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Point and periodicity: the style of Velleius Paterculus and other Latin historians writing in the early Principate

Abstract: This paper examines what may be said about the style of Latin historians who were contemporary with the elder Seneca. Most space is devoted to Velleius Paterculus, but also discussed are L. Arruntius, Pompeius Trogus, Cremutius Cordus, Bruttidius Niger, and Aufidius Bassus. There is discussion of the periodic and pointed styles, of poetical language, of the use of clausulae, and of imitation of Sallust and Livy.

‘Er [Velleius] will nicht mit Livius verglichen sein (man kann eben nicht Heterogenes vergleichen), sondern mit Nepos einerseits und Florus anderseits: jener schreibt wie ein puer für pueri, dieser wie ein insanus für insani: den Velleius liest man gern von Anfang bis zu Ende, nicht als Menschen oder als Historiker, aber als Schriftsteller, der in der Manier selten kindisch oder absurd wird.’¹

To write about Latin prose-style is fraught with difficulties. First, the very notion ‘style’ is difficult to define: by what should we measure it? Second, such a small percentage of Latin prose survives. Third, even if all Latin prose survived, how far should we be able to generalize about the shared qualities exhibited by any one epoch? How far when examining our own prose-style can we distinguish between what is characteristic of our generation and what reflects own personalities? Despite these difficulties, in this paper an attempt will be made to look at what might be said about styles used in the writing of history in the two generations after the publication of the surviving books of Livy.

For the period between Caesar’s death and c.10 BC (by which date all the extant books of Livy must have been written) we have substantial remains of two historical writers, Sallust and Livy. From then until the accession of Claudius in AD 41 we have substantial remains of just one, Velleius Paterculus. If Quintus Curtius Rufus be Vespasianic or even later, then the figure remains at one for

I thank Professor M.C. Scappaticcio for the kind invitation to speak at the conference on the elder Seneca’s *Histories*: since the style in which Seneca composed that work remains unknown, these thoughts on the styles used by his contemporaries were offered as a substitute. I thank also Professor A.J. Woodman for improving an earlier draft of this essay.

1 Dr C.L. Whitton and Professor A.J. Woodman *Norden* (1915) 1. 303.

about eighty years, rising finally to three with Tacitus in the reign of Trajan. For this reason most of this essay will be concerned with Velleius. The quantity of fragments of writers surviving only through quotation by others is pitiful, a fact illustrated more clearly by the slender scope of the second volume of Peter's *Historicorum Romanorum reliquiae* than by Cornell's *The fragments of the Roman historians* (*FRHist*), where the listing of all Roman historians together, although entirely sensible in itself, obscures the boundary in which I am interested.

The most substantial fragment, however, comes from a writer not included in either Peter's or Cornell's volumes: Pompeius Trogus. It is often forgotten that Justin, in his *Epitome* of Trogus' work, includes a full unepitomized speech in *oratio obliqua* that Trogus wrote for Mithridates (38.4.1–7.10). Otherwise, almost all the fragments about the style of which something of interest may be said come from *Suasoria* 6 of the elder Seneca, on the death of Cicero, where among historians Pollio (*FRHist* 56), Livy, Cremutius Cordus (*FRHist* 71), Bruttidius Niger (*FRHist* 72), and Aufidius Bassus (*FRHist* 78) all feature. Pollio I shall not discuss: many of the tastes of this acquaintance of Cicero and Catullus must have been formed before either Sallust or Livy wrote; and although Sallust may have had some influence on his style and manner,² his history was written too early to be influenced by Livy. Of other writers contemporary with the elder Seneca it is possible to say something about the style of Lucius Arruntius (*FRHist* 58) and a very small amount about that of Fenestella (*FRHist* 70), but almost nothing about Agrippa, Augustus, Messalla Corvinus, Labienus, Julius Hyginus, Clodius Licinus, Marathus, Drusus, Aquilius Niger, Julius Saturninus, Alfius (*FRHist* 59–69), the emperor Tiberius, the elder Seneca himself, and the emperor Claudius (*FRHist* 73–75).

I shall look in particular at five aspects of the style of these historians, although not every aspect is relevant to every historian. First, their use of the poetical and archaic language found earlier in Sallust and Livy and later in Tacitus – but this topic will feature but little, since neither the fragments nor Velleius Paterculus offer much evidence for it.

Second, their adoption of a method of narration that involves the use of extensive hypotactic subordination, often called periodicity. It is vain to seek either a compelling ancient definition of the periodic sentence or to hold up certain types as 'ideal' and to cast judgement on ancient authors as to whether or not their periodicity matched such an ideal.³ Nevertheless, Caesar, especially in the *De bello Gallico*, and Livy both made frequent use of a type of sentence which

² Woodman (1988) 127–128.

³ On the difficulty of defining the periodic sentence, see Reinhardt *et al.* (2005) 7–14.

built up through a series of subordinate clauses or phrases to a climax. A good example is provided by Livy 5.27.2, which deals with the famous episode of the Faliscan schoolmaster's marching the children of the leaders of his city into the camp of the besieging Camillus:

is [the Faliscan schoolmaster] *cum in pace instituisset pueros ante urbem lusus exercendique causa producere, nihil eo more per belli tempus intermisso, modo brevioribus modo longioribus spatiis trahendo eos a porta, lusu sermonibusque uariatis, longius solito ubi res dedit progressus, inter stationes eos hostium castraque inde Romana in praetorium ad Camillum perduxit.*

Here the betrayal by the schoolmaster is narrated in one sentence, in which after a series of subordinated actions a climactic main clause takes the eyes of readers or, if the passage was ever recited, the ears of listeners through the outposts of the Romans, into the camp, into the commander's tent or building, and face-to-face with Camillus. Caesar's periods tend to have a structure that is easier to follow than those of Livy, with frequent use of the ablative absolute, Livy's one that is more challenging, and hence more exciting. Although in modern times those learning Latin have often been taught to write in this way, sentences with such structures are highly artificial.⁴

Third, historians' adoption of the so-called pointed style, and other techniques associated with declamation. The practice of declamation became widespread from the 40s BC onwards, and no one needs now to be reminded of its profound influence on the style of both Latin prose and Latin verse in the period between Ovid and Juvenal. Prime features of this style include a striving for point, often manifesting itself in antithesis (regularly being found together with a sentence-structure that exhibits precise balance) or ingeniously contrived terminal *sententiae* (themselves often featuring antithesis), apostrophe, a depiction of the gruesome, and purple passages of prose written in a highly ornate style and unusually replete with rhetorical figures. This style is far removed from that of Caesar or Livy. In what follows, in passages quoted that feature antithesis the words or phrases set against each other are identified by raised letters. This may be illustrated from the opening paragraph of Velleius' work (1.1.2):

⁴ See the excellent essay of Mayer (2005). All the sentences in Velleius that I term periodic build up to a main clause and verb through various subordinated members; but the main clause does not always end the sentence as it does in the example from Livy just quoted.

*Agamemnon . . . tres ibi urbes statuit, ^Aduas ^Ba ^Cpatriae ^Dnomine, ^Aunam ^Ba ^Cuictoriae ^Dmemoria, Mycenae Tegeam Pergamum.*⁵

Fourth, historians' adoption of the particular prose-rhythms associated most famously with Cicero, a practice that has proved notoriously difficult precisely to analyse. The habit of punctuating both sentences and internal pauses within sentences with rhythmical cadences began in Hellenistic oratory, from which it emerges in Latin prose first in Cicero and the anonymous treatise *Ad Herennium*. It becomes prevalent in the first century AD, with Mela, the younger Seneca, Petronius, Quintilian, and the younger Pliny all prime exponents of the technique.⁶ Sallust and Livy did not use the rhythms favoured by Cicero, nor did Caesar before them. One might suspect that in Caesar's and Livy's cases avoidance of them was deliberate: drawing attention to the pauses within sentences hardly helped the onward sweep of their periodicity. In his historical works Tacitus scarcely used such rhythms, perhaps an aspect of his Sallustian imitation, but Curtius Rufus' prose is regularly clausulated.⁷ John Briscoe has noted that such clausulae occur sporadically in the surviving fragments of early imperial historians,⁸ and it is well known that Velleius employed them. To illustrate the practice, in the passages of Latin that are quoted below the ends of sentences that exhibit these clausulae will be marked with the standard notation of scansion and will be categorized according to the following scheme.

- 1) — u — — x = cretic + trochee or spondee
- 1a) uu u — — x
- 1b) — u uu — x
- 1c) — u — uu x
- 1d) uu u uu — x
- 2 — u — — u x = double cretic
- 2a) uu u — — u x
- 2b) — u uu — u x
- 2c) — u— uu u x
- 3) — u — x = double trochee or trochee + spondee
- 3a) — u — — u — x (the same preceded by a cretic)
- 3b) — u uu x
- 4) — — — — u x = molossus + cretic

⁵ I cite this example simply to explain how antitheses will be marked; the sentence itself is not remarkable and could have been written by e.g. Cicero.

⁶ These authors all show a liking for the cadences based on cretics and trochees that Cicero had employed. Naturally, within this system they have slightly different preferences.

⁷ See especially Müller (1954) 755–782.

⁸ Briscoe in *FRHist* I 38.

- 4a) uu — — — u x
- 4b) — uu — — — u x
- 4c) — — uu — — u x
- 5) — u — u x = cretic + iambus (hypodochmiac)
- 5a) uu u — — u x
- 6) — — — x = double spondee or spondee + trochee

The six most favoured rhythms are numbered 1–6; variations of them caused by resolution of a heavy syllable into two light syllables are marked by a letter after the number (1a, 2a, etc.).⁹ With this notation the end of the first surviving sentence of Velleius (1.1.1) would be marked thus: *Mētāpōntūm cōndīdīt* |^{4a}, giving a molossus + cretic with the first heavy syllable of the molossus resolved.

Fifth, the influence of Sallust and, sixth, the influence of Livy. The most admired writers of prose tend to develop their own distinctive style, but even for them the influence of others can be hard to escape. In the ancient world the rhetorical training that allowed writers successfully to write in different styles provided them with the skills necessary for close imitation; and, in a literary culture that was so allusive, one should expect to find at least some later historians who imitate or at least who allude to these two literary giants. Since allusion may take the form of stylistic imitation, distinguishing between stylistic imitation and stylistic allusion is not always easy.

Imitation of Livy needs little discussion. That his history was much read in the century after his death is easy to demonstrate,¹⁰ but no extant writer offers a sustained imitation of his style. The most Livian of extant writers is Quintus Curtius Rufus,¹¹ but, although his language is steeped in Livian expressions, his sentence-structure, his use of *clausulae*, and his general tone makes him very different to read. The famous Lyons inscription (*CIL* XIII.1668) suggests that Livy's pupil, the emperor Claudius, may have rivalled Curtius in Livian reminiscence,¹² but virtually nothing survives of his historical work. There is much Livian vocabulary and allusion in Tacitus (after Sallust, Livy is among extant writers perhaps

⁹ Although writers who use this system of *clausulae* employed the final double spondee or spondee + trochee less often than it would naturally occur in Latin, it was clearly an acceptable cadence; how far they felt that it actually enhanced the rhythmicity of their prose may be doubted.

¹⁰ See e.g. Oakley (2016) 165–167.

¹¹ See e.g. Baynham (1998) 20–25, with further bibliography.

¹² See Last and Ogilvie (1958).

the most important influence on Tacitus' historical style), but no one has ever thought of Tacitus as a 'Livian' writer.¹³

With Sallust matters are different. The the abrupt and halting style, more pronounced in the *Iugurtha* and *Histories* than the *Catiline*, would probably at any time have been an attractive target for imitation, but all the more so in a literary culture in which the declamatory style, based on antithesis and point rather than periodicity, was becoming dominant. The cynical tone must have been attractive too, although the political circumstances of the Principate may have made writers cautious about employing it. Among extant historians Sallustian expressions appear often in Velleius Paterculus (on whom more below), Tacitus, and L. Septimius' translation of 'Dictys Cretensis';¹⁴ and once again no one needs to be told that Tacitus imitated and surpassed not just the expressions of Sallust but also his manner, tone, and sentence-structure. In another (but not entirely unrelated) genre,¹⁵ Sallustian reminiscences are to be found in the geographical treatise of Velleius' younger contemporary, Pomponius Mela.¹⁶

Arruntius

Consideration of the influence of Sallust leads naturally to discussion of Lucius Arruntius (*FRHist* 58), who has been made notorious by the amusing satire of the younger Seneca, writing about later imitation of stylistic vices (*epist.* 114.17–19):

Sic Sallustio uigente anputatae sententiae et uerba ante expectatum cadentia et obscura breuitas fuisse pro cultu. L. Arruntius, uir rarae frugalitatis, qui historias belli Punici scripsit, fuit Sallustianus et in illud genus nitens. est apud Sallustium: 'exercitum argento fecit', id est, pecunia parauit. Hoc Arruntius amare coepit; posuit illud omnibus paginis. dicit quodam loco 'fugam nostris fecere', alio loco 'Hiero, rex Syracusanorum, bellum fecit', et alio loco 'quae

¹³ On Tacitus' debt to Livy, see, in addition to the indices of the various commentaries, e.g. Syme (1958) 685–686, and Woodman (1979) 153 = (1998) 82.

¹⁴ For Septimius see Brunnert (1888); Sallustian influence on Tacitus is too well known to need documentation.

¹⁵ See Frick (1888) V–VII.

¹⁶ Woodman (1988) 146 wrote '[i]n the sensitive political atmosphere of the first century AD, when historians and their works were equally at risk, it is hardly surprising that writers chose to follow Livy rather than Sallust.' On imitation of Sallust's cynicism and tone, I have no evidence to set against this conclusion but suspect that imitation of Sallustian phraseology and other mannerisms of his style may have been more common than Woodman allows. Note *Sallustio uigente* in the passage of Seneca quoted below (admittedly likely to refer only to the early and mid-Augustan period) and perhaps Quint. *inst.* 10.2.17.

audita Panhormitanos dedere Romanis fecere'. (18) *gustum tibi dare uolui: totus his contexitur liber. quae apud Sallustium rara fuerunt, apud hunc crebra sunt et paene continua, nec sine causa; ille enim in haec incidebat, at hic illa quaerebat. uides autem quid sequatur ubi alicui uitium pro exemplo est.* (19) *dixit Sallustius 'aquis hiemantibus'. Arruntius in primo libro belli Punici ait: 'repente hiemauit tempestas', et alio loco cum dicere uellet frigidum annum fuisse ait: 'totus hiemauit annus', et alio loco 'inde sexaginta onerarias leues praeter militem et necessarios nautarum hiemante aquilone misit'. Non desinit omnibus locis hoc uerbum infulcire. quodam loco dicit Sallustius 'dum inter arma ciuilia aequi bonique famas petit'. Arruntius non temperauit, quo minus primo statim libro poneret ingentes esse 'famas' de Regulo.*

Which of the two Lucii Arruntii, father and son, wrote this history is not quite certain, but Levick, who provides a lucid review of the evidence, was probably right to assume that it was the consul of 22 BC.¹⁷ Such a date corresponds to a time when Sallust's influence is likely to have been at its height (note Seneca's *Sallustio uigente*), and suggests that Arruntius may have been born around 64 BC. He might well have known Sallust, but is unlikely to have wished to imitate a younger man such as Livy. Seneca's paragraph should not be taken entirely at face-value:¹⁸ he does show that Arruntius imitated the vocabulary of Sallust (perhaps the use of the plural *famas* is the most striking borrowing),¹⁹ but not all the criticisms are fair. For example, the use of *facere* + noun instead of a verb cognate with the noun is common enough, and *bellum facere* is found in Caesar and Livy.²⁰ Sadly, Seneca provides no evidence for a Sallustian sentence-structure, and there are no other fragments of Arruntius.

Pompeius Trogus

It is not easy precisely to date the writings of Trogus, but, if Arruntius has been dated correctly, Trogus perhaps published after him. The major difficulty in using the chapters quoted in full by Justin (38.4–7) to generalize about the style of Trogus comes from their being a speech of Mithridates in which he tries to rally his

¹⁷ See Levick in *FRHist* I 448–50.

¹⁸ For more on the expressions of Arruntius mentioned by Seneca, see Levick in *FRHist* III 533–534 and especially Woodman (2015) 125–126.

¹⁹ It is attested before Sallust (whose use of it is attested also by the Verona scholiast on Verg. *Aen.* 4.178) only at Plaut. *Trin.* 186; as Levick says in her commentary on F7, it was perhaps an archaism for Sallust.

²⁰ E.g. Caes. *Gall.* 3.29.3, 5.28.1, Liv. 1.38.3, 8.37.8. For further discussion of these expressions with *facere* see Woodman (2015) 126; he shows that our extant evidence allows us to parallel *fugam facere* in the sense 'put someone else to flight' in Livy but not Sallust.

troops for fighting against the Romans rather than narrative. No Roman historian wrote his speeches in quite the same style as his narrative and, in Trogus' case, Justin's observation (38.3.11) that he criticized Sallust and Livy for inserting speeches of excessive length into their works makes it very unlikely that he gave over a large proportion of his own work to speeches, whether direct or indirect. Justin's observation proves, what we should anyhow have guessed, that Trogus had read Sallust and Livy, and scholarly speculation about the nature of his history has tended to concentrate on the influence of these writers.

In Trogus' speech of Mithridates many themes occur that are very similar to those found in the letter that Sallust made Mithridates send to Arsaces (*hist.* 4.69 Maurenbrecher). These similarities have been comprehensively listed by Sellge;²¹ I repeat just two of the similar passages from his list:

Eumenen, quouis amicitiam gloriose ostendant, initio prodidere Antiocho pacis mercedem; post, habitum custodiae agri captiui, sumptibus et contumeliis ex rege miserrimum seruorum effecere, simulatoque in pio testamento filium eius Aristonicum, quia patrium regnum petiuerat, hostium more per triumphum duxere; Asia ab ipsis obsessa est.

Sallust, *hist.* 4.69.8

sic rursus Eumenen, cuius classibus primo in Asiam fuere transiecti, cuius exercitu magis quam suo et magnum Antiochum et Gallos in Asia et mox in Macedonia regem Perseum domuerant, et ipsum pro hoste habitum eique interdictum Italia, et quod cum ipso deforme sibi putauerant, cum filio eius Aristonico bellum gessisse.

Justin 38.6.3–4

Omniaque non serua, et maxime regna, hostilia ducant

Sallust, *hist.* 4.69.17

Hanc illos omnibus regibus legem odiorum dixisse

Justin 38.6.7

Even though anti-Roman speeches, which gave the Roman historians an opportunity to show their skill in argument and their understanding of the historical circumstances of the times, are found quite often in the Roman historians,²² and even though two writers needing to find words to give to Mithridates are likely to

²¹ Sellge (1882) 13–30.

²² See e.g. Oakley (1997–2005) 3. 41.

have come up with some of the same ideas, it would still be extraordinary if Trogus had written his speech with no thought of Sallust's letter, and the number of coincidences of theme suggests that he expected his readers to recall Sallust's words.

Echoes of both Sallust and Livy have been found in the language of the speech. Perhaps the most striking is Trogus' *timidius ac diffidentius* at 38.7.4. This can be paralleled at Cic. *Cluent.* 1 *timide et diffidenter*, Sall. *Catil.* 45.4 *timidus ac uitae diffidens*, Iug. 32.5 *eique timido et ex conscientia diffidenti*,²³ but, even if the coupling was not rare, it is hard to believe that Trogus was not influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by Sallust. The Livian expressions are slightly less striking, but the coupling of *ferus* and *inmitis* at 38.4.15 (*ferorum atque inimitum populorum*) is paralleled before Ambrose and Jerome only at Livy 23.5.12 and Sen. *Herc.* 1280. A good example of how difficult it can be to assess the vocabulary of the historians is provided by *ferrum stringere* at 38.4.2. This expression is found very often in Latin poetry but elsewhere in prose up to Tacitus only five times in Livy and then at Vell. 2.125.2, Sen. *contr.* 1.4.1, Val. Max. 4.6.3, Plin. *epist.* 3.16.6, Quint. *decl.* 258.9, Ps. Quint. *decl.* 3.7, and Tac. *hist.* 3.10.4. It is hard to say whether Trogus has taken over a Livian mannerism or whether this is a mildly poetical expression at home in the vocabulary of the historians.²⁴

As one would expect, Mithridates is made to express himself with the aid of a variety of rhetorical figures. We meet e.g. an amplitude in phrasing sometimes verging on redundancy (Iust. 38.4.3: *ratione ac spe*, 4.6: *aemulationis ac inuidiae*, 4.10: *longiore ac difficiliore*, 7.4: *timidius ac diffidentius*, 7.4: *rudis ac tiro*, 7.4: *periculum ac labor*), insistent anaphora (38.4.5–11: *audire . . . audire . . . audire . . . audire*, 6.2–3: *sic . . . sic . . .*, 6.5–6: *huic . . . huic . . . hunc . . . huius*), balance (7.1: *qui paternos maiores suos a Cyro Darioque, conditoribus Persici regni, maternos a magno Alexandro ac Nicanore Seleuco, conditoribus imperii Macedonici, referat*, 7.8: *rapacitas proconsulum, sectio publicanorum, calumniae litium*), chiasmus (4.2: *si nequeant pro salute, pro ultione tamen sua omnes ferrum stringere*, 4.11: *pro libertate alios, quosdam etiam pro uice imperii*), rhetorical questions (5.4, 5.6, 5.8), what Adams has termed 'verbal hyperbaton', that is, the separation of an epithet from its noun by part of a verb (4.6: *ipsam caperet urbem*, 7.2: *totam pacauit Asiam*).²⁵ But much the same could be said for most speeches in the Latin historians, and Mithridates' is hardly remarkable in this respect – rather, one may

²³ See Yardley (2003) 17.

²⁴ For both expressions see Yardley (2003) 21 (but for both I have added to his parallels).

²⁵ See Adams (1971); he discusses the historians on 8–10. The figure is discussed in more detail *infra* 216, on Velleius.

feel that its rhetoric is somewhat muted, perhaps by Trogus' decision to use *oratio obliqua*.

As for clausulae, most sentences end with cadences commonly used by writers of clausulated prose in the early Principate; see e.g. 38.4.1–4: *pāx hăbēndă* |³, *uictōriāe cārēānt* |^{1c}, *omnēs ferrūm stringērē* |⁴, *bēllă sūstinēānt* |^{1c}, *Cappădōciă fūdērīnt* |^{2a}. Whether such clausulae would have occurred so regularly in narrative, there is no knowing.

Further deductions about the character and style of Trogus' work have often been made from Justin's *Epitome*. The influence of Sallust on Trogus has been detected in the subject matter and judgements offered by Justin,²⁶ and many similarities to the phrasing of both Sallust and Livy have been found in his work.²⁷ A well-known example may be found at Iust. 9.3.10: *quippe aduersis uulneribus omnes loca, quae tuenda a ducibus acceperant, morientes corporibus texerunt*, which recalls Sall. *Catil.* 61.2: *nam fere quem quisque uiuus pugnando locum ceperat, eum amissa anima corpore tegebat*.²⁸ That many of these similarities are owed to Trogus and not to Justin seems likely enough, but it is a frustration that for none can this be proved,²⁹ and therefore it is hard to use Justin to further discussion of Trogus' style.

Fenestella (*FRHist* 70)

The longest fragment of Fenestella, who died at some point in the Tiberius' reign, is F2:

itaque ut magistratum tribuni inierunt, C. Cato, turbulentus adulescens et audax nec imparatus ad dicendum, contionibus adsiduis inuidiam et Ptolomaeo simul, qui iam profectus ex urbe erat, et Publio Lentulo consuli, paranti iam iter, concitare secundo quidem populi rumōre coēpīt |³

How typical this fragment is of his historical works as a whole, there is no knowing, but it exhibits periodicity (the sense is not complete until the final verb *coepit*) and balance (*et Ptolomaeo, qui iam profectus ex urbe erat* is balanced by *et*

²⁶ See Rambaud (1948).

²⁷ See now especially Yardley (2003) 9–78. In particular, Yardley has greatly added to the known number of similarities between the phrasing of Justin and Livy.

²⁸ It is cited by Sellge (1882) 77, Rambaud (1948) 182, Yardley (2003) 15.

²⁹ Like some other late writers, Justin may have enjoyed imitating Livy and Sallust.

Publio Lentulo consuli, paranti iam iter). The expressions *magistratum inire*, *turbulentus adulescens*, *invidiam concitare*, and *imparatus ad dicendum* may all be paralleled in Cicero,³⁰ and *magistratum inire*, *turbulentus* and *assiduis contionibus* are all Livian. Whether Drummond was right to regard *secundo . . . populi rumore* as '[a] poetic, and perhaps specifically Ennian, touch' is a nice question.³¹ The clausula is 'Ciceronian', a double trochee, the significance of which is unclear in the absence of other sentence-endings.³²

Cremutius Cordus (*FRHist* 71)

Among the fragments of the Tiberian historians quoted by Seneca in his discussion of *suasoriae* on the death of Cicero,³³ the most interesting come from Aulus Cremutius Cordus (*FRHist* 71). The first is the longer and comes from the narrative of Cicero's death:

Quibus uisis laetus Antonius, cum peractam proscriptionem suam dixisset esse (quippe non ^Asatiatus modo caedendis ciuibus sed ^Adiffertus quoque), super rostra exponit. itaque, quo saepius ille ingenti circumfusus turba ^Bprocesserat, quam paulo ante coluerat³⁴ piis contionibus, quibus

30 See Drummond in *FRHist* III 572 for all but the first. *magistratum inire* is found in Cicero at *Verr.* 1.125, *p. red. in sen.* 8, *fin.* 2.74, *Phil.* 3.2, 3.7, 3.39.

31 Up to the time of Tacitus *rumore secundo* is attested at Enn. *ann.* 24 S, Sueius, fr. 7 Blänsdorf = 7 Courtney, Verg. *Aen.* 8.90, and Hor. *epist.* 1.10.9, all verse texts. *secundo rumore* is attested at Cic. *diu.* 1.29, *rumoribus aduersa in prauitatem, secunda in casum*, and Tac. *ann.* 3.29.4; *aduerso rumore* is found at Liv. 27.20.9, 44.22.10, Tac. *hist.* 2.26.2, *ann.* 14.11.3, and Suet. *Tit.* 6.2. There are more instances in prose than verse but most are in the historians, who use archaic language. Ennius may have encouraged adoption of the expression in historiography, but by Fenestella's day Virgil may have been a more obvious exemplar for its use in poeticizing prose.

32 On the language of this fragment see also Woodman (2015) 127.

33 On the fragments quoted by Seneca see recently e.g. Feddern (2013) 426–465 (part of his commentary on all the *suasoriae*), Woodman (2015) 63–74, and Keeline (2018) 118–130. Feddern's commentary is much fuller than that offered by Levick in *FRHist* but his textual choices tend to be too conservative.

34 The text is uncertain: I have followed Winterbottom (1974) 2. 580; Håkanson (1989) 364 prints *quae . . . caluerat* (his own conjecture), Feddern (2013) 442 *quae* [depending on *rostra*] . . . *coluerat* (the MS. reading). It seems more natural to emphasize Cicero's cultivation of his throng rather than the *rostra*.

multorum ^C*capita seruauerat, tum per* ^C*artus* ^B*sublatus*³⁵ *aliter ac solitus erat a ciuibus suis con-*
spectus est, praependenti capillo orique eius inspersa sanie, breui ante ^D*princeps* ^E*senatus* ^E*Roma-*
manique nominis ^D*titulus, tum* ^D*pretium* ^E*interfectoris sui* ^F*]. praecipue tamen soluit pectora om-*
nium in lacrimas gemitusque uisa ad caput eius deligata manus dextera, diuinae eloquentiae
ministra ^F*].* ^F*ceterorumque caedes* ^G*priuatos luctus excitauerunt, illa una* ^G*communem.* ^I (Cre-
 mutius Cordus F1)

Referring to what remained of Cremutius' work after its outspokenness had led to its bowdlerization and its author's demise, Quintilian writes (*inst.* 10.1.104) *sed elatum abunde spiritum et audaces sententias deprehendas etiam in iis quae manent*. There is plenty of 'exalted spirit' in this fragment. Its stylistic features include a series of antitheses: *satiatus* followed by *differtus* (sustaining the metaphor in the word that it balances),³⁶ *princeps* and *titulus* contrasted with *pretium* (the assonance draws attention to the antithesis), *senatus Romanique nominis* with *interfectoris sui*, *ceterorum* with *illa una*, *priuatos* with *communem*, and (perhaps) earlier *capita* and *artus*. The terminal *sententia pretium interfectoris sui* is perhaps one of those of which Quintilian was thinking.³⁷ There is 'verbal hyperbaton' in the separation of *ingenti* from *turba* by *circumfusus*, the separation mirroring the sense,³⁸ and chiasmus in *princeps senatus Romanique nominis titulus*. The second sentence suggests that Cordus sometimes wrote in a periodic style. The doubling up (*non satiatus modo caedendis ciuibus sed differtus quoque; princeps senatus Romanique nominis titulus; lacrimas gemitusque*) suggests an expansiveness of style of which Cicero himself might have approved. *soluit pectora* is a poeticism,³⁹ and makes one wonder how far Cremutius followed in the tradition of Sallust and Livy in using such expressions. Like others who wrote about Cicero's death,⁴⁰ Cremutius included several echoes of Cicero's own language. By far the most striking of these is *quibus multorum capita seruauerat*, which echoes *de orat.* 3.10: *M. Antoni in eis ipsis rostris, in quibus ille rem publicam constantissime consul defenderat quaeque censor imperatoriis manubiis ornaauerat, positum caput illud fuit a quo erant multorum ciuium capita seruata*. Since this M. Antonius was

³⁵ *Sublatus* is Gertz's conjecture; the MS. Reading *suos latus* is possible but conveys a little less effectively the notion of Cicero's being raised limbs by limb. Håkanson's *suos sublatus* is also possible.

³⁶ See Woodman (2015) 68.

³⁷ See Bonner (1949) 158.

³⁸ See Woodman (2015) 69. Such mirroring is found quite often with verbs denoting surrounding (cf. e.g. Liv. 7.10.5: *Hispano cingitur gladio*).

³⁹ For the evidence, see Woodman (2015) 68–69.

⁴⁰ See Woodman (2015) 66 and Keeline (2018) ch. 3 *passim*.

the grandfather of the homonymous triumvir who proscribed Cicero, Cremutius has served up a witty paradox for his readers to savour.

The second fragment comes from Cremutius' laudation:⁴¹

^AProprias enim simultates ^Bdeponendas ^Cinterdum putabat, ^Apublicas numquam ^Cauide ^Bexercendas: cuius non solum ^Dmagnitudine uirtutum sed ^Dmultitudine quoque cōspiciendū (Cremutius Cordus F2)

This fragment likewise exhibits antithesis: in the contrasts between *proprias* and *publicas*, *deponendas* and *exercendas*, *interdum* and *auide*, and *magnitudine* and *multitudine*. More Ciceronian language occurs with *simultates deponendas*.⁴² It ends with the so-called heroic clausula, not an ending that followers of Cicero used often but found more often in the historians (especially with polysyllabic words),⁴³ and perhaps not inappropriate in this passage of praise.

As we shall see, almost all these features of Cremutius' style can be illustrated more amply from Velleius Paterculus.⁴⁴

Bruttedius Niger (*FRHist* 72)

With Bruttedius I shall be brief, since the fragments quoted by Seneca do not offer much scope for stylistic comment. Here is the second part of F1 (= Sen. *suas.* 6.21):

ut uero iussu Antoni inter duas manus positum in rostris caput conspectum est, quo totiens auditum erat loco, datae gemitu et fletu maximo uiro inferiae, nec, ut solet, uitam depositi in rostris corporis contio audiuit sed ipsā nārrāuit: |¹ nulla non pars fori aliquo actionis inclutae signata uestigio erat, nemo non aliquod eius in se meritū fātēbātūr. |¹ hoc certe publicum beneficium palam erat, illam miserrimi temporis seruitutem a Catilina dilātam in Āntōnium |²

⁴¹ Seneca was unimpressed by the laudation; see *suas.* 6.23: *Cordi Cremuti non est operae pretium referre redditam Ciceroni laudationem; nihil enim in ea Cicerone dignum est, ac ne hoc quidem, quod paene maxime tolerabile est* (F2 follows).

⁴² Cf. Cic. *Planc.* 76, *Att.* 3.24.2, and *fam.* 2.13.2. Woodman (2015) 129 cites these passages and observes that the expression is rare elsewhere. Yet it seems in itself unremarkable and, if this judgement is correct, Cremutius may have used it without conscious reference to Cicero.

⁴³ See e.g. Woodman on Vell. 2.95.2; Bornecque (1907) 572–573 has some examples of this rhythm in Velleius.

⁴⁴ As can the parenthesis introduced by *quippe*, which here seems unremarkable but is a mannerism in Velleius.

The main paradoxical point inherent in *nec, ut solet, uitam depositi in rostris corporis contio audiuit sed ipsa narrauit*, that the audience narrates rather than listens to the funeral laudation, seems typical of the declamatory style.⁴⁵ A secondary point, later reinforced by *palam*, is that there was no body placed (*depositi . . . corporis*) on the rostra. How far the clausulae marked here were typical of the whole work there is, once more, no knowing.⁴⁶ Similarly, we cannot know how typical *gemitu et fletu* is in being both pleonastic and an expression used by Cicero, nor how typical is the verbal hyperbaton *aliquo ... signata uestigio*.⁴⁷

Aufidius Bassus (*FRHist* 78)

Aufidius Bassus (*FRHist* 78), of whose style Quintilian generally approved,⁴⁸ probably wrote last of the historians quoted by Seneca; but, as with Bruttidius, what Seneca has bequeathed us allows little scope for stylistic comment. F1 comes from his account of Cicero's death:

Cicero paulum remoto uelo postquam armatos uidit, 'ego uero consisto' ait; 'accede, ueterane, et, si hoc saltem potes recte facere, incide ceruicem'. trementi deinde dubitantique 'quid, si ad me' inquit 'primum uenissetis?'

quid, si ad me . . . primum uenissetis? introduces us to the kind of pointed utterance beloved by the declaimers that loses its obscurity only on reflection: Bassus' Cicero appears to mean that, if Cicero was the first person whom this band of veteran soldiers had been required to kill, they would never have advanced in their career.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ See Keeline (2018) 138. This is not to say that earlier writers, uninfluenced by declamation, could not have produced such a paradox.

⁴⁶ But the first part of the fragment ends with *āntē dēfēsum āb illō* (pattern 3a).

⁴⁷ For discussion of such pleonasm, see *infra* 216–17, on Velleius. For Ciceronian parallels, see *S. Rosc.* 24 and Woodman (2015) 67.

⁴⁸ Quint. *inst.* 10.1.103 = T4 in *FRHist*.

⁴⁹ I pass over F2, since it offers nothing under any of the categories by which I am analysing these historians.

Velleius Paterculus

From the meagre scraps of the historians who survive only in fragments, we come to Velleius Paterculus, much of whose summary history, published in AD 30, survives.⁵⁰ Velleius fascinates for several reasons: as a man, because he is a prime exemplar of the upper-class Italians who by Tiberian times had come to hold office in Rome; for his content, because a significant portion of his history deals with his own times and therefore shows how a contemporary of Tiberius wished (or thought it expedient) to write; and as a stylist, because, together with his contemporary Valerius Maximus, he shows how techniques learnt in declamation, a practice so vividly illustrated by their older contemporary, the elder Seneca, had come to influence contemporary prose-literature. In his style Velleius fuses something of the balanced oratorical smoothness and amplitude of phrasing found in Cicero with the antithetical point so beloved by the schools of declamation. The result has provoked a variety of opinions: up to 1800 Velleius' style was admired by many, including Krause, who published his edition in that year; after that year few have expressed approval, since pointed wit was not to the general taste of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁵¹ Yet the amount of detailed scholarship devoted to Velleius' language in the nineteenth century attests to the strikingness of his style, whether or not its students approved of it.

Velleius' style is more varied than is sometimes realised, and an understanding of the form of his history is helpful for appreciating this variety. His many references to the brief compass of his work, to his *festinatio*, and to his plans to write a more expansive history in the future,⁵² emphasize that this form is that of a summary of Roman (perhaps world)⁵³ history that moves swiftly through the earlier periods of Roman history but expands significantly for the period within the life of Julius Caesar, expands still more for the reign of Augustus, and yet more

⁵⁰ But much has been lost: Starr (1981) 162 estimates that, if the now defective book was originally as long as the complete second, 'over 40 per cent may have been lost'.

⁵¹ But contrast e.g. Norden (1915) 1. 303 and Woodman (1975b). For brief comment on changing responses to Velleius, see e.g. Milkau (1888) 1–4 and Woodman (1975b) 18. One may compare the views on Lucan expressed in these periods, for which see Housman (1926) VI.

⁵² The import of these was seen by Milkau (1888) 8, but explained properly and fully first by Woodman (1975a) 277–288 = (2012) 208–222. For the brief compass of the work, see 1.16.1, 2.29.2, 2.38.1, 2.52.3, 2.55.1, 2.66.3, 2.86.1, 2.89.1, 2.96.3, 2.99.4, and 2.103.4; for *festinatio* 1.16.1, 2.41.1, 2.108.2, 2.124.1. For his plans for writing a more expansive history see 2.48.5, 2.89.1, 2.96.3, 2.99.3, 2.103.4, 2.114.4, and 2.119.1. All these passages are regularly cited in scholarship on Velleius; see e.g. Woodman (1975a) 277 = (2012) 206 and Lobur (2007) 214–215.

⁵³ Thus Starr (1981) 162–166.

again for that of Tiberius. As we shall see, the brief compass of the narrative shaped the distinctive way in which Velleius used both pointed antitheses and the periodic style. For the reign of Tiberius, and especially for 2.126.1–5 and 129.1–130.5, the narrative comes to resemble a panegyric,⁵⁴ and the style in turn has many features that find parallels in other panegyrics.⁵⁵

Part of the distinctiveness of Velleius' style comes from his letting his authorial voice intrude into the narrative more than any other Latin historian of the classical period. It appears, for example, in those programmatic references to the compressed nature of his history, his own future plans, and his *festinatio*, in the very frequent addresses to his dedicatee and probable patron Marcus Vinicius,⁵⁶ in the references to his own family,⁵⁷ in cross-references of the *ut praediximus* kind,⁵⁸ and in the frequency with which he uses the historian's prerogative of passing some form of judgement on the actions or characters of the men who appear in his history. As the narrative comes close to Velleius' own day, his enthusiasm for Julius Caesar and his house is almost palpable, his criticism of their opponents firm and trenchant.⁵⁹

Velleius' style and sentence-structure are far removed from the brevity of Sallust,⁶⁰ but like his younger contemporary Pomponius Mela he shows that even

54 A fact that has often been noted but is explained best by Woodman (1975a) 290–303 and (1977) 46–56 (and see his index entry for 'panegyric . . . topoi of' [285]).

55 If the work was recited to celebrate Vinicius' consulship (thus e.g. Lobur [2007] 218, Rich [2011] 86), then the panegyric tone towards the *princeps* becomes even less surprising. Entry into the office of consul was regularly accompanied by praise, and in the Principate all had to be careful to praise the *princeps*.

56 Vell. 1.8.1, 1.8.4, 1.12.6, 1.13.5, 2.7.5, 2.49.1, 2.65.2, 2.96.2, 2.101.3, 2.103.1, 2.104.2, 2.113.1, 2.130.4. See Woodman (1975a) 273 = (2012) 201.

57 2.16.2, 2.69.5, 2.76.1, 2.104.3, 2.115.1, 2.121.3, 2.124.4; see e.g. Starr (1981) 174 and Marincola (1997) 142–143.

58 For many of these see Sauppe (1837) 176.

59 For this prerogative in general see e.g. Oakley (1997–2005) 4. 556–557 with further bibliography; Velleius' practice is sympathetically described by Krause (1800) 19–20. Velleius' judgements are so frequent that there is no need to list them, but it is worth noting that very many of his numerous instances of superlative adjectives (on which more below) involve some kind of judgement.

60 But Sallust might have enjoyed *Catil.* 1.7.4: *ego, pace diligentiae Catonis dixerim, uix crediderim tam mature tantam urbem* [sc. *Capuam*] *creuisse floruisse concidisse resurrexisse* and 2.101.3: *haud iniucunda tot rerum locorum, gentium urbium recordatione perfruor*. Strings of words in asyndeton are a characteristic feature of Sallust's style (but by no means unique to him); the four perfect infinitives at 1.7.4 are the most striking example in Velleius of the phenomenon. They could perhaps have been cited elsewhere in this essay as instances of balance and antithesis.

those who eschewed Sallust's manner would sometimes wish to sprinkle Sallustian phrasing throughout their work. The large number of Sallustian echoes in Velleius has been collected by A.J. Woodman;⁶¹ I shall note some of these in passages of Velleius that are quoted below. As for Livy, the similarities between Velleius' comparison of the reception given to Octavius and Anicius and that given to Aemilius Paullus (1.9.5–6) and Livy's (45.45.5) is so striking that it is hard not to believe that Velleius did not have Livy's text either in front of him or at least lodged firmly in his mind.⁶² There are expressions in Velleius for which the closest parallel is to be found in Livy,⁶³ but it is less clear that Velleius drew them from Livy himself, and they may have been part of the general store of Latin historical writing. Although, like Livy, Velleius often deploys periodic sentences in his writing,⁶⁴ his manner is generally fuller and smoother than Livy's energetic incisiveness and perhaps more obviously reflects, or fails to develop from, a training influenced by contemporary rhetorical fashions.⁶⁵ In general, Sallust seems to have been a more important influence on Velleius than was Livy.

Velleius differs from both writers in his choice of vocabulary, employing far fewer archaic and poetical expressions than they did, but there are some reminders of the grand historical manner. For example, the archaic third person plural of the past tense in *-ere* is used regularly as well as the form in *-erunt*. Before three chapters of book 1 have been finished readers have met of the former *regnauere* (1.1.4), *fuere* (1.2.1), *condidere* (1.2.2), *occupauere* (1.3.1), and *commigrauerunt* (1.3.1), but of the latter only *desierunt* (1.2.1) and *uixerunt* (1.3.2).⁶⁶

Unlike both Sallust and Livy, Velleius regularly uses rhythmical *clausulae* of which Cicero would have approved, probably in accord with the stylistic fashion of his time.⁶⁷ He is the first extant Latin historian for whom sustained use of this artifice can be demonstrated, and his practice is doubtless to be explained by the

61 Woodman (1968).

62 Thus Sauppe (1837) 178. It would be surprising if Velleius had not used Livy as a source.

63 See Woodman (1977) 285 and (1983) 285 (both index entries for notes in his commentary that draw attention to Livian influence or parallels).

64 To be discussed *infra* 226–33.

65 In this I differ from Woodman (1975b) 14; he associates Velleius' phrasal *abundantia* with Livy as well as Cicero.

66 Note too e.g. his fondness for the archaic *bellum patrare* (see Woodman on 2.114.4).

67 On Velleius' *clausulae* see especially Aili (1979) 126–127, showing that his preferred *clausulae* are – uu – – u x (molossus + cretic with resolution in the middle syllable of the molossus; my pattern 4b) and – u – – u x (double cretic; my pattern 2). Aili's statistics have been confirmed by Keeline and Kirby (2019) 189. See also Bornecque (1907) 571–574, Woodman (1975b) 24 n. 64, Woodman (1977) on 2.112.6 and 283 s.u. *clausulae*, (1983) on 2.67.1, Hellegouarc'h (1982) 1. LXXII–LXXIII.

increasing prevalence of such rhythms in the writing of all Latin prose. Presumably he learnt this skill as part of his rhetorical training. As with other writers who used *clausulae* of this kind, the rhythmical cadences that are found at the end of sentences may be found also, although less regularly, at the end of cola within sentences.⁶⁸

Another figure that often affects the manner in which cola and sentences end is verbal hyperbaton. Originally a way of creating emphasis, and used for the most part in this way by Cicero, by the time of Velleius it had often become little more than an elegant literary mannerism, which Velleius uses very frequently. In the following examples the figure conveys emphasis in the first and perhaps in the second, third, and fourth, but less obviously in the others:

- 2.2.1: *immanem* deditio Mancini ciuitatis mōiūt *dissēnsiōnēm* |^{3a}
 2.37.2: *omnibus* exutus *copiis*
 2.40.3: *magnificentissimūque* de tot regibus per biduum egit *triumphum*
 2.45.1: *ullum* nisi quem uellet nosset *modum*
 2.48.3: bello . . . et malis non alius *maiores flagrantioresque* quam C. Curio tribunus pl. subiecit *facem*
 2.55.1: *Pompeiani* obtinēbānt *exercitūs* |⁴
 2.87.1: (Octavian) . . . *ultimam* bellis ciuilibus imposuit *manum*
 2.109.1: [Marobduus] *eminens et nostro quoque imperio timendum* perduxit *fastigium*⁶⁹

Writers who employ rhythmical clausulae often employ also an amplitude of phrasing, a feature of Velleius' style that was studied very fully by Freitag.⁷⁰ It is most noticeable in his love of pleonastic doubling, that hall-mark of Ciceronian style in which two virtually synonymous words are joined together.⁷¹ The following instances, which could probably be multiplied fourfold, show that Velleius is willing to double up adjectives, nouns, and verbs in this way:

- 1.7.1: uir . . . *otii quietisque* cupidissimus
 1.17.1: *aspera ac rudia*
 2.1.4: *foedera . . . turpia ac detestabilia*

⁶⁸ However, partly to avoid cluttering the text with the insistent marking of rhythms, and partly because locating the boundaries of cola is not an extant science, I have marked clausulae inside sentences only for the two massive periods laid out schematically at the end of this essay.

⁶⁹ More instances may be found at e.g. 1.4.4 (twice), 1.10.2, 1.10.5, 1.11.2, 1.16.4, 1.17.7, 2.1.4, 2.6.3, 2.7.1, 2.7.3, 2.14.1, 2.15.1, 2.18.5, 2.18.6, 2.29.1, 2.54.3, 2.55.3, 2.59.6, 2.61.2, 2.120.2, 2.125.1, 2.127.1, 2.127.3, 2.129.3.

⁷⁰ Freitag (1942) 9–47.

⁷¹ See especially Freitag (1942) 14–29; also Woodman (1975b) 13–14, Hellegouarc'h (1982) 1. LXV n. 8.

- 2.13.2: *ueluti inescandae inliciendaeque multitudinis causa*
 2.73.3: *latrocinii ac praedationibus infestato mari*
 2.90.1: *feris incultisque nationibus*
 2.97.3: *aequa ac par sui aestimatio*
 2.98.3: (on L. Piso) *hoc omnibus sentiendum ac praedicandum est*
 2.99.2: (on Tiberius) *mira quadam et incredibili atque inenarrabili pietate*
 2.102.3: *ultimo ac remotissimo terrarum orbis angulo*

In passing it may be noted that Velleius was addicted to alliteration and assonance.⁷² This feature of his style naturally affects the words that he chose to pair:

- 2.11.1: *Marius . . . hirtus atque horridus*
 2.25.3: *homine duplicis ac diuersissimi animi*
 2.85.5: *uitam ueniamque Caesar promisit*
 2.109.1: *uim ac uoluntatem resistendi*

Velleius' declamatory training reveals itself above all in his extreme love of balance. Much of this balance involves also antithesis, a figure of thought that is a fundamental feature of both the pointed style of the first century AD in general and Velleius' style in particular. His summary history required brief judgements, something that a style built around antithesis was well equipped to deliver, and antithesis is visible on almost every page of Velleius' work.⁷³ So resourceful was Velleius in creating it that a full examination of the techniques by which he did so would take up much space, and what follows is only a limited categorization. The use of two uncognate words opposite in meaning is ubiquitous and scarcely needs illustration; I give here just two examples:⁷⁴

- 2.34.3: *M. Cicero . . . uir nouitatis nobilissimae*⁷⁵
 2.117.2: (on Syria and the governorship of Quintilius Varus) *quam pauper diuitem ingressus diues pauperem reliquit*³

More interesting examples are those in which a word is contrasted with another word that is cognate but opposite or different in meaning:⁷⁶

⁷² See especially Milkau (1888) 10–26; also Woodman (1975b) 13.

⁷³ For lists of antithetical and otherwise pointed expressions in Velleius, see Krause (1800) 26–7, Kritz (1848) XLIX–LIV, Hellegouarc'h (1982) 1. LXIX–LXX.

⁷⁴ Numerous others may be found in the various quotations from Velleius that follow.

⁷⁵ In political parlance *nouitas* and *nobilis* are virtual opposites, and so the expression is strikingly paradoxical. 2.96.1: *nouitatem suam multis rebus nobilitauerat* (on which see Woodman (1977) *ad loc.*) has the same antithesis, albeit deployed in a less striking manner.

⁷⁶ For more examples in this category see many of the passages cited at Milkau (1888) 12–13.

- 1.9.3: (on Aemilius Paullus) *quam tergiuersanter perniciosam rei publicae pugnam inierat, tam fortiter in ea mōrtem ōbīērāt* |^{3b}
- 1.17.6: (on talent) *naturaliterque quod procedere non potēst rēcēdit* |³
- 2.5.3: (on Roman troops in Spain) *tantum effecit mixtus timori pudor spesque desperatione quaesita*
- 2.14.3: (on Livius Drusus' house) *cum . . . promitteret . . . ei architectus ita se eam aedificaturum ut . . . immunis . . . ab omnibus arbitris esset neque quisquam in eam despicere posset, 'tu uero', inquit, 'si quid in te artis est, ita compone domum meam ut quicquid agam ab omnibus pērspīci pōssit.'* |¹
- 2.23.5: (on Mithridates' victims) *cum ab inimicis tenerentur, oppugnabantur ab amicis*
- 2.29.3: *potentia sua numquam aut raro ad impotentiam usus*
- 2.35.5: *At Catilina non segnius conata obiit quam sceleris consilia inierat*
- 2.72.2: (on Brutus and Cassius) *e quibus Brutum amicum habere malles, inimicum magis timeres Cassium*

Or an antithesis may involve the same word being used twice:⁷⁷

- 2.49.3: *Lentulus uero salua re publica saluus esse non posset*
- 2.50.2: (on Caesar) *cum alienis armis ad ārmā cōmpulsūs ēssēt* |^{3a}
- 2.53.3: (on Pompey) *cui modo ad uictoriam terra defuerat, deesset ad sēpultūrām* |¹
- 2.83.2: (Plancus) *in omnia et omnibus uenalis*
- 2.111.4: (on Velleius himself) *legatus eiusdem ad eundēm mīs<sūs> sūm* |⁶
- 2.125.1: (on the state of the nation) *neque diu latuit aut quid non impetrando passuri fuissēmus aut quid impetrando profēcissēmūs* |⁶

Sometimes the second use of the word is pointedly different in sense:

- 1.11.6–7: (on Metellus Macedonicus) *quattuor filios sustulit . . . (7) mortui eius lectum pro rostris sustulerunt quattuor filii*
- 1.12.7: (on hatred or an enemy) *neque ante *** inuisum esse desinit quam ēssē dēsiit*⁷⁸ |³
- 2.4.6: (on the death of Scipio Aemilianus) . . . eiusque corpus uelato capite elatum est, cuius opera super totum terrarum orbem Rōma ēxtulērāt cāpūt |^{4b} (here both *caput* and *efferre* are used in different senses)

Sometimes Velleius plays on two parts of a verb, one in the active voice, the other in the passive:

- 2.34.3: *Cicero . . . effecit ne, quorum arma uiceramus, eorum ingenio uinceremur*
- 2.51.2: *sed inopia obsidentibus quam obsessis ērāt grāuīōr* |^{1c} ⁷⁹
- 2.53.3: (an authorial comment) *quod adieci, non ut arguerem sed ne arguerer*

⁷⁷ Many of these passages come from the list assembled for a slightly different purpose at Milkau (1888) 11–12; others, too, could be added from there.

⁷⁸ Presumably to be read as *desīt*, with a long *i*.

⁷⁹ The contrast is standard in Latin; for another instance see 2.125.4.

- 2.66.2: *nihil tam indignum . . . fuit quam quod aut Caesar aliquem proscribere coactus est aut ab ullo Cicerō proscriptus ēst* |^{4a}

Examples in which the passive form is a gerundive may be regarded as a sub-set of the preceding:

- 1.12.2: *magis quia uolebant Romani, quicquid de Carthaginensibus diceretur, credere quam quia credenda adferebantur*
 2.35.5: *At Catilina non segnius conata obiit quam sceleris conandi consilia inierat*
 2.103.2: *neque enim quaerendus quem legeret sed legendus qui eminebat*⁸⁰

Here follows an example in an antithesis that does not fit into the categories just discussed but which I quote because the juxtaposition of two words ending in *-tione* illustrates Velleius' love of assonance:⁸¹

- 2.108.2: *Marobduus . . . natione magis quam ratione barbarus*

This last passage also illustrates another device regularly used by Velleius to create antithesis: comparison. *Magis* is used with *quam* thirty-four times, and *potius* nine times, in the eighty-nine Teubner pages of his work.

Antithesis was particularly useful when Velleius wished to compare two people: here are Brutus and Cassius compared and contrasted:⁸²

fuit autem ^Adux ^BCassius melior quanto ^Buir ^ABrutus; e quibus ^CBrutum ^Damicum ^Ehabere ^Fmalles, ^Dinimicum ^Fmagis ^Etimeres ^CCassium; ^Gin altero maior ^Huis, ^Gin altero ^Huirtus; qui si uicissent, ^Iquantum rei publicae ^Iinterfuit ^KCaesarem potius ^Ihabere quam ^KAntonium principem, ^Itantum ^Irettulisset ^Ihabere ^MBrūtū quā ^MCāssūm |⁴ (2.72.2)

Note here, in addition to *potius . . . quam*, the alliterative contrast of *uis* with *uirtus* and the chiasitic balance of *Brutum amicum* and *inimicum . . . Cassium*.⁸³

Some more extended examples of antithesis may now be examined. It was easier to effect in shorter sentences, and in general Velleius' shorter sentences

⁸⁰ A similar assonance is created by use of a gerund at 2.126.5: *nam facere recte ciues suos principes optimus faciendo docet*.

⁸¹ Perhaps one could say *-atione* despite the difference in vowel quantity.

⁸² In this, as in other longer quotations that follow, I have used raised letters to point out antitheses.

⁸³ Other examples of the comparing and contrasting of two people may be found at e.g. 1.13.2 (Mummius and Scipio Aemilianus), 2.1.5 (Pompeius and Mancinus), 2.5.3 (Metellus Macedonicus and Fabius Aemilianus), 2.64.3–4 (Cicero and Cannutius, quoted below), 2.91.2 (Varro Murena and Fannius Caepio), 2.95.3 (Plancus and Paulus), and 2.102.1 (Lollius and Censorinus).

contain more antithesis than his longer periods.⁸⁴ When Velleius' narrative required description of a conflict between two parties (and much of his account of the late Republic was concerned with civil war) such a style was obviously useful. Here is the beginning of his account of the build-up to the Battle of Actium:

Caesare deinde et Messalla Coruino consulibus debellatum apud Actium, ubi, longe ante quam dimicaretur, exploratissima Iulianarum partium fuit uictoria. ^Auigebat ^Bin hac parte ^Cmiles atque imperator, ^B<in> illa ^Amārcēbānt ^Cōmnīā; ^I⁴ ^Dhinc re<mi>ges ^Efirmissimi, ^Dillinc ^Einōpia ādfēctissimī ^I⁴^a; nauium ^Fhaec ^Gmagnitudo modica nec celeritati aduersa, ^Filla ^Gspecie [et] terribilior; ^Hhinc ad ^IAntonium ^Inemo, ^Hillinc ^Iad Caesarem cotidie ^Ialiquis transfugiebat . . (2.84.1)

Note the shortness of the antithetical clauses and sentences, and the profusion of the antitheses marked out by the raised letters. Best of all in this vein is Velleius' account of the outbreak of civil war in 49 BC:

*^AAlterius ducis causa ^Bmelior ^Cuidebatur, ^Aalteriūs ^Cērāt ^Bfīrmīōr ^I²^a; ^Dhic omnia ^Especiosa, ^Dillinc ^Eualentia; ^FPompeium ^Gsenatus ^Hauctoritas, ^FCaesarem ^Gmilitum armāuīt ^Hfīdūcīā. ^I⁴ Consules senatusque ^Icausae, ^Inont ^IPompeio summam imperii detulerunt ***. (3) ^INihil ^Krelictum ^La Caesare quod seruandae pacis causa temptari posset, ^Inihil ^Kreceptum ^La Pompeianis, cum ^Malter consul ^Niusto esset ferocior, ^MLentulus uero ^Nsalua re publica saluus esse non posset, ^Mautem Cato ^Omoriendum ante quam ullam condicionem ciuis <armati> ⁸⁵ ^Oaccipiendam rei publicae contenderet. Vir ^Pantiquus et grauis ^QPompei partes ^Rlaudaret magis, ^Pprudens ^Rseque- retur ^QCaesaris et ^Silla ^Tgloriosa, ^Shaec ^Tterribiliōrā dūcērēt ^I⁵ (2.49.2–3)*

In the structure of its sentences and the profusion of items placed in antithesis this passage is similar to the one previously quoted from Velleius. He writes from a Caesarian perspective, but shows good historical understanding; note especially the contrast between *uidebatur* and *erat*.

The next example, on the events of 43 BC, illustrates how naturally it came to Velleius to cast even narrative in antithetical mode:

Haec sunt tempora quibus M. Tullius continuīs actionibus aeternas Antonii memoriae inussit notas, sed ^Ahic ^Bfulgentissimo et caelesti ore, at ^Atribunus Cannutius ^Bcanina rabie lacerābāt

⁸⁴ De Stefani (1910) analyses many instances of balance, most of it antithetical. Much of the balance and antithesis brought out in Woodman (1966) (a discussion of Velleius' account of the battle of Actium) is found in sentences that are not periodic.

⁸⁵ Despite the defence in Woodman's note ('conditions from an individual citizen'), the paradosis seems extremely awkward and unlikely to be what Velleius wrote. Watt's supplement restores plausible sense but is obviously uncertain: would Cato, even in Velleius' imagination, have thought of Caesar as a *ciuis* rather than a *hostis*? A bold conjecture would be to emend to *ciui* and transpose to after *moriendum*.

Āntōnūm. |² utrique uindicta libertatis morte stetit; sed^C tribuni sanguine^D commissa proscriptio, ^C Ciceronis uel<ut> satiatio Antonio^D paēnē finītā |¹ (2.64.3–4)

However, at times Velleius' use of antithesis can seem almost mechanical. Here is the opening of book 2, in which with Sallustian echoes⁸⁶ Velleius takes up the Sallustian theme of the effect of the sack of Carthage in 146 BC:⁸⁷

^APotentiae Romanorum^B prior Scipio uiam^C aperuerat, ^Aluxuriae^B posterior^C aperuit: quippe remoto Carthaginis metu sublataque imperii aemula, non^D gradu, sed praecipiti^D cursu^E a uirtute^F descitum, ^Ead uīŕā^F trānscūrsūm; |^{1a} ^Guetus disciplinā^H dēsērtā, |¹ ^Gnōua^H īndūctā; |⁸⁸ ^In somnum^I a uigiliis, ^Iab armis^I ad uoluptates, ^Ka negotiis^K in otium conuērsā cīuītās. |⁵ tum^L Scipio Nasica^M in Capitolio^N porticus, tum^N quas praediximus^L Metellus, tum^M in circo^L Cn. Octavius^N multo amoenissimam moliti sunt, ^Opublicamque^P magnificentiam secuta^O priuatā^P luxūria ēst |^{1c} (2.1.1–2).

As observed in the passages just quoted, so here before the first full stop the main clauses separated by semi-colons are generally short, the parallelism and balance profuse and pronounced. The sentence ends with a tricolon, whose predictability is varied by the chiasmic structure of its first two members (*in somnum a uigiliis | ab armis ad uoluptates*) and by the reversal in the third member of the *in . . . a* sequence found in the first. The second sentence is self-evidently different in manner; I quote it because it shows how antitheses (*publicam/priuatam; magnificentiam/luxuriam*) can be embedded even within one clause.

This last passage illustrates Velleius' habit, perhaps remarked upon first by Haase, of writing a pointedly antithetical expression but then following it with another that is similar in manner but varies it only slightly; Freitag regarded this as an example of his pleonastic style.⁸⁹ Kritz reasonably held that this habit diluted the force of Velleius' initial point,⁹⁰ and he appositely cited a famous passage of the elder Seneca that deplores the habit and shows that it was not uniquely the property of Velleius but belonged rather to his age:⁹¹

⁸⁶ See Woodman (1968) 787–788.

⁸⁷ Norden (1915) 1. 302 drew attention to this passage.

⁸⁸ This colon has one too few syllables to be an instance of a cretic + trochee; I have marked rhythm of the previous colon, although it comes in the middle of a sentence.

⁸⁹ Haase (1837) 202, Freitag (1942) 42–48. Haase cited 1.12.7, 1.13.5, 1.16.2, 1.17.6–7, 2.3.3–4, 2.22.5, 2.28.3, 2.92.5, 2.98.3, 2.115.5 (he also adduced 2.7.6, 2.95.3, and 2.118.4, which seem a little less apposite).

⁹⁰ Kritz (1848) LV–LVI. He quoted fully 1.13.3, 2.8.1, and many passages to be found already in Haase's list, and cited a further fourteen passages.

⁹¹ Haase had also cited this passage but made less forceful use of it.

habet hoc Montanus uitium: sententias suas repetendo corrumpit. dum non est contentus unam rem semel bene dicere, efficit, ne bene dixerit. et propter hoc et propter alia, quibus orator potest poetae similis uideri, solebat Scaurus Montanum 'inter oratores Ouidium' uocare; nam et Ouidius nescit quod bene cessit relinquere. ne multa referam, quae 'Montaniana' Scaurus uocabat, uno hoc contentus ero: cum Polyxene esset abducta, ut ad tumulum Achillis immolaretur, Hecuba dicit, 'cinis ipse sepulti in genus hoc pugnat.' poterat hoc contentus esse; adiecit, 'tumulo quoque sensimus hostem.' nec hoc contentus est; adiecit, 'Aeacidae fecunda fui.' aiebat autem Scaurus rem ueram: non minus magnam uirtutem esse scire dicere quam scire desinere. (contr. 9.5.17)

An unsympathetic critic might wish to add the last passage of Velleius quoted in Haase's and Kritz's list.

Sententiae, often coming at the end of a paragraph, whether expressing a general moral truth or merely a comment on the action just described, are perhaps the most famous feature associated with the declamatory style of the early Principate.⁹² Velleius shows moderate restraint with regard to both kinds.⁹³ An example the first kind is:

2.92.5: ^Apraesentia ^Binuidia, ^Apraeterita ^Bueneratione prosequimur et ^Chis nos ^Dobruī, ^Cil-
lis ^Dinstrūi crēdīmūs |²

Velleius quite often uses *adeo* to introduce this kind of epiphonema, usually with some pointing of his style in the clause in which it is found:

- 1.12.7: *adeo odium certaminibus ortum ultra metum durat et ne in uictis quidem deponitur, neque ante *** inuisum esse desinit quam esse desiit*⁹⁴
- 2.8.1: *adeo illi uiri magis uoluntatem peccandi intuebantur quam modum, factaque ad consilium derigebant et quid, non in quantum, admissum foret aestimābānt* |³
- 2.10.1: *adeo mature a rectis [in uitia, a uitiiis] in praua, a prauis in praecipitia peruenitur*
- 2.30.3: *adeo familiare est hominibus omnia sibi ignoscere, nihil aliis remittere, et inuidiam rerum non ad causam sed ad uoluntatem personāsq̄ dērigēre* |^c
- 2.67.2: (on the proscription of 43 BC) *id tamen notandum est, fuisse in proscriptos uxorum fidem summam, libertorum mediam, seruorum aliquam, filiorum nullam: adeo difficilis est hominibus utcumque conceptaē spē mōrā* |⁵

⁹² Again, Krause's discussion and classification of *sententiae* ((1800) 25–26) remains well worth reading. See also Sihler (1894) XLVIII–XLIX, Norden (1915) 1. 302.

⁹³ Both, but especially the former, enhance the didactic and moralizing properties of his history. On the judgements expressed in them see Marincola (2011) 123–125.

⁹⁴ For scansion of the clausula, see *supra* 218 n. 78.

With regard to the pleonasm in Velleius' moralizing passages that has just been discussed, it may be noted that in three of these examples the final point is introduced by a connective (either *neque* or *et*).⁹⁵ In the last example, perhaps because of the virtuosity of what had preceded, Velleius writes the *sententia* in a plain style. Less conspicuously placed is a judgement like:

- 2.40.5: (on Pompey, after his victories over Mithridates and in the east) *numquam tamen eminentia inuidia carent*

Terminal *sententiae* (often marked by antithesis, assonance or alliteration) that comment on action just narrated include:

- 1.11.7: *hoc est nimirum magis feliciter de uita* ^A*migrārē quā* ^A*mōrī* |⁵ (note the comparison and the alliteration)
 2.4.6: (on the death of Scipio Aemilianus). The passage has been quoted on p. 218.⁹⁶
 2.19.4: *At ille adsecutus circa Aenariam filium cursum in Africam direxit inopemque uitam in tugurio ruinarum Carthaginensium tolerauit, cum* ^A*Marius* ^B*aspiciens* ^C*Carthaginem*, ^A*illa* ^B*intuens* ^C*Marium*, ^D*alter* ^D*alteri possent ēssē sōlācō* |² (note the precise parallelism in the antitheses)
 2.26.2: ^A*optimusque sibi* ^B*uidebatur quī* ^B*fōrēt* ^A*pēssimūs* |² (note the assonance, chiasmus, and antithesis)⁹⁷
 2.85.3: *Antonius* ^A*fugientis* ^B*reginae quam* ^A*pugnantis* ^B*militis sui comes ēssē mālūt* |⁵, *et* ^C*imperator*, *qui in* ^D*desertores saeuire debuerat*, ^C*desertor* ^D*exercitūs sūi fāctūs ēst* |² (note the antitheses and, once again, the use of a connecting word [*et*] before the final *sententia*)

But it is hard to draw a hard and fast line between such terminal sentences and pithy comment found in mid-sentence. Two examples of the latter (the first quoted already) are:

- 2.49.3: *Lentulus uero salua re publica saluus ēssē nōn pōssēt* |¹ (for the wider context of this *sententia* see above, p. 220)

⁹⁵ Velleius was not alone in introducing a climactic flourish in this way; from Tacitus cf. e.g. *Agr.* 21.2: *paulatimque discessum ad delinimenta uitiorum, porticus et balineas et conuiuiorum elegantiam; idque apud imperitos humanitas uocabatur, cum pars seruitutis esset*, 30.5: *auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium atque ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant*, *hist.* 1.3.1: *corrupti in dominos serui, in patronos liberti; et quibus deerat inimicus, per amicos oppressi*, and 1.49.4: (on Galba) *maior priuato uisus, dum priuatus fuit, et omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset*, and for Quintilian see Whitton (2019) 73 n. 17.

⁹⁶ Bonner (1949) 159–160 well compares a *sententia* of Haterius quoted at *Sen. contr.* 7.2.5: *qui modo Italiae umeris relatus est, nunc sic a Popilio refertur*. However, he regards Velleius' *sententia* as unsuccessful and forced.

⁹⁷ *foret* is Halm's conjecture; if one reads *fuera*t with the paradosis the clausula is of type 4b.

2.97.1: *M. Lollio . . . inter summam uitiorum dissimulationēm uītīōsissimō* |^{4b}

In general, Velleius avoids the gruesomeness and extreme sensationalism associated with declamation. But his account of Cicero's death, that favourite topic of declamatory *suasoria* and told by Velleius in a style that is universally recognized as indebted to the practices of declamation,⁹⁸ brings a unique lapse into apostrophe,⁹⁹ with the authorial voice addressing a character (Mark Antony) in a manner that it is hard to imagine Sallust, Livy, or Tacitus in his *Histories* and *Annals* doing:

Nihil tamen egisti, M. Antoni (cogit enim excedere propositi formam operis erumpens animo ac pectore indignatio), nihil inquam, egisti mercedem caelestissimi oris et clarissimi capitis abscisi numerando auctoramentoque funebri ad conseruatoris quondam rei publicae tantique consulis incītāndō¹⁰⁰ nēcēm. |² (4) *Rapuisti tu M. (Gelenius: tum testt.) Ciceroni lucem sollicitam et aetatem senilem et ^Auitam miseriorem ^Bte principe quam ^Bsub te triumpho ^Amortem, famam uero gloriamque factorum atque dictorum adeo ^Cnon abstulisti ^Cut aūxērīs.* |⁵ (5) *Viuit uiuetque per omnem saeculorum memoriam, dumque hoc uel forte uel prouidentia uel utcumque constitutum rerum naturae corpus, quod ille paene solus Romanorum ^Danimo ^Euidit, ^Dingenio ^Fcomplexus est, ^Deloquentia ^Einluminauit, manebit incolume, comitem aevi sui laudem Ciceronis trahet omnisque posteritas ^Fillius ^Gin te ^Hscripta ^Imirabitur, ^Ftuum ^Gin eum ^Hfactum ^Iexecrabitur, citiusque e mundo genus hominum quam <Ciceronis nōmē> cēdēt* |⁶ (2.66.3–5)¹⁰¹

The parenthesis in the first sentence quoted is one of those passages in which Velleius draws attention to his breaking the self-imposed boundaries of the scale of his work; it may therefore prepare us for the change in style that follows.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ See e.g. Krause (1800) 25 'locus totus est oratorius', Moravsky (1876) 717 and (1882) 167, Woodman (1975b) 11–13 and his notes *ad loc.* in Woodman (1983), Keeline (2018) 118–125; Woodman's notes offer a detailed account of the language of the passage. Many scholars are derogatory when they point to this declamatory influence; Leeman (1963) 248 is particularly outspoken in his condemnation of it. For analysis of the sentence–structure of the passage, see De Stefani (1910) 23–24.

⁹⁹ The addresses to Velleius' dedicatee, Marcus Vinicius, cited *supra* 214, have a different function. Bonner (1949) 159 wrongly regards 2.32.1 'te, Q. Catule' as another example; it is a quotation.

¹⁰⁰ *incitando* is Woodman's conjecture; *irritāndō*, the paradosis, would give a clausula of type 4.

¹⁰¹ The final pointed utterance is once more introduced by a connecting word (-que).

¹⁰² See Keeline (2018) 123. The closest parallel is 1.16.1, where Velleius moves from a digression on Roman colonization to one on the phenomenon of artistic talent clustering in a particular epoch. The argumentational nature of that passage likewise makes it rather different from the style of Velleius' narrative.

Exclamation is used only moderately often at the beginning of the work, appearing first at 2.7.3: *sed M. Cato quantum differt!* and 2.25.3: *pro quanti mox belli facem!* But it was very well suited to a panegyric tone, and is used increasingly often in the final pages of the work, as in these two examples:

106.1: *Pro di boni! quanti uoluminis opera insequenti aestate sub duce Ti. [i.e. Tiberiō] Caēsārē gēssimūs!* ^{14c}

111.4: *Quas nos primo anno acies hōstium uīdīmūs!* ¹² *quantis prudentia ducis opportunitatibus furentes eorum uires uniuērsās ēuāsīmūs* ¹⁴, **** pārtībūs!* ¹² *quanto cum temperamento simul <***, simul> utilitatis res auctoritate imperatōris āgi uīdīmūs!* ^{14b} *qua prudentia hibēnā dispōsītā sūnt!* ^{12c} *quanto opere, inclusus custodiis exercitus nostri, ne qua posset erumpere, inopsque copiarum et intra se furens, turibus hostis elanguesceret.* ¹⁰³

The declamatory style needs emphasis, and, although Velleius may have shown some restraint with regard to the gruesome, the sententious, and apostrophe, his love of superlatives and hyperbole knew hardly any bounds.¹⁰⁴ Few Latin texts of comparable length contain so many superlatives, and perhaps no text of comparable length and post-Augustan date contains so many instances of the first occurrence of a superlative.¹⁰⁵ A computerized word-search suggests that the eighty-nine pages of Watt's Teubner text contain 172 forms (among which I include adverbial forms and other adjectival endings) ending in *-issimus*, 35 in -

103 Later examples may be found at 2.114.1 and 2.129.1–130.2 (in which passage Watt prints fifteen exclamation marks). Sometimes it can be difficult to decide whether to punctuate as an exclamation or a question. Questions that are similar in tone may be found in 2.122 (Watt punctuates the chapter with four question marks) and at 2.126.3: *quando annona moderatior? quando pax laetior?*

104 See Krause (1800) 24 (who well puts the phenomenon in the context of Velleius' desire to move or impress his readers), Sauppe (1837) 177, Kritz (1848) XLVIII–XLIX. Milkau (1888) 39 writes: 'Velleius – id quod opus eius quamuis strictim attingenti incurreret in oculos – neque in laudando neque in vituperando ut tumidis ipsius verbis utor "aut modum norat aut capiebat terminum." Quo factum est, ut cum in rebus perquam mediocribus verbis uteretur nimis splendidis et rerum modo excedentibus, tum si singulis uiris celebrandis illustrandisque intentus erat, adiectiva participia adverbialia, in quibus superlativi vis iam inesse videtur, variaret per gradus et profuse superlativis adderet superlativos, qui plus trecenti quinquaginta apud eum inveniuntur.' It was noted *supra* 214 n. 59 that this use of superlatives may be related to Velleius' exercising of the historians' prerogative to judge and evaluate. The summary nature of his history means that new characters and judgements on them come thick and fast.

105 Some first occurrences in Latin: *adfectissimus* (2.84.1), *caelestissimus* (2.66.3, 2.104.3), *di-strictissimus* (Bentley: *-aximus*) (2.114.1), *eminentissimus* (a particular favourite: 1.12.3, 1.16.2, 2.2.1, 2.17.3, 2.22.2, 2.43.3, 2.71.2, 2.72.3, 2.75.3, 2.99.1, 2.101.2, 2.121.3, 2.130.5), *fulgentissimus* (2.39.1, 2.64.3, 2.71.1), *impatiensissimus* (2.23.1), *mixtissimus* (2.98.3; Watt obelizes here, but in Velleius such a superlative seems possible), *uerecundissimus* (2.33.3; also Sen. *contr.* 7.7.3).

errimus, 12 in *-illimus*, and a further 18 of *optimus*, 7 of *pessimus*, 15 of *plurimus*, 41 of *maximus*,¹⁰⁶ 2 of *minimus*. That is 304 instances, a staggering total even if one regards some instances of *maxime* and *minime* as unremarkable. Add, too, 9 instances of *longe* modifying a comparative. Other hyperbolic expressions include the formulation *super humanam fidem*¹⁰⁷ and *per* being followed by a part of *omnis* (usually in the form *per omnia*) sixteen times, and by *tot* twice.

Bonner, more sympathetic to Velleius than many, wrote, ‘the influence of rhetoric is seen in the brevity and point which marks the style throughout, and in the avoidance of the period. When occasionally Velleius attempts a period, his inexperienced hand leads him into long, unwieldy efforts which a stylist like Livy would hardly have countenanced’.¹⁰⁸ But I have observed already that one of the most interesting features of the style of Velleius is the manner in which he combines periodicity and point, and in fact there are many periods in Velleius, most to be found in passages of narrative.¹⁰⁹ The form of the work to some extent governed his use of such sentences. His summary history is character-driven;¹¹⁰ one may view it as a succession of small episodes which begin with the introduction of a new character. He uses periods most often at the beginning of an episode, whether one containing a character sketch¹¹¹ or without one.¹¹² Alternatively, the character sketch may be delivered in a sentence that is not periodic and a period that drives to the heart of the action may follow.¹¹³ Occasionally a period embraces a whole event or period.¹¹⁴ Periods tend to cluster only rarely in

106 I exclude instances of the proper name.

107 Found at 2.41.1 (on Julius Caesar’s *animus*), 2.130.1 (on Tiberius’ honouring of Augustus).

108 Bonner (1949) 160.

109 Periodic sentences to which I shall not refer again may be found at e.g.: 2.24.3, 2.43.1, 2.51.1–2, 2.56.3, 2.62.1–3, 2.70.2, 2.94.4, 2.95.2, 2.99.1–2, 2.112.2, 2.113.2, 2.119.2, 2.123.2.

110 See Krause (1800) 19 ‘plerumque incipit a uiris summis’, Woodman (1975b) 5.

111 Periods introducing characters may be found at e.g. 1.11.1 (Pseudophilip), 1.12.3 (Scipio Aemilianus), 2.2.2–3 (Tiberius Gracchus), 2.3.1 (P. Scipio Nasica), 2.4.1 (Aristonicus), 2.18.1–3 (Mithridates), 2.18.4–6 (P. Sulpicius), 2.27.1–2 (Pontius Telesinus), 2.29.1 (Pompey), 2.34.3 (Cicero), 2.41.1–2 (Julius Caesar), 2.45.1 (P. Clodius), 2.68.1 (M. Caelius), 2.75.3 (Livia), 2.76.1 (C. Velleius, the historian’s grandfather), 2.83.1–2 (Munatius Plancus), 2.91.2–3 (Caepio and Murena), 2.91.3 (Egnatius Rufus), 2.92.2 (Sentius Saturninus), 2.94.1–3 (Tiberius).

112 See e.g. 1.10.1, 1.11.1 (including a short comment on Pseudophilip’s character).

113 See 2.13.2 (on the career of Livius Drusus; this period has an extension beyond the main clause).

114 See e.g. 2.4.1 (on Aristonicus), 2.5.1 (on D. Brutus; in this sentence the main clause comes first but a following *qui*-clause develops into a period), 2.33.1 (a massive sentence that embraces most of Lucullus’ Asian campaign).

Velleius because the summary nature of the history that he was writing meant that his episodes tend to be short.

The internal dynamics of Velleius' periodic structures have not been much admired. Bonner's judgement has been quoted already, and similar verdicts may be found elsewhere.¹¹⁵ Before examples of Velleian periods are analysed some general observations may be made. One is to note Velleius' fondness for parentheses, in which he generalises about an event, passes judgement on a character, or briefly mentions a tangential matter; such parentheses, found throughout Velleius' work, are often inserted into the middle of long or periodic sentences.¹¹⁶ Another concerns the shape of those long periods which start with a character-sketch. Perhaps they may be compared to the departure of a railway train from a station: many Velleian periods move slowly at first, as the sentence makes its way through a series of balanced epithets, appositions or phrases that describe the character to be introduced,¹¹⁷ but then the speed picks up with ablatives absolute and temporal clauses, and these lead to a climax (often in a main clause) in which the sentence reaches its destination.

Some passages give the lie to the view that Velleius could not construct excellent periods:

Cn. Pompeius consulesque et maior pars senatus relicta urbe ac deinde Italia transmisere Dyrrhachium. (50.1) at Caesar, Domitio legionibusque quae Corfinii una cum eo fuerant potitus, duce aliisque qui uoluerant abire ad Pompeium sine dilatione dimissis, persecutus Brundisium ita ut appareret malle integris rebus et condicionibus ^Afinire bellum quam ^Aopprimere ^Bfugientes, (2) cum transgressos reperisset consules, in urbem reuertitur redditaque ratione consiliorum suorum in senatu et in contione ac miserrimae necessitudinis, cum alienis ^Carmis ad ^Carma compulsus esset, Hispanias pētērē dēcreūit |^{1a} (2.49.4–50.2)

115 See e.g. Sauppe (1837) 175 'Die Perioden sind ohne Rundung', Kritz (1848) LXI 'Si quando vero studet maiores periodos struere, res plerumque male ei cessit', Milkau (1888) 8 'immanes istae periodi', Duff (1927) 160, 'Where he attempts the long sentence the inferiority of his literary architecture becomes apparent: it is often an ill-built fabric of clumsy patchwork', Hellegouarc'h (1982) 1. LXVIII 'insuffisante rigueur', Mayer (2005) 207–208.

116 For parentheses in Velleius see e.g. *2.1.5, *2.13.2, *2.15.1, 2.18.3, *2.18.4, 2.28.2, *2.40.5, 2.41.3, *2.42.3, *2.43.1, 2.43.4, 2.45.1, 2.48.2, 2.58.2, 2.63.1, 2.66.3, *2.68.1, 2.69.3–4, *2.83.1, *2.88.2, 2.91.2, *2.98.2, 2.99.4, 2.100.4, 2.102.3, *2.112.4. Examples preceded by an asterisk are introduced by *quippe*, a favourite word of Velleius', which he uses 63 times over the 89 pages of Watt's text. Velleius' fondness for parenthesis was noted by e.g. Sauppe (1837) 175 and Hellegouarc'h (1982) 1. lxviii. Freitag (1942) 48–68 provides a full study and categorization. Since editors (reasonably) disagree as to when they should punctuate to indicate a parenthesis, it is not possible to produce a full list.

117 Contrast the less sympathetic remark of Mayer (2005) 208.

After a brief sentence describing Pompey's abandonment of Italy, *at Caesar*, like those *at Corbulos* in Tacitus,¹¹⁸ switches attention to a man who knew how to act decisively. What follows is one of the most powerful periods in Velleius: *inter alia* it shows Caesar, last seen crossing the Rubicon, capturing Corfinium in an ablative absolute, chasing Pompey to Brundisium in a participial phrase, and then entering the city with the first main verb; his acts there having been described with breathless haste, the second main verb brings his decision to go to Spain. Velleius never controlled the architecture of his sentences better.¹¹⁹

Or one may consider Marius' escape from Sulla:

*Marius, post sextum consulatum annumque LXX, nudus ac limo obrutus, oculis tantummodo ac naribus eminentibus, extractus harundineti circa paludem Maricae, in quam se fugiens consectantes Sullae equites abdiderat, iniectione in collum loro, in carcerem Minturnensium iussu duumviri perductus est.*¹²⁰ (3) *Ad quem interficiendum missus cum gladio serius publicus, natione Germanus, qui forte ab imperatore eo bello Cimbrico captus erat, ut agnouit Marium, magno eiulatu exprimente indignationem casus tanti uiri abiecto gladio profugit ē cārcērē.*¹²¹ (4) *Tum ciues, ab hoste misereri paulo ante principis uiri docti, instructum eum uiatico conlataque ueste in nauem impōsuerunt.*¹²¹ (2.19.2–4)

Three periodic sentences in succession, each building up to a climax in a main verb, each with faultless architecture, take Marius from Minturnae to Africa.

I turn now to more detailed analysis of two of Velleius' periods, both singled out by Kritz as examples of Velleius' clumsiness,¹²² and in the analysis will take the opportunity to draw attention to some features of Velleius' style on which comment has already been made. First, Julius Caesar's entry into the history:

*Secutus deinde est consulatus C. Caesaris, qui scribenti manum inicit et quamlibet festinantem in se morārī cōgīt.*¹²³ *Hic, nobilissima Iuliorum genitus familia et, quod inter omnes constabat, antiquissima, ab Anchise ac Venere deducens genus, forma omnium ciuium excellentissimus, uigore animi acerrimus, munificentia effusissimus, animo super humanam et naturam et fidem euectus, magnitudine cogitationum, celeritate bellandi, patientia periculorum Magno illi Alexandro, sed sobrio neque iracundo, simillimus, (2) qui denique semper et cibo et somno¹²⁴ in uitam, non¹²⁵ in uoluptatem uteretur, cum fuisset C. Mario sanguine coniunctissimus atque idem Cinnae gener, cuius filiam ut repudiaret nullo metu compelli potuit, cum M. Piso consularis Anniam, quae Cinnae uxor fuerat, in Sullae dimisisset gratiam, habuis-*

¹¹⁸ Tac. *ann.* 11.18.2, 14.23.1, 15.26.1.

¹¹⁹ For discussion of this sentence from the point of view of the attitude to Julius Caesar that it reveals, see Pelling (2011b) 162–163.

¹²⁰ The clausula here comes close to a molossus + cretic.

¹²¹ On the heroic clausula, found more often in historiography than elsewhere, see *supra* 211.

¹²² Kritz (1848) LXI–LXIII.

setque fere XVIII annos eo tempore quo Sulla rerum potitus est, magis ministris Sullae adiutoribusque partium quam ipso conquirentibus eum ad necem, mutata ueste dissimilemque fortunae suae indutus habitum nocte urbe elapsus est. [|]⁴ (2.41.1–2)

The nature of the subordination that is found in the second of these sentences may be depicted graphically as follows. Each indentation marks a layer of dependent subordination:¹²³

hic,
nobilissima Iuliorum genitūs fāmīlīā [|]^{3b}
et,
quod inter omnēs cōnstābāt,
antiquissima, [|]¹²⁴
ab Anchise ac Venērē dēdūcēns gēnūs, [|]^{4a}
forma omnium ciuium ēxcēllētissimūs, [|]⁴
uigōre ānīmī ācērrimūs, [|]^{4b}
munificentia effusissimus, [|]
animo super humanam | et naturam ēt fidem ēuēctūs, [|]¹
magnitudine cogitātīōnūm, [|]³ *celeritātē bēllāndī,* [|]¹ *patientia periculōrūm* [|]³ *Magno illi*
Ālēxandrō, [|]³
sed sobrio neque iracundō
sīmīllimūs, [|]⁵
qui denique | semper et cibo ēt sōmnō [|]⁶ *in uitam, non in uoluptatem ūtērētūr,* [|]³
cum fuisset C. Mario sanguinē cōniūctissimūs [|]^{4a} *atque idēm Cīnnāē gēnēr,* [|]⁴
cuius filiam
ūt rēpūdiārēt [|]^{1b}
nullo metu compelli potuit |
cum M. Piso cōnsulārīs [|]³ *Anniām*
quaē Cīnnāe ūxor fūērāt, [|]
in Sullae dimississēt grātīām, [|]⁴
habuissetque fere XVIII [i.e. octōdēcim] ānnōs [|]³ *eo tempore*
quo Sulla rerūm pōtītūs ēst, [|]⁵
magis ministris Sullae adiutoribūsque pārtiūm [|]⁵ *quam ipso conquirentībūs ēum ād nēcēm,* [|]^{2b}
mutātā uēstē [|]⁶
dissimilemque fortunae suae indūtūs hābitūm, [|]^{2c}
nocte urbe elapsus est. [|]³

123 The lay-out follows syntax. However, as noted earlier, I have marked both what I regard as the boundaries of cola (with |) and rhythmical clausulae found at these boundaries. These cola tend to be shorter than most clauses and many phrases and the boundaries do not always coincide with the lay-out given by syntax; since (again, as noted earlier) colometry is not a precise science and different ancients would have read and declaimed in different ways, some of these boundaries could reasonably be marked differently.

124 The word is only one initial heavy syllable too short to give a molossus + cretic.

Twelve features of this sentence are typical of Velleius. First, as often elsewhere, he has used a period to introduce a character new to his history (the brief introductory sentence in which Velleius characteristically draws attention to the brevity of his work hardly counts as an introduction). Second, the sentence is massive. Third, it moves from a subject (*hic*) introduced at the beginning to a final climactic main clause in which the verb comes at the end. Fourth, it ends with a *clausula* of which Cicero would have approved. Fifth, there is a characteristic piling up of adjectival or participial phrases near the beginning of the period (seven in this period, and all describing Caesar's background and character), before subordinate clauses begin to introduce some narrative: (1) *nobilissima Iuliorum genitus familia et . . . antiquissima*; (2) *ab Anchise ac Venere deducens genus*; (3) *forma omnium civium excellentissimus*; (4) *uigore animi acerrimus*; (5) *munificentia effusissimus*; (6) *animo super humanam et naturam et fidem euectus*; (7) *magnitudine cogitationum, celeritate bellandi, patientia periculorum Magno illi Alexandro . . . simillimus*. Sixth, the sentence exhibits considerable internal balance, especially in the part occupied by these adjectival phrases: *excellentissimus*, *acerrimus*, *effusissimus*, *euectus*, and *simillimus* all end phrases that start with ablatives; and *magnitudine cogitationum, celeritate bellandi, patientia periculorum* constitutes a balanced tricolon with each ablative governing a following genitive. Seventh, although there are no formal parentheses, quasi-parenthetical remarks such as *sed sobrio neque iracundo* and *cum M. Piso consularis Anniam, quae Cinnae uxor fuerat, in Sullae dimisisset gratiam* perform a similar role and require concentration on any reader's part lest he or she lose the structure of the sentence. In this context it may be added that the use of the pronoun *eum* to refer to the subject of the sentence in an ablative absolute, is what a modern schoolteacher would regard as a breach of grammar, for all that there are examples of such things in Caesar himself. Eighth, there is antithesis *in uitam non in uoluptatem* and in the contrast between Caesar and Marcus Piso.¹²⁵ Ninth, there is alliteration, in the words just quoted. Tenth, Velleius includes seven superlatives: *nobilissima, antiquissima, excellentissimus, acerrimus, effusissimus, simillimus, coniunctissimus*. Eleventh, there are two instances of verbal hyperbaton: *nobilissima Iuliorum genitus familia* and *dissimilemque fortunae suae indutus habitum*. And twelfth *humanam et naturam et fidem* illustrates characteristic verbal *abundantia*.

The introduction of Mithridates brings a more complex sentence (2.18.1–3):

¹²⁵ But, as observed above, Velleius' periods tend to contain fewer antitheses than his writing in shorter sentences, and in this respect this sentence is typical. Less typical is 2.18.1–3, quoted in this page.

Per ea tempora Mithridates, Ponticus rex, uir^A neque silendus^A neque dicendus sine cura, bello acerrimus, uirtute eximius, ^Baliquando ^Cfortuna, ^Bsemper ^Canimo maximus, ^Econsiliis ^Fdux, ^Fmiles ^Emanu, odio in Romanos Hannibal, occupata Asia necatisque in ea omnibus ciuibus Romanis, (2) quos quidem eadem die atque hora redditis ciuitatibus litteris ingenti cum pollicitatione praemiorum interimi iusserat, (3) quo tempore neque ^Gfortitudine ^Haduersus Mithridatem neque ^Gfide ^Hin Romanos quisquam Rhodiis par fuit (^Horum ^Ifidem ^IMytilenaeorum ^Iperfidia illuminauit, qui M'. Aquilium aliosque Mithridati uinctos tradiderunt, quibus libertas in unius Theophanis gratiam postea a Pompeio restituta est), cum terribilis Italiae quoque uideretur imminere, sorte obuinit Sullae Asia prouincia.

It may be laid out schematically like this:

Per ea tempora
Mithridātēs, |³
Pōntīcūs rēx, |³
uir neque silendus neque dicendus sine cura |
bello acerrimus, |¹²⁶
uirtute eximius, |
aliquando fortuna, sempēr ānīmō mākīmūs, |^{2a}
consiliis dux, |
miles manu, |
odio in Rōmānōs Hānnibāl, |⁴
ōccūpāta Āsiā |^{1c}
necatisque in ea omnibus ciuibūs Rōmānīs, |⁶
quos quidem
eadēm diē ātque hōrā |¹ redditis ciuitātībūs littērīs |²
ingenti cum pollicitatione praēmīōrū |³ intērīmi iūssērāt, |^{4b}
quo tempore | neque fortitudine aduersus Mithridātēm |³ neque fide in Rōmānōs |⁶
[quisquam Rhōdīs pār fūit |²
(horum fidem | Mytilenaeorum perfidia illūmīnāuit |³
qui M'. Aquilium aliosque Mithridati uinctos trādīdērūt |³
quibūs libētās |⁶ in unius Thēōphānīs grātīām |^{2a} postea a Pompeio rēstītūta ēst), |³
cum terribilis Italiae quoque | uideretur imminērē, |³
sorte obuinit Sullae Āsiā prouīnciā. |^{2a}

The most striking feature of this period is that it emerges in the penultimate clause that Mithridates, whose characterization has been embraced so copiously earlier, is not the subject of the whole sentence but rather of a *cum*-clause to which virtually everything earlier turns out to be subordinate. The opening words *per ea tempora* are the only exception, and I have analysed them as part of the main clause, but even they could be placed within the *cum*-clause. The use of a

126 Virtually a molossus + cretic.

cum-clause at a point where one might have expected a main-clause is a phenomenon found in Livy, to whose lean and incisive periods it imparts energy.¹²⁷ I have divided what follows *Mithridates* into eight phrasal units: we start with units built around two nouns (*rex, uir*), then three built around adjectives (*acerrimus, eximius, maximus*), and then three more units built around nouns (*dux, miles, Hannibal*). The sequence exhibits balance: *acerrimus*, *eximius*, and *maximus* each have preceding ablatives dependent on them. Further balance and antithesis may be found in *neque silendus neque dicendus* (in which *uir ... dicendus sine cura* is a Sallustian reminiscence)¹²⁸ in *aliquando fortuna, semper animo*, and in the chiasmic *consiliis dux, miles manu*. The striking *Hannibal* ends the sequence and looks back to *Mithridates*. The description over, two ablatives absolute start the narrative. Upon the second a relative clause introduced by *quos* depends, which itself contains an ablative absolute inside it, and to which another clause, introduced by the relative expression *quo tempore*, is appended. In this last clause *neque fortitudine aduersus Mithridatem* is in balance and antithesis with *neque fide in Romanos*. *Fide* provides the cue for the characteristically Velleian parenthesis, which starts *horum fidem*. After the parenthesis the delayed *cum* comes as a surprise, and an even greater surprise then comes with the introduction of Sulla and the realisation that *Asia prouincia* is the subject of the whole sentence. If account is taken of the elision in *Sullae Asia*, then the final *clausula* may be analysed as a molossus + cretic, with the last heavy syllable of the molossus resolved.¹²⁹

Not every long sentence in Velleius winds its way through subordinate clauses to a climax in a main clause. Also long, but strikingly different, is:

Reliqua eius acta in urbe, nobilissimaque Dolabellae accusatio et maior ciuitatis in ea fauor quam reis praestari solet, contentionesque ciuiles cum Q. Catulo atque aliis eminentissimis uiris celeberrimae, et ante praeturam uictus <in> maximi pontificatus petitione Q. Catulus, omnium confessione senatus princeps, (4) et restituta in aedilitate aduersante quidem nobilitate monumenta C. Marii, simulque reuocati ad ius dignitatis proscriptorum liberi, et praetura quaesturaque mirabili uirtute atque industria obita in Hispania (cum esset quaestor sub Vetere Antistio, auo huius Veteris consularis atque pontificis, duorum consularium et sacerdotum patris, uiri in tantum boni in quantum humana simplicitas intellegi potest), quo notiora sunt, minus egent stilō ^{15a} (2.43.3–4).

¹²⁷ See Oakley (1997–2005) 1.132 and Mayer (2005) 205 (both with bibliography).

¹²⁸ Maurenbrecher (1891–3) 90–91, comparing our passage and others, prints *uir cum cura dicendus* as *hist.* 2.71, and refers it to Mithridates; but it is not quite certain that Sallust used the expression either of Mithridates or in the nominative. See also Woodman (1968) 791.

¹²⁹ For another discussion of this sentence see Freitag (1942) 59–60.

In this sentence there are no fewer than nine nouns or equivalents (*acta, accusatio, fauor, contentiones, Q. Catulus, monumenta, liberi, praetura quaesturaque* [the last two should be counted as one unit]) that are subject to the main verb *egent*; there is extremely effective use of the possibilities for subordination offered by the past passive participle in the so-called *ab urbe condita* construction (*uictus, restituta, reuocati, obita*), and there is a characteristically Velleian parenthesis.¹³⁰

I have remarked that most of Velleius' periods occur in passages of narrative, but at 1.16.1 he produces a splendid example of the kind of period that we often meet in passages of argument in Cicero and others:

*Cum haec particula operis uelut formam propositi excesserit, quamquam intellego mihi in hac tam praecipiti festinatione, quae me rotae proniue gurgitis ac uerticis modo nusquam patitur consistere, paene magis ^Anecessaria ^Bpraetereunda quam ^Asuperuac<an>ea ^Bamplectenda, nequeo tamen temperare mihi quin rem ^Csaepe ^Dagitata animo meo neque ^Cad liquidum ratione ^Dperductam signem stilō.*⁴

In this sentence, after an initial causal *cum*-clause, the sentence is articulated by, and balanced around, *quamquam ... tamen ...* Inside the concessive clause introduced by *quamquam*, the sense is not complete until *consistere*; and although *nequeo*, the main verb of the main clause, comes first in its clause, no full-stop could be placed before the end of the sentence: *nequeo* leads one to expect an infinitive; the infinitive (*temperare*) leads one to expect a clause of prevention; and the clause of prevention, introduced by *quin*, is not complete until its end.

There are some long sentences in Velleius about whose more ramshackle structure it is difficult to enthuse, but I prefer to put their failing down to over-ambition rather than lack of talent.¹³¹

To return to remarks made at the beginning of this essay, a comprehensive history of Latin prose-style would be difficult to write if all the significant authors had survived and is impossible to write with the evidence that does survive. But in the style of Velleius, echoed in various ways by the fragments of other writers, especially Cremutius Cordus, we can discern many of the features that shaped the stylistic outlook of those writing history at the end of the reign of Augustus

¹³⁰ Vell. 2.52.3 is in some respects similar, only here the sentence starts with a list of six nouns in the accusative (and not nominative) before the main clause; it too has several instances of the *ab urbe condita* construction. On Velleius' use of this construction see Moravsky (1876) 716.

¹³¹ See e.g. 2.69.1–5.

and under Tiberius: in particular, the influence of Sallust, the influence of declamation (especially in prose-rhythm and the quest for point), and the competing demands of the latter with periodicity.