

# The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



---

## The Latin Sapphic

A. W. Verrall

The Classical Review / Volume 17 / Issue 07 / October 1903, pp 339 - 343

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00208470, Published online: 27 October 2009

**Link to this article:** [http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S0009840X00208470](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00208470)

### How to cite this article:

A. W. Verrall (1903). The Latin Sapphic. The Classical Review, 17, pp 339-343 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00208470

**Request Permissions :** [Click here](#)

is perhaps too poetical. Cf. *ἔκνιζεν αὐτὸν . . ὁ ἔρως* above.

*Romp.* 10. *ἐπέκεινα . ὠθουμένων.* Read *ἐπ' ἐκείνα*, *to those parts.*

*ib.* 53 *ὅπου τοσοῦτον βάθος ἡγεμονίας καὶ μέγεθος εὐρυχωρίας δυοῖν ἀνδρῶν οὐκ ἐπέσχευ.* *ἐπῆρκεσεν* or *ἀπέχρησεν* is suggested. The use of *ἀπέχειν* to be enough is not very well attested for such Greek as Plutarch's, but *ἀπέσχευ* would seem very probable here, if we were sure of the use.

*Phoc.* 16 *τὴν ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλὴν ἔχοντες ἐν τῷ δήμῳ δεόμενοι καὶ δακρύοντες μόλις ἔπεισαν.* Should we supply something like <*σύμμαχον*> *ἔχοντες*? But what does this reference to the Areopagus mean? Compare perhaps the 2nd Arg. to the *Androtion* which says of the Areopagus, *ἥνικα μεγίστη ἀνάγκη ἐγένετο, τότε μόνον περὶ δημοσίων συνήγετο.*

*Cleom.* 21 *μεγίστων . . πραγμάτων ἐπικρατήσας καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν ὅλης . . Πελοποννήσου κύριος γενέσθαι δεήσας.* *μετὰ* cannot be right. The usual phrase would be *μικροῦ δεήσας* and perhaps *κατὰ μικρὸν . . δεήσας* might stand here as a variation on it, though I know no parallel.

*Demetr.* 30 *τοῦ καθεστηκότος ἐξέστη δι' ὀργὴν αὐτοῦ.* For *αὐτοῦ*, which is unmeaning, I have suggested *παντός* in this *Review* 17, 146. If the suggestions there made are at all approved, they might induce us in *Arat.* 1 *φιλαύτου γὰρ ἀνδρός, οὐ φιλοκάλου, παντός ἀεὶ βέλτιστον ἡγεῖσθαι* to read *ἐαυτὸν* for *παντός*, but the error in the text may be more considerable.

*Dion* 31. In a letter from Dionysius

to Dion there were *ὑπομνήσεις* and *κατὰ τῶν φιλάτων ἀπειλαὶ σωμάτων* and *ἐπισκήψεις δειναὶ μετ' ὀλοφυρμῶν* καὶ τὸ μάλιστα *κινήσαν αὐτόν, ἀξιούντος μὴ καθαιρεῖν ἀλλὰ παραλαμβάνειν τὴν τυραννίδα.* I can make no sense of καὶ . . αὐτόν and would suggest *κατὰ τὸ μάλιστα κινήσον* (or *μάλιστ' ἂν κινήσαν*), αὐτόν in the way most likely to move him, (Madvig has anticipated me in proposing *κινήσον*). Perhaps also αὐτόν should be αὐτούς, to move them, the Syracusans. At the end of the following chapter *ὑπολαμβάνων* δὲ καὶ *μετάγων ῥᾶον αὐτούς, οἳ τὸ σεμνὸν τοῦ Δίωνος . . ἀπεστρέφοντο*, the pronoun *οἳ* does not go well with αὐτούς and should perhaps be *οἱ*. So in *Cato* 2 Sintonis has written *οἱ* for *ὁ* (*παῖς οὗτός ἐστιν*). At the beginning of Ch. 33 should not *ἀφ' αὐτῶν* be *ἐφ' αὐτῶν*?

*Dion et Brut. Comp.* 2 καὶ μὴν οὐχ ὅμοιον Διονυσίου Συρακουσίοις ἢ Καίσαρος ἀπαλλαγῆναι Ῥωμαίοις. For ἡ write καί. Cf. above on *Marcell.* 21.

*Artax.* 6 καρδίαν ἔφη τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ φορεῖν βαρυντέραν καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν μᾶλλον καὶ μαγεύειν βέλτιον. Read *βαθυτέραν*.

*Galb.* 29 τῇ Οὐνδίκῳ ἐμπαράσχων ὄνομα τόλμῃ, κίνημα καὶ νεωτερισμὸν αὐτοῦ λεγομένην τὴν ἀπόστασιν ἐποίησε πόλεμον ἐμφύλιον ἀνδρὸς ἡγεμονικοῦ τυχοῦσαν. It is not so much a question what it was called as what it was. *λεγόμενος* and *γενόμενος* sometimes get confused and I would suggest *γενομένην* here. Galba turned what had been only an agitation or political movement into a civil war.

HERBERT RICHARDS.

## THE LATIN SAPPHIC.

An interesting article by Prof. Sonnenschein (see above, p. 252) proposes a bold answer to the question—Why did Horace fetter the Sapphic verse (1) by the regular caesura after the fifth syllable (in the *Three Books* almost invariable), and (2) by making the fourth syllable invariably long? Prof. Sonnenschein, modifying the views of Prof. Eickhoff, would reply:—Because these rules were necessary to the rhythm intended by Horace, which was not that of the Greek Sapphic, but was identical, or almost identical, with that familiar to schoolboys,

*Pérsicos ódi púer apparátus,*

the rhythm of the 'Needy knifegrinder.'

The Greek verse had five bars of 3-time, thus:



The Horatian verse, according to this theory, had four bars of 2-time, thus:



which is a delicate modulation of 'Needy knifegrinder.'

The points in favour of this are plain, and one of them is strong. It accounts for the facts adduced, and in particular for the puzzling fourth syllable. If Horace in-

tended a trochaic rhythm, what motive, it may be said, could he have for excluding absolutely the double trochee? If the caesura excluded such a verse as that of Catullus,

nuntiate pauca meae puellae,

still we might expect, for variety, a sprinkling of the type

ictus incipit; referuntur ictus,

and other types consistent with the Horatian caesura. Why are these prohibited? The 2-time rhythm explains: without a long syllable in the fourth place that rhythm is impossible. It also accounts for the caesura. In the 2-time rhythm a strong beat falls on the sixth syllable

$\frac{3}{4}$		♩	♩		♩	♩		♩	♩		♩	♩		♩	♩	
or		♩ 3 ♩				♩ 3 ♩				♩ 3 ♩				♩ 3 ♩		
or		♩	♩													
		ἐν μνρ-	του κλαδι	το ξι-	φος φορ-	ησω										
		ὥσπερ	Ἀρμοδι-	ος κἀ-	μιστο-	γειτων.										
		meas	esse ali-	quid pu-	tare	nugas										

It fact it differs from the Sapphic verse only in the different place of the 'trochaic dactyl', and in certain consequent rules as to the possible places of the equivalent feet. But the Romans, after some hesitation visible in Catullus, converted it into this,

$\frac{2}{4}$  | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩

pōst haec ómnia fórte si movébit  
Báachus, quám solet, ésuritiónem.

The Roman rules and practice, especially the invariable spondee at the beginning, absurd and purposeless for the 3-time rhythm, are dictated by the 2-time; the change has some interesting minor results, which we may perhaps follow on another occasion. Now the supposed conversion of the Sapphic, though by no means so easy as that of the hendecasyllable, is analogous, and might well have arisen in the same circumstances.

But though this theory has points of strength and may contain a kernel of truth, it cannot be the whole account of the matter. That Horace had abandoned the 3-time of the Greeks, we cannot suppose. There are facts that cannot be so explained; for example, his treatment of the trochaic caesura, which he allowed throughout as

Pérsicos ódi puer apparátus.

This syllable (by Greek rule) must be short. If it were also unaccented, it would not bear the beat.<sup>1</sup> Such a mode of recitation as

laúrea dóuandús Apollinári

might be tolerable as a variety here and there, but not as normal. The Horatian caesura secures that the sixth syllable shall have at least some word-stress, and this is *ex hypothesi* necessary.<sup>2</sup>

Further, the adaptation of the Greek Sapphic to 2-time might be illustrated, as Prof. Sonnenschein has probably noted, by the parallel case of the hendecasyllable. This also began in Greek as five bars of 3-time.

an exception and in his later work largely increased. Prof. Sonnenschein perceives the difficulty here, but proposes a solution more than questionable. He suggests that though the Horatian Sapphic generally was in 2-time, lines having the trochaic caesura were in 3-time, that is to say in plain words, they were *extra metrum*. Thus *Ode I. 25* is in 2-time throughout and has the rhythm of 'Needy knifegrinder,' *except in the eleventh verse*, where this rhythm is to be abandoned, and we are to read,

Thráció bacchánte magís sub ínter.

So in *II. 6* all is 2-time except the one verse

flúmen ét regnáta petám Iacóni,

but this is 3-time, *extra metrum*. Surely no reader could divine an intention so strange and so contrary to the very nature

<sup>1</sup> I do not say that the Latin word-accent either originally was a 'beat' or had become such by the age of Augustus. That it then *affected* the beat, is seen in all branches of Augustan poetry. What precisely it was or had been, we shall hardly know until we can hear ancient Romans recite.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Sonnenschein gives another reason for the caesura (p. 253) and quotes from Prof. Eickhoff yet another, both *ex hypothesi* valid, but not, I think, so obvious as the above.

of metre. If these poems are in 2-time, so must be the verses which have the trochaic caesura, thus,

flūmen et régnat' petam Lacōni.

The prevalent 2-time rhythm must be supposed to carry us through these rare exceptions, which, though less suitable to it, are allowed for the sake of variety. This is conceivable; but great difficulties remain. Though such weaker verses may be admitted, there is one place in the poem where the poet would never put them; and that is the beginning. When the rhythm is established, the variety may come in, but we must at all events start right. Yet Horace in his *First Book*, where we most look for direction, and where the trochaic caesura is very rare, nevertheless three times begins a poem with that caesura (*Odes* 10, 12, 30), that is, in such a way as inevitably to suggest that the poem has the Greek rhythm throughout. Still stranger must appear his later work. *Ode* IV. 2 seems on this hypothesis unmanageable. Here most stanzas, about two in three, contain verses with trochaic caesura such as

laurea donandus Apollinari,

verses which, if the poem as a whole is 2-time, must either stand outside the metre altogether, or be brought into it by violating the natural run of the words. Surely this is beyond belief. Other difficulties arise as we look further, but this one is enough for the present.

Nor can Prof. Eickhoff's views<sup>1</sup> claim strength from the predominance of the 'Horatian caesura.' They do indeed explain this very well; but it can very well be explained without them. Prof. Sonnenschein says truly that many books of authority do not explain it, but leave us practically to suppose that it was on the part of Horace a mere blunder. But it is explicable nevertheless. It is an application to the Sapphic of the same principles which the Roman imitators applied to those Greek metres which they best succeeded in transplanting, the hexameter and pentameter. It secures a certain *discrepancy* between the rhythmical ictus and the word-accent. Thus in the hexameter, the rhythmical ictus is

<sup>1</sup> I should say that I know them only through Prof. Sonnenschein. Prof. Eickhoff is, it seems, now prepared to say that the *Greek* Sapphic, the ode ποικιλόθρονος for instance, is 2-time. At present I find this incomprehensible.

u u | / - | u u | / - | u u | / -

the heavier beats marking the pairs of feet. The Latin poets, having first decided that, for the purpose of recitation in their language, the two last beats, the fifth and sixth, must regularly *coincide* with a word-accent, and having therefore discarded (rare exceptions apart) the quadrisyllabic ending, next invented rules, inconvenient, stringent, but presumably necessary, to secure that in the earlier part of the verse the beat and the accent should be sufficiently *discrepant*. The most important of all, the predominance of the penthemimeral caesura

impositique rogis | iuvenes ante ora  
parentum

secures that, whereas the first of the three heavier beats must always have some word-accent, and the third (the fifth in the verse) always has the full accent, the second (third in the verse) is in the great majority of verses accentless, as here in the last syllable of *rogis*. The other rules, such as that the trochaic caesura shall regularly be followed by the hephthemimeral caesura

et metus et malesuada | fames | et turpis  
egestas,

are applications of the same principle, namely that *beat and accent shall not too much coincide*. The Latin pentameter develops *mutatis mutandis* in the same way. So also, in respect of the caesura, does the Horatian Sapphic. Words apart, the rhythmical beat is

u u | / - | u u | / - | u -

the feet tending here, as always, to fall into pairs. Now of the three chief beats, the third, from the nature of the case, must always have a full word-accent; the first will always have some, and frequently the full. And the 'Horatian caesura'

fronte curvatos | imitatus ignes

simply secures that, in order to oppose a contrast to these two beats, and to prevent the verse from trotting, the second of the chief beats (third in the verse) shall be the final syllable of a word, and therefore accentless. When we see to what embarrassing restrictions Virgil and his successors thought it necessary, for the like purpose, to subject the Greek hexameter, we need not be surprised that Horace in the Sapphic was similarly severe.

The parallel may be carried further; for although Horace does not actually impose on the trochaic caesura in the Sapphic the restriction normally imposed in the hexameter—namely, that it must be followed by an iambic word—yet he shows a strong preference for this arrangement. The rare examples of that caesura in the *Three Books* are all of this type. Thus *Ode* I. 10, the only Sapphic poem in those books which uses that caesura in a considerable proportion, gives

Mercuri facunde | nepos | Atlantis—  
nuntium curvaeque | lyrae | parentem—  
sedibus virgaeque | levem | coerces.

In the *Carmen Saeculare*, out of 19 verses with trochaic caesura, 13 have the iambus, as

Phoebe silvarumque potens Diana.

One is dubious,

haec Iovem sentire deosque cunctos.

Only five are free,<sup>1</sup> allowing the word-accent to fall both on the third beat of the verse and on the fourth, as

lenis, Ilithyia, tuere matres.

And this one exhibits a Greek word (*Ilithyia*), which, according to the general principles of Latin poetry, would excuse a recurrence to Greek freedom. It is clear therefore that Horace felt such a verse as

siderum regina bicornis, audi

to be an extreme liberty, and was disposed generally to follow in this matter the track of Virgil.

The view that Horace adopted 2-time, or was even influenced by it, must stand, if at all, on the invariable lengthening of the fourth syllable, this being the only phenomenon for which, with 3-time, it is not easy to account.

Still this difficulty remains, and it is, in my opinion, serious. A preference for the rhythm  $\underline{\text{—}} \text{ } \underline{\text{—}} \text{ } \underline{\text{—}} \text{ } \underline{\text{—}}$ , as against  $\underline{\text{—}} \text{ } \underline{\text{—}} \text{ } \underline{\text{—}} \text{ } \underline{\text{—}}$ , would be intelligible and might be illustrated by other facts in Latin poetry; but not that this preference should be exclusive. The disadvantages are obvious, and Horace cannot have overlooked them. For the rigid caesura we see a compensation, and such as for Roman ears may be supposed adequate. But what was the sufficient compensation here? Horace can write

plurimum circa nemus uvidique  
Tiburis ripas,

that is, he can allow the double trochee at the end of the verse, even where there is no pause to diminish the trochaic effect. Why then in spite of the strongest reasons, temptations and precedents to the contrary, did he abstain altogether from the double trochee at the beginning of the verse? The view that he was influenced by the 2-time rhythm answers this question, and there is so much to be said for it.

But though this were assumed, it would not involve the incredible conclusion that he himself intended his Sapphics to be read with that rhythm. It would be sufficient that he was aware of a prevalent tendency to it among his expected readers. It is easy to conceive such a situation. The metre was foreign. It had no hold yet (if indeed it ever had) upon the Latin language and the Roman ear. Even for those who spoke or read Greek, Sapphics lay out of the common track. Most Romans may be supposed to have known nothing about them. Now Horace, as he tells us, though resolved to satisfy the learned, meant also to conquer a wide public, the whole educated population of the new empire. We know that in one instance (the hendecasyllable) the Romans actually imposed a 2-time rhythm upon a Greek metre made for 3-time. Suppose that they showed a similar tendency in the Sapphic. Suppose it known to Horace by experiment, that, *whatever he intended*, many would take the stanza

saepius ventis agitur ingens  
pinus et celsae graviore casu  
decidunt turres feriuntque summos  
fulgura montes

to have naturally the rhythm here given, and would read it so as a matter of course. This would be reason enough for not making it incapable of that rhythm by writing

saepius ventis agitur ingens  
pinus; altiùs graviore casu  
decidit turris; etc.

Because, although this might please Horace and the learned as well or even, as a variety, better, the only effect of it on such readers as we are supposing would be to make them roll up the book in despair. In such circumstances the *Romanae fidicen lyrae* might well think that, until the *Aeolii modi* should become generally known to his

<sup>1</sup> vv. 14, 35, 58, 59, 61.

countrymen, the best way to get a hearing for Sapphics was to write them so that people who did not know Sappho, and had no natural disposition for the 3-time rhythm, might at any rate be able to read them.

It is true that, if this was so, the metre could not be expected to take root easily. It was more likely to fail altogether. Well, it is one of the facts to be explained, that the metre, with all its kindred, did fail in Latin, failed, that is, to get a real grip on the language. *The Odes* did not fail; they achieved an immense success. But they did not endow Latin, as Horace hoped that they would, with the metres of Sappho and Alcaeus. Quintilian's remark on the successors of Horace is familiar. The specimens that remain, the Sapphics of Statius for instance, confirm his unfavourable judgment. They are purely academic; stiff, formal, lifeless, foreign, unnatural. And this failure of the Sapphic is explained, if in truth the Romans never could make up their minds how to read it. As a 2-time measure it could not live. In this form it is a hybrid, an unnatural compromise. Unless Latin ears and lips could appropriate the 3-time measure, the Sapphic must wither and die. It did so; and perhaps here was the reason.

The problem of the Horatian Sapphic

cannot be separated from that of the Alcaic, to which Prof. Sonnenschein does not refer. Here we have similar puzzles, the regular lengthening of the first and of the fifth syllable,

dūx inquietī turbidus Hadriae,

apparently inexplicable, if the poet meant *and could trust his readers to know* that the rhythm was the trochaic 3-time of Alcaeus,

dux | inqui- | eti | turbidus | Hadri- | ae

$\frac{3}{4}$  | ♩ | ♪♩ | ♯♩<sup>3</sup> | ♩. ♩ | ♩ | ♩.

But this also will be explained, if, as a fact, many Latin readers were likely to presume the 2-time rhythm, the schoolboy's rhythm,

dux inqui- | eti | turbidus | Hadriae

2/4 | ♯4 ♯5 ♯6 | ♯4 ♯5 | ♯4 ♯5 ♯6 | ♯4 ♯5 ♯6

To make the verse *possible* for such readers, it must be written as Horace writes it ; and this he may have done, as a means to the end, while nevertheless himself intending (as for many reasons it is plain that he did) to give the rhythm of Alcaeus, and expecting a time when the Roman lyrist might be on better terms with his public, and have a larger scope.

A. W. VERRALL.

## ON MANILIUS. I 423.

IPSIVS hinc mundo templum est, uictrixque  
solutis

Ara nitet sacris, uastos cum terra gigantas  
in caelum furibunda tulit. tum di quoque  
magnos

quaesivere deos; *esurcione* Iuppiter ipse,  
quod poterat non posse timens, cum surgere  
terram  
cerneret, ut uerti naturam crederet omnem.

*esurcione* M, *dubitavit* GL. Well did Lobeck say in the preface to his Paralipomena 'iam dudum in hanc deductus sum sententiam ut omnes mihi festinasse uideantur quorum alii libri extant praeter postumos.' I have explained M's *esurcione* as an anticipation of *c̄ surgere* from the verse below. But now I see that this inestimable

MS has once again preserved a genuine remnant of *argutia Maniliana*;

tum di quoque magnos  
quaesiuerunt deos; *equit Ioue* Iuppiter ipse.

The errors *r* for *i*, *c* for *t*, *n* for *u* are all common : *s* for *g* is not, but it recurs at v 596, where a *gurgite frontem* appears as *asurgit a fronte* in L and *assurgit a fronte* in G, it is found even in the capital MSS of Virgil (georg. i 387 *sestire* Med. for *gestire*, Aen. xii 733 *gubeat* Pal. for *subeat*), and it is easy in the half-uncial hand, exhibited by the Viennese codex of Livy's last five books, which seems to have left other traces in the text of Manilius.

A. E. HOUSMAN.