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Simplicitas & the Hymni Ambrosiani

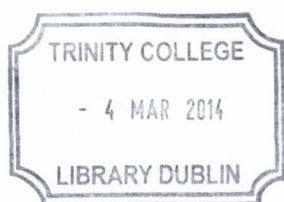
by

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor in
Philosophy

University of Dublin
Trinity College

2013

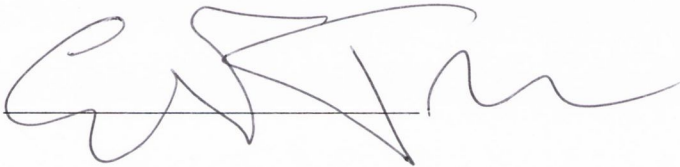


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Emmett P. Tracy

SUMMARY

The overall aim of this thesis is to address the notion that the earliest and most influential of Christian poems, the *Hymni Ambrosiani*, were formally and linguistically *simple*. The general position that these highly structured verse compositions were the ‘simplest thoughts in the simplest forms of metre’ or functional and simple *versiculi* seems to overlook the complex and diverse literary and linguistic influences in the text. Despite the fact that the term *simple* remains an ambiguous and divisive concept in the modern age, little attention has been paid to its unsettling appropriation in Ambrosian poetic studies. Taking a formal and systematic approach, this work examines the syntax, lexis, and metre of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* and makes greater attempt to catalogue the poetic stylisations and the diverse linguistic influences in the collection.

Chapter 1.

Chapter 1 introduces the *Hymni Ambrosiani*, a collection of religious poems in Latin verse, traditionally attributed to Ambrose of Milan (c. 339-397). There is a brief review of the issues of authorship after which the chapter outlines and defines the central argument of this paper, namely that the use of the words *simple* and *simplicity* (*Einfachheit*, *semplicità*, *simplicité*, etc.) has challenged (obscured and prevented) a modern understanding of the linguistic and poetic qualities of the work. The chapter concludes with a brief biographical sketch of the author along with notes on editions and terminology.

Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 commences with a brief introduction to the complexities of early Christian aesthetics and outlines problems of understanding *simplicity* in ancient and modern usage. The chapter introduces the current state of *hymni* scholarship and demonstrates the potentially problematic use of *Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, *semplicità*, and *simplicity* as principal locutions in the modern discussion of style and form in the text. A methodology based on a synthesis of philological and sociolinguistic study is proposed, limitations are considered, and all subsequent chapters are outlined.

Chapter 3.

Following the methodological approach laid out in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 explores individual features of syntax as a means of exploring simplicity in the text (Walpole 1922: 24, Norberg 1974: 141, Fontaine 25). Regularizations of verbal morphology, nominal usage, and clausal structure are all investigated as prominent features of simplified languages (Mühlhäusler 76-89, Goodman 1971: 253). Chapter 3 demonstrates that while certain regularized elements

occur, the *hymni* exhibit other aspects of complex grammar (e.g. supine, rare participial substantives, extended clausal subordination) as well as constructions influenced by metre or poetic stylisation (e.g. poetic plurals, rare singulars, hyperbaton) and derivations from Biblical style (e.g. extended *genitive* constructions, signs of *ad + acc.* in indirect object). In short, syntactic features in the collection appear to exhibit a significant synthesis of Classical and Biblical language as well as poetic influences that can be seen to complicate, rather than simplify, the syntactic component.

Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 proposes that while some aspects of lexical simplification occur in the *hymni* (e.g. lexical repetition of certain terms like *fides* and *Christus*), there also occur undervalued elements of originality and poeticism (e.g. stylised metonymy, oxymora, loan-words and Ambrose-isms). Chapter 4 explores these aspects and proposes that the lexical originality in the text demonstrates far greater stylisation and linguistic diversity than is generally discussed.

Chapter 5.

Following the direct line of enquiry in Chapters 3 and 4, Chapter 5 explores the metrical component of the *hymni* as a means of analysing simplification on a formal scale. Traditionally, the hymns' system of stichic acatalectic iambic dimeter patterns has been used to indicate a certain level of quantitative and syllabic regularization (Norberg 1974: 139, Fontaine 63). Overall, however, the chapter suggests that greater attention should be paid to the formal innovations and the possible Biblical influences in the collection. While the *hymni* are shown to exhibit some characteristics of quantitative and syllabic regularity, closer investigation reveals that such regularity itself is complex and that in passages with Biblical intertext, Biblical quotation, or Greek or Hebrew loan-words there is greater formal variation than is generally acknowledged.

Chapter 6.

The conclusion restates the significant observations of the thesis, namely that the diversity of literary and linguistic influences in the *Hymni Ambrosiani* has a substantial impact on the syntax, lexis, and metre of the text. A greater understanding of this impact may contribute to future readings of the collection and further research on contact studies in early Christian literature. Finally, an attempt is made to contextualize this research within modern Ambrosian studies.

There is not a simple page, a simple word, on earth –

J.L. Borges (1970)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My research on the iambic dimeter and on the poetry of Ambrose of Milan has lasted six years, and I have numerous individuals, institutions, and resources to thank for their inexhaustible patience. At the University of Dublin, Professor McGing, Dr. Dodge, Dr. Cuypers, Professor Gale, and especially Dr. Ashley Clements and Dr. Donncha O'Rourke (now Edinburgh) have added useful criticism at various stages. In the School of Religions and Theology, Dr. Benjamin Wold has been a mentor in discussions of New Testament literary aesthetics. Outside of Dublin, Professor Philip Burton helped advise directions in sociophilological analysis, and two remarkable confidants, Sig. Paolo Di Vito and Dr. Stephanie Russell, have buttressed studies of Latin linguistics and Milanese culture while continuing to inspire attempts at closer, more focused and accurate readings of an *oratio simplex*.

Institutionally, I am indebted to the gracious librarians and staffers at Ussher Library (TCD), Early Printed Books (TCD), Butler Library (Columbia University), and Burke Library (Union Theological Seminary). I must thank members of staff at those institutions, and in particular, Mr. Adrian Thomas who miraculously located a lost copy of Engström on short notice. At Trinity, the executive officer of the Classics Department, Ms. Winifred Ryan, and library administrators, Ms. Kay O'Neill and Ms. Paula Norris, made transitions and research investigations almost seamless.

If a hierarchy of *grates* were to exist, my foremost thanks would be directed to Professor Anna Chahoud. It is impossible to quantify Professor Chahoud's influence on (or patience with) this work, but her insights into levels of literary and textual analysis will guide this author's approach *in sempiterna saecula*. At every stage – from analysis, to translation, to re-analysis and revision – she has been *une aubaine*. This text (and especially the Appendix translations) could not have been completed without her assistance.

Finally, my own family and friends have given their support for too many years, and while Jenny and T. Tomas have taken the brunt of it all, they have made language contact and language acquisition much more than hours in a library.

E. Tracy

Abbreviations

All periodical references follow the style of *L'Année philologique*; with any exception listed below or identified in full. Abbreviations for classical and late antique texts follow the conventions of the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (Leipzig, 1900-). References to scripture are taken from the *Vulgate* (Vg), unless noted, and thus the style follows that of the Vg text ('1-2 Rg.' = 1-2 Sam; '3-4 Rg.' = 1-2 Rg.; and references to the Psalms follow the Vg enumeration). As well, the following abbreviations are used in the text:

<i>AB</i>	<i>Anchor Bible</i> (New Haven, 1956-)
<i>alt. sp.</i>	Alternate spelling
<i>CCSL</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</i> (Turnhout and Paris)
<i>CLE</i>	See Bibliography, F. Bücheler (ed.) (1895-1926)
<i>CSEL</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> (Vienna, 1866-)
<i>De.</i>	German
Fontaine	See Bibliography, J. Fontaine (ed.) (1992)
<i>Fr.</i>	French
<i>Gr.</i>	Greek
H-S	See Bibliography, J. Hofmann (ed.) (1965)
<i>It.</i>	Italian
ITSEE	<i>Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing</i>
K-S	See Bibliography, R. Kühner (ed.) (1962)
<i>LLSA</i>	See Bibliography, S.M.A. Adams (1927)
<i>LLT-A</i>	<i>Library of Latin Texts – Series A</i> (Turnhout, 2002-)
<i>LLT-B</i>	<i>Library of Latin Texts – Series B</i> (Turnhout, 2002-)
LSD	<i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> , Liddell & Scott (edd.)(Oxford, 1968)
Mühlhäusler	See Bibliography, P. Mühlhäusler (1974)
NT	New Testament
NT(A)	See Bibliography, R. Muncey (1959)
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>OLD</i>	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , P.G.W. Glare (ed.)(Oxford, 1968-82)
OT	Old Testament
<i>PLM</i>	<i>Poetae Latini Minores</i> (Leipzig, 1910-)
P-W	See Bibliography, W. Plater (1926)
<i>RM</i>	See Bibliography, F. Crusius (1959)
<i>TLL</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> (Leipzig, 1900-)
VL	Vetus Latina
Vg	Vulgate

Abbreviations of Other Works by Ambrose

<i>Abr.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Abraham</i> , CSEL 32.1.501-638
<i>Apol.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De apologia prophetae David</i> , CSEL 32, 2, 299-335
<i>Bon. Mort.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Bono Mortis</i> CSEL 32.1
<i>Cain et Ab.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Cain et Abel</i> , CSEL 32.1. 339-409
<i>Epist.</i>	O. Faller & M. Zelzer (edd.), <i>Epistulae</i> , CSEL 82.1-3
<i>Exc. Sat.</i>	O. Faller (ed.), <i>De excessu fratris Satyri</i> , CSEL 73
<i>Fid.</i>	O. Faller (ed.), <i>De Fide ad Gratianum Augustum</i> , CSEL 78. 8. 3-307
<i>Fug. Saec.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De fuga saeculi</i> , CSEL 32. 2.163-207
<i>Hex.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>Hexaemeron</i> , CSEL 32.1.3-261
<i>Iac.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Iacob et uita beata</i> , CSEL 32.2
<i>In Luc.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>Expositio euangelii secundum Lucam</i> , CSEL 31.4
<i>In Psalm.</i>	M. Petschenig (ed.), <i>Explanatio psalmorum XII</i> , CSEL 64.6.3-397
<i>In Psalm 118</i>	M. Petschenig (ed.), <i>Expositio psalmi CXVIII</i> , CSEL 62.5.3-510
<i>Inst. uirg.</i>	<i>De institutione uirginis et s. Mariae uirginitate</i> (PL 16.319-47)
<i>Isaac</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>Isaac uel de anima</i> , CSEL 32.2
<i>Myst.</i>	O. Faller (ed.), <i>De mysteriis</i> , CSEL 73
<i>Nab.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Nabuthae</i> , CSEL 32.2
<i>Noe</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Noe</i> , CSEL 32.1
<i>Off.</i>	See Bibliography, I. Davidson (2001)
<i>Parad.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Paradiso</i> , CSEL 32.1
<i>Sacr.</i>	O. Faller (ed.), <i>De Sacramentis</i> , CSEL 73
<i>Spir.</i>	O. Faller (ed.), <i>De Spiritu sancto ad Gratianum Augustum</i> , CSEL 79
<i>Symb.</i>	O. Faller (ed.), <i>Explanatio symboli</i> , CSEL 73
<i>Tob.</i>	K. Schenkl (ed.), <i>De Tobia</i> , CSEL 32.2
<i>Virg.</i>	E. Cazzaniga (ed.), <i>De uirginibus ad Marcellinam sororem</i> (Torino, 1948)
<i>Virginit.</i>	E. Cazzaniga (ed.), <i>De uirginitate</i> (Torino, 1952)

A Note on the Texts

Latin quotations from the *Hymni Ambrosiani* are taken from J. Fontaine (ed.) (1992) (see above and bibliography) unless otherwise noted.

English quotations from the *Hymni Ambrosiani* are taken from E. Tracy (2013) (see Appendix A) unless otherwise noted.

Latin quotations from the Bible are taken from the Vulgate (*Biblia Sacra Vulgata*) (see above and bibliography) unless otherwise noted.

English quotations from the Bible are taken from the Anchor Bible (New Haven, 1956-) unless otherwise noted.

Part I

Introduction & the Issue of *Simplicitas*

Introduction & the Issue of *Simplicitas*

1.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the *Hymni Ambrosiani*, a collection of religious poems traditionally attributed to Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (c. 339-397).

After a brief review of the issues of attestation raised in modern scholarship, the introduction outlines and defines the central argument of this thesis: namely that the critical use of the words *simple* and *simplicity* (*Einfachheit*, *semplicità*, *simplicité*, etc.) have long challenged, prevented and obscured a modern understanding of the linguistic and poetic qualities of the Latin text. The chapter concludes with notes on editions, terminology, a biographical sketch of the author and the attached translation appendix.

1.2 Evidence of Authenticity

The *Hymni Ambrosiani*, a modern compendium (Fontaine 93-4; Franz 1994: 1-15) of iambic dimeter compositions, can be found in manuscripts dating from as early as the eighth century (Jullien 1989: 57-189). The oldest codex, *Cotton Vespasian A I* (or the Vespasian Psalter), contains two hymns included in modern editions (*hymni* 2 and 4);¹ four others (*hymni* 3, 5, 7 and 9) exist in a manuscript of a slightly later date, *Bibliotheca Vaticana Reg. lat. 11* (c. 750-800 C.E.); and eight others are located in the Milanese codex *Bibliotheca Vaticana Vat. lat. 82* (c. 870-

¹ In the numeration used by Fontaine (1992), Simonetti (1988), Bulst (1956), and this thesis. Walpole (1922) provides a numeration plus one, thus hymn 1 = hymn 2, hymn 2 = 3, etc. Dreves gives an altogether different numeration as follows 1 = 1, 2 = 2, 3 = 3, 4 = 7, 5 = 8, 6 = 9, 7 = 10, 8 = 11, 9 = 12, 10 = 13, 11 = 14, 12 = 15, 13 = 16, 14 = 17; Biraghi (1862), the first 'modern' editor, yet another 1 = 11, 2 = 12, 3 = 13, 4 = 17, 5 = 1, 6 = 9, 7 = 2, 8 = 4, 9 = 3, 10 = 5, 11 = 6, 12 = 7, 13 = 8, 14 = 10. See Appendix B for coordinated numeration.

900 C.E.).² The total number of texts that have been credited or attributed to Ambrose of Milan is far greater.³ The popularity of the works and their role in Christian liturgy seem to have produced so many *ex nomine Ambrosiani* that as early as the seventh century, Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636) noted that there were an abundance of Christian Latin hymns inaccurately labelled ‘Ambrosian’ (Isid. *eccl. off.* 1.6.13 *atque inde hymni ex eius nomine Ambrosiani uocantur*), and in the ninth century, Walahfrid Strabo (c. 808-849), the Frankish theologian and poet, recognised that countless imitations lacked any substantial authorial evidence (Strabo *De ecclesiasticarum rerum exordiis* PL 114.955: *Sciendum tamen multos [sc. (h)ymnos] putari ab Ambrosio factos, qui nequaquam ab illo sunt editi. Incredibile enim uidetur illum tales aliquos fecisse, quales multi inueniuntur, id est qui nullam sensus consequentiam habentes insolitam Ambrosio in ipsis dictionibus rusticitatem demonstrant*).⁴

Research on the authenticity of the *hymni* has been rendered considerably more difficult by the transmission of the texts in liturgical documents (for example hymnaries, missals, and other devotional material). Rather than reproduced in proper collections following literary criteria (Lanéry 2008: 218), the hymns were frequently subject to corruption as a result of these more pragmatic methods of circulation (see Fontaine 93-102). Modern research (see §1.5) has dedicated significant scholarship toward the issues of attribution and recovery, and by using a combination of internal and external criteria, experts have identified no more than eighteen⁵ as the authentic works of Ambrose (Franz 1994: 17-25). Still, only four hymns of the modern group (*hymni* 1, 3, 4 and 5) have their authenticity as the true works of the Bishop confirmed by the writings of two contemporary witnesses, Augustine (d. 430) and Pope Celestine (d. 432):⁶

² Altogether modern editors have consulted roughly forty-three manuscripts, see Fontaine (102-14).

³ H.A. Daniel’s *Thesaurus Hymnologicus* (1841-56), for example, lists over one hundred hymns as Ambrosian (vol. I, 12-115), and the issue of authenticity is still a point of discussion amongst scholars (see den Boeft and Hilhorst (edd.) (1993: 79).

⁴ Strabo *De ecclesiasticarum rerum exordiis* PL 114.955: ‘Nevertheless, it must be known that many hymns are thought [to have been written] by Ambrose that were certainly not produced by him. For it seems unbelievable that he wrote some of such a kind, as many are found, that is those, which having no sequence of thought, demonstrate a rusticity in their very modes of expression unusual for Ambrose’.

⁵ Fourteen is the number generally accepted today (see den Boeft 1993: 77-89).

⁶ The latter, Celestine, is quoted in a work attributed to Arnobius Junior (c. 460).

Aug. *retract.* 1.21 qui sensus etiam cantatur ore multorum in uersibus beatissimi Ambrosii, ubi de gallo gallinaceo ait: **hoc ipse petra ecclesiae / canente culpam diluit;**

(which meaning is also sung in the mouth of many people in the verses of most blessed Ambrose, when he speaks about the cock's crow: "**as he sings, the Rock of the Church himself / washes away our sin**") (Hymn 1)

Aug. *nat. et grat.* 74 Spiritum memoratus episcopus etiam precibus impetrandum admonet; ubi in hymno suo dicit: **uotisque praestat sedulis / sanctum mereri Spiritum;**

(the aforementioned Bishop [Ambrose] reminds us that the Spirit must be obtained also by prayers, when he says in his hymn, "**And he makes it possible to be worthy of the Holy Spirit by constant prayers**") (Hymn 3)

Aug. *conf.* 9.12.32 recordatus sum ueridicos uersus Ambrosii tui: tu es enim **Deus creator omnium / polique rector . . .**

(I recalled those true verses of your Ambrose: you are indeed, "**God, creator of all things / ruler of the sky . . .**") (Hymn 4)

Ps. Arnob. *confl.* 2.13 recordor beatae memoriae Ambrosium in die natalis Domini nostri Iesu Christi omnem populum fecisse una uoce canere: **ueni Redemptor gentium, / ostende partum uirginis . . .**

(I recall that Ambrose, of blessed memory, made all the people sing in one voice on the day of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ: "**Come redeemer of the peoples, reveal the offspring of the Virgin . . .**") (Hymn 5)

1.3 Enquiry

The enquiry of this thesis, rather narrowly, does not seek to investigate or reassess the issues of attribution but in accordance with recent scholarship on Ambrose (den Boeft 1993, 2008 and Zerfass 2008) to explore the critical vocabulary used to characterise the linguistic and aesthetic elements of the Latin text.⁷ In

⁷ More recent studies (see den Boeft (1993, 2008), Zelzer (1999), Lanéry (2008), and Zerfass (2008)) have taken the path of Ambrosian scholarship in two directions: 1) to appreciate more of the

particular, this research finds there has been a remarkable (and confounding) propensity in nineteenth and twentieth century scholarship to use *simple* and *simplicity* (*Einfachheit*, *semplicità*, *simplicité*, etc.) as central locutions in the critical approach (see §2.4), and that the terms *simple* and *simplicity* (also widely applied to Christian prose literature)⁸ have slipped into the study of Ambrosian poetry is unsettling, not least because it seems to occur without proper consideration of what exactly *poetic simplicity* means or whether the term can accurately describe the syntactic, lexical and metrical features of the Latin.

As Paul Auksi observes in his analysis of early Christian aesthetics,⁹ the words *simple* and *simplicity* are extremely challenging from a modern perspective because their semantic meanings are open to more than fifteen definitions in English (see *OED* ix.63-5), and choosing any one of them as a single point of analytical departure inevitably invites confusion.¹⁰ In ancient contexts, the Latin word *simplex* contains its own semantic challenges, holding two distinct etymological elements, *sem* (one) and *plex* (fold), that bestow certain definitions (e.g. undivided, single) with elusively metaphoric connotations (see *OLD* 1764, Ernout & Meillet 1959: 514-5). The complexities and variances of these meanings, especially as they become even more complicated in early Christian literature (where the word is adopted and specialized with theological significance) will be explored more directly in Chapter 2 (see §2.2-3), but it is relevant to note that the suggestion that something is *simple* implies the comparative and converse notion that something

originality and artistry in the hymns (den Boeft 2008: 425-40), and 2) to focus on the intricate linguistic (and social) connections between pagan and Biblical traditions. Regarding the latter, Zelzer (1999: 228) has gone so far as to criticise research that identifies linguistic diversity without taking into account social, political and theological situations ('So erscheint es - zusammenfassend - zwar erfreulich, daß die Schriften des Mailänder Bischofs heute immer mehr Bedeutung finden, es genügt aber nicht, eingehend aufzuarbeiten, wie er heidnische Traditionen und Bibeltexte (nicht), miteinander verbunden hat; ohne sorgfältige Beachtung seiner besonderen gesellschaftlichen, kirchenpolitischen und theologischen Situation und seiner eigentlichen Ziele muß das Ergebnis wohl unbefriedigend bleiben'). den Boeft's analysis, on the other hand, focuses more on aesthetics and originality and has done a great deal to highlight the innovation and artistry in Ambrose's work (den Boeft 2008: 425-6).

⁸ See Auerbach (1965: 25-82), Murphy (1974: 299), Auksi (1995: 3-33).

⁹ Auksi (1995: 3).

¹⁰ For a discussion of the inherent problems with defining aesthetic experience in terms of simplicity, see Diepeveen (2002) and §2.5.

else is *complex* – a perception that is equally value-laden and largely ignored in Ambrosian critical analyses.¹¹

In short, this study has found that the unique combination of diverse elements (what Fontaine labels a ‘triple-heritage’ (Judeo-Greco-Roman) and Biraghi calls a ‘foreignness of phrases’ (Fontaine 3; Biraghi 1862: 8)) might benefit from greater explorations into the precise syntactic, lexical and metrical qualities of the text. The implementation of methodologies found in modern sociolinguistic studies have helped to yield a unique and systematic approach to that investigation, and in particular, Mühlhäusler’s extension of simplification theory (as originally defined by Ferguson (1971), then Mühlhäusler (1974) and later Trudgill (2010)), has allowed this thesis to assess not only the perceived impact of Biblical language on the Latin verse¹² but also the possibility of syntactic and lexical regularization as part of an emerging Christian verse aesthetic (see §2.6-8). In other words, the principles of syntactic and lexical simplification provide a framework to highlight the formal and linguistic characteristics of the hymns that may (or may not) signify an aesthetic or linguistic *simplicity*.

The exact implementation of the present methodology will be outlined in Chapter 2, but the governing principle of the investigation is that if the *hymni* are as formally and linguistically *simple* as it has been claimed (see §2.4, also Norberg 1974: 139-41, Simonetti 1988: 11-7, Fontaine 63, 141), then the linguistic aspects of the Latin (i.e. syntax, diction, metre) might exhibit signs or patterns that are suggestive of regularization or limitation (i.e. a consistent and limited use of certain clausal features, verbal morphologies, lexical terms, etc.), and further, if the *hymni* exhibit variations (in the form of complex clausal constructions, poetic stylisations, rare lexical terms, Biblical loan-words, metrical variations) then the critical description of the *hymni* might benefit from reassessment or the terminology of simplicity abandoned for more descriptive and elucidating terms.

¹¹ Towards this issue this thesis has tried to provide some comparative analysis (see §3.3, §4.4.2, §5.2).

¹² Research on the notion of Biblical influence and Biblical Latin is extensive. For recent discussions see García de la Fuente (1994), Kraus (2003), Rubio (2009); see also the classic discussions of Mohrmann (1952, 1961-77).

1.4 Terminology

Prior to a proper discussion, certain terms will appear in this thesis that require prefatory note. *Hymni*, foremost, is used as a direct reference to the fourteen hymns considered throughout the discussion. At times, the terms ‘hymns’ and ‘poems’ are also used synonymously. It is worth noting that my discussion avoids the issue of antiphonal singing altogether (see Dreves 1893: 276-316), primarily as the result of a more focused linguistic approach. The evidence of musical accompaniment or melodic arrangement remains contentious (Taruskin 2005: 47-48, Hughes 1954: 59-6, Wellesz 1947: 126, also McKinnon 1987: 125-34),¹³ and thus I have chosen to treat the *hymni* more for their literary and linguistic qualities than their supposed musical arrangement.

Certain references to periods of Latinity also appear. *Classical Latin* (CL) is used as a reference to literary Latin of the Golden and Silver ages. *Biblical Latin* (BL) refers specifically to the language of the *Vetus Latina* (VL) and *Biblia Sacra Vulgata* (Vg).¹⁴ Such ‘periodizations’ are of course problematic (see Wright 2003: 36-7), but they can be helpful in comparative discussions of later Latin. With regard to sociolinguistic theory, the terms ‘regularization’ and ‘variation’ represent distinctions highlighted by Mühlhäusler (76-109, 136). Although Mühlhäusler actually uses the term ‘irregularity’ more frequently than ‘variation’, the term ‘irregularity’ introduces a misleading convention into a discussion of late Latin as it suggests forms or constructions that are altogether unusual or unprecedented in the language (as opposed to those which exhibit the absence of ‘regularization’). The theoretical difference between ‘regularization’ and ‘restriction’ is a significant tenet of Mühlhäusler’s extension (73-4), and following his precedent the latter term is generally avoided.

As regards editions of the Bible, I have relied on the Institut Vetus Latina series (1949-present) and the ‘Stuttgart Vulgate’ edited by R. Weber *et als.* (1984).

¹³ For a discussion of the issue and debate between Duchesne (1931) and Cagin (1900), see Hughes (1954: 60). Generally the argument exists over whether the Ambrosian melodies can be traced through Latin (Cagin) or Eastern traditions (Duchesne). Wellesz advocates for the Eastern influence (Wellesz 1947: 126) but he acknowledges that very little can be certain given the lack of textual evidence (see also Taruskin 2005: 47-8).

¹⁴ As outlined by P-W (1-10) and Burton (2000: 3-13).

It must be noted that the text used by Ambrose was certainly not Jerome's Vg, but some version of the VL or a Greek text. James Muncey's *The New Testament Text of St. Ambrose* (1959) has shed some light on this subject (mainly by piecing together Ambrose's usages in prose works), and where evidence exists from Muncey's research that work is cited. Still, at present there is no conclusive evidence regarding all of the New Testament or Old Testament text read by Ambrose, and in cases where significant variations between the Vg and VL versions occur, I have made a note in the discussion and presented as many versions of the VL as possible. In this regard, the Jülicher-Matzkow-Aland *Itala* volumes have been an indispensable resource and the ITSEE website (Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing) a valuable aid that has helped to identify numerous syntactic and lexical variations in the manuscript tradition. As for the 'Greek Bible', an appellation that unsatisfactorily (and erroneously) suggests a monolithic translation, I have used the Swete edition (1887) for the OT and Nestle-Aland 27 (1992) for the NT. In these instances, the term 'Septuagint' is used despite the fact that individual books are likely to carry their own textual histories.

1.5 Editions

As a result of the issues of attestation (see §1.2), the history of critical reception and editions is complex. The debate on authenticity was brought into the modern age by the work of Luigi Biraghi (1862) who in his review and revaluation of the sixteenth and seventeenth century editions (most notably those edited by Cardinal Tommasi (1685) and by the Maurist monks (1686-1690)) observed that earlier research had ignored or underestimated the issue and extent of 'internal evidence'.¹⁵ To address this failure, Biraghi proposed a revised methodology of authentication based on the application of three objective 'canoni' (i.e. criteria), namely (1) conformity with the literary character and style of Ambrose, (2) the rites

¹⁵ Such was a much needed analytical reading, considering 16th century hymn collectors (e.g. Clovoceo, Cassandro, Giovanni), and later Cardinal Tommasi (1685) had often attributed hymns without proper justification or reasoning to be included 'alla nobilissima famiglia da lui generata' (Biraghi 1862: 6).

and uses of the ancient Milanese church, and (3) the testimony of ancient authors (Biraghi 1862: 3-4, Simonetti 1952: 377, Franz 1994: 21-3).

Biraghi's revised edition lists eighteen *hymni*, and its version of the text remains recognised today (see Dreves 1893, Walpole 1922, Simonetti 1952, 1988). A second edition, somewhat more conservative, was introduced by August Steier in 1903. Steier judged evidence insufficient for four of Biraghi's 'incomplete' *hymni*¹⁶ and limited the number of works to fourteen (see Steier 1903, Bulst 1956, Fontaine 1992), only to have a third edition introduced by Simonetti (1952) who found *hymni* 6, 7, and 12 doubtfully authentic and suggested a number closer to eleven (Simonetti 1952: 413). The most restrictive edition of the *hymni* was published in 1994 by Franz, who accepted as authentic only the four compositions attested by Augustine and Celestine (Franz 1994: 26).

In this present study, Steier's fourteen hymns (Steier 1903, Bulst 1956, Fontaine 1992) have been adopted. Most recently, this edition has been reprinted by Peter Walsh (2012), and it remains the most widely referenced collection of Ambrosian poetry in modern research (see Mans 1993, den Boeft 1993, 2008, Bastiaensen 1994, Lanéry 2008). For the sake of continuity and of adherence to the contemporary position of authenticity, the text of each hymn as per this edition is reprinted at the end of this discussion.

Perhaps the greatest justification for the use of Steier's text is the comprehensive approach to the manuscript tradition completed by Fontaine (1992). Roughly forty-three codices from Italy, Spain, Germany, France, Switzerland, England and Belgium are analysed by the French scholar (Fontaine 1992: 102-109) who categorises the hymns by date, place of origin, and type (hymnal, church manual, etc.); the most consistent and insightful method of classification appears to be 'type' – whereby the manuscripts form four distinct 'families' (from Fontaine 106-7): the Milanese hymnal (group A), the Spanish hymnal (group B), the 'ancient' hymnal (group C) and the 'new' hymnal (group D). Group D constitutes the largest of these 'families' and contains texts from Italy, Germany, England and France, all

¹⁶ The 'incomplete' *hymni* (15, 16, 17, 18, see Walpole 1922: 108, Simonetti 1988: 10, den Boeft 1993: 79) have long been contested. They are generally discredited by modern editors and not included in this study.

of which correspond more or less geographically (the Lake of Constance region in Switzerland seems to be very consistent with manuscripts from the West of Germany, while the French and English copies are relatively similar).¹⁷

1.6 Author

A discussion of the latinity of the verse writings of Ambrose is not the appropriate venue for a comprehensive biography of the Bishop of Milan. For a proper account, see Paredi (1960), McLynn (1994), Dassman (2004) or most recently Liebeschuetz (2011).¹⁸ Biographical narrations are mostly based on the *Vita Sancti Ambrosii*¹⁹ by Paulinus Mediolanensis,²⁰ an author who had been Ambrose's secretary in Milan and was later commissioned by Augustine to write a *uita sancti*.²¹ Long criticised for his tendency to embellish biographical details, Paulinus found ample opportunity in Ambrose's *uita* to insert references to scriptural and messianic events. The most overt examples undermine the accuracy of the account and reveal striking similarities between episodes of Ambrose's infancy and a passages in the Book of Proverbs 16:23-4:

Paul. Med. *vita Ambr.* 3.2

Qui infans in area praetorii in cuna positus, cum dormiret aperto ore, subito examen apum adueniens faciem eius atque ora compleuit, ita ut ingrediendi in os egrediendique frequentarent uices.

(The infant was placed in a cradle in the courtyard of the praetorium. All at once, as he slept with his mouth open, a swarm of bees came and covered his face and mouth in such a way that they would go in and out [of his mouth].)

[trans. Ramsey (1997: 197)]

¹⁷ For further discussion, see Jullien (1989: 57-189) and Fontaine (107).

¹⁸ The latter reviewed by Peter Brown in the *New York Review of Books*, March 08, 2012: www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/mar/08/tale-of-two-bishops-and-brilliant-saint/.

¹⁹ See Palanque (1933), Paredi (1960). A composition date of 412/413 C.E. has been put forth by Duval (1966), though 422 C.E. is the generally accepted date by Palanque (1933), Paredi (1960), Pellegrino (1961), and Lamirande (1983).

²⁰ See Lamirande (1983).

²¹ Perhaps around the Conference of Carthage in 411 that both men attended, cf. Aug. *epist.* 29*.2 *Vt enim mouerer tale aliquid facere, quando de hac re tuae caritati locutus sum, delectauerant me quaedam de martyribus conscripta a uenerabilis memoriae sene ambrosio quae comparata ceteris quorum scripta de his rebus legeram mihi proposui, sed ea maxime narrauit senex ambrosius quae in publicis gestis cognosci non possent.*

Prv. 16:23-4

cor sapientis erudiet os eius et labiis illius addet gratiam; fauus mellis uerba composita
dulcedo animae et sanitas ossuum.

(The wise man's heart instructs his mouth, and it enhances instruction on his lips.

Pleasant words are honeycomb – sweet to the taste and healing to the bones).

Despite the ostensible inaccuracies of Paulinus' material, it is generally accepted that Ambrose of Milan was born at Trier between C.E. 334 and 340, as either the second or third child of an imperial officer.²² He had at least two siblings, Marcellina and Satyrus, and he was taken to Rome at an early age²³ to be instructed in the 'liberal arts'.²⁴ After entering into a professional career as a legal counsel,²⁵ Ambrose seems to have been appointed to an office at the court of Sirmium under the praetorian prefect, Petronius Probus,²⁶ with whom he remained until he was appointed governor of Aemilia-Liguria around C.E. 370. It was in the third or fourth year of that second political appointment that Ambrose was acclaimed Bishop of Milan – the circumstances of which remain mysteriously unclear (Paredi 1964: 91-107, McLynn 1994: 1-13).²⁷ As Paulinus presents it, it was not Ambrose's religious or political qualification that garnered his election, but divine intervention:²⁸

Paul. Med. *vita Ambr.* 6.1-2

ibique cum adloqueretur plebem, subito uox fertur infantis in populo sonuisse:

'Ambrosium episcopum!' Ad cuius uocis sonum totius populi ora conuersa sunt
adclamantis: 'Ambrosium episcopum!'

²² Cf. Paul. Med. *vita Ambr.* 3.1 *posito in administratione praefecturae Galliarum patre eius Ambrosio natus est Ambrosius.*

²³ Cf. Paul. Med. *vita Ambr.* 4.1 *Postea uero, cum adoleuisset et esset in urbe Roma constitutus cum matre uidua et sorore.* See Liebeschuetz (2011: 57-8).

²⁴ Paul. Med. *vita Ambr.* 5.1 *Sed postquam edoctus liberalibus disciplinis ex urbe egressus est professusque in auditorio praefecturae praetorii, ita splendide causas perorabat, ut eligeretur a uiro inlustri Probo, tunc praefecto praetorii, ad consilium tribuendum.*

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See Liebeschuetz (2011: 58-9).

²⁷ Liebeschuetz provides an unusually condensed and matter-of-fact discussion of the election of Ambrose, stating: 'Order was indeed restored, for the two factions united to acclaim Ambrose' (Liebeschuetz 2011: 59).

²⁸ Cf. also Rufinus, *Rufin. hist.* 11.11 *cumque inibi multa secundum leges et publicam disciplinam pro quiete et tranquillitate perorasset, pugnantis inter se et dissidentis populi subito clamor et uox una consurgit Ambrosium episcopum postulantes.*

(and there, as he was speaking to the throng, the voice of the a small child all at once made itself heard among the people: 'Ambrose for Bishop!' At the sound of this voice the whole tone of the gathering changed, and they acclaimed Ambrose as their bishop.)

[trans. Ramsey (1997: 198)]

What is certain is that over the next two decades Ambrose emerged as one of the most politically influential and commanding bishops in the West. In C.E. 381 Ambrose organised the Council of Aquileia to condemn the Arian sects of Christianity, and exerted his anti-Arian views again at the Council of Rome in C.E. 382. In C.E. 385 he refused to allow Valentinian II to use Milanese basilicas for non-religious (or non-Trinitarian) purposes, and by C.E. 389-91, he helped institute the Theodosian decrees, a set of laws that essentially outlawed paganism by making pagan holidays workdays and closing the doors of pagan temples.

Most significant to this study, however, is the fact that Ambrose's legacy as an author and Christian Father can be closely connected to his pastoral activity in the final decades of the fourth century. As one of the most charismatic leaders of the rapidly expanding Christian church, Ambrose produced a wealth of influential works, including: letters and sermons, five dogmatic volumes, fourteen exegetical treatises, and six ethical writings. His *hymni* represent his most lasting contribution to Western culture (Julian 1907: 56), although it is Augustine, not Ambrose, who provides the possible context for their composition.²⁹

Aug. *conf.* 9.7.15

Nimirum annus erat aut non multo amplius, cum Iustina, Valentiniani regis pueri mater, hominem tuum Ambrosium persequeretur haeresis suae causa, qua fuerat seducta ab arrianis. Excubabat pia plebs in ecclesia, mori parata cum episcopo suo, seruo tuo . . . tunc hymni et psalmi ut canerentur secundum morem orientalium partium, ne populus maeroris taedio contabesceret, institutum est . . .

(There was a year, not much more, during which Justina, mother of the boy-king Valentinian, was persecuting Ambrose, the man of God, in the interests of her own heresy; she had been seduced by the Arians. The devout populace mounted watch in the church, ready to die with their bishop, your servant . . . It was then that the custom

²⁹ It should be noted that the passage in Augustine does not make explicit reference to the hymns sung on this occasion.

was established of singing hymns and psalms after the Eastern fashion, to keep the people from growing weary and faint-hearted . . .)

[trans. Burton (2001: 197)]

Here it is presumed that Ambrose's own *hymni* were introduced along with (and closely connected to) Biblical songs and psalms. The unique form and structure of his compositions (see §5.2) however quickly made his work independently popular and widely recognisable (Julian 1907: 56, Fontaine 109-14). Most profoundly, his poetry incorporated themes of persecution and endurance that seemed to resonate with early Christian sentiments of oppression, loss, and suffering.³⁰ As Augustine says, *et in Ambrosii ora suspendi . . . diligebat autem illum uirum sicut angelum dei* ([she] hung upon the lips of Ambrose . . . she loved that man as an angel of God).³¹

When Ambrose died at dawn on April the fourth 397 C.E., his body was buried in the tomb of the martyrs, Protasius and Gervasius, whom he claimed to have discovered.³² He left only one sermon that addressed the significance of his poetic achievement:

Ambr. *epist.* 75a.34

Hymnorum quoque meorum carminibus deceptum populum ferunt, plane nec hoc abnuo. Grande carmen istud est quo nihil potentius; quid enim potentius quam confessio trinitatis, quae cottidie totius populi ore celebratur? . . . Facti sunt igitur omnes magistri, qui uix poterant esse discipuli.

(They declare also that the people have been led astray by the strains of my hymns. I certainly do not deny it. That is a lofty strain, and there is nothing more powerful than it. For what has more power than the confession of the Trinity which is daily celebrated by the mouth of the whole people? . . . So they all have become teachers, who scarcely could be disciples).

³⁰ See McLynn (1994: 201). Augustine himself recites hymn 4 after the death of Monica: cf. Aug. *conf.* 9.12.32 *Cum ecce corpus elatum est, imus, redimus sine lacrimis . . . deinde dormiui et euigilaui et non parua ex parte mitigatum inueni dolorem meum atque ut eram in lecto meo solus, recordatus sum ueridicos uersus Ambrosii tui . . .* (Even when the body was taken out for burial, I went and came back without weeping . . . then I slept and woke again, and found my grief greatly lessened; and, as I lay alone in my bed, I recalled those true-spoken verses of your servant Ambrose . . .) [trans. Burton (2001: 208)].

³¹ Aug. *conf.* 6.1.1.

³² McLynn (1994: 361-7).

1.7 Appendix

At the back of this text is attached Appendix A that provides the complete text of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* as edited by Jacques Fontaine *et al.* (1992). The English *en face* (translated by the author of this thesis) represents an aid for readers with lesser command of Latin. While the English rendering is not poetic, certain effort has been made to reproduce the brevity and density of an iambic dimeter line.

A Review of Research and the Issue of *Simplicitas*

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 begins with an introduction to the semantic complexities of early Christian *simplex* and *simplicitas* and outlines the challenges of determining the correct and diverse meanings of those terms as they appear in writings of that period. The chapter then reports on the current state of *hymni* scholarship and highlights the potentially ambiguous employment of the term *simplicity* (*Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, *semplicità*) as a fundamental concept or aesthetic that characterises the style and form of the collection (Szövérfy 1964: 56, Norberg 1974: 139, Simonetti 1988: 18, Fontaine 1992: 63, White 2000: 46).

On the whole, the chapter suggests that a methodology based on a synthesis of philological¹ and sociolinguistic theory² might effectively stimulate a broad and systematic discussion. The chapter argues that an in-depth analysis of syntactic, lexical and metrical elements is beneficial to the understanding and appreciation of the text and helps to clarify any potential ambiguity of the ‘simple’ classification.

¹ See Ernout (1957), Leumann (1959), Coleman (1999), Wright (2003), Adams (2003, 2003a, 2011). These studies have had different influences on this thesis, but Leumann (1959) perhaps most eloquently lays out the challenges (and significances) of investigating poetic diction: ‘Mit dem Ausdruck “Dichtersprache” hingegen ist nicht etwas Individuelles gemeint, auch nicht die Summe individueller Sprachformen eines Dichters, sondern vielmehr ein sprachlicher Kollektivbesitz, bei dem die Besonderheit oder der Stil des einzelnen Dichters lediglich durch sein Auswählen unter den darin gegebenen Formen und durch die darüber hinaus geschaffenen Neuerungen bestimmt ist’ (Leumann 1959: 131), followed by an outline of certain aspects of syntax and lexis that can contribute to the poeticizing of a text (Leumann 1959: 141-56). More recently, Coleman (1999: 21-93) has helped to characterise the concept (as noted in Hine’s (2005) discussion of Seneca) that helps make sense of what exact differences exist (outside of metre) between prose and verse. In terms of historical linguistic studies, Adams (2003, 2003a, 2011) and Wright (2003) have been most convincing in their emphasis on interdisciplinary analyses. Wright (2003: 297-342) correctly addresses the hazards of combined methodologies (318-330) but acknowledges that much can be learned from the incorporation of sociolinguistics and graphemics (295), see also §2.6.

² Most significantly Mühlhäusler (1974), but see also Ferguson (1959, 1971), Gumperz (1962, 1964), Thomason and Kaufman (1988), Nichols (1992), Trudgill (2002, 2010). It should be noted here that ‘simplicity’ in a sociolinguistic sense does not signify ‘simplicity’ in linguistic, philosophical, or other senses. Sociolinguistic ‘simplicity’ refers specifically to the definition found in Ferguson (1971) and later Mühlhäusler (1974) and Trudgill (2010), see §2.6.

2.2 *Oratio simplex et grauis*

The literature addressing the complexities of Christian literary semantics and the countless connections to Biblical *loci* cannot be covered in an exhaustive manner in this dissertation.³ For the purpose of my study I should begin by noting that at least as early as Tertullian (d. 220 C.E.) there emerges an aesthetic emphasis on *simplicitates* (simplicities) and *ueritates* (truths). Cyprian (d. 258 C.E.) espouses a rhetorical style of *uox pura* (pure expression) and *rudi ueritate simplicia* ([words] simple with unvarnished truth). Lactantius (d. 320 C.E.) remarks that prophets used *simplex* (simple) language because they spoke *ad populum* (to the people); and Arnobius (d. 330 C.E.) recognises a clear connection between Christ's *familiaris conlocutio* (familiar speech) and his *pura simplicitas* (pure simplicity):

Tert. *spect.* 29 Si scaenicae doctrinae delectant, satis nobis litterarum est, satis uersuum est, satis sententiarum, satis etiam canticorum, satis uocum, nec fabulae, sed ueritates, nec strophae, sed simplicitates.

(If the theatrical literature pleases you, there is also plenty of our literature, plenty [of our] verses, thoughts, songs, proverbs; not fables, but truths, not tricks, but simplicities).

Cypr. *ad Donat.* 2 in iudiciis, in contione, pro rostris opulenta facundia uolubili ambitione iactetur: cum de domino, de deo uox est, uocis pura sinceritas non eloquentiae uiribus nititur ad fidei argumenta sed rebus. denique accipe non diserta, sed fortia, nec ad audientiae popularis inlecebram culto sermone fucata, sed ad diuinam indulgentiam praedicandam rudi ueritate simplicia.

(Let elaborate eloquence be paraded with the fluency of ambition in the law-courts, in the assembly, on the rostra; when speaking of the Lord, when speaking of God, the pure sincerity of speech relies not upon the power of eloquence to express the proofs of faith, but on facts. Therefore, be prepared to hear words that are not well-spoken, but weighty, and that are not beautified for the purpose of charming a popular audience with a sophisticated speech, but simple for the purpose of proclaiming the divine mercy with unvarnished truth).

³ See André (1921: 306-27), Spicq (1933: 5-26), Lehmann (1938: 306-308), Blaise (1954: 761), Auksi (1995) for discussions of 'simplicity'. More generally, see Auerbach (1965: 25-82), Norberg (1974: 5-6) and Murphy (1974). For a discussion of Christian aesthetics, see Herzog (1975) and Roberts (1989).

Lact. *inst.* 5.1.15 nam haec in primis causa est cur apud sapientes et doctos et principes huius saeculi scriptura sancta fide careat, quod prophetae communi ac simplici sermone ut ad populum sunt locuti.

(for this is primarily the reason why the wise, the learned, and the rulers of our age have no faith in the Holy Scripture, because the prophets spoke with common and simple language, as [though they spoke] to the people).

Arnob. *nat.* 1.46 <se> saepius familiari conlocutione monstravit, qui iustissimis uiris etiam nunc inpollutis ac diligentibus sese non per uana insomnia sed per purae speciem simplicitatis apparet.

(He often showed himself in friendly conversation, he who appears even now to righteous men unstained and to those who love him, not through vain dreams, but through an aspect of pure simplicity).

Yet *simplicitas*, or a simple aesthetic, cannot be understood as wholly Christian or influenced by Biblical literature alone without subverting centuries of classical theory and treatises of ancient rhetoric that might reflect an aesthetic of *simplicity*.⁴ In book 1 of *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius' discussion of physical properties and the indivisibility of *simplicitas* (singleness) seems to hint at stylistic as well as scientific qualities (Lucr. 1.548-50 *sunt igitur solida primordia simplicitate* / *nec ratione queunt alia seruata per aeuum* / *ex infinito iam tempore res reparare* 'Therefore the first-beginnings are of solid singleness, nor in any other way can they be preserved so through the ages from infinite time now gone and renew things')⁵ that might even reflect the Epicurean emphasis on stylistic σαφήνεια (cf. Diog. L. 10.13 Κέχρηται δὲ λέξει κυρία κατὰ τῶν πραγμάτων . . . σαφὴς δ' ἦν οὕτως, ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Περί ῥητορικῆς ἀξιοῖ μηδὲν ἄλλο ἢ σαφήνειαν ἀπαιτεῖν). Indeed, the Lucretian aphorism *sunt igitur solida primordia simplicitate* is found on several occasions⁶ to indicate what Leonard and Smith describe as 'the intrinsic integrity', and 'the absence of void and so structural evenness' (Leonard and Smith 1942: 256).

⁴ The influence of classical authors on the Church Fathers is well documented in relation to Ambrose see Diederich (1931), Marrou (1948), Davidson (1995), and Gelumbeckaite (1999).

⁵ Translation from Bailey (1947: 203), emphasis my own.

⁶ Cf. Lucr. 1.574, 1.609, 1.612, 2.157.

This evenness or singleness in physical and metapoetical senses can, according to Gale, ‘account in a quite mechanistic way for everything that happens throughout the universe’.⁷ A century earlier, Terence’s opening to the *Heautontimorumenos* admits a critical rejection of a plot that contaminates (*contaminare*)⁸ a single Greek theme (*argumentum simplex*) by making it *duplex* (Ter. *Haut.* prol. 6 (*comoedia*) *Duplex quae ex argumento facta’est simplici*), a concept that also seems common to Lucretian views on the difficulty of adopting Greek philosophy into *rustica* Latin (Lucr. 1.136-9 *nec me animi fallit Graiorum obscura reperta / difficile inlustrare Latinis uersibus esse / multa nouis uerbis praesertim cum sit agendum / propter egestatem linguae et rerum nouitatem* ‘Nor does it pass unnoticed of my mind that it is a hard task in Latin verses to set clearly in the light the dark discoveries of the Greeks, above all when the many things must be treated in new words, because of the poverty of our tongue and newness of the themes’).⁹

In the prose of Cicero and Quintilian, we find more overt (if dismissive) overtures to a Stoic appreciation of a stylistic *simplicitas* in the divisions of rhetorical style (the so-called *genera dicendi*).¹⁰ In *Partitiones Oratoriae*, for instance, Cicero notes that an *oratio* must be simple (*simplex*) and profound (*grauis*) for it is the occasion not of elaborate or rousing language but a straightforward display of intent (cf. Cic. *part.* 97 *tota autem oratio simplex et grauis et sententiis debet ornatior esse quam uerbis* ‘Moreover the whole speech ought to be simple and weighty and more elaborate in its meaning than in its words’). Peter Auksi observes that the Ciceronian position (staking its claim between Attic and Asiatic oratory)¹¹ often insists on a *uarietas* of simple and complex elements (Cic. *part.* 12 *aut haec*

⁷ Gale (2009: 7).

⁸ Cf. Ter. *Haut.* prol. 17.

⁹ Translation from Bailey (1947: 183). Goldberg’s (1986) discussion of structure and themes in Terence dedicates a whole section to the significance of *simplicitas* as a guiding aesthetic (Goldberg 1986: 149-69).

¹⁰ Cf. Cic. *orat.* 20 *tria sunt omnino genera dicendi*, also Cic. *orat.* 69 *sed quot officia oratoris tot sunt genera dicendi: subtile in probando, modicum in delectando, vehemens in flectendo*. The principle text is often *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Rhet. Her. 4.16. In Quintilian, Quint. *inst.* 12.10.58 *altera est diuisio, quae in tris partis et ipsa discedit, qua discerni posse etiam recte dicendi genera inter se uidentur*. For a dated but indispensable account of the *genera dicendi* see Hendrickson (1905), also Shuger (1984: 1-42). For more in-depth discussion of Cicero’s approach and to lower registers of Latin, see Burton (2009: 55) who draws a connection to several important terms, among them *rusticus* and *simplex*, and Ferri & Probert (2010). Also Clackson & Horrocks (2007: 229-264).

¹¹ Cf. Quint. *inst.* 12.10.16-58.

inaequabili uarietate distinguimus, cum parua magnis, simplicia coniunctis, obscura dilucidis . . . inteximus ‘Or we distinguish these [matters of speech] with uneven variation, we interweave small things with great [ones], simple with complex, obscure with clear’) and even if Cicero seems to marginalise *simplicitas* (as *parua* = *simplicia*, *magna* = *coniuncta*), the master of Roman rhetoric does not wholly repudiate *simplex* speech (Auksi 1995: 53-7).¹² In fact, what is interesting is that Cicero’s usage seems to convey something of a relationship between *simplicitas* and the *antiquitas* of Roman culture, as when Cicero refers to his mother-in-law’s pronunciation of Latin and its *incorrupta antiquitas* (Cic. *de orat.* 3.45 *facilius enim mulieres incorruptam antiquitatem conservant . . . sono ipso uocis ita recto et simplici est ut nihil ostentationis aut imitationis afferre uideatur* ‘for women easily preserve the pure antiquities [of speech], . . . the very sound of her [Laelia’s] voice is so simple and direct that she seems to employ no [sense of] ostentation or affectation’) or when he offers the style of Lucius Mummius as *simplex et antiquus* (Cic. *Brut.* 94 *Fuerunt etiam in oratorum numero mediocrium L. et Sp. Mummii fratres, quorum exstant amborum orationes; simplex quidem Lucius et antiquus, Spurius autem nihilo ille quidem ornator* ‘In the order of second-rate orators there were also two brothers, Lucius and Spurius Mummius, both of whose orations are exstant; Lucius [was] simple and archaic, Spurius no more ornate’). The role of *simplicitas* as a sort of μέρος πραγματικόν (Quint. *inst.* 12.10.59, see also Hendrickson 1905: 269), also seems to be part of an oratorical balance and variation, a stylistic mode suited to specific moments, like dialogues in the theatre (for as it is *in scaena*, so it should be *in foro*, (cf. Cic. *Brut.* 116 *Volo enim ut in scaena sic etiam in foro non eos modo laudari, qui celeri motu et difficili utantur, sed eos etiam quos statarios appellant, quorum sit illa simplex in agendo ueritas, non molesta*).

Quintilian, who plays the significant role in bringing Ciceronian theory into the Middle Ages, seems equally conscious of, if less patient with, a *simplex* aesthetic. While the *Institutio oratoria* alludes to the three *genera dicendi*, the author clearly advocates the *genus grande* as the only style worthy of elevated thought

¹² As Jakob Wisse observes, ‘*Rhetoric for Herennius* 4.11-16 offers the well-known and probably original variant with three such types, the plain style, the middle, and the grand . . . the Atticists are adherents of the plain style, while the ideal orator is a master of all three’ (Wisse 2002: 358).

(Quint. *inst.* 12.10.10-16). At the beginning of Book 8, Quintilian clearly marks a division between what learned orators might understand and what can be read by the *incipientes* (beginners) in terms of *simplicitas* (cf. Quint. *inst.* 8 proem. 1 *per omnes numeros penitus cognoscere ad summam scientiae necessarium est, ita incipientibus breuius ac simplicius tradi magis conuenit* ‘For a proper understanding it is necessary to become fully acquainted with all sections [of this method], but it is appropriate to impart it *more simply* and briefly to beginners’), and in fact, Quintilian’s usage of *simplicitas* seems to delineate three semantic categories of the term: simplicity as ‘naturalness’ (Quint. *inst.* 1.11.6 *quod minime sermoni puro conueniat, simplicem uocis naturam pleniore quodam sono circumliniri*),¹³ simplicity as ‘grammatical restriction’ (Quint. *inst.* 1.5.3 *aut simplicia aut composita*),¹⁴ and simplicity in ‘legal theory’ (Quint. *inst.* 3.10.1 *ceterum causa omnis, in qua pars altera aientis est . . . haec simplex dicitur, illa coniuncta*).¹⁵ Within these divisions, Quintilian marks a *sermo simplex* as something that is unprepared (*non compositum domi*)¹⁶ and colloquial (*ex proximo sermonis*),¹⁷ drawn in stark contrast with what is *scripta* and *elaborata*. A *materia* is *simplex* if it refers to a vote on soldiers’ pay, but not if it deals with *causae faciendi* or *non faciendi* (Quint. *inst.* 3.8.19), and if a legal case is *simplex* it requires only a brief *exordium* (Quint. *inst.* 4.1.62). In sum, *simplex* aspects of Roman oratory or legal action are ‘limited’, ‘unsophisticated’, ‘brief’ or ‘vulgar’, and the more important or challenging areas of language are often referred to as *non simplex* (cf. Quint. *inst.* 3.8.58, 6.2.2, 7.4.1).

In the works of the poets, there appears to be a somewhat greater appreciation of *simplicitas* as an ethical or aesthetic quality. In Ovid, we find the lover possessing *fides* (faith), *nuda simplicitas* (bare simplicity), and *purpureus pudor* (blushing modesty) as attributes worthy of reciprocated affection (Ov. *am.* 1.3.7-14 *si me non ueterum commendant magna parentum / nomina, si nostri sanguinis auctor eques / . . . et nulli cessura fides, sine crimine mores / nudaque*

¹³ Cf. Quint. *inst.* 1.3.12, 1.11.6, 2.2.5.

¹⁴ Cf. Quint. *inst.* 1.5.65, 1.9.4, 3.5.8. For modern uses of the term ‘simple’ in relation to grammatical structures see Ferguson (1971) and section 2.7.

¹⁵ Cf. Quint. *inst.* 3.10.1, 4.1.62, 7.1.9.

¹⁶ Cf. Quint. *inst.* 4.1.54.

¹⁷ Cf. Quint. *inst.* 4.1.54.

simplicitas *purpureusque pudor* ‘If the great name of my ancestors does not commend me, if the father of my line [was just] a knight . . . [I still have] faith ceding to none, manners without rebuke / and *bare simplicity* and blushing modesty’). The elegiac poet often professes to be drawn to a partner who is *simplex* or pleasing in their *simplicitas*¹⁸ (Ov. *am.* 1.10.12 *donec eras simplex, animum cum corpore amavi*; ‘as long as you were *simple*, I loved you soul and body’),¹⁹ and love is personified amidst images that allude to simplicity (Ov. *am.* 1.10.15 *et puer est et nudus Amor* ‘Love is both a child and naked’).²⁰ In Tibullus, what Michael Putnam defines as an appreciation of rural felicity amidst metapoetics (Putnam 2005: 123-41) is connected to the terminology of *paupertas* (Tib. 1.1.5 *me mea paupertas uita traducat inert*) ‘Let my small means lead me on an idle path’) and Francis Cairns has noted that the Tibullan appropriation of Nicaenetan imagery is, ‘bound up with a country life of poverty, *simplicity*, and smallness’ (Cairns 1979: 18-9). Similar bucolic philosophy seems connected to Vergilian themes (Verg. *georg.* 3.528-30 *frondibus et uictu pascuntur simplicis herbae / . . . / . . . nec somnos abrumpit cura salubris* (they fed on leaves and nourishment of *simple* grass . . . / nor did worry interrupt [their] healthful slumbers), and is clearly present in Horace’s aesthetic outlook (Hor. *ars.* 23 *denique sit quod vis, simplex dumtaxat et unum* ‘so let it be whatever you like, only [let it be] *simple* and unified’), Hor. *carm.* 1.38.5-6 *simplici myrto nihil allabores / sedulus curo* ‘take care you are eager to add nothing to *simple myrtle*’).²¹ In the *Sermones*, Horace’s *simplex* man is connected (albeit satirically) to bravery (Hor. *sat.* 1.3.52 *simplex fortisque habeatur* ‘Let [him] be cherished [as] *simple* and brave’), and in the *Odes*, the elegant appearance of a lover’s hair with the paradoxical concept of ‘simple ornamentation’ (Hor. *carm.* 1.5.4-5 *cui flauam religas comam, / simplex munditiis?* ‘For whom are you tying up your flaxen hair, so

¹⁸ For the discussion of the metapoetic connection between lover and creative process (and the possible connection to aesthetic *simplicity*), see Wyke (1989).

¹⁹ Translation Showerman (1986: 359) emphasis mine.

²⁰ Translation Showerman (1986: 359).

²¹ Richard Thomas in his article ‘Urbane Rusticity’ (1995) remarks that the rustic ideals of these authors are in fact quite dissimilar – as Horace (cf. Hor. *epist.* 2.1) can be quite dismissive of ‘rusticity’ in aesthetic terms and criticises the undeserved praise of ancient authors. Putnam, too, presents different attitudes toward rusticity in Tibullus and Vergil (Putnam 2005: 131).

simple, so elegant?’).²² The sound of the flute so *tenuis simplexque* (slender and simple) is praised for its utility (Hor. *ars.* 202-4 *tibia non, ut nunc, orichalco uincta tubaeque / aemula, sed tenuis simplexque foramine pauco / adspirare et adesse choris erat utilis* ‘The flute was, not as now - bound by copper and rivalling the trumpet – but a *slender and simple* [instrument] with few holes to lead and assist the chorus was useful’), and Horace himself seems to take pride in being *simplicior* (more simple) than anyone (Hor. *sat.* 1.3.63-5 *simplicior quis et est, qualem me saepe libenter / obtulerim tibi, Maecenas, ut forte legentem / aut tacitum impellat*), at least among his friends.

Admittedly, however, it is often difficult to differentiate between the moral value of *simplicitas*²³ and the term’s more stylistic implications in examples from Classical poetry. Indeed, from the early Lucretian usages through Horatian and Tibullan perspectives, *simplicitas* only intermittently, and somewhat inconclusively, signifies an aesthetic principle. In fact it is necessary to acknowledge that the diversity and ambiguity of the term in the hands of Roman poets also includes a connection with *antiquitas*, as in Ovid’s references to an old Rome less *cultus*: (cf. Ov. *AA* 1.236-42 *vina parant animos, faciunt caloribus aptos / . . . / tunc aperit mentes aevo rarissima nostro / simplicitas, artes excutiente deo* ‘Wine gives courage and makes men apt for passion; / . . . / then simplicity, most rare in our age, lays bare the mind, when the god dispels all craftiness’),²⁴ and a more critical rejection of ‘primitive conditions’²⁵ (Ov. *AA* 3.113 *simplicitas rudis ante fuit: nunc aurea Roma est* ‘There was *crude simplicity* before, now Rome is golden’). Tibullus connects himself with an *antiquus agrestis* (ancient countryman) who fashions his cup of *lutum* (clay), and the Gods, representatives of tradition and history, are frequently

²² Translation Rudd (2004: 35), emphasis mine. There exists some complexity in translating *simplex munditiis* that Nisbet and Hubbard note by stating: ‘*munditiis* does not make an oxymoron with *simplex* but points in the same direction . . . in the present context an adequate English translation [of *munditia*] seems impossible. “Daintiness” suggests a doll-like fragility. “Chic” and “elegance” are too sophisticated’ (Nisbet and Hubbard 1985: 75-6).

²³ For further discussion of the moral value of *simplicitas*, see §2.3.

²⁴ Translation Mozley (1929: 29).

²⁵ Gibson’s phrase (Gibson 2003: 134), which is further discussed as: ‘Ovid’s preference for modern Rome is implicit in the earlier books of the *Ars*, especially in the comparison between Romulus’ rape of the Sabines and behaviour in the more sophisticated theatre of his own day’ (1.89-134).

alluded to in terms of *simplicitas* (cf. Hor. *carm.* 2.8.13 *simplices Nymphae*).²⁶ In sum, one must often infer aesthetic or stylistic implications from the more overtly scientific or ethical meanings.

2.3 Early Christian *Simplicitas*

Still, the Christian creative aspiration toward a *sermo simplex* (if such it may be called) has been traced by Andrés (1921), Spicq (1933) and Lehmann (1938) to the moral prescriptions of the OT rather than Attic or Augustan ideals, whence it has been observed that the *Vetus Latina* (VL) manuscripts from the second and third centuries frequently relied on *simplicitas* to convey significant tenets of Judeo-Christian morality. Early versions of the Bible translated Job's attributes ἀληθινός ἄμεμπτος (Jb. 1:1) as *simplex et rectus*,²⁷ and Genesis 25:27 marked Jacob as a *vir simplex* (ἄνθρωπος ἀπλαστός).²⁸ In 1 Mcc. 2:60 Daniel was released from the lion's mouth *in sua simplicitate* (ἐν τῇ ἀπλότητι),²⁹ and at least thirty occurrences of *simplicitas* or *simplex* appear in the Books of Psalms and Proverbs.³⁰ *Simplicitas*, Spicq went so far as to conclude, was 'la condition primordiale de la foi et du salut' (Spicq 1933: 19).

It is worth noting that the potential influence of Biblical semantics on Christian aesthetics demands further discussion, and in particular, the notion of a distinctly Christian *simplicitas* poses potential challenges to a wider understanding of aesthetics in the *hymni* (Auksi 1995: 4-8). As Spicq observes, *simplex* in early Christian literature appears to have drawn specialized meanings from several Septuagint terms, including ἀπλοῦς (simple)³¹ (Gn. 25:27), ἀληθινός (genuine) (Jb.

²⁶ Also the natural appearance of Atalanta (cf. Ov. *met.* 8.319 *crinis erat simplex, nodum conlectus in unum*). But again such sentiments should not be read as uniform, as passages from Horace (Hor. *epist.* 2.1) and Catullus (Catull. 6) demonstrate.

²⁷ Hetzenauer (1906). See also LSD 190.

²⁸ Migne (1842-65).

²⁹ Hetzenauer (1906), Sabatier (1743=1976). *Simplicitate cordis* also occurs regularly, cf. Gn. 20:5; Chr. 29:17; Wis. 1:1; Eph. 6:5; and Col. 3:22.

³⁰ Cf. Prv. 2:7; 10:9; 11:3; 11:20; 19:1; 20:7; 28:6; 28:18; and Ps. 7:9; 24:21; 25:1; 25:11; 36:37; 40:13; 77:72; 100:2; 100:6. For instances where David was introduced as *humilem et simplicem*, cf. Ps. 56:1; 57:1; 58:1 (de Lagarde (1874)).

³¹ ἀπλοῦς, interestingly, does not seem to carry the same euphemistic meanings of εὐήθης ('good hearted', 'guileless', 'simple-minded'). The former term, according to LSD, is often used technically

1:1, 1:8), ειρηνικός (peaceful) (Ps. 37:37), καθαρός (clean) (Gn. 20:5), and ὅσιος (pious) (Prv. 10:29). All these words have been used in translations of the Hebrew word *tām* (blameless, complete, guiltless) or other derivations of the Hebrew verb *tamam* (to finish, be complete). Thus when Abimelech defends his abduction of Sarah before God he states that he acted *betām lebābekā* (ἐν καθαρᾷ καρδίᾳ) (*in simplicitate cordis*) (Gn. 20:5), and when God appears to Solomon after the construction of the temple he advises him to follow his father and walk *betām lebāb* (ὁσιότητι καρδίας) (*in simplicitate cordis*). So too in the book of Proverbs the way of the Lord is described as a stronghold for the blameless (*lattām*) (ὁσίου) (*simplicis*) (Prv. 10:29). In the NT, *simplex* and *simplicitas* seem to be the standard translations of the Greek ἀπλοῦς and ἀπλότης – terms that convey concepts of generosity and compassion (cf. Rm. 12:8 ὁ μεταδίδους ἐν ἀπλότητι (*qui tribuit in simplicitate*) and 2 Cor. 11:3 ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπλότητος . . . τῆς εἰς τὸν χριστόν (*a simplicitate quae est in Christo*)). As it has been noted in Kittel,³² the substantial connection between ἀπλότης and *simplicitas* may have stemmed from a shared etymological structure referring to *singleness* (*sim-* cf. *semel*) (see also Blaise 1954: 761, Ernout & Meillet 1959: 514-5);³³ this singleness, Kittel remarks, might have provided significant moral implications within Judeo-Christian spirituality (Kittel 1932: 386). Perhaps most notably for this study, the Biblical ἀπλότης and *simplicitas* appear to express a distinctly positive set of meanings (e.g. openness, lack of ambiguity, purity, generosity, freedom from discord).³⁴ This positivity is not always evident in modern translations of the Bible where ‘simple’ has been used in passages where neither *tām*, nor ἀπλοῦς, nor *simplex* occur, e.g. the King James Bible translates Ps. 118:130 *ostium sermonum tuorum lucidum doce paruulos* as ‘the entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple’ (Hebr. *pētah dābārekā yā’îr mēbîn pātāyim*; Gr. ἡ δῆλωσις τῶν λόγων σου φωτιεῖ καὶ συνετιεῖ νηπίους), and Prv.

in discussions of materials (i.e. ‘unmixed’) or language (‘plain’, ‘straightforward’, ‘single-membered’). In relation to people its meanings are often ‘open’, ‘frank’, or more negatively, ‘single-minded’. See LSD 190.

³² Kittel (1932: 386).

³³ *Simplicitas* may have appeared to Latin translators as a very suitable calque for the Greek term ἀπλότης. Both ἀπλότης and *simplicitas* have a compound etymological structure referring to either the ‘singleness’ (ἀ- / *sim-*, cf. *semel*) or the ‘lack’ (ἀ-) of a physical ‘fold’.

³⁴ Kittel (1932: 386), Spicq (1978: 169). See LSD 190.

8:5 *intellegite paruuli astutiam* as ‘O ye simple, understand wisdom’ (Hebrew *hābînū pātayim* ‘*arāmāh*; Gr. νοήσατε ἄκακοι πανουργίαν).³⁵ It seems relevant to note, therefore, that terms other than *tām*, ἀπλοῦς, and *simplex* occur (namely the Hebrew *pātayim*, Greek ἄκακος or νηπίους, and Latin *paruulus*) where the connotations of a modern *simple* convey a dismissive semantic meaning.

Interestingly, outside of Biblical language the Greek ἀπλοῦς and Latin *simplex* also seem to have been capable of more pejorative connotations, similar to those associated with ἄκακος and *paruulus* (cf. Isoc. 2.46 ἀπλοῦς δ’ ἡγοῦνται τοὺς νοῦν οὐκ ἔχοντας (they regard men of no understanding as simple),³⁶ and the sense that *simplicitas* was a more ambiguous or even derogatory term in secular Latin seems evident from early Republican literature onward.³⁷ As referenced in §2.2, one finds the recurrent use of *simplex* in negative conditions in Terence, Cicero, Seneca, Ovid and Tacitus (cf. Cic. *orat.* 230 *o uirum simplicem, qui nos nihil celet* (Oh simple man, who conceals nothing from us!); Sen. *Dial.* 3.16.3 ‘*simplicissimi*,’ *inquit, ‘omnium habentur iracundi*’ (‘irascible people’, he says, ‘are considered the most simple of all’), see OLD 1764-5).³⁸ When Cicero highlights the distinction between the *simplices* and *diserti* – noting that the cunning of the latter can lead to the manipulation of the former – we find a clearly derogatory association (Cic. *Brut.* 196 *quam captiosum esse populo, quod scriptum esset neglegi et opinione quaeri uoluntates et interpretatione disertorum scripta simplicium hominum pervertere?* ‘What a snare was set for for plain people if the exact wording of the will were ignored, and if intentions were to be determined by guess-work, and if the written words of the simple-minded people were to be perverted by the interpretation of clever lawyers’),³⁹ and when Tacitus, in his discussion of Germanic customs, defines

³⁵ Cf. also Ps. 114:6 *custodit paruulos Dominus*; Pr. 1:4 *ut detur paruulis astutia*; Pr. 9:16 *quis est paruulus declinet ad me*.

³⁶ ἀπλότης also seems to have been used to designate the ‘genuine’ nature of currency, see Spicq (1978: 172). For other cases of Christian specialization, see Löfstedt (1959: 74-5), Burton (2000: 121).

³⁷ The earliest example may be Plautus (Plaut. *Persa* 559), where the reference is nestled amidst Saturio’s daughter’s rant, although there it is more directly connected to the physical size of a city wall.

³⁸ The OLD lists five definitions of *simplicitas*, the most negative of which is ‘lack of sophistication’ (OLD 465). Such usages are not always clearly negative, however, as in Sen. *Con.* 10.4.18 (*non curatis quod iuuenum miserorum simplicitatem circumeunt*) when the author recounts and quotes the oratorical skills of Labienus and the meaning is closer to ‘inexperience’ or ‘innocence’.

³⁹ Translation from Hendrickson (1971: 165).

the barbarians' unrefined governance and lack of sophistication, he uses the phrase *simplices cogitationes*:

Tac. *Germ* 2.22

diem noctemque continuare potando nulli probrum. crebrae, ut inter uinolentos rixae raro conuiciis, saepius caede et uulneribus transiguntur. sed et de reconciliandis inuicem inimicis . . . de pace denique ac bello plerumque in conuiujs consultant, tamquam nullo magis tempore aut ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus aut ad magnas incalescat. gens non astuta nec callida aperit adhuc secreta pectoris licentia loci;

(There is no shame attached to drinking steadily all day and night long; naturally, among drunken men quarrels frequently spring up, and these seldom stop at angry words, but in the majority of cases end in wounds and bloodshed. Nevertheless, it is generally at drinking bouts that they discuss the making up of feuds . . . indeed the all-important question of peace or war; as though under no other circumstances were men more likely to be single-hearted or more easy to warm to great resolves. Not being a crafty or a cunning race they furthermore disclose their secret thoughts in the freedom of the feast, and so the minds of all lie open and discovered.)

[trans. Townshend (1894: 74)]

Such dyslogism appears even in the elegists whose general approach to *simplicitas* is otherwise more favourable (cf. Ov. *epist.* 16.315-6 *paene suis ad te manibus deducit amantem / utere mandantis simplicitate uiri!* 'Almost with his own hands he has brought your lover to you; profit by the behests of your artless lord!', Ov. *epist.* 17.175-6 *Tempora ne pereant ultro data praecipis, utque / simplicis utamur commoditate uiri* 'You urge on me that opportunity freely offered should not be wasted, and that we should profit by the obliging ways of a simple husband', see also 2.2).⁴⁰ The Ovidian allusion to an 'artless' or 'ignorant' husband in *Heroides* 16 seems hardly congruent with Tibullus' *antiquus agrestis*, and yet the point seems to emphasise the ambiguity and diversity of semantic meaning found in the classical authors. In later periods, both Petronius and Martial use *simplex* emphatically and dismissively, the former to insult Tryphaena (Petron. 106 'o te' inquit 'feminam simplicem, ('O you silly woman, he said . . .) and the latter to dissuade fishermen at

⁴⁰ Translations from Showerman (1986).

Baiae (Mart. 4.30.14-16 *at tu, dum potes, innocens recede / iactis simplicibus cibis in undas, / et pisces uenerare delicatos* ‘And you, while you can, leave innocent / as you cast innocent food into the water / and worship these alluring fish’).⁴¹

Yet Christian usages, even outside of Biblical exegesis, rarely seem to present *simplicitas* in such negative or derogatory conditions.⁴² In fact, when negative meanings are implied, the negativity itself seems to be embraced and exalted as a defining characteristic. When Jerome speaks of his own persecution, for example, he defines it in terms of misunderstood *simplicity* (Jer. *epist.* 45.2), and he uses *simplex* on several occasions in his letters to Eustochius to characterise humble customs (*simplices cibos*), Job’s devotion to God (*testimonio immaculatus et simplex*), and Mary’s faith:

Hier. *epist.* 45.2

osculabantur mihi quidam manus et ore uipereo detrahebant; dolebant labiis, corde gaudebant: uidebat dominus et subsannabat eos et miserum seruum suum futuro cum eis iudicio reseruabat. Alius incessum meum calumniabatur et risum, ille uultui detrahebat, haec in simplicitate aliud suspicetur. paene certe triennio cum eis uixi.

(Some kissed my hands, yet attacked me with the tongues of vipers; sympathy was on their lips, but malignant joy in their hearts. The Lord saw them and had them in derision, reserving my poor self and them for judgment to come. One would attack my gait or my way of laughing; another would find something amiss in my looks; another would suspect the simplicity of my manner. Such is the company in which I have lived for almost three years.)

[trans. Fremantle (1893: 59)]⁴³

Hier. *epist.* 22.10-19

innumerabilia sunt scripturis respersa diuinis, quae gulam damnent et simplices cibos praebeant . . . Iob deo carus et testimonio ipsius immaculatus et simplex, audi, quid de diabolo suspicetur . . . uirga mater est domini, simplex, pura . . .

⁴¹ Cf. also Juv. 13.34-5 *nescis / quem tua simplicitas risum uulgo moueat, cum / exigis a quoquam ne peieret . . .?*)

⁴² Examples can be found in Augustine’s letters that appear to indicate some negative usage, cf. Aug. *epist.* 191.2 *sed etiam . . . uigilantia pastoralis propter infirmiores et simpliciore dominicas oues* and Aug. *epist.* 220.12 *quia, etsi tu eam post illa tua uerba Tubunensia ducere non debebas, illa tibi tamen nihil eorum sciens innocenter et simpliciter nupsit.*

⁴³ Fremantle (1893) = Schaff & Wace (1994) v. 6.

(There are, in the Scriptures, countless divine answers condemning gluttony and approving *simple food* . . . Job was dear to God, *perfect and upright* before Him, yet hear what he says of the devil . . . The rod is the mother of the Lord – *simple, pure* . . .)

[trans. Fremantle (1893: 26-9)]

Cyprian, too, notes that prayer is something that is *simplex and pacifica* (simple and peaceful),⁴⁴ and equates Christian salvation with a preference for simple and ordinary clothes (Cypr. *ad Donat.* 3.46 *plebium se ac simplicem cultum*):

Cypr. *domin. orat.* 8

Tunc, inquit, illi tres tamquam ex uno ore hymnum canebant et benedicebant deum. Loquebantur quasi ex uno ore, et nondum illos christus docuerat orare. et idcirco orantibus fuit impetrabilis et efficax sermo, quia promerebatur dum *pacifica et simplex* et spiritalis oratio.

(‘Then these three’, it says, ‘as if from one mouth sang a hymn, and blessed the Lord’. They spoke as if from one mouth, although Christ has not yet taught them how to pray. And therefore, as they prayed, their speech was availing and effectual, because a *peaceful, and sincere*, and spiritual prayer deserved well of the Lord.)

[trans. Wallis (1886: 449)]⁴⁵

Cypr. *ad donat.* 3

Ego cum in tenebris atque in nocte caeca iacerem cum que in salo iactantis saeculi nutabundus ac dubius uestigiis oberrantibus fluctuarem uitae meae nescius, ueritatis ac lucis alienus, difficile prorsus ac durum pro illis tunc moribus opinabar, quod in salutem mihi diuina indulgentia pollicebatur, ut quis renasci denuo posset utque in nouam uitam lauacro aquae salutaris animatus, quod prius fuerat, exponeret . . . qui possibilis aiebam tanta conuersio . . . quando parcimoniam discit, qui epularibus cenis et largis dapibus adsueuit? et qui pretiosa ueste conspicuus in auro atque in purpura fulsit, ad plebeium se ac *simplicem cultum* quando deponit?

(While I was still lying in darkness and gloomy night, wavering hither and thither, tossed about on the foam of this boastful age, and uncertain of my wandering steps, knowing nothing of my real life, and remote from truth and light, I used to regard it as a difficult matter, and especially as difficult in respect of my character at that time, that a man should be capable of being born again – a truth which the divine mercy had

⁴⁴ Cypr. *domin. orat.* 8 et *idcirco orantibus fuit impetrabilis et efficax sermo, quia promerebatur dum pacifica et simplex et spiritalis oratio.*

⁴⁵ Wallis (1886) = Roberts & Donaldson (1994) v. 5.

announced for my salvation – and that a man quickened to a new life in the laver of saving water should be able to put off what he had previously been . . . ‘How’, said I, ‘is such a conversion possible . . . When does he learn thrift who has been used to liberal banquets and sumptuous feasts? And he who has been glittering in gold and purple, and has been celebrated for costly attire, when does he reduce himself to ordinary and *simple clothing?*’)

[trans. Wallis (1886: 275)]

Augustine himself alludes to a possible distinction between classical and Christian semantics when he states that pagans often misunderstand the spirituality and power of God’s *simplicitas* (Aug. *conf.* 2.6.13 *et curiositas affectare uidetur studium scientiae, cum tu omnia summe noueris. ignorantia quoque ipsa atque stultitia simplicitatis et innocentiae nomine tegitur, quia te simplicius quicquam non reperitur* ‘A shallow and inquisitive nature affects a desire for knowledge, but your knowledge of all things is supreme. Ignorance and stupidity would shield themselves with names of *simplicity* and harmlessness, but what *simpler* than you may be found’)⁴⁶ and Augustine goes further to state that the challenges of a classical education often impede the comprehension of a *simple* and *unchangeable* God:

Aug. *conf.* 4.16.29 quid hoc mihi proderat, quando et oberat, cum etiam te, deus meus, mirabiliter *simplicem atque incommutabilem*, illis decem praedicamentis putans quidquid esset omnino comprehensum

(What good did all this do me? Rather, it did me harm; for, thinking that whatever existed could be completely contained within these ten categories of predicate, I attempted to understand you in the same way, my God, wondrously *simple and immutable* as you are)

[trans. Burton 2001: 83]

If anything, the paradoxes that seem to arise in the early Christian usages of *simplex* and *simplicitas* are that a seemingly ‘limited’ semantic meaning (in its positive Biblically-influenced definition(s)) is remarkably complex and elusive in its own terms of moral and spiritual ideology (Auksi 1995: 13). As seen in Ambrose’s

⁴⁶ Translation from Burton (2001: 38-9). O’Donnell (1992: 137) observes that the connection between God and *simplicitas* is often made, citing Aug. *conf.* 9.4.10 *in aeterna simplicitate* and 13.3.4 *quia solus simpliciter es*.

own writings,⁴⁷ *simplicitas* and *simplex* are always understood as positive conditions, but within that positivity there exists a profound and diverse approach to moral observance and devotion (perhaps explained by the numerous translations for *tām* in the Septuagint). For example, few instances of *simplex* and *simplicitas* are even translated into English as ‘simple’ and ‘simplicity’ by modern editors of Ambrose’s work (translations from Davidson (2001)):

Off. 1.9.21 qui non sermonum supellectilem neque artem dicendi sed simplicem rerum exquirunt gratiam.

(. . .those who are looking not for ornate language or verbal artistry but for the simple grace of things as they are).⁴⁸

Off. 2.24.119 ad omnia abundat animi directa simplicitas satisque se ipsa commendat.

(A straight and single-minded attitude is more than adequate at all times, and serves as its own commendation).

Off. 3.6.37 quia pretiorum captare incrementa non simplicitatis sed uersutiae est.

(for when a man is forever chasing higher and higher prices, it is a sign not of openness and honesty but of cunning).

Off. 3.6.40 Bona quidem agricultura quae fructus ministrat omnibus, quae simplici industria accumulat terrarum fecunditatem

(Oh yes, agriculture is a good thing alright. It supplies bounty for everyone – with nothing but sheer hard work it is able to enhance the earth’s own fertility).

Off. 1.19.83 Ita tamen ut etiam ipse non sit adfectatus decor corporis, sed naturalis simplex neglectus magis quam expetitus

(so long as this attractiveness of the body is in no way contrived, but is natural and simple, casual rather than carefully produced).⁴⁹

⁴⁷ The terms *simplicitas* and *simplex* never appear in the hymns themselves.

⁴⁸ Cf. also Ambr. *Off.* 1.22.101 *Tractatus quoque de doctrina fidei, de magisterio continentiae, de disceptatione iustitiae, adhortatione diligentiae; . . . Oratio pura simplex dilucida atque manifesta, plena grauitas et ponderis non adfectata elegantia sed non intermissa gratia* (Preaching too – whether it be about the doctrine of the faith, or about the teaching of self-control, or the discussion of issues to do with justice, or encouraging people to show an exhortation to charity . . . the style should be pure, simple, clear, and plain, full of seriousness and dignity; it should not be studied with elegance, but nor should it be bereft of a touch of appeal) [trans. Davidson (2001)].

⁴⁹ Cf. also Ambr. *Off.* 1.18.75 *Est etiam gressus probabilis, in quo sit species auctoritatis, grauitatisque pondus, tranquillitatis uestigium, ita tamen si studium desit atque adfectatio sed motus*

Ambrose's references to a *simple ear*, *simple eye*, or *simple mind* (cf. Mt. 6:22)⁵⁰ equally prove that the usage was heavily reliant on Biblical precedent and sometimes confoundingly metaphorical:

In Psalm 118 19.39 sit ergo simplex oculus tuus, ne incipiat totum corpus tuum esse tenebrosus.

(Let your eye therefore be simple, lest your whole body begin to be dark).

In Psalm 118 15.25 simplicem mentem, purum ac defaecatum animum diligit Christus.

(Christ loves the simple mind, a pure and purged soul).

In Psalm 118 20.18 si simplicibus accipias auribus, et Christum exaltauit.

(If you receive with simple ears, and he has exalted Christ).

On the whole, specific semantic complexities of Christian terminology seem to constitute fundamental components of early Christian literary aesthetics that present unique challenges to a discussion of early Christian literature. *Simplicitas*, in particular, appears to be fraught with the problem of recognising a distinct set of Biblically influenced meanings (1 Mcc. 2:37 *moriamur omnes in simplicitate nostra* (let us all die in our simplicity)), which as Spicq remarks, 'is not just a dictionary entry but an entire spirituality'.⁵¹ In this way, any examination of style and form which deals with early Christian poetry must recognise that there are semantic obstacles surrounding the use of ethically univocal, but semantically duplicitous words; or as Michael Roberts put it, 'to appreciate late antique poetry properly, it is necessary to view it on its own terms rather than from the perspective, conscious or

sit purus ac simplex: nihil enim fucatum placet. (There is, though, another type of gait, one of which we can approve, which gives an impression of authority, of firmness and gravity, and sense of calm purpose. The important thing is to keep studied effort and affectation out of it, and to allow your movement to be natural and simple, for no kind of falsehood can ever be pleasing) [trans. Davidson (2001)].

⁵⁰ Mt. 6:22 *si fuerit oculus tuus simplex totum corpus tuum lucidum erit* (So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light). For further parallels in NT, cf. Lk. 11:34 *si oculus tuus fuerit simplex*; cf. also Ambr. *In Psalm 118* 15.13 *oculi sunt uiri uidelicet spiritalibus ornati sensibus . . . in quibus non sit aliqua doli maculosa confusio, sed simplicis affectus pura et immaculata sinceritas* (The eyes of the man are clearly gifted with spiritual reason . . . in which there may not be some disreputable, meddlesome confusion of cunning, but simple, pure affection and unstained sincerity).

⁵¹ Spicq (1978: 169).

not, of classical aesthetics'.⁵² Foremost, the modern word simple (capable of meaning *insignificant, weak, or of little value*)⁵³ and the early Christian *simplex* do not appear to carry the same semantic currency, nor for that matter, does a Christian *simplex* seem to represent the same *simplex* as used by pagan Latin authors. *Simplicitas* in the early Christian period seems to register a distinct ethical precept, a distinct literary and spiritual aesthetic that remains extremely difficult to identify without a full awareness of the massive presence of the moral and spiritual background of the Old and New Testament.

2.4 Critical Usages of *Simplicity* in Ambrosian Studies

It is interesting to observe that despite semantic complications surrounding *simple* much of modern research has been inclined to use words like *simplicity*, *Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, or *semplicità* in explorations of the metre, lexis, and syntax of the *Hymni Ambrosiani*. Despite the possible specialization of early Christian *simplicitas*, those terms have served our understanding of formal and linguistic aspects of the collection for more than two centuries, and in a brief summary of influential scholarship that follows, these locutions will show how prevalent the notion of simplicity is in our understanding and appreciation of the text.

2.4.1 Luigi Biraghi

The earliest modern study to focus on the stylistic aspects of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* was Luigi Biraghi's (1862) *Inni sinceri e carmi di sant'Ambrogio, vescovo di Milano*.⁵⁴ Consisting of nearly one-hundred and sixty pages of text,

⁵² Roberts (1989: 3).

⁵³ Auksi (1995: 4).

⁵⁴ Duffield (1889: 14-5) argued that the *hymni* had only become a topic of scholarly interest by the late 16th century. This was due, Duffield claimed, to the fact that the greatest issue was never an exploration of poetic style or form, but rather the 'precarious undertaking' of manuscript variation. Dreves (1893: 195-6) was equally troubled by early Ambrosian scholars. Today questions of 'Ambrosian' or 'pseudo-Ambrosian' authorship are still relevant (see §1.2, as well as den Boeft and Hilhorst (1993: 79) for a recent summation of the argument). Fontaine covers the subject most comprehensively (93-102).

commentary, and critical insight into the eighteen hymns,⁵⁵ Biraghi laid the groundwork for a direct exploration of the Ambrosian poetic achievement. In general, Biraghi attempted to identify some of the more consistent formal and stylistic elements in the *hymni*: '[Ambrose] has a style all his own, which while flowing clear and sometimes very sweet, is also elevated, noble, majestic, strong, as was fitting for a character at the height of nobility and status. It also carries a wonderful density of thought and a singular brevity of expression, as well as a certain stylised elegance and foreignness of phrases'.⁵⁶ Biraghi's recognition of Ambrose's original contribution to Latin poetry was significant, and Ambrose's metre (the iambic dimeter), as Biraghi observed, exemplified the 'sensi brevi, ben distinti, con pensieri sublimi, con affetto maschio, con fina coltura' that was full of 'semplici' and 'brevis' images.⁵⁷ Stylistically Biraghi proposed that the *hymni* were more steeped in Classical poetics than previously recognised,⁵⁸ and he attributed to classical influences their metrical strictness and lofty imagery, though his most lasting achievement was setting the number of authentic Ambrosian verses at eighteen.

2.4.2 G.M. Dreves and the German *Kritik*

Guido Maria Dreves' (1893) *Aurelius Ambrosius. Der Vater des Kirchengesanges: eine hymnologische Studie* drew upon Biraghi's collection of eighteen *hymni* in the first German edition to include a substantial exploration of form and style. The analysis followed a considerable tradition of earlier nineteenth century German scholarship that had focused on the *praktische* (practical), *einfach* (simple), and *volkstümlich* (popular) qualities to describe the language and form of the collection (see Wackernagel 1864: iv, Bähr 1872: 61, Ebert 1874: 168-9, Kayser

⁵⁵ Biraghi included the four disputed works (Lanéry 2008: 220).

⁵⁶ Biraghi (1862: 8): '[Ambrogio] ha uno stile tutto suo proprio, il quale, mentre scorre limpido e talora dolcissimo, elevasi nobile, grandioso, forte, quale si conveniva a un personaggio di quella nobiltà e altura di stato e inoltre presenta meravigliosa densità di sentenza e singolare brevità di periodo, e tal quale studiata eleganza e peregrinità di frasi'.

⁵⁷ Biraghi (1862: 8): 'Vuoi evidenza di fantasia con immagini e lineamenti semplici, brevi, forti?' (Do you want proof of an imagination expressed in images and in simple, brief, vigorous strokes?).

⁵⁸ Biraghi (1862: 33): 'sua eleganza Latina attinta al secolo d'oro' (the elegance of his Latin is drawn from the Golden Age).

1881: 52-3, Manitius 1891: 143).⁵⁹ Dreves concurred with Adolf Ebert's position that the *hymni* were motivated foremost by *praktische Rücksichten* (practical considerations) and observed that the collection displayed a unique emphasis on poetic use of the *Volkssprache* (people's speech) (Dreves 1893: 232). With regard to language, Dreves quoted Karl Bähr by stating: 'these hymns are distinguished no less by the simplicity and naturalness of their language, still wearing the colouring of old Rome, than by their content, free from all impurity, the pure doctrine of the Gospel . . .'⁶⁰ and Förster (1884) who found: 'the language of Ambrose has an inherent simplicity and moral seriousness'.⁶¹ Beyond that, Dreves' evaluation of style and metre recognised that there were deviations from the strict adherence to the iambic dimeter (Dreves 1893: 232-36), an elaborate use of repetition (Dreves 1893: 239-41), and an inclination toward rhetorical questions (Dreves 1893: 241-2).

What Dreves did not elaborate on was what constitutes 'simple natural language' (i.e. a purely lexical distinction? A matter of Quintilian's syntactic reduction?), or whether the linguistic features of the *hymni* were in fact representative of a 'colloquial' or 'vulgar' register. Dreves' discussion, on the whole, was principally interested in ideas of authenticity, influence, and tradition more than a comprehensive examination of linguistic or poetic aspects. Though it was the first German edition to offer a substantial discussion of the manuscript tradition and to dedicate a considerable discussion to the musicality of the compositions, Dreves' edition did not examine the linguistic character of the collection nor provide sufficient evidence to support his bolder linguistic claims.

⁵⁹ See Wackernagel (1864: iv): 'Die ältesten Hymnen aus den Zeiten des Ambrosius und Gregorius tragen in ihren ernsten und strengen Zügen noch das Bild der überwundenen Martyrszeit . . . Späterhin hat sich manches glänzender gestaltet, aber selten bei gleicher Reinheit und Einfachheit'; Bähr (1872: 61): 'soweit sie als wirkliche Produkte des Ambrosius gelten können, so gehören sie unstreitig zu dem Besten, was die christliche Lyrik überhaupt aufzuweisen hat . . . nicht minder durch die einfache natürliche Sprache, die noch ganz das Colorit des Altrömischen trägt, als durch den Inhalt aus'; Kayser (1881: 52-3): 'Die lateinische Kirchenhymnen feiern die Geheimnisse der Religion und die Tugenden der Heiligen mit einem würdigen Ernst, mit einer erhabenen Einfachheit, mit einer gefühlsinnigen Tiefe und Fülle heiliger Begeisterung'; Manitius (1891: 143): 'In ihnen gibt sich der Schwung der religiösen Begeisterung des Ambrosius in seiner ganzen Erhabenheit zu erkennen. Auch die Sprache zeichnet sich hier durch eine edle Einfachheit. . .' [my emphasis].

⁶⁰ Dreves (1893: 190) following Bähr: 'Es zeichnen sich diese Hymnen nicht minder durch die einfache natürliche Sprache, die noch ganz das Colorit des Altrömischen trägt, als durch den Inhalt aus, der, frei von allen unlautern, der reinen Lehre des Evangeliums . . .'

⁶¹ Förster (1889: 265): '. . . die Sprache des Ambrosius die ihm eigene wurde, Einfachheit und sittlichen Ernst, welche wie Bohringer richtig beimisst'.

2.4.3 R.C. Trench, A.S. Walpole and the English Tradition

Like much of the German scholarship referenced by Dreves,⁶² R.C. Trench's (1869) *Sacred Latin Poetry* attempted to anthologise Christian Latin verse with an attention to particularly influential works. Trench's collection was meant 'to offer to members of our English church a collection of the best Sacred Latin poetry', and Trench presented seventy-eight poems for that consideration. The sixth poem in Trench's collection (Trench 1869: 89-91) was the only Ambrosian hymn included (Hymn 5, *Intende qui regis Israel*), and a brief, three-page preface to the hymn's style begins as follows:

After being accustomed to the softer and richer strains of the later Christian poets . . . it is some little while before one returns with a hearty consent and liking to the almost austere *simplicity* which characterises the hymns of St. Ambrose. . . Only after a while does one learn to feel the grandeur of the unadorned meter, and the profound, though it may have been more instinctive than conscious, wisdom of the poet in choosing it; or to appreciate that confidence in the surpassing interest of his theme, which has rendered him indifferent to any but its *simplest* setting forth. It is as though, building an altar to the living God, he would observe the Levitical precept, and rear it of unhewn stones, upon which no tool had been lifted. The great objects of faith in their *simplest* expression . . . (87-8)

It remains curious that a work like *Sacred Latin Poetry* – which included only one of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* and offered no more than three paragraphs of stylistic analysis – would be so influential in English scholarship. Despite its brevity (and limited attention to style and form) Trench's work remained the most cited examination of the *hymni* for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Anthologies by Schaff (1869), March (1874), and Walpole (1922) all referenced Trench's introduction as the foremost English authority on Ambrosian poetry.

⁶² E.g. Mone (1853), Wackernagel (1864), Kayser (1881).

Walpole, author of the only complete English edition of the *hymni*, quoted Trench’s attitude toward Ambrose’s ‘austere simplicity’ *in extenso* (Walpole 1922: 24-25).

It is, in the wake of Trench’s ‘simplest expression’, worth listing other passages from nineteenth and twentieth century English scholarship that seem to reflect the same predilection toward a terminology of *simplicity*. As presented in Table 2.1, one can observe a profound tendency to use simple or simplicity as a defining characteristic:

TABLE 2.1 Modern English Uses of Simple and Simplicity in Ambrosian Scholarship.⁶³

<i>Author (Year)</i>	<i>Passage / Text</i>	<i>Reference</i>
P. Schaff (1869)	‘full of faith, rugged vigor, austere <u>simplicity</u> . . . and questionable taste’. <i>Christ in Song</i> , 9	style
F.A. March (1874)	‘. . . the <u>simplest</u> thoughts in the <i>simplest</i> forms of meter’. <i>Latin hymns with English notes</i> , 223-4	thought
S.W. Duffield (1889)	‘lay in the <u>simple</u> direct plunge of his sentences . . . a <u>simple</u> and reverent spirit’. <i>Latin Hymn-Writers and Their Hymns</i> , 53-5	style
A. MacGilton (1918)	‘there is a <u>simplicity</u> of expression and a straightforward sincerity of tone in the <i>Ambrosiani</i> . . . they are not beautiful . . . but their <u>simplicity</u> is refreshing’. <i>A Study of Latin hymns</i> , 19-21	style
A.S. Walpole (1922)	‘Let us now inquire into the literary character of the four hymns, their outward form and style. They are . . . sharp-cut, clear, concise, nervous and strong . . . as Archbishop Trench happily put it: ‘The great objects of faith in their <u>simplest</u> expression . . .’. <i>Early Latin Hymns</i> , 24	style
F. Gillman (1927)	‘From that time forward Ambrose developed the song-worship of his people. He wrote them for their use . . . he also taught them plain and <u>simple</u> tunes’. <i>The Evolution of the English Hymn</i> , 54	style

⁶³ Interestingly, Gaselee (1928) offers three hymns (Hymn 5, Hymn 2, and another (*Jesu, corona uirginum*) which is no longer considered authentic) but largely defers to Walpole (1922).

F.J.E. Raby (1927)	‘[Ambrose’s poems] were composed with the <u>practical</u> aim of expounding the doctrines of the Catholic faith in a manner sufficiently <u>simple</u> to capture the imagination of the unlearned’. <i>Christian Latin Poetry: From the beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages</i>, 34	form
E.K. Rand (1928)	‘St. Ambrose’s hymns . . . are incidentally lyrics of crystalline <u>simplicity</u> and sincerity . . . trained by the old poets in the art of metre he gives the new message in the most direct way’. <i>Founders of the Middle Ages</i>, 207	form
Wright & Sinclair (1931)	‘Ambrose in his <u>simple</u> eight-stanza iambics invented a form that was exactly fitted for antiphonal singing’. <i>A History of later Latin literature</i>, 18	form
B. Brawley (1932)	‘[Ambrose] composed both words and music. His compositions are <u>simple</u> and vigorous, with terse statement of the great doctrines of Christianity’. <i>History of the English hymn</i>, 22	style
H.J. Rose (1936)	‘All [Ambrose’s poems] are in a perfectly <u>simple</u> metre, the iambic dimeter, and the language is correspondingly <u>simple</u>, but dignified and not without a certain beauty’. <i>A Handbook of Latin literature from the earliest times to the death of St. Augustine</i>, 485	form
C.S. Phillips (1937)	‘a <u>simpler</u> and more natural type of prosody (which no doubt had existed all along in the song of the people) began to assert itself—’. <i>Hymnody past and present</i>, 54	style
M. Hadas (1952)	‘The hymns all expound some doctrine, but with <u>simplicity</u> as well as dignity and evangelical fervor’. <i>A History of Latin literature</i>, 426	style
R. Messenger (1953)	‘Ambrose used the unrhymed iambic dimeter, a <u>simple</u> and singable form which has been in vogue ever since’. <i>The Medieval Latin Hymn</i>, 6	form
L. Swift (1990)	‘Ambrose’s development of the genre into a <u>simple</u>, highly poetic, and very <u>popular</u> form justifies his title’. <i>Encyclopedia of Early Christianity</i>, 31	form

M.J. Mans (1993)	‘Although Hilary of Poitiers is credited with being the first to introduce liturgical hymns in the Latin Language into the West, Ambrose developed the genre into a <i>simple</i> , highly poetic form’.	form
	<i>Early Christian Poetry</i> , 91	
C. White (2000)	‘Despite their formal <i>simplicity</i> , Ambrose’s hymns are densely packed with powerful images, often drawn from scripture’.	form
	<i>Early Christian Latin Poets</i> , 46	

The consistency shown in English criticism suggests that a set of critical locutions based on simplicity permeates much of twentieth century research. So much so, in fact, that one might have questioned whether scholars were objectively analysing Ambrose’s work or merely assigning to it the attributes that Western culture had come to expect from early Christian Latin (see §2.5). Even the more modern works by Mans (1993) and White (2000) demonstrate that the terms simple and simplicity remain defining characteristics of style and form, and on the whole, these terms exist in receptions of Ambrose’s work up to the last decade.

2.4.4 Norberg – Simonetti – Szövérfy – Fontaine and Changes in Perception⁶⁴

In the past fifty years, however, the contributions of Dag Norberg, Manlio Simonetti, Jozef Szövérfy, and Jacques Fontaine have advanced the linguistic study of the text a great deal and had considerable impact on readings of Ambrose’s work. In comprehensive and independent analyses, each of these scholars have not only emphasised the originality of the collection, but refocused the analytical framework to highlight the diverse amalgam of literary and linguistic influences (Mans 1993: 92). Fontaine states, ‘Ambrosian hymnody is justly called one of the most original

⁶⁴ I intentionally omit the most recent works of den Boeft (2003, 2008), Zelzer (1999, 2000), and Zerfass (2008), see §6.4. The point here is to draw connections between critical uses of simplicity (a term that seeps even into den Boeft’s otherwise excellent work, see den Boeft (2008: 427)) in the latter half of the 20th century. The four authors listed (Norberg, Simonetti, Szövérfy and Fontaine) are the most representative authors of that period. As stated in Chapter 1 (see §1.3 n. 5), recent scholarship has focused more attention on the artistry and language found in Ambrose’s work – an approach that has had considerable influence on this thesis.

and perfect creations of poetry from Christian Latin. It fuses into a new synthesis, a triple heritage of Jewish, Greek, and Latin traditions'.⁶⁵

Exploring more deeply the linguistic diversity of the hymns, Norberg, Simonetti, Szövérfy, and Fontaine also observed that any so-called simplicity or simple aesthetic might actually be a much more delicate and intricate matter. Simonetti's *Innologia* observes that the highly stylised combination of *concinntitas* and *variatio* (as well as a use of oxymora and parallelism) emerges as a defining characteristic (Simonetti 1988: 18), and Szövérfy argues that a deeper symbolism and complexity lies beneath the simple poetic structure in Hymn 4 (Szövérfy 1964: 56).⁶⁶ Fontaine too suggests that Ambrosian word-play is epitomised in the highly poetic use of paronymic and synonymic variation in Hymn 3 (Fontaine 56).

Ultimately, however, the four analyses do not systematically explore poetic qualities of the text⁶⁷ and ultimately also rely on *Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, or *semplicità* to define the syntactic, lexical, or metrical qualities of the collection. Norberg insists 'les conditions indispensables à un chant de ce genre étaient la simplicité et la clarté' (Norberg 1974: 139), and 'cependant Ambroise s'est servi de la simplicité comme procédé stylistique et poétique' (Norberg 1974: 141). Simonetti concludes that the *hymni* can be characterized as functional (*funzionale*), popular (*popolare*), and simple (*semplice*).⁶⁸

tutti gli inni di Ambrogio sono composti in dimetri giambici, forma metricale di natura popolare . . . [gli inni ambrosiani] sono perfettamente funzionali, perfettamente aderenti . . . sotto il punto di vista dello stile (caratteristica evidente anche a un superficiale esame di tutti gli inni di Ambrogio) è la

⁶⁵ Fontaine (11): 'L'hymnodie ambrosienne passe à juste titre pour l'une des créations poétiques les plus originales et les plus parfaites du christianisme latin. Elle fond en une synthèse neuve le triple héritage antique des traditions hymniques juive, grecque et latine;' see also Norberg (1974: 136-7) who speaks of an 'assimilation intensive entre la chrétienté et la culture païenne' while insisting the work was 'une ligne plus indépendante et plus originale'. See also Mans (1993) for an overview of Biblical material in the *hymni*.

⁶⁶ Szövérfy (1964: 56): 'Dahinter steckt mehr als eine einfache dichterische Formel. Der eigentliche Hintergrund ist hier der christliche Ordnungsgedanke, ein Bekenntnis der Zweckmäßigkeit der Welt und Schöpfung'.

⁶⁷ Largely because these works are interested in verifying authenticity.

⁶⁸ Importantly, Simonetti appears to quantify the *hymni*'s 'simplicity' in aspects of metre.

tendenza a una forma compatta e *semplice*, ma di una semplicità ricercata, studiattissima, basata su parallelismi.

(Simonetti 1988: 11-7)

While the exact definition of Simonetti's 'refined, studied, and parallelism-based simplicity' is not easy to determine, Szövérfy insists 'diese Hymnen erfüllten aber eine Funktion und hatten eine Aktualität' (Szövérfy 1964: 49) as well as, 'Nicht nur die dichterische Darstellung, sondern auch die Sprache mußte also einfach sein' (Szövérfy 1964: 63). Fontaine again speaks of a formal structure 'simple et claire' (Fontaine 63) with an 'ordre des mots plus simple' (Fontaine 25).

Two pervading aspects of the renewed (and more comprehensive) approach to the hymns may be put forth: (1) modern scholars have tended to focus on form, syntax, and lexis as areas that demonstrate signs of simplicity (Simonetti 1988: 17, Fontaine 25) and (2) modern scholars have begun to emphasise the aesthetic diversity of the collection (Fontaine 11) and focus on its more intricate use of parallelism and variation (Simonetti 1988: 17, Fontaine 56). What one may ask now is how much did the *hymni* actually reflect simple language? And what exactly constitutes aesthetic diversity? Can we determine any evidence of Fontaine's *triple héritage*? How frequently do we find Hebrew or Greek influences in the collection? That is, what if anything are we to read into the prominence of 'simplicity' in the critical vocabulary?

2.5 Modern Simplicity, A Changing Concept

As the previous sections have sought to demonstrate, the use of *Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, *semplicità* and *simplicity* hold a prominent position in critical readings of the *Hymni Ambrosiani*. While more recent works have turned toward areas of syntax, lexis and metre as particular aspects that exhibit a *simple* aesthetic (Norberg 1974: 139-41, Simonetti 1988: 11-7, Fontaine 63, 141), it is still relevant to question how much of the critical perception is based on linguistic evidence as opposed to our own cultural values. As early as the 1950's, for example, literary and sociological studies began to recognise a cultural obsession with the terminology of simplicity,

and Raymond Havens' article 'Simplicity, a Changing Concept', traces that obsession to the influence of science on a modern usage and understanding of simplicity. As Havens states, 'the extraordinary regard in which simplicity was held during the eighteenth century came in part from the support it received from science. Kepler, Galileo, Torricelli, Descartes, Pascal, Huygens, Robert Boyle, and Newton through the epoch-making discoveries . . . threw the full weight of this authority behind simplicity . . . to them it was not only a useful principle of method, it was the fundamental fact about the universe'.⁶⁹ Indeed, William Godwin wrote that, 'the road to the improvement of mankind is in the utmost degree simple',⁷⁰ and David Hume noted that, 'those compositions which we read the oftenest, and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity'.⁷¹ Interestingly, Havens suggested that the term simplicity borrowed some of its semantic currency surprisingly (or not surprisingly) from Classical thought: 'the supreme illustration, it was felt, of rising above the complex and elaborate was furnished by the Ancients . . . the idyllic simplicity of the golden age . . . the tendency to think of the Homeric period and even Greek life in general as much like the reign of Saturn' (Havens 1953: 6).⁷²

By the mid-twentieth century, these value-laden meanings and aesthetic fascinations with simplicity seem to have changed. As Leonard Diepeveen puts it, 'early in the twentieth century simplicity was the default way of understanding literature . . . a simplicity that was not just based on comprehension but was encrusted with peripheral, socially inflected values . . . simplicity was central to great art . . . but simplicity became an increasingly weak principle around which to marshal arguments about the canon . . . and it eventually became incomprehensible as a way of understanding significant aesthetic experience' (Diepeveen 2002: 178-9). Along with (or preceeding) this popular view, science – and in particular physics and mathematics – had presented theories of nonlinear dynamics, quantum mechanics, and fractal geometry that helped shape the world as both complex and

⁶⁹ Havens (1953: 4).

⁷⁰ Godwin (1793: 494-5).

⁷¹ Hume (1742 = Miller (1987: 195)). Further examples are abundant, though Newton's, 'nature is pleased with simplicity' is perhaps the most memorable.

⁷² Even the most influential of classical art historians, Joachim Winckelmann, summarised the architecture of ancient Greece as made of 'noble simplicity and quiet grandeur'.

chaotic. Today, the concepts of complex number systems and chaos theory have a profound and wide-reaching influence on our understanding of the universe and human existence, and as Ulf Hannerz notes in his book on cultural complexity, ‘when a larger proportion of the physical environment is human-made, complexity in the forms of externalization of meaning automatically becomes greater . . . the cultures of small-scale societies are cultures of face-to-face, oral flows of meaning. The cultures of complex societies, on the other hand, now make use of. . . television and computers’ (Hannerz 1992: 27). Philosophically, Mario Bunge has taken the analysis of simplicity and complexity even further by dividing the modern world into divisions of semiotic simplicities: e.g. terms, sentences, and theories (Bunge 1962: 113-5) and argued that, ‘the theory of simplicity, though still in a very rudimentary stage, threatens to become highly complex . . . This should not be taken as a declaration of skepticism, but as a warning against one-sidedness and superficiality’ (Bunge 1962: 135). In the visual arts,⁷³ Albert Rothenberg has argued that ‘homospaciality’ or the ‘process of conceiving two or more discrete entities occupying the same space’⁷⁴ has re-defined aesthetic experience as complex in the postmodern age. Today, Rothenberg suggests, we are attuned to complex visual juxtapositions and disparate image recontextualizations, and the ideas of ‘bisociation’ (Koestler 1964), ‘remote association’ (Mednick 1962), and ‘magic synthesis’ (Arieti 1976) are all in line with the notion of a more complex experience with art. It seems, that is, our phenomenological understanding of the world has turned toward a more dismissive attitude towards, or at least increasing incomprehension of, the notion of simplicity. The concept of complexity – or at least a complex simplicity – has taken its place. As Diepeveen puts it, ‘in the triumph of high modernism, difficulty replaced simplicity’ (Diepeveen 2002: 179).⁷⁵

⁷³ A division of the arts relevant to late Latin literature ever since the publication of Roberts’ *Jeweled Style* (1989).

⁷⁴ Rothenberg (1990: 25).

⁷⁵ In 2009, Universal Pictures grossed \$112 million with the motion picture *It’s Complicated* (there has been no motion picture *It’s Simple* released).

2.6 ‘Sociophilology’: One Road into the Problem

Shifts in twenty-first century critical theory and modern attitudes toward cultural aesthetics ought not to be taken lightly in our approach to the Ambrosian hymns. Given the semantic obstacles presented in the early Christian usage of *simplicitas* and the modern ambiguities inherent in the term simplicity, it remains extremely difficult (or even incomprehensible) to evaluate the linguistic aesthetic of the *hymni* as definitively ‘simple’ (or for that matter definitively ‘complex’). In short, no precise definition of simplicity has even been put forth in Ambrosian scholarship to make proper or quantifiable sense of the word nor have the linguistic aspects of the text that have been labelled ‘simple’ been expressed in clear and systematic terms.

In the sections that follow, I propose that a deeper and more comprehensive discussion of formal, syntactic and lexical qualities of the Latin might confront some aspect of this dilemma and that modern linguistic theories of language contact and language change might provide a helpful methodology for exploring the problem from a philological perspective. The re-focused significance of foreign elements in the *hymni* (Biraghi 1862, Fontaine 11, Mans 1993) along with the perceived link between simplicity of form and simplicity of syntax (Norberg 1974: 139-41, Simonetti 1988: 11-7, Fontaine 63, 141) suggest that a more focused linguistic approach to the text might benefit future scholarship, and in this way, a methodology that systematically evaluates the possible diverse linguistic influences in the text and the possibility of grammatical regularization might be helpful in demonstrating the distinctive linguistic aspects of the Ambrosian collection.⁷⁶

For the purposes of this investigation, I have chosen to follow modern sociolinguistic theories that define simplification as the regularization of syntactic and lexical aspects of a language (Ferguson (1971), Mühlhäusler (1974), and Trudgill (2010)). This approach does not claim to account for all possible notions of simplicity (especially those in more ideological senses), but it does seem to address the most recent issues of simplicity in syntax and lexis (Norberg 1974: 139-41, Simonetti 1988: 11-7, Fontaine 63, 141). The simplification theory, as laid out by

⁷⁶ As noted above, Norberg (1974: 141) had already recognised the potential significance of such an approach.

Mühlhäusler (1974) (see (§2.8)), seems to establish a clear and comprehensive method to examine the syntactic and lexical features of linguistic document without making broader assumptions about aesthetic or creative motivations. Mühlhäusler's approach delineates fundamental elements (e.g. prepositional syntax, lexical preference) and catalogues them independently before making observations about an overall simplicity, and in this way, the present study has found it helpful to analyse individual aspects of the Latin as a first step in a constructive framework which may later assist in observations about aesthetics and creative motivations in the text.

But might the particular fascination with the terminology of simplicity in nineteenth and early twentieth century scholarship even be discussed in the context of a branch of linguistics that focuses on the culture and history of a language? It is, of course, important to recognise that as the semantic currency of a critical term changes, it becomes necessary to identify its rise or decline. Fundamentally that is, I do not suggest that (and borrowing the phrase from Owen Barfield) any semantic meaning of a modern English 'simplicity' corresponds directly to the Latin *simplicitas* or Greek ἐπλότης.⁷⁷ For that matter, it is difficult to maintain that simplicity even has a comprehensive semantic relationship with *Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, or *semplicità*. As section §2.5 suggests, simplicity in nineteenth century English society might carry a different set of ideological values than it does today, and to attempt to comprehensively define those differences only distracts from a closer reading of the Latin. The point is that one may never conclusively or quantifiably define what *every* scholar means when s/he uses the term *simplicity*, *Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, or *semplicità*, and still, something must be made of simplicity as a critical locution in modern twenty-first criticism.

Two recent proponents of incorporating sociolinguistic methodologies into the study of historical languages might also help to establish parameters for this study. Peter Trudgill's work (1986, 2002, 2010, 2011) in sociohistorical linguistics has long relied upon pidgin and creole studies of 'simplified registers' to explain linguistic developments in continental Europe and the British Isles (Trudgill 2010: 4-20). As Trudgill states, 'there is in fact considerable agreement in the literature that language contact is indeed associated with a very particular linguistic process,

⁷⁷ Barfield (1952: 79-80).

namely simplification, and thus with a very particular characteristic, namely relative simplicity of structure' (Trudgill 2011: 15). Trudgill's analysis, quite generally, employs modern sociolinguistic methodologies toward the study of undocumented developments in historical languages, and the changes that occurred between Old English and Middle English, for example, are explained through the process of language contact, sociological change, and lexical and grammatical adjustment (Trudgill 2010: 4-20). In Classical studies, such sociolinguistic methods have been alluded to in works by Philip Burton (2008), Jim Adams (2003), and foremost Roger Wright (2003), who has focused on a balanced incorporation of sociolinguistic theory – noting of course the substantial perils that occur in the assumptions and/or observations made of ancient and late antique society – to explain linguistic developments in late antiquity.

Wright's term 'sociophilology' attempts to recognise that not only is the language of a historical written document important, but also the sociological context of its author and audience. As Wright explains, 'the successful sociophilologist has to attempt to understand several academic fields at once as well as be acquainted with a wide range of data (vii) . . . it is preferable to try to analyse the language and the texts of the time in their own terms, rather than with reference to the past or the future . . . thus the linguistic nature of these centuries [of late antiquity] is not easy to assess, and much more research needs to be done, but some light can indeed be shed by such a sociophilological approach which combines close analysis of textual detail with an understanding of both historical context and modern sociolinguistics' (Wright 2002: 69-70). In some manner, Wright's approach to late Latin seeks to rectify the misconception that a language can be accurately divided into chronological phases (Wright 2003: 36-7), and in his discussion of the linguistic developments in southern Europe, Wright alludes to the phenomenon of 'interdialects' (citing Peter Trudgill) as a means to explain the 'simplification' of certain Latin features (2003: 26-7). Overall, Wright's analysis stresses that there is a profound importance to understanding contexts in which language change occurs (including cultural contact, sociological shifts, and reform in education or religion (Wright 2003: 139-141)). Written records, Wright argues, can be difficult tools to use in assessing these transitions, though certain evidence of morphological, lexical,

semantic and even phonological developments can be observed (Wright 2003: 320-30). Furthermore, signs of such change are evident even within a community that has different but mutually comprehensible forms of the same language (Wright 2003: 69).

With regard to the *hymni Ambrosiani*, Wright and Trudgill's work suggests that the hymns' place in the sociological context of the fourth century may shed light on their linguistic features (and vice-versa). There is reasonable evidence, that is, that indicates some attempt toward accessible or mutually comprehensible Latin, for as Ambrose himself states, 'what has more power than the confession . . . celebrated by the mouth of the whole people? . . . so they all become teachers who scarcely could be disciples.'⁷⁸ In this regard, the hymns might also be understood as important documents in a period of significant religious reform (Williams 1995). At a time of deep divisions in the Christian Church, the hymns appear to have been used as tools to encourage unity and perseverance (cf. Aug. *conf.* 9.7.15; 9.12.32), and though they are recognizable as a literary form (as opposed to spoken language), there has been scholarship that points to their connection with the practical, daily speech of the people (Ebert 1874: 168-9). Thus, unlike the hymns of Prudentius or Ephraim which seem to represent more personal expressions of benediction, the *hymni Ambrosiani* appear as communal documents – texts that presumably exhibit a form of Latin which is (at least partially) inclusive and comprehensible.

2.7 Sociolinguistic Simplification: A Systematic Methodology

In the early 1970's, the idea of simplicity had emerged as a fundamental sociolinguistic concept for the study of 'language universals, language acquisition, and language loss'.⁷⁹ Based in part on research of transformational theory and alternative grammars, the notion of sociolinguistic simplicity appeared to focus more on the surface elements of language and the disparity between linguistic competences within a single speech community. As Charles Ferguson noted in an

⁷⁸ Ambr. *epist.* 75a.34.

⁷⁹ Ferguson (1971: 145). The notion of 'simplicity' was used in more than one sense in 20th century linguistics, see most notably Chomsky (1957: 53-56).

article entitled, 'The Absence of Copula and the Notion of Simplicity: A Study of Normal Speech, Baby Talk, Foreigner Talk, and Pidgins':

The notion of simplicity in language and language description has been a perennial issue in linguistics as in other disciplines, and there is little agreement on what constitutes simplicity. Some recent work in linguistics has been concerned with a 'simplicity metrical' in evaluating alternative grammars or partial grammars. The notion of simplicity in language itself, however, is only indirectly related to this. In the present paper we are concerned with the concept of simplicity in language (e.g. a paradigm, a construction, an utterance, a clause type, a phonological sequence) as in some sense simpler than another comparable part in the same language or another language . . . [for] any full-scale description of a language should identify simple versus complex (i.e. primary versus derivative) along a number of dimensions and thus offer predictions about possible orders of acquisition . . .⁸⁰

According to Ferguson's notion of simplicity, all speech communities appear to contain distinct varieties (simple and complex) that could be classified by a difference of syntactic, lexical, and phonological elements.⁸¹ For particular reasons (e.g. language development in children, language acquisition in foreigners), certain members of a community seemed unable to understand the 'normal' (or complex) elements of speech. Such disparity between language comprehension, Ferguson argued, created an identifiable (simplified) variety of a language (and thus, due to the nature of divisions, a polar complex variety was also recognised). Similar to the notion of *diglossia*, Ferguson theorised, the complex language was superposed upon 'simple' speech, for simple speech was learned first and 'as the child grows up he acquires the other normal non-simplified register of the language' (Ferguson 1971: 144).

⁸⁰ Ferguson (1971: 145).

⁸¹ Similar to 'bilingual' elements in *diglossia*, linguistic simplicity suggested that the complex language variety was superposed on the simple register – by which it was assumed that children and language learners acquired the complex register after the simple speech. This, however, did not assume that a complex register was a mere extension of simple speech. On the contrary, it appeared that both registers could be observed as having mutually exclusive linguistic elements.

In short, Ferguson accepted simplified language and the simple/complex dimension as linked primarily to the reduction of linguistic elements: a reduced vocabulary, syntax, sound and imagery (Ferguson 1959: 333-4; 1971: 144-146).⁸² The restrictions placed on inflectional systems, copula constructions, and the omissions of prepositions were fundamental justifications for that hypothesis. Furthermore, Ferguson insisted that lexical regularity – often the use of simpler synonyms over complex terms (e.g. buy – purchase, light – illumination) – indicated a direct distinction between the simple and complex varieties.

To these aspects, Peter Mühlhäusler in *Pidginization and Simplification of Language* (1974) added several other qualifiers of simplified speech:

TABLE 2.2 *from* Mühlhäusler (1974)⁸³

- a) predilection for a syllable structure
- b) the absence of highly marked sounds, such as rounded vowels, clicks, the replacement of voiced sibilants by voiceless ones, etc.
- c) the loss of tonal distinctions
- d) loss of the passive
- e) infinitive present form for verbs
- f) preference for continuous constituents
- g) use of masculine for all genders when languages with a gender system becomes simplified
- h) use of singular in all cases
- i) relational words.

In general, Mühlhäusler's extension of simplification theory sought to define conclusively the idea of simplicity and simplification within sociolinguistics by avoiding common misconceptions unattended to by Ferguson. Foremost, Mühlhäusler was cautious in promoting the idea that sociolinguistic connections between simplicity and complexity were related to metatheoretical ideas of 'natural order'.⁸⁴ As Voorhoeve (1961) had also observed, it was theoretically dangerous (from a sociolinguistic perspective) to assume that 'the natural order in the language, given by the language itself, coincides with the most simple order'.⁸⁵ Consequently,

⁸² The 'reduction' theory was supported subsequently by Silverstein (1971), but Mühlhäusler (68-9) makes a further important distinction – separating 'simplification' (the increase in regularity) and 'impoverishment' (the reduction or deletion of syntactic or lexical forms).

⁸³ Mühlhäusler (76).

⁸⁴ Chomsky (1957: 53).

⁸⁵ Voorhoeve (1961:146). Chomsky himself (1965: 6) later clarified his position by stating, 'Another reason for the failure of traditional grammar, particular or universal, to attempt a precise statement of

Mühlhäusler and Voorhoeve noted it was critical to establish certain terminological distinctions in order to clarify differences between generative grammatical theory and sociolinguistic simplicity before proceeding with a sociolinguistic approach.

The simplification of one component of grammar (e.g. loss of the passive), Mühlhäusler insisted, did not necessarily contribute to (or represent) an overall metatheoretical simplicity, as: ‘it has often been argued that what seemed to be simplification of language is in reality simplification of one of the components of a grammar and that this simplification takes place at the cost of greater complexity in another component’ (Mühlhäusler 71). Thus, Mühlhäusler suggested two important clarifications:⁸⁶ (1) certain taxonomic distinctions be allowed for significant differences between transformational theories of grammar and the sociolinguistic phenomenon of simplification (this involved ‘two different terms to keep the two meanings apart: ‘simplicity’ for the metatheoretical metrical; and ‘simplification’ for the kind of simplicity found in pidgins and language in general’ (Mühlhäusler 68)), and (2) the development of an explicit and systematic approach wherein syntactic, lexical, phonological, and syllabic elements be analysed independently as a means of exploring linguistic simplification.

Mühlhäusler’s distinctions and clarifications of sociolinguistic simplification have proven enormously helpful in subsequent studies of sociohistorical linguistics (see especially Trudgill 2002, 2010) and will help to avoid confusion for the remainder of this dissertation. As will be discussed in §2.7.2, much of Ferguson and Mühlhäusler’s research (as well as observations by Meisel (1977), Levenston and Blum (1977), Nichols (1992), Romaine (1995), Adams (2003) and Trudgill (2010)) will serve as a theoretical guide to the philological study of the *hymni*. The independent analysis of syntactic, lexical, and metrical elements (following Mühlhäusler’s extension) will serve as the framework for chapters 3 through 5.

regular processes of sentence formation and sentence interpretation lay in the widely held belief that there is a ‘natural order of thoughts’ that is mirrored by the order of words’.

⁸⁶ Mühlhäusler actually stressed a third significant point (Mühlhäusler 73), namely the division between ‘simplification’ and ‘impoverishment’ (his term for reduction). That distinction, though important from a sociological perspective, does not much affect this study (since we are trying not to distinguish between language loss and language optimalization). Thus, all further references to ‘simplification’ or language ‘reduction’ refer to both ‘simplification’ and ‘impoverishment’ without distinction. Also, this discussion will use ‘simplification’ over simplicity’ in order to avoid any other confusion.

2.7.1 Complexities & Limitations

Before proceeding with a discussion of linguistic and formal elements, it is worth acknowledging a handful of psychological complexities and theoretical limitations tethered to the theory of sociolinguistic simplification. In further analysing Mühlhäusler's approach, Levenston and Blum (1977: 51-71) indicated that simplified speech involved a much more complicated aspect of communicative sensitivity and semantic competence than originally conceived. In particular, the speaker's awareness of systematic relationships (*e.g.* synonymy, hyponymy, and antonymy) or the ability to recognise various degrees of paraphrastic equivalence emerged as primary factors in understanding exactly how simplification might occur.⁸⁷ In this way, Levenston and Blum argued that 'simple speech' actually involved complex communicative strategies that drove the whole nature of social relationships. It did not – as Ferguson had originally implied – simply recall the infant 'baby-talk' competence of source and target parties.

J. Meisel (1977) further emphasised certain psychological elements of simplification by insisting that the nature of certain simplifications were very difficult to quantify (Meisel 1977: 88-113).⁸⁸ In general, Meisel argued, what was important to observe was that sociolinguistic simplification actually alluded to a complex linguistic phenomenon of two mutually exclusive processes. On the one hand, Meisel insisted, 'unconscious simplification' (or 'unguided' as he described it) represented a language variety created through an interlocutor's limited understanding of a 'register' or grammatical system (most clearly observed in children or second-language learners). On the other hand, Meisel concluded, 'guided simplification' was a complex (and less understood) phenomenon represented by a learned speaker's manipulation of language for the purposes of communicating with a 'simpler' speaker.

In short, Meisel suggested guided simplification required a greater (than average) degree of linguistic competence, since the interlocutor was deliberately

⁸⁷ Levenston and Blum (1977: 52).

⁸⁸ *E.g.* some syntactic or lexical 'simplifications' were consistent across cultures, while others contradicted all reasonable predictions about language development and language change.

simplifying language according to pre-conceived ideas of communicative sensitivity in the target audience. That is, ‘unguided simplification’ appeared to stem from a *need* that superseded (and complicated) a *linguistic competence* while ‘guided simplification’ stemmed from a *linguistic competence* that superseded (and manipulated) a *need*. According to Meisel, it was worthy of note that a student *making do with less* and a teacher *simplifying more* were not necessarily taking part in the same linguistic process (Meisel 1977: 92).

Overall, the combined observations of Meisel and Levenston and Blum have made it necessary to distinguish between guided or unguided simplification when discussing a systematic analysis of simplified linguistic elements. In the case of this study, there appears to be convincing evidence that we are dealing with guided simplification, as there is no viable argument to suggest that the author of the *hymni* possessed a restricted linguistic competence. Furthermore it is relevant that Ambrose alludes to his role as *magister* in the Milanese community and that the sociological dynamic surrounding the hymns’ composition appears to be one of liturgical singing and exegetical instruction (cf. Ambr. *epist.* 75a34).

Yet the limitations of analysing the hymns through the lense of sociolinguistic theory should be outlined in some detail. Foremost, a methodology that is based on linguistic change, linguistic contact, and linguistic loss requires some justification. Although the most recent and comprehensive studies of the hymns have alluded to the diverse linguistic influences in the text (Biraghi 1862, Fontaine 11, Mans 1993), it is important to recognise, as Roger Wright proposes, that the impetuous application of sociolinguistic ideas can often provide baseless, albeit tempting, conclusions (Wright 2003: 297-330). In particular, the direct notion that creole studies would be compatible with an analysis of Ambrose’s work should not be mistaken as a suggestion that the author of the hymns was taking part in a direct bilingual or multilingual experience of creative composition. While Ambrose may have been literate in Greek (Runia 1993), there is little evidence to support his proficiency in Hebrew (Kraus 2003). Indeed as Matthew Kraus argues, any linguistic influence from the OT seems to be heavily susceptible to Graecization

before Jerome and thus very difficult to quantify.⁸⁹ If anything, the linguistic synthesis to which Fontaine alludes (Fontaine 11) is most likely subconscious and indirect; still it must be acknowledged that, as shown in studies by Rubio (2009) and Rosén (1995), indirect linguistic influences can be profound and, in light of Trudgill's 'interdialect' theory (Trudgill 1986), it might be presumptuous to assume that fourth century Milan represented a uniform linguistic system. In all likelihood, the phonetics, semantics, and syntax of culture that brought together Ambrose and Augustine would have been diverse, if mutually comprehensible.

As well one might expect that a greater discussion of comparative linguistics, structuralism, cognitive linguistics, or generative grammar would help contextualize the current study. This would be absolutely correct if the thesis were to make larger conclusions about language universals, spoken Latin in the fourth century, or broader linguistic developments. Indeed, some comparative methods are used in chapters 3 and 4, mainly as the problematic periodizations 'CL' (Classical Latin) and 'BL' (Biblical Latin) are employed, but the thesis tries to make few or no assumptions about a standardized Latin of the Classical period or an independent register of the Bible; the terms appear in those chapters only as helpful comparands in a discussion of interesting syntactic and lexical forms. In so far as there seems to be a bias toward elements that exhibit more unusual (complex) structures, this thesis emphasises those aspects as potential contradictions to the traditional approach.

In conclusion, it is the aim of this research to investigate *one* avenue of the 'simple' classification and, more broadly, to elucidate the more distinctive syntactic, lexical, and metrical elements of the text.

2.7.2 Simplification: *Hymni Ambrosiani*

The exploration of the syntactic, lexical, and metrical elements according to the principles of simplification theory still requires further delimitation. Foremost, the implementation of the sociolinguistic divisions – simple and complex – can present immediate challenges to a philological discussion. As Adams notes,

⁸⁹ Kraus (2003: 487-513).

historical perspectives make any sociolinguistic hypothesis based on linguistic competence difficult to defend (Adams 2003: 8).⁹⁰ ‘Colloquial’ Latin, ‘Neutral’ Latin, and ‘Vulgar’ Latin have all been terms used to express a ‘lower’ or ‘simpler’ register of the Latin language, yet each category itself creates linguistic divisions and language hierarchies (Hofmann 1978: 1-8, Clackson 2010: 7-12).⁹¹ Indeed, even in contemporary spoken languages, it is a challenge to say which language varieties are ‘more simple’ or ‘more complex’ than others (Mühlhäusler 69-74).

As a result this study aims cautiously at answering questions of perceived simplicity without making distinctions regarding degrees of linguistic competence. The fundamental principle of this methodology is that if the *hymni* are proven to be linguistically simple, then they would exhibit signs of syntactic, lexical and metrical regularization (Mühlhäusler 71). Consequently, if it were demonstrated that the *hymni* exhibit variation (e.g. complex clausal constructions, poetic stylisations, rare lexical terms, etc.), the simple classification would need possible re-consideration. This means that this study adopts a polar opposition in the complex-simple division: i.e. constructions either signifying some level of regularization/simplification or some level of variation/complexification, without regarding degrees of simplicity.

In general, the subsequent chapters (3-5) will follow a combination of such philological and sociolinguistic methodologies to explore several of the significant features of syntax (Chapter 3), lexis (Chapter 4), and metre (Chapter 5) that have been labeled simple.

Syntax

Similar to the discussion of lexis, the exploration of syntax plays a crucial role in assessing the presence or absence of simplification. According to Mühlhäusler’s extension of simplification theory (76) the regularization of the nominal, verbal, prepositional and clausal grammar represents a universal factor of simplified language.

This section examines the possible simplifications of grammatical forms and pays particular attention to areas of possible regularization (e.g. restrictions in verbal morphology) as well as stylizations (e.g. poetic plurals, hyperbaton), unusual

⁹⁰ Adams (2003: 8): ‘setting up degrees of linguistic competence is out of the question’.

⁹¹ Overall, ‘Colloquial’ Latin ‘neutral’ Latin or ‘vulgar’ Latin must *not* be assumed to represent a ‘simple’ register. Along the same lines, ‘poetic’ Latin should *not* be confused with ‘complex’ speech, though such language varieties might share certain elements.

constructions (e.g. rare singulars, supine), and possible features of Hebrew or Greek influence (e.g. genitives of quality). If the simplicity in the *hymni* is to be explored, all of these aspects need to be addressed as possible characteristics within the syntactic component.

Lexis

The use of words may be the most fundamental (and difficult) area of investigation. As evidenced by philological studies (see Leumann 1959, Adams and Mayer 1999: 1-18, Coleman 1999: 21-93, Hine 2005: 211-38) the designation of certain words as belonging to a particular linguistic register is an important, yet precarious study (see Axelson (1945: 16-8). As Hine (2005: 212) has observed, 'we now recognise that many, indeed most, of the words used by Latin poets are neutral.' Still, as sociological studies suggest (Mühlhäusler 73), the most obvious place for simplification to occur is in the lexical component, and thus this section aims at identifying the use of restricted semantics and lexical regularity while identifying elements that appear to exist outside a simple classification (e.g. loan-words, so-called *Ambrose-isms*). Ultimately, a vocabulary with more explicit meaning (e.g. proper names, places, technical terms, poeticisms) will receive greater attention due to the interest in formulating whether or not the *hymni* demonstrate a broader (thus, varied) range of lexical characteristics. In this direction, Chapter 4 works under the assumption that if the *hymni* are indeed simple then the lexical element would reflect a conscious attempt at regularization.

Metre

The consistent stichic iambic dimeter form found in the *hymni* has led to a general perception that the metre of the text is formally and structurally simple (see Norberg 1974: 139, Fontaine 63, §2.4.3). While a superficial level of regularization may account for some theoretical notion of simplicity, this section suggests that an adherence to the iambic dimeter quantity actually presents a significant level of complexity within the Latin language. In other words, it is generally understood that poetry encourages a reduction of certain features that do not 'fit' the metrical system (e.g. iambs or dactyls) which might imply a simplification, yet it also increases the the features that do 'fit' the system (but might not occur often within other aspects of the language), so a complication. The discussion here outlines some general misconceptions regarding the stichic iambic dimeter tradition (particularly the problem of viewing the form through

the Anglo-Germanic tradition) and proposes that metrical regularization of the text deserves closer examination.

2.8 Conclusions

Heretofore, what has been addressed is that the terms *simple* and *simplicity* pose a number of theoretical obstacles to the study of language and poetics in the *Hymni Ambrosiani*. In modern usage *simplicity* (*Einfachheit*, *simplicité*, *semplicità*, etc.) creates an ambiguous, perhaps even misleading estimation of the linguistic and poetic qualities in the text. It has been noted that in early Christian usage the term *simplicitas* held specialized semantic meanings, some of which are difficult to comprehend without a thorough exploration of early Christian theology.

Our inquiry into the discussion of this problem incorporates a methodology based on a synthesis of philological and sociolinguistic research. The inclusion of the latter is influenced, in part, by recent work that has highlighted the linguistic and literary diversity of the collection (Fontaine 1992, Mans 1993, Passarella 2008). Simplification theory and more distinctly, Mühlhäusler's extension (1974), presents a systematic framework for further exploration of linguistic and formal elements in the text. At this point, we find our study working inwards: taking into account semantic, syntactic, and metrical elements in the *hymni* in order to appreciate the stylistic and poetic aspects of the Latin.

Part II
Simplicity & Linguistic Aspects
of the *Hymni*

Syntax and Morphology

3.1 Introduction

Evidence of stylistic poeticisms and metrical influences (e.g. poetic plurals, rare singulars, and hyperbata) and extended syntactic constructions (e.g. rare participial substantives, supine, and extended clausal subordination) suggest that the *Hymni Ambrosiani* may not be as syntactically simple as it has been asserted (see Walpole 1922: 24, Norberg 1974: 141).¹ In particular formal qualities of the texts appear to encourage more condensed syntactic constructions (supine, substantives), inflectional variations (poetic plurals, rare singulars), or word order patterns (hyperbata) that are governed by patterns of iambic metra rather than linguistic regularization.

This chapter explores the approach to the *hymni* as ‘simple expressions’ (Trench 1869: 88) systematically by looking at nominal, verbal, prepositional, and clausal syntax.

3.2 Syntax and Morphology

Variations² between hymn manuscripts have made it difficult to formulate conclusions about syntax in the collection on a wider scale. Different codices contain different nominal forms (e.g. 3.15 *fidei/fide*; 3.17 *celsus/celso*), different verbal moods (e.g. 4.29 *rogamus/rogemus*; 9.7 *soluit/soluat*), or different clausal structures (e.g. 4.17 *ut/et*). Variations in some manuscripts even seem to indicate a period of transmission or regional distinction (for example *ut* is found in the four oldest manuscripts at 4.17 while *et* in all later editions).³ The so-called development of Latin in late antiquity (e.g. extended use of prepositional phrases, greater use of

¹ Fontaine (25) has done little to dispel this notion when he refers to an ‘*ordre des mots plus simples*’.

² ‘Variant’ readings in the process of transmission of the *hymni* have occurred in a variety of forms – e.g. unconscious alteration by medieval scribes, conscious alterations, mistakes in modern transcription. For a proper discussion see Jullien (1989).

³ The list of variant forms is too extensive to be included here. See Fontaine (148-563) for a comprehensive account.

habere to express new perfect and future tenses)⁴ further compounds the issue of a periodization (see Wright 2002: 36-48, Gelumbeckaite 1999: 375-80, Coleman 1971, 1976), and as Jim Adams' recent assessment of later Latin has convincingly shown, the linguistic developments in the fourth and fifth centuries can offer inconsistent evidence, reflecting regional or even individualistic tendencies (Adams 2011: 257-283).⁵

Challenges of linguistic contact are also relevant. The phenomenon of Hebraisms and Graecisms in early Christian literature often implies the indirect linguistic contact with Hebrew or Greek via Biblical translation (*not* the process of linguistic contact by social interaction).⁶ As Matthew Kraus concludes, this 'translation contact' almost always occurs through the Greek, since there is little evidence to support a direct Hebrew influence on Latin prior to Jerome (Kraus 2003: 513). Differentiating this process of contact from literary imitation, or further Hebraization or Graecization, can be an immense challenge. Still, Haiim Rosén and Gonzalo Rubio have argued that the linguistic influence of Biblical syntax (Hebrew and Greek) had an important impact on later Latin, and the evidence shows that the phenomenon may have had substantial linguistic consequences (Rosén 1995: 5-21; Rubio 2009: 204).⁷ Foremost, any discussion of (potential) Biblical contact must contend with crucial distinctions between qualitative and quantitative influences (that is syntactic constructions that have no precedent in Classical Latin (qualitative) and those that may have had a limited role in the history of the language but do not occur frequently in literary texts (quantitative)).⁸ As will be seen, the difference between these two is of great importance, but it does not necessarily imply any diminished significance of the quantitative variety (Rubio 2009: 204).⁹

⁴ The development of *habere* + *past participle* to express the perfect tense is much clearer than *habere* + *infinitive* to express the future (see Gratwick (1972: 388-98), Coleman (1976: 151-9)). Cicero often has been cited as an early example of the latter, Cic. *S. Rosc.* 100 *habeo etiam dicere quem . . . de ponte in Tiberim deiecerit*; although here, as in Lucretius, Lucr. 6.711 *item in multis hoc rebus dicere habemus*, the meaning seems to convey necessity more than futurity, and may evidence the influence (archaizing) of ἔχω. In the Vg we find, Jn. 8:26 *multa habeo de vobis loqui*.

⁵ For earlier approaches, see Löfstedt (1959), Clackson and Horrocks (2007).

⁶ For challenges involved in such a discussion see Rosén (1995: 5-21), Kraus (2003: 487-513).

⁷ See also P-W §10-54, Mohrmann (1947: 1-12), Löfstedt (1959: 68-87), García de la Fuente (1995: 219-20).

⁸ For further discussion, see García de la Fuente (1994: 171), Rubio (2009: 204).

⁹ Rubio here makes important observations about such distinctions, namely that it is difficult to quantify language along these lines. Still, some distinct syntactic features appear to exist in BL (see

Given the confounding and multi-dimensional process of analysing fourth century Latin (and the profound impact the *hymni* had on Western culture), it seems worthwhile to provide a more systematic discussion of the language in the collection.¹⁰ As noted in chapter 2, critical scholarship has relied on words like *simple*, *popular*, and *practical* to characterise the syntactic features of the work, and this chapter hopes to address that issue by illustrating some of the more definitive aspects of grammar in the text.

3.3 Nominal Syntax

Constructions of case, number, and gender in the *hymni* seem to exhibit features that are consistent with to Classical Latin (CL), showing no evidence of the assimilation of certain neuters to masculine or feminine (Grandgent 1907: 150; Adams 2011: 271; H-S §17b), no clear loss of the inflected case system (Adams 2011: 263-70; H-S §115c), and no great ambiguity in case function (Löfstedt 1911: 126-130; Väänänen 1981: 113; Adams 1995: 435-6).¹¹ As shown in Table 3.1, the *hymni* appear to exhibit a diverse use of nominal forms with no great evidence of regularization or restriction, and in Table 3.2(a) and Table 3.2(b) nominal forms in the hymns are shown to be consistent with other (classical and biblical) texts within the genre of prayer. If anything, the hymns appear to show a relatively limited number of vocatives given the genre (see vocative comparison in 3.2(a) and (b)), a feature that might be explained by the text's more narrative style (depicting the lives' of Saints and the birth and crucifixion of Christ). The hymns' tendency toward singular nominative forms might also evidence the thematic focus on the unity and singularity of God (4.31 *unum potens per omnia*), a dominant issue during the Nicene-Arian conflict:

P-W 54-102), and several linguistic distinctions can be observed in the Classical poetics (Lunelli 1988).

¹⁰ Systematic studies have been written for Ambrose prose works, see Phillips (1937), Adams (1927), Barry (1926). Zerfass (2008) has probably presented the most comprehensive study of the language of the *hymni*, but his focus centers on hymns 1, 3, 4 and 5 as opposed to the entire collection.

¹¹ For examples of these occurrences in the VL and Vg, see Rönsch (1875: 265-72), Burton (2000: 172-3).

TABLE 3.1 Nominal Declined Forms: Case and Number in the *Hymni* (including substantives, numerical adjectives, and nominal verbal forms)

Case	Singular		Plural		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%		
Nominative	209	26%	34	4%	243	30%
Vocative	10	1%	-	-	10	1%
Accusative	133	17%	83	10%	216	27%
Genitive	122	15%	37	5%	159	20%
Dative	19	3%	12	2%	31	5%
Ablative	106	13%	34	4%	140	17%
Total	599	75%	200	25%	799	100%

TABLE 3.2(a) Comparative Data with nominal distribution (percentage) listed for selected CL texts¹² - Catullus 34 (hymn to Diana), Horace's *Carmen Saeculare*, Horace's *Carmina* 1.10, 1.21, 3.18, Vergil's *Aen.* 8.572-583 (Evander's prayer), and the *carmen Arvale* (CIL 2104.32-7) (declined forms include substantives, numerical adjectives, and nominal verbal forms).

Case	Hymni		Catull. 34 (hymn to Diana)		Hor. <i>Carm.</i> <i>Saec., Carm.</i> 1.10; 1.21; 3.18		Verg. <i>Aen.</i> 8.572-583 (Evander's prayer)		<i>carmen Arvale</i> (CIL 2104.32-7)	
	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.
Nominative	26%	4%	5%	11%	11.7%	4%	3.6%	10.7%	-	-
Vocative	1%	-	24%	-	6.9%	4%	32%	-	25%	8.5%
Accusative	17%	10%	14%	2.5%	17.4%	13.5%	25%	7.2%	16%	33.5%
Genitive	15%	5%	11%	11%	12%	4.7%	10.7%	3.6%	8.5%	-
Dative	3%	2%	2%	-	3.6%	2.9%	3.6%	-	-	-
Ablative	13%	4%	14%	5.5%	15.7%	3.6%	3.6%	-	-	8.5%
Total	75%	25%	70%	30%	67.3%	32.7%	78.5%	21.5%	49.5%	50.5%

¹² 'Relevance' here was based foremost on genre (hymn) with subsequent consideration of metre. Obviously the *carmen Arvale* is not iambic but has been included as a representative text of prayer from an earlier period of Latin, see Norden (1939: 109-280), also Hickson (1993: 12). Catullus 34 ('hymn to Diana') is not written in iambs but a combination of glyconics and pherecrateans (for which a connection has been made to the iambic metres, see den Boeft (1993: 78-9)). The *Carmen Saeculare* and *Odes* 1.10 and 3.18 are written in Sapphic stanzas (i.e. hendecasyllabic with a central choriamb) and *Carm.* 1.21 in a mix of asclepiadean, pherecratean and glyconic. The Vergil, of course, is dactylic. The prayers offered at the *Ludi Saeculares* (CIL 6.32323.92-146) are omitted, for more on those works, see Pigghi (1965), as are the prayers found in Plautus and Terence (for example Plaut. *Curc.* 96-109), for a discussion there, see Fraenkel (1922: 236-40) and La Bua (1999: 105-10). Other passages of predication, for example Cato's agricultural sacrifices (Pisani (1960: 50-6)) and Cicero's religious *formulae* (cf. Cic. *Mur.* 88, Cic. *Phil.* 14.37) extend beyond the scope of this discussion, and further examples in Vergil and Livy (for example Verg. *Aen.* 6.56-65 (At the oracle of Apollo), Verg. *Aen.* 8.293-302 (Hymn of the Salian priests), Liv. 1.16.2-3 (prayer to Romulus), Liv. 29.27.2-4 (Scipio setting forth to invade Africa) were either comparable to work presented (e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 8.572-583) or too short for comparative examination.

TABLE 3.2(b) Comparative Data with nominal distribution (percentage) listed for selected Christian Latin texts¹³ - Vg Psalm 79 (Weber 1984), the *Psalmus Responsorius* (Salzano 2006), Prudentius' *Cath. 1 (Hymnus ad Galli Cantum)*, and Boethius' *con. 2. carm. 8 (quod mundus stabili fide)*.

Case	Hymni		Psalm 79 (Weber 1984)		Psalmus Responsorius (Salzano 2006)		Prudentius Cath. 1 (ad Galli Cantum)		Boeth. con. 2. carm. 8	
	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.
Nominative	26%	4%	11%	3%	27%	5%	28%	10%	30.5%	2%
Vocative	1%	-	6%	-	1.5%	.5%	2.5%	-	-	-
Accusative	17%	10%	29%	18%	28%	7.5%	16.9%	7%	15%	22%
Genitive	15%	5%	13%	5%	5%	3%	18%	1.8%	2%	4.5%
Dative	3%	2%	1.5%	1.5%	7.5%	-	1.8%	-	-	4.5%
Ablative	13%	4%	11%	1%	12%	3%	9%	5%	13%	6.5%
Total	75%	25%	71.5%	28.5%	81%	19%	76.2%	23.8%	60.5%	39.5%

Aside from the statistical evidence above, certain nominal features in the *hymni* also present further interesting and defining evidence, (including deviations from Classical or Biblical language), and examples that appear to exhibit either: (1) a stylised sensitivity toward the iambic metre or other poetic effect (for example parallelism) or (2) a degree of influence from Biblical Latin (BL) that might be traced to indirect contact with Biblical Hebrew or direct contact with Biblical Greek. Those passages are explored more closely in the sections that follow.

3.3.1 Poetic Plurals

- 4.18 *caligo noctium* (the darkness of nights)
- 7.17 *aquas colorari uidens* (seeing [that] the waters are coloured)
- 8.17 *aras nefandi numinis* (the altars of an impious god)
- 11.15 *sanatus impos mentium* ([a man] powerless of [his] minds, healed)

Steier has reckoned that the plural use of *nox* was common in CL when no particular night was intended (see Steier 1903: 643, for example in CL Sen. *Med.*

¹³ ‘Relevance’ again based on genre (hymn) and metre (iambic dimeter). Psalm 79 is not written in the classical iambic dimeter, but it is included as a representative text of the Biblical tradition, and the choice is relevant since it is quoted in Hymn 5 of the *Hymni Ambrosiani*). The Boethius text (*Boeth. con. 2. carm. 8*) is not in the acatalectic iambic dimeter but the glyconic. Prudentius’ ‘Hymn for Cock Crow’ is iambic. Other ‘late’ prayer texts such as the *Peruigilium Veneris* (Bailey 1999: 139-44) (trochaic), sections of Dracontius’ *Orestis Tragoedia*, or poems from the *Anthologia Latina* and *CLE* are omitted since they appear in various other metres (and are generally pagan), see La Bua (1999: 343-436).

750 *Nunc meis vocata sacris, noctium sidus, veni*), and the genitive *noctium* is frequently found in prose. In hexameter poetry it is less common (largely due its metrical limitations) and seemingly absent in Livy. Still, research suggests that the plural *noctes* is appropriate in instances of temporal duration (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.127 *noctes atque dies patet*) or determinative *cum* clauses (cf. Lucr. 1.1066-7 *cum tempora caeli / diuidere et noctes parilis agitare diebus*), but does not appear to be the rule in temporal expressions with *caligo* (cf. Lucr. 4.456 *nostra uidemur, et in noctis caligine caeca*; Sil. 11.513 *uixdum depulsa nigrae caligine noctis*; Apul. *met.* 2.32 *ut uix inprudidae noctis caligine*).¹⁴ That is, Ambrose himself uses the singular, *noctis*, in temporal constructions with *caligo* in prose (Ambr. *epist.* 10.77 *ecce ueri dies quos nulla caligo noctis interpolat*); and in hymn 4, the juxtaposition of *nox* with a singular *dies* (day) may indicate that the plural *noctium* is unusual. In fact, according to the *LLT-A*, no examples of *caligo noctium* appear in Latin prior to Hymn 4, and it seems that to say ‘darkness of night’, we find *caligo noctis* but not *caligo noctium*.¹⁵

There is a potentially stronger case for the poetic plural in the expression *impos mentium*.¹⁶ In Suetonius we find *impos mentis* in reference to the Illyrian *lixa* who tries to murder Augustus (cf. Suet. *Aug.* 19 *imposne mentis an simulata dementia incertum*) and in Jerome a singular construction with *facere* (cf. Hier. in *Ion.* 1.4 *mentis suae impotem facit*), but what Walpole and Fontaine have concluded is that the plural *mentium* can only be explained by metrical and phonetic ‘advantages’ (Walpole 1922: 90, Fontaine 504).

The plural *aquas* in 7.17 (*aquas colorari uidens*) indicates another, slightly different, yet Biblically relevant aspect of poetic stylisation. As Fontaine observes, the reasonable explanation for the plural ‘waters’ (when a singular ‘water’ is meant) may be rhetorical parallelism (Fontaine 355). The plural *aquas* complements two

¹⁴ Quintilian addresses the issue thus: Quint. *inst.* 5.10.42 *eius autem, ut alio loco iam dixi, duplex significatio est: generaliter enim specialiter accipitur. prius illud es ‘nunc, olim . . . hoc sequens habet et constituta discrimina ‘aestate, hieme, noctu, interdiu’*. On the difficulties involved in identifying and interpreting ‘poetic plurals’, see the classic discussions of Marouzeau (1954: 221-27), Löfstedt (1956: I 40-1), and Wackernagel (2009: 131-33).

¹⁵ In a resonant passage later in Prudentius we find (Prud. *Cath.* 1.37-40) *ferunt uagantes daemonas / laetos tenebris noctium / gallo canente exterritos / sparsim timere et cedere*.

¹⁶ Interestingly, the Gr. φρένες, not infrequently found in the plural, might offer a poetic model (cf. A. *Pr.* 673 εὐθύς δὲ μορφὴ καὶ φρένες διάστροφοι / ἦσαν).

other plural nouns in the strophe (7.17- 20 *aquas . . . flumina . . . elementa*), while metrically, *-am* and *-as* make no quantitative distinction. Ordinarily such variance can be common in poetic expressions for rivers or streams (Verg. *Aen.* 6.298-9 *portitor has horrendus aquas et flumina seruat / terribili squalore Charon*) but given that the pluralisation deviates from Vg and VL syntax – the passage is a direct allusion to the Gospel of John (cf. Jn. 2:9 *ut autem gustavit architriclinus aquam uinum factam et non sciebat unde esset ministri autem sciebant qui haurierant aquam*)¹⁷ – it is difficult to explain the variance as anything other than a poeticising of Biblical narrative (see also §3.6.4, §3.8.3, §4.2.4). The fact that 7.17 substitutes a poetic plural (*aquas*) for a Biblical singular (*aquam*) seems to suggest a valuation of metre over an accurate reproduction of the biblical model.

In each case the poetic plurals seems to be employed as a result of stylistic or metrical influences. In 4.18 and 11.15,¹⁸ *noctium* (nights) and *mentium* (minds) indicate that the dimeter metron (*light-heavy-light-anceps*) forces a plural over the singular (*noctis, mentis*) so as to avoid a catalectic quantity (*light-heavy-anceps*) and heptasyllabic variance (uncommon to the hymns' emphasis on symmetry and cohesion).¹⁹ In the latter occasion, the emphasis seems to be on parallel structures.

3.3.2 Rare Singular

Claustrum

5.14 *claustrum pudoris permanet* (the lock of honour remains)

8.10 *claustrum pudoris auxerant* (they had augmented the lock of honour)

The hymns also exhibit a singular usage of *claustrum* (lock) that seems rare in CL and BL (cf. 5.14 *claustrum pudoris permanet* (the lock of honour remains)

¹⁷ Most VL versions are identical to the Vg (cf. ITSEE *Codex Vercellensis* (Gasquet 1914), ITSEE *Codex Veronensis* (Buchanan 1911), *et al.*) with lexical variation found in the case of *aqua* not *number* (cf. VL (Gasquet 1914) . . . *autem gustasset architriclinus [a]qua uinum factum . . .*

¹⁸ Fontaine (454, 494) reads two other plurals in the singular (10.15 *castrisque raptos impiis*; 11.27 *emissa totis urbibus*), connecting the latter to Verg. *Aen.* 7.384 *per medias urbes*; and OLD 282. Simonetti (1988: 59, 65) disputes both occurrences, translating them literally in their plural form. *Castris*, in particular, is commonly found in CL and BL in the plural, cf. Ex. 19:16 *populus qui erat in castris*; Num. 2:16 *in castris Ruben*; Num. 2:31 *in castris Dan*; Ps. 105:16 *in castris Aaron* and cannot be understood as any real poeticising of the text.

¹⁹ For the use of *light-heavy* v. *short-long*, see Gratwick (2009: 209-11), also adopted in §5.2.

and 8.9-10 *Metu parentes territi / claustrum pudoris auxerant* (Her parents, struck by fear, / had augmented the lock of honour)). In CL, forms of *claustrum* predominantly occur in the plural (see *TLL* 3.1319.30; *OLD* 335) with limited exceptions in Lucan, Pliny, Curtius Rufus, and Apuleius (cf. Lucan 10.505 *nunc claustrum pelagis*; Plin. *nat.* 30.138 *argenteum claustrum mordeat uitium*, Curt. 4.5.21 *obicitur a uigilibus claustrum*; Apul. *met.* 5.2 *nullo uinculo, nullo claustrum*).²⁰ In *hymni* 5 and 8, there is an unusual use of the term with *pudor* (honour), to signify the chastity of Mary (5.14) and Agnes (8.10), respectively.

The assertion that the term was altogether a *plurale tantum* appears unlikely since the singular occurs in Silver Age authors,²¹ and yet it is interesting to recognise that the singular (*claustrum*) is unique as a metaphor for celibacy until the Middle Ages.²² Ambrose seems to be the first²³ to use the phrase (cf. also Paul. Petric. *Mart.* 4.657 *iam domino deuota fides, ut claustra pudoris*), and the singular usage in 3.14 and 8.10 is suggestive of a particular metrical formula (*claustrum pudoris*) whereby the iambic rhythm of a first metron (*anceps, heavy, light, heavy*) is established.²⁴

Prex

3.4 *intendat affectum precis* (let it turn toward a state of prayer)

The singular of *prex* (prayer) is perhaps more unusual. There appears absolutely no CL precedent of the nominative (*prex*) and genitive (*precis*) usage. Occurrences in the accusative and ablative singular are also rare (cf. Plaut. *Capt.* 243 *nunc te oro per precem*; Ter. *Andr.* 601 *nihil est preci loci relictum*; Verg. *Aen.* 10.368 *nunc prece, nunc dictis*; Hor. *carm.* 1.21.16 *uestra motus aget prece*, see *OLD* 1455, Blaise 1954: 661). In BL, the singular *precem* occurs only twice (cf. Ps.

²⁰ Poetically, Vergil uses *claustra* for the winds at Aeolus' hall and Sinon's release of the Greeks (Verg. *Aen.* 1.55-6 *Illi indignantes magno cum murmure montis / circum claustra fremunt*; Verg. *Aen.* 2.258-9 *et pinea furtim / laxat claustra Sinon*).

²¹ For further discussion of *pluralia tantum*, see Wackernagel (2009: 119-25).

²² *LLT-A* lists nine occurrences of *claustrum* in the period of Antiquitas (pre-200 C.E.), forty-seven occurrences in the Aetas Patrum I (200-500), and more than four hundred in the Middle Ages (736-1500).

²³ Ambrose is fond of the singular *claustrum* in prose writings, cf. Ambr. *In Psalm.* 38.6 *iustus ipse sibi claustrum est*; Ambr. *Virg.* 11.61 *soluit uinculum carnis et corporis claustrum*.

²⁴ For other examples of *claustrum* in the singular after Ambrose, cf. Iuuenc. 3.281 *non exsuperabile portis / claustrum perpetuo*; Leo M. *epist.* 22.70 *sibi claustrum pudoris*.

33:16 *oculi Domini super iustos et aures eius in precem eorum*; Ps. 87:3 *inclina aurem tuam ad precem meam*).

If the *LLT-A* is to be believed, the only previous occurrence of *prex* in the nominative or genitive singular is found in Cyprian (c. 258 C.E.) who uses it on one occasion (Cypr. *laps. 25 precis nostrae et orationis impatiens*).²⁵ Ambrose's usage in 3.4 *affectum precis* (state of prayer) thus creates an entirely unprecedented phrasing, comprised of an unusual singular form, *precis* (of prayer), and a noun conveying a broader disposition, *affectus* (state of mind, alt. sp. *adfectus*). Whether the singular usage of the former term evinces the surfacing of a sub-literary expression is difficult to determine, and any metrical or poetic motivation is unclear.²⁶ According to Blaise (1954: 661), the plural *preces* remains the more common construction throughout Late Latin.

3.3.3 Gender

1.15 *ipse petra ecclesiae* (the Rock of the Church, himself)

2.30 *aurora totus prodeat* (May He, the entire, the dawn appear)

Latin translations of the Septuagint and Gospel of Mark demonstrate some tendency to assimilate neuter forms into the masculine or feminine (cf. VL Ps. 26:4 *unam petii a Domino, hanc requiram*;²⁷ VL Mk. 6:39 *uiridem faenum*),²⁸ and among Augustine and other early Christian writers there are some departures from gender distinctions in CL (Itin. *Burdig. 22.12 haec fons*; Lucif. *reg. apost. 12 p.2 2.71 cornum tuum*; Aug. *civ. 17.4 cornum meum*).²⁹

In the *Hymni Ambrosiani*, two appositive constructions have caused minor confusion regarding gender (cf. 1.15 *hoc ipse petra ecclesiae* (at this, the rock of the Church, himself); 2.30 *aurora totus prodeat* (May he, the dawn, the entire, appear)).

²⁵ The fifth century poet Cyprianus Gallus uses the singular *prex* on one further occasion, cf. Cypr. Gall. *exod. 682 palmarum prex iuncta foret*.

²⁶ By the sixth century the singular *prex* appears only somewhat more widespread (cf. Isid. *sent. 3.7.6 Ille enim precis desideratum effectum*).

²⁷ Hetzenauer (1906).

²⁸ Scrivener (1864). See also Rönisch (1875: 265-72), Burton (2000: 172-3), P-W §18.

²⁹ H-S 10-11. See also Colbert (1923: 6).

The juxtaposition of a masculine modifier (*ipse, totus*) and feminine noun (*petra, aurora*) has resulted in some variant readings and textual emendations (see Fontaine 149, 187). In modern editions, it is generally accepted that *ipse* and *totus* are to be read as appositional forms, and there are no further signs of significant gender inconsistencies within the text.

3.3.4 Case

The syntax of case presents fewer plural forms than one might expect (see above Table 3.1 and Comparative Tables 3.2a and 3.2b), and yet there is no clear sign of a substantially restricted or simplified inflection. Overall, the *hymni* are generally consistent with CL grammar, although there is some evidence of possible prosodic or Biblical influence, and in particular, genitive and ablative constructions exhibit the more unusual (and distinctive) grammatical forms.

Genitive of Quality

3.17 *triumphi uertice* (on the summit of triumph)

5.15 *uexilla uirtutum* (the signals of virtues)

8.10 *claustrum pudoris* (lock of honour)

A few genitive constructions in the *hymni* seem to demonstrate an extended use of the genitive of quality (*qualitatis*, H-S §56) both with and without an adjective. On at least three occasions, there appears to be a more Biblical construction *ohne Attribut* (H-S §56ε, P-W §20): cf. 3.17 *triumphi uertice* (on the summit of triumph); 5.15 *uexilla uirtutum* (the signals of virtues); 8.10 *claustrum pudoris* (lock of honour).³⁰ As presented in Rubio (2009: 208) such constructions are widespread in BL (probably as a result of the limited number of adjectives in Hebrew and Aramaic) and are especially common throughout the Book of Psalms

³⁰ One might read more traditional possessive or defining syntax in these genitives, though the semantic connection with Biblical passages convinces this author that the syntax has greater affinity with Biblical language.

(cf. Ps. 23:8 *rex gloriae*; Ps. 45:6 *uirga directionis*; Ps. 67:34 *uocem uirtutis*).³¹ Parallel constructions appear to be rare in CL (cf. Vitr. 8.3.28 *rebus escarum*; Phaedr. 4.8.4 *res esset cibi*).

Especially frequent (and relevant to Ambrose's reading of Psalm 79) seems to be the genitive use of *uirtus*. Given that the first four lines of hymn 5 borrow directly from the beginning of Psalm 79,³² it is relevant to observe that both texts use of *Deus uirtutum* (Almighty God) (cf. Ps. 79:5, 79:8, 79:15, 79:20). In the Psalm, the Latin *uirtutum* appears to be making an effort to convey the Greek δύναμις (a translation trying to convey the Hebrew *elohim*), and while there is some precedent in Cicero for the grammatical structure with the term, it seems difficult to deny the Biblical influence. That said, if the indirect Hebrew influence is accurate, it is still quantitative (since the syntactic construction occurs already in Latin),³³ though phrases in the *hymni* like *uexilla uirtutum* or *claustrum pudoris* might have been read as either emphatic or foreign (i.e. Semitic).³⁴

Repeated Genitive

1.3 *temporum tempora* (seasons of the seasons)

2.3 *lux lucis* (light of light)

2.4 *dies dierum* (day of days)

Aside from *qualitatis* constructions, the repeated genitive (P-W §20, §31) also defines important aspects of the hymns' syntax. In at least these instances, the *hymni* seem to show some influence from the Book of Psalms (Ps. 67:34 *caelum caeli*) and New Testament (Rm. 16:27 *in saecula saeculorum*) to emphasise a particularly resonant word or phrase (cf. also Ps. 83:5 *saecula saeculorum*; Phil. 4:20 *in saecula saeculorum*). In CL, such syntax has ubiquitous polyptotonic precedent (see H-S 707, Wills 1996: 189-221), though in CL the stylistic and

³¹ Possibly also *patrem . . . gloriae*; *patrem . . . gratiae* at 2.10-11 (both lines with accompanying adjective, see below, p. 77), perhaps modeled on James I *pater luminum*. I owe this suggestion to Professor Philip Burton. See also García de la Fuente (1994: 176-8) and P-W 19-20.

³² For the debate on their authenticity, see Walpole (1922: 51-2).

³³ See Rubio (2009: 208). Similar examples of *ohne Attribut* constructions are observed in Ambrose's prose, where the Semitic influence has also been suggested (*LLSA* 18-9). See also K-S §86.2, Palmer (1954: 293).

³⁴ If not for their syntax, then possibly for their semantic meaning.

semantic usage is rarely employed in temporal and theological expressions. The usage in the *hymni*, on the other hand, seems to define a stylistic element of the collection – Simonetti’s *symmetria variata* (see §4.4.2) – whereby the poet is able to set up parallel isocolonic or tricolonic structures in a sequence that resonates with the words and syntax of the Book of Psalms and Pauline epistles.

Ablatives Absolute

- 1.21 *gallo canente* (when the cock sings)
- 4.9 *peracto iam die* (now at ending day)
- 11.4 *martyribus inuentis* (at having found the martyrs)
- 14.9 *terrore uicto saeculi* (by conquering the fear of the age)

Recent research on ablatives absolute indicates that there is little evidence to support Väänänen’s claim (Väänänen 1981: 178) that the construction entered a period of decline during late antiquity (Müller Lancé 1995: 413-15). The construction is found frequently in Gregory of Tours and the *Itinerarium Egeriae*, outnumbering occurrences in Cicero, Caesar, and Vergil.³⁵

The presence of the absolute construction in the *hymni* can be seen in part as facilitating a more condensed means of temporal or circumstantial expression. As Coleman notes, it may also contribute to a sense of literariness within the Latin grammar (see Coleman 1989: 353-74, 1995: 364). At least six instances of ablatives absolute occur with temporal or causal force: 1.21 *gallo canente*, 4.9 *peracto iam die*, 11.2-3 *Protasio Geruasio / martyribus inuentis*, 11.17 *caecus recepto lumine*, 14.9 *terrore uicto saeculi*, 14.10 *poenisque spretis corporis*. At least one of these occurrences, 11.17 *recepto lumine*, indicates a more compact syntax than similar passages found in Ambrose’s prose writings (cf. Ambr. *In Psalm.* 35.15 *caecis refundi lumen*; Ambr. *In Psalm.* 36.24 *oculorum lumen eripuit*). Two of the other absolute constructions (1.21 *gallo canente*; 4.9 *die peracto*) seem to have little or no precedent in Latin literature, but are copied by Prudentius and Augustine (Prud. *cath.* 1.39 *gallo canente exterritos*; Aug. *faus.* 22.50 *iam die peracto in eius iret amplexus*). All of these expressions would have offered Ambrose a more condensed

³⁵ Also Hernández (1996: 471-82).

grammatical structure than a subordinate *cum* clause, an advantage given the short and rigid acatalectic iambic dimeter. That said, it remains difficult to quantify the general role of or preference for the absolute, though in the Latin Bible, absolute forms are a significant means of rendering the Greek aorist participle and the genitive absolute (Gn. 39:23 *cunctis ei creditis*, Jdg. 19:17 *eleuatis oculis*).

3.3.5 Further Remarks on Nominal Syntax

Beyond more unusual or metrically influenced aspects, the hymns seem to evoke a certain poetic style that can be defined in part by nominal forms. The heavy use of the genitive, for example, provides what might be read as a balanced yet colourful style that emerges in parallel syntactic progressions. In certain passages, the hymns' use of genitive grammar acts almost as an axis around which the narrative of the passage revolves:

Apostolorum passio
diem sacrauit saeculi
Petri triumphum nobilem
Pauli coronam praeferens.
12.1-4

In each clause the nominal meaning seems weighted in the genitive (*apostolorum*, *saeculi*, *Petri*, *Pauli*) and each of those terms is given significant linear position (line-initial, line-final, line-initial, line-initial). Similarly in 2.9-12, the central parallelism is emphasised by alliteration, word order and the use of the genitive:

Votis uocemus et Patrem,
Patrem perennis gloriae,
Patrem potentis gratiae;
culpam releget lubricam,
2.9-12

With regard to syntactic simplification, the latter passage is perhaps one of the clearest example of regularized isocolonic patterns, and perhaps it is through such examples that one might read an aesthetic of simplification. Yet, on the whole there appears to be no consistent regularization of number, gender, or case inflection

across the collection, and although certain restrictions are found in nominatives, accusatives, and vocatives plural (see §3.3.3) those figures do not seem to be out of line with other works in the hymn genre. In fact, numerous passages exhibit what appear to be diverse, even unusual, nominal constructions including: the use of the poetic plural with *mens* and *aqua* (§3.3.1), extended genitive of quality constructions with *pudor*, and *uirtus* (§3.3.3), the so-called repeated genitive (§3.3.3), and the predominant use of ablatives absolute (§3.3.3), all indicate some aspect of stylised or metrically influenced syntax.

3.4 Prepositional Syntax

Prepositional syntax in Late Latin remains extremely difficult to quantify in terms of linguistic development (Löfstedt 1911: 163-180, Väänänen 1981: 117-122; Adams 2011: 26-270). The traditional position, whereby Late Latin begins to use independent function words (e.g. *de*, *ad* or *in*) to convey inflected case meanings (e.g. genitive, dative or ablative) has been shown to be inconsistent, regional, or even individualistic in the broader development of the language (Adams 2011: 264).³⁶ As mentioned in §3.2, the use of prepositional phrases in the fourth century alone shows a variant syntactic progression within the Latin linguistic system, and any so-called development or deterioration of CL syntax often neglects occurrences from sub-literary Latin or features found in the very early stages of the language.³⁷

Still, some aspects of prepositional expressions in the *hymni* are worthy of consideration as indications of stylistic practice or possible Biblical influence. Of those prepositions that occur,³⁸ the use of *ad* and *in* will receive more comprehensive attention here.

³⁶ See also Grandgent (1907: 39-41), Löfstedt (1959); also Hrdlicka (1931) for prepositional use in Augustine and Brown (1934) in Hilary of Poitiers.

³⁷ See Coleman (1989, 1991).

³⁸ *apud* (6.18 and 6.20 *apud Deum*); *coram* (5.3 *Ephraem coram*); *cum* (11.28 *cum gratia*); *de* (2.2 *de luce lucem*); *e/ex* (5.9 *ex uirili semine*; 5.17 *e thalamo suo*); *inter* (7.29 *inter manus*); *post* (13.8 *post triduum*; 13.17 *post triduum*), *pro* (10.19 *pro rege*; 10.20 *pro Christo*); *retro* (7.6 *retro tertio*), *sub* (7.23 *sub dentibus*), and *super* (5.2 *super Cherubim*) appear only once or twice. *Adversus*, *ante*, *circum*, *cis*, *contra*, *erga*, *extra*, *infra*, *ob*, *prae*, *praeter*, *propter*, and *sine* do not occur at all. The avoidance of *super* is particularly interesting given its prevalent usage in the Vg, see P-W (89-90).

3.4.1 *Ad*

11.8 *qui clamat ad Deum Patrem* (which calls to God the Father)

Ad occurs in at least three different uses in the *hymni*: (1) in constructions of direction (H-S §115a): 5.22 *regressus eius ad Patrem* (he returned to his Father); 5.24 *recursus ad sedem Dei* (he returned to the seat of God); 10.27 *ad oppidum* (to the city); (2) in a more adverbial sense of location (H-S §115e): 3.32 *ad dexteram sedens Patris* (seated at the right of the Father), and (3) in expressions of indirect object (H-S §115c): 11.8 *qui clamat ad Deum Patrem* (which calls to God the Father). Of these, 11.8 *clamat ad Deum* deserves further examination.

It has been noted that the use of accusative with *uerba dicendi et monstrandi* occurs early in Plautus (cf. Plaut. *Capt.* 359-60 *praecipe / quae ad patrem uis nuntiari*; Plaut. *Capt.* 1019 *hunc . . . ad carnificem dabo*; Plaut. *Epid.* 38 *ad hostis exuias dabit*) and surfaces later in CL with expressions that address crowds or spoken motion across space (see Adams 2011: 266). Lindsay (1907: 20, 83) has made the argument that the particular use of *clamare + ad + acc.* may have been a regular element of spoken Latin (see also Väänänen 1981: 120-1; H-S §115c). Ultimately, however, the use of *clamare + ad + acc.* in the so-called *Volkssprache* remains uncertain, as there are few instances in texts that exhibit less literary registers (for example Petronius or Egeria), and the construction appears to be a rare feature in CL prose or verse.³⁹ Constructions in BL are far more frequent, as it is often a direct translation of the *Gr.* *πρός*: cf. Gn. 4:10 *clamat ad me de terra* (βοᾷ πρὸς με ἐκ τῆς γῆς); Ps. 56:3 *clamabo ad Deum altissimum* (κεκραῶμαι πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τὸν ὑψίστον).⁴⁰ The occurrence in 11.8 may reflect a popular idiom given license by the Biblical Greek (Burton 2000: 175-6).

³⁹ It might be noted, however, that *alloquor* is a verb of expression that regularly takes the direct object.

⁴⁰ Cf. also Is. 21:11 *Onus Duma ad me clamat ex Seir custos quid de nocte?*; NT(A) and Vg Lk. 1:18 *Et dixit Zaccharias ad angelum: unde hoc sciam?*; Jn. 4:48 *dixit ergo Iesus ad eum*. It is worthy of note that Ambrose seems fond of the *clamare + ad + acc.* construction in his prose writings, cf. Ambr. *Cain et Ab.* 1.9.34 *et spiritus anxius clamat ad te*; Ambr. *In Psalm.* 40.17 *in cordibus nostris clamat ad patrem*. He is followed by Augustine, cf. Aug. *civ.* 19.6 *si pie sapit, clamat ad deum*; also Greg. *Tur. Franc.* 2.3 *ad episcopum aiebat*. For further discussion see Väänänen (1981: 120-1) and Coleman (1987: 40).

3.4.2 *In*

14.25 *In his paterna gloria*, (in them is paternal glory)

14.26 *in his uoluntas spiritus* (in them the will of the spirit)

In + abl. occurs in regular constructions of time and location throughout CL (H-S §156a) and BL and can be found in several passages in the text: 6.17 *In principio erat Verbum* (In the beginning was the Word); 6.20 *in principio apud Deum* (In the Beginning with God); 5.16 *uersatur in templo Deus* (God is living in the temple).⁴¹ While little of this syntax can be seen as anything but standard CL usage, on a few occasions, *in* constructions appear to make a direct reference to BL phrasings, as in 2.31 *in Patre totus Filius* (The entire Son in the Father); 2.32 *et totus in Verbo Pater* (And the entire Father in the Word) where the influence seems to stem from the Gospel of John (cf. Jn. 10:38 *credatis quia in me est Pater et ego in Patre* and Jn. 14.10 *non credis quia ego in Patre et pater in me est verba*; see P-W 101-2). Still it is difficult to assign more than stylistic influence to such constructions, since a similar usage occurs in Cicero and Seneca (cf. Cic *off.* 1.30 *in Catulo et in patre et in filio . . . uidimus*; Sen. *Thy.* 310 *in patre facient quidquid in patruo doces*).

On certain other occasions, the *in* + abl. construction can be difficult to classify (cf. 14.25-6 *In his paterna gloria*, / *in his uoluntas spiritus* (in them is paternal glory / in them the will of the spirit)). The sense in these lines seems distinctly Biblical, and it is owed (almost certainly) to the translations of Gr. ἐν (cf. Rm. 8:37 *sed in his omnibus superamus* (Gr. ἀλλ' ἐν τούτοις πᾶσιν ὑπερνικῶμεν); 2 Cor. 2:15 *in his qui salui fiunt et in his qui pereunt* (Gr. ἐν τοῖς σωζομένοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις); however, it is difficult to call such usage unusual, and thus the greater point is that Biblical phrasing in relation to prepositional syntax may have a considerable impact on the collection.

⁴¹ See also K-S §107.

3.4.3 *Ab, de, ex*

As a general observation, constructions of separation, origin, and starting point with *ab*, *de*, and *ex* are neither marked by ‘over-specified’⁴² constructions (see Löfstedt (1959) 163-180),⁴³ nor indicative of a shift or regularized usage (see Väänänen 1987: 35, Burton 2000: 174-175). Six expressions occur with *ab/de/ex* indicating some level of separation or starting point (1.8 *a nocte noctem segregans*, 2.2 *de luce lucem proferens*, 3.12 *culpamque ab aevo sustulit*, 5.9 *non ex uirili semine*, 5.17 *procedat e thalamo suo*, 5.21 *egressus eius a Patre*), while six similar expressions occur in the bare ablative (1.10 *soluit polum caligine*, 4.25 *exuta sensu lubrico*, 9.7 *non graui soluat metu*, 10.15 *castrisque raptos impiis*, 11.25 *soluta turba uinculis*, 11.26 *spiris draconum libera*). Assuming 10.15 (*castris*) and 11.9 (*caelo*) are not the dative and locative ablative respectively (see Walpole 1966: 85-90), one may then pose the question whether there remained a few verbs – such as *soluere* – which maintained a separative sense in Milanese communities of the 4th century (cf. Hymn 1 and 9: *Hoc excitatus Lucifer/ soluit polum caligine* (1:9-10) *Quem non graui soluat metu / latronis absolutio* (9:7-8)). In these cases, *soluere* appears to allow for a more inflected reading – as in ‘the morning star . . . releases the sky from darkness (*soluit polum caligine*)’, and unlike *procedere*, *proferre*, or *segregare*, one is inclined to read *soluere* as having maintained a separative sense, and thus requiring no prepositional accompaniment. Otherwise there seems to be little evidence of an unusual use (or lack of use) of the three (*ab/de/ex*) prepositions.

3.4.4 Further Remarks on Prepositional Syntax

The regularization of prepositional syntax serves as a primary aspect of sociolinguistic simplification (Mühlhäusler 89), and in some instances, this has involved the reduction of prepositional forms or their total elimination (see Clyne 1968: 136). As shown above, the *hymni* show few signs of this phenomenon. The

⁴² Coleman’s term – see R. Coleman (1991: 332-333).

⁴³ As noted by Woodcock (1959: 27-30) and Hoffman-Szantyr (1965: 101-104) such over-specified emphasis was often avoided in earlier Latin verse (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 4: 587; 12:121), though D. Norberg argues it was common in Biblical translations from the first four centuries. Furthermore R. Coleman (1999: 79) has acknowledged its frequent omission in Classical constructions, pointing to Propertius (2.19.30). (cf. Psalm 10).

collection exhibits more than twelve different prepositions. Two of the most frequently used prepositions (*in* and *ad*) occur in variant syntactic constructions, some of which demonstrate a diversity of Classical and Biblical influences (see §3.4.1).

3.5 Adjectival Syntax

Despite the significance of adjectival syntax in the VL and Vg (Rubio 2009: 209-12, Burton 2000: 176-8), the hymns show only three *comparative* or *superlative adjectival* forms:⁴⁴ 7.1 *altissimus*; 9.21 *sublimius*; and 14.21 *pulcherrimum*. There are no *plus* + adjective forms, genitives of comparison (H-S §75e, P-W 35), or unusual lexical forms.⁴⁵ In certain passages, the *hymni* exhibit a plentiful use of adjectival syntax (2.5-6 *uerusque sol . . . / . . . nitore perpeti*; 2.12-13 *culpam . . . lubricam / . . . actus strenuos*; 5.30-32 *lumenque nox spirat nouum / quod nulla nox interpolet / fideque iugi luceat*), but there is little that is unfamiliar in CL usage.

On the whole, the most prominent adjectival features are attributive constructions of *noster*, *sacer*, *pius*, *altus*, and *sobrius*, typically without substantial enjambment, although as is seen in §3.8.2, instances of hyperbaton within the line are frequent. Aside from one occasion of a double adjective (2.18 *casto fideli corpore*), there do not appear to be any extended or compound forms, and a predicate or substantive is also infrequent (cf. 6.1 *Amore Christi nobilis*, 6.8 *immobilis fide stetit*; 8.5 *matura martyrio fuit* as exceptions). Metrically, it can be observed that the most frequent adjectives (*sacer*, *sobrius*, and *pius*) are often placed in line-final position, where their quantity contributes to the final light-anceps of the line (cf. 1.23, 3.16, 3.23, 3.30, 9.3, 10.1, 12.11).

⁴⁴ Other occasions exist wherein the hymns make *comparative* reference (such as in hymn 13, cf. 13.1 *Apostolorum supparem* and 13.3 *pari corona martyrum*) though the comparative form of an adjective is not used.

⁴⁵ The more obscure Biblical constructions like *petrosus*, *inextinguibilis*, and *possibilis*, see Burton (2000: 176) and Rönsch (1875: 109-40) do not occur.

3.6 Verbal Syntax

The *hymni* may seem to exhibit some features of restricted verbal morphology: the present and perfect indicative, present subjunctive, and imperative all occur with great frequency (see Table 3.3), while the future, future perfect, pluperfect indicative and subjunctive are rarely employed. There is a regular use of the second and third person singular and first person plural, while the first person singular and second person plural are less frequent.⁴⁶ Certain verb forms – imperatives, for instance – seem to occur frequently in the first and last strophes but are largely absent in central passages.

However, as seen in Table 3.4a and 3.4b much of the hymns’ verbal morphology seems consistent with other Classical and Biblical hymns, and thus the prevalence of certain verb forms may indicate more about the genre of prayer than any linguistic restriction. In Catullus 34, for example, all the verb forms are either present or perfect, and in Horace’s *Carmen Saeculare* nearly seventy percent of the verbs are present tense. Thus, perhaps the most interesting and definitive aspect of the verbal syntax of the *hymni Ambrosiani* is an avoidance of the first person singular, for unlike the Syriac hymnody of Ephraim or Prudentius’ *Cathemerinon* there is no real presentation of the poetic ‘I’ in any of Ambrose’s writing (cf. 11.4 as a single exception).

TABLE 3.3 Table of Tense Frequency (tense/all verbs). Percentage (%) given for *Present Indicative, Perfect Indicative, Present Subjunctive* and *Imperative. Hymni* divided by authenticity – (a) undisputed, (b) generally attributed and (c) total.

	<i>Hymns 1, 3-5</i>	<i>Hymns 2, 6-14</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Present Indic.</i>	34/89 = 38.2%	53/171 = 31.0%	86/258 = 33.3%
<i>Perfect Indic.</i>	12/89 = 13.5%	41/171 = 24.0%	54/258 = 20.9%
<i>Present Subj.</i>	26/89 = 29.2%	37/171 = 21.6%	63/258 = 24.4%
<i>Imperative</i>	12/89 = 13.5%	8/171 = 4.6%	19/258 = 7.4 %
<i>Total</i>	84/89 = 94.4%	139/171 = 81.2%	222/258 = 86.0%

⁴⁶ A characteristic that stands in stark contrast to the Syriac hymnody of Ephrem (see Brock 1975: 1-72) and the later Latin poetry of Prudentius (cf. Prud. *Praef.* 1 *per quinquennia iam decem, / ni fallor, fuimus septimus insuper / annum cardo rotat*).

TABLE 3.4(a) Comparative Data with verb tense frequency (tense/all verbs), percentage (%) given for *Present Indicative*, *Perfect Indicative*, *Present Subjunctive* and *Imperative* of selected CL texts - Catullus 34 (hymn to Diana), Horace's *Carmen Saeculare*, Horace's *Carmina* 1.10, 1.21, 3.18, Vergil's *Aen.* 8.572-583 (Evander's prayer), and the *carmen Arvale* (CIL 2104.32-7).

<i>Tense</i>	<i>Hymni</i>	Catull. 34 (hymn to Diana)	Hor. <i>Carm.</i> <i>Saec., Carm.</i> 1.10;1.21; 3.18	Verg. <i>Aen.</i> 8.572-583 (Evander's prayer)	<i>carmen Arvale</i> (CIL 2104.32-7)
<i>Present Indic.</i>	33.3%	62.5%	47%	64%	-
<i>Perfect Indic.</i>	20.9%	12.5%	13.5%	-	14.3%
<i>Present Subj.</i>	24.4%	25%	20%	18%	-
<i>Imperative</i>	7.4%	-	16.5%	18%	85.7%
<i>Total</i>	86%	100%	97%	100%	100%

TABLE 3.4(b) Comparative Data with verb tense frequency (tense/all verbs), percentage (%) given for *Present Indicative*, *Perfect Indicative*, *Present Subjunctive* and *Imperative* of selected Christian Latin texts - Vg Psalm 79 (Weber 1984), the *Psalmus Responsorius* (Salzano 2006), Prudentius' *Cath.* 1 (*Hymnus ad Galli Cantum*), and Boethius' *con.* 2 *carm.* 8 (*quod mundus stabili fide*).

<i>Tense</i>	<i>Hymni</i>	<i>Psalm</i> 79 (Weber 1984)	<i>Psalmus</i> <i>Responsorius</i> (Salzano 2006)	<i>Prudentius</i> <i>Cath.</i> 1 (<i>ad</i> <i>Galli Cantum</i>)	<i>Boeth.</i> <i>con.</i> 2. <i>carm.</i> 8
<i>Present Indic.</i>	33.3%	13.1%	20.4%	44.5%	61%
<i>Perfect Indic.</i>	20.9%	34.7%	36%	15.5%	5.5%
<i>Present Subj.</i>	24.4%	4.4%	4.6%	21.5%	33.5%
<i>Imperative</i>	7.4%	28.3	4.6%	12.3%	-
<i>Total</i>	86%	80.5%	65.6%	93.8%	100%

3.6.1 Present Tense

As seen in Table 3.2, the present (indicative and subjunctive) is the most prominent tense in the *hymni*. Along with a general avoidance of the future tense, this signifies an important characteristic of verbal syntax (and expressive immediacy). Such present tense usage appears to fall into three categories: (1) present tense parataxis (cf. 1.22-4 *aegris salus refunditur* / . . . / *lapis fides reuertitur* (health is poured back in the sick / . . . / faith is restored to the fallen); 4.13-6 *Te cordis ima concinant*, / . . . / *te mens adoret sobria*, (May depths of the heart celebrate you / . . . / may a sober mind adore you); (2) present-perfect juxtaposition (cf. 3.1-2 *Iam surgit hora tertia*, / *qua Christus ascendit crucem* (And now rounds the third hour, / when Christ mounted his cross); 8.1-4 *Agnes beatae uirginis* / *natalis est*, *quo spiritum* / *caelo refudit debitum* / *pio sacrata sanguine* (Of

Agnes, the blessed virgin, / it is the festival day, on which / she, consecrated by pious blood, / returned her spirit owed to heaven), and (3) uses of the historical present (cf. 6.5-8 *Captis solebat piscibus / patris senectam pascere; / turbante dum nutat salo, / immobilis fide stetit*. (With captured fish he was wont / to nourish his aged father / while he sways on the breaking sea / he stood immovable through faith. The present-perfect juxtaposition deserves further mention here (see §3.7.1 for parataxis).

Present-Perfect Juxtaposition

In *hymni* 3, 8, and 9, a present-perfect juxtaposition establishes a significant temporal framework built upon tense variation: 3.1-2 *Iam surgit hora tertia, / qua Christus ascendit crucem*; 8.1-4 *Agnes beatae uirginis / natalis est, quo spiritum / caelo refudit debitum / pio sacrata sanguine*; 9.1-4 *Hic est dies uerus Dei / sancto serenus lumine, / quo diluit sanguis sacer / probrosa mundi crimina*. In each example, the present-perfect juxtaposition creates a layering of narrative structure and verbal syntax.⁴⁷ The initial verb introduces Time 1 (the present narration of the event) followed by the recollection of a previous hagiographical account in Time 2. As a result, the poem works to redirect and complicate the poem’s narrative progression:



The effect of such temporal duality is that the *hymni* seem to establish a layered concept of time whereby the point-of-view of the speaker (present) runs parallel to that of a Biblical or hagiographical exegesis (past). The theological significance of this phenomenon is too extensive to be given proper treatment here (see Lanéry 2008: 217-275, for greater significance in the collection), but from a linguistic perspective such manipulation of temporal perspective and verb tense creates an important degree of duality and multilayered syntax. One feels that the poet is often

⁴⁷ In 3.2 *ascendit* and 9.3 *diluit*, the verbs could be read as present, a position that further emphasises the ambiguity of the narrative. I read them as perfect in line with Ambrose’s tendency to use the past tense in connection with the lives of saints and martyrs, cf. 6.1-4, 8.1-4 and 10.1-12, 13.1-6.

making a conscious effort to blur the lines between the lives of saints or Gospel narrative into the present time of the poem. By layering the present and past so closely and quickly at the beginning of composition, the poet is thus able to conflate the experience of the subject (past) with that of the audience (present).

3.6.2 Voice

Passives and Deponents

1.22 *aegris salus refunditur* (health is poured back into the sick)

1.23 *muco latronis conditur* (the blade of the thief is sheathed)

Linguistic trends in early Romance languages suggest that the synthetic passive and deponent constructions either disappeared from the language or were absorbed into the active (Löfstedt 1959: 13-15; Herman 1967: 76-7; Väänänen 1981: 137-138).⁴⁸ Consequently, studies of Late Latin have focused on passive and deponent forms – as well as changes to the participial system – as a means of identifying linguistic developments (see Grandgent 1907: 51, Burton 2000: 178-80, Wright 2011: 73-6). The *hymni* offer very little evidence of such transition. Thirteen of the fourteen *hymni* exhibit an established set of deponent or passive forms (the verb *habere* is never used as an auxiliary or in an active semantic sense). Hymns 7 and 8 exhibit several passive constructions: 7.8 *sacraris*; 7.30 *rigatur*; 8.14 *ducitur*; 8.18 *cogitur*, and hymn 1 exhibits three passive forms in the antepenultimate stanza alone 1.22-24 *aegris salus refunditur,/ muco latronis conditur,/ lapsis fides reuertitur* (health is poured back into the sick / the blade of the thief is sheathed / faith is restored to the fallen).⁴⁹

Deponents, meanwhile, occur in eight of fourteen hymns. They are used in the present, imperfect, future, indicative and subjunctive: 2.5 *inlabere*; 3.17 *loquebatur*; 5.7 *miretur*; 5.16 *uersatur*; 7.27 *mirabitur*; 9.27 *moriatur*; 10.20 *pati*; 11.16 *fatetur*; 13.8 *sequere*. The only deponent used on multiple occasions is *miror*:

⁴⁸ There is, in fact, very little evidence to support this hypothesis beyond the observation that Romance languages do not have deponents. The chronology of the (possible) phenomenon, however, is very uncertain and new deponents are even created in later Latin.

⁴⁹ All of this is consistent with third and fourth century translations of the Bible, where we find deponent use (Burton 2000: 181).

5.7 *miretur omne saeculum* (let every generation marvel); 7.27 *quis haecuidens mirabitur* (who seeing these things will marvel). Otherwise, none of the ‘new BL deponents’ (e.g. *infirmari*: Jn. 4:46 *cuius filius infirmabatur Capharnaum*) occurs.⁵⁰

3.6.3 Participles / Word-Play

- 1.25 *Iesu, labantes respice* (Jesus, look back at *those* wavering)
- 7.23 *edentium sub dentibus* (under the teeth of *those* eating)
- 7.29 *Inter manus frangentium* (between the hands of *those* breaking it)

Participles and participial phrases (H-S §206) play a significant role in Late Latin syntax, especially in terms of substantives (Löfstedt 1959: 122-4). Usage of the future form (Adams 1977: 49) and renderings of the Greek Aorist in Biblical translation are significant indicators of linguistic development (Burton 2000: 184-7, also P-W 108-112).⁵¹ Coleman, too, observes that a more concentrated poetic style can employ participial substantives as a means toward a semantically rich, but syntactically condensed language (Coleman 1999: 84-5).

In the *hymni*, the participial construction occurs frequently. The present active and perfect passive forms occur most often, while future active and future passive forms are extremely rare, see Table 3.5:

TABLE 3.5 Participial Frequency. Ratio (tense/all participles) and Percentage given for *Present Active, Perfect Passive, Future Active, and Future Passive. Hymni* divided by authenticity – (a) undisputed, (b) generally attributed, and (c) total.

<i>Forms</i>	<i>Hymni 1, 3-5</i>	<i>Hymni 2, 6-14</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Present Active</i>	13/22 = 59%	36/72 = 50%	49/94 = 52%
<i>Perfect Passive</i>	9/22 = 41%	34/72 = 47%	43/94 = 46%
<i>Future Passive</i>	0/22 = 0%	2/72 = 3%	2/94 = 2%
<i>Future Active</i>	0/22 = 0%	0/72 = 0%	0/94 = 0%

⁵⁰ Burton (2000: 181-2).
⁵¹ In BL, in particular, there is a distinguished use of the future participle as well as several attempts to convey the Greek Aorist participle. See P-W 108-112, also Eklund (1970) and Burton (2000: 184-187). The use of participles has also been well documented in the major Augustan poets, see for example K. Edwards (1888) *Uses of the Participle in Virgil* (Ithaca)

Syntactically, the use of participles in the *hymni* can be divided into three main categories: (1) as adjectives: 3.32 *ad dexteram sedens Patris* (seated at the right of the father); 4.12 *hymnum canentes soluimus* (we, singing a hymn, now offer); 6.5 *captis solebat piscibus* (with captured fish, he was wont); 8.9 *metu parentes territi* (her parents struck by fear); 12.19 *quo nollet iuit, sed uolens / mortem subegit asperam*. (he went whither he might not want, but willing / he overcame a violent death), (2) as substantives: 1.20 *gallus negantes arguit* (the cock denounces those who deny him); 1.25 *Iesu, labantes respice* (Jesus, look back at those falling) 4.32 *foue, precantes Trinitas* (protect those who pray, Trinity); 7.4 *Iesu, faue precantibus*, (Jesus, give protection to those praying); and (3) as verbs without *esse* (only perfect passive): 3.21 *praetenta nuptae foedera / alto docens mysterio* (explaining in a holy mystery / the covenant offered to her as a bride).

Substantive participial forms occur in numerous constructions in the *hymni* (cf. 1.19 *somnolentos*; 7.23 *edentium*; 7.29 *frangentium*; 9.5 *perditis*; 10.30 *rapti* and those cited above). The uses of *edens* and *frangens* are particularly striking, as there appears to be little precedent for these forms in CL or BL (cf. Sen. *epist.* 15.7 *buccas edentis*; also TLL 5.101.30 and TLL 6.1253.9). In both occurrences, the unusual use of a participial substantive may indicate the influence of poetic stylisation through phonetic and etymological word-play (cf. 7.23 *edentium . . . dentibus*; 7.29 *frangentium . . . fregerant . . . fragmenta*, see §4.4.2).

Much has also been noted on the use of *labans* (over *labens*) in 1.25 (see Dreves 1893: 199; Walpole 1922: 33; Fontaine 170-1), as a result of metrical lightening (i.e. *labentes* would bring a spondee into the second foot of the first metron). The more unusual *labare* (to totter/waver) occurs instead, preserving the iambic rhythm of the line. The conscious avoidance of *labi* (to fall/sin), a term found far more frequently in the collection and only a few lines later (cf. 1.27 *lapsus cadunt*) indicates what Fontaine calls a *lectio difficilior* (Fontaine 171) and the passage exhibits a deeper, more complex semantic meaning given the (perhaps) unexpected word-choice.

3.6.4 Supine

7.11 *et hoc adoratum die* (and on this day to adore)

8.13 *Prodire quis nuptum putet* (Anyone might think she proceeds to marry)

The employment of the supine (in *-um* or *-u*) in the Vg or later Latin is such a rare occurrence that its usage in the *hymni* is worthy of note (H-S §204, P-W §131). On two occasions (7.11-2 *et hoc adoratum die* / *praesepe magos duxeris* (and on this day led the Magi / to adore the manger); 8.13 *Prodire quis nuptum putet* (Anyone might think she proceeds to marry)) the supine in the accusative is used after a verb of motion (*ducere*, *prodire*) to express purpose. In a parallel Biblical text of the former occurrence (Mt. 2:2) we find either an infinitive or an *ut* clause to express *adoratum* (to adore):⁵² cf. Vg Mt. 2:2 *uidimus enim stellam eius in oriente et uenimus adorare eum*, or VL Mt. 2:2 (*An Mal* 5⁵³) . . . *ut eum adoremus*). There are few or no precedents for the depiction of Agnes.

As Fontaine notes, the supine can be found elsewhere in Ambrose's writing (cf. Amb. *Hex.* 5.12.36) but the tendency in Late Latin suggests that the form had ceded to expressions of the infinitive and the gerundive much earlier (Serbat 1994: 377, K-S §128.2.4, H-S 380-2). Ambrose's use alongside other occasions of infinitive nominal-verb forms within expressions of motion (cf. 12.29-30 *Prodire quis mundum putet* / *concurrere plebem poli* (Anyone might think that the world / advances to unite the people of heaven) suggests not only a variation in noun-verb constructions, but a strong adherence to CL syntax. The possible motivation for the employment of the supine is difficult to determine. However, the shorter, compact *-um* form may have provided a metrically advantageous construction given the compact nature of the iambic dimeter. Again there is evidence of condensed, but not regularized, syntactic constructions as a result of metrical influence.

⁵² The infinitive construction is more common, cf. VL White 1888, Hetzenauer 1906, Heer 1910.

⁵³ *An Mal* = Anonymous, ascribed to the *Laterculus Malalianus*. Cf. also VL Am fi 1.4 *ut Deus adoratur* (a VL reading based on Ambrose's *De fide*. Muncey (1959) does not contain Mt. 2.2).

3.6.5 Further Remarks on Verbal Syntax

The extensions of simplification theory have observed that one of the most consistent features of linguistic simplification is the introduction of greater regularity into the system of verbal morphology (Mühlhäusler 84-89; Whinnom 1965: 513; Reinecke 1971: 51). In some instances, extreme verbal simplifications have led to one verb form being chosen in all occurrences (see Göbl-Galdi 1934: 271; Valkhoff 1966: 26 wherein the infinitive prevails in simplified French and Portuguese).⁵⁴ In the *hymni*, some restriction of tense, person, and number might be observed (see Table 3.2 and 3.3), though the phenomenon appears to be representative of the hymn genre more than a distinctive stylistic aspect of the collection.

In fact, upon closer examination, it is important to observe that the *hymni* exhibit verbal stylisations or poeticisms (i.e. present-perfect juxtapositions (§3.6.1), unusual substantive participles (§3.6.4), and the supine (§3.6.5)) that may indicate a more condensed syntax and a certain poeticization. As a result, the passages that appear to exhibit simplified elements (i.e. paratactic constructions with the present indicative or present subjunctives) are often balanced with features that reflect more stylised language (etymological word-play, metrical influences).

3.7 Clausal Syntax

The syntax of subordinate clauses in Late Latin is an important, though largely difficult area of investigation.⁵⁵ The indicative and subjunctive occur interchangeably in many Late Latin indirect questions (H-S §293b), relative clauses of characteristic (H-S §300), and temporal *cum* clauses (H-S §334).⁵⁶ The use of *ut* in concessive-adversative, temporal, and causal clauses can also exhibit variant subjunctive/indicative forms (Herman 1967: 94-5, P-W 120-4, K-S 361). As Gonzalo Rubio observes, clausal structures also offer significant insight into

⁵⁴ See also Nida and Fehderau (1970: 149) where the third person singular dominates. Hesseling (1905); Thomas (1969) and Jourdain (1956) have observed the 'abolition of all passive constructions' is also a fundamental aspect of 'simplified' language.

⁵⁵ See Clackson & Horrocks (2007: 280-2).

⁵⁶ K-S §203-5.

linguistic contact and aspects of syntactic influence (Rubio 2009: 228).⁵⁷ Between Greco-Roman culture and Semitic literary traditions, for example, there appears to be an aesthetic shift toward short paratactic structures. The stylistic preference for the simple sentence would appear, in part, to have its foundation in Biblical syntax. Still, the precise nature of that influence is extremely difficult to quantify.⁵⁸

On the whole, the *hymni* appear to exhibit a certain tendency toward paratactic structures, and the phenomenon tends to occur in central passages (see §3.7.1). Still, there are several complex constructions that adhere to more complex CL usage (e.g. extended relative clauses and subjunctive purpose constructions). As will be discussed in the sections that follow, certain clausal tendencies in the *hymni* indicate that the balance of independent, paratactic structures and complex, hypotactic features stands as one of the most defining characteristics of the collection.

3.7.1 Parataxis

Independent clauses occupy an important position in the clausal syntax of the *hymni* with regard to a correlation between clause and poetic line, and the presence of parataxis (H-S §289) perhaps has led to some general perception of syntactic simplicity in the texts (Duffield 1889: 53-5).⁵⁹ In this regard, it is interesting to observe that certain *hymni* exhibit a clausal pattern revolving around a series of short independent clauses at the centre of several compositions. As shown in Table 3.6 (below), the phenomenon is particularly evident in two of the four most authenticated *hymni*:

⁵⁷ Rubio (2009: 228): ‘In the eyes of a Classicist, the most striking feature of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic is probably the overwhelming predominance of parataxis’.

⁵⁸ Rubio (2009: 228).

⁵⁹ MacGilton (1918: 19-21), Rose (1936: 485).

TABLE 3.6 Examples of Clausal Parataxis with Simple Sentences in *Hymni* 1, 3, 4, and 5. (Numbers in 'Paratactic Series' indicate verses; Numbers in 'Simple Sentences' indicate actual number of simple sentences in the hymn)

<i>Hymn 1</i>		<i>Hymn 3</i>		<i>Hymn 4</i>		<i>Hymn 5</i>	
<i>Paratactic Series</i>	<i>Simple Sentences</i>	<i>Paratactic Series</i>	<i>Simple Sentences</i>	<i>Paratactic Series</i>	<i>Simple Sentences</i>	<i>Paratactic Series</i>	<i>Simple Sentences</i>
21-24	8	-	4	13-16	7	5-8 13-16 21-24	12

Of the *hymni* listed above, 1 and 4 incorporate stylistic elements of *anaphora* (clause initial repetition) and *homoeoteleuton* (similar endings) that serve to emphasise the paratactic structure, as noted below:

TABLE 3.6a Clausal Parataxis Shown with Examples of Homoeoteleuton and Anaphora in *hymni* 1 and 4.

aegris salus refunditur
mucro latronis conditur
lapis fides reuertitur
1.22-24
(Homoeoteleuton)

Te cordis ima concinant,
te uox canora concrepet,
te diligat castus amor,
te mens adoret sobria,
4.13-16
(Anaphora)

It is worthy of note that the use of such repetition in the paratactic series suggests that there is greater stylisation in these examples than it is generally perceived. The word order in 4.13-16, for example exhibits a variant SVM (Subject-Verb-Modifier) pattern, where the constant line-initial object (O = *te*) anchors an alternating word order of other clausal elements (4.13 OMSV, 4.14 OSMV, 4.15 OVMS, 4.16 OSVM; see Chapter 4 for further discussion of Word Order). In this regard, it should be noted that while the central paratactic element exhibits a certain level of clausal regularization as well as a level of structural variance. Similar examples are evident in *hymni* 2.13-16, 5.13-16, 9.27-28, and 14.17-20.

3.7.2 Hypotaxis

It would misrepresent the overall style of the *hymni* to suggest that independent clauses define the clausal syntax of the collection. On the contrary, clausal subordination is sufficiently employed, and as with the lexical elements of the *hymni* (see Chapter 4), it is the juxtaposition of *simple* and *complex* features that contributes a defining element of their literary character.⁶⁰

The greater pattern of clausal structures creates a nucleus of simple sentence or independent clause constructions (cf. *hymni* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 12) that either begin or end in at least one strophe of subordinated syntax. A pre-eminent example is again that of *hymni* 4, wherein the central asyndetic construction lies embedded between two subordinate clauses of purpose:

TABLE 3.7 Simple, Asyndetic Structure Surrounded by Subordinating Clauses in Hymn 4.11-19.

et noctis exortu preces uoti reos ut adiuues hymnum canentes soluimus.	}	Indirect Command (w/ <i>preces</i>)
Te cordis ima concinant, te uox canora concrepet, te diligat castus amor, te mens adoret sobria,	}	Asyndeton (with emphatic Anaphora)
ut, cum profunda clauserit diem caligo noctium, fides tenebras nesciat,	}	<i>ut</i> Purpose Clause with <i>cum</i> Temporal Clause

In the passages that follow, a more general overview of adverbial clauses (temporal, causal and adversative), adjectival clauses (relative), and noun clauses (appositives and subjunctive) is provide to offer a detailed reading of subordinate syntax in the *hymni*.

⁶⁰ There are several tempting hypotheses surrounding such syntactic patterns – for perhaps the juxtaposition of simple and complex elements creates a heightened sensitivity to the central, ‘simplified’ message.

Adverbial

Temporal Clauses

Temporal clauses introduced by *ubi* or *dum* appear three times in the *hymni* followed by the indicative according to CL: *ubi*: 11.14 *ubi factum est fides?* (when the fact is its own testimony?); *dum*: 6.7 *turbante dum nutat salo* (While he sways on the breaking sea); 7.22 *dum quinque panes diuidit* (so while he divided five loaves).

Two other temporal clauses with *cum* appear with adversative force: 4.17-8 *cum profunda clausurit / diem caligo noctium* (when the deep darkness of night / has confined the day); 9.29-30 *cum mors per omnes transeat, / omnes resurgant mortui* (while death may pass through us all / may all the dead rise again).

Of these 4.17 (*cum profunda clausurit*) deserves particular attention. Not only is *cum profunda clausurit* the only temporal clause found in the four most authentic *hymni* (1, 3, 4, 5), it appears to be the most structurally complex. As noted above (Table 3.7) the temporal *cum* clause here follows a four-line paratactic/asyndetic series and lies within an *ut* clause of purpose. The juxtaposition of independent and subordinate elements exemplifies the balance of clausal complexity and regularization within the syntactic component. Observing that hymn is quoted at length in Augustine's *Confessions* it is also important to note that at the center of what is perhaps Ambrose's most influential composition we find an extremely interwoven, juxtaposition of complex clausal features. In so far as this relates to the metrical aspect of the text, the temporal clause is relevant for its potential disruption of quantitative iambs. *Cum* clauses, whether temporal, adversative, or causal often require subjunctive verb forms that carry more syllables and quantitatively heavier syllables, and the use of any such clause would seem to complicate an attempt at a regularized quantitative patterns. This is particularly evident if we consider epigraphic evidence of iambic dimeters that seem to avoid any such complicating constructions (cf. *CIL* VI.10082, §5.3). In sum, the use of extended (and enjambed) *cum* clauses appears to indicate some of the more complex and metrically challenging passages in the collection.

Causal Clauses

Only two causal clauses appear in the *hymni*. Both are introduced by *quod* and both use the indicative: 6.28 *quod fecit esse martyres* (because he allowed martyrs to be); 7.16 *quod ipse non impleuerat* (he himself had not filled [them]). The relative paucity of such structures may be indicative of the challenges mentioned above.

Purpose Clauses

Purpose clauses appear in the *hymni* more frequently than any other adverbial subordinate construction. Hymn 4, in particular, shows an elaborate use of purpose subordination with four purpose clauses occurring in the first twelve lines (see Table 3.8). The hymn begins with a vocative, an appositional phrase, a compound participial phrase, a three-line polysyndetic construction, four purpose clauses, a compound object and an independent subjunctive – all clearly attesting to the significance of complex clausal fusion in the *hymni*:

TABLE 3.8 Elaborate Purpose Subordination (exhibiting Appositive and Purpose Constructions) in Hymn 4.1-12.
Deus creator omnium

polique rector, uestiens				
E diem decoro lumine,	}	}	Vocative introduced	
pnoctem soporis gratia,				
diem decoro lumine,	}	}	Appositive phrase / Participial phrase	
noctem soporis gratia,				
artus solutos ut quies	}	}	Purpose Clause A	}
reddat laboris usui				
mentesque fessas alleuet,	}	}	B	
luctusque soluat anxios,				}
grates peracto iam die	}	}	Compound Object	}
et noctis exortu preces,				
uoti reos ut adiuues	}	}	Indirect Command (w/ <i>preces</i>)	
hymnum canentes soluimus.				}

Although not quite as elaborate as the clausal-layering in hymn 4 above, purpose clauses also can be found in six of the other compositions: 1.4 *ut alleues fastidium* (to relieve [our] weariness); 3.23 *ne uirginis partus sacer / matris pudorem laederet* (so that the Virgin's sacred birth / would not harm a mother's honour); 4.17-8 *ut, cum profunda clauserit / diem caligo noctium, / fides tenebras nesciat* (So that when the deep darkness of night / has confined the day / may faith not know darkness); 5.20 *alacris ut currat uiam* (so he may travel the path briskly); 8.23-4 *ut profluo / cruore restinguam focos* (So I may destroy / these pyres with streaming blood); 8.28 *ne quis relectam cerneret* (so that someone might not see her naked).

Relative Clauses

Relative or *qui* clauses occur frequently in nine of the fourteen *hymni* and are typically followed by a verb in the indicative: 1.2 *noctem diemque qui regis* ([you] who rule night and day); 3.31 *peccata qui mundi tulit* ([he] who bore the sins of the world); 5.1 *Intende, qui regis Israel* (Hear us, [you] who rule Israel); 5.2 *super Cherubim qui sedes* ([you] who sit above the Cherubim); 3.5 *qui corde Christum suscipit* ([He] who takes up Christ in his heart); 3.28 *qui credidit saluus erit* ([he], who has believed, will be saved); 10.23-4 *munitus armis ambulat / ueram fidem qui possidet* (He marches guarded with weapons / who possesses true faith), and the relative clause usually pertains to Christ, the Christian congregation, or a particular hour or day.

Two occasions demonstrate the relative clause with the subjunctive: 5.30-1 *lumenque nox spirat nouum / quod nulla nox interpolet* (night breathes new light / which no night may change) and 13.11-2 *spectauit obtutu pio / quod ipse mox persolueret* (watched with pious gaze / what he himself might soon suffer). Although Walpole reads the latter (13.12) in the pluperfect indicative (*persoluerat*) (Walpole 1922: 102), Fontaine argues that there is sufficient manuscript evidence for the subjunctive reading (Fontaine 571).⁶¹ In Biblical Latin, it should be noted that the relative clause often translates the Greek participial construction (cf. Jn. 1:29

⁶¹ Use of the subjunctive in relative clauses is of course common to both CL and BL, see H-S §298-99 and P-W §138.

ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου (*ecce qui tollit peccata*), Ps. 1:1 μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὃς οὐκ ἐπορεύθη ἐν βουλῇ ἀσεβῶν (*beatus uir qui non abiit in consilio impiorum*) and thus a high rate of occurrence in the early Christian literature might be a potential marker of Biblical style.

Noun

Facere + esse / Infinitive Noun Clause

6.28 *quod fecit esse martyres* (because he allowed the martyrs to exist)

The usage of *facere + esse* in hymn 6 (6.28 *quod fecit esse martyres* (because he allowed the martyrs to exist)) seems to be a relatively rare feature of Latin outside of CL verse (*TLL* 6.115.36; *OLD* 668; H-S §194; cf. Verg. *Aen.* 2.538-9 *me cernere letum / fecisti*; Ov. *trist.* 5.9.14 *et facis accepto munere posse frui*). The more common construction, especially in prose, is *facere + ut* (cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.112 *faciebat ut mori cuperem*). Walpole notes the distinction of Ambrose's usage and cites a similar construction in Ambrose's prose (cf. Ambr. *In Psalm.* 40.35 *fecisti terram esse*; also see Walpole 1922: 61). Although it is difficult to read the preference for the *facere + esse* construction as a direct result of prosodic constraints, the more compact syntax of the iambic dimeter line would seem suited to the shorter construction.

3.7.3 Further Remarks on Clausal Syntax

According to simplification theory, the study of surface structure, including subordinate clauses, is an important, though largely undefined, area of investigation. The direct correlation of simple/complex sentence structure and simple/complex language can be largely misleading (Mühlhäusler, 94-97). Parataxis, for example, is not itself an immediate indicator of syntactic or semantic simplicity, nor is it necessarily an indicator of sub-literary speech (Marouzeau 1962: 228-232). Still, the general reduction of the more extended subordinate construction remains a significant indicator of simplified language.

The central paratactic structures found in the *hymni* (§3.7.1) provide some evidence of clausal regularization. The stylistic tendency to highlight a series of present indicative or present subjunctive clauses emphasises the role of clausal parataxis in the work.

As it was demonstrated above, paratactic structures are also frequently introduced or followed by greater clausal complexity (§3.7.2). The most significant example of this occurs in hymn 4 (§3.7.2). Overall, it is important to observe that the clausal syntax of the collection cannot be understood through paratactic constructions alone. Rather, it is the juxtaposition of paratactic and hypotactic features that defines the clausal syntax of the collection.

3.8 Word Order

Aspects of word order in the *hymni* are discussed here with a view to their impact on the syntactic component. Because of the numerous challenges involved in investigating poetic word order (see Clackson & Horrocks 2007: 27-31), the examples that are discussed here, namely anastrophe and hyperbaton, could just as easily be discussed as a matter of rhetoric. Anastrophe, distinguished here as the transposition of conjunctions and relative pronouns, has been seen as not only indicative of CL poetic style, but Greek influence (Kroll 1922, Mayer 1999: 159). Hyperbaton (a more specific case of transposition with words that are naturally placed together) remains a fundamental and complex feature of prosodic composition in all periods (Adams 1971: 1-16, Jocelyn 1999: 355, Powell 1999: 323).

3.8.1 Anastrophe

3.31 *peccata qui mundi tulit* (he who bore the sins of the world)

4.11 *uoti reos ut adiuues* (so that you may help our vows)

4.21 *dormire mentem ne sinas* (suffer not the soul to rest)

6.7 *turbante dum nutat salo* (while he sways on the breaking sea)

Anastrophe occurs throughout much of CL poetry, perhaps most notably in Verg. *Aen.* 1.1 *Troiae qui primus ab oris*, and Mayer has observed that much of its stylistic usage can be traced to Greek influence (Mayer 1999: 159).⁶² At least seven instances with relative pronouns or subordinating conjunctions are found in the *hymni*.⁶³ 3.31 *peccata qui mundi tulit* (he who bore the sins of the world); 4.5-6 *artus solutos ut quies / reddat laboris usui* (So that rest may restore weak limbs / to [their] exercise of labour); 4.11 *uoti reos ut adiuues* (so that you may help pay our vows); 4.21 *dormire mentem ne sinas* (suffer not the soul to rest); 5.2 *super Cherubim qui sedes* (you who sit above the cherubim); 6.7 *turbante dum nutat salo* (while he sways on the breaking sea); 10.5 *torrens harena quos dedit* (whom the burning desert produced).⁶⁴

The principal explanation for the employment of such anastrophe would seem to be metrical. The placement of *ut* (4.5, 4.11), *ne* (4.21), *qui* (3.31, 5.2) and *quos* (10.5) all contribute to a greater iambic rhythm whereby in the clause initial position of the subordinating conjunction (*ut/ne*) or relative pronoun (*qui/quos*) would cause a trochaic pattern in the second half of the first metron (e.g. *ne dormire mentem sinas*). The avoidance of non-iambic patterns and the attempt at a greater metrical adherence seems to demonstrate at least some evidence of stylised word order.

3.8.2 Hyperbaton

5.19 *gemmae gigas substantiae* (a giant of twin nature)

6.16 *Sancto locuta Spiritu* (saying through the Holy Spirit)

8.15 *nouas uiro ferens opes* (carrying new wealth to a husband)

Hyperbata are extremely prevalent in the collection, and any attempt to provide a comprehensive investigation of their usage would go beyond the scope of

⁶² See also Kroll (1924).

⁶³ The usage of *et* (8.8; 9.13) may be understood as the more flexible sense of *etiam* (H-S §256i) and is omitted here.

⁶⁴ Of these, 3.31 (*peccata qui mundi tulit*) seems the least striking, for if one considers the frequency with which *Troiae qui primus ab oris* was quoted (Conway 1935: 22), there is little convincing evidence of 'irregularity'.

this chapter. Still, a few representative examples are worthy of consideration for the purposes of elucidating linear aesthetics and enjambments.

While the separation of an adjective from its noun is so frequent in CL that it may hardly be worth mentioning (cf. Catull. 64.78 *Peliaco quondam prognatae uertice pinus*),⁶⁵ the form of the iambic dimeter seems to accentuate numerous examples within the poetic line (cf. 5.19 *geminæ gigas substantiæ*,⁶⁶ 6.16 *Sancto locuta Spiritu*, 8.15 *nouas uiro ferens opes*, 10.11 *Sancto repleuit Spiritu*). The frequency of these constructions, whereby the adjective receives line-initial placement and the noun receives line-final (separated by a verb or participle) is so common that a more ‘normal’ word order often becomes the unexpected (cf. 14.1-4 *Aeterna Christi munera / et martyrur uictorias / laudes ferentes debitas / laetis canamus mentibus*). Stylistically, the juxtaposed emphasis of such patterns allows for greater semantic emphasis as well as metrical adherence.⁶⁷

Hyperbata that extend across several verses are also evident (cf. 4.17-8 *ut, cum profunda clausurit / diem caligo noctium*). On several occasions, this has the effect of producing homoeoteleuton (cf. 8.2-3 *natalis est, quo spiritum / caelo refudit debitum*, 10:13-14 *et se coronauit trium / cruore sacro martyrur*).⁶⁸ In the former passage, a degree of poetic stylisation separates *profunda* (deep) from *caligo* (darkness) in an iconic reflection of semantic meaning (cf. 4.17-8) since the physical words surround *dies* (**profunda** [dies] **caligo**) just as the sense depicts. In 8.2-3, the separation of *spiritus* (spirit) and *debitus* (owed) further seems to emphasise the sanctification of the virgin Agnes.

⁶⁵ See H-S 689, also Powell’s (2010) recent discussion on Cicero. Separation across lines is less common, but still familiar (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 12.316-7 *ego foedera faxo / firma manu*, Ov. *met.* 1.1 *in noua fert animus dicere formas / corpora*). In post-classical Latin, one commonly finds a sentence concluding: modifier-verb-headword (cf. Sulp. Sev. *uita sancti Martini Turonensis* 9.3 *contemptibilem esse personam*).

⁶⁶ Note also the mimetic metre, where two syllables occupy the space usually occupied by one.

⁶⁷ Boethius (d. 524 C.E.) seems equally fond of such noun/adjective juxtaposition in shorter line (cf. Boeth. *cons.* 1. *carm.* 5.1-2 *O stelliferi conditor orbis / qui perpetuo nixus solio*, Boeth. *cons.* 1. *carm.* 5.10 *et qui primae tempore noctis*).

⁶⁸ This technique of course is not particular to late Latin, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 12.16-18 *ego foedera faxo / firma manu*; Ov. *met.* 1.1 *in noua fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora*.

3.8.3 Deviations from Biblical Word Order

3.31 *peccata qui mundi tulit* (he who bore the sins of the world)

3.32 *ad dexteram sedens dei* (seated at the right hand of the Father)

5.1 *Intende, qui regis Israel* (Hear [us, you] who rule Israel)

12.11 *electionis uas sacrae* (the vessel of holy election)

Occurrences wherein the *hymni* deviate from Biblical word order require separate reference. Although it remains difficult to conclusively assert that Ambrose paraphrased or otherwise altered passages from the Bible for metrical or stylistic purposes, it is possible (through cross-referencing his prose quotations and examining all extant Vg traditions) to make some relevant observations. A few of the most notable examples are listed here:

Hymn 3.31	peccata qui mundi tulit
Vg Jn. 1:29	qui tollit peccatum mundi
VL Jn. 1:29	qui tollit peccatum mūdi
	(Buchanan 1911, Gasquet 1914)
NT(A) Jn. 1:29	qui tollit peccata mundi
<i>In Psalm 118</i> 3.26 ⁶⁹	tulit peccata mundi
Hymn 3.32	ad dexteram sedens dei
Vg Mk. 16:19	sedet a dextris Dei
VL Mk. 16:19	sedet a dextris Dei (Hetzenauer 1906)
NT(A) Mk. 16:19	ad dexteram dei sedere credamus
Hymn 5.1-2	Intende, qui regis Israel
	super Cherubim qui sedes,
Vg Ps. 79:2-3	Qui regis Israel, intende: . . .
	qui sedes super cherubim
Hymn 12.11	electionis uas sacrae
Vg Act. 9:15	uas electionis est mihi
VL Act. 9:15	uade, quoniam uas electionis est mihi

⁶⁹ A text that is shown to have influence on Ambrose's formal aesthetic (see §5.4).

NT(A) Act. 9:15
In Psalm 118 14.24

uade, quoniam uas electionis est mihi
 uas electionis diuinae

In each example, the principal motivation is an adherence to formal patterns. In some instances this involves anastrophic transposition (3.31, 5.1-2) in others the noun-modifier order has been reversed (12.11). But the general observation is that the Biblical passage is *not* quantitatively iambic, and the *hymni* version is quantitatively iambic. Such grammatical liberty is of considerable significance. Generally, it might be assumed that in passages of quotation, Biblical word order would be maintained (as in 6.17-21 where the Bible is quoted verbatim).⁷⁰ But in this regard, the *hymni* exhibit an inconsistent relationship to the Bible as a primary text. For further instances of deviation from Biblical language see §3.3.1, §3.6.4, §4.2.4.

3.9 General Conclusions

It is worth recalling a few significant observations. From the perspective of simplification theory there appears some level of regularization in the verbal, nominal, and clausal syntax. This is seen to occur in the avoidance of the future tense (§3.6), limited use of certain nominal cases (§3.3.3), and a tendency toward paratactic constructions (§3.7.1). The predilection for present tense forms (indicative and subjunctive), as well as areas of clausal parataxis, is a particularly striking and significant linguistic characteristic of the collection. The pattern of verbal and clausal structures (as shown in the use of the imperative/independent subjunctive forms at the beginnings and ends of *hymni*) is also defining part of the linguistic style.

Upon deeper syntactic investigation, however, the *hymni* also show signs of unusual and stylised syntax. Extended clausal subordination (§3.7.2), ablatives absolute (§3.3.3), poetic plurals (§3.3.1), supine (§3.6.4), hyperbaton (§3.8.2),

⁷⁰ In the one instance where Biblical word order is preserved, cf. 6:17-21 '*In principio erat Verbum / et Verbum erat apud Deum / et Deus erat Verbum, hoc erat / in principio apud Deum. / Omnia per ipsum facta sunt*' the metre is severely sacrificed (see §5.10).

etymological word-play (§3.6.3) and unusual substantive participles (§3.6.3) appear to offer some evidence of poetic stylisations in the text. Some such stylisations more directly evince the role of metrical influence (e.g. poetic plurals, supine, hyperbaton); others indicate the influences of Biblical language (e.g. an extended use of the *genitivus qualitatis* and so-called repeated genitive (§3.3.3)). On the whole, therefore, numerous syntactic features in the *Hymni Ambrosiani* testify to a level of poetic stylisation and complexity.

As will be seen in the analysis of lexical and metrical features that follow, it is the greater appreciation and recognition of these aspects that may more accurately depict the linguistic character of the collection.

Lexis and Rhetoric

4.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter 2, studies of sociolinguistic simplification suggest that the regularization of the lexical component of a language is a fundamental by-product of linguistic simplification (Mühlhäusler 97).¹ In cases of language contact or language acquisition, this simplification has exhibited itself in the use of ‘simpler’ synonyms over ‘complex’ terms (e.g. buy – purchase, light – illumination). Significantly, signs of language contact like loan-words, calques, or independent developments demonstrate that such regularity is not the only possibility (Mühlhäusler 104), and as Johanna Nichols (1992: 92) has argued, signs of language contact can also account for complexity in a linguistic system (see also Trudgill 2010: 36).

Chapter 4 proposes that while some aspects of lexical simplification may occur in the *Hymni Ambrosiani* (e.g. lexical repetition of certain terms like *fides* and *Christus*), there also appear certain levels of complexity (e.g. stylised metonymy, oxymora, loan-words and original diction). Chapter 4 proposes that the combination of these elements in the texts demonstrates far greater stylisation and linguistic complexity than is generally acknowledged.²

4.2 Lexis

The designation of certain words as belonging to a particular ‘register’ is always a precarious study. This is not least the case in historical linguistics like Latin where one cannot closely observe daily usage or document the effects of sociolinguistic behaviour and language contact. Nevertheless, one can – through meticulous cross-referencing and the use of available databases (*TLL*, *LLT-A*, *LLT-*

¹ For a detailed discussion of how simplification may appear in certain aspects of a language but not create a broader simplified language see Mühlhäusler (110), Nichols (1992: 192), Trudgill (2010: 16), and Chapter 3 of this thesis.

² In line with what Fontaine calls ‘une synthèse neuve du triple héritage antique des traditions hymniques’ (Fontaine 11) and thus representative of the hymns’ diverse linguistic tradition.

B, *OLD*, etc.) – make observations about the influence of cultural and linguistic contact on ‘poetic diction’.³

In this first part of this chapter, the analysis will focus on individual words or phrases in the *hymni*, and the examination of lexical preference will establish a unique set of linguistic examples through which the presence or absence of simplification may be explored (Mühlhäusler 97). Certain elements of poetic diction (e.g. loan-words, metonyms, and etymological word-play) will be used as categorical divisions in the discussion. ‘New’ words or ‘original phrasings’ (hereafter called *Ambrose-isms*) will also be outlined as playing a significant role in a general perception of poetic stylisation.⁴

That the language of the *hymni* has been characterized as ‘simple’ by such a large number of respected studies (see Chapter 2) makes the topic of lexical regularization worthy of considerable attention.⁵ On more than one occasion, the lexis of the collection has been distinguished for its ‘simplest expression’ (Walpole 1922: 24) and its ‘simplicité’ in ‘expressivité formulaire’ (Fontaine 68). As can be shown, the text indeed exhibits possible elements of regularized speech: the recurrent use of certain words like *fides* and *martyr*, for example, often dominates passages and establishes characteristic paratactic structures. Nevertheless, it is the primary suggestion of this discussion that such simplification illustrates only one part of the lexical component of the *hymni*, and that, as numerous other passages will demonstrate, the words and images in the text indicate a novel and complex amalgam of allusions and literary influences.

A substantial focus of this discussion will fall upon the analysis of words that appear to have little precedent in Latin poetry, little precedent in Latin translations of the Bible, or are altogether ‘original’.⁶ In this regard, some of the sections will make a considerable effort to highlight areas of creativity and diverse literary influence. As will be shown, several words or phrases exhibit diverse cultural and

³ For use of terminology as ‘poetic language’ or ‘poetic diction’, see Axelson (1945), Lunelli (1988: 133). For sociohistorical interference, see Trudgill (2010).

⁴ A precedent for such research on original expression in Ambrosian studies has been set by *LLSA* (97-100).

⁵ Duffield (1889: 53-5), MacGilton (1918: 19-21), Rose (1936: 485), Fontaine (25), *et al.* See Chapter 2.

⁶ ‘Originality’ itself is an elusive subject, especially in a corpus language; this study follows the convenient definition of *LLSA* (97), that if a word or phrase does not appear in any other extant example from the Latin language, it is considered ‘original’.

literary allusions which appear to stem from a synthesis of BL and CL during the late antique period. Words like *cherubim* and *archidiaconus*, for instance, naturally have no history in Classical poetry and yet they appear here alongside *syngrapha* (common to Roman judicial language) and *tropaeum* (a recurrent term in Augustan verse), words which are relatively unknown to Christian literary expression.

In sum, the combination of distinctly Classical and distinctly Biblical phrases highlights the importance of contact studies in Ambrosian verse,⁷ and while more established ‘poetic’ rhetoric (e.g. metaphors with a long literary tradition in both Biblical and Classical literature (*dies*, *aurora*)) will not be ignored, the depth of expression and broader diversity of unique language will reveal some of the more stylised and complex elements of the *hymni*. It is the goal of this section to explore those examples and enrich a discussion of the lexis and rhetoric in the work.⁸

4.2.1 Ambrose-isms

Several words or phrases in the *Hymni Ambrosiani* seem to have no precedent before the late fourth century and can for the purpose of this study be categorised as original to Latin literature. Whether or not such terms were actually introduced by Ambrose to Latin may never be conclusively verified; yet, as far as can be deduced from modern lexica, concordances and thesauri, the following expressions (some of which may more clearly be viewed as metaphoric) can only be read as innovative to Latin expression.⁹

As will be discussed at the end of this chapter, each item (listed with corresponding *hymn.line* reference) represents a significant contribution in the study of the hymns’ linguistic tradition. In several cases, the innovative juxtaposition of Biblical and Classical expressions poses a challenge to the notion of simplification,

⁷ Recently taken up by Passarella (2008), and more well developed in research on Ambrose’s prose works, see *LLSA* (1-124), Phillips (1937).

⁸ None of this is to say sufficient work has not been put forth on Classical influence in Ambrosian verse already, see Diederich (1931: 1-127) and den Boeft (2008: 425-40). On the contrary, one aim of a thesis is to elucidate the contact between Classical and Biblical language amidst a discussion of poetic simplification. As such, it is important to observe original words, archaisms, metonyms, or other such poeticisms.

⁹ For the sake of clarity and concision, not all the words or phrases below will receive a full etymological or allegorical discussion. Where such information is relevant to the exploration of originality those details will be provided.

and the discussion of so-called Ambrose-isms by its very nature indicates the possible complexity of the lexical component (Trudgill 2010: 22).¹⁰

Carnis Tropheo

5.26 *carnis tropheo cingere* (be enclosed in a trophy of flesh)

The term *tropheum* ('victory' or 'trophy') occupies a more unusual position in Latin literature than *caro* (flesh). Though *tropheum* is a relatively common feature of Classical poetic diction (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.172 *magna tropaea ferunt*, Verg. *Aen.* 11.790 *non exuias pulsaeue tropaeum*, Prop. 3.4.6 *assuescent Latio Partha tropaea*, Prop. 3.9.34 *Maecenatis erunt uera tropaea fides*, Ov. *fast.* 5.555 *digna Giganteis haec sunt delubra tropaeis*, Ov. *epist.* 9.102 *et tulit a capto nota tropaea uiro*) the word is absent from the NT, and occurs only three times in the OT (cf. Ps. 73:4 *posuerunt signa sua in tropaeum*, 2 Mcc. 5:6 *hostium et non ciuium se trophaea capturum*, 2 Mcc. 15:6 *cogitauerat commune trophaeum statuere de Iuda*).

As such, there is little evidence of *tropheum*'s position in the earliest Christian literature. Biblically, the term exhibits only a negative connotation – where it details the cruelty of Jason (2 Mcc. 5:6) and the wicked deeds of the Babylonians (Ps. 73:4). By Tertullian, however, the term appears to have taken a more positive meaning in Christian writing (cf. Tert. *adv. Marc.* 4.20 *per tropaeum crucis triumphauit*, also Cypr. *Demetr.* 26 *tribuit subigendo mortem trophaeo crucis*) where it serves as a reference to the glory of the cross.¹¹

Carnis tropheo,¹² however, demonstrates semantic originality in its combination of corporeal mysticism and military allusion.¹³ The physical sacrifice of Christ (and Christians) is made vivid through a reference first to *caro* (flesh), and

¹⁰ Fontaine (143-621) has done a comprehensive job of providing commentary on the hymns that sheds light on this subject. However, a comprehensive discussion of originality in Ambrose's poetic writings does not yet exist.

¹¹ The only poetic occurrence of *tropaeum* in Christian verse appears in the *Carmen Aduersus Marcionem* (CCSL 2, R. Willems 1952): *Exuit exuias carnis et debita mortis; / serpentis spoliū deuicto principe mundi / adfixit ligno, refugarum immane trophaeum*, in which the reference alludes to the tree of wisdom in Eden.

¹² Almost in the sense of *martyr* as *miles* (soldier) - a trope found in hymn 10 (see §4.5). The terms may also reflect the tumultuous climate of the age.

¹³ For the relevance of *caro* in linguistic development and Ambrose's work specifically, see Mohrmann (1951: 284) and Seibel (1958).

then it is equated with a (Classically) epic sense of conquest in *tropheum* (trophy). The hymn incorporates a Classical theme of military victory into a Christian context of martyrdom – all in a direct reference to the glorification of Christ’s body (5.25 *aequalis aeterno Patri* (equal to the eternal Father)). A variation of the phrase occurs again in *hymni* 12 and 13 (12.6 *cruor triumphalis necis*; 13.14 *egit triumphum martyr*)¹⁴ and seems to have influenced the later writings of Hildegard of Bingen and Peter Damian (cf. Hildegard of Bingen *epist.* 1.25.70.1 *et post huius carnis tropheum ad amplexus celestis sponsi*; Petrus Damianus *serm.* 65.11 *Redemptor noster, trophaeo carnis indutus*).

Censu Sanguinis

8.16 *dotata censu sanguinis* (richly endowed by a fortune of blood)

The originality of *censu sanguinis* (fortune of blood) seems to lie in the general metaphor of martyrdom-as-nuptial-dowry: the occurrence is at 8.13-6 *Prodire quis nuptum putet, / sic laeta uultu ducitur, / nouas uiro ferens opes, / dotata censu sanguinis* (Anyone might think that she proceeds / to a wedding, with such joyful look / she comes, carrying new wealth to a husband/ richly endowed by a fortune of blood). The hymn’s allusion to the faith-as-matrimony theme (here applied to the story of St. Agnes) recurs frequently in Ambrose’s work (cf. Ambr. *Hex.* 3.13.56 *Christi cruore dotata*, Ambr. *Abr.* 2.4.18 *dotalis census*).¹⁵

Census (register, value or census) holds a long history in the Latin vocabulary of property, possessions, and public-record (cf. in prose Cic. *flac.* 52 *homini egenti, sordido, sine honore . . . sine censu*; Suet. *Aug.* 41 *senatorum censum amplexauit*; in verse Plaut. *Trin.* 493-4 *aequo mendicus atque ille opulentissimus / censeatur censu ad Acheruntem mortuos*; Ov. *am.* 3.8.9 *per uulnera censu*; Ov. *met.* 7.739 *dum census dare me pro nocte*; Stat. *silv.* 2.7.81 *censu, sanguine, gratia, decore*). The term seems to have held a significant position in Latin Biblical expression as well (cf. Ne. 7:5 *et inueni librum census eorum*; Ne. 7:64 *hi quiesierunt scripturam suam in censu*; Ecl. 30:15 *corpus ualidum, quam census*

¹⁵ According to Fontaine (394), the metaphor seems to have been borrowed from Origen.

immensus; Ecl. 30.16 *non est census super censum salutis corporis*; Mt. 17:24 *reges terrae a quibus accipiunt tributum uel censum a filiis suis an ab alienis?*; Mt. 22:17 *licet censum dare Caesari, an non?*; Mt. 22:19 *ostendite mihi nomisma census*).¹⁶ In early Christian literature, Tertullian uses *census* frequently to defend the exact origin of Christianity and the birth of Christ (Tert. *apol.* 7 *census istius disciplinae*; Tert. *apol.* 10 *ab illo census totius uel potioris et notioris diuinitatis*).

Yet *censu sanguinis* appears to be a metaphoric phrase with little precedent in Latin literature.¹⁷ The unique combination of technical and spiritual vocabulary extends the martyrdom-as-marriage metaphor into a language of financial and bureaucratic parallelism.¹⁸ The virgin's 'worth' (i.e. dowry) is comprised of her *sanguis* (blood), by which the hymn emphasizes her *fides* (faith). Through such parallelism of *martyrio* (martyrdom) and *nuptiis* (marriage), we are to understand the love, bond and sacrifice of Christianity. The hymn, and in particular the phrase, plays upon of the concept of ceremony which wedlock and martyrdom exemplify.

Claustrum Pudoris

5.14 *claustum pudoris permanet* (the lock of honour remains)

8.10 *claustum pudoris auxerant* (they had augmented the lock of honour)

See §3.3.1.

Ecclesiarum Principes

14.5 *Ecclesiarum Principes* (Princes of Churches)

The *hymni* independently employ *ecclesia* (church) and *princeps* (leader, prince) on six other occasions, the plural use of the former (*ecclesiae*) also in 3.16 (*totum per orbem ecclesias*). Such usage is consistent with early Christian writing,

¹⁶ Of these, Ecclesiastes and Matthew appear most likely to have served as allegorical precedents for Ambrose's use. In 2 Ezra *census* carries a more circumscribed association of formal 'register' or 'census' rather than 'wealth' or 'fortune'.

¹⁷ The temptation to connect the passage to Statius' *censu, sanguine* (Stat. *silv.* 2.7.81) is strong. However, the use of imagery and syntactic position in the *hymni* appears quite different from that of Statius.

¹⁸ Ghedini (1940: 285) claims the hymn as 'tra quelli di Ambrogio il più bello' and states its stylistic elegance as validation for its authenticity.

as found in VL and Vg translations of the Pauline epistles and the Book of the Apocalypse (2 Cor. 8:23 *siue fratres nostri apostoli ecclesiarum gloriae Christi*; Apc. 1:20 *et septem candelabra aurea septem stellae angeli sunt septem ecclesiarum*, see also TLL 5.2.34).

According to Fontaine, the combination of these terms in the phrase *ecclesiarum principes* (leaders of the churches) is completely original (Fontaine 603); however, this estimation seems to overlook the precedent in Origen's *Homily on Numbers* (cf. Rufin. *Orig. in num.* 9.1 *si apud homines hodie iudicaretur haec causa et apud ecclesiarum principes haberetur examen de his*).¹⁹ Despite the possible Greek precedent, Ambrose seems to be the first to conjoin the nominal form *principes* (princes) to *ecclesiarum* (of churches) in a eulogistic reference to Christian martyrdom, a usage which becomes more widespread in Augustine and later Christian writing (cf. Aug. *in psalm.* 67.36 *quae omnia uerissimos nobis insinuant principes ecclesiarum . . . martyres namque in ecclesiis locum summum tenent*).

Heres Futurus Sanguinis

13.10 *heres futurus sanguinis* (the future inheritor of blood)

There are abundant examples of *heres* (heir) and *sanguis* (blood) throughout Classical and Late Antique texts. From the OT, we find God's words to Abraham in Genesis 15:4 *non erit hic heres tuus sed qui egredietur de utero tuo ipsum habebis heredem*, and Tertullian combines the elements of the phrase in an exegetical reading of 1 Cor. 3:22 (cf. Tert. *resurr.* 59 *constituit heredes etiam futurorum*).

Interestingly, however, there appears to be no precedent for the expression *heres futurus sanguinis* (future inheritor of blood) before hymn 13. As such, the phrase is used in descriptive apposition with Laurentius (Lawrence) in his gruesome persecution by fire and is typical of Ambrose's corporeal, yet technical diction. That the phrase *heres sanguinis* may be original to the hymns is made all the more

¹⁹ In Cyprian *ad ecclesiam principalem* (to the principal church) occurs in reference to the condemnation of the heretic Felicissimus (cf. Cypr. *epist.* 59.14), but the usage is rather dissimilar. As to the challenges of using Rufinus (a fourth century Latin author) as a precedent for the Greek of Origen (a third century author) we are limited by the loss of the original text. Still, the point of Ambrose's originality seems in question.

significant by Prudentius' allusion in the *Apotheosis* (cf. Prud. *apoth.* 999-1000 *qui sit de semine David / stirpe recensita numerandus sanguinis heres*).

Mystico Spiramine

5.10 *sed mystico spiramine* (but from a mystical breath)

Both *mysticus* (mystical) and *spiramen* (breath) are relatively rare in Classical and Biblical Latin. In the Vg, *mysticus* occurs only once – in an exotic reference to the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah (cf. Is. 3:3 *et prudentem eloquii mystici*, (and men learned in mystical communication), while *spiramen* appears only in Job's reply to Bildad²⁰ (cf. Jb. 26:4 *nonne eum qui fecit spiramen tuum*, (not him who made your life)). In early Christian authors, the occurrence of *mysticus* and *spiramen* appears only slightly more often (cf. Tert. *adv. Marc.* 5.9 *Fortassean et mystice factum sit*; Lact. *inst.* 5.1.26 *quoniam mystica sunt*).

Mysticus in CL can be found primarily in poetic works (Verg. *georg.* 1.166 *et mystica uannus Iacchi*; Ov. *epist.* 2.42 *mystica sacra deae*, see TLL 8.1758-60) and a few dramatic sequences (Acc. *trag.* 687 *mystica ad dextram uada*).²¹ The principal allusion is with Dionysian rites, which as Varro states were performed in the East. Only scant further examples of the term exist (cf. Stat. *Theb.* 8.765 *mystica lampas*; Mart. 8.81.1 *non per mystica sacra Dindymenes*) that again refer to Dionysus.

Spiramen, likewise, appears rarely and only in poetry (cf. Enn. *ann.* 7.260 *posuit spiramina Naris ad undas*; Lucan 2.183-4 *alius spiramina naris adunca / amputat*, 6.90 *tali spiramine Nesis*; Lucan 10.247 *sunt qui spiramina terris*; Sil. 12.143 and Stat. *Theb.* 2.67; 4.93; 8.218; 12.262).²² The slightly more common form of the word seems to have been the longer *spiramentum* – which occurs in Vergil, Ovid, and Seneca.

Mystico spiramine, however, never appears in poetry or prose before the *hymni* – where the phrase falls amidst an antithetical argument of Christ's birth: 5.9-

²⁰ There is some argument that the reply actually addresses Zophar (see AB 15.189-91).

²¹ The passage of Accius is later cited by Varro, cf. Varro *ling.* 2.7.

²² The more common word for 'breath' appears to have been *spiramentum* (OLD 1805, Fontaine 282-3).

10 *Non ex uirili semine, / sed mystico spiramine* (Not from the seed of man, / but from a mystical breath). Ambrose's inclination to conjoin these terms is not unusual, considering the poet's interest in monarchianism (cf. 5.25 *aequalis aeterno Patrem*)²³ and his fondness for both words (Barry 1926: 53, 181, 196). If nowhere else, the influence of Ambrose's creativity here appears to have had a profound effect on Hildegard of Bingen who uses the phrase on numerous occasions.²⁴

Petra Ecclesiae

1.15 *hoc ipse petra ecclesiae* (At this, he himself the rock of the church)

Both *petra* (rock) and *ecclesia* (church) are common loan-words borrowed directly from the Greek (πέτρα; ἐκκλησία), the former at an early stage of Latin (Plaut. *Bacch.* 17 *quom liquescunt petrae, ferrum ubi fit*),²⁵ the latter at least as early as Pliny (Plin. *epist.* 10.110.1 *et ecclesia consentiente*, OLD 584), before a semantic specialization in Christian usage (Blaise 1954: 297). The symbolic connection between *petra* and Christ seems to date at least as early as Tertullian and Cyprian (Tert. *bapt.* 9 *si enim petra Christus*; Tert. *adv. Marc.* 5.5 *Petra autem fuit Christus*; Cypr. *epist.* 63.8.2 *quando Christus qui est petra*), although in the NT we already find 1 Cor. 10:4 *bibant autem de spiritali consequenti eos petra, petra autem erat Christus*.

The particular phrasing *petra ecclesiae* (rock of the Church) seems to be an original idiom in the *hymni*: 1.15 *hoc ipse petra ecclesiae* (at this, he himself, rock of the Church). Syntactically, the phrase has been well analysed (see Fontaine 149, 187) since *ipse* (himself) is placed in appositional agreement with *petra* (despite differing in gender, see §3.3.2). The usage amidst the reference to the sea in the preceding line *pontique mitescunt freta* (and the straits of the sea grow calm) is accentuated by Biblical allusion, invoking Christ and the name of Simon Peter (Mk. 1:16 *in mare . . . pescatores*).

²³ See Williams (1995).

²⁴ Cf. Hildegard of Bingen *epist.* 1.2.7; 1.16.49; 2.52.129; *Sciuias* 2.1.33; 2.1.103; 2.6.24.

²⁵ Perhaps also Plaut. *Truc.* 56, but the passage is obelised by Leo.

Syngrapham Vocis et Sanguinis

13.15 *syngrapham / uocis tenens et sanguinis* (preserving the bond of life and blood)

Syngrapha (contract, a transliteration of the Greek συγγραφή) appears in Cicero (cf. Cic. *dom.* 129 *non syngraphas cum Byzantiis*; Cic. *Verr.* 1.91 *et syngraphas fecerat*), once in Seneca (Sen. *benef.* 7.10.3 *uideo istic diplomata et syngraphas et cautiones*), once in Suetonius (Suet. *Iul.* 23.2 *etiam syngrapham exigere*), and then disappears from literary usage until the *hymni*.²⁶

From the perspective of Christian literature, *syngrapha* is extremely rare – absent from any early Christian writing (before Ambrose) and any passage from the Vg or VL. There is a great possibility that *syngrapha* would have been a familiar term for Ambrose as a result of his legal training, and one may deduce that Ambrose's early career as a lawyer played a role in his poetic vocabulary (cf. also 4.11 *uoti reos*, 8.16 *censu*). There is almost no precedent for the use of such a contractual or functional term in Latin poetry, and the fact that Ambrose includes it here is a fascinating insight into his own poetic identity.²⁷

Triumphalis Necis

12.6 *cruor triumphalis necis* (the blood of triumphal slaughter)

Resonant of Ambrose's lyric emphasis on combining military imagery with Christian theology (see *carnis tropheo*), *triumphalis necis* (triumphal slaughter) appears to invoke the terminology of Roman conquest (cf. Suet. *Aug.* 38 *super triginta ducibus iustos triumphos et aliquanto pluribus triumphalia ornamenta*) as well as Classical epic (cf. Verg. *georg.* 4.90 *neci demittere*; Verg. *Aen.* 12.513 *Tanaimque neci*). *Nex* (slaughter) seems to be a particularly vivid and gruesome

²⁶ Distinguished here from *syngraphus* (safe-conduct, Gr. σύγγραφος) a word that carries a slightly different connotation and appears earlier in Plautus (cf. Plaut. *Capt.* 449-50 *eadem opera a praetore sumam syngraphum . . . quem syngraphum*; Plaut. *Capt.* 505 *rogo syngraphum*). There may be some connection between *syngrapha* and *chirographum* (cf. Ambr. *Fug. Saec.* 9.57, Ambr. *Apol.* 8.42).

²⁷ Despite the literary obscurity of the term, *syngrapha* has received little attention from previous editors. Fontaine notes that the term 'souligne la valeur juridique précise de ce document et sa différence avec un testament', but makes little of the fact that it is extremely rare in poetry, before or after Ambrose.

term (used by Vergil to depict the battlefields in *Aeneid* 12) borrowed by Ambrose to depict the martyrdom of St. Paul and St. Peter. In the OT, *nex* occurs in more than a dozen passages, almost always in the singular, and is particularly resonant in Esther and 2 Maccabees where it is used to depict the slaughter of the Jews and Onias, respectively (cf. Es. 16:15 *nos autem a pessimo mortalium Iudaeos neci destinatos in nulla penitus*; 2 Mcc. 4:35 *et moleste ferebant de nece tanti uiri iniusta*).²⁸

Interestingly, *triumphalis* (triumphal) has almost no precedent in Biblical or early Christian Latin. The term appears in a limited number of early Christian texts (cf. Tert. *pall.* 4 *triumphalem cataphracten amolitus in captiua sarabara decessit*; Firm. *err.* 24.4 *et triumphales currus eius*) and occurs only once in the OT (1 Rg. 15:12 *et erexisset sibi fornicem triumphalem*).

It is worthy of note, then, that *triumphalis necis* becomes a significant phrase in Ambrose's expression of holy martyrdom. *Triumphalis*, in particular, occurs three other times in the *hymni* (10.32 *plaustrum triumphalis modo*; 12.6 *cruor triumphalis necis*; 14.6 *belli triumphales duces*);²⁹ and here the combination of strikingly epic terms seems to highlight Ambrose's role in the fusing of Classical and Biblical traditions.

4.2.2 Biblical Loan-words

Aside from words or phrases that may be original to Latin literature, the *hymni* contain several terms common to Christian writing which were directly borrowed from the Greek, some originally borrowed from the Hebrew. Such borrowings frequently reflect institutional or technical aspects of Biblical vocabulary and have received considerable attention in early Christian studies (P-W §37-41, Mohrmann 1950: 193-211, Löfstedt 1959: 74-81). From the perspective of sociolinguistic contact, these terms are significant for their apparent extension of the lexis and seem to *diversify* rather than *regularize* the lexical component.

Some such instances – *ecclesia* (church) and *martyr* (martyr) – are so common to early Christian literature that they hardly deserve attention. Other

²⁸ Also Nm. 32:15 *et uos causa eritis necis omnium*.

²⁹ The term appears thirty-seven times in Ambrose's work, more than Tertullian, Cyprian, and Lactantius combined.

occurrences where the loan-word is less frequently attested or used in a unique or original construction will be noted here.

Apostolus

3.20 *apostole, en mater tua* (apostle, here behold your mother)

Prevalent in early Christian literature and occurring throughout the NT, *apostolus* is recognised as a principal Greek borrowing.³⁰ Like *ecclesia* and *baptisma*, *apostolus* belongs to that category of institutional and technical Christian vocabulary for which Latin-speaking Christians rarely adopted a Latinized translation.³¹ What makes *apostolus* particularly relevant in the *hymni* is its novel usage in a poetic context and its relationship to *discipulus* in Ambrose's paraphrase-citation of Jn. 19:26-27 (cf. 3.19-20 '*en filius, mater, tuus; / apostole, en mater tua,*' ('Here, mother, behold your son; / apostle, here, behold your mother,')). In the hymn, Ambrose deliberately changes the noun from a more common Latin term (*discipulus*) to a Greek borrowing (*apostolus*).³²

Only two previous texts, Tertullian's *De Pudicitia* and Pseudo-Cyprian's *de singularitate clericorum*, exhibit *apostolus* in the vocative construction (Tert. *pudic.* 15 *o apostole, ut cum maxime ipse*; Ps. Cypr. *singul. cler.* 29 *succurre meus praeco, succurre Paule apostole*), and neither example is particularly representative of a larger rhetorical trend.³³ Hymn 3 and the paraphrase of Christ's final words upon the cross, therefore, represent the first time *apostole* occurs in a Latin poetic context.³⁴

³⁰ Mohrmann (1951: 284).

³¹ Mohrmann (1951: 284) notes that the Latinization of Biblical Greek words occurred most frequently with ideas or theological precepts – as in *fides* for πίστις, see also Burton (2000: 158-170).

³² Cf. Jn. 19:26-7 *Dicit matri suae: Mulier ecce filius tuus. Deinde dicit discipulo: Ecce mater tua*; also NT(A) Jn. 19:26-7 *mulier, ecce filius tuus. ecce mater tua*. It is relevant to note that *discipulus* is not metrically admissible in iambic dimeters.

³³ A vocative *apostole* never appears in the NT.

³⁴ Perhaps more significant, however, is the role *apostole* plays in the hymns' characteristic paraphrase of Scripture. A definitive element of hymns' style appears to be the manipulation of Biblical passages to suit (or attempt to suit) the formal qualities of verse (see Roberts (1985: 107-160) who examines this phenomenon at length in his study of Christian epic). On several occasions (cf. 5.1-4; 6.17-21), the hymns freely alter Biblical syntax or lexis to fit metrical constraints. In this case, Jn. 19:26-27 (which Ambrose quotes *correctly* in the prose passage *In Luc.* 2.4; 10.131) normally reads: '*mulier, ecce filius tuus*'; *deinde dicit discipulo*; '*ecce mater tua*'; for which Ambrose poetically offers 5.19-20 '*en filius, mater, tuus; apostole en mater tua*'. See § 4.2.4.

Archidiaconum

13.2 *Laurentium archidiaconum* (Lawrence the archdeacon)

If the first volume of the *TLL* is to be believed, *archidiaconus* (Gr. ἀρχιδιάκονος) does not appear in any Latin form earlier than the fourth century (*TLL* 2.461.17). Augustine uses the term in the *Sermones* and Jerome in the *Epistles* (cf. Hier. *epist.* 125.15 *singuli archidiaconi et omnis ordo ecclesiasticus*) yet hymn 13 appears to be the first evidence of a Latin usage.³⁵

Baptismate

7.5 *seu mystico baptismate* (whether by mystical baptism)

Borrowed directly from the Gr. βάπτισμα, *baptisma* (baptism) occurs in numerous NT passages as a particular reference to the institution of baptism (Mk. 7:4 *baptismata calicum*; Lk. 12:50 *Baptisma autem habeo baptizari*; Eph. 4:5 *unus Dominus una fides unum baptismata*), the term originally stemming from the verb βάπτω (to immerse) which was used for the Hebrew *tābal* in the Septuagint (Jdt. 12:7 καὶ ἐβαπτίζετο ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ ἐπὶ τῆς πηγῆς τοῦ ὕδατος).

Consequently, there emerges an interesting distinction between *baptisma* and the masculine *baptismus* (βαπτισμός), the latter which appears to signify the actual act of baptism itself rather than the idea (Mk. 1:4 *et praedicans baptismum paenitentiae*) and thus Ambrose acknowledges a distinction (Ambr. *Parad.* 9.45 *dicitur etiam mors per baptismatis sacramentum, sicut habes: consepulti enim sumus cum illo per baptismum in mortem et alibi*).

The phrase *mysticum baptismata* (mystical baptism) appears to be original in Latin literature and the unique combination of two Greek loan-words (*mysticus*, from the Gr. μυστικός) marks a significant passage of Greek-influenced language.

³⁵ Jerome uses the term (Hier. *ad Pamm.* 61.4) and much later it appears in Fortunatus and Cassiodorus (cf. Ven. Fort. *Mart.* 3.38 and Cassiod. *hist.* 5.48).

Cherubim

5.2 *super Cherubim qui sedes* (you who sit above the Cherubim)

Derived from the Greek transliteration (κερουβ) of the Hebrew *kerub*,³⁶ *cherub* (pl. *cherubim* or *cherubin*) occurs regularly in the OT – most notably Is. 37:16 *qui sedes super cherubin*; and Ps. 98:1 *populi sessor cherubin*. The principle reference in hymn 5 is Ps. 79:2 *qui sedes super cherubin*, after which the entire first strophe is constructed.

Cherub, despite occupying substantial place in Biblical expression, is not found regularly in any of the earliest Christian authors. The term occurs only in a few lines in Tertullian (Tert. *adv. Marc.* 2.10 *cum cherub imposui*; Tert. *adv. Marc.* 2.22 *sic et cherubin et seraphin*; Tert. *adv. Iud.* 11 *ascendit a cherubin*) once in Novatianus (Novatian. *trin.* 8.45 *et desuper cherubin*) and once in Marius Victorinus (Mar. Victorin. *in Eph.* 1.3).³⁷ The occurrence of the word in hymn 5 marks one of few usages in Latin poetry, along with two instances found in the *Carmen adversus Marcionitas* (Carm. *adv. Marc.* 4.189 *atque super cherubim*; 4.189 *nam cherubim cum sit bis binis*) that demonstrate the Hebrew influence.

4.2.3 Proper Nouns

The *hymni* exhibit a handful of proper names stemming from Hebrew, Roman, or Greek etymologies: 8.1 *Agnes*; 5:3 *Ephraem*; 10.1 *Felix*; 11.3 *Geruasius*; 5.1 *Israel*; 6.3 *Iohannes*; 7.6 *Iordanis*; 10.28 *Laudense*; 13.2 *Laurens*; 10.2 *Mediolanus*; 10.1 *Nabor*; 10.9 *Padus*; 12.4 *Paulus*; 12.3 *Petrus*; 11.3 *Protasius*; 11.19 *Seuerus*; 12.14 *Simon*; 10.1 *Victor*; 13.5 *Xystus*. Of these *Agnes*, *Ephraem*, *Geruasius*, *Nabor*, *Protasius*, and *Xystus* never occur in Latin poetry prior to the *hymni*.

³⁶ Muraoka (2002), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Chiefly of the Pentateuch and the Twelve Prophets* (Louvain) 597.

³⁷ Cherubim appears in St. Philastrius as well (give citation), though the precise dates for that text are uncertain.

4.2.4 Biblical Expressions

Biblical expressions play a significant role in the lexical component. On numerous occasions words or phrases are borrowed directly from the OT or NT. The more distinctive examples are: 2.1 *splendor gloriae* (Heb. 1:3 *qui cum sit splendor gloriae*), 5.12 *fructus uentris* (Ps. 126:3 *ecce hereditas Domini filii merces fructus uentris*), 6.2 *filius tonitruui* (Mk. 3:17 *quod est filii tonitruui*), 10.22 *Christi milites* (2 Tim. 2:3 *labora sicut bonus miles Christi*).

As shown in §3.3.1, §3.6.4, and §3.8.3, the *hymni* also exhibit a tendency to alter Biblical quotations and allusions for metrical or stylistic purposes. The principal example of such variation within the lexical component occurs in hymn 3:

3.19-20	‘en filius, mater, tuus’ / apostolo ‘en mater tua’
VL Jn.19:26-7 ³⁸	mulier ecce filius tuus, deinde dicit discipulo, ‘ecce mater tua’
Vg Jn. 19:26-7	mulier ecce filius tuus, deinde dicit discipulo, ‘ecce mater tua’
NT(A) Jn. 19:26-7	mulier ecce filius tuus. ecce mater tua.

The substitution of *en* for *ecce* represents a change whereby a more rare (and more dramatic) interjection occurs (see *TLL* 5.545.25, *OLD* 606), and as Fontaine notes, the alteration for the shorter *en* appears partly motivated by metre (while also carrying a significant allusion to CL, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 1.461 *En Priamus . . .*) (see Fontaine 223). Likewise, the naturally tribracchic *mulier* poses a considerable challenge to the iambic quantity (unless resolved), and apostolus is a suitably iambic synonym for the iambically inadmissible *discipulus*. A further example, although less extreme, can be found at 5.17 (cf. 5.17 *procedat e thalamo suo*, Ps. 18:6 *procedens de thalamo suo*) where the verb and preposition are changed to accommodate another naturally tribracchic term, *thalamo* (see §5.7.1). Akin to other facets of the text, the paraphrase of Biblical narrative thus appears to exhibit the impact of prosodic constraints on confluence of BL and CL aesthetics.

³⁸ Gasquet (1914).

4.2.5 Conclusions

Certain lexical elements deserve recapitulation. Foremost, the so-called Ambrose-isms represent a significant challenge to the perception of simplification in the text. The unprecedented nature of certain words/phrases (e.g. *carnis tropheo*, *censu sanguinis*) suggests not only a level of poetic creativity but significant linguistic complexity. Along with Hebrew proper nouns (e.g. *Ephraem*, *Israel*), and Greek and Hebrew loan-words (e.g. *archidiaconus*, *cherubim*), these elements indicate a layered originality and linguistic diversity in the text. In sum, evidence indicates that there are several words/phrases that have little or no history in the Latin language, and these terms deserve greater recognition in the larger scope of linguistic and literary research on the collection.

4.3 Rhetoric

Rhetorical figures (e.g. metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron) occur frequently in the *hymni* collection and further demonstrate a level of stylisation. Certain phrases convey complex theological precepts (10.26 *mors triumphus*; 6.13 *piscis bonus pia est fides*) while others seem to introduce eastern philosophy for the first time in Latin (e.g. 2.23-4 *sobriam ebrietatem*). In passages that follow, the more relevant examples of rhetoric are explored which pose a challenge to the idea of simplification in the lexical component.

4.3.1 Oxymora

Although the presence of oxymoron is well established in CL prose and poetry (cf. Cic. *Catil.* 1.8 *cum tacent clamant*; Hor. *carm.* 3.11.35 *splendide mendax*),³⁹ Christianity appears to present a whole set of original antithetical or paradoxical concepts worthy of note.⁴⁰ In the *hymni*, novel semantic contradictions are typified by the juxtaposition of *castus* (chaste) and *amor* (love), *mors* (death) and *triumphus* (triumph), and *sobria* (sober) and *ebrietas* (intoxication). These expressions will be explored in detail.

³⁹ Potentially categorized as paradox, though quoted by Coleman (1999: 86) as oxymoron.

⁴⁰ The dated yet definitive text on rhetorical figures in the Bible remains Bullinger (1898).

Castus Amor

4.15 *te diligat castus amor* (may a chaste love worship you)

The combination of *castus* (chaste, pure, virtuous, pious) and *amor* (love) does not necessarily indicate a semantic paradox when the former (*castus*) appears in a secular or pagan context (cf. Ov. *epist.* 1.23 *sed bene consuluit casto deus aequus amori*; Sen. *Phaedr.* 645 *amore nempe thesei casto furis?*; Sil. 3.113 *castum haud superat labor ullus amorem*, see TLL 3.564-71). In Christian usage, however, *castus* frequently indicates a level of asceticism that might convey paradox when juxtaposed so closely with *amor* (cf. Aug. *civ.* 10.1 *ita illud, quod omnes homines appetunt, id est uitam beatam, quemquem isti assecuturum negant, qui non illi uni optimo, quod est incommutabilis deus, puritate casti amoris adhaeserit*, see also Blaise 1954: 137, Ernout-Meillet s.v. *castus*).⁴¹

In 4.15 *te diligat castus amor* (may a chaste love worship you) hymn 4 appears to reject corporeal or sensual desire in favour of spiritual devotion, a notion suggestive of semantic contradiction. *Castus* in the sense of ‘chaste’ is accentuated by the parallelism of the surrounding paratactic (and anaphoric) clauses: 4.13-6 *te cordis ima concinant / te uox canora concrepet / te diligat castus amor / te mens adoret sobria* (may the depths of the heart celebrate you / may the singing voice resound you / may a pure love worship you / may a sober mind adore you). Thus, the balance of *castus amor* (chaste love) and *mens sobria* (sober mind) appears to condemn (and contradict) the more desirous aspects of sensual affection.

Mors Triumphus

10.26 *mors triumphus* (death is a triumph)

Indicative of Ambrose’s juxtaposition of military and theological diction, *mors triumphus* (death is a triumph) expresses the ‘victory’ of Christian martyrs (here Victor, Nabor, and Felix) over their *inuidens* (envious) pagan persecutors. Walpole notes that such an oxymoronic construction is quintessentially Ambrosian,

⁴¹ ‘qui se conforme aux règles ou aux rites’ (Ernout-Meillet 1959).

as the convention of death as a military victory is typical of his borrowings from Paul (cf. Ambr. *epist.* 31.9 *deuorata est mors in uictoria sua*, (I Cor. 15:54)) (Walpole 1922: 86). The concept of *triumphus* (triumph) occurs on three other occasions in the *hymni* (12.3 *Petri triumphum nobilem*; 13.14 *egit triumphum martyris*; 14.6 *belli triumphales duces*, see also 5.26 *carnis tropheo*, above) all of which convey the same connection between military victory and the martyrdom of early Christians. The phrase is closely related to the metaphorical expression *Christi milites* (soldiers of Christ), for which see metaphor (§4.3.2).

Morte Viuebat

8.29 *in morte uiuebat pudor* (in death her honour lived)

The juxtaposition of *mors* (death) with verbs and nouns associated with life (*uiuio*, *uitam*, etc.) is also common in the *hymni* (cf. 9.24 *reddatque mors uitam nouam*; 10.26 *mors triumphus*). In 8.29 *in morte uiuebat pudor* (in death her honour lived) is given particular significance in the story of Agnes, whose *pudor* (honour) parallels that of the Virgin Mary in *hymni* 3 and 5. The oxymoron *in morte uiuebat* has precedent in earlier Latin (cf. Flor. *epit.* 1.18 *et in ipsa morte ira uiuebat*; Mar. Victor *aleth.* 3.224 *uiua morte suos referat*), with certain association to NT theology (2 Cor. 4:11 *semper enim nos qui uiuimus in mortem tradimur*, Rm. 7:10 *ad uitam hoc esse ad mortem*). The association of the phrase with the narrative of Agnes' martyrdom, however, appears original to Latin verse.

Sobriam Ebrietatem

2.23-4 *laeti bibamus sobriam / ebrietatem* (rejoicing, let us drink the sober / intoxication)

Sobria ebrietas (sober intoxication) is most frequently associated with the mysticism of Philo (Philo 1.23 μέθη νηφαλίῳ κατασχεθεῖς), of whom Ambrose is a prodigious borrower (Runia 1993: 291-311). Interestingly, there is almost no precedent for the phrase *sobria ebrietas* in Latin prior to the *hymni*, and Ambrose appears to be the first to adopt its usage into poetic expression (for prose

occurrences in Ambrose, see below). The antithesis of ‘sober intoxication’ in hymn 13 is emphasised by the enjambment between terms, whereby *ebrietas* (intoxication) is separated from its modifier (sober), a pattern that frames the subsequent line with *Spiritus* (of the Spirit).

Ambrose seems to have been fond of the oxymoronic juxtaposition of these terms (*sobria ebrietas*) as they are found in his prose writings (Ambr. *Cain et Ab.* 1.19 *haec ebrietas sobrios facit, haec ebrietas gratiae*; Ambr. *In Psalm.* 1.33 *bona ebrietas, quae sobriae stabiliret mentis incessum*), and as O’Donnell and Lewy observe, his usage seems to stand at some distance from the earlier Greek examples (see Lewy 1929: 149).⁴² The phrase is adopted later by Paulinus of Nola (Paul. Nol. *carm.* 24.685-6 *quod sobriat ebrietate?*) and Augustine (Aug. *conf.* 5.13.23 *et sobriam uini ebrietatem populo tuo*) who gives it particular prominence,⁴³ before gaining more widespread use in the 5th and 6th century.⁴⁴

4.3.2 Metaphor

Several of the original metaphoric expressions have already been discussed under the heading Ambrose-isms (§4.2.1). Here it is important to recognize the less inventive, yet still highly stylised, figures in the *hymni*.⁴⁵ The discussion (non-exhaustive) of certain rhetorical characteristics evidences the general imagery and figurative representation in the collection.

Christi Milites, Triumphales Duces, Caelestis Aulae Milites

- 10.21-2 *non tela quaerunt ferrea / non arma Christi milites* (they seek not iron weapons / not arms the soldiers of Christ)
- 14.6 *belli triumphales duces* (triumphant generals of war)
- 14.7 *caelestis aulae milites* (soldiers of the heavenly court)

⁴² O’Donnell (1992: 322-3) cites Lewy’s observation that Philo uses ‘sober intoxication’ as an expression for an ‘ecstatic process’ rather than a more general state of pious devotion.

⁴³ O’Donnell (1992: 323).

⁴⁴ Cf. Fulg. Rusp. *epist.* 18.14 *laeti bibamus sobriam ebrietatem spiritus*, Cassiod. *in psalm* 150 35.169 *ebrietas sobria, uinolentia gloriosa*.

⁴⁵ It has been noted that the prose writings of Ambrose are so full of metaphoric language that they ‘often tend to confuse rather than enlighten the reader’ (LLSA 116).

The *miles* (soldier) or the *dux* (leader) metaphor has some foundation in NT theology (cf. 2 Tm. 2:3 *labora sicut bonus miles Christi Iesu*) where it is used to convey the struggle of Christian martyrdom. Tertullian references the metaphor in *ad martyras* (Tert. mart. 3 *uocati sumus ad militiam dei uiui iam tunc, cum in sacramenti uerba respondimus. Nemo miles ad bellum cum deliciis uenit*) and Cyprian uses the phrase *milites Christi* (soldiers of Christ) in several passages (cf. Cypr. epist. 15.1 *nam cum omnes milites Christi*, Cypr. epist. 57.5 *colligere intra castra milites Christi*).

The underlying connection, as well-presented by von Harnack (1905) and later Butturini (1979), Swift (1983), and Shean (2010), belongs to the parallelism of *arma-fides* in which Christianity is commonly presented as spiritual combat (see Harnack (1905), also Fontaine 605, Helgeland *et al.* (1985), Haldon (1999)). On several occasions, the *hymni* exhibit similar extended metaphoric expressions (10.21-2 *non tela quaerunt ferrea / non arma Christi milites* (they seek not iron weapons / not arms the soldiers of Christ); 14.6 *belli triumphales duces* (triumphant generals of war); 14.7 *caelestis aulae milites* (soldiers of the heavenly court)). In 14.6-7, the *arma-fides* concept is highlighted by surrounding terminology, as the first line of the hymn introduces *munera* (gifts), a term frequently associated with civic or military duties (cf. Cic. *de Orat.* 1.199 *honoribus et rei publicae muneribus perfunctum senem*; Liv. 9.3.5 *is grauis annis non militaribus solum sed ciuilibus quoque abscesserat muneribus*; Liv. 25.7.4 *dum ne quis eorum munere uacaret neu dono militari . . . donaretur*) and gladiatorial exhibition (cf. Liv. 31.50.4 *munus gladiatorum datum*). Overall, the inherent *arma-fides* parallelism seems to permeate much of Judeo-Christian theology. This is evidenced by passages from Isaiah (cf. Is. 59:17 *indutus est iustitia ut lorica et galea salutis in capite eius indutus est uestimentis ultionis et opertus est quasi pallio zeli*), the Book of Psalms (Ps. 90:5-6 *non timebis a timore nocturno, a sagitta uolante in die*), and the story of David and Goliath, where Goliath is depicted as a warrior (I. Rg. 17:49 *et misit manum suam in peram tulitque unum lapidem et funda iecit et percussit Philistheum in fronte et infixus est lapis in fronte eius et cecidit in faciem suam super terram*), all the way down to the NT (Eph. 6:10-11 *de cetero fratres confortamini in Domino et in potentia uirtutis eius. induite uos arma Dei ut possitis stare aduersus insidias diaboli*).

Gallus

1.21 *Gallo canente, spes redit* (when the cock sings, hope returns)

Gallus (cock) as a metaphoric symbol of Christ in hymn 1 has been well analysed (see most recently Mans 1993: 93-5). Christ's role as the *custos* (guard) or the *gallus* positions him as not only the one who 'calls man to Eternal Life' (Mans 1993: 93) but one who keeps watch throughout the *nox profunda* (deep night). A precedent for the *gallus* metaphor can be traced to Mk. 13:35-6 which establishes the juxtaposition of night-day or sleep-wake in a Christian context (Mk. 13:35-6 *uigilate ergo nescitis enim quando dominus domus ueniat sero an media nocte an galli cantu an mane. Ne cum uenerit repente inueniat uos dormientes*, cf. also Eph. 5:14 *propter quod dicit surge qui dormis et exsurge a mortuis et inluminabit tibi Christus*). Accordingly, the development of the surrounding metaphor (sleep = death = impiety / wakening = life = salvation) is extended across the entire hymn, for which Christ is given not only the metaphoric position of *gallus* and *praeco diei* (herald of day) but also the metonymic *lux* (light) which carries salvation.

Nauta

1.13 *Hoc nauta uires colligit* (at this the sailor gathers strength)

The image of the sailor (*nauta*) as a reference and representation of human experience has some precedent in the OT from the stories of Noah and Jonah (cf. Gn. 6:14 *fac tibi arcam de lignis leuigatis mansiunculas in arca facies*, Jonah 1:5 *et timuerunt nautae et clamauerunt uiri ad deum suum*), and while there is some evidence in the NT, it is not used figuratively, but rather as a *literal* depiction of Jesus' power over nature (Mk 4: 38-9 *et erat ipse in puppi supra ceruical dormiens . . . et exsurgens comminatus est uento et dixit mari tace obmutesce et cessauit uentus et facta est tranquillitas magna*)⁴⁶ or the dangers on the sea (cf. Act. 27:30-1 *nautis uero quaerentibus fugere de nauis cum misissent scapham in mare sub obtentu quasi a prora inciperent anchoras extendere dixit Paulus centurioni et militibus nisi hii in nauis manserint uos salui fieri non potestis*). In Tertullian, the term is associated with

⁴⁶ Cf. also Mt. 8:23-7; Lk. 8:22-5.

immoral and licentious behaviour (cf. Tert. *adv. Val.* 12 *uidemus cotidie nauticorum lasciuias gaudiorum*), and generally the metaphor of life-as-sea-voyage is less frequent in Biblical literature than one might expect. In the Classical tradition, the image dates back as far as the *Odyssey* and in Latin, of course, the *Aeneid*.⁴⁷ In Roman iambs the more figurative sense is developed in Horace (cf. Hor. *epod.* 15.7-8 *dum pecori lupo et nautis infestus Orion / turbaret hibernum mare*) whose *propempticon* for a Vergilian departure in Ode 1.3 (Hor. *carm.* 1.3.1-6 *sic te diua potens Cypri / . . . nauis, quae tibi creditum / debes Vergilium*) has been read by Clark as a metaphor for sailor-as-poet (Clark 2004: 8).⁴⁸

In hymn 1, we find a series of geographically-inspired images (sky, land, and sea) which serve to emphasise the grandeur of God (1.1-12). The evocation of the *freta ponti* (straights of the sea) is perhaps the most evangelical of these and most representative of human experience (Walpole 1922: 60, Fontaine 162). Here, the *nauta* emerges as a solitary figure, juxtaposed to the *gallus-as-Christ* (1.18, and see *gallus*) and dependent upon his omnipotence (*hoc*). The symbolism and comparison of the world to a troubled sea is further guided by the *petra ecclesia* (rock of the church) a phrase which inhabits the metaphoric seascape.⁴⁹ Interestingly, the image also lies embedded in one of the few cases of hysteron proteron in the text: 1.13-4 *hoc nauta uires colligit / pontique mitescunt freta*.

Piscis

6.13 *Piscis bonus pia est fides* (the good fish is pious faith)

The symbolic connection between Christianity and *piscis* (fish) and *piscator* (fisherman) is clearly Biblical (cf. Mt. 13:47 *iterum simile est regnum caelorum sagenae missae in mare et ex omni genere congreganti*; Jn. 21:11 *ascendit Simon Petrus et traxit rete in terram plenum magnis piscibus centum quinquaginta tribus*). The metaphor was developed early by Tertullian (Tert. *bapt.* 1 *sed nos pisciculi*

⁴⁷ Roger Brock (2013) has recently dedicated a chapter of his text on political imagery to sea metaphors, though that text was published too near the completion of this thesis for a thorough examination.

⁴⁸ Clark makes note of Vergil's own figurative sea imagery in Verg. *georg.* 1.40 *da facilem cursum, atque audacibus adnue coeptis*.

⁴⁹ Common elsewhere in Ambrose's work, cf. 6.14 *mundi supernatans salum*; Ambr. *Virg.* 118 *nauis ecclesia est, quae . . . in hoc bene nauigat mundo*.

secundum nostrum Iesum in aqua nascimur) and the symbolism of the ἰχθύς (fish)⁵⁰ appears in first century Roman catacombs and inscriptions.⁵¹

In hymn 6.13, *piscis bonus pia est fides* (the good fish is pious faith) seems to contain several overlapping metaphors. Aside from the general correlation between Christians-as-fishermen and Christ-as-fish, as in 6.10 *piscatus est Verbum Dei* (he fished the word of God), one also senses the invocation of Christians-as-fishers-of-men. There is further division between *piscis bonus* (good fish) and *piscis malus* (bad fish) as in Mt. 13:47-50 (see above). Fontaine notes that this distinction not only evokes an allusion to NT scripture, but may insinuate the growing tension between the Arian (bad fish) and Nicene (good fish) (Fontaine 325). The syntax and word order of the line is also reminiscent of 10.25 *scutum uiro sua est fides* (see below) and 11.14 *uoces, ubi factum est fides?*.

Scutum

10.25 *Scutum uiro sua est fides* (his faith is a shield to man)

Contiguous with the martyr-as-soldier imagery, *scutum* (shield) as a metaphor for God's protection draws directly from the OT and NT (cf. Ps. 17:31 *Deus . . . scutum est omnium sperantium in se*; Eph. 1:16 *sumentes scutum fidei*). Ambrose quotes these lines directly in *De uirginibus* (Ambr. *Virg.* 2.4.29 *scutum fidei, quo uulnus repellas*) and makes further allusion in *De spiritu sancto* (Ambr. *Spir.* 3.7.46 *accipientes scutum fidei, in quo possitis omnia tela maligni ignita extinguere*).

In hymn 10, *scutum* (shield) occurs within a broader military imagery (*tela, triumphus, castra, arma*) in the narrative of the martyrdom of three Christian soldiers (Felix, Nabor, and Victor). Both the terminology and descriptive progression culminate in 10.25-6 *scutum uiro sua est fides / et mors triumphus* (faith is a shield to man / death a triumph) whereby a combination of metaphor and oxymoron seems to emphasise the Biblical precept. For further discussion, see *Christi milites* (§4.3.2) and *mors triumphus* (§4.3.1).

⁵⁰ I.e. as an acronym for Christ's name.

⁵¹ See H. Achelis (1888), *Das Symbol des Fisches und die Fischdenkmäler der römischen Katacomben* (Marburg).

4.3.3 Metonymy

As contrasted with metaphor, metonymy is employed when a person, thing, or concept is invoked by means of a closely associated attribute. In hymn 2, for example, Christ is represented by the natural objects that are part of God's creation: *lux* (light), *dies* (day), and *aurora* (dawn, cf. 2.3 *lux lucis* (light of light); 2.4 *dies dierum illuminans* (day of days giving light); 2.30 *Aurora totus prodeat* (let the dawn, the entire, appear). In this way, such terms can be read as metonymical because Christians fundamentally believe that all things are part of God's creation and part of God (as differentiated, say, from Lucretian views of *nullam rem e nihilo*),⁵² and it seems, from a theological perspective, significant to label them as distinct from metaphor. From the perspective of simplification, however, such metonymical constructions containing natural phenomenon or symbolic power appear to present extensions within the lexical component, as nominal forms are given alternate, often appositionally constructed forms rather than regularized repetitive constructs. A few of the more notable phrases are listed here:

Aula Regia

5.16 *uersatur in templo Deus* (God is moving in the temple)

5.18 *pudoris aula regia* (the royal palace of honour)

Several different metaphors are employed in the *hymni* to signify the 'honour' (*pudor*) and 'bearing' (*partus*) of the Virgin Mary. In hymn 5, the two most overt occurrences are found in the quasi-metonymic allusion to the references of *aula regia* (royal court) and *templum* (temple) as figurative expressions for Mary's womb. In the former (*aula regia*) Walpole (1922: 54) notes the extended usage in Ambrose's other writings (cf. Ambr. *In Luc.* 10.132 *quia cognouerat per Filii mortem mundi redemptionem, aula regalis putabat se et sua morte publico muneri aliquid addituram*) though in a much less suggestive (and physical) description. A more consistent phrasing occurs in the *De institutione uirginibus* (Ambr. *Inst. uirg.*

⁵² Lucr. 1.149-50 *principium cuius hinc nobis exordia sumet, / nullam rem e nihilo gigni diuinitus umquam.*

12.79 *habitauit in nobis quasi rex sedens in aula regali uteri uirginalis*) which appears to invoke the passage from Psalm 44:15-16 *uirgines . . . adducentur in templum regis*. It is worthy of note that both prose texts use *regalis* instead of *regia*, an observation that Fontaine attributes to the lexical distinction between poetic and prose usage (Fontaine 290).

Petra Ecclesiae

1.15 *hoc ipse petra ecclesiae* (At this, he himself the rock of the church)

See *Ambrose-isms* §4.2.1

4.3.4 Synecdoche

At least two metaphoric expressions may be better classified as synecdoche, or the representation of an individual or object through one of its parts: 1.23 *mucro latronis conditur* (the blade of the thief is sheathed); 2.14 *dentem retundat inuidi* (may he dull the tooth of the jealous). In the former occurrence, *mucro* (blade) is used to signify the larger image of *latro* (thief), a metonymic term which symbolises temptation, evil-doing, and in some Christian contexts, Satan (cf. Prud. *perist* 1.106 *His modis spurcum latronem martyrum uirtus quatit*). Here the surrounding terminology of night (1.18 *gallus iacentes excitat*) and brigandism (1.7 *nocturna lux uiuantibus*) enhance the imagery of the *mucro latronis* (blade of the thief) and present the *gallus* (cock) and *praeco diei* (herald of day) as illuminating salvations. The second occurrence (2.14 *dentem retundat inuidi*) invokes a Biblical association with Satan as well as image of Christian persecution and martyrdom. In Tertullian and Lactantius, *dens* (tooth, fang) is already associated with God's Judgment (Tert. *adv. Marc.* 1.27 *cui nullus ignis coquitur in gehenna, cui nullus dentium frendor horret in exterioribus tenebris*; Lact. *instit.* 6.10.19 *ex draconis alicuius dentibus*) both of which seem to allude to Biblical passages like those in OT and NT (Jb. 16:10 *et comminans mihi infremuit contra me dentibus suis hostis meus*; Mt. 13:50 *et mittent eos in caminum ignis ibi erit fletus et stridor dentium*).

4.3.5 Conclusions

Rhetorical features occur regularly throughout the *hymni* collection. In several instances oxymoron, metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche provide a variant means of depicting objects, experiences, and theological concepts. The employment of *aula regia* (palace of honour) or *thalamo* (chamber) as alternate expressions for Mary's womb, or *petra* (rock), *piscis* (fish), and *gallus* (cock) as expressions for Christ can only be read as stylisations and complexifications within the lexis. On the whole, it is significant to note that the collection exhibits a highly developed use of such features that are manipulated for artistic and illustrative effect.

4.4 Repetition

The employment of repetitive figures deserves separate examination. So developed and variant are the repetends in the *hymni* that they might seem worthy of an entirely independent study.⁵³ What follows here is a limited discussion of repetitive constructions that indicates a stylistic significance in the text, and thus it should be noted that the aim of the discussion is to highlight aesthetic choices in the hymns, *not* to reflect historical patterns (for a systematic listing of that nature, see Landgraf (1881) or Wills (1996)). Still, it is worth mentioning that repetition, and especially polyptoton, seems to play a significant role in the prosodic and prosaic Classical tradition (cf. Cic. *Amic.* 5 *ut tum ad senem senex de senectute, sic hoc libro ad amicum amicissimus scripsi de amicitia*), as well carrying definite Biblical precedent (cf. Ps. 83:5 *saecula saeculorum*, see Berlin 1978). Both Eduard Norden and Martin have also observed repetition's inherent relevance to the hymn genre (Norden 1923: 157, Martin 1938: 88). The Hymn of the Arval Brethren (*CIL* 2104.32-7), for example, is comprised of heavily repetitive structures, while the *Peruigilium Veneris* demonstrates a consistent 'refrain'.

Some features of stylistic *repetitio* (e.g. anaphora) might seem to indicate a greater level of lexical and syntactic regularization when compared to others (e.g. etymological word-play), yet on the whole, as Jeffrey Wills suggests, almost all

⁵³ As noted by Berlin (1978: 35), parallelism is perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of Biblical rhetoric. It has been shown that the aesthetic is shared with Sumerian texts (Berlin 1978), and in this direction, the broader influence of eastern literary aesthetics on the *hymni* could be an important topic of comparative investigation.

repetitions demonstrate a considerably developed and varied pattern of sounds, words, and clausal structures.⁵⁴ Consequently, repetends in the Ambrosian collection seem to constitute a major element of the verse aesthetic, and in an attempt to elucidate the hymns' style, this discussion will outline patterns of evidence from three distinct categories: (1) phonetic repetition (e.g. alliteration, assonance, homoeoteleuton, etymological word-play), (2) word repetition (anaphora, epiphora, mesidiplosis) and (3) clause repetition (isocolon, tricolon).⁵⁵

4.4.1 Phonetic Repetition

Alliteration

Alliteration occurs regularly in Latin literature of all periods (cf. Ter. *Eun.* 780 *solus Sannio servat*, which Donatus comments on as *παρόμοιον* (Don. Comm. Ter. *Eun.* 1.19 *haec figura παρόμοιον dicitur*, also Verg. *Aen.* 3.183 *casus Cassandra canebat*, etc.), and yet it is significant to note its prevalence as a stylistic element in Ambrosian verse (cf. 12.9-10 *Primus Petrus apostolus / nec Paulus impar gratia*; 13.31-2 '*Versate me, martyr uocat, / uorate, si coctum est, iubet*'). Repeated vowel sounds (especially in line initial or adjacent position, cf. 5.25 *Aequalis aeterno Patri*, 7.25 *multiplicabatur magis*, 10.7-8 *extrema terrae finium / exulque nostri nominis*) are common in the text and appear to have almost incantatory effect. Patterns of vocalic variation are also not unusual (cf. 13.25-6 *piorum perpetes . . . profecto*),⁵⁶ and one may observe that phonetic repetition frequently occurs across lines and stanzas – an aspect that must have been forceful when performed aloud (especially in antiphonal arrangement).⁵⁷ On the whole, it can be observed that many alliterations are frequently used for semantic or metaphoric emphasis (cf. 9.17 *mysterium mirabile!*, 11.14 *ubi factum est fides?*), and while it may be difficult to conclude any definitive relationship between alliteration and meaning it has been observed that the emphasis on alliterative patterns leads to greater fluidity in the

⁵⁴ As Wills notes, 'repetends are never poetically the same. Even when identical in form and meaning, they occupy different spaces in linear work, have different acoustic neighbours, and are met by the reader with different expectations' (Wills 1996: 461).

⁵⁵ The principle work consulted is of course Wills (1996). Where other studies are cited, reference is given.

⁵⁶ The phenomenon is common in CL, cf. Cat. 115.8 *mentula magna minax*. See Wills (1996: 25).

⁵⁷ Especially when the sound repeats across stanzas, cf. Hymn 1.24-5.

poetic narrative (Roberts 1989: 19). An account of occurrences, divided by position, is provided here:

Adjacent

1.16	canente culpam diluit
3.1	qui corde Christum suscipit
4.3	diem decoro lumine
5.15	uexilla uirtutum micant
5.19	geminae gigas substantiae
5.25	Aequalis aeterno Patri
7.9	seu stella partum uirginis
7.25	multiplicabatur magis
8.4	pio sacrata sanguine
8.5	matura martyrio fuit
8.17	Aras nefandi numinis
8.26	nam ueste se totam tegens
8.27	pudoris praestitit
9.2	sancto serenus lumine
9.17	mysterium mirabile
10.2	Mediolani martyres
10.10	mercede magna sanguinis
10.23	munitus armis ambulat
10.28	Laudense misit martyres
12.2	diem sacrauit saeculi
12.9	Primus Petrus apostolus
12.30	concurrere plebem poli
13.25	Verae piorum perpetes
14.18	sanguis sacratus funditur
14.32	in sempiterna saecula

Separated within the line

1.17	surgamus ergo strenue
2.18	casto fideli corpore
3.25	Cui fidem caelestibus
5.2	super Cherubim qui sedes
6.13	Piscis bonus pia est fides

8.13	Prodire quis nuptum putet
9.1	Hic est dies uerus Dei
9.20	carnis uitia mundans caro!
10.11	sancto repleuit spiritu
10.25	scutum uiro sua est fides
11.14	uoces, ubi factum est fides?
11.18	mortis sacrae meritum probat
12.13	Verso crucis uestigio
13.15	successor aequus syngrapham

Adjacent across lines

3.7-8	uotisque praestat sedulis Sanctum mereri Spiritum
6.5-6	captis solebat piscibus patris senectam pascere
7.31-2	intacta quae non fregerant fragmenta subrepunt uiris
10.31-2	reuecti in ora principum plaustri triumphalis modo

Seperated across lines

1.5-6	praeco diei iam sonat noctis profundae peruigil
2.18-9	casto fideli corpore; fides calore ferueat
8.9-10	Metu parentes territi claustrum pudoris auxerant
9.2-3	sancto serenus lumine quo diluit sanguis sacer
9.11-2	iustosque praeuio gradu praeuenit in regnum Dei
9.17-8	mysterium mirabile ut abluat mundi luem
9.31-2	consumpta mors ictu suo perisse se solam gemat!
12.9-10	Primus Petrus apostolus

- nec **P**aulus impar gratia
 13.25-6 Verae **p**iorum **p**erpetes
 inopes **p**rofecto sunt opes;
 14.1-2 Aeterne Christi **m**unera
 et **m**artyrum uictorias

*Line initial*⁵⁸

- 2.19-20 fides calore **f**erueat
 fraudis uenena nesciat.
 3.30-1 **p**artumque uirginis sacrae
peccata qui mundi tulit
 5.15-6 **u**exilla **u**irtutum micant,
uersatur in templo Deus
 10.7-8 **e**xrema terrae finium
exulque nostri nominis
 10.14-6 **c**ruore sacro martyrum
castrisque raptos impiis
Christo sacrauit milites
 10.30-1 **r**apti quadrigis corpora
reuecti in ora principum
 12.3-4 **P**etri triumpham nobilem
Pauli coronam praeferens
 12.5-8 **C**oniunxit aequales uiros
cruor triumphalis necis;
 . . . / **C**hristi **c**oronauit fides.
 13.31-2 ‘**V**ersate me, martyr **u**ocat,
uorate, si coctum est, iubet.’⁵⁹
 14.3-4 **l**audes ferentes debitas
laetis canamus mentibus
 14.18-9 **s**anguis sacratus funditur
sed permanent immobiles

⁵⁸ See also examples of anaphora (§4.4.2).

⁵⁹ 13.31-2 is also an example of *paromoiosis*, as the sound is repeated in a parallel clause construction.

Line final

- 4.13-5⁶⁰ Te **cordis** ima **concinant**
te vox **canora concrepet**
te diligat **castus amor**
- 6.23-4 Se laudet ipse, se sonet
et laureatus **Spiritu**
scriptis coronetur suis.
- 11.7-8 latere sanguis non **potest**
qui clamat ad Deum **Patrem**
- 11.15-6 Sanatus impos **mentium**
opus fatetur **martyrum**
- 14.10-1 poenisque spretis **corporis**
mortis sacrae **compendio**

Across stanzas

- 1.23-5 mucro **latronis** conditur
lapis fides **reuertitur**.
Iesu, **labantes respice**
- 5.11-3 **uerbum** Dei factum est caro
fructusque **uentris** floruit.
Aluus tumescit **uirginis**,
- 6.24-6 **scriptis** coronetur suis.
Commune multis passio
cruorque delictum lauans
7. 28-9 iuges meatus **fontium**
inter manus **frangentium**
- 12.24-7 et uate tanto nobilis
Tantae per urbis ambitum
stipata **tendunt** agmina
trinis celebratur uiis

⁶⁰ For more on this passage see §3.7.

Assonance

Assonance, like alliteration, occurs throughout the hymns, and yet as Jocelyn notes, its comparative or comprehensive employment in Latin can be difficult to measure (Jocelyn 1999: 349). A comprehensive list of usages here might exceed the limits of this discussion, though the following examples are provided in passages that seem to demonstrate a connection between assonance and semantic or stylistic emphasis. Foremost, the instances at 4.1-3 and 5.21-4 indicate how assonance is frequently used in parallel metrical *sedes* at the beginning of the hymn or at an important narrative sequence:

2.23-4	laeti bibamus sob riam eb ri etatem Sp ir itus
4.1-3	deus creat or omnium polique rect or , uestiens diem dec or o lumine
5.21-4	e gressus eius a Pat re , r egressus eius ad Pat re m; excursus usque ad inf er os r ecursus ad sed e m D ei.
6.17-8	‘in principio er at V erbum et V erbum er at D eum
9.18	ut abluat m undi l uem
10.22	non arma Christi m il i tes

Homoeoteleuton

Instances of homoeoteleuton are also common to Latin literature (cf. Enn. *trag.* 92-4 *haec omnia uidi inflammari, / Priamo ui uitam euitari / Iouis aram sanguine turpari*), and occur often in CL poetry (cf. Cat. 2.1 *deliciae meae puellae*; Verg. *Aen.* 9.182-3 *ruebant / . . . tenebant*; see Shackleton Bailey 1994, Wills 1996:

419, H-S 706-7).⁶¹ In the *hymni*, homoeoteleuton is found in roughly half of the works:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1.18-9 | gallus iacentes excitat,
et somnolentos increpat |
| 1.22-4 | aegris salus refunditur,
mucro latronis conditur,
lapis fides reuertitur. |
| 2.10-1 | Patrem perennis gloriae,
Patrem potentis gratiae; |
| 3.5-6 | Qui corde Christum suscipit,
innodium sensum gerit, |
| 3.11-2 | mortisque regnum diruit
culpamque ab aevo sustulit |
| 5.9-10 | Non ex uirili semine,
sed mystico spiramine |
| 6.17-8 | ‘In principio erat Verbum
et Verbum erat apud Deum |
| 7.28-9 | iuges meatus fontium?
Inter manus frangentium |
| 8.2-3 | natalis est, quo spiritum
caelo refudit debitum |
| 14.2-3 | et martyrum uictorias
laudes ferentes debitas |

⁶¹ Over-employment was condemned by Cicero amongst others, cf. Cic. *orat.* 38 *et ut pariter extrema terminentur eundemque referant in cadendo sonum; quae in ueritate causarum et rarius multo facimus et certe occultius*). Instances in the *hymni* are sufficiently sporadic (within hymns and the collection overall) that there is little evidence to support that notion of a movement toward rhyme.

14.5-7 Ecclesiarum principes,
 belli triumphales duces
 caelestis aulae milites

4.4.2 Word Repetition

Word repetition first will be categorised in terms of position (anaphora, mesodiplosis, epiphora), and second in terms of function (gemination, polyptoton, parallelism, modification). In part, this is a result of the fact that poetic texts place significant emphasis on lexical placement and line breaks, for which it is imperative to acknowledge position (see Wills 1996: 13). Once relevant instances are provided, a brief comparative discussion of Classical figures follows.

Anaphora

The use of anaphora, or line/clause-initial repetition, features prominently in the text, and its employment (especially in examples of parallelism) may contribute to the reading of simplicity and regularization. When considered in functional terms, however, the usage of anaphoric parallelism does not always indicate a level of simplicity, and as Walpole notes, the particular use of parallelism in 1.18-21 (*gallus . . . gallus . . . gallo*) accentuates the central narrative of the hymn with a complex Biblical allusion (Walpole 1922: 33). Other passages have been noted for their parallel terms (cf. 1.9-15, 4.13-16), for which the use of prepositions, pronouns and adverbs has been seen to have classical precedent (Wills 1996: 397). Of the following examples, anaphora is divided between repetition of an identical form (parallelism) and repetition of a different form (modification):

Parallelism

1.9-15 **Hoc** excitatus Lucifer / soluit polum caligine,
 hoc omnis errorum chorus / uias nocendi deserit.
 Hoc nauta uires colligit / pontique mitescunt freta;
 hoc ipse petra ecclesiae

2.10-1 **Patrem** perennis gloriae,

- Patrem** potentis gratiae;
- 2.29-30 **Aurora** cursus prouehit;
aurora totus prodeat
- 4.13-6 **Te** cordis ima concinant,
te uox canora concrepet,
te diligat castus amor,
te mens adoret sobria,
- 4.21-2 **Dormire** mentem ne sinas,
dormire culpa nouerit;
- 8.5-6 **matura** martyrio fuit,
matura nondum nuptiis
- 10.21-2 **non** tela quaerunt ferrea,
non arma Christi milites;
- 14.25-6 **In his** paterna gloria,
in his uoluntas spiritus
- Modification*
- 1.18-21 **gallus** iacentes excitat, / . . . /
gallus negantes arguit. /
gallo canente spes redit.⁶²
- 4.29-30 **Christum** rogamus et Patrem
Christi Patrisque Spiritum;
- 8.21-3 **hic** ignis exstinguit fidem,
haec flamma lumen eripit.
hic, hic ferite! ut profluo (also *geminatio*)

⁶² Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 16-7 for parallels: . . . *hic illius arma / hic currus fuit; hoc regnum dea gentibus esse.*

Epiphora

Repeated words at the end of a clause or line (epiphora) are less frequent, but occur on at least eight occasions:

Parallelism

- 9.27-8 oriatur **uita omnium**,
 resurgat **uita omnium**!
- 11.11-2 nequimus esse **martyres**,
 Sed repperimus **martyres**.

Modification

- 5.21-2 Egressus eius a **Patre**,
 regressus eius ad **Patrem**;
- 6.27-8 hoc morte praestat **martyrum**
 quod fecit esse **martyres**.
- 13.13-4 Iam tunc in illo **martyre**
 egit triumphum **martyris**

Mesodiplosis

Repetition of a word within a line (mesodiplosis) occurs on roughly six occasions:

Parallelism

- 3.19-20 'en filius, **mater**, tuus
 apostole, en **mater** tua'
- 5.22-4 regressus eius **ad** Patrem;
 excursus usque **ad** inferos
 recursus **ad** sedem Dei.
- 7.21-2 Sic **quinque** milibus uirum
 dum **quinque** panes diuidit

9.24-5 reddatque **mors** uitam nouam ?
Hamum sibi **mors** deuoret

Modification

3.27-2 nec **credidit** plebs impia,
qui **credidit** saluus erit.
Nos **credimus** natum Deum

11.5-6 Piae **latebant** hostiae,
sed non **latebat** fons sacer;

Polyptoton / Geminatio

For words that do not follow any specific positional pattern, it seems best to classify them along more functional lines (polyptoton, gemination) given some subdivision of relative position (adjacent / separated):

Adjacent Polyptoton

1.8 a **nocte noctem** segregans

2.3-4 de **luce lucem** proferens,
 lux lucis et fons luminis;

Separated Polyptoton

1.3 et **temporum** das **tempora**

9.20 **carnis** uitia mundans **caro**!

11.1-2 Grates tibi, Iesu, **nouas** (by enjambment / *anadiplosis*)
 noui repertor muneris

Adjacent Geminatio

8.23 **hic, hic** ferite!

Etymological Wordplay

Certain examples of alliteration, assonance, consonance (and indeed polyptoton) may be best described as etymological word-play. The *hymni* exhibit numerous examples that seem to evidence another stylised aspect of the language:

1.6-8 **noctis** profundae peruigil
 nocturna lux vianibus
(Ernout & Meillet 1959: 794-5)

2.3-4 **lux** lucis et fons **luminis**
 dies dierum **illuminans**
(Ernout & Meillet 1959: 662-4)

7.23 **edentium** sub **dentibus**
(Ernout & Meillet 1959: 301-2)

7.29-32 Inter manus **frangentium**
 ... / intacta quae non **fregerant**
 fragmenta subrepunt uiris.
(Ernout & Meillet 1959: 446-7)

4.4.3 Further Remarks on Word Repetition

It is interesting, given the preponderance of repeated words in the *hymni*, to consider classical precedents and models. As Wills notes, the most marked positions for word repetition in classical authors appears to be at the beginning (anaphoric) and ending (epiphoric) of a line⁶³ (cf. Catul. 63.68-71 *ego nunc ... / ego uitam ...*, Prop. 2.25.41-44 *uidistis pleno ... / uidistis nostras ...*, Verg. *Aen.* 8.271-2 *hanc aram luco statuit, quae maxima semper / dicetur nobis et erit quae maxima semper*, Ov. *Met.* 9.791-2 *date munera templis, / nec timida gaudete fide! dant munera templis*). This stylistic tendency, according to Wills (1996: 397), is not ‘unusual, but also not common’, and it is understood to have been considerably rarer in quadruplet or triplet form (Wills 1996: 400-5). Such avoidance of a ‘dulling effect’ (Wills’

⁶³ Wills (1996: 390) counts more than two thousand examples in Latin poetry up to Juvenal, and the phenomenon is apparently adopted from the Greek, see Homer *Il.* 1.436-9; *Il.* 10. 228-32.

term) is not altogether consistent with the style of the *hymni* – where four of the eleven examples of anaphora contain three or more repetends (cf. 1.9-15 *hoc...hoc...hoc...*, and 4.13-6 *te...te...te...te*). This distinction and preference for patterns of three or four repetitive structures ought not to be exaggerated (since the hymns do repeat in couplets more often), but if Wills’ estimate of some twenty times greater frequency is accurate (Wills 1996: 400) then there appears to be some disparity in aesthetic. Furthermore, if we consider Wills’ table of adjacent word repetitions (Table 4.1) it is significant that the *hymni* appear to exhibit a somewhat average percentage of adjacent figures (per 1000 words) making it difficult to claim that the *hymni* are definitively more or less repetitive than CL texts:

TABLE 4.1 Adjacent Repetends in CL authors *from* Wills (1996)⁶⁴
 Classical Poets’ use of adjacent repetition, number given of repeated terms per 1000 words (edited to include Ambrose)

Lucretius	3.6
Ov. <i>Heroides</i> 1-14	3.9
Ov. <i>Amores</i>	3.1
Ov. <i>Ars Amatoria</i>	3.1
Hor. <i>Epodes</i>	2.7
Ambrose Hymns	2.5
Catullus	2.3
Persius	2.2
Verg. <i>Eclogues</i>	2.1
Manilius	2.0
Hor. Odes	1.3
Tibullus	1.1
Verg. Aeneid	1.1
Propertius	0.5
Juvenal	0.4
Verg. <i>Georgics</i>	0.4

4.4.4 Clause Repetition

Syntactic and clausal repetition (e.g. isocolon, tricolon) are not always included in discussions of functional and positional patterns.⁶⁵ Yet some mention of repeated clausal structure (often paratactic) is worthy of note. On numerous occasions, the *hymni* demonstrate a succession of syntactic constructions that exhibit a consistency of grammatical structure. Numerous such passages have already been

⁶⁴ Wills (1996: 390-1).

⁶⁵ As they can seem to be defined more by word order and syntax, see Wills (1996).

discussed as examples of parataxis (see §3.7.1), or they display other repetitive features, such as anaphora (§4.4.2) or homoeoteleuton (§4.4.1).

Isocolon

2.10-1 Patrem perennis gloriae,
 Patrem potentis gratiae;

9.27-8 moriatur uita omnium
 resurgat uita omnium!

10.19-20 pro rege uitam ponere
 decere pro Christo pati

14.17-8 Nudata pendent uiscera
 sanguis sacratus funditur

Tricolon

1.22-4 aegris salus refunditur,
 mucro latronis conditur,
 lapsis fides reuertitur.

4.14-6 te uox canora concrepet
 te diligat castus amor
 te mens adoret sobria

5.13-5 Aluus tumescit uirginis
 claustrum pudoris permanet
 uexilla uirtutum micant

Variations within such seemingly consistent passages are worthy of further exploration. In 4.14-6, for example, the repeated construction (accusative, nominative, adjective, verb) demonstrates certain regularity, accentuated of course by the anaphoric *te*. Such tricolon, it might seem, provides an excellent example of clausal simplification. But what is important to recognise, as Simonetti stresses, is that symmetry in the *hymni* frequently occurs with subtle variation (Simonetti 1952:

380).⁶⁶ In 4.14-6 this centres on verbal position; in 4.14 the verb (*concrepet*) is line-final, in 4.15 the verb (*diligat*) is secondary, and 4.16 (*adoret*) it is central. This movement of word order within seemingly straightforward cases of tricolon and anaphora underlines the subtle refinement of intensifying repetition. In the case of 4.14-6 the progression (*concrepare, diligere, adorare*) conveys a climax of semantic and theological meaning (to resound, to love, to adore). Similar instances of *symmetria variata* seem to occur in 5.13-5 and 10.19-20.⁶⁷

4.5 General Conclusions

To summarise, lexical and rhetorical aspects of the *hymni* present what appear to be considerable challenges to a notion of regularization in the text. Not only does the collection present a diverse amalgam of literary and linguistic influences (loan-words §4.2.2, proper nouns §4.2.4) but it emerges with words/phrases which have little or no clear precedent in the Latin language (Ambrose-isms §4.2.1). The fact that phrases like *petra ecclesiae* (rock of the church) and *mysticum spiramen* (mystical breath), for example, occur first in the *hymni* (and are so widely copied afterwards) evidences the unique and prominent role of originality and creativity in the collection.

Rhetorically, features of metonymy (§4.3.3), oxymoron §4.3.1), and metaphor (§4.3.2), further exhibit what seem to be discernible levels of poetic stylisation, and while certain constructions appear to borrow heavily from Classical or Biblical tradition (e.g. 1.21 *gallus*, 1.13 *nauta*, 6.13 *piscis*), others seem to demonstrate original rhetorical expressions (5.18 *aula regia* 13.10 *heres futuris sanguinis*) or recent borrowings from eastern theologies which have no clear history in Latin expression (2.23 *sobriam ebrietatem*).

The developed and variant use of repetition (§4.3.2) also, paradoxically, suggests a subtle level of variance and stylised language. While the recurrent use of anaphora (§4.4.2), epiphora (§4.4.2) and tricolon (§4.4.3) indicate what seem to be a levels of regularized grammar, Simonetti has observed (and the *hymni* show) that this regularization also presents subtle levels of *symmetria variata*. Furthermore,

⁶⁶ Simonetti's concept of symmetry and variation emerges often in Roberts' discussion of late antique aesthetics (Roberts 1989: 13, 37).

⁶⁷ For further discussion, see Simonetti (1952: 380-3).

examples of alliteration, assonance and etymological-wordplay (§4.4.1, §4.4.2) attest to considerable aspects of poetic stylisation. As Walpole and Simonetti recognise, numerous passages of repetition (phonological, word, and clause) play an integral role in the complex progression of narrative through intensifying parallelism.

Metre

5.1 Introduction

Simplification theory does not engage explicitly with quantitative metrics. Prosody in general lies outside of Mühlhäusler's extension and has not been regularly addressed in studies of sociolinguistic theory (Mühlhäusler 76-7). Still scholars of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* have highlighted the metrical component (exhibiting a system of regularized iambic quantity and regularized syllabic count) as a fundamental indicator of formal and stylistic simplicity (Norberg 1974: 139, Fontaine 63), and the topic deserves some attention.

Assumptions about formal regularity and simplification in the *Hymni Ambrosiani* should be cautiously investigated. Chapter 5 suggests that the regularity and extreme adherence to the iambic dimeter quantity actually represent a significant level of complexity in the Latin language. Closer prosodic research reveals that stichic iambic dimeter traditions (especially those that avoid resolved iambs) have little connection to verse forms deemed *popular*,¹ and that the formal structure of the collection may have ulterior motivations, namely a synthesis of traditions (Classical and Biblical) that produces a unique metrical aesthetic.

After the tradition and misrepresented popularity of the stichic iambic dimeter is presented, an outline of the metrical aspects of the *hymni* will be given, followed by instances of variation that occur.

5.2 Stichic Iambic Dimeter Traditions

A few observations concerning the literary tradition and cultural association of the metre of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* should be addressed prior to an analysis. The particular usage of the stichic iambic dimeter form in Classical prosody and its place in popular versification has presented several misconceptions that require specific note.

¹A distinction that is difficult to quantify, but Cameron (1980: 147) points directly to the *CLE*, and Herman (1967: 27-35) looks to epigraphy for *popular* or *vulgar* language.

The acatalectic iambic dimeter (⏏–⏏– ⏏–⏏–)² of the *hymni* can be marked by the repeated schema of two *metra* (⏏–⏏–) comprised of two iambic patterns³ (⏏–), of one light syllable (⏏) followed by one heavy (–). In the *hymni*, this stichic form is further organised into stanzas of four lines (quatrains), of which there are a consistent number (eight). The formal aesthetic can be set out as follows:

Quantity	Syllables (per line)	Stanzas (per hymn)	Verses (per stanza)	Lines (per hymn)
⏏–⏏– ⏏–⏏–	8	8	4	32

It should be mentioned that the quantitative iambs in the *Hymni Ambrosiani* generally allow for spondaic substitution in the first half of each metron. This convention appears to follow an accepted practice in classical iambic poetry – one that, as Morgan observes, establishes a distinctive light-heavy (⏏–) rhythm at the *end* rather than *beginning* of the dipodic unit (and thus substitutes spondee for iamb in the beginning of the metron).⁴ Ancient scholia on iambic metres, treatises on metrics, and ancient writers of *iambi* attest to this prevalence in Hellenic and Roman traditions, though Horace finds the phenomenon of greater substitution (and resolution) to be a particularly Roman innovation (cf. Hor. *ars* 254-62 *non ita pridem / tardior ut paulo grauiorque ueniret ad auris, / spondeos stabilis in iura paterna recepit / commodus et patiens, non ut de sede secunda / cederet aut quarta socialiter, Hic et in Acci / nobilibus trimetris adparet rarus, et Enni / in scaenam missos cum magno pondere uersus / aut operae celeris nimium curaque carentis /*

² See RM §84. The metre of the *hymni* according to ancient and modern sources, cf. Bede *de arte* 8.1 *sed et Ambrosiani eo maxime currunt, deus creator omnium . . . et ceteri perplures; in quibus pulcherrimo est decore compositus hymnus beatorum martyrum, cuius loca cuncta imparia spondeum, tenent iambum paria*; see Biraghi (1862: 29), Dreves (1893: 231), Walpole (1922: 23), Szövérfy (1964: 64), Simonetti (1988: 11), Fontaine (82-92). This is not to say other metres have not been proposed, see J. den Boeft (1993: 78-9) who suggests the glyconeus may have been influential. Also Fontaine (1981: 138). Some texts refer to the Latin terminology (*quaternarius*) for which Raven (1965:58-59) provides a point of distinction. But the division between this term (*quaternarius*) and the *iambic dimeter* can often be misleading (Gratwick 1999: 209), and since virtually all scholarship on the *hymni* use the terminology iambic dimeter, the convention will be followed here.

³ The whole terminology of ‘feet’ in podic analysis has been questioned (see Gratwick 1999: 209-11) and the terminology has been consciously avoided here, although for the sake of attention I will refer to individual constituents of the metron-unit when discussing rhythmic and syllabic variations (p. 176 ff. below).

⁴ Morgan (2010: 130-1) draws mainly from Gratwick (1999: 209).

aut ignoratae premit artis crimine turpi, Schol. *Hor. carm.* 1.7 (Keller 1902) *trimeter autem dicitur, qui habet sex iambos; dimeter, qui habet quattuor; iambicus trimeter tragicus, qui recipit pedes dextros spondeos primum, tertium, quintum, sinistros iambos secundum, quartum, sextum*).⁵ In part because of aesthetic distinctions found in the *Ars Poetica*, modern scholars have tended to divide the shorter iambic metres (e.g. trimeter and dimeter) between two employments:⁶ a ‘purer’ (i.e. unresolved) usage found in the late republic and Augustan poets (for example Horace’s *epodes*, cf. *Hor. epod.* 4.2 *tecum mihi discordia est*), and a ‘freer’ (i.e. more resolved) usage found in the earlier dramatists (cf. *Plaut. Pseud.* 204 *nimum stultus, nimum fui*; see Raven 1965: 41, Gratwick 1999: 209-37, Morgan 2010: 130-1).⁷ The diverse usages of all shorter iambic forms would extend well beyond the limits of this thesis, but it is important to note that by the time of Isidore of Seville (d. 636) the stichic dimeter was widely known as Ambrosian (cf. *Isid. eccl. off.* 1.6.13 *atque inde hymni ex eius nomine Ambrosiani uocantur*) and in the fourth century, the ‘purer’ dimeter occurs in more than four hundred lines of Ambrose, nearly two hundred lines of Ausonius, and more than fifteen hundred lines of Prudentius. Fontaine (Fontaine 83) has explained this usage as part of a classical lineage, charting Ambrose’s employment of the dimeter through Aristophanes, Laevius, Varro, Horace and Martial. Szövérfy endorses the form’s ‘combined influence from Horace and eastern hymnody’ (Szövérfy 1964: 64),⁸ and Simonetti alludes to a formal popularity and ancient tradition (Simonetti 1952: 414). Several other twentieth century scholars cite the use of the dimeter as the rise of a ‘perfectly simple metre’ (Rose 1936: 485), or as Charles Phillips put it, ‘a simpler and more natural type of prosody which no doubt had existed all along in the songs of the people’ (Phillips 1937: 54).

Yet there are substantial problems with this perception of the dimeter, and other scholars, including Alan Cameron (1980), have questioned the general

⁵ Reaffirmed by Gratwick (1999) who notes that the defining structure of the iambic dimeter is based on the light (˘) heavy (–) pattern at the *end* rather than *beginning* of the metrical unit (Gratwick 1999: 209).

⁶ Gratwick and Morgan suggest somewhat artificially, see Gratwick (1999: 209-37), Morgan (2010: 130-1). In a similar discussion of the iambic trimeter, Postgate (1925: 162) gives a third tradition, distinguishing between ‘purer’ forms which shown no spondaic substitution.

⁷ If Horace is to be taken as reliable evidence of the distinction between tradition, the ‘purer’ form distances itself from by its ‘freer’ counterpart through the privileging of the iamb in every part of the line, although again the reference is to dramatic, not stichic iambs (cf. *Hor. ars* 259-62 *et Enni / in scaenam missos cum magno pondere uersus / aut operae celeris nimum cura qua carentis / aut ignoratae premit artis crimine turpi* see also Morgan 2010: 131).

⁸ Citing Gaselee (1931: 14) and Norberg (1958: 69).

correlation between stichic iambic dimeters and ‘popular’ poetry. In fact, it is the general disparity between positions in late antique studies that remains problematic, not least because it continues to cloud our understanding of aesthetics in the *hymni*, and the topic seems worthy of further investigation.

According to Quintilian, the masters of the Roman *iambus* were Catullus, Bibaculus, and Horace (Quint. *inst.* 10.1.96 *iambus non sane a Romanis celebratus est ut proprium opus, sed aliis quibusdam interpositus: cuius acerbitas in Catullo, Bibaculo, Horatio, quamquam illi epodos interuenit, reperiatur*), though significantly Quintilian notes the stichic form was not much practised (*non celebratus*). Horace’s *Epodes* use the iambic dimeter only with an alternating iambic trimeter (i.e. epodically, cf. Hor. *epod.* 1-10)⁹ or a dactylic hexameter (cf. Hor. *epod.* 14 and 15), and Catullus does not exhibit the iambic dimeter in stichic form.¹⁰ Cicero, too, does not discuss the stichic dimeter (Cic. *de orat.* 3.182 *Nam cum sint numeri plures, iambum et troachaeum frequentem segregat ab oratore Aristoteles, Catule, uester*), and Tacitus and Marius Victorinus (pseudo) are relatively silent on the subject (cf. Tac. *dial.* 10.4 *et elegorum lasciuias et iamborum amaritudinem*; Ps. Mar. Victorin. *gramm.* 182.11 *primo trimetro iambico acatalecto, sequenti dimetro adaeque iambico acatalecto*). Even Porphyryon, in his commentary on Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, provides only a basic reference to the use of the dimeter in dramatic verse as a gloss to Horace’s mention of Archilochus and the ‘invention’ of iambic poetry (Porph. *Hor. ars* 78-9 *Primus Archilochus iambos scripsit in Lycambam socerum suum. Hunc socci cepere pedem grandesque coturni: quo modo comoediae et tragoediae ornantur, qui pes iambicus appellatur*).¹¹

The most direct, though limited, evidence of the stichic dimeter in the classical period seems to come from the fragments of Laevius (c. 80 B.C.E.) (cf. frag. 1, 4, 6, 15, 18, 23, 27 (Courtney (1993)) whose works surface in the Priscian’s *Institutiones grammaticae* (Hertz & Keil 1855-9) and which demonstrate resolved iambs in roughly half of the lines:

⁹ Cf. also Mart. 1.49; 1.61; 3.14; 3.14; 9.77; 11.59.

¹⁰ Bibaculus, our ‘third master’, is lost except for his hendecasyllables, see Courtney (1993:192, Bibac. frg. 1-2 = Suet. *De gramm.* 11).

¹¹ In Diomedes we garner a slightly clearer glimpse of the form’s connection to the glyconic (Diom. *gramm.* 3.510.22 *Glyconium ex iambico dimetrum in Horatio tale est, non ebur neque aurum*), a notion raised by den Boeft (1998: 79-9).

Laevius frg. 6 (Courtney 1993)

humum humidum pedibus fodit

Laevius frg. 15 (Courtney 1993)

complexa somno corpora o-
periuntur ac suaui quie
dicantur

Laevius frg. 27 (Courtney 1993)

philtrata omnia undique eruunt ;
antipathes illud quaeritur,
trochiscili, ungues, taeniae,
radiculae, herbae, surculi,
saurae inlices bicodulae, hin-
neientium dulcedines.

Christine Mohrmann (1947: 165) and other scholars (see Raby 1954: 33) have suggested that the lack of literary evidence from the republican or Augustan period only indicates that the stichic dimeter emerged as a more ‘popular’ metre later (nearer the reign of Hadrian), where we find the famous *animula, uagula, blandula* fragment (Hadrian frg. 3 Courtney 1993). Somewhat more substantial evidence for this theory emerges in the writing of Terentianus Maurus (c. mid-3rd century(?))¹² who provides at least some evidence of a stichic tradition at the end of his *De litteris, de syllabis, de metris*:

Terent. Maur. 2439-2451 (Cignolo 2002)

Nec non dimetrus ex trimetro redditur,
quacumque partem tertiam si detrahas;
stabitque versus octo tantum syllabis,
nisi quando sumet dactylum aut contrarium,
locoue iambi qui probatur tribrachys;
talisque uersus hic erit,
phaselus ille quem uides.

¹² See Cignolo (2002: xxv-xxix). The dates for Terentianus range from mid-second century to fourth century. Courtney (1993: 373) estimates the late third century.

Plerumque nec carmen modo,
 sed et uolumen explicat;
 ut pridem Avitus Alfius
 libros poeta plusculos,
 usus dimetro perpeti,
 conscribit excellentium.

(Nor is the dimeter not derived from the trimeter, and if you remove the third part wherever [suits] it will stand as a verse of eight syllables, unless it admits a dactyl or the opposite [anapaest] or the tribrach, which is allowed in place of the iamb; and the line will be as this: "that phaselus which you see". Often [the dimeter] realises not only a poem, but an entire book, as in old times, Avitus Alfius, a poet [who wrote] rather many books of *Excellentes* using the dimeter in continuous form).

The significance and place of Avitus' *libri plusculi* in Roman culture would certainly shed some light on the issue,¹³ but that significance of those texts remains difficult to determine as a result of the lack of material or subsequent references to Avitus in other works. If Avitus' *libri plusculi* were *plusculi* (and there is little reason to doubt Terentianus' account), it is still difficult to assume they were *populares* (in fact Terentianus' *pridem* seems to suggest they are somewhat dated). In fact, in the material collected in Courtney's *Fragmentary Latin Poets* (1993), Blänsdorf (2011), and all extant writings by the major Latin poets we are dealing with roughly eighty, heavily resolved lines of stichic acatalectic iambic dimeters.¹⁴ That evidence appears largely inconclusive with regard to a tradition of stichic iambic dimeters, and it remains a difficult proposition to suggest that Classical models, and in particular Horatian *iambi*, represent the most significant formal influence on the structure of the *hymni*. It is true, we seem to find slightly greater evidence in the poetic forms of the second and third centuries, but even then our material is fragmentary and full of resolution:

¹³ If it is possible due to the fragmentary evidence. For more on the iambic tradition in the so-called *poetae nouelli*, see Castorini (1949), Cameron (1980: 127-75), Cignolo (2002).

¹⁴ Cignolo goes so far as to credit Alfius Avitus or one of the *poetae nouelli* as being the first to use the acatalectic iambic dimeter as a stichic form (2002: 543).

Hadrian (c. 140?)

frg. 3 (Courtney 1993)

animula uagula blandula,
hospes comesque corporis,
quae nunc abibis in loca,
pallidula rigida nudula,
nec ut soles dabis iocos?

P. Alfius Avitus (c. 3rd century?)

frg. 2 (E. Courtney 1993)

tum litterator creditos
ludo Faliscum liberos
causatus in campi patens
exteraque muri dicere
spatiando paulatim trahit
hostilis ad ualli latus

Marianus (c. 3rd century?)

frg. (E. Courtney 1993)

sed diua flaua et candida
Roma, Aesculapi filia,
nomen nouum Latio facit,
quod conditricis nomine
Romam sub ipso omnes uocant.

5.3 Epigraphic Evidence

It seems relevant also to consider epigraphic material that may contain the dimeter form. The recent work by Courtney (1995) and Cugusi (2007a, 2012) also seems to suggest that the stichic iambic dimeter was somewhat of a *struttura metrica rara* (Cugusi 2007a: 59) and certainly not one we might call popular.¹⁵ In Cugusi's examination of epigraphy from Pannonia, for example, he lists twenty-three inscriptions written in dactylic hexameters, seventeen in elegiac couplets, three *versificazione 'mista'*, eleven incomplete dactylic forms and only one example of

¹⁵ See also Green's discussion of Ausonius (Green 1991: 261).

the stichic iambic dimeter. That fragment, a limestone plate apparently belonging to a larger panel found at the base of a house near the Austrian border, contains lines that are very difficult to decipher:

frg. 19 (Cugusi 2007a) = Hoffiller – Saria 470
(c. 2nd century? Toplice Varazadin)

[- - -] cursu perpeti
[- - u] olatu similis
[- -] secutus nobilem
[- qua] m credebam repperi
[- - -] cordant ignea
[- - -] flamma persona
[- - -] morbo luitur
[- - -] u . . . corpus est
[- - - - -] uiscera
[- - - - - n] ympha est
[- - - - -] mo . . . uri . . .

In the analysis of inscriptions from Spain published last year (Cugusi 2012), Cugusi finds more than fifty-five dactylic hexameters, forty elegiacs, six trochaic *septenarii*, and not one stichic iambic dimeter.¹⁶

Examples from Courtney's *Musa Lapidaria* (1995) also seem to suggest that the stichic iambic dimeter was a rare form. In frg. 137 (Courtney 1995 = *IRT* 231), Courtney lists a six-line dimeter inscribed in an Attic limestone base in rustic capitals located near Tripoli. Deciphering that text, especially line 3, has proven a considerable challenge (thus making it hard to discern the 'purity' of the verse (see Reynolds 1955: 142)). Nevertheless, the fragment does seem to be the marker of a religious offering and thus relevant not only for its metre but for its connection to the genre of prayer (the date of the inscription remains uncertain):

¹⁶ Consequently, if we look at Cugusi's 2012 material, we find several interesting inscriptions of heavily resolved epodic or iambic senarius writings as, for example, frg. 101 (Cugusi 2012) a humorous couplet on the back of a clay *catinum* from the Tarragona region (dated to the first century B.C.E.). The Tarragona inscription is significant for its potential connection to more 'popular' versification insofar that the nature of the evidence (a domestic item with a personalized narrative) may evidence a more likely connection with common verse. It is these inscriptions (epodic or stichic *senarii* akin to 'looser' dramatic passages in Plautus) that seem to occur more often, found in at least thirteen inscriptions from Cugusi's 2012 material, including tombstones and vase writings.

frg. 137 Courtney 1995 = *IRT* 231
(3rd century?, Tripoli)

Liber pa[t]er [sa]nctissime
arcem [meam qui p]ossides
et ad s[acellum uoue]ram
u[r]bus [tuum et coni]ugis
et hi[c tibi] uotum dico
dentes duos Lucas bouis

(most holy father, Liber, who are the
master of my citadel, I had vowed at
your shine ?in the city [?also for my
wife] and here I dedicate to you what
I promised, two elephant tusks.)
trans. Reynolds 1955

In frg. 200 (Courtney 1995 = *CIL* VI.10082) we find perhaps one of the most easily readable dimeter marbles (2nd century), containing a funerary epitaph for a horse ('Speudusa'). The evidence is intriguing, not because of the dedication to a pet (see Lazenby 1949), but for its unusual place as one of the few passages of unresolved stichic dimeters, one that contains heavy parallelism and homoteteleuton in the first few lines:

frg. 200 Courtney 1995 = *CIL* VI.10082
(2nd century?, Rome)

Gaetula harena prosata
Gaetulo equino consita
cursando flabris compara
aetate abacta uirgini
Speudusa Lethen incolis

(born from sandy Gaetulia
conceived in a Gaetulan stud
matching the winds in speed,
you, Quickfoot, reft from your
virgin youth dwell in Lethe)

trans. Courtney (1995)

A general overview of the extant material, literary and epigraphic (Table 5.1), demonstrates that the evidence of stichic acatalectic iambic dimeters is extremely limited, and the popularity of the form is inconclusive until the end of the fourth century. It is not until the last decades of Ambrose's life, that is, that we find a large number of unresolved stichic iambic dimeter compositions, and if we take metrical adherence as a defining element it becomes significant to recognise that Ambrose resolves iambs in only four percent of his lines, Prudentius roughly five percent, and Boethius roughly four percent. As a comparative figure, Laevius resolves iambs in roughly fifty percent of his lines, Alfius Avitus roughly twenty percent (Hadrian also roughly twenty percent):

TABLE 5.1 Instances of Stichic Acatalectic Iambic Dimeters Prior to (or contemporary with) the *Hymn Ambrosiani*, as gathered from *CLE* vol. 1-3, *PLM* vol. 1-6, Engström (1912), Courtney (1993, 1995)), Cugusi (2007a, 2012), Blänsdorf (2011), the works of Ausonius (Prete 1978), the works of Prudentius (Thomson 1969), and Boethius' *De consolazione philosophiae* (Moreschini 2000).¹⁷ [? = uncertain]

<i>Author/ Text</i>	<i>Date / Origin</i>	<i>Stichic Iambs (# lines)</i>	<i>Resolutions (# of lines with)</i>	<i>Strophic Structure (Discernable)</i>
<i>Laevius</i> frg. 1, 4, 6, 15, 18, 21?, 23, 27 (Courtney 1993)	c. 80 B.C.E. Rome	23	12 (also <i>synapheia</i>)	None
<i>Varro</i> Men. frg. 511? (Astbury 2002)	d. 27 B.C. Rome	2	2	None
<i>Hadrian</i> frg. 3 (Courtney 1993)	d. 138 C.E.? Rome	5	2	None
<i>Apuleius</i> frg. 6 (Courtney 1993) = Gellii Amicus Ignotus (Blänsdorf 2011)	d. 180 C.E Carthage	17	2	None
<i>Alfius Avitus</i> frg. 1, 2, 3 (Courtney 1993)	c. 3 rd Cent.? Spain?	11	2	None
<i>Marianus</i> (Courtney 1993)	c. 3 rd Cent.? ?	5	1	None
<i>Serenus</i> frg. 1?, 2?, 3 (Courtney 1993)	c. 3 rd Cent.? ?	5?	1	None
<i>Terentianus</i> (Courtney)	c. 3 rd Cent.? ?	3	0	None

¹⁷ Two possible texts are omitted here. Cugusi (2007a: 59) lists Zarker (1958) 22, 23 as containing two iambic dimeter inscriptions, but the text is an unpublished 1958 dissertation (Princeton) that I was unable to locate. As for the refrain of the fourth century *Psalmus Responsorius* (Herzog 1989: 328-9) the metre does not appear iambic.

1993) De Lit. De syl. De Metr. 2444- 2451		8	0	None
<i>Ausonius</i> Parecbasis, Egressio Cento Nupt. X Epist. X Epist. XII 71-82 Epigram. 48, 98 In Norarium (Prete 1978)	d. 395 C.E. Bourdeaux	22 9 3 105 11 10 36	5 0 0 12 1 3 5	None None None None None None None
<i>Ambrose of Milan</i> Hymni 1-14	d. 397 C.E. Milan	448	17	Quatrains Eight stanzas
<i>Prudentius</i> cath. 1, 2, 11, 12 perist. 2, 5	d. 405? Spain	535 1160	27 65	Quatrains Quatrains
<i>Boethius</i> cons. 1.5 (anapaest dimeter catalectic, cons. 1.6 (glyconic), cons. 2.5 (paroem), cons. 2.8 (glyconic), cons. 3.7 (Ion. dim.?) cons. 3.12 (glyconic) cons. 4.3 (glyconic), cons. 5.4 (glyconic)	d. 524 Rome	48 22 30 30 6 58 39 40	7 0 3 0 0 1 0 0	Quatrains Quatrains
<i>CLE 217</i> = <i>CIL</i> III.8298	? Dalmatia	3	0	None
<i>CLE 218</i> = <i>CIL</i> VI.10082	c. 2 nd cent.? Rome	5	0	None
<i>CLE 219</i> = 323 (Brambach 1867)	? Cologne	22	7	stanza break after line 8?
<i>CLE 220</i> = <i>CIL</i> VIII.251	? Sufetula	6	4	None
<i>CLE 221</i>	?	8	?	None

= <i>CIL</i> VIII.1069	Carthage	(half lines)		
<i>CLE</i> 222 = <i>CIL</i> X.4183	(late)? Naples	8	1	None
<i>CLE</i> 223 = 132 (Hübner 1871)	c. 3 rd cent.? Corduba	7?/8? (2 half lines)	0	None
<i>CLE</i> 224 = <i>CIL</i> II.3493	? Andalusia	2	0	None
<i>CLE</i> 1526C = <i>CIL</i> II.2660	? León	4	3	None
<i>CLE</i> 1613? = <i>CIL</i> VIII.7604	? Cirta	3?	?	None
69 (Engström 1912)	? France	1	0	None
70 (Engström 1912)	? Rome	1	1	None
71 (Engström 1912)	? Aquileia	2	0	None
72, 73 (Engström 1912)	? Rome	2	1	None
74 (Engström 1912)	? Rome	1	1	None
75 (Engström 1912)	? Bithynia	1	0	None
76 (Engström 1912)	? Rome	2	0	None
30A (Courtney 1995)	pre-300 C.E. Scythia	14	?	None
137* (Courtney 1995)	? Tripoli	6? (very difficult to read)	?	None

= IRT 231

138?*	?	12	8 syllables, but metre faulted	None
(Courtney 1995)	Leptis Magna			
19	2 nd cent.?	11	0	None
(Cugusi 2007a)	Croatia			
Gellii Amicus	2 nd cent.?	17	1	None
Ignotus	Rome?			
(Blänsdorf 2011)				

* = 137 and 138 (Courtney 1995) are analogous, see also *AE*

1922.110.

5.4 Popular Rhythm?

The hypothesis that shorter, unresolved iambic metres were a more common or popular form has met with certain opposition in studies of late antiquity and western prosody. Llewelyn Morgan has addressed the issue and observed that the ‘popular’ classification might signify a misconception that stems from a bias of Anglo-Germanic scholars who feel that the cadence of Latin should be more like English or German (or Greek, cf. Arist. *Poet.* 1449a24-8, also Soubiran 1988, Gratwick 1987: 281-3). That is, although it is well referenced that the Romans like the Greeks found the iambic metre to be *sermoni proximum* (Quint. *inst.* 9.4.76), it does not necessarily mean that pure, unresolved stichic iambic dimeters are particularly common or easy to write. On the contrary, there is some evidence that it is in fact extremely difficult to compose unresolved stichic dimeters in a language like Latin that has not a high proportion of quantitatively light syllables (Gratwick 1993: 41, Morgan 2010: 131). The general misconception about unresolved iambs, Gratwick suggests, does not immediately recognise the difficulty and unnaturalness of maintaining a rigid quantitative and octosyllabic formal pattern – one that has little precedent in the passages of literature or epigraphic writing. As Alan Cameron notes, there are numerous challenges with grouping second and third century stichic dimeter fragments under any distinctive school or aesthetic, e.g. the *poetae nouelli* or *neoterici* (Cameron 1980: 127-75, Courtney 1993: 373). Indeed, based on the limitations (and fragmentary nature) of the evidence, Cameron goes so far to say, ‘to the notion that these [dimeter] meters were in themselves “popular”, not only

popular but essentially Italian . . . there is in fact some positive evidence against the supposition . . . the one and only Latin metre we know to have been “popular” in the sense that it served as a vehicle for popular doggerel, soldiers’ songs, and the like is the trochaic septenarius’ (Cameron 1980: 146-55). Ultimately, scholars such as Adolf Ebert, William Beare, and Jacques Fontaine have all independently concluded that it is extremely difficult to label the iambic dimeter ‘popular’.¹⁸ In fact, Roger Green (who attributes to the hymns of Ambrose a potential influence on the works of Ausonius (Green 1991: 248)), states that the emergence of shorter, stichic metres in late antique poetry may well have something to do with an aesthetic fascination with a ‘smallness of scale’ (Green 2006: 378), and as Michael Roberts observes, both the visual art and poetry of late antiquity ‘show a good deal of stylistic and compositional uniformity’ (Roberts 1989: 95). Dag Norberg, in conclusion, has emphasised the challenges of maintaining the iambic dimeter pattern and stated there are numerous limitations (for example one cannot begin with a trisyllabic word type – ∪ ∪ (such as *omnia, et Deus*, etc.)) that might even explain some of the transition from quantitative to syllabic or accentual based metres in Europe (Norberg 1958: 103).

5.5 Confluences of Tradition: Psalm 118?

This thesis would like to propose that a focus on formal symmetry and uniformity might also derive some of its aesthetic from Biblical literature and Judeo-Christian theology, and some mention concerning the possibility of diverse (i.e. Biblical) influence might be put forth prior to an analysis of the text. Since the syntax and lexis of the *hymni* appear to derive partial influence from Greek or Hebrew, so too the idea of a confluent metrical aesthetic is worthy of consideration. In this regard, the exact qualities of Biblical poetry (i.e. the Song of the Red Sea, Ex. 15:1-12; the Song of Moses, Dt. 32:1-43; the Psalms of David) have remained important, yet difficult, areas of investigation. The debate over the syllabic or accentual properties and structures of Hebrew poetry alone presents numerous

¹⁸ Beare (1957: 180), Fontaine (1981: 138), also Cugusi (2007: 59). For a recent discussion of popular culture in Rome (including the sociological influence of Christianity), see Toner (2009: 92-122 and 185-97).

challenges to such a discussion of prosodic imitation.¹⁹ The complexity of Hebrew poetry is only further compounded by their translation into Greek and Latin. Still, it is relevant to note that Ambrose seems conscious of a distinct formal aesthetic in the Book of Psalms, and his possible imitation of that aesthetic deserves consideration.

In the exegetical analysis of Psalm 118,²⁰ Ambrose introduces the possibility of a formal Biblical influence whereby a significant theological number is incorporated into poetic form:

In Psalm 118, prologus (Pizzolato 1987)

1. Licet mystice quoque uelut tubae increpuerit sono Daudid propheta, tamen moralium magnus magister, quantum in eo excellat ethica, psalmi huius summa declarat gratia, siquidem cum suavis omnis doctrina moralis sit, tum maxime suauitate carminis et psallendi dulcedine delectat aures animumque demulcet . . . quem (sc. psalmum) per singulas Hebraeorum digessit litteras, ut, quemadmodum paruulorum ingenia primis litterarum elementis adsuescunt discendi usum adsumere, ita etiam nos huiusmodi elementis usum discamus uiuendi.

2. Litteris autem singulis octonos uersiculos adscripsit, ut simul et unitatem doceret, non pluralitatem – unitas enim coercescit omnia et regit, cui subiecta sunt omnia – et purgationem legitimae sanctificationis. octaua enim die sollemnis purgatio uel ex lege, quia octaua die circumcisionis sollemnitas impleri statuta est, uel quia totus mundus coinquinatus erat peccatis nostris et septem illis pollutus diebus. ubi autem uenit dies resurrectionis, conuiuificati domino Iesu resurreximus et erecti sumus in nouitate uitae praeferentes ablutionis gratiam. meritoque primogenita offerimus animantia in figura primogeniti filii dei castitatis et simplicitatis spiritale sacrificium acceptum deo non quarto aut quinto die, ne inmundum aut inconsummatum sacrificium sit, sed octaua die, qua omnes in Christi resurrectione non solum resuscitati, sed etiam confirmati sumus . . .

(1. Although the prophet David did make his voice resound mystically, as if with a trumpet sound, [he was] however a great master of morals; the

¹⁹ Lay (1875: 99), König (1900: 277-283), Beare (1957: 110-3).

²⁰ Psalm 119 in modern editions.

outstanding beauty of this psalm declares how much moral virtue excels in him, for while every moral doctrine is sweet, it particularly delights our ears and soothes our soul through the sweetness of song and the charm of psalm-singing . . . [David] divided the psalm into sections, one per each letter of the Hebrew [alphabet], so, just as the intellects of children become accustomed to undertake the practice of learning through the first elements of the alphabet, so we too may learn through such elements the practice of living.

2. To each letter he assigned eight little verses, in order to teach unity, not plurality – for unity, to which all things are subject, brings together and rules all things – and the purification of sanctification prescribed by the law. For, it is on the eighth day that the ritual cleansing (is prescribed), either by the law (because it was established that the ritual of circumcision would be performed on the eighth day), or because all the world was polluted by our sins and corrupted by them during those seven days. But when the day of resurrection came, we who have been vivified by the Lord Jesus Christ, have risen again and have been lifted in the newness of life, exhibiting the grace of ablution. So rightly we dedicate the first-born living creatures in the figure of the firstborn Son of God, as spiritual sacrifice of purity and simplicity, acceptable to God, not on the fourth or the fifth day, lest the sacrifice should be unclean or incomplete, but on the eighth day when all of us have not only risen, but been confirmed in Christ's resurrection . . .)

Such eight-part *unitas* is worthy of consideration given that Ambrose finds interest in the connection between poetic form, spiritual *purgatio* (purification), and the number eight.²¹ The concept that *uersiculi* (little verses) might 'teach' is also familiar to Ambrosian views on prosody (cf. Ambr. *epist.* 75a.34) and in one of the few passages where Ambrose gives his own exposition of verse, it is significant that the aesthetic hinges on symbolism and numerical symmetry.

²¹ The numerical significance is evident elsewhere in Ambrose's writings, cf. *In Luc.* 5.49 *hic enim quattuor uelut uirtutes amplexus est cardinales, ille in illis octo mysticum numerum reseravit pro octaua enim multi scribuntur psalmi*; Ambr. *epist.* 14.29 *Anna octoginta quattuor annos in uiduitate sua ieiuniis et obsecrationibus in templo die ac nocte seruiens Christum agnouit, quem Iohannes abstinentiae magister, quidem nouus terrarum angelus, annuntiauit.*

To overemphasise the eight-part structure of the collection or the possibility of a syllabically-based metre might overshadow a more important point. Ambrose's prologue of *In Psalm 118* makes it clear that the poet surmised some notion of symmetrical form in the Book of Psalms, and when Ambrose alludes to his own creative effort (namely *epist.* 75a.34 *ut simul et unitatem doceret, non pluralitatem*, cf. also 4.31 *unum potens per omnia*) his expression exhibits a similar emphasis on continuity and a formal cohesion. In this regard, there appears to be a distinct connection between theological unity (a driving theme in the *hymni*) and the formal significance of an eight-part structure in poetry.

5.6 Iambic Dimeter: A Review

It may be worthwhile to review aspects discussed so far. First, the influence of the stichic Classical tradition has been called into question as a result of a lack of evidence in metrical treatises and extant prosodic works. Second, the idea of a 'very popular' rhythm has been shown to have little foundation when it comes to the stichic acatalectic iambic dimeter. Third, some evidence of Biblical (i.e. Book of Psalms) influence has been put forth in terms of formal and theological significance revolving around the number eight.

It is important to recognise that the *hymni* were composed in an extremely regularized, eight-part pattern. This pattern in itself creates cohesion and formal unity. This same cohesion also presents restrictions that are difficult to maintain, especially within a language like Latin that has not a high number of light syllables or naturally iambic structures. As set forth in chapters 3 and 4, the brevity of the iambic dimeter has been shown to influence syntactic constructions (i.e. substantives (§3.6.3) and supine (§3.6.4)) as well as forge a complex (and varied) relationship with Biblical intertexts (see below §5.7.1 and §5.7.2).

Of four hundred and forty-eight lines in the *Hymni Ambrosiani*, only seventeen exhibit resolution (3.8%). Altogether roughly 96% of the lines contain eight syllables, and almost 95% exhibit a consistent iambic quantity. As visible in the metrical pattern from the first two stanzas of hymn 1, the formal symmetry of the collection is one of the most defining characteristics:

- - - - -
 Aeterne rerum conditor,
 - - - - -
 noctem diemque qui regis
 - - - - -
 et temporum das tempora,
 - - - - -
 ut alleues fastidium,

- - - - -
 praeco diei iam sonat,
 - - - - -
 noctis profundae peruigil,
 - - - - -
 nocturna lux uiantibus
 - - - - -
 a nocte noctem segregans.

The traditional position that the metre of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* exhibits a formal simplicity seems to overlook (or at least insufficiently convey) the extreme difficulty of maintaining the iambic dimeter quantity and syllabic regularity. As Maurice Cunningham well summarises, ‘what cannot be paralleled in earlier Latin poetry is the occurrence of a number of poems all in the same poetic form and with same or similar internal structure . . . the very idea of a verse form of fixed compass (such as a sonnet, for example, or the sestina) seems completely repugnant to classical poetics . . . it causes the external form of the poem to impose certain definite modes and patterns of thought and progression upon the author, who must accept them or fail in his efforts to employ the form’.²²

At this point, it may be worth exploring two further aspects: (1) the more technical elements of the metre (e.g. hiatus, elision) and (2) the 3.8% of the *hymni* that exhibit resolution or substitution. Through these areas, I propose, a more exhaustive understanding of the metrical features will actually shed light on the challenges (even complexities) of the formal component of the *hymni*. By this, one might not only appreciate the adherence to the iambic dimeter rhythm but recognise some of the aesthetic and creative motivations behind the compositions. As will be shown, the attempt to incorporate Biblical quotation or Greek and Hebrew loan-words poses a particularly large challenge to the unity and structure of the metre.

²² Cunningham (1955: 510-2).

5.7 Towards a Further Analysis

In the following analysis of prosodic structure, much of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* will be noted to adhere to the consistent pattern of the iambic dimeter quantity (⏑–⏑– ⏑–⏑–) without numerous examples of resolution, syncope of unstressed syllables,²³ hiatus, or diaeresis. Aside from occurrences of substitution of iamb for spondee in the first half of the metron (a variation so frequent that it extends beyond the need for a comprehensive catalogue) the majority of verses exhibit an intense focus on quantitative and syllabic regularization. Still, the regularization of all verses of the *hymni* is not absolute, and significant passages occur where the quantity or syllabic count is altered with variation (i.e. resolution for anapaest, variation for anapaest or tribrach (⏑⏑⏑), or even amalgam of metres), and those instances will be discussed below.

5.8 Elision

Elision, or more appropriately synaloepha,²⁴ occurs on twenty-four occasions in the *hymni*.²⁵ As far these instances indicate important aspects of the metre, they are worthy of consideration for two reasons: (1) juxtaposed with instances of hiatus (§5.10), they indicate a certain level of variation and (2) they might elucidate passages with unmetrical patterns:²⁶

- 1.15 hoc ipse petra ecclesiae
- 2.4 dies dierum illuminans
- 3.12 culpamque ab aeuo sustulit.
- 3.16 totum per orbem ecclesias.
- 3.20 apostole, en mater tua,

²³ cf. 7.8 *sacraris* = *sacraueris*. See *RM* §25 and Coleman (1999: 38-9) for the tendency in Latin poetics.

²⁴ *RM* §18. Soubiran (1966: 55-91) argues the latter term, synaloepha, is the more accurate term for a ‘merging’ of syllables in certain circumstances, i.e. (1) when a word ending in a vowel or diphthong is followed by a word beginning in a vowel or diphthong; or (2) when a word ending in a vowel or diphthong is followed by a word beginning with *h*; or (3) when a word ending in a vowel followed by *m* is followed by a word beginning with a vowel, diphthong, or *h*.

²⁵ Fontaine (86) lists thirty-one cases, but does not differentiate between elision and prodelision (see §5.8). He also includes 6.18 *verbum erat* that I propose is not elided since it would leave a dibrach in the second half of the metron.

²⁶ The most comprehensive discussion remains Soubiran (1966: 613-45).

- 5.3 appare Ephraem coram, excita
 5.4 Potentiam tuam et veni
 5.23 excursus usque ad inferos,
 6.19 et Deus erat Verbum, hoc erat
 6.30 calente oliuo dicitur
 7.2 micantium astrorum globos
 7.14 uini saporem infuderis
 7.19 mutata elementa stupent
 7.20 transire in usus alteros
 8.23 Hic, hic ferite! ut profluo
 9.6 caecosque uisu inluminans
 9.10 Iesum breui adquisit fide
 9.15 Christoque adhaerentem reum
 10.3 solo hospites, Mauri genus
 10.26 et mors triumphus, quem inuidens
 10.31 reuecti in ora principum
 11.21 Vt martyrum uestem attigit
 11.31 tactuque et umbra corporum
 13.2 Laurentium archidiaconum

In so far as these examples show variation with instances of hiatus, they will be discussed in §5.12; however as an indicator of stylistic and expressive value it is worth recognising that the *hymni* exhibit some elisions which add, in the words of Soubiran, a semantic ‘immeasurability’ or ‘lack of definition’ to the line of verse (Soubiran 1966: 630, Morgan 2010: 332). What this entails, it seems, is that certain elisions literally blur the connection between terms, e.g. 1.15 *petra ecclesia*, where phonetic juncture of the phrase ‘rock of the church’ underscores the metaphoric and symbolic effect. Further phonetic significance can be found in other instances where elision seems to emphasise a passage of alliteration or assonance (e.g. 5.4 *Potentiam tuam et*, 10.3 *solo hospites*, 11.31 *tactuque et*.) though it remains difficult to make larger claims about the significance or creative motivation behind these examples, and some offer an almost lengthy string of syllables to pronounce (e.g. 13.2 *Laurentium archidiaconum*).

5.9 Prodelision

Prodelision, or inverse elision, where the initial *-e* of the copula *es* or *est* is dropped to form a junction with a final vowel or final syllable in *m* (e.g. *sua est* = *suast*) occurs on six occasions:

- 5.11 uerbum Dei factum est caro.
- 6.13 Piscis bonus pia est fides
- 10.25 Scutum uiro sua est fides
- 11.14 uoces, ubi factum est fides?
- 12.17 Praecinctus, ut dictum est, senex
- 13.32 uorate, si coctum est, iubet'

As has been shown by Lindsey and Allen (Lindsay 1894: 121, Allen 1973: 148-9), prodelision occurs in some of the earliest Latin verse and the phenomenon is not unusual in CL (Pezzini 2011). Perhaps the most striking observation in the text is the metrical placement. In each occurrence prodelision appears in the first half of the second metron, an area of the line that (traditionally) accepts greater variance (see §5.2).

5.10 Hiatus

Hiatus (i.e. the suspension of elision) occurs six times²⁷ in the *hymni* (below marked by l²):

- 6.17 In principio l² erat Verbum
- 6.18 et Verbum l² erat apud Deum
- 6.20 in principio l² apud Deum
- 9.27 moriatur uita l² omnium²⁸
- 9.28 resurgat uita l² omnium
- 12.12 Petri l² adaequauit fidem

Of these, almost all of the occurrences have some connection to Biblical intertext or Biblical allusion. Hymn 6.17-20 has been identified as containing several metrical

²⁷ Fontaine (86) counts five instances, omitting 6.18.

²⁸ Walpole finds the hiatus in 9.27 unacceptable and edits the line thus: 9.27 *moriatur ut uita omnium* (Walpole 1922: 81).

variances (see §5.10), while in 12.12 the hiatus appears to occur in deference to the name of the Apostle (*Petrus*).²⁹ Overall, it seems difficult to make conclusions regarding the significance of hiatus (see Lindsay 1922: 113-259, Allen 1978: 78-9, Adams 2007), although some possible explanation may be put forth based on Biblical quotation.

It is possible that, as Sturtevant and Kent suggest, the distinction between prose and verse plays some role in the tendency to elide (Sturtevant & Kent 1915: 155). In the occurrence where prose Scripture is quoted (6.17-8, 20) elision might thus be avoided. It is also possible that phrases that carried stereotyped or idiomatic language may have avoided elision (*uita omnium?*).³⁰ Still, as far as can be determined, there is no indication that either of these is a direct explanation for hiatus in the text. There is no reason to see ambiguity as a result of elision in 6.17-8, 6.20, or 9.27-8, and further, it is difficult to assign any occurrence of hiatus the force of a sense pause.

5.11 Areas of Variation

Several passages demonstrate instances where iambs are resolved, syllables elided, or iambic patterns altogether substituted. These sections will be addressed in the paragraphs that follow in an attempt to propose: (1) that the *hymni* are not always so quantitatively and syllabically regularized and (2) areas of variation tend to be connected to Biblical intertext, Biblical quotation, or Biblical loan-words.³¹

The analysis has split the discussion of metrical variations between the first half of the metron and the second half of the metron. This is a result of the prosodic rules governing iambic dimeter quantity (see §5.2). As stated above, the *hymni* allow for greater variation in the first half (especially with substitution of heavy for light in the first position), and therefore resolutions or substitutions that occur in the second half are noted as greater deviations from the iambic dimeter rhythm.

²⁹ Interestingly, the noun *apostolus* itself is elided at 3.20 *apostole, en mater tua*.

³⁰ Sturtevant and Kent (1915: 133).

³¹ As a comparative model, it is worth mentioning that Greek words are often found in polysyllabic line-endings in epic poetry (accounting for sixty-seven of seventy-four instances in Vergil, all instances in Statius, and roughly half of the occurrences in satirical hexameters, see Courtney 1980: 51). Often, these passages exhibit metrical variations, i.e. fifth foot spondees in Lucretius (see Bailey 1947: 113-20), and thus one finds certain precedent for variation of metre in passages of foreign loan-words or borrowings.

5.11.1 Variation in the First Half of the Metron

Three occasions seem to exhibit the substitution of an iamb for trochee (–∪) in the first half of the metron:³²

2.24 ebrietatem Spiritus³³

3.28 Qui credidit saluus erit³⁴

4.15 Te diligat castus amor³⁵

In addition to these, three other variations occur where iamb is resolved for dactyl (–∪∪):

Dactyl

first metron

6.19 et Deus erat Verbum, hoc erat

6.21 Omnia per ipsum facta sunt

11.4 Martyribus inuentis cano

On twelve other occasions, a potentially less extreme variation occurs where an initial iamb is resolved for anapaest (∪∪–):³⁶

Anapaest

first metron

5.19 geminae gigas substantiae

8.18 adolere taedis cogitur

9.27 moriatur uita omnium

13.23 inopesque monstrans praedicat

³² See Dreves (1893: 235), Walpole (1922: 24), Beare (1957: 228).

³³ Walpole (1922: 38) argues, ‘the accent falls on the *i* [of *ebrietatem*] and tends to lengthen it’, thus making an initial spondee rather than a trochee; yet he cites no other examples. In Ovid (*Ov. Ars.* 1.597 *ebrietas, ut uera nocet, sic ficta iuuabit*) the *i* in the nominative form (*ebrietas*) is scanned light (cf. also *Ov. met.* 12.21 *ardet, et ebrietas geminata libidine regnat*). Fontaine (198-9) makes no mention of the metrical aspects of the line.

³⁴ Fontaine (226) emphasises the Biblical nature of this expression (cf. *Mk.* 16:16; *Acts.* 16:31; *Rm.* 10:9) and notes that there is a precedent for a lengthening of the short –*uus* ending, citing *Verg. ecl.* 6.53. In this reading, the trochee would then be read spondee.

³⁵ See note 34.

³⁶ A distinction of is made here of ‘less extreme’ variation because 1) the substitution of spondee for iamb in the first position is frequent throughout the *hymni*, and 2) the resolution of an initial heavy into two light syllables would seem to have less impact on an iambic rhythm than the same resolution in the second position (i.e. an iamb for dactyl).

13.26 inopes profecto sunt opes

second metron

5.1 Intende qui regis Israel

5.17 Procedat e thalamo suo,

8.5 matura martyrio fuit

10.27 nobis tyrannus ad oppidum

11.18 mors sacrae meritum probat

12.18 et eleuatus ab altero

13.2 Laurentium archidiaconum

The connection between variation and Biblical intertext or Greek loan-words in the above occurrences may prove significant. Instances of loan-words (cf. 8.5 *martyrium*, 11.4 *martyr* and 13.2 *archidiaconus*) appear to indicate that a direct borrowing from the Greek (see §4.6) results in metrical variations and a sacrifice of the strict iambic rhythm. In some examples, such as the ablative plural *martyribus* (11.4), the rhythm is so inherently dactylic that there is little possibility of an iambic configuration. In 8.5 and the 13.2 the final syllables of *martyrio* and central syllables of *archidiaconus* also appear to sacrifice the iambic dimeter pattern. Furthermore the inclusion of particularly resonant Biblical phrases (cf. 3.28 *saluus erit*; Mk. 16:16 *qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit saluus erit*; Acts 16:31 *at illi dixerunt crede in Domino Iesu et saluus eris*; also Rm. 10:9) seems to indicate that the motivation to incorporate Greco-Christian terminology and Biblical language overrides an adherence to formal regularity in the *hymni*.

Still, some examples exist (cf. 5.17 *Procedat e thalamo suo*; Psalm 18:6) where there seems to be an attempt at altering a Biblical passage in order to accommodate the stricter rhythms of the iambic dimeter (i.e. the omission of *ut sponsus* and the alteration of *de* to *e*):

Ps.18:6 Qui procedit ut sponsus de thalamo suo

5.17 Procedat e thalamo suo,

It is important to recognise in these cases (see also 6.17-20 below) that though some aspects of the Biblical passage have been altered, the *hymni* still attempt to maintain

the central semantic qualities of the OT or NT, and in hymn 5.17 the adherence to the Greek tribracchic loan-word *thalamo* creates an unavoidable area of variation.

Aside from these observations, it should also be noted that several of the passages of variation are open to a range of readings and metrical interpretations depending on elision, hiatus, and correption of hiatus (cf. 6.17-20, 9.27, 13.2, see §5.8, §5.9, §5.10); these differences make it difficult to assign one particular quantitative pattern, and as seen in examples 9.27 and 13.2 below, the formal qualities of the line can vary considerably (e.g. if elision is read instead of hiatus, or vice-versa):

9.27	
moriatur uita omnium	(anapaest, spondee, iamb, iamb) (hiatus)
moriatur uita omnium	(dibrach, spondee, spondee, iamb) (elision)
13.2	
Laurentium archidiaconum	(spondee, anapaest, anapaest, iamb)(hiatus)
Laurentium archidiaconum	(spondee, iamb, anapaest, iamb)(elision)

Consequently, lines with greateast variation have often been subjected to editorial alterations (see Fontaine 275, 315, 417). Walpole, for example, has gone so far as to say of 9.27, ‘Ambrose would never have written such a line as *moriatur uita omnium*, which brings a spondee into the 2nd foot and leaves a final unaccented a unelided before *o*’, and goes on to defend a reading of *moriatur ut uita omnium* (Walpole 1922: 81-2).

For greater discussion of the challenges in reading Hymn 6.17-20 and Hymn 5.1, see below.

5.11.2 Variation in the Second Half of the Metron / Biblical Quotation

Beyond the occurrences of variation in the first half of the metron, two passages of Biblical quotation demonstrate the impact of theologically significant material on the purer second half of the dipodic unit.

5.1-4

Intende, qui regis Israel,	(spondee, iamb, anapaest, spondee)
super Cherubim qui sedes,	(iamb, iamb, spondee, spondee)
appare Ephraem coram, excita	(spondee, anapaest, spondee, iamb)*
potentiam tuam et ueni.	(spondee, iamb, iamb, iamb)*

*note the dependence on elision

Ps 79:2-3

(2) qui regis Israhel intende qui deducis tamquam oves Ioseph
qui sedes super cherubin manifestare (3) coram Effraim et Benjamin
et Manasse excita potentiam tuam et ueni

6.17-20

In principio erat Verbum	(spondee, anapaest, iamb, spondee)*
et Verbum erat apud Deum	(spondee, tribrach, iamb, iamb)*
et Deus erat Verbum, hoc erat	(dactyl, iamb, spondee, iamb) ³⁷
in principio apud Deum	(spondee, anapaest, iamb, iamb)*

*note the dependence on hiatus

Jn. 1:1-2

(1) In principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum et Deus
erat Verbum (2) hoc erat in principio apud Deum

In 5.1-4 and 6.17-20, it seems that two different approaches to Biblical quotation are employed. In 5.1-4, the Biblical quotation of Ps. 79:2-3 is altered (*intende* is re-positioned, passages are omitted, words are changed) to accommodate the iambic metre. In 6.17-20, the hymn adheres closely to the Biblical text, and the metre is largely sacrificed. In particular, the substitution of an iamb for anapaest in 6.17 and 6.20, the resolution of iamb for dactyl in 6.19, and the resolution of an iamb for tribrach in 6.18 seem to create a distinctly non-iambic passage. Yet, it is worth noting that there does not appear to be one definitive reading of these lines

³⁷ With elision *Verb(um) hoc*; [unless *Verbūm* lengthened before syntactical pause as at end of 6.17, leaving a dactyl at the end of the line (possible?)].

(Fontaine 86). In 6.17, 6.18 and 6.20, for example, it is ambiguous whether hiatus is actually employed, or a pattern is created that would accommodate an eight-syllable rhythm and thus uphold syllabic, if not quantitative, regularity.³⁸ On the whole, it is evident that on certain occasions the lexis, word order, and syntax from the Latin Bible have almost no inherent iambic quantity, and thus it remains difficult to determine whether the inclusion of those lines points to the significance (or breakdown) of syllabic or quantitative formal patterns.

Perhaps what is most notable is not the deviation from the quantitative metre in 6.17-20, but rather the variant approaches to Biblical passages and terms that are adopted throughout the collection. In general, it may be noted that the *hymni* often freely alter Biblical syntax and lexis (see §3.8.3 and §4.2.4), a phenomenon that contradicts Muncey's observations about Ambrose's prose usage (Muncey 1959: 5-14) while also making considerable efforts to highlight direct Biblical quotation. The *hymni*, that is, may have provided Ambrose a different context, a unique literary medium that transcended the *sermo humilis* of exegetical writing.³⁹

5.12 Verse and Word Accent

The matter of the interaction between word accent and the structure of quantitative verse in the *hymni* has been a topic of considerable interest to scholars (Raby 1953: 36, Beare 1957: 227-30, Norberg 1958: 69). At present, there seems little justification for the theory that a considerable effort was made to coordinate word accent and quantitative length (i.e. to support the move towards accentual metre in a later stage of the language) (Beare 1957: 228-9). One might consider for example 1.2 *noctem diemque qui regis*, 2.3 *lux lucis et fons luminis*, and 6.13 *Piscis bonus pia est fides* where there is almost no continuity between word accent and quantity in the line. The few instances where iambs have been substituted for trochee (see §5.10.1) also do not seem to coincide with any theory of lengthening by stress.⁴⁰

³⁸ With elision, the three lines would have to accommodate a dibrach in the first half (6.17 *spondee-dibrach-iamb-spondee*, 6.18 and 6.20 *spondee-dibrach-iamb-iamb*).

³⁹ This is the point that Mans (1993) has perhaps missed in his discussion of Biblical influences in the *hymni*.

⁴⁰ As Beare notes, a tenuous theory in the first place, see Beare (1957: 229).

Interestingly, it is worth considering changes to this perception if one excludes the most problematic areas (i.e. the first and last two metrical ‘places’ of each verse [⏑–]⏑– ⏑–[⏑–]). In Latin, these four syllables present the most challenging rhythms of coordination (almost invariably demanding a line-initial monosyllable followed by a disyllable, etc.). If this is taken into account, the number of coordinated accent-quantity iambs appears to increase (cf. 2.16 *donet gerendi gratiam*, 4.13 *Te cordis ima concinant*, 4.29 *Christum rogamus et Patrem*, 7.3 *pax uita lumen ueritas*). In hymn 1, for example, nearly eighty-eight percent of the verse and word-accent coincide if the first and last two places are omitted. More generally, the constraints of the metre also suggest that the poet must avoid a line that begins with two bi-syllabic words,⁴¹ or employ an enclitic *–que* (cf. 2.7, 4.7-8, 10.18, 11.24). None of this may amount to a convincing argument, but it does shed light on the prosodic considerations that go into iambic dimeter composition (n.b. Prud. *cath.* 1-50, also appears to avoid two bi-syllabic words).

Altogether there is insufficient evidence to suggest a comprehensive or explicit organization of word accent and quantity, although several passages do exhibit a possible attempt at coordination: 4.13 *Te cordis ima concinant*; 6.25 *Commune multis passio*, 9.29 *cum mors per omnes transeat*.

5.13 Conclusions

Based on the foregoing analysis, several significant conclusions can be put forth. The first is that the formal characteristics of the *hymni* exhibit an extreme adherence to the quantitative articulation of the acatalectic iambic dimeter verse. By definition, this means the *hymni* also adhere to a rigid syllabic structure that may have deep numerological and theological significance. In other words, Ambrose’s compositions are simultaneously subject to two metrical systems – quantitative and syllabic – with potentially different (Classical and Biblical) roots and developments. Considering O’Daly’s recent discussion of Prudentius’ *Cathemerinon* (O’Daly 2012), such regularity might also be tied with the musicality and performance of the work (though in Prudentius’ case we are dealing with the trochaic tetrameter catalectic, see O’Daly 2012: 260-1). In fact, one might suggest that Prudentius’ *da*

⁴¹ Something that occurs in only eight percent of Ambrose’s lines (37/448).

puer plectrum (and Hilary's Hymn 3) adhered more closely to Roman song (especially the genre of military triumph), but those works failed to win the broader popularity and exercise the same influence over Western prosody.⁴²

In general, however, the description of the hymns as highly regularized does not account for the several passages that exhibit variant or resolved patterns of quantitative length and syllabic number in the text. These passages, while limited to roughly six of the *hymni* (and just under 4% of the lines), indicate that the texts do not constitute an entirely regularized collection nor do they unequivocally adhere to the strictest rules of quantity.

In addition, passages of variation that do occur show that resolved iambs (or even greater dissolution of metre) appear to coincide with instances of loan-words and cross-cultural literary influences. In particular, passages that contain Greek or Hebrew borrowings (e.g. *martyr*, *archidiaconus*, *Israel*, *Petrus*) or Biblical intertext (Ps. 18:6, Ps. 79:2-3, Jn. 1:1-2), appear to exhibit greatest variation. While such evidence is perhaps not surprising, it would seem to support the position of Nichols (1992: 192) who observes that while linguistic contact can produce certain levels of simplicity, it can also foster considerable complexity.

Finally, it seems that the established perception of the 'the simplest forms of metre' does not comprehensively or conclusively define the quantitative or syllabic properties of the work. In fact, the notion of simplicity suggests a more popular and seamless prosodic tradition was used in the text. In this regard, this chapter illustrates that the assimilation of Biblical language into Latin poetry presented significant prosodic challenges, and that the establishment of a strict (and difficult) formal pattern was part of a more innovative and diverse aesthetic.

⁴² I am indebted to Dr. Philip Burton for suggesting the Prudentius as a comparand. Its place alongside Ambrose's work proves to be a fruitful direction for further study of metre in late antiquity.

Conclusions

6.1 Conclusions

The principal conclusion of this thesis is that the critical use of *simple* and *simplicity* has generally obscured readings of the poetic qualities and linguistic diversity found in the *Hymni Ambrosiani*. As demonstrated in chapters 3 through 5, the ambiguous, even dismissive, nature of *simple* terminology in a modern context undermines passages that exhibit a significant and highly stylised amalgam of Classical and Biblical imagery and expression. From the point of view of historical linguistics and poetic development, this *simple* classification might have obstructed other literary and linguistic contact research on the *hymni* texts.

The term simplicity remains extremely difficult to define. In early Christian usages the word *simplicitas* appears to adopt specialized meanings that carry particular theological and spiritual significance. These theologically charged associations are only part of the issue. Even within modern contexts (which appear to carry less Biblical influence), simplicity has been used in so many different ways that it is difficult to understand its precise critical value. The definition of this term and its connection to linguistic and formal characteristics was therefore necessary.

This study adopted the definition of simplicity in sociolinguistic terms of simplification and regularization (Mühlhäusler 136), and that approach helped to establish a set of criteria through which the simplicity of the text could be explored. The systematic evaluation of syntactic, lexical, and metrical regularization was set forth as a theoretical framework whereby parameters were incorporated and significant data presented.

6.2 Significant Data

The more salient data of linguistic features found in the *hymni* text can be loosely summarised as follows:

Syntactically.

1. Poetic Plurals. 2. Rare Singulars. 3. Genitive of Quality. 4. Repeated Genitives. 5. *Ad* + acc. to Express the Indirect Object.

6. Participle-Substantivation. 7. Supine. 8. Hypotaxis. 9. Anastrophe. 10. Hyperbaton.

Lexically.

1. Original phrasings. 2. Loan-words (Greek and Hebrew). 3. Metaphors. 4. Oxymoron. 5. Alliteration. 6. Homoeoteleuton. 7. Polypoton. 8. Parallelism.

Metrically.

1. Stichic Iambic Dimeter Patterns. 2. Podic Variations as a Result of Biblical Quotation and Biblical Loan-words.

In the first category, poetic plurals, rare singulars, supine, and participial substantives demonstrated that the metrical or formal patterns in the text have a significant influence on syntax. The brevity of the stichic acatalectic iambic dimeter appeared to encourage more condensed syntactic expressions (e.g. substantives, the supine), while quantity governed aspects of nominal number (e.g. poetic plurals, rare singulars). Biblical influence, namely the employment of the repeated genitive, genitive of quality, and *ad + acc.* to express the indirect object also carried a significant value in readings of linguistic usage. The former elements (repeated genitive, genitive of quality) may be indicative of an aesthetic shift as a result of Biblical influence, while the latter aspect (genitive of quality, and *ad + acc.*) may represent the greater influence of vulgar syntax on Latin poetic expression.

Lexically, the influence of foreign languages was significant. Loan-words (Greek and Hebrew), oxymora, and metaphors all show that the *hymni* derive much of their language and imagery from the Bible (i.e. Greek or Hebrew). Many such instances are not unusual or original (the use of *ecclesia*, for example, cannot be seen as innovative), but other usages indicated a diverse and novel amalgam of foreign expression (e.g. *sobria ebrietas*, *archidiaconum*). The presence of Ambroseisms (e.g. *mystico spiramine*, *censu sanguinis*) further challenged the concept of regularization and simplification within the lexical component. Often, definitive expressions in the *hymni* were comprised of a union of Classical and Biblical terminology (e.g. *carnis tropheo*, *ecclesiarum principes*, *caelestis aulae milites*).

Metrically, the analysis showed that quantitative regularization and the stichic iambic dimeter patterns have less precedent in the Latin language than is generally acknowledged. Data was presented that showed the *hymni* seem to derive a formal aesthetic from a confluence of Biblical and Classical prosody, and passages

of Biblical allusion and Biblical quotation were especially relevant as they showed variation from this structure. The quantitative (and syllabic) variance seemed to suggest that the diversity of linguistic influences in the *hymni* as well as their creative/theological motivations created greater variation, greater irregularity in formal contexts. The established perception that the *hymni* represent the ‘the simplest forms of metre’ appears to overlook this evidence or misrepresent the quantitative or syllabic properties of the work.

6.3 Suitable Conclusions?

Ultimately this brings us to a somewhat frustrating position of answering the following question: how do we define the formal and linguistic elements of the *Hymni Ambrosiani*? It is tempting to respond (given the foregoing analysis) that the *hymni* are simple with regard to certain linguistic elements, but complex with regard to others. Indeed several aspects of the text have been put shown to express regularizations in grammar, lexis and metre (e.g. verbal morphology, dipodic patterns, parataxis) while others contrast this view. The problem is that within apparent simplifications there seem to lie undetected and subtle complexities for as Simonetti states, there are countless examples of juxtaposed *concinntitas* and *variatio* (Simonetti 1988: 18, see also Franz 1994: 240). Syntactic variations in instances of anaphora, for example (§4.4.2), are read as exhibiting a fascinating combination of regularization and variation, and just as it would be imprudent or perhaps insensitive to label these passages simple, so too it would inaccurately convey the early Christian aesthetic to claim they are *full* of intricate complexity.

6.4 Positioning and Context

It is relevant to position this thesis within broader scholarship. In so far as this study engages with or contributes to current studies on early Christian poetry, it hopes to offer a bridge between early modern research on Ambrosian verse and the most recent work on the texts. By laying out a history of critical locutions (chapter 2), this thesis has attempted to highlight cultural influences on aesthetic perceptions that may help contextualize research by earlier scholars. This contextualization, in

turn, might help introduce more modern work by Jan den Boeft (1993, 2008), Michaela Zelzer (2000), and Alexander Zerfass (2008). den Boeft in particular continues to influence and enlighten English audiences with ideas of artistry and structure in Ambrosian hymns, and his attention to innovation and poetic creativity in the collection is instrumental in forging new directions and sympathies toward the text.¹

This thesis has also attempted to exhibit comprehensive evidence regarding syntactic, lexical, and metrical features in the Ambrosian hymns. While one is likely to encounter statements like, ‘the iambic dimeter had been used in classical poetry, but never in this way’,² it seems (at least to this author) a whole other matter to provide a comprehensive catalogue of stichic iambic dimeters (Chapter 5) and comparative tables of nominal and verbal usage (Chapter 3). In a similar direction, the exploration of Ambrose-isms, metaphors, and Biblical-deviations (Chapters 4) tries to present material in an accessible and systematic form so that it may help future research and compliment contemporary analyses.³

Lastly, the thesis contributes to the collective effort of drawing attention to what Green calls ‘a fascination with a smallness of scale’ (Green 2006: 378) and Roberts labels a ‘good deal of stylistic and compositional uniformity’ (Roberts 1989: 95). While much of research on late antique prosody has focused on the Christian appropriation of Classical forms and themes, especially the epic (see Herzog 1975, Roberts 1985, Green 2006), it is important to recognise that there is an aesthetic shift during the fourth century toward shorter, more condensed, and more regularized patterns of prosody (see also O’Daly 2012). This shift should not necessarily indicate a level of simplicity, but rather as a distinct aesthetic that seems to have implications that go beyond religion and liturgical singing (Charlet 1988: 82-5, Roberts 1989: 5-9).

¹ Yet little of his valuable scholarship has focused on the problematic terminology prevalent in earlier 20th century Ambrosian research, and on occasions, den Boeft too has fallen into using such terminology in his own analysis, see den Boeft (2008: 427).

² See den Boeft (2008: 427), with nary a footnote in sight.

³ Fontaine (1992) presents much, though by no means all, of this material in a more traditional commentary structure. Alongside systematic presentation and discussion of linguistic, stylistic, and metrical features, the present study offers for the first time a comprehensive list, and discussion, of original phrasings (‘Ambrose-isms’) and Biblical deviations.

6.5 *Seltsam und freundlich*

If anything this study hoped to encourage scholars of early Christian poetry to remain conscious of critical vocabularies used to describe aesthetics. This study has found it best to discuss such aspects of form and language in as detailed and specific a manner as possible. The ideas of diversity, syntactic compactness, metrical synthesis, and lexical borrowing are by far more enlightening than observations of a so-called simplicity. Given the extreme significance of the *hymni* texts, it remains important to recognise that the interpretation of meaning, even critical meaning, is of utmost importance.

In conclusion, it has been easy to overlook the fact that the *hymni* stand at a central crossroads of Western poetic expression. The texts were so popular, so widely disseminated throughout Europe that they played an enormous role in influencing that crossroads and directing much of medieval prosody. In light of this position, one is tempted to recall that famous passage in Goethe's *Faust* where Helene so seamlessly weaves her language from the classical iambic trimeter into the protagonist's medieval rhyming couplets. The *Hymni Ambrosiani*, it seems, are lost somewhere in that first dialogue (from *Faust* II.3.2):

HELEN

Vielfache Wunder seh' ich, hör' ich an.
Erstaunen trifft mich, fragen möcht' ich viel.
Doch wünscht' ich Unterricht, warum die Rede
Des Manns mir seltsam klang, seltsam und freundlich:
Ein Ton scheint sich dem andern zu bequemen,
Und hat ein Wort zum Ohre sich gesellt,
Ein andres kommt, dem ersten liebzukosen.

FAUST

Gefällt dir schon die Sprechart unsrer Völker,
O so gewiß entzückt auch der Gesang,
Befriedigt Ohr und Sinn im tiefsten Grunde.
Doch ist am sichersten, wir üben's gleich:
Die Wechselrede lockt es, ruft's hervor.

HELEN

So sage denn, wie sprech' ich auch so schön?

FAUST

Das ist gar leicht, es muß von Herzen gehn.
Und wenn die Brust von Sehnsucht überfließt,
Man sieht sich um und fragt—

HELEN

Wer mitgenießt.

(HELEN

I see and hear so many marvelous things;
I am amazed, would ask you many questions.
Could you explain why that man's way of speaking
sounded so strange to me – strange and yet pleasant?
Sounds seem to be in concord with each other,
and when one word's been welcomed by the ear,
another comes to give it a caress.

FAUST

If you already like the way our peoples speak,
I'm sure their singing will delight you too,
will fully satisfy both ear and mind.
Delay is dangerous – let's practice it at once;
responses are what tempt us to employ it.

HELEN

Then tell me how I too can learn the art.

FAUST

It's simple: let the words well from your heart.
And when your soul is filled with yearning's flame,
You look around and ask

HELEN

Who feels the same.)

[trans. S. Atkins 1994]

Hymni Ambrosiani

1. Aeterne Rerum Conditor
2. Splendor Paternae Glorïae
3. Iam Surgit Hora Tertia
4. Deus Creator Omnium
5. Intende Qui Regis Israel
6. Amore Christi Nobilis
7. Inluminans Altissimus
8. Agnes Beatae Virginis
9. Hic Est Dies Verus Dei
10. Victor Nabor Felix Pii
11. Grates Tibi Iesu Nouas
12. Apostolorum Passio
13. Apostolorum Supparem
14. Aeterna Christi Munera

A NOTE ON THE TEXT

The Latin text follows that of Fontaine (1992) – an edition that continues to serve scholars as the most current and comprehensive examination of the collection. The debate over *uariae lectiones* still stands, and it is no criticism of the du Cerf text to observe that certain passages (though reproduced here) deviate from the majority of manuscripts and modern traditions. The most prominent instances are:

1.32 *et ora*

3.15 *fidei*; 3.17 *celso*

4.17 *et*; 4.29 *rogemus*

6.7 *natat*; 6.14 *salum*; 6.22 *sed laude ipse*

7.10 *signauerit*; 7.12 *duxerit*

8.15 *uero*

9.7 *soluit*

13.25 *uere*

Any in-depth discussion of these passages might consult Fontaine directly (1992: 93-123), or better each of the other respective 20th century editions, see Bibliography.

On a single occasion, I have chosen to ignore Fontaine's punctuation, (cf. 10.29-30 *sed reddiderunt hostias / rapti quadrigis corpora*) in favor of reading *corpora* in apposition with *hostias*. By not splitting the lines with punctuation (Walpole 1922: 86) it avoids a rather atypical instance of the Greek accusative.

ON THE TRANSLATION

Regarding the translation, the English is intended to serve as a guide to the Latin printed *en face*. The rendering is not overly poetic, though certain effort has been made to reproduce the brevity and density of an iambic dimeter line.

In the period between the original submission of this thesis and the present, a version of the hymns (edited with English translation by Peter G. Walsh (2012)) was published by Harvard University Press. Walsh's translation, as the introduction states, 'imitates the Latin meter faithfully', and it has been helpful in the revision of this work. A few passages, however, deserve attention: 2.11 the repetition of *gloria* ([sic] *gratiae*), 3.24 *apostole* perhaps unnecessarily specialized as 'John', 5.14 and 8.10 *claustrum pudoris* (a significant phrase, see §3.3.2) translated as 'maidenhead' and 'purity's defense' respectively, 6.22 *sic* ([sic] *se*) Walsh's reading is plausible, but manuscript evidence discourages it and the breakdown of the tricolonic structure is left unattended, 8.2 *natalis* may more likely be 'festival day' than 'birthday', 9.4 *probrosi* ([sic] *probrosa*), 11.1 'Jesus, to you new thanks I hymn / for this new gift that I have found' might contain a typo, and 13.13 *nunc* ([sic] *tunc*) unattested in Fontaine, Simonetti (and all manuscripts).

Aeterne Rerum Conditor
(Hymnus 1)

Aeterne rerum conditor, [1]
noctem diemque qui regis
et temporum das tempora,
ut alleues fastidium,

praeco diei iam sonat,
noctis profundae peruigil,
nocturna lux uiantibus
a nocte noctem segregans. [8]

Hoc excitatus lucifer
soluit polum caligine,
hoc omnis errorum chorus
uias nocendi deserit.

Hoc nauta uires colligit
pontique mitescunt freta;
hoc ipse petra ecclesiae
canente culpam diluit. [16]

Surgamus ergo strenue;
gallus iacentes excitat,
et somnolentos increpat;
gallus negantes arguit.

Gallo canente, spes redit,
aegris salus refunditur,
mucro latronis conditur,
lapsis fides reuertitur. [24]

Iesu, labantes respice
et nos uidendo corrige;
si respicis, lapsus cadunt
fletuque culpa soluitur.

Tu lux refulge sensibus
mentisque somnum discute,
te nostra uox primum sonet
et uota soluamus tibi. [32]

Eternal Creator of Things
(Hymn 1)

Eternal creator of things, [1]
who rule the night and day,
and give seasons of seasons
to relieve our weariness,

the herald of day now sounds –
vigilant of the deepest night
a nocturnal light to travellers
separating night from night. [8]

At this, the morning star, roused
releases the sky from darkness,
at this, the whole chorus of sinners
abandons their ways of evil-doing.

At this, the sailor gathers strength
and straits of the sea grow calm;
as he sings, the Rock of the Church himself
washes away our sin. [16]

So let us rise up briskly
the cock rouses those who lie flat
and castigates those who sleep
the cock denounces those who deny him.

When the cock crows, hope returns
health is poured back in the sick
the blade of the thief is sheathed
faith is restored to the fallen. [24]

Jesus, look back at the wavering
and by looking, straighten us;
if you look back, our failings
fall away and sin is undone in tears.

You, light, shine forth upon our thoughts
and shake off the sleep of our mind;
let our voice first call you
and let us pay our vows to you. [32]

Splendor Paternae Glorïae
(Hymnus 2)

Splendor paternae gloriæ,
de luce lucem proferens,
lux lucis et fons luminis,
dies dierum illuminans,

[1]

uerusque sol, inlabere,
micans nitore perpeti;
iubarque Sancti Spiritus
infunde nostris sensibus.

[8]

Votis uocemus et Patrem,
Patrem perennis gloriæ,
Patrem potentis gratiæ;
culpam releget lubricam,

informet actus strenuos,
dentem retundat inuidi,
casus secundet asperos,
donet gerendi gratiam,

[16]

mentem gubernet et regat
casto fideli corpore;
fides calore ferueat,
fraudis uenena nesciat.

Christusque nobis sit cibus,
potusque noster sit fides,
laeti bibamus sobriam
ebrietatem Spiritus.

[24]

Laetus dies hic transeat!
Pudor sit ut diluculum,
fides uelut meridies,
crepusculum mens nesciat!

Aurora cursus prouehit;
aurora totus prodeat
in Patre totus Filius,
et totus in Verbo Pater.

[32]

Splendour of the Father's Glory
(Hymn 2)

Splendour of the Father's glory [1]
carrying light from light
light of light and source of brightness
illuminating day of days

and the true sun, flow down
gleaming in perpetual lustre;
and the radiance of the Holy Spirit
spread upon our thoughts. [8]

Let us call upon the Father in prayers,
Father of eternal glory
Father of powerful grace
may he banish tempting sin,

may he shape our brave actions
may he dull the tooth of the jealous
may he aide in our troubled times
may he grant the grace of what we must do, [16]

may he govern and guide the soul
in a pure and faithful body;
may faith burn aglow
and know not the poisons of deceit.

And may Christ be our nourishment
and may faith be our drink
joyful, let us drink the sober
intoxication of the Spirit. [24]

May this joyful day pass!
may honour be as the dawn,
[our] faith, be as midday,
may the soul not know twilight!

Dawn advances its march;
may He, the entire, the Dawn, appear
the entire Son in the Father
and the entire Father in the Word. [32]

Iam Surgit Hora Tertia
(Hymnus 3)

Iam surgit hora tertia, [1]
qua Christus ascendit crucem;
nil insolens mens cogitet,
intendat affectum precis.

Qui corde Christum suscipit,
innoxium sensum gerit,
uotisque praestat sedulis
Sanctum mereri Spiritum. [8]

Haec hora, quae finem dedit
diri ueterno criminis,
mortisque regnum diruit
culpamque ab aeuo sustulit.

Hinc iam beata tempora
Christi coepere gratia:
fide repleuit ueritas
totum per orbem ecclesias. [16]

Celsus triumphi uertice
matri loquebatur suae:
'en filius, mater, tuus;
apostole, en mater tua,'

praetenta nuptae foedera
alto docens mysterio,
ne uirginis partus sacer
matris pudorem laederet. [24]

Cui fidem caelestibus
Iesus dedit miraculis;
nec credidit plebs impia,
qui credidit saluus erit.

Nos credimus natum Deum
partumque uirginis sacrae,
peccata qui mundi tulit
ad dexteram sedens Patris. [32]

Now Rounds the Third Hour
(Hymn 3)

And now rounds the third hour [1]
when Christ mounted his cross
let the mind ponder nothing excessive
let it turn toward a state of prayer.

He who takes Christ in his heart
carries his senses free from sin
and he makes it possible to be worthy
of the Holy Spirit by constant prayers. [8]

This is the hour that gave end
to a weariness of dreadful sin
and levelled the kingdom of Death
and bore sin from eternity.

At this time, the joyous moments
began through the grace of Christ:
through faith, truth filled congregations
throughout the whole world. [16]

High on the summit of triumph
he spoke out to his mother:
'Here, mother, behold your son;
apostle, here, behold your mother,'

explaining through holy mystery
the covenant offered to her as a bride
so that the Virgin's sacred birth
would not harm a mother's honour. [24]

For this, Jesus gave proof
by heavenly miracles –
the impious crowd did not believe,
he, who believed, will be saved.

We do believe that God [was] born
and [was] the child of the holy Virgin –
He, who bore the sins of the world,
seated at the right of the Father. [32]

Deus Creator Omnium
(Hymnus 4)

Deus creator omnium [1]
polique rector, uestiens
diem decoro lumine,
noctem soporis gratia,

artus solutos ut quies
reddat laboris usui
mentesque fessas alleuet,
luctusque soluat anxios, [8]

grates peracto iam die
et noctis exortu preces,
uoti reos ut adiuues
hymnum canentes soluimus.

Te cordis ima concinant,
te uox canora concrepet,
te diligat castus amor,
te mens adoret sobria, [16]

ut, cum profunda clauserit
diem caligo noctium,
fides tenebras nesciat,
et nox fide reluceat.

Dormire mentem ne sinas,
dormire culpa nouerit
castis fides refrigerans
somni uaporem temperet. [24]

Exuta sensu lubrico,
te cordis alta somnient
nec hostis inuidi dolo
pauor quietos suscitet.

Christum rogamus et Patrem
Christi Patrisque Spiritum,
unum potens per omnia
foue precantes, Trinitas. [32]

God Creator of All Things
(Hymn 4)

God, creator of all things [1]
ruler of the sky, adorning
the day in splendid light
and night in the grace of sleep,

So that rest may restore weak limbs
to [their] exercise of labour
and comfort weary souls
and relieve [our] torturing sorrows, [8]

We, singing a hymn, now offer
thanks at the ending day
and prayers at the dawn of night
may you help pay our vows.

May depths of the heart celebrate you
may the singing voice resound you
may a chaste love worship you
may a sober mind adore you. [16]

So that when the deep darkness of night
has confined the day
faith may know no darkness
and night may blaze alive with faith.

Suffer not the soul to rest
for only sin has known rest
may faith, cooling the chaste,
temper the warmth of sleep. [24]

Stripped of evil thought, may depths
of the heart dream of you
and may fear for jealous enemy's ruse
not wake those sleeping.

We pray to Christ, and the Father
and of Christ and of the Father,
the Spirit, One Almighty, protect us,
praying to you, the Trinity. [32]

Intende, Qui Regis Israel
(Hymnus 5)

Intende, qui regis Israel, [1]
super Cherubim qui sedes,
appare Ephraem coram, excita
potentiam tuam et ueni.

Veni, redemptor gentium,
ostende partum uirginis,
miretur omne saeculum,
talis decet partus Deo. [8]

Non ex uirili semine,
sed mystico spiramine
uerbum Dei factum est caro
fructusque uentris floruit.

Aluus tumescit uirginis,
claustrum pudoris permanet,
uexilla uirtutum micant,
uersatur in templo Deus. [16]

Procedat e thalamo suo,
pudoris aula regia,
geminæ gigas substantiae
alacris ut currat uiam.

Egressus eius a Patre,
regressus eius ad Patrem;
excursus usque ad inferos,
recursus ad sedem Dei. [24]

Aequalis aeterno Patri,
carnis tropheo cingere,
infirmi nostri corporis
uirtute firmans perpeti.

Praesepe iam fulget tuum
lumenque nox spirat nouum
quod nulla nox interpolet
fideque iugi luceat. [32]

Hear Us, You Who Rule Israel
(Hymn 5)

Hear us, you who rule Israel, [1]
you who sit above the Cherubim,
appear before Ephrem, excite
your power – and come.

Come, redeemer of the peoples
reveal the offspring of the Virgin
may every generation marvel
at such birth that is worthy of God. [8]

Not from the husband's seed,
but from a mystical breath,
the word of God was made flesh
and the fruit of the womb flourished.

The womb of the virgin swells,
the lock of honour remains,
the signals of virtue shine,
God is moving in the temple. [16]

May he come forth from his chamber
the royal palace of honour
a giant of twin nature
so he may travel the path briskly.

He has come forth from his Father,
he returned to his Father,
he was sent as far as hell
he returned to the seat of God. [24]

You, equal to the eternal Father,
be enclosed in a trophy of flesh,
strengthening the weaknesses
of our body through endless power.

Now your manger shines forth
night breathes new light
which no night may change
and may it shine with eternal faith. [32]

Amore Christi Nobilis
(Hymnus 6)

Amore Christi nobilis [1]
et filius tonitruī,
arcana Iohannes Dei
fatu reuelauit sacro.

Captis solebat piscibus
patris senectam pascere;
turbante dum nutat salo,
immobilis fide stetit. [8]

Hamum profundo merserat,
piscatus est Verbum Dei;
iactauit undis retia,
uitam leuauit omnium.

Piscis bonus pia est fides
mundi supernatans salo,
subnixa Christi pectore,
Sancto locuta Spiritu: [16]

‘In principio erat Verbum
et Verbum erat apud Deum
et Deus erat Verbum, hoc erat
in principio apud Deum.

Omnia per ipsum facta sunt.’
Se laudet ipse, se sonet
et laureatus Spiritu
scriptis coronetur suis. [24]

Commune multis passio
cruorque delictum lauans;
hoc morte praestat martyrum
quod fecit esse martyres.

Vinctus tamen ab impiis,
calente oliuo dicitur
tersisse mundi puluerem
stetisse uictor aemuli. [32]

Noble for his Love of Christ
(Hymn 6)

Noble for his love of Christ [1]
and the son of thunder,
John revealed the secrets of God
by his sacred prophesy.

With captured fish, he was wont
to nourish his aged father;
while he sways on the breaking sea,
he stood steadfast through faith. [8]

He had plunged the hook deep,
he fished for the Word of God;
he cast the nets into the waves,
he raised-out the life of all.

The good fish is pious faith
riding upon the sea of the world,
resting on the breast of Christ,
saying through the Holy Spirit: [16]

'In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God, this was
in the Beginning with God.

All things were made through him.'
May he praise himself, celebrate himself
and crowned by the Spirit, may he
be coronated for his writings. [24]

Common to many is suffering
and the bloodshed washing sin;
in this he surpasses the martyrs' death
because he allowed martyrs to be.

Bound by the impious men
it is said that in burning oil,
he wiped off the dust of the world
he stood the victor of [his] rival. [32]

Inluminans Altissimus
(Hymnus 7)

Inluminans Altissimus [1]
micantium astrorum globos,
pax uita lumen ueritas,
Iesu, faue precantibus,

seu mystico baptisinate
fluenta Iordanis retro
conuersa quondam tertio [8]
praesenti sacraris die;

seu stella partum uirginis
caelo micans signaueris
et hoc adoratum die
praesepe magos duxeris;

uel hydriis plenis aquae
uini saporem infuderis;
hausit minister conscius [16]
quod ipse non impleuerat,

aquas colorari uidens,
inebriare flumina;
mutata elementa stupent
transire in usus alteros.

Sic quinque milibus uirum
dum quinque panes diuidit,
edentium sub dentibus [24]
in ore crescebat cibus,

multiplicabatur magis
dispendio panis suo.
Quis haec uidens mirabitur
iuges meatus fontium?

Inter manus frangentium
panis rigatur profluus,
intacta quae non fregerant [32]
fragmenta subrepunt uiris.

Almighty, Illuminating
(Hymn 7)

Almighty, illuminating [1]
the spheres of the flickering stars
peace, life, light, truth
Jesus, give protection to those praying,

whether by mystical baptism
the waters of the Jordan
once turned thrice back
you made holy on this very day [8]

or you, a star, shining in the sky
marked the virgin's bearing
and on this day led the Magi
to adore the manger.

Or you poured the taste of wine
in jugs full of water
the servant drew knowing
he himself had not filled [them], [16]

seeing [that] the waters are coloured
seeing the streams intoxicate;
the changed elements are astounded
to pass over into other uses.

So while he divided five loaves
unto five thousand men
under the teeth of those eating
the food grew in the mouth. [24]

The bread was multiplied more
by its own consumption.
Who seeing these things will marvel
at the endless flow of springs?

In the hands of those breaking it,
the bread, flowing, is moistened,
the unbroken fragments which they
had not broken, steal in upon men. [32]

Agnes Beatae Virginis
(Hymnus 8)

Agnes beatae uirginis [1]
natalis est, quo spiritum
caelo refudit debitum
pio sacrata sanguine;

matura martyrio fuit,
matura nondum nuptiis.
Nutabat in uiris fides [8]
cedebat et fessus senex.

Metu parentes territi
claustrum pudoris auxerant;
soluit fores custodiae
fides teneri nescia.

Prodire quis nuptum putet,
sic laeta uultu ducitur,
nouas uiro ferens opes,
dotata censu sanguinis. [16]

Aras nefandi numinis
adolere taedis cogitur;
respondet: 'Haud tales faces
sumpsere Christi uirgines;

hic ignis exstinguit fidem,
haec flamma lumen eripit.
hic, hic ferite! ut profluo [24]
cruore restinguam focos.'

Percussa quam pompa tulit!
Nam ueste se totam tegens
curam pudoris praestitit
ne quis retectam cerneret.

In morte uiuebat pudor,
uultumque texerat manu,
terram genu flexo petit,
lapsu uerecundo cadens. [32]

Of Agnes, the Blessed Virgin
(Hymn 8)

Of Agnes, the blessed virgin, [1]
it is the festival day, on which
she, consecrated by pious blood,
returned her spirit owed to heaven.

Mature she was in martyrdom
not yet mature for marriage.
Faith was wavering in men, even
the weary old man was withdrawing. [8]

Her parents, struck by fear,
had augmented the lock of honour;
faith, unable to be restrained,
released the doors of the guard.

Anyone might think she proceeds
to marry, in an air so happy
she is led, carrying new wealth to a husband
richly endowed by a fortune of blood. [16]

With torches, she is forced to worship
the altars of an impious god;
she responds, 'the virgins of Christ
took up no such torches;

this fire extinguishes faith,
this flame takes away light.
Here, strike here! So I may destroy
these pyres with streaming blood.' [24]

Beaten in the procession, how she endures!
Still covering her whole body in a robe
she took care of her honour
so that someone might not see her naked.

In death, her honour endured,
she had covered her face with her hand,
she looked for ground on bending knee,
dying, with modest motion. [32]

Hic Est Dies Verus Dei
(Hymnus 9)

Hic est dies uerus Dei [1]
sancto serenus lumine,
quo diluit sanguis sacer
probrosa mundi crimina,

fidem refundens perditis
caecosque uisu inluminans.
Quem non graui soluat metu
latronis absolutio, [8]

qui praemio mutans crucem
Iesum breui adquisit fide
iustosque praeuio gradu
praeuenit in regnum Dei?

Opus stupent et angeli
poenam uidentes corporis
Christoque adhaerentem reum
uitam beatam carpere. [16]

Mysterium mirabile
ut abluat mundi luem,
peccata tollat omnium
carnis uitia mundans caro!

Quid hoc potest sublimius,
ut culpa quaerat gratiam
metumque soluat caritas
reddatque mors uitam nouam? [24]

Hamum sibi mors deuoret
suisque se nodis liget,
moriatur uita omnium,
resurgat uita omnium!

Cum mors per omnes transeat,
omnes resurgant mortui;
consumpta mors ictu suo
perisse se solam gemat! [32]

This is the Real Day of God
(Hymn 9)

This is the true day of God [1]
bright in holy light
on which sacred blood washed
the wicked sins of the world,

restoring faith to the lost and
giving light to the blind through sight.
Whom does the thief's pardoning
not release from deep fear, [8]

who transforming the cross into a gift
gained Jesus in a moment of faith
and by leading the march came before
the righteous into the Kingdom of God?

Even the angels marvel at his work
witnessing the torture of the body
and that a sinner clinging to Christ
seized a blessed life. [16]

Wondrous mystery!
May it absolve the world's plague,
take away the sins of all [men],
flesh cleansing the faults of flesh!

What can be more sublime than this
that sin should seek grace,
and love should dissolve fear,
and death should bring a new life? [24]

May death swallow its own thorn
and bind itself in its knots,
may the life of all die,
may the life of all rise again!

While death may pass through us all
may all dead rise again;
Death consumed by its own blow
may bemoan it alone has died! [32]

Victor Nabor Felix Pii
(Hymnus 10)

Victor Nabor Felix pii [1]
Mediolani martyres,
solo hospites, Mauri genus
terrisque nostris aduenae,

torrens harena quos dedit
anhela solis aestibus,
extrema terrae finium
exulque nostri nominis. [8]

Suscepit hospites Padus
mercede magna sanguinis,
sancto repleuit spiritu
almae fides ecclesiae,

et se coronauit trium
cruore sacro martyrum
castrisque raptos impiis
Christo sacrauit milites. [16]

Profecit ad fidem labor
armisque docti bellicis
pro rege uitam ponere,
decere pro Christo pati,

non tela quaerunt ferrea,
non arma Christi milites;
munitus armis ambulat
ueram fidem qui possidet. [24]

Scutum uiro sua est fides
et mors triumphus, quem inuidens
nobis tyrannus ad oppidum
Laudense misit martyres.

Sed reddiderunt hostias
rapti quadrigis corpora,
reuecti in ora principum
plaustrum triumphalis modo. [32]

Pious Victor, Nabor, Felix
(Hymn 10)

Pious Victor, Nabor, Felix [1]
the [holy] martyrs of Milan
guests to [our] soil, born of Africa
and strangers in our lands,

whom the burning desert produced
gasping in the heat of the sun
an extreme of the earth's borders
and a place outside of our [Latin] name. [8]

The Po received [its] guests
with the great cost of [their] blood,
the faith of the maternal church
filled [them] with the Holy Spirit

and [faith] crowned itself with the holy
bloodshed of three martyrs,
and seized [them] from an impious camp
soldiers consecrated to Christ [16]

Their work advanced their faith –
and having learned by military arms
it was right to place life before a king
it was right to suffer for Christ.

They seek not iron weapons
not arms, the soldiers of Christ;
He marches guarded with weapons
who possesses true faith. [24]

His faith is a shield to man
and death a triumph, which
grudging it to us, the king
sent the martyrs to the city of Lodi.

But the stolen returned [their] bodies,
the sacrifices on four horses
brought back before the princes' faces
in the manner of a triumphal chariot. [32]

Grates Tibi, Iesu, Nouas
(Hymnus 11)

Grates tibi, Iesu, nouas [1]
noui repertor muneris
Protasio Geruasio
martyribus inuentis cano.

Piae latebant hostiae,
sed non latebat fons sacer ;
latere sanguis non potest,
qui clamat ad Deum Patrem. [8]

Caelo refulgens gratia
artus reuelauit sacros;
nequimus esse martyres,
Sed repperimus martyres.

Hic quis requirat testium
uoces, ubi factum est fides?
Sanatus impos mentium
opus fatetur martyrum. [16]

Caecus recepto lumine
mortis sacrae meritum probat
Seuerus est nomen uiro
usus minister publici.

Vt martyrum uestem attigit
et ora tersit nubila,
lumen refulsit ilico
fugitque pulsa caecitas. [24]

Soluta turba uinculis,
spiris draconum libera,
emissa totis urbibus
domum redit cum gratia.

Vetusta saecula uidimus,
iactata semicinctia
tactuque et umbra corporum
aegris salutem redditam. [32]

New Thanks, Jesus, to You
(Hymn 11)

New thanks, Jesus, to you [1]
I, discoverer of a new gift,
sing at having found the martyrs
Protasius and Gervasius.

Pious victims, they lay hidden,
but not hiding was the holy source;
blood cannot hide
which calls to God the Father. [8]

Grace, shining light from the sky,
unveiled the sacred limbs;
unable we are to be martyrs,
yet we discovered the martyrs.

Here, who would search for witnesses'
voices, when the fact is its own testimony.
[A man] powerless of [his] mind, healed
reveals the work of the martyrs. [16]

The blind man, regaining his sight,
demonstrates the power of a holy death.
Severus is the man's name
a minister of the public service.

When he touched the martyrs' clothing
and it cleansed his darkened eyes
sight flashed instantly
and blindness, banished, fled. [24]

The crowd, released from [its] chains,
freed from the coils of demons,
brought forth from all cities
returns home with thankfulness.

We have seen the centuries of old:
clothes cast aside, and health
restored to the sick both by touch
and by the ghosts of [the martyrs'] bodies. [32]

Apostolorum Passio
(Hymnus 12)

Apostolorum passio [1]
diem sacrauit saeculi
Petri triumphum nobilem
Pauli coronam praeferens.

Coniunxit aequales uiros
cruor triumphalis necis;
deum secutos praesulem
Christi coronauit fides. [8]

Primus Petrus apostolus,
nec Paulus impar gratia;
electionis uas sacrae
Petri adaequauit fidem.

Verso crucis uestigio,
Simon honorem dans Deo
suspensus ascendit, dati
non immemor oraculi: [16]

praecinctus, ut dictum est, senex
et eleuatus ab altero,
quo nollet iuit, sed uolens
mortem subegit asperam.

Hinc Roma celsum uerticem
deuotionis extulit,
fundata tali sanguine
et uate tanto nobilis. [24]

Tantae per urbis ambitum
stipata tendunt agmina;
trinis celebratur uiis
festum sacrorum martyrum.

Prodire quis mundum putet,
concurrere plebem poli:
electa, gentium caput!
sedes magistri gentium! [32]

The Passion of the Apostles
(Hymn 12)

The Passion of the Apostles [1]
made holy this day of the year
marking the noble triumph of Peter
[and] the coronation of Paul.

The blood of triumphal slaughter
joined these men as equals;
having followed God as a leader
Christ's faith crowned them. [8]

Peter was the first apostle,
nor was Paul inferior by grace ;
the vessel of holy election
made [him] equal to Peter's faith.

On the upturned sign of the cross
Simon, glorifying God,
ascended, having been lifted,
not forgetting the given prophecy: [16]

The old man, as it was said, girded
and lifted by another, went
whither he might not, but willing
he overcame a violent death.

Hence, Rome has exalted
a high pinnacle of devotion,
founded on such blood
dignified by such a prophet. [24]

In a circle of so great a city
packed crowds march together;
the festival of holy martyrs
is celebrated on three roads.

One would think that the world were coming forth,
and the people of heaven assembling;
[Rome] was chosen, capital of the peoples!
Seat of the master of the peoples! [32]

Apostolorum Supparem
(Hymnus 13)

Apostolorum supparem [1]
Laurentium archidiaconum
pari corona martyrum
Romana sacrauit fides.

Xystum sequens hic martyrem
responsa uatis rettulit:
'Maerere, fili, desine,
sequere me post triduum.' [8]

Nec territus poenae metu,
heres futurus sanguinis,
spectauit obtutu pio
quod ipse mox persolueret.

Iam tunc in illo martyre
egit triumphum martyris:
successor aequus syngrapham
uocis tenens et sanguinis. [16]

Post triduum iussus tamen
census sacratos prodere
spondet pie nec abnuit,
addens dolum uictoriae.

Spectaculum pulcherrimum!
egena cogit agmina
inopesque monstrans praedicat:
'Hi sunt opes ecclesiae.' [24]

Verae piorum perpetes
inopes profecto sunt opes.
Auarus inlusus dolet
flammas et ultrices parat.

Fugit perustus carnifex
suisque cedit ignibus;
'Versate me,' martyr uocat,
'uorate, si coctum est, iubet.' [32]

A Near Equal of the Apostles
(Hymn 13)

Roman faith sanctified [1]
a near equal of the Apostles
Lawrence, the archdeacon,
with the same crown of martyrs.

He, following the martyr Sixtus
received the prophet's reply:
'Cease, my son, to grieve,
follow me after three days.' [8]

Not frightened by fear of punishment
the future inheritor of blood
[he] watched with pious gaze
what he himself might soon suffer.

So then in that martyrdom,
he bore the triumph of a martyr:
an equal successor, preserving
the bond of voice and blood. [16]

Yet, after three days, ordered
to bring forward sacred gifts
he dutifully pledges, nor refuses,
joining the snare to victory.

Most beautiful vision!
He gathers the impoverished crowd
and directing the destitute, proclaims:
'These are the riches of the church.' [24]

The poor truly are the real, eternal
riches of the blessed.
The greedy man, ridiculed, suffers
and prepares the vengeful flames.

The executioner flees, burned,
and runs from his fires;
'Turn me,' cries the martyr,
Consume me, if cooked,' he commands. [32]

Aeterne Christi Munera
(Hymnus 14)

Aeterna Christi munera [1]
et martyrum uictorias
laudes ferentes debitas
laetis canamus mentibus.

Ecclesiarum principes,
belli triumphales duces,
caelestis aulae milites
et uera mundi lumina, [8]

terrore uicto saeculi
poenisque spretis corporis,
mortis sacrae compendio
lucem beatam possident.

Traduntur igni martyres
et bestiarum dentibus;
armata saeuit ungulis
tortoris insani manus. [16]

Nudata pendent uiscera,
sanguis sacratus funditur,
sed permanent immobiles
uitae perennis gratia.

Deuota sanctorum fides,
inuicta spes credentium,
perfecta Christi caritas
mundi triumphat principem. [24]

In his paterna gloria,
in his uoluntas spiritus,
exultat in his filius,
caelum repletur gaudio.

Te nunc, Redemptor, quaesumus,
ut martyrum consortio
iungas precantes seruulos
in sempiterna saecula. [32]

The Eternal Gifts of Christ
(Hymn 14)

The eternal gifts of Christ [1]
and the victories of the martyrs
bearing [their] worthy glories
let us sing in our blessed souls.

Leaders of the Church,
triumphant generals of war
soldiers of the heavenly court
and true lights of the world, [8]

conquering the fear of the age
and spurning torture of the body
with a reward of holy death
they inherited holy light.

The martyrs were handed over
to the flames and the teeth of beasts
armed with claws, the hand
of the wild torturer rages. [16]

The bare entrails hang down,
the holy blood is shed,
but the steadfast endure
through the grace of eternal life.

The devoted faith of saints
the unconquerable hope of believers
the complete devotion to Christ
[it] triumphs over a leader of the world. [24]

In them, is paternal glory
in them, is the will of the spirit
the son exalts in them,
the sky is filled with joy.

Now we beseech you, redeemer,
to join [your] humble praying servants
with the community of martyrs
throughout the everlasting ages. [32]

Reference to the Numeration of Hymni In Modern Editions

As noted in §1.2, the numeration of the *Hymni Ambrosiani* in modern editions is not consistent. A point of reference may therefore be helpful for this study and others. The most current and widely used numeration is given at left (A), followed by those of the seven editors.

A	Fontaine (1992) Simonetti (1988) Bulst (1956)	Walpole (1922)	Dreves (1893) Steier (1903)	Biraghi (1862)
1	1	2	1	11
2	2	3	2	12
3	3	4	3	13
4	4	5	7	17
5	5	6	8	1
6	6	7	9	9
7	7	8	10	2
8	8	9	11	4
9	9	10	12	3
10	10	11	13	5
11	11	12	14	6
12	12	13	15	7
13	13	14	16	8
14	14	15	17	10

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