

On Catalepton 5

1. Ite hinc, inanes, ite, rhetorum ampullae,
Inflata † rhuso † non Achaico verba,
Et vos, Selique Tarquitique Varroque,
Scholasticorum natio madens pingui,
5. Ite hinc, inanis cymbalon iuventutis.

For line 2, K. Münscher (Hermes XLVII. p. 153) suggests *rhoezo*, which is palaeographically excellent, and which in general has won much approval. For this and other emendations cf. REH Westendorp Boerma's edition (1949) pp. 108—10.

But there are objections to *rhoezo*: the other "Greek" words in the Catalepton (*rhetor* 2.2, 5.1, *tyrannus* 2.3, *ampulla* 5.1, *scholasticus* 5.4, *cymbalon* 5.5, *charta* 5.13, 7.13, *pothos*? 7.2, *polus* 9.28, *pontus* 9.47, *historia* 11.6, *pharetra* 14.10) are quite familiar in Latin literature, whereas *rhoezus* is not found at all;— its meaning varies considerably, and it is not obviously appropriate in this poem.

Further, it makes line 2 contain a harsh metaphor, whereas the other metaphors in the poem are simple and unaffected. I would suggest *prosa non Achaica*, which is in harmony with the simple style of the poet. The MSS are so corrupt that the error *rhuso* is easily explainable.

It is true that *prosa* as a noun is not found before Quintilian (1.5.13 &c.). The adjectival use is in Velleius (1.17.3) Columella (11.11.1) and Pliny (NH 5.31). But *scholasticus* (line 4) is not found as a noun before Petronius (6.1, 39.5, 61.4): and if the Vergilian authorship of this poem be doubted, the objection is less strong. *Prosa* would be appropriate, not only in its context of rhetorical "criticism", but as opposed to the affection for poetry expressed in lines 11—14.