

Delendane est Karthago? Metrical Wordplay and the Text of Horace *Odes* 4.8

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0. The problem (lack of caesura in line 17):

non incendia Karthaginis impiae

‘not the burning of unholy Carthage’

Metrical scheme of the *Lesser Asclepiadean*:

– – – u u – | – u u – u – (where | = required caesura)

Karthago < Phoenician *Qrt – Hdšt*

1. The passage (*Odes* 4.8.13–20):

*Non incisa notis marmora publicis,
per quae spiritus et uita redit bonis
post mortem ducibus, non celeres fugae
reiectaeque retrorsum Hannibalis minae,*

Not marble statues with their public inscriptions, that allow the breath of life to return to good generals after death; not Hannibal’s headlong rout and the hurling back of his threats;

*non incendia Karthaginis impiae,
eius qui domitā nomen ab Africā
lucratus rediit, clarius indicant
laudes quam Calabriae Pierides (...).*

not the burning of unholy Carthage — none of these proclaims more vividly the feats of him, who returned home from the subjugation of Africa enriched with a name, than do the Muses of Calabria (...).¹

2. The seeming absurdity (J. N. Madvig, 1873):

What could be more perversely excogitated than to join, in one comparison, inscriptions with the very deeds of Scipio, and to say that inscriptions *and victories* are worse at conferring praise than poems are?

Quid excogitari perversius potest, quam ut in hac comparatione cum marmore coniungantur ipsae res gestae Scipionis et hoc dicatur, non marmora et victorias melius laudes indicare quam carmina?

3. The inscriptional style (*C.I.L.* 1.7.1–4):

*Cornelius Lucius Scipio Barbatus
Gnaiod patre prognatus, fortis vir sapiensque,
quoius forma virtutei parisuma fuit,
consol censor aidilis quei fuit apud vos (...)*

Lucius Cornelius Scipio Barbatus,
born of his father Gnaeus, a brave and wise man,
whose beauty was equal to his virtue,
who was consul, censor, and aedile among you (...)

4. The historical inaccuracy (Bentley 1728, part i):

What is this, my good men? Did Horace have no friend (for he used to read everything to his friends before publication) who would have been able, or would have wanted, to remove such a blatant mistake? — who could have revealed to Horace the *oh-so-recherché* fact that there were *two Scipios with the cognomen Africanus*? It’s absurd! Well then, you may say, what will come of this? How the heck are you going to get your Horace out of this mess? The truth is that, with Old Cato, I maintain that *Carthage must be eliminated!*

¹ Translation is from the Loeb (ed. N. Rudd), slightly modified. All other translations are my own.

Quid enim vultis, o boni? nullumne habuit amicorum (recitare enim iis sua omnia ante editionem solebat) qui tam conspicuum errorem tollere posset aut vellet? qui tam reconditum arcanum proderet, duos fuisse Scipiones cognomine Africanos? O rem ridiculam! sed interea quid fiet, dices: quo tandem pacto Venusinum tuum ex crimine evolues? Ego vero cum prisco Catone Carthaginem delendam esse censeo.

5. The metrical irregularity (Bentley 1728, part ii):

Never, not once... did our poet violate this rule in the Asclepiadean meter. So we've caught the rascal interpolator red-handed! Ignorant of metrical art, he set a caesura in the middle of a word and wrote:
Non incendia Car | thaginis impiae.

Numquam ne semel quidem... discessit ab hac regulā Noster, in versu Asclepiadeo. Captum itaque tenemus tenebrionem, qui modorum et artis imperitus caesuram in mediā voce constituit, 'Non incendia Car | thaginis impiae'.

6. Ritter's defense (edition of 1856):

a.) Compound words split over caesurae elsewhere in Horace:

Odes 2.12.25 cum flagrantia detorquet ad oscula --- u u - | - u u - u - (*Lesser Ascl.*)
Odes 1.18.16 arcanique fides prodiga perlucidior uitro --- u u - | - u u - | - u u - u - (*Greater Ascl.*)

b.) Roman knowledge of the etymology of Carthage (Servius on *Aeneid* 1.366):

'For Carthage is, in the Punic language, 'New City', as Livy teaches us.'

Carthago enim est linguā Poenorum nova civitas, ut docet Livius.

7. Glossing in Augustan Poetry:

a.) In Horace (on *Lyaeus* as 'releaser'; Λυαῖος < λύειν. λύειν = *soluere*):

curam metumque Caesaris rerum iuuat it's nice to **release** one's care and fear for Caesar's affairs
dulci Lyaeo soluere. with some sweet *Lyaeus*. (*Ep.* 9.37–8)

b.) In Vergil (on *Dido* as 'wanderer' in Punic):

- 1.) *femina, quae nostris errans in finibus...* the woman who, **wandering** in our land... (*A.* 4.211)
- 2.) *urit infelix Dido totāque uagatur* unhappy Dido burns, and in her madness **wanders**
urbe furens throughout the entire city (*A.* 4.68–9)
- 3.) *inter quas Phoenissa recens a uulnere Dido* among whom Punic Dido, with her wound still fresh,
errabat siluā in magnā **was wandering** in a huge forest (*A.* 6.450–1)

c.) In Vergil (on *Karthago* as 'New City' in Punic):

- 1.) ... *utque nouae pateant Karthaginis arces* ... and so that the citadels of **new Carthage** be open
hospitio Teucris to receive the Trojans (*A.* 1.298–9)
- 2.) ... *ubi nunc ingentia cernes* ... where presently you will behold the huge walls
moenia surgentemque nouae Karthaginis arcem and rising citadel of **new Carthage** (*A.* 1.365–6)

8. Similar multi-lingual metrical wordplay in Vergil?

haec secum: mene incepto desistere uictam? (saying) the following to herself: 'am I to cease,
mēnin | -cepto defeated, from what I have begun?' (*A.* 1.37)
~ μῆνιν

APPENDIX: *Conspectus Editionum*

1.) No modifications to transmitted text.

> THOMAS 2011; PUTNAM 1986; WICKHAM 1901.

Donarem pateras grataque commodus,
 Censorine, meis aera sodalibus,
 donarem tripodas, praemia fortium
 Graiorum; neque tu pessima munerum
 ferres, diuite me scilicet artium (5)
 quas aut Parrhasius protulit aut Scopas,
 hic saxo, liquidis ille coloribus
 sollers nunc hominem ponere, nunc deum.
 sed non haec mihi uis, nec tibi talium
 res est aut animus deliciarum egens. (10)
 gaudes carminibus: carmina possumus
 donare et pretium dicere muneri.
 non incisa notis marmora publicis,
 per quae spiritus et uita redit bonis
 post mortem ducibus, non celeres fugae(15)
 reiectaeque retrorsum Hannibalis minae,
 non incendia Karthaginis impiae
 eius qui domita nomen ab Africa
 lucratus rediit clarius indicant
 laudes quam Calabriae Pierides, neque (20)
 si chartae sileant quod bene feceris
 mercedem tuleris: quid foret Iliae
 Mauortisque puer si taciturnitas
 obstaret meritis inuida Romuli?
 ereptum Stygiis fluctibus Aeacum (25)
 uirtus et fauor et lingua potentium
 uatum diuitibus consecrat insulis:
 dignum laude uirum Musa uetat mori.
 caelo Musa beat: sic Iouis interest
 optatis epulis impiger Hercules. (30)
 clarum Tyndaridae sidus ab infimis
 quassas eripiunt aequoribus ratis,
 ornatus uiridi tempora pampino
 Liber uota bonos ducit ad exitus.

2.) *Lacuna* posited after v. 32.

> KOVACS 2009.

Donarem pateras grataque commodus,
 Censorine, meis aera sodalibus,
 donarem tripodas, praemia fortium
 Graiorum; neque tu pessima munerum
 ferres, diuite me scilicet artium (5)
 quas aut Parrhasius protulit aut Scopas,
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 clarum Tyndaridae sidus ab infimis
 quassas eripiunt aequoribus ratis.

< *desunt duo*
uel sex uu. >

ornatus uiridi tempora pampino
 Liber uota bonos duxit² ad exitus.

² *duxit* A B λ1 : *ducit* R ψ σχ

3.) Two verses deleted (17 and 33).

> HARRISON 1990; KIESSLING-HEINZE 1958;
PASQUALI 1920. (BENTLEY 1728 deletes **only v. 17.**)

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Censorine, meis aera sodalibus,
donarem tripodas, praemia fortium
Graiorum; neque tu pessima munerum

ferres, diuite me scilicet artium (5)
quas aut Parrhasius protulit aut Scopas,
hic saxo, liquidis ille coloribus
sollers nunc hominem ponere, nunc deum.

sed non haec mihi uis, nec tibi talium
res est aut animus deliciarum egens. (10)
gaudes carminibus: carmina possumus
donare et pretium dicere muneri.

non incisa notis marmora publicis,
per quae spiritus et uita redit bonis
post mortem ducibus, non celeres³ fugae(15)
reiectaeque retrorsum Hannibalis minae,
[non incendia Karthaginis impiae]

eius qui domita nomen ab Africa
lucratus rediit clarius indicant
laudes quam Calabriae Pierides, neque (20)
si chartae sileant quod bene feceris

mercedem tuleris: quid foret Iliae
Mauortisque puer si taciturnitas
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uirtus et fauor et lingua potentium
uatum diuitibus consecrat insulis:
dignum laude uirum Musa uetat mori.
caelo Musa beat: sic Iouis interest

optatis epulis impiger Hercules. (30)
clarum Tyndaridae sidus ab infimis
quassas eripiunt aequoribus ratis,
[ornatus uiridi tempora pampino]
Liber uota bonos ducit ad exitus.

4.) Six verses deleted (15b–19a, 28, 33).

> SHACKLETON BAILEY 2008, KLINGNER 1959, and
FEDELI 2008, all following LACHMANN 1846.

Donarem pateras grataque commodus,
Censorine, meis aera sodalibus,
donarem tripodas, praemia fortium
Graiorum; neque tu pessima munerum

ferres, diuite me scilicet artium (5)
quas aut Parrhasius protulit aut Scopas,
hic saxo, liquidis ille coloribus
sollers nunc hominem ponere, nunc deum.

sed non haec mihi uis, nec tibi talium
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non incisa notis marmora publicis,
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post mortem ducibus, [non celeres fugae(15)
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non incendia Karthaginis impiae
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ereptum Stygiis fluctibus Aeacum (25)
uirtus et fauor et lingua potentium
uatum diuitibus consecrat insulis:
[dignum laude uirum Musa uetat mori.]
caelo Musa beat: sic Iouis interest

optatis epulis impiger Hercules. (30)
clarum Tyndaridae sidus ab infimis
quassas eripiunt aequoribus ratis,
[ornatus uiridi tempora pampino]
Liber uota bonos ducit ad exitus.

³ *celebres* Harrison.

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