PLUTARCH’S ASSESSMENT OF LATIN AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSION

It is well-known that at the beginning of the Life of Demosthenes, in one of the rare instances in which Plutarch speaks about himself, he tells the reader that only late in life did he begin to come into contact with texts written in Latin1. He adds that, by the time he was writing this, he had attained the capability of reading a Latin text treating matters he was somehow familiar with, so that the expertise he had acquired elsewhere made him able to understand the language, rather than the other way around – that is, using knowledge of the language as a means to gain the information he needed. We may believe him when he says this is true, in spite of its seeming strangeness2. Many of us may have experienced something similar at the beginning of our academic career, when we began reading books and papers in foreign languages we were not necessarily already familiar with, and soon attained the ability to find our way around texts treating subjects akin to those which we were studying ourselves.

This statement of Plutarch’s would be sufficient, in and by itself, to make us realize that the Latin texts he is referring to are those that he needed for his writing activity – mainly, of course, in connection with the biographies of the prominent Romans he paired with equally prominent Greeks in his Parallel Lives, though Latin sources may have been handy also for lesser works concerned with Roman matters3. By and large, therefore, we may expect most of the Latin works he would be interested in to be histories, which he read in order to get information for his own biographical writing. This is punctually confirmed by an analysis of his quotations4. Most of the Latin

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1 Plut. Dem. 2.2 όψε ποτε και πόρρω τῆς ἡλικίας ἤρξαμαι Ρωμαϊκοῖς συντήρησιν ἐντυπώσαιν. Jones 1971, 81 n. 3, compares a similar expression, in which the age of around sixty years is mentioned: Plut. Aem. 10.2 ἡλικίας... ἤδη πρόσω καὶ περί ἐξήκοντα γεγονός ἐτη.

2 Plut. Dem. 2.2 πράγμα θυμισμάτων μὲν, ἀλλ’ ἄλλης ἐπίσκοπε." E.g. the De fortuna Romanorum, the Quaestiones Romanae, and the Parallela Graeca et Romana; but also several passages of the Quaestiones convivales.

3 Plutarch quotes about 40 Latin writers in 130 different passages: cf. Strobach 1997, 41.
writers he mentions are indeed historians; in particular, no Latin poet is ever quoted, with the single exception of the Epistles of Horace, in the Life of Lucullus. All scholars therefore agree on the fact that Plutarch did not read Latin literature for enjoyment, but merely for practical purposes. At all events, Plutarch himself explicitly goes on to say that he never acquired the capability to appreciate the fine points of style in Latin writings.

The question of Plutarch’s knowledge of Latin has been discussed for well over a century, but nowadays most scholars agree that, in spite of some obvious errors found in his writings, he did possess a fair working knowledge of the language, which of course was far from perfect command. An almost total ignorance of Latin on the part of Plutarch is hardly a tenable position; the same of course is true of the other extreme, which attributes to him a profound knowledge of Roman literature and considers his own statement about his inability to appreciate Latin style to be false modesty – though both positions are represented even in fairly recent scholarship.

Our main concern, however, is not to establish to what extent did Plutarch master Latin – we have already stated our opinion concerning this. What we propose to investigate is rather his attitude to and his assessment of

\[\text{Plutarch's Assessment of Latin…}\]
the language of the Romans as a means of expression.

We may begin by remarking that at the very moment he avows his inability to appreciate Latin style he does, in fact, express such an appreciation, by saying that what he cannot perceive is not merely the beauty (κάλλος) of Latin, but also its conciseness and pregnant concentration, which he denotes by the term τάχος, “speed” or “brevity”. The latter definitely appears to be no general remark, but rather a trait peculiar to the Latin language. We must remember this, because the same term and/or the same idea will return in all of Plutarch’s pronouncements about the language of Rome.

In the introductory chapters of the *Lives of Demosthenes and Cicero* he goes on to say that due to his imperfect command of Latin he will avoid emitting a literary judgment as to the superiority of the former or the latter as an orator, and criticizes the presumption of Caecilius of Calacte, who had the nerve to write a *Comparison of Demosthenes and Cicero*, though his language was Greek. We may remind that another literary critic writing in Greek did not shrink from proposing such a comparison. I’m referring to Ps. Longinus, the author of *On the Sublime*10, whose judgments on Demosthenes and Cicero are believed by many to be ultimately based on those of Caecilius11, although he would hardly be touched by Plutarch’s reproach, in as much as he is at pains to apologize for daring to utter an opinion about Cicero, though he is a Greek, and finally leaves the matter to his Roman addressee and his compatriots12. We should notice, however, that he attributes the very trait which for Plutarch is peculiar to Latin, the τάχος, to Demosthenes rather than to Cicero. On the other hand, his judgment on the two orators is in striking agreement with what we read in Quintilian about them,13 and probably reflects a well established tradition.

10 [Longin.,] *de subl.* 12.4 οƔ κατ' ἄλλα δὲ τίνα ἢ ταῦτα, ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, ἄλλατε Τερεντιανόν (λέγω δὲ, « εἰ» καὶ ἡμίν ὡς Ἔλληνιν ἐφέσται τι γινόσκειν), καὶ ὁ Κικέρων τοῦ Ἀμισθένους ἐν τοῖς μεγέθεσι παραλάμβανε, ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐν ύψει τὸ πλέον ἀπότομο, ὁ δὲ Κικέρων ἐν χύσει, καὶ ὁ μὲν ἡμέτερος διὰ τὸ μετὰ βίας ἔκκατα, ἢπὶ δὲ τάχοι, ῥύψης, διενότητος, οὐον καίειν τε ἁμα καὶ διαρπάξειν, σκέπτο τινι παρεικαζοτ' ἢ ἡ κεραυνο, ὁ δὲ Κικέρων ἡς ἀμφιλαφής τις ἐμπιστος, οἷοι, πάντῃ νέμεται καὶ ανεκλέξαι, πολλ ἔχον καὶ ἐπίμονον ἐπ' ὁ καίν καὶ διακληρονομιμένον ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ κατα διαδοχάς ἀναπρόβομεν.
11 Cf. Ofenloch 1907, 137.
12 [Longin.,] *de subl.* 12.5 ἄλλα ταύτα μὲν ὑμείς ἡ ἀμέσως ἐπικρίνεστε.
13 Quint. 10.1.106 densior ille (Demosthenes), hic (Cicero) copiosior, ille concludit adstrictius, hic latius, pugnatum ille acumen semper, hic frequenter et pondere, illic nihil detrahi potest, hic nihil adici. Cf. 10.1.76 tanta vis in eo (Demosthene), tam densa omnia, itu quibusdam nervis intenta sunt, ut nec quod desit in eo nec quod redundet invenias. Notice
Obviously, not all Greek critics had been so insensitive to Latin literature as Dionysius of Halicarnassos, who, though he knew Latin\textsuperscript{14}, never appears to have harbored any interest for Roman literature\textsuperscript{15}, and the comparative merits of Cicero and Demosthenes had been discussed in Greek\textsuperscript{16}. Plutarch himself, in the σύγκρισις which closes the biographies of the two orators, comes very near to contravening his own introductory caution, in as much as he does somehow pass a judgment on their literary achievements. However, the detail we should stress the most, as it is pivotal in assessing Plutarch’s ideas on our problem, is his remark about the two orators’ work as a mirror of their respective character and nature\textsuperscript{17}.

This approach reflects an old idea, which had acquired paramount importance in Roman literary theory and criticism a few decades before Plutarch. It is perhaps best expressed by a Greek proverb reported by Seneca in Latin translation: talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis vita\textsuperscript{18}: “people’s expression reflects their life”. There is no time now for a detailed investigation of this idea, which I have discussed at length in a paper first published in Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt and later updated and collected in one of my books\textsuperscript{19}. It is any way apparent that Plutarch had accepted this principle. To the passage from the σύγκρισις of Demosthenes and Cicero several others can be added – significantly all in reference to Roman authors.

Fabius Maximus’ eloquence fitted his life and character, and it was as dense and concentrated as Thucydides\textsuperscript{20}. Cato the Younger’s character showed through his orations\textsuperscript{21}, as did those of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus,
whose natures were as different as their expression. It hardly matters whether Plutarch is really acquainted with the speeches of these orators—which some scholars, perhaps legitimately, call in doubt. What is really important is that these passages prove that Plutarch accepted the idea that each author is endowed with a peculiar style, which reflects his personality.

As can be easily surmised, and as I have shown at length in one of my books, the idea of each writer’s peculiarity of expression, as dictated by individual personality, is naturally matched by the conception of the special characteristics of a language corresponding to the national character of the people speaking it. Within the Greek language itself, as far as the Doric dialect spoken at Sparta is concerned, not merely does Plutarch accept the widespread idea of its “laconism”: he adds that its conciseness is a fitting and effective means of expression. Among the Romans, Seneca confirms that this dialect is a fit vehicle to give expression to sentiments of fortitude.

All the more justified is the effort to determine the peculiarities typical of each separate language. At Rome the different characteristics of Greek and Latin are often discussed in connection with a problem that hardly concerned the Greeks, namely translation or adaptation from the Greek into Latin. This is hardly surprising, in view of Rome’s cultural dependence from Greece. The Romans’ position, however, was also strongly influenced, sometimes, by moral prejudice. So, for example, the alleged levity of the Greeks, as the Romans saw them, was said to find its expressive counterpart in volubilitas, an uncontrolled rapidity heaping word upon word with no

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22 Plut. Gracchi 2.3 ἐπεί οὗ τοῦ μὲν Γαίου φοβερός καὶ περιπαθής εἰς δείνον, ήδη δὲ τοῦ Τιβερίου καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπαγαγός ὅτι τῇ δὲ λέξει καθαρός καὶ διαπεπονημένος ἀκριβής ἐκείνος, ὁ δὲ Γαίου πιθανός καὶ γεγανωμένου. See the whole context.

23 To be sure, he summarizes a speech given by Tiberius Gracchus (Gracchi 15), in order—significantly—to give an idea of his power of persuasion (15.1 ὁσθ’ ὑπονοηθῇ τὴν πιθανότητα καὶ πυκνότητα τοῦ ἀνδρός).


26 Plut. Lyc. 19.5 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὸν λόγον ὅρῳ τὸν Λακωνικὸν βραχύν μὲν εὔναι δοκοῦντα, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸν πραγμάτων ἐφικνομένον καὶ τῆς διανοίας ἀπόμενον τῶν ἄκρωμομένων; cf. de garrul. 21, 513A. It must be added that these peculiarities of the Doric dialect are strongly reminiscent of those that Plutarch, as we shall see, attributes to Latin.

27 Sen. ep. 77.14 Lacon ille... captus clamabat ‘non serviam’ sua illa Dorica lingua, et verbis fidelim imposuit.
regard for the actual message to be conveyed\textsuperscript{28}: the seeming equivalent, but the actual opposite of the τόξος that Plutarch attributed to the Romans. This attitude is probably mirrored also in the alleged impression which, according to Plutarch, Cato thought he made on the Athenians with a speech he held in their city, namely that the words of the Greeks came from the lips, those of the Romans from the heart\textsuperscript{29}. Seneca, however, is more fair: he speaks of \textit{Latinae linguae potentia aut Graecae gratia}\textsuperscript{30}, “the power of Latin, the charm of Greek”, and finds their counterparts in \textit{robur} and \textit{subtilitas}, vigor and subtlety, the respective national peculiarities of the two peoples\textsuperscript{31}. A generation later, Quintilian’s verdict is hardly different\textsuperscript{32}. As we shall see, Plutarch’s judgment of Latin basically agrees with these ideas of the saner and less nationalistic Romans themselves. But are really Greek and Latin two distinct and separate languages?

Before we tackle the texts where Plutarch expresses his ideas on the peculiarities of Latin, we must briefly turn our attention to what linguistic theories, if any, provide the background for them.

Plutarch is fond of etymologies. In his writings he offers hundreds of etymologies of words belonging to Greek, Latin, and other languages\textsuperscript{33}. The etymologies of Latin words (130 of them) are almost as numerous as those referring to Greek terms. In more than a quarter of the the total Plutarch has recourse to the Greek in order to present an etymological explanation of Latin words; not rarely he does the same with words from other languages, which the Greeks would traditionally consider ‘barbaric’. This is extremely interesting, since Plutarch, though he never engages in discussions involving theories of language, clearly adopts the attitude and the methods which can be found in Plato’s \textit{Cratylus}\textsuperscript{34}. He also appears to believe that, though things

\textsuperscript{28} See Setaioli 1988, 14-15.

\textsuperscript{29} Plut. \textit{Cato mai.} 12.7 τὸ δ’ ὅλον οἰάσθαι τὰ ρήματα τοῖς μὲν Ἑλλησπόν ἀπὸ χειλῶν, τοῖς δὲ Ρωμαίοις ἀπὸ καρδίας φέρεσθαι.


\textsuperscript{31} Sen. nat. 2.50.1 \textit{Graeca subtilitate}; 7.32.2 \textit{Romani roboris}. Cf. Setaioli 1988, 12 n. 5; 13 n. 12; 15.

\textsuperscript{32} E.g. Quint. 12.10.36 \textit{non possamus esse tam graciles, simus fortiore: subtilitate vincimur, valemus pondere.} See the whole context.

\textsuperscript{33} Plutarch’s etymologies are listed by Strobach 1988 in the \textit{Anhang} (pp. 186-192: etymologies of Greek words; pp. 194-201: etymologies of Latin words; pp. 201-204: etymologies of words belonging to ‘barbaric’ languages – most of them Egyptian, found in the \textit{De Iside et Osiride}). The etymologies of Greek words are treated at pp. 55-68; those of Latin words at pp. 87-115; those of words from ‘barbaric’ languages at pp. 115-141.

received their names through human agency (Θεσεί), these perfectly reflected the intrinsic nature of the objects they denoted, when they were first introduced\(^{35}\) – a position close to the Stoic theory of language\(^{36}\). In the *Cratylus*, however, Socrates repeatedly states that no etymology can be found for words coming from barbaric languages, even though they may have long been in use in Greek\(^{37}\). Plutarch has progressed well beyond the parochial attitude of the Greeks of the classical period, who had no qualms about universalizing their own language. In this he is the rightful heir of Hellenistic thinking, when the problem of the existence of languages different from their own was first tackled philosophically by the Greeks\(^{38}\). When Plutarch presents etymologies of Latin and ‘barbaric’ words, he extends the languages they belong to the recognition of a dignity equal to the Greek’s, in as much as this supposes their being governed by rational rules, which permits to understand and reconstruct their inner structure.

It should not escape our attention that not rarely Plutarch’s etymologies of Latin words have recourse to the Greek. This may be due in part to a residual universalization of his own language by the Greek Plutarch. An even stronger reason, however, may be found in the widespread idea that Latin was itself derived from the Greek, which Plutarch in several passages seems to accept and endorse.

That Latin had developed from Greek – rather than both languages descending from a common Indo-European ancestry, as proved by modern comparative linguistics – was an idea which enjoyed wide currency among both Greeks and Romans\(^{39}\) and at times went beyond the merely cultural sphere. The Macedonians, for example, tried to rally the Greeks on their side during the war against Rome by stressing the linguistic difference separating the Romans from the Greeks\(^{40}\), whereas, by endorsing the idea that their language was derived from the Greek, the Romans could uphold their alleged right to interfere in the affairs of Greece.

Though Plutarch never explicitly tackles the problem of the relationship

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\(^{35}\) Cf. Strobach 1988, 55.
\(^{37}\) Plat. *Crat.* 409e; 416a; 421c; 425c. For the Stoics’ similar position see Dahlmann 1964, 11.
\(^{38}\) Cf. Setaioli 1988, 27 and n. 71, with the literature quoted and discussed.
\(^{39}\) Detailed treatments of this topic are available in Gabba 1963 and Werner 1996.
\(^{40}\) Cf. Liv. 31.29.15 *Aetolos, Acarnanas, Macedonas, eiusdem linguæ homines, leves ad tempus ortae causæ diluæ sunt coniunguntur; cum alienigenis, cum barbaris aeternum omnibus Graecis bellum est eritque; natura enim, quæ perpetua est, non mutabilibus in diem causis hostes sunt.*
between the two languages, it is quite clear that he accepts the theory of Latin’s derivation from the Greek. When he says that Latin has “dropped” most prepositions, he obviously supposes an earlier stage in which it possessed all the prepositions of Greek. This is punctually borne out by a number of passages which also suppose an early linguistical stage in which Latin had not yet fully detached itself from Greek. Seen in this light, Plutarch’s judgments concerning the peculiarities of Latin do not basically differ from those he passes, say, on the Doric dialect — whose “laconism”, incidentally, closely resembles what he says about Latin’s conciseness.

We have already seen that the conciseness (τάχος) of Latin was already emphasized in the Life of Demosthenes, where Plutarch purports not to be able to appreciate the stylistic aspect of Latin writings. Several other passages bear out this judgment. In the Life of Cato the Younger he remarks that Curio used one word which he is obliged to render with two Greek terms to do justice to its whole semantic range: ἡδίων... καὶ μᾶλλον ἡμέρος, which, according to some, renders the Latin mansuetior, whereas I would rather propose mitior, which can mean both “sweeter” (ἡδίων) and “gentler” (μᾶλλον ἡμέρος).

In the Life of Cato the Elder Plutarch tells about a speech given by him at Athens, which, though according to some sources it was in Greek, he believes to have been held in Latin and then translated by an interpreter. Plutarch then reports what appears to be a comment by Cato on the impression he made on the Athenians, which might ultimately go back to the Censor himself. Once more, what is emphasized in this passage is the τάχος, the

42 E.g. Plut. Marc. 8.7 κατὰ τὴν Ἑλληνίδα γλώσσαν ἐπὶ πολλὴν τότε συμμειμένην τῇ Λατίνῳ: Num. 7.10 τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ὁνόματιν τότε μᾶλλον ἢ νῦν τὸς Λατίνοις ἀνακεχρημένων; Rom. 15.4-5 (about the ritual cry at Roman weddings, Talassios) εἰς τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ὁνόμασιν τῶν Ταλασσίων ἐπικεχρημένων, εἰ δέ τούτῳ μὴ λέγεται κακώς, ἀλλ’ ἐχρόνῳ Ρωμαιοῖς τὸ τό ὀνόματι τῆς ταλασίας καθάπερ ἡμέες, ἔτεραν ἀν τις οἰκίας εἰκάσεις πιθανώτεραν. ἐπεὶ γαρ οἱ Σαμῖνοι πρὸς τοὺς Ρωμαίους πολεμήσαντες διηλάγησαν, ἐγένοντο συνθήκεις περὶ τῶν γυναικῶν, ὅπως μηδὲν ἄλλο ἔργον τοῖς ἀνδρίσι τά περὶ ταλασίαν ὑπονομέω. Cf. quaest. Rom. 31, 271F. On the question see esp. Strobach 1997, 84-87.
43 Plut. Cato min. 14.8 “ἐν λέγεις”, εἰπὲν ὁ Κουρίος, “ἡδίων γαρ ἐπανήξεις ἐκεῖθεν καὶ μᾶλλον ἡμέρος”, οὔτω παρὰ καὶ τῷ ῥήματι χρησίμουνος. Gehman 1916-1916, 238, thinks the original word to have been mansuetior. The same suggestion is made by Perrin 1919, 267 n. 1. At Coriol. 1.6 Plutarch remarks that the Romans use only one word (virtus) to mean both άρετή and ἀνθρεία.
conciseness of Cato’s Latin, which is reaffirmed, after a few words, by a hint at his brevity (βραχέως), and accompanied by ὀξύτης, “sharpness”, or “pointedness”, a quality which often goes together with τάχος44. It appears to be akin to potentia, the power which Seneca attributes to the Latin language. It is worth noting that Cato’s conciseness is opposed to the verbosity of the Greek translation made by the interpreter: through Plutarch’s report we can get a glimpse of an early stage of the persistent moralistic prejudice against the Greeks and their language, seen as a mirror of the alleged levity and lack of seriousness of that nation, which, as we saw, resulted in volubilitas, the expressive intemperance of a people whose urge to talk and talk, in the eyes of some Romans, was utterly beyond redemption45.

However, when the moralistic disparagement of the Greeks is removed, the assessment of the peculiarities of Latin as an expressive tool attributed to Cato does not basically differ from what Plutarch himself has to say on the subject.

Exactly the same terms – τάχος and ὀξύτης – appear in another famous passage, in which Plutarch reports Caesar’s celebrated announcement of his victory over Pharnaces: veni vidi vici. They are actually referred to Caesar’s military campaign, of which his famous three-word report is the aptest representation; here too, however, literary brevity (βραχυλογία) is expressly mentioned46. The most striking detail is Plutarch’s remark about the particular expressiveness of the three words in Latin, as compared to the Greek translation he offers his readers. One is rather amazed, however, when he sees the reason of this in the fact that all three have the same ending. This obviously proves that Plutarch’s knowledge of Latin is anything but accomplished, as all Latin perfects end in -i in the first person. But another detail is perhaps even more conspicuous: Plutarch does not notice that the three Latin verbs all have two syllables, and, most of all, what for us is the most obvious element, namely the alliteration, appears to have escaped him totally.

In Greek literature alliteration in no way attained an importance comparable to the one it enjoys in Latin literature, not to mention those of the Ger-

44 Even in the Greek Demosthenes: Quint. 10.1.106 (cf. above, note 13).
46 Plut. Caes. 50.3-4 καὶ τῆς μάχης παύση τὴν ὀξύτητα καὶ τὸ τάχος ἀπαγγέλλων εἰς Ἱώμην πρὸς τινα τῶν ἰδίων Μάτινν ἐγγέγραψε τρεῖς λέξεις· ἕλθον, εἶδον, ἐνίκησα. Ῥωμαῖοι δ’ αἱ λέξεις, εἰς ὅμοιον ἀπολήγουσα σχῆμα ρήματος, σὺν ἀποθανον τὴν βραχυλογίαν ἔχουσιν.
manic languages. With few exceptions – such as the couple ὁμός τε καὶ ὁμός\(^{47}\) –, it is also difficult to find alliteration in Greek everyday speech, as we do in Latin and the Romance languages on the one hand, or in the Germanic ones on the other\(^{48}\). In Latin we have, for example, *purus putus*, *faustus felix*, etc.\(^{49}\); in Italian “bello e buono”, “sano e salvo”, etc.\(^{50}\); in French “sain et sauf”, “(promettre) monts et merveilles”, etc.\(^{51}\); in German “Rast und Ruhe”, “Schutz und Schirm”, etc.\(^{52}\); in English “safe and sound”, “then and there”, “time and tide”, “kith and kin”, “part and parcel”, “mice and men”, “trick or treat”, “spick and span”, “wax and wane”, “rough and rowdy”, “head over heels”, “through thick and thin”, “from stem to stern”, etc.

If Plutarch destroys Caesar’s alliteration in his Greek translation, we witness the opposite in the Latin translation of a famous saying of Jesus’ from the Greek of St. John. The famous words\(^{53}\) ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή – “I am the way, the truth and the life”, in the King James Version – become in Latin *ego sum via, et veritas, et vita*.

If Plutarch is one of the few Greeks capable to appreciate the qualities of Latin as a means of expression, it also remains very true that he is not capable to appreciate the fine points of Latin style, as he tells us himself and as his missing Caesar’s alliteration confirms. This proves that, though Plutarch’s working knowledge of the language can hardly be denied, his judgments on Latin are based on the general framework provided by contemporary culture which we have been trying to outline, rather than on opinions and convictions stemming from a personal, first-hand appreciation of language, texts, and authors.

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\(^{47}\) E.g. Hes. *op.* 243; Herod. 7.171.2; more references in *LSJ* s.v. ὁμός.

\(^{48}\) For an in-depth study of alliteration and other phonetic structures see Traina 1999\(^2\).

\(^{49}\) Also *ferus et... ferreus* (Tib. 1.10.2); *maria monitisque* (Sall. *Cat.* 23.3); *pas Palamedes* (Petr. 66.7); *factum, non fabula* (Petr. 76.4); *ab acia et acu* (Petr. 76.11, and cf. Otto, 1890, s.v. *acus* 2).

\(^{50}\) Also “vivo e vegeto”, “baracca e burattini”, “mari e monti”, “in fretta e furia”, “ciò che pare e piace”, “volere o volare”, “l’onore e l’onore”, “di rifa o di raffa”; “paga, Pantalone”; “basta, Bastiano”; “spendere e spandere”, “tagliare la testa al toro”.

\(^{51}\) Also “bel et bon”, “rêve et réalité”, “vice et vertu”, “à tort et à travers”, “bric-à-brac”, “(ne remuer) ni pied ni patte”.

\(^{52}\) Also “Blut und Boden”, “Tod und Teufel”, “Feld und Frucht”, “Haus und Hof”, “Land und Leute”, “Mann und Maus”, “mit Kind und Kegel”, “Zweck und Ziel”.

\(^{53}\) IoH. 14.6.
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