URBS CAPTA: SKETCH OF AN ANCIENT LITERARY MOTIF

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Postero die deditione facta praesidium intra moenia accepere; iussique arma tradere cum dicto paruissent, signum repente victoribus datur, ut tamquam vi captam urbem diriperent; neque ulla, quae in tali re memorabilis scribentibus videri solet, praetermissa clades est; adeo omne libidinis crudelitatisque et inhumanae superbiae editum in miseros exemplum est.

Livy finds many occasions to describe the capture of cities. Needless to say, not every such description depends on the report of a reliable eye-witness, but in his description of the capture of Victumulae (21.57.13 f., quoted above), the clause *quae . . . solet* shows that writers by his day were accustomed to employ certain stock elements in describing the horrors associated with the capture of a city. In fact these elements or some of them were regularly combined to form a motif which can be traced throughtout classical literature, from Homer to late Antiquity, in poetry, oratory, and historiography. A study of the motif may, therefore, illuminate the inter-relationships of different literary genres. It may serve to illustrate the roles of *imitatio* and *aemulatio* in literary creation,[1] and how these characteristics of ancient literature were transmitted and encouraged by the rhetorical training which, from the time of the Sophists, had become the staple of ancient higher education. Students of rhetoric continued to study the poets, and especially Homer (cf. Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 10.1.27; 46 ff.) and as Norden pointed out, from the time of Thucydides historians were rhetorically educated, while from the time of Isocrates, the rhetors took pleasure in dealing with historical material.[2] Historiography also always remained to some extent under the influence of epic: this influence was felt both in form, e.g., the use of speeches and excursuses, and in content, e.g., the focus on warfare. *Historia* was, in the words of Quintilian, *proxima poetis, et quodam modo carmen solutum* (*Inst. Or.* 10.1.31).

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[1]On which see D. L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York 1957) 144–176; D. A. Russell, "De imitatione," in D. West & T. Woodman (edd.), *Creative Imitation and Latin Literature* (Cambridge 1979) 1–16.

[2]E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*$^{2/3}$ (Leipzig 1915) 1.85–86 (91–95 for the interrelations of rhetoric, history, and poetry). Cf. Hdt. 9.27.2–4; Thuc. 1.73.2. History was by some regarded as a branch of or close neighbour to epideictic oratory; cf. Cic. *De or.* 2.51; 62; *Orat.* 37; 66 and Kroll *ad loc.* See also note 27, below.

The effects of the close relationship of history and poetry can be studied in a well-known passage of Book 2 of Polybius: he there criticizes Phylarchus for failing to distinguish between tragedy and history, citing in particular Phylarchus' treatment of the capture of Mantinea by Cleomenes in 223 B.C. Phylarchus, according to Polybius, in his eagerness to arouse the pity of his readers "talks of women embracing, tearing their hair and exposing their breasts; and again of the tears and lamentations of men and women led off into captivity along with their children and aged parents" (2.56.7: translated E. S. Shuckburgh).[3] That such scenes at the captures of cities were a favourite theme of Hellenistic historians is clear from their frequent appearance in the narrative of Diodorus, who is probably drawing on Clitarchus in Book 17 (cf. the capture of Thebes, chapter 13; of the Persian camp after Issus, 35; of Persepolis, 70), and on Duris of Samos in Books 19 and 20 (cf. 19.6–8, capture of Syracuse by Agathocles; 20.71, capture of Egesta). Such passages provide evidence for the object of Polybius' polemic against those who magnify the details of sieges to produce history in the absence of any real knowledge.[4] Skill in describing the captures of cities was an important requirement of Hellenistic historiography; for example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus writes of Thucydides: "since he is often compelled to write of the captures and destructions of cities and of enslavements and other similar misfortunes, sometimes he makes the emotional scenes (*pathe*) appear so cruel and terrible and deserving of pity that he leaves neither to historians nor to poets any possibility of surpassing him."[5] It was the theory and practice of his own day that caused Dionysius to read such an interpretation into Thucydides' usually restrained descriptions. In Hellenistic writers, descriptions of captured cities provided an opportunity for the display of a historian's skill in *enargeia* and the description of *pathe*.[6]

It should not be forgotten, however, that the cruelty and terror consequent on the capture of cities were experiences by no means remote from the personal knowledge of many inhabitants of the ancient world.[7]

[3]On history and tragedy see F. W. Walbank, *Historia* 9 (1960) 216–234.

[4]29.12.4. On Diodorus and the practice of his sources see E. Burck, *Die Erzählungskunst des T. Livius*[2] (Berlin/Zurich 1964) 205 ff.

[5]Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 15.845; cf. Plut. *Nic.* 1.

[6]See further P. Scheller, *De hellenistica historiae conscribendae arte* Diss. (Leipzig 1911) 57 ff.; P. S. Everts, *De Tacitea historiae conscribendae arte* Diss. Utrecht (Kerkrade 1926) 14 ff. For the rhetorical theory see H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* 1 (Munich 1960) 399 ff. s.v. *evidentia*; also G. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Meisenheim am Glan 1956) 130 ff. On *enargeia* see further note 41, below.

[7]On the ferocity and bloodshed at the captures of cities see, e.g., W. V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome* 327–70 *B.C.* (Oxford 1979) 51 ff.; 263 f. (Additional Note IX).

Among the Greeks, also, the city is frequently identical with the state, hence the destruction of cities is a theme of high importance to poets and historians.[8] The point can be illustrated by reference to Phrynichus' *Miletou halosis*, banned from performance, according to Herodotus (6.21.2), because it reminded the Athenians of their own misfortunes. Given the ancient interest in imitating or emulating admired predecessors, literary treatments of such themes were bound to influence later writers. Hence Strasburger traces Thucydides' concern with *pathemata* to Homer's pre-occupation with *algea*.[9] Thucydides, however, *pace* Dionysius, when he is describing the captures of Plataea, Mytilene, and Melos, narrates the final action in each case with marked restraint (though he may have believed that the notion of the enslavement of fellow-Greeks, for example, was sufficiently moving to stir the reader without any resort to a detailed description). He clearly wishes to emphasize the inhumanity associated with these events, but he does it principally through the speeches ascribed to the participants. The historian's description of the capture of Mycalessus (7.29–30) would have been a better example for Dionysius' purpose: the city's fate was "deserving of pity." Even more to the point would have been the description of the Athenians' march from their camp two days after the naval battle at Syracuse (7.75): in an emotionally charged and dramatically heightened passage (references to grief, fear, pain, prayers, lamentations etc.) the description culminates in the statement "indeed they resembled nothing so much as fugitives from *a city that had been taken by siege*, and a great city too" (translated B. Jowett, emphasis added: the significance of this particular comparison will be suggested in what follows). It is true in general, however, that in his treatment of the captures of cities and similar scenes Thucydides practises restraint. The later historians on the whole were much less restrained and frequently resorted to such descriptions as Polybius criticized when employed by Phylarchus.[10]

In the discussions of Polybius and others it is the "tragic" element in

[8]Cf. H. Strasburger, *Die Wesensbestimmung der Geschichte durch die antike Geschichtsschreibung* (Wiesbaden 1966) 29 f.; cf. Cic. *Rep.* 3.12.20 *bella et victoriae captis et eversis plurimum urbibus constant*; 23.34.

[9]Strasburger 25.

[10]For Duris' "tragic" additions (*epitragodei*) to the narrative of the capture of Samos see *FGrHist* 76 F 67 (= Plut. *Per.* 28); the additions consist, according to Plutarch, of descriptions of cruelty and exaggerations of the terrible. Polybius himself was not opposed to pathetic descriptions, cf., e.g., 16.30–34; he even mentions pathetic details such as he blames in Phylarchus' narrative, cf. 15.13.3. (See also F. W. Walbank, *Polybius* [Berkeley 1972] 39 f.) "Tragic" seems to be applied to pathetic material not based on the historian's sound knowledge; a defence of Polybius' own practice is implicit in his attack on Timaeus, 12.25h. Phylarchus' practice can perhaps be detected in Plut. *Arat.* 31–32; 45; see the commentaries of W. H. Porter (Dublin 1937) and A. J. Koster (Leiden 1937) *ad locc.*

such scenes that is emphasized (Polybius likens the historians he is attacking to tragic poets and discusses their methods in the critical language appropriate to tragedy), and one can readily see their relationship especially to those tragedies that dealt with the Trojan War and its aftermath.[11] But the motif of the capture of cities has a longer history. In the rhetorical treatise *Peri methodou deinotetos* ascribed to Hermogenes, there is a chapter entitled *Peri tou tragikos legein* (page 450 Rabe), in which the writer, following Plato (*Resp.* 10.598d), names Homer the father of tragedy, and in evidence cites *Iliad* 9.593–594, two lines describing the fate of cities when captured. The interest of the lines is that they form part of Cleopatra's successful appeal to her husband, Meleager: they do not describe an actual event, but constitute an emotive passage used as a rhetorical device. (A similar passage, *Iliad* 22.61–65, forms part of Priam's appeal to Hector; cf. 6.450 ff.). That is to say, the capture of cities has already become a subject for a rhetorical motif, a fact which may well have influenced Thucydides' choice of comparison at 7.75.5 (noted above). The elements of the motif in the passage from *Iliad* 9 are the killing of the men, the destruction of the city by fire, and the carrying off of the women and children (i.e., into slavery). Other examples cited below include such other elements as the plunder of temples, the murder of children (as in *Iliad* 22.63–64) or their violent separation from their parents, rape, and the wailing of women and children. Ps.-Hermogenes, in the passage cited above, discusses how Demosthenes uses similiar elements, all but paraphrasing Homer, in describing the fate of Phocis (i.e., Dem. *De fals. leg.* 65.361). *Iliad* 9.592–594 is cited also by Aristotle (*Rh.* 1365a10 ff.), with some variation from the vulgate text, as an example of *merismos* (*distributio*), an indication that the passage had become a text for the rhetoricians. Frequent citing of the motif of the capture of cities by later rhetoricians[12] makes it clear that it became a traditional element in rhetorical instruction.

In what follows, after attempting briefly to account for the wide diffusion of the motif, I should like to illustrate its history by citing examples of its use in actual descriptions, cases where the motif is simply alluded to, and cases where the motif is transferred to contexts other than straightforward narrative ones. Its diffusion is owed in large measure, I believe, to the popularity of the theme of the destruction of Troy. The popularity of that theme is attested by the various treatments

[11] E.g., Euripides, *Troades* and *Andromache*.

[12] See the references collected by Marx (Leipzig 1894), Caplan (Cambridge, Mass. 1954) and Calboli (Bologna 1969) on *Rhet. Her.* 4.39.51. On the rhetorical function of *Il.* 9.591–594 see D. Lohmann's discussion, *Die Komposition der Reden in der Ilias* (Berlin 1970) 254 ff., especially 261.

of the *Iliupersis* in poems of the Epic Cycle[13] and by Stesichorus, who is credited with being the inspiration of the scene of Troy's destruction on a Tabula Iliaca.[14] Various scenes from the sack of Troy frequently appear on vase-paintings.[15] Scenes from the sack appear on the walls of Pompeian houses; note also the appearance of Heracles' capture of the city from Laomedon on the upper frieze in the house of Loreius Tiburtinus.[16] In Dido's temple to Juno Aeneas saw figured *Iliacas ex ordine pugnas/ bellaque iam fama totum vulgata per orbem* (Vergil, *Aen.* 1.456 f.).[17] The continuing popularity of the theme is indicated by Petronius' treatment of the *Halosis Troiae* (*Satyricon* 89); the poem, it will be remembered, is inspired by a wall-painting. Its possible relationship to Nero's *Troica* (Dio 62.29.1) need not be discussed here; Nero was, however, alleged to have sung of the *Troianum excidium* during the fire of Rome (Tac. *Ann.* 15.39). And to anticipate, R. M. Ogilvie points out[18] that "almost all Livy's accounts of captured cities are variations on the *Ilioupersis* theme."

It is clear that the destruction of Troy and the resulting suffering and grief were firmly established as a literary and artistic theme. The story was also told as history by a contemporary of Thucydides, Hellanicus, in the two books of his *Troica*.[19] Influenced by such descriptions the general theme of the capture of cities was also early established in epic, tragedy, and historiography, and no doubt recurring patterns of events were to be observed in actual captures. At any rate by the time of the Hellenistic historians descriptions of such events had been conventionalized, both by repetition in literary works and also because a particular example of the motif of the capture of cities had become part of the rhetoricians' stock-in-trade, as Aristotle, *Rh.* 1365a10 ff. shows.

Descriptions of the siege and capture of cities enter Roman literature at least as early as Ennius. Norden has pointed out[20] that Ennius in his treatment of such themes was probably influenced by Hellenistic historiography. A *fabula praetextata* of Ennius dealt with the capture of

[13]Cf. Proclus, *Chrestom.* 239.20 W; also, e.g., J. Griffin, *JHS* 97 (1977) 51 f.

[14]*IG* 14.1284 (Rome, Capitoline Museum, Inv. 316); cf. K. Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination* (Cambridge, Mass. 1959) 34 ff.; especially 48 ff.; Plate 24, fig. 56; G. Karl Galinsky, *Aeneas, Sicily and Rome* (Princeton 1969) 32 ff.; 106 ff.

[15]See in general Margaret R. Scherer, *The Legends of Troy in Art and Literature* (New York 1936) 96 ff.

[16]See G. Picard, *Roman Painting* (London 1970) 80–81; the house is decorated in the Fourth Style.

[17]See R. G. Austin's notes on *Aen.* 1.456 f. in his edition (Oxford 1971) for references to paintings on *Iliacae pugnae* and on *Aen.* 2.403 (Oxford 1964) for references to scenes of the violation of Cassandra.

[18]*A Commentary on Livy Books I–V* (Oxford 1965) 320, on Livy 2.33.8.

[19]*FGrHist* 4 F 23–31; 138–156; note especially fragment 31 (= Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.45.4–48.1) for details of the city's capture and of Aeneas' flight.

[20]*Ennius und Vergilius* (Leipzig/Berlin 1915) 157.

Ambracia in 189 B.C.[21] and the influence of the *Iliupersis* theme can be seen in the same poet's *Andromacha* (*Scaenica* 92–99) where many stock elements are employed (cf., e.g., Eur. *Andr.* 395 ff.) though the passage is focused as much on the feelings of the speaker as on the motif of the city's capture.[22] The most significant passage in Ennius for this theme appears to have been one that has not survived, namely his description in the *Annals* of the destruction of Alba, on which, according to Servius (*ad Aen.* 2.486), Vergil's account of the fall of Troy is based, and which Norden has shown,[23] by a comparison between Livy 1.29 and Vergil, *Aen.* 2.486 ff., to form at least indirectly the model for Livy's treatment of the destruction of Alba. The motif appears to influence Caesar's descriptions also: for example, the indiscriminate slaughter at Avaricum,[24] embracing the old, the women, and children (. . . *non aetate confectis, non mulieribus, non infantibus pepercerunt*), and the *misericordia* it evokes among the Gauls are emphasized by Caesar and attributed to the soldiers' desire for revenge, as well as to their excitement in the battle. That action in turn (and by implication its attendant emotions) is recalled in the account of the later action at Gergovia:[25] after describing the shouting and the panic, Caesar recounts that the Gallic *matres familiae* threw garments and silver from the walls and leaned over the walls themselves, with breasts bared and hands spread in supplication to the Romans, asking that they might not share the fate of the women and children of Avaricum. In their commentary *ad loc.* Kraner-Dittenberger-Meusel (Berlin 1913) cite D'Arbois de Jubainville in support of the view that the baring of their breasts by the women in the act of supplication was a Gallic custom. It has also been suggested to me that the description, being that of an eye-witness, is more likely to be accurate. Even if that is so, the description may still owe its *character* to literary influence (Caesar was, after all, eminent among the orators of his day, cf. Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 10.1.114) and it is certainly striking to find Caesar describing an incident in terms similar to those condemned by Polybius when used by Phylarchus. I am inclined to think that reminiscence of the literary motif lies behind *BCiv.* 2.7.3 as well; there Caesar writes of the receipt of unfavourable news by the besieged Massiliots as follows: *re cognita tantus luctus excepit, ut urbs ab hostibus capta eodem vestigio videretur.*

[21] *Scaenica* 366–369 V²; cf. *Ann.* 397–408 V².

[22] The imitation of this passage in Verg. *Aen.* 2.499 ff. follows almost immediately on the imitation of the destruction of Alba (in the text, below); for a discussion see E. J. Kenney in West & Woodman (above, note 1) 112–114.

[23] *Ennius und Vergilius* (above, n. 20) 156 ff.

[24] *BGal.* 7.28.

[25] *BGal.* 7.47.

The motif of the capture of cities which had already made its appearance in the speeches of Greek orators of the fourth century B.C.[26] had become part of the stock-in-trade of the Greek rhetorician from the time of Aristotle, as noted above. It also made an early appearance in Roman oratory and rhetoric, not simply for purposes of description but as a way of arousing the *misericordia* and other emotions of one's hearers. This is shown by the treatment of the theme in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.39.51, where under the heading of *descriptio* one of the passages cited as an example is an orator's emotional appeal to the fate of captured cities.[27] The motif can be exemplified in several of Cicero's speeches: *Sull.* 19 exploits standard elements of the motif to create prejudice against Autronius; *Dom.* 98 alludes to *ea quae capta urbe accidunt victis* and then cites elements of the motif to describe Cicero's misfortunes.[28] In *Ad Atticum* 1.14.3 Cicero's reference to *totum hunc locum quem ego varie meis orationibus . . . soleo pinguere, de flamma, de ferro,* when combined with Crassus' quoted allusion to the preservation of his wife, his home, and his fatherland, strongly suggest that Crassus had employed the *urbs capta* motif in his speech. Further evidence for the employment of the motif can be found in Sallust: in *Cat.* 51.9 Caesar is made to refer ironically in the senate debate to the use by earlier speakers of emotive passages of this kind, and in his reply to Caesar, Cato is represented as arguing *capta urbe nihil fit reliqui victis.*[29] Sallust's treatment of the capture of cities in his narrative is comparatively restrained[30] but he employs elements of the motif at *Cat.* 31.3 to describe the atmosphere in Rome as news of the Catilinarian conspiracy becomes public. Norden[31] cites Horace, *Carm.* 4.15.1 f., *Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui/victas et urbes increpuit lyra . . .* as evidence for the pre-occupation of later writers with the capture of cities. Horace is no doubt thinking of epic, but the significance of the theme for historiography is sufficiently indicated by the passage in which Tacitus contrasts his own sad lot with that of those *qui veteres populi Romani res conposuere,* by implication in

[26]Cf., e.g., Dem. *De fals. leg.* 65.361; Aeschines *In Ctes.* 157; note also Agatharchides' discussion (*GGM* 1.119. fr. 21) of orators' treatment of the destruction of Olynthus and Thebes.

[27]Caplan, *ad loc.*, believes the example is Greek in origin. Cf. also *Rhet. Her.* 4.8.12, the passage beginning *Quid agere ausi sunt . . .?* An *exemplum* of the grand style, with quasi-historical description, it contains choice and elevated expressions; see Calboli (Bologna 1969) note 36, page 290.

[28]Cf. also, e.g., *Cat.* 4.2; *Dom.* 143; 2 *Verr.* 4.52.

[29]*Cat.* 52.4; cf. also ps.-Sall. *Ep. ad Caes.* 2.3.4, and K. Vretska in his commentary (Heidelberg 1961) *ad loc.*

[30]Cf. *Jug.* 12.5; 91.6; K. Vretska, *Studien zu Sallusts Bellum Jugurthinum* (Vienna 1955) 152.

[31]*Ennius und Vergilius* (above, n. 20) 157 n. 2.

the grand style. Their themes, he writes, were *ingentia . . . bella, expugnationes urbium, fusos captosque reges* (*Ann.* 4.32).

Some of the passages already cited indicate that an orator or writer could count on his audience's familiarity with the motif, so that the mention (sometimes the bare mention) of the capture of a city could be expected to evoke an emotional response, or could be exploited for humorous effect. Passing references of this kind appear in the poets of the late Republic and early Empire. An interesting example is Catullus 62.20–24: the stanza opens with a complaint addressed to Hesperus *qui natam possis complexu avellere matris . . .* which is generalized in the last line *Quid faciunt hostes capta crudelius urbe?*[32] Plautus exploits the capture of Troy as a comic metaphor, *Bacch.* 925 ff., while the elegists employ allusions to the motif, sometimes playfully: cf., e.g., Propertius 4.8.55–56 *fulminat illa oculis et quantum femina saevit,/spectaclum capta nec minus urbe fuit*, followed by a description of the fray. Ovid, *Met.* 12.225 describes the battle of the centaurs at the wedding of Peirithous as *captaeque erat urbis imago*; while *Tristia* 1.3.6 refers to the lamentations surrounding Ovid's departure from Rome as *haec facies Troiae, cum caperetur, erat.* And there is a revealing passage in the *Metamorphoses* in which Ovid describes the appearance of the heron that emerges from the ruins of Ardea: *et sonus et macies et pallor et omnia, captam/quae deceant urbem . . . .*[33] At *Aen.* 4.665 ff., Vergil describes the confusion in the city after Dido's suicide with elements of the motif . . . *non aliter quam si immissis ruat hostibus omnis/Karthago aut antiqua Tyros. . . .*[34]

The subject-matter of Livy's history meant that he had abundant opportunities to describe the capture of cities. Certain passages, especially, for example, that quoted at the head of this paper, also make it clear that such descriptions constituted for him a well-established literary motif.[35] Again, perhaps simply because such motifs were so well-known, Livy gained a special effect by avoiding them, as, for example, when mentioning the atmosphere in the city after Cannae (not, of course, after the capture of a city in this case), he writes: *numquam salva urbe tantum pavoris tumultusque intra moenia fuit. itaque succumbam oneri neque adgrediar narrare quae edissertando minora vero faciam*

[32]R. Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus*[2] (Oxford 1889) 244, *ad loc.*, cites a number of parallels, including the passages from Caesar referred to in notes 24 and 25, above; cf. W. Kroll, *C. Valerius Catullus*[3] (Stuttgart 1959) *ad loc.*, "Die Greuel bei Eroberung einer Stadt werden seit *Il.* 9.592 von der Poesie und von der Geschichtschreibung gern geschildert. Sall. *C.* 51.9."

[33]14.578–580.

[34]A. S. Pease in his commentary (Cambridge, Mass. 1935) *ad loc.*, cites a number of parallels.

[35]Cf., e.g., 8.25.6; 24.39.5 f.; 37.29.4; 38.43.10; and, recalling Catullus, 23.10.8 *quid violentius capta Capua fieret?*

(22.54.8). Conversely, the very frequency of the motif may mean that when it is used, it has to be exaggerated for special effect, as at 29.17.1 ff., where a Locrian embassy in the course of a complaint about the misdeeds of the Roman commander, Pleminius,[36] alleges (29.17.6) *cottidie capitur urbs nostra, cottidie diripitur*; later in this speech the motif of the capture of cities is supplemented by another well-worn rhetorical topic, *tyranni scelera* (29.17.19 f.).

Over-use of the motif may itself account for Livy's customary restraint in dealing with accounts of the capture of cities, as compared with the excesses of Hellenistic historians.[37] In very many cases, Livy contents himself with a few sentences of bare narrative,[38] though other descriptions, such as 2.33.7–8 (Corioli), are fuller and show Livy's familiarity with the Hellenistic technique;[39] cf. also 5.21.10–16 on the capture of Veii, especially the sentence *clamor omnia variis terrentium ac paventium vocibus mixto mulierum ac puerorum ploratu complet* and the use of *distributio* in the description (Ogilvie on 5.21.5, 10, detects Vergilian parallels and suggests the influence of Ennius). Elsewhere the *urbs capta* motif appears as a rhetorical device, intended to evoke an emotional response, notably in the Verginia episode in Book 3; cf. Verginia's appeal, 3.47.2, *quid prodesse si, incolumi urbe, quae capta ultima timeantur, liberis suis sint patienda*? Similarly, in Camillus' dignified rebuke to the Faliscan schoolmaster, 5.27.7, he says: *arma habemus non adversus eam aetatem cui etiam captis urbibus parcitur.* There are two cases in Books 1–5, however, where Livy embarks on a full, pathetic treatment of the events accompanying the capture of a city. The first of these is 1.29, where, as was pointed out above, Livy is drawing on Ennius' description of the capture of Alba. Ogilvie inclines to believe that Livy is drawing on Ennius directly for inspiration,[40] while Norden's view is that Livy's account derives from an earlier historian whose version was influenced by Ennius; there seems to be no way of deciding the issue with any certainty. The other passage, 5.42, deals with the Gallic entry into Rome, and the extensive treatment of the event could be justified by its importance in Roman annals. Both passages contain references to the usual constituents of the *urbs capta* motif, the shouts of the enemy, the wailing of women and children,

[36]Left in charge of the city by Scipio, Pleminius and his men attacked the persons of the citizens and their families and are said to have plundered the treasures of the temple of Proserpina: see Broughton, *MRR* 1.304 for references.

[37]Cf. Burck, *Erzählungskunst* (above, n. 4) 206 f. Other literary aims may also intervene to detract from interest in the capture of a city; cf. Burck 184, on Gabii.

[38]Cf. (in Books 1–5) 1.10.4; 11.2; 14.11; 2.17.6; 4.34.3; 59.7; 5.41.9–10; 49.6 (*castra*).

[39]Note *ut solet* and see Ogilvie (above, note 18); E. J. Kenney in West & Woodman (above, note 1) 113.

[40]See his note on 1.29.6 (*Commentary*, 122).

rapid movements of troops and fleeing citizens, fire and sword, the crash of buildings, the slaughter of the defeated (especially 1.29.4 f.; 5.42.4 f. *quocumque clamor hostium, mulierum puerorumque ploratus . . .*). But in each case, Livy disarms the reader—and heightens the tension—by suggesting at the outset of the description that this capture is different from the usual type of capture. At 1.29.2 he begins *Quae (legiones) ubi intravere portas, non quidem fuit tumultus ille nec pavor qualis captarum esse urbium solet, cum . . .*, but then proceeds to a description which includes the usual elements of the motif. Similarly, at 5.42.2, he first states *nequaquam perinde atque in capta urbe primo die aut passim aut late vagatus est ignis . . .* and again proceeds to an emotive description. In each case, that is to say, while basing his description on an established motif, Livy seeks to revive an element of the unexpected.

In taking over an established literary motif, therefore, Livy on the whole avoids the excesses of his Hellenistic predecessors, imparts freshness on occasions by his manner of introducing the motif, but also reveals, as in the plea of the Locrian embassy (above), how rhetoric in striving for effect may overreach itself. An examination of Livy's use of the motif does show how various aspects of poetry, oratory, and historiography may influence one another, and in this regard his practice may be considered characteristic of the literary and rhetorical culture of at least Hellenistic and Roman times. The frequency of the appearance of the *urbs capta* motif finds sufficient testimony in the references collected by Marx, Caplan, and Calboli (see note 12, above). The method of its use is discussed by Quintilian (*Inst. Or.* 8.3.67–70) in his treatment of *enargeia* and the ways in which *miseratio* may be increased: the mere report of the storming of a city embraces all that such a fate involves, but if the writer wishes to obtain the full emotional effect, he must unpack (*aperias*) the horrifying detail (i.e., the standard elements, which Quintilian then describes), *licet enim haec omnia, ut dixi, complectatur 'eversio', minus est tamen totum dicere quam omnia. Consequemur autem ut manifesta sint si fuerint veri similia, et licebit etiam falso adfingere quidquid fieri solet.* (Note especially the concluding sentence.[41]) Though the subject of Quintilian's work is training in oratory, all the educated had a similar training and doctrines such as Quintilian's became part of the mental furniture of poets and historians, hence the continued life of the

[41]On the connection between *enargeia* and the rousing of *miseratio* see also Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 6.2.29 ff.; especially 32 ff., with examples from poetry; cf. "Longinus," *De subl.* 15.1, and the comments of D. A. Russell (Oxford 1970) *ad loc.*, especially pages 121 f.; W. Kroll, *Studien zum Verständnis der römischen Literatur* (Stuttgart 1924) 299 f.; on *enargeia* in historiographical theory see G. Schepens, *RSA* 5 (1975) 185–200, especially 192 ff. (the starting-point of the discussion is Polybius 12.25h). Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 8.3.67 ff. is quoted by Erasmus discussing *enargeia* in *De Copia* (*Collected Works of Erasmus* 24 [Toronto 1970] 577 f.).

motif. Under such influences as Livy as historical model and Quintilian's precepts, the motif persisted, sometimes in actual descriptions, sometimes in allusions, both in history and poetry. The colourful passage in which Tacitus describes the condition of Rome after the death of Vitellius concludes with the phrase *ubique lamenta conclamationes et fortuna captae urbis . . .*;[42] or again, the disorder caused in Rome by Nero in A.D. 56 is summed up in the phrase *in modum captivitatis nox agebatur* (*Ann.* 13.25). Descriptions such as that of the disaster at Fidenae or of the fire in Rome seem to owe something also to the motif.[43] Allusions to the motif are to be found in the narrative of such writers as Josephus, describing disorders in Jerusalem after the arrival of John of Gischala (*BJ* 4.3.4.142), Appian describing the atmosphere at Rome as search was made for the enemies of the Triumvirs (*BCiv* 4.6.22), and Justin, who refers to it to describe the effect on Carthage of the news of the loss of Himilco's army, *omnia ululatibus non secus ac si urbs ipsa capta esset personabant* (19.2.7 ff.).

The motif continues to be exploited by the poets;[44] its influence may be suspected even where there is no explicit mention of a captured city, as for example in Lucan 1.466 ff., especially 486 ff. (cf. Petronius *Sat.* 123 = *Bellum Civile* 222 ff.), where the atmosphere in Rome before Caesar's arrival is described. Oppian, *Hal.* 5.553–555, is something of a curiosity. The poet describes the concern of a female dolphin for her harpooned offspring: "you would say you were beholding the mourning of a mother when her city is sacked by the foe and her children are haled away perforce as the spoil of the spear" (translated A. W. Mair).[45] Scenes of horror at actual captures of cities, as narrated by historians, continued to be popular: it will perhaps be enough to mention Appian's report of Scipio's storming of Byrsa (*Pun.* 128.610 ff.), Dio's of Boudicca's sack of two cities in Britain (62.7), or Josephus' of Titus' capture of Jerusalem (*BJ* 6.8.5.400 ff.). Representations of the captures of cities were not confined to literature but also appeared in triumphal processions[46] and on triumphal arches and columns. Claudius staged the storming and plunder of a city in a show on the Campus Martius (Suet. *Claud.* 21.6).[47]

[42]Tac. *Hist.* 4.1. Tacitus' treatment of the captures of cities is briefly discussed by K. Wellesley in *Tacitus*, ed. T. A. Dorey (London 1969) 68.

[43]*Ann.* 4.62 (cf. A. J. Woodman, *CQ* 22 [1972] 155 f.); 15.38; cf. Dio 62.16.1–18.1.

[44]Cf., e.g., Silius Italicus 17.504 ff. (note especially line 508: *lateque ut capta passim trepidatur in urbe*); Statius *Theb.* 4.821 ff.

[45]Quoted by Pease (above, note 34).

[46]Cf. Livy, 26.21.7; 37.59.3; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 6.3.61; App. *Pun.* 66.293; Josephus *BJ* 7.5.5.143 f. According to Pliny, *HN* 35.23, Hostilius Mancinus had paintings of the assault on Carthage exhibited in the forum.

[47]For the use of the motif in Imperial oratory see Dio Chrysostom 32.89 (cited by Caplan on *Rhet. Her.* 4.39.51).

It would be otiose to continue to accumulate examples: a few citations from later writers will suffice to indicate the tenacity of the literary motif in both history and rhetoric. Orosius, 4.6.10 ff., takes over the motif from Justin along with the latter's report of the effect on Carthage when the loss of Himilco's army is reported. Jordanes, *Get.* 42.220 f., exploits standard elements of the motif in describing Attila's sack of Aquileia.[48] In his *Panegyricus* on Anastasius, Procopius of Gaza describes the fears roused by threats of eastern barbarians and the rumours of captured cities with many of the conventional features of the motif.[49] My final example occurs in the seventh-century *Rhetoric* of Isidorus (*Etym.* 2.21.34.521 Halm): to illustrate the device of *metathesis* (temporal *aversio*) he quotes from an unknown[50] orator: *revocate mentis ad spectaculum expugnatae miserae civitatis, et videre vos credite incendia, caedes, rapinas, direptiones, liberorum corporum iniurias, captivitates matronarum, trucidationes senum.* The evidence is drawn from oratory and rhetoric as well as historiography, but perhaps enough has been said above to indicate how model passages, cited by rhetoricians in the schools, could form a pattern which historians (and also poets) might follow in emotive descriptions and so contribute to that *Kreuzung der Gattungen* which Kroll has documented for the poets.[51] The persistence of the *urbs capta* motif in particular throughout classical literature affords a means of documenting the literary and rhetorical inspiration of much ancient historiography.

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[48]The rhetorical tone of the passage is set by the departure of the *aves futurarum rerum providae* before the assault.

[49]Volume 14, page 497 in the Bonn *Corpus*. I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr. James Fitton.

[50]The passage is, however, very close to Aeschines *In Ctes.* 157.

[51]Kroll, *Studien* (above, note 41) 202 ff.