

DIIUDICATIO LOCORUM: GELLIUS AND THE HISTORY OF A MODE IN ANCIENT COMPARATIVE CRITICISM*

Comparison of literary passages is a critical procedure much favoured by Gellius, and is the main theme in several chapters of his *Noctes Atticae*: ch. 2.23 is dedicated to a comparison of Menander's and Caecilius' versions of the *Plocium*; 2.27 to a confrontation of passages from Demosthenes and Sallust; in 9.9 Vergilian verses are compared with their originals in Theocritus and Homer; parts of speeches by the elder Cato, C. Gracchus and Cicero are contrasted in 10.3; two of Vergil's verses are again compared with their supposed models in ch. 11.4; a segment of Ennius' *Hecuba* is contrasted with its Euripidean original in 13.27; Cato's and Musonius' formulations of a similar *sententia* are confronted in 16.1; in 17.10 Vergil's description of Etna is compared to Pindar's; the value of Latin erotic poetry is weighed against the Greek in ch. 19.9, in which an Anacreontean poem and four Latin epigrams are cited; and finally in 19.11 a 'Platonic' distich is set side by side with its Latin adaptation, composed by an anonymous friend of Gellius, though in this case no comparison of the poems is attempted. To these can be added some shorter remarks in which comparative judgements passed incidentally are woven into discussions of completely different topics, such as the duration of women's pregnancy or the importance of breast-feeding (3.16.3–5, 12.1.20; see also 9.10.3–4).

This cluster of comparative discussions represents a variety of critical methods, each having its own history and variously practised by critics from different disciplines. Yet only an examination of the whole range and its provenance can reveal not only the distinctive features and independent development of each of these critical methods, but their mutual influence and possible fusions or contaminations as well. Such a study of the particular critical technique of comparing passages may also, I hope, shed some light on the broader issue of the employment and evolution of comparative criticism in antiquity, a chapter in the history of western criticism whose importance has often been recognized, though it still, to my knowledge, awaits a comprehensive study.¹

I. SYNKRISIS AS A METHOD OF LITERARY CRITICISM

Comparative criticism, i.e. an evaluative method based on the confrontation of two objects in order to weigh their respective qualities and rank them by merit, is very common in the ancient world. It is employed, for example, to decide between the testimonies of conflicting historical sources, or in the dramatic enactment of

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¹ See, e.g. S. H. Butcher, *Harvard Lectures on the Originality of Greece* (London, 1911), pp. 257–8; J. W. H. Atkins, *Literary Criticism in Antiquity: A Sketch of its Development* (Cambridge, 1934), ii.335–6. The standard reference for a study of ancient comparative criticism is still F. Focke, 'Synkrisis', *Hermes* 58 (1923), 327–68, at pp. 339–48. I have not seen O. Hense, *Die Synkrisis in der antiken Literatur* (Diss., Freiburg, 1893).

conceptual conflicts in Greek tragedy and in the *agon* of Aristophanic comedy, as well as in much dialogue literature. From the Hellenistic age it also forms part of the preparatory exercises of rhetorical training (*progymnasmata*), one of which, the *σύγκρισις*, consisted of a comparison of two persons or abstracts (such as town life and country life), aimed at eulogizing or defaming one of them.²

The term *σύγκρισις* is already employed in Aristotle's discussion of the logical principles of preference through comparison laid out in the third book of the *Topica* (e.g. 3.4, 119a1, 7, 8), an influential discussion among later practitioners of this type of comparison (e.g. Cic. *Top.* 68–71; *Part.* 7; Plut. *Mor.* 616D). From then on the term is a common tag for comparative procedures used in scientific and scholarly works. Polybius testifies to a *synkrisis* of historiography and declamation by Ephorus which was later imitated by Timaeus (Plb. 12.28.9–12 = *FGrHist* 70 F 111, 566 F 7).³ Philodemus of Gadara draws a *synkrisis* of rhetoric and philosophy (*Rh.* fr. 3.26–30, ii.146 Sudhaus).⁴ Polybius uses the same terminology for his comparison of Rome and other great empires of antiquity (1.2.1, 2), of various political systems (6.47.6; cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1295a27, 1296b24; Plut. *Mor.* 826E), and of the legion and the phalanx (18.28.12).⁵ Poseidonius seems to have written a *περὶ συγκρίσεως Ἀράτου καὶ Ὀμήρου περὶ τῶν μαθηματικῶν*.⁶ and it has been suggested that the *synkrisis* appended to most of the extant pairs of parallel lives of Plutarch may have been modelled on similar comparisons of historical figures in the works of Hellenistic biographers or Roman scholars of the last century B.C., such as Varro and Nepos.⁷ A parodic *synkrisis* by Alcaeus of Messene (Plb. 32.2.5)⁸ and a 'comparison of pulse porridge and lentil soup' by Meleager (Ath. 4.157b) further testify to the popularity of such comparisons in the last two centuries B.C. (though the term *synkrisis* in the last example is not necessarily Meleager's).

In such a climate it is not surprising to find comparisons abundantly exploited in Hellenistic literary criticism as well. Comparative observations are, of course, a natural constituent of critical discourse, and there is some evidence of them in earlier times, such as in Sophocles' alleged remark on the difference between his own way of portraying characters and that of Euripides (ap. Arist. *Po.* 25, 1460b32–5), or in

² For definitions of the exercise: Quint. *Inst.* 2.4.21; Theon, *Prog.* 9, Spengel, *Rhet.*, ii.112; Aph. *Prog.* 10, *ibid.*, p. 42. See G. Reichel, *Quaestiones Progymnasmaticae* (Diss., Leipzig, 1909), pp. 95–7; Focke, *Hermes* 58 (1923), 331–9.

³ See further F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, vol. II (Oxford, 1967), pp. 410–11.

⁴ Cf. the similar comparison in Book 1 of Cicero's *de Oratore* and Quint. *Decl. Min.* 268. On the quarrel between rhetoric and philosophy, see G. A. Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 321–5. For similar comparisons between history and poetry in the Hellenistic age: Praxiphanes fr. 18 Wehrli IX, on which see K. O. Brink, 'Callimachus and Aristotle', *CQ* 40 (1946), 11–26, at p. 24. See further B. L. Ullman, 'History and Tragedy', *TAPhA* 73 (1942), 25–53. Cicero's friend Roscius composed a book 'quo eloquentiam cum historia compararet' (Macr. *Sat.* 3.14.12), and a similar comparison seems to have been the subject of Cicero's own *Hortensius*.

⁵ Cf. Walbank (n. 3), vol. I (Oxford, 1957), p. 40. On comparisons in Polybius see further K. Lorenz, *Untersuchungen zum Geschichtswerk des Polybios* (Stuttgart, 1931), pp. 15, 81 notes 73–4.

⁶ *Vita Arati* pp. 143, 150 Maas (= pp. 5, 17 Martin) with E. Maas, *Aratea* (Berlin, 1892), pp. 385–6.

⁷ Cf. Nep. *Han.* 13.4; fr. 58 Marshall = fr. 9 Funaioli (cf. Vell. 2.41.1). See F. Leo, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer litterarischen Form* (Leipzig, 1901), pp. 149–51; Focke, *Hermes* 58 (1923), 351–66; J. Geiger, *Cornelius Nepos and Ancient Political Biography* (Stuttgart, 1985), pp. 118–19.

⁸ Cf. Porph. ap. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 10.3.23, 467D = *FGrHist* 70 T 17, and see F. W. Walbank, 'Alcaeus of Messene, Philip V and Rome', *CQ* 37 (1943), 1–13, at p. 3.

allusions to contemporary drama in Attic comedy, and above all in the *agon* of Aristophanes' *Frogs* (cf. *Nub.* 1364–74). Yet, although this splendid piece of practical criticism is in many respects a parody on the critical methods then fashionable, its comparative character seems to have been dictated by the dramatic conventions of the comic *agon*, rather than intended to ridicule a specific 'syncritic' treatise or a more general tendency of contemporary literary critics to employ comparative methods.⁹

Remarks similar to that ascribed to Sophocles tend to be reiterated by later scholars, and are quite common in what came to be the most characteristic genre of Peripatetic literary criticism—the *βίοι* of authors.¹⁰ Thus, in one of the *Lives of Isocrates*, the orator is said to have compared the qualities of his two eminent pupils, Ephorus and Theopompus (*Vita Isocr.* III 98–108, p. 257 Westermann; cf. *Vita Theop.* 41–51, p. 205 Westermann). Traces of a comparison of Euripides with Sophocles are discernible in the third-century B.C. *Life of Euripides* by Satyrus (*POxy* ix.1176, fr. 8.iii.5–7 with Hunt ad loc., p. 171) and, as this *Life* seems to have formed part of a work on the lives of all three great tragedians (cf. fr. 39. xxiii), it is possible that such comparisons were also included in similar collections of *βίοι* of literary men such as those of Aristoxenus (frs. 113–16 Wehrli II) and Heracleides of Pontus (fr. 179 Wehrli VII), entitled *περὶ τῶν τριῶν τραγωδοποιῶν*, or the *περὶ Εὐριπίδου καὶ Σοφοκλέους* of Duris of Samos (*FGrHist* 76 F 29), as well as the *περὶ τῆς ποιήσεως Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου* of Hecataeus of Abdera (*FGrHist* 264 T 1). Heracleides dedicated another essay to a comparison of the mythological narrative of tragedies (*περὶ τῶν παρ' Εὐριπίδῃ καὶ Σοφοκλεῖ* = fr. 180 Wehrli VII), and it seems that his treatise on Archilochus and Homer was also of a syncritic character (fr. 178 with Wehrli VII ad loc., p. 123). A response to Aristotle's characterization of Euripides as the *τραγικώτατος* among tragedians (*Po.* 13, 1453a25) is ascribed to the *Epistle to the Comic Writer Poseidippus* of Duris' brother, Lynceus (Ath. 14, 652c–d; cf. *D.Chr. Or.* 55.16), and a comparison of Aeschylus' achievement with that of his forerunners and successors appears in the (probably much later) *Vita Aeschyl.* (84–5, p. 122 Westermann).

There is also some evidence that the Hellenistic application of *synkriseis* was not always confined to the type of short comparative remarks preserved in the *βίοι*. A relatively long and detailed comparison of Hegesias with Stratocles, Aeschines and Demosthenes formed part of an inquiry on the Red Sea by the early second-century B.C. Agatharchides of Knidos (preserved in Photius, *Bibl.* 250, 445b39–447b5).¹¹ The

⁹ The *agon* of *Frogs* has been taken to parody (a) 'syncritic' critical treatises by Gorgias or members of his circle (M. Pohlenz, 'Die Anfänge der griechischen Poetik', *NGG* 1920, 142–78 = *Kleine Schriften* [Hildesheim, 1965], ii.436–72); (b) treatises on tragedy similar to the *Certamen* of Homer and Hesiod; and (c) Sophocles' *περὶ Χοροῦ* (R. Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism before Plato* [London, 1969], p. 131). There is, however, no evidence of Gorgias' having been engaged in any kind of comparative criticism. The *Certamen* depicts an *agon* similar to that represented in the *Frogs* (and to the dramatic competitions of the festivals themselves for that matter) and is also set in an amoebae form, yet it does not go beyond reporting of the competition and its result and contains no critical discussion (cf. the *certamen of erotikoi logoi* in Plat. *Phdr.* 230E–257C). It therefore cannot be the object of Aristophanes' parody on the methods of contemporary literary criticism. See also G. Ugolini, 'L'evoluzione della critica letteraria d'Aristofane II', *SIFC* 3 (1923), 259–91, at pp. 283–4; D. L. Clayman, 'The Origins of Greek Literary Criticism and the *Aitia* Prologue', *WS*² 11 (1977), 27–34, at p. 29; K. Dover, *Aristophanes' Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), p. 32.

¹⁰ See Brink, *CQ* 40 (1946), 11–26; A. J. Podlecki, 'The Peripatetics as Literary Critics', *Phoenix* 23 (1969), 114–37.

¹¹ See P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford, 1972), i.547–50; D. A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1981), pp. 37, 173–6.

third-century rhetor Cleochares of Myrlea is reported to have composed a *synkrisis* of Demosthenes and Isocrates which included the often repeated attribution of martial qualities to the former and athletic ones to the latter (*Vita Theop.* 67–72, p. 206 Westerman = Phot. *Bibl.* 176, 121b9–15).¹² And another third-century scholar, Dionysiades of Mallos, wrote a treatise on the characteristic styles of the Attic comedians (*Suda*, s.v. ‘Dionysiades’), which almost certainly involved comparative analysis.¹³ It should also be noted that comparative evaluation lies at the base of another typically Hellenistic variety of literary criticism, namely the ‘canonical’ lists of authors. These involve comparative procedures both in order to distinguish the *ἐγκριθέντες* from the rest of literature and for ranking these authors among themselves in hierarchically arranged lists, such as those of Volcacius Sedigitus (fr. 1 Morel) and Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.46ff.).¹⁴

Not all the above-mentioned comparisons are *stricto sensu* critical, the product of some of them not being an evaluation and ranking of the contested authors, but rather their classification according to qualities characteristic of their style. Among such analytic comparisons are Isocrates’ distinction between the styles of Ephorus and Theopompus, and probably Dionysiades’ study of the comedians.¹⁵ In the similar characterization of the styles of Demosthenes and Isocrates by Cleochares, the comparison is not purely analytical, and the author’s preference for one of the styles is overt. The counterpart of such comparative analyses of authors’ styles is the enumeration of exemplary writers in theoretical classifications of styles. Varro has thus patterned his discussion of the three *genera dicendi* and their attendant dangers (preserved by Fronto, *Eloq.* 1.2, pp. 133–4 v.d.Hout² and Gellius 6.14.3–6),¹⁶ in which exemplary poets, historians and orators are associated with each of the styles and their correlative faults. In the same chapter Gellius cites a similar classification of the styles of the three Greek philosophers of the embassy of 155 B.C., which he attributes to ‘Rutilius and Polybius’ (6.14.8–10). As suggested by G. L. Hendrickson, this classification is probably also taken from Varro’s discussion of the three styles,

¹² Cf. Cic. *de Orat.* 2.94; *Orat.* 42; D.H. *Dem.* 32, i.200f. U.-R.; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.33; Plin. *Ep.* 5.8.10. The same observation on the styles of the two orators is attributed to Philip of Macedon in the *Life of Demosthenes* preserved in the pseudo-Plut. *Lives of the Ten Orators* (*Mor.* 845D) and in Photius (*Bibl.* 265, 493b24–30 = *Vita Demosth.* I 75–80, pp. 283–4 Westermann). A comparison with Demosthenes might also be implied in a remark of Cleochares’ near-contemporary Hieronymus of Rhodes on Isocrates’ disregard for delivery (Phld. *Rh.* 4 col. xvi, 13ff., i.198 Sudhaus; D.H. *Isoc.* 13, i.73 U.-R.). See E. Drerup, *Demosthenes im Urteile des Altertums* (Würzburg, 1923), pp. 94–7.

¹³ Cf. the two similar studies (of uncertain date) by Platonius, *περὶ διαφορᾶς κωμωδιῶν* and *περὶ διαφορᾶς χαρακτήρων*; see Kaibel, *CGF*, pp. 3–6; R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship I: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford, 1968), p. 160.

¹⁴ Like the elder Seneca (*Con.* 10.pr.13), Quintilian tends to distinguish only the *princeps* (who is not necessarily the *auctor* as well) from the rest of the *ordo*; e.g. *Inst.* 10.1.61, 73, 76, 81, 85 etc. On the history of ‘canons’ see now M. Scotti, ‘I “canoni” degli autori greci’, *Esperienze letterarie* 7 (1982), 74–91.

¹⁵ A classification of Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon according to the three rhetorical *χαρακτήρες λέξεως* is preserved in the (4th century A.D.?) Marcellinean *Life of Thucydides* (sect. 39–40, lines 204–11, p. 194 Westermann), but to assume a Hellenistic origin for this classification would involve reopening the vexed question of the origins and date of the ‘tripartite division of styles’, which is beyond the scope of this study.

¹⁶ For the association of Fronto’s discussion with the same Varronian source Gellius uses, see M. Warren, ‘On a Literary Judgment of Fronto’, *TAPhA* 25 (1894), xlii–xlv. H. Dahlmann’s attribution of the fragment to Varro’s *περὶ χαρακτήρων* is plausible, though as fragments 40 and 99 Funaioli show, similar discussions could also have been included in a Menippean Satire or the *de sermone latino*; see his ‘Zu Varros Literaturforschung besonders in *de poetis*’, *Entretiens de la Fondation Hardt* 9 (1962), 3–20, at pp. 6–8.

which in turn depended on Rutilius, who reported on a classification he found in Polybius.¹⁷ Even if Hendrickson is right in dating the emergence of the tripartite division of the *genera dicendi* to the first century B.C. at the earliest, and in assuming subsequently that the classification preserved by Gellius is an attempt by Varro to adapt an earlier system of classification to the categories of styles current in his day, the passage would still afford further evidence of some sort of stylistic classification being employed in the second century B.C. And, given the historiographic interests of Polybius and Rutilius, the original context in which this comparison of styles was probably set is a report on the actual discourses of the three philosophers rather than a theoretical discussion of the typology of styles.

Apart from this classification of authors according to the three *genera dicendi*, Varro is also credited with similar stylistic distinctions between Roman authors of *Palliata* and *Togata* according to the qualities in which they excel (fr. 40 & 99 Funaioli).¹⁸ Another seeming comparison of the characteristic qualities of two comic poets is preserved in a fragment from Cicero's *Hortensius* (fr. 89 Müller = fr. 9 Grilli).¹⁹ Without entering the much debated question of whether Horace's polemic against the *critici* in *Ep.* 2.1.50–62 is directed specifically at Varro himself or at his followers,²⁰ there is ground enough to infer from it that the tendency to contrast pairs of authors in order to analyse and label each of them according to qualities typical of his style (or those in which he excels) was a strong enough critical trend in Augustan times to warrant much ink and bile. Comparative analysis of styles is also

¹⁷ 'The Origin and Meaning of the Ancient Characters of Style', *AJPh* 26 (1905), 249–90, at pp. 270–71. For a different classification of the three philosophers, see Cic. *de Orat.* 2.157–61.

¹⁸ Varro seems to be using here Aristotle's classification of the *τραγωδίας μέρη* (*Po.* 6, 1449b31–50a14). For the origins of Varro's method, see Dahmann *Varros Schrift 'de Poematis' und die hellenistisch-römische Poetik* (Wiesbaden, 1953), pp. 30–32, 60–72 (= *AAMainz* 1953, 116–18, 146–58).

¹⁹ On which see A. Grilli, *M. Tulli Ciceronis Hortensius* (Varese & Milan, 1962), pp. 63–6. For similar classifications of prose writers in Cicero cf. *de Orat.* 3.28; *Hort.* fr. 25 Müller (= fr. 15 Grilli) and *infra*.

²⁰ For the state of the question, see C. O. Brink, *Horace on Poetry* III (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 83–91. Horace's objection to the 'contrast and label' method of the critics, especially prominent in lines 56 and 59, is present throughout the section *Ep.* 2.1.50–59, where it is combined with his censure of two other critical fallacies: blind preference of the ancient over the new, and the tendency to couple Roman poets with Greek ones (see Brink, *ibid.*, 57). In lines 50–54 Ennius is labelled 'sapiens et fortis', coupled with Homer, and contrasted with Naevius, whose sole merit is being older (cf. Ennius' quality in Volcaci Sedigitus' canon of comic poets [fr. 1 Morel]: 'decimum addo causa antiquitatis Ennium'); 'doctus' Pacuvius is contrasted with 'altus' Accius; and the coupling of Afranius and Plautus with Greek models also serves to contrast the features of ancient comedy present in Plautus' *Palliatae* with the *Nea*-type *Togatae* of Afranius. If this interpretation is correct, Varro or his fellow critics join a long tradition of comparisons between ancient and new comedy: Arist. *E.N.* 4.8.6, 1128a22ff. (cf. *Tract. Coislin.* 7); Cic. *Off.* 1.104 and perhaps *Hort.* fr. 89 Müller; Plut. *Mor.* 711F–12D; 853A–4D; Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* 11.6; see further R. Janko, *Aristotle on Comedy* (London, 1984), pp. 203–8; D. M. Schenkeveld, *Gnomon* 58 (1986), 216. Porphyrio's note to line 56 seems to imply that the differentiation between Pacuvius and Accius has also been adapted from a standard critical practice of contrasting Sophocles' style with those of Aeschylus and Euripides.

Horace himself is not entirely free of such pigeonholing of writers; see *C.* 2.13.29ff. (cf. *Ov. Her.* 15.29–30) with A. La Penna, 'Sunt qui Sappho malint: note sulla σύγκρισις di Saffo e Alceo nell'antichità', *Maia* 24 (1972), 208–15. And, despite his criticism, the method remained a favoured constituent of Roman critical discourse throughout the first century A.D. (e.g. Vell. 2.9.3; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.52–3, 73, 87, 105–6, 108, 118; Tac. *Dial.* 25) and into the second, when it is represented in enumerations of the characteristic qualities of authors in Fronto (e.g. *Fer. Als.* 3.1, p. 227 v.d. Hout²) and Apuleius (*Apol.* 95), as well as in a list of the peculiar faults of some prominent Latin erotic poets that Gellius puts in the mouth of a company of Greek *συμπόται* (19.9.7).

common in Cicero's rhetorical works, especially in the *Brutus*, where Greek orators are juxtaposed with Roman, Italian with those from the *urbs* proper, those of one generation with their predecessors, primitive with cultured, and the styles of contemporaneous orators are often contrasted and classified according to their stylistic types. Comparisons also furnish three of the major digressions from the historical narrative of the dialogue, where Crassus is contrasted with Scaevola (144-9), Marcellus with Caesar (248-62) and Hortensius with Cicero himself (301-28). The same critical method was employed by Cicero's coeval Demetrius of Magnesia, whose comparison of the styles of Dinarchus and Demosthenes is cited by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Din.* 1, i.298 U.-R.).²¹ In the next generation, comparative criticism becomes a principal tool in the rhetorical discussions of Dionysius and of his friend Caecilius of Calacte, who is reported to have composed a *synkrisis* of Demosthenes and Cicero and another of Demosthenes and Aeschines (*Suda*, s.v. 'Κεκίλιος'; Plut. *Dem.* 3.1-2).²²

Similar comparative discussions are from then on a habitual feature of Greek and Latin rhetorical discourse on both prose writers and poets.²³ These, at times, seem to follow the form of the more detailed comparative inquiries of Cleochores and more significantly of Caecilius the rhetor, and occupy entire treatises, such as Plutarch's *synkrisis* of Aristophanes and Menander (*Mor.* 853Aff.)²⁴ and Dio Chrysostomus' confrontation of the three versions of the tragedy of Philoctetes (*Or.* 52), and his comparisons of Homer with Archilochus (*Or.* 33.11ff.) and with Socrates (*Or.* 55). Gellius is familiar with a Latin specimen, the treatise *de comparatione patris et Ciceronis*, composed by C. Asinius Gallus, Pollio's son (Gel. 17.1).²⁵ He also records a short comparative observation on the styles of Plato and Lysias (2.5), which he attributes to Favorinus, a pupil of Dio and a friend of Plutarch.

²¹ See F. Susemihl, *Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit* (Leipzig, 1891-2), i.507-8.

²² See W. Rhys Roberts, 'Caecilius of Calacte', *AJP* 18 (1897), 302-12, at pp. 310-11, though in view of the evidence collected above, I find the central role he ascribes to Caecilius in the history of comparative criticism somewhat exaggerated. Apart from these two treatises, 'Longinus' testifies to a comparison of Caecilius between the styles of Lysias and Plato, probably in his own *περὶ Ὑψους* ('Long.' 32.8; cf. fr. 95 Ofenloch).

²³ E.g. 'Long.' 9.11-14, 12.3, 33.4-5, 34; Petr. 55; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.73, 87, 101, 105; Tac. *Dial.* 18, 26; Plin. 1.20.4; 'Lucian', *Dem.Enc.* 4-7; see also Demetr. *Eloc.* 80, 112-13. If the author of the *περὶ Ἐρμηνείας* is of the Hellenistic age, as many scholars nowadays believe, these instances further testify to the abundance of comparative remarks in the literary inquiry of that era.

²⁴ In spite of Phrynichus' censure of the non-Attic use of *synkrisis* in the title of this work (on which see C. A. Lobeck in his edition [Leipzig, 1820], p. 278), the term, as shown above, is in accordance with earlier terminology of literary critics, and is similarly employed by Plutarch in *Mor.* 331C. In view of the abundant evidence for the employment of both the term *synkrisis* and the procedure it represents in many fields of Hellenistic scholarship including literary criticism, I see no reason to associate the application of this critical technique to literature with the *progymnasma* of *synkrisis*, as has sometimes been suggested. As the descriptions and exemplary models of the exercise offered by rhetoricians reveal, it was always focused on moral evaluations, either of specific persons or of abstract ways of life (see n. 2 supra), and even when the persons compared happened to be orators, as in Libanius' *synkrisis* of Demosthenes and Aeschines (*Prog.*, compar. 3, Foerster viii.342; cf. Nicol. *Exemp. Prog.*, compar. 2, Walz, *Rhet.Gr.* i.358), it is the orators' moral conduct and political career which are compared, rather than stylistic or aesthetic values of their speeches (for such comparisons see also Gel. 15.28.6-7; Philostr. *V.S.* 1.18).

²⁵ Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 12.1.22; Suet. *Claud.* 41.3; and for the title of Gallus' work, Plin. *Ep.* 7.4.3-6.

II. COMPARISON OF PASSAGES

Caecilius and Dionysius seem to have played an important role in the propagation of comparative methods in rhetorical discussions and may also have been responsible for the development of a particular variety of these methods, namely the foundation of general stylistic classifications of authors on an analytical comparison of passages from their works. For Dionysius this eventually becomes a major critical technique, though the employment of comparisons of passages in his stylistic investigations seems a relatively late development of his critical methods.²⁶ The technique had been employed earlier, as evidenced, for example, in Agatharchides' confrontation of Hegesias' description of the sack of Olynthus and Thebes with those of Stratocles, Aeschines and Demosthenes (ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 250, 446b26–447b5), and there is no telling how many other comparisons of passages were present in what seems a rather large volume of Hellenistic comparative discussions now lost. Nevertheless, Dionysius' employment of the method met with criticism, which induced him to enter into a methodological discussion. At the beginning of his *Epistle to Cn. Pompeius* (1, ii.223–4 U.-R.) he evokes the authority of earlier practitioners of the method and claims that rejecting comparative inquiry (τὴν ἐκ τῆς συγκρίσεως ἐξέτασιν) in political oratory would involve its rejection in related fields, such as the study of poetry, history, political science, law, the lives of eminent persons and philosophy; and to that, he adds, no sane person would assent. Yet the major object of Pompeius' complaint is not comparative criticism in general but the specific procedure of comparing passages. Dionysius answers this by rejecting the tendency of some critics to compare the best passages of one author with the worst of another and by strongly emphasizing the need to compare only passages from the sections considered best in the writings of both authors (τοὺς ἀρίστους λόγους, *Pomp.* 1, ii.223.6 U.-R.; cf. τὸ δ' ἐκ τῶν ἀμφοτέρων μάλιστα εὐδοκιμούντων, *Dem.* 23, i.179.17–23 U.-R.). This, however, he does while acknowledging, like Agatharchides, the advantage of basing inquiries into the stylistic qualities of authors on comparisons of passages in which they touch upon a common theme (ἐπὶ τῶν ὁμοίων ἔργων λαβοῦσαι, *Dem.* 16, i.162.14 U.-R.; or εἰς τὸν ὁμοίων in Photius' words, 447a18).²⁷

In the light of modern acclaim for the great advantage of Dionysius' critical method, it is surprising how seldom comparisons of passages are employed in subsequent rhetorical studies in antiquity. We do, from time to time, encounter isolated recourses to the method, usually evoked to illustrate a specific point, as, for example, in the 'Longinian' juxtaposition of Hesiod's representation of Gloom (*Sc.* 267) to the Homeric Strife (*Il.* 4.442ff.), used to illustrate how sublimity may be attained through mighty and awe-inspiring descriptions ('Long.' 9.4–5).²⁸ But these

²⁶ Though Dionysius' earlier writings (such as *Imit.* and *Lys.*) abound in general comparative criticism, they contain no discussion of specific passages. The method is first employed in the *de Isocrate*, and only in the later works (esp. *Isae.*, *Demosth.* and *Thucyd.*) does he appear to fully realize the potential of the technique and make ample use of it. See S. F. Bonner, *The Literary Treatises of Dionysius of Halicarnassus: A Study in the Development of Critical Method* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 54–5, 62–8, 93, whose reconstruction of the chronological order of Dionysius' works I follow here.

²⁷ The advantage of comparisons of passages sharing a common or similar theme is also acknowledged in Plat. *Phdr.* 236D; 'Lucian', *Dem.Enc.* 5; Hermog. *Id.* 397–8 Rabe.

²⁸ Cf. 'Long.' 15.7 and 32.5 (possibly borrowed from Caecilius; see fr. 95 Ofenloch) where the passages compared are not cited but referred to. See also D.Chr. *Or.* 2.3–13; 'Lucian', *Dem.Enc.* 5–6; Hermog. *Id.* 243, 353–4, 397–8 Rabe. A possible explanation for the relative rarity of comparisons of passages in rhetorical treatises is the competing (and often more handy) method of illustration by contrasting examples cited from literature with the rhetor's

are usually confined to short supportive remarks and are never as elaborate and cardinal to the discussion as in Dionysius' later treatises. Thus, though the extant epitome of Plutarch's *synkrisis* abounds in quotations and examples of Aristophanes' indecency and corrupt style, none of these is contrasted with passages from Menander. Dio too does not cite and contrast verses in his detailed comparison of the three *Philoctetes* tragedies, though his choice of tragedies handling the same myth to illustrate the differences between the three tragedians in general is, in a way, analogous to the method of illustrating stylistic differences between authors through discussions of shorter passages sharing a common theme.²⁹

However, mid-second-century Rome produced at least three such detailed comparisons of passages. One is a confrontation of the proems of Apollonius' and Lucan's epics integrated in the correspondence of Fronto (*Or.* 6–7, pp. 155–6 v.d.Hout²). The others are Gellius' discussion of the oratorical merit of the elder Cato, C. Gracchus and Cicero, illustrated by paragraphs from their speeches (Gel. 10.3), and a shorter comparison of the formulations of the same *sententia* by Cato and Musonius, in which the latter is found superior in all stylistic respects, but the former more venerable because of its antiquity (Gel. 16.1.3). To these may be added Fronto's charge to his son-in-law to compare part of his Bythinian speech with a passage from Cicero's *Pro Sulla* which deals with a similar subject ('in simili re', *Ad Am.* 1.14.2, p. 180 v.d.Hout²), and a remark embedded in Annianus' praise of the portrayal of the love-making of gods in *Aen.* 8.404ff., where Vergil's chaste yet direct description is deemed more difficult than Homer's oblique and metaphoric manner of referring to such activities (Gel. 9.10.3). As in Agatharchides, Dionysius, 'Longinus', and Fronto, all three Gellian cases also confront passages handling common or similar themes ('in simili causa', Gel. 10.3.7).

In the chapter Gellius dedicates to a confrontation of Greek and Latin erotic poetry, four Latin epigrams are juxtaposed with a representative 'Anacreontic' poem both because of the common theme and because they are deemed the best of their kind and therefore good enough to rival the Greek classics (19.9.10). This chapter, however, differs from the rest of Gellius' critical comparisons in two respects. It is, first of all, set as a contest between a company of Greek youths and Gellius' rhetoric teacher Antonius Julianus, each representing the poetry of one nation, whereas the rest of Gellius' critical comparisons are conducted by a single critic. Secondly, unlike the other cases, in which the qualities of the compared passages are analysed and evaluated, Antonius does not attempt to comment on the poems and is content with

own recasting of them in different words, metre or word order. Found as early as Plat. *Rep.* 3, 392E–394B, this is Demetrius' favourite method of illustration, and is also practised by Cicero (e.g. *Orat.* 214–15), Dionysius (e.g. *Comp.* 4, ii.15f. U.-R.), 'Longinus' (40.3, 43.4), and Hermogenes (e.g. *Id.* 230, 250, 301, 326 Rabe), though vehemently rejected by Philodemus of Gadara; see N. A. Greenberg, 'Metathesis as an Instrument in the Criticism of Poetry', *TAPhA* 89 (1958), 262–70. For the Hellenistic controversy between rhetoricians who illustrate their propositions by citing from well known authors and those in favour of inventing their own examples, see *ad Her.* 4.1–10 and H. Caplan's note in the Loeb ed. (London & Cambridge, MA, 1954), pp. 242–3 note c. Gellius attributes a similar method of illustrating the euphonic qualities of literary passages to Probus (Gel. 13.21 passim; cf. 6.20.2, 6).

²⁹ It is tempting to speculate on the possibility that Hellenistic inquiries such as the *περὶ τῶν παρ' Εὐριπίδῃ καὶ Σοφοκλεῖ* of Heracleides of Pontus (fr. 180 Wehrli VII) were similarly formed. For the form of Dio's *synkrisis*, see Maria T. Luzzatto, *Tragedia greca e cultura ellenistica: l'Or. LII di Dione di Prusa* (Bologna, 1983), pp. 29–37. Her emphasis on the deviation of Dio's 'triadic' comparison from the regular rhetorical practice of comparing only two authors at a time seems to ignore Gellius' 'locorum conlatio' of three orators in 10.3, on which see *infra*.

citing the Latin epigrams alone, to which Gellius adds the short observation that they are second to none in gracefulness and polish. Rather than the rhetorical practice of analysing the styles of authors by comparing passages from their works, this chapter seems, therefore, to follow the tradition of *certamina*, represented, for instance, in the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi*, the poetic contests staged in bucolic poetry, and in Horace's competition of jokers (*S.* 1.7), as well as in the agon of Aristophanes' *Frogs* (a play much favoured by Gellius), with all of which it shares the agonistic setting and (Aristophanes apart) the lack of critical discussion.³⁰

The criteria and terminology employed in Gellius' more detailed evaluations are of the type common in rhetorical discourse (e.g. 'brevitas', 'venustas', 'mundities', 10.3.4; 'sub oculos subiectio', 10.3.7; 'verbisque est brevibus et rotundis vinctum', 16.1.1), and the three orators chosen for discussion in 10.3 are standard examples often contrasted in stylistic discussions.³¹ Together with Fronto's comparison of *prohoemia* these chapters might, therefore, indicate the ubiquity of comparative criticism in second-century rhetorical discourse. Gellius could have acquired the technique in the course of his formal rhetorical studies, through his association with Fronto, or from the conversations of other eminent men of letters which he liked to attend.³² There is no telling whether the fact that these instances are the earliest evidence of the employment of this type of comparative criticism of passages in the Roman world is the result of a revival of Dionysius' example, or more generally Augustan critical methods, or whether such comparisons were continuously practised in Roman rhetorical schools and only fortune's whim is to blame for our lack of earlier evidence.

III. COMPARISONS OF IMITATIONS AND THEIR MODELS BY RHETORICIANS

The last two generations of the first century B.C. also witnessed the prevalence of the doctrine of *imitatio* in Roman rhetoric³³ and, like many other elements of ancient rhetorical theory, the rules and precepts of this doctrine, originally designed for those engaged in the creation of literary compositions, also came to be employed as evaluative criteria in the criticism of already published literary works. While warmly recommending imitation of renowned authors as an exercise for improving one's eloquence, rhetoricians often emphasize that such compositions should not be mechanically executed resulting in slavish reproduction of the original, but should exhibit autonomous merit and attempt to rival their models. When employed in

³⁰ See note 9 supra. The comparison of 'best passages' rather than of passages sharing a common theme is typical of *certamina*, which are more concerned with the result of the competition than with the process and criteria of evaluation; cf. *Certamen* 321.

³¹ E.g. Tac. *Dial.* 18.2-4; Plin. *Ep.* 1.20.4; Fro. *Eloq.* 1.2, 2.12, pp. 134.3-4, 140.10-11 v.d.Hout²; Apul. *Apol.* 95.

³² Gellius studied with two rhetors: T. Castricius (esp. 11.13, 13.22.1) who reveals some familiarity with C. Gracchus (11.13) and Antonius Iulianus (1.4.8, 9.15, 18.5.1, 19.9.2). He also attended some kind of extracurricular conversations with didactic intent held by Fronto (19.8.1, 16).

³³ See E. Stemplinger, *Das Plagiat in der griechischen Literatur* (Leipzig & Berlin, 1912), pp. 121-58; W. Kroll, *RE Suppl.* VII, pp. 1113-16, s.v. 'Rhetoric' 35; J. F. D'Alton, *Roman Literary Theory and Criticism* (London, 1931), pp. 426-32; J. Bompaire, *Lucien écrivain: imitation et création* (Paris, 1958), pp. 59-121; A. Reiff, *Interpretatio, Imitatio, Aemulatio: Begriff und Vorstellung literarischer Abhängigkeit bei den Römern* (diss., Köln, 1959); D. A. Russell, 'De Imitatione', in D. West & T. Woodman (eds.), *Creative Imitation and Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 1-16.

literary criticism, these precepts result in an evaluative procedure in which the autonomous values of both imitation and model are judged and weighed against each other, thus allowing for the possibility of either one to be found inferior, equal or superior to the other, regardless of the dependence of one of the two texts on the other. Furthermore, although the rhetorical doctrine of *imitatio* deals with both the reproduction of subject-matter and the assimilation of the formal aspects of the model (such as generic conventions or stylistic qualities), the application of its precepts to the criticism of passages is normally confined to those in which a theme of the model is rehandled by a subsequent writer. We are, therefore, not to expect any methodological difference between comparisons of imitations and their models and those of two unrelated formulations of similar ideas, discussed in Section II.

The earliest record of such a comparison of which I am aware is again in Agatharchides' treatise, where, among numerous comparisons of passages from Hegesias with the handling of similar topics by others, the critic juxtaposes a figure from Hegesias' description of the sack of Thebes with a similar formulation by Demosthenes. Only this time he also remarks that Demosthenes was the source from which Hegesias transposed the figure and altered it for the worse (οὗ τὴν γλώσσην οὗτος ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον μετέθηκε, ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 250, 446b27). And Agatharchides' awareness of the dependence of one formulation on the other does not modify his evaluation of these passages in any way, and his criticism here is conducted in the same way as the rest of his comparisons of segments from this author's works with those from the works of others.

Although this evidence antedates the great boom in discussions of *imitatio* in rhetorical theory, the critical practice it reveals does not differ substantially from that employed in later criticism, at times by the very preceptors of this doctrine. Thus, when the author of the treatise *περὶ Ὑψους* confronts the Homeric simile of a ship under the assault of waves (*Od.* 15.624–8) with its adaptation into a description of the perils of storm in Aratus (*Phaen.* 299), his criticism is conducted in exactly the same manner as a comparison of the same Homeric verses with a passage attributed to the *Arimaspea*³⁴ in the previous paragraph, where no relation of derivation is assumed: just as Aratus' verse is judged 'elegant rather than terrible', those from the *Arimaspea* are deemed 'more flowery than fearful' ('Long.' 10.5–6). Similarly, in 16.3 'Longinus' seems to dismiss Demosthenes' reported dependence on Eupolis as unimportant, and strongly emphasizes the superiority of the orator's employment of the oath by the heroes of Marathon in *de Cor.* 208. This is also the case in two other comparisons of this sort in the treatise (4.4–5, 15.5–6), where the author notes the dependence of one passage on the other, but this does not modify his evaluative procedure in any way.³⁵

³⁴ Probably not from the eighth-century B.C. poem by Aristaeus of Proconnesus; see D. A. Russell's commentary (Oxford, 1964), p. 103. Aratus' imitation of the passage is also mentioned in Schol. (Bt) *Il.* 15.628 and pseudo-Plut. *Life and Work of Homer* 160, but, as often in ancient literary exegesis, the commentators are content with the bare mention of the borrowing, without attempting any judgement of the passages; for this type of observation on literary dependence: Stempler (n. 33), pp. 6–12, 27–31.

³⁵ For these comparisons of 'Longinus', and especially for his judgement of the Aeschylean and Euripidean lines in 15.5–6, see Russell, in *Creative Imitation* (n. 33), pp. 13–14. The elusive Demetrius, already working under some kind of theoretical distinction between discreditable *μετάθεσις* (cf. the similar use of *μετατίθημι* by Agatharchides, ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 250.21, 446b28), and permissible *μίμησις*, in which the borrowed material is tinged with the imitator's own personal style and altered to suit a new context (*Eloc.* 112–14), illustrates the latter by bringing together Homer's use of the epithet *περίρρητος* to describe the vastness of Crete (*Od.* 19.172–3), and the adoption of the same epithet by Thucydides, to emphasize the unity of Sicily (Thuc.

Since Roman rhetorical theory does not distinguish between inter- and intra-lingual imitations, evaluations of Latin adaptations from Greek originals do not differ from the critical methods employed when both model and imitation are in the same language. Thus Cicero, discussing Pacuvius' depiction of the wounded Ulysses in his *Niptra* (v. 256–8 Ribbeck³), judges it better than its Sophoclean model, in which the hero tearfully laments his pain in too unmanly a manner (*Tusc.* 2.48–9). Varro is credited with a comparison between the beginning of Terence's *Adelphoe* and its Menandrian original, and he too is said to have preferred the Latin adaptation to the Greek source (Suet. *Vita Ter.* 3). And though the elder Seneca sometimes doubts the potential of rhetorical exercises of imitation to equal their originals (*Con.* 1.pr.6; cf. Quint. *Inst.* 10.2.11), this does not seem to have influenced his judgement of literary imitations. Of five critical comparisons between passages considered to be imitations with their models in the extant parts of his work, imitations are ranked superior to their models in four: Julius Montanus is reported to have found Vergil's representation of the quiet of night in *Aen.* 8.26–7 better than its supposed source in Varro Atacinus' translation of the *Argonautica* (*Con.* 7.1.27); the poet is also said to have improved on Dorion's adaptations from Homer (*Suas.* 1.12) and on the celebrated appellation of Hector 'belli mora' in a passage from book 11 of the *Aeneid* (*Suas.* 2.20; *Aen.* 11.288–90); and Sallust is deemed to have outdone his model, which Seneca believes to be by Thucydides, in the very virtue of conciseness for which that historian is renowned (*Con.* 9.1.13).³⁶ Only an attempt by the declaimer Arellius Fuscus to adopt a Vergilian figure is said to have fallen short of its original (*Suas.* 3.5). Nearly four centuries later Macrobius collects numerous examples for three classes of Vergilian adaptations from Homer, those in which the poet's imitations surpass their originals, those in which they equal them, and those in which they are inferior (*Sat.* 5.11, 12, 13 respectively).³⁷

IV. GELLIUS' COMPARISONS OF IMITATIONS AND THEIR MODELS: *SYNKRISIS* AND THE EXAMINATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

Gellius dedicates six chapters of his miscellany to criticism of imitations, in which eleven passages are compared with their putative models; in all these cases the passages considered imitations come from Latin literature and their models from the

4.64.3). But Demetrius merely asserts the independent merit of the Thucydidean borrowing and points to the different significance of the epithet in both places, without attempting a critical comparison of the passages. The irrelevance of the exact relation between the passages to their evaluation is particularly notable in Porphyry's remark on two contemporary authors: καὶ ὅτι μὲν ὁ ἕτερος παρὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου μετέθηκε πρόδηλον... ἀδήλον δὲ ὄντος ὀπότερος ἄγαμαι μὲν Δημοσθένην, εἰ λαβὼν παρὰ Ὑπερείδου πρὸς δέον διώρθωσε. μέμφομαι δὲ τὸν Ὑπερείδην, εἰ λαβὼν παρὰ Δημοσθένους πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον διέστρεψε. (Porph. ap. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 10.3.15, 466A–B). For other evaluative comparisons of imitations and their models see Hermog. *Id.* 252, 253 Rabe; Porph. ap. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 10.3.10–11, 465B–C.

³⁶ The passage is in fact taken from Ps. Demosth. in *Ep. Phil.* 13, a work not noted for its conciseness. But although this may dull the point of Seneca's criticism, for the purpose of this study his critical observations should be investigated according to the critic's own assumptions, without regard to their accuracy. The same also applies to the discussion in *Con.* 7.1.27, in which Varro Atacinus is probably not at all the model of Vergil in these lines (though the original lines of Apollonius might have been), and to the assumption that Vergil's depiction of Etna (*Aen.* 3.570–77) is modelled on Pindar *Pyth.* 1.21–6 rather than on Lucretius 6.639–702 or on Vergil's own *G.* 2.308–9 (Gel. 17.10).

³⁷ See also *Sat.* 5.17.5–6, 6.3.4 for cases in which Vergil is deemed superior to his models (Apollonius and Ennius), and 5.3.2, 5.15, 5.17.7–14 (almost a verbatim citation of Gel. 17.10) for cases in which he is judged inferior.

Greek. In the *lemma* of ch. 2.23 he calls his detailed confrontation of passages from Menander's and Caecilius' versions of the *Plocium* 'consultatio diiudicatioque locorum', and the similar formulation 'conlata... carmina et diiudicata' is found in the heading of the comparison between the descriptions of Mt. Etna in Book 3 of the *Aeneid* and in the second strophe of Pindar, *Pyth.* 1 (17.10). Though *iudicare* and *iudicatio* are among the most common terms in Roman literary criticism, *diiudicatio* is not recorded in such a context elsewhere. It does, however, seem to translate the Greek term *σύγκρισις*, employed, as we have seen, since the Hellenistic age to denote comparative literary evaluations, whether of specific passages or, more generally, of the characteristic qualities of two authors. The Latin 'diiudicatio' is common in legal discourse, and it is quite possible that instead of coining the non-existent *coniudicatio*, Gellius preferred to adopt a synonymous term, with which he was familiar through his judicial career, in his literary discussions. The coupling of the term in both its occurrences with words prefixed by 'con-' ('consultatio diiudicatioque' in 2.23 and 'conlata... et diiudicata' in 17.10) could be meant as a sort of compensation for the replacement of the conjunctive prefix *syn-* by a disjunctive one. Elsewhere, in a caption to a comparison of passages which he does not suspect of deriving one from the other, he uses the words 'locorum quorundam inlustrium conlatio contentioque' (10.3.cap.), a formulation which also seems to point to the critical procedure in which a comparison of two literary pieces serves to decide their respective value and to rank them accordingly.

Yet, although Gellius' designation of these chapters seems to be in accord with the type of syncritic criticism we have hitherto examined, the results of his critical comparisons of imitations and their models are far less well-proportioned than those reached by Cicero, Seneca, 'Longinus' or Macrobius (see the table below, p. 504). Out of eleven instances of such comparative evaluations only once does he come near to asserting the superiority of an imitation over its model. In seven other cases the imitation is ranked inferior, and even among the remaining three comparisons, in which the passages are judged of equal merit, this estimation is twice expressed with reservations: Vergil's imitation of Theocr. *Id.* 3.3–5 in *Ecl.* 9.23–5 is found satisfactory, except for the rendering of *ἐνόρχης* by 'caper' (9.9.9–10);³⁸ and Ennius' adaptation of verses 293–5 of Euripides' *Hecuba* (v. 199–201 Vahlen³) is judged well executed as a whole, but again not entirely accurate (11.4.4).

How are we to account for the divergence of the results of Gellius' critical comparisons from those of both his predecessors and his successors? Does it derive from a loss of confidence in the possibility of imitations to rival their originals or, what amounts to much the same thing, from the interference of some other prejudice in the process of his evaluation, such as a blind preference for the ancient over the more recent or for Greek over Latin literature?³⁹ The matter becomes even more complex once we contrast Gellius' value judgements in his detailed literary discussions with cases in which he incidentally remarks on the value of imitations while discoursing on a completely different topic. In two such incidental remarks the imitation is said to have improved on its original: in a discourse on the duration of women's pregnancy (3.16.3–5), Caecilius' version of the *Plocium* is praised for not neglecting to mention the possibility of eight-month parturition (v. 164–5 Ribbeck³), which was not mentioned by Menander (fr. 343 Koerte); and while preaching on the

³⁸ On which see L. Gamberale, *La traduzione in Gellio* (Rome, 1969), p. 111 n. 98.

³⁹ For doubts as to the potential of imitations to equal their models, see Sen. *Con.* 1.pr.6; Quint. *Inst.* 10.2.9–11; and for an attribution of the *a priori* inferiority of Latin imitations of Greek originals to the *egestas verborum* of the Romans' language, Plin. *Ep.* 4.18.1.

Table 1. *Ancient critics' ranking of the relative value of literary imitations in comparison with their models*

Critic	Model and imitation	Value of imitation	Order of citation
Agatharch. ap. Phot.	Demosthenes → Hegesias	-	imit.-mod.
'Long.' 4.4-5	Xenophon → Timaeus	-	mod.-imit.
'Long.' 10.5-6	Homer → Aratus	-	mod.-imit.
'Long.' 15.5-6	Aeschyl. → Eurip.	-	mod.-imit.
'Long.' 16.3	Philemon → Demosth.	+	imit.-mod.
Cic. <i>Tusc.</i> 2.48-9	Sophocles → Pacuvius	+	
Varro ap. Suet.	Menander → Terence	+	
Sen. <i>Con.</i> 7.1.27	Var. At. → Vergil	+	imit.-mod.
Sen. <i>Con.</i> 9.1.13	'Thucyd.' → Sallust	+	mod. imit.
Sen. <i>Suas.</i> 1.12	Dorion → Vergil	(2 ×) +	mod.-imit.
Sen. <i>Suas.</i> 2.20	'celebre dictum' → Verg.	+	mod. imit.
Sen. <i>Suas.</i> 3.5	Vergil → Arellius Fuscus	-	imit. mod.
Gel. 2.23	Menander → Caecilius	(3 ×) -	mod.-imit.
Gel. 2.27	Demosth. → Sallust	-	mod.-imit.
Gel. 9.9.5-6	Theocr. → Vergil	= / +	mod.-imit.
Gel. 9.9.7-11	Theocr. → Vergil	= (-)	mod.-imit.
Gel. 9.9.12ff.	Homer → Vergil	-	mod.-imit.
Gel. 11.4	Euripides → Ennius	= (-)	mod.-imit.
Gel. 13.27	Parthenius → Vergil	=	mod.-imit.
Gel. 13.27	Homer → Vergil	-	mod.-imit.
Gel. 17.10	Pindar → Vergil	-	mod.-imit.
[Gel. 3.16.3-5	Menander → Caecilius	+	mod.-imit.]
[Gel. 12.1.20	Homer → Vergil	+	mod.-imit.]
Macr. <i>Sat.</i> 5.11	Greek poetry → Vergil	(9 ×) +	mod.-imit.
Macr. <i>Sat.</i> 5.12	Greek poetry → Vergil	(9 ×) =	mod.-imit.
Macr. <i>Sat.</i> 5.13	Greek poetry → Vergil	(23 ×) -	(9 ×) mod.-imit. (14 ×) imit.-mod.

importance of feeding babies with maternal milk rather than with that of nurses, Gellius' Favorinus praises Vergil for adding the line 'Hyrcaenaeque admorunt ubera tigris' (*Aen.* 4.367) to the parallel Homeric passage in which parentage alone is held responsible for Achilles' savagery (*Il.* 16.33-5), thus emphasizing the role of the milk on which a baby is nurtured in the formation of his character (12.1.20). Whatever prejudice is assumed to intervene in Gellius' appreciation of imitations, it appears, therefore, to be operative only while he is involved in a systematic analysis of imitations, and not to influence his judgement when not engaged in literary discussion.

Another explanation for Gellius' apparent partiality to originals could be that his comparisons of imitations and their models do not consist of an evaluation of the independent merit of each of the two passages, but rather of an examination of their degree of correspondence to each other. Though also called *comparison*, this evaluative technique is completely different from syncritic evaluation, as it involves judgement of only one of the passages, the imitation, and can therefore never find it superior to its model. Furthermore, unlike a *synkrisis*, comparisons intent on an examination of correspondence have a determined direction: it is always the imitation (or 'translation') which is required to correspond to the original and not the other way round. And finally, the quality of similitude between the passages, which determines value in such a procedure, is altogether irrelevant to syncritic evaluation, in which the respective value of the passages is judged by external criteria. To borrow

an old Aristophanic metaphor, in a syncritic comparison, imitations and their models may be said to be judged by means of scales, whereas in examinations of correspondence, one passage is applied as the yardstick (or, as a Greek would call it, a *κανών*) for judging the other.⁴⁰

L. Gamberale, who studied Gellius' criticism of literary imitations in detail, has indeed observed the frequent occurrence of the criterion of deviation from the original in these comparisons (characteristically marked by terms such as 'mutare', 'omittere' or 'praetermittere'), and pointing to the occurrence of similar terminology and value standards in Gellius' remarks on his own translations, concluded that he assimilates evaluative criteria from school exercises in translation to his criticism of literary imitations.⁴¹

But are we, therefore, to assume that Gellius departs from the traditional evaluative procedure and criteria Roman critics employ in their examinations of literary translations or imitations? Both in the six chapters devoted to literary imitations and throughout his work, Gellius employs the terms *imitari* and *aemulari*, characteristic of rhetorical discussions of literary imitation, side by side with less specific terminology such as (*con*)*vertere*, *sequi* and even *interpretari*.⁴² On the other hand, a theoretical formulation of the principles of literary imitation which introduces one of his discussions of Vergilian borrowings does indeed seem to establish a set of evaluative criteria which deviates from that traditionally prescribed by the doctrine of *imitatio* (9.9.1-3):

When striking ideas in Greek poetry have to be translated and imitated, they say that we should not always strive to render every single word in the same manner in which it is expressed in the original. Many things lose their charm if they are transferred too forcibly, as if unwilling and reluctant. Vergil, therefore, showed skill and good judgement in not translating some parts and rendering others, when reproducing passages of Homer, Hesiod, Apollonius, Parthenius, Callimachus, Theocritus and some others.

These principles are represented as common doctrine ('aiunt'). But though they show some resemblance to the familiar Roman objection to close verbatim translations (esp. 'Cic.' *Opt. Gen.* 14; Hor. *Ars* 133-4; Sen. *Ep.* 80.1; Quint. *Inst.* 10.5.5), they differ from the traditional view in that they do not regard divergence from the original as a requirement which furnishes the imitator with the opportunity to exhibit his own

⁴⁰ *Ar. Ra.* 797, 799: καὶ γὰρ τάλαντω μουσικῇ σταθμῆσεται... καὶ κανόνας ἐξοίσουσι καὶ πῆχεις ἐπῶν. For *κανών* in this sense, see e.g. Cic. *Fam.* 16.17.1; D.H. *Lys.* 2, i.9 U.-R., 18, i.29 U.-R.; *Pomp.* 3, ii.239 U.-R.; Phot. *Bibl.* 61, 20b.25 and, for similar employment regarding the plastic arts, Plin. *N.H.* 34.55. See further H. Oppel, 'κανών: zur Bedeutungsgeschichte des Wortes und seiner lateinischen Entsprechungen (regula-norma)', *Philologus* Suppl. 30.4 (1937), 43-50; Pfeiffer (n. 13), i.207.

⁴¹ Gamberale (n. 38), esp. pp. 168-72 but also 43, 62-3, 94-5 and n. 69, 108 n. 93; see also R. Marache, *La critique littéraire de langue latine et le développement du goût archaïsant au IIe siècle de notre ère* (Rennes, 1952), pp. 305-8; Reiff (n. 33), pp. 101-2; L. Holford-Strevens *Aulus Gellius* (London, 1988), pp. 149-50.

⁴² For the terms see H. E. Richter, *Übersetzen und Übersetzungen in der römischen Literatur* (Diss., Erlangen, 1938); Reiff (n. 33), esp. pp. 104-11. The terms *imitatio* and *aemulatio*, as well as the often despised *interpretari*, appear to have lost much of their distinct significance in the course of the first century; see Reiff, *ibid.*; Russell, ad 'Long.' 13.2; Gamberale (n. 38), pp. 97-9, 119-20. As a critical term, Gellius usually employs *aemulatio* in the sense of 'a successful imitation or translation' ('cum eam tragoediam verteret, non sane incommode aemulatus est', 11.4.3), without the further notion of rivalry (but see 20.17.8 on a translation exercise). His employment of *interpretari* is confined to translations focused on rendering the *meaning* of the original, at times, as often in Cicero (e.g. *N.D.* 2.47; *Fin.* 2.5, 3.35), in reference to the Latin equivalents of single words (5.18.7, 11.16.3, 13.9.4, 17.3.cap. 1, 19.2.2); on which see further Reiff (n. 33), pp. 46-50.

achievement, but rather as a concession to the difficulty (and at times impossibility) of full correspondence to the original. However, terminology and theoretical formulation of the principles of valuation do not necessarily always correspond to the actual evaluative method employed, and it is, therefore, the manner in which Gellius' evaluative comparisons of Greek models and their Latin adaptations are actually conducted that should be examined in order to determine whether he expects imitations to exhibit autonomous merit and rival their model or to reproduce them as faithfully as possible.

The criterion of divergence from the original does indeed serve occasionally in Gellius' critical discussions. The degree of alteration is what most amazes him once he sets out to compare Caecilius' *Plocium* with its original ('di boni... quantum mutare a Menandro Caecilius uisus est', 2.23.7; 'quantum differat', 2.23.8), and in the ensuing discussion the Latin version is twice censured for omissions ('praetermisit' and 'omisit', 2.23.12). Following the theoretical preface of ch. 9.9, which allows for some omission in imitation, two examples from the *Eclogues* are adduced, and Vergil is praised for not rendering parts of their Theocritean original deemed untranslatable: 'reliquisse Vergilium... verti autem neque debuit neque potuit', (9.9.4); 'caute omissum', and 'igitur reliquit' (9.9.7, 9). But Gellius' remark on the first of these 'omissions' is worth noting. Although Vergil's substitution is considered permissible only when full correspondence is impossible, the phrase 'quod substituit pro eo quod omiserat non abest quin iucundius lepidiusque sit' (9.9.5) does seem to maintain (albeit hesitantly) that it surpasses its model in some respect.⁴³ The critical discussion in the second part of this chapter is dedicated to a comparison of the Diana simile of Dido in *Aen.* 1.498ff. with that of Nausicaa in the sixth book of the *Odyssey* (102ff.) which Gellius attributes to Valerius Probus, and is based on a completely different set of criteria (to be discussed infra, p. 507).⁴⁴ The only connection between this discussion and the precepts and criticism at the beginning of the chapter is found in the last of Probus' four censures, where Vergil is criticized for *omitting* the best part of the whole section ('flore ipsius totius loci Vergilium videri omisisse', 9.9.16). But even this remark appears to refer not to the deviation from the original, but rather to the damage impaired to the autonomous value of the Latin version of the simile by the poet's decision not to adorn it with a beautiful verse.

The requirement for close adherence to the original is also reflected in criticism grounded in lack of semantic equivalence. This occurs in a censure of Vergil's rendering of ἐνόρχης by *caper* in *Ecl.* 9.25, a word which, according to Varro, denotes castrated he-goats only (9.9.9–10), and in the criticism of Ennius' use of *ignobiles* and *opulenti* to translate ἀδοξοῦντες and δοκοῦντες in Euripides' *Hecuba* 294–5 (11.4.4). However, in both cases the deviation from the original sense may be said to detract from the independent value of the adaptation: castrated he-goats are less prone to butt, and the claim that the words of the rich carry more weight than those of the obscure may be deemed morally inferior to an assertion of such difference between the generally esteemed and those of ill repute. The same criterion is also evoked in the censure of Vergil's description of Etna where, mistakenly taking 'globos flammaram'

⁴³ For the syntactical structure cf. Cic. *Att.* 11.15.3: 'Prorsus nihil abest quin sim miserrimus'.

⁴⁴ Gel. 9.9 is one of the chapters of the *N.A.* for which it is particularly difficult to adopt J. Kretzschmer's principle 'singula capita, quoad licebit, ad unum auctorem revocanda sunt' (*De A. Gellii fontibus, I. De auctoribus A. Gellii grammaticis* [Diss. Greifswald; Posen, 1860], pp. 6–11), and because of the different critical methods and value concepts employed in sections 12–17 of this chapter, I prefer to follow Holford-Strevens (n. 41), pp. 53–4 in regarding Probus' criticism as a postscript appended to the first part of the chapter because of the similar topic.

to stand for Pindar's κρουνοῦς,⁴⁵ Gellius notes: 'duriter et ἀκύρωσ transtulit' (17.10.15).⁴⁶ And finally, the assumption that Vergil has actually intended to reproduce Pindar's description faithfully is explicitly pronounced in the words 'interpretari volens' a few lines earlier in the same discussion.⁴⁷

Yet only part of Gellius' criticism is based on divergence from the original, and his judgement is often formed by putting both passages to the test of external criteria and deciding their value according to the degree of their meeting a common set of requirements.⁴⁸ Gellius' censure of the *Plocium* of Caecilius is thus based on its falling short of Menander's original in the realistic portrayal of character (2.23.12, 13), in the expression of emotions (2.23.19), and in keeping to the laws of propriety and adjusting diction to both character and genre (2.23.21). Similarly, psychological realism is the common criterion by which both imitation and model are judged in the comparison of Demosthenes and Sallust (2.27.4). Probus' criticism of Vergil's Diana simile in comparison with that of Homer (9.9.12ff.) is based on the degree of correspondence between simile and tenor, on the propriety of Dido's portrayal through the simile, on the inner coherence of elements within the simile itself, and on the quality of the portrayal of emotions. Extravagance and over-ornamentation are the criteria of judgement in 13.27.3 and 17.10.8, 16, and faithfulness to reality and scientific accuracy are evoked in 10.10.11–12, 17–19.

A somewhat more complicated evaluative procedure is that in which the respective value of the two passages is decided on the grounds of a discrimination between the worth of two different virtues, each present in one of the confronted passages only. Thus, Caecilius is criticized for preferring lower types of humour to the more refined *facetiae* of Menander (2.23.11–12),⁴⁹ and for neglecting the virtues of propriety and realistic portrayal of character while striving for this cheap humour ('ridiculus magis quam personae isti, quam tractabat, aptus atque conveniens videri maluit', 2.23.13). Similarly, Vergil is censured for sacrificing his model's accuracy and faithfulness to reality in the description of the erupting Etna, while labouring to find a combination of words which will reproduce the sound of the eruption ('Pindarus veritati magis obsecutus' whereas Vergil 'in strepitu sonituque verborum conquirendo laborat', 17.10.11–12).

These last two critical methods are the basic procedures of syncritic evaluation employed from Hellenistic times on in all comparisons of passages. The technique of judging paired passages by common criteria is the basic procedure in the comparative evaluations of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, where it is at times rather mechanically employed (e.g. *Pomp.* 3, ii.239–40 U.-R.). Cicero evaluates Sophocles' and Pacuvius' descriptions of the wounded Ulysses by putting both to the test of a common moral criterion (Cic. *Tusc.* 2.48–9), and Seneca judges the 'Thucydidean' and Sallustian

⁴⁵ Gellius' text lacking πέτρας in v. 23, he seems to have taken κρουνοῦς from the next sentence as the direct object of φέρεi, hence his blunder in assuming it was rendered by Vergil's 'globos flammaram'. See Holford-Strevens (n. 41), p. 172 n. 50.

⁴⁶ For *transferre* in the sense of 'translate', see Gamberale (n. 38), pp. 110–12, notes 98, 100. For the technical term ἀκύρωσ, see Quint. *Inst.* 8.2.3; cf. Cic. *Fam.* 16.17.1; Gel. 1.22.12 (again in the language of Vergil), 19.7.3; and for later employment J. L. Moore, 'Servius on the Tropes and Figures of Vergil I', *AJPh* 12 (1891), 157–92, at pp. 176–7.

⁴⁷ On *interpretari* see n. 42 above.

⁴⁸ This, as noted already by Dionysius Thrax (p. 83 Uhlig), is often marked by the use of evaluative adjectives in the comparative.

⁴⁹ For the distinction between low types of humour, traditionally associated with mime or the *scurra*, and the more respectable ones, based on *facetiae*, see e.g. Cic. *Off.* 1.104; *De Orat.* 2.239, 244; Hor. *S.* 1.10.6; Quint. *Inst.* 6.3.8, 82; Euanth. 3.5; cf. Arist. *E.N.* 4.8.3, 1128a4ff.; *Tract. Coislin.* 12, 18; and see further D'Alton (n. 33), pp. 358–63; Janko (n. 20), pp. 216–18.

sententiae by the standard of conciseness (*Con.* 9.1.13); whereas the preference of Homer to Aratus in 'Long.' 10.6 is grounded in deeming elegance of style less valuable than the inspiration of fright (*γλαφυρόν ἀντὶ φοβεροῦ*), at least as regards achievement of the sublime. These are also the evaluative procedures which serve Gellius in his comparisons of passages he does not assume to be interrelated in chapters 10.3 and 16.1. But even when imitations and their models are judged by this apparently neutral technique, Gellius' partiality to the original is noticeable. Whenever different virtues are detected in the two passages, the one present in the original is considered of greater (or at most equal) value, and if a common criterion is applied to both, the imitation is never judged superior by it. This partiality for the model is especially striking in ch. 13.27, where Vergil is said to have fallen short of his Homeric model because of his addition of the epithet 'pulcher' and the apostrophic 'tibi', while his decision not to reproduce an unnecessary epithet when imitating Parthenius ranks him only equal to his original and not better. Furthermore, at least in one case the common criterion by which both passages are judged is dictated by the model: in chapter 2.23 Caecilius is required to excel in the very quality of realism traditionally associated with Menander.⁵⁰

Expecting imitations to exhibit the same qualities in which the original excels, and only these, may still be accounted for by assuming that Gellius' judgements are based on a broader notion of the translation, which requires not only full and faithful adherence to the contents of the original, but also the reproduction of all its other qualities, as we nowadays tend to expect of translations. Such a notion of translation (which, it should be noted, does not necessarily have anything to do with a transition from one language to another) is not altogether alien to Roman literary ideas, and to the more Atticist aspects of the doctrine of *imitatio*.⁵¹ Even modernists like the younger Seneca may at times find it opportune to express such ideas, for example when flattering Claudius' *a studiis* Polybius, who produced a prose translation of Homer in Latin and of Vergil in Greek. Addressing him Seneca says (*Dial.* 11.11.5): 'sic enim illa ex alia lingua in aliam transtulisti, ut, quod difficillimum erat, omnes virtutes in alienam te orationem secutae sint.'⁵² Gellius himself says, in reference to his own translation of a passage from Plato, that it was motivated by a desire to reproduce the *elegance* of the Greek in Latin words (17.20.7) and, as shown by S. M. Beall, many of his translations do indeed reveal an effort to follow the metrical pattern and other stylistic characteristics of their originals.⁵³ But even if we assume that this broader notion of translation governs Gellius' evaluations of passages from the works of renowned authors of the past as well, it is clear that in the critical comparison of Vergil with Parthenius (13.27.2), the Latin poet is expected to depart from his model and not to reproduce its faults, an expectation which also governs

⁵⁰ For ancient acclamation of Menander's realism, especially in the portrayal of characters, see Ar.Byz. apud Syrian. In *Hermog.* ii.23.8–11 Rabe; Man. 5.474–5; D.Chr. *Or.* 18.7; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.69; *Hermog.* *Id.* 323.22ff. Rabe.

⁵¹ Especially in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, but also among the Neo-Atticists of the Second Sophistic, e.g. Lucian, *Rh.Pr.* 9. The expectation that imitations should reproduce the most characteristic virtue of their original might be related to a typically Roman aspect of the idea of *imitatio*, which regards rivalling a Greek model in the very field of its excellence the utmost achievement of *aemulatio*; see, for example, Seneca's above-mentioned comparison of Sallust's *brevitas* with that of 'Thucydides' (*Con.* 9.1.13), and further in Reiff (n. 33), pp. 77–82.

⁵² In spite of the rejection of verbatim translation of the speeches of Demosthenes and Aeschines in *Opt. Gen.* 14, the aim that the author sets for himself in this treatise is also to reproduce all the (essential) virtues of his originals (23).

⁵³ S. M. Beall, *Civilis eruditio: Style and Contents in the 'Attic Nights' of Aulus Gellius* (Diss., Berkeley, 1988), pp. 151–208.

Favorinus' censure of the poet's failing to avoid the stylistic extravagance of Pindar in chapter 17.10. This appears again to be more in accord with the traditional doctrine of *imitatio*, which often emphasizes the need for a thorough understanding of all the qualities of the original in order to avoid imitating its faults rather than its merits.⁵⁴

What we have, then, in Gellius' critical comparisons of literary imitations and their models is a mixture of two logically incompatible conceptual frameworks of evaluation, the one requiring equivalence with the original, the other autonomous merit. Neither is new among Roman literary ideas, and both are represented in different aspects of the rhetorical doctrine of *imitatio* as well. Yet in Gellius' evaluations these two contradictory standards are closely mixed and often employed together in the same evaluative discussion. In judging these passages Gellius adopts an evaluative procedure which, though he sometimes calls it 'diuidicatio', consists, in fact, of a comparison of imitations to their model, rather than a true syncritic comparison of their respective merits. This unilateral examination of correspondence seems also to be reflected in the order in which he cites the passages: as the last column in the table on p. 504 reveals, he constantly cites the model before the imitation, whereas other critics vary the order of citation. In other words, without abandoning the concepts of value embedded in the doctrine of *imitatio* and *aemulatio*, Gellius uses an evaluative procedure which does not suit this conceptual framework, but is rather in accord with a notion of 'translation'.⁵⁵ Calling such an evaluative procedure *diuidicatio* indicates how little he is aware of the difference between true *synkriseis* and the type of unilateral examination of correspondence which predetermines his judgements. This also explains his surprise at the change in his appreciation of Latin comedies once they are compared to their Greek originals in such a manner (2.23.1-4).⁵⁶ On the other hand, when not engaged in a systematic critical discussion, Gellius is capable of judging imitations differently, as revealed in the two incidental remarks where imitations are said to have improved on their originals. Therefore, though prejudices and partiality to Greek or ancient literature may well have something to do with his appreciation of literary imitations, these factors seem to become operative via the evaluative procedure he routinely employs when engaged in systematic literary discussions, and not to influence his evaluations unless triggered by the undertaking of such a critical procedure.

V. COMPARISONS OF LITERARY IMITATIONS AND THEIR MODELS BY THE GRAMMARIANS

What is still left to investigate is how such an evaluative procedure came to be employed in Gellius' critical discussions of literary imitations, and whence this impossible mixture of contrary standards of value. We possess Gellius' own evidence on the origins of some of his comparative discussions. The comparison of Demosthenes and Sallust he ascribes to his rhetoric teacher, T. Castricius (2.27.cap., 3) and this accords with the purely syncritic character of this discussion, which, as

⁵⁴ E.g. Cic. *de Orat.* 2.90-1; Hor. *Ep.* 1.19.15-16; D.H. *Vet.Orat.*, praef. 4, i.6.23-4 U.-R.; Sen. *Ep.* 114.17.

⁵⁵ Such a unilateral examination of correspondence would also explain Gellius' apparent blindness to the fact that some of the alterations he censures are necessitated by the different function an 'imitation' comes to serve in its new context, as often noted by modern critics. See, for example, the observations on Probus' criticism of *Aen.* 1.498ff. in the commentaries of R. G. Austin (Oxford, 1971), p. 167 and R. D. Williams (London and New York, 1972), p. 199, and in Marache (n. 41), p. 307.

⁵⁶ For the ability of comparisons to modify judgements cf. D.H. *Pomp.* 1, ii.223 U.-R.

shown in Section III, characterizes the rhetoricians' approach to literary imitations. There seems to be no reason to doubt the attribution of the discussion of the Diana similes to the grammarian Valerius Probus. But Gellius' ascription of the comparison of Pindar's and Vergil's descriptions of Etna (in ch. 17.10) to Favorinus has often been questioned, and many have preferred to ascribe it to a Roman grammarian, such as Hyginus or Probus because of its critical method. L. Holford-Strevens believes Favorinus may be credited at least with pointing to the putative dependence of the Vergilian *locus* on Pindar.⁵⁷ But the detailed comparison may well be Gellius' own.

Grammarians were engaged in comparisons of imitations with their models both as part of their instruction of literary works and in their exegetical writings.⁵⁸ There is no telling whether the collection of Vergil's *furta* by Perellius Faustus and the eight volumes of *ὁμοιότητες* by Octavius Avitus, recorded by Donatus in the *Vita Vergilii* (44–5), included any evaluative discussion or merely enumerated borrowings and their sources, as is often the case in Greek collections of literary parallels,⁵⁹ and in much of Macrobius' examples in Books 5 and 6 of the *Saturnalia*. Some discussion certainly formed part of Asconius' replies to Vergil's *obtretractores* (*Vita Verg.* 46), and the many instances in which Servius and other late scholiasts refer to earlier censure of Vergil's imitations may probably be taken as evidence of the inclusion of such comparisons in the intensive grammatical exegesis of poetry in the first two centuries A.D.⁶⁰

The remarks on imitations found in the extant Roman scholia may be classified into three general types, as follows:

I. Non-evaluative observation in which the source of a borrowing or a deviation from an original is merely mentioned, such as Servius' remark on one of the passages discussed by Gellius in ch. 9.9 (*Serv. Ecl.* 9.23): 'Theocriti sunt versus, verbum ad verbum translati'.⁶¹

II. Various kinds of critical remarks based on the requirement for correspondence to the model (or replies to such criticism found in former commentators), such as (a) criticism of mistranslation or of misunderstanding the original,⁶² or (b) censures of deviation from the

⁵⁷ Holford-Strevens (n. 41), p. 89, and pp. 53–4 for the possible attribution of ch. 13.27 to Probus. It is perhaps significant that Favorinus had some familiarity with the teachings of Probus (*Gel.* 3.1.6). H. Nettleship assumed that at least some of Gellius' discussions of translation had been taken from 'a manual in which the whole question of translation was discussed', which he believes to be Octavius Avitus' *ὁμοιότητες* ('The Noctes Atticae of Aulus Gellius', *AJPh* 4 [1883], 391–415, at p. 404), but see Gamberale (n. 38), pp. 55–9.

⁵⁸ Sidonius Apollinaris testifies to the employment of this practice in the instruction of Latin *Palliat* (*Ep.* 4.12.1–2) and Juvenal ridicules the use of such learned comparisons by the undeservedly educated (i.e. women) to parade erudition at dinner parties (6.436–8); cf. Macrobius 6.2.4, 15. For similar comparisons in the Latin scholia, see H. Georgii, *Die antike Äneiskritik aus den Scholien und anderen Quellen hergestellt* (Stuttgart, 1891), p. 562; P. Rabbow, 'De Donati commento in Terentium specimen observationum primum', *NJPhP* 155 (1897), 305–42, at pp. 314–20; H. Nettleship, 'On Some of the Early Criticisms of Virgil's Poetry', in J. Conington and H. Nettleship (eds.), *Vergil, Opera*⁵ (London, 1898), pp. xxix–l.

⁵⁹ For which see Stemplinger (n. 33), pp. 33–80.

⁶⁰ For Servius' replies to this type of criticism, see Georgii (n. 58), pp. 49–50, 102 and the index, p. 562; idem, 'Die antike Vergilkritik in den Bukolika u. Georgika', *Philologus* Suppl. 9 (1907), 209–328, at pp. 313, 315.

⁶¹ Cf. Porphyrio ad Hor. *S.* 1.5.1, 87–8, 2.1.30; *Ep.* 1.1.45; *C.* 1.15; Don. *An.* 204, 483, 592, 801; *Eu.* 46; *Hec.* 58; *Serv. Ecl.* 5.32; *Aen.* (SD) 1.198, 4.1, 10.361, 11.483, (SD) 12.176; and for notes on divergence from the original: Don. *An.* 977; *Ph.* 339; *Ad.* 351; cf. *Schol.* (A) *Il.* 2.670, 3.371, 9.70, 22.351. See further E. Fraenkel, 'Zur römischen Komödie', *MH* 25 (1968), 231–42, at pp. 239–42.

⁶² E.g. Don. *Eun.* 689: 'colore mustellino: erravit Terentius non intellegens Menandricum illud αὐτός ἐστιν γαλεώτης γέρων [fr. 163 Koerte]. ait autem *stellionem*, quod animal lacertae non dissimile est maculoso corio; namque ad id genus facies exprimitur eunuchorum corporis,

original;⁶³ and (c) explanations of such deviations as necessitated by the new context in which the imitation is set.⁶⁴ or even (d) explanations of difficulties and apparent defects in the work by tracing them back to the original.⁶⁵

III. Value judgements based on syncritic comparisons of imitations with their models, in which both are judged by the same criterion, and each may be found superior or inferior to the other.⁶⁶

The fact that all three types are represented both in the Vergilian scholia and in the observations of Donatus on Terence's comedies seems to indicate that Gellius was not alone in disregarding the difference between the relation of entire Latin *fabulae* to their Greek originals and that of isolated *loci* in histories or epic poems to theirs.⁶⁷ It is, however, worth noting that the second class of observations, i.e. those which presuppose correspondence between imitation and model, are altogether absent from the considerations of Vergil's adaptations from Greek literature in the fifth book of Macrobius' *Saturnalia* (except for *Sat.* 5.17.12 in which he is citing Gel. 17.10.14–15). Macrobius' discussion depends partly on Gellius, perhaps also on Servius, and probably on many other sources as well, and may be taken to represent ideas and methods common in a large range of exegetical works. Eustathius, the speaker of this part of the *Saturnalia*, specifically mentions Annaeus Cornutus and Valerius Probus among former scholars who were involved in the search for the sources of Vergil's ideas and formulations (*Sat.* 5.19.2, 5.22.9; cf. 5.22.12). The earliest datable evidence for an exegetical note in which Vergilian imitations are regarded as faithful reproductions of their originals (type II d) is found in a reply of Velius Longus to a censure of Vergil by Annaeus Cornutus: 'adnotat Cornutus, quod indecenter sacram matri suae avem sagittis figendam constituerit. sed videlicet Homerum secutus est...' (*Schol. Veron. Aen.* 5.488).⁶⁸ Aemilius Asper, on the other hand, is already

quia plerique lentiginosi sunt. hic ergo erravit ideo, quia γαλή *mustella* dicitur, γαλεώτης *stellio*'. Cf. *Schol.* (A) *Il.* 4.439–40.

⁶³ E.g. Don. *Hec.* 440: 'imperite Terentium de Myconio *crispum* dixisse aiunt, cum Apollodorus *calvum* dixerit (fr. 12 *CAF* iii.284), quod proprium Myconiis est'. Cf. Serv. *Aen.* 3.623.

⁶⁴ E.g. Don. *Phor.* 91: 'Apollodorus tonsorem ipsum nuntium facit, qui dicat se nuper puellae comam ob luctum abstulisse [fr. 16 *CAF* iii.285], quod scilicet mutasse Terentium, ne externis moribus spectatorem Romanum offenderet'.

⁶⁵ E.g. Serv. *Ecl.* 2.25: 'nuper me in litore vidi: negatur hoc per rerum naturam posse fieri; sed Theocritum secutus est, qui hoc dicit de Cyclope (*Id.* 6.35)'. Cf. Serv. *Aen.* 5.517, 12.725.

⁶⁶ For an example in which Vergil is said to have improved on his Latin original, see Serv. *Aen.* 9.503: 'at tuba terribile sonitum: hemistichium Ennii. nam sequentia iste mutavit. ille enim ad exprimendum tubae sonum ait *taratantara dixit* [v. 140 Vahlen⁹ = 451 Skutsch]. et multa huius modi Vergilius, cum aspera invenerit, mutat. bene tamen hic electis verbis imitatur sonum tubarum'. Cf. Don. *An.* 301, 891; *Eu.* 539 (but see Fraenkel, *MH* 25 [1968], 239–42); *Hec.* 825; *Ad.* 81, 938; Serv. *Ecl.* 2.23, 2.51, 3.8; *Aen.* 2.7, (Serv.D.) 9.267; 9.801. For cases in which the imitation is found inferior: Serv.D. *Aen.* 1.92: 'reprehenditur sane hoc loco Vergilius quod improprie hos versus Homeri transtulerit [*Od.* 5.297–8]... nam *solvuntur frigore membra* longe aliud est quam *λύτο γούνατα*, et *duplices tendens ad sidera palmas talia voce refert* molle, cum illud magis altum et heroicae personae *πρὸς ὄν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν*. praeterea quis interdiu manus ad sidera tollit, aut quis ad caelum manum tendens non aliud precatur potius quam dicit *o terque quaterque beati*? et ille intra se, ne exaudiant socii et timidiores despondeant animo; hic vero vociferatur.' (cf. Don. *Eu.* 1001; Serv. *Aen.* 8.670, 12.266). In this relatively detailed comparison, censure of deviation from the original (in the first argument) is joined to criticism of Vergil's depiction on the basis of common criteria applied to both model and imitation, by which his hero's behaviour is found unmanly, unconvincing, and not befitting a commander.

⁶⁷ Though in his preface to the *Georgics* Servius does make a distinction between Vergil's closer adherence to his model in the *Eclogues* and the imitations 'longo intervallo' of the *Aeneid* (cf. Cic. *Fin.* 1.7).

⁶⁸ See Serv. *Aen.* 5.517 for Urbanus' further contribution to the discussion of this passage in Vergilian exegesis.

credited with an objection to Vergil's over-dependence on his originals: 'hoc quidem apud Homerum de eo qui in flumine trahebatur (*Il.* 21.120) recte positum est, at de eo cuius iacet in campo corpus, si flumine mersum dicit, non est dictum ratione. sic in quibusdam dum nimio studio Vergilius ad Homerum trahitur, neque temporis neque loci habet curam.' (*Schol. Veron. Aen.* 10.559). The same line of criticism is followed in the last section of Eustathius' criticism of Vergil's adaptations from Homer (*Macr. Sat.* 5.13.40-41), and this stance might account for the omission of observations regarding the correspondence of imitations to their originals from his discussion. In the beginning of the sixth book, another of Macrobius' figures, Furius Albinus, introduces a general observation on the value of Vergilian imitations in which the terminology and precepts of the rhetorical doctrine of *imitatio* alone are prominent, and rejects the less favourable criticism of the *imperiti* and *maligni* who oppose both dependence and deviation (*Sat.* 6.1.2-6).

The mixture of the two modes of evaluating imitations exists, therefore, also in the scholia of the fourth and fifth centuries, and was probably also there already in earlier exegetical works of grammarians known to Gellius and his age.⁶⁹ This mixture could have been the result of the infiltration of the precepts of *imitatio* into an already established critical practice of comparing Latin adaptations from Greek drama to the originals. Though both the requirement for close adherence and the insistence on freedom and autonomous achievement are discernible already in Terence's polemic against Luscius Lanuvinus and other *malevoli* critics of his day,⁷⁰ it is, I believe, likely that the merging of the two value standards in grammatical criticism occurred, or was at least reinvigorated, during the first two centuries A.D., when rhetorical precepts were amply absorbed by grammarians together with their technical terminology.

There seems, however, to have been yet another opportunity for these two contradictory evaluative concepts to have merged and been employed together in comparative criticism, and that is in the evaluation of schoolboys' exercises of *paraphrasis*. As this exercise consisted of recasting literary passages in the pupil's own words, it is but natural that comparison with the original formed part of teachers' judgements of such compositions. A recommendation to check and assess the value of *paraphraseis* by contrasting them with their originals is explicitly mentioned in the advice of Dio Chrysostomus and Pliny to adults who conduct their studies without the help of a professional teacher (*D.Chr. Or.* 18.12, *Plin. Ep.* 7.9.3). Dio even calls this process *συγκρίνειν*.

Rhetoricians such as Theon, Quintilian and Hermogenes regard the exercise of paraphrasis as most suitable for the application of the precepts of *imitatio*, and in dealing with it often repeat the familiar admonition that imitations should exhibit autonomous merit and rival their models rather than try to reproduce them.⁷¹ But the

⁶⁹ Gellius is familiar with at least some of Velius Longus' works (*Gel.* 18.9.4), though he does not mention his commentary on Vergil. It is impossible to decide whether he could have come across the commentary of Aemilius Asper, as this grammarian is dated between Cornutus (whom he mentions) and Iulius Romanus (by whom he is mentioned). Since all we know of Iulius Romanus' time is that he, in turn, is mentioned by Charisius in the middle of the fourth century, Asper's can be any time between the later part of the first century and the end of the third; but see M. Geymonat, *Enciclopedia virgiliana* I (Rome, 1984), pp. 373-4, s.v. 'Aspro', who attempts a more precise dating.

⁷⁰ *Esp. An.* 15-21; *Eu.* 7-13; *Ad.* 6-14; on which see A. Traina, *Vortit Barbare: Le traduzioni poetiche da Livio Andronico a Cicerone* (Rome, 1970), pp. 61-5; Maria R. Posani, 'Osservazioni su alcuni passi dei prologhi terenziani', *SIFC* 37 (1965), 85-113; C. Garton, *Personal Aspects of the Roman Theatre* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 40-72, 89-90.

⁷¹ Theon, *Prog. praef.*, Spengel, *Rhet.*, ii.62-4; Quint. *Inst.* 10.5.2-11; Hermog. *Meth.* 24, Spengel, *Rhet.*, ii.445-6. See also: Cic. *de Orat.* 1.154-5; Sen. *Con.* 9.1.13; Suet. *Gramm.* 4, 25;

same exercise was also practised in earlier stages of training, to a completely different end. Grammarians used paraphrases not in order to improve their pupils' abilities to express themselves eloquently, but to train them in a foreign language or in the interpretation of difficult texts.⁷² Many examples of such exercises are preserved on papyri, in which texts were 'translated' from the festive diction of poetry into ordinary prose, or from one language to another. In Egypt, this last type served for training Greek-speaking schoolboys in Latin, and took the form of either close translations of Cicero and Vergil into Greek or shaky Latin renderings of Greek fables and literary passages.⁷³ In Rome the same exercise was used to instruct Latin-speaking pupils in Greek (Quint. *Inst.* 1.9.2, Suet. *Gram.* 25). Such paraphrases were, of course, required to reveal close correspondence to their originals, and Quintilian's admonition against the application of this requirement to the more advanced form of *paraphrasis* reveals how easily the requirements of the two varieties of the exercise had come to be confused,⁷⁴ especially at a time when both types seem to have formed part of the grammar school curriculum (Quint. *Inst.* 2.1.1–3; Suet. *Gram.* 4.7–8), and were therefore examined and compared with their originals by the same person—the *grammaticus*.

The step from correction of school exercises to criticism of poetry is not a big one. Theon adduces examples of literary imitations by canonical authors to prove that exercises of *paraphrasis* can rival their originals (*Prog.* praef., Spengel, *Rhet.*, ii.62–4), and Statius' praise of his father's fair copy of the exercise (*Silv.* 5.3.159–61) is already real literary criticism, as are Seneca's compliments to Polybius' translations, which might also have been model versions of *paraphrasis* (*Dial.* 11.11.5). When in ch. 19.11 Gellius sets a 'Platonic' distich side by side with its free adaptation into seventeen Latin iambic dimeters composed by a young talented friend of his, there is no telling whether he regards this piece, which he finds 'worth remembrance', as an admirable exercise or as an accomplished literary work.⁷⁵ It is even possible that such a distinction would not have seemed significant to him at all, especially as at times he regards his own translations, composed 'exercendi gratia', in a manner similar to his criticism of literary imitations (esp. 17.20.7–8).

Plin. *Ep.* 7.9.1–3; D.Chr. *Or.* 18.12; Fro. *Eloq.* 5.4, p. 152.1 v.d.Hout²; Gel. 17.20.cap.; Lucian, *Rh.Pr.* 9; August. *Conf.* 1.17; Hieron. *Chron.* praef. See further Reichel (n. 2), pp. 18–19, 112, 128–30; Stemplinger (n. 33), pp. 118–21, 212–15.

⁷² Quint. *Inst.* 1.9.2; D.Chr. *Or.* 18.19. See P. Beudel, *Qua ratione Graeci liberos docuerint, papyris, ostracis, tabulis in Aegypto inventis illustratur* (Münster, 1911), pp. 51–6; Richter (n. 42), pp. 71–6; H.-I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité*²⁶ (Paris, 1965), pp. 387, 596. For the adaptation of similar methods to exegetical practices: W. G. Rutherford, *A Chapter in the History of Annotation, being Scholia Aristophanica Vol. III* (London, 1905), pp. 336–46. And for the relation between this exercise and Latin literary translations: H. D. Jocelyn, *The Tragedies of Ennius* (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 25–6.

⁷³ For Greek translations and paraphrases of Latin authors on papyri: Cavenaile, *CPL* nos. 1–7, 13, 21, 22 (= Pack² 2940, '46, '50, '48, '51, '22, '23; cf. nos. 2519, 3026e); for Latin translations: Cavenaile, *CPL* 38–40 (= Pack² 3010, 52, 172); and see L. Radermacher, 'Aus dem zweiten Bande der Amherst Papyri', *RhM* 57 (1902), 137–51, at pp. 142–5; C. H. Moore, 'Latin Exercises from a Greek Schoolroom', *CPh* 19 (1924), 317–28; C. H. Roberts, *P.Ryl.* iii.478; for a possible translation exercise by a Roman: Roberts, 'A Fable Recovered', *JRS* 47 (1957), 124–5.

⁷⁴ Quint. *Inst.* 10.5.5: 'Neque ego paraphrasin esse interpretationem tantum volo, sed circa eosdem sensum certamen atque aemulationem'; cf. D.Chr. *Or.* 18.19: λέγω δὲ οὐχ ἵνα σύνταγμα τὸ δλον ὡσπερ οἱ παῖδες εἴρων συνάπτῃς.

⁷⁵ This holds true even if Gellius' friend is a renowned author such as Apuleius, as has sometimes been argued; see H. Dahlmann, 'Ein Gedicht des Apuleius? (Gellius 19, 11)' *AAMainz* 1979, no. 8.

The requirements Gellius lays down for literary translations in the preface to ch. 9.9 may, therefore, also have originated in the precepts of grammarians for elementary exercises in translation. His objection to word-for-word translation and approval of occasional omissions (9.9.1–3) recall Quintilian's account of the third stage in the practice of the exercise (*Inst.* 1.9.2): 'versus primo solvere, mox mutatis verbis interpretari, tum paraphrasi audacius vertere, qua et brevare quaedam et exornare salvo modo poetae sensu permittitur'. As we have seen, Quintilian's requirement to retain nevertheless the *sense* of the original is also shared by Gellius in some of his evaluations.⁷⁶ And finally, Gellius' 'omnia omnino verba in eum in quem dicta sunt modum' (9.9.1) fits well the papyrological evidence for Greek translations of Latin verse, in which each word is rendered by a correspondent Greek term in parallel grammatical inflection. Thus, for example, Vergil's 'restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit / os umerosque deo similis' (*Aen.* 1.588–9) is rendered by ἀπέστη ὁ Αἰνείας καὶ ἐν καθαρῷ τῷ φωτὶ ἀντέλαμψεν / τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ τοὺς ὤμους θεῶ ὄμοιο[s] (Cavenaile, *CPL* 7).

Gamberale's assumption that Gellius judges literary imitations by the standards of school exercises may, therefore, be correct, except that these standards do not, as he claims, form a coherent notion of translation, but rather a mixture of two incompatible standards of value employed together in an evaluative procedure which Gellius believes to be syncritic, but is in fact a completely different kind of comparison.

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⁷⁶ These distinctions of Quintilian and Gellius are more akin to Jerome's differentiation between 'verbum e verbo' and 'sensus de sensu' (*Ep.* 57.5.2; cf. *Schol.* Pers. 1.4: 'verba potius quam sensum secutus') than to that between 'verbum pro verbo' and 'genus omne verborum vimque' in *Opt. Gen.* 14, in which verbatim translation is opposed not to a more general semantic correspondence but rather to equivalence in stylistic qualities and in the effect on the audience. For the variety of Roman notions of translation, see now A. Seele, *Römische Übersetzer Nöte, Freiheiten, Absichten: Verfahren des literarischen Übersetzens in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Darmstadt, 1995). Close verbatim equivalence was, of course, always required of translations of legal and business documents and of sacred texts (see S. Brock, 'Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity', *GRBS* 20 [1979], 69–87, at pp. 69–79), and there is evidence that faithful translations were also needed by some people for technical manuals (e.g. *Vitr.* 5.4, and see further Richter [n. 42], pp. 77–89). It is possible that the increasing prominence of the requirement of faithfulness from translations resulted from a gradual change in the function of literary translation due to a decline in the knowledge of Greek among the Romans from the second century on; see D. A. Russell, 'Greek and Latin in Antonine Literature', in idem (ed.), *Antonine Literature* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 4–9.