

me on my journey; I shall sing of what the heavens must learn, while the stars wonder and the firmament rejoices in the songs of its own poet.

He hopes to be conveyed (*uectatus*) about the circuit (*orbe*) undisturbed by others; his *iter* is not to be widely shared. The celestial flight of the astronomical poet, on which his reader—through his verse—joins him, is to pursue (an understanding of) the *cursus* of the stars and planets themselves (cf. MANIL. 1, 13–15). The uniqueness of his undertaking is emphasised in the proem to the fifth book, in which it is explicitly stated that another would not have approached the task which Manilius has set himself as thoroughly (*Hic alius finisset iter*, MANIL. 5, 1): this other would descend from the highest heaven before the work was done (*caeloque rediret/ ac per descensum medios percurreret ignes*, MANIL. 5, 4–5). The *mundus* itself, indeed, demands that Manilius complete his (poetic) tour of the firmament in his flying chariot (MANIL. 5, 8–11):

*me properare etiam mundus iubet omnia circum
sidera uectatum toto decurrere caelo,
cum semel aetheros ausus conscendere curvus
summum contigerim sua per fastigia culmen.*

The firmament too enjoins me to hasten, conveyed as I am, to pass by all of the stars in the whole heaven, since I once dared to mount the ethereal chariot and to reach the very summit of heaven by passing along its acclivity.

It seems plausible to suggest that, unique as he claims his undertaking to be amongst poets, Manilius hopes to find literary fame by being raised to the stars of the highest heaven (not unlike Horace at *Carm.* 1, 1, 35–36); on Manilius' articulation of his own position vis-à-vis the tradition in which he placed himself, see Volk, 2009, p. 182–215.

[TEF]

VII. Roads and paths in Neronian and Flavian Poetry

7. 1. Flavian innovations: the paths of genres and the paths of poetic glory

Poetry in the Neronian and Flavian periods continued Augustan poetry's employment of the Callimachean distinction between the narrow and broad paths of, respectively, good and bad poetry, though the period saw this opposition adopted to new ends, as well as its innovative assimilation to the figure of the "path of [poetic] glory." On the level of adaptation, the Flavian poet Statius combines Callimachus' distinction with the stylistic opposition of "greater" and "smaller" genres: after having completed his great epic, the *Thebaid*, he writes in his lyric *Silvae* that "I now essay to attenuate my song for Maximus" (STAT. *Silv.* 4, 7, 9: *Maximo carmen tenuare tempto*); here, *tempto* ("essay, attempt") picks up on a key term of the coda of his *Thebaid* (12, 816; on which, see below), while *tenuare* points to the narrow path of song he will attempt after his epic Muse Erato "has long ranged a wide plain" (*diu lato spatiosa campo*, 1), and also plays antonymically on the poem's addressee, Maximus (lit. "The Largest"). Much more aggressively, the Flavian epigrammatic poet Martial associates poetry that runs on "a smooth path" (*molli... limite*, 11, 90, 1) with Homer's poems (l. 3), while poetry that "stumbles through ruts and high rocks" (*per salebras altaque saxa cadunt*, l. 2) he associates with the speaker's preference for old Latin poets like Accius and Pacuvius (a preference Martial associates with one who "tastes of cock" (*mentula quid sapiat*, l. 8)).

The value judgments associated with the poles of Callimachus' binary could also be played with or reversed: Statius, for example, praises his father's ability

to be a poetic creator in a wide variety of genres, “wherever the wide paths of speech stretched” (*fandi uia lata patet*, 5, 3, 101, taking Markland’s *uia* for *uis* (M); cf. Gibson *ad loc.*). Sometimes this kind of reversal can be seen in adaptations of earlier “path” motifs to other metapoetic devices: Juvenal turns away from the posture of exclusiveness he saw in the satires of Horace and Persius, and “effect[s] a break with tradition” (Bramble, 1974, p. 170) by following the Augustan elegist Propertius’ lead (2, 10, 1–4, but *pace* 3, 1, 13–14) in replacing Callimachus’ preference for the light carriage and untrodden paths over heavy wagon and wide road (*Aetia* 1, fr. 1 Pf., 25 *sqq.*) with the open plain and horses, explaining “Why though it pleases me to rush across the same plain through which the great son of Aurunca turned his chariot” (*cur tamen hoc potius libeat decurrere campo / per quem magnus equos Aurunca flexit alumnus*, Juvenal 1, 19–20).

This period also sees an interest in the image of “the path of [poetic] glory,” building on Virgil’s articulation in the *Georgics* of his ambition: “I must attempt a path, by which I might be able to lift myself as well above the earth and to fly as a victor through mouths of men” (4, 8–9: *temptanda uia est, qua me quoque possim / tollere humo uictorque uirum uolitare per ora*). Seneca’s *Oedipus*, for example, underlines its departure from Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and its incorporation of new (Virgilian) material (e.g. the *katabasis* in l. 582–658), by having Tiresias cry that “another past must be tried” (*alia temptanda est uia*, l. 390), only for the reader later to hear from Creon about the priest’s *katabasis*, replete with the ground groaning either because displeased that an entrance to hell would “be attempted” (*temptari*, l. 578), or in order to “make a path for the dead” (*daret functis uiam*, l. 579) (cf. Trinacty, 2014, p. 193, 220–221).

On a more clearly structural level, the most emblematic of such innovative adaptations of Virgil’s “path of [poetic] glory” is Statius’ *Thebaid*, which concludes with an envoi addressed, like the last poem of Horace’s first book of *Epistles* (1, 20), by the poet to his own work, and concerning that work’s future paths. Statius begins by asking the poem about the temporal limits of its fame, before asserting, with perhaps over-eager conviction, that “already without doubt attendant Renown for you has laid out a favourable path and begins to show this novelty to posterity” (*iam certe praesens tibi Fama benignum / strauit iter coepitque nouam monstrare futuris*, 12, 812–813). Statius builds on the metaphor of the path to give his book a warning: “Do not essay the divine *Aeneid*, but follow it from afar and always venerate its footsteps” (*nec tu diuinam Aeneida tempta, / sed longe sequere et uestigia semper adora*, 12, 816–817). By obeying this rule, the poet goes on, the work’s fame will endure and bring glory to Statius himself, safe even “if any envy spreads a cloud before you” (*si quis adhuc praetendit nubila liuor*, 12, 818); in later times, Statius’ combination of the “path to (poetic) glory” and clouds as a figure of obscurity (→ Air, fumée) would inspire the end of Nemesianus’ *First Eclogue*, which ends with Tityrus telling the boy Timetas not to leave off music and poetry, “For propitious fame has already here in the woods spread out a favourable path for you, with her feathers bursting the clouds of envy” (*iamque hic in silvis praesens tibi fama benignum / strauit iter, rumpens liuoris nubila pennis*, 84–85).

Within Statius’ *Thebaid* as a whole, the *envoi*’s recommendation of a humbler path had been prepared in the person of vaunting Capaneus’ more ambitious itinerary through heavens, allowing Statius’ conclusion to paint the poet as having kept in poetic terms to what

Seneca had often referred to as “the middle path” moral action (cf. Seneca *Oed.* 890–891 (*media... via*), 899–900; [Seneca] *Herc. Oet.* 675 (*medium... iter*)), 683). Statius’ *Thebaid*’s first book thus describes Capaneus’ spear (uniquely) as “aerial” (*aeria*, 1, 669) so as to prefigure his end in Book 10, where he “prepares for himself an aerial path” (*aerium sibi portat iter*, 10, 842 (a mannered periphrasis for a ladder)) that allows him to be “heard among the stars” (*mediis... auditus in astris*, 898). Capaneus’ aerial journey, recalling Lucretius’ image of Epicurus’ flight of the mind storming of the heavens (*De rerum natura* 1, 62–79), represents a particular kind of poetic ambition repudiated by the epic’s conclusion: if Capaneus prepares this path for himself, it is *Fama* that will safely prepare a path for Statius’ poem, and, thereby, for the poet himself. These two Statian episodes, and their keywords (including Statius’ *tempta*) are in turn brought triumphantly together in the prologue of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, “That with no middle flight intends to soar / Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues / Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme” (14–16).

Tellingly, Statius’ warning concerning following Virgil’s path too closely (especially the key-word *tempta*) follows Virgil’s own formulation in the *Georgics* very closely (see above). In doing so, it also gives a variation on one of Quintilian’s instructions, while preserving its meta-poetic vocabulary of the path to be followed: Homer is first, Virgil second, while “the rest follow long behind” (*ceteri omnes longe sequuntur*, Quintilian *Inst.* 10, 1, 86). Beyond this, the warning also has rich Hellenistic lineage that turns Statius’ envoi into a “window allusion” through Virgil to earlier Greek poets. Beyond reminiscences of Callimachus (fr. 1, 27–28), Statius’ envoi recalls specifically a poem from a generation following

Callimachus by Antipater of Sidon, who praised a poem by Antimachus of Colophon that is likely to be the same *Thebaid* mocked by Callimachus: one should read Antimachus’ *Thebaid* “if you would pursue a path untrodden and unapproached by others” (εἰ τὰν ἄτριπτον καὶ ἀνέμβατον ἀτραπὸν ἄλλοις / μαίεαι, *Anthologia Palatina* 7, 409, 5–6), if only to recognize that “the Colophonian submits to Homer, but leads the crowd of the other poets” (Κολοφῶνος ὑπέζευκται μὲν Ὀμήρῳ, / ἀγέται δ’ ἄλλων πλάθεος ὕμνοπόλων, 9–10). In the Renaissance, Poliziano would in turn recommend the study of Statius in terms borrowed from Statius and from the metaphoric vocabulary of the path upon which he drew: “Let us attempt therefore untouched paths, and leave behind the old well-trodden ones” (*nouas... intactas vias ingrediamur, ueteres tritasque relinquamus*, Poliziano *Oratio super Fabio* etc. (1480)). Yet more famously, Dante had claimed that he himself would be pushed “along a crowded path behind my leader [=Virgil]” (*per la ’mpacciata via dietro al mio duca*, Dant. *Purg.* 21, 5) shortly before meeting Statius himself, who adores Virgil as poet, but can come closer to Paradise than him as Christian.

[AK]

7.2. The metaphor of travel in the epigrams of Antiphilus of Byzantium

Antiphile de Byzance était un épigrammatiste de langue grecque actif durant le 2^e tiers du 1^{er} siècle ap. J.-C. Omniprésent, le thème de la navigation devait ainsi constituer l’un des fils directeurs du recueil d’Antiphile. Étant donnée la fréquente association entre navigation et conduite du poème ou du livre par son auteur, certaines de ces évocations de voyages en mer devaient se prêter à une lecture métapoétique.