Latin Pronunciation & Ancient & Modern Accents (integrations, 2024⁴)

(Addition to § 5.6)

With all (or just half) due respect for those who really believe in Latin metrical performances, let us concisely observe how much (and how unnaturally) it distorts (and betrays) the true (and natural) structure of Latin. Not differently, but even more, than what *opera* (expecially for 'kilometric' vowels) or *rap* (mainly for absurd speed and 'rhythm') devastate languages.

In order to 'respect' metrical feet, stresses are unnaturally changed in comparison with authentic language. Consequently, too many words are stressed too differently than in real language. It would be uselessly complicated to transcribe both the natural and the metrical way of rendering such examples.

Therefore there will follow some isolated examples, just in Latin spelling, but with 'wrong' stresses indicated by acute accents, even two in longer words (or three, as in *tárditúdiné*, too):

(1) *áridá, vénderém, óptantés, náturám, spíritús, péctoribús, Júppitér, crédulúm, míseriús, obsérverént* (2) *tibí, mihí, malé, graví, modís, nupér, pedém, libér, æurés, fidém, læsít, ferúnt,* (3) *meí, diú, eó, pr, tuís, ruít,* (4) *ét, aút, sí, ín, ád, cúm, quó.*

§ 7.8. Let us add some 'ancient and wise' reflections about *natural phonotonetics*:

mire res mira utilis scientifica doctrina naturalis phonotonetica est [ˈmiˑɾɛˑ ɾezˈmiˑɾɐˑ¦ ˈutɪˌlɪs (s)kɪɛnˈtɪfɪˌkɐ dɔkˈtɾiˑnɐˑ ˌnatuˈɾaˑlɪs ˌphonotɔˈneˑtɪˌkɐst]

naturalis phonotonetica utilia acceptaque inex(s)pectata revelat [ˌnatuˈɾaˑlɪs ˌphonotɔˈneˑtɪkɐˑ uˈtɪlɪɐ(ɐ)k kɐpˈtɐk̬ɛɪ ˌnɛkspɛkˈtaˑtɐˑ ɾɛˈweˑlɐt].

And some other reflections, inevitably deeply pessimistic ones:

mundus immundus est [ˈmʊɳdʊ sɪmˈmʊɳdʊˌsɛst]

homo insipiens est potius quam sapiens [ˈhɔmoĩ ˈsɪpɪɛ̃ˌsɛstˑ ˈpɔtɪʊs k̬ɛ̃ˈsɐpɪɛ̃s]

semper gravidæ stultorum hominum matres sunt [ˈsɛmpɛɾ ˈgɾɐwɪdɐɐˑ stʊɫˈtoˑɾṍ ˈhɔmɪnṍ ˈmaˑtɾɛ(s)ˌsʊɳt]

nolite damnatio vitæ afferre [noˈliˑtɛˑ dɛ̃ˈnaˑtɪo ˈwiˑtɐɐˑ¦ ɐfˈfɛɾɾɛ]

infeliciter lex improbissime in usu est [ĩfeˈliˑkɪtɛɾˑ ˈlɛksˑ ˌɪmpɾɔˈbɪssɪmeˑ¦ ɪˈnuˑsust]

etsi inscienter stultus aut indiligens homo semper noxius est [ˈɛtsiĩs k̬ɪˈɛɳtɛɾˑ¦ sˈtʊɫtʊˌsɐʊ tɪɳˈdiˑlɪgɛ̃s ˈhɔmoˑ ˈsɛmpɛɾ ˈnɔksɪʊˌsɛst]

eheu! olim oliorum dementes homines ad rem publica accedunt [ʔɛˈhɛʊˑ ˌolĩolɪˈoˑɾṍˑ deˈmɛɳtes ˈhɔmɪnɛsˑ ˌɐdɾɛ̃ˈpuˑblɪkɐ(ˑ)k ˈk̬eˑdʊɳt]

semper mente alienati regnant [ˈsɛmpɛɾ· ˈmɛntɐə lɪeˈnaˑti· ˈɾɛŋnɐnt]

nequior obtusus judex est quam homo sceleratus [ˈneˑk̟ɪɔɾ· ɔpˈtuˑsʊs ˈjuˑdɛk̟ˌsɛst· k̟ɐ̃ˈhɔˑmosˌkɛlɛˈɾaˑtʊs]

novissime potens diruptio infeliciter ingens malum fuit [nɔˈwɪssɪme ˈpɔtɐ̃z diˈɾʊptɪoˑ¦ ɪ̃feˈliˑkɪtɛ· ˈɾɪŋgɐ̃z ˈmɛlũˌfʊɪt]

quævis ex(s)istentia vel materia vana est [ˈk̟ɐəwi sɛkˈsɪstɛntɪɐ ˌwɛłmaˈtɛɾɪɐˑ¦ ˈwaˑnɐst]

simpliciter negare multos deos vel unum deum esse consentaneum est, effuse homines nimis creduli sunt [sɪmˈplɪkɪtɛɾ· neˈgaˑɾɛ ˈmʊłtoz ˈdɛos· weˈluˑnũ ˈdɛũˌesse· ˌkõsɛnˈtaˑneũst·¦ ɛffuˑse ˈhɔmɪnez ˌnɪmɪsˈkɾɛdʊliˌsʊnt].

solum stulti vitam æternam cupere possunt [ˈsoˑlũs ˈtʊłti· ˈwiˑtɐə ˈtɛɾnɐ̃· ˈkʊpeɾe ˈpɔssʊnt]

omnino absurda æstimatio affirmat homines ratione præditos esse [ɔŋˈniˑno· ɐpˈsʊɾdɐ(ɐ)əs tɪˈmaˑtɪo· ɐfˈfɪɾmɐt· ˈhɔmɪnez ˌɾɐtɪˈoˑne ˈpɾɐədɪtoˌsɛsse]

quævis religio absurda est, præterea damnosa est si fanatica [ˈk̟ɐəwiz ɾeˈlɪgɪoˑ· ɐpˈsʊɾdɛst·¦ pɾɐəˈtɛɾɛɐ· dɐ̃ˈnoˑsɛst· ˌsifaˈnaˑtɪkɐ]

aliquot religiones, comparatæ cum aliis, magis malæ depravatæque sunt [ˈɐlɪk̟ɔt ˌɾɛlɪgɪˈoˑnes· ˌkɔmpeˈɾaˑtɐə kũˈɐlɪis·¦ ˈmɛgɪz ˈmɛlɐə· deˌprawaˈtɐək̟ɛˌsʊnt]

absolute tantum nihil perfectum est quævis materia stulte absurda est [ˌɐpsɔˈluˑte· ˈtɐntũ ˈnɪhɪł· (ˈnɪɫ, ˈnił [both monosyllabic, of course]) pɛɾˈfɛktũst| ˈk̟ɐəwiz maˈtɛɾɪɐˑ¦ sˈtʊłtɐp ˈsʊɾdɛst].

Let us end by considering how some Latin teachers may try to make Latin agreeable to their Italian pupils, supposing to find some inscriptions like:

<div align="center">IVITELLI DEIROMANI SONOBELLI even as:</div>
<div align="center">I VITELLI DEI ROMANI SONO BELLI</div>

In Italian, we have: [ˌiviˈtɛlːli· ˌdeiɾoˈmaːni· ˌsonoˈbɛlːliˑ] ('the calves of the Romans are pretty'). However, the same 'words' (but Latin ones), and adding punctuation marks, which are always useful, we have:

<div align="center">I, VITELLI, DEI ROMANI, SONO BELLI</div>

that is, in classical Latin pronunciation: [ˈiˑ wɪˈtɛłli· ˌdɛɪɾoˈmaˑni· ˌsɔnoˈbɛłliˑ], which means: 'Go, Vitellius, to the sound of war, of the Roman god'. In Italo-Latin pronunciation, it sounds: [ˈiˑ viˈtɛlːli· ˈdɛi ɾoˈmaːni· ˈsɔˑno ˈbɛlːliˑ].

Here is another example frequently used:

<div align="center">MAGISTERMEUS ASINUSEST</div>

more adequately, we have the following two versions:

<div align="center">MAGISTER MEUS ASINUS EST</div>

in Italo-Latin: [maˈʤister ˈmɛus· ˈaːzinuˌsɛst·] ('My teacher is a donkey'). In classical Latin: [maˈgɪstɛɾ ˈmɛʊs· ˈɐsinuˌsɛst·]. However, written as:

<div align="center">MAGIS TER MEUS ASINUS EST</div>
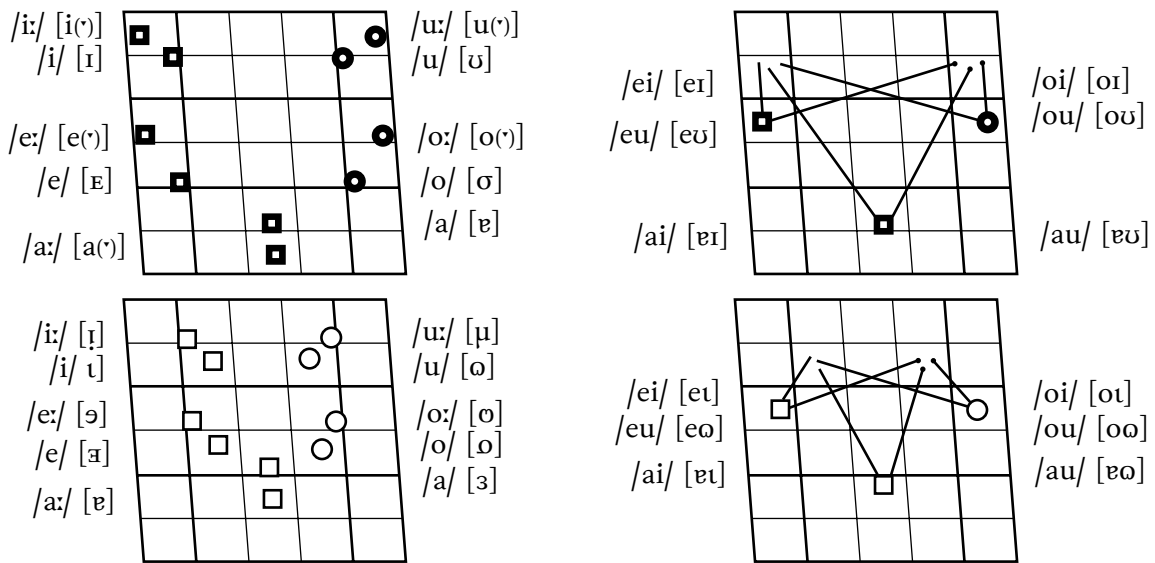
that is: 'more that three times my donkey eats'; better:

<div align="center">MAGIS TER, MEUS ASINUS EST</div>

for: [ˈmaˑʤis ˈtɛɾ· mɛuˈsaːzinuˑ ˈsɛst·]; in classical Latin: [ˈmɛgɪs ˈtɛɾ· mɛʊˈsɐsinuˌsɛst·].

Old Latin (Italic, ɪᴇ) had five *V*, both short and long, which were phonetically nasalized before /NC, N#|/, *NC* or *N#|*, their timbres remaining unaffected and the *N* being preserved, even before constrictives, with [n≡C]. It had also six diphthongs and length opposition for the *C*.

It generally had inital stress, mainly /ˈ$$ˌ$($)/, with weakened unstressed vowels and diphthongs (as shown in the bottom series of vocograms): *Benedictus, Florentina, Metellus, Tiberius* [ˈbɛnɑ̨ˌdɪktɵs, ˈɸɫoˑɾɑn̨ˌtinɜ, ˈmɛtɑɫˌɫʊs, ˈtɪbɑ̨ˌɾɪʊs, -rɭˌʊs].

There were no Greek phonostylemes yet, but there was *z* /VzV/ [VzV], which later became *r* /ɾ/, or *Vs#* /Vh/ [Vh], *eg floɀis* [ˈɸɫoˑzɪh, -ɪh] (later *floris*); also, *gn* /gn/ [gn]. The phoneme /l/ was [ɫ] before pauses, or *C* (including heterosyllabic /j/, /C#j/), or before back *V* (including /a, aː/), but [l] before tautosyllabic /j/, /#Cj/), or before front *V*; /kw, gw/ [k̯, ĝ].

/ / [··ˈ··ˈ··ˈ·]   /./ [·ˈ·.]   /?/ [·ˈ·ˑ]   /;/ [·ˈ··]