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A Note on Verg. *Georg.* 1.393-397

Mélessande Tomcik

- ¹ Near the end of the first *Georgic*, Vergil reproduces Aratus' weather signs (ARAT. 773-1154; VERG. *Georg.* 1.351-465). Reversing the order in which the portents are presented in the *Phaenomena*, Vergil first describes the weather signs based on terrestrial phenomena (ARAT. 909-1141; VERG. *Georg.* 1.351-423) and then those derived from the observation of the sun and the moon (ARAT. 778-891; VERG. *Georg.* 1.424-465).¹ Further, Vergil divides the former section into two parts, the first describing the change from good to bad weather (VERG. *Georg.* 1.351-392), the second concerned with the signs portending the return of fair weather (*Georg.* 1.393-423). The following lines make the transition from one to the other (VERG. *Georg.* 1.393-397):

Nec minus ex imbri soles et aperta serena
 prospicere et certis poteris cognoscere signis:
 nam neque tum stellis acies obtunsa uidetur,
 nec fratris radiis obnoxia surgere Luna,
 tenuia nec lanae per caelum uellera ferri;

Clear skies and suns returning after rain
 By no less definite signs can be foreseen,
 For then unblurred is the piercing light of the stars.
 And as if unaided by her brother's beams
 The rising Moon shines; nor do woolly fleeces
 Pass trailing over the sky. (Translation: Wilkinson 1982)

- ² After lines 393-394 have signaled the beginning of the section devoted to omens of fair weather, verses 395-397 are usually understood to be describing the first signs of sunny weather and clear sky. Yet, it seems strange that Vergil should have chosen to start his section on terrestrial portents of good weather with three celestial phenomena. Commentators highlight that there is something odd in this passage, because Vergil seems to be creating portents of good weather by simply negating three of Aratus' signs of bad weather.² As M. Erren emphasizes, negating signs of rain does not necessarily make them into omens of good weather.³ Especially troublesome is the phenomenon described in line 396, which commentators struggle to explain and for which no correspondence in Aratus' *Phaenomena* has yet been identified.⁴ Aratus is indeed a

central figure for interpreting Vergil's weather signs and, as I wish to show in this article, close scrutiny of the way Vergil adapts his model is key to understanding the passage. So, first I will examine carefully how Vergil alters selected passages from his model in order to fit the structure of his weather signs. This will lead to a reconsideration of the purpose of lines 395-397, which should not be read as the first signs of good weather but as an introductory comment stressing the relevance of terrestrial signs. I will then take a closer look at how Vergil elaborates on Aratean signs to compose lines 395 and 397, before suggesting a model in the *Phaenomena* for line 396. It will thus be possible to recognize the phenomenon alluded to in this verse. Finally, I will conclude by following up on some of the implications of this revised interpretation. Thus, in this article I offer a new reading of the passage that not only solves all the above-mentioned problems but also opens new perspectives for interpreting lines 395-397 in relation to the end of the first *Georgic*.

1. Seeing the signs

- 3 Lines 393-394 of the first *Georgic* are modeled after lines 994-995 of the *Phaenomena*:⁵

σκέπτεο δ' εὐδῖος μὲν ἔων ἐπὶ χεῖματι μᾶλλον,
ἐς δὲ γαληναίην χειμωνόθεν. [...]

When in fair weather look out all the more for storm, and for calm when it is stormy. (Translation: Kidd 1997)

- 4 Aratus' injunction to look out for omens of storm when the weather is good and indications of more clement weather when the sky is stormy shifts the scope from the signs of bad weather that he has just described to the signs of fair weather that he is about to list. Lines 393-394 of the first *Georgic* have exactly the same transitional function: *Nec minus* (VERG. *Georg.* 1.393) looks back to the preceding section devoted to signs of bad weather, which was introduced in similar terms (*Georg.* 1.351: *Atque haec ut certis possemus discere signis*; 394: *certis poteris cognoscere signis*); *ex imbri soles et serena aperta* (1.393) – a close imitation of Aratus' expression (v. 995: ἐς δὲ γαληναίην χειμωνόθεν) – advertises the following section concerned with the change from rainy days to sunny skies.⁶

- 5 Vergil then continues with three lines (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395-397) modeled after one of the signs from Aratus' subsequent list of portents (ARAT. 1013-1015):⁷

ἦμος δ' ἀστερόθεν καθαρὸν φάος ἀμβλύνηται,
οὐδέ ποθεν νεφέλαι πεπιεσμέναι ἀντιόωσιν,
οὐδέ ποθεν ζόφος ἄλλος ὑποτρέχει οὐδὲ σελήνη,

When the bright light of the stars is dimmed, and yet no serried clouds at all occlude them, and no other darkness interferes with them, and no moonlight either. (Translation: Kidd 1997)

- 6 Both passages have in common the blunted starlight (ARAT. 1013: ἀστερόθεν [...] φάος ἀμβλύνηται; VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: *stellis acies obtunsa*) in combination with clouds (ARAT. 1014: νεφέλαι; VERG. *Georg.* 1.397: *ueller*) and the moon (ARAT. 1015: σελήνη; VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: *luna*). I will return to the way Vergil reworks each of these lines individually in the next section, but first I would like to point out that Vergil modifies Aratus' portent by placing it in a subordinate clause introduced by *neque* [...] *uidetur* (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395). Although the passive form of the verb *uidere* can – and often does – mean 'seem',

‘appear’,⁸ in this particular context it makes more sense to take it in its literal meaning as ‘to be seen’,⁹ or rather ‘to not be seen’ (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: neque [...] uidetur). Indeed, Vergil just advertised signs that are sighted during rain (VERG. *Georg.* 1.393: ex imbri) to portend the return of good weather (*Georg.* 1.393-394: soles et aperta serena | prospicere), but when the sky is overcast, the stars, sun and moon cannot be seen.¹⁰ Therefore, lines 395-397 do not describe the first signs of good weather but belong to the introduction of the section on terrestrial signs portending the change from rain to clear skies for which they provide a legitimation: indeed (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: nam), in such a case (*Georg.* 1.395: tum), it is impossible to base a forecast on the observation of the celestial phenomena due to meteorological conditions and one must rely on terrestrial signs instead. Read thus, the openings of both sections concerning terrestrial signs span exactly the same number of lines (VERG. *Georg.* 1.351-355; 393-397).

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2. Aratean phenomena

- 7 As mentioned above, *Georgic* 1.395-395 is modeled after lines 1013-1015 of the *Phaenomena*. It has been noted that Vergil changes the structure of Aratus’ portent and turns each of the three lines into an independent sign that cannot be seen (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: neque [...] uidetur; 396: nec; 397: nec) by combining them with other phenomena from Aratus’ poem.¹²
- 8 This is the case for the starlight (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: stellis acies obtunsa), which condenses the metaphor of blunted steel (ARAT. 1013: ἀστερόθεν καθαρὸν φάος ἀμβλύνηται) with the sharp contrast of celestial bodies against a dark sky (v. 472: τὰ γε κνέφαρος διαφαίνεται ὅξεα πάντα, “but all [stars] shine sharply in the darkness”).¹³ Vergil’s choice of the word *acies* to refer to the brightness of the stars is remarkable, because this term primarily associated with weapons is unusual to describe light.¹⁴
- 9 In a similar way, Vergil supplements Aratus’ tight clouds (ARAT. 1014: νεφέλαι πεπιεσμέναι) with a simile illustrating the shape of rainclouds (vv. 938-939: νέφεα [...] οἷα μάλιστα πόκοισιν, “clouds that look very like fleeces”) that he turns into a metaphor (VERG. *Georg.* 1.397: lanae [...] uellera).¹⁵ In passing, Vergil processes Aratus’ raw wool (ARAT. 939: πόκοισιν)¹⁶ and turns it into fine fleeces (VERG. *Georg.* 1.397: tenuia [...] lanae [...] uellera).
- 10 Based on the poetic technique used to compose the two other signs, it seems very unlikely that Vergil did not have an Aratean passage in mind to complement the moon’s interference (ARAT. 1015: ὑποτρέχη [...] σελήνη) when he composed line 396 (VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: fratris radiis obnoxia surgere Luna). Indeed, a parallel for Vergil’s line can be found in one of Aratus’ solar signs portending rain when the sun’s light fades away as it does during an eclipse (ARAT. 862-865):

ἀλλ’ ὅπότε ἡελίοιο μαραινομένησιν ὁμοῖαι
 ἑξαπίνης ἀκτῖνες ἀπ’ οὐρανόθεν τανύωνται,
 οἷον ἀμαλδύνονται ὅτε σκιάησι κατ’ ἰθὺ
 ἰσταμένη γαίης τε καὶ ἡελίοιο σελήνη.

but there is [a reason to be afraid of rain] when the sun’s rays suddenly
 lengthen in the sky and look as if they are dying away, just as they weaken

when the moon shades them, when it stands directly between earth and sun.
(Translation: Kidd 1997)

- 11 The passage of the moon between the earth and the sun matches her interposing action in line 1015 (vv. 864-865: κατ' ἰθὺ [...] γαίης τε καὶ ἡελίοιο; 1015: ὑποτρέχῃ) and the obscurity that it causes parallels the darkness mentioned in the same line (v. 864: σκιάῃσι; 1015: ζόφος). Moreover, this passage is the only Aratean sign in which sun and moon appear together, a distinctive feature of the portent in the *Georgics* (ARAT. 865: ἡελίοιο σελήνῃ; VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: fratris [...] Luna); both mention the sun's rays (ARAT. 863: ἄκτῖνες; VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: radiis) and the rising moon (ARAT. 865: ἵσταμένη; VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: surgere). Finally, as for the fleece-like clouds, the eclipse-simile illustrating the dimness of the sun is turned into a metaphor in the *Georgics*.
- 12 From this parallel it can be inferred that the phrase *fratris radiis obnoxia surgere luna* (VERG. *Georg.* 1.396) depicts an eclipse: the moon passes in front of the sun and blocks the sun's rays.¹⁷ Instead of reflecting her brother's light as she usually does,¹⁸ she holds them back, which is why she does him wrong (VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: obnoxia).¹⁹ Once again, Vergil compresses two Aratean signs into one and takes the image one step further by giving it a distinctive nuance: sun and moon are connected by family ties (VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: fratris [...] luna) and placed in a relation of conflictual dependence (*Georg.* 1.396: obnoxia).

3. Invisible signs

- 13 The revised reading of the passage as a comment on signs that cannot be seen and the recognition of an eclipse in line 396 open the way to new interpretations. Vergil's warning that there are invisible signs in the sky (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: neque [...] uidetur) reads as a cue to look for hidden starlight, eclipses and clouds in his text. Indeed, these particular signs are not listed among the celestial phenomena in the section devoted to the sun and moon (VERG. *Georg.* 1.424-465), but they do reappear in a different form later in the text.
- 14 The star's conspicuously sharp edge (VERG. *Georg.* 1.395: acies), invisible at line 395 (*Georg.* 1.395: neque [...] uidetur), comes to sight again at line 490 (1.490: Romanas acies iterum uidere Philippi, "a second time Philippi saw the clash of Roman arms").²⁰ This time the word resumes its main military sense in the context of the civil war described at the end of the book.²¹ Thus, the weaponized starlight at line 395 forebodes the coming development on the confrontation of Roman battle lines.
- 15 Similarly, the lurking shadow of fraternal strife cast on the sun by the moon (VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: fratris radiis obnoxia [...] luna) materializes when the Roman people witnesses an abnormal obscuring of the daylight after Caesar's death (*Georg.* 1.466-468):
- ille etiam exstincto miseratus Caesare Romam,
cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine textit
impiaque aeternam timuerunt saecula noctem.
- He too, when Caesar fell, showed pity for Rome,
Hiding his radiant head in lurid gloom,
That guilty age feared everlasting night. (Translation: Wilkinson 1982)

- 16 According to Vergil, this phenomenon is the first omen portending the disastrous civil war (1.464-465: *caecos instare tumultus | saepe monet fraudemque et operta tumescere bella*, “[the sun] often warns of dark revolts afoot, conspiracy and cancerous growth of war”).²² So, as for the preceding sign, the solar eclipse in line 396 looks forward to the following description of civil war portents.²³
- 17 Finally, Vergil’s thinned-out fleece-clouds hidden in the sky (VERG. *Georg.* 1.397: *tenuia [...] lanae per caelum uellera*) may allude to the subtle wordplay that Vergil has concealed in his celestial signs (*Georg.* 1.427-435).²⁴ Indeed, wool work is often used as a metaphor for writing poetry and *tenuis* is a programmatic adjective proclaiming elegance of style and scholarly sophistication.²⁵ Its Greek counterpart λεπτός is closely associated with Aratus, whose stylistic refinement is exemplified by his famous ΛΕΠΤΗ acrostic hidden in his lunar portents (ARAT. 783-787).²⁶ Therefore, Vergil’s slender clouds in line 397 signal his engagement with Aratus’ poetry and hint toward the subtle wordplay that he has woven into his own weather signs in imitation of his literary forebearer.

4. Conclusion

- 18 The close study of Vergil’s technique of composition in lines 393-397 has shown how the poet reworks Aratus’ text. He uses one of the *Phaenomena*’s celestial signs to emphasize the relevance of terrestrial portents and complicates his model by combining it with other passages. Besides, he takes Aratus’ images one step further: he presents starlight as an edged weapon, describes an eclipse in terms reminiscent of fraternal conflict and refines Aratus’ clouds. Hence, Vergil’s version of Aratus’ text takes on a programmatic meaning, metaphorically foreboding his elaborate wordplay in the celestial signs and his development on civil war at the end of the book.
- 19 Thus, Vergil’s relation to Aratus in this passage is neatly summarized by a literary reading of the eclipse in line 396. Indeed, in his weather signs, Vergil aligns Aratus with the sun by playing on the homonymy between the Greek poet’s place of origin (*Soli* in Asia Minor) and the sun (*sol*) and associates himself with the moon by concealing his name in the lunar portents.²⁷ Therefore, the line featuring the moon eclipsing the sun to which she owes her light can be read as Vergil’s acknowledgement of his indebtedness to Aratus, as well as a claim of superiority over his Greek forebearer.

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NOTES

1. Thomas 1988, 127; Farrell 1991, 80; for a detailed structural analysis of the weather signs, see Erren 2003, 197; 215. Although bees and birds can be considered as intermediates between earth and sky, in meteorological texts they belong to the terrestrial realm, while only astral phenomena such as stars, sun and moon are assigned to the celestial sphere.
2. Conington/Nettleship 1898, 212 s.v. 295: "Virg. begins by negating certain phaenomena, which would have been more naturally mentioned among the signs of rain"; Wilkinson 1969, 235: "[...] the first three being simply negatives of rain-warnings, borrowed to make up the balance"; Thomas 1988, 135 s.v. 397: "V. refers to the *absence* of a phenomenon whose *presence* was for Aratus an indication of the opposite weather [...]"; Mynors 1990, 84 s.vv. 395; 397; Erren 2003, 217 s.vv. 395-403: "[...] beschreibt Vergil als erste Schönwetterzeichen Zeichen für Wetterverschlechterung, die ausbleiben [...]".
3. Erren 2003, 217-218 s.v. 395 *stellis acies obtunsa videtur*: "Die Negation hat Vergil an ihren vermeintlich logischen Platz versetzt; aber jetzt stimmt die Logik nicht mehr. Es müssen doch vor Regentagen nicht jedesmal alle Regenzeichen erscheinen!"
4. Various interpretations have been suggested for the moon not rising "indebted to her brother's rays" (VERG. *Georg.* 1.396: *nec fratris radiis obnoxia surgere Luna*). Explanations range from a very bright moon to a new moon, and sometimes even a moon that doesn't rise at all; see Conington/Nettleship 1898, 212 s.v. 396: "And the moon is bright as though she shone with her own light"; Jermyn 1951, 50: "This is obvious, of course, if she does not rise; equally obvious if she is "not sunlit"; for she has no light of her own. [...] (I am assuming that *fratris radii obnoxia*, „indebted to her brother's rays", does mean "sunlit". What else *can* it mean?)" ; de Saint-Denis 1957, 88 s.v. 396: "La lune est si brillante qu'elle paraît luire de sa propre lumière sans rien emprunter aux rayons de son frère, c'est-à-dire de Phébus (le soleil)"; Wilkinson 1969, 240: "Commentators take this to mean "and the moon rises *seemingly* unbeholden to her brother's light, i.e. so brilliant that she seems to shine with light of her own, not borrowed from the sun"; Thomas 1988, 135 s.v.: "she is so bright that her light seems to be her own"; Mynors 1990, 84 s.v.: "in a general sense, of course, Phoebe is always indebted to Phoebus for her light, but there are two particular cases. (1) When she rises reddened, as though specially illuminated by the sun, which is a sign of bad weather; [...] Better therefore: (2) when she shines so brightly at her rising as to convey the illusion that she is shining with an inward light, and owes her brother nothing" ; Fairclough 1935, 127 n.25: "The moon's light is so radiant that it seems to be her own and not

reflected from the sun”; Erren 2003, 218 s.v. 396 *nec fratris radiis obnoxia Luna*: “der Mond reflektiert alle Strahlen, die er von der Sonne bekommen hat, und behält keinen zurück”.

5. Erren 2003, 216, s.v. 393 *ex imbri soles*.

6. The meaning of *ex imbri* (VERG. Georg. 1.393) needs to be clarified. Indeed, some translators and commentators seem to take the phrase in a temporal sense with *prospicere* [...] *poteris*, thus implying that the reader is meant to wait until the sky clears after the rain to establish a forecast; see Conington/Nettleship 1898, 212 s.vv. 393-423: “when the rain is over”. While this interpretation is not impossible, the phrase *ex imbri* only remotely has a temporal meaning and there is no parallel for a line instructing the reader to wait for the end of the rain to see the signs: portents of good weather that cannot be seen in advance are no longer prognosticatory signs. On the contrary, verses 994-995 of Aratus’ text and Servius’ comment to Vergil’s line (SERV. Georg. 1.396: *dat prognostica, quibus agnoscamus ex tempestiuo caelo serenitatem futuram*) make clear that *ex imbri* must be read with *soles et aperta serena* in order to advertise the change from bad to good weather. Therefore, it is not the prediction that takes place after the rain but the return of the sun, and the forecast must be made while it is still raining, as some translators make explicit; see de Saint-Denis 1957, 15: “par temps de pluie”; Erren 1985, 57-59: “bei Regenwetter”.

7. Jermyn 1951, 50; Mynors 1990, 84 s.v. 395; Kidd 1997, 529 s.v. 1013; Erren 2003, 217.

8. OLD s.v. *uideo* 20; the verb is conveniently elided by Wilkinson in his translation, but see de Saint-Denis 1957, 15: “[...] l’éclat des étoiles ne paraît pas émoussé, la Lune à son lever ne semble pas redevable de sa clarté aux rayons de son frère, [...]”; Thomas 1988, 135: “nor does the Moon seem to rise indebted to her brother’s ray”; Barchiesi/Conte 1989, 25: “[...] non appare sbiadito il luccichio delle stelle”; Erren 1985, 58-59: “Dann wird nämlich der scharfe Glanz der Sterne nicht abgestumpft aussehen [...] und keine zarten Lammfellchen scheinen über den Himmel zu ziehen.”

9. OLD s.v. *uideo* 1; see Fairclough 1935, 109: “For then stars’ bright edge is seen undimmed, [...]”; Jermyn 1951, 49: “Then seen [...]”; de Saint-Denis 1957, 15: “l’on ne voit pas de minces flocons de laine emportés à travers le ciel.”

10. Erren 2003, 217 s.v. 395-403: « [...] Zeichen, die man [...] nur bei gutem Wetter, unter tiefen bedrückenden Wolken jedoch im Regen weder sehen noch vermissen kann! »

11. The introduction to the signs involving the moon and the sun also span three lines each (VERG. Georg. 1.424-426; 438-440).

12. Jermyn 1951, 50; McDonald 1973, 204; Knauer 1979, 51-52 calls this literary process ‘Kontamination.’

13. McDonald 1973; Mynors 1990, 84 s.v. 395; Erren 2003, 217 s.v. 395 *stellis acies obtunsa videtur*.

14. See TLL s.v. n°1 and McDonald 1973; Thomas 1988, 134-135 s.v. *acies obtunsa*; Erren 2003, 218 s.v. *acies*.

15. Thomas 1988, 135 s.v.; Mynors 1990, 84 s.v.; Erren 2003, 218-219 s.v.

16. See LSJ s.v.

17. The *Scholia Bernensia* preserve the fifth century grammarian Iunius Philargyrius’ interpretation of this sign as an eclipse (ad Georg. 1.396): *idest eclipsin dicit. Iunilius dicit; see RE s.v. Iunius III.2; Vergil Encyclopedia s.v. Philagrius*. The anonymous scholiast of the *Brevis expositio* is even more explicit and hints at the Aratean origin of the phenomenon (ad Georg. 1.396): *nec si subito sol deficit, ut uideatur radiis eius fuisse obnoxia Luna. Eclipsidem Aratus dicit*. For a description of solar eclipse, see LVCR. 5.753-755: *luna queat terram secludere solis | lumine et a terris altum caput obstruere ei, | obiciens caecum radiis ardentibus orbem*.

18. The moon does not shine with her own light her own light but reflects the sunrays; e.g. VITRVV. 9.2.3; LVCAN. 1.538: *iam Phoebe toto fratrem cum redderet orbe*. In ancient terms, she was

thought to borrow her light from the sun; e.g. CATVL. 34.15: *notho es | dicta lumine Luna*; LVCR. 5.575: *lunaque siue notho fertur loca lumine lustrans*.

19. TLL s.v. IA1. The anonymous scholiast of the *Breuis expositio* records an etymological explanation that probably originated in ancient commentaries (ad Georg. 1.396: ‘obnoxiam Lunam’ dixit pro eo, quod obstat et noceat); see also the *Scholia Bernensia* ad Georg. 1.396.

20. These are the only two occurrences of the word *acies* in the first *Georgic*. Vergil uses the word four other times in this text, essentially in the context of war (VERG. Georg. 2.281; 4.82; 88) and once of a sickle (Georg. 2.365), which can easily be recast as a sword (1.508).

21. Lyne 1974 shows how the finale of book 1 is intimately related to the rest of the first *Georgic* and how storm imagery pervades the peroration on civil war and chaos. For a discussion of weather as a metaphor for war and politics in the *Aeneid*, see Pöschl 1977, 13-23 and Hardie 1986, 103-110 on the connections between storms and the battle of Actium via Gigantomachic imagery.

22. The simultaneous disappearance of Caesar and the sun suggests an assimilation of both characters; see Lyne 1974, 51-53; Nelis 2010; for other examples of eclipses as signs of internal strife, see TIB. 2.5.75-76; OV. *met.* 15.785-786; LVCAN. 1.540-543.

23. The mention of the sun as the moon’s brother is telling, since in the *Georgics* Vergil often uses the lemma *frat-* in connection with civil war (VERG. Georg. 2.496; 2.510) or to describe mythological conflicts akin to civil wars (Georg. 1.280: Gigantomachy; 2.533: Romulus and Remus). On the way Vergil exploits the relationship between the sun and the moon in the *Aeneid*, see Hardie 2006, 29-31.

24. On wordplay in Vergil’s weather signs, see Brown 1963; Feeney/Nelis 2005; Somerville 2010; Danielewicz 2013.

25. On wool work as a metaphor for writing poetry and *tenuitas* in Latin poetry, see Eisenhut 1975; Deremetz 1995, 289-293; 298-308; see also SERV. *ecl.* 6.5: DEDVCTVM DICERE CARMEN tenue: translatio a lana, quae deducitur in tenuitatem. The presence of this metaphor in the passage is confirmed by Lucan’s rewriting of this sign in the fifth book of the *Bellum ciuile*; he literally draws out the metaphor (LVCAN. 5.541: *sol non rutilas deduxit [...] nubes*).

26. Aratus’ *λεπτότης* was celebrated by Leonidas, Callimachus and Ptolemy (*Anth. Pal.* 9.25.1-2: *λεπτῇ | φροντίδι*; 507.3-4: *λεπταὶ | ῥήσιες*; *Suppl. Hell.* frg. 712.4: *λεπτολόγος [...] Ἄρατος*), see Cameron 1995, 321-328; Asper 1997, 179-185; for a literalization of the metaphor in a metapoetic vignette, see Henkel 2011; see also CINNA frg. 13 Hollis. On Aratus’ *ΛΕΙΠΘΗ* acrostic, see Jacques 1960; Hanses 2014; Danielewicz 2015; Trzaskoma 2016.

27. For the play on Aratus of Soli and the sun see Haslam 1992, 203-204; Katz 2016, 80-81; for the same association in Lucretius’ poem see Kronenberg 2019, 287; for Vergil’s acronymic signature, see n.24.

ABSTRACTS

In this paper I take a close look at the way Vergil reworks Aratus’ weather signs in *Georgics* 1.393-397. This in turn leads to a new interpretation of these difficult lines and allows for a political and poetical reading of the passage.

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Keywords: Vergil, Georgics, weather signs, Aratus, Phaenomena, intertextuality