

The recognized proliferation of quantitative patterns in the extant Latin Saturnian corpus has caused recent scholarship to focus on other metrical parameters. A. Mercado (*The Latin Saturnian and Italic Verse*, PhD diss., University of California, 2006) has proposed an accentual scansion for the Saturnian meter based on the stress rules of Plautine Latin. Although he argues that it is unlikely that the change from Very Old Latin to Plautine accentuation patterns occurred contemporaneously with the poetic output of Livius Andronicus, Naevius, Plautus, and Ennius (45), the rules for established poetic meters are equally resistant to change (cf. the continued effect of Greek digamma on Homeric scansion). Furthermore, his identification of Saturnian patterns in initially stressed Sabellian and his hypothetical derivation of the Saturnian from a pan-Italic meter suggests that an analysis of the Latin Saturnian corpus according to Very Old Latin stress rules might be productive. Moreover, Mercado's thesis fails to account for the dramatic abandonment of the Saturnian line in favor of dactylic hexameter which occurred simultaneously with the solidification of ante-penultimate, quantity-sensitive stress patterns in Latin. While the social dynamics of Hellenization might partially account for the preference for Greek quantitative meters, these cannot fully explain why literary Saturnians were viewed as archaic by Ennius, and were nearly incomprehensible within only a few generations. These considerations, then, warrant an examination of the meter in relation to the accentual patterns of pre-Plautine Latin.

An analysis of the Scipio epitaphs (CIL I<sup>2</sup> 7, 9, 10, and 11) reveals that word-initial accentuation also creates an intelligible trochaic and dactylic pattern, roughly schematized as:

$$/ x(x) / x(x) | / x(x) || / x(x) | / x(x)$$

The substitution of trochaic and dactylic 'feet,' in combination with resolution, synizesis, and elision, allows for the observed variation in the length of cola, as measured by syllable count. The application of anaclasis permits further metrical *variatio* within a relatively simple scheme, especially in the context of the second colon (e.g. || *non hónos hónore* CIL I<sup>2</sup> 11.3). Old Latin stress patterns may problematize the traditional placement of a secondary division, the *caesura Korschiana*, within the two half-lines, since word-initial stress suggests a break at that position, with the exception of secondarily stressed words of four or more syllables. Although this interpretation foregrounds the complex problems of stress-clash and secondary stress (e.g. *Córnelius* CIL I<sup>2</sup> 7.1; *témpestàtebus* CIL I<sup>2</sup> 9.6; *mórs pérfecit* CIL I<sup>2</sup> 10.2), these features can be evaluated in terms of comparable meters, such as the Anglo-Saxon alliterative line. However, stress clash requires an alternate schema for the first colon [ / \ x(x) | / x(x) || ] which can be explained in terms of derivation from the primary paradigm, and may further undergo inversion at the '*caesura Korschiana*' [ / x(x) | / \ x(x) || ]. Moreover, this analysis preserves and enhances the tendency for the configuration of line types within the complete epitaphs observed by Mercado. In conclusion, Old Latin word-initial stress provides an alternate, simplified pattern for analysis of the metrics of the epigraphical, and literary, Saturnians.