

This paper explores the ways in which Ennius' famous description of the tactics of Fabius Maximus 'Cunctator' against Hannibal in 217/216 BCE was used both in Sallust's *Histories* and in Livy (esp. Book 22) as a device to articulate a central fault-line in Roman military strategy and in constructions of Roman identity. To judge by its resonance in later literature, *Ann.* 363 Sk., *unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem*, was, even in antiquity, one of the best known lines of the *Annales*, so often cited or imitated that it became proverbial (Cic. *Off.* 1.84, *Sen.* 10, *Att.* 2.19.2; Virg. *Aen.* 6.846 and his commentators; Ov. *Fast.* 2.240, Suet. *Tib.* 21, etc.). In Livy, there are about a dozen allusions to the line, which almost seems to take on a life of its own in his hands. The phrase epitomizes a particular mode of heroism – military wisdom and perseverance – but its language also comes to be used to celebrate more broadly the winning traits of Roman national identity, even under other guises: in particular, the strategy for success expressed by the gerund *cunctando* (often doubled up in Livy with a synonym, as at *AUC* 22.24.10, *sedendo atque cunctando*) is matched against an opposite mode of heroism, also claimed as quintessentially Roman, and likewise expressed by gerunds: unhesitating action (typically expressed as *audendo atque agendo*, as at 22.14.14; cf. 22.53.7, 25.23.15, etc.). Thus, Minucius' exhortation against Fabian inactivity, *audendo atque agendo res Romana crevit, non his segnibus consiliis quae timidi cauta vocant* (22.14.14), pits itself directly against Ennius' *cunctando restituit rem*. The trope is also used in Livy as a mechanism for the contestation of identity; that is, to express the competition between Romans and their enemies for those characteristics that would guarantee Rome's ultimate success (C.S. Kraus, 'No Second Troy', *TAPA* 124, 1994, 267-89). For example, at 22.24.10, Livy quite explicitly casts Hannibal's newly adopted delaying tactics as an appropriation of those that had so recently brought Fabius success against him: *artibus Fabi sedendo et cunctando gerebat bellum*. The fact that Livy's Hannibal comes so close in this line to the Ennian Fabius constitutes a signal to Livy's readers of Hannibal's redoubtable skill, of how nearly balanced his chances for success were with those of Fabius and of Rome, and of how much was at stake in the question of who would ultimately make the modes of behavior celebrated in the *Annales* their own.

Sallust too shows awareness of the trope throughout the fragments of the *Histories* (see e.g. *Hist.* 1.55.7, 77.17; 2.98.2; 4.69.20-21). Obviating the subtlety which was to characterize Livy's negotiations of the expression, Sallust ultimately supplies us with its most shocking re-use, entrusting the hallowed phrase to his irate Mithridates at the end of the letter to the Parthian king Arsaces that constitutes our final fragment of the text. In what amounts to his *peroratio*, Sallust's Mithridates uses the phrase to sum up the Romans' rapaciousness and perfidy, and he does so by appropriating the very language in which Roman wisdom and resilience had been most famously celebrated. Where Livy would have his Minucius suggest that *audendo atque agendo res Romana crevit*, Sallust's Mithridates claims that *audendo et fallundo et bella ex bellis serundo magni facti [sc. Romani]* (*Hist.* 4.69.20), where Sallust's archaizing vowels tacitly reinforce Ennius' presence. Between them, Sallust and Livy illustrate how Ennian epic continued to be a dynamic and generative force in the literature of the late republic and early principate, and a crucial source for those forms of expression through which authors responsible for the public articulation of the character of Rome invited the ethical engagement and self-evaluation of their readership.