

portatur in sylvam cadaver recens, ubi frequentius hae bestiae vagari videntur, praesertim in nivibus altis: (aestate enim nil valent pelles) quo cognito per odorem, et apprehenso, vescitur, donec ventrem instar tympani extensum, inter arbores angustas, non sine cruciatu cogatur exonerare: sicque occupatum, lata dimissa sagitta venator occidit. Est et alius modus huius bestiae capiendae, per trabes tenuissima chorda distinctas, ut eius levi motu, cadaver edendo stranguletur: vel etiam in effossas scrobes, seu cavernas obliquas, ut fame urgente cadavere immisso vescatur, incidens capitur. Aliaque via vix conceditur, ut a canibus apprehendatur, cum ungulas, dentesque, adeo acutos habeat, ut eius congressum formident canes, qui in ferocissimos lupos vires suas extendere solent [end of Grafeo's Epitome, p. 138]. Huic guloni in avibus magnis assimilantur harpyae, quae in solitudine iuxta mare Ionicum morantur, tam rabidae famis, ut fere nullo cibo perhibeantur satiari. In marinis monstris ahunus cunctis aliis insatiabilior: cuius corpus extenditur, donec vomitu extenuet ventrem, prout Albertus et Vincentius attestantur. Ita et hippopotamus, fluvialis equus: qui naturali astutia inter arundines pedem vulnerando, saginam deponere novit, impressaque complanare vestigia, ut venatores fallat insequentes, prout Plinius et Solinus dicunt.



SAXO GRAMMATICUS AND ENNIUS*

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For the Middle Ages Ennius was little more than a name (for us it is somewhat more: a list of fragments). But not just any name: in Horace, Ennius is the poet *et sapiens et fortis et alter Homerus* (epist. 2,1,50); in Cicero (Arch. 22), in Ovid (ars 3,409-410) and in Jerome's *Chronicon* (a.Abr. 1850) he is a poet so great as to merit a position in the sepulchre of Scipio; in an anecdote recounted by Cassiodorus, Ennius is a prized source of Virgil's, *dum Ennium legeret* [scil. Vergilius], *a quodam quid faceret inquisitus respondit: "Aurum in stercore quaero"* (inst. 1,8). A name recurring so frequently, in different authors, could not but excite interest on the part of Medieval readers, as well as an ambition to track down his works: Adhelm of Malmesbury (VII Century) cited

Ennius among the titles of the library of the abbey, but obviously knew only the name (see L.Bönhoff, *Adhelm von Malmesbury*, Dresden 1894, pp. 71 ss.); in the age of the Renaissance Pomponio Leto boasted the possession of Ennius' *Annales*, arousing the envy of the other Humanists (see A.J.Dunston, "A Student's Note of Lectures by Giulio Pomponio Leto", *Antichthon* 1 [1967], p. 92). Some of the attestations that I quote below hypothesised that the work could have been preserved in some codices originating in the Middle Ages and then lost, but this is a hypothesis that can be discarded: at the time of Macrobio (end of IV Century) the work of Ennius had already been lost, *quia saeculum nostrum ab Ennio et omni bibliotheca vetere descivit, multa ignoramus, quae non laterent, si veterum lectio nobis esset familiaris* (Sat. 6,9,9); Corippus (VI Century) drew on quotations of Macrobius and others, as Baldwin has recently shown (see B.Baldwin, "Corippus and Ennius", *Illinois Class.Stud.* 13 [1988], pp. 175-82).

With the impossibility of tracking down the Ennius text, the Middle Ages remembered his name, recovering noticeable appraisals in the sources: Beda (VIII Century) quoted Ennius in *De schematibus et tropis* (p. 610,20 *Rhet.Lat.Min.* Halm) by Sedulius, *Carm.Pasch.* 1,136; Muadwin of Autun took his cue from Ovid (*trist.* 2,423-424), *Carmina lusit item variis en maximus odis / Ennius, ingenuis scribens monimenta priorum; / Propterea in terris tenuit tum culmen honoris* (ed. Dümmler I p. 387, ll. 79-81); Theodulus (IX Century) from Martianus Capella's *distichum Ennianum* (1,42), *Adsint praecipue qui curant florida Tempe, / Quos in distichii serie complecteris, Enni* (ecl. 285-286); Alan of Lille (XII Century), *Illic pannoso plebescit carmine noster / Ennius et Priami fortunas intonat* (*Anticlaud.* I.5, ed. Wright), derives, for Förster, from Priscian, who quotes (*gramm.* II p. 97,8-9 Keil) Ennius' fragment *ann.* 17 Vahlen² [= 14 Skutsch], *cum veter occubuit Priamus sub Marte Pelasgo* (see R.Förster, "Zur Handschriftenkunde und Geschichte der Philologie", *Rhein.Museum* 37 [1882],

p. 488); Alan probably also took account of the appraisal of Horace from *ars* 259-262 (and maybe also from "*fortunam Priami cantabo...*" from 137, which was, however, attributed by Horace to the *scriptor cyclicus*, and not to Ennius). The interest in Ennius allowed Ekkehartus IV, abbot of Sankt Gallen (XI Century) to save a couple of fragments from the *Annales*, extracting them from the tradition of Orosius. Again, Dante (XIV Century), for the response of Pyrrhus to the Roman ambassadors, cited (from Cicero *off.* 1,38) Ennius's fragments 194-201 Vahlen² [= 363-365 Skutsch] (*Mon.* 2,9,8). In short: the interest of the Middle Ages in Ennius is recurrent, and runs through the entire culture of the Age.

Saxo Grammaticus does not quote Ennius, as he does not almost none of the rest of his classical *auctores*. But, it is starting from them that he constructs his own stylistic imprint, the lexis and the language of the *Gesta Danorum*. Recent studies have highlighted the breadth of Saxo's cultural background, and especially the refined technique with which he used his sources in the writing of the *Gesta*. In this regard Saxo reflects the culture of the French Renaissance of the XII Century: no biographical attestations remain, but it is by now accepted that he received his education in northern France, at Tours or maybe at Orléans. The nickname "Grammaticus" by which Saxo is known starting from the XV Century, is surely not misapplied - the name deriving perhaps from the *Compendium Saxonis* of 1345, *Gesta Danorum quidam egregius grammaticus, origine Syalandicus, nomine Saxo conscripsit* (ed. Gertz), in which, however, "grammaticus" has the meaning of "Master of Latin Letters" and thus of "Latinist".

Ennius is not quoted by Saxo, as I have already said, and he is not even indicated among the sources of Saxo, for example in the apparatus of Olrik and Ræder. Rather, Ennius is a source of Saxo's, as we shall see, and is indeed the object of an undertaking of notable interest which reveals the refined strategy of composition this author has.

Some clues to the interest shown in Ennius by Saxo have been noted by Karsten Friis-

Jensen: at 2,1,8 (p. 39,3 Olrik-Ræder), *urbs somno sepulta diripitur*, the quotation of Virgil, *Aen.* 2,265, *invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam*, is probably mediated by the comparison with Ennius *ann. frg.* 292 Vahlen² [= 288 Skutsch], *nunc hostes vino domiti somnoque sepulti*, proposed by Macrobius, *Sat.* 6,1,20, source of Saxo (see K.Friis-Jensen, *Saxo og Vergil*, København 1975, pp. 43.84-85 and K.Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*, Roma 1987, p. 89); other quotations of Virgil noted by Saxo are in Justin 43,4,7 and in Dudo of St-Quentin 1,4 (p. 131,10 Lair). Friis-Jensen notes again, in the Helga episode (6,6,7-12), the use of Virgil in a satiric mode, analagous with the degree to which Horatian exegesis (Ps.Acron on *sat.* 1,2,37-38) reveals the use that Horace makes of Ennius *ann. frg.* 465 Vahlen² [= 494 Skutsch] (see *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet*, p. 115).

We are talking about cases in which the presence of Ennius is indirect. The case that I am examining here sees the direct reworking of Ennius on the part of Saxo.

Replying to his brother Hildigerus, beaten to death by him, Haldanus describes his own shield (it is a *mise en abyme*, in which the indication to the son killed by Haldanus mirrors the killing of the brother), cf. *Gesta Danorum* 7,9,15 (p. 204,19-26 Olrik-Ræder):

ad caput affixus clipeus mihi Sueticus astat,
quem speculator vernans varii caelaminis ornat
et miris laqueata modis tabulata coronant
illic confectos proceres pugilesque subactos,
bella quoque et nostrae facinus spectabile dextrae
multicolor pictura notat; medioxina nati
illita conspicuo species caelamine constat,
cui manus haec cursum metae vitalis ademit.

Olrik and Ræder refer to Ovid, *met.* 13,291, *neque enim clipei caelamina novit* (Ulysses' words, in the *armorum iudicium*, on the boorishness of Ajax, incapable of appreciating the decorations on Achilles' shield). Actually Saxo takes into consideration as a priority Apuleius, who in *Socr.* 2 p. 6,19 Goldbacher quotes Ennius: *ut ait Ennius, clipeo miris fulgoribus variata / caelamina* (the fragment is generally placed in conjunction with the scenic fragments 215-216

Vahlen², *Quid noctis videtur? in altisono / Caeli clipeo*, from *Iphigenia*, but the derivation is not certain, see *The Tragedies of Ennius*, comm. by H.D.Jocelyn, p. 330). That this may be Saxo's source, is shown by the contextual revision of Cicero, again in conjunction with an attestation of Ennius, in *Tusc.* 3,44: *vidi ego te adstante ope barbarica / tectis caelatis laqueatis, / auro ebore instructa regifice* (in this case from the *Andromacha*, they are the scenic fragments 94-96 Vahlen²). The outline of the sources is completed by Martianus Capella, certainly assumed by Saxo, cf. 1,66: *ex qua multicoloribus notulis variegata pictura vernabat* (and maybe also by *Ilias Latina* 630: *accipit [scil. Aiax] insignem vario caelamine balteum*).

What is striking is the combination of two different attestations of Ennius. Saxo's *clipeus* closely follows especially that of Ennius/Apuleius, *clipeus ... varii caelaminis* (Saxo) / *clipeo ... variata caelamina* (Ennius/Apuleius); secondarily Saxo could also have taken into account both Ovid and the *Ilias Latina*. The matching of Ennius/Apuleius with Ennius/Cicero is clearly pressed for by *caelatis*, which re-echoes *caelaminis* from the other fragment (*caelamen* is quite frequent in Saxo: cf. for example 5,1,6, for the collar that Frotho gives to Gothwara, *habebat namque torques nexilia bullarum caelamina intersitaque regum simulacra*). The context of Ennius/Cicero concerns Priam's royal palace, with its panelled ceilings chiselled in gold and ivory. Saxo's attention was probably caught by *laqueatus*, which he used (in this case only in the *Gesta*) for the decoration of the shield (forcing the sense a little: the term concerns specifically the ceilings). But the contextual analogy may be noted: Saxo talks about an exotic *clipeus*, *Sueticus*, exactly as in Ennius/Cicero the Trojan royal palace is decorated *ope barbarica*. Also the more general context of Ennius/Cicero, Priam's royal palace destroyed, appeared perhaps fitting to the context of the *Gesta*, as a fratricide.

The undertaking does not come out of Saxo's usual compositional technique: he

gives priority attention to lexical choice, but is guided frequently also by the analogy of contexts (see F.Stok, "Tecniche della imitazione/composizione in Saxo Grammaticus", in *Tra contesto e testo. Studi di scandinavistica medievale*, a cura di C.Santini, il Calamo, Roma 1994; see also F.Stok, "Die klassischen Vorbilder der Vita des Kanutus Lavard (Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, Buch XIII)", in *The Audience of the Sagas II*, Gothenburg University, Gothenburg 1991, pp. 287-96). But the case examined reveals, I would say, the breadth and depth of Saxo's familiarity with classical texts. It has been asked, in the past, to what extent Saxo may have depended on the authors he used, and if he may have drawn on epitomes, anthologies and the like. It seems likely, in reality, that Saxo had at his disposal most of the authors that he uses in the *Gesta*. But what is more important, in Saxo's compositional technique, is especially the sure command he has of the vocabulary and narrative style of the classical authors, and the use he makes of them for the enrichment and refinement of his own poetic and narrative imprint. Finally, we are left with the comparison Saxo made between different fragments of Ennius. A singular undertaking, that seems to have no precedent in Medieval culture. To find a collection of fragments of Ennius, we have to wait until 1564, the year in which Henry and Robert Estienne (Robertus and Henricus Stephanus) published the *Fragmenta poetarum Latinorum quorum opera non extant*. Saxo, in some way, is a pioneer of the philological work of the moderns. This is also a confirmation of the fact that Saxo really was *grammaticus*.

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