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GASPARINO BARZIZZA'S TREATISE ON IMITATION

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HUMANITIES WORKING PAPER 54

December 1980

Abstract for Barzizza's Treatise on Imitation

Barzizza's treatise on imitation is the only theoretical treatment of the subject for the century between the death of Petrarch and the dispute between Poliziano and Cortesi. It shows the nuts and bolts of imitative technique and thus casts light on the earliest educational training of Renaissance men of letters. It provides a particularly clear example of how metaphors for imitation determine the theoretical position of the author. The text has never been published before and is here reproduced in an appendix.

Gasparino Barzizza's Treatise on Imitation

Most of the theoretical discussions of imitation during the Renaissance date from the exchange of letters between Poliziano and Paulo Cortesio at the end of the fifteenth century.¹ Petrarch is the only earlier author whose theory of imitation has received any attention.² Barzizza's De imitatione is thus the only treatment of imitation which we know of in a period of more than 100 years.³ Barzizza's treatise is not one of the great formulations of the theory of imitation, but still has a certain importance. It presents the nuts and bolts of the technique of imitation, simple advice how to adapt models, such as Barzizza's collection of form letters and exordia, for the student's own letters and speeches. It provides insight into the elementary use of imitation in education which most treatises neglect. Barzizza allows one to glimpse how students went about their Latin compositions. Since the only other treatment of imitation for students, over a century later in works by Johann Sturm and Roger Ascham, is very close to Barzizza on matters of technique, one may conjecture that these procedures were typical in Renaissance education. The treatise is typical in another way. Despite its pedestrian tone it does not differ greatly from more important works in its dependence on metaphors from Seneca's Epistolae morales 84. By making the heart of De imitatione a list of five metaphors Barzizza

provides a particularly clear example of their role in treatises on imitation. Rather than illustrating or adorning a treatise, the metaphors often convey the most important points and are consequently invaluable for understanding what type of imitation an author is presenting.⁴

Barzizza's primary concern is to avoid exact duplication. He drives the point home again and again: the words should not be the same. The treatise contains nothing about improving the model; changing it beyond recognition is enough. The modesty of these pedagogical aims distinguishes the treatise from earlier discussions of imitation, which all insist on transforming the model into something new and, usually, better.

Since Barzizza acknowledges his dependence on Seneca, one can see this difference most dramatically by comparing the treatise with the letter which is its primary source. The bee metaphors are particularly revealing:⁵

Sed ne ad aliud quam de quo agitur abducar, nos quoque has apes debemus imitari et quaecumque ex diversa lectione congressimus separare (melius enim distincta servantur), deinde adhibita ingenii nostri cura et facultate in unum saporem varia illa libamenta confundere, ut etiam si apparuerit unde sumptum sit, aliud tamen esse quam unde sumptum est appareat. (84.5)

Sicut enim apes in prato florenti et floribus pleno vadunt, flores candidiores et electiores sugunt, et extrahunt mel, ita et nos volentes imitari, quando libros oratorum et poetarum et imprimis Ciceronis nostri legimus, electiora dicta imitari

debemus, et sicut ipsae apes non auferunt ipsos flores secum sed tantum id quod potest a floribus accipi, scilicet mel, ita et nos non accipiamus dicta oratorum et poetarum quos imitari volumus recte secundum litteram, sed imitemur ita ut non videamur ipsa furari. (23.6-13)⁶

Seneca is returning from a digression on natural history in which he says that some people think the bees merely gather honey rather than make it; his own position is apparent from his first reference to the bees, "quae vagantur et flores ad mel faciendum idoneos carpunt" (3). Barzizza assumes that the bees take the honey from the flowers. The difference is crucial. Seneca is interested in the sea-change that the components experience in becoming something else; the "something else" may or may not be recognizable. The point of Barzizza's comparison is to select the choicest passages for imitation and to avoid the appearance of plagiarism. He may not even understand the type of transformation Seneca is advocating. Making a few substitutions and transpositions to obscure the relation with the model he understands; he lists ways to do this. He turns Seneca's other comparisons into warnings not to reproduce a text exactly; he does not take them as examples of a new unity emerging from various elements. He omits the comparison which most explicitly reveals this process and which is least capable of being taken as a warning against plagiarism:

Adsentiamur illis fideliter et nostra faciamus, ut unum quiddam fiat ex multis, sicut unus numerus fit ex singulis cum minores summas et dissidentes computatio una comprehendit. (7)

As long as the imitator does not suffer the fate of Horace's "cornicula" and lose all his borrowed glories to their original owners, Barzizza is satisfied. He renounces the project of making something our own and does not dream of competing with or improving the model, an essential aspect of imitation for Quintilian and Petrarch, to name only Barzizza's predecessors. Petrarch's bees, for example, do not just store away their thefts: "nulla quidem esset apibus gloria, nisi in aliud et in melius inventa converterent."⁷

Disguising thefts, not making something better, is Barzizza's special province. His contribution to the theory of imitation consists of specific methods for transforming a text to obscure its relation to its model. Since different versions of his treatise offer different methods, it is time to turn to the four manuscripts which preserve it.

II

All the manuscripts are paper and date from the fifteenth century.

Milan, Ambros. Z 55 sup., ff. 4-11. The treatise is not attributed to Barzizza and is headed: "Comes [in red]. Incipiunt quaedam praecepta de imitatione." It begins at 21.22. The copyist made several careless omissions, including two haplographies, "alio...in" 22.15-16 and "nam...oratio" 22.21-22. The ink on the top few pages has washed away, and consequently these passages are illegible: "Item...verba" 22.18; "sententiae quas" 22.19; "floribus...vadunt" 23.6-7; "accipimus...dicta" 23.16; "ita ut stilus" 24.3

Most of the manuscript contains Barzizza's excerpts from Terence and Plautus.⁸

H London, British Library, Harley 5238, ff. 108v-112v, headed "Gasparinus pergamensis de imitatione." H also contains Asconius, Barzizza's De compositione, anonymously, with the additional prologue,⁹ and "Aliquae imitationes Terenti per Gasparinum Bergomensem."

M Venice, Marc. lat. XI 34 (4354), ff. 27v-30. The title appears on f. 27, "Per Gasparinum Grammaticum De imitatione liber incipit," but is followed by the above-mentioned prologue to De compositione. On f. 27v at the end of the prologue comes the heading "De imitatione." The copyist has omitted several words and phrases. As in H the treatise is followed by "Aliquae Terenti imitationes per Gasparinum pergamensem." The manuscript contains two other works by Barzizza, the Exordia and De compositione.¹⁰

R Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana 779, ff. 210-212, headed "Incipiunt quaedam imitandi praecepta." The treatise, as in A, begins at 21.22 and is not attributed to Barzizza. Although each manuscript has variants peculiar to itself, R has the most and completely departs from the others at the end of the section "De exercitatione." The manuscript, a long (ff. 444), humanistic miscellany, contains several letters by Barzizza, often with readings significantly different from the rest of the tradition.¹¹

A and R represent one version of the treatise, H and M another. The most striking difference is the absence of the first 30 lines from AR. The following selection of variants gives some other

significant ones (the reading of HM comes first): 22.7 imitaremur (-tur)/mutaremus; 23.19 quibus om. AR; 24.4-5 eadem in verbis/in verbis eisdem; 24.13 similitudo/multitudo; 24.19 quattuor modis potest haberi/fit quattuor modis; 25.2 Petrum/alium quempiam; 25.6 verba/alia; 25.15 and 26.9,10 novando/permutando; 25.14 subtrahendo/detrahendo; 26.4,7 commutando/transferendo; 26.6 mutando/unum.

I suspect that different versions survive because Barzizza did not intend the treatise for general circulation. The style is not at all polished, and the organization is somewhat haphazard. The additional lines in HM contradict a passage at their end. In short the treatise looks more like a collection of notes than a finished product, and the only references to it in Barzizza's correspondence suggest that he kept it on hand to send to students so that they could continue their studies away from his school. In a letter written in Padua to Francesco Bicarano¹² Barzizza describes his normal procedure when a student leaves:

Fecissem enim quod solent boni pictores observare in his qui ab eis addiscunt [artem discunt, V] ubi enim a magistro discedendum est antequam plane [plene] rationem pingendi teneant, illi solent eis tradere quasdam egregias figuras atque imagines velut quaedam artis exemplaria quibus admoniti possint vel per se ipsos aliquid proficere. Ita ego sibi in ea arte, in qua satis proficiebat sed nondum <eo> pervenerat quo volebam, exemplaria [copiam] aliquarum illustrium <orationum atque> epistolarum tradidissem, quibus etiam me absente viam sibi ad ornate loquendum [scribendum] suo

studio invenire non difficile fuisset. Addidissem quoque rationem qua multo [qua multo: quanto, V] commodius ac melius potuisset ad eam facultatem accedere.¹³

I take this "ratio" to be a version of the treatise on imitation. In similar fashion Barzizza concludes a letter to a pupil, which in Mazzuconi's opinion may be addressed to Guiniforte, with a promise that the treatise will follow: "Vale et te exerce, libellum compositionis praeceptorum commodae elocutionis propediem expecta, dehinc alius imitationis verborum et sententiarum libellus subsequetur." This letter also refers to "imitatio" as a "ratio" in the passage in which Barzizza expresses his greatest enthusiasm for imitation. He promises his correspondent that he will be able to compose speeches and letters with ease if he works on the enclosed list of synonomous expressions "diligenti inventione et accurata imitatione":

vel etiam singulas dictiones ea ratione contorquere et tractare possit, quod quascumque sententias velis ex ipsis orationibus sive dictionibus in quolibet librorum volumine consequi valeas. (Mazzuconi, p. 199)

This second letter provides one of the scanty bits of information about the date of the treatise, which itself contains no indication of date, since the references to Quintilian are all to passages known before Poggio's discovery in 1416 of the entire Institutio and since Barzizza knew Seneca's Epistolae morales before 1408, the year in which he began to write his commentary on them.¹⁴ On the strength of references to Nonius Marcellus and Guarino's De

diphthongis in the work which accompanies this letter Mazzuconi dates them to around 1417. Strictly speaking the references to these works only provide a terminus ante quem, since one need not assume that Barzizza wrote his own just after receiving them. I think it plausible, however, to place at least one version of the treatise in the years 1413-17, if one is willing to assume that Barzizza intended a version for Guiniforte. That assumption merits consideration because of a letter from Barzizza to his son Niccolò. This moving testimonial of Barzizza's admiration for and hopes in Guiniforte begins with the declaration that he does not need to be exhorted to complete the treatise he promised for Guiniforte because he is totally devoted to his favorite's education. After admitting to his son that he loves Guiniforte best of all his children Barzizza continues:

Non est igitur ulla res quae me reddat magis sollicitum quam omnia conquirere quae possint illum et doctiorem et meliorem facere. Nuper autem privata quaedam studia neglexi quae cum quibusdam amicis meis de oratore instituendo ingressus fueram, ut plus mihi otii esset ad conscribendum ea quae ad eruditionem ac disciplinam euis pertinerent.¹⁵

Since Barzizza says he is considering every aspect of Guiniforte's education, he probably does not neglect to send him a version of De imitatione, even though one cannot say which "tractatus" he is referring to in this letter. The letter is difficult to date; one of its editors, Cessi, thinks it probably from 1413, although he wonders whether it might not be later. It is very similar to a letter from the end of 1412 or the beginning of 1413, in which Barzizza is again

in raptures over Guiniforte's prodigious accomplishments. This letter in any event shows the father's concern for his son's education even though it does not mention any works especially designed for him.¹⁶ One imagines that Guiniforte would have used the treatise on imitation early in his schooling and not much after 1417. Assigning a version of the treatise to 1413-17 is thus rather speculative, but as plausible as any other dating in the absence of more fixed points of reference.

The different versions represent Barzizza's changing adaptations of what Quintilian calls the "quadripertita ratio" to imitation.¹⁷ Quintilian lists these four categories of transformation, "adiectio," "detractio," "transmutatio," "immutatio," in his chapter on solecism (1.5.38), but also uses them as the basis for his division of tropes and figures. Barzizza turns the categories into tools for disguising the dependence of a letter or speech on its model. He offers three different systems. The first appears in the beginning of the treatise in H and M: 1) "addendo," 2) "subtrahendo," 3) "transferendo," 4) "immutando," a) "in eadem re," b) "in simili," c) "a communi," d) "per contrarium." As "transferendo" and "transmutatio" both refer to transposition of word order, this system is the closest to Quintilian, who does not, however, distinguish species of "immutatio."

The end of H and M contains another system. The four types of "immutatio" are listed independently, and the third, "a communi," becomes "a re diversa."¹⁸ The first sentence of the next paragraph lists four or possibly five ways to imitate: "addendo,"

"subtrahendo," "commutando" or "transferendo,"¹⁹ and "novando." Some confusion is present, however, because the explanations omit "transferendo" while retaining transposition as part of "commutando." The fourth or fifth category is new, "novando." Despite a confusing example that makes it resemble "transferendo," "novando" must mean coining words as in Cicero, De oratore 3.154, especially since Barzizza says, "et iste modus maxime fit per compositionem." Cicero gives the formation of compound words, which he calls "coniunctio," as the first way in which "verba novantur," and compound words are often called "composita" as in Quintilian 1.5.3 or 1.5.65.

The final system appears at the end of A and R. The four types of "immutatio" are listed as at the end of H and M, but the following paragraph contains these ways to imitate: "addendo," "detrahendo," "transferendo," and "permutando." This type of "transferendo" includes changing case and number as well as word order, and "permutando" refers to what had been coining new words in H and M, although it is not possible to be sure what Barzizza intends, since the example, "satisfecisti" for "fecisti satis," may just indicate change in word order.

The differences between the endings of the two versions seem to be merely terminological, but 20.1-21.2 looks like a revision of 24.19-26.11, which contain the incomprehensible "numero aut individuo numero" and the discrepancy involving "transferendo." The addition is also better organized and more schematic; it subordinates the material of 24.19-25.13 to "immutatio," thereby eliminating the misleading parallelism, "bona imitatio fit" (24.19, 25.14).²⁰

These attempts to devise instructions for disguising the relationship between text and model form Barzizza's contribution to the technique of imitation. Later theorists, more concerned with imitation as an aid to composition for fully educated authors, do not condescend to discuss such elementary topics.²¹ When Sturm and Ascham, however, reconsider imitation from the pedagogical point of view, they produce instructions very similar to Barzizza's.²² The similarity may in part be due to a mutual dependence on the following passage from Cicero's Partitiones oratoriae:

Cicero. Reliquum est igitur ut dicas de conversa oratione atque mutata. Pater. Est quidem id genus totum in commutatione verborum, quae simplicibus in verbis ita tractatur, ut aut ex verbo dilatetur aut in verbum contrahatur oratio; ex verbo, cum aut proprium aut idem significans aut factum verbum in plura verba diducitur; ex oratione, cum aut definitio ad unum verbum revocatur aut adsumpta verba removentur aut circuitus diriguntur aut coniunctione fit unum verbum ex duobus. In coniunctis autem verbis tripex adhiberi commutatio potest non verborum sed tantum modo ordinis, ut cum semel dictum sit directe, sicut natura ipsa tulerit, invertatur ordo et idem quasi sursum versum retroque dicatur, deinde idem intercise atque permixte. Eloquendi autem exercitatio maxime in hoc toto convertendi genere versatur.

(23-24)

Cicero is describing the first three categories of Quintilian's "quadripertita ratio." Whether or not Barzizza is drawing on Cicero is unsure, but there is no doubt that Sturm takes him as a point of

departure because his first system of transformations appears in a commentary on this passage in his In partitiones oratorias Ciceronis, dialogi duo (1539). By combining Cicero with Aristotle and Hermogenes, Sturm expands "adiectio," "detractio," and "transmutatio."²³ In his next substantial discussion of imitation Sturm shares Barzizza's conviction that the relationship between text and model must be disguised. He lists three "occultandi modi" ("additio," "ablatio," and "mutatio," which covers what Barzizza calls the methods of "transferendo" and "immutando") and comments, "Atque haec sunt quae artem atque similitudinem occultant: quae tametsi levia videantur, sunt tamen sola, quae efficiunt quod eruditorum homines aures requirunt."²⁴

Sturm's final and most elaborate system appears in 1574. He describes six "occultationis partes":

Est autem Appositio, quoties aliquid ad exemplum additur: aut in principio: aut ad extremum, aut aliquid in medio interponitur. Detractio contraria ratio est, qua in his tribus locis aliquid tollitur. Transpositio, cum manentibus sententiis, in eadem conversione aut circumscriptione, collocatione, solum in alium locum migrant sententiae. Immutatio, est materiae, et verborum facta dissimilitudo. Copia, est ex paucis sententiis plures factae, ex paucis membris numerosiora. Idem sentiendum de ornamentis, de numeris. Brevitas, est revocatio rei copiosae, ad paucitatem.²⁵

These categories are no longer just for schoolboys; Sturm gives examples for each one by comparing the openings of the Odyssees and

Aeneid. Nevertheless Sturm is here closest to what may be Barzizza's revised presentation. The first four categories correspond exactly (the names are even the same) and "copia" and "brevitas" are nothing more than extended instances of "additio" and "detractio."

Notes

1. The acrimonious invectives between Poggio and Valla, although important documents in the story of Ciceronianism, do not contribute to the theory of imitation. The Super imitationes eloquentiae of Antonio da Rho is an alphabetical list explaining the meaning and usage of certain Latin words. The prologue contains extravagant praise of the effects of imitation, but does not refer to it further: "...dicendi suppellectilem. Quam profecto non ex arte aut doctrina, quemadmodum eleganter Quintilianus praecepit et Cicero, verum potius ex eloquentissimorum virorum imitatione quadam ac dicendi similitudine communicatam habebam. Quis nesciat complusculos homines nulla ferme aut certe tenui adepta doctrina, dum eloquentiores viros quosdam imitarentur, claros et illustres oratores evasisse. Ars quidem praecipit; imitatio vero sermonis cultum splendoremque verborum coram porrigit. Vidi ego aliquando nonnullos qui cum singula quaeque dicendi praecepta nequaquam ignorarent, deficiente tamen ornato viro quem per vestigia sequerentur, non modo absonos sed certo dicam paene mutos et elingues exstitisse" (Milan, Ambros. H 49 inf., f. 210v). On this work see Remigio Sabbadini, "Notizie sulla la vita e gli scritti di alcuni dotti umanisti del secolo XV raccolte da codici italiani," Giornale storico della letteratur italiana 6 (1885), 165-9, and B. Monfardini, "Antonio da Rho e le 'Imitationes rhetorice,'" Tesi di laurea Lettere e filosofia, Università

Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano 1970-71.

2. See in particular the fine study by Thomas M. Greene, "Petrarch and the Humanist Hermeneutic," in Italian Literature: Roots and Branches, ed. Giose Rimanelli and Kenneth John Atchity (New Haven, 1976), pp. 201-24.
3. Daniela Mazzuconi, "Per una sistemazione dell'epistolario di Gasparino Barzizza," Italia medioevale e umanistica 20 (1977), 183, announces the discovery of the treatise, but it was already known to Bertalot, (Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Der Nachlass Ludwig Bertalots," Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken 45 [1965], 434), and was mentioned by Nancy S. Struever, The Language of History in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism (Princeton, 1970), p. 145.
4. In "Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance," Renaissance Quarterly 23 (1980), 1-32, I use the metaphors to distinguish three kinds of imitation: following, imitating, and emulating.
5. For the history of the bee comparison see J. v. Stackelberg, "Das Bienengleichnis: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der literarischen Imitatio," Romanische Forschungen 68 (1956) 271-293.
6. I refer to the page and line numbers of the appendix.
7. Le Familiari, ed. Vittorio Rossi and Umberto Bosco (Florence, 1933-42), 1.8.23.
8. Folia 11-15v contain various notes and prayers and one Italian poem, all in another hand from Barzizza's works. Remigio

- Sabbadini, "Briciole umanistiche," Giornale storico della letteratura italiana 45 (1905), 74-75, called attention to the excerpts but did not mention the De imitatione.
9. Robert Paul Sonkowsky, "An Edition of Gasparino Barzizza's De compositione," Diss. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1958, pp. xxiv-xxvi.
 10. For some other works in the manuscript see Paul Oskar Kristeller, Iter Italicum (Leiden and London, 1963-67), II 239.
 11. Cesare Colombo, "Ricerche sull'epistolario familiare di Gasparino Barzizza," Tesi di laurea Lettere e filosofia, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, 1963-64, pp. 27-36, gives a list of Barzizza's letters in R. See also Iter Italicum, I 201, and Berta Maracchi Biagiarelli, "Manoscritti della raccolta dell'umanista Nicodemo Tranchedini nella biblioteca Riccardiana di Firenze," in Miscellanea dei studi in memoria di Anna Saitta Ravignas (Florence, 1978), pp. 250-255.
 12. Mazzuconi, p. 236, lists Francesco Barbaro as the recipient although most manuscripts, to which one may add London, British Library, Add. 14786, f. 59, give Francesco Bicarano. The formal tone of the letter, so different from the intimacy with which Barzizza addresses Barbaro, makes her attribution highly unlikely. Barzizza is writing to the relative of a student who appears to have left because of a misunderstanding.
 13. Gasparini Barzizii Bergomatis et Guiniforti filii opera, ed. J. A. Furietti (Rome, 1723), I 180-181. Here and elsewhere I have modified the punctuation and spelling of quotations from

Barzizza's letters. The variants are from Milan, Ambros. H 49 inf., f. 13, Oxford, Balliol College, 132, ff. 111v-112, and Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, CCCIII (303), ff. 67rv (=V); the manuscripts agree except on the two readings peculiar to V. I list the variants not only to provide a better readings--with the omission of "orationum" and the substitution of "loquendum" for "scribendum" Furietti's text hardly makes sense--but also to take the opportunity to insist that Furietti is only too frequently unreliable and that a critical edition of Barzizza's letters, despite the opinion of Mazzuconi (p. 204), the last scholar to work extensively with them, is badly needed.

14. Letizia A. Panizza, "Gasparino Barzizza's Commentaries on Seneca's Letters," Traditio 33 (1977), 299-302.
15. This letter has been published twice, first by Roberto Cessi, "Di alcune relazioni familiari di Gasparino Barzizza," in Scritti vari di erudizione e di critica in onore di Rodolfo Renier (Torino, 1912), pp. 740-741, and second by Ludwig Bertalot, "Die aelteste Briefsammlung des Gasparinus Barzizza" (1929), now in Studien zum italienischen und deutschen Humanismus, ed. Paul Oskar Kristeller (Rome, 1975), II 77-78.
16. Bertalot, II 85-86. The letter is before Guinforte's seventh birthday ("Nundum enim ut nosti agit annum septimum"), and Guinforte was born in the first couple of months of 1406 (Guido Martellotti, in Dizionario biografico degli italiani VII [Rome, 1965], p. 39).
17. For the extensive applications of this fourfold scheme in ancient

rhetoric and grammar see H. Usener, "Ein altes lehrgebäude der Philologie," Sitzungsberichte der philosophischen-philologischen und der historischen Classe der k. b. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Muenchen 1892, 628-631.

18. "Ab eadem re" is subdivided into two categories which I am unable to understand, "ab individuo" and "ab numero" (if the punctuation of A is correct; otherwise the second is "ab individuo numero").
19. H's "commutando sive transferendo" attempts to keep four categories despite the five gerunds and to account for the omission of "transferendo" in its following explanation.
20. Barzizza's De compositione offers a textual parallel. Two of its numerous manuscripts (in addition to H and M) contain a prologue which sets forth different theories of clausular rhythm than those of the body of the treatise. In that instance Sonkowsky, p. xxi, thinks that the prologue is probably not by Barzizza.
21. The fullest discussion of the the history of imitation is Hermann Gmelin, "Das Prinzip der Imitatio in den romanischen Literaturen der Renaissance," Romanische Forschungen 46 (1932), 83-360. For other references see the notes to my "Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance."
22. Since Ascham acknowledges his reliance on Sturm, I will not discuss what he calls the "tools" of imitation (The Scholemaster, ed. R. J. Schoeck [Don Mills, Ontario, 1966], pp. 103-104).
23. Gmelin, pp. 344-348, gives a useful schematic presentation.
24. Nobilitas Literata (Strassbourg, 1549), p. 47. On the basis of this work, which was translated into English in 1570, Marion

Trousdale, "Recurrence and Renaissance: Rhetorical Imitation in Ascham and Sturm," English Literary Renaissance 6 (1976), 156-179, discusses Sturm's theory of imitation.

25. De imitatione oratoria libri tres (Strassbourg, 1574), 3.3.

Appendix

- A: Milan, Ambros. Z 55 sup., ff. 4-11; begins at 21.22.
 H: London, British Library, Harley 5238, ff. 108v-112v.
 M: Venice, Marc. lat. XI 34 (4354), ff. 27v-30.
 R: Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana 779, ff. 210-212; begins at 21.22.

The apparatus is selective. I do not record any orthographical variants, some differences in word order, most omissions of a word or two, any variations in tense or mood, and a few other insignificant variants (e.g., "vel" for "aut"). After much hesitation I have decided to follow the conventions of classical orthography. I observe the modern typographical distinction between u and y. The punctuation is my own.

De imitatione

Imitatio sumitur vel fit quattuor modis, videlicet, addendo, subtrahendo, transferendo, et immutando. Addendo quando est aliqua Ciceronis vel alterius brevis oratio, <et> debemus eam amplificare. Subtrahendo quando aliqua oratio est prolixa, et tunc debemus reducere
 5 ipsam ad brevitatem. Transferendo quando id quod antepositum est postponimus. Immutando vero fit quattuor modis, videlicet: aut in eadem re, ut si puta Cicero vel alius defendit aliquod crimen ambitus, possum in eadem re imitari; aut in simili, ut si quis accuset aliquem de pecuniis repetundis, et ego accusabo ipsum de crimine ambitus, quia similis est; aut
 10 a communi, ut si quis laudat unum a prudentia, et ego laudabo eum a

1 sumitur] finitur H 4 oratio] dictio M 6 aut scripsi ut H ne M
 9 similis scripsi idem H id M

temperantia; aut per contrarium, ut si quis laudat unum, et ego vituperabo ipsum. Et nota quod imitatio non debet esse contexta longa alterius oratione atque sententia--et maxime quando eodem ordine sequimur--et potest sumi ex pluribus auctoribus et locis dummodo filum sit aequaliter
5 contextum.

Nota quod amplificatio aut additamentum fit quando tibi praeposita una ratio est, videlicet, in epistola componenda, aut in libris omnium sapientium sententiam ipsorum eligere si volueris, ut verbi gratia: Tullius aut unus alter tractat de bello, imitaberis illum per alia verba et per
10 supposita et apposita, aut in eo bello commemorabis antiquos nostros per exempla, aut per similitudinem, aut per colores rhetoricos. Nota autem si de bello nobis committitur, debemus nos extendere super illud nostro intellectu quid cadat ad propositum belli. Item si tibi quattuor causae committentur aut plures, pro quacumque causa sibi materiam adiungas ad
15 propositum aptam, et sic facies per singulam quamque usque adeo <si> tuam orationem, aut epistolam, aut sermonem brevem aut longissimum attrahere per illas causas singulas volueris.

Nota quod ad omne tuum initium omnium rerum, aut per epistolas, aut orationes, semper assume tibi bonam sententiam, si volueris id quod
20 sequitur, videatur semper totum bonum et unaquaque sententia contextum.

Nota de imitatione per alium modum et maxime secundum Senecam. Dicit Seneca ad Lucilium quod imitatio non debet esse echo,¹ id est; quando

8 eligere] allegare M 10 commemorabis] connumerabis M 13 quid
scripsi] qui quidem HM 14 sibi] si H 16 longum contrahere M
17 illas causas om. H post volueris add. Nota de imitatione per
alium modum et malum [sic] M 20 unaquaque] una quasi H 21 et
maxime om. H

volumus imitari, non debemus accipere recte litteram sicut stat in illo libro in quo volumus imitari, sed debemus mutare verba et sententias ita quod non videantur esse illa eadem verba quae sunt in ipso libro. Istud facile poterimus accipiendo imitationem e contrario, id est, mutare
 5 sententiam per contrarium illius quam imitari volumus, ut si Cicero quem imitari vellemus eximie laudaret aliquem, possemus illum maxime vituperare. Item non debemus imitari totam unam epistolam, etiam dico si mutaremus verba quae cito cognoscerentur. Sed debemus accipere modicum in una epistola vel oratione, et modicum in alia et sic possumus complere nostram
 10 epistolam vel orationem, transmutando tamen verba. Possemus tamen accipere duo vel quattuor verba in principio alicuius epistolae vel orationis quam vellemus imitari, sed non plura, quia principia orationum vel epistolarum sunt notiora aliis partibus orationis vel epistolae.

Item si illa latinitas quam vellemus imitari esset in nominativo
 15 casu, debemus ponere et transmutare in alio casu dummodo posset transmutari. Item si esset in numero singulari, possemus transmutare in numero plurali.

Item quando imitamur, debemus respicere si illa verba et illae sententiae quas inveniremus in libris auctorum decerent illos ad quos
 20 scriberemus, quia sicut eadem vestis non decet omnes, ita nec eadem oratio, nam nec unum rusticum nec unum carpentarium deceret habere vestem more iudicis, ita nec eadem oratio quae scriberetur ad iudicem deceret scribi ad carpentarium.

4 post facile add. facere A 7 Item] licet H mutarem] imitarem
 H imitarentur M 8 quae] quia AH 20 cf. Petrarch. Fam. 2.22.16-17

Item nota quod a conclusionibus adversariorum nostrorum possemus exordiri in nostris orationibus vel epistolis.

Qui vult imitari Ciceronem non relinquat.

Nota quod imitatio a quinque potest accipi similitudinibus vel per
 5 quinque similitudines habetur. Prima similitudo habetur ab apibus, a quibus componitur mel. Sicut enim apes in prato florenti et floribus pleno vadunt, flores candidiores et electiores sugunt, et extrahunt mel, ita et nos volentes imitari, quando libros oratorum et poetarum et imprimis Ciceronis nostri legimus, electiora dicta imitari debemus, et sicut ipsae
 10 apes non auferunt ipsos flores secum sed tantum id quod potest a floribus accipi, scilicet mel, ita et nos non accipiamus dicta oratorum et poetarum quos imitari volumus recte secundum litteram, sed imitemur ita ut non videamur ipsa furari.

Secunda similitudo habetur ab alimentis. Nam quantacumque alimenta
 15 in specie sua in stomacho sunt conservata et non digesta sunt oneri. Ita si volentes imitari accipimus et furamur dicta aliorum, non imitando sed scribendo et accipiendo litteram sicut stat in ipsis oratoribus, talis imitatio oneri est et dedecori. Nam si venirent illi a quibus extraxissemus dicta sua, ex quibus composuissemus orationem vel epistolam
 20 et acciperent quae sua essent, nihil in papiro scriptum relinqueretur.

Tertia similitudo accipitur a parentibus. Nam licet aliqui filii sint omnino similes patri vel matri et in eis appareant aliqua signa

2 cf. Ad Her. 1.10, Cic., Inv. 1.25, Quint. 4.1.54 3 ante Qui
add. Quid dicere contingit R 4 quinque scripsi quattuor AHMR
 5 quinque scripsi quattuor AHMR 6 componitur] contrahitur H
 7 sugunt] quaerunt R 8 oratorum] auctorum M 17 orationibus A
 auctoribus M 20 cf. Ad Her. 4.5, Hor., Ep. 1.3.15-20
 21 accipitur] fit M

ipsorum parentum ex quibus cognoscuntur quorum filii sint, et tamen non sunt illi, puta filius non est pater suus licet ei assimuletur. Ita bona imitatio debet esse et accipi ita ut stilus et eloquentia videatur assimilari Ciceroni vel alio oratori, et tamen non esse debet eadem in
 5 verbis. Sed bene debet esse aliqua signa, puta aliquae sententiae, aliqua pulchra dispositio verborum et aliorum quae requiruntur in arte.

Quarta similitudo est quae assimilatur echo, id est, reflexioni vocis, et non est bona similitudo, exempli gratia, si aliquis emittat sonum magnum et vox reflectatur ad aliam partem et audiatur, cognoscitur esse
 10 eadem quae ab ore clamantis emissa est. Sed qui vult imitari non debet id agere ut eadem verba videantur esse sua quae ab aliis accepit.

Quinta similitudo bona est et accipitur a clamore multorum insimul congregatorum. Si in aliquo loco sit multitudo hominum alte loquentium diversa et aliquis aliquantulum distans ab illo loco sit qui auscultet,
 15 audiet quandam vocem unitam, et nihil intelliget, nec cognoscet qui sint qui loquantur, nec quid. Si ergo volumus per hanc similitudinem imitari, capiamus imitando tam multa dicta oratorum, ita ut non videantur proprie esse eadem quae ab illis oratoribus dicta sunt, sed nostra et temperata.

Notandum ergo est quod bona imitatio fit quattuor modis. Primo ab
 20 eadem re, aut numero aut individuo. Numero, ut aliquis defendit Horatium

1 quibus om. AR 2 ei] et M eis eis [sic] R 3 accipitur R
 ita...videatur om. R 4 in verbis eisdem AR 6 pulchra] puta A
 dispositio] disputatio R post et add. dispositio R 9 reflectiva R
 et om. R 11 aliis] alia persona R 12 accipitur om. H post a
add. causa H 13 multitudo] similitudo HM post loquentium add.
 omnium HM 15 unicam R 17 tam] tantum] AR tum H 18 sed...temperata]
 et viam temperatam R post temperata add. Alia
 imitationis praecepta M 19 fit...modis] quattuor modis potest
 haberi HM 20 Ita punxit A. aut numero, aut individuo numero, ut HMR

et bene dixit, ita ego imitando ipsum defendam Petrum. Ab individuo, ut laudavit aliquis Scipionem, ego laudabo Petrum, puta imitando eandem materiam et eandem sententiam, sed mutatis tamen verbis et diligenter temperatis, ut si aliquis de iure civili in laude orationem habuerit, tu in
 5 alio loco et in alio conventu facilius de eodem iure poteris laudem habere ab illa imitatione, dico imitando alia et non accipiendo eadem verba. Secundo a simili, ut aliquis laudaverit ius civile, et ego ius canonicum laudabo, quia magnam similitudinem habet unum cum altero. Tertio a re diversa, puta iste laudaverit imperatorem aliquem strenuum in bello, tu per
 10 imitationem assumes laudes de aliquo praetore in civitate integerrimo in futuris agendis. Quarto a contrario, et dico quod haec est optima imitatio. Siquis vituperaverit aliquem de iniustitia, possum per contrarium imitando laudare alium ab aequitate.

Omnis bona imitatio fit aut addendo, aut subtrahendo, aut
 15 commutando sive transferendo, aut novando. Addendo ut si invenirem aliquam brevem latinitem in Cicerone vel in alio aliquo libro, adiungam ei aliqua verba ex quibus videbitur illa latinitas aliam accipere formam et diversam a prima. Exemplum. Si ponatur quod Cicero dixerit, "Scite hoc inquit Brutus," addam et dicam, "Scite enim ac eleganter hoc inquit ille vir
 20 noster Brutus." Ecce quomodo videtur habere diversam formam a prima, et hoc potest probari hac similitudine. Aliquis pictor pinxit figuram hominis

1 ut] ita M om. H 2 Petrum] alium quempiam AR 3 sed om. R
 6 illa] alio M alia] verba HM 7 post ut add. si AR 9 iste]
 aliquis M ille R 10 assumes] accipias M 13 post aequitate add.
 Notantur etiam quaedam de imitatione A Nota etiam alia de imitatione H
 Notandum est etiam de alia imitatione M 14 aut subtrahendo, aut
 commutando om. A detrahendo R aut commutando om. R 15 sive]
 aut AMR novando] permutando A 16 post brevem add. locutionem sive
 A aliquo libro] docto oratore M

absque manu dextra vel sinistra, accipiam ego pennellum et adiungam manum dextram vel sinistram, et etiam pingam sibi cornua in capite. Vide quomodo videtur ista figura multum diversa a prima. Subtrahendo autem leviter cognoscitur per contrarium supradictorum. Commutando fit mutando verba, 5 scilicet de uno verbo in aliud, aut numerum in alium numerum, puta singularem in pluralem, vel e converso, aut unum casum in alium, puta nominativum in genitivum, et sic de ceteris, aut fit transferendo ordinem verborum, scilicet praeponere quae postposita sunt, et sic de aliis. Novando fit ut si diceretur, "Tu semper fecisti satis amicis," dicam ego 10 novando verbum, "Tu semper satisfecisti amicis," et iste modus maxime fit per compositionem.

Nota quod idem posset dici de sententiis mutando sicut supradictum est de verbis. Voco verbum quamlibet partem orationis. Si autem queramus quos oratores et poetas debeamus imitari, audiamus Quintilianum, cuius 15 proprie haec verba sunt, "Tuteo te potius Ciceronem quam Livium imitari, et potius Livium quam Sallustium."²

Nota aliud quod tot sunt species imitationis quot sunt partes ex quibus componitur oratio. Nam si voluero imitari inventionem, videbo quomodo fecit Cicero ubi de inventionem scripsit et composuit orationes 20 suas. Si voluero imitari dispositionem, videbo quomodo Cicero dispositione usus est, et sic dico de aliis. Sed de memoria hoc non dico, quia non potest haec dari in scripto.

3 videntur M figura] signa M detrahendo AR 4 commutando]
 transferendo AR 6 unum] mutando HM alium] casum HM
 7 transferendo] commutando HM 8 scilicet praeponere] si praeponam R
 9 Novando] permutando AR diceretur] dicet aliquis M 10 novando]
 permutando AR 13 cf. Quint. 1.5 14 quos auctores, quos poetas,
 quos oratores M quos auctores et poetas R 15 Livium] Laelium M

Sequitur nunc ut pauca de exercitatione dicam. Si volumus ergo nos exerceri, consideremus circumstantias quae maxime ad hoc requiruntur. Hae quidem sunt in quo, cum quo, quando, quomodo, quantum. Dico primo in quo conveniat nos exerceri, et dico in illis quae sunt propinquiora
 5 grammaticae. Loquor illis qui sunt novi in hac arte et qui student hanc artem assequi, qui primo recedunt a studiis grammaticae et statim huic studio traduntur ut primo discamus narrare fabulas quae sunt in Ovidio et quomodo vellemus narrare. Post has videamus quomodo narremus argumentum aliquod, puta Terenti comici poetae vel alicuius tragici poetae, ulterius
 10 aliquam historiam, et sic procedendo. Cum quo: dico cum homine benivolo et grato. Quando: puta considerando tempus debitum et horam, videlicet, si scriberemus homini irato, sollicito curis, famelico ante comestionem, non acciperet epistolas nostras nec audiret libenter. Expectandum ergo tempus in quo sit recreatus et voluntate bona, tunc libentius audiet. Quomodo:
 15 oportet enim diligenter considerare quomodo ad hominem superbum et arrogantem scribamus et quomodo ad hominem clementem ac pium, et sicut sunt diversae hominum naturae ita nos accommodare. Quantum: non enim debemus ad fastidium scribere, vel nostrum, vel audientium sive legentium, sed omnia temperare debita cum ratione. Considerandum est primum cuius rei gratia.

4 nobis conveniat AR dico in...Loquor om. R 5 post Loquor add. tantum A 10 homine] huic R 12 sollicito...curis] pollicito multis et R 13 nostras om. R ne AHM libenter] aliquem cum eo loqui volentem AHM 14 recreatus...audiet] bone rationis et voluntatis, et tunc videbit libentius et auscultabit dicentes AHM 15 post enim add. laute et R 16 mitem et clementem AHM post et add. sic AHM post sunt add. nam sunt M 17 ita...accommodare om. AHM ad...primum] tantum scribere quod generet fastidium. Primo nobis quantum ad laborem, dehinc legentibus, sed temperate quantum sufficit et cum debita ratione. Debemus etiam considerare AHM

Notes to Appendix

1. Our texts of Seneca do not mention "echo", but Barzizza knew it as a variant for "ex quo" at Epistolae morales 84.8, as his commentary on the passage indicates: "Ex quo, id est, ex quali sententia, vel echo. Echo est vocis reflexio quae causatur ex reverberatione facta in locis concavis, de qua fabulose dicitur.... Adducitur autem hic a Seneca ut illos comparet echo qui praecise aliena dicta referunt et in eadem forma nihil de suo penitus adicientes" (Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, Vindob. lat. 51, f. 118v; Vatican City, Urb. lat. 218, f. 132).
2. Nowhere does Quintilian say exactly this. When discussing which authors a beginning student should read, he expresses the opinion that one should always read the best: "Ego optimos quidem et statim et semper, sed tamen eorum candidissimum quemque et maxime expositum velim, ut Livium a pueris magis quam Sallustium (et hic historiae maior est auctor, ad quem tamen intellegendum iam profectu opus sit). Cicero, ut mihi quidem videtur, et iucundus incipientibus quoque et apertus est satis, nec prodesse tantum sed etiam amari potest" (2.5.19-20).