

Rome, ῥῆρωϛ, and the *Versus Romae*

Keith Stanley

THE BITTER ELEGIACS known as the *Versus Romae*,¹ dated in the latter half of the ninth century A.D., lament the disappearance of Rome's former glory and attack the present arrogance and avarice of her inhabitants (lines 17–18):

*Transiit imperium mansitque superbia tecum,
cultus avaritiae te nimium superat.*

Rome has been deserted by her former kings and nobles; her name and honor have now passed to the Greeks, and *servorum servi* impose themselves as her masters. The city's ruin is twofold (lines 9–10):

*Constantinopolis florens nova Roma vocatur:
moribus et muris, Roma vetusta, cades.*

The first half of the poem concludes with an “ancient oracle” in the form of a palindrome (lines 11–12):

*Hoc cantans prisco praedixit carmine vates:
‘Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.’*

According to Muratori, “retrogradam fortunam Urbis eo versu designatam Poëta arbitratur . . .”² Kantorowicz observes that line twelve forms the “axis” of the entire twenty-four lines. He adds that the play on words ROMA-AMOR is “very old” and cites a group of coins from

¹ The standard text is that of L. Traube, *MGH, Poet. Lat. Med. Aev. III* (Berlin 1896) 555–556. See also the discussion by W. Hammer, “The Concept of the New or Second Rome in the Middle Ages,” *Speculum* 19 (1944) 50–62, esp. 53–54.

² L. Muratori, *Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi II* (Milan 1739) col. 148. The palindrome is preserved elsewhere but once, in a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 9.14.4 (*MGH, Auct. Antiq.* VIII, “Ap. Sid. Ep. et Carmina,” ed. C. Lvetjohann [Berlin 1887] 167), where it is referred to as *illud antiquum* and quoted as an example of *versus recurrentes*. For a rejection of M. Szilágyi's implausible restoration of the palindrome in an inscription from Aquincum (*Acta antiqua Acad. Scient. hung.* 2 [1954] 305–310), see J. Carcopino, “Encore le carré magique,” *CR Acad. Inscr.* 1955, 500–507.

the Constantinian period on which the inscription ΕΡΩΣ appears.³ Dressel, in discussing this series, remarks that the device is not intended merely as a designation of the provenience of the coins, “hat aber auch die Wahl gerade dieser merkwürdiger Bezeichnung eine besondere, uns unbekannte Veranlassung gehabt.”⁴

It seems possible to define more precisely both the function of the palindrome in the *Versus Romae* and the nature and antiquity of the traditions it embodies. Gregorovius pointed out that “Die Beziehung von Roma und Amor ist alt und mystisch,”⁵ and referred to a passage in Johannes Lydus (*De Mensibus* 4.73) where we read that “the city had three names, a ritual name, a hieratic name, a political name; a ritual name as if Eros, since all were possessed with a divine love for the city . . . a hieratic name Flora as if blooming . . . a political name Rome. Now the hieratic name was clear to all and could be pronounced without fear, but only to the pontiffs had it been permitted to pronounce, during the sacred rites, the ritual name.”⁶ According to the Servian commentary on *Aeneid* 1.277, the existence of a ritual name of Rome had been discussed by Varro, who recorded the execution of Q. Valerius Soranus for revealing the secret. Pliny (*NH* 3.65) and Solinus (1.4–6) repeat the story, adding that a cult of Diva Angerona was propagated to instill silence on the subject: the goddess was represented with a bandage over her mouth.⁷ Plutarch (*Quaest. Rom.* 61) combines this tradition with information, probably derived from Valerius Flaccus, on the secret tutelary goddess of Rome and the rite of *evocatio*, the formula used to induce the protective gods of a city under siege to abandon it, with a promise to provide temples for these gods in Rome.⁸ Macrobius (*Sat.* 3.9) not only expands upon these details but presents what he believed to be the actual text of one such

³ E. H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies, A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton 1957) 82, n.99.

⁴ H. Dressel, “Numismatische Analekten, 3,” *ZfN* 21 (1900) 36–39.

⁵ F. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter*, II³ (Stuttgart 1876) 150, n.1.

⁶ The translation is that of J. H. Oliver, “The Ruling Power,” *Trans. Am. Philos. Soc.*, n.s. 43, part 4 (1953) 883. C. Wittig, *Quaestiones Lydianae* (diss. Kgl. Albertus-Universität, Königsberg 1910) 45–47, suggested that Lydus’ hieratic name Flora was a fabrication. See, however, W. Hartke, *Römische Kinderkaiser* (Berlin 1951) 301–302.

⁷ See J. Hubaux, “Angerona,” *AC* 13 (1944) 37–43 and P. Lambrechts, “Diva Angerona,” *ibid.*, 45–49.

⁸ For Plutarch’s source see F. Münzer, *Beiträge zur Quellenkritik der Naturgeschichte des Plinius* (Berlin 1897) 308, neglected by H. J. Rose, *The Roman Questions of Plutarch* (Oxford 1924) 42. On the rite of *evocatio* see V. Basanoff, *Evocatio* (Paris 1947).

evocatio, that used by the younger Scipio before the walls of Carthage in 146 B.C.⁹ As for the secret name of Rome itself, Macrobius reports a difference of opinion:

Sed dei quidem nomen, nonnullis antiquorum, licet inter se dissidentium, libris insitum est et ideo vetusta persequentibus quicquid de hoc putatur innotuit. Alii enim Jovem crediderunt, alii Lunam; sunt qui Angeronam . . . alii autem, quorum fides mihi videtur firmior, Opem Consiviam esse dixerunt.

Modern scholars are equally at variance on the identity and name of this tutelary divinity,¹⁰ but evidence in addition to the testimony of Lydus for popular belief that this secret name was *Amor* has been observed in a Pompeiian graffito where the political and ritual names appear in quadrate form (*CIL* IV, Suppl., pt. 3.1, 8297):¹¹

R O M A
O I I M
M I I O
A M O R

Again, a hint of the word-play may be observed in the double temple of Venus and Rome on the Velia, begun by Hadrian about A.D. 121 and dedicated by Antoninus Pius in 136–37.¹² The two cult statues were situated, facing opposite directions, in apses built into the central wall

⁹ G. Wissowa, *RE* VI (Stuttgart 1909) 1152–1153, maintains that Macrobius' combination of the rite of *evocatio* with the siege of Carthage is a late and apocryphal conflation due to the reception into Rome of the Carthaginian cult of Juno Caelestis under Septimius Severus. K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* (Munich 1960) 123, n.2, agrees that this is likely. But see the argument in support of the authenticity of Macrobius' text advanced by Basanoff (*supra* n.8) 3ff.

¹⁰ Basanoff (*supra* n.8) 92–111 argues that the tutelary divinity of Rome was Pales, and the secret name Palatium. See, however, the criticisms of P. Grimal, *REA* 50 (1948) 172–177. A. Brelich, *Die geheime Schutzgottheit von Rom* (= *Albae Vigiliae*, n.f. 6 [Zürich 1949]) 49–56, refuses to isolate a single deity, but maintains that "Genius, Fortuna, Pales, Ops Consivia, Diva Angerona usw. sind alle „Schutzgottheiten der Stadt“; aber zugleich hat jede von ihnen eine eigene, von der übrigen deutlich unterschiedene Gestalt; denn der Ideenkomplex, der sie zu „Gottheiten der Stadt“ macht, ist in ihren Gestalten notwendigerweise mit verschiedenen, jedesmal anderen Ideenkomplexen verknüpft" (54–55). Cf. K. Gross, *Die Unterpfänder der römischen Herrschaft* (= *Neue deutsche Forschungen*, Abt. *Alte Geschichte*, Bd. 1 [Berlin 1935]) 119–122; and Hartke (*supra* n.6) 73–74; 302.

¹¹ P. de Angelis, *Roma, Il Nome Arcano* (Rome-Milan 1947) 33. This interpretation is accepted by Oliver (*supra* n.6) 883.

¹² See G. Lugli, *Roma Antica, Il Centro Monumentale* (Rome 1946) 234–240, and Tav. 4 no.50 (following p. 112); and J. Beaujeu, *La religion romaine à l'apogée de l'empire, I: La politique religieuse des Antonins* (96–192) (Paris 1955) 128–161.

dividing the two cellas. Substituting Amor for Venus, the arrangement may be schematized in this way:

X O W V
R O M A

The result is not simply a "colossal architectural pun."¹³ The institution of the temple seems to have been connected with the transformation of the festival of the Parilia, originally a Spring fertility rite observed on April twenty-first, into the official *Natalis Urbis*. It is difficult to explain the presence of Venus solely on the basis of her role as a goddess of vegetation or as the *genetrix* of the *Aeneadae*: the unusual arrangement of the cult statues suggests that the building was planned with the symbolism of Janus, *immensi reparator aevi* (Stattius, *Silvae* 4.1.11), in mind, perhaps intentionally recalling the earlier aspect of the Parilia as the *principium anni*.¹⁴ Indeed, it is from about this time (134–38) that the almost uninterrupted series of coins bearing the legend ROMA AETERNA begins to appear.¹⁵ The association of Venus and Roma thus betokens constant renewal and eternal life for the city.

If we may assume, then, that the palindrome in the *Versus Romae* refers to the notion that the secret name and tutelary deity of Rome was Amor, its position in line twelve acquires a special significance: the poet makes use of the mystical value of the number twelve derived in Roman tradition from Romulus' famous augury on the Aventine. The twelve vultures seen on this occasion were thought to symbolize the life-span of the city.¹⁶ Following the Gallic occupation of Rome in 390 B.C. there was (according to Livy 5.50.8ff) a movement to abandon the city and remove to Veii. The speech of Camillus discouraging the proposal betrays an effort to assuage anxiety induced by speculation on the significance of the omen. There was, apparently,

¹³ P. MacKendrick, *The Mute Stones Speak* (New York 1960) 281.

¹⁴ For the tutelary aspect of Janus, see L. A. MacKay, "Janus," *UCalPubClassPhil* 15.4 (1956) 173. On the Parilia see V. L. Johnson, "Natalis urbis and principium anni," *TAPA* 91 (1960) 109–119.

¹⁵ See the discussion by J. Gagé, "Le templum urbis," *Mélanges Franz Cumont* (= *Annuaire de l'inst. de phil. et d'hist. orientales et slaves* 4 [Brussels 1936]) 151–187. Cf. H. Mattingly, E. A. Sydenham, *The Roman Imperial Coinage II* (London 1926) 370.

¹⁶ The earliest account, that of Ennius (Vahlen³, XLVII), is preserved in Cicero, *De Div.* 1.48.107ff. For interpretations of the number twelve in Roman tradition, see J. Hubaux, *Les Grandes Mythes de Rome* (Paris 1945) chapter 1, and M. Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*,² tr. W. Trask (New York 1959) 133ff. Cf. E. Magotteaux, "L'Augure des douze vautours," *AC* 25 (1956) 106–111.

fear that a “Great Year” of 365 years had been meant, and that period was now at an end.¹⁷ Early in the first century B.C. the augur Vettius maintained that since Rome had survived its first 120 years, the omen must signify a duration of 1200 years.¹⁸ Vettius may well have adopted the teaching of the Etruscan *libri rituales* which foretold for the nation survival for ten *saecula*, each of approximately 120 years’ duration.¹⁹

The traditions of a secret name, a tutelary divinity, and the omen foretelling the life-span of the city are clearly reflected in writers of the fifth century A.D. and later.²⁰ Claudian, writing in 402, describes widespread fear that the predicted end was at hand (*De Bell.Goth.* 266–67):

*Tunc reputant annos, interceptoque volatu
vulturis, incidunt properatis saecula metis.*

and reflects anxiety lest the secret tutelary force which protected the city should be betrayed (*ibid.* 100–104):

. . . *procul arceat altus
Juppiter ut delubra Numae, sedemque Quirini
barbaries oculis saltem temerare profanis
possit et arcanum tanti deprendere regni.*

In an effort to curtail alarmist speculation on the impending fall of the empire, Stilicho destroyed the Sibylline books late in 407, the year before his own death. Rutilius Namatianus goes so far as to attribute the invasion of 410 to Stilicho’s betrayal of the secret name of the city (*De Reditu Suo* 2.41–42):²¹

¹⁷ See J. Hubaux, “La crise du lac Albain,” *Mélanges . . . offerts à J. Marouzeau* (Paris 1948) 291–295; *ibid.*, *Rome et Véies* (= *Bibl. de la Fac. de Phil. et Lettres de l’Univ. de Liège*, 145 [Paris 1958]); *ibid.*, “Du Songe de Scipion à la vision d’Enée,” *Hommages à Léon Herrmann* (= *Collection Latomus* 44 [Brussels 1960]) 436–445. H. H. Scullard, *A History of the Roman World from 753 to 146 B.C.* (London 1951) 80, n.1, maintains that this story is a “reflection of the Romans’ fears at the end of the Republic that the capital might be moved to the East.” Whatever the date of the anecdote, it nevertheless illustrates Roman concern with the meaning of the Romulean augury.

¹⁸ According to a passage preserved from the 18th book of Varro’s *Antiquitates* in Censorinus, *De Die Natali*, 17.15; *cf.* 17.6.

¹⁹ Such Etruscan prophecies were very much in the air during the period of Vettius’ calculations: see J. Heurgon, “The Date of Vegoia’s Prophecy,” *JRS* 49 (1959) 41–45. The emphasis laid in this document upon the *avaritia* of the Romans provides a remarkable parallel to the similar view of the writer of the *Versus Romae* (line 18).

²⁰ See S. Reinach, “Une prédiction accomplie,” *Cultes, Mythes et Religions* III (Paris 1908) 302–310.

²¹ *Cf.* L. Alfonsi, “L’importanza politico-religiosa delle ‘Enunciazione’ di Valerio Sorano,” *Epigraphica* 10 (1948) 81–89, esp. 87, n.1.

. . . *est facinus diri Stilichonis acerbum,
proditor arcani quod fuit imperii.*

Again, the murder by Valentinian III of his general and mainstay Aetius, an event viewed as the collapse of the empire in the West, took place in 454 just as the city completed its twelfth century according to the foundation date 747 B.C. adopted, among others, by Fabius Pictor and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.²² Only two years later, Sidonius writes (*Paneg. in Av.* 358–60; *cf.* 55ff):

*iam prope fata tui bisenas vulturis alas
complebant—scis namque tuos, scis, Roma labores—
Aetium Placidus mactavit semivir amens.*

When in 455 the emperor himself was assassinated and the Vandal Gaiserich, setting out from Carthage, entered the city and subjected it to humiliation even more severe and prolonged than the invasion of 410,²³ the significance of time and circumstance was not lost on Byzantine writers anxious to propagate the idea of Constantinople as a New Rome.²⁴ Manasses, in the twelfth century, remorselessly describes Rome's submission to an 'alien yoke' and continues (*Breviarium* 2546–47):

*καὶ ταῦτα μὲν συμβέβηκε τῇ πρεσβυτέρᾳ Ῥώμῃ·
ἢ δ' ἡμετέρα τέθηλεν, αὖξει, κρατεῖ, νεάζει . . .*

It is clear that the writer of the *Versus Romae* likewise saw in the death of Old Rome a fulfillment of the prophecy contained in the palindrome in line 12. Amor had indeed departed: for the *translatio imperii* had been accompanied by transferral of the very names of the city. The allusion in line 9 of the *Versus* to *Constantinopolis florens* refers to the belief that during the dedication of Constantinople the emperor named the *tyche* of his new city Ἐυθουσα, corresponding to the hieratic name of Rome.²⁵ Moreover, Constantine is said to have

²² Reinach (*supra* n.20) 304ff.

²³ See E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* I² (Tournai 1960) 365–367. For exaggeration in the accounts of the invasion of 410, see E. Demougeot, "A propos des interventions du Pape Innocent I^{er} dans la politique séculière," *RHist* 212 (1954) 23–38.

²⁴ See F. Dölger, "Rom in der Gedankenwelt der Byzantiner," *ZfKirchengesch.* 56 (1937) 1–42 (reprinted in *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt* [Ettal 1953] 70–115), and Hammer (*supra* n.1).

²⁵ The evidence is presented and discussed by A. Frolov, "La dédicace de Constantinople," *RevHistRel* 127 (1944) 61–127, and R. Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine* (Paris 1950) 31–32. It is thus understandable that, during the brief resurrection of paganism at Rome in

transported the statue of the *tyche* of Rome to Constantinople, where it was housed together with that of the new city. Henceforth, Venus is associated with New Rome. Johannes of Ephesus informs us that Justin II issued darics bearing a figure compared by many to Aphrodite.²⁶ Manasses (*Breviarium* 2349ff) praises Constantinople as

πόλιν τὴν μεγαλόπολιν, πόλιν τὴν νέαν Ῥώμην . . .
 Ῥώμην αἰεὶ νεάζουσαν, αἰεὶ καινιζομένην,
 Ῥώμην ἀφ' ἧς προχέονται χαρίτων αἰ συρμάδες.

The last line appears to be a remarkable survival of the old Hellenic idea, absorbed and formalized by Romans in the cult of Venus Obsequens, of Aphrodite, dispenser of graces moral and civic as well as physical. Under the imperium of old Rome, Aphrodite had had no better time—as Aelius Aristides expressed it (*Eἰς Ῥώμην* 105)—to sow the seed and foster the growth of the *χάριτες*.²⁷ Now these *χάριτες* flow, as from Aphrodite, from the new Rome, Constantinople.

While it may not be possible to determine with any precision the date of the palindrome in the *Versus Romae*, it is possible to trace the development of the concepts it expresses. The role of Venus or Amor as tutelary deity of Rome owed much of its enduring vitality to the implication that a cosmic force sustained and was in a sense embodied by the *orbis terrarum* viewed as an *orbis Romanus*.²⁸ Even prior to the emergence of the city itself as a *compendium totius mundi*—an emporium of nations as well as goods—the extension of Roman power came to be viewed in philosophical terms. While it is generally held that the earliest explicit evidence in Latin for an awareness of the rôle of Rome

393–94, the temple of Flora was restored, in an apparent effort to cancel Constantine's plagiarism. Hartke's theory (*supra* n.6), 303–304, that "Die Entdeckung des Floratempels als Unterpfand der Herrschaft Roms, die sich in seiner Wiederherstellung ausdrückte, ist dann zeitlich genau festgelegt: kurz vor September 394," neglects the fact that Constantine saw fit to apply the name Ἐπιφάνεια to Constantinople in order to assure the continuity of the New Rome with the Old. The rôle of Flora as "Unterpfand" appears to be at least as early as A.D. 143, the year in which Aelius Aristides delivered his oration *Eἰς Ῥώμην* (see the remarks of Oliver [*supra* n.6] 885).

²⁶ Johannes of Ephesus III.14 (tr. by J. M. Schönfelder, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Johannes von Ephesus* [Munich 1862] 109). The coinage of Justin II is illustrated and discussed by W. Wroth, *Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum I* (London 1908) xix and plate xi, 1.

²⁷ See J. H. Oliver, *Demokratia, the Gods, and the Free World* (Baltimore 1960) 161–162, n.23; cf. 91–117.

²⁸ See F. Christ, *Die römische Weltherrschaft in der antiken Dichtung* (Stuttgart-Berlin 1938) 81–83; cf. W. Gernentz, *Laudes Romae* (diss. Rostock 1918) 49–50; J. Vogt, *Orbis Romanus* (Tübingen 1929) 17. The etymological relation between *urbis* and *orbis* maintained by Varro (*DLL* 5.143) was doubtless important in the development of the concept.

as a world-power does not appear until the first century,²⁹ Roman primacy was already recognized in the East as early as the battle of Magnesia in 189 B.C. Polybius preserves speeches of Antiochene and Rhodian envoys in which Rome appears as the ruler of the *oikoumenē*³⁰ and himself viewed the outcome of the Second Punic War as the decisive turning-point in Roman history: the victory over Hannibal marked the entrance of Rome upon the stage of “universal” history. Walbank has shown that the interruption of the historical narrative leading up to the final great conflict with Carthage by the Geography of Book 24 is “an attempt to give additional cohesion to the universal history by describing for us the full geographical framework of the *oikoumenē*.”³¹ Since the period of the Second Punic War the various parts of the *oikoumenē* formed not only a geographical but an historical unity: “von nun an greifen die Ereignisse auf der ganzen Oikumene in gegenseitiger Verflechtung ineinander . . . die Teilgeschichten wachsen zu einer organischen Einheit zusammen . . .”³² Even in this early presentation of the mission of Rome, an effort is made at viewing Roman history within a philosophical framework. Apart from the much debated role of *tyche* in the rise of Rome,³³ Polybius’ description of the Roman constitution betrays the use of a handbook of Platonic political theory.³⁴

It is not, however, until Cicero’s *De Republica* that Platonism is utilized to the full in an attempt to demonstrate the harmony of the Roman State with the Cosmos itself. “Hier wird der römische nicht mehr als ein Mechanismus mit künstlich berechnetem Zug und Gegenzug erklärt, sondern als Kosmos verherrlicht, in dem ein jeder Teil wie im Weltall seinen ihm wesensgemässen Raum sucht, damit die Harmonie des Ganzen erhalten bleibe.”³⁵ Again, Plutarch (*De Fortuna Romanorum* 317 A–C) explicitly compares the emergence of Rome to a position of world power, and her creation of a *κόσμος*

²⁹ In the *Rhet. ad Her.* 4.9.13, and in Cicero. See Christ (*supra* n.28) 5–6.

³⁰ 21.16.8 and 23.4. See, however, F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* I (Oxford 1952) 42, who suggests that the passages in question may reflect later *topoi*.

³¹ F. W. Walbank, “The Geography of Polybius,” *ClMed* 9 (1948) 155–186, esp. 168ff.

³² W. Siegfried, *Studien zur geschichtlichen Anschauung des Polybius* (Leipzig n.d. [1928]) 91.

³³ See the discussion by Walbank (*supra* n.30) 16–26.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 645 and 650.

³⁵ F. Klingner, *Römische Geisteswelt* (Munich 1956) 565. For a discussion, and rejection, of the suggestion that Panaetius was the sole or prime source for Cicero, see M. van Straaten, *Panētius, sa vie, ses écrits et sa doctrine . . .* (Amsterdam 1946) 302–315. V. Pöschl, *Römischer Staat und griechisches Staatsdenken bei Cicero* (= *Neue deutsche Forschungen*, Abt. Klass. Phil. 5 [Berlin 1936]) 174, maintains that Cicero’s originality lies in the comprehensiveness of his treatment of the Roman cosmos and the postulation of its eternity. J. W. Swain, “The

εἰρήνης, to the resolution of primordial chaos by the creation of the cosmos with earth at its center.

Laudes Romae expressed in such cosmological terminology may be said to reach something of a climax in Aelius Aristides' Roman Oration. J. H. Oliver has suggested that Aristides draws, in considerable detail, upon Platonic cosmology for the imagery with which Rome and the Roman world are presented: the Aeneadae are described in terms of the divine demiurge who has brought into being an ordered cosmos "through the creation of a (Good) World-Soul capable of controlling the World-Body."³⁶ Aristides further emphasizes the association of Rome and Amor by repeatedly contrasting the dominion of Love in the Roman empire with the rule of Hate which preceded the rise of Rome. When speaking of Rome in terms of a divine demiurge, Aristides avoids explicit reference to Amor, but constantly hints at the benefits dispensed by Rome in the character of Eros.³⁷

Theory of the Four Monarchies," *CP* 35 (1940) 1–21 has argued that fr. 501 (Vahlen³) of Ennius' *Annales*,

*Septingenti sunt paulo plus aut minus anni,
augusto augurio postquam inclita condita Roma est,*

shows that Ennius was familiar with the oriental idea found in, though antedating, the Book of Daniel II.31–45 and VII.1–14, that there would be four world monarchies succeeded by a fifth which would last forever. He bases his theory on the assumption that Ennius himself is speaking, which would place the foundation of Rome *ca.* 880, "the date ordinarily given at that time for the fall of the Assyrian empire" (p. 3). In implying that Rome succeeded to the primacy vacated by Assyria, Ennius would thus be the first Latin writer to assert Rome's eternity. It is true that the idea of Rome's eternity does appear in the Greek world at the time the *Annales* were being written. The Hymn to Rome by the poetess Melinno, dated by C. M. Bowra in the first half of the second century B.C. ("Melinno's Hymn to Rome," *JRS* 47 [1957] 21–28), proclaims Rome an exception to the universal law of change (lines 5–6; 13–16):

σοὶ μόνῃ, πρέσβιστα, δέδωκε Μοῖρα
κῦδος ἀρρήκτω βασιλῆον ἀρχᾶς . . .

πάντα δὲ σφάλλων ὁ μέγιστος αἰῶν
καὶ μεταπλάσσω βίον ἄλλοτ' ἄλλως
σοὶ μόνῃ πλησίστιον οὖρον ἀρχᾶς
οὐ μεταβάλλει.

Cf. the prophecy in Lycophron's *Alexandra* 1229, that Rome would have sole rule over land and sea (discussed by W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* II [Cambridge 1948] 24; 28f). Unfortunately for Swain's argument there is no agreement on the context of the fragment from Ennius. Some would place it in a version of the speech of Camillus exhorting the Romans not to evacuate the city, others in a conversation between Scipio and Hannibal. For the most recent discussion see J. Heurgon, *Ennius I "Les Annales"* (= *Les Cours de Sorbonne: Latin* [Paris 1958]) 118–120. Cf. E. H. Warmington, *Remains of Old Latin* I (London 1956) 176, n.a.

³⁶ Oliver (*supra* n.6) 875.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 883–884.

In speculating on the origin of this association of Rome with Eros, Oliver remarked: "When the identification was first made by someone cannot, of course, be discovered, but it is surely possible that the identification of Rome with Amor accompanied the rise of the idea of a Roman Cosmos . . . especially when men like T. Quinctius Flamininus insisted that the Romans were the Aeneadae, hence children of Venus or Aphrodite . . . we may suppose that the identification was Hellenistic; but even if not Hellenistic, it was surely made before Aelius Aristides, because it antedates the destruction of Pompeii . . ." ³⁸ There is good reason for maintaining that this identification was indeed Hellenistic, and that the implications of the Trojan legend of Aeneas were realized and elaborated in philosophical terms by Ennius, at once the first great epic poet in Latin and, as Kranz has characterized him, "der erste römische Kosmologe." ³⁹

Eduard Norden first pointed the way towards a due appreciation of a brief fragment preserved by Horace (*Sat.* 1.4.60–61 = *Enn. Poesis Rel.*³, ed. Vahlen, lines 266–67):

*postquam Discordia taetra
belli ferratos postes portasque refregit.*

Norden identified *Discordia* as the cosmic principle of Strife (νεῖκος) which, together with the opposing force Love (φιλία), characterized the dualistic system of Empedocles.⁴⁰ Norden suggested, further, that Ennius 521–22 Vahlen:

*Corpore tartarino prognata Paluda virago,
cui par imber et ignis, spiritus et gravis terra*

referred to the same *Discordia*, pointing out that the description conformed to Empedocles' division of the cosmos into four elements ruled alternately by Love and Strife (B17.18–20 D–K⁷):⁴¹

³⁸ *Ibid.* 883.

³⁹ W. Kranz, *Kosmos* (= *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* II. 1–2 [Bonn 1958]) 76; cf. 64ff.

⁴⁰ E. Norden, *Ennius und Vergilius* (Leipzig 1915) 10–18. On the alternations of Love and Strife in the cosmos, see E. Bignone, *Il Pensiero Greco II: I Poeti filosofi della Grecia: Empedocle* (Turin 1916) esp. App. II and III, 545–611.

⁴¹ See Bignone's refinement of Norden's interpretation of Vahlen 521f in "Ennio ed Empedocle," *RivFC* n.s. 7 (1929) 10–30 (reprinted in *Studi sul pensiero greco* [Naples 1938] 327ff; see also *Storia della letteratura latina* [Florence 1942] I, 313–319). Cf. H. Fraenkel, "Griechische Bildung in altrömischen Epen, II," *Hermes* 70 (1935) 59–72. The denial of any relation between Ennius' *Discordia* and the Empedoclean *Neikos* made by W.-H. Friedrich, "Ennius-Erklärungen," *Philologus* 97 (1948) 277–301, esp. 291ff, has been rejected by Fraenkel, "Zur *Discordia* des Ennius," *Philologus* 97 (1948) 354. Cf. O. Regenbogen, *Gnomon* 10 (1940) 104–105 and S. Timpanaro, Jr., "Per una nuova edizione critica di Ennio," *StItal* n.s. 23 (1948) 5–58, esp. 55ff.

πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ γαῖα καὶ ἡέρος ἄπλετον ὕψος,
 Νεῖκος τ' οὐλόμενον δίχα τῶν, ἀτάλαντον ἀπάντηι,
 καὶ Φιλότης ἐν τοῖσι ἴση μῆκός τε πλάτος τε.

Norden then attempted to reconstruct the *Discordia* episode on the analogy of passages in *Aeneid* 7 which he believed had been modelled on the *Annales*. He suggested that Ennius' description of the outbreak of war was reflected in Vergil, lines 323ff, where Allecto is aroused from Hades by Juno to shatter peace and sow *crimina belli*, precipitating the war between the Latins and the Trojans. Because of the word *postquam* in fr. 266, Norden felt that the verse must not refer to the actual emergence of *Discordia*, but rather to a description of her reentry into Hades via a *πλουτώνιον* such as that depicted by Vergil, 7.563ff. Vahlen 260–63 suggested to Norden just such a passage, and, accordingly, he included these fragments in the *Discordia* episode. This entire section, Norden proposed, must have occurred in Book 7 of the *Annales*, and referred to the reopening of the temple of Janus in 235 B.C., when the threat of war with Carthage was renewed.⁴² E. Fraenkel and others, arguing that the presence of *postquam* excludes the verse from the epic narration of the acts of *Discordia*, and pointing out the chronological difficulties of connecting the actual beginning of the Second Punic War with the events of 235, would prefer to take the fragment in a purely metaphorical sense.⁴³ Timpanaro, in reply, insists that a specific reference is intended, but rephrases the interpretation of Norden: “Si comprende perciò come Ennio vedesse nella riapertura del 235 l'inizio di un lungo ciclo di guerre che aveva avuto il suo culmine nella terribile guerra annibalica.”⁴⁴

Ennius and Vergil after him have, in effect, combined the Empedoclean concept of *νεῖκος* with the traditional incitement to conflict,

⁴² Norden's theory that the *Discordia* episode followed a council of the gods has been rejected by Friedrich, “Zur altlateinischen Dichtung,” *Hermes* 76 (1941) 113–135, and Timpanaro (*supra* n.41), who argues that there was only one council of the gods in the *Annales*, that in Book I. This accords with the attenuated rôle of the Olympian gods in the poem as a whole. There is, for example, no evidence for divine intervention on the battlefield, and the gods, when mentioned, tend to be treated in a purely formulaic manner. See the still useful dissertation by H. von Kameke, *Ennius und Homer* (diss. Leipzig 1926).

⁴³ E. Fraenkel, “Some Aspects of the Structure of *Aeneid* VII,” *JRS* 35 (1945) 12–14. Fraenkel's scepticism extends to Norden's coupling of the description of *Discordia* with Vahlen 266–67, and the interpretation of 260–63 as a depiction of the *πλουτώνιον*. Fraenkel suggests that the lines refer to troop movements near the river Nera following the battle of Cannae, and belong in Book VIII.

⁴⁴ Timpanaro (*supra* n.41) 37.

the Homeric ἔρις.⁴⁵ Bignone has pointed out, however, that this association is already implicit in the language of Empedocles, where νεῖκος is represented by the plural ἔριδες (B20.4 D-K⁷).⁴⁶ The implications of this correspondence of Discordia to νεῖκος, which Norden failed to elaborate, remained to be described by Bignone: “Empedocle aveva rappresentata tutta la vita cosmica come un immenso, eterno dramma che si svolge nella infinità dei tempi . . . Ennio . . . rappresentando lo scoppio della guerra, causato da Cartagine, quale opera della Contesa, dell’ Odio, nel mondo, veniva a raffigurare la vittoria romana . . . quale il trionfo della Concordia, dell’ Amore, nel mondo e nei secoli.”⁴⁷

It is perhaps impossible to say in what terms Ennius developed the association between Rome and Eros in the course of the *Annales*, but it seems likely that the rôle of Amor included a tutelary aspect. We know—if Propertius 3.3.11 may be admitted as evidence—that Ennius was familiar with the idea of a tutelary deity:

et cecinit (Ennius) . . .

Hannibalemque Lares Romana sede fugantes.

Moreover, according to Varro (*DLL* 5.163), . . . <re>ligionem Porcius designat cum de Ennio scribens dicit eum coluisse Tutilinae loca. This seems to imply that Ennius did not simply “inhabit the quarter of Tutilina” but “tended the grounds sacred to Tutilina” (Warmington) or “showed devotion” to her (Latte). While Latte suggests that “Porcius in der Weise antiker Biographie eine Erwähnung in den Annalen des Ennius auf die Person des Dichters bezog,” he concludes that the statement at least shows that Tutilina had by this time become no mere “Sattgottheit.”⁴⁸ Whatever the nature of such a reference in the *Annales*, one may still conjecture that Ennius saw in the function of Tutilina a manifestation of the power of Eros. In combination with the philosophical basis of the *Annales* the cult of a protective deity who might be identified with Amor would carry some degree of genuine conviction.

⁴⁵ E.g. *Il.* 11.3–4; 21.385–386; in these examples ἔρις is accompanied by one of its fixed epithets, ἀργαλέη. It is likely that Ennius’ *Discordia taetra* is a formula in imitation of Homer, and its convenient position at the end of the hexameter suggests that it was contrived for frequent use. The appearance of νεῖκος together with ἔρις in *Iliad* 27.384–385 should be noted, although the precise philosophical implications demonstrable in Ennius are, of course, absent here.

⁴⁶ Bignone, *RivFC* (*supra* n.41) 25.

⁴⁷ Bignone, *Storia* (*supra* n.41) 317.

⁴⁸ Latte (*supra* n.9) 51, n.2.

The complex of ideas, then, preserved in the palindrome of the *Versus Romae* seems to originate with Ennius, at a time when contact with Greek ideas was beginning to transform irrevocably the mission of Rome.

DUKE UNIVERSITY

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