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The *Epodes*: Horace's Archilochus?

Horace's *Epodes* were composed in approximately 42–30 BCE,[1] during Rome's bloody transition from republic to autocracy. Dramatically speaking, the book is set in the run-up to the battle of Actium on 2 September 31 BCE.[2] The *Epodes* were for many years the least regarded of Horace's works. Reasons include a tendency to focus on a few explicitly historical pieces (1, 7, 9, 16) to the relative exclusion of the rest,[3] and a prudish distaste for the explicit sexuality of *Epodes* 8 and 12.[4] In the last two decades, however, there has been a reawakening of interest in these difficult and fascinating poems, with *Satires* 1 the earliest of Horace's works. Three commentaries have appeared since 1992 and there have been a number of important general studies.[5] The current trend is to read the *Epodes* holistically, that is to say as an integral body of verse.[6] This represents a reaction to sometimes over-schematic attempts to divide the book up into balancing pairs[7] and the above-mentioned tendency to privilege the 'serious' poems at the expense of the lighter, more occasional pieces. But the pendulum has perhaps swung too far in the other direction. To embrace a holistic reading is to underplay the polymorphous diversity of the collection – in this respect a direct inheritor of Callimachus' *Iamboi*[8] – and to risk enshrining as

1 Horace began writing verses upon returning to Italy after Philippi (*Epistles* 2.2.50ff.). The latest datable *Epode*, 9, deals with Actium. Allowing some months for revision, we arrive at 30 BC. Kraggerud (1984) holds that the book is designed to be read from a pre- and post-Actian perspective.

2 Du Quesnay (2002).

3 E.g. Fraenkel (1957).

4 Documentation in L. Watson (2003), 36, 40. T. E. Page (1890) and others omit them entirely.

5 See 'Further reading'.

6 Notably Fitzgerald (1988); Oliensis (1991), and (1998) 64–101; Gowers (1993a) 280–310.

7 E.g. Carrubba (1969); D. H. Porter (1995).

8 But see the cautionary remarks of L. Watson (2003) 11–13. Callimachus' *Iamboi*: Dawson (1950); Kerkhecker (1999).

overarching themes certain topics (e.g. the dog star, dyspepsia)[9] of dubious universality.

The title *Epodes* derives from *epodos* sc. *stichos*, 'an epodic verse'. This properly describes a verse which follows or 'echoes' a preceding (usually longer) one, but came by synecdoche to refer to the epodic distich and by extension to a poem composed in a series of such distichs.[10] The most straightforward example of this system is *Epodes* 1–10, composed after the model of Archilochus fr. 172ff. West in a succession of iambic trimeters followed by dimeters. The systems employed for *Epodes* 11–16 are less homogeneous, the metre of the second or 'epodic' verse being broadly speaking different from the first, while in the case of the transitional poem 11, an *Epode* with an identifiably Archilochean metrical forerunner,[11] the second verse is anomalously but permissibly longer than the first. In the final poem, the epodic structure is abandoned for stichic iambic trimeters.

'*Epodes*' is the name by which Horace's book is usually known, but it is by no means certain that this represents the poet's own choice of nomenclature. When Horace speaks of these poems he uses the generic descriptor *iambi*.[12] The issue of title is important. Were it certain that Horace styled his book *Epodi*, it would seem that he was playing on *epode*, 'spell, incantation',[13] in recognition of the pivotal role played by magic in the fabric of the work. Unfortunately the evidence in favour of '*Epodes*' derives from late antiquity, and it is perhaps most judicious to leave open the question of whether Horace labelled his book *Iambi* or *Epodi*.[14] If in what follows the title '*Epodes*' is adopted, this is in deference to convention and house style.

In *Epistles* 1.19, a retrospective of his poetic career, Horace boasted:

> Parios ego primus iambos
> ostendi Latio, numeros animosque secutus
> Archilochi, non res et agentia verba Lycamben

> I was the first to introduce Parian iambics to Latium, adopting the rhythms and the spirit of Archilochus, but not his subject-matter and the words that hounded Lycambes. (23–5)

Horace is apparently saying that he transplanted to Roman soil the metres and ethos of Archilochus, the seventh-century Greek poet of Paros who was

9 Respectively Oliensis (1991); (1998 esp. 80); Gowers (1993a). Other suggested thematic clusters: Büchner (1970b); Fitzgerald (1988); D. H. Porter (1995).
10 Cavarzere (1992) 13. 11 Bremer, Talman Kip, van Erp and Slings (1987) 51–9.
12 *Epodes*. 14.7, *Epistle* 1.19.23, less pertinently *Odes* 1.16.22–5.
13 Cf. Gowers (1993a) 281–2, 288–9; S. J. Harrison (2001a) 176–7; also Oliensis (1998) 69, 76.
14 So Cavarzere (1992) 9–14.

credited with inventing the iambic genre, but did not engage in sustained attacks on a single individual, as Archilochus did in the case of Lycambes, who supposedly promised Archilochus the hand of his daughter Neobule, then reneged upon his undertaking, unleashing in the poet a torrent of vengeful invective which drove Lycambes and his daughters to suicide.[15] Also implicit in this pocket history of the *Epodes*' genesis is Horace's dilution of the extreme virulence for which Archilochus was notorious.[16]

A second piece of evidence for the literary seedbed from which the *Epodes* sprang comes in *Epode* 6 *namque in malos asperrimus / parata tollo cornua, / qualis Lycambae spretus infido gener / aut acer hostis Bupalo*, 'for, most savage against them, I raise my horns to attack the malignant,[17] as did his son-in-law spurned by faithless Lycambes or Bupalus' fierce antagonist'. Here, in a programmatic[18] exploration of the iambic ethos, Horace states that he will respond to provocation in the relentless fashion of Archilochus with Lycambes, or Hipponax, the sixth-century poet of Ephesus, who, in a suspicious replication of the Lycambes story,[19] supposedly hounded to death his enemy Bupalus by the lethal violence of his attacks.

As we have just seen, in his account of his literary models for the *Epodes*, Horace privileges Archilochus. Recent criticism has taken the poet at his word.[20] Hence it will be convenient to examine the *Epodes* through the lens of the archaic Greek poet, while simultaneously holding up to scrutiny the poet's claim to be a Roman Archilochus. For the most pressing challenge which confronted Horace when he took up his iambic stylus was how to make iambus relevant in the socio-historical matrix of first-century-BCE Rome, a process of accommodation which inevitably demanded significant modification of literary and thematic modalities. Moreover, the Archilochean character of the book is overlaid with additional influences in the shape of Callimachus' *Iamboi* (third century BCE) and Horace's immediate predecessor in iambus, Catullus,[21] two vital if not explicitly acknowledged presences in the book.

Archilochus famously declared himself both poet and soldier,[22] and it is no accident that Horace commences the *Epode* book with a piece which revisits the Archilochean motifs of poetry, friendship and war by sea. At

15 L. Watson (2003) 263–4 for testimonia and discussions.
16 Archilochus' virulence: Gerber (1999), testimonia 12, 16–32, 35–6, 40, 42, Cratinus fr. 6 CGF. Horace's dilution of same: L. Watson (2003) 4–6.
17 L. Watson (2003) 262–3. 18 Buchheit (1961); E. A. Schmidt (1977) 405–6.
19 L. Watson (2003) 263–4 for testimonia and discussions.
20 Mankin (1995); S. J. Harrison (2001a); and A. Barchiesi (2001a), with the important caution 161. Cf. L. Watson (2003) 4–17.
21 Heyworth (1993). 22 Fr. 1 West.

the same time, in a programmatically significant adumbration of a dominant thematic,[23] he disclaims Archilochean bellicosity and virility, styling himself a *mollis vir*, 'a womanish man', *imbellis ac firmus parum*, 'unwarlike and lacking in strength' and comparing himself to a mother bird which fears for its unfledged chicks but cannot offer them protection against the superior might of predators (10, 16, 19–22).

It has been noted that iambic, in Archilochus' hands, was a potent instrument of social control, articulating and promoting ideals common to the poet and his sodality, and conversely showering with mockery those who deviated from that standard.[24] It has equally been remarked that *iambos* typically arises in times of social change or political stasis:[25] the iambic poet hence feels empowered to preach to the populace at large appropriate behaviour at crucial junctures in their history. It is no surprise to find Horace, in the crisis-ridden 30s BCE, taking up that particular Archilochean mantle: in *Epodes* 7 and 16 he harangues the Romans, in tones of deep pessimism,[26] for their headlong rush into the self-destructive madness of civil war. And in similar fashion, the attack on the loathsome parvenu of *Epode* 4, or the twin broadsides against the superannuated sexuality of the high-born matron of 8 and 12, can be read at one level, not as the expression of personal animus, but as symbolic of the moral deliquescence of the dying Republic.

By adopting a genre a poet simultaneously appropriates that genre's persona.[27] An important aspect of the iambic voice is that it is partial, biased, unilateralist. This dimension of iambus is productively harnessed by Horace, as he moves from outsider to insider over the course of ten years. Returning to Italy 'with wings clipped' after Philippi (42 BCE), where he fought unsuccessfully on the side of the Liberators, Horace found himself deprived of his paternal estate, and, he claims, constrained by poverty to write verses.[28] Among his earliest efforts were the 'civic' *Epodes* 7 and 16, dating, most would agree,[29] to 39–38 BCE. Here the poet's stance is judiciously impartial. 'The Romans' are excoriated *en masse* for their renewed descent into internecine strife. Not a word is said about those responsible for the recrudescence of civil war, the rival dynasts Antony and Octavian, and, less culpably, Sextus Pompey. Instead the blame is placed, nebulously, on an ancestral curse that dogs the race and the tendency of powerful states to consume themselves in an orgy of self-destruction.

23 Discussed under iambic 'impotence' below. 24 Slings (1990) 1–30.
25 O'Higgins (2003) 63. 26 The influence of Sallust's *Histories* has been detected.
27 A. Barchiesi (2001a) 152–3. 28 *Epistles* 2.2.50–4.
29 Kraggerud (1984) 44–65, however, dates 7 to 32, and 16 (p. 136) to around the time of Actium. Similarly Mankin (1995).

Such even-handedness will not last. In 38 BCE, according to the accepted dating,[30] Horace's artistic promise saw him taken up into the entourage of Octavian's man of affairs, Maecenas, with all the obligations to trade mutual benefactions that such a relationship entailed,[31] in Horace's case the composition of politically engaged poetry. *Epode* 4 is revealing of the resultant development. Datable to the months before the final showdown with Sextus Pompey in 36 BCE, the poem is an attack on the inordinate rise to wealth and position of a delinquent ex-slave. In that sense the *Epode* maintains Horace's earlier stance as a promoter of civic hygiene, since the loathsome *arriviste* symbolises the topsy-turvydom and class porousness which characterised the death-throes of the Republic. But on the other hand the concluding revelation that the parvenu has been enrolled as a military tribune on the Octavianic side (17–20) provides the launching-pad for two propagandist messages, one explicit, one implicit: first, an officially inspired misrepresentation of Sextus as a piratical leader of renegade slaves (pointing the irony of the worthless ex-slave's fighting against them),[32] second, the imputation that the Octavianic forces are the morally superior side and should have no truck with the likes of the parvenu. And, by placing the second half of the poem in the mouths of passers-by, Horace makes the citizens, tendentiously, endorse views to which many would not in fact have subscribed.[33]

The apogee of Horace's ideological partisanship is *Epode* 1's thematic twin, *Epode* 9, set in the confused hours following Actium. In keeping with the emergent regime's pretence that the Actian campaign was against a foreign foe, the focus is on Cleopatra, her eunuch minions, symbols of Eastern decadence, and the degradation to which the Antonian soldiers submit by their servitude to both (11–16). The defeated Antony is designated a *hostis*, 'enemy of the state', signifying his alienation from his homeland (27),[34] while the routing of Sextus Pompey from his natal element, the sea,[35] is made a harbinger of definitive success in the present campaign (7–10): an account of Sextus' career egregiously at odds with the facts.[36]

Iambos traditionally blended praise with blame:[37] the dispraise of the Antonians in 9 is framed by enthusiastic endorsements of the Caesarian cause. But the most characteristic generic marker of iambus was undoubtedly its aggressiveness, a feature captured in the association of *iambos* with Greek

30 E.g. Nisbet (1984) 8 = (1995) 169–70. 31 Cf. generally Bowditch (2001).
32 For the misrepresentation see L. Watson (2003) 169–71. 33 Cf. L. Watson (2002).
34 *Hostis* is related to *hospes*, 'stranger'. See further L. Watson (2003) 332–3.
35 Naval successes encouraged Sextus to declare himself Neptune's son: L. Watson (2003) 319–20.
36 L. Watson (2003) 314–5. 37 Nagy (1976); O'Higgins (2003) 66.

iapto, 'hurl a weapon', and an insistence that the poetry of Archilochus, the inventor of the genre, was fuelled by rage: Horace's *Archilochum proprio rabies armavit iambo*, 'furious anger armed Archilochus with the iambic that was particularly his own' (*Ars* 79) succinctly expresses both ideas.[38] The Parian poet's outpourings of hostility were most famously associated with his vengeful attacks upon the Lycambids: but his displeasure was equally vented against others, in tones of varying intensity. Iambic aggression is duly replicated in the *Epodes*. Here too the mood can vary from wry amusement or derisive laughter to unbridled rage. And, also as in Archilochus and iambic more generally, anger can take the form of *aischrologia*, obscene abuse, a key aspect of *iambos* which reflects alike the genre's presumptive origins,[39] its profound misogyny and the scurrility for which Archilochus was notorious.[40] All the women of the *Epodes*, in keeping with the reductionist dialectic of anti-feminism, are objectified as body, or viewed through the filter of their sexual activities. A case in point is the sex-crazed old woman of *Epode* 8, who, in a brutal catalogue of her corporeal parts, is disabused of the notion that she can produce in Horace a flicker of desire:

> to think that you can ask what unstrings my virility, decaying as you are with a long aeon, when your teeth are black and advanced old age ploughs wrinkles into your brow, and there gapes between your shrivelled buttocks an ugly anus like a dyspeptic cow's! But of course I am turned on by your withered bosom and breasts, like a mare's udders, and your flabby belly and skinny thighs tacked on to swollen ankles. (1–10)

The literary pedigree of this thumbnail sketch is too complex to go into here.[41] But certain of the details explicitly advertise their Archilochean pedigree,[42] and the poem as a whole is fed by the further currents of explicitly Roman colouring (11–16) and a Catullan taste for transgressive language.

Thematic variety is a much-studied aspect of the *Epodes*:[43] these incorporate, in addition to poems previously mentioned, a super-hyperbolic squib on garlic gastralgia (3); curses invoking shipwreck and death upon 'stinking' Maevius (10); a rhapsodic account of rural beatitude rounded off by a famously debunking conclusion (2); lengthy treatments of the murderous activities of the nightmarish witch Canidia (5, 17); proto-elegies and lyric

38 Cf. Catullus 36.5 *truces vibrare iambos*, 'hurl angry iambics'.

39 O'Higgins (2003) 84, passim.

40 Misogyny in iambus: O'Higgins (2003) 64–5, 74–82. Archilochean scurrility, especially against women: Gerber (1999), testimonia 18–21, 40.

41 See L. Watson (2003) 288–92 for literary models.

42 See L. Watson (2003) 6–7.

43 E.g. Fedeli (1978).

(11, 13–15) which impart to the second half of the book a notably different character from the first, deliberately problematising its generic identity as iambus. Too often such variety has been ascribed to the influence of Callimachus' richly diverse book of thirteen (or seventeen) *Iamboi*, without a parallel awareness that *iambos* as practised by its archaic representatives Archilochus, Hipponax and Simonides was equally a hodgepodge.[44] In part this was an inevitability, given the highly occasional, 'here and now' character of early iambus: an occasionality which Horace conspicuously strives to replicate. With the partial exception of 2, 6 and 11, all the *Epodes* take their starting-point from a particular moment in time.

It has been remarked that the iambic poet, who victimises others, is himself a victim.[45] Archilochus' attacks upon Lycambes and family, like other of his fusillades, are retributory, that is to say predicated upon offence taken or hurt suffered: in the case of Lycambes the only means of recourse against an irremediable wrong.[46] On one occasion Archilochus complains, 'for you are being throttled by your friends' (fr. 129 West), and both he and Pindar speak, significantly, of his *amechania*, 'helplessness'.[47] Hipponax represents himself as a starveling buffoon, embroiled in a gamut of humiliating situations,[48] and Callimachus too is not free of self-abasement.[49] This aspect of iambus is powerfully developed in the *Epodes*. It has been the focus of important studies over the last fifteen years,[50] critics variously speaking of Horace's self-fashioning as a 'feckless', 'toothless' or 'impotent' iambist, the last term being understood in both a narrowly physiological and a transferred sense. It is argued that the two dimensions come together in exemplary fashion at *Epod.* 15.11–12.[51] Here, threatening to replace with another the congenitally faithless Neaera, who has already discarded him for a more promising mate, Horace fatuously blusters, *o dolitura mea multum virtute Neaera! / nam si quid in Flacco viri est . . .*, 'O Neaera who will suffer much from my firmness. For if there is any manliness in "Floppy" . . .', a self-deflating apostrophe

44 O'Higgins (2003) 60; L. Watson (2003) 11–12.

45 Miralles and Pòrtulas (1983); (1988).

46 Steinruck (2000), 1–14 posits that, in a society with a shortage of marriageable daughters, failure to wed was a disaster for the elite male. Similarly, O'Higgins (2003) 64.

47 Archilochus fr. 128.1, 23.11ff. West, Pindar *Pyth.* 2. 54–6; also Archilochus fr. 88 and 112.3 for the motif.

48 Cf. L. Watson (1995) 189 n. 6, more generally Miralles and Pòrtulas (1988).

49 *Iambus* 3.

50 Fitzgerald (1988); Oliensis (1991); (1998) 64–101; L. Watson (1995) with n. 1.

51 Fitzgerald (1988) 177–8; Oliensis (1991) 124–5; (1998) 74; Gowers (1993) 287. Reservations: L. Watson (2003) ad loc.

unlikely to strike terror into Neaera's bosom.[52] Critics are divided on whether the 'impotent iambist' approach can successfully be applied to every one of the *Epodes*:[53] but it has been plausibly argued that the simile of the bird in *Epode* 1, unavailing in her attempts to protect her fledglings from attack (19–22), is an imagistic adumbration of what becomes a dominant thematic of the book.[54]

Thus far we have considered the *Epodes* from the perspective of Horace's debt to Archilochus. It is time to register some departures from the Archilochean template. A start may conveniently be made with further discussion of iambic impotence. In the biographical tradition, at least, the attacks of Archilochus on the Lycambids, and of Hipponax on Bupalus, were charged with lethal violence. In a symbolic announcement of the potency of his iambic venom, Hipponax's first book of *iamboi* figures Bupalus as a *pharmakos*, 'scapegoat', a ritual which very probably ended in death.[55] Consider now by contrast Horace's third *Epode*, which utilises the traditional iambic motif of the curse.[56] The differences from the archaic prototype are as important as the thematic convergence. This brief piece dramatises an attack of indigestion suffered by Horace after eating a dish over-liberally seasoned with garlic at the house of Maecenas, who apparently finds Horace's sufferings highly amusing.[57] The effects of garlic are ludicrously associated with some of the most deadly substances known to criminology or mythology – hemlock, the incendiary drugs with which Medea smeared her rival's bridal gifts, Hercules' envenomed shirt. According to the absurd (il)logic of the poem, then, Horace has been fatally poisoned by the offending condiment.[58] And what is his reponse? 'If you ever again conceive a desire for such a substance, jesting Maecenas, may your girl block your kiss with her hand and sleep at the edge of the bed' (19–22). Horace's riposte to his 'poisoning' is to invoke upon Maecenas a minor sexual rebuff, moreover at some unspecified time in the future ('if you ever again' . . .). There could not be a clearer example of a toothless curse,[59] a self-contradiction in both imprecatory and iambic

52 Fuller discussion in L. Watson (1995), 194–6.

53 For the across-the-board approach, Fitzgerald (1988); Oliensis (1991); (1998); Gowers (1993a): reservations in L. Watson (1995).

54 E. A. Schmidt (1977), 402–3.

55 Fr. 5–10 West: it is interesting that Bupalus is represented as a public enemy, like various pests assailed by Horace. Scapegoat rituals and death: Bremmer (1983).

56 Notably (?) Hipponax frg. 115 West, the model for *Epode* 10.

57 'Jesting Maecenas' 20.

58 Gowers (1993a), 299–300.

59 Particularly if we imagine that the *puella* who is to deny Maecenas her erotic favours at a future garlicky meal is ensconced on the couch beside him at the present one, which would strongly imply sexual intercourse following the *convivium*. Cf. Roller (2003).

terms: the curses of the dying (for so Horace ridiculously represents himself) were thought to be invested with especial potency;[60] as for iambus, its tendency to disproportion in exacting revenge was often remarked,[61] a pattern laughably nullified here. And this imprecatory toothlessness is emblematic of that blend of assertiveness and weakness which characterises the *Epode* book as a whole: a weakness which Horace develops to a significantly greater degree than Archilochus, elevating it to a cardinal motif of the collection.

So far as we can judge in the fragmentary state of our knowledge, nothing in the pre-existing iambic tradition can have prepared Roman readers for the prominence awarded to magic in the *Epodes*.[62] The two pieces devoted to the activities of the arch-witch Canidia (5, 17) comprise almost a third of the verses in the collection, and it is seen as symbolic of her importance in the literary weave of the whole that Canidia is literally given the last word in the book.[63] Why did Horace develop the theme of magic with such anomalous expansiveness? Some speculative answers may be proffered. At the most basic level this represents an attempt to enhance the thematic parameters of iambus (always a hospitable genre), a process which runs parallel to the generic experimentation so integral to the book. Another instigating factor might have been contemporary politics: Horace paints magic in the vilest colours (in *Epode* 5 Canidia kidnaps a child in order to use his desiccated innards as a love-charm; in 17 her spells reduce Horace to skin and bone while vindictively denying him release in death). This may have as backdrop a push in the 30s by Octavian and his ministers to stamp out magic, and simultaneous attempts to brand Sextus Pompey and his followers as devotees of necromancy (significantly, Canidia is shown practising this in the contemporaneous *Satires* 1).[64]

Another consideration was surely an intellectual fascination with the gruesome arcana of magic; a fascination equally visible in Ovid, Seneca and Lucan, ultimately dependent upon familiarity with books of magic, like those mentioned at *Epode* 17.4–5, which are known to have circulated freely in antiquity and are vestigially preserved in the *Magical Papyri* excavated in Egypt during the nineteenth century. From a literary-historical perspective, Horace may be feeding off Virgil's 8th *Eclogue* or perhaps Catullus, of whom the elder Pliny tantalisingly remarks that he wrote of amatory incantations:[65]

60 L. Watson (1991) 27.

61 Eustathius on Homer *Od.* 11. 227, Lucian *Pseudolog.* 1. *Epode* 10 embodies the pattern.

62 Hipponax fr. 78 West, however, apparently describes a magic procedure to cure impotence (M. L. West (1974) 142f.).

63 Oliensis (1998), 68, 95, further L. Watson (2003) 541: programmatic significance of Canidia's having the exit-line; Cavarzere (1992) ad loc., A. Barchiesi (2001a) 147–8

64 L. Watson (2003) 179–80; Du Quesnay (1984) 38–9.

65 Pliny *NH* 28.19.

more generally the theme of antisocial magic offered a promising canvas upon which to develop that taste for the grotesque which was one of the many inheritances of Hellenistic literature at Rome. Lastly, at a symbolic level, Canidia can be read as the Horatian correlate of Archilochus' *bête noire* Neobule, or alternatively Iambe/Baubo, the presiding genius of iambic:[66] both figures are conspicuously sexual, like Canidia, whose magic is driven by lust.

The prominence of Canidia points up another important divergence from Horace's archaic models. While women had been a perennial target of attack in iambus, for the most part[67] they are denied speech (iambus likes to silence the opposition).[68] By contrast Horace gives his females expansive opportunities to express themselves. Canidia speaks at length in *Epode* 5 and the dialogic 17, while 8 and 12 report respectively at first and second hand the strident protests to Horace of the sexually affronted *matrona*. It is not, however, to be supposed that, by giving his female characters such extensive air-time, Horace precisely empowers them. Rather, he both empowers them by granting speech and simultaneously disempowers them by the unloveliness of the characters which their words disclose. Horace invests them with the anger and sexual jealousy which were held to be peculiarly female vices,[69] not to mention a profound lack of self-awareness which makes them appear ridiculous – and Horace too for becoming embroiled with such.[70]

Horace, it was noted, claimed that his version of iambus moderated Archilochus' ferocity, a contention which might seem disingenuous to modern readers of 8 and 12, with their irate female-driven phallocentrism and explicit crudities. Horace, however, had a precedent for this claim in the shape of his generic predecessor Callimachus.[71] Moreover, one might reflect upon the anonymity of the target(s) of 8 and 12, which dilutes somewhat the force of the poet's attack, particularly when compared with the *First Cologne Epode* of Archilochus (fr. 196a West), which named and sexually shamed Lycambes' daughters. Further, it is arguable that Horace's language in the sexual *Epodes* is not as robust as in the more colourful fragments of Archilochus,[72] than whom Hipponax is still coarser.[73]

The point comes into sharper focus if one compares the extremes to which *libertas*, 'frank speech', ran in Catullus,[74] who, *pace* Horace, has a valid claim to be considered Rome's first iambic poet.[75] Horace, it has been argued,[76] consciously sanitises the pugnacity of his *Satires*, eschewing the devastating aeschrology which Catullus drew from the language of the street, and a similar process may be at work in the *Epodes*. At all events, *Epodes* 8 and 12 pale by comparison with some of the more cloacal outpourings of Catullus, such as poems 37 or 97, or – especially interesting because written in the metre of *Epodes* 1–10 and a direct continuation of the Roman iambic tradition as represented by Catullus and Horace – the little-regarded *Catalepton* 13, an astonishing sexually based dissection of an unidentified Luccius.

Lastly, some features of the *Epodes*, whether Archilochean or not, which there is no room to discuss here: Horace for the most part attacks type-figures, the presence of whom in Archilochus is a deeply contested issue;[77] the architecture of the *Epodes*, which divide into two metrically demarcated and unequal parts, each poem, 13 excepted,[78] having its thematic partner, either within its own half or across the internal divide (1 and 9, 7 and 16, etc.);[79] 'imbrication' or leakage of motifs from one *Epode* to the next;[80] the *Epodes* as a locus for generic problematisation, an issue metapoetically explored in 11–17;[81] the iambist as both insider and outsider (Archilochus allegedly the son of a slave-woman Enipo but articulating the ideals of the elite symposium,[82] Horace the freedman's son with a conduit to the most important men in Rome); the foregrounding of the poet's likes and dislikes, a feature common to Archilochus, Catullus and Horace (in the *Epodes* perhaps taking over some of Catullus' exclusivity);[83] the metrical legacy of Archilochus and Callimachus.[84]

FURTHER READING

Of recent commentaries, Cavarzere (1992) is first rate, with a useful bibliography on each poem; Mankin (1995) helpful but idiosyncratic, especially on chronology; L. Watson (2003) fullest, offering the first detailed exegesis of the magical *Epodes* and featuring an interpretive essay on each *Epode*. The most important general studies are

66 For the sugggestion, A. Barchiesi (2001a) 152. Iambe/Baubo: O'Higgins (2003) 37–57.
67 Exceptions: Archilochus fr. 196a, 23, Hipponax fr. 25 West.
68 O'Higgins (2003) 64, 73. 69 Harris (2003).
70 Cf. L. Watson (1995) 190–4 for the poet's ridiculousness in 8 and 12.
71 Cf. L. Watson (2003) 5–6. 72 So S. J. Harrison (2001) 174.
73 Cf. M. L. West (1974) 28. 74 Cf. A. Barchiesi (2001a) 158–60.

75 Heyworth (2001). 76 Ruffell (2003).
77 See conveniently O'Higgins (2003) 72, with nn. 68–70.
78 D. H. Porter (1995) 129. 79 Carrubba (1969) reviews various schemata.
80 Henderson (1987) 112, 116; L. Watson (2003) 23–8.
81 Generic hybridisation in the *Epodes*: Leo (1900); Heyworth (1993); A. Barchiesi (1994); S. J. Harrison (2001).
82 Archilochus Enipo's son: fr. 295 West. Archilochus and the symposium: Bowie (1986).
83 Catullan exclusivity: Krostenko (2001). But Catullus, like Horace, may have felt himself an outsider too: Tatum (1997).
84 L. Watson (2003) 43–5.

Fitzgerald (1988); Watson (1995); Gowers (1993a); and Oliensis (1991/1998): the last two sometimes pursue interpretive trajectories having little basis in Horace's text. On generic hybridisation A. Barchiesi (1994) and S. J. Harrison (2001a) are mandatory, as are Fraenkel (1957) and Nisbet (1984/1995) on the political *Epodes*. On the latter Kraggerud (1984) is provocative but stimulating. Among studies of individual poems, noteworthy are Du Quesnay (2002) on 1, Cairns (1975) on 2, Buchheit (1961) and Dickie (1981) on 6, Wagenvoort (1956) on 7, L. Watson (1983) on 11, Lowrie (1992) on 13, Watson (2001) on 14, and Reynen (1964) on 16. Grassmann (1966) is most informative on the 'erotic' *Epodes* 8, 11, 12, 14 and 15 and their literary background. Fedeli (1978) usefully surveys the Hellenistic and neoteric background to the *Epodes*. Hanslik (1958) discusses the contested issue of whether Maecenas and Horace were at Actium.

8

FRANCES MUECKE

The *Satires*

Magnam rem puta unum hominem agere. Praeter sapientem autem nemo unum agit, ceteri multiformes sumus.

Consider it a great thing to play the role of one man. But nobody except the wise man plays a single role; the rest of us have many parts.
(Seneca, *Epistles to Lucilius* 120.22)

The first monograph in English devoted exclusively to the *Satires* appeared as recently as 1966. On reflection, it is perhaps not surprising that this was presented as 'an effort to revive interest in Horace's *Satires*'.[1] Much to the taste of the eighteenth century,[2] the *Satires* had inevitably been swept aside in the age of Romanticism. Even in the mid-twentieth century, under the lingering influence upon later criticism of the Romantic interest in individuality, Eduard Fraenkel's powerful voice had dismissed a considerable proportion of the two books as immature and ineffective Lucilian experiments, and Patrick Wilkinson (in a book on Horace's lyric poetry written for non-specialists) had felt obliged to explain why he did not get much enjoyment from the hexameter works.[3]

In the generation or two that have now passed since Rudd brought the *Satires* back into the mainstream of Latin literary studies, there have been enormous changes in this field, and, far from being neglected, the *Satires* have been recognised as offering much scope to current interpretive approaches, where emphasis is placed on dynamic relationships within genre and literary history, on the ideological dimension and on reintegration of the cultural and the political.

Horace's *Satires*, with their engagement with Roman social life, their problematisation of their genre, their flaunting of powerful patrons, and their setting in the politically uncertain period of the young Caesar's consolidation

1 Rudd (1966) 1.
2 Brower (1959) 163 dubs Horace a 'culture hero' of the eighteenth-century elite; more recently on Pope see Stack (1985) and Martindale and Hopkins (1992). In eighteenth-century Germany 'Wieland felt a very strong affinity with Horace's personality, especially as this is expressed in his *Satires* and *Epistles*': Curran (1996) 183.
3 Fraenkel (1957) 101; Wilkinson (1945) 5–6.

12

JOHN MOLES

Philosophy and ethics

In his later poetry, Horace himself spins a narrative about these controversial topics. Poetry can be 'useful', 'delightful', or both (*Ars Poetica* 333–4). It has 'useful' ethical functions (*Epistles* 2.1.126–31). Writing 'well' (technically and morally) requires 'wisdom' sourced from Socratic and Platonic philosophy (*Ars Poetica* 309–22): Socratic writings provide the poet's basic material; life is like a drama, but different social roles have appropriately different 'duties', 'parts' and 'characters'. Here the poetic representation combines the 'is' and the 'ought', and traditional Peripatetic literary theory is overwritten by the moral relativism of the Stoic philosopher Panaetius (who greatly influenced late Republican Roman philosophy).[1] 'Philosophy', both in its broadest sense and in the narrow sense of specific philosophies, informs Horace's own poetry.

Epistles 2.2.57–60 itemises Horace's range:

> What do you want me to do?
> Moreover, not all men admire and love the same things.
> *You* rejoice in lyric, this one delights in iambics,
> That one in Bionian 'conversations' and their black salt.

The *Satires*

Horace has written 'lyric', 'iambics' and 'conversations' (= 'satires'). Why the emphasis on Bion, the largely Cynic ('doggish') philosopher?[2]

The *Satires* parade numerous satiric predecessors, models and exemplars without naming Bion,[3] but Horace here advertises his reading of Bion: 'black

Translations are mine. Presentation and documentation are minimalist, Moles (2002) reworked. Nothing denies multiplicity of poetic meaning. Readers are assumed to want to read Horace. I thank Emily Gowers, Stephen Harrison and Tony Woodman.

1 Cicero, *De Off.* 1.107ff., 124ff.; McGann (1969) 10ff.

2 Kindstrand (1976) (useful but uncritical); *OCD* 3rd edn (1996) 243 (sharper).

3 E.g. 1.4, 1.6, 1.10, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3.11–12, 2.6.

salt' refers both to the salt fish sold by Bion's father and to Bion's 'abrasive' wit.[4] 'Conversations' glosses 'diatribes', or 'informal philosophical talks', a form associated with Bion.[5] The Roman satirist Lucilius 'rubbed the city down with much salt' (*Satires* 1.10.4) and was 'of wiped [keen] nose' (1.4.8), just as Bion's father 'wiped his nose with his elbow':[6] Lucilius is Horace's 'satirical father'.

Crucial is *Satires* 1.6 (beginning the second half of Book 1):

Bion F1, 2, 16 Kindstrand	Horace
The philosopher Bion addresses King Antigonus Gonatas (whose names imply 'high birth').	The poet-philosopher Horace addresses Maecenas, himself of the noblest birth.
Antigonus asks Bion where he comes from and who his parents are.	At their first meeting, the question of Horace's background arises.
Bion, favourite of Antigonus, has been criticised by jealous rivals for low birth.	Horace, favourite of Maecenas, has been criticised by jealous rivals for low birth.
Bion gives much information about his father.	Horace gives much information about his father.
Bion admits that his father was a freedman and that he himself had been enslaved.	Horace repeatedly describes himself as son of a freedman.
Bion's father wiped his nose with his elbow.	Maecenas does not turn up his nose at unknowns (Maecenas is another 'literary father').
Bion's father was branded on his face.	The highborn Laevinus was 'branded' by the Roman people.
Bion's mother was of dishonourable status: a prostitute.	Octavian's public supremacy prompts the question whether he was dishonoured by an unknown mother (Octavian is another 'father').
Bion's father was a customs officer.	Horace's father was a tax-collector.
Bion's master bought him for sex.	Horace's father kept Horace pure.
Bion asks to be considered on his own merits; Bion tells Antigonus, in the case of friends, to examine not where they are from but who they are.	Maecenas holds that a man's father does not matter, provided he himself is a free man.
Antigonus chooses friends.	Maecenas chooses friends.

(*cont.*)

4 DL 4.46; F1A Kindstrand; T15–18 Kindstrand.
5 *OCD* 3rd edn 463; T8A–B Kindstrand; p. 168 below. 6 F1 Kindstrand.

(*cont.*)

Bion F1, 2, 16 Kindstrand	Horace
Bion boasts of his parentage.	Horace will never regret such a father.
Bion: 'these are the things concerning *me*'.	Horace: 'now I return to myself'.
Antigonus rules many well, Bion himself.	Maecenas' ancestors commanded great legions, a Roman legion once obeyed Horace, and Horace now does as he pleases.
Bion rejects rhetoric.	Horace celebrates the education his father secured for him.
Bion rejects wealth and extravagance for simplicity and ease.	Horace rejects wealth and extravagance for simplicity and ease.

Horace mobilises a whole series of items to accentuate the Bion analogy.[7] His reworking of Bion's father's 'branding' enlists Bionian diatribe under satire's 'branding' function (1.4.5, 106).

Readers are challenged to detect Bion's presence. The successful are retrospectively congratulated (*Epistles* 2.2.60), the unsuccessful re-challenged. The challenge is alike literary ('spotting the allusions') and moral/philosophical (discerning Horace's distinctive moral/philosophical stance).

Two passages in *Satires* 1.1 ambivalently acknowledge Cynic diatribe. In 13–14 (where Horace curtails examples), 'all the other examples of this *genre*, so many are they, could *wear out the talkative* Fabius', the italicised words gloss the Greek 'genre' of 'diatribe' (literally, a 'wearing away' of time in 'talk').[8] Lines 23–7 gloss Cynic 'pedagogic', 'serio-comic' didacticism:[9] 'Besides, not to run through the subject with a laugh like a writer of jokes – although what forbids telling the truth with a laugh? Just as coaxing teachers sometimes give little cakes to children, to make them want to learn the first elements – nevertheless, putting playfulness aside, let us seek serious matters.' A further Cynic 'marker' comes in 2.1.84–5: 'what if someone has *barked* at a man worthy of abuse, himself untouched by blame?' And the witch Canidia (~ *canis*) articulates another 'doggish' voice within the collection.[10]

7 The historical circumstance of his father's being a freedman (G. Williams (1995)) will have contributed to Horace's inspiration.
8 Gowers (2004) 54. 9 Kindstrand (1976) 209, 47f.
10 *Satires* 1.8.48, 2.1.48, 2.8.95; Muecke (1993) 293; Mankin (1995) 300; Oliensis (1998) 68f.

Thus Horace presents his *Satires* as 'Bionian', 'Cynic' and 'serio-comic' 'diatribe'. Hence much basic Cynicism, of content and style;[11] jibing at pretentious Stoics;[12] and emphasis on 'unofficial' moral authorities such as Horace's father, Ofellus and Cervius.[13] Book 1.4, Horace's defence of his own milder satire, rejecting the 'blackness' of malevolent criticism (85, 91, 100) or himself as a biting dog (93), functions as a redefinition, rather than a negation, of such Cynicism (cf. Lucilius' 'wiped nose' and the 'branding' motif).

What of the strong Epicurean strand, both of doctrine and of allusions to Lucretius, greatest Epicurean poet of the previous generation?[14] Since Cynicism influenced Epicurean ethics and Epicureanism appropriated diatribe, Cynic and Epicurean positions sometimes intermix, as in 1.2 on 'easily available sex'. Elsewhere, they differ, Horace favouring the less extreme Epicurean position. In 2.2.53ff. Ofellus' simple living is the mean between gross, 'wolfish' gluttony and sordid, '*doggish*', parsimony. Book 1.1's gestures to Cynic diatribe are punningly redefined by the Epicurean moral '*sati*ety' which this Horatian '*sati*re' advocates and which its very length instantiates (119–21).[15] Horace's teasing citations, in an Epicurean erotic context (1.2.92–3, 121–2), of Philodemus, Greek poet, literary critic and Epicurean philosopher, whose circle included Horace's friends and fellow poets Plotius, Varius and Virgil (1.5.40; 1.10.81), look programmatic of that Epicurean strand. Horace actually *was* the fellow Epicurean of Plotius etc. and of Maecenas,[16] a fact constantly alluded to, and reflected in, his poetry (however ironically). The extended punning on his own name (*Horatius* ~ *hora*) in 2.6[17] makes Horace the personification of the Epicurean principle *carpe diem*, though Epicureans, too, can be satirised (2.4). And there are other important philosophical influences, including mainline Stoic, Panaetian Stoic, Peripatetic and (in Book 2) Platonic dialogue.[18]

Philosophical programmes, then, can be presented piecemeal and unsequentially, implemented, Romanised, incompletely descriptive, ironised, redefined, subverted, etc.: but they must be recognised.

11 Esp. *Satires* 1.1–4, 1.6; Freudenburg (1993) 8–27, 78–82, 216–29.
12 E.g. *Satires* 1.1.120, 1.2.134, 1.3.96 ff., 2.3. 13 *Satires* 1.4.105ff., 1.6, 2.2, 2.6.
14 E.g. *Satires* 1.1.74–5, 1.2.111–12, 1.3.76–7, 97–114, 1.5.44, 101–3, 1.6.128–31, 2.2.14–20, 25, 2.6.93–7.
15 *Lucretius* 3.938, 959–60; Epicurius *Sent. Vat.* 88; fr. 69 Bailey; note that this criterion targets Lucretius as well as Cynics.
16 Armstrong (2004); Maecenas' Epicureanism: André (1967) 15ff; Maecenas' *Symposium* (*Odes* 3.21) included Virgil and Horace.
17 Reckford (1997); also *Satires* 1.6.119ff.
18 Surveys: Muecke (1993) 6–7; Gowers (2004).

Epodes and *Satires*, contemporaneous and generically affiliated (both being 'blame poetry'), have many links, including the 'doggish' Canidia[19] and the Greek poet Archilochus, part of Horace's satirical reading (*Satires* 2.3.12) and the *Epodes*' main inspiration.[20]

Crucially, *Epode* 6 runs:

> Why do you worry unoffending strangers,
> A cowardly dog when facing wolves?
> Why not, if you really can, turn your empty threats here
> And attack me, who will bite back?
> For, like either the Molossian hound or the tawny Laconian, 5
> A force friendly to shepherds,
> I'll drive through deep snow with ear upraised,
> Whatever beast goes before.
> *You*, when you have filled the wood with fearful voice,
> Sniff at the food thrown you. 10
> Beware, beware! For I raise my ready horns most savagely against the wicked,
> Like the spurned son-in-law of faithless Lycambes or Bupalus' keen enemy.
> Or, if anyone attacks me with black tooth,
> Shall I weep unavenged like a child?

In this fable, one dog represents the malice of the iambic tradition's negative version (13), which attacks the innocent and defenceless (1) but is cowardly in the face of the strong (2–4, 10), becoming all bark and no bite (9f.). The other (Horace) bites back (4, 13–14), defends the community (6, 11), and, now also bull-like, charges the wicked (11). Its literary and moral ancestors are Archilochus and Hipponax (12), whose notorious aggressiveness is harnessed to Cynic moralising.[21] Thus the *Epodes* integrate Cynic 'doggishness' into the iambic tradition of 'biting', producing a genre which serves the common good, attacks the wicked and manifold forms of moral 'beastliness', and defends the weak, including the poet himself, but which is also serio-comic (Horace's '*upraised* ear' being deflated by his name *Flaccus* ~ 'floppy').[22]

As with the *Satires*, this Cynic programme does not make the collection solidly Cynic. Many of the poems deploy general 'hard–soft', 'public–private', 'business–leisure', 'manliness–unmanliness/womanliness', 'virtue–pleasure' (etc.) contrasts, which are sometimes given philosophical colouring.

19 *Epodes* 3, 5, 17.
20 As *Epistles* 1.19.23–5 retrospectively reveals (cf. *Epistles* 2.2.60 on Bion).
21 Dickie (1981) 195–203; *Epode* 6 resembles *Satires* 1.4 and 2.1 (esp. 47ff.).
22 Generally: Fitzgerald (1988); Oliensis (1998) 68ff.

In the *Epodes*, as elsewhere, 'soft' philosophical colouring denotes Epicureanism, 'hard' Stoicism, Cynicism, or both (Cynicism influenced Stoicism even more than it did Epicureanism, hence Cynic and Stoic ethics sometimes cohere, sometimes diverge).

Epode 1 introduces the contrasts:

'Virtue' (etc.)	'Pleasure' (etc.)
Life 'oppressive' if Maecenas does not survive.	Life if Maecenas survives 'pleasant'.
Public engagement/'war'/'labour'	'Leisure'/'unfitness for war'
	'Leisure' only 'sweet' if Maecenas present
'Men'	'Softness'
Travelling to the extreme north, east and west	Staying put
'Bearing labour'	Not bearing labour
'Strength'	'Insufficient strength'
Lack of fear	'Fear'

None of these is automatically philosophical, but the emphasis on 'labours' and travels to the Caucasus and extreme West evoke Hercules, Stoic hero. Consequently, 'pleasure', 'leisure', 'sweetness', 'softness', etc. are 'attracted' into the Epicurean colouring that they have in philosophical contexts. Exploration of the demands of friendship in crisis is underpinned by a contrast between Stoicism and Epicureanism, resolved by Horace's combining of public and private obligations.

Epode 2 has similar contrasts and lightly Epicureanises the countryside (19, 37–8, 40). *Epode* 3, on Maecenas' garlic, contrasts 'hardness' (4) and Hercules' sufferings (17) with Maecenas' girl. *Epode* 4, on the upstart, contrasts 'hardness' (4, 11) and 'softness' (1).[23] The boy victim of *Epode* 5 tries to 'soften' (14, 83–4) the witches' savagery (4) and 'labours' (31). In 8, Horace's 'strength' is 'unmuscled' (2), his impotence 'urged on' (7) by the woman's 'soft' belly (9); Stoic tracts fail to 'stiffen' Horace (who, symbolically, cannot 'sustain' his Cynic/Stoic 'hardness'), and the only useful 'labour' is *fellatio* (hardly a Herculean task).

Epode 9 reworks the contrasts of 1. The closing lines – 37–8 'it is pleasurable to dissolve care and fear for Caesar's affairs in the sweet Loosener' (Bacchus) – give the celebratory symposium an Epicurean flavouring, hence

23 Read sympathetically, the upstart recalls Horace (cf. *Satires* 1.6) as (ironically) 'suffering Cynic-Stoic hero'.

its opposites a Stoic one. In turn, 19–20 ('though *urged* to the left, the poops of the hostile ships *hide* in harbour') exploit Epicureanism's passive and negative associations. As in 1, Stoicism and 'good' Epicureanism coexist (hence Epicurean celebration of Octavian's Stoic valour), but 'bad' Epicureanism smears Antony and Cleopatra.

In 10, the shipwrecked Maevius emits 'unmanly' wailing (17). In 11, Horace no longer takes 'pleasure' in writing poetry, smitten by 'oppressive' love and fire for 'soft' boys and girls, a frequenter of 'hard' thresholds. *Epode* 12 finds Horace sniffing out odours more shrewdly than 'a keen dog where the pig [= vagina] lies hidden' (philosophical animal imagery – 'dog' = Cynic, 'pig' = Epicurean – is again burlesqued: so much for poem 6), his penis 'dissolved', 'soft' for one act only and 'inert'. *Epode* 13 Epicureanises the symposium (3–4, 9–10, 17–18). In 14, the 'soft inertia' of love for a freedwoman has prevented Horace from completing his promised iambics, just as Anacreon wept for love in 'unelaborated' feet. In 15, the unfaithful Neaera will suffer from Horace's 'manhood', 'if there is anything of the *man* in *Flaccus*' (pun). The politically escapist and extravagantly Epicurean 16 redeploys, in contrast to 1, the themes of 'manliness' (2, 5, 39), 'labours' (16), 'sweetness' (35), 'softness' (37), and 'womanliness' (39). *Epode* 17 finds Horace suffering 'labours' (24, 64) worse than those of Ulysses (16) or the dying Hercules (31–2), through the witchcraft of Canidia, in a final 'authority' struggle between the iambic tradition's 'two voices'.

The ingenious patterns Horace creates from these basic contrasts, philosophical and general, contribute substantially to the collection's poetic texture.

Odes 1–3

Ode 1.1 programmatically weaves philosophical threads: the renewed Bion–Antigonus paradigm;[24] the 'choice of life' motif; structural imitation of *Satires* 1.1; evocations of the diatribe theme of 'discontent' and of 'endurance of poverty'; hinted reconciliation of public life/duty/reward/Stoicism and private life/pleasure/emotion/Epicureanism (Maecenas as Horace's 'sweet glory' [2]); and links between philosophical material and addressee.

Into this higher genre, diatribe sporadically injects low-life energy: heated moralism (serious or ironic), down-to-earth illustrations, mockery of pretension and folly, and paradoxical inversions of worldly values.[25] It suffuses 2.15 (encroachments of luxury-building), 2.18 (vanity of riches in contrast

24 Further *Odes* 2.18.12–14, 3.16.37–8.

25 E.g. *Odes* 1.3.9ff., 1.16.9ff., 1.31.6, 2.2.13ff., 1.28.4ff., 2.14.21ff., 3.16.25–8, 3.29.55–6.

to Horace's poverty) and 3.24 (futility and destructiveness of Roman luxury contrasted with Cynic primitivism).

Stoicism is the dominant philosophical presence in few odes. In 1.22 the sage's 'weaponlessness' is the paradigm for Horace's inviolability as lover/love-poet. Ode 1.29 twits Iccius for eyeing the treasures of Araby over those of Panaetius and the Socratics. Ode 2.2 contrasts Sallustius' 'tempered' use of wealth, self-rule and philosophical kingship with Eastern potentates. In 3.2, military endurance and prowess, political greatness (especially that of Augustus) and political discretion (including Horace's) variously manifest Virtue. Ode 3.3 subsumes Augustus' political consistency under Stoic tenacity of purpose.

Epicureanism is the dominant presence in more than twice as many odes. Epicurean *carpe diem* feeling inspires symposia or holidaying as antidotes to wintertime, time passing (1.9, 3.29), preoccupation with the future (1.9, 1.11, 3.29), mortality (1.9, 2.3), hard times (2.3), cares (2.11, 2.16), anxieties over life's necessities or foreign wars (2.11, 3.8, 3.29), and luxury (1.38, 3.29), and as exhortations to love and pleasure (1.9, 1.11, 2.3). The simple Epicurean life is advocated in 1.31, 1.38, 2.16 and 3.1, where it is strikingly preferred to the lives – whether good or bad in their kind – of kings (who must include Augustus), politicians and landowners (who must include Maecenas). By contrast, 1.34's spoof recantation of Epicureanism introduces reflections on Fortune's power.

Another important group juxtaposes Stoic and Epicurean, in varying relationships of tension. Ode 1.7 praises Plancus' 'virile' Stoic 'labours' in war and politics, while counselling periodic immersion in 'softening' Epicurean symposia. Ode 1.32 superimposes Stoic and Epicurean colourings on Horace's public and private[26] lyric voices (similarly 1.31, 2.13.25–8), warranting generalisations about public~Stoic and private~Epicurean. In 1.37 (a poem framed by legitimate Epicurean celebration), Cleopatra's base Epicurean association with 'un-men', 'sweet' fortune and 'softness' (cf. *Epodes* 1 and 9) is succeeded by Stoic 'nobility', 'unwomanliness', rejection of 'the hidden', daring, serenity, bravery and deliberated suicide. Ode 2.7 urges a returned Republican die-hard to forget a shared past of misguided Stoic 'virility' through Epicurean 'sweetness' of friendship and celebration. Ode 3.1, generally Epicurean, envisages a hierarchical Stoic universe. Ode 3.2, generally Stoic, piquantly mixes the two in the famous 'It is sweet and glorious to die for one's country' (cf. 1.32.13, 15, 1.1.2). Ode 3.16 combines Stoic incorruptibility, Epicurean satisfaction with little, gratitude to Maecenas and teasing. In 3.21, tough Stoic types are not immune to wine and

26 The punning 'Latin'/'latent' evokes Epicurean 'hiddenness'.

the poem guys earnest philosophical Symposia, while simultaneously honouring both Maecenas' *Symposium* and Messalla's 'sweet' poetry. Horace's seduction campaign (3.28) deploys the Epicurean symposium against Lyde's 'Stoic citadel'.

Exceptionally, 2.10 advocates the Peripatetic golden mean as a remedy for political troubles.

Thus about a third of the *Odes* are varyingly philosophical, though their impact spreads further. The tone ranges from solemn (2.10, 3.2, 3.3) to flippant (1.22, 3.28). Proportionately, Stoicism lags far behind Epicureanism, which characteristically has the last word and with which, whether as temporary expedient or choice of life, Horace regularly identifies,[27] though not in a 'professional' way (cf. 1.34, 3.1, 3.2, 3.16). Epicureanism dominates 3.1 (the first 'Roman Ode'), a challenge redoubled by the corresponding, also Epicurean, 3.29. Yet, while Stoicism can be mocked (1.22), so can Epicureanism (1.34), and Stoicism generally receives great respect (1.7, 1.37, 2.2, 3.2, 3.3). 'Both – and' formulations (1.1.2, 1.32.13, 15, 3.1, 3.2.13, 3.16) further complicate the picture. Importantly, Epicureanism could celebrate stable rule as guarantor of Epicurean 'quiet' (something of this in 1.7, 2.7 and 3.1, as in the *Epodes*). Horace implicitly claims a 'Stoic voice' as well as an Epicurean (1.1.35, 1.31, 1.32, 2.13.25ff., 3.2). There is, then, a strong pull towards the Epicureanism Horace had espoused since the 30s, but an avoidance of the exclusive commitment alien to his temperament (or its representations), to his role as Augustan *vates*, and to the collection's literary, political, social and philosophical fecundity.

Other questions.

First, the relationship between content and addressee (including implicit addressees and referents). The two may complement – Stoic odes to Stoics (1.22 to Fuscus, 1.29 to Iccius, 2.2 to Sallustius), Epicurean odes to Epicureans (3.8 and 3.29 to Maecenas) – or contrast (2.7 Epicurean solution to Pompeius' 'Stoic' problems; 2.11 Epicurean exhortation to Stoic Quinctius). Other relationships are unclear (2.3 to Dellius; 2.10 to Licinius; 2.16 to Grosphus). If addresses are formally honorific, do philosophical exhortations function as concealed praise for what addressees are doing anyway, or as genuine admonitions? Admonition of other readers is always possible. Of addressees explicit and implicit, there is much concealed praise (Plancus in 1.7, Sallustius in 2.2, Augustus in 3.2 and 3.3, Messalla in 3.21). But there is also teasing (e.g. Iccius in 1.29, Quinctius in 2.11) and admonition: 2.7 ('forget the past'), or 2.10 (whoever its addressee). Slipperiest are odes addressed to, or implicitly referring to, Maecenas (1.1,

27 Again, *hora* ~ *Horatius*: *Odes* 1.9.20, 2.16.32, 3.8.28, 3.29.48.

2.18, 3.1, 3.16, 3.29). Granted encomium, affection and gratitude, teasing is certain, jibing plausible, criticism – as morally protreptic – apparent. Such frankness was traditionally permitted to symposiastic companions and moralising poets, and demanded by Cynic and Epicurean[28] conceptions of friendship.

Second, integration of philosophy into the collection. As in the *Epodes*, Horace is consistently ingenious. Thus the non-philosophical 1.6 rejects, as a poetic theme, the wanderings over the sea of the duplicitous Ulysses. Ode 1.7 implicitly likens the mature Plancus to the sea-wandering and complex Ulysses, imbues him with Stoic virility and endurance, and recommends periodic Epicurean retreats to the shade. Ode 1.8 has the youthful Sybaris, hitherto enduring of dust and sun, lurking, unmanned in a shady brothel. Odes 1.9 and 11 reactivate 'good Epicureanism' in Horace's own erotic campaigns.

Epistles 1

The book begins (1.1–20):

> Told of in my first Camena [Muse], to be told of in my last,
> I've been spectated enough and already been given my discharge staff,
> Maecenas, are you seeking to enclose me again in the old school game?
> My age and mind are not the same. Veianius,
> His arms fixed to Hercules' doorpost, lies low, hidden in the country, 5
> So that he may not so often have to beg the people at the end of the arena.
> There is one who constantly imparts loudly into my purified ear:
> 'If you're sane, loose the ageing horse in time, so that
> He may not fail at the end laughably and strain his flanks.'
> So now I put aside both verses and all those other games: 10
> What is true and what befits is my care, this my question, this my whole concern:
> I am laying down and putting together things that I can bring out presently.
> And, in case by chance you question, under what leader, at what hearth I protect myself,
> Not told to swear to the words of any master,
> Wherever the storm snatches me, I am carried in as a stranger-guest. 15
> Now I become active and drown myself in political waves,
> Guard of true virtue and its rigid attendant,
> Now I furtively slip back into the precepts of Aristippus,
> And I try to subdue things to me, not me to things. 19

Horace, it seems, has retired from the 'old game' of 'verses', likened to gladiatorial games (1–10), and his 'new game', suiting his age (4), is philosophy, which totally absorbs (11). As to philosophical master, he oscillates between Stoics (16–17) and Aristippus (18–19). The latter follower of Socrates may seem a surprising choice, because no 'Aristippean' school survived in Horace's day, but, as will emerge, the ambiguities of Aristippus' thought facilitate wide coverage of philosophical issues, and his chequered career, subject of amusing anecdotes, furnishes suggestive parallels with Horace's own.

The whole passage flaunts the poet's philosophical erudition. 'Game' (3) can apply to philosophical 'schools'; 5 glosses Epicurean 'hiddenness'; 7 evokes Socrates' 'divine voice', in its familiar 'deterrent' role. The verb translated as 'im*parts* loudly into' (*personet*) canvasses Panaetius' theory that individuals can play legitimately different 'parts' in life's 'drama'. The absoluteness of 11 suits philosophical conversion. 'What is truth?' is *the* philosophical question. 'What befits' glosses Panaetius' category of 'the appropriate'. Horace's and Maecenas' 'questions' (13) suggest Socratic dialectic. Philosophy is a 'storehouse' for the future (12). The sectarian religious imagery of 13 suggests philosophical exclusiveness. 14 echoes the Academic non-commitment of Cicero, *Tusc.* 4.7 ('but let each man defend what he feels; for judgements are free: we will maintain our principle and be bound to the laws of no single teaching'), and contrasts with Epicureans' oaths to Epicurus' doctrines. Horace's oscillations (15–19) recall Socrates' wanderings in search of knowledge (Plato, *Ap.* 22a). Line 15 echoes Cicero, *Ac.* 2.8 ('carried in to whatever teaching, as if in a storm'). 'Stranger-guest' glosses Aristippus' claim to be a 'stranger-guest' everywhere (Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.2.13). Line 16 conveys Stoicism's commitment to political life, 17 its characteristic imagery of warfare and hardness. Contrastingly, 'drown myself in political waves' suggests the 'sea of troubles' rejected by the Epicurean. 'Guard' and 'attendant' (17) image Virtue as king, glossing Stoic 'kingship'. Line 18 adapts Cicero, *Ac.* 2.139 ('I see how agreeably pleasure caresses our senses: I slip to the point of assenting to Epicurus or Aristippus'). 'Furtively' echoes 'lies low, hidden' (5), suggesting the side of Aristippus aligned with Epicureanism. Line 19 glosses, via the yoking metaphor, Aristippus' characteristic boast, 'I have, but I am not had' (DL 2.75). The combination of that yoking metaphor, of the horse metaphor for Horace's rejected verses (8–9) and of the name 'Aristippus' (= 'best at horses' or 'best horse') recalls the contrasting horses of Plato, *Phaedr.* 246bff. And beneath the general contrast of 16–19 lies Hercules' choice between Virtue and Vice/Pleasure and their corresponding roads, a choice put to Aristippus (Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.21–34) and alluded to in Cicero, *Ac.* 2.139 (cf. also 6). Retrospectively, 'enclose' (3) glosses Aristippus' refusal to 'enclose himself' in any political state (Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.13).

28 Armstrong (2004) 281f., 287f.

First question: the status of the *Epistles* – self-evidently *philosophy*, are they *poetry*? Line 10 creates a key ambiguity. 'Verses' can mean '*lyric* poetry', a young man's game (4), 'the *old* school game' (3), 'enclosure' into which Horace avoids by writing philosophical hexameters. But 'verses' can also mean 'all poetry', 'philosophy' suits older men, and 'conversational' hexameters can be represented – archly – as prose.[29] Neither interpretation quite works, since, both in this poem and in later ones, Horace repeatedly brings the *Epistles* into relationship with other genres. The ambiguity/illogicality is fruitful: Horace both does and does not fulfil Maecenas' request; the *Epistles* both are poetry and are not poetry, but philosophy; they both are and are not a radical departure, whether in relation to Horace's earlier poetry in general or in relation to his earlier philosophical poetry; and philosophy itself is something that both can and cannot be dissociated from both texts and life. These ambiguities bear on central questions about social dependency or independence, the value of poetry and of books (including *Epistles* 1), and the practice and practicability of philosophy.

Second, figures in a philosophical landscape. Lines 16–19 construct a complex polarity between orthodox Stoicism/virtue/consistency/political involvement and Aristippus/adaptability/pleasure/political disengagement. Panaetian Stoicism (7), Socrates (7), and 'country' Epicureanism (5) are further possibilities. Subsequent poems unpack this complex polarity and feature these philosophical figures. For example, 1.2 contrasts Virtue/Wisdom/Ulysses/Stoics/Cynics (17–22) and Pleasure/Folly/Companions/Phaeacians/Epicureans (23–31), and ends with a practical Panaetian compromise (70–1). In 1.3 the addressee and his friends may be behaving like Phaeacians/vulgar Epicureans, and the unifying thought is that true wisdom involves concord/friendship with oneself, one's fellows, one's fatherland and the universe (28–9), a Panaetian formulation. *Epistle* 1.4 again recycles the polarity but now favours Epicureanism. In 1.5, Augustus' birthday allows a busy man to implement Epicurus' advice.

Third, addressees and other characters. *Epistles* 1 is a philosophical drama (7), whose poems present a series of dramatic situations in which 'characters' 'play' the different philosophical parts outlined above (as in *Ars Poetica* 309–22), in accordance with known philosophical preferences or psychological appropriateness, and whose purpose is 'right' or 'kingly' 'living' (1.60).

The most important character is Horace himself *qua* letter-writer. Of his stated parts, the orthodox Stoic is illustrated by *Epistle* 1 itself, with its ironic concluding endorsement of the 'sage' – a category that still includes Horace (106–8), and by 1.16 (where Horace the poet honours the magnificence

29 E.g. *Satires* 2.6.17 and Harrison, chapter 2 above.

of the Stoic ideal), and Aristippus by 1.17,[30] while Horace's inconsistency appears repeatedly.[31] He has also unstated parts: that of Socrates and Panaetian relativist (7). The former is illustrated by further passages in *Epistle* 1 and elsewhere,[32] the latter throughout the collection.[33] Horace's appearance in later poems as an Epicurean[34] derives partly from the 'pleasure' side of Aristippus but also from the less explicit, but ultimately more substantial, Veianius analogy. Lines 14–19 and 7, then, introduce 'the dramatic Horace' at the start of the drama, the complexity of whose role allows the practical exploration of a wide range of philosophical possibilities, as on a first encounter with philosophy, whereas 4–6 adumbrate 'the real Horace', ever more drawn to Epicureanism.

Of other characters, Lollius, 'freest of men', receives one epistle (1.2) which is appropriately Cynic-Stoic, and in another (1.18) is warned against 'unmixed freedom' of manner. Both the sombre Albius (1.4) and the Epicurean Torquatus (1.5) get Epicurean letters. The Stoic Fuscus, city-lover, learns of Epicurean country pleasures (1.10). The Stoic Quinctius is shown the high stakes of Stoic conduct in Augustan Rome (1.16).

As with the *Odes*, the question arises whether addressees (as opposed to other readers), while honoured, are also admonished, even criticised. Granted Horatian irony, wit and teasing, criticism is an indispensable element of serious moralising addressed to individuals. Maecenas, Lollius, Florus, Albius, Iccius, Quinctius and Scaeva all receive protreptic criticism: as, indeed, does Horace himself.

Fourth: philosophical conclusions. While high-falutin philosophy is predictably mocked (1.12), only one philosophy is strongly criticised: Cynicism, whether Diogenic (1.17) or modified within society (1.18.6–8), and, as against these, 1.2 is quite strongly Cynic (or Cynic-Stoic). Otherwise, two main strands. First, Socratic non-commitment and Academic, Panaetian and Aristippean relativism legitimatise not just flexibility within philosophies but choice between philosophies. This shrewd insight acknowledges that individual personality influences philosophical, political and social choices. It becomes increasingly clear that Horace's personal choice is Epicureanism. But this is itself the second strand, for the Epicurean note sounds ever more insistently and comes at the end of 1.18, an analysis of the difficulties and dangers of friendship with the great and the last strongly philosophical poem of the collection. When Horace tells Lollius, amid all his preoccupations, to

30 *Epistle* 1.17.35 ~ 20.23 (of Horace's own political career).
31 E.g. *Epistles* 1.76, 2.3–5, 7.1–2, 8.2–12, 10.49–50, 14.12–13, 15.
32 E.g. *Epistle* 1.18.96, 100.
33 E.g. *Epistles* 2.70–1, 7.98, 10.42–3, 14.44, 17.29.
34 E.g. 4.15–16, 5, 7.45, 10, 11.22 ff., 16.15, 17.6–10, 18.104 ff.

keep up study of philosophy, the list of alternatives (96ff.) resumes the main philosophical choices examined in earlier poems, and Horace then (104ff.) confesses his own, Epicurean, choice. But even within the list, there is an Epicurean bias, and the total emphasis recalls Veianius, in an Epicurean ring-structure similar to *Odes* 3.29 ~ 3.1. Even for Lollius, the Epicurean secret life seems the better way.

The final period

From Horace's first poems, and almost throughout his poetic corpus, the Epicurean life offers an alternative to public life. And from *Odes* 3.30 ('I have completed a monument more lasting than bronze') onwards, much of Horace's poetry seems valedictory. (Apparently) disappointed by the (apparent) fact that few readers – Augustus notably excepted– appreciated the *Odes* (*Epistles* 1.13, 1.19), and (apparently) pressurised by Maecenas (*Epistles* 1.1.3), Horace produced *Epistles* 1. The book ends with endorsement of Epicurean retreat, with thoughts about the remainder of life, and with retrospective glances at *Satires*, *Epodes*, *Odes* and *Epistles* themselves.[35]

Whatever their relative chronology, the poems of Horace's last decade read similarly. To an importunate Florus (*Epistles* 2.2), Horace explains why he can no longer write poetry. There are retrospective glances at *Epistles* 1, *Odes*, *Epodes* and 'Bionian conversations'.[36] But the poem is itself such a 'conversation', with internal Bionian diatribe and philosophical reminiscences. Thus 'I was nourished in Rome ['strength'] and learned philosophy in Athens' (41–5) echoes Bion's 'I am Borysthenite [= 'strong'] by birth and learned philosophy in Athens',[37] and '*Bio*nian' suggests 'bio-'. The poem ends with appeals to the Epicurean life, with the Bionian/Lucretian image of departure from the feast of life, and with renewed back-references to *Epistles* 1 and to the *Satires*, right back to *Satires* 1.1.[38] Like *Satires* 1.1, *Epistle* 2.2 is itself a feast (57ff.), but now the feast is nearly over. No more poetry, then, but philosophical poetry advocating a philosophical life for what remains of life and specifically both an Epicurean life and an Epicurean departure from it. A 'life-conversation', indeed.

35 *Epistles* 1.18.104ff., 1.19, 1.20.

36 E.g. *Epistles* 2.2.1–19 (~ *Epistles* 1.20), 47 (~ *Odes* 2.7.15f.), 55–7 (~ *Epistles* 1.1.4, 10), 59–60, 99, 141–2 (~ *Epistles* 1.1.3–4, 10–11), 175–9 (~ *Odes* 2.3.17–24; ~ *Satires* 2.2.132ff.), 199–200 (~ *Epistles* 1.1.15f.), 204 (~ *Epistles* 1.2.71).

37 F1A Kindstrand.

38 *Epistles* 2.2.198; F68 Kindstrand; *Epistles* 2.2.213–16 ~ *Satires* 1.1.118–21 ~ Lucretius 3.938 and *Epistles* 1.1.2–4, 7–8, 10.

At Augustus' request,[39] Horace added *Odes* 4: unphilosophical, except for the spring poem 4.12, which invites 'Virgil', 'client of noble youths', to 'wash away the bitterness of cares' in wine, to 'put aside the study of gain' and, 'mindful of the dark fires, mix, while you may, brief folly with your counsels; to be unwise in the right place is sweet'. Horace's 'sweet' 'unwisdom' is Epicureanism, the 'unwise wisdom' of 1.34.2. 'Virgil's' contrasting 'counsels' are public Stoicism. Naturally, this impossibilist vision of stealing time with the dead Virgil creates bitter-sweet pathos. But the serio-comic alignment of the Epicurean friend with Stoicism (through the *Aeneid*), with 'clientship to noble youths' (Octavian?) and with 'study of gain', ruefully recalls the philosophical, moral and political compromises that Virgil had made in his life – and that Horace himself is still making. This perfectly poised philosophical focalisation could hardly be more disconcerting.

To a reproachful Augustus,[40] Horace explains why he is no longer writing poetry (*Epistles* 2.1), reviews the relationship between poets and rulers, especially that of his own poetry to Augustus *qua* world ruler, and emphasises their intertwined *Nachleben*.

The *Ars Poetica*, part response to a request, part general literary treatise, stresses the philosophical nature of poetry and ends with the end of life, recalling both the end of the *Letter to Florus* and the end of *Satires* 1.1, the first poem of Horace's first published collection.[41]

Notwithstanding counter-factors (the *Carmen Saeculare*, the irony that disavowal of poetry occurs within writing what – on one level – obviously remains poetry, and Horace's apparent admission that, while claiming to be writing nothing, he is still writing),[42] the cumulative impression of Horace's last decade is that he would rather not write: he is old and tired, he would rather just live – or die. 'Enough' of poetry, of material things and of life. That 'enough' is itself an Epicurean stance and one that looks back all the way to the close of the first Satire. In the end, it seems, living the philosophy he had favoured since the beginning of his poetic career was more important than writing, even than writing about the philosophy, and Epicureanism proved to be the main thread, not just of his poetry, or even of his philosophy, but of his life.

Spinning a yarn? Only a construction? With Horace, the boundaries between construction and life, while demanding exploration, are finally elusive.[43] But such questions do not – here – matter finally. Horace's representation of the role of Epicureanism in the pattern of his life is sufficiently

39 Suetonius *Hor.* (Loeb edn 2.486).

40 Suetonius *Hor.* (Loeb edn 2.486–8).

41 *Ars Poetica* 476 'full' ~ *Epistles* 2.2.214 ~ *Satires* 1.1.119–20 ~ Lucretius 3.938.

42 *Epistles* 2.1.111 (also ~ 2.1 itself).

43 See e.g. Harrison, chapter 2 above.

plausible to have protreptic force, a force enhanced, not diminished, by his constant ironies, playfulness, equivocations and inconsistencies. He paints a far more realistic picture than most 'proper' philosophers of the ups and downs of practising philosophy in everyday life. Granted obvious differences of density and intensity, Horace's philosophising, essentially school-based, but broad-minded, benign, frequently humorous, and formally self-revelatory, can justly be compared with the philosophising of the two best philosophical teachers of pagan antiquity: Seneca, whom he influenced, and Plutarch.

FURTHER READING

The close, parallel-text translations of Bennett (1927), Fairclough (1929), P. M. Brown (1993) and Muecke (1993) are the best for non-Latinists. All relevant philosophical matters are fully covered in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn (Hornblower and Spawforth (1996)). Attractive accounts of Horace as moralist: Rudd (1993b); Russell (1993) (comparing Plutarch). 'Horace-*philosophus*' survey: Mariotti (1996–8) II. 78–98. Scholarly controversy: 'pro'-philosophy: Macleod (1979); S. J. Harrison (1995b); Moles (2002); Armstrong (2004) (valuably linking Horace with Philodemus but, arguably, neglecting epistles' internal logic); 'anti'-philosophy: Mayer (1986); (2004); Rudd (1993b). Of commentaries, on the *Satires*, Lejay (1911), P. M. Brown (1993) and Muecke (1993) are all philosophically responsive, Brown and Muecke especially helpful. On the *Epodes*, Mankin (1995) and L. Watson (2003), otherwise outstanding, minimise philosophy; on *Odes* 1–3, Nisbet and Hubbard (1970), Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) and Nisbet and Rudd (2004) excel, philosophically and otherwise. On *Epistles* 1, Mayer (1994) is unsympathetic to philosophy, but presents much evidence; similarly, Brink (1963, 1971, 1982) on the literary epistles. General studies include Fiske (1920) (controversial, but full of matter); McGann (1969) (seminal on *Epistles* 1); and Ferri (1993) (important on Horace and Lucretius).

13

JASPER GRIFFIN

Gods and religion

For Horace, as for all serious Roman poets, the choice of poetical form in which to compose meant selecting a model from those bequeathed by the great writers of Greece. It was to Greek models that Horace, approaching the composition of lyric verse, naturally and explicitly turned.[1] That had important implications, not only for the manner but also for the content of the work.

Greek lyric poetry, from its origins, was intimately connected with the cult of the gods. Poems were occasional, produced for specific events, often ritual in nature. Later on, when the Alexandrian scholars set out to produce collected editions of the works of the lyric poets, by now regarded as classics, they were faced with the task of finding an intelligible system by which to arrange the mass of poetry produced for different occasions and without thought for subsequent or collected publication. One of the solutions they found was to separate the poems by the type of religious occasion for which they had been produced. Thus with Pindar the hymns, maiden songs, paeans, dithyrambs, etc., were each grouped into separate books. Only the four books of epinicians, alas, his victory songs for athletes, survived the end of antiquity. They were grouped by the festival at which the victory had been won: Olympia (Olympians), Delphi/Pytho (Pythians), etc.[2]

When Horace decided to compose a substantial body of short lyric poems, he faced two immediate needs: to identify a range of subject-matter, and to find an appropriate level and style. He went back, he claims, behind the more recent Greek poets, Callimachus and the Hellenistic writers who had been in vogue in the previous generation, their names ostentatiously dropped by Catullus and his contemporaries. The names of Callimachus and Catullus each occur once in Horace, both times in a disobliging context:

1 That is made clear immediately: in his very first ode Horace refers to his 'Lesbian lyre', *Odes* 1.1.34 *Lesboum barbiton*. On this, see Feeney (1993) and Hutchinson, chapter 3 above.
2 Cf. Pfeiffer (1968) 181ff. A few odds and ends were placed at the back of the *Nemeans*.

in Greek life and thought (and, by extension, of the erotic theme in Greek and Roman literary representations of food and the sympotic lifestyle) is wittily illuminated by Davidson (1998). On the main forms of entertainment at Greek symposia, the article by Pellizer (1990) provides a coherent overview. Many *realia* associated with the Horatian banquet (including wine-connoisseurship) are succinctly described in the encyclopaedic article 'Vino', Fedeli (1997b).

On the strictly literary interpretation of the Horatian sympotic ode, see the insightful synopsis by Steele Commager (1957). The rhetorical economy of Horace's deployment of convivial motifs and their philosophical interconnections are discussed at length in G. Davis (1991), especially chapter 3: 'Modes of consolation: *convivium* and *carpe diem*'.

16

ELLEN OLIENSIS

Erotics and gender

Horace has always been a poet more for men than for women. By comparison with the contemporary poets whose work we know (Virgil, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid), Horace shows relatively little interest in the life of love, which is where Latin literature tends to locate its women. Though Horace is, for most readers today, the poet of the *Odes* above all, it is worth remembering that roughly half his poetry consists of the hexameter *Satires*, *Epistles* and *Ars Poetica*, poems in which women have at most a marginal existence. And this marginalisation is not an accidental but a constitutive feature of the hexameter poems, thickening their characteristic 'men's club' atmosphere. At the end of his debut collection, *Satires* 1, Horace submits his poetry to the judgement of his ideal readership, a star-studded list of masculine proper names (Maecenas, Virgil, Pollio, et al.) forming the strongest possible contrast to the nameless females (distant ancestors of Hawthorne's 'damned mob of scribbling women') who seek instruction from Horace's poetaster-rivals: 'As for you, Demetrius, and you, Tigellius: go and whine to your classroom of ladies in armchairs' (*Demetri, teque Tigelli, / discipularum inter iubeo plorare cathedras*, *Satires* 1.10.90–1). A similar exclusion marks Horace's last venture in hexameters, the *Ars Poetica*, which opens with Horace inviting his (male) friends to join him in laughing at an ineptly imagined painting of a monstrous female nude – thus from the very outset casting men as the knowing critics, and women as the matter but not the producers or consumers of (Horatian) art.

Until relatively recently, scholarship has tended to follow suit. There have been critics, men and women, to espouse, with varying degrees of warmth, Ovid's feminism and what might be termed Virgil's Didonianism. But those interested in resistant or alternative models of gender and desire have found little to attract them in Horace's poetry. To the extent that feminists have laid claim to Horace, it has been mostly in the service of exposing the aggressively gendered dynamic in which Horace's poetry seems quite wholeheartedly to

participate.[1] By contrast, when the topic 'Horace as a love poet' is broached, the emphasis typically falls not on gender roles (which the reader finds already distributed, as it were) but on Horace's characteristic blend of urbane detachment and erotic susceptibility, the chief aim being to defend the (philosophical, emotional, aesthetic) value of the love poems.[2] Thus to write heatedly about gender is to oppose Horace, while to write dispassionately about desire is to identify with him.

Gender

Across Horace's poetry, gender roles are distributed along broadly predictable lines. Elite Roman girls are meant to mature into virtuous matrons, Roman boys into capable householders as well as hardworking participants in the varied business of the *res publica* – prudent lawyers, honoured senators, valiant soldiers. But there is also a class of men and women of less secure social status and less clearly differentiated gender (slaves, freedmen, freedwomen: 'feminised' subordinates) who pour the wine, play the music and supply the erotic interest at the parties at which Horace's good Romans take a well-deserved break from the stresses of public life. The identity of the poet is likewise hard to pin down. The venomous but avowedly ineffectual epodist, the relatively soft-spoken satirist, the courtly moraliser who puts in regular appearances in the *Odes*:[3] these personae embody a masculinity implicated in a shifting social hierarchy not readily reducible to the polarity of subordinate and master, feminine other and masculine self. In every case, gender is not only an attribute but a predicate: something that can be asserted or denied, or even (however tendentiously) simply shrugged off.

In the hexameter poetry, with its nearly all-male cast (hapless lovers, faithless friends, social climbers, etc.), the emphasis falls on the relations men sustain with themselves (e.g., self-restraint) and with other men (e.g., loyalty) – not with women. The masculine bias is most pronounced in the first book of *Epistles*, one of Horace's most engaging and innovative works, produced, perhaps not coincidentally, during the height of the love-elegy craze at Rome. While the elegists were celebrating and deploring their erotic entanglements, Horace was conducting his life in a set of verse letters to men on the capacious theme of how to live – a theme that does not, in Horace's view, call for any extended discussion of how or how not to love.[4] Horace's chatty letter to his fellow author Albius, whom many have been tempted to identify with the elegist Albius Tibullus, has nothing to say about love in particular, while the dinner-party to which he invites Torquatus in *Epistles* 1.5 features wine, friendship and conversation, but no women (and, as befits this hexameter genre, no song). Where sex does crop up, it is chiefly framed as an economic issue: what Horace terms, in a letter to his up-and-coming friend Lollius, *damnosa Venus* (*Epistles* 1.18.21), financially ruinous sexual desire. It is for men that Horace holds up the mirror of his hexameters, a mirror that reflects Horace's fluctuating personae while also recurrently encouraging the reader to check his own moral and social character before sallying forth into (or out of) the world: 'Is your heart free of vain ambition? free of the fear of death, and anger? Dreams, the terrors of magic, marvels, witches, ghosts in the night, Thessalian prodigies – do you laugh at all this? Are you thankful for the sum of your birthdays? Do you forgive your friends?' (*Epistles* 2.2.206–10).

One consequence of the relegation of 'real' women is the re-emergence of women as figures for how men should or should not behave with each other. In *Satires* 2.7, Horace's slave accuses Horace, his purportedly 'free' master, of dancing servile attendance on his eminent friend Maecenas, and also (and at much greater length) of being at the beck and call of the women to whom he is sexually 'enslaved'; it has been persuasively argued that the second, relatively frivolous charge displaces anxieties raised by the first.[5] The same anxieties send *Epistles* 1 repeatedly back to the theme of *virtus*, the quality that defines a *vir*, man-liness: something that is always imperilled by one man's (potentially servile or effeminate) subordination to another, for example Horace's to Maecenas. Horace's epistolary defence rests first on the philosophical meditation on the conditions for self-ownership that runs through the collection (a theory of *virtus*), and second on two politely disobliging letters in which he declines to do what Maecenas wants him to do (*virtus* in practice). In one of these, Horace even casts himself as a long-absent Ulysses opposite Maecenas' increasingly impatient Penelope: like Ulysses, Horace is a liar (*mendax*, *Epistles* 1.7.2), and he too will return 'home' to the tune of the swallow's song (*hirundine prima*, 13). A less savoury identification shows up in a pair of letters warning aspiring friends-of-the-great to shun the role of *meretrix* (courtesan or prostitute: *Epistles* 1.17.52–7,

1 E.g. Richlin (1992) and chapters 4 and 7 of Henderson (1999).
2 E.g. Lyne (1980) 190–238.
3 I do not have space here to fill out, much less defend, these characterisations; my hope is that the other chapters in this *Companion* will help my readers put these and other claims in context.

4 Or, for that matter, how to interact with women on any other basis. I am aware of the danger of filtering the topic 'gender' through the topic 'erotics', as if the one inevitably implied the other.
5 Bernstein (1987).

1.18.1–4). Mercenary and untrustworthy, the *meretrix* embodies the vices of the false friend; the true friend finds his reflection instead in the loyal *matrona* (1.18.3–4). But either way, the comparison of the aspiring *amicus* to a woman compromises his *virtus*, the crucial term about which *Epistles* 1.17 draws ironic circles (Horace's crass addressee evidently fancies himself a conquering hero) and which *Epistles* 1.18 redefines as a middle course between servile accommodation and macho self-assertion (*virtus est medium vitiorum*, *Epistles* 1.18.9): an amiable pliability that remains just this side – the virile side – of effeminate softness.[6]

On those rare occasions when women take centre stage in Horace's hexameters, they appear as desirable sexual objects or repulsive sexual subjects, caught up in a discourse that is still more about men than about women. In *Satires* 1.2, a poem long subject to decorous truncation by bowdlerising editors, mankind's propensity to behavioural extremes is further illustrated by men's tendency to pursue the wrong sort of women: too low (sordid, promiscuous) or too high (married, aristocratic). It is the latter, 'romantic' desire for the unattainable that is the focus of Horace's Epicurean critique, which recommends appeasing the sexual appetite with objects either readily attained or already possessed – a slave-girl or boy, for example (116–18). Whereas the penis is personified and endowed with a voice, with which it irritably reproaches its over-fussy proprietor (68–71), the object of desire is dehumanised – compared to a horse (best to look it over thoroughly before purchasing the merchandise, to make sure that all's sound, 86–90), or a golden goblet or luxurious dinner (unnecessary frills, like high status in a woman, to the satisfaction of an appetite, 114–16). And at the satire's comic climax, where Horace counterpoints his own carefree sex act with an anxiety-fraught adulterous encounter, his naked obscenity does without not only the trappings of romance but even the object, grammatical and sexual: 'And I don't fret, while I'm fucking (*dum futuo*), that her husband may come hurrying back from the country, the door fly open, the dog bark . . .' (127–8).

In *Satires* 1.8, a statue of the phallic god Priapus (another talkative penis) takes over from the satiric speaker to tell us about two scary witches who have been practising magic in his garden, drawn by the lingering spirits of the dead (the garden, formerly a graveyard, belonged to Maecenas, as Horace's readers would have known). The moral checklist quoted earlier included witches among the dark fears a philosophically sound man ought to be able to laugh off, and this satire is indeed funny, albeit mostly at the expense of the speaker, who ultimately frightens the witches out of his garden, not with any glorious virile display, but with a fart of terror. Yet in the end it is the discomfited witches who are presented to us as the proper targets of laughter, as they run off shedding false teeth and hair and magic accoutrements, a sight to provoke 'a lot of laughter and joking' (*cum magno risuque iocoque videres*, 50) in Priapus' imagined audience. Though Priapus is himself a mere hunk of wood (*truncus*, 1) shaped by a sculptor and given voice by the satirist, it is the witches whose bodies are here seen to be subject to disintegration, as if their comical 'truncation' could compensate for the satiric speaker's own.[7]

This aggressive but only semi-effectual Priapus could be the tutelary divinity of Horace's *Epodes*, published around the same time as the second book of *Satires*, soon after the victory of the young Caesar over Antony and Cleopatra near Actium in 31 BCE. Whereas the satirist pointedly overlooks the upheavals of the 30s, the epodist builds them into the framework of his book, which is anchored from the start in the uneasy ebb and flow of current events: the first poem shows Maecenas pledging allegiance to Caesar on the eve of Actium, an example Horace follows by pledging allegiance in turn to Maecenas (*Epodes* 1.1–14; though he readily concedes he may be reckoned 'unwarlike and not steady enough' for the battle to come, *imbellis ac firmus parum*, 16). It is in part this new engagement that brings women into new prominence. Relatively unthreatening targets, women give the epodist a way of managing the free-floating anxieties of civil war. The witches banished by Priapus in *Satires* 1.8 reappear in two epodes, exulting in purported triumph over their masculine victims – in the dramatic sketch of *Epodes* 5, a little boy; in the dialogue of *Epodes* 17, the final poem of the collection, Horace himself. These lurid fantasies of emasculating witchcraft are complemented by two remarkably obscene poems levelled against sexually rapacious women to whose challenge Horace has failed to rise; Horace retaliates by representing them as grotesque assemblages of disgusting body-parts, smells, and sounds, unredeemed by the trappings of elite status and discourse they parade (*Epodes* 8, 12). In poems such as *Epodes* 11 (a rueful confession of Horace's erotic susceptibility) and 15 (a half-hearted threat directed against an unfaithful mistress), the collection also offers the first samples of what we might recognise as Horatian 'love poetry': if Horace's hexameters represent a radically un-elegiac or even anti-elegiac world, his epodic couplets not only superficially mimic the elegiac couplet but admit something resembling 'elegiac' content.[8] *Epodes* 11 and 15 are

6 On Horace's bid for freedom in *Epistles* 1, see further W. R. Johnson (1993).

7 This paragraph resumes Henderson (1999) 186–91. On Horatian truncation, see further Gowers (1993b).

8 With Epode 11 Horace starts incorporating elegiac metrical material into his 'epodic' couplets; see A. Barchiesi (1994).

certainly engaging scenes from an erotic comedy. Yet when read alongside the obscene invectives of *Epodes* 8 and 12 and the witch-haunted dramas of *Epodes* 5 and 17, these light-hearted representations of erotic humiliation can also register as another, differently styled expression of masculinity under threat.

What helps hold together the miscellaneous material of the *Epodes* is their common stress on masculine impotence, variously manifested as Horace's unwarlike shakiness, his sexual inadequacy, his emotional inconstancy, and also as the uncontrollable civil violence deplored in poems such as *Epodes* 7 and 16.[9] Whereas what Horace gives us in the *Satires* is a world from which (but for the satires discussed above, and bit appearances elsewhere) women have already been effectively banished, what the *Epodes* dramatise is the ongoing labour of expulsion, which might guarantee, if it were ever completed, the *virtus* of the men remaining behind. The context of the civil war, in particular the battle of Actium, is critical: it is above all Cleopatra whose blend of sexual allure and political expertise energises the repulsion of Horatian obscenity.[10] Though he glances at both Sextus Pompey and Antony in *Epodes* 9, and intermittently launches energetic assaults against other (significantly non-elite) men (the upstart ex-slave of *Epodes* 4, the 'stinking Maevius' of *Epodes* 10), it is against the sexually unrestrained women in whose bed he unaccountably keeps finding himself that Horace unleashes his most violent invectives. Just as Cleopatra gave the young Caesar a way to reconfigure the final phase of Rome's prolonged civil strife as a war against an external foe, so the women of the *Epodes* allow Horace to 'go to war' without doing irreparable damage to the civic fabric.

This differentiation also informs Horace's *Odes*. Though the *Odes* do satirise, sometimes gently and sometimes quite harshly, the varied vices of men – the greed of the landowner, the discontent of the rich, the self-indulgence of the lover, the inconsistency of the philosopher-turned-soldier – Horace reserves his nastiest attacks for women. The famous ode on Cleopatra (*Odes* 1.37) overlooks Antony, focusing instead on the vices of the emasculating queen, mad with ambition and drunk on hope (a propagandistic caricature famously discarded by the end of this brilliant poem, however).[11] Women whose desires have outlived their attractiveness are likewise excoriated as out of touch with (social) reality (*Odes* 1.25, 3.15, 4.13; it is worth pointing out that there are no comparable poems to *pueri delicati*

9 See Fitzgerald (1988), with L. Watson (1995), the latter conveniently resuming recent scholarship in an attempt to save Horace's reputation.
10 Henderson (1999) 104.
11 On contemporary representations of Cleopatra, see Wyke (1992).

past their prime). The differential treatment of the 'girls and boys' (*virginibus puerisque*, *Odes* 3.1.4) to whom Horace addresses the ambitious sequence commonly known as the 'Roman Odes' is particularly striking. While Horace in *Odes* 3.5 condemns the surviving soldiers of Crassus' army (conquered by the Parthians roughly thirty years earlier) for abandoning their Roman upbringing and 'going native', when he looks around the contemporary Roman scene in *Odes* 3.6 what really catches his eye is the immoral behaviour of the girls, who go from bad (before marriage, when they cultivate Greek dancing and other pernicious arts of seduction) to worse (after marriage, when they begin their strings of adulterous liaisons). Though the same ode also castigates the complaisant husband (the young wife rises to join her lover 'not without the complicity of her husband', *non sine conscio / . . . marito*, 3.6.29–30; Horace has in view Augustus' programme of moral legislation, which would soon make such complaisance illegal), the grammatical and rhetorical focus remains on the misbehaving wife. Further, whereas *Odes* 3.2 elaborates a positive model of masculine, military *virtus* for the boys in the audience, there is no comparable model set before the eyes of the girls, unless we count the stern mother who bred up Roman soldiers in the rustic past, lamented as a long-lost ideal near the end of *Odes* 3.6.

That ideal has been recovered, or is at least within reach, by the time we reach the *Carmen Saeculare*, the hymn Horace wrote for performance by a chorus of boys and girls (the same, as it were, to whom he addressed the improving images of the Roman Odes) at Augustus' Secular Games of 17 BCE. The Games were designed to announce the new age inaugurated by the implementation of Augustus' programme of moral reform, which included laws criminalising adultery, penalising citizens who failed to marry and providing incentives to encourage the production of offspring.[12] The boys and girls in the chorus accordingly join in asking the appropriate divinities to watch over 'mothers' and to foster the decrees of the senatorial 'fathers' concerning 'the yoking of women and the marriage law productive of new offspring' (*Carmen Saeculare* 13–20). From the fertility of mothers the chorus passes to the fertility of the good earth, and thence to a comprehensive prayer for the good of the community: 'Gods, give upright morals to the teachable young, rest to the elders at ease, property and offspring and every adornment to the race of Romulus' (45–8). The girls might locate themselves among the 'teachable young', whom Horace, usurping or mediating the role of the gods, has already provided with 'upright morals' (insofar as the performers of the hymn 'are' the boys and girls morally (re-)formed by the Roman Odes, Horace is celebrating his own as well as Augustus'

12 A good overview is in Galinsky (1996) 128–40.

achievement). Yet the implicit message of the hymn, which moves centrifugally from domestic to imperial space (subsequent stanzas will take up the imperial victories of Augustus), is that the girls are to efface themselves behind or within the unmarked masculine community, to which (gods willing) they will one day contribute 'property and offspring'. And indeed by the end of the poem they have decorously vanished: we are left with the prayers of 'men' and 'boys' (*quindecim . . . virorum*, 70: the college of priests; *puerorum*, 71: the chorus).[13] Desire has naturally no place in such a hymn, unless it be the communal desire that finds expression in prayer.

Erotics

Viewed from the perspective of normative gender roles, desire figures chiefly as the enemy: it makes men soft. So Horace reproaches Lydia for 'destroying' Sybaris by turning him away from the toughening proto-military exercises in which he once excelled (*Odes* 1.8) and advises the elegist Valgius, trapped in the endless repetitions of his mournful couplets, to master his emotions and adopt a more virile poetics (*Odes* 2.9). The superior vantage-point Horace adopts in odes such as these helps confirm his own masculine poise. Knowledge is 'hard', ignorance 'soft'; the innocent or amorously blinded always find themselves at a disadvantage. Horace's love poetry is typically the poetry of experience, not innocence – of diagnosis, not bafflement. In *Epodes* 11 Horace lucidly describes his own propensity for serial infatuations, one erotic entanglement severed but simultaneously replaced by another, and in *Odes* 1.33 he analyses the plight of the elegist Albius (Tibullus?), forlorn at a rival's success, as one instance of our universal tendency to love the scornful and scorn the loving. One of Horace's most knowing and inflexibly virile pieces of erotic rhetoric is the sweet talk of *Odes* 1.23: three stanzas addressed to a girl who shuns his advances out of misguided fear, clinging to the mother and childhood she has (so he asserts) outgrown.[14] The innocent Chloe is as timid as the shuddery prey whose springtime jitters fill the middle stanza: 'for whether the approach of spring bristles in the shifting leaves, or green lizards push apart the brambles, [the fawn] trembles, heart and knees' (5–8). And Chloe's suitor proceeds to underscore the analogy in the act of disavowing it: 'yet I am not, like some fierce tiger or African lion, chasing you to break you' (9–10). In so far as this is a poem not just about gender but of desire, its erotic energy is generated first by the agitation of the

13 The commentaries offer various palliatives, without, however, banishing the rhetorical asymmetry.

14 On this poem see Ancona (1994) 70–4.

landscape, rustling with imminent sexual knowledge, and then by the final image of predation – delicate foreplay, as it were, followed by a fantasy of sexual assault.

But the ode to Chloe is exceptional. Elsewhere in Horace's poetry, desire finds its opening not in the virile certitude this poem deploys but in the discovery or creation of uncertainty. Even the famous 'Pyrrha' ode (*Odes* 1.5), a quintessential song of experience, the ironic musings of a survivor of the storm of love, opens not with knowledge but with questions: what perfume-soaked stripling is forcing his ardent attentions on you now, Pyrrha? Granted, the answer doesn't matter. Whoever it is, Horace knows his future: he will experience the same reversal, marvel at the same transformation, suffer the same shipwreck, as all Pyrrha's other lovers, Horace among them. And yet the very form of the question, along with the amused criticism of the young lover's naïvety that it conveys, opens up the possibility of desire. Is Horace perhaps proposing himself to Pyrrha as a candidate for a different kind of affair, an urbane affair of experience? The possibility glanced at in this ode is brilliantly dramatised in the dialogue of *Odes* 3.9, which culminates in the proposed reunion of the estranged speakers, against their better judgement and despite the supposedly superior attractions of their current partners (the authenticity of desire is thus guaranteed by its refusal to listen to reason). But my point is that it is the rhetorical instability of the Pyrrha ode, its indeterminate temperature (warm or cool?), that generates its erotic appeal.

Though Horace often deplores the unmooring of identity produced in those who succumb to desire, this unmooring is a crucial part of his poetics. Horace knows how to make the most of waywardness. Consider the final stanza of the ode to the forlorn Albius, ousted by a rival (*Odes* 1.33.13–16):

> ipsum me melior cum peteret Venus
> grata detinuit compede Myrtale
> libertina fretis acrior Hadriae
> curvantis Calabros sinus.

> I myself, when a better Venus was in pursuit, was held fast in welcome shackles by Myrtale, a freedwoman more violent than the Adriatic that makes the Calabrian coastline curve.

The self-inclusion is rhetorically effective: Horace's detached perspective on mismatched desire is the fruit of bitter experience. Yet the specificity of the final image, set as it is in a centrifugal syntax (Horace's sentence, though complete with *Myrtale*, spins outward from there), works to derail the poem from its instructive conclusion, sending Horace and his readers back inside the experience of desire. *Acrior*: Myrtale is 'more violent' (like a stormy sea)

but also 'more passionate' (unlike her presumably sedate rival) and 'sharper, more pointed' (in contrast to the alluring curves the sea carves out of the coast). Though rejected by Horace's good judgement as inferior to a 'better Venus', Myrtale, even in recollection, seduces him into lingering once more over the enticing landscape of her oxymoronically angular curves.

One recurring figure for this seductive confusion of qualities is the girlish boy, smooth-cheeked and long-haired, marked out by his 'softness' (*mollitia*; cf. *Epodes* 11.4, 24) as a fit object of desire for men, yet himself on the verge of manhood, and potentially attractive to women as well. An ode contemplating a girl named Lalage (*Odes* 2.5), whom the hyper-masculine speaker objectifies as an unbroken heifer or unripe grape not yet ready for virile consumption, ends by swerving away toward less certain images of lovers past: fugitive Pholoe; Chloris with her white shoulder gleaming like the moon's reflection in the sea; and finally Gyges, a boy who, if set down in a group of girls, could confound judgement, with his flowing hair and sexually ambiguous (still beardless) face. A *discrimen obscurum*, Horace calls him: an uncertain distinction, a shadowy division. It is the suspenseful hesitation of the syntax and image that makes the reader stick, ensnared by the poem, as the speaker by his fugitive memories.[15]

A similar oscillation or chiaroscuro informs *Odes* 4.1, in which the now ageing poet sets out to persuade Venus to leave him alone (he is too old for love; his friend Maximus will be a more effective campaigner; etc.), only to be swept back by questions of desire (*Odes* 4.1.33–40):

> sed cur heu, Ligurine, cur
> manat rara meas lacrima per genas?
> cur facunda parum decoro
> inter verba cadit lingua silentio?
> nocturnis ego somniis
> iam captum teneo, iam volucrem sequor
> te per gramina Martii
> campi, te per aquas, dure, volubilis.

> But why, alas, Ligurinus, why does the infrequent tear slide down my cheek? Why does my eloquent tongue trip midspeech into unseemly silence? In my dreams at night, now I've got you, and now I chase you flying across the grassy Field of Mars, chase you, hard heart, through the Tiber's fluent stream.

Unlike Gyges, more girl than boy, the Ligurinus of Horace's dreams is located in a Roman space, the Field of Mars, and is engaged in improving and approved Roman activities: he is toughening himself up, racing and

15 Cf. Sutherland (1997) 40.

swimming as the Sybaris of *Odes* 1.8 was wont to do, before Lydia whisked him away into the shadows of her bedroom. The same location sets off the glamour of Enipeus in *Odes* 3.7: 'Take care Enipeus doesn't find more favour with you than he should', Horace warns Asterie, and then adds, seductively, 'though no other skilled at handling a horse is as admired as he is on the grassy Campus, and no other swims as fast as he down the Tuscan river' (22–8). Who is out there looking on appreciatively or swooningly as the young men strip down to work out on the Field of Mars and to plunge their hardened bodies into the lambent Tiber? In *Odes* 1.8 Horace may be reproaching Lydia not only for softening up the virile Sybaris but also or chiefly for depriving his admiring fans of their accustomed pleasure.[16]

One critic has suggested that the perfected virility – the agility, strength, corporeal mastery – of Ligurinus and his kind represents the ultimate (narcissistic) object of desire for the Roman man.[17] Yet for Horace, the axis of desirability is less 'virile versus feminine' than 'young versus old'. The young desire, and are desirable. The old desire too, alas!, and what they desire, in Horace's poetry, is chiefly the fugitive image of their lost youth. This image gleams out of Horace's excuses to Maecenas in *Epistles* 1.7 (25–8): 'If you want me never to go away, you will have to give me back my unflagging stamina, the black curls framing my brow, my sweet eloquence and becoming laughter, and my tipsy laments at the flight of that reckless girl Cinara.' Horace links compliance with Maecenas' desire to a resumption of his lyric persona (*Odes* 1–3 had been published a few years earlier). Yet these lines paint Horace not only as a young lover but also as a youthful beloved, object as well as subject of desire, like the beautiful boys he elsewhere celebrates, suited for the embraces of men as well as women. It is as if Horace had taken fugitive Cinara's place, leaving Maecenas to sob alone in his disconsolate cups.

We are at liberty to domesticate the image by reading it allegorically, as a response to Maecenas' request for more lyric poetry (such a request is the implied background of the refusal Horace metes out to Maecenas in the first of his epistles). But we can also reverse the direction of our interpretation and take the image as an emblem of the erotic appeal of Horatian poetry. We are encouraged to do just that by the envoi to *Epistles* 1, Horace's wittiest exposition of his poetry's desirability. In this reluctant send-off, Horace personifies his book as an attractive boy foolishly intent on marketing his charms to the world at large. The book is at once a beloved slave, determined

16 As remarked by Leach (1994) 338, it may be these exercises that caught Lydia's eye in the first place.
17 Desbordes (1979) 80.

to run away from his doting master (as Horace has run away from his own 'master', Maecenas), and a surrogate son, a diminutive, portable 'Horace' whose peregrinations will perpetuate Horace's name and image, and disseminate his pleasurable products, in the world and into the future. Though the realist poet of the *Epistles* imagines the material book rapidly ageing, it is safe to say that the only body that has any hope of remaining perpetually fresh, young and desirable is the transmaterial 'body' of Horace's poetry.[18]

The channelling of desire into poetry also shapes Horace's last love-poem. In *Odes* 4.1, the ageing Horace insisted to Venus that 'no woman or boy' (*nec femina nec puer*, 29) could turn his head any more. If Ligurinus is the boy who immediately proves Horace wrong, the Phyllis of *Odes* 4.11 (which follows, not by chance, a second ode to 'cruel' Ligurinus) is the woman (*femina*, 34, a rare noun in Horace's poetry). Horace's household is getting ready for a party, the altar is wreathed in anticipation of the sacrifice of a lamb; Phyllis is summoned to attend. The party marks a great event in Horace's year, the Ides of April, the birthday of 'my Maecenas' (19), who occupies a place of honour in the poem's central stanza. It seems Horace has a bit of reluctance to overcome on Phyllis' part, since he goes on to insist that the young man she has her eye on is not for her – Telephus is already taken, held fast by a wealthy, sexy girlfriend (*puella*, 22). Think of the sad fate of Phaethon and Bellerophon, Horace advises, and don't overreach! What is left for Phyllis, it seems, is Horace. And what is left for Horace is Phyllis, or rather her answering, desirable voice (31–6):

> age iam, meorum
> finis amorum
>
> – non enim posthac alia calebo
> femina – condisce modos, amanda
> voce quos reddas; minuentur atrae
> carmine curae.

Come now, last of my loves (I won't warm to another woman after this), learn the measures well so you can render them with your lovely voice; black cares will diminish with song.

This close reworks the final stanza of an earlier poem from *Odes* 4, in which Horace imagines a newlywed proudly recalling her role in performing Horace's own *Carmen Saeculare* (4.6.41–4):

18 The distinction between the book and the work it carries is crucial to Catullus 1, an important model for the Horatian envoi; see Fitzgerald (1995) 38–42.

> ego dis amicum,
> saeculo festas referente luces,
> reddidi carmen, docilis modorum
> vatis Horati.

When the age brought round the holiday, I rendered a song dear to the gods, having learned the measures of the bard Horace.

The points of contact are very numerous,[19] and they incline me to propose that Horace is not just placing himself again in the role of lyric instructor[20] but revisiting, from a different angle, the Secular Games, with the anniversary of Maecenas' birth in place of the civic *saeculum*, and a modest blood sacrifice (not a normal component of Horatian drinking-parties) in place of the splendid offerings that punctuated the Augustan ritual. Horace's poems usually downplay the contributions of slave labour to aristocratic leisure, but this poem has its own reasons for reversing that decorous policy.[21] The slave-'girls mixed with boys' (*mixtae pueris puellae*, 10; *puellae* in the sense of 'slave-girls' is a notable anomaly) who race about getting the house ready for the party reconfigure the elite boys and girls who formed the double (not mixed) chorus that performed the *Carmen Saeculare*. It is as if the whole stable hierarchical world envisioned and wishfully prolonged by the communal hymn were darkening and shifting before our eyes.

Whereas the *Carmen Saeculare* rigorously demarcates gender roles, this ode, as the 'mixing' of boys and girls emblematically suggests, repeatedly confounds them. The slight dislocation involved in inviting Phyllis to a party honouring Maecenas (why isn't the poem addressed to Maecenas, as several earlier Horatian invitations are?) invites us to ponder the relation of the 'last' of Horace's 'loves' and the patron he elsewhere addresses as his poetic alpha and omega (*Prima dicte mihi, summa dicende Camena*, *Epistles* 1.1.1). Some suspect that Horace's advice to Phyllis serves as a tactful reminder to a purportedly overreaching Maecenas, who may have permanently offended Augustus some time in the period preceding *Odes* 4 – hence, we are told, the absence of any poem dedicated directly to Horace's patron.[22] Yet if Maecenas

19 *Amicum* ~ *amanda*, *reddidi* ~ *reddas*, *carmen* ~ *carmine*, *docilis* ~ *condisce*, *modorum* ~ *modos*; following the *Carmen Saeculare*, both odes adopt the Sapphic stanza.

20 So Quinn (1980) ad loc.

21 Only in the second book of *Satires*, where he has particular reasons for advertising his elite status, does Horace give us a comparable impression of the slaves who crowded his house. The closest parallel within the *Odes* (and it is not very close) is *Odes* 1.19, where plural *pueri* tote the necessary equipment for Horace's sacrifice to Venus (13–15).

22 O. Murray in Rudd (1993b) 103.

did fall from favour, it would be more in Horace's manner to rewrite this history than to rehearse it. Far from aping Augustus and excluding Maecenas from the party, Horace here represents *himself* as the one who has fallen from favour: his beloved Maecenas is, it seems, otherwise engaged. This would align Maecenas with Phyllis' Telephus, and Horace with Phyllis, as two disappointed lovers who may find solace in each other. Whereas Ligurinus reflects a younger self, Phyllis (a *femina*, not a *puella*) looks more like the mature Horace of the present.[23] The moment of identification across the gender divide – untinged, for once, by anxiety or hostility – is peculiarly moving. The 'lovely voice' Phyllis is called upon to supply is also the voice with which Horace's readers reanimate his poetry, thereby diminishing their own black cares.

FURTHER READING

There is a wide-ranging account of Roman and Horatian sexual *mores* and humour in Richlin (1992). Henderson (1999) provides seminal discussions of gender issues in the *Epodes* (chapter 4) and *Satires* (chapter 7) as well as suggestive comments on the gender dynamics of *Odes* 3.22 (chapter 5). Gender is intermittently foregrounded by Oliensis (1998) (especially chapters 2 and 5). On gender roles in the *Odes*, see Leach (1994) (focusing on *Odes* 1.8) and (in French) Desbordes (1979) (a systematic overview tethered to *Odes* 3.12). On Horace's poetic 'bisexuality', see Woodman (2002).

There are several useful overviews of 'Horace as a love-poet', most recently Arkins (1993) (partly resuming but not superseding the sympathetic accounts of Reckford (1959), Boyle (1973), and Lyne (1980)). Putnam (1986) illuminates the workings of desire across *Odes* 4. Current studies of individual love-poems typically include some consideration of gender roles (especially the distribution of power between lover and beloved); see, e.g., T. S. Johnson (2003); Sutherland (1997). Ancona (1994), the only book-length study of Horatian desire, offers an intelligent critique of the then scholarly status quo as well as thoughtful readings of a series of odes, focusing on the interplay of desire and temporality. On Horatian homoerotics, see Oliensis (1997). On the erotics of Horatian poetic form, see Lowrie (1997) chapter 7 (esp. 304–14); Oliensis (2002).

23 And as a poet, Horace identifies with Sappho as well as with Alcaeus: Ancona (2002); Woodman (2002).

17

STEPHEN HARRISON

Town and country

The tension and interplay between town and country form a key theme in Horace's poetry, and have significant philosophical and ideological implications. This chapter seeks to explore this important poetic material and its presentation in the different genres and periods of Horace's output.

A divided existence?

The theme of town and country appears in the first programmatic poem of Horace's first poetry book, *Satires* 1 (35 BC) – *Satires* 1.1.8–9:

> agricolam laudat iuris legumque peritus,
> sub galli cantum consultor ubi ostia pulsat;
> ille, datis vadibus qui rure extractus in urbem est,
> solos felicis viventis clamat in urbe.

The expert in law and statute praises the farmer, when a client knocks on his door at cock-crow; the farmer, dragged from country to city on court surety, cries that only those who live in the city are happy.

This split between urban and rural life, here couched in the ironic context of criticising *mempsimoiria*, discontent with one's own lot, and applied to lifestyles paradigmatic of the two environments, is a major Horatian topic. Like most Romans of the first century BC, Horace's existence, both practical and poetical, oscillated between *rus* and *urbs*: the tension between his natural inclination for the quiet life in the country, with its peaceful space for reading, writing and thinking, and the bustle of Rome, with its round of social and other duties, is often brought out in his work. In the first book of *Satires* Horace himself is firmly located in Rome, perhaps something of a necessity for a satirist seeking to attack the excesses of his own society, but in the second we find him dividing his time between Rome and the Sabine estate, clearly presented to him by Maecenas in the gap between *Satires* 1 and