.] and Manilius.

The poet's use of the melodramatic *quis non deflevit* (18) and *quis non doluit* (21) is suggestive of the tragic quality to most of these myths.

17 ultima quis tacuit iuvenum certamina, Colchos: 'who has remained silent on the far-flung struggles of young men, the Colchians.' Despite the awkwardness of the apposition of *certamina* and *Colchos*, the reader gathers that this is an allusive reference to Jason's Argonautic expedition to Colchis. This is most famously recounted in Apollonius Rhodius' four-book Hellenistic epic, the *Argonautica*, a poem that is full of the characteristics (magic, myth, the divine

etc.) that [V.] associates with vulgar poetry. In terms of extant Latin literature, Apollonius' work was imitated by the Flavian poet Valerius Flaccus (whose *Argonautica*, we know, post-dates the *Aetna*, given its allusion to the 79 AD eruption of Vesuvius at 4.507-8; cf. MacRae [2021]), whilst the myth provides the premise of Catullus 64 – a Neoteric epyllion – and is covered extensively by Ovid at *Metamorphoses* 7.1-424. We can presume, therefore, that the tale's fabulous content and Alexandrian poetic associations made it a favourite of first-century Latin poetasters, explaining its place here amongst [V.]'s poetic targets; the myth is dismissed in greater detail by Manilius at *Astr.* 3.9-13.

quis tacuit: Undoubtedly more sardonic than Manilius' *non referam* (*Astr.* 3.9). This is a step-up also from [V.]'s own *quis nescit* (9) in reference to the Golden Age; he is stressing the topic's over-exploited poetic appeal, as opposed to its familiarity to its audience.

18-19 quis non Argolico deflevit Pergamon igni | † inpositam:[321] 'who has not lamented for Troy, set on the Argive fire.' Goodyear (n. ad loc.) finds the image of Troy on the pyre "extraordinary and almost incredible", and hence obelises *inpositam*, but I do not see the issue. The melodrama and obscurity of the phrase is entirely in keeping with the poet's treatment of these mythological poetic *topoi*. The Trojan War is the original Greco-Roman poetic *topos*, and hence features in many a *recusatio*: cf. e.g. that of [V.]'s model, Man. 3.7-8.

18 quis non deflevit: Here used with heavy irony; the poet is emphasising the melodramatic treatment of the Trojan War in poetry.

19 tristi natorum funere † matrem:[322] CSHV here read *mentem*, but Goodyear (n. ad loc.) is right to suggest that this is nonsensical. Goodyear is cautious to accept the *matrem* of ARγ, on account of the poor quality of those manuscripts, though he acknowledges that it makes decent sense here. I am content to accept it cautiously. We cannot say with any great certainty who the *mater* in question is. The fact that this comment follows mention of the Trojan War may suggest Hecuba (deprived of her sons), Hine (2012: 318) suggests

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[321] **18** post h. u. lacunam posuit Munro

[322] **19** mentem *CSHV* : matrem *ARγ, fort. recte*

Niobe, but I favour Medea. My preference is based on [V.]'s use of Man. 3.1-42 as a model for his *recusatio*. In that passage, Manilius focuses his evocation of the Argonautic cycle on the actions of Medea (see *Astr.* 3.9-10). It nevertheless makes sense that [V.] separates his reference to Jason's expedition from that to Medea's child-killing, as the former is covered in Apollonius' *Argonautica*, whilst the latter is not. The fact that [V.]'s mention of this myth is followed by another of child-murder may strengthen the Medea suggestion further, but as mentioned, she is by no means the only possible candidate.

20 aversumve diem: A highly compressed, allusive way of referring to the myth of Thyestes'cannibalistic banquet. The reference to the curtailed daylight following the horrific crime became the short-hand way of referring to the myth: cf. similar references to it as hackneyed poetic material at Man. 3.18-19 *natorumve epulas conversaque sidera retro | ereptumque diem*; and, perhaps as the model for both, Ov. *Am.* 3.12.39 *aversumque diem mensis furialibus Atrei.* In my opinion, it is likely that the *Aetna* post-dates Seneca's *Thyestes* (see intr. I); in which case, cf. Sen. *Thy.* 1035-6 *hoc est deos quod puduit, hoc egit diem | aversum in ortus.* In any case, we know that early Roman tragedians Ennius (see Frag. 132-141) and Accius (see Frag. 162-200) both wrote a *Thyestes*, from one of which this image is most likely derived (if not from an even earlier work).

sparsumve in semina dentem:[323] A compressed way of referencing the myth of Cadmus' slaying of the dragon and subsequent sowing of its teeth to produce the Sparti, who become the founders of Thebes. Whilst from extant Classical literature, Ov. *Met.* 3.1-137 […] 4.563-603 provides the fullest account of this episode (see the words of Cadmus at Ov. *Met.* 4.573 *vipereos sparsi per humum, nova semina, dentes, idem*), we know from Ovid himself that the tale had already, prior to the *Metamorphoses*, acquired a status as go-to poetic subject matter: see Ov. *Am.* 3.12.35 *protea quid referam Thebanaque semina, dentes*. The Ovidian parallels perhaps support Goodyear's acceptance (n. ad loc.) of Scaliger's emendation *semina*, as opposed to the *semine* of the more reliable family of the ms. tradition, but broad meaning is not affected either way.

One cannot rule out entirely the possibility that this may be a reference to Jason's teeth-sowing (mentioned at Man. 3.10), as opposed to that of Cadmus,

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[323] **20** semina *Scaliger* : semine *Ω*

but the Ovidian parallel, and the fact that [V.] has seemingly moved on from the Argonautic expedition (via his reference to Thyestes' banquet), suggest to me that this is unlikely. If we accept this as a reference to Cadmus – and not Jason – it negates the chance of *Amores* 3.12 being alluded to by [V.] only via the Manilian passage (since Cadmus' sowing of the dragon's teeth is mentioned in the Ovidian passage and not in the Manilian one).

21-2 The next poetic mythological cycle dismissed by [V.] is that of Theseus, alluded to via a reference to his tragic oversight in the aftermath of his slaying of the Minotaur: his failure to follow his father's instruction to hoist the white sails in the event of a successful return to Athens from Crete. In his Neoteric epyllion (poem 64), which tells of Theseus' quest in Crete via an ekphrastic description of Peleus and Thetis' coverlet, Catullus depicts Theseus' catastrophic oversight as divine punishment for his abandonment of Ariadne on Naxos: see Cat. 64.202-50. [V.]'s reference to Ariadne's abandonment at 22 suggests that he has Catullus' masterpiece in mind. Despite Catullus 64's undoubted quality as a composition, it is exactly the sort of mythologically charged work that [V.]'s poem attacks.

21 quis non doluit: Implying the same melodrama as that of *quis non deflevit* (18) and *questus* (22).

mendacia: Favoured by [V.] when dismissing poetic falsities: cf. 366 *nec te decipiant stolidi mendacia vulgi* and 571-2 *atque avidi veteris mendacia famae | eruimus*. By using *mendacia* in the context of Theseus' error, [V.] reminds his audience of the danger of falsities.

23 quicquid in antiquum iactata est fabula carmen:[324] 'Anything in which myth has been thrown in with ancient song.' In the words of De Vivo (1992: 673), '*una sorta di sententia*' – a cutting summary of [V.]'s issue with the poetic *topoi* that he has listed. Note the stark juxtaposition of *fabula* and *carmen*, the two poles of a tension that plays out throughout the poem: for more on which, see intr. IV.1.iii, IV.4.i. The speaker here demonstrates an attitude towards mythological

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[324] **23** et *Bormans* : et in *S* : in *CB* : [et *C^{sscr}*]·

poetry similar to that of Manilius: cf. e.g. *Astr.* 3.29-30 *speciosis condere rebus |*
carmina vulgatum est, opus et componere simplex.

The accuracy of the manuscripts' rendering of this verse has been challenged
by former editors on the grounds of Latinity. Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*) claims that '*in*
gives no sense', and instead reads *quicquid et*, arguing that the line means 'and
whatever old theme of the poets is now a hackneyed tale'. Whilst, given the
problem with *antiquum carmen* outlined below, this arguably makes more sense
in the context, Goodyear acknowledges that it is a stretch for *iactata* to mean
'hackneyed'. Ov. *Am.* 3.1.21, cited by him in support of this reading, is irrelevant,
and if anything, strengthens the case for the ms. reading.

The OCT's apparatus criticus (printed in the footnote below) is also misleading
here. It suggests that the scribe of C has written *et* above *in* as an alternative;
having inspected said ms., this is not the case. In fact, '*S et*' is written above
quicquid, which as Ellis proposes, is likely a directive from the scribe: *scilicet et* –
i.e. that the reader should supply *et* at the start of the line. As Ellis hints at, the
scribe of C's potential cousin S may have misinterpreted this comment, and
subsumed *et* into the line, resulting in that manuscript's unmetrical rendering of
it. On account of this confusion, I here diverge from the OCT and read *quicquid*
in. Munro (see n. ad loc.) hypothesises that 23 is a conflation of two lines on
account of a scribal error; this seems unlikely.

antiquum carmen: [V.]'s complaint is clear; that hackneyed mythological
themes have come to dominate 'ancient song'. His point is, of course, ridiculous,
given that myth and poetry have always been inextricably intertwined.

iactata est: Note [V.]'s characteristically dismissive tone; in his opinion, myth
has been 'thrown' into poetry.

fabula: As addressed in detail at intr. IV.1.iii, *fabula* is a poetological *Leitwort*
of the *Aetna*. As demonstrated by *OLD* s.v. *fabula*, the term is usually contrasted
with an expression of 'truth' or 'fact' and bears strong connotations of fictionality,
but [V.] is nevertheless particularly scathing about it; see his dismissive depiction
at 42 of the Gigantomachy as an *impia fabula* (discussion at n. ad loc.); also the
similarly disdainful 511 *si firma manet tibi fabula mendax.* However, as discussed
at intr. IV.4.i, [V.] ends his composition with an uplifting account of the *miranda*
fabula (explicitly labelled as such at 603) of the escape of the *pii fratres* of Catania
from the fires of Mount Etna. For more on the seemingly ambivalent treatment of

fabulae in the *Aetna*, see Taub (2008) 55, Welsh (2014) 109-18, Kruschwitz (2015) 86-91.

As suggested by Munro (n. ad loc.), Nemesianus perhaps imitates this verse at *Cyn. 46-7 haec iam magnorum praecepit copia vatum, | omnis et antiqui vulgata est fabula saecli.*

24-8 The climax of [V.]'s proem: restatement of his own poetic programme. [V.] concludes his proem with a five-verse(?)[325] programmatic statement, which (as suggested by De Vivo [1992] 676) follows the structure of *Georg.* 1.1-5, and that of his own opening statement: namely a series of indirect questions with anaphora, dependant on a delayed main clause (once again amounting to 'I shall sing of': cf. 2-4n.). The rhetorical purpose of the poet's second programmatic statement is to extol the originality of his subject matter, in contrast to those mentioned at 17-23. Via this recall of the poem's opening statement, [V.] gives satisfactory ring composition to his proem, though this might also be labelled as repetitiveness.

Welsh (2014: 124-5) interprets [V.]'s claim to originality somewhat differently, reading the poem's second programmatic statement as a specific response to Lucretius' account of the workings of Mount Etna at *DRN* 6.680-702, on account of what the poet mentions and what he does not. Welsh notes on 24-8: 'This poem will be concerned with what the poet calls *ignotas ... curas*, specifically the movements within the volcano and the force that sets the various components of an eruption in motion. By his silence the poet seems to signal, despite glances at such details, that he will not discuss the origin of the flames, the source of the *moles*, or how that force burns specifically with "floods of fire".' I am not convinced by Welsh's interpretation here, for a number of reasons. Firstly and most importantly, the comparative *fortius* (24) sets up this section ([V.]'s statement of theme) as one in direct contrast to that which precedes it (the list of various hackneyed poetic *topoi*); secondly, [V.]'s summary of his theme is brief out of necessity, so it is a stretch to read anything into its omissions; and thirdly, the likely lacuna at 25-6 (bizarrely, given the above, acknowledged by Welsh) makes it a particularly dangerous game to specify what [V.] does and does not say here.

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[325] Depending on the presence and length of the lacuna at 25-6: see n. ad loc.

24 fortius ignotas molimur pectore curas: 'More bravely [than them] does my heart toil on unfamiliar [poetic] concerns.'

fortius: Comparative, as [V.] is placing himself in direct contrast with those who have attempted the poetic themes listed at 17-23. For the image of the 'dangerous' poetic unknown, cf. 8 *per insolitum Phoebo duce* <u>*tutius*</u> *itur* (n. ad loc.). The point of this verse is missed by Morel (1968), who endeavours to emend *fortius*.

molimur: Usually used in a physical sense, this is the first example in extant Latin of *molior* being used in the context of literary composition (see *OLD* s.v. *molior*, meaning 1b). The effect of this usage on the part of [V.] is to emphasise his supposed exertion towards poetic originality. It is used later in this way by Statius at *Ach.* 1.19 and *Theb.* 4.37.

ignotas … curas: For the clichéd Callimachean associations of this, see 8n. *curas*, like *molimur*, stresses the challenge presented by the poet's choice of theme.

Throughout the poem, **cura / ae** is a highly significant poetological *Leitwort*. In several cases it means something akin to *raison d' être*: see (in reference to the divine) 33-4 *non est tam sordida divis | cura*; (in reference to [V.]'s own poetic programme) 91-2 *sed omnis | in vero mihi cura*; and (in reference to humankind more generally) 223 *digna laborantis respondent praemia curis* and 251 *sed prior haec homini cura est, cognoscere terram*. The word undoubtedly has a deep poetological significance; its usages at 24 and 92 are in reference to [V.]'s own poetic endeavour, whilst those at 33, 223 and 251 (see ns. ad loc.) can be interpreted as contributing to criticism of [V.]'s poetic rivals.

pectore: For *pectus* as a poetic faculty, cf. e.g. Prop. 2.1.39-40 *neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus | intonet angusto pectore*, and various other examples at *TLL* 10.1.913.21-52. Note the association with Alexandrian poetry implied at Prop. 2.1.40. In contrast to the Propertian example, [V.]'s *pectus* seemingly composes poetry, as opposed to delivering it.

pectore curas: Welsh (2014: 125), following Iodice (n. on 23-8), suggests cf. Lucr. 6.645 *pectora cura*. Given that the only similarity between the two phrases in question here is one of appearance, I question the relevance of this citation.

25 qui tanto motus operi: The first of twenty-two usages of the term *opus* in the *Aetna*, eleven of which are in direct reference to the mountain itself or its

workings: for these, see 25, 159, 169, 187b, 194, 336, 458, 490, 565 and 600. Contrary to the simplistic verdict of Brakman (1921: 208), that [V.]'s extensive use of this word is evidence of his shortcomings as a poet, it is a poetical strategy; as discussed at intr. IV.1.ii, given the way in which [V.] also uses *opus* to describe his own poetic programme / line of inquiry (see, e.g., 188 *nunc opus artificem incendi causamque reposcit* [n. ad loc.]), scholars have unsurprisingly read its use here and elsewhere in application to the mountain metapoetically, as another way in which the poet blurs the lines between his subject matter, Mount Etna, and his product, the *Aetna*: cf. 1-4n. For more on the metapoetical significance of *opus* in the poem, see, intr. IV.1.ii; also Wolff (2004) 83, Welsh (2014) 119-20 and Glauthier (2011) 111-2.

For *tantum opus*, cf. 159, and implicitly 256.

25-6 quae tanta perenni […] explicet in densum flammas:[326] Goodyear (following Munro) posits that the breakdown in meaning here is likely due to a lacuna. For criticism of various attempts to emend the text, and of γ's *causa perennis*, see Goodyear (n. ad loc.).

26-7 et trudat ab imo | ingenti sonitu moles: 'and [what] throws up from the depths masses with a great noise.' Enjambment here potentially reflects meaning: cf. 13-14n.

trudo: For its meaning, i.e. 'to eject', cf. Lucr. 1.292 and other examples under *OLD* s.v. *trudo*, sense 1a.

ab imo: A verse-ending favoured by [V.]: cf. 200, 376.

28 ignibus irriguis urat: The only usage in Latin of *irriguus* (which normally means something like 'watery' [cf. e.g. the *irriguum carmen* of the *cortina* at 296]) as an epithet of fire: see *TLL* 7.2.421.60. Welsh (2014: 125) reads this unusual usage of the word as a 'nod' from [V.] to the theory expressed at Lucr. 6.694-700 that water from the sea runs through Mount Etna's underground caverns. There may be some truth in this, but Welsh is right to point out that the epithet depicts well the image of 'molten lava' regardless, and indeed that the poet likens the pyroclastic flow to a river at 483-5.

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[326] **25** tanta perenni *CSZV* : causa perennis γ   *lacunam posuit Munro*

mens carminis haec est: 'this is the mind of my song.' As suggested by De Vivo (1992: 676), this recalls verse 4, the culmination of the poet's first programmatic statement. Berrino (n. ad loc.) helpfully notes the force lent to this phrase by its preceding strong caesura. This impression of the poem having a 'mind' of its own is highly self-conscious, and seems particularly appropriate for didactic poetry, given its generic characteristic of, as Volk (2002: 13) puts it, 'poetic simultaneity', the 'illusion that the poem is really only coming into being as it evolves before the readers' eyes'. See intr. IV for the *Aetna* as a meta-poem.

29-40

[29-35] *Dismissal of the myth of Etna as the home of Vulcan.* **[36-40]** *Dismissal of the myth that Etna's furnaces were used by the Cyclopes to forge Jove's thunderbolt.*

29-40 On this section, and its follow-up ([V.]'s dismissal of the association of the Gigantomachy with Mount Etna), as De Vivo (1992: 677) points out, note the increase in hostility of tone of [V.]'s judgements of the various tales, ranging from 1) labelling the legend that Mount Etna is the home of Vulcan as a *fallacia vatum* (29), to 2) that it houses the forges of the Cyclopes as a *facies vatum* (36) and a *turpe et sine pignore carmen* (40), to 3) that it is the site of the Gigantomachy as an *impia fabula* (42).

Most (forthcoming) argues that Virgil is the primary target of [V.]'s trio of poetic falsities associated with Mount Etna: that 29-35 (Etna as the home of Vulcan) responds to *Aen.* 8.416-22; 36-40 (Etna as the site of the Cyclopes' forging of Jove's thunderbolt) responds to *Georg.* 4.170-5 and *Aen.* 8.424-8; and 41-73 (Etna as the site of the Gigantomachy) responds to *Aen.* 3.578-82. Whilst there is admittedly a degree of overlap between each of these passages and its supposed Virgilian model, which will be illustrated below, Most's argument hinges on what follows these – [V.]'s dismissal of poetic underworlds (76-84) – which, he argues, settles beyond all doubt the issue of the target of the poet's criticism. For the reasons given at 76-84n., I deem this interpretation too simplistic. Admittedly, Virgil is very likely a target of [V.]'s polemic, but there is nothing to suggest that he is the one and only target, particularly given the plethora of models seemingly used by [V.] during his dismissal of the Gigantomachy: see 41-73n.

29 principio ne quem capiat fallacia vatum: 'Firstly, let no-one be deceived by the lies of the poets…'

capiat: For *capio* in the non-physical sense of deceit, cf. various examples at *TLL* 3.0.336.53-337.72. [V.]'s choice of verb and construction (*ne* + subj.) achieves the intended voice of scorn for the persuasive power of the *vates*.

fallacia: Cf. its later (potential) usage by [V.] in a similar context at (the corrupt) 79 † *plurima pars scaenae rerum est fallacia*. This is strong rhetoric from [V.]; *fallacia* is implicit of outright lying, as opposed to something softer such as 'poetic licence': cf. 91 *debita carminibus libertas ista* (n. ad loc.).

vatum: This is the first mention by [V.] of the *vates*-figure, the self-styled 'poet / seer' of the Augustan era, and later. Throughout his extended proem, [V.] casts this figure in a negative light, as the source of the poetic falsities that he seeks to dismiss: cf. those usages of the word at 36 and 76. Nevertheless, in contrast, cf. the more ambivalent usage of it at 75, and in a potentially self-referential manner, its positive usage at 642: for more on the implications of which, see intr. IV.4.i.

Notably, in their epics, all of Ovid, Virgil and Lucan refer to themselves directly as *vates*: see, e.g., respectively, Ov. *Met.* 15.879, Virg. *Aen.* 7. 41 (Horsfall n. ad loc.), Luc. 1.63. For scholarship on the use of the *vates*-figure by the Augustan poets, see, e.g., Newman (1967) and Jocelyn (1995); for Lucan as *vates*, see O' Higgins (1988) and Pillinger (2012). The *vates*-figure is also used self-consciously throughout Manilius' *Astronomica*: see, e.g., Man. 1.23; discussion at Volk (2002) 209-25. Whist [V.] is using the term generally here, we can presume that, given his engagement with all of his predecessors mentioned above elsewhere, he has them in mind.

For this trope of the lying *vates*, and verses that the one in question might emulate, cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.253 *valeant mendacia vatum*; *Am.* 3.6.17 *prodigiosa loquor veterum mendacia vatum*, and 3.12.41 *exit in inmensum fecunda licentia vatum*. Like [V.], Ovid plays self-consciously with his own status as *vates*. As De Vivo (1992: 674) points out, there is a generally Ovidian timbre to the *Aetna*'s prologue; see 17-23n. for my difference of opinion with De Vivo in regard to the dynamics of appropriation between *Amores* 3.12 and the *Aetna*.

Also, as suggested by G. D. Williams (2020: 126-7), cf. Lucr. 1.102-3 *vatum | terriloquis* […] *dictis*; 1.109 *religionibus atque minis* […] *vatum*.

30-2 sedes esse dei tumidisque e faucibus ignem | Volcani ruere et clausis resonare cavernis | festinantis opus: Cf. *Aen*. 8.416-22, at which the narrator seemingly casts Aetna / Hiera as the home of Vulcan: *insula Sicanium iuxa latus Aeoliamque | erigitur Liparen fumantibus ardua saxis, | quam subter specus et Cyclopum exesa caminis | antra Aetnea tonant, validique incudibus ictus | auditi referunt gemitus, striduntque cavernis | stricturae Chalybum et fornacibus ignis anhelat, | Volcani domus et Volcania nomine tellus.* As discussed at 29-40n., Most (forthcoming) interprets [V.]'s remarks as a direct response to these Virgilian verses. The lack of verbal crossover between the two passages is one reason why I deem Most's opinion tenuous; see 76-84n. for more.

In regard to Mount Etna as the home of Vulcan / Hephaestus, cf. also Pind. *Pyth.* 1.25-6 κεῖνο δ᾽ Ἀφαίστοιο κρουνοὺς ἑρπετὸν | δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμπει; Aesch. *P.V.* 366-7 κορυφαῖς δ᾽ ἐν ἄκραις ἥμενος μυδροκτυπεῖ | Ἥφαιστος; detailed discussion of both of which at intr. II.1.

In addition, cf. Gratt. *Cyn.* 430-3 *est in Trinacria specus ingens rupe cavique* […] *Vulcano condicta domus.* The scholarly consensus on the dating of the *Cynegetica* (late Augustan / Tiberian: see 1n.) most likely allows for an awareness on [V.]'s part of Grattius' poem.

Cf. in addition, potentially as direct reception of the *Aetna*, but if not, as evidence of the status that this myth held in antiquity, the remarkably similar Philostr. *Apoll.* 5.16 καὶ μηδὲ ἐκεῖνος ὁ λόγος, καίτοι δοκῶν εὐφημότερος εἶναι, τιμάσθω, ὡς Ἡφαίστῳ μέλει τοῦ χαλκεύειν ἐν τῇ Αἴτνῃ, καὶ κτυπεῖταί τις ἐνταῦθα ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἄκμων, πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ ἄλλα ὄρη πολλαχοῦ τῆς γῆς ἔμπυρα, καὶ οὐκ ἂν φθάνοιμεν ἐπιφημίζοντες αὐτοῖς γίγαντας καὶ Ἡφαίστους. Given that, at this point in his narrative, Philostratus is supposedly recounting events that occurred during or imminently after 69 AD, the Year of the Four Emperors (see Philostr. *Apoll.* 5.12), and given the similarity of the subject matter (poetic lies about Mount Etna), he might conceivably have used the *Aetna* as a source.

30 [Aetnam] sedes esse dei: Cf. in reference to the stars, Man. 1.804 *illa deis sedes.* [V.]'s point at 29-35, one that he reiterates throughout his poem (cf. e.g. 253-6), is that the stars, rather than the earth, are the abode of the divine. However, he will challenge Manilius for interfering with the inaccessible divine sphere at 219-81.

For the general scepticism of an earthly *sedes dei / deorum*, cf. Lucr. 5.146-7 *illud item non es ut possis credere, sedes | esse deum sanctos in mundi partibus ullis.*

tumidis faucibus: [V.]'s anthropomorphised impression of Mount Etna depicted here, with the volcano's cavities cast as throats, evokes Etna's associations with the myth of Enceladus' burial under the mountain by Jove at the conclusion of the Gigantomachy. See intr. IV.2.i. for the way in which [V.]'s consistent use of supposedly impious 'Enceladean' imagery to depict his subject matter contributes to his creation of a self-contradictory poetic programme.

31 Vulcani ruere et clausis resonare cavernis: Note the alliteration and internal rhyme of *ruere … resonar*e and c*laus*is … *cavernis*, positioned in an abab pattern to reflect the impression of the noise of Vulcan's work echoing around his forge.

32 festinantis opus: *festinantis* agrees with *Vulcani*: literally 'and the work of him [Vulcan] toiling resounds in closed caverns'. For *festino* + *opus*, see *TLL* 6.1.618.52-3. For the poetological significance of [V.]'s use of *opus* in the *Aetna*, see 25n.; intr. IV.1.ii.

non est tam sordida divis | cura: 'the gods have no such base a care.' Cf. in reference to Mount Etna itself, 370 *non est divinis tam sordida rebus egestas*, suggestive of the volcano's own divinity: see further discussion of this theme at Welsh (2014) 109-18.

sordida: For the sense here, see *OLD* s.v. *sordidus* (meaning 7): 'base'.

cura: See 24n. on [V.]'s use of *cura / curae*.

33-5 neque extremas ius est dimittere in artes | sidera: subducto regnant sublimia caelo | illa: 'Nor is it right to denigrate the stars to base crafts; they rule sublime in the remote sky.' The thought expressed by [V.] here is a stronger version of that iterated at Lucr. 1.44-6 and 2.646-8 *omnis enim per se divom natura necessest | inmortali aevo summa cum pace fruatur | semota ab nostris rebus seiunctaque longe.* Whereas Lucretius' remark is a proclamation of the Epicurean principle of the detachment of the divine from human affairs (see Bailey n. on Lucr. 1.44-9; cf. Ep. *KD* 1), [V.]'s is a specific attack on those poets who humanise the gods. Given the allusions discussed at 33n., 34n. and 35n., Manilius is a likely target here: see intr. III.2 for [V.]'s polemical hypertextual relationship with his predecessor.

33 dimittere […] sidera: Cf., in reference to the giants, 43-4 *detrudere mundo | sidera*, which itself looks back to Man. 1.3 [*sidera*] *deducere mundo*: see full discussion at 43-4n.

extremas artes = 'base crafts.' For this negative sense of *extremus*, see *OLD* s.v. *extremus* (meaning 5); *TLL* 5.2.2004.38-2005.8. Here it is placed in stark contrast with *sidera* […] *sublimia*.

34 sidera: subducto regnant sublimia caelo [illa]:[327] The sibilance and repetition of the prefix *sub-* gives this verse a hymnic quality.

sidera: Note the dramatic placement of *sidera* as first word of the line followed by a caesura. [V.]'s use of *sidera* in reference to the divine clearly nods to Manilius, whose poetic programme is based on the idea that stars = gods (cf. 30n. above).

subducto: Regardless of whether one accepts *subductus* or *seductus* here, the sense is the same: 'remote'. Neither epithet is applied to *caelum* elsewhere in Latin. The epithet (and statement more broadly) is likely a subtle dig at Manilius, who at *Astr.* 1.1-3 explicitly casts his own poetic programme as an attempt to 'draw down' (*deducere*) the stars through the medium of verse.

Note the play from [V.] on the like prefixes of *subductus* and *sublimis*, despite their contrasting meanings.

sublimia: Perhaps surprisingly, given the divine status of the stars, this adjective is not applied to *sidera* elsewhere in extant Latin. For the idea of the divine occupying a *sublimis* zone, cf. Enn. *Ach.* Frag. 2, quoted at Gell. 4.17.13-14 *prolato aere astitit, | per ego deum sublimas subices | umidas unde oritur imber sonitu saevo et spiritu.*

35 illa neque artificum curant tractare laborem: 'And they [the stars] do not care to engage with the toil of craftsmen.' Given what [V.] will go on to say at 219-81 (see n. ad loc.), his words here tempt strongly a metapoetical interpretation: that 'the stars [i.e. the gods] suffer not the toil of artisans [poets: i.e. Manilius and Virgil].'

artificum: As Kruschwitz (2015: 92-3) suggests, [V.]'s negative depiction of the *artifex*-figure here contrasts strikingly with those at 189 *nunc opus artificem incendi causamque reposcit* and 600 *artificis naturae ingens opus aspice*; cf. also 198 *quis mirandus tantae faber imperet arti*. The point is that, whereas here [V.] is referring to the base artistry of humans, in the latter examples, he is referring to the wondrous artistry of Nature: see 189n. This contrast is entirely in keeping with his broader outlook; his remark at 600 (an encouragement to his reader to appreciate the majesty of Etna) follows an attack on those who travel the world

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[327] **34** subducto *CSAδ* : seducto *HRVγ*

in quest of the great artworks (593-9): see intr. IV.1.ii for the metapoetical interpretation of this.

curant: Cf. 24n. on *cura / curae*.

tractare: Connotations of dragging contribute to the intended impression of the mundanity of earthly life.

laborem: In a work with as much *Georgics*-colouring as the *Aetna* (see intr. III.1), [V.]'s use of this *Leitwort* of Virgil's poem compels the reader to consider the Augustan poet's usage of it. Like [V.], Virgil fully exploits the potential poetological significance of this word: see, e.g., *Georg.* 4.6 *in tenui labor; at tenuis non gloria* (Thomas n. ad loc.). It is therefore hard not to read [V.]'s remark here as a poetological barb directed at the *Georgics*. Volk (2005: 87), following Di Giovine (1981) argues that 257-72 *torquemur miseri in parvis premimurque labore…* targets in particular *poetry about labor*, i.e. the *Georgics*. [V.]'s usage of *labor* here potentially strengthens her case, though see my reservations about her broader conclusions at 219-81n., 263-72n.

36 discrepat a prima facies haec altera vatum: 'this other error of the poets differs from the first one…'

This is the only usage of *facies* in this sense in Classical Latin (see *TLL* 6.1.53.38-9), namely that of *factura*, a translation of the Greek ποίημα. On this usage, see Goodyear (n. ad loc.) Rather than look for an explicitly poetological meaning of this word, I would focus on its potential connotations of a 'façade' (see *OLD* s.v. *facies*, meaning 2), insinuating deception.

For [V.]'s attitude towards the *vates*, see 29n.

37-9 illis Cyclopas memorant fornacibus usos, | cum super incudem numerosa in verbera fortes | horrendum magno quaterent sub pondere fulmen: 'They [the *vates*] recall the Cyclopes using those furnaces, when over the anvil, with strong strokes, they forged the terrible thunderbolt under immense pressure.' As Most (forthcoming) suggests, a likely target here is Virgil, who at *Georg.* 4.173-5, remarks: *gemit impositis <u>icudibus</u> Aetna; | illi inter sese magna vi bracchia tollunt | <u>in numerum</u>, versantque tenaci forcipe ferrum.* The verbal similarities between the two passages (*incudem / incudibus*; *numerosa / numerum*), make Most's argument in this case convincing: cf. 76-84n. It should also be noted that [V.] demonstrates obvious awareness of this 'Aetnaean'

passage of the *Georgics* elsewhere in his poem: cf. his use of *fervet opus* at 169 (see n. ad loc.).

fornacibus: The dative is used here as the object of *usus*. [V.]'s usage of this word in this metrical *sedes* (the penultimate word in the line) is reminiscent of his usage of it in the poem's opening line. See intr. IV.2.i for discussion of the way in which [V.]'s poem ultimately fails to disassociate its subject matter from this supposedly impious myth.

38 incudem contributes to a Virgilian colouring in these lines; in addition to Virg. *Georg.* 4.173 (cited above), cf. Virg. *Aen.* 8.418-20 *Cyclopum exesa caminis | antra Aetnaea tonant, validique incudibus ictus | auditi referent gemitus*.

numerosa in verbera: Perhaps the only usage of *numerosus* in extant Latin in the context of forgery (see *OLD* s.v. *numerosus*, meaning 5a). The adjective has obvious associations with poetic metre, and is here presumably intended to give an impression of the rhythmical nature of the Cyclopes' work.

39 horrendum magno quaterent sub pondere fulmen: The chiastic structure of the line is artfully imitative of the forging process; in addition, its assonance and spondaic rhythm reflect the sonorous, repetitive nature of the subject matter.

quaterent: Often, in the context of weaponry, means 'brandish', but here must = 'forge'. The exact usage here is likely unique, but see *OLD* s.v. *quatio* (meaning 6) for 'knock or strike repeatedly'. The subjunctive is used here following *cum* (38).

40 armarentque Iovem: Dramatic, epic moment emphasised by strong caesura. A clear link is established by [V.] between this section and that which follows it, given that the *proxima* (41) poetic falsity dismissed by [V.] is that of Mount Etna being the site of the Gigantomachy. Cf., in reference to the arming of Jove for the Gigantomachy, Prop. 3.9.48 *te duce vel Iovis arma canam.*

turpe: A scathing choice of diction from [V.]. As recorded at *OLD* s.v. *turpis*, the word covers a variety of meanings of 'shameful'.

sine pignore: Here, [V.] suggests that poems ought to have some sort of 'proof' of their truthfulness. Cf. [V.]'s depiction of his own poetic programme at 91-2 *sed omnis | in vero mihi cura*: for more on which, see n. ad loc.; intr. IV.1.iii.

De Lacy (1943: 170-3), followed by Stoneman (2020), argues that [V.]'s use of *pignus* here is demonstrative of his Epicurean epistemological approach. De Lacy points out that, elsewhere in the poem, *pignus* largely means a 'proof that can be perceived' (cf. 135, 460, 519). There are undoubtedly potentially Epicurean connotations of [V.]'s usage of this word, however I think that it is a stretch (particularly in the case of the present example) to use [V.]'s usage of this word as the basis of an argument about the poet's overarching 'world view': cf. 135n.; intr. III.3.

carmen: Note how [V.] characterises the arming of Jove explicitly as a *carmen*, rather than as a *fabula*, suggesting to me that he has a particular poem in mind: see 41-73n. for my hypothesis of lost gigantomachic Latin literature.

[41-73] *[V.] dismisses at length another poetic falsity associated with Mount Etna, the Gigantomachy.* **[46-7]** *He first describes the monsters themselves,* **[48-9]** *followed by: the piling up of mountains;* **[50-3]** *the assault on heaven;* **[54-8]** *Jupiter's initial fear and the giants' success;* **[59-63]** *the gods' galvanising of themselves for resistance;* **[63-8]** *Jupiter's decisive cast of his thunderbolt;* **[68-70]** *the restoration of peace to the cosmos;* **[71-3]** *and finally, the burying of Enceladus under Mount Etna.*

41-73 [V.]'s dismissal of / digression on the Gigantomachy. Given that [V.]'s 32-verse digression on the Gigantomachy is one of the longest accounts of the myth in extant Classical Latin literature, it has received surprisingly little scholarly attention, the exception being the largely philological study of Hildebrandt (1897).

Having dismissed the first two *fallaciae vatum* associated with Mount Etna (namely that it was [1] the home of Vulcan, and [2] the site of the forge of the Cyclopes), [V.] dismisses a third – that the volcano was the location of the Gigantomachy. Despite labelling the myth pointedly as an *impia fabula* at 42, [V.] digresses to deliver an extended account of it.

Whilst we lack a poem from antiquity solely devoted to the Gigantomachy prior to the fourth-century Claud. 52, the theme was seemingly a rich Latin literary *topos*. It features in several Augustan and Tiberian *recusationes* as an exemplum of an overused poetic subject matter.[328] The myth also acquires a pro-Augustan allegorical significance, present overtly in Horace's fourth 'Roman Ode' (*Carm.* 3.4), and as Hardie (1986: 85-156) has demonstrated, as an underlying theme of the *Aeneid*. This has led Nisbet and Hubbard (n. on Hor. *Carm.* 2.12.7), followed by Hardie (1986: 87), to posit convincingly that there must be lost literature on this subject matter – perhaps Hellenistic or Neoteric epyllia, or sections from the lost Augustan annalistic epics.

Despite being ignored in this discussion, the *Aetna*'s gigantomachic digression undoubtedly supports this proposition. Its pretext, after all, is that the

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[328] Cf. Prop. 2.1.19-20, 39-40, 3.9.47-8; Hor. *Carm.* 2.12.6ff.; Ov. *Am.* 2.1.11ff., *Trist.* 2.69ff, 331-2; Man. 3.5-6; [Virg.] *Culex* 27-8; [Virg.] *Ciris* 29ff. Ovid also bucks the trend and delivers a narrative of the battle at *Met.* 1.151-62.

theme has been overused in poetry. In addition, the account reads as an ironic pastiche, as [V.] strains to emphasisise the overly familiar nature of his subject matter. Contributing factors to the account's timbre are [V.]'s overblown (mock-)epic style, full of repetition and hyperbole (see, e.g., 52-3n.); clichéd characterisation of the gods and giants (see, e.g., 51n.); and focus on the tale's formulaic course of events. In addition to its tone, the form of the account (an extended digression, almost an epyllion itself) suggests that it targets either a poem or several poems on the subject, which are now lost to us. De Vivo (1992: 678) warms to the idea of Ovid having written a gigantomachic epic, posited by Owen (1924) and Della Corte (1971), as he interprets [V.]'s proem as a presentation of a poetic approach antithetical to that of Ovid.[329] Had Ovid indeed written an epic of this sort, [V.]'s use of it here would be likely, given his wider engagement with the Ovidian canon throughout his extended proem: see, e.g., his reworking of Ov. *Am.* 3.12.19-40 at 17-23n.

Despite its dismissive premise, [V.]'s Gigantomachy is more than just a demonstration of poetic virtuosity or polemic for the sake of it. The passage plays an important intratextual role; by casting the myth as the consummate example of an *impia fabula*, [V.] presents it as a counterpart to his closing *pia fabula* on the myth of the pious Catanian brothers (603-45): for more on which, see intr. IV.4.i.

In addition, [V.]'s gigantomachic digression has strong poetological significance, given the extensive use of the theme within the Latin didactic tradition. As discussed by Hardie (1986: 209-13) and Volk (2001: 105), Lucretius explicitly compares the challenge presented by his own poetic programme – an Epicurean inquiry into what has been labelled as 'divine'– to that of the assault of the giants on Olympus at *DRN* 5.110-25. Likewise, Lucretius casts Epicurus as a 'gigantomachic' figure in his programmatic description of him at *DRN* 1.62-79 (most obviously at 68-9): see discussion at Volk (2001) 107. As suggested by Gee (2000: 55-6) and S. J. Green (n. on *Fast.*1.295-310), Ovid engages with the idea of Lucretian gigantomachic philosophy in his 'Eulogy to Astronomers' at *Fast.* 1.295-310. In contrast to Lucretius, who aligns his own practice with that of

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[329] The way in which Ovid hints at the writing of a poem of this sort throughout his extant oeuvre (see, e.g., *Am.* 2.1.11-20) is the main reason why scholars have hypothesised this.

the giants, Ovid, on the whole,[330] contrasts his own encouraged route to the stars (via learning) with that of the giants (physical conquest): see S. J. Green n. on *Fast.* 1.307-8; Gee (2001) 53. As discussed extensively by Volk (2001), Manilius, unsurprisingly, given his own claims to piety, tries to distance his poetic programme from the approach of the giants (see, e.g., Man. 2.127-8; discussion at Volk [2001] 85-106), but ultimately fails to disassociate his own craft from 'intellectual Gigantomachy': see, e.g., 4.883-5; Volk (2001) 107-17. Regardless of Manilius' intentions in this regard, when [V.]'s gigantomachic account is taken alongside his criticism of the Manilian poetic programme at 251-6, it becomes clear that he associates the two as unnatural assaults upon the divine sphere: cf. 43-4n. There is also every chance that [V.]'s casting of the Gigantomachy as the consummate *impia fabula* responds to Lucretius' association of it with Epicureanism, given that [V.] directs barbs at Lucretius' doctrine-espousing poem elsewhere (see intr. III.3).

The reader's trust in the sincerity of [V.]'s poetological discourse is severely compromised by his treatment of the Gigantomachy. Despite the myth's supposed status as a poetic 'no-go zone', in addition to delivering his extended account of it here, [V.] uses clearly gigantomachic imagery at 203-4 (see n. ad loc), 332-3, 559-60 and 608-9: for discussion of which, see intr. IV.2.ii.

The manner in which it introduces several concurrent tensions of the poem – such as good poetry vs. bad poetry, impiety vs. piety, the earthly sphere vs. the divine – makes [V.]'s gigantomachic digression strongly programmatic.

The Gigantomachy, Etna and Hesiod. Though Hesiod does not treat the Gigantomachy at length (referring to the Giants only in passing as the offspring of Gaia at *Theo.* 185-6), he does depict extensively two other cosmic conflicts seminal to the foundation of Jove's regime, his defeat of the Titans (the Titanomachy: *Theo.* 617-735) and his defeat of Typhon (the Typhonomachy: *Theo.* 820-68). Despite being clearly defined as separate by Hesiod, in later literature these Jove-related cosmic conflicts come to be confused and conflated with one another. One example of such confusion is how Mount Etna comes to be associated with the Gigantomachy. There is a tradition that derives itself back

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[330] It ought to be said that Ovid does not completely disassociate astronomy with the Gigantomachy: see *Fast.* 1.297-8; S. J. Green n. ad loc.

to either a misreading of Hes. *Theo*. 860 (see West n. ad loc*.*), or a pre-Hesiodic source (posited by Burton [1962] 98), crystallised into canon in the fifth century B.C. by the similar (both in terms of dating and content) Pind. *Pyth.* 1.15-20 and Aesch. *P.V.* 351-72, that has Zeus bury his defeated foe Typhon under Etna, the monster's breath providing the source of the volcano's fires: see further discussion at intr. II.1.[331] However, by [V.]'s time, the Latin poets, likely influenced by Call. *Aet.* Frag. 1.36, had replaced as this 'monster under the mountain' this lone adversary of Zeus, Typhon, with one of the giants, Enceladus: see, e.g. Virg. *Aen*. 3.578; discussion at intr. II.2, Horsfall n. ad loc.

Despite following the non-Hesiodic, Pindaric-inspired Latin tradition in regard to the conclusion of his Gigantomachy, it seems likely that [V.] drew considerable inspiration for his gigantomachic depiction from the *Theogony*'s extended account of the Titanomachy at *Theo* 617-735. This is an aspect of [V.]'s Gigantomachy that scholarship thus far has not recognised. Some notable similarities between Hesiod's Titanomachic account and the *Aetna*'s Gigantomachy, in order of their strength, are (1) the 'un-Homeric' nature of the fighting in both (see 60-1n.); (2) the role of Zeus in both (see 57-8n.); (3) the focus on noise in both (see 56-7n.), and (4), the supporting role played by the winds in both (see 57-8n.). [V.]'s Hesiodic borrowing here is illustrative of why the various conflicts of the *Theogony* came to be confused and conflated so often; regardless of which specific cosmic conflict a Greek or Latin poet wanted to depict, he would likely draw on Hesiod's original.

41-2 proxima vivaces Aetnaei verticis ignes | impia sollicitat Phlegrais fabula castris: 'Next there is that sacrilegious legend which associates the living fires of Etna's summit with Phlegraean warfare.' Alongside critiquing the broadly impious nature of the myth, [V.] is making a specific point about the conflation of various myths that has resulted in the Gigantomachy being associated with Mount Etna: see 41-73n. (above).

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[331] Both of these passages name the birthplace of Typhon as Cilicia (see Pind. *Pyth*. 1.16; Aesch. *P. V.* 351), an additional detail not mentioned by Hesiod. A further passage of interest here may be the Typhonic simile at Hom. *Il.* 2.780-5, and specifically 783 εἰν Ἀρίμοις, ὅθι φασὶ Τυφωέος ἔμμεναι εὐνάς· There is considerable scholarly debate as to what and where were the Arimi (mentioned both here and at Hes. *Theo*. 304), and no certainty on the matter at all. One sensible theory is that they were a mountain range in Cilicia: see West n. on *Theo*. 304. Were this the case, it strengthens the case for a pre-Pindaric, non-Hesiodic Typhonomachic tradition, one that perhaps provides the origins for the association of Etna with the conclusion of the conflict.

41 vivaces ignes: [V.] depicts Etna's fires as 'living' here to contrast them with the long-dead giants of hackneyed mythology: cf. 204n. More broadly, throughout his poem, he casts his inanimate subject matter as having agency; for this, see, e.g., his 'panegyric' to the *lapis molaris* at 400-554: in particular, 417-8 *profecto | miranda est lapidis <u>vivax</u> animosaque virtus*; discussion at intr. IV.3.i.

42 impia fabula: 'a sacrilegious tale.' For the Gigantomachy's association with impiety, cf. e.g. Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.64.1 *nam cum vetus haec opinio Graeciam opplevisset, exsectum caelum a filio Saturno, vinctum autem Saturnum ipsum a filio Iove, physica ratio non inelegans inclusa est in <u>impias fabulas</u>*.

sollicitat: As Hildebrandt (1897: 564) suggests, [V.]'s use of *sollicito* here may derive itself from Ov. *Fast.* 5.40 [*Gigantes parabant*] *magnum bello sollicitare Iovem.*

fabula: For the Gigantomachy as *fabula*, cf. Gratt. 61-4 *nonne vides veterum quos prodit fabula rerum | semideos: illi aggeribus temptare superbis | caeli iter et matres ausi attrectare deorum.* On the likelihood of a direct intertextual relationship between Grattius' *Cynegetica* and the *Aetna*, see 1n. For the significance of *fabula* as a poetological *Leitwort* used by [V.] throughout his work, see 23n. [V.] here establishes the *impia fabula* of the Gigantomachy as a counterpart to the *pia fabula* of Amphinomus and Anapius told as the poem's concluding narrative: see intr. IV.4.i for more on the relationship between the two accounts.

Phlegrais castris: For the impression of the giants as an army from Roman conflict, cf. Ov. *Epist. Ex Pont.* 2.2.11-12 *nec nos Enceladi dementia castra secuti | in rerum dominos movimus arma deos.*

Phlegra, or the *Phlegraei Campi* (Phlegraean Fields), as they were and still are known, refers to the large area of volcanic land around the Bay of Naples: for a geographical description of it from antiquity, see, e.g., Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 29.111. The Latin poets often cast this area as the site of the Gigantomachy: cf. e.g. Prop. 2.1.39-40, 3.9.47-8; [Virg.] *Cul.* 28; Ov. *Met.* 10.150-1; Luc. 4.593-7, 9.655-7.

On the issue of the geographical confusion associated with the Gigantomachy in antiquity, see Servius n. on *Aen* 3.578 (*fama est*) *fama est bene se fabulosam rem dicturus excusat: nam re vera nisi quae de gigantibus legimus, fabulosa acceperimus, ratio non procedit. nam cum in Phlegra, Thessaliae loco, pugnasse*

dicantur, quemadmodum est in Sicilia Enceladus? Otus in Creta secundum Sallustium, unde Otii campi? Typhoeus in Campania?: see Vian (1952: 13) for further commentary on this. By using the geographical term *Phlegrais* here, [V.] seems to be making a similarly specific complaint as to why something from mainland Italy has come to be associated with Etna.

43-4 [gigantes] temptavere (nefas) olim detrudere mundo | sidera: 'They [the giants] once attempted an unspeakable act: to wrench down the stars from the firmament!' Note [V.]'s melodramatic tone here, suggestive of the clichéd nature of his subject matter. For the image, cf. Gratt. 63-4 *illi aggeribus temptare superbis | caeli iter et matres ausi attrectare deorum*; Luc. *B.C.* 3.316 *aut si terrigenae temptarent astra gigantes*; Ov. *Met.* 1.151-3 *neve foret terris securior arduus aether, | adfectasse ferunt regnum caeleste gigantas | altaque congestos struxisse ad sidera montis.* We might consider the account of the Gigantomachy in *Met.* 1 as the *locus classicus* for the myth in Latin poetry; though, given how often the mythic theme features as an exemplum of supposed hackneyed poetic subject matter in Latin *recusationes*, and given the similarities between the various extant versions of it, I strongly suspect that there was in antiquity a now-lost Hellenistic, Neoteric or Augustan 'canonical' account of it: see 41-73n.

nefas is a famously Lucanian *Leitwort*: see, e.g., Luc. 1.4-6; seminal pieces by Henderson (1987), Johnson (1987), Masters (1992) et al. Hildebrandt (1897: 564) helpfully points out that Lucan describes the Gigantomachy explicitly as a *nefas* at *B.C.* 1.36-8 *non nisi saevorum potuit post bella gigantum, | iam nihil, o superi, querimur; scelera ista <u>nefasque</u> | hac mercede placent.* As outlined at intr. I.4, I cannot date with certainty the *Aetna* as a post-text of the *Bellum Civile*, despite a few moments in the poem tempting this: cf. e.g. 79n.

olim: [V.] signposting the 'bygone', fabulous nature of the tale that he is about to tell. Cf., likewise, his introduction at 605 to the concluding *miranda fabula* with the similarly distancing *quondam*. This is reminiscent of Ovid's distancing of himself from the Gigantomachy at Ov. *Met.* 1.152-3 (*ferunt* etc.).

temptavere […] detrudere mundo | sidera: Gigantomachy, as depicted by [V.] as an attempt to pull down the stars from the firmament, is anathema to the view expressed by the poet at 33-5 *neque extremas ius est demittere in artes | sidera: subducto regnant sublimia caelo | illa neque artificum currant tractare laborem*: see n. ad loc.

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For the thinly veiled attack on the Manilian poetic programme contained within this phrase, see intr. III.2.

Enjambment here is reflective of meaning: cf. e.g. 14-15n.

mundus occurs eight times in the poem (see, in addition to here, 55, 68, 70, 102, 173, 228, 247). As discussed at Volk (2009: 19) the word is a particularly Lucretian and Manilian term for the cosmos. [V.]'s use of it here is illustrative of the cosmic scale of the Gigantomachy.

For **sidera** equating to the divine in the poem, see 34n.

44-5 captivique Iovis transferre gigantes | imperium et victo leges imponere caelo: There may be a nod here to Virg. *Aen.* 6.851-2 (Anchises' Roman creed) *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento | (hae tibi erunt artes) pacique imponere morem*. Such a take on such an iconic passage of the *Aeneid*, which would suggest that Roman imperialism is akin to that of the giants, could be read as subversive.

It is hard not to read the critique of the giants' attempt to impose laws onto a 'tamed sky' as criticism of the Manilian poetic programme: see intr. III.2.

44 captivique Iovis: For the tradition of a captive divine sphere as part of the Gigantomachy, cf. Ov. *Met.* 1.182-4 *non ego pro mundi regno magis anxius illa | tempestate fui, qua centum quisque parabat | inicere anguipedum captivo bracchia caelo*. As Volk (2001) discusses, whilst on the one hand, Manilius suggests disapproval at the forcible conquering of the sky (see, e.g., Man. 2.127-8 *quis neget esse nefas invitum prendere mundum | et velut in semet captum deducere in orbem?*) and seeks to distinguish his own poetic programme from such an approach, he nevertheless fails to do this, ultimately explicitly casting his own poetic programme as, in the words of Volk (2001: 103), 'intellectual Gigantomachy'. For this, see, e.g., Man. 4.390-2 *quod quaeris, deus est: conaris scandere caelum | fataque fatali genitus cognoscere lege | et transire tuum pectus mundoque potiri*; and more explicitly 883-5 *iam nusquam natura latet; pervidimus omnem | et capto potimur mundo nostrumque parentem | pars sua perspicimus genitique accedimus astris*. For further discussion of this theme, see Volk (2001) 107-17; intr. III.2.

45 imperium: [V.]'s characterisation of Jove throughout this digression is worth a comment. Whilst elsewhere the king of the gods is cast as humorously timorous (see, e.g., 54n.), [V.] here perhaps draws on the allegorical significance held by the Gigantomachy in the first-century Roman literary and artistic *imaginaire* (see 41-73n.), casting Jove as the *imperator* of an *imperium*. [V.] seems to allude to the Gigantomachy's allegorical significance elsewhere in his account: cf. 68n.

46-7 his natura sua est alvo tenus, ima per orbes | squameus intortos sinuat vestigia serpens: 'Their nature is their own down to the belly [i.e. humanoid], whilst below a scaly serpent winds its path in contorted coils…' For the serpentine nature of the giants' lower body according to [V.], cf. the words of Jupiter at Ov. *Met.* 1.182-4, quoted above. Note the serpentine sibilance used here.

squameus: Much rarer than *squamosus*, and almost entirely limited to hexametric poetry of the first century AD: see *OLD* s.v. *squameus / squamosus*.

intortos: This is the only usage of *intortus* in poetry in reference to serpentine coils: see *TLL* 7.2.30.80-31.8. Unusual diction such as this contributes to the impression of [V.]'s Gigantomachy as something of a poetical oddity.

sinuat: For its usage in the sense of serpentine movement, cf. most obviously, in reference to the *serpentes* from Tenedos, Virg. *Aen.* 2.208-9 *pars cetera* [*serpentum*] *pontum | pone legit sinuatque immensa volumine terga.*

48 construitur magnis ad proelia montibus agger: As Hildebrandt (1897: 566-7) suggests, throughout his depiction of this epic battle scene, [V.] uses anachronistic terminology from the sphere of the imperial Roman army. Hildebrandt is correct in suggesting that this image of the pile-up of mountains as an *agger* has precedence in Latin poetry: cf. Gratt. 63 *aggeribus superbis*; see Waszink (1972: 442-3) for further precedence for this usage.

I suspect that the 'Romanisation' of the Gigantomachy was a standard feature of lost gigantomachic poetry, likely as part of the theme's pro-Augustan allegorical use: see 41-73n., 68n.

49 Pelion Ossa premit, summus premit Ossan Olympus:[332] 'Ossa presses on Pelion, utmost Olympus on Ossa.'

premit: The mss. give *creat*. The merits of this seemingly unusual choice of word from [V.] have been hotly debated by past editors of the poem. Scaliger (n. ad loc.) alleges that *creat* = *aget* and that *ex duobus montibus creatur unus.* Vesserau (1905: n. ad loc.) defends the ms. reading thus: '*la masse du Pélion s'accroît de celle de l'Ossa. L'Ossa est la cause de cet accroissement: c'est lui que fait croître la montagne au dessus de laquelle il est élevé, creat Pelion.*' These two scholars are followed by Waszink (1949: 230; 1972: 444-6), who sees in *creo* [V.]'s attempts to outdo Man. 1.426, and less convincingly, [Virg.] *Ciris* 34. Brakman (1923: 214-5) and Hildebrandt (1905: 567) refute the ms. reading here as nonsense, as does Goodyear, who is scathing of his predecessors in his n. ad loc., remarking: 'One would have thought this stuff refuted itself'.

Given the presence of *creat* throughout the ms. tradition, I am loathe to use instead of it the OCT's conjecture *premit*. Nevertheless, regardless of whether one accepts either of the standout options for emendation – the OCT's *premit* or Jacob's *gravat* (see Goodyear, n. ad loc.) – or the ms. reading *creat*, [V.]'s order of piled-up mountains remains the same, namely: Pelion ~ Ossa ~ Olympus. Given that, by the time of the *Aetna*'s composition, this mythological debate has become a *locus* for subtle correction of a poetic predecessor, it was evidently a well-used aspect of the Gigantomachy myth. The original Homeric order was Olympus ~ Ossa ~ Pelion (Hom. *Od.* 11.315-6). Virgil 'corrects' this to have Olympus on top at *Georg.* 1.281-2 *ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam | scilicet, atque Ossae frondosum involvere Olympum*: see Thomas (n. ad loc.). In contrast, Horace (*Carm.* 3.4.52) and Propertius (2.1.19-20) reject the Virgilian innovation and follow the Homeric original, whilst Ovid seemingly devises his own: Ossa ~ Pelion ~ Olympus (*Met.* 1.154-5). [V.] unsurprisingly follows Virgil's order, but outdoes his model by squeezing all the names into one chiastic hexameter, in order to enhance the impression of a pile-up of mountains.

The OCT's conjecture *premit* does have its merits. Repetition is favoured by [V.], and is used in a similarly obvious manner elsewhere in this section: cf. 52-3n. Cf., in addition, as cited by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), 169-70 *fervet opus*

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[332] **49** premit (*loco priore*) *Clausen*, *Kenney* : creat Ω (see more at Goodyear n. ad loc.)

densaque premit premiturque ruina | nunc Euri Boreae Notus, nunc huius uterque.

summus Olympus: After Virgil, a standard noun-epithet combination in Latin hexametric poetry: cf. e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 7.559; Man. 3.257; Ov. *Met.* 1.213.

51 impius miles: Cf. Cic. *Har. Resp.* 20 *quis est ex gigantibus illis, quos poetae ferunt bellum dis immortalibus intulisse, tam impius qui hoc tam novo tantoque motu non magnum aliquid deos populo Romano praemonstrare et praecinere fateatur?*; Hor. *Carm.* 2.19.21-2 *cum parentis regna per arduum | cohors Gigantum scanderet inpia.* Perhaps also cf. Ov. *Met.* 1.187, at which Jove describes the giants as a *ferus hostis*. Note the consistent association between the Gigantomachy and impiety (cf. 42n.). See 41-73n., intr. IV.4.i for the internal dialogue between [V.]'s *impia fabula* and his concluding *pia fabula* of the Catanian brothers' escape from the fires of Etna.

metuentia astra: [V.] depicts the gods as perhaps surprisingly timid; nevertheless, from a similar context, cf. Man. 1.427-8 *et iam vicinos fugientia sidera colles | arma impotantis et rupta matre creatos.* This characterisation of the gods is seemingly another 'typical' feature of Latin gigantomachic accounts, given Claud. 52.9 *pallescunt subito stellae.*

comminus: Note, once again, [V.]'s use of the language of Roman military prose to describe the Gigantomachy: cf. 48n.

52-3 † provocat […] provocat:[333] The repetitive nature of these lines, as preserved in CS, is not tolerated by some editors: see, e.g., Goodyear n. ad loc. However, I think that those who seek to edit this on aesthetical grounds miss the point; [V.] is here using a 'hyper-epic' style appropriate for his subject matter. In contrast to other editors, Vessereau (1905: n. ad loc.) commends [V.]'s use of anaphora here: '*Il y a là un artifice de diction admirable, non une banale tautologie.*'

infestus: [V.] is going to town on his characterisation of the giants: cf. 51n. *infestus* is seemingly an adjective favoured by [V.]: cf. 287 *infestis ventis*. For use of the word elsewhere in reference to the Gigantomachy, cf. Ov. *Met.* 1.187.

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[333] **53** *sic CS* : provocat … admotis (-us) *tantum Z* : *v. totum om. Vγ*

53 tertia sidera:[334] There is complete scholarly uncertainty about the meaning of the epithet, *tertia*, here. Some editors have sought to emend this confusing phrase, for example Ellis' proposition *per inertia*, which at least makes sense, whilst others have posited various innovative explanations to attempt to explain the ms. reading. Schwartz (n. ad loc.) suggests that it may refer to a region of the cosmos, whilst Hildebrandt (1897: 569-70) proposes that it is an example of [V.] once again using Roman military terminology in this unusual context – that it might mean something like the 'third rank of stars'. Given the strain that Hildebrandt's translation puts on the Latin, I am more inclined to side with Schwartz.

One further, albeit admittedly unlikely, option is that *tertia* may refer to the gods of the underworld, i.e. Hades: cf. e.g. [Tib.] 3.5.22 *tertia regna*; Fulkerson n. ad loc.

54 Iuppiter e caelo metuit: Cf. 51 *metuentia astra.* For the characterisation of Jove in [V.]'s gigantomachic digression, see 45n.

54-5 dextramque coruscam | armatus flammam: Accusative of respect: 'his glittering right hand armed with flame'.

Jove's **dextra corusca** is a Virgilian noun-adjective combination: cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.328-9 *ipse pater media nimborum in nocte corusca | fulmina molitur dextra.* For the idea of Jove being 'armed with flame', cf. Hor. *Carm.*1.2-4 *pater et rubente | dextera sacras iaculatus arces | terruit urbem.*

56-8 As I demonstrate below, [V.]'s focus on the din caused by the divine conflict is particularly Hesiodic: see broader discussion at 41-73n.

56 incursant vasto primum clamore gigantes: Note the spondaic metre of this line, which gives it a particularly epic timbre. As Hildebrandt (1897: 571-2) suggests, the giants are here depicted by [V.] as fighting in the style of barbarians. This focus on the noise of the conflict, I have argued (see 41-73n.), is likely influenced by Hesiod's account of the Titanomachy, in which it is such an eminent

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[334] **53** trementia *Bormans* : ad territa *Wassenberg* : conterrita *Vollmer* : per inertia *Ellis* : *alii alia*

feature: see, Hes. *Theo.* 677-86. This impression of the noisy giants perhaps became a typical feature of the lost Latin gigantomachic accounts.

vasto clamore: For the use of this noun-adj. combination in imperial Latin battle narrative, cf. Virg. *Aen.* 10.716 *missilibus longe et vasto clamore lacessunt* (on which, see Harrison n. ad loc.) and particularly (given its associations with barbarism) Ov. *Met.* 12.494 *ecce ruunt vasto rabidi clamore bimembres.* In all of these passages, there may perhaps be a vague reminiscence of the opening of *Iliad* 3, in which the Trojans are likewise cast as noisy aggressors: see Hom. *Il.* 3.2 Τρῶες μὲν κλαγγῇ τ᾽ ἐνοπῇ τ᾽ ἴσαν.

57-8 hinc magno tonat ore pater geminantque faventes | undique discordi sonitum simul agmine venti:[335] 'From one part the father thunders with loud voice, and then from all sides the favouring winds, in a discordant throng, redouble the noise.' The ms. reading of the third word of 58 is *comitum*, which is followed by Hildebrandt, but requires *gemino* to operate intransitively, which as Goodyear points out (n. ad loc.), is a usage not seen elsewhere in Latin literature. In addition, as argued by Goodyear, Hildebrandt's suggestion (1897: 575) that the *comites* of the winds are *grandines*, *nives*, *imbres*, *nimbi*, *pluviae*, *pluveres*, *caligo*, *nebulae*, *procellae* etc. is unconvincing; nowhere else in extant Latin literature are these types of bad weather explicitly described as such. Jacob's replacement of *comitum* with *sonitum*, accepted by Goodyear, is very plausible and resolves both issues.

magno tonat ore pater: For Zeus similarly standing out from the throng, cf. Hes. *Theo.* 687-9 οὐδ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἔτι Ζεὺς ἴσχεν ἑὸν μένος, ἀλλά νυ τοῦ γε | εἶθαρ μὲν μένεος πλῆντο φρένες, ἐκ δέ τε πᾶσαν | φαῖνε βίην·

faventes venti: Indeed the case for Jacob's emendation (*sonitum* for *comitum*) is strengthened by the seemingly unknown (to him and Goodyear) intertextual relationship between [V.]'s Gigantomachy and Hesiod's Titanomachy (see 41-73n.), given that Hesiod depicts the winds as playing exactly this role (enhancing the general effect of Jove's input to the battle) at *Theo.* 705-9 σὺν δ᾽ ἄνεμοι ἔνοσίν τε κονίην τ᾽ ἐσφαράγιζον | βροντήν τε στεροπήν τε καὶ αἰθαλόεντα

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[335] **57** hinc *Scaliger* : hic Ω   geminatque *γ* : fovente *H* : favente *Wensdorf*   **58** discordi *Wakefield* : discordes Ω   sonitum *Jacob* (*iam* fremitum *Wakefield*) : comitum Ω   ventos *Vγ*

κεραυνόν, | κῆλα Διὸς μεγάλοιο, φέρον δ' ἰαχήν τ' ἐνοπήν τε | ἐς μέσον ἀμφοτέρων·

discordi agmine: Cf. Hes. *Theo.* 705 ἄνεμοι […]ἐσφαράγιζον.

59 densa per attonitas rumpuntur fulmina nubes:[336] For this middle usage of *rumpo*, cf. e.g. 1. The usage contributes to the ultra-vivid description that [V.] is delivering; lightning bolts are depicted as literally 'breaking themselves' on the clouds. Though *fulmina* is preserved in a less reliable tradition of codices (Zγ), it evidently makes better sense in the context than the *flumina* of CSV.

attonitas nubes: Just like the stars, the clouds are personified. As suggested at *OLD* s.v. *attonitus* (meaning 1), it is here used literally (i.e. 'thunderstruck'): cf. e.g. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.27.3 *quos vocamus attonitos, quorum mentem sonus ille caelestis loco pepulit.* This provides further strength to Zγ's reading of *fulmen*, rather than CSV's *flumen*. This vivid personification of nature is typical of [V.]: cf. e.g. 41 *vivaces ignes*; 51 *metuentia astra*.

60-1 atque in bellandum quae cuique potentia divum | in commune venit: 'all the warlike prowess of each and every god comes together for the common cause.' Note once again the epic diction from [V.].

As Hildebrandt focuses on (1897: 576) it is notable how, rather than depicting the Gigantomachy in the manner of epic conflict, i.e. as a variety of duels, [V.] casts the conflict as an orchestrated effort on the divine side. This plays into its depiction as a war of Romans versus others: cf. 41-2n. [V.]'s casting of the Gigantomachy as a mêlée, rather than as a series of duels, might also look back to Hesiod's Titanomachy, which is a distinctly un-Homeric battle scene: see West n. on *Theo.* 617-719.

61-2 iam patri dextera Pallas | et Mars laevus erat:[337] The emendation of the 'inept' (Goodyear, n. ad loc.) *saevus* to *laevus* provides this phrase with good sense. This image contributes further to the impression of the gods as a disciplined army.

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[336] **59** funduntur *AR*   fulmina *Zγ* : flumina *CSV* : flamina *Heinemann*

[337] **62** laevus *Bormans, Haupt* : saevus (sc- *R*) Ω

iam … iam: More of [V.]'s favoured anaphora, imitative of epic style: cf. e.g. 52-3 *provocat … provocat…* (n. ad loc*.*).

62-3 iam cetera turba deorum | stant utrimque † deus †:[338] '[Perhaps] already the rest of the gods take their stand, one on either side.' The mss. preserve *deus* as the third word of 63, though this is very likely wrong. Haupt's *utrimque secus* is a decent conjecture for the reasons given by Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*). As suggested by Goodyear, for the sense, cf. Apul. *Met.* 2.4 *canes utrimque secus deae latera muniunt*; and for generic precedence, Lucr. 4.939 *quare utrimque secus cum corpus vapulet*. I do not agree with Goodyear's dismissal of Walter's conjecture *decus*, which is accepted in Wight Duff and Duff's text, as 'sorry'; on the contrary, I think it makes good sense (added to its obvious strength that it is very close to the supposed interpolation *deus*). One further option to emend this sentence, suggested by Hildebrandt (1897: 578), but not mentioned by Goodyear, is to punctuate before *deus*, making it in apposition with *Iuppiter*. I cannot say much for certain here; given all of this, the safest course of action is to follow Goodyear in obelising *deus*.

63-4 [deus?] validos tum Iuppiter ignes | increpat: For this usage of *increpo* ('cause to sound'), in a similar context, as suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*), cf. Ov. *Met.* 12.51-2 *cum Iuppiter atras | increpuit nubes*, and more at *TLL* 7.1.1052.5-11.

64 et † victo † proturbat fulmine montes:[339] If one follows the reading of CSH, *victus* here means 'mastered', which seemingly makes good sense. In addition, as Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*) comments, there is not much going for the various emendations suggested by editors. For these reasons, I accept *victo*. For the verse-ending, cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.283 *ter pater exstructos disiecit fulmine montis.*

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[338] **63** deus *CSVδ* : de… *tantum S* : metus *γ* : secus *Haupt* : decus *Walter*

[339] **64** et victo *CSH* : et victor *AR* : et iacto *δ* : iniecto *δ* : invecto *V* : et iunctos *nescioquis apud Munronem* : et multo *Baehrens*

65-6 illinc devictae verterunt terga ruina | infestae divis acies:[340] For the prosaic *terga vertere* in hexametric verse, cf. e.g. *Aen.* 8.706 *omnes vertebant terga Sabaei.* [V.]'s usage of it here once again demonstrates his penchant for using the language of imperial Roman military prose: cf. e.g. 48n.

Wernsdorf's **ruina**, accepted by the OCT, makes far better sense than the *ruinae* of the mss., but as a conjecture ought to be treated with caution.

Despite the somewhat questionable status of the ms. tradition behind it (see Goodyear, intr. 4-10), ζδ's **infestae** is used by the OCT, and in my opinion, is convincing enough to be accepted, given [V.]'s other usage of the epithet in this scene to describe the giants at 52, and his penchant for repetition: cf. e.g. 52-3n.

66 infestae divis acies, atque impius hostis: Cf. 51 *impius miles*; 52 *infestus* [*miles*].

67-8 [impius hostis] praeceps cum castris agitur materque iacentis | impellens victos: 'The impious enemy is driven headlong with their camp, as is their mother, urging on her defeated troops even as they lie.'

cum castris recalls the narrative's opening at 41-2 *proxima vivaces Aetnaei verticis ignes | impia sollicitat Phlegraeis fabula castris* (see 42n.). The **mater** in question here is *Terra*, Mother Earth and mother of the giants: cf. e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 3.4.73.

Whilst **iacentis […] victos**[341] is somewhat tautologous, it is not overly so, and certainly not demanding of an emendation such as Pithoeus' *natos*.

68 tum pax est reddita mundo: With a cast of Jove's thunderbolt, the conflict comes to an abrupt end and peace is restored to the cosmos. [V.]'s usage of *mundus* rounds off neatly his gigantomachic narrative, the noun having been used in the opening of the account at 43. In addition, its usage once again reminds the reader of the Gigantomachy's status as a cosmic conflict: see, generally, Hardie (1986) 85-156.

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[340] **65** illic *Vγ*   devictae *CARδ* : devinctae *S* : devectae *HVδ* : deiectae *Peerlkamp, fort. recte* : disiectae *Bormans*   ruina *Wernsdorf* : ruinae *Ω*   **66** infest(a)e *ZVδ* : inferte (-t e *C*) *CS*

[341] **68** natos *Pithoeus*

The way in which [V.] chooses to close his gigantomachic account by focusing on its positive outcome – the restoration of universal peace – seems, once again, to allude to the pro-Augustan allegorical significance that the conflict held in the first-century Roman *imaginaire*: see 45n. In a post-Augustan context such as this, it is hard not to read [V.]'s emphatic usage of the word *pax* as a nod to Augustus' peace programme, the *Pax Augusta*: for scholarship on this, see, e.g., Cornwell (2017) 187-200.

Given the premise of [V.]'s account of the Gigantomachy – his dismissal of it as hackneyed and impious poetic subject matter – and the non-serious style in which it is delivered, it can be safely said that [V.] is not intending his version of the tale as panegyric here. Instead, I suspect that the potentially panegyrical aspects of the myth – the characterisation of Jove and the conflict's abrupt ending – are present in [V.]'s account precisely because they were some of the most overused. This supports the idea posited by Hardie (1986: 88) that we have likely lost further literature which uses the pro-Augustan gigantomachic allegory, such as, perhaps, the Augustan historical epics.

69-70 † tum liber cessat venit per sidera caelum | defensique decus mundi nunc redditur astris:[342] [Perhaps, reading Ellis' *cessata*:] 'Then Liber comes through the resting gods, and the glory of a defended universe is assigned to the stars.'

Textually, these are a difficult couple of lines. As outlined by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), the attempts to lend sense to this sentence (*tum pax est reddita mundo…*) via punctuation made by both Munro (*tum pax est reddita mundo, | tum liber cessat: venit per sidera: caelum | defensique* etc.) and Sudhaus (*tum pax est reddita mundo | tum liber cessat, venit per sidera caelum,* etc.) do little to rectify the problem. I disagree with Goodyear's verdict (n. ad loc.) that we ought not to capitalise *liber* as an epithetical reference to Bacchus, 'since he has not been mentioned before and his introduction would be incredibly abrupt.' As Goodyear himself acknowledges, Bacchus is depicted as playing a crucial role on the side of the Olympians in the conflict by Horace at *Carm.* 2.19.21-4 *tu* [*Bacchus*]*, cum parentis regna per arduum | cohors Gigantum scanderet impia, | Rhoetum retorsisti leonis | unguibus horribilisque mala.* In addition, contrary to the above

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[342] **69** cessat *CS* : cessa *HA* : cessata *Ellis*   **70** additur *Peerlkamp*

statement of Goodyear, Bacchus has been mentioned previously by [V.], as recently as 13: *ipse suo flueret Bacchus pede*. I am also unsure as to why Goodyear dismisses Ellis' emendation of the problematic *cessat* to *cessata*; the latter in my opinion makes good sense and would be an understandable corruption. However, given all the uncertainty here, using the obelus on 60 is probably the best course of action.

sidera caelum […] mundi […] astris: According to Goodyear (n. ad loc.), the repetitions here are 'offensive and pointless', but in fact they are in keeping with the timbre of the section: that of hyper-epic style demonstrative of the Gigantomachy's overuse as a poetic theme (cf. 52-3n., 41-73n.). Seemingly, *sidera* here refers to the gods themselves, whilst *astra* refers to their abode, though [V.] uses both words interchangeably: for *sidera* = the divine abode, cf. e.g. 103; for *astra* = the stars as gods, cf. e.g. 51.

defensi decus mundi: An obscure phrase: cf. general parallels of a divine *decus* cited by Goodyear (n. ad loc.). Alzinger (1896: 23) is perhaps correct in seeing here a reference to the constellation *Ara*, which according to Man. 1.420-32, Jupiter established as a trophy for the gods' victory over the giants.

redditur: If the above is the case, Peerlkamp's *additur* is certainly preferable to *redditur*, but given all the uncertainty, cannot be accepted conclusively.

71-3 gurgite Trinacrio morientem Iuppiter Aetna | obruit Enceladon, vasto qui pondere montis | aestuet et petulans exspirat faucibus ignem: 'by the Trinacrian whirlpool Jupiter buried under Etna the dying Enceladus, who, groaning under the great weight of the mountain, burns and exhales fire out of his throats.' Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.578-82 *fama est <u>Enceladi</u> semustum fulmine corpus | urgeri mole hac ingentemque insuper <u>Aetnam</u> | impositam ruptis <u>flammam</u> <u>exspirare</u> caminis, | et fessum quotiens mutet latus intremere omnem | murmure <u>Trinacriam</u> et caelum subtexere fumo*: detailed discussion of which at intr. II.2. Given [V.]'s consistent use of the Virgilian canonical works as models, it is unsurprising that he chooses the Virgilian Enceladus, rather than the traditional Typhon, as his 'monster under the mountain': see intr. II.2 for the additional Callimachean hypotext. If [V.]'s critique of poetic gigantomachies is particularly directed at Virg. *Aen.* 3.578-82, as Most (forthcoming) would have it so, it constitutes a misreading of the Virgilian text, given that Virgil (through the mouth

of Aeneas) also distances himself from the validity of the account by attributing it to *fama*; see Horsfall, Servius ns. ad loc.

On the tradition of the monster under the mountain, cf. Ov. *Epist. Ex Pont.* 2.10.23-4 *vidimus Aetnaea caelum splendescere flamma, | subpositus monti quam vomit ore Gigans*; Ov. *Ib.* 597-8.

Cf. also the second-century Philostr. *Apoll.* 5.16 ἐκεῖνοι μὲν γὰρ Τυφῶ τινα ἢ Ἐγκέλαδον δεδέσθαι φασὶν ὑπὸ τῷ ὄρει καὶ δυσθανατοῦντα ἀσθμαίνειν τὸ πῦρ τοῦτο. There are several strong similarities between Philostratus / Apollonius of Tyana's dismissal of the 'lies of the poets' associated with Mount Etna, and that of [V.]; for more on a potential relationship between the two texts, see 30-2n.

Trinacrio gurgite: A noun-epithet combination not used elsewhere in extant Classical Latin (see *TLL* 6.2.2364.41), but is presumably a reference to Charybdis and the whirlpool that she supposedly became. This geographical detail may look back to that at Call. *Aet.* Frag. 1.35 τριγλώχιν ὀλοῷ νῆσος ἐπ᾽ Ἐγκελάδῳ; also perhaps cf. Aesch. *P.V.* 364-5 κεῖται στενωποῦ πλησίον θαλασσίου | ἱπούμενος ῥίζαισιν Αἰτναίαις ὕπο.

73 aestuat et petulans exspirat faucibus ignem: Alongside the Virgilian source quoted above, cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 1.25-6 κεῖνο δ᾽ Ἀφαίστοιο κρουνοὺς ἑρπετόν (Τυφὼς) | δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμπει· Typhon's imprisonment under Etna as an *aition* for the volcano's activity is also stated explicitly at Aesch. *P.V.* 351-72: see intr. II.1 for the relationship between the Pindaric and Aeschylean passages.

As suggested by Berrino (n. ad loc.), '*l'empiatà della materia passa el canto e, sembra suggerire l'anonimo autore dell'* Aetna, *al suo poeta*.' For more on this (i.e. the way in which [V.]'s personification of Etna here seems to clash with his overarching poetic approach), see intr. III.2.

aestuat: Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.577 *fundoque exaestuat imo.*

exspirat: Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.579-80 *ingentemque insuper Aetnam | impositam ruptis flammam exspirare caminis.*

petulans: Enceladus, as this consummate 'foeman of the gods', remains in character to the end: cf. (in reference to the giant's predecessor Typhon) Pind. *Pyth.* 1.15 θεῶν πολέμιος; Aesch. *P.V.* 354 Τυφῶνα θοῦρον· πᾶσιν ὃς ἀντέστη θεοῖς.

[74] *Having delivered his description of the Gigantomachy, [V.] dismisses its validity as a poetic subject matter.* **[75-6]** *Bards have talent, but also rely on deception.* **[77-84]** *[V.]'s dismissal of poetic underworlds,* **[85-90]** *followed by his dismissal of poetic interference with the divine.* **[91-3]** *[V.] concludes his prologue with a resounding statement of his own aspirations of delivering 'poetic truth'.*

74-93 [V.] on poetic licence. [V]'s proem continues in a similarly polemical vein; having dismissed the Gigantomachy as valid poetic subject matter, he attacks the use of two more poetic *topoi*: the Underworld and the affairs of the divine, both of which he labels as the work of *mentiti vates* (79). In this section, he also clarifies his viewpoint on his own craft, admitting that poets are talented (75), and even acknowledging that they ought to be afforded a degree of poetic licence (91). [V.]'s poetological discourse ought to be taken with a hefty pinch of salt; despite his own brash claim that he delivers complete poetic 'truth' at 91-2, he often uses imagery inspired by supposedly mendacious mythology (see intr. IV.2), and indeed concludes his poem with an account of something that he explicitly labels as a *fabula* (see intr. IV.4).

Indeed, we might question the sincerity of [V.]'s diatribe here more broadly. As put by Taub (2008: 53), there is a stark irony that 'our poet uses poetry to criticize other poets' use of poetry.' The self-conscious use of the idea of poetry as deceptive originates in archaic Greek poetry: see, e.g., Hes. *Theo.* 27-8 (West n. ad loc.). By the time of the *Aetna*'s composition, it has become a poetic trope; see, e.g., Ovid's witty use of the idea at *Am.* 3.12.19-44 (for discussion of which, see Cullhed [2015] 69-71), a poem that clearly influenced [V.]: see 1-28n. The figure of the 'lying poet' was also a common target for ancient literary critics: Plato criticises Hesiod and Homer in this regard at *Rep.* 2.376-83: see Belfiore (1985); Dio's *Trojan Oration* (11) considers the supposed lies of Homer; whilst at *Moralia* 16a (as part of his essay on studying poetry), Plutarch reflects on (and agrees with) the quotation πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἀοιδοὶ: for its supposed origin with Solon and further discussion, see Hunter-Russell (n. ad loc.). [V.]'s engagement with this trope contributes to the impression of his proem being a witty poetological *tour de force*, '*Wie man ein Lehrgedicht schreibt*', as Volk (2005) puts it.

For more on [V.]'s engagement with ideas of truth and falsehood in poetry, see Taub (2008) 31-55.

74 haec est mendosae vulgata licentia famae: 'This is the popularised licence of fraudulent rumour.' Note the generally scathing diction used by [V.] here to pass judgment on the myth in question (the burying of Enceladus under Etna): *mendosus*, *vulgatus*, *licentia*, *fama*.

Most (forthcoming) argues that the fact that each one of the three poetic falsities[343] associated with Mount Etna that are dismissed by [V.] from 29-73 is stated explicitly in the Virgilian corpus, and the fact that they are followed by a dismissal of poetic underworlds (77-84), reveals Virgil as the particular target of [V.]'s poetological critique. However, as stated above (see 73n.), if it is the case that [V.] here attempts to criticise Virgil in particular, his lambasting of the Enceladus-Etna myth likely constitutes a misreading (deliberate or otherwise) of his model, given that Virgil also attributes the Enceladus tale to *fama*: cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.578-80 *fama est Enceladi semustum fulmine corpus | urgeri mole hac ingentemque insuper Aetnam | impositam ruptis flammam exspirare caminis.*

[V.]'s likely misreading of Virgil here is markedly reminiscent of the way in which, at *Ciris* 54-71, another poetic imitator of Virgil seemingly criticises the way in which his model conflates the two mythological Scyllas at *Ecl.* 6.74-5 *quid loquar, aut Scyllam Nisi, quam* <u>*fama*</u> *secuta est | candida succintam latrantibus inguina monstris*, once again seemingly ignoring the fact that Virgil attributes the error to *fama*. For interpretations of this as an attempt from the *Ciris*-poet to 'correct' Virgil, see Lyne (n. on *Ciris* 54) and Most (forthcoming).

In contrast, Pierano (2009; 2012: 193-4) proposes the ingenious interpretation that the *Ciris*-poet's seemingly scathing remarks about Virgil and the other *magni poetae* stand as an attempt to highlight his model's usage of the word *fama* and therefore exonerate him (Virgil) from the charge of poetic error, rather than an attack on Virgil induced by a misreading. [V.] may be doing something similar in our line in question; by treating *fama* so scathingly, he may be attempting to amplify Virgil's own usage of the word at *Aen.* 3.578, and therefore to align himself with his model. Regardless of the original intentions behind the comments

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[343] Namely, that Etna is the home of Vulcan (29-35), that it houses the forge of the Cyclopes (36-40), and that it was the site of the Gigantomachy (41-73).

of both the *Ciris*-poet and [V.], the way in which both poets seem to respond to a specific usage of a specific word (in the case of both poets, *fama*) by Virgil is suggestive of the extent to which Virgil was read and imitated in the first century AD. For more on this, see Peirano (2012) and Most (forthcoming).

mendosae: Note the focus on the somewhat questionable issue of poetic 'truth': cf. [V.]'s own claims in this regard at 91-2 *sed omnis | in vero mihi cura*; discussion at n. ad loc., intr. IV.2*.*

vulgata: Strong connotations of 'cheapening': see *OLD* s.v. *vulgo* (meaning 1). For a similarly scathing judgment of poetry of this sort, cf. Man. 3.29-30 *speciosis condere rebus | carmina vulgatum est, opus et componere simplex*; also, Man. 1.91 *ne vulgata canam*, 750-1 *nec mihi celanda est vulgata fama vetusta | mollior.* [V.]'s diction here is so 'Manilian' that it is almost as if he adopts a Manilian persona; the point of this alignment with Manilius is to ensure that the divergence, when it comes, is all the more drastic: see 219-81n.; intr. III.2.

For **licentia** = 'poetic licence', see various examples at *TLL* 7.2.1356.11-33. The stand-out example, to my mind, is Ov. *Am.* 3.12.41 *exit in inmensum fecunda licentia vatum*, given the similarity of context (poetological musing), and the fact that [V.] uses this text as a model throughout his proem: see 1-28n. Cf. the way in which poetic licence is, contrastingly, construed positively by [V.] at 91 *debita carminibus libertas ista*: for more on which, see n. ad loc.

famae: Cf. 369 *pelle nefas animo mendacemque exue famam*; Prop. 4.2.19 *mendax fama, vaces.*

75 vatibus ingenium est: hinc audit nobile carmen: 'Bards have talent; it is from this that their poetry acquires renown.'

vatibus: For the significance of the *vates*-figure in the *Aetna* and in Latin poetry more generally, see 29n.

ingenium here = 'talent'. For poetic *ingenium*, cf. Ov. *Trist.* 2.424 *Ennius ingenio maximus, arte rudis.* [V.] is suggesting that poets use their *ingenium* towards immoral ends.

audit: For this unusual sense, meaning 'to be known', see, as Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), Apul. *Met.* 10.35 *Cenchreas pervado, quod oppidum audit quidem nobilissima[e] colonia[e] Corinthiensium*; and further examples at *TLL* 2.0.1291.48-71.

nobile carmen: Perhaps a nod to Virg. *Ecl.* 9.38 *neque est ignobile carmen*, particularly given the similar context of discussion of vatic status: see *Ecl.* 9.32-4 *et me fecere poetam | Pierides, sunt et mihi carmina, me quoque dicunt |vatem pastores.*

76 † plurima pars scaenae rerum est fallacia:[344] As it is, 'the stage largely provides deception'. Goodyear (n. ad loc.) deems this intolerable both in terms of meaning and Latinity, and favours Barth's emendations to, and punctuation of, 75-6 *vatibus ingenium est (hinc audet nobile carmen | plurima, par scaenae rerum est fallacia)…*, which means something similar to the translation of these lines given by Hine (2012: 318): 'Poets have talent (hence noble poetry is very daring: its misrepresentation of facts is like the stage)'. But this, as Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), still leaves the phrase deeply unsatisfactory. In reference to the reading of CSδ, Goodyear remarks that 'so abrupt and direct a reference to the stage is inappropriate, since it is clear the author is not thinking primarily about dramatic poetry'. Goodyear is here guilty of making a distinction between 'dramatic poetry' and (presumably) 'literary poetry' that was not particularly apparent at the time of the *Aetna*'s composition. It is clear that almost all Latin poetry was written to be recited or sung to an audience as much as read: see, e.g., reference to the performance of all of Virgil's canonical works at Don. *Vit. Verg.* 26-34. For more on the performance of Latin poetry in general, see Wiseman (2015 [p. 164 for discussion of this verse of the *Aetna*]).

Furthermore, regardless of whether a complex didactic poem such as the *Aetna* was more often read or heard (and I suspect the former), generic convention demands that the poet depict himself as a bard: cf., e.g., 92 *canam*. For detailed discussion of this trope in Latin didactic and elsewhere, see Volk (2002) 6-24. For these reasons, I am more inclined to accept CSδ's reading than Goodyear is, and certainly deem it preferable to Barth's emendations, but given all of the above, accept the fact that this verse is difficult to comment on with much certainty.

rerum fallacia: lit. 'the deceit of things.' *rerum* is here used as an all-encompassing abstract, as at Virg. *Aen.* 1.462 *sunt lacrimae rerum*.

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[344] **76** par *Barthius*   scenae *CSδ* : scenea *Z* : scenica *Vδ* : scaena et *Postgate*   rerum est *CSH* : verum est *AR* : est rerum *Vγ* : vatum *Cors^{mg.}*

76-84 Criticism of poetic underworlds. Following his dismissal of the three *fallaciae vatum* associated with Mount Etna – (1) that the volcano was the home of Vulcan, (2) that it was the site of the forge of the Cyclopes, and (3) that it was the location of the Gigantomachy – [V.] diverges to issue a general (seemingly) critique of poetic underworlds. Most (forthcoming) interprets these lines as confirmation that Virgil has been the primary target of [V.]'s *recusatio*, and therefore as a specific nod to the Virgilian underworlds of *Georgic* 4 and *Aeneid* 6. He deems this critique part of, as he interprets it, a broader programmatic aim of the *Aetna*'s extended proem to criticise the canonical works of Virgil by Lucretian criteria. I am not wholly convinced by Most's interpretation, for several reasons. Firstly, there is only limited verbal crossover between [V.]'s accounts of these poetic *fallaciae* and their supposed Virgilian models. Secondly, as I demonstrate at intr. III.3, the *Aetna* generally does not present itself as a particularly loyal successor of the *DRN*. Thirdly, as Hardie (2017) suggests, such a take on the Virgilian underworld would make [V.] a somewhat blunt reader of Virgil, given that Virgil's epic is steeped in the world view of the *De Rerum Natura*; for this, as suggested by Hardie, see, e.g., Iarbas' 'Epicurean' impression of the Underworld at *Aen.* 4.208-10. Given the grasp of Virgilian subtlety demonstrated by [V.] elsewhere in his poem (see, e.g., 74n.), my suspicion therefore is that, if [V.]'s critique is directed primarily at Virgil, it amounts to an ironic misreading of his model.

Following Lucretius' rationalisation of poetic underworlds at *DRN* 3.978-1023, the poetic underworld becomes a common *topos* of ridicule: see, e.g., Pythagoras at Ov. *Met.* 15.153-5 *o genus attonitum gelidae formidine mortis, | quid Styga, quid manes et nomina vana timetis, | materiam vatum falsique pericula mundi?*; Man 2.46-8 *quin etiam tenebris immersum Tartaron atra | in lucem de nocte vocant orbemque revolvunt | interius versum naturae foedere rupto.*

It is perhaps worth noting that, in the *Theogony*, Hesiod also follows his depiction of cosmic conflict (in his case the Titanomachy) with a description of the Underworld (720-819). Whilst there is no obvious Hesiodic allusion in [V.]'s critique of poetic underworlds, there is reason to regard the *Theogony* as a significant structural model behind this section: see 41-73n.

76-7 vates | sub terris nigros viderunt carmine manes:[345] 'Bards have depicted in song the dark shades of the Underworld.'

Goodyear (n. ad loc.), following Haupt and Munro, takes issue with *viderunt carmine*, but I do not think that the ms. reading is overly problematic, given that, alongside its literal meaning, *video* can mean to 'envisage' with the mind's eye: see *OLD* s.v. *video* (meaning 6). Indeed the ambiguity of *viderunt* here – the inherent presence of the ridiculous idea that a bard literally 'sees' his imagined subject matter through his poetry – contributes nicely to [V.]'s scathing tone. Cf. the contrasting opinions of Davies on Munro (1868) 543; Lieberg (1982) 120.

Goodyear hints at his searching for the meaning that I am suggesting here by promoting Bormans' conjecture *finxerunt*, seemingly overlooking the fact that this meaning is inherent in the ms. reading, *viderunt*.

77 The heavily spondaic rhythm and assonance of this verse is suggestive of the 'epic' subject matter being described.

78 atque inter cineres Ditis pallentia regna: As suggested by Most (forthcoming), cf. Virg. *Aen.* 6.269 *perque domos Ditis uacuas et inania regna*.

inter cineres Ditis: Goodyear (n. ad loc.) suggests that *cineres* = 'the dead', citing *TLL* 3.1073.9-74.10 in support of this, but given the context, it surely makes more sense if it refers to the ashy landscape of Dis.

pallentia regna: Further focus on (potentially clichéd) visuals: cf. 77n. Note also the heavily spondaic rhythm of 78. *pallens* is a typical Stygian adjective in imperial Latin poetry: cf. e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 6.426 *pallentes umbras Erebi*; [Tib.] 3.21-2 *parcite, pallentes undas quicumque tenetis | duraque sortiti tertia regna dei*; [Virg.] *Culex* 333 *pallentesque lacus et squalida Tartara terrent*; and others at Richter n. on *Aetna* 78.

79 † mentiti vates Stygias undasque canesque:[346] For full explanation of the obvious problems with the ms. reading here, see Goodyear (n. ad loc.). Out of the two favoured emendations to the patently corrupt *undasque canentes*, that of Schenkl (*calentes*) and that of Scaliger (*canesque*), I am inclined to diverge from Goodyear and accept the latter, given the parallels discussed below. I do

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[345] **77** nigro …. agmine *Haupt*   finxerunt *Bormans* : luserunt *Baehrens*

[346] **79** mentitique rates … calentes *K. Schenkl*   valles *Ellis*   naves … canesque *Scaliger*

not take issue with the admittedly tautologous *mentiti vates*, unlike former editors (see Goodyear, n. ad loc.); like it or (more likely) loathe it, repetition is a trademark of [V.]'s style: cf. e.g. 52-3 (n. ad loc.).

mentiti vates: Despite acknowledging at 91 that a degree of licence ought to be afforded to poetry (see n. ad loc*.*), [V.] clearly draws a line at attempting to depict the Underworld. For [V.]'s general attitude towards the figure of the *vates*, see 29n. For a similarly self-consciously ironic disapproving take on poetic licence, cf. Hor. *Ars. Poet.* 151 [*poeta / vates*] *atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet.*

Stygias undasque canesque: For precedence, which potentially strengthens the case for accepting Scaliger's conjecture, as suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), cf. Erictho's reference to the Eumenides as *Stygias*[*que*] *canes* (*BC* 6.734). It is potentially significant for our discussion of *Aetna* 79 that Erictho also refers to Demiurgus at 749 as <u>*Stygias* qui peierat *undas*</u>. Whilst we ought to tread carefully, given both the textual uncertainty that shrouds *Aetna* 79, and the uncertainty over the poem's precise dating, as perhaps an almost immediate predecessor of the *Aetna*, the Lucanian underworld of *Bellum Civile* 6 might have been an influential hypotext behind this passage.

For the fear of **Stygias undas**, perhaps cf. the words of the gnat at [Virg.] *Culex* 239-40 *terreor, a, tantis insistere, terreor, umbris, | ad Stygias revocatus aquas!*

80 † hi Tityon poena stravere in iugera foedum:[347] 'They [*vates*] have stretched in punishment foul Tityus over many an acre.' A likely paraphrase of Ov. *Am.* 3.12.25 [*poetae*] *idem per spatium Tityon porreximus ingens*: see 17-23n., 74-93n. for more on the intertextual relationship between the *Aetna* and *Amores* 3.12.

Whilst the Ovidian parallel suggests that we may not be far away from the meaning of this line, given its ms. tradition, it is likely to be corrupt. Goodyear (n. ad loc.) is very sceptical about the wording preserved in CZ, given the lack of parallels for *foedus* + *poena* and *in iugera*. However, none of the conjectures suggested by former editors are particularly convincing.

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[347] **80** h *tantum S*   poena stravere *CZ* : septem stravere *γ* : septem servare *V* : stravere novem per *Franke* : stravere novena *Haupt*

For the stretching of Tityus in Tartarus in ancient poetry, cf. Hom. *Od.* 11.576-7 καὶ Τιτυὸν εἶδον, Γαίης ἐρικυδέος υἱόν, | κείμενον ἐν δαπέδῳ· ὁ δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἐννέα κεῖτο πέλεθρα; Lucr. 3.984-94 [*Tityus*] *qui non sola novem dispessis iugera membris | obtineat, sed qui terrae totius orbem...*; Virg. *Aen.* 6.595-7 *nec non et Tityon, Terrae omniparentis alumnum, | cernere erat, per tota novem cui* <u>iugera</u> *corpus | porrigitur.*

81-2 † sollicitant illi te circum, Tantale, poena | sollicitantque siti:[348] Cf. Ov. *Am.* 3.12.30. Goodyear (n. ad loc.) states that 'this passage is beyond cure', and that the ms. reading is objectionable on various grounds; namely, 1) the fact that Tantalus' *poena* and *sitis* are here presented seemingly as separate (despite the fact that one was part of the other); 2) the supposedly difficult phraseology; and 3) the clunky anaphora of *sollicitant … sollicitantque*. I would say that issue 1 might be explained by a somewhat convoluted apposition from [V.], whilst 3, in my opinion, is actually typical of our author: cf. e.g. 52-3n. Hence I do not find this phrase so problematic.

[V.] seemingly chooses the traditional Homeric Stygian punishment for Tantalus – temptation with food and drink (see Hom. *Od.* 11.582-92) – as opposed to that one favoured by tragic and lyric poets, and subsequently adopted by Lucretius, that of being stuck in perpetual fear of an overhanging rock: see, e.g., Lucr. 3.978-83. Whilst Tantalus does not feature in the Virgilian Tartarus of *Aeneid* 6 (though see R. D. Williams n. on *Aen.* 6.601-3 for a potential lacuna), the pseudo-Virgilian *Culex* also follows the Homeric version of Tantalus' punishment: see [Virg.] *Culex* 240-2. The use of this version of the myth in both the *Aetna* and the *Culex* might point towards a revival of its popularity in the first century AD.

82-3 Minos, tuaque, Aeace, in umbris | iura canunt: Note the harsh assonance and consonance of *tuaq*[*ue*] *Aeac*[*e*], indicative of [V.]'s disdain for the subject matter. For Minos as a figure of the classic poetical Tartarus, cf. Hom. *Od.* 11.568-71, Virg. *Aen.* 6.431 and [Virg.] *Culex* 275-6. For Aeacus, cf. *Aen.* 6.582, *Culex* 234-5.

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[348] **81** *Goodyear fort.* suppeditant   poena *CARγ* : poen- *S* : penam *H* : *fort.* cenam (*iam* cena *Baehrens*) : pomạ *Munro* : pomis *De Rooy*

canunt: Note [V.]'s use of *cano* here, indicative that he is very much referring to poetic depictions of underworlds.

83 idemque rotant Ixionis orbem: For Ixion on an *orbis*, cf. Virg. *Georg.* 4.484 *atque Ixionii vento rota constitit orbes.*

rotant: Vivid: bards who deliver poetry about Ixion's plight are literally 'spinning his wheel'. This is a considerable step up from the idea of bards 'envisaging' Stygian affairs, expressed at 72: see n. ad loc. for the textual controversy. Cf. *stravere* (80), similarly to the case in question.

84 † quicquid et interius; falsi sibi conscia terra est:[349] 'and whatever is buried deeper; the earth is aware of the falsehoods [related to her?].' As per Goodyear (n. ad loc.), textually 'this passage is beyond cure.' Most editors accept Vγ's *terra*, and subsequently the *terra est* of the 1517 Aldine editor. Nevertheless, this line still contains grave issues of punctuation and sense. Wight Duff and Duff's Loeb edition makes a reasonable effort of it, whilst staying as close as possible to the ms. tradition: hence I use that text here. Whilst Munro's proposition of a lacuna has understandably appealed to many editors, with 84 in this form, the progression of thought onwards is just about bearable. [V.] plays with the idea of the Underworld, suggesting wittily that there are scandalous poetic subject matters, such as divine extra-marital affairs (see 85-93), which ought to be kept hidden even deeper than it.

falsi sibi conscia terra est: This remains a difficult phrase; *sibi* here (as a reflexive pronoun) must refer back to the subject of the sentence, giving the meaning: 'the earth is conscious of her own (not, as we would like it to be, their [i.e. the poets']) falsehood.' However, in contrast to Goodyear (n. ad loc.), I think that the sense is bearable.

85 nec tu, terra, satis: See the verdict of Ellis (intr. xxix): 'This is not only an artifice, but an artifice of the rhetorical schools.' [V.] casts himself here as a champion of the earth, directly addressing it as the victim of falsehoods told by

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[349] **84** ulterius *Jacob* : interius Ω : in terris *Baehrens*   sibi conscia *CSVγ* : consortia *Z*   terret *Munro* : terrent *CSZ* : terra *Vγ* : terra est *ed. Ald. 1517*   lacunam posuit Munro

his fellow poets. This reverence for the earth is characteristic of [V.]: for more on which, see intr. IV.3.

Thoughout the *Aetna*, [V.] depicts a hierarchy of the spheres of the cosmos, casting the earth as a lower rung on the ladder than the stars: cf. e.g. 219-81n.

85-6 speculantur numina divum | nec metuunt oculos alieno admittere caelo: The object of [V.]'s criticism are those poets who attempt to depict the divine. Given the close hypertextual relationship between the two texts (see intr. III.2), it is hard not to read this as a barb directed at Manilius' *Astronomica*, which depicts itself as an inquiry into the divine: see Man. 4.905-8. See, e.g., 35n., 43-4n., 219-81n. for similarly thinly veiled anti-Manilian rhetoric from [V.].

speculor often has negative connotations of 'spying on' or 'prying into'. Nowhere else in extant Classical Latin is it used to refer to human interference with the divine sphere (see *OLD* s.v. *speculor*), making [V.]'s usage of it here particularly scathing, suggestive of Manilius' blasphemy.

For **oculos admittere**, as suggested at *TLL* 10.749.10-11, cf. Claud. *Rapt. Pros.* 2.114-5.

87 norunt bella deum, norunt abscondita nobis: For [V.]'s favoured anaphora of verbs, cf. e.g. 52-3n., 81-2n.

bella deum: Once again, [V.] associates Gigantomachy with bad poetic practice: see 41-73n.

87-8 norunt abscondita nobis | coniugia: For *absconditus* + dat., see *TLL* 1.0.166.50-64.

coniugia does not necessarily suggest formal marriage: see, e.g., *Aen*. 3.475-6 (Anchises and Venus), and 4.172 (Aeneas and Dido). The list of Jove's rapes, which follows at 89-90, suggests to me that [V.] is inferring extra-marital affairs here.

88-90 [V.] is here once again guilty of not practising what he preaches. Despite criticising the *vates* for supposedly 'knowing' the affairs of the gods (i.e. depicting them in poetry) at 87, he indulges himself by mentioning three of the most famous of Jupiter's rapes: that of Europa, Leda and Danaë. Ovid has Arachne weave all three of these rapes accomplished via Jovian metamorphosis

into her tapestry at *Met.* 6.103-14. Given the intertextual relationship already established by [V.] between his proem and *Amores* 3.12, [V.] likely has Ovid in mind here.

88 et falsa quotiens sub imagine peccet: In the context of Jove's rape of Leda, cf. Germ. *Arat.* 274-5 *Ledae thalamis qui illapsus adulter | furta Iouis <u>falsa</u> uolucer <u>sub imagine</u> texit.* The fact that [V.] uses *falsa sub imagine* in precisely the same way, in the same metrical *sedes*, as Germanicus suggests to me that the correspondence between the two texts is more than coincidence. The mythological details in Germanicus' account are an addition to the original Aratean version (see Gain, n. ad loc.), the significance of which for us is that, if this is direct allusion, it shows that [V.] has the Latin translation, rather than the Greek original, in mind.

peccet: [V.] uses the diction of love elegy in an attempt to shock the reader into questioning the approach of the *vates*. Potentially, cf. Petr. *Sat.* 83 *Iuppiter in caelo suo non invenit quod diligeret, sed peccaturus in terris nemini tamen iniuriam fecit.*

89 taurus in Europen, in Ledam candidus ales: Note [V.]'s use of chiastic structure to represent the actions that he is describing. His use of *in* + acc. is suggestive of aggression on the part of the subject (disguised Jove).

taurus in Europen: A well-covered poetic theme; Europa's tale is recounted in detail in Moschus' Hellenistic epyllion *Europa*, and at Ov. *Met.* 2.833-75. [V.]'s primary poetic rival, Manilius, resorts to using this myth during his geographical excursus: see Man. 4.681-2 *quod superest Europa tenet, quae prima natantem | fluctibus excepitque Iovem taurumque resolvit.*

In Ledam candidus ales: Note the irony implicit in *candidus*, given the colour's connotations of purity: see *TLL* 3.0.244.43-67. Manilius uses this myth as an aetiology for the constellation Cyncus (the Swan): see Man. 1.336-40 *proxima sors Cynci, quem caelo Iuppiter ipse | imposuit, formae pretium, qua cepit amantem, | cum deus in niveum descendit versus olorem | tergaque fidenti subiecit plumea Ledae.* Manilius' use of this sort of scandalous myth in supposedly serious poetry seems to be precisely what [V.] is criticising here.

90 Iuppiter: The name of the perpetrator of these rapes is dramatically delayed for a hexameter-and-a-half.

ut Danaae pretiosus fluxerit imber: '[*vates* know] how a costly shower flowed over Danaë.' The *pretiosus imber* is an allusive way of referring to the way in which Jove metamorphosed into a shower of gold to rape Danaë: cf. e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 3.16.7-8 *fore enim tutum iter et patens | converso in pretium deo*; Ov. *Met.* 6.113 [*Iuppiter*] *aureus ut Danaaen.*

pretiosus: [V.]'s implied *double-entendre* is suggested by my translation, 'costly'.

91-3 The culmination of [V.]'s extended proem. [V.] ends his 93-verse proem with a resounding endorsement of his own poetic programme. Whilst acknowledging at 91 that a degree of licence ought to be granted to poets, he states that, regardless, his work will deliver the truth and nothing but the truth. He follows this with a re-statement of his poetic theme. As De Vivo (1992: 680-1) has demonstrated, this third programmatic *propositio* of [V.]'s proem is, verbally, closely aligned with the two that precede it (at 1-4 [a] and 24-8 [b]): *cura* (92) recalls *curas* (24), *motu* (92) ~ *motus* (25), *aestuet* (93) ~ *aestus* (3) and *ignes* (93) ~ *ignes* (1) / *ignis* (28). One might add that *canam* recalls *carmen* (4) and *carminis* (28), and *Aetna* (93) its usage at 1. This verbal echoing contributes to the impression that [V.]'s prologue, whilst long, is a neatly worked rhetorical composition: see 1-28n.

91 debita carminibus libertas ista: Cf. 74 *haec est mendosae vulgata licentia famae.* [V.] distinguishes poetic *libertas* from out-and-out *licentia*, conceding here that a degree of poetic licence is necessary.

91-2 sed omnis | in vero mihi cura: A defining statement of [V.]'s poetic programme. In contrast to his poetic rivals, who are expected, even allowed, to exploit a degree of poetic licence (see 91n.), [V.]'s poetry, supposedly, will deliver only the truth. For the way in which [V.] fails to abide by his creed, and the broader repercussions for our reading of the poem because of this, see intr. IV.2-4.

For the significance of **cura** as a poetological *Leitwort* in the *Aetna*, see 24n.

92-3 canam quo fervida motu | aestuet Aetna novosque rapax sibi congerat ignes: 'I shall sing by what motion fervid Etna boils and rapaciously gathers fresh fires to herself.' For the way in which [V.]'s statement of theme responds to earlier parts of the proem, see 91-3n.

canam: For the *Aetna* as a self-conscious poem, see intr. IV; for it exhibiting what Volk (2002: 13) describes as 'poetic simultaneity', see 28n. This is the one and only time that [V.] uses *cano* in the first person, giving the impression that this is a particularly programmatic moment.

fervida: Alongside its connotations of literal heat, it has those of lust, desire and passion (see *TLL* 6.1.598.21-38). These are brought out by [V.]'s use of *rapax* in tandem with it. Cognates are used in application to Mount Etna or its fire at 169 and 637; and in reference to the *lapis molaris* at 396, 402 and 483.

93 aestuet Aetna novosque rapax sibi congerat ignes: [V.] closes his section with a hexameter containing five dactyls (the maximum). The pace that [V.] injects to his verse here is likely reflective both of the vivacity of his subject matter, Mount Etna, and his own gathering excitement, as he professes his poetic programme.

aestuet Aetna: The assonance here draws the reader's attention to the etymological pun being made.

Aetna rapax: For *rapax* in application to fire, see *TLL* 11.2.77.75-78.7. The epithet here responds to the list of Jovian rapes at 89-90. The point is that, in [V.]'s case, Mount Etna will take centre stage. The epithet is also proleptic to the closing *miranda fabula*, in which Etna's *avidus ignis* (640) will consume all those who are themselves consumed by greed: for more on which, see intr. IV.4. It is perhaps notable that the epithet is applied to Scylla at *Culex* 331 and Charybdis at Sen. *Thy.* 581, given the Sicilian connection.

novos congerat ignes: In the context of [V.] proclaiming his poetic novelty, we cannot help but consider the connotations of poetic innovation implicit in *novus* here: cf. 6-8n.

[94-6] *The earth is not solid.* **[96-8]** *In fact, it is full of crevices.* **[98-101]** *Just as blood runs through the veins of a living creature, so do air currents through vents in the earth.* **[102-10]** *Creation of these fissures: perhaps, when the universe was created, the earth sunk to the bottom, albeit full of hollows.* **[110-16]** *Or maybe these fissures were not there from the beginning and were in fact created by either subterranean winds, water, or vapour and fire, or perhaps a combination of all of these forces.* **[116-7]** *The exact cause of the earth's fissuring is not important* per se, *as long as we accept the fact that it is fissured.*

94-117 Causes of the cavernous nature of the earth. Following his extended poetological / methodological proem, [V.] begins his didactic lesson proper by outlining the hypothesis that underpins most of his theorising on volcanology, and is the focus of his poem from 94-218: that the earth is not a solid mass, and is in fact porous. This theory was a favourite of philosophers from various schools going back to the pre-Socratics: including Democritus (see Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.20), Metrodorus of Chios (see Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.19), Aristotle (see, e.g. *Met.* 2.8.25), Epicurus (see *Ep. ad Pyth.* 105) and pseudo-Aristotle (see *De Mundo* 395b.). In addition, this theory underpins much of what Seneca has to say on geology in *Natural Questions* 6, a text to which [V.] is evidently indebted.

It has been well documented by commentators that [V.]'s initial statement of the earth's porous texture, culminating at 96-8, is a paraphrase of Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.14.1: for further discussion of the hypertextual relationship here, see n. ad loc. Likewise, commentators have pointed out how the extended simile that follows at 98-101, in which [V.] compares the porous texture of the earth to that of a living creature, seemingly draws much from depictions of the earth at *Nat. Quest.* 3.15.1 and 6.14.1. For further parallels, see n. ad loc.

Less has been said on the influences behind the list of potential causes for the earth's porous nature provided by [V.] at 102-17. In terms of its methodological approach, namely the suggestion of various causes without settling on one, and the overarching idea that the 'acceptance of what is manifest is more important than ascertaining the impossible to ascertain (i.e. the cause)', I argue that this list is indebted to Lucretius and Epicureanism: see 102-17n. In terms of the content of the list, I demonstrate that the second half of it (110-17) is

a fairly precise compression of the *tour de force* of various theories behind the causes of earthquakes offered up by Seneca at *Nat. Quest.* 6.4: see 102-17n., and particularly 110-16n.

[V.]'s list is an interesting take on *Natural Questions* 6; whereas Seneca (broadly following Arist. *Met.* 2.7-8) presupposes the fact that the texture of the earth is porous, and uses this premise as the basis of all the various potential causes of earthquakes that he mentions, [V.] turns this around, using these potential causes of earthquakes as reasons for the porous texture of the earth.

For further discussion of these verses and their sources, see Sudhaus, 94-117n.; Goodyear (1984) 350; Garani (2009) 105-6.

94-8 quacumque inmensus se terrae porrigit orbis | extremique maris curvis incingitur undis | non totum est solidum, denso namque omnis hiatu | secta est intus humus penitusque cavata latebris | exiles suspensa agit: 'Wherever the vast body of the earth stretches itself, and is girt by the curved waves of the far-flung sea, it is not entirely solid, because beneath the surface it is undercut densely by fissures. It is hollowed out in the depths by hidden passageways, and it overhangs the slender vents that it creates.'

94 quacumque immensus se terrae porrigit orbis: Suggestive of the vastness of earth. The line's spondaic metre (it contains the maximum number of spondees for a dactylic hexameter) contrasts with the hyper-dactylic 93, a shift in speed which is representative of [V.]'s change in tone from excitedly proclaiming the originality of his poetic programme to beginning his didactic lesson proper.

orbis terrae: A formulaic way of saying 'the land on earth'. Whilst translators often take this to refer to the sphericalness of the earth, it does not necessarily imply this. Here, for example, [V.] depicts the old-fashioned impression of *terra* as one continent, surrounded by *oceanus*: cf. 95n. By the time of the *Aetna*'s composition, it was largely accepted as fact that the earth is spherical: see, e.g., Strab. *Geog.* 1.20, Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.28.5, Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 2.64-5. Nevertheless, it seems as if the old impression of the earth as a disc was still used evocatively to depict the image of the 'ends of the earth': from hexametric poetry, see the examples cited at 95n. For the numerous general examples of *orbis* associated with *terra*, see *TLL* 9.2.914.65-915.22.

se porrigit: [V.]'s use of the reflexive *se* here gives a sense of indefiniteness. For this usage of *porrigo*, cf. the later Avien. *Orb. Terr.* 44 *tellus sese* […] *in austrum porrigit*, and other examples at *TLL* 10.1.2761.51-6.

95 [orbis terrae] extremique maris curvis incingitur undis: The idea that the *orbis terrarum* was surrounded by one large sea, usually called *oceanus*. For this idea in Latin hexametric poetry, cf. e.g. Cat. 64.30, [Tib.] *paneg. in Mess.* 147, Ov. *Met.* 1.187; also perhaps [Arist.] *De Mund.* 392b.20-3.

Whilst **extremum** + **mare** might sound like a formulaic noun-adj. combination, it is not found anywhere else in Latin verse prior to the *Aetna*. Pliny uses it to refer to a hypothetical 'edge of the sea' (cf. *Nat. Hist.* 2.65.164, 165), but here it clearly means something more general, such as 'far-flung'.

Whilst **curva** + **unda** might also sound formulaic, this is the first usage of it as a noun-adj. combination in Latin; as suggested at *TLL* 4.0.1551.80-2, it is later used at Stat. *Theb.* 2.381 and Mart. *Epigram.* 9.90.3. Via these seemingly familiar – but in fact unique – usages, [V.] endeavours to ensure that the opening to his didactic lesson, whilst being steeped in Senecan colouring (see 96-8n.), is something original.

96-8 non totum est solidum: denso namque omnis hiatu | secta est intus humus, penitusque cavata latebris | exiles suspensa vias agit: As suggested by Munro (n. ad loc.), Sudhaus (n. ad loc.), Goodyear (1984: 350) et al., cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.14.1 *non <u>tota solido contextu terra</u> in imum usque fundatur, sed multis partibus cava et: 'caecis suspensa latebris'.* Seneca's 'quotation' is in fact a playful (likely) misquote / transformation of Ov. *Met.* 1.388-9 *interea repetunt caecis obscura latebris | verba*, which, as suggested at Bömer (n. ad loc.), is itself a transformation of Lucr. 1.408, with the influence of Virg. *Aen.* 2.232 and 3.424 present as well.

As Goodyear implies, the similarity of thought and phraseology between the Senecan quotation and that of the *Aetna* is too strong to be coincidental. This poses questions about the priority of each text. I agree with Oltramare (1961: 214) that it is far more likely that Seneca is transforming the Ovidian quotation, as opposed to delivering a version of it that has been garbled by his reading of the *Aetna*; and that the *Aetna*, in turn, is paraphrasing Seneca. In addition, the similarity between the two passages beyond the supposed quotation strongly

supports the second hypothesis. For more on my dating of the *Aetna* as a post-text of the *Natural Questions*, see intr. I.

The transformation that each phrase undergoes between hypertext and hypotext (particularly that between Ovid and Seneca) says much about the *laissez-faire* and often manipulative manner in which quotation and paraphrase were used by authors of the first century AD. For more on Seneca's often playful use of quotation in the *Natural Questions*, see Mazzoli (1970), Trinacty (2018).

96 † non totum est solidum: denso namque omnis hiatu:[350] Though this verse is clearly deeply corrupt, we can ascertain the general sense that is required. I cautiously accept Goodyear's use of Ascensius' conjecture *non totum est solidum* ('it is not wholly solid'), and his own conjecture *denso*, as opposed to CSAR's patently corrupt *desunt*, for the reasons given by him (n. ad loc).

97 cavata: For the use of *cavo* in relation to earth, see *TLL* 3.0.654.44-73.

98 exiles vias: 'slender pathways.' For the meaning of *exilis* here, see various usages at *TLL* 5.2.1480.62-72. For this usage of *via*, i.e. = 'underground passageway' by [V.], cf. 98 *exiles vias* and 413 *tenuis vias*.

For this usage of **suspensa**, as in without solid substructure, cf. Stat. *Theb.* 6.882 *si tremuit suspensus ager subitumque fragorem | rupta dedit tellus*, and others at *OLD* s.v. *suspendo* (meaning 5b).

98-101 utque animanti | per tota errantes percurrunt corpora venae | ad vitam sanguis omnis qua commeat, † idem | terra foraminibus conceptas digerit auras: 'and as in a living thing, wandering veins run throughout the whole body, through which all blood comes together for the preservation of life; so does the earth distribute drafts of air that it has taken in through those [reading *illis*: see 100-1n.] channels.'

This is a vivid extended simile, artfully constructed, in which [V.] likens subterranean air-vents to human veins, and by extension, the earth to a living being. Throughout his poem, [V.] animates the inanimate geology of the earth,

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[350] **96** est solidum *ed. Ascens. 1500* : et solidum *Z* : et solido *CS* : in solidum *Vδ* : solidum *δ* : ex solido est *Ellis* : et solidum est *Jacob*   denso *Goodyear* (*iam* densum *Vollmer*) : desunt *CSAR* : desinit *HV* : defit *γ* : desit *δ*   hiatus *Z*

often for pathetic effect: see, e.g., his criticism of mining at 257-62 (n. ad loc.), and his depiction of the *lapis molaris* at 417 *miranda est lapidis vivax animosaque virtus*; discussion at intr. IV.3.

As suggested by Goodyear (1965: n. ad loc.; 1984: 349), [V.]'s simile draws on the Stoic impression of the earth as a living organism, as depicted at, e.g., Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.15.1 *placet natura regi terram, et quidem ad nostrorum corporum exemplar, in quibus et venae sunt et arteriae, illae sanguinis, hae spiritus receptacula. in terra quoque sunt alia itinera per quae aqua, alia per quae spiritus currit*; and 6.14.1 *corpus nostrum et sanguine irrigator et spiritu, qui per sua itinera decurrit. habemus autem quaedam angustoria receptula animae, per quae nihil amplius quam meat, quaedam patiora, in quibus colligitur et unde dividitur in partes. sic hoc totum terrarum omnium corpus et aquis, quae vicem sanguinis tenent, et ventis, quos nihil aliud quis quam animam vocaverit, pervium est.* See intr. III.4 for more on the hypertextual relationship between the *Aetna* and Seneca's *Natural Questions*.

Similarly to the impression given by [V.], the idea of the earth as a living thing is more than just an evocative image for Seneca, as expressed at *Nat. Quest.* 3.29.2 *sive animal est mundus, sive corpus natura gubernabile, ut arbores, ut sata, ab initio eius usque ad exitum quicquid facere quicquid pati debeat, inclusum est.*

Seneca and [V.] are not alone amongst first-century authors in likening the earth to a living creature: cf. e.g. Ov. *Met.* 15.342-5 *nam sive est animal tellus et vivit habetque | spiramenta locis flammam exhalantia multis, | spirandi mutare vias, quotiensque movetur, | has finire potest, illas aperire cavernas* (see intr. II.3 for further discussion thereof); also Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 2.158, discussed at 259n.

[V.]'s simile is also strongly reminiscent of the similarly Stoic idea expressed (albeit, in this case, about the entirety of the universe) at Man. 2.64-6 *cum spiritus unus | per cunctas habitet partes atque irriget orbem | omnia pervolitans corpusque animale figuret.*

98 animanti: Note how, in contrast to Sen *Nat. Quest.* 3.15.1 and 6.14.1, which both use the image of the specifically human body (*nostrum corpus*), [V.] refers to a generically 'living' one. In this way, he avoids depicting an anthropocentric impression of the earth; for more on [V.]'s voice of ecological concern, expressed throughout the poem, see intr. IV.3-4.

99 An otherwise artful 'golden line' (maybe reflective of its 'fluid' subject matter) is perhaps botched by the clunky anaphora of **per … percurrunt**. Whilst such repetition of the preposition / prefix is not aesthetically appealing, it has precedence, given Lucr. 6.668.

errantes + venae is used similarly by [V.] at 121. His usages are the only two occurrences of this noun-adj. combination in extant Latin.

100 ad vitam sanguis omnis qua commeat: [V.]'s use of the singular *sanguis omnis* and *ad vitam* depicts well the idea of various veins and arteries coming together for the single purpose of 'life'.

100-1 † idem | terra foraminibus conceptas digerit auras:³⁵¹ Complex meaning packed densely into a compressed line is illustrative of the complex function of the earth – the acceptance of and distribution of drafts of air – being depicted here.

† idem: Blatantly corrupt as nonsensical here. All of *illis*, *eidem* and *isdem*, suggested by Goodyear, Ellis and Gorallus respectively, make sense, and there is very little to choose from between them, but, as Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), none of them can be accepted with much certainty.

101 terra: Note the placement of the simile's tenor, the earth, mention of which has been delayed thus far, in the pole position as the first word of the line.

foraminibus: Gorallus' *foraminibus* for Ω's *voraginibus*, followed by Goodyear, is a convincing emendation, given the usages of *foramen* in the Senecan passages cited by Goodyear (n. ad loc.): *Nat. Quest.* 6.14.1, 24.3. This section of the *Aetna* has a strong general colouring of *Natural Questions* 6 (see 94-117n., 102-17n.), which strengthens the likelihood of these potential parallels.

digerit: See *OLD* s.v. *digero* (meaning 2): 'distribute'.

102-17 [V.] lists various potential causes for the fissured texture of the earth, before stating that accurate knowledge of the precise cause is less important than awareness of the result. There is seemingly considerable crossover between

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³⁵¹ **100** isdem *Gorallus* : eidem *Ellis* : *fort.* illis   **101** foraminibus *Gorallus* : voraginibus *Ω*

each cause, but [V.] presents them as distinct. They are 1) that since its creation, the earth has been hollow (102-10); 2) the earth's old age (110-1); 3) subterranean air-currents (111-2); 4) subterranean water (112-3); 5) subterranean water-vapour and fire (114-5); or 6) a combination of all of these (115-6).

[V.] delivers his list with artful *variatio*; his descriptions of the causes vary in length, and he uses a variety of conjunctions (*aut* [102], *sive* [110], *seu* [111], *seu* [112], *sive* [115]).

The manner in which [V.]'s list presents a multitude of potential causes without settling on one is reminiscent of that given by Lucretius on the causes of the Nile's summer flooding at *DRN* 6.712-37. The principle behind Lucretius' list is an Epicurean one, explained at *DRN* 6.703-11: on which, see Bailey n. ad loc.; cf. also Epicurus, *Ep. ad Hdt.* 79-80, *Ep. ad Pyth.* 86-7; Lucr. 5.526-33 (see Bailey n. on Lucr. 5.509-770); Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.20.5. This Epicurean approach is also used by [V.] at 123-7 (on subterranean waters) and 282-92n. (on the source of Etna's *spiritus*). For more on the use of the Epicurean πλεοναχὸς τρόπος in Lucretius, see, e.g., Hankinson (2013), Verde (2020) 83-92. For the *Aetna*'s use of this Lucretian approach, and its possible link to Theophrastus' Περὶ ῥύακος τοῦ ἐν Σικελίᾳ, see Verde (2018a) 538-43, (2020) 92-9.

As demonstrated at 110-16n., this list of 'nurture-induced' causes for the cavernous texture of the earth is a compression of Seneca's *tour de force* of the various potential causes of earthquakes at *Nat. Quest.* 6.4ff., which Seneca summarises in a list markedly similar to our own at 6.5.1 *causam qua terra concucitur alii in aqua esse, alii in ignibus, alii in ipsa terra, alii in spiritu putaverunt, alii in pluribus, alii in omnibus.*

102-10 scilicet aut olim diviso corpore mundi | in maria ac terras et sidera, sors data caelo | prima, secuta maris, deseditque infima tellus, | sed tortis rimosa cavis et, qualis acervus | exilit imparibus iactis ex tempore saxis | † ut crebro introrsus spatio vacat acta charibdis | pendeat in sese, simili quoque terra figura | in tenuis laxata vias non omnis in artum | nec stipata coit: Perhaps '[the fissured texture of the earth is the result of] either, you know, when once the body of the universe was divided into seas and lands and stars, the first portion was allotted to the sky, that of the sea's followed, and the earth sank to the bottom – but it was riddled with twisted hollows: just as, when

rocks of different shapes are thrown at random, a heap springs up, suspending itself over the numerous spaces and hollowed caverns [reading *vacuisque cavernis*: see 107-8n.] beneath; so the earth, like in formation to this – perforated with narrow pathways – is not textured entirely tight and compact.'

The first *causa* given by [V.] for the fissured texture of the earth is that it was so from the very beginning; that when the crust first came into being it was riddled with perforations. In order to illustrate this concept, [V.] delivers a vivid simile using as its vehicle the image of a heap of stones, created by random throwing, naturally perforated by nooks and crannies.

102-3 scilicet aut olim diviso corpore mundi | in maria ac terras et sidera: For this traditional, clearly defined tripartite division of the *corpus mundi*, cf. Lucr. 5.91-6, and particularly 92 *naturam triplicem* (see Bailey n. ad loc.); Ov. *Met.* 1.5-9 (see Bömer n. ad loc.). For variant versions of this cosmogonical list containing, in addition, the moon and the sun, cf. Lucr. 5.68-9; [Tib.] 3.7.153; Virg. *Aen.* 6.725-6.

102 scilicet: The informal tone from [V.] here is suggestive that these various *causae* were often proposed.

For **corpus mundi** equating to the 'fabric of the universe', see various examples at *TLL* 4.0.1024.68-74.

103 …in maria ac terras et sidera: Familiar cosmogonical diction: in addition to the parallels cited at 102-3n., cf. perhaps Man. 1.488 *et maria et terras et sidera caeli.*

103-4 sors data caelo | prima: Enjambment here is perhaps reflective of meaning: the casting of a lot.

104 secuta [sors] maris: Note the way in which, throughout his tricolon, [V.] mixes the cases of the nouns – dative *caelo*, genitive *maris*, nominative *tellus* – for *variatio*.

deseditque infima tellus: Cf. [Tib.] *Paneg. in Mess.* 19 *qualis in immenso desiderit aere tellus.*

infima tellus: For this idea of the earth getting the 'deepest' portion, cf. e.g. Cic. *Rep.* 6.17 *nam ea, quae est media et nona, tellus, neque movetur et <u>infima</u> est, et in eam feruntur omnia nutu suo pondera*; also Lucr. 5.449-51, Ov. *Met.* 1.29-30, Man. 1.159.

105 rimosa: 'fissured'. Rare (see *OLD* s.v. *rimosus*), and not found prior to Virg. *Georg.* 4.45.

106 exilit: As Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), whilst CS's vivid *exilit* might not seem ideal in this context, it is likely correct, supported as it is by 478-9 *verum ubi paulatim exiluit sublata caducis | congeries saxis.*
     imparibus: The same usage, albeit in a different context, is at 297.
     iactis […] saxis: The internal rhyme here is perhaps imitative of the sound of thrown stones ricocheting off one another.

107-8 † ut crebro introrsus spatio vacat acta charibdis | pendeat in sese:[352] This is evidently corrupt textually. Accepting C's *charibdis* makes this a largely nonsensical double simile. I follow Goodyear (n. ad loc.) and Rehm (1935: 250-3) in preferring not to read it in this way, and instead to see in *ut… pendeat* a consecutive clause. Whilst, given all the uncertainty here, it is impossible to back with much conviction the conjecture of anyone, Goodyear's *vacuisque cavernis* makes good sense, giving the whole simile the meaning presented at 102-10n.

108-10 simili quoque terra figura | in tenuis laxata vias non omnis in artum | nec stipata coit: 'so the earth, like in formation to this [a body] – perforated with narrow pathways – is not textured entirely tight and compact.' The tenor of [V.]'s simile, the earth, is made clear. The long sentence, broken up by enjambment / caesura, might be reflective of meaning: i.e. that the weight / density of the earth is lightened by interior fissures.

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[352] **107** vacat acta *CS* : vacuvata *V* : vacuata *γ* : *fort.* vacuisque (*vel* –usque) : *alii alia*   charibdis *C* : carinis *corr. in* charims *S* : carambos *V* : corymbos (-us) *γ* : cavernis *Rehm*

simili figura is surely used with a strong degree of playful self-consciousness in the context of a simile; for *figura* meaning 'figure of speech', see *OLD* s.v. *figura* (meaning 11).

109-10 [terra] in tenuis laxata vias non omnis in artum | nec stipata coit: Given the unusual usage here of both *in artum* and *coeo* (see ns. below), this remark is likely influenced by Lucr. 5.484-6 *et radii solis cogebant undique terram | verberibus crebris extrema ad limina in artum, | in medio ut propulsa suo condensa coiret.* We might see [V.]'s remark that the earth's density is lessened by underground vents as a 'correction' of the Lucretian passage, which uses the sinking of the earth as an aetiology for its absolute solidity: see Lucr. 5.495-6 *sic igitur terrae concreto corpore pondus | constitit.*

109 tenuis vias: On *via* = 'underground passageway' in the *Aetna*, see 98n.

laxata: Though cited as parallels at *TLL* 7.2.1072.15-6, the usages of *laxata* in relation to *terra* at Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.29.6 and 6.4.1 are different to that of [V.] here, our case meaning something positive and necessary, i.e. 'relaxed', and Seneca's something negative and destructive, i.e. 'collapsed' or 'loosened'.

in artum: Favoured as a verse-ending by [V.]; cf., in a similar context, 566-7 *urget* [*vires*] *in artum | spiritus.*

110 coit: This usage of *coeo*, in application to the solid subject matter *terra*, is Lucretian; as suggested at *TLL* 3.0.1419.5-10, cf. Lucr. 5.486 (quoted and discussed at 109-10n. above); 6.845, 865.

110-16 [V.]'s list of potentially 'nurture'-related causes for the cavernous nature of the earth's interior seemingly owes a lot to Seneca's *tour de force* of the various potential causes of earthquakes at *Nat. Quest.* 6.4ff., which he summarises in a list markedly similar to [V.]'s at 6.5.1: *causam qua terra concucitur alii in aqua esse, alii in ignibus, alii in ipsa terra, alii in spiritu putaverunt, alii in pluribus, alii in omnibus.*

The ordering of Seneca's discussion of the various potential causes of earthquakes matches well on to that of [V.]. *Natural Questions* 6 runs thus: 1) causes related to water (*Nat. Quest.* 6.6-8; cf. *Aetna* 112-3); 2) causes related to fire (*Nat. Quest.* 6.9; cf. 115); 3) the general old age of the earth (*Nat. Quest.*

6.10; cf. 110-1); 4) water-vapour (*Nat. Quest.* 6.11; cf. 114); 5) subterranean wind / air (*Nat. Quest.* 6.14-19; cf. 111-2); or a combination of all of these causes (*Nat. Quest.* 6.20ff.; cf. 115-6).

For another similar Senecan list of potential causes of earthquakes, cf. *Nat. Quest.* 6.10 [*Anaximenes ait*] *quasdam enim partes eius decidere, quas aut umor resolverit aut ignis excederit aut spiritus violentia excusserit* […] *nam primum omnia vetustate labuntur nec quicquam tutum a senectate.*

110-1 nec stipata coit; sive illi causa vetustas | nec nata est facies; seu liber spiritus intra: Note the ways in which these two lines mirror one another; namely, their shared metre (*sdssda*), anaphora of *nec*, and use of *sive / seu* after a strong caesura in the third foot. This mirroring contributes to the impression that [V.]'s is a somewhat formulaic list.

sive illi causa vetustas[353] | nec nata est facies: 'or alternatively old age is the cause, and it [the earth] did not have this appearance from birth.' The mss. give *vetusta est*, which makes the phrase somewhat contradictory: 'or maybe the origin of it [the earth's fissured nature] is ancient, but its current form was not coeval with it [i.e. it took time to have effect].' In order to avoid this, Goodyear accepts Haupt's conjecture *vetustas*, and in support of it, recommends convincingly (given the similarity of approach, as I point out at 102-17n.), cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.10.1-2 *nam primum omnia vetustate labuntur nec quicquam tutum a senectute est; haec solida quoque et magni roboris carpit* […] *ita in hoc universo terrae corpore evenit ut partes eius vetustate solvantur*; and, somewhat less convincingly (given its genericity), Sen. *Epist.* 91.11-12.

Whilst an outright conjecture such as this ought to be treated with caution, the Senecan parallel, and the fact that it fits in with [V.]'s broader modelling of this section on *Natural Questions* 6 (as illustrated at 110-16n.) does give it plausibility. Cf. the contrasting opinion of Garani (2009) 107.

facies: As suggested at *TLL* 6.1.50.8-9, it is here a synonym of *figura*. Goodyear (n. ad loc.) suspects that the whole phrase is corrupt.

111-2 liber spiritus intra | effugiens molitur iter: 'or free subterranean air forces a route as it escapes.' The next theory cited by [V.] is that subterranean

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[353] **110** vetustas *Haupt* : vetusta est Ω

winds have carved out these caverns. Note the extent of the personification here. This theory is an inversion of the oft-posited one from antiquity that earthquakes are caused by underground winds: for this, cf. e.g. Sen *Nat. Quest.* 6.12.1ff., Lucr. 536-8, Arist. *Met.* 2.7-8, [Arist.] *De Mundo* 395b, Posid. Frag. 12 (on which, see I. G. Kidd [n. ad loc.]).

[V.]'s hypothetical theory cited here on how the earth came to be cavernous – that it was hollowed out by subterranean air currents – is markedly similar to the crux of his theory of volcanic power, that it is reliant on subterranean *spiritus*: cf. 188-218n.

spiritus: Cf. 188-218n. The noun *spiritus* is used ten times by [V.] – at 111, 154, 213, 217, 295, 324, 343, 472, 561 and 567 – eight of which usages are in direct reference to the underground winds that supposedly power Mount Etna, whilst the other two (at 295 and 472) are suggestive of its force via their role in similes. As suggested by Paisley / Oldroyd (1979: 10), throughout his poem, [V.] uses *spiritus* in a manner highly reminiscent of Seneca in the *Natural Questions*: cf. e.g. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.1.3 (on the sources of which idea, see Hine [n. ad loc.]), 5.14.4.

On the vexed issue of the relationship between Seneca's *spiritus* and the Stoic πνεῦμα, see the lengthy note of Hine on *Nat. Quest.* 2.1.3. Without doubt, [V.], as an imitator of Seneca, inherits the Stoic complexity inherent to this term, though I do not think that he uses it with a particular overarching doctrinal agenda: see intr. III.4.

effugiens: For this use of *effugio*, cf. 142 † *aer tantum effugit ultra*.

112-3 seu nympha perenni | edit humum lima furtimque obstantia mollit:[354] 'or water has eaten up the earth with its persistent file, secretly softening all in its path.' The third theory presented by [V.], regardless of the ms. reading followed here, is that subterranean water is the cause of the earth's fissured texture. Cf. (on earthquakes, in this case) Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.7.3ff., particularly: [*flumen*] *potest fieri ut aliquam regionem rivus affluens exedat ac sic trahat aliquam molem, qua lapsa superposita quatiantur.* Also, on dampness as a cause of erosion, cf. *Nat. Quest.* 6.10.1 *quasdam enim partes* [*terrae*] *eius decidere quas aut umor resolverit.*

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[354] **112** *nympha* CS : lympha *β*   **113** lima *Scaliger* : limo *CSγ* : limum *HV*

nympha: Very little to choose between the *nympha* of CS and the *lympha* of β. In favour of the former is its presence in the more reliable branch of the ms. tradition, whilst the latter seems more appropriate, though for *nympha* = water in poetry, see *OLD* s.v. *nympha* (meaning 1b). Either way, the broader sense remains the same.

lima: Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*) is seemingly happy to accept Scaliger's conjecture, *lima* for the *limo* of CSγ. To me, it seems like an odd choice of word, to describe water as a 'file', though admittedly, the sense provided by *limo* of CSγ is limited to non-existent – that water should wear down the fabric of the earth with mud.

furtim: As suggested at *TLL* 6.1.1642.12, *furtim* is here used in the sense of *paulatim*, to give the impression of the constant supposed erosion by water that is ongoing.

114-5 aut etiam inclusi solidum vicere vapores | atque igni quaesita via est: 'or even trapped vapours have overcome the solid fabric of the earth, and a path is found for fire.' The third potential theory behind the hollow interior of the earth mentioned by [V.] is the erosive force of steam, followed by fire. This proposed theory seems to be influenced by a combination of potential causes for earthquakes posited by Seneca at *Nat. Quest.* 6.9-11: see 110-16n.

inclusi solidum vicere vapores: Onomatopoeic alliteration. For water vapour, linked with fire, as a cause of erosion, cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.11.

atque igni quaesita via est: Cf. in particular Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.9.1 *ignis ex hoc collisu nubium cursuque elisi aeris emicuit, hic ipse in obvia incurrit exitum quaerens ac divellit repugnantia, donec per angustum aut nactus est viam exeundi ad caelum aut vi et inuiria fecit.*

115-6 sive omnia certis | pugnavere locis: 'or whether all of these [forces] have fought in their own places'; i.e. 'whether all of these [causes of erosion] have contributed in some way'. On a combination of a plurality of causes, cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.5.1 *alii in pluribus, alii in omnibus*, extended at 6.20ff.

116-7 non est hic causa docenda[355] | dum stet opus causae: 'it is not necessary to illuminate for certain the cause here, as long as the effect of the cause is known'. Whilst Goodyear deems Ω's reading *dolendi* 'very strange' (n. ad loc.), I do not think that it should be ruled out. The ms. reading would mean something along the lines of 'nor is here a reason for grief [i.e. the poet's uncertainty about causation], as long as the effects of the cause are known.' As pointed out by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), the strength of Gorallus' conjecture lies in the fact that it does not require *causa* to mean something different in 116 and 117, reason (in the context of personal response), and cause (in the context of natural forces) respectively.

Regardless of whether one accepts *dolendi* of the mss. or Gorallus' *docenda*, the message from [V.] is the same: that knowledge of the precise cause of underground caverns is less important than the awareness that they are there. This is a broadly Lucretian / Epicurean approach: see 102-17n.

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[355] **116** docenda *Gorallus* : dolendi *Ω*

[117-31] *[V.] uses the rising of springs and the descending of rivers as proof for his theory that there must be underground caverns.* **[132-42]** *He states that there are other 'visible proofs' of this fact.* **[143-5]** *In general, one can infer the invisible from the visible.*

117-45 [V.] on perception and observation. Many of these lines are corrupted to the extent that interpretation of them is made impossible, or nigh on impossible.[356] Nevertheless, from the wreckage that is available to us, we are able to ascertain [V.]'s broad poetic purpose; in these verses, [V.] seeks to provide further ballast to his hypothesis that the earth is hollow. The main piece of evidence that he uses to support his theory is the disappearance of certain rivers underground (117-31), a phenomenon that likewise fascinated many of his Greek and Latin predecessors: see, e.g., Arist. *Met*. 1.13, Strab. 16.2.7, Ov. *Met.* 15.268-78, Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.7.1; more in Connors / Clendenon (2016).

[V.]'s attitude towards perception of phenomena has been an important battleground in the scholarly debate over his philosophical standpoint. In a relatively influential article, De Lacy (1943:169-78) argues that [V.]'s mantra of 'understand what is beneath the surface from what can be observed above it', i.e. his reliance on *pignora* (see, e.g., 144-5n.), is revealing of his broadly Epicurean methodological approach. De Lacy clams that his line of argument is far more conclusive than that of Sudhaus (1898) or Rostagni (1933), who both pursue the flawed approach of collating 'one-liners' from the poem to prove that it is, respectively, Stoic and Epicurean. Undoubtedly, De Lacy is right to argue that observation and perception are intrinsic to [V.]'s methodological approach. However, as I demonstrate in greater detail at intr. III.4, De Lacy's overarching approach and argument is similarly flawed to those of his predecessors. Like Sudhaus and Rostagni, he overlooks moments in the poem that do not fit his argument; see for example, from this section of the poem, the way in which [V.] stresses at 144 the importance of the observer's *animus* in coming to

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[356] We are helped in this regard by the welcome arrival of the reported readings of the 'G' tradition at 138-286; for my assessment of this tradition's overall quality, see intr. V.2.

conclusions, an approach which is inherently more Stoic than Epicurean: for more on which, see 144-5n.

117-9 quis enim non credit inanis | esse sinus penitus, tantos emergere fontis | cum videt † hac torrens uno se mergere hiatu: 'For who does not believe that there are empty caverns deep below, when one sees great springs emerge, and just as often plunge themselves into a deep chasm [reading *ac totiens imo se mergere hiatu*].'

On the existence of subterranean waters, cf. e.g. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.16.4 *crede infra quicquid vides supra. sunt et illic specus vasti ingentesque recussus ac spatia suspensis hinc et inde montibus laxa; sunt abrupti in infinitum hiatus, qui saepe illapsas urbes receperunt et ingentem ruinam in alto condiderunt. haec spiritu plena sunt—nihil enim usquam inane est—et stagna obsessa tenebris et lacus ampli.*; 6.6.1-8.5. [V.]'s impression of the fabric of the earth is evidently heavily influenced by that of Seneca: for more on which, see, e.g., 110-6n, Connors / Clendenon (2016) 161-2.

117 quis enim non credit: A generalising statement, suggestive of the supposed obviousness of the claims that [V.] is about to make. The didactic poem is, in essence, a rhetorical exercise, and [V.]'s is no exception. Note the use of the present, to achieve what Volk describes as the impression of 'poetic simultaneity', or 'the illusion that the poem is really only coming into being as it evolves before the readers' eyes', one of four characteristics she identifies as defining of didactic poetry: for more on these, see Volk (1997) 288-92; (2002) 11-40.

inanis: For this physical, spatial use of *inanis*, as suggested at *TLL* 7.1.822.76, cf. Luc. 3.459-61 *cum tantum nutaret onus, telleris inanes | concussisse sinus quaerentem erumpere ventum | credidit et muros mirata est stare iuventus.* In regard to the overarching hypertextual relationship between our passage and that of *Bellum Civile* 3, I suspect strongly that they both draw on the *Natural Questions* as a common model; for the heavy influence of the *Natural Questions* over Lucan's geographical digressions, see Zientek (2014, 2020).

118 fontis: For this equating to 'underground springs', cf. e.g. Ov. *Met.* 15.270; and various examples at Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.11.1-3.

119 † hac torrens uno se mergere hiatu:[357] The lack of agreement between the mss. suggests that the text here is deeply corrupt. As proposed by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), if we accept the reading of δ, *torrentem imo*, the text gives a 'tolerable sense'. The most artful rendering of this phrase is undoubtedly that of Haupt (followed by Wight Duff / Duff and Hine) *ac totiens imo se mergere hiatu*, which gives the whole clause the meaning: 'when one sees great springs emerge, and just as often plunge themselves into a deep chasm.' Whilst the quality of this emendation cannot be denied, it cannot be followed with any certainty.

hiatu: Cf., in the same metrical *sedes*, Ov. *Met.* 15.273 *sic ubi terreno Lycus est epotus hiatu*.

120-2 † nam ille ex tenui vocemque agat apta † necesse est | confluvia errantes arcessant undique venas | † et trahat ex pleno quod fortem contrahat amnem:[358] As put by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), these lines constitute a *locus desperatus*. Thus, it is hard to comment on them with any sort of certainty. Having said this, from the various versions of these verses that we do have, we can ascertain that they likely further the point of 117-19; namely that, underground, various aquiferous channels come together as tributaries to form a larger waterway. For discussion of various attempts to reconstruct the text, see Goodyear (n. ad loc.).

123-4 flumina quin etiam latis currentia rivis:[359] Past editors have sought to emend *rivis* to *ripis*, on account of the fact that, as Goodyear (n. ad loc.) points out, a *rivus* is usually a small stream, never associated with the adjective *latus*: see *OLD* s.v. *rivus*. As acknowledged by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), *ripis* is also less

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[357] **119** hac *C* : ac *β*   torrens *β* : torre^{n}s *C* : torrentem *δ* : totiens *Haupt* : terrae subito *Baehrens*   imo *δ*   se emergere *A* : se erumpere *Bormans*   hyatum *H*   *post h. u. lacunam posuit Munro*

[358] **120** nam *CS* : non *β* : namque *Lenchantin* : nata *Buecheler*   mille *Munro, fort. recte*   vocemque *Ω* : vena est *δ* : vacuoque *Scaliger* : quocumque *Sudhaus*   acta *γ*   **121** confluvia *HVδ* : cum fluvia *S* : cum fluvio *C* : confluit *ARδ*   accersatque errantes *δ* : arcessens *Jacob* : arcessat ut *Vessereau*   venas *CS* : et undas *Z* : ab undis *Vγ* : lymphas *δ*   **122** extrahat *AR* : et trahit *δ* : ut trahat *Munro* : sed trahat *Scaliger* : attrahat *Jacob*   quem *δ* : quo *Scaliger*   fortem *CS$^{p.c.}$* : fontem *S$^{a.c.}$HV* : fonte *AR*   contrahit *δ* : convehat *Bormans* : *alii alia*   amne *Vγ* : *fort.* amnis

[359] **123** ripis *Bormans*

than ideal. Given that *rivis* appears in all mss., and is used by [V.] at 130, in my opinion, the best option is to accept it as an unusual usage here.

quin: Note, once again, the use of rhetorical language from [V.] here.

124 occasus habuere suos: The only usage of *occasus* in Classical Latin in the physical sense of 'sinkhole': see *OLD* s.v. *occasus* (meaning 4); *TLL* 9.2.341.56-7.

124-5 aut illa vorago | derepta in praeceps fatali condidit ore: 'either a chasm has seized and swallowed them headlong in its fatal jaws…' A vivid depiction of a sinkhole from [V.], achieved via his favoured anthropomorphic imagery: cf. e.g. his use of *fauces* at 30n. Note also the enjambment used to reflect meaning.

vorago: For its usage in the context of Latin depictions of karstic landscapes, cf. Connors / Clendenon (2016) 154; more examples at *OLD* s.v. *vorago* (meaning a).

fatali ore: Such imagery potentially connotes the association between the Underworld and karstic terrain in the Greco-Roman *imaginaire*: for more on which, see Connors / Clendenon (2016) 165-88.

condidit: For usages in application to rivers, see *TLL* 4.0.150.59-66. [V.] himself uses it in the same sense at 132 *si praecipiti conduntur flumina terra.*

126-7 aut [flumina] occulta fluunt tectis adoperta cavernis | atque inopinatos referent procul edita cursus: '… or they [rivers] flow on in secret, hidden in deep caverns, until they re-emerge far away and renew their course unexpectedly.' [V.] seemingly presents this as a different reason for the existence of underground rivers, but the two are clearly linked; 124-5 describes the sinking process, whilst 126-7 describes what follows.

occulta … adoperta: Note the *variatio* used by [V.].

128 quod nisi diversos emittat terra canales:[360] 'but if the earth did bring ducts to its surface all over the place…' As commented on by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), given that *canalis* always means the channel in which the body of water is

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[360] **128** *fort.* admittat

contained, rather than the body of water itself (see *OLD* s.v. *canalis*), the phraseology here is not ideal. Goodyear favours emendation of *emittat* to *admittat*, but this does not resolve the problem presented by [V.]'s choice of *canalis*. As with [V.]'s usage of *rivus* (123) and *occasus* (124), we may have to accept this as a quirky, perhaps unique, usage of the word. Whilst the image seems unusual, [V.]'s impression of hollowed-out channels emerging at the surface of the earth does suit his broader theory of the earth's cavernous nature: cf. 98-101n.

129-30 † hospitium fluvium aut † semita nulla profecto | fontibus et rivis constet via:[361] In the mss., these verses plainly constitute a *locus desperatus*. As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), we can just about ascertain the intended meaning of 128-30: 'were there no channels in the earth to hold them, rivers, springs and streams would not move at all.' The most obvious way to achieve this meaning is to emend the *aut* of CSHAVγ either to Baehrens' *det* or *sit* and to punctuate after *profecto*.

fontibus et rivis constet via: '[no] way would present itself for rivers and streams.' As the text stands, it requires *nulla* of 129 to apply to *via* as well. An option for emendation is Goodyear's *non stet* for *constet*.

130-1 pigraque tellus | conferta in solidum segni sub pondere cesset: '… and the sluggish earth, packed into a solid mass, would turn idle under its own ponderous weight.' Throughout his poem, [V.] implies that subterranean waterways play a crucial role in maintaining the earth's health. This idea is given its clearest expression in the simile expressed at 98-101: for the Senecan influence over which, see n. ad loc.

This phrase is one of many throughout the poem that is almost repeated by [V.]: see 156-7 *tellus | pigraque et in pondus conferta immobilis esset*; cf. the relationship between 125 and 132. Repetition becomes a generic feature of Latin didactic poetry following Lucretius, who uses it at, e.g., *DRN* 2.177–81, 5.195–9 (see Bailey n. ad loc.), as, in the words of Gale (2004: 62), 'a means of fixing passages of doctrinal importance in the reader's mind.' As a technique, it also serves the additional role of imitating orally transmitted poetry and thus conveying

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[361] **129** in *post* hospitium *add. Unger*   fluvium *CSδ* : fluminum *ZVδ* : fluviorum *δ* : fluviis *Birt*

what Volk (2002: 13-24) describes as 'poetic simultaneity', something she views as a defining characteristic of didactic.

131 Note the spondaic metre used, imitative of meaning.

pigra is not used as an epithet in application to **tellus** outside of the *Aetna*: cf. 156-7.

conferta in solidum: The use of the perfect passive participle of *confercio* in a quasi-middle voice here – 'having compressed itself' – contributes to the impression of constriction that is being depicted.

solidum segni sub … cesset: Heavy sibilance further contributes to the claustrophobic feel of this verse.

cesset: The verb *cessare* is favoured by [V.] in reference to nature (cf. 154, 163 [166], 176, 367, 384), and, particularly unusually, as in this case, the fabric of the earth: see 154, 176; cf. *TLL* 3.0.961.83-962.4. [V.]'s excessive and unusual usage of the verb is reflective of both his tendency to personify natural forces, and his obsession with the 'health' of the workings of the interior of the earth.

132-4 quod si praecipiti conduntur flumina terra, | condita si redeunt, si quaedam incognita surgunt, | haud mirum clausis etiam si libera ventis | spiramenta latent: 'But if rivers are buried headlong into the earth, and re-emerge from their burial, if other ones emerge previously unknown, then no wonder if open vents lie hidden for contained winds also.' For the Senecan influence over this theory, see 94-116n.

132 quod si praecipiti conduntur flumina terra: An almost-repeat of 125. For [V.]'s use of repetition, see 130-1n.

quod si: A typical rhetorical opening to a section of didactic; used seven times by [V.], in each case as the opening to a verse: cf. 132, 155, 306, 329, 358, 491and 536.

praecipiti: A transferred epithet, which should be taken with *flumina*.

conduntur: Cf. 124-5n.

134 haud mirum: Rhetorical: cf. 457; a variant thereof used at 540. Variants of this phrase are favoured by Lucretius: see Lucr. 2.87, 338; 4.768; 5.192, 748, 799; 6.615, 1012; discussion of all of which at Kenney (2007) 101.

clausis ventis: [V.] contributing further to this impression of constriction and restraint. For *clausus* + *ventus,* as recommended at *TLL* 3.0.1304.4, cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.27.1.

134-5 libera […] spiramenta: 'open vents.' For this meaning of *spiramentum,* cf. *OLD* s.v. *spiramentum* (meaning 1b). Cf. in particular its usage at Ov. *Met.* 15.343, part of a passage similar in timbre to the one in question: see broader discussion at intr. II.3.

135-6 certis tibi pignora rebus | atque oculis haesura tuis dabit ordine tellus: 'In due order will the earth provide you with pledges of clear-cut things, indeed proofs that will fix your eyes.' [V.]'s point is that we should be able to ascertain the invisible from the visible. This mantra is used by De Lacy (1943) to infer a broadly Epicurean methodological approach on the part of [V.]; see 117-31n., intr. III.3 for my reservations with De Lacy's interpretation.

certis rebus: A noun-adj. combination particularly favoured by Lucretius: see, e.g., Lucr. 1.173, 813; 4.281; 6.924.

tibi … tuis: [V.]'s frequent use of second-person pronouns (henceforth in the poem) gives a strong impression of, as Volk (2002: 25-40) puts it, 'a teacher-student constellation', something she identifies as one of the four defining characteristics of didactic poetry, alongside 'explicit didactic intent', 'poetic self-consciousness' and 'poetic simultaneity', all of which are plainly evident in this section of the poem.

Having said this, this is [V.]'s first involvement of a second-person addressee, the belatedness of which is one reason why G. D. Williams (2020: 115) sees the poem as a 'more reflexive, even self-absorbed operation' than the didactic norm. This intense self-consciousness is something that I also identify as a trademark characteristic of the poem: see intr. IV.

haesura: For this metaphorical sense of *haereo*, as in to 'fix by sight', cf. e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 1.717-8 and other examples at *TLL* 6.3.2495.59-67; having said this, this example might be the only from extant Latin of the object fixing the eyes, rather than vice versa. This contributes to the impression of [V.]'s subject matter having agency: cf. e.g. 41n.; further discussion of this theme at intr. IV.3.

137-9 inmensos plerumque sinus et iugera pessum | intercepta licet densaeque abscondita nocti | prospectare:[362] 'Often, you can gaze at vast recesses and tracts of land that have been dragged to the bottom, hidden in the thick of night.'

iugera pessum | intercepta: Note, once again, the lack of agency conveyed by [V.]'s use of the perfect passive participle (cf. 131n.), in addition to the enjambment, reflective of meaning.

pessum: See *OLD* s.v. *pessum* (meaning 1a).

licet: The first of G's divergences from Ω is clearly an excellent improvement; *licet* is demanded by the sense instead of *leget*.

138 densaeque abscondita nocti: Notably Stygian diction. Connors / Clendenon's (2016) geo-mythological interpretation of Greco-Roman depictions of karstic landscapes argues that they aim to reconcile the 'believed-in world of the underworld with the observed world of the landscape' (p. 40). [V.]'s use of this sort of diction raises questions about his poetic motives, given that, at 74-84 (see n. ad loc.), he takes pains to denounce poetic depictions of the Underworld. Whilst, on the one hand, [V.]'s depiction of the *ruinae sine fine* (139) of the subterranean world, which is created by natural, explained processes, might be seen as a rationalisation of the fanciful poetic underworld, it could also amount to a sensationalisation of something explainable. The challenge faced by the didactic poet to balance his fundamental message with appealing content is epitomised well by Lucretius' metaphor of the honey-rimmed cup (see Lucr. 1.931-50, 4.8-25): for more on this challenge, and how [V.] engages with it, see intr. IV.2.iv.

For **densa nox**, cf. Ov. *Met.* 15.31.

abscondita: Cf. its usage in the sense of 'hidden' at 87; also [Tib.] *Paneg. ad Mess.* 155.

139 procul chaos ac sine fine ruinae:[363] '[It is] far-flung chaos and ruin without end.' For the connotations of the Underworld, cf. 138n.

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[362] **138** *incipit G*   licet *G, Scaliger* : leget *Ω*   densaque … nocte *G*

[363] **139** procul *Ω* : *non habuit G*   vastum G *(post* chaos *inserendum), sed Burmannus adnotavit 'in margine incertum an ex coniectura H' (sc. 'Heinsius' vel 'Heinsii')*   ac *Ω* : et *G*   ruinast *Munro* : ruinas *Gδ* : ruinae *Ω*

chaos: Cf. Sen. *Epist.* 72.9 *imperitis ac rudibus nullus praecipitationis finis est; in Epicureum illud chaos decidunt, inane, sine termino.* There may be a suggestion of the Epicurean 'void' in [V.]'s use of *chaos*.

sine fine: Given the *Aetna*'s close hypertextual relationship with the canonical works of Virgil (see intr. III.1), it is hard for the reader not to consider here the famous line from the *Aeneid*, 1.279 *imperium sine fine dedi*… Having said this, *sine fine* is used regularly throughout Augustan and later first-century Latin poetry; it appears twenty-one times in the Ovidian corpus alone (out of the sixty-four times it appears in Classical Latin).

ruinae: Goodyear favours *ruina* over the *ruinae* of the mss.; see his intr. 30. This is an unnecessary emendation in my opinion.

140-1 cernis et in silvis spatiosa cubilia retro | antraque demersas penitus fodisse latebras:[364] G's rendering of 141 *antraque demersas penitus fodisse latebras*, coupled with the Aldine editor's emendation to 140, *spatiosa* for *spatioque*, perhaps gives this phrase a degree of sense: 'In forests, also, you see that lairs and caves, spacious to the rear, have dug out deeply submerged hide-outs.' On the obscurity of the subject matter, and difficulty of the text here, see Goodyear n. ad loc. The remark seemingly amounts to one of [V.]'s more ridiculous observation-based assumptions, that caves on the surface of the earth are evidence for similar subterranean caverns.

cernis: [V.]'s use of this word, which is famously a *Leitwort* of Lucretius' *DRN* (used 138 times), might tempt the reader to think Epicureanism, but is far more likely demonstrative of his poem's polyphonous nature, its general indebtedness to the *DRN*, alongside several other works of Latin literature: see intr. III for more on this.

cubilia: For this meaning of *cubile*, i.e. 'lair', cf. *OLD* s.v. *cubile* (meaning 3). For its association with *latebrae*, see *TLL* 4.0.1271.68-78; for its association with *bestiae* (surely the case in these admittedly obscure lines, as indicated by *in silvis*), see *TLL* 4.0.1271.79-1272.71.

latebras: For the Senecan significance, cf. 96-8n.

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[364] **140** spatiosa *ed. Ald. 1517* : spatioque Ω   **141** demersas *G* : demissa *CZ* : dimissa *S* : demissis *Vγ* : demissas *Ellis*   penitus *G* : pedibus Ω   fodisse *GCSVγ* : fedisse *H* : fudisse *AR* : sedisse *Wernsdorf*   latebras *Gδ* : latebris Ω

142 incomperta via est † aeri tantum effugit ultra…:[365] A *locus desperatus*. Most editors suspect a lacuna following *ultra* / *intra*. As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*), if we accept *operum* of the mss., the first half of this line makes some sort of sense: 'unknown is the course of these works…'. However, there is very little one can say beyond this.

143 argumenta dabunt ignoti vera profundi: [Perhaps] 'They [subject lost] will grant you true proofs of the unknown deep [i.e. what is below the surface of the earth].' As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), this sentence likely begins for us *ex nihilo*, with its subject lost to a lacuna. Presuming that we have not lost a substantial chunk of text, it is likely that the subject is something like *cubilia* / *antra*, or *recessus*. I suspect that this verse fits into a longer phrase with a meaning similar to that of 135-6: 'something visible will provide proof of the invisible hollows of the earth's interior.'

argumenta vera: [V.]'s typical confidence in the 'truthfulness' of his account: cf. his programmatic statement at 91-2 *sed omnis* | *in vero mihi cura*. For the inherent difficulties of [V.]'s didactic aim to proclaim absolute truth, and the way in which he self-consciously engages with this, see 91-2n.; intr. IV.2.

ignoti vera: Note the juxtaposition here.

dabunt: As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), 136 provides excellent precedence for [V.]'s usage of *do* here. This suggests that the corruption to this passage does not reside in the verb, rather that a lacuna precedes this verse.

profundi: Alongside the fact that it is metrically appropriate, it is likely positioned at the end of the line for emphasis, and to reflect its meaning; indeed all of [V.]'s nine usages of it are in this metrical *sedes*: cf. 143, 166, 211, 258, 320, 342, 546, 578.

144-5 tu modo subtiles animo duce percipe causas | occultamque fidem manifestis abstrahe rebus:[366] 'with your mind as guide, grasp the subtle causes, and extract hidden truth from things that are visible.' A resounding summary of the point that [V.] has been labouring for the past twenty-five verses:

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[365] **142** aeri *G* : operum *Ω* : aer *Jacob*   tantum *CSHVγ* : tamen *ARδ*   effugit ultra *G* : effluit intra *CSZ* : influit intra *Vγ*   *lacunam posuit Munro*

[366] **144** causas *Jacob* : curas *Ω*

that one can construe what is invisible underground from what is visible on the surface. This approach is markedly Senecan; cf., in a similar context (that of the disappearance and re-emergence of rivers), *Nat. Quest.* 3 *praef.* 18 *deinde in occultis exercitata subtilitas non erit in aperta deterior*; and for the approach more generally, 3.16.4 *crede infra quicquid vides supra*; discussion at Connors / Clendenon (2016) 161-2.

tu … percipe … abstrahe: [V.] at his most 'didactic'; he is dealing in imperatives to his 'student'-addressee.

subtiles: A likely *double-entendre* here. One meaning of *subtilis* is 'subtle' (see *OLD* s.v. *subtilis* meaning 4c), but its prefix also implies 'underground'. [V.]'s point is that one needs to look beneath the surface to grasp such subtleties.

animo duce: 'with your mind as a guide.' As stated by Berrino (143-5n.), '*L'invito al ragionamento* […] *costituisce un τόπος del genere didascalio-filosofico ed è motive già lucreziano.*' There are no specific parallels within the Lucretian corpus for *animus* as *dux*, but for *animus* being the faculty for *ratio*, see, e.g., Lucr. 2.1023 *nunc animum nobis adhibe veram ad rationem*, 4.383 *hoc animi demum ratio discernere debet.* Lucretius' emphasis on the importance of one's mental faculty in discerning truth severely problematises De Lacy's (1943:173) clear-cut distinction between supposedly 'Epicurean' sensory perception of truth, and supposedly 'Stoic' acceptance of truth via mental assessment, further illustrating why his argument for a broadly 'Epicurean' *Aetna* is flawed: see intr. IV.3-4 for more.

Perhaps, as recommended at *TLL* 5.1.2326.48-9, cf. [Sen.] *Mon.* 127 *animum tamquam ducem cura*.

percipe causas: On the grounds of sense, Jacob's emendation of *causas* for *curas* is necessary and excellent: cf. Ov. *Fast.* 1.166, 4.938.

occultam fidem: Oxymoronic, given the associations of *occultus* with shadiness and secrecy: see *OLD* s.v. *occultus* (meaning 2). This contrast emphasises well [V.]'s encouragement to look below the surface in search of truth.

occultam fidem … manifestis rebus: Artful use of antithesis from [V.], contributing to the effect described above; cf. perhaps Sen. *Epist.* 95.61 *ratio autem non impletur manifestis: maior eius pars pulchriorque in occultis est.*

manifestis rebus: Cf. various Lucretian parallels cited by Richter (n. ad loc.).

abstrahe: According to *TLL* 1.0.203.24, one of only three usages of *abstraho* in the sense of 'to deduce', and the only in verse.

[146-9] *As fire is more volatile in an enclosed space, so underground winds must be more lively than those overground.* **[150-2]** *Rather than follow the hollowed-out tunnels beneath the earth, charged-up subterranean winds and fires find the most direct route to the surface, clearing a path for themselves.* **[153-7]** *The result of this destructive process is earthquakes, which [V.] suggests are proof that the earth is not entirely solid.*

146-9 nam quo liberior quoque est animosior ignis | semper in inclusis, nec ventis segnior ira est, | sub terra penitus moveant hoc plura necesse est, | vincla magis solvent, magis hoc obstantia pellant:[367] 'For as fire is always more wanton and lively in confined spaces, and the ire of the winds no more sluggish, so it ought to be accepted that winds, deep underground, must dislodge more things, must be more free from their chains, and must more easily drive off those things in their path.'

For the question of whether the apodosis of this analogy begins at *sub terra* or *necesse est*, see Ellis, Goodyear (ns. ad loc.). I agree with both of them (against, e.g., Munro and Sudhaus) that the phraseology here works better if the apodosis begins with *sub terra*, and like Goodyear, favour the emendation of the mss. reading *-que movent* to Kenney's *moveant* over Ellis' *novent*, giving the analogy the sense as presented above.

Whilst the analogy presented by [V.] here – that, because underground fire is more volatile, so underground winds must also be – is admittedly clunky, I agree with Goodyear's verdict (n. ad loc.) that the text does not demand wholesale emendation. As revealed by [V.] at 151 (see n. ad loc.), the analogy is something of a blurred one, in that whilst [V.] seems to use the 'fact' that confined fires are more volatile as proof of the hypothesis that 'confined winds must be more volatile', he is likely trying to argue the case that both fire and wind are made more volatile underground, given the importance of both elements to his theorising on volcanology.

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[367] **148** moveant *Kenney* : -que movent *G(?)CSHVγ* : -que movet *AR* : -que novent *Ellis*

146 The repetition of *quo… quo* and *ior… ior* gives this verse a somewhat 'jingly' acoustic quality.

liberior: Note the paradox that fire is always *liberior* […] *in inclusis*: *liber* is here used loosely, to mean something like 'wild'.

animosior ignis: *animosior* […] *in inclusis* is similarly oxymoronic to *liberior* […] *in inclusis*. [V.] has a penchant for animating the inanimate geology / elements of the earth, as discussed at intr. IV.3.

The use of this adjective, with its strong etymological association with *anima* of 151, establishes the link between the two elements, fire and wind (in the context of constriction), expounded in the comparison at 146-52 (particularly at 151).

147 semper in inclusis: Enjambment, followed by strong caesura, is here reflective of meaning (constriction).

inclusis: Favoured by [V.] in the context of constricted natural forces: cf. 114 *inclusi* […] *vapores*.

nec ventis segnior ira: [V.]'s typical personification of nature: cf. e.g. 3. His point is that, just as fire is more volatile in an enclosed space, so are air currents.

segnior: See *OLD* s.v. *segnis* (meaning 4): 'sluggish'.

148 sub terra penitus [venti] moveant hoc plura necesse est: For the idea, and perhaps the diction, as suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.12.2 *tum ille quaerens locum omnes angustias dimovet et claustra sua conatur effringere; sic evenit ut terrae, spiritu luctante et fugam quaerente, moveantur*: see, e.g., 94-117n. for more on [V.]'s use of *Natural Questions* 6.

sub terra: Also used as a verse opening by [V.] at 302.

149 [venti] vincla magis solvent, magis hoc obstantia pellant: As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.18.2-3 *ubi erepta discedendi facultas est et undique obsistitur, tunc 'magno cum murmure montis claustra' fremit, quae diu pulsata convellit ac iactat, eo acrior, quo cum mora valentiore luctatus est* […] *ita eius non potest vis tanta cohiberi nec ventum ulla compages.* solvit enim quodcumque vinculum.

vincla: By personifying the winds as endeavouring to break free from their chains, [V.] (like Seneca above) alludes to Virgil's description of Aeolus' prison of

the winds at *Aen.* 1.50ff.; cf., in particular, 1.52-4 *hic vasto rex Aeolus antro | luctantis ventos tempestatesque sonoras | imperio premit ac vinclis et carcere frenat.* As pointed out by Hardie (1986: 90-3), Virgil's image itself is a remythologisation of the impression of the winds depicted at Lucr. 6.197-8 [*venti*] *magno indignantur murmure clausi | nubibus*. The rich literary tradition behind [V.]'s image of the winds striving to break free from their bonds provides his didactic discourse with colour: see Garani (2009) 108-10.

obstantia: For the meaning, cf. 113 † *lima* […] *obstantia mollit*.

150-2 nec tantum in rigidos exit contenta canales | vis animae flammaeve; ruit qua proxima cedunt | obliquumque secat qua visa tenerrima claustra:[368] 'But the built-up force of wind or fire does not leave only by solid channels; it rushes onwards wherever its surroundings give way, and cuts its way straight through those confines which seem weakest.' [V.] is describing the idea that pressurised wind or fire, rather than following previously hollowed-out paths, will carve itself out a direct route of escape.

tantum: Bormans' emendation for Ω's *tamen*. Though Goodyear accepts it as a 'trivial change', it seems to me questionable to emend purely on the grounds of finding the *mot juste*; *tamen* might be deadwood in this line, but it certainly does not demand emendation.

rigidos canales: [V.] envisages that the fabric of the earth is interspersed with 'hard-walled channels', which provide a passage for subterranean winds and waters: cf. 128 (n. ad loc.). His point here is that pressurised underground winds and fires do not follow these set channels, but instead force their way out wherever they can.

150-1 contenta vis: Note, once again, [V.]'s use of the perfect passive participle, to achieve an impression of restriction: cf. e.g. 147 *inclusis* (n. ad loc.).

151 vis animae flammaeve: Juxtaposition presenting the crux of the 'blurred analogy' that has been ongoing since 146. Note the elemental impression of natural forces.

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[368] **150** tantum *Bormans* : tamen *Ω*   **151** flammaeve ruit *G* : flamma neurit *H* : flamma verrit *CS* : *similia fere cett.*

anima is inherently ambiguous. Just like *spiritus* (cf., e.g., 111-2n.), *anima* is used regularly to mean both 'wind' and 'breath'; cf., respectively, *TLL* 2.0.70.11-58 and 2.0.70.59-72.43. Here it is used as a synonym for *ventus*: cf. other usages in this manner at 298, 310, 359. [V.]'s usage of both *anima* and *spiritus* throughout his poem contributes to the impression depicted of the volcano as a living thing: for more on which, see 188-218n., intr. IV.3.i.

flammaeve ruit: G's reading; a vast improvement on those of the extant mss. Note the dramatic diction, emphatic of the power of wind and fire.

proxima: [V.]'s use of the superlative here emphasises the devastating power of the volcano's internal forces.

152 visa seems to suggest that the volcanic onslaught has a mind of its own, able to discern the easiest escape route.

claustra: As at 149n., this evokes the description of Aeolus' cave from *Aeneid* 1: cf. Virg. *Aen.* 1.56 [*venti*] *circum claustra fremunt*.

153 hinc terrae tremor, hinc motus: [V.]'s point, which he reiterates several times, is that it is these trapped, pressurised air currents that result in earthquakes. He dramatises the presentation of his theory through his use of anaphora (*hinc … hinc*) and his alliteration of the voiceless plosive [t]. The double caesura around *hinc motus* also contributes to this effect.

The idea that trapped underground winds are the cause of earthquakes is very Senecan: cf, e.g., as cited at 94-117n., Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.12.2, 18.2-3. In terms of the diction used here, for *terrae tremor* equating to an earthquake, cf. *Nat. Quest.* 6.21.2.6 *non enim sine causa tremorem terrae dixere maiores*; for *terrae motus* equating to an earthquake, cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.12.2.4 *cum terrae motus futurus est*.

153-4 ubi densus hiantis | spiritus exagitat venas cessantiaque urget:[369] '…when the dense air forces open the veins of the earth and moves from its path all that delays it.' As argued by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), G's *hiantes* (or Ellis' minor emendation of this to *hiantis*) is preferable to what is preserved in the extant

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[369] **153** hiantes (-is *Ellis*) *G* : hiatu *CSHγ* : hiatus *ARV*

manuscripts; for precedence, cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.91 *venas astringit hiantis*; also Sen. *Oed.*190 *uenas rumpit hiantes*.

densus spiritus: Note the continued focus on pressurised air. On *spiritus*, cf. 111n., 188-218n.

hiantis venas: For [V.]'s depiction of the earth as akin to a human body, cf. e.g. 98-101n. [V.]'s use of the ambiguous *spiritus* contributes further to this.

cessantiaque urget: For *cessare* in this context, cf. 131n.

155-7 quod si spissa foret, solido si staret in omni, | nulla daret miranda sui spectacula tellus, | pigraque et in pondus conferta immobilis esset:[370] 'But if the earth were compacted, if it were entirely solid, it would not provide any of its wondrous spectacles, but instead would be inert, unmoving in its dense mass.' This is a typical challenge from [V.] to his addressee to question his opinion: cf. 158-61. His broad point is that we can insinuate from earthquakes that the earth must be hollow in part, to allow for these underground forces to operate.

155 quod si spissa foret, solido si staret in omni: Heavy sibilance here from [V.] gives an impression of pressure. The second half of the line replicates the key phrase of the opening to this section of the poem: cf. 96 [*terra*] *non totum est solidum.* This signposting provides [V.]'s didactic lesson with structure.

quod si: Cf. 132n.

in omni: As Goodyear (intr. 33) points out, G's *in omni* gives this line good sense and explains the various corrupt readings of the extant mss.

156 miranda spectacula: The *miranda spectacula* in question here are presumably earthquakes specifically, but the diction is proleptic towards the conclusion of the poem, [V.]'s account of another seismic event, his *miranda fabula* of the eruption of Mount Etna and the pious Catanian brothers' rescue of their parents from its fires: for more on the significance of which, see intr. IV.4. [V.]'s description of earthquakes as *miranda spectacula* might seem contradictory, given the approach of rationalism that he advocates at, e.g., 247-50: see n. ad loc. Nevertheless, as argued at intr. IV.2, throughout his poem, [V.]

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[370] **155** in omni *G* : in amni *C* : in a … *S* : in omi *V* : in(m)ani *Zγ* : in imo *Sandbach*

strives to strike a balance between abiding by his didactic aims and delivering appealing content.

For earthquakes = *miranda spectacula*, perhaps cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.30.4 *quantas res hi terrarum tremores quamque mira spectacula ediderint, satis dictum est*, though it should be said that Seneca is here eulogising the repercussions of earthquakes, rather than the events themselves.

For *spectacula* used in the context of natural disasters by [V.], cf. 384 *sic cessata diu referunt spectacula venti*; and perhaps (though cf. Goodyear [n. ad loc.]) 601.

157 pigraque et in pondus conferta immobilis esset: Almost a re-ordering of 130-1 *pigraque tellus | conferta in solidum segni sub pondere cesset.* As at 131 (see n. ad loc.), the line is metrically sluggish (in this case, containing three spondees and two elisions), in order to replicate its point, one reiterated throughout this section of the poem: that without these underground channels and the air currents that they contain – the earth's 'veins'– the earth would in some way stagnate. The alliteration of the plosive [p] contributes further to this impression of sluggishness.

For the use of the perfect passive participle **conferta**, cf. 131n.

[158-61] *But if you think earthquakes are the result of causes on the surface, you are mistaken;* **[162-7]** *winds lose their potency in the open.* **[168-70]** *Violent winds must come from underground gullies, which pressurise / strengthen them.* **[171-2]** *Hence the raging of winds and the causing of earthquakes.* **[173-4]** *There is no better proof that one day the earth will return to its primeval form.*

158-9 sed summis si forte putas concrescere † causis | tantum opus † et summis alimentum viribus †:[371] Perhaps: 'But if perhaps you think that such a work arises from surface causes and its nourishment from surface strength…' In the words of Goodyear (n. ad loc.), 'the corruption here is […] too deep for remedy.' For Goodyear's choices, which he admits are made without conviction, see his n. ad loc. As pointed out by Goodyear, from the context and the many variant ms. readings of them, the general sense of these lines is apparent: [V.] is trying to say that earthquakes are not the result of surface causes.

si forte putas: This is the first time in the poem that [V.] has entered into direct conversation with his addressee, using the second person indicative; he will use this exact formula again at 329. This formula is similarly favoured by Lucretius: cf. Lucr. 3.533, 3.698. [V.]'s hypothetically challenging interlocutor is perhaps reminiscent of that of Seneca from the *Natural Questions*: for more on which see G. D. Williams (2012) 26.

summis […] concrescere causis | tantum opus: For Goodyear's justification for following G's reading *concrescere*, see his intr. 33, in addition to 158n. *concrescere* works well with *tantum opus*, but *summis causis* as 'by causes rising to the surface' (Munro), is, as Goodyear points out, highly unlikely. Goodyear's favouring of *claustris* (cf. 152) for *causis*, which is followed by Hine (2012), still retains the issue of *summus* = 'at the surface', a meaning that is not explicitly suggested by any of the examples cited at *OLD* s.v. *summus*.

159 tantum opus: Cf. 25n., 256.

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[371] **158** concrescere *G* : concredere *CSγ* : congredere *Zδ* : congerdere *V*   caulis *Gorallus* : *fort.* claustris   **159** ex *Unger*   summis *Ω* : subitis *G*   alimenti *Unger* : *alii alia*

et summis alimentum viribus: The ms. reading here is even harder to make sense of than at 158. Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.) that *alimentum* may be veiling something to do with *venti* (most likely *ventorum*), a conjecture that is followed by Hine (2012: 319), who reads the whole of 158-9 as *sed summis si forte putas concrescere claustris | tantum opus et subitis uentorum uiribus*: 'Perhaps you think that such powerful activity builds up in confined spaces close to the earth's surface, and through the energy of winds that spring up suddenly'.

159-60 ora | qua patula in promptu cernis vastosque recessus:[372] '… in places where you can see with your very own eyes open caverns and vast recesses.' The readings of G here – *ora*, *patula* and *vastosque* – make reasonable sense, and are followed by most modern editions. However, Goodyear (intr. 33) provides us with the noteworthy caveat that it is hard to explain the corruption of these readings of G to those of Ω.

For **ora** = underground openings, cf. various examples at *TLL* 9.2.1091.58-78.

For **patulus** in application to *fauces*, *cavernae*, *viae* etc., cf. various examples at *TLL* 10.1.796.27-36. Such precedence perhaps strengthens the case for accepting the readings of G.

in promptu cernis: Cf. 140-1n. for the potential Epicurean timbre of [V.]'s use of *cernere* here, and my preferred interpretation that such diction is indicative of the polyphony of [V.]'s poem, rather than its allegiance to one particular doctrine.

vastosque recessus: G's reading has strong precedence; from the *Aetna*, cf. 336 (in the same metrical *sedes*); and from elsewhere, cf. e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 8.193, and esp. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.16.4 *sunt et illic specus vasti ingentesque recessus ac spatia suspensis hinc et inde montibus laxa.*

161 falleris et nondum in certo tibi lumine res est:[373] [following G's readings] 'you are deceived and the issue has not yet been revealed to you in clear light.' Goodyear, once again, cautiously follows the readings of G, but only with the addition of Vollmer's *in*, given the lack of parallels for *res certo lumine*,

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[372] **159** ora *G* (*ex adnotatione Craneri*) : oris Ω (*et G ex adn. Burmanni*)   **160** qua *δ* : quae Ω : quod *Jacob*   patula *G* : valida Ω : vacua *Ellis*   vastosque *G* : validosque Ω : vacuosque *Ellis*

[373] **161** falleris et *G* : fallere sed Ω   in *add. Vollmer*   certo tibi lumine res *G* : tibi lumine certaque retro (recto *γ*) Ω   claro *Maehly*

and even so, is still highly sceptical of the Latinity of the phrase. As Goodyear acknowledges, none of the parallels that he cites (n. ad loc.) demonstrate any particular precedence for the *Aetna*'s phrase. However, his citation of Sen. *de Vit. Beat.* 2.2 (*oculis de homine non credo; habeo melius et certius lumen, quo a falsis vera diiudicem*) is interesting in regard to the question of whether the poem espouses a world view closer to that of Stoicism or Epicureanism; in this passage, Seneca uses this image of a light to represent his ability to use faculties beyond plain sight, an approach that is inherently Stoic, reminiscent of what [V.] is advocating here

Although the text is deeply uncertain, the evidently hyper-didactic tone adopted by [V.] here is in keeping with that of the poem more broadly.

162-4 (165-7) quippe, ubi quod teneat ventos acuatque morantis | in vacuo defit, cessant, tantumque profundi | explicat errantis et in ipso limine tardat:[374] 'For when in the open there is nothing to restrain the winds nor spur them on as they delay, they then falter, and the great expanse sets them off wandering, and slows them down on its very threshold.' Goodyear transposes 165-7 into this position, on the grounds that 162-4 make very little sense without prior mention of the *venti* (even if we emend *alimentum*, the result is not satisfactory).

The transposition produces a text of reasonable sense. 165-7, stating that winds in the open lose their volatility, follows well [V.]'s assertion that 'you are wrong if you think that earthquakes are the result of causes close to or on the surface of the earth.' Goodyear's explanation (n. ad loc.) as to why such a scribal error might have been made – confusion between *lumine* (161) and *limine* (164 [167 in the erroneous ordering]) – is reasonably plausible.

162 (165) ubi quod teneat ventos acuatque morantis: The ms. readings here are clearly deeply corrupt. Goodyear (n. ad loc.) accepts Haupt's conjecture *quod teneat*, on the grounds that he deems it 'intermediate' between G's *qui teneat* and Cβ's *contineat*. He also deems Munro's conjecture *acuatque*

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[374] **162-4 (165-167)** *huc Goodyear transposuit*   **162 (165)** quod teneat *Haupt* : qui teneat *G* : contineat *Cβ* : continuat *S*   ventos acuatque *Munro* : ventos aquasque (*vel fort.* qua quasque) *G* : ventosa qua quaeque *C* : ventos aqua queque *S* : ventosa quaeque *Z* : ventos(-o *V*) : qua queque *Vδ* : ventos quacunque angatque *Unger* : aurasque *Baehrens* : contineant… quaecumque… desunt (166) *Scaliger*   **163 (166)** defit *G* : desint *CSHAVγ* : desinit *R* : desit *Ellis*

'excellent', instead of the nonsense transmitted by the mss. I am content to follow both conjectures accepted by Goodyear, though given the textual uncertainty here, am unable to comment on the line with any sort of conviction.

163 (166) in vacuo defit: Enjambment followed by caesura is here reflective of meaning.

cessant: Cf. 131n.

tantumque profundi: 'The great expanse'. For the same usage, cf. Front., *Ad M. Caesarem et Invicem* 3.14.4.10.

164 (167) explicat errantis et in ipso limine tardat: Note once again the vivid personification of natural forces achieved by the poet's diction: *errare*… *tardare*, both used in reference to the winds; cf. e.g. 149n.

in ipso limine: [V.] describes the earth's crust as a *limen*. Note the anthropocentric language used by him in order to familiarise his complex subject matter with his reader; see broader discussion of this didactic approach at intr. IV.3.iii. Having said this, *limen* is used to describe natural 'thresholds' by other Latin authors: see *TLL* 7.2.1406.21-77.

165-7 (162-4) namque illuc, quodcumque vacans hiat, impetus omnis, | at sese introitu solvent adituque patenti | conceptae languent vires animosque remittent:[375] [Perhaps, reading Ellis' emendation *vacans hiat*] 'For the entire onrush of winds makes for any open vacuum, but on arrival they calm themselves; at the open entrance their built-up force dissipates and they lose their spirit.'

165 (162) impetus omnis: Note the militaristic characterisation of nature from [V.] here, a technique that he uses to familiarise his subject matter with his reader: cf. 217, 359, 382, 506; broader discussion of this poetic approach at intr. IV.3.iii.

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[375] **165 (162)** illuc *CSHVγ* : illic *δ* : illud *ARδ* : illis *G*   quodcumque *CSARVγ* : quocumque *H* : quaecumque *G*   vacans hiat *Ellis* : vacat hiat impetus omnis *CS* : vacant hiatibus omnis *G* : vacat hiatum pecus omnis *Z*   *cett. pessime corrupti* : *fort.* vacat, fert   *post h. u. lacunam posuit Munro*

166-7 (163-4) Note the repetition of the spondaic *sssdda* metre in these verses, reflective of their meaning.

sese introitu solvunt: *introitus* here = *exitus*. For the usage of *solvo* here, cf. (in reference to the *lapis molaris*) 553.

adituque patenti | conceptae languent vires: Enjambment here is reflective of meaning; when the winds reach the open… they lose their strengths.

vires animosque: Note [V.]'s typical personification of natural forces. For this usage of *vires*, cf. e.g. 221; and for *animus*, cf. e.g. 274.

168 angustis opus est, ut turbent, faucibus:[376] For Goodyear's defence of his conjecture *ut turbent*, see his n. ad loc. I agree with Goodyear's verdict that it is clear from the variant ms. readings that the sense required is 'winds need narrow spaces to rage' – the point that [V.] has been making since 158 – and that previous efforts to emend the text fail to achieve this. Whilst we are able to gauge the general sense, given our reliance on Goodyear's conjecture, it would be imprudent to attempt additional commentary on this line.

opus: See *OLD* s.v. *opus* (meaning 12a): + *est* = 'it is essential'. Cf. its contrasting usage in the following verse.

169 fervet opus: Cf. Virg. *Georg.* 4.169-75, which uses these words to introduce its simile that compares the workings of a beehive to those of the forge of the Cyclopes, a place which Virgil explicitly associates with Mount Etna: see *Georg.* 4.173, and [V.]'s dismissal of this *facies vatum* at 36-40 (n. ad loc.). [V.]'s quotation here is perhaps his most obvious 'nod' to Virgil's canonical works in his poem, particularly as the whole Georgic line (*fervet opus redolentque thymo fragrantia mella*) is self-quoted by Virgil at *Aen.* 1.436, in reference to the Carthaginians, and in this way, becomes something of a Virgilian *sphragis*.

Quotation and paraphrase of Virgil was unsurprisingly popular with the Augustan poet's first-century imitators: see, e.g., [Virg.] *Ciris* 59-61 ~ Virg. *Ecl.* 6.75-7; [Virg.] *Ciris* 538-41 ~ Virg. *Georg.* 1.406-9. Since the seminal work of Peirano (2012), scholarship has generally progressed from the simplistic impression of the poems of the *Appendix Vergiliana* which purport to have been

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[376] **168** potius turbant *Baehrens* : ut turbent *Goodyear* (*iam* turbent *Haupt*) : turbant in *CSH* : turbanti *G* : turbare in *RVγ* : turburare in *A*   illic *Bormans* : illo *G* : illos *Ω*

written by Virgil as 'deliberate forgeries'. In the case of the *Ciris*, the debate is now over whether the poem is a 'homage' to its model (Most [forthcoming]) or something that intelligently attempts to 'prefigure' its model (Peirano [2012] 174-204): see also a variety of possible interpretations of the hypertextual relationship between the *Ciris* and the Virgilian canon presented by Lyne's excellent note on *Ciris* 538-41. Whilst the *Aetna* has rightly been largely exempt from such questions (no-one would argue that the poem, overall, purports Virgilian authorship: see intr III.1), they are applicable to moments such as this. By evoking a Virgilian *sphragis* here, [V.] perhaps attempts to prefigure his Virgilian model, presenting (with perhaps a strong 'wink': see following paragraph) the *Aetna* as the potential source of Virgil's Mount Etna simile, which itself is reworked in the *Aeneid*.

Of course, in our case, the poet has perhaps deployed the strongest of clues to the clever game of prefiguration that he is playing, by placing the 'nod', *fervet opus*, in potentially the same line (169) as its Virgilian model. This sort of literary gameplay would be entirely in keeping with the approach of other poets of the *Appendix Vergiliana*.

169-70 densaque premit premiturque ruina | nunc euri boreaeque notus, nunc huius uterque:[377] Following the readings of G: 'and at one point the South Wind assails and is assailed by the thick ruin of the East and North, then at another is each of these assailed [by the thick ruin of it] in return.' On G's readings here, see the words of Ellis (n. ad loc), who is normally so sceptical of the tradition: 'We can scarcely doubt that a correction so satisfying in all its parts really comes to us from aniquity.'

[V.]'s choice of winds is presumably influenced by their characteristics: *notus* (the South wind) is associated with warm weather, whilst *eurus* (the East wind) and *boreas* (the North wind) are associated with cold. The presence of the overground winds here is undoubtedly somewhat random, given that [V.] is talking specifically about underground winds, though cf. 285-8n. for a theory that Etna absorbs her own winds.

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[377] **169** densaque premit *G* : densique premunt *Ω*   ruinas *Z*   **170** nunc Euri Boreaeque Notus *G* : hinc furtim boreaeque noto *CSH et sic fere cett.*

premit premiturque: The polyptoton of *premere*, here used in both active and passive voice, depicts well the impression of the chaos of the winds constantly in conflict. For *premere* in relation to the winds, cf. Germ. *Phaen.* Frag. 5.7 *quo premeret Boreas*.

170 nunc… nunc: The anaphora contributes to the chaotic impression depicted of the winds being in conflict constantly with one another.

171-2 hinc venti rabies, hinc saevo quassa citatu | fundamenta soli trepidant urbesque caducae:[378] 'Hence the raging of the wind, hence the foundations of the earth, shaken by violent jolting, and collapsing cities tremble.' [V.] ascribes the cause of earthquakes to underground winds; this is the cause favoured by Seneca at *Natural Questions* 6.16.1ff.

For **venti rabies**, as recommended at *TLL* 11.2.11.18-20, cf. Ov. *Met.* 5.7.

citatu: For Goodyear's commendation of Ellis' conjecture here, see his n. ad loc.

hinc … hinc: For [V.]'s use of anaphora here, cf. 170n. above.

172 fundamenta soli: For the usage, cf. 201, and from elsewhere, cf. Prob. n. on Virg. *Georg.* 2.478 *ventis inclusis exitum quaerentibus terrae fundamenta quassantur*, which given its similarity to the context of the *Aetna*'s phrase in question, might be a direct reception of it. Through this usage of *fundamenta*, [V.] gives a sense of the destructive scale of earthquakes; they shake the earth to its very core.

urbes caducae: The only usage of *caducus* in Classical Latin in this sense (i.e. 'tottering'): see *TLL* 3.0.34.34.

173-4 inde, neque est aliud, si fas est credere, mundo | venturam antiqui faciem, veracius omen: 'Hence, if it is right to trust in it, we have no truer omen that the earth will return to its form of old.' This idea of the consequences of natural disaster being evidence for the fact that the earth will one day reclaim its primeval form is very Senecan: cf. e.g. *Nat. Quest.* 6.2.9 *si cadendum est, cadam orbe concusso, non quia fas est optare publicam cladem, sed quia ingens mortis*

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[378] **171** quassa citatu *Ellis* (quassa meatu *Wernsdorf*) : quassat hiatu Ω   **172** soli *G* : solo Ω

solacium est terram quoque videre mortalem. For further discussion of the intertextual relationship here, and the potentially Stoic implications of [V.]'s words, see intr. III.4; in addition to Munro (1867) 35-6.

si fas est credere: For the same usage, cf. Man. 3.553, 4.896. There is perhaps a nod here to Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 6.2.9 *non quia fas est optare* (quoted above).

mundo: Suggestive of the scale of the natural disaster envisaged by [V.]. For *facies mundo*, cf. Man. 1.35.

veracius omen: Whilst *omen* usually has connotations of superstition (anathema to [V.]), as suggested at *TLL* 9.2.577.42-5, it is here devoid of them, as [V.] is using it in the sense of 'indication'.

[175-6] *The earth is perforated with veins.* **[177-9]** *Mount Etna itself provides the truest account of its own nature; with me as your guide I can show you.* **[180-5]** *The explorer of Etna encounters many geological marvels;* **[186-7]** *these make the volcano what it is.*

175-87 [V.]'s Description of Etna and homage to it. Having spent the past eighty-one verses expounding his general theory about the interior of the earth (that it is not entirely solid), [V.] returns to the primary subject matter of his poem, Mount Etna, delivering a twelve-line ekphrastic description of it and encomium to it. The same observation-based methodology that he has used to argue that the earth is hollow is applied to Etna; his theorising on the status of the earth operates as a premise for his theorising on volcanism.

In this section of the poem, [V.] also gives his addressee an idea of how he intends his work to be used, casting himself and his poem as a 'guide' to help his reader understand the features of Mount Etna. Overall, [V.]'s vivid passage succeeds both in summarising his previous theory and refocusing his poem on its primary subject matter.

175-6 haec primo constat species naturaque terrae: | introrsus cessante solo trahit undique venas:[379] 'in the first place, then, this is the nature and appearance of the earth; whilst the surface is solid, everywhere does it drag down veins.' This couplet operates as a summary of the point that [V.] has been making over the course of the last eighty lines; that the earth is not entirely solid.

constat: Haupt's emendation for the *cum sit* of the extant mss. As Goodyear remarks (n. ad loc.), if 175-6 is a summary of 94-174, it is a necessary change.

species naturaque terrae: Via the juxtaposition of appearance (*species*) and reality (*natura*), [V.] reminds his reader once again of his observation-based methodological approach; for the correspondence between this approach and Epicureanism, see 117-45n., intr. III.3.

introrsus cessante solo: For *cesso* in this context, see 131n.

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[379] **175** primo *Cβ* : primum *δ* : immo *G* : imo *Matthiae*   constat *Haupt* : cum sit *GCSZV*   haec primo species rerum *γ*   facies *S*   -ve *G*

trahit undique venas: On [V.]'s depiction of the earth as akin to a living thing, cf., most obviously, 98-101n.

177 Aetna sui manifesta fides et proxima vero est: Note [V.]'s typical use of the language of truth and trust: see intr. IV.1.iii-2.iv for more on which. For this use of *fides*, cf. 226; for this use of *verum*, cf. 91-2.

　　manifesta fides: For the usage, in the same metrical *sedes*, cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.375.

　　For **proxima vero** as 'very close to the truth', as suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), cf. Germ. *Arat.* 26; Hor. *Ars. Poet.* 388.

178 non illic duce me occultas scrutabere causas: 'with me as your guide there, you will not struggle over hidden causes.'

　　The ultimate expression of didactic intent from [V.]. Highly self-conscious: the poet casts himself as the literal guide for his reader of the topography of Mount Etna. For the idea, and also in terms of similarity of expression, cf. 144-5 *tu modo subtiles animo duce percipe causas | occultamque fidem manifestis abstrahe rebus*: n. ad loc. [V.] has replaced the reader's *animus* as *dux* with himself as *dux*; his reader needs the didactic poet as guide.

　　scrutabere: For the usage, see *OLD* s.v. *scrutor* (meaning 3): 'probe for something hidden'.

179 occurrent oculis ipsae cogentque fateri: 'They [causes] will draw your eyes and compel you to admit them.' For similar rhetorically charged expressions in which [V.] gives agency to his subject matter, cf. 135-6 *certis tibi pignora rebus | atque oculis haesura tuis dabit ordine tellus* (n. ad loc.); 191 *res oculos ducent, res ipsae credere cogent*; 331 *res oculis locus ipse dabit cogetque negare.*

　　cogent fateri: For the usage, cf. Man. 2.526 *idque duplex ratio cogit verum esse fateri*.

180 plurima namque patent illi miracula monti: Like *miranda* (cf. 156n.), [V.]'s usage of *miracula* in association with the volcano is undoubtedly proleptic towards his concluding *miranda fabula*: for more on which, see intr. IV.4.

181 hinc vasti terrent aditus merguntque profundo: 'At one point vast chasms terrify as they plunge into the abyss.' Like Goodyear (n. ad loc.), I am not convinced by Ellis' interpretation of *mergo* as transitive (taking as its object 'the spirit', i.e. *animus*?). As pointed out by Goodyear, whilst the intransitive usage of *mergo* is rare, there are several examples of it used in this manner at *TLL* 8.0.833.47-50.

vasti terrent aditus: Note the dramatic diction. Despite his programmatic aim to demystify Mount Etna (see 1-4), throughout his poem, [V.] dramatises his subject matter for the sake of poetic appeal: cf. e.g. 138n. For the *Aetna* as a self-conscious reflection on the challenge faced by the didactic poet to balance transmission of message with delivering attractive poetry, see intr. IV.

aditus: For the usage, cf. 166 (163).

profundo: Cf. 143n.

182 † porrigit hinc artus penitusque exaestuat intra:[380] Textually, a very uncertain line; *artus* is the only word on which the mss. agree. From that, we can gather that the mountain is personified, and that the image is likely one of the volcano seeming to stretch or compress itself, but little more can be said on this line with any degree of certainty.

For Goodyear's convincing defence of G's *penitusque exaestuat*, and of his own conjecture *intra*, see his n. ad loc.

183 hinc scissae rupes obstant discordiaque ingens: 'At another point do cleft crags and great disorder bar the way.' Vivid description from [V.]: it is as if he is now giving his reader a topographical tour of Mount Etna.

discordia ingens: Perhaps surprisingly, this is the only collocation of *discordia* + *ingens* from Classical Latin. Note how [V.] often uses abstract qualities to represent something physical: cf. e.g. 139 *sine fine ruinae.*

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[380] **182** porrigit *G* : corrigit *Cβ*   hinc *ed. Rubei 1457* : hic *Ω*   penitusque exaestuat *G* : penitus quos exigit *CS* : penitusque exigit *Z* : penitusque quod exigit *Vγ*   intra *Goodyear* : ultra *Ω*

184-5 inter opus nectunt aliae mediumque coercent, | pars igni domitae, pars ignes ferre coactae:[381] 'Other crags – some of which are subdued by fire, others forced to bear it – are interspersed around the volcano and enclose it.'

inter opus nectunt: Via his use of his favoured poetological *Leitwort opus* (see 25n, intr. IV.1.ii), [V.] depicts Mount Etna as a work of art. Given the varied ways in which [V.] uses this word – often in reference to his subject matter (e.g. here), but sometimes in reference to his own poetic programme (see, e.g., 188n.) – his usage of it at this ekphrastic moment contributes to the blurring of the lines between subject matter and product – Mount Etna and the *Aetna* – that occurs throughout his work. The poetological connotations of this phrase are strengthened by [V.]'s use of *nectunt*: for *necto* equating to weaving, see *OLD* s.v. *necto* (meanings 1-6); for it equating to composing poetry, see meaning 10).

pars igni domitae, pars ignes ferre coactae: I do not follow Goodyear's acceptance of Ultius' conjecture *indomitae*, over the ms. reading *domitae*. Contrary to Goodyear's opinion (expressed in his n. ad loc.), *domitae* does provide the requisite contrast for the syntax: namely, that some of the rocks have already been conquered by fire, whilst others are forced to endure it yet. This is certainly not so problematic as to warrant the acceptance of a conjecture, particularly given the consensus between Ω and G on *domitae*.

[V.]'s personification of Etna's rocks here is proleptic to that of the *lapis molaris* at 470-1 *pars lapidum domita est, stanti pars robore pugnat | nec recipit flammas.*

186 [ut maior species et ne succurat inanis]:[382] Reprinted at 195. Both Munro and Goodyear deem this line spurious (in both of its locations): for their reasoning behind this, see their ns. ad loc. The line would certainly require drastic emendation to give it sense in either location.

187b [haec operis visenda sacri faciesque domusque]:[383] 'This is the appearance and home of the sacred mount, a sight to behold.' Preserved only in G, and placed in that tradition following 187. For Goodyear's acceptance of this line, and placement of it here, see his n. ad loc. Given the uncertainty of the

[381] **184** aliae *G* : varies *CSH* : varios *ARVγ*   **185** indomitae *Ultius, Goodyear* : domitae *Ω*

[382] **186 / 195** *eiecerunt Munro, Goodyear*   *post 185 tradunt GΩ, post 194 quoque Ω*

[383] **187b** *solus habet G post 187, huc traiecit Matthiae*   operis *vulgo* : operi *G*   modusque *Unger*

validity of this line, comments on it ought to be treated with caution. Cf., in general, 175 *haec primo constat species naturaque terrae*, the point being that the fabric of the earth is the same as that of Mount Etna.

operis sacri: [V.] depicts Mount Etna as having an aura of sanctity throughout the poem: cf. e.g. 276-7 *sacros | Aetnaei montis fremitus*. More generally, one thinks of the pious fires of 604 and the rest of the *miranda fabula*; cf. also 339-40, the description of those who burn incense at the summit to placate the gods.

For the sanctity of Mount Etna outside of the *Aetna*, cf. e.g. Pind. *Pyth.* 1.21-2. τᾶς ἐρεύγονται μὲν ἀπλάτου πυρὸς ἁγνόταται | ἐκ μυχῶν παγαί; discussion thereof at intr. I.1.

visenda: [V.]'s use of the gerundive here, expressing the necessity of seeing first-hand the splendour of Mount Etna, looks towards his exclamation at 600.

187 haec illi sedes tantarumque area rerum est:[384] 'This is the site and location of its awesome power.' Given the uncertainty of the status of the two lines (potentially) prior to this one (and its own textual uncertainty), 187 ought to be treated with caution.

If, following Goodyear, we accept 187b and γ's version of 187, ordered this way round, [V.] presents us with a dramatic two-line finale to his description of Mount Etna. The anaphora of *haec* contributes to this.

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[384] **187** illi *G* : illis Ω   tibi *Schwartz, fort. recte*   sedes tantarumque area rerum est *γ ed. Rubei 1475* (*et G ex silentio*) : tantarum sedesque arearum est *CS* : tantarum sedesque area rerum est *HAVδ* : tantarum sedeque circa rerum est *R* : tantarum sedes atque area rerum est *Schwartz fort. recte*

[188] *Now I shall illustrate the cause of Etna's fires.* **[189-96]** *The truth about her can only be observed from a distance.* **[197-8]** *Yet, there is no doubt about what the cause of her volatility is.* **[199-209]** *She erupts with such force that, when it happens, Jove thinks that old enemies are returning.* **[209-18]** *Nevertheless, the threat is a natural one; it is subterranean winds that provide Etna's fires with their strength.*

188-218: [V.]'s homage to *spiritus*. Having delivered in detail his theory about the hollow nature of the earth (94-176) and then applied the same theory to the interior of his subject matter Mount Etna (177-87), [V.] now moves on to addressing the issue promised in lines 2-4 of the poem: in short, what provides the volcano with its destructive force? He reminds his reader of this programmatic aim of his poem in lines 188 and 197, each of which neatly echo 2 and 3 respectively: see ns. on 188 and 197. After dramatically delaying providing the definitive answer to these questions, [V.] eventually reveals it to be subterranean *venti* (210), and particularly that which has been pressurised, which he labels as *spiritus* at 213 (see n. ad loc.).

The extent of the influence of *spiritus* over the workings of Mount Etna, in the eyes of [V.], is emphasised by the variety of ways in which the poet depicts the relationship between force and object. At 188 and 198, *spiritus* is depicted as an artist and Etna as its work; at 197, the impression is that of *spiritus* as torturer and Etna as victim; whilst at 216-8, the former is depicted as an emperor or general and Etna's fire as its foot-soldier.

[V.]'s admiration for *spiritus* contrasts starkly with his disdain for those who still associate Etna's volatility with the hackneyed myths of the past, something that he illustrates at 203-6 with the ridiculous image of Jupiter fearing a second Gigantomachy or war with the Underworld. As discussed at 203-6n., the reason behind [V.]'s insertion of this surprising piece of poetic colour is to contrast pointless superstition (for the hackneyed myths) with worthwhile interest (in the force of nature that powers Etna). In this way, that section becomes, once again, a tribute to [V.]'s own brand of poetry (that of scientific inquiry) as opposed to that of his rivals (hackneyed mythological material).

[V.] arguably aligns himself even more closely with his favoured force of nature. It is notable that [V.] casts himself as having the same relationship with the volcano – that of artist and artwork (see intr. IV.1.ii) – as that of *spiritus*. In addition, throughout his poem, [V.] leaves open the word's potential connotations of 'poetic inspiration'. If these connotations are accepted, the implication is that [V.]'s *spiritus* is the driving force behind his own *Aetna*, a poetological conceit that is entirely in keeping with his general approach: for further discussion of which, see intr. IV.1.

As discussed at intr. III.4, given the Senecan influence behind [V.]'s use of *spiritus*, its connotations of Stoic πνεῦμα are inescapable; for Seneca's use of this term, see, e.g., Hine (1981) n. on *Nat. Quest.* 2.1.3; G. D. Williams (2006) 134ff. However, at 213 (see n. ad loc.), [V.] makes it clear what he particularly means by *spiritus* – supercharged subterranean winds: see Volk (2005) 75.

For more on [V.]'s personification of *spiritus* in these lines, see Garani (2009) 108; and, on his casting of the force as an artificer, G. D. Williams (2020) 114.

188 nunc opus artificem incendi causamque reposcit:[385] 'Now my work demands who is the maker and cause of the inferno.' [V.] here suggests that, in this section, he will provide answers to his programmatic rhetorical question posed at verse 2 *quae tam fortes volvant incendia causae.* His answer – *spiritus* – is provided at 209-18.

opus: This verse is perhaps [V.]'s most obvious highlighting of the ambiguity inherent to his oft-used term *opus*. Two and four lines earlier, he has used the word in reference to his subject matter, but here he uses it clearly in reference to his own poetic programme. For more on [V.]'s manipulation of the poetological connotations of this word, see 25n., intr. IV.1.ii.

artificem: Vivid diction. More than simply asking for the cause of the fire, [V.] seeks a personified *artifex* of it: for more on [V.]'s changeable attitude towards this figure, see 35n., Kruschwitz (2015) 92-3. [V.] seems to answer this question at 600, when he attributes Etna's power generally to *artifex natura*. However, more specifically for this section, as we find out, he attributes Etna's power to *spiritus*: cf. 197-8n.

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[385] **188** incendi *Cδ* : incendii *G* : incendia *SZVδ*   causamque *CSZ* : causasque *Vγ* : caussaque *G*   poposcit *G*

opus […] causam[que] reposcit: Strongly self-conscious diction: [V.] depicts it as if his work has agency and governs his approach. This is reminiscent of 28 *mens carminis haec est* (see n. ad loc.).

reposcit suggests that [V.] has asked this question previously in his work, which of course he has, at verse 2 *quae tam fortes volvant incendia causae*.

189 † non illam parvo aut tenui discrimine signis:[386] As Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), the best, and really only, way to make sense of this corrupt line is to use the text of G and accept Haupt's emendation *signes*. This text gives the satisfactory meaning of 'you may mark this with no small or subtle distinction', i.e. 'you may discover it easily'. However, given the complete uncertainty here, I refrain from commenting further on this verse.

190 † mille sub exiguo ponent tibi tempora vera:[387] As Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), the text of G (*mille sub exiguum venient tibi pignora tempus*) lends this otherwise indecipherable line a degree of sense, its meaning being thus: 'in a small time, a thousand proofs will present themselves to you'. Its hyper-didactic timbre is also in keeping with [V.]'s general tone: cf. e.g. 161n. However, given how far removed G's readings are from those of Ω, as at 189, the prudent course of action is to use the obelus and refrain from further comment.

191 res oculos ducent, res ipsae credere cogent:[388] The meaning of this verse is largely the same regardless of whether one accepts the readings of G or Ω. It is a reiteration of the idea concurrent throughout the poem (cf. e.g. 135-6n., 179n.) that one's own perception is critical to understanding the 'truth' about the earth, something that is interpreted by de Lacy (1943) and Stoneman (2020) as indicative of [V.]'s alignment with Epicureanism (in my opinion simplistically: see intr. III.4; 117-45n.).

I agree with Goodyear that Lucr. 2.869 *sed magis ipsa manu ducunt et credere cogunt* strengthens the case for accepting G's reading. Once again,

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[386] **189** illas *Vδ* : illos *δ*   parvo aut tenui discrimine signis *G* : parvi aut tenuis discriminis ignes *Ω*   signes *Haupt*

[387] **190** *locus difficillimus*   sub exiguo ponent tibi (ponent ibi *S* : ponentibus *C* : ponam tibi *Vγ*) tempora (tempore *ARVγ*) vera (veras *γ*) *Ω* : sub exiguum venient tibi pignora tempus *G*

[388] **191** oculos ducent *G* : oculique docent *Ω*

acknowledgement of a potential allusion here raises the question of [V.]'s potential Epicureanism, but see intr. III.4 for my concerns with the methodology of isolating one-liners.

res … res: [V.]'s use of anaphora, strong caesura after *ducent*, and the rhyming of *–ent* ... *– ent* give this line rhetorical force. The voice of the didactic poet-*persona* is particularly apparent here.

oculos ducent … credere cogent: Once again, [V.] gives the landscape of Mount Etna agency over of its onlooker: cf. e.g. 135-6n., 179n.

192-3 quin etiam tactu moneant, contingere tuto | si liceat:[389] [Relying on readings from various sources] 'Indeed they [flames] would even warn you by touch, if one were allowed to touch them in safety.' [V.]'s seemingly bizarre suggestion that 'touching a volcano's fires will reveal its heat' may be a parody of the significance lent by the Epicureans to the importance of sensory perception in finding the truth, the *locus classicus* for which is Lucr. 4.499; on which, see Striker (1977), Sedley (1998) 87-90, et al.

This somewhat absurd idea is perhaps echoed at Claud. *Rapt. Pros.* 1.160-1 *Aetnaeos apices solo cognoscere visu, | non aditu temptare licet.*

193-4 prohibent flammae custodiaque ignis | illi operi est: 'but the flames prohibit it; fire is the guardian of Etna's work.' There is an ominous prolepsis here towards the destruction involved in the poem's concluding *miranda fabula*: for more on which, see intr. IV.4.

194-6 arcent aditus divinaque rerum | cura sine arbitrio est: For my omission, following Goodyear, of Ω's 195 *ut maior species et ne succurat inanis*, see 186n., Goodyear (n. on 186). The meaning of 194-6 without this likely interpolation is tolerable: '[flames] halt those approaching and the divine control of the mountain's workings happens without witness.'

divina cura: For the divinity of the volcano, cf. e.g. n. on 187b.

For **res** equating to the workings of the volcano, cf. 187.

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[389] **192** moneant *ARVγ* : moneat *GCS* : monet *H* : moneam *δ*   tuto *G, Scaliger* : toto *Ω*

196 eadem procul omnia cernes: For the potential Epicurean connotations of this, cf.140n.

197-8 nec tamen est dubium penitus quid torqueat Aetnam, | aut quis mirandus tantae faber imperet arti:[390] 'Nor, however, is there any doubt what torments Etna in the depths or who is the wondrous craftsman that commands such a work of art.' Similarly to the way in which verse 188 recalls 2, this couplet responds to the rhetorical questions posed in verse 3: *quid fremat imperium, quid raucos torqueat aestus?* The object in question is [V.]'s supercharged subterranean wind, *spiritus*, whose relationship with Mount Etna [V.] depicts here as that of both torturer and victim, and artist and artwork; for more on which, see 188-218n.

torqueat: Cf. its usage at 2; for the potential connotations of torture (which I think are particularly apparent here), see *OLD* s.v. *torqueo* meanings 3-5.

mirandus: Strongly proleptic towards the poem's concluding *miranda fabula* (603ff.), heightened further by the nod to 600 discussed below.

faber: Responds to 188 *nunc opus artificem* […] *reposcit*. As highlighted by G. D. Williams (2020: 114), [V.] here casts *spiritus* as a craftsman; see 188-218n. for [V.]'s potential poetological alignment with *spiritus*.

tantae arti: For Mount Etna as a work of art, cf. most obviously 600 *artificis naturae ingens opus aspice*; detailed discussion of the theme at 25n., intr. IV.1.ii.

imperet […] arti: The only example of *impero* + *arti/ibus* in extant Classical Latin. [V.]'s unusual usage of *impero* here emphasises the level of control held by *spiritus* over his subject matter. The usage induces analepsis on the part of the reader to the indirect question posed by [V.] at 3: *quid fremat imperium.* Now, we learn that one of the authorities that Etna attempts to 'resist' in some way is its tormenter (197), *faber* (197), *princeps* and *dux* (218): *spiritus*. For more on Etna as a resistant subject matter generally, see intr. IV.3.iii.

199-202 As suggested by Goodyear (1984: 349), for the content, cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.30.1 *Aetna aliquando multo igne abundavit, ingentem vim harenae urentis effudit, involutus est dies pulvere, populosque subita nox terruit. aiunt tunc plurima fuisse fulmina et tonitrua quae concursu aridiorum corporum facta sunt.*

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[390] **197** quid *G (ex adn. Crameri)* : quis *G (ex adn. Burmanni), ed Rubei 1475* : quin *Ω*

Cf. also the later passage of the *Aetna* (which clearly evokes this one), 359-62 *ille impetus ignes | et montis partes atra subiectat harena, | vastaque concursu trepidantia saxa fragoris | ardentisque simul flammas ac fulmina rumpunt.* As Goodyear recognises, there is likely a direct intertextual relationship between the Senecan quote and the two from the *Aetna*. For my hypothesis that it is [V.] using Seneca, and not the other way round, see intr. I.

199 pellitur exustae glomeratim nimbus harenae:[391] 'A cloud of burnt ash is ejected in a mass.'

G's usage of **glomeratim** here is the only in extant Classical Latin: see *TLL* 6.2.2058.39-48. Though one might argue that this makes the reading unconvincing, one could equally say it makes it unlikely that this is an interpolation. Goodyear accepts it on the grounds that it gives a good sense, unlike most of the other options here; Vγ's *glomeratus* would also work well, but has against it the unreliability of its provenance. Glauthier (2011: 119) rightly recommends cf. *Aen.* 3.576-7 [*Aetna*] *saxa* […] *glomerat.*

exustae: As suggested at *TLL* 5.2.2125.36, for the meaning, cf. the much later Marcell. *Chron.* 2.472.1 *Vesuvius mons exusta evomuit viscera.*

For **harena** as ash emitted by Etna, cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.30.1 (quoted above); and the many other examples cited at *TLL* 6.3.2527.55-9.

200-1 volvuntur ab imo | fundamenta: 'foundations are rooted up from the depths.' Note [V.]'s use of artistic enjambment to match meaning; for his use of this technique elsewhere, cf. e.g. 13-14n.

For the verse ending of 200, cf. *Aen.* 6.581 *volvuntur in imo.* Notably, this comes from Virgil's description of the Titanomachy. Likewise, in the case of our passage, [V.] uses gigantomachic imagery: see 203-6n. This Virgilian verse-ending also appears at Man. 1.447.

fundamenta: For the usage, cf. 172n.

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[391] **199** exustae *δ* : exhaustae *G* : exutae *Cβ*   glomeratim *G* : glomeratus *Vγ* : glomeratur *CHAδ* : glomerantur *SR*   arena *V*

201 [fundamenta] fragor tota nunc rumpitur Aetna: 'Now a crash breaks across the entirety of Etna.' Note the fricative alliteration of *fundamenta fragor*, in addition to the spondaic rhythm, dramatising [V.]'s diction here.

fragor: Note the gigantomachic connotations suggested by its association with thunder: see *TLL* 6.1.1234.3-21.

The passive form of *rumpo*, **rumpitur**, seems particularly 'explosive': cf. 1n., 59, 279, 605.

Note the dramatic placement of the subject of the poem, **Aetna**, as the final word of the hexameter.

202 nunc fusca pallent incendia mixta ruina: 'Now fires mixed with dark ruin pale.' Vivid description from [V.].

fusca: 'dark.' For its application to ash, presumably what is being suggested by [V.] here, see [Virg.] *Dirae* 60 *fuscum cinerem*.

pallent: Strong Stygian connotations of this word: cf. 78 *pallentia regna.* [V.]'s description here looks towards Jupiter's misinterpretation of Etna's eruption as the attempted upheaval of Olympus by Tartarus at 203-6.

For this usage of **ruina**, cf. 139n.

203-6 Jove's fears. In a surprising piece of poetic colour, [V.] uses supposedly off-limits imagery to illustrate the awesomeness of Etna's eruptive powers. The image that [V.] uses is one of Jove, wondering (*miratur*, 203) at Etna's fires, and fearing that they are indicative of: 1) the return of the giants; or 2) Dis transferring his kingdom from the depths of the Underworld to Olympus. Not only is the king of the gods here guilty of reacting to the volcano's blast in the exact manner that is criticised by [V.] at 278-9 *non subito pallere sono, non credere subter | caelestis migrasse minas aut Tartara rumpi*, but [V.] also here chooses to 'resurrect' two poetic *topoi* that he has earlier endeavoured to dismiss, the Gigantomachy (41-73) and the Underworld (77-84). Via this digression, [V.] is certainly exercising his right to a degree of poetic licence – acknowledged at 75 (see n. ad loc.) – and indulging in one of his trademark moments of use of supposedly 'impious imagery' (see intr. IV.2), but it serves a greater programmatic purpose. Stoneman (2020: 201) sees in [V.]'s ridiculous depiction of Jupiter further indication of his supposed Epicureanism-lite. However, given the complexity of ascertaining [V.]'s philosophical standpoint (see intr. III.3-4), I

am cautious to go this far. I think Glauthier's interpretation of Jove as emblematic of the errant scientist (2011: 119-20) is closer to the reality. As argued at 188-218n., I interpret this moment as [V.] providing a largely poetological contrast: namely, that of poets and readers who rightly wonder at the awesomeness of the natural forces that power Mount Etna such as *spiritus* (i.e. [V.] himself), versus those who still associate Etna's power with hackneyed mythology (i.e. those poetic rivals dismissed at 29-73 [see n. ad loc.]).

203 ipse procul tantos miratur Iuppiter ignes:[392] Jupiter is here guilty of one of [V.]'s methodological bugbears, the act of *mirari* without inquiry: cf. e.g. 224-5.

procul: [V.] is guilty here of not practising what he preaches in regard to the supposedly sacrilegious act of 'prying into the divine': cf. 254-6n.

tantos: As Goodyear suggests (intr. 38), G's *tantos* is an improvement on Ω's *magnos*, though both are tolerable.

204 neve sepulta novi surgant in bella gigantes: 'Fearing lest new giants are rising up to fight long-buried wars.' For Jupiter's fearfulness of the giants, cf. e.g. 54 *Iuppiter et caelo metuit*, an image [V.] was seemingly initially critical of, but now uses himself.

sepulta: Another image, which draws on a mythic tradition previously dismissed by [V.], but now resurrected; that of Typhon / Enceladus being buried underneath the volcano: cf. 73-4. Note the contrast depicted by [V.] here between a potential new (*novi*) generation of giants and the bygone (*sepulta*) wars.

205 neu Ditem regni pudeat: 'or that Dis is ashamed of his kingdom.' For the impersonal use of *pudeo* + accusative of person affected and genitive of object of shame, see *OLD* s.v. *pudeo* (meaning 1a).

205-6 neu Tartara caelo | vertat: 'and is transferring Tartarus to heaven.' The primary fear of Jove here is that Dis attempts to conquer heaven. Nevertheless, I think that there is also a hint here of fear on Jupiter's part of the buried Titans returning from their graves: cf. 278-9n.

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[392] **203** tantos *G* : magnos *Ω*

206 in occulto tantum tremit:[393]   As outlined by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), neither *tremit* nor *premit* can be right, unless the line is corrupt elsewhere. Goodyear favours either Haupt's emendation *tantus tremor*, or his own conjecture *tantus fremor*: i.e. 'there is such an uproar on the inside': see his n. ad loc for parallels.

206-7 omniaque extra | congeries operit saxorum et putris harenae:[394] 'and outside an accumulation of rocks and crumbling sand covers everything.' As stated by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), G's *extra* here, as opposed to Ω's *dextra*, makes very good sense, a contrast with *in occulto* seemingly being requisite.

congeries: [V] depicts the effluent of the volcano as a chaotic mixture of substances.

For **puter** in application to the **harena** / ash emitted by a volcano, see 424 (and various other examples listed at *TLL* 10.2.2750.30-44).

208-9 quae nec sponte sua saliunt nec corporis ullis | subiectata cadunt robusti viribus:[395] Using, as per Goodyear, Wernsdorf's conjecture *saliunt*, and that of Postgate, *subiectata*: 'Neither do these things leap out on their own accord, nor are they thrown upwards and fall back down on account of the strength of any solid body...'

saliunt: I am not entirely convinced by Goodyear's acceptance of Wernsdorf's conjecture here, though he acknowledges that he does so 'with some hesitation' (see his n. ad loc.). G's *veniunt*, which as Goodyear (intr. 38) acknowledges, 'gives a sense', is at least not a modern conjecture.

ullis here is a transferred epithet, its meaning being far more appropriate when applied to *corporis*.

subiectata: Postgate's emendation of *sustentata*; necessary if we take Wernsdorf's *saliunt*, less so if we accept G's *veniunt*.

robusti: G's reading. There is very little to choose between this and Ω's *robustis*.

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[393] **206** tantus *Haupt*   tremit *G* : premit *Ω* : fremit *Damsté* : tremor *Haupt*

[394] **206** omniaque extra *G* : omnia dextra *Ω*

[395] **208** saliunt *Wernsdorf* : faciunt *Ω* : veniunt *G*   ullis *Gδ* : ulli *Ω*   **209** subiectata *Postgate* : sustentata *Ω*   robusti *G* : robustis *Ω*

209-11 omnes | exagitant venti turbas ac vertice saevo | in densum conlecta rotant volvuntque profundo:[396] 'it is entirely the winds which agitate the masses, and in a savage vortex whirl what they have gathered into a solid mass, spouting it out from the depths.' Vivid depiction from [V.]; the long sentence, spread over three hexameters with enjambment, depicts well the intended impression of carnage.

exagitant venti turbas: The reading of G, which as Goodyear comments (intr. 38), gives excellent sense. Cf. 154 *spiritus exagitat venas*, and perhaps 318-9 *penitusque coactus | exagitant ventos.*

exagitant … vertice … rotant … volvunt: Note the *variatio* of the various words related to the idea of 'whirling', used to depict confusion and carnage vividly.

turbas: For the confusion implied by this word when applied to natural matter, see *OLD* s.v. *turba* (meaning 1b).

ac… que: The polysyndeton here is reflective of the chaos of the scene.

conlecta: Munro and Goodyear adopt G's reading *collecta*, but spell it in this manner, in an attempt to reconcile G's reading with CZ's *coniecta*.

profundo: See 143n. for [V.]'s use of this word.

212 † haec causa expectata ruunt incendia montis:[397] This verse is clearly deeply corrupt. To give it sense, two options for emendation present themselves, the first being to accept ARV's *hac*, and the second being to read *hae causae* (partially preserved by G's reading). The latter option has a couple of factors supporting it. Firstly, it provides a degree of context to 212, which surely requires previous mention of the winds – something that *hae causae* (referring to the *venti*) provides to an extent. Secondly, reading *hae causae* makes this remark a neat answer to the rhetorical questions about the *causae* of the *incendia* posed at lines 2 and 188 (see ns. ad loc.).

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[396] **210** exagitant venti turbas ac *G* : exigitur venti turbas a *C* : i turb *tantum legitur in S* : exigitur vetitur saxa *R* : *cett. vel peius corrupti*   **211** conlecta *Munro* : collecta *G* : coniecta *CZ* : convesta *V* : congesta *γ*

[397] **212** haec *GCγ* : hac *ARV* : nec *Hδ*   causae *G*   expectata *Ω* : expectanda *G* : spectanda *Baehrens* : *alii alia*   ruunt *Ω* : terunt *G* : ferunt *Maehly*   *fort. lacuna post h. u. statuenda est*

213 spiritus inflatis nomen, languentibus aer: In dramatic style, [V.] finally names the *causa* of Etna's volatility – *spiritus*, supercharged subterranean wind: see 111n. The textual difficulty of this line derives from the issue of what *inflatis* and *langentibus* specifically refer to; as Goodyear (n. ad loc.) suggests, it has to be *venti*. There are other similar such expressions from antiquity: cf. e.g. Lucr. 6.685 *ventus enim fit, ubi est agitando percitus, aer*; Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 2.1.3 *spiritus autem aer sit agitatus*, 5.1.1 *ventus est fluens aer*; and more at Goodyear (n. ad loc.).

As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), there are a number of feasible explanations as to why this line seems to be a *non sequitur*: there may be a lacuna after 212; the two lines may have been switched; or perhaps we should read *hae causae* as referring to *venti*. As expressed at 212n., the latter option has a couple of factors supporting it, but nevertheless cannot be accepted conclusively. Despite all this uncertainty, the strong attestation for the thought expressed in 213 elsewhere in ancient literature negates the need for drastic emendation.

214 nam prope nequiquam per se est violentia flammae:[398] 'for the violence of the flame on its own is near nothing.' The mss. are clearly deeply corrupt here. I agree with Goodyear (n. ad loc.) that Wagler's conjecture *per se est* makes good sense given the context, and is given strength by its attestation in verse: cf. e.g. Lucr. 1.419, 422, 440, et al.

215-6 ingenium velox illi motusque perennis, | verum opus auxilium est ut pellat corpora: 'It [fire] possesses a swift nature and an everlasting volatility, but it needs help to propel particles.'

ingenium velox: Note the personification of the volcano's fire here; it has its own *ingenium*, 'character'. This is the only one of [V.]'s four usages of this noun (cf. 75, 227, 548) that is in application to nature; nevertheless, for the usage of *ingenium* in Latin literature more broadly in application to nature, see *TLL* 7.1.1535-9.

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[398] **214** *abscissus in S*   prope nequiquam *C* : prope nequicquam *G* : propena quic(t)quam *Zδ* : *cett. pessime corrupti*   nequaquam *Baehrens*   per se est *Wagler* : pars est *G* : par est *Cβ*   violentia *Gδ* : volentia *C* : volventia *β*   flammae *G* : semper *Cβ*

motus[que] perennis: Strong analepsis to 25 *qui tanto motus operi, quae tanta perenni*: see n. ad loc*.* for the likely following lacuna.

verum: The conjunction: see *OLD* s.v. *verum*³ (meaning 1).

ut pellat corpora: For *corpus* = 'particle', see *OLD* s.v.*corpus* (meaning 12). This looks back to [V.]'s suggestion at 209-10 *quae nec sponte sua saliunt nec corporis ullis | subiectata cadunt robusti viribus*; though see n. ad loc. for the textual uncertainty. The point, of course, is that *spiritus* provides this force.

216-8 Note the overload of military and imperial diction delivered here by [V.] in his fanfare to *spiritus*: *impetus… imperat… princeps… duce… militat*. As we have already seen, [V.] has a penchant for depicting nature with the diction of empire-building: cf. e.g. 3n. See intr. IV.3.iii for broader discussion of this as a ploy from [V.] to achieve his programmatic aim of taming a resistant natural subject matter.

216-7 nullus | impetus est ipsi; qua spiritus imperat, audit:³⁹⁹ 'itself, it [fire] has no power; where spirit orders, it obeys.' This responds to the remark made at 198-9 *nec tamen est dubium* […] *quis mirandus tantae faber imperet arti*; see n. ad loc. for further discussion of the controlling relationship between *spiritus* and Etna.

impetus: For [V.]'s use of this militaristic noun in application to natural forces, see 165n.

audit: The reading of the majority of the extant mss.; G's *audet* would also give a sense.

218 hic princeps magnoque sub hoc duce militat ignis:⁴⁰⁰ [Reading Schrader's *hic* and Munro's *magnoque*] 'spirit is the emperor; under this great general, fire serves as a soldier.' Regardless of which ms. tradition one follows here, the image depicted is one of *spiritus* as a general, and fire serving as a soldier in its army; for further discussion of the relationship between force and object depicted here, see 188-218n. This image is proleptic towards [V.]'s

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³⁹⁹ **217** audit *CSHRᵖ·ᶜ·Vγ* : audis *ARᵃ·ᶜ·* : audet *G*

⁴⁰⁰ **218** hic *Schrader* : hinc *GCSH* : hunc *A* : nunc *RVγ*　　magnoque *Munro* : magnosque *CSH* : magnusque *ARVγ* : magnus qui *G* : magnus, quo sub *Baehrens*

depiction of the volcano in his concluding *miranda fabula*, as conducting a crusade against the greedy: for more on which, see intr. IV.4.

magnoque: Munro's elegant correction of C's *magnosque* gives this line a good sense, in line with that of G's rendering of it.

219-81 [V.]'s methodological digression. At this point in the poem, [V.] pauses from his exposition to deliver an extended reflection on the role of the scientist / didactic poet. On account of this section's clear programmatic significance, it is one of the most well-addressed parts of the poem in modern scholarship, most of which has focused on its engagement with [V.]'s didactic predecessors: see, in particular, Lühr (1971), Effe (1977) 204-20, Di Giovine (1981), Goodyear (1984) 357-8, Volk (2005) 82-90, Taub (2008) 47-8, Welsh (2014) 101-9, and G. D. Williams (2020) 119-21.

1) Manilius' *Astronomica* **in [V.]'s digression.** As Lühr (1971: 147-8) originally ascertained, perhaps the strongest model behind or target of [V.]'s rhetoric is Manilius' programmatic statement at *Astr.* 4.387-407, in which the astronomical poet defends himself from the imagined charge that he is interfering with the inaccessible divine sphere (387-92). The broad similarities between the two passages can be seen in the table below:

Man. 4.387-407	*Aetna* 219-81
Statement of poetic programme: one's aim is to inquire into the very nature of God (387-92).	Statement of poetic programme: one's aim is to inquire into the causes of things (219-22).
Profession of worthwhileness of poet's *labor* (393).	Profession of worthwhileness of poet's *labor* (222-3).
Do not simply 'wonder' (*ne mirere*) at the intricacy of things (393-4).	Do not simply gaze at the wonders (*miracula*) of the earth in the manner of cattle (224-6).
	[V.]'s 'didactic *recusatio*', the first half of which is itself modelled on Man. 2.60ff., culminating in overt criticism of

	the Manilian poetic programme (226-56).
Miners are willing to toil hard for their profits (396)…	People toil wretchedly over little things; miners are willing to torture the earth to make ends meet (257-62)…
… As are farmers, putting their trust in the fickle countryside (400-1).	… Likewise farmers, motivated by greed, waste their days with trivial concerns (263-71).
Criticism of *luxuria* (404-7).	Criticism of *avaritia* (272).
Man must expend his very self before God can dwell in him (407).	Each man should imbue himself with noble accomplishments, the mind's harvest (273ff.).

It becomes clear that [V.] uses a Manilian framework as a platform to engage in *aemulatio* with his poetic predecessor. Having proclaimed the benefits of (largely) astronomy from 222-50, in a drastic turnaround, [V.] remarks pointedly at 250-2 that, before one addresses the stars, one ought to understand the earth beneath one's feet: for more on which, see n. ad loc. The poet then begins a full-on assault on the Manilian poetic programme, exclaiming at 254-5: *nam quae mortali spes est, quae amentia maior, | in Iovis errantem regno perquirere divos*. This, of course, responds directly to Manilius' depiction of his own line of inquiry; in programmatic passages at *Astr.* 2.60ff. and 4.905ff., Manilius casts himself as inquiring into the very causes of Jove.

Whilst, at this point, [V.]'s *recusatio* seemingly acknowledges Manilius as its prime 'target', it continues to follow its model in terms of its form and approach. Just like *Astr.* 4.387-407, [V.] moves on to discussion of farming and mining. Whilst Manilius uses these pursuits as exempla for his mantra that 'hard work pays dividends' (see *Astr.* 4.396-401), [V.] casts them in a more negative light, depicting them (in contrast to his own pursuit, natural science) as trivial, destructive activities.

2) Virgil's *Georgics* in [V.]'s digression.

Having attacked mining as a greedy pursuit, [V.] is similarly critical of farming. At 264-73 he depicts agriculture as an inane, avaricious enterprise, an impression that is in keeping with the attitude towards it expressed by him throughout his work: see n. ad loc., intr. IV.3.ii. Given the broadly poetological nature of this part of the poem (it being seemingly, on one level, a discussion of topics suitable for didactic poetry), scholars – most notably Di Giovine (1981), Volk (2005: 87) and Welsh (2014: 103-6) – have read [V.]'s critique of farming at 263-72 as a barb directed at Virgil's *Georgics*. Via this interpretation, as Volk (2005: 87) suggests, the poet casts his own 'brand' of didactic as '*den goldenen Mittleweg*' of the genre, in the sense that it is not so ambitious and sacrilegious as that of Manilius, but on the other hand, is not as base and worthless as that of Virgil, the *Georgics*.

This interpretation is made particularly tempting, given that, throughout his methodological digression, [V.] uses the diction of agriculture to illustrate the gain that can be acquired via scientific investigation; this is particularly apparent at, e.g., 222, 223 and 271-2 (see ns. ad loc.) In addition, undoubtedly, [V.] uses as a model for his 'didactic *recusatio*', Virgil's own, *Georg.* 2.475ff.: see 226n.; Volk (2005) 86-7.

However, whilst I do not rule out the chance that [V.] might be engaging directly with the *Georgics* here, I think that the interpretation ought to be treated with caution. Whilst it is neat to see in this digression [V.] issuing polemic on two fronts, and thus casting his own brand of didactic as the ideal one, it ought to be said that [V.]'s critique of farming is fairly generic; there is very little that can be pinpointed as an attack on a specific part of the *Georgics*, something that even the advocates of this reading acknowledge: see, e.g., Welsh (2014) 103-6. If anything, [V.]'s views on farming are in line with those of Virgil, who likewise depicts farmers as greedy (see, e.g., Virg. *Georg.* 1.47-8). Therefore, I prefer to read the poet's critique of farming as a heightening of the Virgilian impression of agriculture as an often-greedy enterprise, and as part of a broad line of critique expressed throughout the work of greed and abuse of the natural environment. For more on this perspective of the poet, see intr. III.1, IV.3.ii.; 263-72n.

3) Others in [V.]'s digression.

Another potential hypotext behind [V.]'s methodological digression, which has not been properly addressed by scholarship, is Cicero's praise of *ratio* at *De Nat. Deo.* 2.59.147ff. Whereas, throughout *Aetna* 219-81, [V.] laments man's exploitation of the natural world, Cicero casts man's domination of the biosphere in a positive light, commending the very pursuits – astronomy, farming and mining – which are criticised by [V.]. Particularly relevant is the way in which Cicero commends astronomy for the access with which it provides humankind to the divine, something that is scathingly critiqued by [V.] at 254-6 (see n. ad loc.)

The case for a direct intertextual relationship between these two works is strengthened by some striking parallels. At 224-5 (see n. ad loc.) [V.] contrasts mankind's ability to understand the world on which he walks with that of cattle. This evokes strongly the impression that Cicero gives of man's uniqueness at, for example, *De Nat. Deo.* 2.56.140, 58.145, 61.153. Likewise, though [V.] may be evoking Cicero via Manilius here, or responding to a generically 'Stoic' conception of the universe, his question about the status of the universe at 230 strongly evokes Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.45.115: see 230n. for details.

For a moment of very specific engagement with the Lucretian poetic programme from [V.], see 250n. For [V.]'s use of Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.15 at 257-62 (his critique of mining), see n. ad loc.

[219-22] *[V.] declares to his reader that he will continue to provide insights into the workings of the volcano,* **[222-3]** *stating that the work of the natural scientist / philosopher / didactic poet is hard, but also rewarding.* **[224-30]** *One should not be content to gaze at one's surroundings unknowingly, but should inquire into the causes of everything,* **[231-2]** *attempting to know the orbit of the sun / moon,* **[233-5]** *the signs of the zodiac,* **[236-7]** *the influence of the lunar cycle over weather,* **[238-40]** *the revolving of the seasons;* **[241-6]** *and one should be able to read the map of the sky.* **[247-250]** *In short, one should endeavour to understand all phenomena, and to define them clearly; true satisfaction in life is derived from this.*

219-22 'Now, since the nature of its [Etna's] workings and fabric is clear, I shall pursue the questions of whence do the winds derive, what fuel feeds the fires, why suddenly do they curtail their strengths, and what is the cause of their quiescence.'

219 nunc quoniam in promptu est operis natura solique: Strong didactic rhetoric here; [V.] is talking his addressee through his poem: cf. e.g. 161n.

opus is used here in reference to the 'workings' of the volcano. For [V.]'s exploitation of the potential metapoetical ambiguity of this term in the *Aetna*, see 25n.; intr. IV.1.ii.

For a parallel of **natura … in promptu = '**nature … is clear', cf. Virg. *Aen.* 3.185 *ante oculos quorum in promptu natura videtur.*

220 unde ipsi venti:[401] The origins of Mount Etna's supercharged subterranean winds are the focus of the poem from 282-384.

quae res incendia pascit: The answer to this is the *lapis molaris*, which becomes the focus of the poem at 385-564.

[V.]'s use of **pascit** here is proleptic towards his personification of Etna's fires as 'devouring' in the poem's dramatic ending: cf. 621-4 *cunctantis uorat ignis et undique torret auaros,* | *consequitur fugisse ratos et praemia captis* | *concremat:*

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[401] **220** unde *G* : una *Ω*

haec nullis parsura incendia pascunt, | uel solis parsura piis; discussion at intr. IV. 4.ii.

220-2 unde … quae …. cur … quae … subsequar: Following G's readings, *unde* (220) and *cur* (221), [V.]'s series of rhetorical questions to start a programmatic section such as this is typically didactic. This evokes the opening of the poem, and via this, that of the *Georgics*: see 1-4n.

As Welsh (2014: 110) recognises, this series of programmatic rhetorical questions is reiterated by [V.] at the conclusion of his digression, thus giving it ring composition: see 280-1n.

221 cur subito cohibent vires:[402] If we follow Goodyear in accepting Heinsius' conjecture *vires* (see Goodyear intr. 39-40), this perhaps looks forward to 324-5, which potentially reads: *spiritus involvensque suo sibi pondere vires | densa per ardentes exercet corpora vires*: see Goodyear n. ad loc. for the textual uncertainty.

quae causa silenti: As Welsh (2014: 109) suggests, this should perhaps be paired with 281 *unde repente quies et † multo † foedere pax sit*, though it is debatable whether the cause of the volcano's intermittent activity is ever discussed by [V.]: see 281n.

222 immensus labor est, sed fertilis idem: 'Immense is my task, but also productive.'

Cf. Man. 4.393 *pro pretio labor est nec sunt immunia tanta.* Both [V.] and Manilius frame their poetic approach in the language of the *Georgics.* As Ellis (n. ad loc.) points out, [V.]'s statement evokes particularly Virgil's programmatic remark at *Georg.* 4.6 *in tenui labor, at tenuis non gloria*. Ellis does not comment on the fact that our poet destroys his Virgilian model; the characteristically balanced, subtle Virgilian understatement is replaced by [V.]'s shameless proclaiming of the *immensitas* of his own work – though perhaps the poet's claims regarding the *fertilitas* of his work counterbalance this to an extent. As discussed at 219-81n., this section of the poem, which is broadly modelled on Virgil's own

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[402] **221** cur *G* : cum *Ω*   cohibent *G* : cohibetur *Ω* : cohibentur *Matthiae*   vires *Heinsius* : iners *G* : inest *Ω*

didactic 'proem in the middle', *Georg.* 2.475ff, is generally steeped in 'Georgic' diction: cf. e.g. 226, 263-74 (ns. ad loc.); Di Giovine (1981).

Perhaps cf. also, in terms of poetic self-reflection, Luc. 1.68 *inmensumque aperitur opus…*

fertilis: For usages of this word figuratively as in this case (not common), see *TLL* 6.1.588.49-62.

223 digna laborantis respondent praemia curis: 'fitting rewards match the efforts of he who toils.'

A phrase that is once again steeped in the language of the *Georgics*. This looks forward to [V.]'s claim at 270-1 *implendus sibi quisque bonis est artibus: illae | sunt animi fruges, haec rerum maxima merces*: see n. ad loc.

digna praemia: Receiving one's *praemia* (one's 'just deserts') is an important theme of the *Aetna*. In [V.]'s closing *miranda fabula*, the *avara manus* seek to rescue at all costs their *praedas /praemia*, in contrast to the *pii fratres*, for whom *divitiae solae materque paterque* [*sunt*] (631). For more on this, see intr. IV.4.iii.

curis: Another toil-related *Leitwort* of the *Aetna*: see 24n.

224-5 non oculis solum pecudum miranda tueri | more nec effusos in humum grave pascere corpus:[403] 'Not to take in the wonders of the world in the manner of cattle only with the eye, nor, sprawled on the ground, to feed a fat body.'

As suggested by Richter (n. ad loc.), the contrast expressed here between man and other animals is reminiscent of that stated by Ovid at *Met.* 1.84ff. (and others elsewhere: see Bömer n. ad loc.), the point being that man has the physical and intellectual capacities to evaluate his surroundings, whilst other animals do not. For the likely Ciceronian backdrop to this, see 219-81n., section 3.

non oculis solum pecudum miranda tueri | more: An expansion on the similar Man. 4.394 *ne mirere viae flexus rerumque catenas*: for the broader correspondence between the two passages, see 219-81n., section 1. [V.] is encouraging his audience not to gaze in awe at the wonders of the natural world, but instead to inquire into their nature and causes.

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[403] **224** tueri *G* : fuere *Ω* : videre *φ*

miranda: On prolepsis towards [V.]'s concluding *miranda fabula*, cf. 156n.

tueri: For the usage here, see *OLD* s.v. *tueor* (meaning 1). Either of G's *tueri* or φ's *videre* is possible, but as Goodyear (intr.: 40) argues, the latter's readings are not particularly reliable.

226 nosse fidem rerum dubiasque exquirere causas:[404] 'To know the truth of things, and inquire into doubtful causes.'

Cf., most obviously, Virg. *Georg.* 2.490 *felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*. As Effe (1977: 219) and Volk (2005: 86-7) have discussed, Virgil's own self-conscious digression (*Georg.* 2.475ff.), of which this iconic verse is the crux, is likely an important model for *Aetna* 219-81. Whilst there is much scholarly debate over the precise intention behind the Virgilian passage in question, the most popular (and in my opinion, most convincing) interpretation of it is that it is particularly poetological: that it is a *recusatio*, in which Virgil suggests that he would write 'Lucretian' didactic poetry had he the capacity for it, but instead settles for his own more grounded brand of it. For interpretations of the Virgilian passage from broadly this school of thought, see Buchheit (1972) 55-77, J. S. Clay (1976) 239-40, Hardie (1986) 43-7, Mynors n. on 2.490, Schäfer (1996) 91, Gale (2000) 8-12, and Volk (2002) 141-5; cf., in contrast, Ross (1975) 29-31 and Thomas n. on 2.483-4, which argue that the contrast presented by Virgil is that between his own works, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*.

Regardless of the original Virgilian intention behind *Georg.* 2.475ff., and the various scholarly interpretations of the passage, [V.] reads it as an attempt from Virgil to engage with his didactic predecessor, Lucretius. In our lines, [V.] adopts the basic Virgilian framework of 'didactic *recusatio*', switches its primary target from Lucretius to Manilius, and adapts its tone from respectful to dismissive: see 254-6n.

In addition to the Virgilian parallel, cf. Cic. *De Nat*. *Deo.* 2.38.96, at which, in the context of an anecdote about Mount Etna, the orator remarks: *sed adsiduitate cotidiana et consuetudine oculorum adsuescunt animi, neque admirantur neque requirunt rationes earum rerum quas semper vident, proinde quasi novitas nos magis quam magnitudo rerum debeat ad exquirendas causas excitare.* The

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[404] **226** rerum *G* : rebus *Ω*

message of this – that habit and daily occurrence ensure that we do not properly appreciate ever-visible phenomena – resonates strongly with that of [V.].

nosse fidem rerum: An aim that is, unsurprisingly, particularly in line with [V.]'s own self-proclaimed poetic standard: cf. 91-2 *debita carminibus libertas ista, sed omnis | in vero mihi cura* (see n. ad loc.)

rerum: Not least because of the Virgilian and Ciceronian parallels cited above, G's reading here is far superior to Ω's *rebus*.

For **exquirere causas** cf. the similarly dated *Ciris* 254 *persequitur miserae causas exquirere tabis.* For a similar parallel between the *Aetna* and the *Ciris*, cf. *Aetna* 637 ~ *Ciris* 27; for discussion of the possibility of a hypertextual relationship between these two texts, see Waszink (1972) 444-5.

For **dubias causas** in a didactic context, cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.1 *hic quoque mensis habet dubias in nomine causas…*

227 ingenium sacrare caputque attollere caelo:[405] 'To consecrate genius and to lift one's head to the sky.'

ingenium sacrare: Even Ellis, who is generally so sceptical of G, accepts that its reading here, *ingenium sacrare*, is 'brilliant and looks as if it must be genuine': see his n. ad loc. As has been commented on by all of Sudhaus, Ellis and Goodyear, G's version of this verse renders the thought expressed strikingly reminiscent of that at Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 4a *praef.* 10 *ingenium suspicere coepisti omnium maximum et dignissimum, quod consecrari mallet quam conteri.*

caputque attolere caelo: Once again, G's reading likely restores the true sense of this phrase from the nonsense preserved in Ω. In Stoic writings, man's uprightness is a defining characteristic of his dominion over his environment: see, e.g., Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.56.140 *quae* [*natura*] *primum eos humo excitatos celsos et erectos constituit, ut deorum cognitionem caelum intuentes capere possent.* Here, the image serves both a figurative and literal purpose. In a similar way to Manilius, [V.] uses the image of 'looking to the stars' to indicate lofty poetic / scientific ambitions.

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[405] **227** ingenium sacrare *G* : sacra per ingentem (ign- *V*) *CSZV* : sacra per urgentem *γ* : sacrare ingenium *Schwartz*   caputque attollere caelo *G* : capitique attollere caelum *Ω* : caput atque attollere caelo *Scaliger*

228-46 The list of cosmic questions. [V.]'s list of cosmic questions, needing to be answered, recalls strongly (and is likely modelled on) that which follows Manilius' programmatic statement at *Astr.* 2.57-61, which proclaims the virtues of the poet's own brand of hexametric verse. In that passage, Manilius uses the image of a charioteer ascending to the heavens to depict himself as a didactic poet who is inquiring into the divine (explicitly expressed as such) governance of the universe, and goes on to express his Stoic belief that it is a god, which ensures that the *machina* of the universe stays in sync (60-2), before listing various astronomical objects and what they portend: for more on this, see Volk (2005) 213-8; (2012) 203-8. In stark contrast to Manilius' list, which provides a clear-cut answer to all the cosmic questions that he poses, namely God, [V.]'s questions remain unanswered, in an attempt perhaps to distance himself from the Manilian theocratic world view. For more on this, see 230n.

Likely via its primary Manilian model, this list of *naturales quaestiones* is reminiscent of that at Prop. 3.5.25ff. (see 230n., Shackleton Bailey [1952] 309), in addition to [Arist.] *De Mundo* 397a.

228-9 scire quot et quae sint magno natalia mundo | principia:[406] 'To know how many and of what sort are the natal elements of this great universe.'

magno mundo has strong Manilian precedence. Cf. Man. 5.409 *cumque fidis magno succedunt sidera mundo*, 738-9 *sic etiam magno quaedam res publica mundo est | quam natura facit.*

natalia principia: I agree with Sudhaus and Goodyear (ns. ad loc.) that *principia* here must = στοιχεῖα ('elements'): see *TLL* 10.2.1311.43-77. This usage of the noun is particularly Lucretian: cf. e.g. *DRN* 1.483-4 *corpora sunt porro partim primordia rerum, | partim concilio quae constant principiorum*; and several more at *TLL* 10.2.1311.58-69.

Given that *principia* = 'elements', here CSφ's reading *natalia* is clearly preferable to G's *fatalia* (in contrast to the case at 227): see Ellis intr. lxxxiii, 228n.; Goodyear intr. 41, 228n. Both *natale* + *principium* and *fatale* + *principium* are unique noun-adj. combinations in extant Latin.

As suggested by Richter (n. ad loc.), cf. generally Ov. *Met.* 15.67-8 *magni primordia mundi | et rerum causas*: see 226n.

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[406] **228** natalia *CSφ* : fatalia *G* : talia *β*

229 † occasus metuunt ad saecula pergunt:[407] Whilst this line is nonsensical in all preserved mss., a likely purpose behind [V.]'s words is ascertainable; the poet seems to be asking whether elements 'fear' death, as in whether they are everlasting or temporary. Throughout his poem, [V.] has engaged with the idea of a universe in flux: cf. e.g. 173-4n.

Sense might be restored to this verse, if – following Hine (2012: 320) – we read *timentne an*, but as expressed by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), such an adverbial use of *saecula* on its own (as in *ad saecula*, *per saecula*), which would be required in this case, is likely unparalleled.[408]

230 et firma aeterno religata est machina vinclo:[409] 'and is the fabric fixed firm with everlasting chain?'

This rhetorical question engages with the broadly Stoic notion of a cohesive universe: see, e.g., Diog. Laert. 7. 138-9, Cleom. *Cael.* 1.2.1-10, Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.44.115. Given the broader parallels between the two texts (see 228-46n., 219-81n., section 1), this is likely a particular allusion to the programmatic passage at Man. 2.60ff., which includes at 67-70 the verdict: *quod nisi cognatis membris <u>contexta</u> maneret | <u>machina </u>et imposito pareret tota magistro | ac tantum mundi regeret prudentia censum, | non esset statio terris, non ambitus astris.* These words also perhaps allude via Manilius to the programmatic passage of Propertius 3.5.25-6 *tum mihi naturae libeat perdiscere mores, | quis deus hanc mundi temperet arte domum.* For several other examples of *machina* used in this sense (i.e. *machina mundi*), see *TLL* 8.0.13.74-7.

As suggested by Sudhaus (n. ad loc.), [V.]'s figurative usage of **vinclum** (GC's reading), referring to a force that keeps the universe in order, strongly evokes Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.45.115 *maxime autem corpora inter se iuncta permanent cum quasi quodam vinculo circumdato colligantur.*

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[407] **229** *Goodyear fort.* occasusne timentia … an (*pro* et *in* 230) *vel* -ne timent, *Goralli* an (*pro* ad) *recepto*

[408] Both Ellis and Goodyear cite as their only possible parallel for this adverbial usage of *saecula*, Cinna, Frag.14 (Baehrens), quoted at Suet. Grammat. 11: *saecula permaneat nostri Dictynna Catonis* (Mommsen *per maneat*).

[409] **230** vinclo *GC* : mundo *Sβ*

231 solis scire modum et quanto minor orbita lunae: 'to know the measure of the sun's course, and by how much is the orbit of the moon less big.'

solis modum: This is the only usage in extant Latin literature of *modus* referring to an orbit (see *TLL* 8.0.1255.8); Sudhaus (n. ad loc.) believes that it must refer simply to the sun's size, but this destroys the contrast that [V.] is seemingly making. For this impression of the earth at the centre of the universe, cf. e.g. Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.40.102.

orbita lunae: For this, in the same metrical *sedes*, cf. Prop. 2.20.21.

232-3 haec brevior cursu ut bis senos pervolet orbes | annuus ille meet:[410] 'so that in its shorter course, it [the moon] flies through twelve revolutions, while the sun takes a year to orbit.' [V.]'s point is that the moon orbits the earth twelve times during the course of the year.

232 ut: Required syntactically; placed by Ellis here, which Goodyear accepts, though cf. the way in which Munro replaces the *et* of 231 with *ut*.

233 meet: The reading of φ, favoured by modern editors (including Goodyear). Despite the general unreliability of the excerpts (see Goodyear intr. 40), this reading gains strength on account of firstly the improved sense it brings to the line, and secondly the fact that *meo* is a particularly popular verb of motion in the context of astrological movement: cf. e.g. Ov. *Met.* 15.71 *qua sidera lege mearent*; further examples at *TLL* 8.0.786.15-30.

233-5 quae certo sidera currant | ordine quaeve suos servent incondita motus | scire vices etiam signorum et tradita iura:[411] '[to know] which stars run in fixed order, which maintain their motion with no regularity; also the movements of the constellations and their allotted laws.' These three verses all have the same metre (*ddssda*). A double metrical repetition such as this occurs only twice elsewhere in the poem, namely at 268-70 and at 619-21. This might reflect either the patterned nature of the subject matter being described, or the generally formulaic timbre of this section of the poem.

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[410] **232** ut *add. Ellis*   **233** meet *φ* : movet *GHRδ* : monet *CSAVδ*

[411] **233** sidera *Rδφ* : sidere *CSHAδ*   **234** quaeve *GCS* : quaeque *β*   suos *G* : suo *Ω*   servent *G* : errant *CSZδ*: erant *V* : careant *γ*   incognita *δ*   motus *G* : cura *CSARγ* : thura *H* : tura *V*

233-4 certo ordine: The idea of the stars having a fixed course is the basis of the astronomical poems of both Aratus (cf. e.g. *Phaen.* 19-23) and Manilius: *certus* + *ordo* as a noun-adjective combination in relation to celestial movements is used six times by Manilius (at *Astr.* 1.59-60, 148, 246; 2.961; 3.51, 73).

234 As explained by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), G's **ordine quaeve suos servent incondita motus** makes good sense (supported by Apul. *De Mundo* 2; cf. [Arist.] *De Mundo* 392a). Ellis (232n.) plausibly suggests that those which move 'randomly', in the eyes of [V.], are the planets: see, e.g., Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.46.119.

235 scire vices etiam signorum et tradita iura: 'to know also the movements of the constellations and the laws given to them.'

vices signorum as 'movements of the constellations' is particularly Manilian: see, e.g., Man. 1.109-10, 495, 562-3; 3.33, 294.

iura in application to stars is once again particularly Manilian: cf., in particular, Man. 1.806 *signorum canam fatalia carmine iura*; other examples at *TLL* 7.2.694.63-6.

235b sex cum nocte rapi, totidem cum luce referri:[412] 'six [constellations] fly round by night, and the same again return with daylight.'

This line is preserved only by G, so as Goodyear suggests (n. ad loc.), our inclusion of it depends entirely on our assessment of the authority of that tradition. As discussed at intr. V.2, on the whole, I rate the authority of this tradition as second to none.

The verse undoubtedly makes good sense, referring to the phenomenon that, whatever time of year it is, only six of the signs of the zodiac are visible above the horizon. As pointed out by Ellis (n. ad loc.), this is something that is commented on regularly in Greco-Roman poetry: cf. e.g. Man. 3.241-2 *in quocumque dies deducitur astro, | sex habeat supra terras, sex signa sub illis*; Arat. *Phaen.* 554-6 πάσῃ δ᾽ ἐπὶ νυκτὶ | ἓξ αἰεὶ δύνουσι δυωδεκάδες κύκλοιο, | τόσσαι δ᾽ ἀντέλλουσι (cf. Germ. *Arat.* 568-9). For further explanation of the

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[412] **235b** *solus praebet G*

concept, which is being described here, see the excellent note of Kidd on *Phaen.* 555.

236-7 nubila cur caelo, terris denuntiet imbres, | quo rubeat Phoebe, quo frater palleat, igni:[413] '[to know] why, when Phoebe reddens her fire, and her brother pales his, it presages clouds for the sky and rain for the earth.'

Goodyear, following Munro, cautiously accepts Ω's reading of 236 over G's baffling *panope caelo*, which he argues likely conceals a corruption: see his evaluative n. ad loc. These two lines seem to be a compression of – and somewhat mangling of – Virg. *Georg.* 1.424-37, which themselves look back to Arat. *Phaen.* 778-818: see Thomas n. ad loc. for Virgil's use of Aratus here.

The repetition of the metre (*dsssda*) might reflect the mundanity of the list: cf. 233-5n.

quo rubeat Phoebe: As suggested by Sudhaus (n. ad loc.), cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.431 *vento semper rubet aurea Phoebe*. Whereas for [V.] the reddening of the moon forecasts rain, for Virgil it presages wind (Virgil deems the waxing of the moon indicative of rain [see *Georg.* 1.427-9: Thomas n. ad loc.]). Aratus is much more specific in regard to the matter of how the moon presages weather, stating at *Phaenomena* 796-8 that the reddening of the moon on the third day of a month (specifically) is indicative of stormy weather (for that month in its entirety): αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν τριτόωσαν ὅλος περὶ κύκλος ἑλίσσῃ | πάντη ἐρευθόμενος, μάλα κεν τότε χείμερος εἴη· | μείζονι δ᾽ ἂν χειμῶνι πυρώτερα φοινίσσοιτο. Aratus also associates the reddening of the waxing moon with the coming of wind at 803-4.

[V.]'s couplet seems to oversimplify its models; indeed, given the contrast between moon and sun presented by the poet, the sense may be something as simplistic and bizarre as 'a weak sun and strong moon presages bad weather.'

238-40 tempora cur varient anni, ver, prima iuventa, | cur aestate perit, cur aestas ipsa senescit | autumnoque obrepit hiems et in orbe recurrit:[414] 'why the times of the year change: why spring, its youthful prime, perishes with summer; why summer itself grows old and winter creeps up on autumn, restarting

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[413] **236** caelo terris (terrae *Vγ*) Ω : panope caelo *G* : Phaeo caelo *Unger* : *alii alia*

[414] **238** ver prima iuventa *G* : primaque iuventa *Ωφ*

the cycle.' For the association of the changing of the season with celestial objects (implicit here) from antiquity, cf. e.g. Germ. *Arat.* 483-4; Man. 1.265-9.

Note the way in which [V.] uses subtle *variatio* to depict the changing of the seasons; the three sub-clauses – each of which refers to a different season – all use different verbs and syntax. Their common characteristic is their use of personification: e.g. *iuventa… perit… senescit… obrepit*. These few lines stand out from the rest of the list on account of their artfulness.

ver, prima iuventa: G's reading, which undoubtedly gives excellent sense here.

241-3 Note the internal rhyming across all three of these hexameters: *axem … tristem … cometen*; *unde … quave … unde*; *stella tenax … Martia pugnax*. The effect of this is to speed up the list.

241 axem Helices: Helice is an alternative name for the Plough / Ursa Major, not one of the twelve signs of the zodiac.

tristem cometen: As suggested by Sudhaus (n. ad loc.), for the association between comets and disaster, cf., e.g., Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 7.28.2-3.

242 Lucifer … Hesperus: The names given to the planet Venus when seen in the morning and evening respectively: as suggested by Sudhaus (n. ad loc.), see Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.20.53 *Lucifer latine dicitur, cum antegreditur solem, cum subsequitur autem, Hesperus*.

Bootes: 'The ploughman', a constellation made up of several particularly bright stars in the Northern sky.

243 Saturni quae stella tenax: Editors have puzzled over the precise meaning of the epithet ascribed to Saturn here, *tenax*. Goodyear (n. ad loc.) tentatively accepts Scaliger's hunch that here it = *impediens*, *remorans*, 'delaying' or 'impeding' business. His reasoning is that used by Hildebrandt (1911: 60) that Saturn appears to the Northern Hemisphere in the winter, and is thus associated with holding ships in port.

245 quo rapiant nautae, quo sidere lintea tendant: '[to know] under which star sailors ought to draw in their sails, and under which they ought to spread

them.' Knowledge of the stars obviously played a crucial role in imperial Roman seafaring: see, e.g., Man. 1.294-5 *summa tenent eius miseris notissima nautis | signa per immensum cupidos ducentia pontum.*

246 caeli praediscere cursus: *praediscere* = 'to understand': cf e.g. Virg. *Georg.* 1.51 *ventos et varium caeli praediscere morem.*

quo Serius incubet index:[415] *Serius* = Sirius, the 'dog-star'. *incubere*, 'to lie down, recline', is entirely appropriate, given the subject matter, but the meaning of *index* here is not obvious. Ellis (n. ad loc.) presents the suggestion of Sudhaus – that Sirius is a watch-dog – and that of Jacob, that *index* refers to the warning-signs given by the dog-star of harvests, sickness, war or peace. To my mind, there is not much to choose between the two interpretations; Goodyear (n. ad loc.) favours the latter.

247-50 et quaecumque iacent tanto miracula mundo | non congesta pati nec acervo condita rerum, | sed manifesta notis certa disponere sede | singula, divina est animi ac iucunda voluptas:[416] '[in short, one ought] not allow any of the wonders of the world to lie confused and buried in a mass of things, but should mark each one clearly in its proper place – this is the divine and joyful pleasure of the mind.'

[V.] concludes his list of encouraged scientific pursuits with a four-line summary. The encouraged approach, one of rationalism, has a markedly Lucretian timbre, something which is enhanced by specific verbal parallels (see 250n. below).

miracula: Cf. 180n., intr. IV.4.i.

tanto mundo: Cosmic connotations: *mundus* here refers to the world and beyond. Cf. [V.]'s use of *rerum* in the following line (248).

248 congesta … condita: Rhetorical repetition with *variatio*. G's *congesta* gives a marginally better sense than Ωφ's *digesta*.

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[415] **246** Serius *Housman* : setius *CS* : secius *HVδ* : serus *AR* : sevus *γ* : *om. φ* : Sirius *Ald. 1517* incubat *HR* : excubet *G*

[416] **248** congesta *G* : digesta *Ωφ*

nec acervo condita rerum: There are strong Lucretian connotations of this. The image of an *acervus rerum* seems unusual, but cf. Front. *Strat.* 1.2.5 *et hi, qui notabilia excerpserunt, ipso velut acervo rerum confuderunt legentem.* Whereas in the cited parallel *res* refers to 'material', in our example it must refer to *miracula*.

249-50 In the opinion of [V.], one ought to sort out, define, explain and clearly label the various phenomena of the world.

singula: [V.] expresses something of an atomistic impression of the universe here, with each part of its fabric having its own unique properties.

disponere: On the cosmogonical significance of this verb, see Glauthier (2011) 104.

250 divina est animi ac iucunda voluptas: The conclusion to [V.]'s list. The diction here is evidently particularly Lucretian. *voluptas* is used twenty-four times throughout Lucretius' poem (including in its first line). Each of the two epithets applied by [V.] to this Lucretian *Leitwort* is used once in application to it in Lucretius' poem: for *divina voluptas*, cf. Lucr. 3.28-9 *his ibi me rebus quaedam divina voluptas | percipit atque horror*; for *iucunda voluptas*, cf. Lucr. 2.1-4 *suave, mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis, | e terra magnum alterius spectare laborem; | non quia vexari quemquamst iucunda voluptas, | sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.*[417] Both of these passages of the *DRN* are famously programmatic: see Bailey ns. ad loc. [V.]'s choice of diction here might therefore be interpreted as an attempt to align himself clearly with his Epicurean model (at his own strongly programmatic moment), but I read it instead as a pointed 'correction'; that, for [V.], rather than *divina voluptas* deriving itself from the enlightenment of Epicureanism, and *iucunda voluptas* from the sanctuary from real-world problems provided by philosophy, they are in fact derived from the act of inquiry itself (as proclaimed at 248-50). For more on [V.]'s vexed hypertextual relationship with his Lucretian model, see intr. III.3.

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[417] These Lucretian parallels in *Aetna* 250 were brought to my attention by E. Mitchell at AMPAL 2018.

[251-2] *Before one looks to the stars, one should get to grips with the earth on which one walks,* **[253-6]** *something that is a task more appropriate to mortals than interfering with the divine sphere (the stars).* **[257]** *We care too much for the little things.* **[258-62]** *Why do we spend so much time looking for gold and silver and, in the process, torture the earth with fire and iron?* **[263-72]** *Farmers concern themselves too much with maximising gain.* **[273-4]** *Instead each person should set themselves to the 'noble arts';* **[275-81]** *the study of the earth and in particular Mount Etna.*

251-2 sed prior haec homini cura est, cognoscere terram | quaeque in ea miranda tulit natura notare:[418] 'But a more important concern for humankind is this: to understand the earth, and to take note of all the wonders that nature has bore on it.'

This is seemingly a barb directed at Manilius, the gist of which is that one should know the ground on which one walks, before attempting to comprehend the incomprehensible universe. For more on how [V.]'s critique of the Manilian poetic programme plays out throughout the poem, see in particular, intr. III.2; and on specific sections of the poem, 41-73n., 219-81n., section 1.

Schrader's conjecture **homini** is justifiably favoured by Goodyear (see his 251n.), as it reconciles well the variants (*omni* G, *hominis* ZS, *dominis* C), all of which give a tolerable sense, but none as good as *homini*.

On the significance of **cura/ae** in the poem, see 24n. Its usage here is undoubtedly highly self-conscious, as it refers to [V.]'s own *raison d'être*, study and appreciation of the earth.

cognoscere: In the context of didactic poetry, one is compelled to consider here Virgil's *makarismos* at *Georg.* 2.490 *felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.* This further contributes to the impression that [V.]'s *recusatio* at 219-81 draws heavily on Virgil's at *Georg.* 2.475ff. For more on this, see 226n.; 219-81n., section 2.

et quae tot miranda tulit natura notare: Cf. similarly 247-50n. This is the first appearance in the poem of **natura** as a personified force: cf. [V.]'s usages of

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[418] **251** homini *Schrader* : omni *G* : hominis *Z et S (ut vid.)*: dominis *C* : hominum *Vγ*

it at 272, 539, and in particular, 600. [V.]'s words here are strongly proleptic towards the conclusion of the poem, an account of a *miranda fabula* (603), which is explicitly labelled as the product of *artifex natura* (600): for more on which, and on [V.]'s general depiction of *natura*, see intr. IV.3-4.

253 haec nobis magis adfinis caelestibus astris:[419] Given [V.]'s polemic against Manilius, outlined at 219-81n., section 2, G's reading *magis* (supported by the Exc. Pith.), which gives this phrase the meaning 'this [study of the earth] is more appropriate for us than the stars of heaven', is far superior to Ω's reading, *magna*. There is a clear poetological *double-entendre* from [V.] here, the earth not only being literally 'closer' to humankind than the stars, but also a 'more appropriate' topic for poetry. For Ellis' unconvincing defence of his acceptance of Ω's *magna*, see his n. ad loc.; see criticism of which at Goodyear intr. 43.

254-6 nam quae mortali spes quaeve amentia maior | in Iovis errantem regno perquirere divos | tantum opus ante pedes transire ac perdere segnem:[420] 'For what greater hope, what greater madness is there for mortal kind than to wander into the kingdom of Jove looking for gods, whilst overlooking and neglecting in its idleness such a great work beneath its feet.'

As first recognized by Lühr (1971: 146) this is a response to Man. 4.905-10, in which the astronomical / astrological poet depicts precisely this as his poetic *raison d'etre*: *stitit unus in arcem | erectus capitis victorque ad sidera mittit | sidereos oculos propiusque aspectat Olympum | inquiritque Iovem; nec sola fronte deorum | contentus manet, et caelum scrutatur in alvo | cognatumque sequens corpus se quaerit in astris*.

[V.]'s scathing critique might also look back to Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.61.153, which similarly commends the fact that knowledge of the stars equates to knowledge of the gods: *quid vero? hominum ratio non in caelum usque penetravit? soli enim ex animantibus nos astrorum ortus obitus cursusque cognovimus, ab hominum genere finitus est dies mensis annus, defectiones solis et lunae cognitae praedictaeque in omne posterum tempus, quae quantae quando futurae sint. quae contuens animus accedit ad cognitionem deorum, e*

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[419] **253** magis *G Exc. Pith.* : magna Ω

[420] **255** divos *G* : velle Ω   **256** segnem *Schrader* : segne est *G* : segnes Ω

qua oritur pietas, cui coniuncta iustitia est reliquaeque virtutes, e quibus vita beata existit par et similis deorum, nulla alia re nisi inmortalitate, quae nihil ad bene vivendum pertinet, cedens caelestibus.

For more on [V.]'s broader use of both of these intertexts, see 219-81n.

254 quae … quae: The anaphora used here contributes to the cutting tone of [V.]'s critique of his targets.

spes … amentia maior: Note the abrupt increase in the sharpness of [V]'s tone from describing the act of inquiring into the divine as something naïve (*spes*) to something insane (*amentia*). For usages by other authors of *amentia* in this rhetorically charged manner, see *TLL* 1.0.1883.46-1884.78.

255 in Iovis errantem regno perquirere divos: [V.] casts astronomy as gigantomachic. This passage, when taken alongside the allusions to the opening of the *Astronomica* in [V.]'s own digression on the Gigantomachy (see 41-73n., 43-4n.), confirms that [V.] is labelling Manilius as a gigantomachic poet: for more on this polemic, see intr. III.2.

perquirere: Cf. Man. 4.193 [On those born under the constellation Erigone] *causas viresque dabit perquirere rerum.* Lühr (1971: 145) suggests that [V.] uses this word, in contrast to *exquirere* (226), with negative connotations of over-ambition; he suggests cf. Lucr. 6.382 *indicia occultae divum perquirere mentis.* Manilius' own self-referential usage of this verb at *Astr.* 4.193 strengthens Lühr's argument.

divos: G's reading certainly strengthens the anti-Manilian rhetoric here.

256 tantum opus: Given [V.]'s exploitation of the ambiguity of the term *opus* throughout his poem, and the particularly poetological nature of the passage in question, one cannot ignore the potentially metapoetical sense of his usage of it here: *opus* on one level meaning the earth, but on another, a poem about the earth, i.e. the *Aetna*. The remark is reminiscent of the equally poetologically charged one [V.] makes at 600. For more on [V.]'s exploitation of the inherent ambiguity of the term *opus*, see 25n.; intr. IV.1.ii.

For the description of Mount Etna as specifically **tantum opus**, cf. 25.

transire: For the potential metapoetical significance of this, cf. *OLD* s.v. *transeo*, meanings 12 and 12c.

segnem: The conjecture of Schrader; understandably accepted by Goodyear as an intermediary between the readings of G (*segne est*) and Ω (*segnes*).

257-72 In these verses, [V.] adopts a markedly similar approach to that of Manilius at *Astr.* 4.396-401, comparing the *labor* of the scientist / didactic poet firstly to that of miners and then to that of farmers. However, [V.] subtly but significantly adapts his model; whilst Manilius' is a positive analogy to emphasise the benefits of scientific endeavour, [V.] subverts it into something that emphasises the greed of miners and farmers. For further discussion of this section, see 219-81n., section 2.

257-62 [V.]'s criticism of mining [following G's placement of Ω's 276-8]. For general discussion of this section of the poem, see intr. IV.3.i. Whilst, unlike his critique of farming at 263-72, we do not have an obvious literary 'target' of [V.]'s critique here, the thought behind it is reminiscent of that at Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 5.15. In this passage, Seneca uses a *fabula* about Philip II's miners witnessing great lakes underground (ostensibly used as evidence for his hypothesis about underground waters) as a vehicle to attack the *luxuria* associated with mining. Similarly to [V.]'s depiction of it in this passage, Seneca casts mining as a greedy, base pursuit at odds with the values that he espouses: for more on this, see G. D Williams (2012) 81-4, Zientek (2020) 78-85. Nevertheless, whereas Seneca emphasises the damage done to the self by such a pursuit, [V.] laments the damage done to the earth by it.

Another potential hypotext behind [V.]'s critique of mining is Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.60.151. Here, Cicero uses mining as a positive exemplum for man's mastery of his environment (and at 2.64.162 as evidence of the sure fact that the earth must have been created for man). This positive impression of mining contrasts heavily with [V.]'s impression of it as a damaging, exploitative enterprise, as depicted here. For [V.]'s engagement with this Ciceronian model more broadly, see 219-81n., section 3.

257-9 torquemur miseri in parvis premimurque labore, | scrutamur rimas et vertimus omne profundum, | quaeritur argenti semen, nunc aurea

vena:[421] 'Miserable, we torture ourselves over the trivial and are oppressed by toil; we scrutinise fissures and uproot the depths in their entirety. At one time a fleck of silver is sought, at another a vein of gold.'

257 torquemur miseri in parvis: Previously [V.] has sought to define his own poetic programme as not overly grand in comparison with that of the astronomical poets (and Manilius in particular), but now he criticises those concerned with 'trivialities', namely mining and farming, activities that he accuses of ravishing the earth in pursuit of profit. Di Giovine (1981), Volk (2005: 87) and Welsh (2014: 103-6) understandably interpret these critiques metapoetically. Their line of argument is thus: in the *Aetna*, as does criticism of astronomy amount to criticism of the *Astronomica*, so does criticism of farming amount to that of the *Georgics*. The issue with this interpretation is that, whilst [V.]'s digression on astronomy responds directly to specific programmatic statements made by Manilius (see, e.g., 254-6n.), his critique of farming has little that can be seen as responding to the *Georgics*, bar the fact that, in both poems, the farmer is characterised as greedy, making the two poems if anything aligned with one another. Hence, I prefer to read [V.]'s critique of mining and farming here not as something particularly poetological, but as a moment in the poem when the poet's voice of despair for humankind's abuse of the environment is aired: for more on this, see intr. IV.3.ii.

premimurque: As Goodyear expresses at intr. 43, there is very little to choose between Ω's *premimurque* and G's *terimurque*, though as both Munro and Ellis point out (see their respective ns. ad loc.), *premo* is a word favoured by our poet: cf. its other usages at 49 (x2), 169 (x2), 291, 303 and 374.

labore: For the Virgilian connotations of this word, see 222n.

258-60 (276-8) G has here the lines that Ω has as 276-8: see Munro (n. ad loc.); Goodyear intr. 43.Of the many excellent improvements to the *Aetna*'s text provided by G (see intr. V.2), its transposition of these verses is arguably its best. Given that, in this position, these verses fit the sense and tone of their

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[421] **257** terimurque *G* **258-60 (276-8)** *post 275 habent CSZVγ, post 272 δ   verum ordinem in G servatum esse probabile est, nam in L desunt post 275 vv. 276-8, in collatione autem Leidensi Burmannus indicavit vv. non adesse in G eodem loco quo in textu Pithoeano leguntur et verum ordinem signis restituit*

surrounding passage excellently, as opposed to amounting to a *non sequitur* in their position in Ω, I am happy to accept G's placement of them.

258 (276) scrutamur rimas et vertimus omne profundum: [V.]'s use of *scrutor* and *omnis* is suggestive of the implied excessiveness of mining as a pursuit. In contrast to [V.], Cicero depicts positively the way in which the depths of the earth provide for us; see *De Nat. Deo.* 2.65.162 *nec vero supra terram sed etiam in intumis eius tenebris plurimarum rerum latet utilitas quae ad usum hominum orta ab hominibus solis invenitur.* For more on the hypertextual relationship between the two texts, see 219-81n., section 3.

259 (277) quaeritur argenti semen, nunc aurea vena: Cf. Man. 4.396-7 *at nisi perfossis fugiet te montibus aurum, | obstabitque suis opibus super addita tellus.* [V.] subverts the Manilian impression of mining as the admirable exertion of *labor* to overcome the earth's barrier to its inner riches, casting it instead as the greedy exploitation of a tortured earth.

This impression of the earth as a living organism has Stoic origins. Cf. e.g. the already-quoted Sen. *Nat. Quest.* 3.15.1; in addition, Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 2.63 *ut tamen quae summa patitur atque extrema cute tolerabilia videantur, penetramus in viscera auri argentique venas et aeris ac plumbi metalla fodientes.*

Another important potential model behind this image is Cic. *De Nat. Deo.* 2.60.151, in which, in commendation of man's use of his hands, Cicero remarks: *nos aeris argenti auri venas penitus abditas invenimus.* For [V.]'s broader use of this Ciceronian model, see 257-62n.; 219-81n., section 3.

Whilst the image of a subterranean 'vein of metal' is common (see *OLD* s.v. *vena* [meaning 6]), this is the only usage of **semen** in Classical Latin in this context (see *OLD* s.v. *semen*). Given the word's connotations of tininess, [V.]'s use of it is suggestive of the lengths to which miners are willing to go to make money.

260 (278)-262 (259) torquentur flamma terrae ferroque domantur, | dum sese pretio redimant, verumque professae | tum demum viles taceant inopesque relictae:[422] 'Parts of the earth are tortured by flame and oppressed by iron, until they yield themselves for a price – at which point, having admitted their secret, they are left silenced, poor and worthless.'

260 (278) torquentur flamma terrae ferroque domantur: [V.] uses a chiastic structure to convey meaning artfully; earth is placed in the middle of the two implements of torture (*flamma* and *ferrum* – note the fricative alliteration), which are themselves surrounded by the two verbs of torture (*torquentur* and *domantur* – note the internal rhyme). This verse is set to a slow, painful spondaic rhythm. This is [V.] at his most stylish as a poet.

torquentur: Given [V.]'s impression of mining as abuse of the earth, Ω's reading *torquentur* is superior to G's *torrentur*. Cf. also his other usages of *torqueo* at 3, 197, 257 and 609.

domantur: *domo* and cognates are words favoured by [V.] when it comes to depicting the oppression of natural forces by man or other natural forces. For the former, cf. 10, 611 (discussion at intr. IV.4.ii); for the latter, cf. 185n., 471, 522.

261 (258) dum sese pretio redimant: [V.] uses the language of commerce here. This is indicative of the target of his criticism, those exploiting the earth for financial gain: cf. 273-4n.

261-2 (258-9) verumque professae | tum demum viles taceant inopesque relictae: To ratchet up the pathos of his depiction of the exploitation of the earth, [V.] here plays with the idea of the earth having a voice; to escape torture, it is forced to 'profess its truth', as in give up its resources, and when it does, it is left silenced, bereft and worthless. For more on [V.]'s pathetic image of the earth depicted here, see intr. IV.3.i.

viles taceant: This is the reading of Ω, which given its contribution to meaning here, it is inconceivable not to accept. Therefore, I here diverge from Goodyear, who accepts Maehly's conjecture *vilesque iacent*, on the fairly weak grounds that

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[422] **260 (278)** torquentur *Ω* : torrentur *G*   **262 (259)** viles taceant *Ω* : vilesque iacent *Maehly* : humilesque iacent *G* : turpe silent artes viles *φ* : iaceant *Exc. Pith.* : vilesque tacent *Wight Duff*

it is an intermediary reading between those of Ω and G (*viles taceant* and *humilesque iacent* respectively). Whilst I follow his acceptance of Ω's *viles taceant*, I do not agree with Ellis' verdict (expressed in his n. ad loc.) that *taceant* might contain 'some notion of the silence of a forsaken mine, no longer resonant with tools or the voices of men.' This is far too anthropocentric an interpretation of [V.]'s words here, the point of which is that mankind's greed induces the earth's silence.

263-72 (260-9) [V.]'s critique of farming. Is this section metapoetical, and therefore directed particularly at the *Georgics*? Di Giovine (1981) and Volk (2005: 87) deem it so, as does Welsh (2014) 103-6. The former two scholars read this passage as a specific response to *Georg.* 2.177ff. (on soil types), whilst the latter interprets it more broadly as a response to the ethos expressed at *Georg.* 2.109–76, which opens with the pairing of crops with their proper soil type, and proceeds onto the so-called *Laudes Italiae*. Welsh argues that [V.]'s criticism of mining also derives itself from this passage, given that Virgil emphasises the abundant mineral wealth of the land at *Georg.* 2.165–6. As expressed at 219-81n., section 2, given the generic nature of the criticism of farming here, whilst I do not rule it out, I am not convinced that [V.] has the *Georgics* particularly in mind: for specifics, see, esp., ns. on 266(3) and 267(4).

263 (260) noctes atque dies festinant arva coloni: 'Night and day, farmers hurry to work their fields.'

Goodyear (n. ad loc.) recommends cf. Prop. 1.9.7-8 *lucra petens habili tauros adiungit aratro | et durum terrae rusticus urget opus*, but the more obvious parallel is surely the phrase iterated twice by Lucretius, at *DRN* 2.12-13 and 3.62-3 *noctes atque dies niti praesante labore | ad summas emergere opes*, both of which are criticising the avarice of men, in contrast to the philosophically aware. By evoking the Lucretian formula here, [V.] casts farmers in the same light as his predecessor does the avaricious throng.

For parallels of the unusual **festinant arva**, see Ellis (n. ad loc.).

264 (261) callent rure manus: 'hands harden in the country.' There is an obvious figurative sense of acquiring experience implicit here: see *TLL* 3.0.166.1-36.

glebarum expenditur usus:[423] 'the use of different soils is pondered.' This is precisely what Virgil does, to painstaking extent, at *Georg.* 2.177-258: see Mynors n. ad loc.

Given its better sense, G's reading here *expendimus usum* is likely closer to the truth than that *expellimur usu* of the mss. On account of this, Munro, Sudhaus and Ellis all accept it. In contrast, Goodyear once again accepts a modern conjecture as an intermediary reading between those of G and the mss., in this case Wernsdorf's *expenditur usus*: see his explanation at Goodyear intr. 44. Although I am critical of the way in which Goodyear accepts a scholar's conjecture as an intermediary reading between Ω and G at 262n., here I am not as concerned, given the limited effect that it has on the meaning, which is almost certainly preserved by G's reading.

265 (262) fertilis haec segetique feracior, altera viti: 'This one [soil] is fertile and more accommodating for corn, another for the vine.' Cf. Virg. *Georg.* 2.228-9 *altera frumentis quoniam favet, altera Baccho, | densa magis Cereri, rarissima quaeque Lyaeo.* Virgil has earlier provided more detail on the preferred soil type for vines and corn: cf., respectively, *Georg.* 2.185-94 and 203-11.

266 (263) haec plantis humus, haec herbis dignissima tellus:[424] 'This soil is best for shoots, this earth for grass.'

Virgil does not cover soil types for trees or grass specifically, which suggests that [V.]'s critique of farming is generic as opposed to specifically directed against the *Georgics*.

[V.]'s repetition of *haec… haec* is suggestive of the supposed inanity of the subject matter. The repetitive structure of the sentence in general (*haec – plantis / herbis – humus / tellus*) further contributes to this impression.

There is very little to choose between G's **plantis** and Ωφ's *platanis*, though the generic nature of [V.]'s discourse here might point towards the former.

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[423] **264 (261)**   expenditur usus *Wernsdorf* : expellimur usu *CSZφ* : expendimus usum *G* : expendimus usu *V* : experimur usu (*vel* usus *vel* versus) *δ*

[424] **266 (263)** plantis *G* : platanis *Ωφ*

267 (264) haec dura et melior pecori:[425] [Using φ's *dura est*] 'This one is firm and better for cattle.' Virgil does not specifically recommend 'hard' soil for the rearing of livestock, instead advocating use of the idyllic meadows of Tarentum or Mantua: see *Georg.* 2.195-202. This once again suggests that [V.]'s critique here is not directed at the *Georgics* specifically, but instead at agriculture in general.

dura et: The most apt of the various readings here; for this reason, it is followed by all the main editions of the poem. Against it is the weakness of its provenance (φ: see intr. V.1), and perhaps the fact that it contradicts Virgil (see above).

268-70 (265-7) Note the repetition of the same *dddsda* metre for three lines in a row; double repetition of metre only happens twice elsewhere in the poem: cf. 233-5n. [V.]'s formulaic composition might be implicit of the supposed mundanity of his subject matter: cf. 266n.

268 (265) aridiora tenent oleae: This is in line with what Virgil says: cf. Virg. *Georg.* 2.179-81 *difficiles primum terrae collesque maligni, | tenuis ubi argilla et dumosis calculus arvis, | Palladia gaudent silva vivacis olivae.*

269-71 (266-7) These verses look back to [V.]'s depiction of the Golden Age at 9-15 (see n. ad loc.), the point being that, in contrast to the Golden Age, in the modern world, greed is the motive behind agricultural success.

269 (266) leves cruciant animos et corpora causae: 'Trivial causes torment minds and bodies.'

This statement is markedly Lucretian in tone. Following a poetological interpretation of [V.]'s methodological digression, one might argue that, out of all of his predecessors, [V.] aligns himself most closely with Lucretius: cf. e.g. his particularly 'Lucretian' iteration of his poetic programme at 248-51: see n. ad loc. Despite this, I argue that [V.] subtly shifts his standpoint from that of Lucretius – which one might describe as inquiry influenced by the doctrine of Epicureanism

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[425] **267 (264)** dura et *φ* : duro *G* : diviti *CSHVδ* : duuti *R* : diuti *A* : diti *δ*

– to what one might describe as inquiry for inquiry's sake. For more on this, see intr. III.3.

leves causae: Perhaps cf. the similar usage of this phrase by Seneca at *De Tranqu. An.* 12.6. At this point in his dialogue, Seneca is criticising those who labour to pointless ends, in much the same way as [V.].

animos et corpora: The idea that manual *labor* such as farming is both physically exerting and mundane.

270 (267) horrea uti saturent, tumeant ut dolea musto: '… that granaries are full, that jars overflow with must.' Note once again [V.]'s chiastic structure, seemingly used as a means to achieve an impression of mundanity: cf. 266n.

saturent, tumeant: This is the language of Golden Age plenty. There is likely a Saturn-related etymological pun in regard to the former.

dolea musto: A formulaic verse ending of the Latin hexameter: cf. Prop. 3.17.17; Col. *De Re Rust.* 10.1.1.432; Juv. *Sat.* 9.58.

271 (268) faenilia: Post-Virgilian for 'haylofts': see *TLL* 6.1.165.6-21.

272 (269) † sic avidi semper qua visum est carius istis:[426] As Goodyear puts it (n. ad loc.), 'this line is beyond certain cure.' If the sense of it is, as Goodyear and Hine suspect, 'so always for the greedy is everything dearer [to them] than themselves', Matthiae's *avidis* and *ipsis* of LG are likely right. Taking these readings, the line operates well as a contrast to what Manilius says at *Astr.* 4.407 (see 273n., below).

As I argue at 263-72n., [V.]'s caricature of the 'greedy farmer' is derived from the *Georgics*, rather than being a direct critique of that poem: cf. e.g. Virg. *Georg.* 1.47-8 *illa seges demum votis respondet avari | agricolae.* In contrast to my opinion, cf. the verdict of Di Giovine (1981: 299-300) on this as direct polemic against the *Georgics*.

273 (270) implendus sibi quisque bonis est artibus: 'each person ought to acquit themselves to the noble arts.' Lühr (1971: 147) rightly suggests cf. Man.

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[426] **272 (269)** avidis *Matthiae*   qua visum est carius *Ω* : quovis est *L et fort. G,* carior *LG* : quidvis est carius *Wagler, fort. recte* : quaevis res carior *Baehrens*   istis *Ω* : ipsis *L^{p.c.}G* : illis *L^{a.c.}*

4.407 *impendendus homo est, deus esse ut possit in ipso.* The direct allusion here confirms that [V.]'s *recusatio* / digression at 219-81 is indeed a subtle reworking of Man. 4.387-407: see 219-81n., section 1. The world view expressed at the crux of each poet's *recusatio* differs markedly: whereas for Manilius, luxury and avarice are crimes against God, for [V.] they are presented as a crime against the earth and perhaps (depending on one's reading of 272) oneself.

bonae artes used in this sense is particularly Senecan; it occurs at least thirteen times in his prosaic works: see, e.g., Sen. *Dial.* 8.3.4.3-4, 10.14.5.4, 10.19.2.4, 12.9.4.4, 12.17.3.5; *De Benef.* 3.28.1.5, 3.31.5.2, 6.15.2.4; *Epist.* 56.8.5, 73.4.8, 80.2.7, 105.5.3; *Nat. Quest.* 6.32.1.6.

implendus: Di Giovine (1981: 302) rightly notes the contrast depicted here between true nourishment (of the soul) and material nourishment achieved via the *plena faenilia* of 268.

273-4 (270-1) illae | sunt animi fruges, haec rerum maxima merces:[427]
'These are the harvests of the mind, the greatest profit of all.' [V.] wittily uses the language of profitable farming (something that he has depicted as avaricious) to proclaim the benefits of scientific inquiry. His main point is that intellectual gain is far superior to material gain.

Given [V.]'s general use of Man. 4.387-407 at 219-81 (see n. ad loc.), it is likely that he has drawn this image of a 'crop of the mind' from *Astr.* 4.400-1 *annua solliciti consument vota coloni, | et quantae mercedis erunt fallacia rura.* In the Manilian example, farming is used as a positive exemplum for the idea that 'hard work bears fruits': see Man. 4.393. When [V.]'s passage is read alongside that of Manilius, it seems as if [V.] corrects his predecessor, suggesting that profit and intellectual gain should never be compared with one another.

illae: As suggested by Goodyear (intr. 45), L's *illae* makes far better sense here than Ω's *illis*.

rerum maxima merces: As suggested by Welsh (2014: 115), [V.]'s phraseology here is remarkably similar to 632 *o maxima rerum* [*pietas*]. As commented by Goodyear (intr. 45), there is very little to choose here between Ω's *maxima* and LG's *est optima*.

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[427] **273 (270)** illae *L* : illis *Ω*   **274 (271)** maxima *Ω* : est optima *LG*

275-81 (272-8) [V.] concludes his *recusatio* with a six-verse reiteration of his encouraged approach to life. The attitude encouraged by the poet in this section is so close to his own poetic *raison d'être* that, as Welsh (2014: 107) puts it, these lines constitute something of an '*Aetna* in microcosm'.

275 (272) scire quid occulto terrae natura coercet: 'to know what nature conceals in the inner depths of the earth.' There is a clear correspondence between this verse and 252 *quaeque in ea miranda tulit natura notare*: see n. ad loc. Welsh (2014: 107) convincingly interprets this phrase as analeptic to 94-176, [V.]'s description of the fabric of the earth and statement of the importance of subterranean winds.

Here, [V.] casts his poetic programme as the demystification of the Stygian depths (see 278-9n.), the mythology of which he has gone to great lengths to dismiss at 75-84: see n. ad loc. For more on the status of 'hidden depths' in the Greco-Roman *imaginaire*, see Connors / Clendenon (2016).

natura: See 251-2n.

276 (273) nullum fallere opus: 'not to give a false report of her [nature's] work.' For the poetological ambiguity of [V.]'s use of *opus* throughout his work, which is certainly apparent here, see 25n.

276-7 (273-4) non mutum cernere sacros | Aetnaei montis fremitus animosque furentis:[428] 'not to perceive dumbly the sacred roaring and raging spirit of the Aetnaean mount.'

mutum cernere: If Haupt's conjecture *mutum* is here the '*mot juste*' as Goodyear puts it (n. ad loc.), which it certainly seems to be, [V.] presents us with the somewhat oxymoronic impression of a caricatured onlooker 'perceiving dumbly' the wonders of Mount Etna. This might be a criticism of the Epicurean approach of unquestioning sensory perception, likewise potentially critiqued at 192-3n. For the difficulty in ascertaining clear-cut alignment on [V.]'s part with either Stoicism or Epicureanism, and the methodological flaws with past attempts to do so, see 117-45n.; intr. III.3-4.

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[428] **276 (273)** mutum *Haupt* : multum *LGV* : muto *R* : multo *HAδ* : multos *CSδ*

sacros fremitus: For the poem's depiction of Etna as sacred, see n. on 187b. Here, there may once again be a hint of the caricatured observer, wondering at Etna rather than inquiring into its nature.

Aetnaei montis: Outside of the *Aetna*, the epic epithet *Aetnaeus* is most often used to describe the Cyclopes: see *TLL* 10.1162.43-6. [V.]'s use of the epithet here undoubtedly ratchets up the rhetoric of his ode to inquiry. His hyperbolic diction here might also be intended to parody those who associate Etna with the legends of epic.

animosque furentis: Whilst a stated aim of the *Aetna* is to take the *furor* out of the volcano by demystification, [V.] arguably does not succeed in achieving this, ending the poem as he does with the *miranda fabula*: see intr. IV.4.

278 (275) non subito pallere sono:[429] 'not to go pale at the sudden noise.' This, and 276-7n., seem to correspond with 224-5, at which [V.] criticises those who dumbly stare at the *miracula mundi*: see n. ad loc.

On the grounds of sense, Lγ's reading here **pallere** is far superior to the alternative *callere*.

278-9 non credere subter | caelestis migrasse minas aut Tartara rumpi:[430] 'not to believe that the heavenly threats have descended underground, or that Tartarus has been breached.' This is the crux of [V.]'s creed; he is encouraging his reader to stop treating the natural wonder, Mount Etna, with superstition, and instead to inquire into its nature. This exclamation looks back to both [V.]'s criticism of poetic depictions of the Underworld at 76-84 (see n. ad loc.), and his somewhat surprising caricature of Jupiter as one of these startled observers at 203-6 (see n. ad loc.)

caelestis migrasse minas: It is uncertain what specifically are the 'heavenly threats' referred to here, but one of them might be Jove's thunderbolt. If so, then cf. Sen. *Nat. Quest.* Praef. 6 *adversus tonitruum et minas caeli subterraneae domus et defossi in altum specus remedia sunt. ignis ille caelestis non transverberat terram.*

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[429] **278 (275)** pallere *Lγ* : callere *CSZVδ*

[430] **279** rumpi *LG* : mundi *Ω*

rumpi: One of the most celebrated of G's readings. It provides the line with a sense that is entirely in keeping with [V.]'s general outlook; one should not associate the eruption of Etna with the escape of the mythological horrors imprisoned in Tartarus: cf. e.g. 205n. Strictly speaking, this should refer to the Titans (see Hes. *Theo.* 739ff.), though see 41-73n. for the way in which the stories associated with the giants and Titans were often confused and conflated in antiquity. For [V.]'s use of *rumpo* in the middle / passive elsewhere, see, e.g., 1n.

280-1 As suggested by Welsh (2014) 109, these lines evoke strongly (in terms of their content) those at the opening of [V.]'s *recusatio*, 220-2 *unde ipsi venti, quae res incendia pascit, | cur subito cohibent vires, quae causa silenti, | subsequar*: see n. ad loc.

280 nosse quid intendat ventos, quid nutriat ignes:[431] [Following G's readings] 'to know what strengthens the winds, what feeds the fires.' As Welsh (2014: 108) suggests, as part of this '*Aetna* in microcosm', these two indirect questions look towards, respectively, [V.]'s discussion of the forces behind the strengthening of the winds at 282-384, and that of the role of the *lapis molaris* at 385-564. Note the stark contrast presented by [V.] between those who wonder unquestioningly (276-9) and those who investigate; part of the latter group are certainly didactic poets.

quid … quid: Typical anaphora of interrogatives from [V.]: cf e.g. 1-4.

281 unde repente quies et † multo † foedere pax sit:[432] Perhaps '[to know] whence comes the sudden silence and peace with no treaty.' A deeply corrupt line. As suggested by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), Alzinger's conjecture *nullo* gives it the best sense. This line evokes the indirect questions asked at 221 (quoted above). Whilst this statement does not refer to a particular section of the poem as clearly as 280, as suggested by Welsh (2014: 111-8), it perhaps looks forward to the description of the ritual of burning of incense at the volcano's crater (cf. 357

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[431] **280** intendat *LG* : impediat *Ω*   ignes *LVγ* : ignis *AR* : illos *C* : *om. SH*

[432] **281** reperta *LG*   multo *LΩ* : nullo *Alzinger* : muto *Oudin* : iuncto *Mencken* : alii *alia*   est *LG* *lacunam posuit Munro*

tanta quies illi est et pax innoxia rapti), and via this, and particularly the phrase *pax innoxia rapti*, the poem's concluding *miranda fabula*.

[282] *The rage of the winds increases underground.* **[282-92]** *This happens either because 1) caves and openings suck them in; or 2) the porous earth draws in external breezes; or 3) the cloud-bringing South wind drives them in.* **[293-300]** *Just as [?] sounds with the tuneful Triton, just as the water-organ makes its music, so do internal waters charge subterranean winds, causing Etna to sound loudly.*

282 concrescant animi penitus:[433] As hypothesised by Munro and Goodyear (ns. ad loc.), there is likely a lacuna following 281. I agree with Goodyear's verdict (cited ad loc.) that Scaliger's *cur crescant*, making 282 a continuation of the 219-81 digression, is deeply unlikely, given the way in which 282 introduces a long inquiry into the origins of subterranean winds.

Given the uncertainty in regard to both the length of the lacuna, and the ambiguity of 282, it is hard to say much for certain about this phrase. Perhaps *animus* here = *anima* (as in *OLD* s.v. *animus* [meaning 3]), or indeed should be *animae* (as per LG), and this ought to be part of [V.]'s list of various causes of underground winds that follows, but this cannot be stated with any certainty.

282-92. seu … seu … sive: [V.] delivers (or perhaps continues [on the possible lacuna, see 282n.]) a list of various potential *causae* for the subterranean winds, which themselves in turn power Mount Etna. For [V.]'s use of πλεοναχὸς τρόπος elsewhere, and the Lucretian / Epicurean backdrop to this technique, see 102-17n.; Verde (2018a) 538-43, (2020) 92-9. The various causes that [V.] provides have considerable crossover: they are 1) that the winds are drawn in by subterranean caverns (282-3); 2) that the earth is porous and naturally draws in breezes (and Etna's elevation exacerbates this); or 3) that external rain clouds propel these winds. If Goodyear's conjecture at 293 *aut* is accepted, [V.] lists a fourth potential *causa*: that subterranean torrents charge the winds: though see my n. ad loc. for my issues with this.

[V.] somewhat garbles his list of hypotheses by seemingly switching from addressing subterranean winds in general at 282-4 to those that specifically

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[433] **281** *lacunam posuit Munro* **282** cur crescant *Exc. Pith., Scaliger* : concrescunt *Vessereau* : seu crescant (*melius* crescunt) *Lenchantin* animae *LG*

operate within Mount Etna at 285ff. Like 102-17, [V.] delivers this list of *causae* with *variatio*, varying the length of his explanations of the potential causes and using as his conjunctions both *seu* and *sive*, and perhaps *aut* (see 293n.).

282-3 seu forte cavernae | introitusque ipsi sorbent:[434] 'whether / or [depending on the length / presence of a lacuna prior to 282] perhaps caverns and hollows themselves suck winds down.'

introitus: For the usage, cf. 166.

sorbent: Sudhaus' conjecture is favoured by Goodyear (n. ad loc.), who cites 354 as a parallel. Whilst *sorbent* admittedly makes good sense here, it cannot be accepted with any certainty.

283-4 seu terra minutis | rara foraminibus tenues in se abstrahit auras:[435] 'or the earth, porous with tiny holes, draws slender breezes into itself.' Cf., in general, the theory expressed by [V.] about the porous nature of the earth at 94-101; note the similarities of expression between these lines and 101 in particular. It is very hard to distinguish a practical difference between hypothesis A, expressed at 282-3, and hypothesis B, expressed here.

tenues in se: LG's reading makes sense of the nonsense preserved in the extant mss.

285-8 'It [Etna?] does this extensively, because, rising to a solid summit, exposed to hostile winds on all sides, it is forced to admit different breezes from all directions, and their [the winds'] concord adds strength to their conspiracy.'

In these verses, [V.] expands on his hypothesis expressed at 283-4, arguing that Etna's elevation increases its intake of wind. These verses are somewhat confusing, given that *Aetna* is not provided as a subject, but they are nonsensical if *terra* remains the subject.

285-6 plenius hoc etiam rigido quia vertice surgens, | illinc infestis atque hinc obnoxia ventis:[436] The metrical contrast between these two consecutive

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[434] **282** porta *LG*   **283** sorbent *Sudhaus*: servent *LGCβ* : fervent *Sδ*

[435] **284** tenues in se *LG* : neve in se *CSHγ* : ne ut in se *V* : neve visse (iu-) *AR*   abstrahit *Sudhaus* : abstrahat *LCSAVγ* : abtrahat *R* : obstrahat *H*

[436] **286** finit *G*   infestis *Jacob* : infestus *Ω* : infessa est *LG*   ventis *LG* : vitis *CSZ* : intus *Vγ*

hexameters may be reflective of their meaning: the dactylic-to-the-max 285 replicating the energised winds, and the spondaic-to-the-max 286 reflecting the stationary volcano exposed to them.

285 rigido vertice surgens: Indicative that the implied subject here is indeed Mount Etna.

286 infestis ventis: As expressed by Ellis (n. ad loc.), Jacob's *infestis* is a good correction here. This impression of hostile, untameable winds recalls those of Aeolus' Cave at *Aen.* 1.50-64: cf. 149n.

287 diversas admittere cogitur auras:[437] For this usage of *diversus*, cf. 128 *diversos canales*.

cogitur: Schrader's excellent correction of Ω's *cogitat*: see Goodyear n. ad loc.

288 et coniuratis addit concordia vires: [V.] uses imagery from the sphere of crime; the winds are cast as conspirators plotting an assault on the mountain. For more on [V.]'s personification of winds, see, e.g., 149n., 188-218n.; Garani (2009) 108-17.

concordia: A characteristic not usually associated with *venti* (see 169-70n.), however [V.] is here depicting the winds as making a concerted effort against Etna.

289 sive introrsus agunt nubes et nubilus auster: 'Or the clouds and the cloud-bringing South Wind drive them [the winds] in.' As cited by Sudhaus (n. ad loc.), Servius, whilst outlining the *causa huius incendii secundum Aetnam Vergilii* (at n. on *Aen.* 3.571), comments that Etna has caves exposed to the South and South-easterly winds, and that it is only when these winds blow that she erupts. As addressed at intr. I.1, it is unclear whether Servius' note is a summary of the Virgilian *Aetna*-poem that it refers to, and if it is, the poem in question is not 'our' *Aetna*, given the lack of crossover between the theories expressed (aside from perhaps the vague correspondence here).

nubes: For the association between Etna and cloudy weather, cf. 334-5 *illinc obscura semper caligine nubes | prospectat sublimis opus vastosque recessus.*

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[437] **287** cogitur *Schrader* : cogitat *Ω*

nubilus auster: Stock noun-epithet combination: cf. e.g. Prop. 2.16.56; Ov. *Met.* 11.663-4; *Ep. ex Pont.* 2.1.26.

290 † seu forte flexere caput tergoque feruntur:[438] As commented by Goodyear (n. ad loc*.*), this line constitutes a *locus desperatus*. The ms. reading means something along the lines of 'or perchance they [clouds?] have encircled the summit and are carried down its back.'

291-2 praecipiti deiecta sono premit unda fugatque | torpentes auras pulsataque corpora denset:[439] '[and] the water, cascading headlong loudly, presses and drives off the sluggish breezes and condenses the particles which it has driven.'

praecipiti sono: *praeceps* here is a transferred epithet, more appropriately applied to *unda*: cf. similarly 132n.

deiecta: Scaliger's emendation for Ω's *delecta*; certainly an improvement, but perhaps not entirely necessary.

premit: For the usage, cf. 169-70n.

pulsataque corpora: Cf. its usage in the same metrical *sedes* at 352.

293-300 A double simile in which [V.] compares the workings of Mount Etna firstly to a [horn of?] Triton and secondly to a water organ. In this obscure, and textually corrupt (no longer mitigated by the readings of G), section of the poem, [V.] seemingly attempts to illustrate via simile his preceding theory that water plays a role in Etna's volatility: namely, as an agent for pressurising subterranean winds, which the poet views as the driving force behind the volcano's destructive power: see 188-218n. Here, [V.] draws on the sphere of music technology to illustrate his point, delivering a vivid and complicated 'double simile', in which he compares the volcano's use of water to that of firstly (seemingly) a [horn of?] *Triton* (293), and secondly a *cortina* (296), which seems to refer to a water organ, perhaps as Ellis (292n.) suggests, something akin to the Greek *hydraulis.*

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[438] **290** forsan *Vγ* : forte ut *Munro* : Boreae *Birt*   retroque *Friesemann* : circumque *Schwartz*

[439] **291** deiecta *Scaliger* : delecta *Ω*

[V.]'s use of an extended, imaginative simile to illustrate a technical point is something of a trademark: cf. e.g. 98-101, 321-9 and 473-4. In this 'double simile', [V.] engages in some typical metapoetical gameplay, blurring the lines between his poetic subject matter, Mount Etna, and his poetic product, the *Aetna*: for other examples of this, see intr. IV.1. As Glauthier (2011: 108-10) suggests, by comparing his subject matter, Mount Etna, to two pieces of manmade technology, [V.] invites his reader to view it also as something that can be shaped and governed my man. This impression is enhanced further by the overload of poetological diction delivered by [V.]. In the space of seven hexameters, we encounter: *sono*, *canorus* (293), *opus* (294), *spiritus* (295), *carmen* (296), *numerosus*, *impares modi*, *cano*, *ars* (297), and *tenuis anima* (298). By the end of this simile, the reader is left with the impression that the volcano can by tamed by a skilled artist / poet. For more on poetic self-consciousness and nature-taming generally in the poem, see intr. IV; in addition to Volk (2005), Welsh (2014) and Kruschwitz (2015). For discussion of these lines in this context, see Garani (2009) 112-5, Glauthier (2011) 108-10, and G. D. Williams (2020) 114-5.

293 nam, veluti sonat †ora duc† Tritone canoro:[440] This line is clearly corrupt in the mss. Whilst we cannot be sure of the specific words used in this verse, it seems to refer to a musical device either known as, or in the form of, a 'Triton'. Depending on what we make of the text, we might translate this as perhaps either: [reading *hora ducis / duci*] 'For, just as the hour resounds with the lord's tuneful Triton-horn…'; or [reading Z's *ora diu*] 'For, just as the shore sounds long with the tuneful Triton-horn…' Despite Goodyear's protestation (n. ad loc.) that it 'hardly makes sense', my marginal preference is for the latter, given its attestation in at least one family of mss.

nam: In his 1965 edition of the poem, Goodyear does not tolerate the 'double simile' as an illustration of the idea that water can increase volcanic volatility, and so emends Ω's *nam* to *aut*, thus making whatever process is illustrated by the simile another potential cause of subterranean winds. Goodyear's explanation given (see his n. ad loc.) is that [V.] distinguishes between external rain as a potential cause of subterranean winds (289-92) and the mountain's own internal

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[440] **293** nam *Ω* : aut *Goodyear*   *quae* sonat *sequntur om. S*   sonat ora duc *C* : sonat ora (ore *AR*) diu *Z* : sonatura (*vel* sonit-) diu *Vγ* : sonit aura *Scaliger* : hora duci *Munro* : hora die *Haupt* : *alii alia*   tritona *ARV*   cancro *C*

torrents as one (299). I find such a distinction tenuous to say the least and maintain Ω's *nam*, less than ideal though the entire section may be. Seemingly, Goodyear changed his mind on the need to emend here, as in the 1966 OCT *nam* is printed. Cf. Courtney (1966a: 14-5) for an attempt to create a distinction between the two *causae* via drastic emendation of the text.

veluti: A standard simile-opener in the poem, followed either by *haud aliter* (as here), *haud secus* (as in 321-9), or operating as a standalone (as in 328).

ora: Munro follows Wernsdorf in reading *hora* here and cites Suet. *Claud.* 21.6 (*hoc spectaculo classis Sicula et Rhodia concurrerunt, duodenarum triremium singulae, eciente bucine Tritone argenteo, qui e medio lacu per machinam emerserat*) to suggest that the device in question might have been that which was used to sound the start of the *Naumachia*, a popular spectacle in which a mock sea battle was staged. Whilst there may be a connection between the two Triton-horns, it cannot be posited with any certainty, given that in the Suetonian anecdote, we are not told anything about how the horn creates its sound.

Tritone: See Garani (2009: 113), who claims that [V.]'s depiction of the workings of this instrument contributes further to his programmatic aim of demythologising gigantomachic imagery: see 41-73n. Given the obscurity of the source that she cites in support of this ([Hyg.] *Poeticon Astronomicon* 2.23), and our uncertainty over what the 'Triton' referred to in this section actually is, I am not convinced by her interpretation here.

canoro: The reading of the majority of the extant mss., apart from C. Given its precedence in application to Triton (cf. Ov. *Met.* 2.8), it is understandably accepted in modern editions. The epithet is used by [V.] elsewhere; cf., in application to Amphion of Thebes, 575; and, in association with Philomela, 586.

294-5 pellit opus collectus aquae victusque moveri | spiritus et longas emugit bucina voces:[441] 'The work is driven by a body of water, and air which is compelled to move – from this does the trumpet bellow out long-sounding blasts.'

opus: The reading of H, in contrast to CSARVγ's *opes*, but surely correct, given the sense that it provides here, and [V.]'s penchant for using *opus*: see 25n.

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[441] **294** opus *H* : opes *CSARVγ*   moveri *Sauppe (iam* movetur *Turnebus)* : movere *Ω*

The poet's use of the term here in reference to the simile's vehicle, the Triton-horn, reminds the reader of Mount Etna's own status, in the poem, as an *opus*, blurring the lines between the simile's tenor and vehicle, and implying that Mount Etna itself is a piece of technology: for more on the metapoetical significance of *opus* in the poem, see 25n.; intr. IV.1.i.

victusque moveri | spiritus: This suggests that even *spiritus*, which has previously been characterised by [V.] as an untameable force of nature (cf. e.g. 188-218n.), can be tamed and used by mankind. Given the prevalence of metapoetical diction in this simile, and the anthropocentric impression depicted by the image, [V.]'s usage of *spiritus* here tempts particularly strongly consideration of the word's poetological connotations, those of poetic inspiration. For more on [V.]'s usage of *spiritus* in this regard, see 188-218n.

emugio: One of only two usages in extant Latin of this compound of *mugio*: see *TLL* 5.2.539.21-5.

bucina: For its association with Triton, perhaps cf. e.g. Ov. *Met.* 1.333-8, in addition to Suet. *Claud*. 21.6 (cited above).

296-8 carmineque irriguo magnis cortina theatris | imparibus numerosa modis canit arte regentis, | quae tenuem impellens animam subremigat unda: 'And [just as] in vast theatres, the *cortina* sings its watery music harmoniously through unequal pipes, thanks to the skill of the organist, who starts a slender breath of air, whilst peddling in the water below…'

296 Supply *veluti*: [V.] is delivering a 'double simile', in which both vehicles are introduced by 293.

carmineque irriguo: An unusual usage of *irriguus* ('watery'), which is used nowhere else in extant Latin to describe a *carmen*: see *TLL* 7.2.421.62-3. See 28n. for a similarly unusual usage of this word from [V.].

cortina: The only usage of this word in extant Latin to describe what it must mean here – a hydraulically powered organ: see *OLD* s.v. *cortina* (meaning 2). For a full discussion of the *cortina* in question equating to a *hydraulis*, see the lengthy note of Ellis on 295; for the marvellous quality of both Mount Etna and the *hydraulis*, see Glauthier (2011) 109-10.

297 imparibus numerosa modis canit arte regentis: [V.] here delivers a hexameter with five dactyls (the maximum). His chosen metre here is likely reflective of the musical nature of his subject matter. As discussed below, this verse is generally full of poetological diction.

imparibus modis: Here, it means the water-organ's unequal pipes, but it also has clear connotations of poetic mode or metre; cf. e.g. Ov. *Trist.* 2.219-20, in which Ovid pleads to Augustus: *scilicet imperii princeps statione relicta | imparibus legeres carmina facta modis?* (in reference to his elegiac poetry).

numerosa: For use of this word in a discussion of poetic metre, cf. e.g. Cic. *Orat.* 188 *quibus* [*pedibus*] *ordine locatis quod efficitur numerosum sit necesse est.* It is used in a potentially similarly metapoetical manner by [V.] at 38: see n. ad loc.

canit: [V.] depicts the water-organ as literally 'singing'. The poetological connotations of this are plainly evident.

arte regentis: It is by the skill (*ars*) of the musician that the water-organ's composition comes together. In the simile, Etna becomes the *rex* that harnesses these natural forces to produce its 'music'. A metapoetical reading would make the poet himself this *rex* and Etna (or the *Aetna*) his instrument / product.

This impression of the capability of man to harness natural forces by *ars* contributes to the tension that is apparent throughout the poem of man's efforts to tame his resistant natural environment: for more on which, see intr. IV.3-4.

298 The product of the organist's skill is a **tenuem animam**, here 'a slender breath of air'. In Latin poetry, *tenuis* has strong poetological connotations, being an equivalent of the Callimachean λεπτός / λεπταλέος (see *Aet.* Frag. 1.23), a quality of poetry aspired to by generations of the Alexandrian poet's successors: see, e.g., Virg. *Ecl.* 6.5 (Serv. n. ad loc.), *Georg.* 4.6.

quae: Referring to *arte regentis*.

subremigat unda: Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 10.227 *subremigat undis*. Ellis (intr. xxxi) argues that this verbal correspondence between the two poems, if it is 'intentional', demonstrates that the *Aetna* must postdate the canonical works of Virgil, given the phrase's aptness in the Virgilian passage. Given the difference of context between the two passages, in my opinion it is unlikely that this is direct allusion.

299-300 haud aliter summota furens torrentibus aura | pugnat in angusto et magnum commurmurat Aetna: '…not unlike this does the raging wind, dislodged by the torrents, struggle in the narrow space – and Etna murmurs loudly.'

furens … pugnat: For [V.]'s bellicose characterisation of the winds, cf. e.g. 216-8n.

torrentibus: Goodyear (293n.) cites [V.]'s use of *torrens* here in support of his replacement of *nam* with *aut* at 293, arguing that it implies that, at 293-300, [V.] is addressing the volcano's internal waters as opposed to the external watery causes mentioned at 289-92. In my opinion, Goodyear's interpretation puts far too much weight on this word, creating a distinction where there is likely not one.

300 pugnat in angusto et magnum commurmurat Aetna: The finale of the extended comparison is suitably climactic. Mention of the volcano is delayed for as long as possible, *Aetna* standing out as the final word of the hexameter (and section). The spondaic rhythm and heavily onomatopoeic alliteration of [m] enhance the poet's description of Mount Etna's bellowing: for more on [V.]'s focus on Etna's acoustics here, see Kruschwitz (2015) 90-1.

Cf. 329, in which [V.] similarly ends an extended piece of description (in this case, the build-up to Etna's eruption) with the volcano itself, and the word *Aetna*, in prime focus.

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