

THE EPIC VANTAGE-POINT: ROMAN HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ALLUSION RECONSIDERED

Abstract: This paper makes the case that Roman epic and Roman historiographical allusive practices are worth examining in light of each other, given the close relationship between the two genres and their common goal of offering their audiences access to the past. Ennius' *Annales* will here serve as epic's representative, despite its fragmentary state: the fact that the epic shares its subject-matter with and pre-dates most of the Roman historiographical tradition as we know it suggests that the poem may have had a significant role in setting the terms on which the two genres interacted at Rome; and what the first surviving generation of its readers, as principally represented by Cicero, have to say about the epic rather confirms that suggestion (§I). Points of contact between the genres on which the paper focuses are: extended repetition of passages recognisable from previous authors (§II); allusion that is contested among the speakers of a given text (§III); citation practices (§IV); and the recurrence of recognisable material stemming from the *Annales* in the historiographical tradition's latter-day, when all sense of that material's original context has been lost, along with its ability to generate new meaning (§V).

In this paper,¹ I consider how reading Ennius' *Annales* can shed light on the extent to which allusion, as it operates in historiography, is differentiable from allusion in other genres. David Levene has made the argument that historiography represents a case apart when it comes to allusion because, where accounts of given historical events are repeated in ancient historian after historian (that is, alluded to without essential alteration), that repetition is a reflex not primarily of each author's distinctive and historically situated interpretation of the past; instead, such repetition reflects what the tradition as a collective has hallowed as the authentic version of the past, which individual authors are not in a position to revise.² Ancient historians' self-identification as such and participation in the conventions of historiography, the argument runs, involves them in a commitment to the historical truth, which for them the tradition enshrines; and, as a result, the degree of choice available to them in re-negotiating previous accounts is more limited than is the case for authors

¹ I am grateful to David Levene for reading an earlier draft of this article, correcting some misperceptions therein of his argument at Levene 2011 (others may remain!) and making other observations; and to Chris Kraus and Chris Pelling for their advice on the same earlier draft. All quotations from the *Annales* are from Skutsch (1985).

² Levene (2011), cited throughout this paper with the author's permission; see also Levene (2010a) 82–163.

writing in genres where no such commitment to historical truth pertains. (Historians are, however, not thereby precluded from participating in literary allusion as we know it from poetry, and Levene gives several instances of this.)

The case of the *Annales* puts pressure on Levene's distinction between historiography and other genres, I submit, in two different ways. It does so first because the genre of epic makes a claim no less urgent than that of prose historiography to be telling the past as it happened and as it continued to matter into the present day. I am referring here to the well-documented ancient conception of epic as itself the original record of the nation's past, firmly founded on a trusted (although of course not undisputed) claim to truth and authority, and providing the audience with the means to construe a relationship between that past and the contemporary moment.³ Historiography's adoption of a narrative mode akin to that of epic—its shared interest in the famous actions and events of human history, and in their causes and their consequences, its principally third-person narrative with free integration of direct speech, the particular forms of narrative patterning it favours,⁴ and, crucially for the argument here,⁵ its common use of tradition as a means of access to the past—reminds us of the kinship between the two genres. Each, in fact, claimed to offer their audiences an 'authentic version of the past' (as I have it above), and neither was invulnerable to scepticism in response. The terms in which a given narrative of the past is authenticated are, as is well known, radically different between the two genres, those terms being one of the primary means by which historiography marks its distinctness from epic.⁶ What matters to the argument here is that the relevant term in either case is indeed authentication, as opposed to authenticity: ancient historians had no greater access to what happened in the past than epic poets did but only a different mode of expressing their commitment to it.⁷ The notion itself of a commonly established vision of the past, one essentially incontrovertible through the will, claimed insight, or expertise of an individual (if one remaining mildly adaptable), sits well with

³ The definition of epic given in the *Suda* is one testament to this: Ἐποποιία ἡ διὰ ἠρωικοῦ μέτρον ἱστορία, καὶ γὰρ στερομένη μύθου ποίησις ἐποποιία ἐστίν (discussion at Häussler (1976) 37). Homer was the 'Wegbereiter der Historie und des historischen Epos' (Häussler (1976) 21–2). See also Feeney (1991) 250–62 and, for more recent discussion, e.g. Kim (2010) 1–84, esp. 10–15, 22–30, 38–81, Grethlein (2012) 14–36, esp. 14–15 and 32–6.

⁴ Strasburger (1972) 12–18; Strasburger et al. (1982) II.1057–97; Fornara (1983) 62–4, 76–8; Woodman (1988) 1–9, 28–40; Marincola (1997) 6–7, with further bibliography at 159–60, 184; Rutherford (2012) 14–; cf. Pelling (2013) 7–13. See also Huber (1965), Rengakos (2006), Marincola (2007), Pelling (2008).

⁵ Especially since the reproduction of the past and the re-visiting of previous literature are in practice largely inextricable (Damon (2010)).

⁶ See e.g. Marincola (1997) 3–33, esp. 3–12, and *passim*.

⁷ Cp. O'Gorman (2009) 235–6, citing Fowler, framed in broader terms than the argument here.

epic—both with the original procedures of oral tradition itself and with the ways in which those procedures set the model for the gradual accretion of further pieces of the epic story which the tradition as a whole then came to accept. It remains the case that the ancient world cared differently about, and taught us too to care differently about, epic and historiography;⁸ this is a matter to which we will return at least briefly with Cicero below.

If it is the case that epic texts too are committed to a commonly established vision of the truth about the past, then they too ought to have at least something of the same relationship to tradition that historiography's peculiar use of allusion, according to Levene, signals: epic repetitions too ought to be readable as commitments to a given view of the past.⁹ This is the first hypothesis with which I will experiment in the pages below (§§ II and V). The *Annales* for their part make epic's claim to be telling the truth—and the analogy between this claim and historiography's parallel (and inherited) claim—more obtrusive than does much surviving epic, because much of the past Ennius treats comes so close to being contemporary for his original audience—and because, not least on that account, the past the *Annales* told was the common property of the prose historiographical tradition also. It is an important assumption of my argument, however, that, though Ennius' poem may approach prose historiographical territory more closely than do other instances of epic available to us, that does not make it categorically distinct from those other instances of its genre. It figures in this part of my argument as an epic whose subject-matter happens to throw analogies between epic and historiography into relief but that nevertheless remains fully representative of its kind.

The second way in which the *Annales* complicate the question Levene raises is, I submit, that they in particular, through their subject-matter, contribute to that same trans-historical vision of the Roman past, at the centre of Levene's re-orientation of our account of allusion, that historiographical texts do. Here, the *Annales* figure not just as a representative of their genre, as in my point above, but rather specifically in their own right: the fact that their subject-matter covered the spectrum of Roman history, while remaining firmly anchored in previous Greek—epic, and, I will suggest, historiographical—tradition, is crucial. It is thus not simply that the *Annales* provided both language and motifs adopted by the later prose historiographical tradition, just in the way that Herodotus too and the tradition that followed him drew on Homer;

⁸ Cf. Pelling (2013) 5, quoted in n. 36, below.

⁹ Levene notes in passing individual points on which a relationship between the practices of allusion in epic and historiography exists: e.g. in their preference for covert rather than overt referencing and quotation (Levene (2011) 91) and in the modelling of characters after pre-existent historical persons or literary characters (ibid. 85, with n. 8 there); see also n. 41, below.

because the *Annales* told the same stories as the Roman historiographical tradition did, and because the poem in its own day loomed as large as it did in the Roman historical imagination, the *Annales* from the first helped determine both the content of the tradition of Roman historiography, broadly conceived, and the way in which that content was framed and articulated. Despite the fragmentary survival of the *Annales* today and the resulting complications to any possible claim concerning the poem, a hypothesis to the effect that the *Annales* acted as a source-text for the Roman historiographical tradition through the turn of the era is worth entertaining: there survive tantalising glimpses of the relationship between the *Annales* and Roman historiography,¹⁰ and this despite the fact that documentation of a relationship between texts not sharing formal features was, in the case of the *Annales*, for the most part outside our sources' ambit.¹¹ Neither does the historiographical tradition's avoidance of direct or consistent citation help. Despite this, it is scarcely in doubt that the material of the *Annales* both directly and indirectly provided material for later prose accounts of the same events.¹²

In the pages below, I put forward material in support of my hypothesis that epic repetitions ought to be readable as the tradition's commitment to a given view of the past, no less and no more than is possible for historiography. I then deal with some issues besides the question of transhistoricity in historiographical allusion (to use Levene's term for the issue tackled by this first hypothesis): for, in *Livy and the Hannibalic War*,¹³ Levene also points to a further type of allusion that he suggests is central to historiography: the type in which textual characters model (or attempt to model) their own or their audience's understanding of later events or persons, themselves included, on events or persons of the past. Here too I support Levene's argument that this type of allusion belongs peculiarly to historiography (and have a suggestion for why this is the case)—and here too I will suggest that epic, with the *Annales* as my primary example, displays similar behaviours, again for reasons analogous to those operative for historiography (§III). Very briefly, I will sketch the possibility that historiographical citation has a relative and ancestor in phenomena

¹⁰ For documentation of the phenomenon as it has historically appeared to scholars, see Elliott (2013a) 80, nn. 13 and 14.

¹¹ For brief comment on this matter (partly to be explained by necessity on argument *ex silentio*), see Elliott (2013a) 79, n. 12.

¹² See now also Goldschmidt (2013): 18–28 and *passim*. Although Goldschmidt focuses primarily on the role of the *Annales* as a precursor to the *Aeneid*, she makes it clear throughout her study that 'the *Annales* functioned for a long time as one of the key transmitters of historical memory in Roman culture' (p. 12). She argues that it was on this territory that Vergil too found the primary need to compete with Ennius. What she argues for Vergil, I make *a fortiori* the case for the Roman prose historians.

¹³ Levene (2010a) 85, 117 (see further n. 41, below).

that we might characterise as epic citation (§IV). Towards the end of this paper, we will return to the notion of transhistoricity and the question of Ennius' contribution to it: I will suggest that, long after their day, the *Annales* were still able to contribute, at a remove, to transhistoricity, through their role as the ultimate source for phrases that still circulated in the hands of writers who, without access to their original contexts or ability to generate meaning, evidently knew to preserve them as markers of the authority of an ancient tradition (§V). We will begin, though, by looking at the *Annales* through the eyes of a reader belonging to the first surviving generation of witnesses to the epic. Through his readings, the poem is revealed as Roman historiography's close and generative relative.

I. Ennius through Cicero's Eyes: Rome's Historian

Our present view of the significance of the *Annales* in their own day is considerably obfuscated by the ancient post-Vergilian sources for the poem, which are responsible for some four fifths of the surviving fragments of the poem and for views of the poem that have no obvious purchase among the pre-Vergilian readers whom we read today.¹⁴ These post-Vergilian readings are interested in the *Annales* either for what the poem can explain about Vergilian language or for what it can illustrate about Republican use of language generally; and they need to be set aside for present purposes, as antithetical to the reading of the poem relevant here. The pre-Vergilian reading is represented by two readers who quote for content and know the *Annales* as a work of literature in its own right.¹⁵ They constitute our best access to what the epic in its own day

¹⁴ Had we the pre-Vergilian sources alone, it would remain clear that Ennius was the first to construct hexameter verse in Latin and that he imitated at least some Homeric word-forms and one or two phrases; the thorough-going imitation of entire Homeric episodes and the imitation of such hallmarks of Homeric style as formula, and, along with that, much of what allows us recognise the crucial role of the *Annales* in the development of Roman literary history, would remain essentially out of our view. These facts are documented in Elliott (2013a) 75–134.

¹⁵ There are in total four surviving pre-Vergilian readers of the *Aeneid* directly responsible for the transmission of fragments: besides Cicero and the author of the *Bellum Hispaniense*, discussed above, we have also Varro and the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. These latter two, however, represent those etymological, lexicographical, and grammatical interests that well survive the intervention of the *Aeneid* and go on to generate a full 38 percent of the surviving fragments of the *Annales* at the hands of post-Vergilian representatives of the same traditions (see Elliott (2013a) 135–44 and 151–2); again, they do not concern my present argument. There are of course also several other pre-Vergilian authors (Lucilius, Catullus, and Lucretius, among others) who engage with the *Annales* without purporting to quote the poem directly. Their complex agendas too I leave aside for present purposes, although, for the last mentioned, see n. 17, below.

meant, before the intervention of the *Aeneid* radically altered its predecessor's cultural status and the purposes for which readers were acquainted with it. These readers are, in first place, Cicero and then also the author of the *Bellum Hispaniense* (whose acquaintance with the work surfaces far more casually and briefly than does Cicero's but whose quotations of the poem suggest that it functioned as a ready source for his imagination and descriptive language).¹⁶ For them,¹⁷ the *Annales* represent the pre-eminent account of the Roman past—a sense of the text that, so far as the poem's record allows us to tell, barely survives the interference of the *Aeneid* at all. Cicero's responses to Ennius' work come closest to detailing why the poem mattered in its own day; and in the process, they give us an idea, I suggest, of why it makes sense to read the *Annales* meant as a tributary to the Roman historiographical tradition.

For Cicero, Ennius' account apparently trumps that of any available historian in terms of making the Roman past accessible and impressively visible. The claims his speakers make about the sorts of access to the past the *Annales* provide span a whole spectrum, but they routinely present the poem as a transparent and reliable record of the past. At one extreme, his speakers go to the lengths of treating the poem as endowed with traits associated with analytic historiography: extraordinarily, they present the work as relevantly based on the author's autopsy and endowed with objectivity, as well as tantamount—on occasion even preferable—to documentary evidence. A striking example of this occurs at *Brutus* 56–60,¹⁸ where Cicero astonishingly presents the *Annales* as representing historical documentation. At issue in the discussion is the early history of Roman oratory. Cicero first lists those (such as App. Claudius Caecus, C. Fabricius, and M.' Curius) whose stories allow one to surmise their rhetorical ability but of whose speeches no actual record survives. The first orator for whom a genuine historical record exists, the speaker goes on to contend, is M. Cornelius Cethegus (*Brut.* 57):

... quem vero exstet et de quo sit memoriae proditum eloquentem fuisse et ita esse habitum, primus est M. Cornelius Cethegus, cuius eloquentiae est auctor, et idoneus quidem mea sententia, Q. Ennius, praesertim cum et ipse eum audiverit et scribat de mortuo: ex quo nulla suspicio est amicitiae causa esse mentitum.

¹⁶ For further description of the *Bell. Hisp.* as a source for the *Annales* and for further differentiation from Cicero as a reader of the epic, see Elliott (2013a) 195–6 and 398–9.

¹⁷ For Lucretius as a contemporary reader for whom the *Annales* again functioned as the traditional, most readily available means of access to, and most powerful expression of the past, see now Nethercut (2014).

¹⁸ I explore the consequences of this and the Ciceronian reading of the *Annales* at *Sen.* 16 (summarised below) in greater detail at Elliott (2013a) 156–64.

... But the first man for whom recorded evidence survives that he was genuinely eloquent and acknowledged as such is M. Cornelius Cethegus. Our authority for his eloquence is Ennius, and an appropriate one, too, I think, in as much as he in person both heard the man speak and recorded his opinion of him after his death: so that there can be no suggestion that he distorted things out of political partisanship.

In suggesting that the reason to trust Ennius' narrative is because the poet had direct access to the events in question (*ipse ... audiverit*), Cicero's speaker measures the *Annales* by recognisably rationalising and analytic standards for historical writing.¹⁹ In repudiating the possibility of Ennian bias (*praesertim cum ... scribat de mortuo: ex quo nulla suspicio est amicitiae causa esse mentitum*), he arrogates to Ennius the historiographical principle later articulated by Tacitus as writing *sine ira et studio* ('without spite or bias', Tac. *Ann.* 1.1). He goes on to make Ennius explicitly 'witness' to history: in discussing the date of M. Cornelius Cethegus' consulship, along with his rhetorical prowess, he remarks on Ennius' 'attestation' to Cethegus' rhetorical powers being unique in the historical record as he knows it (*Brut.* 60):

... id ipsum nisi unius esset Enni testimonio cognitum, hunc vetustas, ut alios fortasse multos, oblivione obruisset.

... had this fact not been made known by Ennius' attestation, and his alone, the long passage of time would have consigned him to oblivion, as perhaps it has done many others.

So far from casting doubt on the historicity of Ennius' account, the uniqueness of the datum, from the Ciceronian perspective available here, only makes the epic the more valuable as a record of the past: the sense is of Ennius 'rescuing' history's precious details. These moves suit the speaker's purposes, because his bid to explain the course of rhetoric at Rome would in theory require those facts and details of history, arranged in their rationalised causal and temporal sequence, that are the analytic tradition's special preserve. In the absence of any such recorded tradition, it appears that the *Annales*, somewhat disguised if not beyond all recognition, are readily serviceable instead.

This is not the full story, and Cicero knows it. He is clearly guilty of some disingenuousness here; after all, he famously has the discussants at *Leg.* 1.5–6 suggest that the only standard of *veritas* (truthfulness, lifelikeness, or credibility) to which the epic poet need aspire was a low and elastic one: no more than *non*

¹⁹ Thus, famously, Thuc. 1.22.2: τὰ δ' ἔργα τῶν πραχθέντων ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ παρατυχόντος πυνθανόμενος ἠξίωσα γράφειν οὐδ' ὡς ἐμοὶ ἐδόκει, ἀλλ' οἷς τε αὐτὸς παρῆν καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσον δυνατὸν ἀκριβείᾳ περὶ ἐκάστου ἐπεξελεθών.

mendacem putari.²⁰ There, he has his speaker Marcus defend the right of even recent historical material, when retailed via epic, to be presented not as it was experienced by its still-living participants but rather through all the fabulous distancing mechanisms associated with epic: there is no doubt he knew what Ennius was up to here. It is equally clear, however, that he did not think that the distortions licensed by epic convention ruled out its claims to be telling the truth about the past and to be believed. One reason for this surely lies in Cicero's profound acquaintance with the practice of *inventio*, by which a practitioner, in the initial instance one of rhetoric or law, re-arranges the audience's understanding and interpretation of established fact, by drawing out a previously latent aspect of the subject-matter.²¹ Ennius' Homerising technique (of which we will soon see some full-blooded examples) is in its own way an instance of this practice, in the sense that it offered a new model for understanding the Roman past, including recent and contemporary events, and construing it all afresh, now as of a piece with Greece's history and in its own right as worthy a subject of song as the subjects of the Greek epics had been.

It is, then, plausibly not only because it suited his momentary purposes at *Brutus* 58 that Cicero chose to represent the Cethegus-fragment as a vehicle for genuine access to the past; it was also because he accepted the epic's representation of Rome's place in the world and understood as legitimate the means it applied in representing the past—even if at the same time, to suit his speaker's aim, he made concerted efforts to disguise the poet's evident distortions, and even if he described the passage in tendentious terms. And he also knew that the historians themselves commonly availed themselves of every kind of license (Herodotus and Theopompus are his examples at *Leg.* 1.6; Herodotus at *Div.* 2.116).

At *Sen.* 16, Cicero makes another striking move, one that indicates the clout of the *Annales* in his day: he chooses to include Ennius' version of a speech by Appius Claudius Caecus (persuading the senate to reject Pyrrhus' peace-proposals after Heraclea) in preference to an historical document recording the original speech—or at least to what was believed to be such:²²

²⁰ For fuller discussion, see Elliott (2013a) 202–5, with the bibliography cited there.

²¹ For documentation, see Elliott (2013a) 211, n. 43.

²² For the relationship between the speech that was known as Appius' own in Cicero's day (cf. *Brut.* 61), Ennius' version of the speech, and the version of the speech that circulated among the prose historiographers (of which Plut. *Pyrrh.* 19, the so-called *Ineditum Vaticanum*, and Appian, *Samm.* 10.5 supply the remains), see Skutsch (1985) 483 and Humm (2005) 64–73 (who believes, unconvincingly in my view, both that the speech to which Cicero alludes was genuine, or minimally contained elements of Appius Claudius' original; and that it was the source, however removed, of Ennius and the later historians); also Powell (1988) 136, 138 and Flores et al. (2002) 152, citing Isid. *Etym.* 1.38.2.

ad Appii Claudii senectutem accedebat etiam ut caecus esset; tamen is, cum sententia senatus inclinaret ad pacem cum Pyrrho foedusque faciendum, non dubitavit dicere illa quae versibus persecutus est Ennius ‘quo vobis mentes, rectae quae stare solebant antehac, dementes sese flexere †via? ...’ [Ann. 199–200] ceteraque gravissime; notum enim vobis carmen est. et tamen ipsius Appii extat oratio.

In addition to the burden of his old age, Appius Claudius had to contend with the fact that he was blind; yet he, when the senate was officially inclining towards making a peace-treaty with Pyrrhus, had no hesitation in making those pronouncements that Ennius set to verse: ‘What way has your sense, which used to maintain a sound position in times past, gone senseless, derailed? ...’ [Ann. 199–200] and the rest, all in the most awe-inspiring tones; for you are familiar with the poem. And in any case Appius’ own speech survives.

Cicero’s confidence in the familiarity of the passage in question to the audience (both his immediate audience and the audience of the dramatic date of 150 BCE) surfaces in the abbreviated manner of his quotation and in the phrase *notum enim vobis carmen est*. By contrast, he betrays no similar expectation of the (supposed) historical speech; even its existence is mentioned in a manner suggesting it might come as a possible surprise to the audience. In Cicero’s treatment, then, the Ennian speech of Appius Claudius appears as *the* serviceable version of what the man said, the one long fixed in shared awareness and therefore possessed of a combination of familiarity and, resulting from that, the faith of its audience. If a ‘hard-core’ historical fact is one ‘so firmly planted in the popular consciousness that it would be impossible to present an alternative version and maintain plausibility’,²³ the *Annales*, as they appear here, have a large claim to represent that sort of historical truth: the sort an audience believes because it has long established cultural currency. At the same time, the mention of the (supposed) record of Appius’ speech proper perhaps served to add credibility to the sonorous and evocative Ennius-quotation, by suggesting that it could be tested against a piece of documentary evidence. In that sense, Cicero is here on the cusp of acknowledging the potential fictionality of Ennius’ representation, even as he overtly rebuts it.

This is certainly not the only way in which Cicero has his speakers present the *Annales* in their relationship to truth and historicity. But, no matter how far he goes, in the service of his speakers’ arguments, in showing awareness that Ennius re-elaborated the past, in the end nothing limits or compromises the

²³ Levene (2011) 10–11; cf. Pelling (2013) on how strong a role familiarity plays in achieving plausibility (for virtually any audience).

authority the *Annales* wielded;²⁴ Cicero's speakers revert almost in the same breath to uses of the text predicated on its reliability and transparency. The salient characteristic of the *Annales* in a world still innocent of the *Aeneid* is that of being a memorial of the past with a powerful claim to compete with prose historiography on its own territory.²⁵ This understanding of the *Annales* is the foundation on which my examination of how references and referencing in the *Annales* operate now proceeds.

II. Repetition within the Epic Tradition: the Question of Transhistoricity

It is surely not irrelevant to the notion of a transhistorical tradition that epic poets began from a practice in which no one individual had control over a final version, but in which all collaborated in preserving an account of the past they each might elaborate but which carried its own authority, not tethered to them and hallowed by time. Oral practice is of course long defunct by the time we reach Roman literature, but its relics remain: repetition within and among epic texts is a lasting hallmark of the genre at Rome. Moreover, at least some episodes of Ennian epic also had analogues in the historiographical tradition; and, given the status of Ennius' *Annales*' in its day, the potential exists for the work to have functioned in detail as a so-called source-text for the Roman historiographical, or indeed the Roman epic, tradition. The full evidence that would allow us to assess whether or not it did so does not survive: the record no longer allows us to juxtapose Ennius on the fall of Troy with Vergil on the fall of Troy or, in any detail, Ennius on the fall of Alba Longa with Livy on the same, even though we know that those accounts once existed to be juxtaposed, and even if thematic and/or stylistic hints argue for Ennian presence in the later texts.²⁶ But other forms of repetition among these texts remain thought-

²⁴ The extreme case of this is at *Div.* 2.115–16, discussed at Elliott (2013a) 189–93.

²⁵ For a different treatment of the relationship between Ennius' *Annales* and historical writing and record-keeping, including discussion of the sources of Ennius' authority as poet, see Gildenhard (2003). Gildenhard argues that Ennius 'situat[es] his authority *as author* in the sphere of the aesthetic [rather than in the social or political sphere claimed by contemporary prose historians]' and 'achieves a similar effect in merging the Greek Muses with the Latin Camenae (linked by folk-etymology with *carmen*): the Muses preside over the realm of song and, as daughters of Memory have the additional advantage of implicitly underwriting the historical reliability of the content of the epic' (p. 103). He raises the question of the extent to which Ennius 'may have been more "influential" than aristocratic prose authors in shaping Rome's "historical consciousness"'.

²⁶ See Servius ad *Aen.* 2.313 and 486ff., printed as frg. II.xi in Skutsch's edition of the *Annales*, with Rossi (2002) 231–40, with nn. 18–21 there for relevant further bibliography. Servius speaks simply of a written 'fall of Alba' (e.g. *de Albano excidio translatus est locus*) without

provoking: here, I will argue that when Ennius reproduces Homer at length (and by extension when Vergil reproduces Ennius and, through him, Homer), using language that draws that reproduction to attention, the repetition can be read as endowed with ‘distinctive ontological status’—or, as I would rather have it, as making a ‘distinctive ontological’ claim as to the identity of the two accounts—in a manner worth juxtaposing to the relationship between Livy and Polybius as Levene reads it.²⁷

In making this case, I do not mean to set aside the irreducible difference between Levene’s transhistoricity (when a writer in the historiographical tradition repeats the detail of previous historians’ accounts in his narrative of the same events) and the related but somewhat different phenomenon that is all the surviving evidence allows me to treat in the case of the *Annales* (repetition of language and theme in treating notionally different historical events). And indeed, to adapt a central claim of Levene’s case to epic in particular, one might further insist that repetition in historiography is more worth paying attention to and more demanding of interpretation than repetition in epic because historians’ practice would tend to occasion greater individuality of expression, whereas, from its oral beginnings, repetition of language is part and parcel of the epic poet’s mode.²⁸ But, while respecting these observations and accepting the limitations imposed by the state of the evidence, I submit that it remains worth comparing the two different types of repetition (again: that serving narrative of the same events in Levene’s historiographical examples, and of different events whose similarity the author is underwriting in my epic examples below). The reason, I propose, is that these two types of repetition share a similar historiographical function: both are deeply engaged in reflecting tradition as the repository of the true past and using it to assert the validity and relevance of that truth with regard to the lived and the textual present.

Thanks to the tradition of scholarship on Vergil, which mines for such things, instances of Ennian repetitions come readily to hand. The most extended is the description of a Roman tribune on the model of the Ajax of *Iliad* 16.102–11, a fragment we know as *Ann.* 391–8:

specifying an author for that written account. This has historically been interpreted as referring to a single dominant author, whose identity (even in Servius’ day? or at the time when the material he reproduces originated?) was so well known that there was no need to name him: Ennius. If that is correct, it implies Ennius’ relevance to a subject treated also by prose writers. An alternative view of the implications of Servius’ phrase, with its failure to name a specific author, is that there existed, for the fall of Alba, a shared account relevant across genres: an instance of ‘transhistoricity’ as Levene has it, but one common to epic and historiography alike.

²⁷ Levene uses the quoted phrase at Levene (2011) 1 and 11.

²⁸ But see O’Gorman (2009) 236 on repetition as a function of language itself, not limited to any particular genre.

undique conveniunt velut imber tela tribuno:
 configunt parmam, tinnit hastilibus umbo,
 aerato sonitu galeae, sed nec pote quisquam
 undique nitendo corpus discerpere ferro.
 semper abundantes hastas frangitque quatitque.
 totum sudor habet corpus, multumque laborat,
 nec respirandi fit copia: praepete ferro
 Histri tela manu iacentes sollicitabant.

From all sides missiles fly at the tribune like a rain: they pierce his shield, the boss rings from the impact of the spears to the brazen clanging of his helmet; yet, however much they strive from all sides, no one is able to rip through his body with their weapons. Constantly he dashes down and shatters the incessant stream of their spears. Sweat covers his entire body; he is in great distress and has no chance to catch his breath. With their swift-winged weapons, the Istrians keep him occupied, hurling their weapons by main force at him.

Because the source here, Macrobius, attributes this fragment clearly and uncontroversially to Book 15 of the *Annales* (conventionally understood as the narrative of the first half of the 180s BCE), there can be no escaping the conclusion that Ennius carried his macroscopic emulation of Homeric passages all the way through the epic, well into his description of recent events. This passage (and its relatives)²⁹ therefore present a conundrum for readers whose criteria for appropriateness in the narration of especially recent and accessible history include rational and realistic treatment, regardless of genre. Of these the twentieth century has had its share: Norden, for example, declares that he finds ‘etwas absonderliches’ (‘something preposterous’) in the representation of Roman consuls and tribunes in the guise of Homeric heroes.³⁰ One response to this situation would be to side-step the matter by putting the passage down to literary *aemulatio* pure and simple, so muting the

²⁹ E.g. *Ann.* XV.iv, a testimonium again given by Macrobius (Sat. 6.2.32) and again uncontroversially attributed to Book 15: *de Pandaro et Bitia aperientibus portas locus* (*Aen.* 9.672ff.) *acceptus est ex libro quinto decimo Ennii, qui induxit Histros duos in obsidione erupisse porta et stragem de obsidente hoste fecisse*. Although Macrobius does not also say so, the information he gives here is sufficient to make it clear that these Istrians’ actions ‘repeat’ those of the Polypoites and Leonteus of *Il.* 12.127ff.

³⁰ Norden (1954) 16. Cf. the grounds on which Fraenkel rejects Norden’s reconstruction of the *Discordia* episode: ‘while making full allowance for the odd inventions to which a poet may be driven who has taken upon himself the task of mingling Roman history with elements of Homeric mythology, we should not forget that there are limits to what we can believe Ennius to have done. I for one am not prepared to foist on him anything so childish as this’ (Fraenkel (1945) 13).

passage's claim to be making an historical representation. That, after all, is how the passage is presented to us in Macrobius' post-Vergilian perspective: at *Sat.* 6.3.2–4, not only *Ann.* 391–8 but also its companions at *Il.* 16.102–11 and *Aen.* 9.806–14 are set before our eyes: what matters to the ancient reader responsible for this organisation is the fact that Ennius' lines are modelled on a passage of Homer and themselves serve as models for a passage of the *Aeneid*; any concerns about historicity are long gone. But to its earlier readers, as we have seen, the credible representation of the past in Ennius was very much the point. Can this passage, then, be read in such a way as to respond to the interests and understanding of a Cicero?

One effect of Ennius' choice to adopt Homeric and Herodotean motifs,³¹ narrative patterns and modes of expression was that he thus confirmed, from the new Roman perspective, the Homeric account of the past as the foundation or counterpart of the account he was himself giving. The re-capitulation of Iliadic narrative (as e.g. at *Ann.* 14, *quom veter occubuit Priamus sub Marte Pelasgo*; 'when Priam of old fell to the Greek war-god') and the repetition of episodes in particular imply the ratification of the pre-existing narrative. It is here, in the confirmation of the validity and relevance of Homer's (and perhaps Herodotus') accounts to his own narrative that I see similarity to Levene's reading of Livian repetitions of Polybius. Again, the claim here is not that we have the evidence to allow straightforward comparison of the phenomenon of repetition within epic texts on the one hand and historiographical ones on the other. Unlike Livy with Polybius, Ennius is not actually narrating the same events as his predecessor: he is not telling Greece's story again but is telling the new story of Rome, and so the kind of repetition at hand is not directly parallel to the phenomenon Levene observes. But it remains the case that there is an (arguable) historiographical import (alongside the literary *aemulatio*) to Ennius' repetitions too: with the rehearsal of the actions and character-types of the Greek past (indistinguishably lived and literary (Damon 2010)),³² peopled now with nominally Roman actors, Ennius transformed what had been the account of a single historical moment—that is, (some events within) the Trojan War—into a recurrent series of actions, something that might start to look a bit like a cycle to history. This choice to make Roman history appear in some significant part a repetition of the Greek past was in practice a contention that Roman history was capable of subsuming the most famous stories of the other places and events of which the Romans knew. The repeated events and characters lost

³¹ See below on *Ann.* 369, with its mention of Xerxes. I have also argued that some of the surviving battle-description of the *Annales* look a lot like snapshots from Thermopylae (Elliott (2010) 150–3).

³² Also with the repetition of the notion of the clash between East and West. I argue that traces of such presentation are visible in the fragments of the *Annales* in Elliott (2013b) 229–40.

their uniqueness; instead, in their new context (and retrospectively in their old) they now functioned as markers of what a significant historical era looked like—with the implication that Roman history now stood revealed as both an extension and the fulfilment of its Greek prototype.³³ The repetition of familiar narrative patterns can, in the way that Chris Pelling has well explained,³⁴ only have abetted the audience's readiness to accept Ennius' defamiliarised Roman past. The case can thus be made that repetition both in the *Annales* and of the *Annales* helps interpret the past and present in their relationship to each other and confirm the centrality of the accounts the tradition enshrined.³⁵ An analogy exists here to that confirmation of the written tradition's authority over the past that Levene sees in historiographical repetition. And that analogy makes no less thought-provoking the fact that Ennius did have an account of the fall of Alba Longa, and Vergil and Livy were aware of it, just as he had an account of the Hannibalic War, and Polybius and Livy were aware of that—even if those accounts no longer exist to be analysed in terms of their repetition and adaptation of the written past that preceded them.

The concerns about the poet's toying with history that Ennius' tribune-passage has induced (as illustrated above by Norden's example) are again not identical to the 'distinctive anxiety' Levene posits on the part of the modern reader around Livy's practice in reproducing substantial pieces of Polybius; but they are generated by the same concern that authors treating history, especially recent or otherwise verifiable history, ought to prioritise the production of an independent version of the truth—and therefore ought not to depend on or emulate how any predecessor has put or has arranged things.³⁶ My solution to these concerns is also not dissimilar to Levene's: he sets aside the concept of *aemulatio*, not because it is not relevant to historiography but because it does not solve the specific concerns about historicity that historiography's particular case generates. Instead, he suggests reading Livy's reproductions,

³³ Lucian's spoof historiographical version of this is described by O'Gorman (2009) 237–8. The problem Lucian identifies is perhaps more acute in epic poetry (though that is not his topic), with its habit of using the same extended formal frame of language for notionally different different occurrences; but, in the satirical perspective he creates, it is not irrelevant to historiography either.

³⁴ Pelling (2013).

³⁵ In the terms of O'Gorman (2009), Ennius' text too both comments on the historical record and presents an interpretation of events (p. 234).

³⁶ Cf. Pelling (2013) 5, on the notion that 'we care about history, at least recent history, not necessarily more than but *in different ways from* those in which we care about plays or novels': repetitions of familiar narrative patterns might help convey a greater sense of plausibility, but that sits less comfortably in the case of an account whose ostensible purpose is in large part to detail historical truth.

which to the modern eye might appear rather too close to plagiarism for comfort,³⁷ as demonstration of Livy's acceptance of the historical truth of Polybius' account.³⁸ I too accept the (in Ennius' case, yet clearer) relevance of *aemulatio*, especially because it is promoted by precisely those ancient readers who are responsible for the transmission of the vast majority of Ennius' 'repetitions'. That does not, however, free the poet from the risk of being accused of plagiarism, as Suetonius' mention of the *obtrectatores Vergili* shows.³⁹ And even if that were not the case, *aemulatio* could still not function as an explanation for what is (concurrently with it) going on in terms of Ennius' historiographical enterprise; for that, an explanation needs to be given of what these repetitions have to do with the vision of the past available from the perspective of the *Annales*. The distinction that Levene (2011) posits between historians on the one hand and poets such as Terence and Catullus on the other holds; it's just that Ennius belongs with the former group, and the reason is that his repetitions, whatever they are doing on the literary and aesthetic level, are also making a significant contribution to the plausible relation of a validated past explanatory of the present and of more recent history.

I propose that the effect of *Ann.* 391–8 in its original context was, at least as much as to elicit admiration for the poet's reproduction of Homer, to startle with the notion that our friend, the tribune (either someone we had fought side by side with and never thought that much of; or else someone we had never even known existed among us) could be re-construed in these extraordinary terms. To imagine this possible was to be presented with an arresting new vision, not accessible in daily life, of the meaning of present times, of history as it was unfolding. In terms of historical facts, there is no reason to quarrel with the idea that a Roman tribune made a courageous stand. He may well have done so, even if not a lot of people noticed it. Cato is perhaps making a similar point in the *Origines*, when he tells the story of the military tribune who sacrificed himself and 400 others to rescue a Roman army caught in a Carthaginian trap in Sicily during the first Punic War.⁴⁰ In the epilogue to the story, Cato for his part makes his point explicit (F 77.19 *FRHist*):

³⁷ Levene (2011) 10.

³⁸ Levene (2011) 8–12.

³⁹ *Vita Vergili* (Rostagni (1944) 106, ll. 209–10; cf. Norden (1927) 366), especially the mention of Perellius Faustus' collection of Vergil's 'thefts' and Octavius Avitus' eight volumes of documentation thereof. The lists of borrowings (produced by speakers both supportive of and hostile to Vergil) in Macrobius' *Saturnalia* are probably one of our better indications of what that documentation looked like.

⁴⁰ The passage is informatively discussed by Krebs (2006). Krebs argues that Cato draws specifically on Herodotus for his account.

sed idem benefactum quo in loco ponas nimium interest. Leonides Laco, qui simile apud Thermopylas fecit, propter eius virtutes omnis Graecia gloriam atque gratiam praecipuam claritudinis inclitissimae decoravere monumentis: signis, statuis, elogiis, historiis aliisque rebus gratissimum id eius factum habuere; at tribuno militum parva laus pro factis relicta, qui idem fecerat atque rem servaverat.

But this same action—it makes all the difference in the world how you respond to it. The Spartan Leonidas, who performed a similar feat at Thermopylae—on account of his deeds of valour, all of Greece honoured his glory and great benefaction with records tending to his high renown: with images, statues, inscriptions, narrative accounts and by other means they treated his action as most worthy of thanks. But our military tribune got small enough praise given his deeds, though he had achieved as much and saved the situation.

Cato and Ennius are each making primarily ideological points, based on (presumably) historical data that might or might not make a mark on strictly rational or analytic accounts. But the one, Cato, is also making a serious point about the nature of historiography; and the other, Ennius, is, I believe, exemplifying that point and at the same time making a serious point of his own about the nature and course of history, as well as about the place of Roman history within the larger history of the world.

III. Contested Allusion in Epic and Historiography

Levene writes of another type of allusion or repetition of the past, one that has tended to be marginal to verse allusion but that is central, and that needs to be recognised as central, to historiography. This is the type in which the characters of the text themselves use (both historical and textual) events and persons from the past to negotiate the present.⁴¹ Among Levene's examples are Livy's renditions of Fabius Maximus Cunctator and Scipio Africanus, as they engage, towards the end of Book 28, in debate over Scipio's proposed invasion of Africa. At 28.41.17, Fabius explicitly mentions the disastrous Sicilian Expedition best known to today's readers from Thucydides Book 6. He directly compares Scipio to Alcibiades, as the rash author of a dangerous move, while, implicitly,

⁴¹ Levene (2010a) 85, 117. Levene notes that the phenomenon is 'not ... impossible to parallel in verse', citing Fowler (1997) 17–18, where Fowler's example is Vergil's Dido, constructed on a multiplicity of models from across the genres. It is relevant to (another part of) Levene's argument that Fowler points out the value of '(s)eeing Dido as Nausicaa, not merely as significantly different' (ibid. 18). It is relevant to my own argument that the parallel given occurs in epic.

he fashions himself in the same speech as the older and wiser Athenian Nicias, urging restraint on the eve of the doomed expedition. In response, as Levene points out, Scipio challenges Fabius' model explicitly (28.43.20), replacing the reference to the Sicilian Expedition with one to the Sicilian tyrant Agathocles—who, when faced with Carthaginians on Syracusan soil, chose to respond to the situation by launching his own offensive in Africa (28.43.21). Livy, Levene argues, is representing Fabius and Scipio as quasi-historians selecting among and arguing about the appropriate use of particular historical sources.⁴²

I propose that the reason why this sort of complex and versatile allusion is especially at home in historiography is because its function is to suggest and substantiate an interpretation of the present in the light of the past. The vignettes in which these allusions are operative thus offer to view miniature, dramatised versions of the task that historiography as a whole performs.⁴³ Such allusion is available to the historian in his own right,⁴⁴ but, in the instances where it is the narrative voice that makes the allusion present, the allusion acquires the apparent transparency that comes with being advertised as an objective reading of reality. It is more especially effective where it appears in the mouths of internal speakers in competition with one another, because the contestation between alternative viewpoints, of parties who are equals (at any rate in terms of textual status), dramatises the dynamic nature of interpretation: what is at stake in the understanding of the past and its ability to govern the present becomes audibly (or legibly) controversial.⁴⁵ But epic too, as revisited

⁴² Levene (2010a) 111–18. Specific intertexts matter here, in Levene's view, quite as much as historical precedent: he reasons that the intertext for Fabius' allusions to the Sicilian expedition is as likely to have been Ephorus as Thucydides—and that the Livian Fabius himself co-opts the arguments of more than one earlier version of Nicias; for Scipio's allusions to Agathocles, Levene argues, the source was Duris or Timaeus (whichever Diodorus' source was for this particular narrative). Levene goes on to note that both speakers also adduce instances from Roman history, ones previously narrated in Livy's own text; here, by contrast, general historical precedent matters more than the particular source. Grethlein and Krebs (2012) 4–5 discuss the range of modes in which competing references to the past can be evoked.

⁴³ Cf. Pelling (2006), on another instance of historiography reflecting its own operation in paradigmatic vignettes: in that instance, in how the elusiveness of wisdom in Herodotus' Lydian *logos* mirrors the difficulty for Herodotus' audience too of drawing anything but the most provisional ethical conclusions from the material he presents. See also Grethlein and Krebs on the metahistorical functions of the *plupast* (that is, of referring to a previous era of the past within historical texts) at Grethlein and Krebs (2012) 8–11.

⁴⁴ The contestation can also be shared between characters and the narrator, as in the use of the Ennian 'Cunctator' in Livy Book 22 (Elliott (2009a)).

⁴⁵ Cp. O'Gorman (2009) 237–40, on how Thucydides' text, intended as it is as a practical guide to the future (Thuc. 1.22.4), offers his readers a basis for 'the elaboration of different modes of reading Thucydides through political action'. Whether the 'readers' of the past are already part of the text (as in my discussion above and in Levene's) or initially extra-

above, is involved in just the same game of (re-) negotiation of the past; and that might explain why conflicts over the relevance of previous patterns and models are also present there. If the contestation of the past in its relationship to the present becomes all the more fraught with the change of scene to Rome, perhaps that explains why this particular type of allusion is especially common in Roman epic as well as in Roman historiography; and, if Ennius was one of the first to negotiate the change of national context, perhaps that helps make sense of the idea that he had an originary role in the process.

What Levene points out in Livy 28 is familiar, for example, from the contestation of identity in the *Aeneid* between Aeneas and Turnus as to who plays the more convincing Paris or Achilles (and which aspect of Achilles is in question).⁴⁶ In Ennius' case, we are never working with the full set of evidence we would like; nevertheless, three examples (one familiar; two less so) suggest that explicit use of the past by the poem's internal speakers to shape their audience's understanding of the present was a recurrent mode of generating meaning in the epic. The first is the famous passage quoted by Cicero (*Off.* 1.38), in the context of a discussion of the concept of a just war and of how behaviour towards an enemy should vary in accordance with the stakes of the conflict (survival *vs.* the acquisition or retention of empire).⁴⁷ In the Ennian quotation itself, we have Pyrrhus ceding to the Romans the prisoners of war he had taken at Heraclea in 280 BCE.⁴⁸ The passage, with a brief amount of its Ciceronian quotation-context, reads thus:

Pyrrhi quidem de captivis reddendis illa praeclara:
 nec mi aurum posco nec mi pretium dederitis:
 non cauponantes bellum sed belligerantes
 ferro, non auro vitam cernamus utrique.
 vosne velit an me regnare era quidve ferat Fors
 virtute experiamur, et hoc simul accipe dictum:
 quorum virtuti belli fortuna pepercit
 eorundem me libertati me parcere certum est.
 dono—ducite—doque volentibus cum magnis dis.

[*Ann.* 183–90]

textual, only later to be woven into the fabric of history as themselves possible models for the future ahead (as in O'Gorman's scenario), all are 'authors of intertextual actions' (Andrew Feldherr's formulation, per O'Gorman, *loc. cit.*, n. 16).

⁴⁶ See e.g. Harrison (1991) 202–3 (on ll. 517–20), 268 (on ll. 827–8), 269 (on ll. 830–1), and 196 (on ll. 491–500). See also the example of Dido (n. 41, above). In Dido's case, the construction on the basis of earlier models is done for her, by the authorial voice, as is largely also true in the cases of Turnus and Aeneas.

⁴⁷ See Dyck (1996) 146–8.

⁴⁸ Skutsch (1985) 347–53.

regalis sane et digna Aeacidarum genere sententia.

And in fact, those words of Pyrrhus' on the return of the prisoners-of-war are outstanding:

I make no demand for gold, nor shall you give me a ransom: not in trafficking in but in waging war, with iron and not with gold, let us resolve the issue of our lives. Whether it is you or me whom lady fortune wishes should rule, or whatsoever she may bring—let it be by valour that we put it to the test. And hear this word too: those to whose valour the fortune of war was kind, it is my resolve to grant their freedom. I bestow them on you—take them—I give them—with the will of the great gods.

This is a kingly thought and worthy of a scion of the Aeacids.

Here, Pyrrhus' refusal of ransom, his unconditional generosity in returning the Roman prisoners-of-war, his support of valour alone as the proper arbiter of fortune, and the nobility with which the stately Ennian language endows him, all cast him as a new version of the humane Achilles of *Iliad* 24; and the striking Ennian hexameter cannot but (loosely) abet such a parallel.⁴⁹ The audience may not be able to rely on explicit reference to Achilles as a cue (it may well be no accident that, in what survives of the *Annales*, Pyrrhus makes no such reference); but Pyrrhus' name cannot but recall Achilles' son and the Achillean heritage that the historical Pyrrhus himself took every opportunity to advertise.⁵⁰ In support of this, all surviving references to Pyrrhus in Ennius' epic refer to his descent, in most cases through use specifically of a Homerising patronymic, *Aeacides*.⁵¹ So effective is this patronymic in capturing the spirit of the Ennian Pyrrhus that we see it transferred into Cicero's text: Pyrrhus' thought is termed *digna Aeacidarum genere* in the reflection immediately following the quotation. Furthermore, in tribute to the power of the *Annales* to shape perceptions of the past, despite Pyrrhus' actions against Rome, Cicero does not hesitate to present him as a model for ideal Roman behaviour.

Although the ennobling connotations of the patronymic thus seem to have got the upper hand, elsewhere in the *Annales* an altogether different set of con-

⁴⁹ This, including the interpretation of *Ann.* 197–8, below, is a case I have already made, in the service of a different argument, at Elliott (2007) 52–4.

⁵⁰ Franke (1989) 463–5, on the coinage Pyrrhus had minted in South Italy and Sicily, and in Epirus.

⁵¹ The surviving identifiable references to Pyrrhus appear at *Ann.* 167 (*te Aeacida*), 197 (*stolidum genus Aeacidarum*), 474–5 (*at non sic dubius fuit hostis / Aeacida Burrus*), 165 (*navos ... homo, Graio patre, Graius homo, rex*), 166 (*nomine Burrus uti memorant a stirpe supremo*); Elliott (2007) 53, with n. 51 there.

notations for the same word is apparent. *Ann.* 197–8 reads: *stolidum genus Aeacidarum: bellipotentis sunt magis quam sapientipotentis* (‘the race of the Aeacids is brutish: they are more powerful in war than in wits’). Here, the mention of prowess in battle coupled with dullness promotes not Achilles but the other famous ‘Aeacid’: that is, the brave but inarticulate Ajax of the *Iliad*. It is not entirely clear who the original speaker was (neither is the matter critical here), but Appius Claudius Caecus is a decent bet.⁵² This anti-Pyrrhus speaker at any rate tries to appropriate the patronymic in a manner that better suits his hostile purposes.

Nor is this the only occasion on which speakers contest the qualities claimed by the Ennian Pyrrhus.⁵³ At *Rep.* 3.4–5, Cicero cites Manius Curius Dentatus, Pyrrhus’ contemporary and conqueror (at the battle of Beneventum in 275 BCE), as an example of previous Roman statesmen who had taken the *mos maiorum* alone, unassisted by Greek philosophy, as their guiding star. (Curius is the first in Cicero’s list and the only one to survive in our fragmentary version of the text.) Cicero describes Curius in exclusively Ennian language, giving us the line we know as *Ann.* 456: *quem nemo ferro potuit superare nec auro* (‘whom no one was able to overcome with iron or with gold’)—a line that pits Curius directly against his historical adversary, Pyrrhus, in terms of ownership of the courage and incorruptibility which Pyrrhus had claimed for himself, in his own (Ennian) voice, at *Ann.* 185: *ferro, non auro vitam cernamus utrique* (‘with iron and not with gold let us each make trial of our lives’). One of the recent Italian commentators on the *Annales*, Giorgio Jackson, points not only to the two lines’ resemblance but also to a more general recurrence of the ‘with iron and not with gold’ antithesis,⁵⁴ thus coming to the conclusion that the trope was a topos, which he tentatively associates with a (hypothetical) pre-Ennian legendary and heroic Camillus.⁵⁵ Very little evidence of such a figure,⁵⁶ or of

⁵² *Contra* Skutsch (1985) 358, on the grounds that ‘the Roman statesman can hardly be credited with allusions to Greek mythology or with flattering references to the enemy’s military prowess’, a remark in the vein of Norden and Fraenkel’s comments on representations in the *Annales*, as cited in n. 30, above.

⁵³ This paragraph summarises an argument I make at Elliott (2013a) 170–1.

⁵⁴ Flores et al. (2002) 136, where Jackson cites Plaut. *Truc.* 929 (*auro hau ferro deterere potes hunc me amem*), Livy 5.49.3 (*arma aptare ferroque non auro recipere patriam iubet*, of Camillus’ response to the Gauls) and Plut. *Cam.* 29.2 (*εἰπὼν ὡς σιδήρῳ πατριὸν ἐστὶ Ῥωμαίους οὐ χρυσῷ τὴν πατρίδα σῶζειν*). Ogilvie (1965) 738 ad Livy 5.49.3 notes further its use by Justin of the Aetolians (28.2.4) and Mithridates (38.4.8). Jackson opposes the idea of the Plautine line’s being a parody of Ennius. But, especially since we can count on the relevance of Ennius’ epic both to Livy and to Plutarch on Pyrrhus (for the latter, see Jackson, *loc. cit.*), I rate the chances of the phrase representing responses to the *Annales*, as opposed to betokening the independent popularity of the antithesis, rather higher than he does.

⁵⁵ Cf. Momigliano (1942) 113.

⁵⁶ See Ogilvie (1965) 670–71, 679, 727–8, 732, 739; Momigliano (1942) 113.

an Ennian one,⁵⁷ survives. But, if Jackson is nevertheless right about the relevance of Camillus, then we have another instance of the use of a model from the past to shape an (internal and external) audience's sense of a new dramatic present; even if not, and if the contestation of identity Ennius created out of the of the 'iron, not gold' language was new here, we can still say that Ennius created a contestation of identity analogous to those which turn on the use of a motif from the past, in an act that resulted in a literary afterlife for the phrase on which the contestation turned (examples cited in n. 54, below).

Instances of references in fragments less well known than *Ann.* 183–90 exist also. The following one suggests that Greek historiography as well as Greek epic lay within the compass of Ennius' references. At *Ann.* 369, a speaker proclaims *isque Hellesponto pontem contendit in alto* ('he drew a bridge out over the deep Hellespont'). Helpfully, the fragment's source, Varro (*LL* 7.21), tells us that the referent of the speaker's 'is' is Xerxes (*Ann.* 369):

'quasi Hellespontum et claustra' [*trag. frag. inc. inc.* 107 R], quod Xerxes quondam eum locum clausit; nam ut Ennius ait 'isque Hellesponto pontem contendit in alto'

'as if the Hellespont and its barriers', because Xerxes once barred up that place; for, as Ennius says, 'he drew a bridge out over the deep Hellespont'

The context of the fragment is in this case really inaccessible. Skutsch posits that the line belongs to a speaker expressing Roman apprehension at Antiochus' movement west towards Rome in 192 BCE.⁵⁸ That is not implausible, but the only clues to the situation are the alarm suggested by the speaker's emphatic *isque* and the idea of a foreign threat (by no sound inference necessarily from the East) implied in the mention of Xerxes; Antiochus is far from being the only possibility.⁵⁹ For my purposes here, however, what matters more than the question of the speaker and the context is that Ennius finds room for a reference to Xerxes in his account of Rome: what we see is a speaker seeking to animate his audience by juxtaposing for purposes of comparison a famous moment of Greek history with a (from the speaker's perspective) current Roman event. While Ennius' audience may have had access to accounts of Xerxes' invasion besides the Herodotean one most familiar to us (and surely the classic source in Ennius' day too), perhaps the more salient fact altogether is that the model after which Ennius' internal and external audiences were

⁵⁷ Despite speculation around *Ann.* 154–5; see Skutsch (1985) 314–15.

⁵⁸ Skutsch (1985) 535.

⁵⁹ See Elliott (2013b) 234–5, n. 26, for documentation of further possibilities.

invited to construe events at Rome was one that belonged fairly unambiguously to Greek historiography.⁶⁰

There are other indications, besides this reference to Xerxes, that the East and its history held a larger conceptual place in Ennius' construction of the world—perhaps no surprise, given the thorough-going modelling after Homer.⁶¹ Troy no doubt had its place in the chronological narrative of the *Annales*,⁶² but there is also evidence to suggest that its spectre loomed over the narrative as a whole—not only through the use of the hexameter and the other means by which Ennius' language implicitly recalled Homeric precedent but through explicit mention too. The single surviving fragment that actually names Troy is assigned by its ancient source (Macrobius)⁶³ to Book 10, a book conventionally estimated to narrate the events the first decade of the second century BCE. This fragment is *Ann.* 344–5, and it refers to Troy's apparently unstoppable renaissance:

[Pergama]

quae neque Dardaniis campis potuere perire
nec quom capta capi nec quom combusta cremari

[Troy]

which could not be destroyed on the Dardan plain
nor when captured remain captured nor when torched be consumed by
flame

In guaranteeing Book 10 as this fragment's original location, Macrobius confirms for us that Troy's significance continued to be felt late in Ennius' narrative. He quotes the lines on account of their relationship to *Aen.* 7.294–6 (part of Juno's angry response to the headway the Trojans were making in Italy),⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Specific intertexts are not needed for the past to generate meaning, even for speakers internal to a text: see Grethlein and Krebs (2012) 4–5. For Pelling (2013) 3, however, 'for later authors, to allude to the Persian Wars must be to allude also to Herodotus'.

⁶¹ I develop this argument at greater length in Elliott (2013b), as cited in n. 32, above.

⁶² Three lines referring to Troy are typically construed by editors as direct narrative in the authorial voice and, in the absence of ancient evidence regarding their positions in the narrative, assigned to Book 1 and the very start of the narrative as a whole. These are: *Ann.* 14, *quom veter occubuit Priamus sub Marte Pelasgo* ('when Priam of old fell to the Greek War-God'), and *Ann.* 15–16, *doctusque Anchisesque Venus quem pulcra dearum / fari donavit, divinum pectus habere* ('?and? learned Anchises, to whom Venus, outstandingly beautiful goddess, granted the gift of prophecy and to have an inspired mind').

⁶³ *Macr. Sat.* 6.1.60. Macrobius also supplies us with the knowledge that the antecedent of the fragment's relative pronoun is *Pergama*.

⁶⁴ *Aen.* 7.294–6: *num Sigeis occumbere campis, / num capti potuere capi? num incensa cremavit / Troia viros*. Macrobius fails to include the first half-line of the quotation as I give it here.

and that has of course been put to use in reconstructions of their original context. Thus Skutsch conjectures that *Ann.* 344–5 originate in Ennius’ replication of a speech of the Lampsacene embassy to Massilia and Rome in the 190s BCE, in which the Lampsacenes requested that Rome protect them from Antiochus, on the grounds of their kinship with the Romans through Troy.⁶⁵ But this conjecture rests on no more than the hypothesis that the account of the Second Macedonian War fell in Book 10, and it is too precise to be underwritten by our surviving evidence about the text. All the same, it is possible to support Skutsch’s conjecture to the extent that it responds to the lines’ evident emotional charge in the mention of Troy’s re-birth, as carried in part by the intense *p* and *c* alliteration—whether that emotional charge serves the speaker’s exasperation (as in the case of Vergil’s Juno) or a desperate plea (as in the case of Skutsch’s Lampsacenes) or some other rhetorical end. Whatever the particular (and to us necessarily mysterious) case, the mention of Troy here serves the speaker as a token of Rome’s long-standing ability to overcome the odds by innate resilience and resourcefulness—and was designed to suggest to the present audience a course of action they could construe as informed by that history. Here too, then, I propose that what we see is the use of a piece of the past as both a rhetorical device and a conceptual model that the speaker is eager for his audience to adopt, because it would involve them in an interpretation of the present moment that accords with the speaker’s own, and would motivate them to the action he desires.

IV. Epic Citation and Historiographical Citation

A point about historiographical citation brings us back now to Levene’s case: as Levene notes, in their debate at the end of Livy 28, Scipio and Fabius do not fully spell out the ramifications of their references to Alcibiades or Agathocles and Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition; but they do mention these persons and events in passing. Brief explicit mention of these possible conceptual models thus serves to confirm their presence and relevance for the narrative moment’s present and immediate future; further (arguable) points of contact are then available for readers to fill out the details of their own (contestable) reconstructions of the more general relevance of the references to the issues in play. Levene also makes the case that similar phenomena characterise citation at the authorial level: he argues (convincingly, in my view) that Livy’s one explicit reference to Polybius in the third decade (*haudquaquam spernendus auctor*, at 30.45.5) is in fact a capstone reference confirming Polybius’ presence all

⁶⁵ Skutsch (1985) 514–15; Erskine (2001) 40, 169–72.

along.⁶⁶ On this view, then, even explicit citation of authors requires a reader to apply independent knowledge and judgment to interpret the fuller relevance of the citation.⁶⁷ In thus avoiding fully spelling out a citation's implications, Livy's procedure perhaps demonstrates some similarity to the behaviours of covert poetic referencing. I further propose that a procedure similar to that employed by Livy's speakers pertains, for example, when the speakers of the *Annales* consistently refer to Pyrrhus as *Aeacides*: the obtrusive patronymic can be read as a form of citation analogous to the Livian Fabius' reference to the Sicilian Expedition and the Livian Scipio's reference to Agathocles in *AUC* 28. The patronymic points to the individual (Pyrrhus) and simultaneously to the text (the *Iliad*) of most relevance, though one that leaves much unstated. In terms of a possible parallel to an authorial capstone reference, Homer gets explicit mention at the start of the *Annales*,⁶⁸ but that may well have been as far as specificity went, with readers left to their own devices in tracing particular reference, relevance and ramifications when it comes to Pyrrhus' self-representation as a new Achilles at *Ann.* 183–90 (or, for another example, the re-description of a Roman tribune as a new Ajax, quoted and discussed above). Given the other ways historiography takes its cue from epic, it may be worth considering whether epic's glancing reference-system (and in general poetry's high expectation of audience-independence in responding to literary cues) helps explain why ancient historians' mention of sources is not thoroughgoing (in the way modern documentation practices are).

V. The Latter-Day: Ennius and Transhistoricity after the Turn of the Era

Before concluding, I now look at some occurrences of Ennian language in the late manifestation of the Roman prose historiographical tradition that is Justin's *Epitome* of Trogus' *Philippic Histories*. Levene notices that this text (and other late summaries: Florus and the *periochae*) represent an extreme case of 'inert' historiographical reproduction of earlier material—testament, he proposes, to the commitment to a transhistorical, transtextual reality, that he sees all prose historiography as sharing but which appears here in stark form,

⁶⁶ Levene (2010a) 126–63. Levene draws into relation with this direct reference to Polybius Livy's other remarkable, direct reference in the decade: that to Ennius at Livy 30.26.9, when Livy (uniquely in the extant record) explicitly quotes Ennian language on Fabius Maximus 'Cunctator' (ibid. 86–8, 162). My own argument about the steady presence of that language in the narrative of Fabius' encounters with Hannibal in Books 21 and 22 (Elliott (2009a)) would enable Levene to make the case that the direct reference to Ennius too is another instance of the capstone kind.

⁶⁷ Cf. Pelling (1992) 10–40.

⁶⁸ *Ann.* 3: *visus Homerus adesse poeta*.

stripped to the bone. The Ennian phrases that occur in this context are ones we can see trickled down through later texts, both epic and historiographical—Vergil, Sallust, Livy—where they have an active role in recalling the specifics of the past and generating new meaning. At first blush, the phrases as they appear in Trogus-Justin look like the sorts of small-scale allusion quintessentially associated with poetry because what makes them recognisable is their wording. Sometimes, they are comfortably integrated into their new contexts; elsewhere, they appear curiously at odds with it. But in general, it is hard to put them to any kind of detailed interpretative use: they appear fossilised, relics of a past no longer understood, no longer dynamic, no longer open to contestation. I suggest therefore that these phrases' primary function in this new context is to carry the authority of traditions retailing the past with which they were associated: allusion in the old sense has been hamstrung, and all that even pointed references can now do is to promote the sense of a past set in stone, a record beyond the reach of individual interpretation.

My first example will be the Ennian-Vergilian phrase *somno ac vino sepultam*, which occurs at *HP* 43.4.7.⁶⁹ In Book 43, the text turns at last to Rome, beginning with an account of the city's origins and early growth. By chapter 4, the narrative has reached the time of Tarquinius Priscus and the foundation of Massilia by Greeks in Gaul. Comanus, the chieftain of the Gallic Segobrigii is persuaded by an evil counsellor to be suspicious of the foreign city in his territory, and, at the Floralia, sends men into the city, while he himself lies in wait with an army *ut, cum nocte a praedictis apertae portae forent, tempestive ad insidias adesset urbemque somno ac vino sepultam armatis invaderet* ('so that, when the city-gates had been opened at night by the aforementioned men, he would arrive in good time to carry out his plot and with his soldiers attack the city buried in sleep and wine'). The phrase *somno ac vino sepultam* is immediately reminiscent of *Aen.* 2.265, *invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam* ('they fall upon the city buried in sleep and wine'), of the Greek assault on Troy as Sinon releases the men inside the Trojan Horse and the Greek fleet approaches from Tenedos. The Vergilian phrase itself has an ancestor in *Ann.* 288, *nunc hostes vino domiti somnoque sepulti* ('now the enemy, subdued by wine and buried by sleep'). There, of course, we do not have the context, but the mention of unmanned *hostes* is a fairly strong indication that it is another ambush-scenario. In the case of this phrase, then, its use in Justin fits rather smoothly into its new context. The surprise is to find

⁶⁹ Sonny (1886) catalogues reminiscences of Vergil in the *Epitome*. The unsurprising fact that Trogus knew Vergil is documented for us by Servius' comment on *Aen.* 6.782: *de hoc autem loco et Trogus et Probus quaerunt* (Yardley (1998) 105).

a metaphorical expression here at all, and to find one with an amply documented surviving epic history to it.⁷⁰ In fact, this phrase has so much extant history that it appears to have been in very common currency indeed, to the extent that we might think Justin himself capable of having imported it—or else of retaining it through comfort with it, if it was a feature of Trogus' text.⁷¹ It is also sufficiently stable in its older contexts that it routinely appears attached to ambush-scenes: specific as the language is, it looks to have become no more than a quasi-formulaic hallmark of any ambush scenario, readily available to any user.⁷² Its poetic origins and venerable history might lend a certain dignity, albeit a casually administered dash thereof. The effect is perhaps not unlike the occasional interspersing of a commonly circulated Shakespearean phrase into conversational English to describe an entirely mundane situation.

In that, the use of the phrase is not a million miles away from a phenomenon we first see in the record of Ennian language with one of the four pre-Vergilian sources for the *Annales*: that is, the pseudo-Caesarian author of the *Bellum Hispaniense*. This man's control of language is notoriously poor,⁷³ and he turns to the words of the *Annales* when his own fail him. Integrated into the stream of the author's own narrative are two single lines of the *Annales*, explicitly attributed to Ennius: at *Bell. Hisp.* 23.3, Caesar's men find themselves under attack while they are building a line of fortifications and, as a result, the author says, *ut ait Ennius, nostri cessere parumper* ('as Ennius says, "our side briefly gave way"'); *Ann.* 480); at *Bell. Hisp.* 31.7, amid the description of the fighting at Munda, the author has (again, *ut ait Ennius*) *premitur pede pes atque armis arma*

⁷⁰ There are multiple iterations of the phrase and its analogues in the *Aeneid*: ... *expletus dapibus vinoque sepultus* (3.630, of the Cyclops), *custode sepulto* (6.424, of the now drugged Cerberus), *confectum curis somnoque gravatum* (6.520, of Deiphobus), *somno vinoque soluti* (9.189, of the surrounding Rutulians, in Nisus' description to Euryalus), *passim somno vinoque per herbam / corpora fusa vident* (9.316–17, still the Nisus and Euryalus episode); see Berres (1977) on the relationship among these phrases. Austin (1964) ad *Aen.* 2.265 illustrates the resonance this phrase acquired in Latin literature by quoting pre- and post-Vergilian examples of it from Lucretius, Propertius, Ovid, Livy, and Valerius Maximus. For something close to these expressions among the extant fragments of the *Annales*, see *Ann.* 366–8: *omnes mortales victores, cordibus vivis / laetantes, vino curatos somnus repente / in campo passim mollissimus perculit acris*.

⁷¹ On the relationship between Trogus and Justin, see Syme (1988) and (1992) and Yardley (1998).

⁷² Even though the *somno vinoque sepultam* phrase has no traceable Homeric ancestry, its multiple uses in multiple epic texts have endowed it likewise with a kind of quasi-formulaic status—an argument I made at Elliott (2007) 241–8, 251, 262.

⁷³ Gaertner (2010) analyses the problem with greater nuance than traditional assessments used (e.g. Klotz (1927) vi; Skutsch (1985) 724; cf. Norden (1915) 158, 'seiner stammelnden Rede').

teruntur ('foot is ground on foot, arms on arms'; *Ann.* 584)—the latter transmitted in unmetrical form,⁷⁴ in token of the informal nature of the quotation. That informality helps supply the sense that the author is quoting spontaneously; his is perhaps the last generation whose imagination and descriptive language draw on a general acquaintance with Ennius, and he uses the poet's powerful words to supply a sense even of the history through which he has himself lived. He is not therein disturbed by the fact that *Ann.* 584 in particular is quintessentially epic, a reproduction of a Homeric line in common circulation among Roman poets,⁷⁵ and thus presents himself as a Ciceronian reader of the *Annales*, at ease with the overtly epic text's historiographical relevance. The line's traceable Homeric ancestry links it, moreover, to a set of lines repeated in the *Annales* to reproduce the effect of Homeric formula:⁷⁶ it is liable to have been a very familiar line, one obviously tied to its context of battle-field fighting, and one designed to lack specificity, precisely so that it could be put to use multiple times, recalling nothing more particular than the heroic age. It connotes an era and a type of scene; and occurs with sufficient literary historical frequency that not especially learned readers are at ease with it. In that, it inaugurates, I suggest, the phenomenon of Ennian language as we see it in Justin's *Epitome*. An indelible difference between what we see in the *Epitome* and what we see in the *Bellum Hispaniense* is that the author of the latter text—unlike Justin, who treats a dim and distant past—uses Ennian quasi-formulaic language to describe a past that is recent and fresh (as Ennius himself does, using Homeric language, e.g. with the tribune of *Ann.* 391–8 (p. 288, above)).

There is also found something slightly more curious than the recurrence of by then trite formulae. At *HP* 31.5.6, Hannibal, fled from Carthage to the court of Antiochus, is seeking to persuade him that the only way to reduce Rome is to go to war on Italian soil: *siquis eos in Italia lacessat, suis eos opibus, suis viribus, suis armis posse vincere, sicut ipse fecerit* ('if one were to attack them in Italy, they could be conquered through their own resources, their own strength, their own military might, just as he himself had done').⁷⁷ This phrasing is striking in its context here. It makes a certain amount of sense: Hannibal goes on to use an analogy comparing Italy to a riverhead that must itself be stemmed in order to avoid having to confront the flood of the full-bodied river elsewhere, and

⁷⁴ The manuscripts have *pes pede premitur, armis teruntur arma*.

⁷⁵ *Il.* 13.131, ἀσπίς ἄρ' ἀσπίδ' ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνέρα δ' ἀνῆρ, a line that Macrobius (*Sat.* 6.3.4) knows to put into relation with Furius (Bibaculus?)' *pressatur pede pes, mucro mucrone, viro vir* (fr. 10 Courtney (2003)), and *Aen.* 10.361, *haeret pede pes densusque viro vir*, if not with the *Bell. Hisp.*'s Ennian line.

⁷⁶ For the idea of Ennius' contrivance of the effects of Homeric formula, see Elliott (2007) 241–8 and Elliott (2013a) 75–134.

⁷⁷ Cf. the phrase at *HP* 31.5.3: *Romanos vinci non nisi armis suis posse nec Italiam aliter quam Italicis armis subigi*.

his point is presumably that the way to defeat Rome is to invade Italy and to form alliances with the Italians against the Romans, as he himself had done.⁷⁸ But the phrase is reminiscent of a phrase recurrent in Livy, Book 22, where it is doing far harder work: there Hannibal is not only confronting the Romans on Italian soil but also being foiled by the stratagems which the ‘Cunctator’ has learned from Hannibal himself: *nec Hannibalem fefellit suis se artibus peti* (‘it did not escape Hannibal that it was by his own [sort of] cunning that he was being beset’; Livy 22.16.5). The wording in that context is extraordinarily well motivated, part of a nexus of Ennian language in which the behaviours and ethical qualities of Fabius Maximus and Hannibal operate in a precarious balance with one another.⁷⁹ The phrase furthermore has a cousin in Sallust (*Jug.* 48.1), where a similar conceptual reciprocity between the Livian Hannibal’s literary ancestor, the Sallustian Jugurtha, and Metellus is in play: Metellus too has studied North African tactics and is managing to keep Jugurtha in suspense, neither denying nor promising him the peace he has requested. Like the Livian Hannibal after him, Jugurtha too realises the relationship between this and his own actions: *se suis artibus temptari animadvertit* (‘he realised that he was being put to the test by means of his own [style of] trickery’). In the *Epitome*, it is as though Hannibal—or rather the complex of authorial consciences that have gone into forming the text as we have it—bears the trace of a memory of these events and realisations but is no longer able to apply them with the full force and flexibility they carried earlier in the tradition.

Sallust makes striking use of the phrase *varia victoria* at the memorable introduction to his narrative of the Jugurthine War: *bellum scripturus sum, quod populus Romanus cum Iugurtha rege Numidarum gessit, primum quia magnum et atrox variaeque victoria fuit ...* (‘I am about to write of the war which the people of Rome waged with Jugurtha, the king of the Numidians, first because it was significant and terrible and characterised by shifting victories ...’; *Jug.* 5); and the same phrase has a subsequent history in Livy.⁸⁰ We find it again at *HP* 2.5.4:⁸¹ in the course of a history of Scythia, there is mention of a military expedition which

⁷⁸ Levene (2010b) 309–11. See Levene’s point there that the parallel accounts in Livy (36.7) and Appian (*Syr.* 14) make Hannibal’s proposed Italian strategy only one part of the plan for taking Rome down. The prominence of the orphaned phrase found in the *Epitome* is only highlighted by its context in a (vis-à-vis these other accounts) unbalanced narrative.

⁷⁹ Elliott (2009a) 536, 540. The self-reflexive language is not in itself demonstrably Ennian on the strength of the surviving fragments of the *Annales*, but it survives in contexts where Ennius is a very strong presence (Elliott (2009a)); and its recurrence in Sallust and Livy, while it documents nothing other than that Livy read Sallust, is at any rate suggestive.

⁸⁰ The phrase occurs five times in Livy: at 1.33.4, 2.6.10, 9.21.6, 23.13.3, 34.47.4 (Yardley (2007) 12–13, 28).

⁸¹ Also, besides the further instance at instance 44.2.7 I here discuss, at 3.6.9, 4.2.6, 19.1.9 and 37.1.7 (Yardley (2007) 28).

takes the men of Scythia away from home for eight years.⁸² The women despair of their return and marry the slaves who had been left behind to take care of the animals. On their return, the men thus find themselves barred from their own property and women, and fight with the slaves *varia victoria*—until they remind themselves that these are slaves and turn to beating them as masters rather than fighting them as enemies of equal rank (*HP* 2.5.1–8). The final book, 44, turns to the history of Spain. The only Spanish military commander considered worthy of note is Viriathus, a leader of the Lusitanians in the 140s BCE (and also known from e.g. Livy *Per.* 54, Diod. 33): *in tanta saeculorum serie nullus illis dux magnus praeter Viriatum fuit, qui annis decem Romanos varia victoria fatigavit* ('in so long a period of time, they had no great commander except Viriathus, who for ten years caused the Romans trouble, with victories on either side'; 44.2.7). Although the evidence here is slighter than in the other cases (and nothing survives to link it to Ennius), the expression is undeniably striking in a narrative not otherwise characterised by its fine and alliterative turn of phrase. The compression of the language and the resultant difficulty of expression alone set it apart from the general run of what we read in the *Epitome*. It is more comfortable in the Viriathus-context than in the Scythia-context, but in either it is isolated from other phenomena that might lead one to engage in further interpretative work around it.

Levene urges us to understand the entire historiographical system all the way down to the late epitomes and summaries in terms of transhistorical transmission of a set of core material that transcends the particular cast a given author might otherwise impose on his work; when he writes of a 'dynamic ideological system across centuries of Roman history',⁸³ he has in mind content that makes it across different authors and survives different historical eras and mindsets. The phrases I have here brought to attention are far from carriers of content; but they too are bearers of an ethos that survives across authors, long after specific memory of their origins has faded. Given their contexts and behaviours in the *Epitome*, they as a group look as if they get stuck in the popular consciousness, carried along as *disiecti membra poetae* (Hor. *Serm.* 1.4.62), first in the stream of historiographical tradition, as well as perhaps in the more general cultural consciousness—but without entirely being divested of the power that comes with antiquity: the aura of the texts to which they had belonged still somehow clung to them. The *Annales* were a dynamic and generative force in Roman Republican historiography; the poem's disembodied

⁸² This episode bears an obvious relationship to the one at Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.1–4, where essentially the same story is told as a prequel to Darius' invasion of Scythia (although in Herodotus the Scythian men's absence is one of 28 years, not 8 as in Trogus-Justin; did the decimal digit simply fall out in the course of transmission?). The episode as a whole thus constitutes an instance of Levene's 'transhistoricity'.

⁸³ Levene (2011) 16.

reach into the centuries beyond, sent out only now via the works it had helped foster, still had the power to abet, if only through the hollow repetition of phrases, the authority by which the core of the ancient tradition was preserved.

Conclusion

In the modern as, to a lesser extent, in the ancient world, epic's formal features can tend to distract from its original function, which historiography had to usurp from it, and to which it never quite relinquished its claim: the authoritative representation of the lived past in its informing relationship to the present. The unhelpfully broad category 'poetry', into which epic's metre places it, helps obscure that real commonality between the two genres, as does the fact that epic is not shy in its use of devices (such as the representation of the gods) that highlight its departure from the mundane in the understanding of the past—while its younger prose kin, at least in some of its manifestations, and not least as a result of its need to distinguish itself from epic, works so hard to downplay the necessary fact that it too represents nothing other than a reconstruction of the past based in large part on tradition. Yet the kinship between the two surfaces nonetheless, among other reflexes in the common use of allusion to construct a rhetorical relationship between past and present (or between different layers of the past), in related modes of citation, and in the common use of tradition to access and reproduce the past. The present investigation could be carried further by comparing different epics' narratives of the same events, or epic and historiographical narratives of the same events, as a closer comparative test to Levene's cases of Livy's reproductions of Polybius than the material I chose allowed for (in §II of the present paper). The case I hope nevertheless to have made is that, while differences between the two genres, which their practitioners so zealously maintained, will presumably always remain in evidence, when examining historiography's claims to unique qualities, epic is always and for well-grounded reasons a revealing mirror in which to examine them.

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