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Lexicon and style in the works attributed to Firmicus Maternus

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1. Introduction

Most studies on Firmicus' texts focus on aspects related to the reconstruction of the cultural world of his time. There are significantly fewer studies dealing with his style. The attribution of both *De errore* and *Matheseos* to Firmicus has been confirmed through the study of the classical heritage, creating the opportunity for a deeper understanding of the works in their cultural context and more scholarly editions of these two texts. The present study uses traditional methods of categorizing words by field, parts of speech and word formation. By viewing his works as products of persuasion, this approach offers a way of studying word choice in direct relation to audience effects.

It can reasonably be assumed that the author's goal was to select the best word for a particular context; this may serve as the point of departure, either with respect to the vocabulary itself, or, more broadly, for further linguistic commentary. Is there any evidence that Firmicus took particular care in his selection of words? Or was this choice determined by rhetorical composition? It is not our aim to analyze the complex rhetorical tradition involved in *De errore* but only to focus on those aspects that may have guided the selection of vocabulary. The rhetorical resources of style are therefore of special concern. The figures of repetition, as well as the use of prefixed or suffixed forms of verbs as an etymological device to persuade by insistence, can also be considered structural tools. Firmicus selected particular communicative schemes with the intention of exerting a persuasive effect on the audience of *De errore* despite the speech being addressed to the political authorities – a kind of plea to avoid public support for ancient cults. For instance, the first description was composed *ethopoeiaco sermone* (*Err*. 8, 4). But what about *Matheseos*?

A few scholars have investigated Firmicus' style. Among the early 20th century studies, however, Groehl's 1918 study is unreliable because he read Firmicus' works in editions that were very different from contemporary ones. Ziegler (1953, p. 12-13), outlining the poetic parallels, mentioned the imitation of verse and prose expressions from Ovid, Lucretius, Virgil, Livy, Horace and Seneca. Kroll *et al.* (1897-1913) compiled a word index but Monat subsequently

made a new *recensio* for his critical edition (Monat, 1992-1997). Despite the limitations of these previous studies, some of their general remarks remain quite useful.

On the other hand, an overview of sentence elements in Firmicus' work reveals a wider choice of expressions, words, and forms adapted to clausula, different from those found in the poetic passages imitated from Ovid, Lucretius, etc., and which may have been borrowed from earlier Christian texts. The sheer number of alternatives available is evidenced in the didactic and apologetic writings of other Christian authors. Needless to say, Augustine's style acquired special meanings and restrictions on usage associated with monologue (*Confessions*)[1] and with the genre of apologia (*City of God*). The stylistic devices used to persuade the audience are basically the same in *De errore* and *Matheseos*, though their frequency and rhythm are different.

2. Firmicus Maternus' lexicon in De errore profanarum religionum and Matheseos

The pathetic style in *De errore* creates a discourse whose intensity grows via the menacing semantic build-up of images, in particular from paragraph 15 onwards:

(1)   *Illic sordes, squalor, caligo, tenebrae et perpetuae noctis dominatur horror.* (Firm. *Err.* 19, 1)

From a semantic point of view, the levels of abstraction through which the author moves the audience's imagination are emphasized by the number and frequency of verbs and abstract nouns.[2] In some of the paragraphs, the contrast of focalization between active and passive is particularly vivid. The arrangement of pathetic intensity through lexical tools suggests a meticulous care for style in the composition of each sentence. Firmicus is aware of every resource of the Latin language, including semantic information, which through sounds and morphemes can be used to reinforce its communicative abilities. We can observe, for instance, the insertion of semantic content in phonetic, morphological and lexical items:

(2)   *Terram omnem circumfluunt maria et rursus inclusa Oceani ambientis circulo stringitur, caeli*
             etiam rotunda sublimitate operitur, perflatur ventis, aspergitur pluviis et timorem suum assidui
             motus tremoribus confitetur. (3, 5)

The opening words of this sentence establish the relationship *terra/mare* through redundant semantic expressions (*circum-/rursus inclusa/amb-/circ-/ string-*) and the repetition of similar sounds.[3] To highlight this stylistic intensity, and its concern for prosodic effects, it is useful to look at some other Christian descriptions of the Earth founded upon the language of the Bible.[4] *Operitur* indicates a cognitive approach to the topic. The abstract noun *sublimitas* instead of the concrete *caelum* in periphrasis emphasizes the sophistication of the sentence. *Perflatur* belongs to the special lexical register of agriculture (Varro, Columela), whereas *aspergitur*, also imported from agriculture, can be considered to belong to the Christian lexicon since the semantic specialization of words was one of the main devices used to produce this kind of style. The *annominatio timor/tremor* combined with the synonymic expression *assiduus motus* closes the

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1   See Balmus, 1930, p. 133: *phrases courtes et hachées* (short, jerky sentences).
2   Pastorino, 1969, p. XLVI-II; Gabarrou, 1921, p. 181-8.
3   Gabarrou, 1921, p. 200-1; 212-16.
4   For example Ambr. *Hex.* 2, 4, 16. See also the Pseud. Firm. *Consultationes Zacchaei Christiani et Apolloni philosophi* 1, 1, 25 (*responsio Zacchaei*). There is also a similar Ambrosian reference that describes the yearly phases of the Earth according to different seasons: Ambr. *Exc. Sat.* 2, 9, 256.

sentence with the cretic and dichoreus, showing the influence of classical heritage on polemic literary Christian style. However, the stringent selection of words may not be only an immediate (automatic) result of imitation. I will argue that an examination of some significant lexical choices in Firmicus' work may provide grounds for considering their selection as compositional devices in rhetorical discourse or astrological speculation. The *inmaculat/-et* (*Err.* 2, 5; 16, 4; and perhaps *Math.* 4, 16) form is particularly remarkable. Making use of the compound rather than the simple form[5] is beneficial for introducing nuances, and is not a mere device used to form a clausula.

2. 1. *The choice of passive and deponent forms*

Focusing on the use of verbal forms from a structuralist perspective, García Hernández (1991) argued that the meaning of each lexical item depends on the selection of features among words which show a similar distribution in the text and share similar contexts. For example, the complementarity (*iacio – iactum est* and *funditus prostratus diabolus iaceat, Err.* 20, 7) and tension which explain grammatical voice in the framework of the semantic system can be a convenient way to express a process from the focus of different actants or with a different syntactic focus e.g. *in revelatione (pandit) – pandantur arcana* (19, 4) – *mysterium ostensus est* (19, 6). Each form, active, passive or deponent, is used in the text to generate a variety of focalizations. The author's intention was to deal with the extraordinary forces that diminish human agency during conversion to a new faith. The variety of forms makes various contrasts with the use of insistence through repetition (Pastorino, 1969, p. L-LVII) and synonyms as in (1) and (2). Inanimate and abstract nouns in the syntactic role of subject focus audience attention on the process, and, hence, passive forms abound. In addition, the aspectual distinction between dynamic and static (Haverling, 2010, p. 304-7) provides further stylistic possibilities. In *De errore*, Firmicus Maternus' lexical variety consists of a balanced choice of verb forms ranging from active, passive, and deponent paradigms alongside a meticulous selection of nominal and adjective forms.

This persuasive style tried to move the audience by expressing not only the dark mysteries of paganism that should be banished, but also Christian attitudes in verbal forms such as *credetur*, *adoratur, curantur*, and by invoking the sensation of light and clarity which the Christian faith brings (e.g. *videtur, monstratur, invenitur*). In *De errore*, there is an especially rich repertory of passive verbal forms that express the suffering and the consequences of violence, and, conversely, the construction of new social religious practices.

The persuasive intent is expressed through the lexical field of verbs of seeing/appearing: *monstratur, detegitur, absconditur* (12, 7-8); *inventum (esse, 14, 3); new faith in *monstratur* (15, 4; 20, 1); *monstrantur* (24, 7); *decernitur, promitur* (28, 13). Verbs expressing evidence/proof at times establish a complementary relationship with those expressing the activity of search/ inquiry and discovery, as is fitting for the allegory of conversion as the search for knowledge, first through myth as in *fuisset inventa* (7, 2)[6] and as a cure for the disease of ignorance (paganism), as in *poscuntur* and *quaeruntur* (16, 5). Considering the importance of the message, the passive voice appears frequently to focus the sentences.

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5   Pastorino, 1969, p. XLV-I; LXXV.
6   Cf. *fuerit constitutus, Math.* 6, 5, 1; *stellae pariter constitutae*, 7, 2, 3; *fuerit inventus*, 7, 2, 4, and *passim*.

Yet, it is worth mentioning the form *iocundabuntur*, which appears in a Christian translation of the Book of Isaiah (18, 4). The verbal form *saginetur* (18, 2) lost its former use and became an expression of felicitous progress thanks to the spiritual support of Christianity.[7]

2. 2. Selection and stylistic role of adjectives and participles

A number of distinctive characteristics of Firmicus' style can be identified in the selection of adjectives and participles in *De errore*. The *ornatus* is evident from the selection of adjective and noun couples such as *monstrosis serpentibus, maculosis insignibus, regalibus praemiis*. The most frequent formation is adjectival derivatives with the suffix *-osus*, which is found more often in Firmicus' works than in other Christian texts. On the other hand, adjectives and participles often enliven the expression of an epithet (e.g. *splendidi luminis, silvarum agrestium, genitalium seminum, manifestum indicium, coniugale consortium, sordido squalore, crudelium mortium, duro crudelique tormento, funestae calamitatis*). If we focus on a stretch of several sentences, it is possible to note the relevant patterns that emerge to aid in the exposition of the argument. One example is the contrast between the violent and pestilent signs of evil and the clear and divine doctrine (e.g. *monstruosus, maculosus, cruentus, crudelis, funestus, flagitiosus, ludibriosus* against *devotus, splendidus, serenus*). A list of these couples in the first few chapters creates a certain variety.[8] Firmicus applied to Porphyrius the epithets that were commonly used in the Christian tradition against Satan: *hostis dei, veritatis inimicus, sceleratorum artium magister* (*Err.* 13, 4).

One way to characterize the difference in use in other Christian *apologiae* is to compare the choices that indicate the author's conceptual perspective on the issue. By observing Firmicus' choices from the options listed, one can detect overall patterns that confirm the small semantic distance between the adjectives and participles used in sentences. The decision to use either an adjective or a participle often depends primarily upon the resulting variety of sounds, mostly in the use of past participle forms. But the link between some participle forms and a verbal stem or paradigm seems to become irrelevant.[9] The use of present participle forms, however, may have greater significance. Balmus (1930, p. 136-40) commented on the frequent use of the participle in the most well-known of Augustine's works, and a similar feature characterises Firmicus' work.

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7   Such an expression is typically found in other Christian references such as *anima de Deo saginetur* (Tert. *Resurr.* 8); *ex cibis fortioribus caelestis mysterii saginetur* (Ambr. *In psalm.* 17); *postea saginetur escis incorruptibilibus* (Aug. *In psalm.* 32); *opinari quidem possumus spiritalis homo quarum causarum delectatione saginetur* (Cassiod. *Anim.* 15, 77); *iste amator... fulcitur, ut etiam interior terrenae domus abundantia saginetur* (Greg. M. *Moral.* 15, 56).

8   *Facinerosae cupiditatis, Err.* 12, 7; *honestam dignitatem*, 14, 3; *commenticios et fictos deos, turbulentus error, sacrilegus error*, 17, 4; *pestiferum veneni virus*, 18, 2; later *pestiferum malum*, 20, 5; *pestiferum deceptis pabulum*, 25, 2; *pestifera cupiditate* 27, 4; *maximum pretium, integrum munus, piissimo ac iustissimo domino, beatum nomen*, 19, 7; *divinae dispositionis*, 22, 1; *spiritalibus pigmentorum odoribus*, 23, 1; *fontes ingenuos, puros liquores*, 28, 1.

9   *Ostensi luminis, Err.* 2, 4; *contaminati corporis*, 4, 2; *dissoluto ordine*, 5, 4; *irata muliere*, 6, 1-2; *proiectis infulis*, 6, 7; *usitato more*, 8, 1; *mens perdita et sceleratae cupiditatis laqueis inplicata*, 8, 5; *fluctus iactatus*, 9, 3; *cruor profusus*, 13, 4; *continuata malorum continuatione*, 18, 2; *dispecta vanitate, scelerata societate*, 22, 4; *polluta verborum contaminatione*, 24, 1; *mitigata offensa*, 24, 1; *extensis manibus*, 21, 5-6 and *expansis manibus*, 27, 3; *obstinati furoris*, 28, 13. Alliteration, synonymy, and the *figura etymologica* have clearly been used as insistent rhetorical tools for persuasion.

The very common -*nd* forms of the deponent verb paradigm in the syntactic role of an adjective are also remarkable.

2. 3. Nouns widely applied to generate an interpretation or evaluation

We emphasized above the important role of abstract nouns in the structure of Firmicus' discourse to create the rhythm. The choice of *nex* rather than the usual *mors* fits the religious topic. In addition to the synonymic relationship between adjectives and abstract nouns,[10] the most frequent noun formations are -*tor*, -*io*, and -*tas*. In Firmicus' *De errore* some nouns in -*tor* are used to blame the pagan gods and to praise Christian salvation: *abactorem* (5, 2; an odd name, here pointing to Mithra); *percussor* (9, 1); *amator* and *amatori* (10, 1; 12, 4), and *corruptor* (12, 4-6; with *corruptae* in close textual proximity); *auctore* (13, 2); *defensor* (13, 4); *emptor/emptori* and *proditor* (15, 2). Among the nouns ending in -*tor*, it is worth mentioning *scelerator* (13, 4), which is frequently used, but exclusively in the genitive plural form; there is not a complete paradigm in the texts.

Some nouns for intensifying pathos end in -*io/-ionis* especially in clausula (Pastorino, 1969, p. LXXIV-v). In addition, one also finds the following noun ending, -*tio*, in some odd usages. Firstly, an interesting choice is the noun *conlapsio*. The inflected forms of this noun are very unusual. It is placed in the final paragraphs involved in the climax of pathos through allegory, and a double cretic:

(3)   *Lapidem tuum ruina sequitur et cadentium culminem funesta conlapsio.* (20, 1)

Noticeably, the form *instigatione* (26, 3) might be considered a special Christian lexical item because it was used in texts which express a particular Christian interpretation of the world, i.e. Minucius Felix in the dialogue *Octavius*[11] and Gregory the Great in the *Moralia* (31, 26, 1; 33, 39, 3). At some other points similar instances of Christian lexical items appear, also invoking the polemic style: *conluctatione* (14, 2); *cataclysmo* (27, 3); *conflictationem* (24, 2).[12]

The *clausulae* sometimes also determined the choice of nouns ending in -*tas*, -*tatis* which indicate the main topics and arguments of the book: *liberalitate* (2, 8); *auctoritate* (7, 7); *potestate* (13, 5); *infirmitas, veritate* (14, 1); *virginitate, dignitatem* (14, 3); *atrocitate* (15, 1); *voluntatem* (15, 4); *antiquitas* (16, 1); *inprobitas* (16, 4; 24, 2); *animositate, sanitate, utilitate* (16, 5); *novitate* (17, 4); *fragilitate, societate, voluntatem, divinitas* (20, 7; *mortalitas, -tis* (21, 2; 24, 4; 25, 2); *calliditas, captivitatis, necessitatem* (24, 1-2); *maiestate* (24, 5); *crudelitate, celeritate, proprietatem* (26, 2); *temeritate, auctoritas, severitas* (28, 10-11). Christian signs are patent in *vexillum fidei* (20, 7) and in the final sequence of nouns at the end of the work: *victoriae, opulentia, pax, copia, sanitas, triumphi* (29, 4).

Taking into account *Matheseos*, the number of nouns in -*io/-ionis* and -*tas*, -*tatis* is high in Firmicus' lexicon. In his work on astrology, the vocabulary and rhetoric in the *praefatio* to the first book also show this preference: *procuratio, argumentatione* (1, 1, 1); *disputatio* (1, 1, 3);

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10   Groehl, 1918, p. 1, discussed the device which he called *genetivus inhaerentiae, cum ad substantivum accedat alterum significatione pari vel simili* in Apuleius, Tertullianus, Arnobius, Martianus Capella: *adfectus amorum, agitatio cursus, amentia furoris, cupiditatis ardore, atrocitas feritatis.*

11   27, 3, 26; 28, 5, 27; Turcan, 2002, p. 52: *Firmicus connaît bien aussi l'Octavius de Minucius Felix.*

12   Tert. *Uxor.* 2, 55; *Resurr.* 48; *Pudic.* 13; Aug. *In psalm.* 36, 3; Pelag. 10, 59.

explicatione, confusio (1, 4); *moderatione, circumfusione* (1, 5); *promisio, trepidationem* (1, 6); *obiurgatione* (1, 7).

The nouns with the derivative ending *-men*, *-mentum* collected from *De errore* are very common nouns in standard Latin, for instance: *liniamenta* (6, 4; also *similibus membrorum liniamentis*, *Math*. 1, 5, 5); *nutrimenta* and *alimenta* (14, 1); *augmenta* (16, 5 and 29, 3); *ornamenta, fundamenta* (21, 4).

The allegory of paganism as an approximation to death and disease is expressed in terms such as *medela* (13, 6); *remedia medicinae* (16, 5); *longa aegritudine* (17, 4). The allegory of the good wheat appears in *favilla* (14, 3) *clibanus, stipula* (15, 4). On the contrary, scorn for the pagan gods is evident in the comparison of their cults with a theatre performance: *scaenam de caelo fecistis* (12, 7).

2. 4. Selection of adverbs

To assert a claim and support it with a reason is the main form of argumentation in *De errore*. But even finer distinctions can be made by examining the choice of adverbs. Most of them belong to the productive paradigm ending *-ter*,[13] but there are some ending in *-tim* which are still in use in Firmicus' texts.[14] *Artuatim* (*Osyrim*, 2, 2) was formed to increase the *ornatus*, even though there may have been some that were more fitting for intense comparison, such as *fortius* (6, 1; 16, 5); *manifestius* (18, 7); *diutius, severius* (16, 2); at a level even lower in frequency, some adverbs in *-e* indicate and specify ways of acting: *peregre* (6, 1), *accurate* (7, 4), *caute* (9 1). But the expression *radicitus amputatum* (2, 5) is full of semantic intensity. Groehl (1918, p. 38) established evidence for the increasing use of *quatenus*.

3. Firmicus' and other Christian texts

Based on the previous review of Firmicus' vocabulary, this section attempts to position his writing technique within the Latin literary tradition. Sources ranging from mythological Latin poetry where the authors criticized the ancient cults, as well as the Christian reference to the Bible, provide a basic group of words for the apologia. However, as time passed, the occurrences of the same vocabulary became less constant. The dates of some Christian texts such as Minucius' and Firmicus' own have been confirmed by external evidence. Based on the evolution of quantitative rhythm and the extension of the sentences and periods, it can be claimed that the criterion for selecting vocabulary did not change. The schools of rhetoric upheld the ancient texts as a model to be emulated. Although the syntactic devices and the extension of sentences varied from one author to another, exercises on writing technique avoided the use of neologisms. The symbolism in *De errore* needed a clear meaning and message; the careful distribution of words tried to persuade the audience with syntactic variety. This is not the aim of *Matheseos*, in which the sentences are longer or shorter without any strict care for periods.

Hagendahl (1937, p. 212-19) reported some arrangements in Arnobius' work which appear quite similar to those of Firmicus. He also commented on Arnobius' use of simple and

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13   *Pariter*, 2, 3; 7, 6; *simpliciter*, 2, 7; *aliter, libenter*, 4, 3-4; *diligenter*, 5, 4; 12, 5; 15, 4; *specialiter*, 6, 1-2; *vehementer, latenter*, 6, 3-5; *moliter, suaviter*, 7, 2; *largiter*, 12, 2; *libenter*, 17, 2; *suppliciter*, 18, 3.

14   *Particulatim*, 6, 3; *vicissim*, 7, 1; *saltim*, 15, 2; *praesertim*, *Math*. 3, 5, 37.

compound verb forms from the point of view of the clausula and observed that compound forms were better for marking a clausula at the end of a period (*ibid.*, p. 157-67). However, rhythm was not a major constraining factor in Firmicus' choice of vocabulary: the *-itur* form (*Err.* 27, 1-2) is an exception. The verbal form chosen is arguably most often just the best for the context (from the phonetic, morphologic and semantic perspective). In fact, the artificial order of the parts of the sentence sometimes shows the displacement of a word after the conjunction *et*. With this device, the author underlines the synonym or the antithesis. Nevertheless, the abnormal word order seems due to an attempt to form a clausula in examples (4b-5b), and in the examples with *unde* and *qui* (5a-b):

(4)   a. *et sellam regni puero tradiderat et sceptrum* (*Err.* 6, 2)
           b. *et colere discat et facere* (16, 3)
(5)   a. *(in iecore) unde libido nascitur et voluptas* (5, 3)
           b. *qui salutem largitur et vitam* (18, 2)

With the addition of *semper* but a different syntactic and rhythmic distribution:

(6)   a. *mors sequitur semper et poena* (18, 1)
           b. *ardet semper et moritur* (27, 3)

Without the double *et*:

(7)   a. *ornamenta quaeris et gloriam* (21, 4)
           b. *stirpi minatur et soboli* (28, 10)

With the occurrence of *pariter* to achieve the clausula and also to contrast the concepts:

(8)   a. *et sublevantur pariter et continentur, Christi participes sitis et vitae* (21, 6)
           b. *per hominem pariter et deum* (25, 4)

The care for rhythm observable in these examples shows Firmicus' aim of writing a sonorous, persuasive speech intended for declamation. Hagendahl (1937, p. 199-200) commented on a similar device in the text by Arnobius, but structured with the conjunction *atque* (for instance, *solis lumina extinguere atque lunae*) to achieve different clausulae. The kind of rhythmical structure was not exactly the same but the rhetorical procedure was still in use in Firmicus' time (Pastorino, 1969, p. LXXVI). It is a case of selection (*et/atque, pariter*) determined by rhythmic preferences.

Riposati (1940, p. 265; 269), after reading Paucker's 1880 *Observationes* on Hieronymus' use of nouns and verbs, expounded his remarks on Ambrosius' lexicon in the rhetorical works and made the following general statement about neologisms: *I vocaboli nuovi sono rarissimi e costituiscono si può dire, quasi un'eccezione, imposta dalle evolute necessità linguistiche* (*ibid.*, p. 264). In Ambrosius' writings, nouns ending in *-mentum* are more frequent than those in *-arium, -erium* and *-orium*; and the number of those ending in *-osus* is not as frequent as the forms ending in *-alis, -bilis*, but more frequent than the forms *-aris, -arius, -icus*. However, Augustine's works provide more material and longer texts for comparison.

Balmus[15] commented on the lexical and syntactic means used to achieve variety in style as well as *amplitudo* in Augustine's *Confessions* and *City of God*. Although the *Confessions* were a different kind of writing from Firmicus' texts, Balmus considered Augustine's monologue to be an *"œuvre éminemment pathétique"*. The criterion for selecting nouns, adjectives and adverbs is

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15 1930, p. 187-203 and 204-34.

quite similar, as are the words themselves. He asserted that Augustine *s'est efforcé de maintenir un ton aussi académique et éloigné de tout ce qui était vulgaire que possible* (Balmus, 1930, p. 207). The use of synonyms is syntactically different and the rhythm of the prose is not one of stylistic constraints. However, Balmus' observations on the syntactic procedures used to create a more expressive, ample writing allow us to consider Firmicus' insistent couples of adjective or participle plus noun as an exception, although the criteria to select vocabulary coincide. Taking the former remarks about the differences into account, a comparison with Augustine's Latin, even at the distance of a century, is possible.

4. Conclusion

Returning to the two questions asked at the outset on the selection of vocabulary (namely: Is there any evidence of care in the selection of words? Or was this choice determined by rhetorical composition?), it is always tempting to dissociate stylistic means from a linguistic perspective. The rhythmic clausular style did not define Firmicus' criteria for selecting most of the noun and adjectival forms, except for those in -io, sometimes -tas, and rarely -tor. In this category, we found a frequent use of the abstract endings -io and -tas to delineate the main topics. Notably, the author often selected adjectives derived by -osus. The search for synonymic expressions was the main device in the development of a varied style. The author usually avoided any neologisms, as is the case for Ambrose in his main rhetorical works, although their use may occasionally have stylistic significance (artuatim, inmaculat/-et). Word choice in Matheseos is defined by the didactic purpose, whereas in De errore the criteria were slightly different due to the variable application of rhythmic constraints. The insistence on argumentation did not achieve amplitude in the same way as in the writings of Arnobius and Augustine. Firmicus used very efficient images and allegories to generate evidence. Nevertheless, allegory did not allow for the use of many terms taken from other registers (e.g. agriculture) in this work. The choice of forms was not dependent on a prior list of Christian vocabulary or on his poetic sources. Some words are more becoming than others (more exalted, more sonorous, more suited for isocola in composition) but the list of vocabulary is rather shorter than Arnobius' or Augustine's. On these grounds, it is possible to consider that the word-based devices reflected a more rigid application of prose constraints.

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