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A HIPPONACTEAN ECHO IN CATULLUS (*FRIGUS*, 44.20)

Catullan commentary has had little to say about Hipponax, beyond superficial references to the traditional metrical background of Catullus' choliambics.¹ When the pre-Callimachean Greek iambic tradition is invoked, Hipponax typically (and not without reason) receives second billing to Archilochus.² Nevertheless, the "colore ipponatteo" of Catullan (as well as Lucilian and Horatian) invective has been clearly established, even if demonstrable Hipponactean verbal reminiscences are somewhat elusive, and even if some of the "Hipponactean" coloration must be attributed to the mediating influence of Callimachus.³ As for the meter, one may say that Catullan choliambic poetry adopts not merely the Hipponactean metrical framework,⁴ but also the ethos of the Greek poet's use of the meter. This correlation has been perceptively signaled by Douglas Thomson, who has emphasized that Catullus "uses the choliambic metre . . . as a rule . . . for serious attacks."⁵

The Hipponactean ethos can be discerned far more broadly in Catullus' handling of characteristic themes and topoi, as discussed by Massimo Lenchantin de Gubernatis and others. One such recurring topos involves the discomforts of cold, as in fragments 42 Dg (32 W), 43 Dg (34 W), 61 Dg (59 W), and 194.9–11 Dg (115.9–11 W). Despite the silence of commentators on this connection, it is worth considering the possibility of a Hipponactean background to Catullus' choliambic Poem 44, the ostensible subject of which is his *gravedo frigida*, accompanied by a *frequens tussis*.

1. Citations of the fragments of Hipponax use the text and numeration of Degani 1983 (hereafter, Dg; texts, with notes and translations, also available in Degani 2007), together with the numeration of West 1989 (W). Translations are from West 1994.

Let it be recalled that choliambic meter might well have been used before Hipponax, despite frequent assertions (e.g., Courtney 1993, 105, or Godwin 1999, 6, 19) that Hipponax "invented" the scazon. As rightly observed by Masson (1962, 22, with earlier references), the traditional attribution of priority to Hipponax "sert surtout à montrer quel est l'écrivain qui a illustré le premier ce type de vers. Au-delà d'Hipponax, le problème est insoluble."

2. E.g., Syndikus 1984, 211 (ad Catull. 37), 221 (ad 40), 285 n. 2 (ad 59). A rare exception (192, ad 33): "Diebes- und Lumpenmilieu kennt man seit Hipponax als Thema jambischer Dichtung." In a more extended compass: Wray 2001, 167–89, on "Archilochian" modes of invective in Catullus.

3. On Catullus and Alexandrian choliambic poetry, see, e.g., Syndikus 1984, 41. The Italian phrase derives from chapter 9 ("Colore ipponatteo della poesia catulliana") of Lenchantin de Gubernatis 1933, lxxxvii–lxxxix. For a balanced discussion of the issue, see Degani 1984, 67–68, with further references, among which Koenen (1977) deserves special mention, despite the uncertainty of some of his specific textual claims; see the critique by Degani (1981), as well as Degani 1993. Rosen (1988, 35 n. 23) discusses possible parallels between Catullus and Hipponax frag. 20 Dg (12 W).

4. With, as is well known, variations derived from Callimachus' practice; on the most salient (i.e., the disallowed spondaic variant preceding the final two syllables), see Courtney 1993, 105 (ad Matius frag. 16).

5. Thomson 1997, 346 (ad Catull. 60); similarly 259 (ad 22), and further 284 (ad 31, the only real exception to this generalization; on this problem see also Syndikus 1984, 189).

To be sure, Catullus engages here in some complex and un-Hipponactean forms of parody, and it is widely agreed that this incorporates a literary-critical barb against the “frigidity” of the oration by Sestius referred to in the poem.⁶ Still, just as Hipponax laments his bursting chilblains (frag. 43.4 Dg, 34.4 W), Catullus pointedly refers to his cough, with forms of *tussis* repeated three times in line-final position: *expulsi tussim* (44.7), *frequens tussis* (44.13), *gravedinem et tussim* (44.19). John Godwin is almost alone among commentators to have noted that the appearance of *tussis* in just this metrical locus is a highly effective touch⁷—that is, so to speak, exactly where the regular iambic rhythm suddenly coughs up a trochee.⁸ The same touch appears in a choliambic poem of Martial, where the full stop preceding the line-final *tussit* reinforces the effect by marked syntactic means (*quid ergo in illa petitur et placet? tussit*, 1.10.4).⁹ The technique of pointing up loaded words by line-final position¹⁰ (and sometimes poem-final position) is far from isolated in Catullan choliambics: two of the most “Hipponactean” of Catullus’ abusive choliambics end with a word meaning “urine”: *et dens Hibera defricatus urina* (37.20), *hoc te amplius bibisse praedicet loti* (39.21)—and the fixation of Hipponax with bodily effusions (including urine) hardly requires detailed comment.¹¹

It may be objected that the chill of winter is not the same as the chill of a head cold; and yet “cold” is “cold.” The freighted word *frigus* in this poem (cf. *gravedo frigida*, 44.13) appears line-finally at 44.20 (following the final cough in 44.19), the next-to-last line of the poem, and is highlighted by alliteration and assonance: *non mihi, sed ipsi Sestio ferat frigus*. Compare, first of all, the full context of the Hipponax fragment referring to chilblains, mentioned above (frag. 43 Dg, 34 W):

ἔμοι γὰρ οὐκ ἔδωκας οὐτέ κω χλαῖναν
 δασεῖαν ἐν χειμῶνι φάρμακον ῥίγεος,
 οὐτ’ ἀσκέρησι τοὺς πόδας δασεῖησι
 ἔκρυψας, ὥς μοι μὴ χίμετλα ῥήγνυται.

6. See especially Fordyce 1961, 197–98; on various levels of literary parody (disputing Fordyce’s judgment that “[t]he piece is merely a vehicle for the pun on *frigus*,” and with particular reference to earlier work by Heusch and Ronconi on the marked use of archaisms in the poem), see Jones 1968.

7. See Godwin 1999, 163, on the “expressive language” in 44.13–14, including the “emphasised onomatopoeic final word *tussis*” at 44.13.

8. As pointed out to me some years ago by David Coffin (Phillips Exeter Academy), the regular spacing of the intervals at which this *frequens tussis* erupts is also iconically effective (an observation I have not seen elsewhere).

9. The parallel with Catullus is noted neither by Howell (1980) nor by Swann (1994). On this placement of the pointed “paradox” at the end of Martial’s scazons (like *tussit*, 1.10.4, *pallet*, 1.77.1–6, *laudes*, 1.89.6), see Tanner 1986, 2645 with n. 40, though one need not accept Tanner’s (to my mind improbable) metrical etiology of this feature, involving a Saturnian intermediary affecting Roman adaptation of the Greek scazon.

10. The locus, predictably, of a pun in Antiphanes (frag. 225 KA, line 7) recently studied by Leigh (2004), where the analysis turns precisely on the possibility of scanning an iambic trimeter as a scazon, given an ambiguous vowel quantity in the line-final word.

11. For urination and defecation, see, e.g., frags. 73 Dg (73 W): ὤμειξε δ’ αἶμα καὶ χολὴν ἐτίλησεν, 79.6 Dg (79.6 W): [κάνετιλ]ησε[, 95.9 Dg (92.9 W): παραπι[δ]άζων βολβίτωι[, 138 Dg (144 W): βολβίτου κασιγνήτην. The repeated reference to teeth in Catullus 39 (cf. also 37.20; on this motif in 39.20, see Katz 2000) calls to mind recurring Hipponactean dental motifs, including (1) the teeth themselves (frags. 132 Dg [73.4 W]: ὀδόντες [line-final in West’s reconstruction], 194.11 [115.11 W]: ὀδόντας, and possibly 95.13 Dg [92.13 W]: ὀδ.[]; (2) gnashing (frag. 107.15 Dg [104.15 W]: ἐπιβρύκων [line-final]); (3) gnawing (frags. 32 Dg [66 W]: τρώγει [line-final], 36.5 Dg [26.5 W]: τρώγων [line-final]; and (4) biting (frags. 39.6 Dg [28.6 W]: δάκνη, 86.11 Dg [84.11 W]: ἐδάκμεν).

For thou hast never granted me a cloak
 thick in the winter to cure me of the shivers,
 nor hast thou wrapped my feet in thick fur boots
 to stop my chilblains bursting.

Thus line-final ῥίγεις (disyllabic, with synizesis) is metrically and (apart from the case form) lexically equivalent to *frigus* in Catullus 44.20.¹² Nor is this the only such instance in Hipponax: the metrical/lexical equation is reinforced by a second line-final disyllabic occurrence of a form based on ῥίγ- (in this instance a verb form), in a fragment of very similar content (frag. 42a.2–4 Dg [32.2–4 W]), or, following West, from another part of the same poem:

ἐπεύχομαί τοι κάρτα γὰρ κακῶς ῥίγῳ
 καὶ βαμβαλύζω . . .
 δὲς χλαῖναν Ἰππώνακτι καὶ κυπασσίσκον

hear thou my prayer, for I am bloody frozen,
 my teeth are chattering . . .
 Grant Hipponax a cloak and a nice tunic

In the end, little of the “colore ipponatteo” in fact remains in Catullus’ typically sophisticated composition. What does remain—just barely—is a faint but clear lexical and metrical echo of the *mot clé* of this prominent Hipponactean topos.

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12. It can hardly be doubted that the phonetic and semantic similarities (as well as that involving gender) between Gk. ῥίγεις and Lat. *frigus*—far tighter than many of the Graeco-Latin etymologies retailed by Varro—would have been striking to Catullus. Whether he would have appreciated the words’ actual linguistic cognacy in something like the modern sense is beside the point, as is the fact that the *literary* pun involving Lat. *frigidus/frigus* (n. 6 above) is based on other Greek vocabulary (ψυχρός, ψυχρότης).

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SUETONIUS *GALBA* 1: BEGINNING OR ENDING?

progenies Caesarum in Nerone defecit: quod futurum compluribus quidem signis, sed vel evidentissimis duobus apparuit. Liviae olim post Augusti statim nuptias Veientanum suum revisenti praetervolans aquila gallinam albam ramulum lauri rostro tenentem, ita ut rapuerat, demisit in gremium; cumque nutrir alitem, pangi ramulum placuisset, tanta pullorum suboles provenit, ut hodieque ea villa “ad Gallinas” vocetur, tale vero lauretum, ut triumphaturi Caesares inde laureas decerperent; fuitque mos triumphantibus, alias confestim eodem loco pangere; et observatum est sub cuiusque obitum arborem ab ipso institutam elanguisse. ergo novissimo Neronis anno et silva omnis exaruit radicitus, et quidquid ibi gallinarum erat interiit. ac subinde tacta de caelo Caesarum aede capita omnibus simul statuis deciderunt, Augusti etiam sceptrum e manibus excussum est.

The descendants of the Caesars ended with Nero. That it would be so was foretold by several omens, but two were especially clear. Once when Livia was staying at her Veientine estate shortly after her marriage to Augustus, an eagle flying past dropped into her lap a white hen still holding a laurel twig in its beak from when it was snatched. She chose to raise the chicken and plant the twig, and the result was an offspring of chicks so great that the villa is now called “The Henhouse,” and such a laurel grove that the Caesars used to pick laurels there for triumphs, usually planting others quickly in the same place without delay; and it was observed that before the death of each, the tree that he had begun wilted. Accordingly in Nero’s last year not only did the whole grove dry up by the root but the last of the hens died too. Then immediately afterwards the temple of the Caesars was struck by lightning and the heads toppled from all the statues at once; even Augustus’ scepter was knocked out of his hands.

Suetonius *Galba* 1

In his *Tacitus* Ronald Syme suggested the possibility that the last six biographies of Suetonius’ *Caesars* (*Galba* through *Domitian*), which are thought to form the final two of eight books,¹ may not have been part of the author’s original design, but were written later as a sequel. In Syme’s opinion the first six *Lives* seemed a self-contained hexad: “Six books, one for each ruler, embraced the Caesars in their dynastic sequence from the Dictator to Nero: a fitting term and climax, rounded off

I wish to thank Stephen Oakley and Timothy Duff for commenting on earlier drafts of this paper, as well as the anonymous referee for constructive criticism. The text followed is the Teubner edition of M. Ihm (Leipzig, 1908). All translations are my own.

1. The eight book divisions of Ihm’s Teubner are based on the evidence of the *Suda* (τ 895), for which see C. L. Roth, ed., *C. Suetoni Tranquilli quae supersunt omnia* (Leipzig, 1858), xi–xii, 283. Casaubon conjectured in 1595 that since the last six *Lives* are much shorter than the first six, Books 7 and 8 must have contained three *Lives* each; see Ihm’s Teubner, vii–ix. This results in eight books of relatively comparable length.