

THE ANTI-NEOLOGIST NEOLOGISER



Henri Estienne II and his Latin Coinages for Hans Ramminger¹

By Keith Sidwell

The famous 16th century printer-scholar, Henricus Stephanus (Henri Estienne) disapproved of excessive neologising, and satirised Justus Lipsius for this fault. But Estienne did coin new words himself. The principles for his neologisms, however, were in accordance with accepted grammatical formulations. This paper examines a number of these new words or new meanings, taken from works not cited in Johann Ramminger's Neulateinische Wortliste, as well as two instances where solecisms are used. In most cases, Estienne points out his originality of vocabulary or usage by employing an 'excuse' motif. The majority of his neologisms fall in the category of 'the humorous'.

1. Estienne's attitude towards Latinity

Henri Estienne (Henricus Stephanus) grew up – or so he claims - in a Latin-speaking environment, for his father, Robert Estienne, kept a ten-man team of international scholars in his household to act as *correctores* for his publishing-house and their only common language was Latin.² Indeed, Henri claims to have learned the language more or less as a native-speaker, long before he had been introduced to the grammar, which would have been the normal way of approaching Latin and Greek in that period (Preface to his 1566 *Poetae Graeci Principes heroici carminis*). When his heart had been stolen by the mellifluous sound of Greek and he longed liked an ardent lover

¹ Hans will know only too well that I have never been a lexicographer. Still, happy chance has arranged matters to put me at the right moment in a position to offer him a few titbits from the sweetshop that is his stock-in-trade – when we are celebrating his long and fruitful career with the *TLL* and hoping that he will now have more time for his ground-breaking *Neulateinische Wortliste* which is a boon for all those who work on early modern Latin texts.

² *Letter to his Son, Paul Estienne* §17-20, De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 452-5. Details of the original editions of Stephanus' works can be found in the bibliography and the USTC provides in most cases a direct link to a digital edition. Since, however, Stephanus gives no line or paragraph numbers either for prose or verse texts, I have thought it more convenient to direct readers to the most recent modern edition of these works, by paragraph, line and page number. Where the work has no modern edition (e.g. *Laudatio equi*) I cite the original edition, and if it is quoted from a secondary source, I refer the reader to Estienne via that.

to learn it, however, he was confronted with the fact that he did not really “know” Latin, as he had not studied it formally:

Then I began to object, fiercely denying that I was ignorant of Latin. My boyish ears rang with the Latin conversations of the household and had gradually become so used to that form of speech that I understood the majority of what was being said (an experience shared also by my mother). Consequently, I was convinced that I was more than sufficiently versed in it and therefore was surprised and not a little indignant that I was being summoned to study the basics of declensions and conjugations.³

He did eventually undergo this formal grammatical education in Latin, but only, he claims, after going through the grammar grind in Greek first. This is especially clear from the *De Plauti Latinitate* of 1576, where he organises his remarks according to the normal grammatical categories, but he shows himself everywhere aware of the formal analytical vocabulary both of grammar and of rhetoric.

From his earliest independent publications, Henri shows himself to be an anti-Ciceronian, though his *Ciceronianum Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* of 1557 is, illogically, a guide to the way in which Cicero had translated Greek words and phrases and purportedly designed to be useful to translators of Greek who wished for truly Ciceronian vocabulary and turns of phrase. In his 1576 treatise *De Latinitate falso suspecta*, however, he makes it very clear (as in many other places) that he regards Latinity as correct if its lexis conforms to a very wide spectrum of usage across the surviving writing of antiquity, from Plautus to Augustine and Jerome.

Late in his life, Estienne criticised Justus Lipsius’ style (*De Iusti Lipsii Latinitate* 1595) for its “unnecessary neologisms and impure” style.⁴ There is, of course, very probably here a nice distinction between “necessary” and “unnecessary” neologisms, since Henri, as we shall see, was not himself averse to creating new Latin words or reusing an existing word to describe something unknown to antiquity. How could he, in fact, have avoided this procedure? For indeed neologism in both these categories was an essential part of the Latinity of the Renaissance and post-Renaissance era, just as it had been of Medieval culture, since its use as an international *lingua franca* demanded that it be able to operate in contexts for which it was not designed. In that sense, it worked in a similar way to a natural language, where new forms of government, new intellectual concepts, new inventions and new

³ Translated in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 11-12.

⁴ Cowling 2012, 82. For the prefatory material to this volume, with comments on Lipsius as *Kaeonophilus* (“lover of neologism”), see Kecskeméti & al. 2003, 694-701.

fashions bring with them new words and phrases to express them, often borrowed from the languages which first thought them up (unless, as for example in France, official attempts are made to regulate non-native terms and keep them out – though this procedure is not especially successful).⁵

As the debates over style and lexis during the 15th and 16th centuries show, Latin was a regulated medium – though quite what the criteria for this regulation should be was always in question. Should one stick to Ciceronian vocabulary or allow a broader net to be cast? Was “barbarism”, the use of words calqued on words from modern languages, ever admissible? And whose style was a better model, that of Cicero, Seneca or Tacitus?

In his chapter in the Brill *Encyclopaedia* and in an interesting follow-up paper published in this journal a few years ago, Hans Helander has articulated some of the basic rules which underlie the creation of neologisms during the early modern period. The progression he tabulates, however, very largely belongs to the period of the explosion of scientific discovery, following especially the invention of the microscope (in the 1590s, though the word itself may be later) and the telescope (1610) and becoming gradually, then exponentially, stronger during the 17th and 18th centuries.⁶

Estienne precedes these developments and in any case was not a scientific thinker, though he did promulgate works of ancient medicine. Consequently, he forms an interesting example of how neologism operated in the largely conservative field of literary studies - and poetic composition - in the 16th century. It must, of course, have made a difference that Estienne was also involved in a relatively new technology, that of printing, which needed to invent new vocabulary (e.g., *typographus* “printer”) or borrow it from antiquity, though investing it with a different physical image (e.g., *prelum* “press”) and also that he had grown up hearing and using this tongue as a natural medium of communication. And it is of the utmost importance that he had seen, as a young man, his father Robert’s great lexicographical project, the *Dictionarium, seu Latinae linguae Thesaurus* (1543), come to completion, had produced a Latin dictionary (the *Ciceronianum Lexicon Graeco-Latinum*) himself in 1557 and, having undertaken to finish the Greek dictionary his father had begun, finally published the *Thesaurus Graecae linguae* in 1572. Estienne had good reason to know very well the rules of word-formation both in Latin and in Greek.

⁵ The attempt in Ireland to produce new terms based on Gaelic roots is nicely satirised by the apocryphal sentence allegedly heard in Connemara from a man pumping up his bicycle in his backyard in answer to the question (in Irish) “What are you doing?”: Tá mé ag pumpáil mo bhicycle in mo bhackyard!”

⁶ Helander 2014 and 2016.

2. Estienne's neologisms

There is nothing to surprise the student of word-formation in the examples of Estienne's neologisms which I shall be dealing with here. And given his lexicographical background, that is not surprising either. Like others, when he has to refer to something specific to his age which needs to be accurate, rather than using a periphrasis, he adheres to the modern convention and calls a spade a spade, or a Landgrave a *Landgravius*.⁷ But he can also use "barbarian" vocabulary to underline a point. For example, in his attack on Lipsius' Latinity, he uses the vernacular-derived word *liga* "League", which had been in common use since at least the 13th century (Latham), more to cast doubt on Lipsius' lexis by sarcasm than to make clear the historical reference-point:

Quod Gallica *liga* adversus hunc quoque, verum et legitimum Galliae regem, Hispanico auxilio freta, idem secta antiquaria, quae tandem (pro dolor!) evasit in gentem magnam, ac quae quotidie magna magisque fit populosa, adversus florentis Romae latinitatem, veram et legitimam Latini eloquii reginam, molitur.

Just as the French League has mobilised against the true and legitimate French king, with Spanish help, so this archaising sect, which has, unfortunately, grown large and grows more popular by the day, is mobilising against the flourishing Latinity of Rome, the true and legitimate queen of Latin eloquence.⁸

But when he is making up his own words, or using words invented by a friend, he always adheres to the cardinal principle that the basic parts should be in the available stock of classical Latin (or Greek) and that the formation should be regular. Consequently, the following notes are organised according to the manner of the neologism's formation or its manner of reuse of the Latin source-word.

a. Words created by using diminutive suffixes:

scyphulus:

in scyphum miserum sitis misella
incidit mea, caeterisque quanto
magis gutturibus meum aestuabat,
sortitum scyphon est eo minorem.
Quid dico scyphon? Imo nominandus

⁷ Helander 2016, 22, quoting Noltenius.

⁸ *De Justii Lipsii latinitate* (quoted by Cowling 2012, 82, from Kecskeméti et al. 2003, 698, with his translation).

est vere scyphulus. Velit Latinis
id verbum dare Posthiana coena.

my wretched little thirst
Chanced on a wretched cup: by how much more
My throat was sweltering than the other throats,
By that much smaller was the cup they chose.
Cup do I call it? No, it should be called
A cupkin: that's the word that Post's great feast
Would like to offer to the Latin tongue.⁹

Given that the root of this word, *scyphus*, had been naturalised from Greek as early as Plautus (e.g. *Asinaria* 444), there is no special reason why the diminutive might not have existed before Estienne. Clearly in the case of *scyphulus*, Estienne did think – or wanted it to be thought – that he was inventing, since he specifically picks out the item as a novelty (“Velit Latinis/id verbum dare Posthiana coena”). In this case, however, he was wrong. Souter lists *scyphulus* as “a small wine-cup” from the 4th-5th century CE Christian poet Paulinus of Nola (19.463). Presumably we must infer that Estienne was unfamiliar with his works. Moreover, the word had been relatively recently used by a Neo-Latin writer, Nicolaus Clenardus. In an account of a journey in Portugal in 1537 (*ep.* 43), he writes: “Forte fortuna scyphulus unus remanserat e prandio”.¹⁰ Estienne *might* have been able to read Clenardus, but his own formulation again makes it more likely that he had not and really thought (or wanted it to be thought) that he had coined the word. New vocabulary could move easily across the Latin-speaking world of the well-travelled humanists, so it must have been almost as difficult for a 16th century Latinist to be genuinely certain that a usage was indeed new and his own as it sometimes is for us, given the relatively undeveloped state of Neo-Latin lexicography and the vast amount of Neo-Latin writing.¹¹

⁹ *Francofordiense Emporium, Coena Posthiana* vv. 310-15 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 388-9.

¹⁰ Printed in Thomas 1902, 203. I am grateful to the anonymous referee for providing this example.

¹¹ A good example is the word *boarda* “cannon”, a poetic form of *bombarda*, clearly coined to make it easier for writers of Latin hexameters to write about the new artillery. I first encountered it in the Irishman Dermotus Meara’s *Ormonius* (1615), 5.50 (Edwards and Sidwell 2011), but Ramminger s.v. lists four other writers from the 15th and 16th centuries who had used it before him. But exactly how had it reached Ireland and Meara?

b. Words created by using prefixes:

tribibax:

Praesul nomen habens viri bibacis,
nec bibax modo, vulgus ut videmus,
sed vere *tribibax* (Latina nomen
hoc illi dare lingua ne gravetur).

A prelate who was known to like his drink,
And not just like, as we see does the crowd.
Nay, him a triple-bibber we might think
(If in the Latin tongue that word's allowed!).¹²

tritantaleus:

Plus quam Tantaleus premebat ergo,
me *tritantaleus* dolor premebat.

I was oppressed by more than Tantalus' pain,
Tri-Tantalean was the pain I bore.¹³

The words *tribibax* and *tritantaleus* are formed by adding the prefix *tri-* to the simple form, on the model of classical forebears such as *tribrachys* (Quintilian 9.4.97) or *triennium* (e.g., Cicero, *Ad Familiares* 15.16.3). In the case of *tribibax*, Estienne once again points to the word as his own coinage, by adding the rider: “Latina nomen/hoc illi dare lingua ne gravetur”. He does not see fit to do this with *tritantaleus*, however, though in both the coinage is prepared for by using the simple word as a contextual prompt.

postfatio:

Vetus est illa consuetudo utendi praefatione seu antefatione, nunc igitur, novo exemplo, uti *postfatione* volui, aliquando etiam *interfatione* usus, si usus veniat.

That custom of using a preface or foreword is an old one. So now, following a new pattern, I have wanted to use an afterword, and will even occasionally use an interword, should the occasion arise.¹⁴

While *interfatio*, also used here by Estienne, is a classical word (e.g., Quintilian 4.2.50), strangely *postfatio* is not. The word is first found, according to Hans Ramminger (s.v. *postfatio*) in two writers more or less

¹² *Francofordiense Emporium, De quodam praesule* vv. 1-4 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 404-5.

¹³ *Francofordiense Emporium, Coena Posthiana* vv. 349-50 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 390-1.

¹⁴ *Francofordiense Emporium, Postscript to Paul Schad* §1 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 406-7.

contemporary with Estienne. These are Johannes Brenz (1499-1570) and Jakob Andreae Schmidelinus (1528-1590). Brenz must have used the word before Estienne (as he died before the 1574 *Frankfurt Fair* was written), but it is not known whether Estienne would have read, or even been able to read, his works. The work cited in Ramminger by Schmidelinus, on the other hand, belongs to 1583, almost a decade after *Frankfurt Fair*. We may be speaking here of a term which was newly wrought – probably thrown up by the habits of the printing trade, where blank spaces at the ends of volumes were often filled by afterthoughts or additional notes which naturally could only be inserted once it was known there was a space (like nature, 16th century printers appear to have abhorred a vacuum). The coinage may have already been quite well-known, therefore, though of relatively recent origin, and it continued in use in the next generation.¹⁵ Still, Estienne appears, by the way he writes *novo exemplo*, to think he has coined it, or at least invented the institution of the “Afterword”.

c. New compound words following the structure of an existing Latin word or words:

ventipes, plumbipes, saxipes, testudinipes:

Terpsichore:

Non solum alipedis hic apud me nomen habebit
Verum & ventipedis, si lingua Latina probabit.

Terpsichore:

This horse I'll call not merely 'winged of hoof',
But, if the Latin language will approve,
'With hooves of wind', I'll add to that as well.¹⁶

Melpomene:

Aeripedem hunc siquis nolit vocitare caballum,
Plumbipedis dare nomen ei fortasse licebit.

Terpsichore:

Addi *saxipedis* debet me iudice nomen.

Calliope:

Hic *testudinipes* dictus tibi, Plaute, fuisset,
Si tibi consueto libuisset more iocari.

Melpomene:

If one's unwilling to describe this nag

¹⁵ Ramminger also cites Balthasar Meisner (1587-1626) under this word.

¹⁶ *Laudatio equi, Francofordiense Emporium* p. 12.

As ‘brazen-hoofed’, perhaps one might be let
Give it the name of ‘leaden-hoofed’ instead.

Terpsichore:

In my opinion, we should also add the name
‘With hooves that weigh as much as does a rock’.

Calliope:

O Plautus, if you had been fain to jest
In usual fashion, you’d have called this nag
‘A horse with feet that match tortoises’ speed’.¹⁷

The neologisms *ventipes*, *plumbipes*, *saxipes*, and *testudinipes* are based on existing items of poetic vocabulary such as *alipes* (e.g., Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.312) and *aeripes* (e.g., Vergil, *Aeneid* 6.802; cf. *sonipes* Vergil, *Aeneid* 4.135), which combine a noun as first element with *pes* (“foot”) to form a compound adjective. As the contexts given above reveal, the new words are formed in direct competition with the old by the Muses, who are represented in the two poems *Laudatio equi* and *Vituperatio equi* as alternately praising a good horse bought at the Frankfurt Fair and criticising a bad one bought at the Zurzach Fair. So *ventipes* is produced by Terpsichore to praise the Frankfurt horse over and above the standard epithet *alipes*, while the other three new adjectives are invented to add further levels of weight (punning on the *aeri-* of *aeripes*) and slowness to the critique of the Zurzach nag. In each instance, Estienne once more points to the fact that these are neologisms. In the case of *ventipes* Terpsichore adds the rider *si lingua Latina probabit* (why not, as the word is properly formed, seems to be the underlying implication?). In this case, however, Estienne’s claim (if indeed he is claiming originality) is false, as the word had already been used by Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus in his *Historiae Deorum Gentilium* of 1548, though as a Latin gloss (*Ventipes nuncia*) for the Greek phrase Ποδήμενος Ἄγγελος.¹⁸ Is this another instance of Estienne’s self-promotion, wherein he deliberately ignores the pre-existence of the word? Or, as the context and the creation of the other neologisms might argue, was he ignorant of Giraldi’s treatise?

In the case of *plumbipes* and *saxipes*, the contrast with the existing term is first established (as in that of *ventipes*) by direct mention of the classical term and then to *plumbipes* is added the rider *fortasse licebit* (permission is still required to innovate in Latin, however well it is done). The zenith is reached a few lines later with the coinage *testudinipes*. In this case Plautus is invoked

¹⁷ *Vituperatio equi*, *Francofordiense Emporium* p. 13.

¹⁸ The text, edited by Karin Zeleny, is available digitally at <https://www.oew.ac.at/kal/mythos/Syn09.pdf>, p. 429. I owe this reference to the anonymous reader.

to justify the jokey but apt neologism. Estienne knew Plautus' works well, admired them, and thought his vocabulary perfectly acceptable for general use. Indeed, only two years after *Frankfurt Fair* he would add an appendix *De Plauti Latinitate* to his treatise *De Latinitate falso Suspecta* (1576).

d. New feminine forms based on existing masculine words with standard feminine suffixes:

grallatrix:

Ut vero a personatis mulieribus abhorremus, ita nec grallatrices amamus; sed easdem et in lecto et in mensa (id est, utrobique vel proceras vel parvas) habere volumus.

Just as we dislike women wearing masks, so we do not have any affection for those on stilts. We would rather have the same women in bed and at table, that is, in both places, whether they be tall or short.¹⁹

As Helander has noted, the *-tor/-trix* agent noun was a great source of new words in early modern Latin.²⁰ Many pairs of *-tor/-trix* agent nouns already existed in ancient texts. For example, the word *assentatrix* (to match masculine *assentator*), is found at Plautus, *Mostellaria* 257 and is used by Estienne at *Apologia pro Herodoto* §107 (as we have seen, Estienne accepted Plautus' vocabulary as classical).²¹ But when he wanted a feminine for *grallator* "stilt-walker", facetiously to describe women wearing the 16th century equivalent of high-heels, he was obliged to invent it, though here notably he does not make any excuse for doing so: he simply assumed, one supposes, that if there was a masculine form, then there must have been a matching feminine one, even though he had never seen it and was in any case using it as a jibe rather than literally.

e. Eponymous comic coinage:

stephanizare:

Superest, mi Melisse, ut mea carmina non ipse solum excusata habeas, sed etiam apud alios eorum sis excusator. Scis enim ea me in itinere scribere consuevisse, quod tu ex eo *stephanizare* appellare soles.

It remains, my dear Schad, for you not only to excuse my poems yourself, but to be their apologist also with others. For you know that it

¹⁹ *Apologia pro Herodoto* §123 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 240-1.

²⁰ Helander 2016, 12.

²¹ De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022.

has been my habit to write them while on the road, a practice which you are wont from that fact to call “Stephanising”.²²

In using the neologism *stephanizare*, based on his Latinized surname name (Estienne = Stephen, from Greek στέφανος “wreath”, “crown”, “chaplet”), Estienne introduces us to a Latin-speaking circle and reveals that the word was invented by Paul Schad (Melissus) to tease him for his mode of poetic composition, viz. on horseback while travelling. Again, there is nothing odd about the way the verb is formed. As Helander reminds us, the *-izo/-isso* ending, which had been naturalised into Latin as early as Plautus (e.g. *graecisso* and *atticisso* at *Menaechmi* 22), became popular for neologisms related to names during the 16th century - whence *Lutherisso* and others of the same ilk.²³ Its existence suggests, however, that there may have been in the banter exchanged between friends on social occasions a much wider propensity for the humorous neologism which we have glimpsed especially in some of Estienne’s less formal writings (the poems of *Frankfurt Fair*, for instance) than we can see from published Latin of this period.

f. Words borrowed from vernacular:

contextus:

Ac omne quidem magnificentiae genus statim mihi promisit quae apud me est non solum ampla et varia, sed etiam pretiosa supellex typographica (eamque promissis stetisse, omnes, ut spero, fatebuntur), ut autem Graecus *contextus* (sicuti vulgo vocatur) quam fieri posset emendatissimus ederetur, non omnem lapidem, sed omnia bibliothecarum (ad quae aditus patuit) scamna partim ipse movi, partim movenda curavi.

And indeed I was at once promised every kind of magnificence by the typographical equipment which I have at my printing-shop, which is not only large and varied, but also valuable – and I hope that everyone will admit that it has stood by its promises. But in order that the entire Greek text (as it is called in the vernacular) should be published in the most correct form possible, I personally moved – or saw to the moving of – not every stone, but every bookcase in the libraries to which I was allowed access.²⁴

The phrase *sicuti vulgo vocatur*, or something similar, is quite often found indicating reference across to a term in the vernacular. But here Estienne

²² *Francofordiense Emporium, Postscript to Paul Schad* §6 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 410-11.

²³ Helander 2016, 24.

²⁴ *Lectori φιλοπλάτωνι* §2 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 430-1.

Latinises the French word he is referring to, *contexte*, since it is in any case derived from the Latin. By this strategy, however, he makes it clear that the meaning to be assigned to the Latin word is not the usual one, viz. “weaving” and so “coherence”, “plan”, “structure”, “continuity”, “complex”.²⁵ Instead, he is thinking of the meaning given to it in the French of his day. The French *contexte* is explained in the *Dictionnaire Francoislain* published by Henri’s father Robert Estienne in 1539 [USTC 849832] as: “Par ung contexte, tout d’ung train, sans rien mesler – *uno contextu*”. So it appears that Estienne understood *contexte* as “the entire, full, complete and uninterrupted text”.

But the very appearance of the gloss *uno contextu* in Robert’s *Dictionnaire* suggests that Estienne is not claiming paternity of the word here. Indeed, Calvin had already in 1542 – three years after Robert’s lexicon had appeared – used *contextus* in this new sense.²⁶ The purpose of Estienne’s formulation here is rather to focus attention on another issue which he examines elsewhere in his writings. For the care Estienne takes to ensure that he is not being seen to be importing a barbarism into his Latin reflects a general problem with the use of spoken Latin during this period, especially by speakers of Romance languages, largely caused by the insistence on limiting one’s vocabulary – in a narrower or a broader way – to the lexical stock provided by approved ancient Latin writers. Estienne in fact wrote his treatise *De Latinitate falso Suspecta* (1576), as he explains in his prefatory remarks to the work, to help solve this problem, precisely because it was the closeness of French/Italian to Latin which stopped people from expressing themselves fluently in Latin, given that they did not want to make fools of themselves by misusing items of vocabulary:

Spero autem fore ut multos meum istud opusculum ad Latine frequentius et loquendum et scribendum incitet, quum eorum quae suspecta prius habebant (ut certe illam ipsam vocem *strenae*, a qua hanc epistolam inchoavi, apud multos in barbariei suspicionem immerito venire scio), pleraque elegantia etiam esse comperient. Sed caveant interim ne fines a me praescriptos excedant, atque ex nimium timidis audaces, ex superstitiosis irreligiosi circa linguae Latinae usum evadant ita, ut sumpta ex hoc meo libro occasione quicquid in buccam et loqui et scribere audeant ac tandem culinaria (ut nostratem appellationem imiter) uti Latinitate sibi permittant. Ac de his ut ipse quoque

²⁵ These are the main subheadings as given in *OLD* s.v. *contextus*.

²⁶ Calvin 1671-1677, op. VI, 103: “Quoniam abruptus est Graecus contextus, quidam accusativum pro nominandi casu positum esse putant”. I owe this reference to the anonymous reader.

praemoneas illos, in quorum manibus hanc lucubrationem invenies, et omnem a me calumniam propulses, etiam atque etiam rogo.

My hope is, however, that this little piece of mine will prompt many to speak and write Latin more frequently. They will discover that the majority of those words which they previously held suspect (as I know for sure that the very word *strenae* with which I began this letter, is undeservedly suspected by many of being a barbarism) are also within the bounds of good Latin. They should beware, however, of exceeding the limits prescribed by me and turning out in their use of the Latin language to be audacious instead of too timid, and irreligious instead of merely superstitious. If they do that, taking their cue from my book, they may dare to say and write whatever comes into their mouths and end up allowing themselves to use “kitchen Latin” (to imitate the French expression). I ask you, then, repeatedly, to warn those in whose hands you find this little lucubration about these matters yourself and to ward off from me all calumny.²⁷

g. New wine in old bottles: new meanings for an existing word

correctio:

Nanque quod humano mens est in corpore, quod mens
praestare humano corpore clausa potest,
hoc opere in nostro praestat correctio (voci
fas usum veteri sit tribuisse novum).

For since there’s mind inside the human frame,
What mind shut in the human frame can do
This in our work ‘correction’ does (the word
Can rightly bear this newly-minted sense).²⁸

We are by now familiar with the careful way in which Estienne signals neologism. In the case of *correctio*, Estienne’s *Ars Typographica* begs to be allowed to give an old word a new meaning. Here, however, it is by no means completely clear from the context whether Estienne is claiming it as his own coinage, impelled by his particular concerns as a scholar-printer, or whether it had by this time come into general use and he is simply advertising his knowledge that this usage diverges from the ancient.²⁹ Of the classical meanings, “amendment of error”, “correction”, “reproof”, the first two are

²⁷ *De Latinitate falso Suspecta* §14. Text and translation from De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 424-7.

²⁸ *Artis Typographicae Querimonia* vv. 131-4 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 270-1.

²⁹ There is no entry in Ramminger.

certainly included within the new sense. But given that it is the *Ars* herself who is excusing the term, it is more likely that Estienne is signalling the appropriation of the term by the new medium she personifies. Indeed, as the word is quite often used in this sense in other printers' prefaces, this is the likelier reason for the highlight it receives here.

It is, then, the processes involved in the new art of printing itself which require the expansion of the term to include all the operations by which a correct text is established – the collection of data from manuscripts and their collation, together with the collation of evidence from earlier printed editions, and, where neither resource suffices to provide an obviously correct text, the use of conjecture (though Estienne is always careful to insist that conjectures should not be printed in the text itself, but only in notes).³⁰ This activity was the realm of the *corrector*, who must necessarily be (at least in Estienne's opinion) a person highly trained in both Greek and Latin. The complaint made by Estienne's *Ars Typographica* in verse is essentially the same made by Estienne himself in prose in his *Epistola de suae Typographiae Statu* in the same year (1569):

Ego igitur olim quidem veterum scriptorum sortem eo nomine deplorabam, quod "in illotas" (ut proverbiali utar verbo) "manus" multorum vel interpretum vel expositorum inciderent, qui sua somnia illis deliriaque adiungerent; at nunc eorum qui in quorundam typographorum prela incidunt, non minus, sed potius magis deplorandam esse dico. "Quorum vero?" Nimirum qui, quum sint omnino literarum rudes, aut certe illis vix tincti, quaecunque ii quos pro doctis vel ipsi habent, vel ab aliis haberi vident, in castigando quopiam scriptore ausi fuerint (quid autem non audent nonnulli?), ea tanquam oracula in ipsa eius scripta inferunt. Hinc enim factum est ut, quum antea veterum libri iis tantum mendis inquinati esse solerent quae ex antiquis exemplaribus manarant, aut certe typographicis, id est iis quae typographicae committunt operae (cuius generis mendis et prope infinitis et monstrosis plerisque refertae erant Herodoti pariter et Thucydidis interpretationum editiones; quorum exempla etiam etiam quaedam in calce Latini mei Herodoti habes), nunc ad illa duo mala peius illis bonum accedat.

I, then, used to bemoan the fate of the ancient writers at one time on the grounds that they were falling into the (to use the proverbial expression) "unwashed hands" of many translators or commentators, who would attach their own dreams and mad notions to them. As things stand, however, I declare that no less wretched, but rather more so, is the fate

³⁰ He makes this point also in his introductory remarks to the reader in his Plato edition of 1578, §3 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 432-3.

of the ones who happen upon the presses of certain printers. “Which ones in particular,” you enquire? Well, those who, although they are altogether unacquainted with literature or certainly have scarcely dipped their fingers into it, bring whatever those whom they themselves regard as educated or they see are so regarded by others, have dared to suggest in emending any given writer (and what is there that some have not dared to suggest?) into the texts of that writer, as though they were oracular pronouncements. Previously the books of the ancients were disfigured only by those mistakes which flowed from the ancient manuscripts, or, certainly, by typographical errors – that is, those errors committed by print operatives – of the sort with which the editions of Herodotus and equally of Thucydides had been stuffed full, almost infinite in number and most of them monstrous. Examples of these you have to hand also at the end of my own Latin Herodotus edition. But by the process outlined just now, it has come about that to those two evils an even more pernicious good has been added.³¹

rotula:

Atque ut de quibusdam ingeniosissimis et vel ipso Archimede dignissimis machinis, de variis item quibus variae artes indigent instrumentis taceam et in iis quae supellectilis sunt pergam: quae familia multum se his nundinis vel eo nomine debere non fatebitur, quod instrumentum dederit cuius industria obitur praecipuum in re culinaria ministerium, humana prius manu obiri solitum? Nam quum ad versandum veru famulum famulamve alere necesse foret, *rotulam* nobis protulerunt Francofordienses nundinae quae hoc ipso et non minus gnaviter et magis industrie fungeretur.

I shall say nothing about certain extremely ingenious devices, which would be worthy even of Archimedes himself and likewise about the various tools needed by the various arts. Instead, I shall continue by mentioning the area of equipment for the home. What household will not admit that it owes a great deal to this Fair even under this head, because it has provided them with a tool by using which an important culinary task is managed, which normally before would have required the human hand? For whilst it would be necessary to pay the keep of a serving-man or serving-women to turn the spit, the Frankfurt Fair has produced for us a little wheel to perform this very task no less zealously and more industriously.³²

In his encomium of the Frankfurt Fair, Estienne spends some time listing labour-saving inventions which he has seen for sale there. Among them are

³¹ Text and translation in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 300-3.

³² *Francofordiense Emporium* §30 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 346-9.

molae brachiales (“arm mills”), which, given the grain-milling vocabulary in this section, presumably were mills equipped with some sort of gearing mechanism which reduced the effort involved in turning the grinding stones so that, instead of an animal’s bulk, the unaided arm of a man could work it. In the next section, Estienne turns to focus on an automatic spit, possibly prompted by the fact that in German and Italian the word for “mill” was used also for “spit”.³³ Estienne uses the word *rotula* (“little wheel”) here for the device as a whole. Given his focus on the fact that it does not need the human hand to work it (the cost of labour and board and lodging is saved by the purchase of the machine), it must have been operated by clockwork, which drove the spit without needing further human agency after it was wound up. Bartolomeo Scappi shows an illustration of such a machine in his *Cuoco secreto di Papa Pio V* (Venice, Michele Tramezzino, 1570, Plate 19 [USTC 855450]), which he calls a *Molinella* (“Little mill”).³⁴ So the device was a real invention of the period.

The question remains, however, what precisely Estienne’s word *rotula* denotes. Perhaps it was a trade name (cf. Hoover)? Or does it rather describe either the *function* of the machine or its *mechanism*. In the first case, it would glance across at French *rôtir* (“to roast”) and would therefore mean “roaster”. In the second, it would be describing either the part of the machine which takes the place of the human agent (not the spit itself, which is nothing like a wheel), and would therefore mean “clockwork” or the machine itself by synecdoche, and would therefore mean “clockwork device”. It is not easy to

³³ See Kammerer 2017, LXXXIII. In Johann Fischart’s German translation of Rabelais, at *Gargantua* 4 (chapter 7 in Fischart’s version: 1582, [Strasbourg, Bernard Jobin], p. 158: USTC 609532), where Rabelais mentions the slaughter of 367,014 oxen for salting, Fischart adds a reference to Solomon’s sacrifice (I *Kings* 8.62-3), involving 22,000 oxen and 120,00 sheep and opines that he must have been the inventor of the “living spit” or the “self moving spit-mill of 72 spits” (“selbs gengig Pratspissmül von 72 Pratspissen”), a clear reference to Estienne’s *Nundinae* (Fischart owned and annotated his own copy of this book). Bartolomeo Scappi (see below) uses an Italian word for “mill” (“Molinella”) to describe an automatic spit. Kammerer, however, appears to think that these “arm mills” are the *model* for the automatic spit. But it seems to me that it was only a similarity of mechanical method (a rotating handle to operate the device) that allowed the borrowing of the term into the vernacular for the two very different types of device. As far as I know, Latin *mola* was not used (and is certainly not used here) to mean “spit”. Moreover, the fact that Estienne uses the word *mola* for “mill” and standard classical terms for “hand mill” (*trusatilis mola*) and “pounding mill” (*pistrinum*) a little earlier (in §29) – items of vocabulary which are never used in connection with spit-roasting - while he uses the specific classical term *veru* for “spit” in §30, indicates that he is here thinking when he speaks of *molae brachiales* only of devices to facilitate grinding. He has moved on to a new subject by §30 and – in his normal “stream-of consciousness” manner - may have thought of the automatic spit only because of the concurrence of the vernacular terms.

³⁴ The plate is reproduced and discussed in Kammerer 2017, C and LXXXIII-V.

decide between these three options, but on balance the third is preferable. We would need more evidence to accept that *rotula* was a brand-name. As to the second option, we have seen above that if Estienne were calquing a French word, he would very likely have pointed it out. On the other hand, it is unclear that enough information is given by the synecdoche of *rotula* to allow it to mean “clockwork device” as a neologism. There is, therefore, a chance that Estienne did not coin the term, especially since he does not point out its novelty, as he usually does when he neologises. But if he did not, then the dictionaries I have consulted, including that of our dedicatee, list no examples of it. This is a conundrum, then, for a more seasoned lexicographer to resolve.³⁵

h. Latin grammar “misused” and excused:

salutes:

Nil, Posthi, superest, nisi ut *salutes*
(si sic per Latium loqui licebit)
tot precer tibi, quot querela versus
effudit mea non satis politos.

Nothing remains, O Post, except to pray
For healths (if it’s permitted so to say
In Latin) just as many on your head,
As hardly polished verses my complaint
Has flooded out.³⁶

vir illa:

Hic mihi huius generis exemplis finem imponere volenti in mentem
venit alia, prae caeteris omnibus mirabilis, Ioannis octavi pontificis
impostura; qui non tantum Pseudopapa verum etiam ψευδοανήρ fuit, id
est sub muliere virum mentitus est, donec *vir illa* (non ille) suo se
tanquam sorex indicio prodidit et media in via repente enixa, foeminini,
non masculini generis se gessisse papatum fateri coacta est.

³⁵ I note, however, that the word *rota* continued to be associated with descriptions of clockwork in the 17th century. Cf. Antoine Garrisoles, *Adolphis* (Montauban 1649), 7.354-6: *Hic mirandi operis brevium dentata rotarum / Instrumenta suos lentâ vertigine motûs / Perficiunt* ‘Here instruments betoothed with tiny wheels/ - A wondrous work – complete with sluggish whirls/Their motions’. Just how closely such classicising authors wanted to stick to existing formulations, even when describing inventions unheard of in antiquity is underlined here by the borrowing of the phrase *rotarum vertigo* from Prudentius, *Psychomachia* 414 (but cf. also the vocabulary for firearms and cannon).

³⁶ *Francofordiense Emporium, Coena Posthiana* vv. 432-33 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 396-7.

As I was wanting to bring my series of examples of this type to an end, another came into my mind, more amazing than all the rest: the imposture of Pope John VIII. This Pope was not just a false Pope, but also a false male, which is to say that beneath a woman's body she pretended to be a man. This fe-man (not "man") kept up the pretence until, like a mouse she betrayed herself on her own evidence. Suddenly giving birth in the middle of the street, she was compelled to admit that she had undertaken a papacy of the feminine, and not the masculine, gender.³⁷

Estienne can innovate grammatically, as well as lexically. Although this does not constitute neologism as such, it is worth looking at a couple of examples of this tendency, to round out the picture of an individual working in complete comfort with Latin in a way very similar to how one might operate in a natural language one has known since childhood.

The first instance, the plural *salutes*, a word used only in the singular in ancient texts, comes with the by now familiar request for permission, indicating that the writer is doing something unusual (*si sic per Latium loqui licebit*). Perhaps it has been suggested simply by the structure *tot...quot*, which would not work with the normal singular *salutem*. If this is not the reason, Estienne may be thinking of Italian *saluti* (though this is normally regarded not as the plural of *salute* "health", but of *saluto*), since in French and German a singular is always used in such expressions (*Santé!* *Gesundheit!*). But the first explanation is more probable, since as we have seen above Estienne would have been likelier to signpost a borrowing from the vernacular in a different way.

The second example, the use of a feminine demonstrative adjective with a masculine noun is a product of the specific context of the passage. For here Estienne is speaking about the famous and apocryphal Pope Joan, the woman who supposedly rose to the throne of Peter despite her gender – which she kept hidden until she was found out upon giving birth in the street. His solecism, however, is explained by the parenthesis *non ille*, which serves to point out (rather too obviously) that this is a joke.

3. Conclusion

Two remarks may be made in conclusion which follow upon this brief examination of some of Estienne's neologisms. The first is that more often than not, he uses new words for humorous effect. This is especially so in his poetry, where, as in conversation with his friends, he felt more relaxed and was aiming to amuse and divert rather than to instruct. That is not to say,

³⁷ *Apologia pro Herodoto* §85 in De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022, 204-7.

however, that instruction was a mode absent from his poetic writings, as his support of the anti-drunkenness crusade by his friends Johannes Post and Paul Schad shows.³⁸

The second is that the “excuse” motif for new words or meanings marks a self-imposed limitation to his neologising. New words are all well and good. But there are limits (overstepped, in his opinion, by Justus Lipsius) and the tendency must be constrained. In a very real way, then, although Estienne is a fine example of the vigour and real-life currency of Latin as a spoken as well as a written medium in the second half of the 16th century, on the other hand he represents, even with his more open attitude to lexis than the Ciceronians whom he despised and reprimanded, one of the reasons why the language was even then gradually giving way to vernacular discourses – even among the intellectual elite - as a medium of viva voce expression. It was simply too difficult for ordinary mortals to evade the linguistic traps laid for them by an imperfect knowledge of the whole lexis of antiquity - knowledge such as only extraordinary individuals like Estienne possessed or could hope to possess. Latin was becoming a victim of its own rigid classicising standards and the Renaissance was beginning to defeat its own manifesto.

Envoi

I am aware, of course, that Henri Estienne’s writings are not unknown to the author of the *Neulateinische Wortliste*. The examples I have looked at above, however, are all from works which are not cited there. This is hardly surprising. Henri was a prolific – and prolix – writer and the comprehensive investigation of his neologisms would take a very long time. It is by pure and (I hope) happy chance that my recent work on an edition of selections for Jeroen de Keyser’s new Lysa Latin text series (LYNX) brought me into close enough contact with works of the great 16th century lexicographer so far unstudied by his modern successor, to whom we are dedicating this volume, to be able to offer him a few humble additions to his Stephanic stock and to suggest that there may well be much more unmined *Wortgeld* (if I may offer a coin from my own lexical treasury) in the mountains of print that emerged from the Estienne *prelum* between 1554 and 1598.

³⁸ For brief accounts of the *Collegium Posthmelisaeum*, see Kammerer 2017, LXXIX-LXXXI and the introduction to De Keyser, Humble and Sidwell 2022.

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