



Malta  
Classics  
Association

# MELITA CLASSICA

Vol. 2  
*2015*

*Journal of the  
Malta Classics Association*

# MELITA CLASSICA

Vol. 2  
2015

*Journal of the  
Malta Classics Association*

All rights reserved.  
No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission in writing by the publisher.

**MELITA CLASSICA**

*Vol. 2, 2015*

Text © Malta Classics Association  
Design and layout © Book Distributors Limited

ISBN: 978-99957-847-37

**Malta Classics Association,**  
The Department of Classics and Archaeology,  
Archaeology Farmhouse, Car park 6,  
University of Malta, Msida  
classicsmaltasoc@gmail.com

**[www.classicsmalta.org](http://www.classicsmalta.org)**

# CONTENTS

## **Notes on the Text of Juvenal**

S. J. Harrison 9

## **The Serpent, the Moon, the Underworld**

Horatio C. R. Vella 17

## **Economic Strategies of a Roman Landowner – Pliny the Younger**

Levente Takács 37

## **Truth Vindicated: *Tristia ex Melitogaudio***

Stanley Fiorini and Horatio C. R. Vella 53

## **Comparing history and tragedy: the case of Polybius and Plutarch**

Nijole Juchneviciene 73

## **Grandmothers in Roman Antiquity: A Note on *Avia Nutrix* (AE 2007, 298)**

Christian Laes 99

## **Reflections on the Literary Sources on Byzantine Malta**

Biagio Vella 115

**Dissertations in Classics successfully  
submitted to the Department of Classics and  
Archaeology, University of Malta 1997-2002**

Horatio C. R. Vella

121

**Book Reviews**

125

**Guidelines to Contributors**

135

## **The Malta Classics Association Committee 2015**

Hon. President	Dr Biagio Vella
Executive President	Profs Horatio C.R. Vella
Vice President	Mr Samuel Azzopardi
Secretary	Ms Joanna Zammit Falzon
Treasurer	Mr Victor Bonnici
Creative Officer	Mr Carmel Serracino
International Officer	Prof. Horatio C.R. Vella
Members	Ms Jennifer Mitchell
	Ms Ilaria Labbate

## ***Melita Classica* Editorial Board 2015**

Editor	Mr Victor Bonnici
Members	Prof. Horatio C.R. Vella
	Mr Carmel Serracino
	Fra Alan J. Adami O.P.

## Notes on the Text of Juvenal

S. J. Harrison

Juvenal is a great Latin poet, but his text is not as well preserved as those of (say) Vergil and Horace. Many problems remain in modern editions,<sup>1</sup> and this article confirms or identifies some of the remaining problems and makes some suggestions for solutions.<sup>2</sup> I cite the revised OCT of Clausen (1992) as perhaps the most widely used text.

1.170-1:

*experiar quid concedatur in illos  
quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina.*

These well-known lines about attacking only the dead seem to state that Romans of the past are buried under the Via Flaminia and the Via Latina; but there are several problems here. The ablative after *tegitur* ought to indicate the means of burial, as at *Aeneid* 10.904 *corpus humo patiare tegi* or *Georgics* 3.558 *humo tegere*. In any case, the reference is as usual to tombs placed not under but alongside the roads leading out of Rome, as at Juvenal 8.146-7 *praeter maiorum cineres atque ossa volucris / carpento rapitur pinguis Lateranus et ipse*. Read *teritur*: the ashes of the dead are vividly said to be trampled by the (users of the) neighbouring road. This striking image, providing an impressive close to an opening poem, is helped by the poetic use of *terere* of the wearing away by foot or vehicle of the roads themselves - cf. Ovid *Pont.*2.7.44 *nec magis est curvois Appia trita rotis*, Seneca *HF* 539 *intonsis teritur semita Sarmatis*, Statius *Silv.*2.2.12 *qua limite noto / Appia longarum teritur regina viarum*.

---

1 I also cite by author's name only Leo (1932), Housman (1938), Ferguson (1979), Courtney (1984), Nisbet, (1995), Willis (1997), and Braund (2004). The online text of Juvenal by Michael Hendry at [www.curculio.com](http://www.curculio.com) is well worth consultation. Asterisked items represent arguments for conjectures mentioned or included more than a decade ago by Susanna Braund in her Loeb edition – many thanks to her.

2 I draw attention also to a posthumous article by Nisbet (2014), which presents conjectural solutions to problems at 4.133, 6.179, 9.29, 11.29, 11.86, 11.148 and 13.15.

Note that in the last two passages *teritur* is used in connection with a specific major road leading from Rome, as in Juvenal.

\*5.30-31:

ipse capillato diffusum consule potat  
calcatamque tenet bellis socialibus uuam.

The host Virro drinks antique vintages, better wine than his slighted guests. *Tenet* seems very odd here: in what sense can he ‘hold grapes trodden in the Social Wars’? The verb here ought to be a natural progression from *potat*: read *calcataque madet... uua*, ‘and is soaked in a grape trodden in the civil wars’. Virro moves from drinking to drunkenness; for *madere* with ablative of the means of intoxication cf. Seneca *Ep.*95.5 *neruorum uino madentium*, Martial 10.49.2 *nigro madeas Opimiano*, while *uua* refers to wine metonymically as often (e.g. Horace *Odes* 1.20. 9-10 *Caecubum et prelo domitam Caleno | tu bibes uvam*, a similar context).

\*6.09-10:

nec cella ponit eadem  
munimenta umeri +pulsatamque arma+ tridentem.

These lines describe arrangements in a gladiatorial school, saying that the amateur sword-fighter does not stow his gear in the same place as the professional *retiarius*. Here as commentators note the shoulder-guards and the trident are the usual arms of the *retiarius*; *pulsatam* is clearly corrupt but must conceal a description of the trident. Suggestions have been made, e.g. *pulsatorisque* (Braund), *pulsatoremque* (Leo), both involving a novel use of a noun which normally means ‘beater’ and is found with the genitive of the object beaten (cf. Valerius Flaccus 5.693 *citharae pulsator Apollo*) which one might expect here. Read *pulsantemque arma*, ‘the trident that strikes armour’;<sup>3</sup> for *pulsare* of striking armour or weapons cf. Vergil *Aen.* 8. 528-9 *arma inter nubem caeli in regione serena | per sudum rutilare uident et pulsa tonare*, Silius 9.642 *pulsatur galea et quatiuntur consulis arma*.

---

<sup>3</sup> N.B. this is misprinted as *pulsantem* (without *-que*) in the apparatus of Braund (2004).



\*8.1-9:

*Stemmata quid faciunt? quid prodest, Pontice, longo  
sanguine censer, pictos ostendere uultus  
maiorum et stantis in curribus Aemilianos  
et Curios iam dimidios umeroque minorem  
Coruinum et Galbam auriculis nasoque carentem, 5  
quis fructus generis tabula iactare capaci  
Coruinum, posthac multa contingere uirga  
fumosos equitum cum dictatore magistros,  
si coram Lepidis male uiuitur?*

This famous opening argues that nobility and *imagines* are no virtue unless allied with good behaviour. *Coruinum* in line 8 must be wrong given the same word in the same position in line 5 (the proper name is clearly at home there). Some solve the problem by omitting 6-8 as an interpolation (e.g. Courtney) or by regarding them as an alternative authorial opening (e.g. Willis), but these lines seem to present a neat variation on 1-5, following aristocratic names (four) with magistral offices (three, on my proposal). In 2004 I suggested *ensore* for *Coruinum* in line 7, adding the most relevant political office in the matter of morals (note that *ensoris* is found in the same initial position at 11.92) even if your ancestor was censor, this is no guarantee that you yourself will be morally worthy.

10.173-6:

*creditur olim  
uelificatus Athos et quicquid Graecia mendax  
audet in historia, constratum classibus isdem  
suppositumque rotis solidum mare.*

There are two problems in these lines. First, *uelificatus* should mean 'given sails' or 'turned into sails', the only meaning it has in the only other passive occurrences of this verb in classical Latin, two, both in Apuleius (*Fl.*2, *Socr.*7; cf. *OLD* s.u. 3). But the reference here is to Xerxes' famous cutting of a canal through the Athos peninsula (cf. Herodotus 7.122), which is very hard to describe as giving the mountain sails, though it can be described as creating a new sea - cf. e.g. Catullus 66.45-6 *cum Medi peperere novum mare, cumque iuventus*

| *per medium classi barbara navit Athon* (~ Callimachus *Aet.fr.* 110 Pf. 45-6 καὶ διὰ μέσσου | Μηδείων ὀλοαὶ νῆες ἔβησαν Ἄθω ). Read *uelis sectus*: the mountain is 'cut through' first literally by Xerxes and then metaphorically by his fleet's sailing through it (for this elevated use of *seco* cf. *OLD* s.u. 5). For the 'cutting through' of Athos cf. Cicero *De Finibus* 2.112 *Athone perfosso*, Pliny *NH* 4.37 *fretum, quo montem Atho Xerxes Persarum rex continenti abscidit*, and for the idea of sailing through it cf. Lucan 2.676-7 *cum uela ratisque | in medium deferret Athon* and the passages of Catullus and Callimachus already cited. Second, *isdem* in 175 makes no sense: 'the same fleets' has no reference point, unless one is supplied from the vague *velificatus*, not at all easy, and the second adjective destroys the balance between the participle/ablative noun pairs *constratum classibus* and *suppositumque rotis*. Read *classibus aequor*, a Vergilian hexameter-ending (cf. *Aeneid* 3/157, 4.313, 4.582, 10.269), used by Manilius to describe the same phenomenon, Themistocles' massive naval deployments at Salamis ( 1.776 *Persidis et victor strarat quae classibus aequor*); cf. also Livy 35.49.5 *consternit maria classibus suis*. The use in the same sentence of both *aequor* and *mare* is unproblematic: such pleonasm is common of the sea in the Latin epic style here adopted. <sup>4</sup>

10.193-5:

*talis aspice rugas*

*quales, umbriferos ubi pandit Thabraca saltus,*

*in uetula scalpit iam mater simia bucca.*

In this description of the facial ravages of old age, it is not clear why the aged ape is described as 'already a mother', and the phrase *iam mater* has been rightly suspected by editors (see Courtney's discussion). Nisbet (255) proposed *iam marcens*, a participle used of withered grapes at Martial 5.78.12, but otherwise meaning 'drooping' or 'feeble'; Ferguson's *Garamantis* picks up the African location of *Thabraca* but might be thought to overemphasise geography here. Read *turpissima*: the point of extreme ugliness is exactly right here, and the passage would echo Ennius *Sat.* 69 V (= XVII Russo) *simia quam similis turpissima bestia nobis*.

4 See Harrison (1991) on Vergil *Aeneid* 10.103.

10.311-13:

*fiet adulter*

*publicus et poenas metuet quascumque mariti*

*+irati+ debet.*

Here the poet looks ahead to the future tribulations of the handsome boy, due to suffer as an adulterer. P's *debet* makes no sense; F's *debent*, probably a later correction, is little improvement (the required ellipse of an infinitive such as *exigere* is not at all easy). Housman's *lex irae debet* is printed by Willis, while Courtney prefers his own *irae debebit*; in 2004 I suggested *irati reddent*, 'bring about',<sup>5</sup> with *mariti* as subject of the verb, but I now realise that the natural reading of *poenas reddere* is 'render due penalties', referring to suffering rather than inflicting appropriate punishment (cf. e.g. Sallust *Jug.14.22 fratris mei necis mearumque miseriarum gravis poenas reddat*, *Ciris 337 reddidit, heu, Graius poenas tibi, Troia, ruenti*). If we suppose that the original reading at the end of the line was *maritis* (as at 6.184), then we can read this together with *iratis reddet*, 'and he will fear the penalties he will duly pay to angry husbands'; the plural husbands are very suitable here given the suggestion of multiple lovers in *adulter* | *publicus*.

11.143-4:

*nec frustum capreae subducere nec latus Afrae*

*nouit auis noster, tirunculus ac rudis omni*

*tempore et exiguae furtis inbutus ofellae.*

Here the poet's serving-boy is presented as thieving from the poet's modest table. In the phrase *omni ... tempore* both case and meaning are difficult (see Courtney; Nisbet (256) conjectured *omni ... crimine*). A simple solution is at hand: excise *tirunculus ... exiguae*, so that the text reads:

*nec frustum capreae subducere nec latus Afrae*

*nouit auis noster, furtis inbutus ofellae.*

Nor does my boy know how to steal a chunk of venison, or a slice of guinea-fowl, trained as he is (only) in the thieving of a (mere) chop.

---

<sup>5</sup> Mentioned in the apparatus by Braund (2004).

11.171-5:

*non capit has nugas humilis domus. audiat ille  
testarum crepitus cum uerbis, nudum olido stans  
fornice mancipium quibus abstinet, ille fruatur  
uocibus obscenis omnique libidinis arte  
qui Lacedaemonium pytismate lubricat orbem.*

The poet stresses the contrast between his own modest home-entertaining and the decadent erotic dancers to be found at more debauched feasts. The passage is highly repetitive, with both 172-3 and 174 referring to obscene language (*uerbis ... quibus abstinet, uocibus obscenis*), and the relative clause of 172-3 with its much postponed *quibus* looks suspicious (though *nudum ... mancipium* could be considered a single sense-unit). Again excision provides an elegant solution: if we remove the words *audiat ille ... abstinet*, the text reads:

*non capit has nugas humilis domus. ille fruatur  
uocibus obscenis omnique libidinis arte  
qui Lacedaemonium pytismate lubricat orbem.*

‘My humble home has no room for these frivolities. Let him enjoy the obscene lyrics and every art of debauchery, who lubricates his Spartan circular floor with spat-out wine.’

12.78-9:

*non sic igitur mirabere portus  
quos natura dedit.*

Here the poet’s addressee is expected to admire the artificial harbour of Portus more than its naturally-formed counterparts (*non sic* = ‘not so much’). The problem here is *igitur*; as Housman saw, this is clearly a stopgap. His *similes* and Nisbet’s *ueteres* (257) provide possible epithets, but similarity and antiquity seem to have little point here. I suggest *positos*: the point is that the well-designed layout of the artificial harbour is superior to natural harbours such as that of Carthage, and *pono* is here used in the sense of ‘build, construct’ (*OLD* s.u. 3): ‘not so much will you admire the construction of the harbours which nature has bestowed’.

Stephen J. Harrison is Fellow and Tutor in Classics, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and Professor of Latin Literature, University of Oxford.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Braund, S.M. (2004). *Juvenal and Persius*. Cambridge, Ma: Harvard UP [Loeb].
- Clausen, W.V. (1992). *A.Persi Flacci et D.Iuni Iuvenalis Saturae* [2nd ed.]. Oxford: OUP.
- Courtney, E. (1984). *The Satires of Juvenal*. Rome: Edizioni del Ateneo.
- Harrison, S.J. (1991). *Vergil: Aeneid 10*. Oxford: OUP.
- Ferguson, J. (1979). *Juvenal: The Satires*. Macmillan: Basingstoke.
- Housman, A.E. (1938). *Iuvenalis Saturae*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Leo, F. (1932). *A.Persi Flacci D.Iuni Iuvenalis Sulpiciae Saturae* [5th ed.] Berlin: Nisbet, R.G.M. (2014). 'Conjectures on the text of Juvenal.' *Segno e Testo* 12: 77-82.
- Nisbet, R.G.M. (1995). *Collected Papers on Latin Literature*. Oxford: OUP.
- Willis, J. (1997). *Iuvenalis Satirae*. Stuttgart and Leipzig: Teubner.