

ON THE AVOIDANCE OF *EIUS* IN LATIN POETRY*

It has been knowledge in the public domain ever since André Dacier's brief note upon Hor. C. 3,11,18 that the genitive form *eius* of pronominal and adjectival *is* was especially avoided in Latin poetry.¹ With the opportunity afforded by his edition of the poet,² Bentley soon after expressed his strong agreement with Dacier's objection to *eius*, confessing ad loc., "[e]quidem jamdudum male oderam illud *ejus*, & hanc viri insignis [sc. Dacieri] censuram magna cum voluptate postea legi". Bentley's subsequent discussion, quite characteristically, far deepened and strengthened Dacier's observation. Importantly, he adds some lines later, "Sed Poëtae Epici, magno sane cum iudicio, vocabulum hoc perpetuo mulctarunt exilio, ne Heroici carminis majestatem humi serpere cogeret." It has since been noted, but rarely discussed in any detail, that the great majority of Latin poets generally avoided all oblique cases of *is*.³ My purpose in this brief paper is to provide an overview of the situation in Latin poetry of the usage of *is*⁴ and, more pressingly, to demonstrate that the rarity of *eius* in particular should be seen as considerably more marked than previously supposed. Let us provide a swift survey of the evidence:

*) I am greatly indebted to the acute comments provided by Dr D.S. McKie and L. M.-L. Coe. I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. B. Manuwald for his helpful suggestions.

1) A. Dacier, *Remarques critiques sur les œuvres d'Horace avec une nouvelle traduction*, Paris 1689–97, Vol. 3, 245.

2) Q. Horatius Flaccus, ex recensione & cum notis atque emendationibus R. Bentleyi, Cambridge 1711.

3) E. Wölfflin, C. L. Meader, *Zur Geschichte der Pronomina demonstrativa*, ALL 11, 1900, 369–381; C. L. Meader, *The Latin Pronouns is, hic, iste, ipse*, New York 1901, 3–28; B. Axelson, *Unpoetische Wörter*, Lund 1945, 71–74; and, on Augustan elegy specifically, M. Platnauer, *Latin Elegiac Verse*, Cambridge 1951, Appendix A.

4) At the close of the paper I append figures for the occurrence of all oblique forms of *is* in Classical Latin poetry.

Poets in whom *eius* does not occur:⁵ Ennius, Virgil (and the *App. Verg.*), the authors of the *Corpus Tibullianum*, Manilius, the poet of the *Aetna*, Columella (Book 10), Persius, Lucan, the *Bellum ciuile* of Petronius' Eumolpus, Martial, Valerius Flaccus, Statius, Juvenal, Calpurnius Siculus, Nemesianus, Claudian, Avianus, the *Peruigilium Veneris* and Sedulius.

Nonetheless, *eius* does appear, as stated above, in the manuscripts of Horace, twice in the *Carmina* (3,1,18; 4,8,18) and twice in the *Sermones* (2,1,70; 6,76). The latter work is, however, deliberately written in a style *sermoni propiora* (cf. S. 1,4,40ff.) and so there is no need for anxious apology concerning either instance of the prosaic *eius* therein. About the two apparent instances in the *Carmina*, written in a style greatly removed from prose, I shall say more below (I, II). Likewise, the scenic poets Naevius, Pacuvius, Plautus, Terence, Caecilius Statius, Titinius and Accius used *eius* with apparent freedom, as did Lucilius twice in his satiric fragments. As for later poets, Lucretius and his stylistic imitator Manilius used *eius* often, their didactic tone apparently having found no poetic objection to the form.⁶ It is also found thrice in Phaedrus, a writer of a low (that is, closer to the common spoken language) linguistic register.

I hope to show in this paper that, disregarding a select number of didactic authors and the prosaic *Sermones* of Horace and *Fabulae* of Phaedrus, *eius* does not occur in (extant) Latin poetry after Accius (c. 100 B. C.) until the Christian poets Juvencus (c. 300 A. D.), Commodian, Ausonius and Prudentius. For the rest of this paper I shall be examining the twelve suspect instances of *eius* found elsewhere in Classical Latin poetry, beginning with those most likely to be spurious. It is disappointing to add that these occurrences of *eius* have typically failed to receive even the slightest mention, let alone discussion, from supposedly authoritative com-

5) Figures are based purely upon manuscript evidence. Lest I paint an inaccurate picture of the avoidance of *eius*, I exclude from my survey those poets of whom only a genuinely small number of verses survive.

6) *eius* occurs 35 times in Lucretius, 15 in Manilius. It is probably by virtue of being part of this rich didactic tradition that Germanicus' *Aratea* employs *eius* (284), as well as *ei* (itself very rare), *eo* and *eos* (see the figures at the close of the paper); I am not convinced that any of these occurrences are corrupt. Nor therefore should it surprise us that *eius* is also found in a fragment of Cicero's *Aratea* (15,2). In the *Ilias Latina* I propose that *huius* should be read at the close of 22: elsewhere in the poem occur 38 oblique instances of *hic*, yet not one of *is*.

mentators. I hope to show that these occurrences should be seen, on either stylistic or contextual grounds, or often both, as corruptions.

(I) Hor. C. 3,11,17–20:

*Cerberus, quamuis furiale centum
muniant angues caput eius atque
spiritus taeter saniesque manet
ore trilingui.*

17–20 del. Naeke ac postea multi *eius atque* mss : *exeatque* Bentley :
effluatque Gesner : *aestuetque* Cunningham : alii alia

“Ce seul mot *ejus* des-honneur l’Ode; & je voudrois bien qu’Horace ne s’en fust pas servy”, asserts Dacier.⁷ His words hold some weight, since this is, if genuine, an odds-on favourite for the worst Sapphic stanza of Horace’s poetic career.⁸ After the elegant allusion to Cerberus as *immanis . . . ianitor aulae* in 15–16, the author of these verses proceeds to record explicitly the subject’s name itself; he then adds a rather trite description of the creature most familiar to all of his readers (although using the somewhat puzzling singular *caput*, presumably κατὰ συνεκδοχήν); then comes the most prosaic *eius* at the close of the clause, although no form at all of *is* occurs in the *Carmina* or *Epodi*;⁹ further, this is collocated with *atque* (which Horace used less frequently as he composed the *Carmina*,¹⁰ and which as a trochaic word with an open short vowel at line end was a rhythm he avoided);¹¹ then we find the archaic *taeter*, a word remarkably rare in Augustan poetry;¹² then further the odd zeugma of *spiritus* and *sanies* with *manet*, which in Horace would, along with *muniant*, usually be indicative after *quamuis*;

7) See n. 1.

8) I am of course only another in a long line of critics who, since Naeke, have objected strongly to the stanza.

9) On *eius* at C. 4,8,18 see II.

10) Excluding this instance, *atque* occurs in the four books, respectively, eleven times, four times, once and twice.

11) There are only four other instances of this rhythm in Horace’s 615 Lesser Sapphic lines.

12) We only find it thrice in Horace’s *Sermones*, once in Propertius and twice in Virgil’s *Aeneis*. I do not of course regard this rarity as per se especially damning, but it is a fact that must be taken into account with the other evidence.

then finally the phrase *ore trilingui*, lifted without alteration from C. 2, 19, 31–32.¹³ Although each of these abnormalities (except for *eius*) can individually be explained away as a legitimate deviation from his poetic norm, altogether they amount to a stanza that is on no account Horatian. Furthermore, if one allows subjective statements to rear their Cerberean head(s), the stanza seems in many ways to me *indignissimum poeta*.¹⁴ Arnold Bradshaw has countered such alarm, asserting that we ought to be horrified at the poet's depiction of Cerberus.¹⁵ That may well be, but a poet does not paint a horrific picture by means of horrifically bad poetry. Quite the contrary. Therefore in the light of the manifold problems that these fifteen words manage to raise, I must here follow what Housman termed "the coward's remedy of declaring the stanza spurious".¹⁶

Let it be said in conclusion that even if one were to retain verses 17–20, I cannot in any way believe that the same person would be so perverse as to defend the collocation *eius atque*. In its place Gesner's *effluatque* (unknown to Housman when he advanced the same conjecture in his first published article) would in

13) Internal repetitions are of course a double-edged sword for the textual critic: authority can be added to a passage if one sees the author as reusing a characteristic tag or alternatively subtracted if it simply evinces an imitator's lack of imagination in composition. No general rule can be forged and, on the principle recorded in Porphyry of Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν, the practice of the given author should be of the most import. Horace was not especially given to internal repetitions (as opposed to echoes) and, considering the many other stylistic problems raised by this stanza, its repeating a verbal collocation from elsewhere in the *Carmina* should weigh in favour of its spuriousness.

14) How can I judge what is *Horatio dignum?*, colleagues will demand. How else than by using his exacting standards of lyric practice as the primary κριτήριο κομπώτητος? The subjective will unavoidably inform my decision to some minor extent but it is nonsense to suggest that we cannot judge roughly what is Horatian in style and quality.

15) Horace *Carmina*, III. XI. 17–20, RhM 118, 1975, 311–324. One must confess that alarm bells start to ring when his defence for *eius* includes the fact that it adds another expressive labiovelar and sibilant to the poem, or for the phrase *ore trilingui* that it "growls". Others have rallied to the stanza's defence on grounds of its representing Greek style (cf. esp. F. Cairns, *Splendide Mendax*, G&R 22, 1975, 129–139) but there is no clear reason why Horace should in this stanza particularly allow such minute Greek influences to sway his typical lyric practice.

16) A. E. Housman, *Horatiana*, JPh 10, 1882, 189–90 (= *The Classical Papers of A. E. Housman*, J. Diggle & F. R. D. Goodyear [eds.], Cambridge 1972, Vol. 1, 3).

the circumstances be an adequate improvement, removing such particularly prosaic and inappropriate phraseology.

(II) Hor. C. 4,8,13–22:

*non incisa notis marmora publicis,
per quae spiritus et uita redit bonis
post mortem ducibus, non celeres fugae
reiectaeque retrorsum Hannibalis minae,
non incendia Carthagini impiae
eius, qui domita nomen ab Africa
lucratus rediit, clarius indicant
laudes quam Calabriae Pierides, neque,
si chartae sileant quod bene feceris,
mercedem tuleris.*

14–17 del. Peerlkamp 15–19 *non . . . rediit* del. Lachmann 17 del. Bentley

Much suspicion too has rightly fallen upon this passage of the *Carmina* because, notwithstanding its stylistic faults, it naturally implies that the Scipio Africanus who burnt Carthage was the same as that lauded by Ennius. We would be very bold indeed to impose upon Horace the confusion (whether through ignorance of key events in Roman history or through ambiguous, and therefore poor, versification) between the two Scipiones, major and minor. Further, as 4.8 stands in the mss it has 34 lines, rendering it the only ode not divisible into quatrains and thereby breaching the Lex Meinekiana. In addition, three anomalies occur in verses 17–19, for 17 stands as the only lesser Asclepiad line to lack the caesura after its first choriamb,¹⁷ 18 contains a pronoun unparalleled in Horace's lyrical poems, *eius* (which is itself very clumsy following two genitives unrelated to it), and 19 exhibits the sole contraction of a fourth conjugation verb in the *Carmina* and *Epodi*.¹⁸ Many have sought to remove a given number of lines, and thereby the unhistorical slip, in order that the ode accord with Horatian practice

17) The only other apparent example (C. 2,12,25) is removed by the quasi-caesura after the prepositional prefix *de-*.

18) An objection which has not been raised before. Seven uncontracted forms of the fourth conjugation occur in Horace's lyric works (Ep. 3,19; 6,15; C. 3,13,8; 3,23,19; 4,13,1–2; C. S. 43).

elsewhere. The best remedy is Lachmann's removal of *non celeres ... rediit* (15–19), expunging as it does *eius* and our numerous other anxieties.

It is to be noted that these two Horatian passages, the most suspiciously viewed in all four books of Horace's *Carmina*, are dismissible on grounds independent of the appearance of the unpoetic *eius*, which alone is sufficient to condemn them to grave suspicion. The manuscript tradition of Horace is known to suffer from interpolation elsewhere, most notably the eight lines opening S. 1,10. As has been said, both instances of *eius* in the *Sermones*, 2,1,70 and 6,76, I am quite prepared to leave on account of the designedly prosaic style of that Horatian project.

(III) Sen. Thy. 299–302:

*si nimis durus preces
spernet Thyestes, liberos eius rudes
malisque fessos grauibus et faciles capi
prece commouebo.*

eius mss : *aeni* Heinsius : *etiam* scripserim *precommouebunt* A : *prece
commouebo* E : *prece commouebunt* L. Müller

This passage has received considerable discussion from commentators but largely for potential interpretative problems raised by 302. Nonetheless Heinsius, astute as ever and imbued with elegiac style, saw *eius* in 300 as an evident point of corruption. It is indeed quite incredible that Seneca, who never used any oblique form of *is* (other than the commonplace *id*, of which there are 6 instances), should here have written *eius* in a passage where it serves no emphatic function at all. *aeni*, Heinsius' genitive of description, is elegant but finds few parallels in extant Latin.¹⁹ It is not so much their age that Atreus wishes to emphasise, rather their general inexperience and ignorance of trickery in contrast to Thyestes' hardened expertise. As the latter is *nimis durus* he may be a poor target for Atreus' scheme; his children, however, are *rudes* and *faciles capi*. I wish to say that they are *etiam rudes* ('still inexperienced') thereby quali-

19) I have not found one closer than Val. Fl. 1,771, *aeni* (s. v. l.) *rudis altera proles*, cited by Tarrant in his commentary ad loc. (Atlanta 1985).

fyng the adjective in a similar manner to *nimis durus*.²⁰ *etiam* is used by Seneca in every foot of his trimeters except for the last,²¹ thrice in the fifth.²² If we recall that the ancient nota for *etiam* was E \bar{T} and a very common continental abbreviation for *eius* was E \bar{I} ,²³ it will be readily apprehended how easily the error could have occurred.

(IV) Tib. 1,6,25–26:

*saepe, uelut gemmas eius signumque probarem,
per causam memini me tetigisse manum.*

gemmas eius signumque mss : *g. e. signumue* ζ Broekhuizen : *gemmam
dominae signumue* scripserim

Nothing mars the couplet save for the surprising appearance of *eius*: other than *is* itself Tibullus never used any form of the pronoun in his poetry and there is no reason to explain his rejection of that stylistic restriction here. Fortunately, we do not have to look far to repair the hexameter, since Ovid strongly imitates the couplet at Tr. 2,451–452. Remarkably, we there read *saepe, uelut gemmam dominae signumue probaret, / per causam meminit se tetigisse manum*. Once we account for the necessary shift from first to third person we see that, far from this being a mere learned echo, it is effectively a quotation (and Ovid has explicitly named Tibullus at 447). The only differences between the two couplets are *gemmam / -as*, *signumque / -ue* and whether Tibullus used the distinctly unpoetic *eius* or the most Tibullan *dominae*.²⁴ I believe we should restore the centre of the Tibullan hexameter from Ovid's otherwise exact repetition: the Tibullan *gemmas* may originate as a makeshift correction once the following word was corrupted to one opening with a vowel; Broekhuizen was right to restore the more appropriate *signumue*, found in the recentiores of the Tibullan tradition; *dominae* too, often abbreviated in later scribal practice to D \bar{N} E,

20) Cf. Sen. Ep. Mor. 40,8 where a judge is said to be *aliquando etiam im-
peritus et rudis*; the same pairing of adjectives is also found ib. 81,8.

21) An instance of which occurs in the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia* (904).

22) Her. F. 1189, Ph. 427, Thy. 889.

23) Cf. W. M. Lindsay, *Notae Latinae*, Cambridge 1915, 34–41, and D. Bains, *A Supplement to Notae Latinae*, Cambridge 1936, 7–8.

24) Used of his mistress at e. g. 1,1,46; 1,5,40; 2,3,5.79; 2,4,1; 2,6,41.

may have become illegible (or even unintelligible) and therefore an apparently harmless ‘filler’ could have come to replace it.²⁵ For we must ask: why ever would Ovid repeat a whole couplet verbatim (with the understandable shift of person) except for one word? It will not do to respond that he, perhaps not having access to a text of Tibullus in exile, fell foul of misquotation. Per contra, had Tibullus written *eius*, it would have particularly stuck out like a sore thumb in Ovid’s memory, as indeed in that of all Roman readers of taste and style. I am surprised that this suggestion to restore *dominae* to Tibullus appears not to have been preceded.

(V) Sil. 11,85–87:

*“en ego progenies eius, qui sede Tonantis
expulit orantem et nuda Capitolia consul
defendit dextra.”*

Here closes the impassioned speech of Torquatus, in which the mss present not only the sole instance of *eius* in the c. 78,000 words of the *Punica* but also the sole instance of any oblique form of *is* (other than the metrically useful and common *id*, which occurs 13 times). This could only be so if some great literary *grauitas* were here to lie behind its employment; I assert that no critic of sense can here maintain such a thesis. Let us then write *huius*, anaphoric to T. Manlius Torquatus (whose tale has just been related) with considerably more rhetorical force than *eius* could bear: it is from this very hero that the speaker descends. This particular genitive form Silius does use only twice elsewhere in the *Punica* but over 250 instances of other oblique forms of *hic* can be found.

(VI) Ov. Tr. 3,4,27–28:

*non foret Eumedes orbis, si filius eius
stultus Achilleos non adamasset equos.*

eius mss : *olim* Francius : *ille* scripserim

25) Although the couplet occurs in the middle section of 1.6, where the poet is contemptuously addressing Delia’s *coniunx*, the appearance of *domina* is unproblematic, especially if the word is to be read as deliberately ambiguous. Delia is at once the *domina* in her husband’s household and the *domina* in Tibullus’ relationship.

It is difficult to believe that Ovid should here so casually use *eius*, which, overlooking the two instances below, is unattested in the c. 36,000 verses of his corpus. If he were in truth willing to use this most convenient (and in quotidian terms most common) form, one would naturally expect to find it considerably more often. In this passage its use is by no means emphatic but rather quite superfluous, since the task of relating the *filius stultus* (Dolon) to Eu-medes is in context hardly taxing. Let us instead here read *ille*, as so often used by Ovid of well-known mythological figures when he avoids naming them explicitly.²⁶ Numerous instances of the order noun-*ille*-adjective could be cited, e.g. *pater ille tuus* (Ex P. 2,2,97), *impetus ille sacer* (ib. 4,2,25).²⁷

(VII) Ov. Met. 8,14–16:

*regia turris erat uocalibus addita muris,
in quibus auratam proles Letoia fertur
deposuisse lyram: saxo sonus eius inhaesit.*

eius inhaesit mss : *haesit in illo* ζ : *Eius haesit* Slater : *huius* scripserim

Thus Ovid depicts Nisus' Megarian palace. Here for *eius* we should read *huius*, a form which occurs no less than 31 times in the *Metamorphoses* and is elsewhere confused palaeographically with *eius*.²⁸ Nonetheless, David Slater expressed genuine surprise that no one had preceded him in suggesting *Eius*, which strikes him as being “in all probability” correct.²⁹ I am afraid I do not share his astonishment. My apprehension towards the conjecture largely consists of the following: (i) the word never occurs in Latin; (ii) the adjective has no productive existence in Greek, from which it is supposedly here transliterated, used as it is only (a) in the vocative,

26) *ille* closes Ovid's hexameters 38 times elsewhere.

27) *filius eius*, although certainly prosaic enough to be a gloss, would surely not have arisen, as Trappes-Lomax has suggested (Seven notes on Catullus, *Mnemosyne* 55.1, 2002, 73–82, at 78 n. 8), from the hardly high-flown or perplexing *natus ab ipso* that he tentatively conjectures; only a genuinely recherché allusion would merit so pedestrian a gloss in the text of Ovid (since so few parallel instances have been found).

28) Especially owing to both words' commonly being abbreviated and the frequency with which *h* was not written (cf. VIII).

29) D. Slater, CR 39.7/8, 1925, 160–161.

(b) qualifying Phoebus, (c) in Homer; (iii) the force of *in-* with the verb is nigh essential to the sound's being within the rock; and (iv) not even the most aurally acute listener could make any sense out of this unprecedented and unexpected (to say the least) appearance of *Eius*. I am sorry to say that I also disagree with Adrian Hollis' rebuke ad loc. that critics ought not to be "unnecessarily squeamish" about oblique occurrences of *is*.³⁰ How squeamish it is to regard the clear stylistic practice of the author and his close contemporaries as of more import than revering the *lectio recepta* I am quite unable to discern.

(VIII) Ov. Ex P. 4,15,5–6:

*tempora nam miserae complectar ut omnia uitae,
a meritis eius pars mihi nulla uacat.*

eius B C le e bl : *huius* xa kb, quod scripserim

The alternative reading *huius* should here be favoured (although its appearance in the ms tradition may be mere coincidence, underlining the potential for confusion of the two forms). Unlike oblique cases of *is*, which were strongly avoided by Ovid,³¹ *hic* and its various forms were a ready alternative: genitival *huius* we find fifteen times in his exilic poetry alone. Here Ovid does not speak directly to Sextus Pompeius, the addressee, until verse 14; in the build up to that point *huius* would serve as a most appropriate pronoun to refer to the subject of his praise, as *hic* does already in line 4.

(IX) Grat. 223–225:

*primae lucis opus: tum signa uapore ferino
intemerata legens, si qua est qua fallitur eius
turba loci, maiore secat spatia externa gyro.*

ferino mss : *ferina* Shackleton Bailey *qua fallitur eius* mss : *q.f. arti*
Shackleton Bailey : *quae fallit euntem* scripserim

30) A. Hollis, *Ovid: Metamorphoses VIII*, with introduction and commentary, Oxford 1970, 38.

31) For figures see the close of the paper.

Grattius' *Cynegetica* often escapes the eye of textual critics but his poem was an Augustan production and therefore, though relatively short, deserves close stylistic observation. The poet's account here focuses on the hound Metagon's detecting the scent of animal trails at dawn. Shackleton Bailey astutely observed that *uapore* must mean 'heat' and admirably emended the following word to *ferina*.³² Owing to Grattius' own practice, i. e. his strict avoidance elsewhere of any form of *is* (save for *id* at 363), we should be rather wary of the semantically superfluous *eius*. Grattius' primary stylistic influences were Virgil and Ovid and his use or eschewal of pronouns seems to provide further evidence of this.³³ It is simply nonsense to defend 224 by citing another passive / deponent verb followed by *eius* at the close of a Lucretian hexameter, as has C. Formicola.³⁴

I do not, however, see much good in Shackleton Bailey's suggested replacement for *eius*, an adjective which he unfortunately does not translate: why a locus artus would be singled out here is quite unclear. Instead I suggest that we read *quae fallit euntem*, i. e. "if there is some confusion [sc. *signorum*] in the area that tricks him as he goes along."³⁵ The verb *fallo* occurs seven times elsewhere in the poem, always in the active voice, and the present participle of *eo* also closes the hexameter at 433. By introducing an active verb into the relative clause we consequently lose the remarkably clumsy *si qua est qua*. Perhaps *eūtē* was misunderstood as a disyllable (possibly even as *eius*) and *qua fallitur eius* seemed the least damaging way to fix the metre.

32) D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Notes on Minor Latin Poets, Phoenix 32, 1978, 305–25.

33) Accordingly, in the 540 verses of the poem no less than 26 forms of *hic* occur, 43 of *ille*. Although the length of the poem is far shorter than the corpus of other poets I here treat, I think nonetheless that a 'Systemzwang' of this nature can be tentatively adduced, and that we can accordingly view the presence of *eius* as apparently remarkable.

34) *fungitur eius* (Lucr. 3,734); C. Formicola, Il *Cynegeticon* di Grattio: Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento, Bologna 1988, 156.

35) Cf. esp. 240 *ut ne prima fauentem [Metagonta] pignora fallent*.

(X) Cat. 84,5–6:

*credo, sic mater, sic liber auonculus eius,
sic maternus auos dixerat atque auia.*

liber V : *libere* Wick : *semper* Nisbet qui *dixit* obiter ci. sed reiecit :
magnus Heyworth : *gibber* Bauer : alii alia *eius* edd. : *eius est* V : *olim*
Heyworth : *aeque* scripserim

The puzzling *liber* (or *Liber*) of V cannot stand, for any qualification of *auonculus* (nominal or adjectival), however ingeniously explained, awkwardly skews the otherwise simple list of family relations. *semper*, Nisbet's much-praised conjecture, does not, however, seem particularly apt. Granted, an adverb here could be taken ἄπὸ κοινοῦ in a way that an adjective qualifying *auonculus* could not be, but *semper* would lack any significant force. For if Arrius' mother, along with her brother, father and mother, all spoke in this manner, it is natural, if not essential, that this would have been a continual linguistic state. Why then would *semper* be placed so alongside the *auonculus*? Nor does Heyworth's *magnus* convince, for a great-uncle (grand-maternal one supposes) is a relative more remote than either maternal grandparent and therefore spoils the climax of line 6. I think that *dixit*,³⁶ which Nisbet suggested in passing only to dismiss it immediately as "fatuous",³⁷ is a suggestion quite worthy of its creator: Arrius *sic dicit*, his *mater* and *auonculus* each *sic dicit*, and yet earlier each grandparent *sic dixerat*.³⁸

Having unravelled this first difficulty let us turn to *eius*, itself most surprising on a stylistic level.³⁹ The word, remarkably, here serves no meaningful function in the couplet. For it is quite clear that, just as the three other family members are spoken of as rela-

36) Since *dicit* and its various forms were often heavily abbreviated, this may well have precipitated its loss from the text.

37) R. G. M. Nisbet, Notes on the text of Catullus, PCPhS 24, 1978, 110.

38) Having written this in support of Nisbet's *dixit*, I discovered that the astute W. S. Watt had also expressed his approval (Notes on Catullus, ZPE 131, 2000, 67–68).

39) Although nominative and accusative instances of *is* occur throughout the poems, along with *eo*, Catullus appears to have been one of the earliest poets to reject its other oblique cases (although on Ennius' partial avoidance cf. J. D. Mikalson, Ennius' usage of *is*, *ea*, *id*, HSPH 80, 1976, 171–177). At 82,3 I follow Trappes-Lomax's admirable *id* for *ei*; at 63,54 D. S. McKie's *et ibi tenebrosa* (forthcoming).

tives of Arrius, so too is the *auonculus*: there is no reason to emphasise the connection between Arrius and his uncle as *eius* would in this position. Heyworth's *olim*, seemingly inspired by Francius' conjecture at Ov. Tr. 3,4,27 (VI above), is in some senses passable, although it seems to be a word of a higher stylistic register for Catullus and therefore inappropriate in this otherwise jocular poem.⁴⁰ It would also, I think, have a greater distancing tone than is here appropriate in the former half of Catullus' retracing of Arrius' ancestors: if any people genuinely spoke in this manner *olim*, it is the *maternus auos atque auia* of 6.

An adverb is, however, doubtless the best contender to complete the hexameter. I conjecture *aeque*, 'likewise', which works in tandem with the repeated instances of *sic*. Catullus thus emphasises that Arrius' uncle spoke also in an equally strange manner as his mother, underlining the fact that the odd diction spread across a given generation (as well as between them) of the family, manifested alike by both sexes.⁴¹ It is worth recalling that if the final letter of *aeque* were misread as a compendium for *est* (which V mysteriously exhibits), the remaining *equ* differs not too greatly from the ductus litterarum of *eius*.

As a final note, it does not become a critic of Catullus, on sighting the couplet's problems of *liber* and *eius*, to regard it as an interpolation.⁴²

40) Five of the six instances of *olim* are found in Catullus' loftier dactylic poems (i. e. 64, the elevated opening of 67, and 68b), the final instance occurring in the solemn language of 96, his consolation poem to Calvus.

41) Cicero, for one, distinguishes between the pronunciation of either sex. At De orat. 3,45, he has Crassus recount how his mother-in-law spoke in a manner akin to Plautus and Naevius, adding the gnomic assertion: *facilius enim mulieres in-corruptam antiquitatem conseruant, quod multorum sermonis expertes ea tenent semper, quae prima didicerunt*. It is perhaps therefore stressed by Catullus that even the men – Arrius' uncle, as well as Arrius himself – adopted this strange manner of speech.

42) I was disappointed therefore to find that Trappes-Lomax, a keen practitioner of Catullan Interpolationsforschung, dismissed 5–6 as spurious (as n. 27). A very powerful case indeed needs to be made for such interpolation in the Catullan tradition and that case has not yet been made. That Quintilian (Inst. orat. 1,5,20) states that the artificial aspiration of plosives was a temporarily fashionable feature of first century B. C. Latin by no means excludes (pace Trappes-Lomax, *ibid.*, 78–79) the possibility that Arrius' family had, contrary to Roman fashion, spoken in this manner for a while. Quite simply, Greek influence lies behind the practice and Greek influence of course did not come into being in Catullus' day. The idiosyn-

(XI) Prop. 4,2,35–37:

*est etiam aurigae species Vertumnus et eius
traicit alterno qui leue pondus equo.
suppetat hic pisces calamo praedabor, ...*

est etiam mss : *mentiar* Housman : *asciscam* uel *est mea et* Postgate : *est ut in* Phillimore *species* mss : *specie* Heinsius : *specimen* Butler *Vertumnus* mss : *cum uerbere* Postgate : *uertamur* Phillimore : *uestitus* Richmond *eius* ζ : *elus* mss *pondus* mss : *corpus* Schrader 35–36 del. Fontein *suppetat hoc* mss : *s. hic* Heinsius : *sub petaso* Alton puncto post *equo* deleto positoque post *petaso*

Both this instance of *eius* and that in the following passage are, it should be noted, not intrinsically objectionable in terms of sense; indeed it is somewhat difficult for a form of *is* (that has an intelligible referent) to be problematic in semantic terms. My arguments against them are instead largely based on the fact that, if the above emendations (I–X) stand, *eius* is extremely unlikely to occur in Propertian elegy, by virtue of its remarkable isolation and its lack of any great purport in the text.

Nonetheless, that *eius* is here found in one of the most manifestly corrupt (as the desperation of various fine textual critics clearly demonstrates) and most oddly situated passages of Propertius can hardly stand in its favour. Lines 35–36 dispense with the preceding first-person format of the poem and there is no mention of any particular tokens that associate the god with the particular rôles mentioned. Postgate’s attempt to introduce one, a whip, by no means mitigates the arresting clumsiness of the passage. Furthermore, the form *eius* is most suspicious, being as it is one of only two Propertian instances of the pronoun outside the nominative and accusative cases, save for one instance of adjectival *ea*.⁴³ I have, after much investigation, found no satisfactory restoration of the curious couplet and have therefore seen little merit in conjecturing any more likely reading for *eius*. Instead, in the light of the many difficulties the lines

cratic diction of Arrius’ family long preceded its brief entrance into élite Roman speech; it is nevertheless unproblematic for Quintilian to allude to Catullus’ *nobile epigramma* merely as evidence of the practice in that period.

43) At 2,1,46, where its appearance can be explained by the preceding relative *qua* (on the other instance, *eius*, see XII). For the genitive, dative and ablative cases, Propertius, like other poets of the period, typically employed forms of *hic*, *ille*, *iste* or *ipse* as appropriate.

raise, I think that Fontein⁴⁴ apprehended the truth in dismissing the distich as spurious (perhaps a clumsy marginal attempt to echo the poet's theme by a reader in antiquity). In a tradition as deeply corrupt as Propertius', this should hardly induce surprise.⁴⁵

(XII) Prop. 4,6,67–68:

*Actius hinc traxit Phoebus monumenta, quod eius
una decem uicit missa sagitta ratis.*

eius mss : *arcu* Peerlkamp qui postea dist. del. : *illi* scripserim

As Bentley observed in his rich note at Hor. C. 3,11,18 (partially quoted in my introduction), a pronoun is here required in order that *quod ... ratis* be fully intelligible. Nonetheless, as stated above, it is remarkable that *eius* should be chosen when stylistically far more Propertian alternatives were available. In its place therefore I conjecture *illi*, as a dative of agent.⁴⁶ *illi* could, if the first I in a capital hand were misread as an E (a very common confusion), most easily have become *eiu* in later minuscule, which would then have forthwith been 'repaired' to the seemingly unobjectionable *eius*.⁴⁷

Conclusion

Having employed the scrutiny above, I assert that Roman poets after the age of Lucilius and Accius strictly dismissed the jarringly prosaic *eius*.⁴⁸ We need not dig too deeply for possible rea-

44) In the marginalia of his copy of Broekhuizen's 1727 edition of the poet (now housed in the Mennonite Library at Amsterdam).

45) It is noteworthy that G. P. Goold, who fortunately devoted a large part of his life to the study of Propertius, came in his later years to suspect the couplet as unpropertian (see his Propertius Loeb [Cambridge MA, 1992], n. ad loc.).

46) *illi* closes five other Propertian hexameters, two in Book Four.

47) David McKie has suggested to me a possible alternative: *illi* was changed into the more readily intelligible genitive *illius*, whose faulty scansion was later fixed by alteration to *eius*.

48) An exception to this general rule is the pedestrian language of Horace's *Sermones* and Phaedrus. Also, by virtue of the common use of such oblique forms in Lucretius and Cicero's *Aratea*, Manilius and Germanicus, as didactic poets, imitated the usage. It should be recalled, as I argue in a forthcoming article, that, after

sons behind this eschewal: semantically *is* has nothing truly *sui generis*, for it can be covered by *hic* and *ille* used in looser senses. It has been suggested that uncertainty about the prosody of certain oblique forms of the pronoun discouraged its use (e. g. *eī* vs *ēī* vs *ēī̄*), which may hold truth to some extent.⁴⁹ Most importantly, however, the pronoun was a stock feature of everyday prose and was therefore, perhaps particularly by dint of the linguistic refinement of the neoteric poets, relegated from the majority of poetic genres. In contrast, the nominative singular forms *is*, *ea* and *id*, each of a metrical scansion differing from the corresponding forms of *hic* and *ille*, are found in most poets, although predominantly in formulaic phrases.⁵⁰

For reference I append a list of Latin poets of the Classical Age who used oblique forms of *is* (excluding the common neuter accusatives *id* and *ea*).

Lucretius: *eum* (14),⁵¹ *eam* (8), *eius* (35), *ei* (9), *eo* (28), *eā* (6), *eos* (14), *eas* (8), *eorum* (35), *earum* (2).

Catullus: *eum* (1), *eam* (3), *eo* (4).

Virgil: *eum* (8), *eam* (1), *eo* (3), *eā* (3), *eos* (2). Of these, four occur in the *Georgica*, all the rest in the *Aeneis*.

Horace: *eum* (5), *eius* (2), *eo* (11), *eos* (1), *eas* (1), *eorum* (1). All instances occur in the *Sermones* and *Epistulae*.

Propertius: *eum* (2), *eā* (1), *eos* (1). *id* is not used.

Ovid: *eum* (7), *eam* (8),⁵² *eo* (11), *eā* (4), *eos* (1), *eas* (1). Of these 32 instances, 17 occur in the *Metamorphoses*, 6 in the *Fasti*, 5 in the *Heroides*, 3 in his exilic elegiacs; the final instance is adjectival *eā* in the *Remedium amoris* (301).

Corpus Tibullianum: *eum* (1).

Manilius: *eius* (15), *eo* (1), *eā* (2), *eorum* (1), *earum* (1), *eis* (3)⁵³.

Germanicus: *eius* (1),⁵⁴ *ei* (2), *eo* (1), *eos* (1).

Lucretius, poets avoided unelided *atque* more strongly than has typically been thought, with the Augustan elegists dismissing it wholesale from their compositions. Horace was also, in his use of *atque*, a distinct anomaly. Finally, it should be noted that *eiusdem* and other oblique forms of *idem* were contrariwise not avoided by Latin poets of any period.

49) Cf. e. g. Axelson (as n. 3) 71.

50) Most commonly *uix ea fatus erat*, *quisquis is est* or *quicquid id est*, and adjectival *ea* in the latter half of the fourth foot of hexameters.

51) Following Watt's *illuc* for *in eum* at 4,284, and *eam* for *eum* at 6,1064; at 6,762 I conjecture *ne primum his* for the mss' unintelligible *ne poteis*.

52) I do not include Heinsius' conjecture *eam* at Frag. 5,1.

53) Following Bentley's insertion of the form at 2,377, to Housman a "coniectura non improbabilis".

54) See n. 6.

Phaedrus: *eum* (1), *eam* (1), *eius* (3), *ei* (1), *eorum* (2).

Aetna: *eā* (1).

Lucan: *eum* (1), *eam* (1), *eo* (1).

Valerius Flaccus: *eum* (2).

Martial: *eum* (1).

Culex: *eum* (1).

From these figures the following points are particularly worth the observation of Latin critics: (i) no oblique form of *is* is used by Tibullus, Seneca (*quia τραγωδοποιός*), Persius, Statius,⁵⁵ Silius Italicus or Juvenal; (ii) only Lucretius, Virgil,⁵⁶ Horace, Propertius (2,21,7), Ovid (Met. 10,235; 14,558) and Phaedrus use any plural form of *is* (again, excluding the common *ea*); (iii) the nominative masculine and feminine plurals do not occur in Latin poetry; (iv) in line with the scarcity of genitival *eius*, we find *eorum* and *earum* only in Horace and Phaedrus, Lucretius and Manilius; and (v) in this last poet alone is *eis* found.⁵⁷

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55) Reading *euntque* at Th. 10,219.

56) I am also dubious about the sole instance of the genitive *istiis* in Virgil, at A. 12,648, which occurs in a verse otherwise alarming because of its apparently inadmissible hiatus.

57) The archaic form *ibus* does not occur in Latin poets after Titinius. I do not believe in I. Voss' *a tergo ibus* at Lucr. 2,88, where for *a tergebibus* of OQG I conjecture *abeuntibus*. Lachmann (at 4,934 and 6,755), Munro (at 6,1012) and Housman (at 2,462) were quite misguided to impose this (pyrrhic!) datival/ablative pronominal form upon the text of Lucretius.