HORACE'S SABINE TOPOGRAPHY IN LYRIC AND HEXAMETER VERSE

The property in the Sabine hills, commonly considered as Horace's gift from Maecenas, figures conspicuously in all the productions of the poet's middle career: *Satires* book 2, *Odes* 1–3, and *Epistles* book 1. No other Republican or Augustan poet so closely associates himself with a definition of place. Although Vergil mentions landmarks around Mantua, and Ovid on one occasion positions himself amidst the well-watered fields of Sulmo (*Am.* 2.16.1–10), only Catullus, in indicating the proximity of his paternal villa to the waters of Lake Garda (1.31.13–14), furnishes any semblance of topographical image for a location specifically called his own. Furthermore, the position occupied by Horace's farm differs greatly from that of other poets' far-off homelands; it furnishes an alternative residence to vary the normal routines of its owner's everyday life. By reason of this leisure-time status Horace's farm has long appealed to readers as a literary *locus* offering privileged insights into intimate personal experience. The approach to genius in shirtsleeves always seems open.[1]

This sense of familiar acquaintanceship extending across the centuries has understandably roused the curiosity of many readers concerning the actual location of the farm.[2] Unlike the largely unconvincing efforts to discover Vergil's Mantuan property on the basis of details in Eclogue 1 that may be fictive,[3] topographical and archaeological re-

[1] Ackerman, *Villa* 35–37, indicates the influential status of such readings.

[2] See Lugli, "Villa Sabina." Interest in the topic developed in coincidence with the sixteenth-century development of *villegiatura* in Tivoli. The general identification of the territory has been established over a period of three centuries through place names. The seventeenth-century Dutch scholar Holstenius identified Horace's Digentia (Epistle 1.18.104) as the river Licenza and the village of Vicovaro as his Varia (Epistle 1.14) and placed the *Fanum putre Vacunae* of Epistle 1.10 at Rocca Giovane, where an inscription commemorated Vespasian's restoration of an ancient shrine. The confirming argument was supplied by a lawyer, Sig. Petrocelli of Vicovarus, who in 1757 discovered an inscription in the convent of San Cosimato identifying Mandela (Epistle 1.18.105) as the ancient name for modern Bardella (subsequently altered to Massa Mandela to mark its ancient associations).

[3] For a precise discussion of correspondences see Wellesley, "Virgil's Home," but prevailing literary opinion that the topography comprises an ideal fiction is represented by Pöschl, *Hirtendichtung* 44–45.

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searches into the location of Horace's property have identified a site in the area of the River Licenza with characteristics corresponding plausibly to Horace's descriptions of a valley ringed by low hills, even a fountain on the slope above the house. In a typically sultry Roman August, the sheltered valley does indeed offer relief from the heat of the Dog Star. Giuseppe Lugli's report in *Monumenti Antiqui* (1926) of excavations on this site describes walls and pavements belonging to an amply proportioned villa renovated and expanded at three widely spaced periods. Reticulate masonry at the core block and remains of black-and-white geometric mosaics indicate occupancy during the Augustan period, at which date the villa would seem to have comprised twelve ground-floor rooms, a heated bath complex, and a terrace opening onto a garden with a *piscina* at its center and a surrounding porticus.[4]

To Lugli, as an archaeologist, the presence of Augustan masonry was persuasive evidence that the actual place had been found. For a literary scholar of his own generation, however, this masonry and the kind of establishment it betokened gave rise to further questions. In 1913 the Harvard philologist E. K. Rand visited the site in Lugli's company. Expecting the visit to increase his closeness to Horace, Rand justified his topographical curiosity in the face of anyone who might maintain the self-sufficiency of the text: "Readers of Horace's *Odes* sometimes do not care to know [just where the Sabine Farm was situated]; the imagination of the poet supplies material for a fairyland of their own constructing. . . . But to the traveller in Italy . . . no topographical minutiae seem irrelevant. The past is enlivened in an indescribable way, for the discovery of actual sites not only gratifies scientific curiosity, but supplies new food for the imagination."[5] While Rand thus defended the contribution of archaeological discovery to literary appreciation, his confrontation with architectural actualities disturbed his literary preconceptions in one particular. The unanticipated spaciousness of the villa and its properties seemed out of keeping with Horace's own protestations of a modest life style. "Such extrava-

[4] Lugli, "Villa Sabina" 530–59. He and his colleague Angelo Pasqui excavated the site in 1911 and 1920; they explained the Augustan features as improvements Horace made upon coming into ownership. Although the rooms are symmetrically disposed around their axis, the plan differs from the usual town-house arrangement of atrium and tablinum described by Vitruvius (*De Arch.* 7) and commonly found in Republican and Augustan houses at Pompeii, but it is not unlike Vitruvius' farmhouse pattern, where the principal entrance faced the countryside so that produce could easily be brought into the peristyle.

[5] Rand, *A Walk* 7.

gance," he mused, "does not befit the *aurea mediocritas* of our poet."[6] A shade of uncertainty clouded his confidence in Horace's candor as he considered that the poet might have misrepresented the material prosperity of the farm.

To what extent does this question concern the present-day literary scholar accustomed to separate literary interpretation from an author's biography? "Not at all," is the expected answer. At this point one should briefly note the particular difficulty that scholars have experienced in disentangling the monumental reality of the farm from biographical considerations. Because the farm is generally regarded as Horace's gift from Maecenas, his allusions to it have been, and continue to be, frequently scrutinized as successive watermarks in the history of his patron-client relationship.[7] Leaving aside, however, this category of analysis, which has little to do with visual representation, we find a case for literary autonomy in Richard Thomas's treatment of the farm as a landscape in Horace's *Epistles*. Thomas takes his point of departure from the observation that emphasis on biographical information in the *Epistles* has precluded deserved appreciation of their poetic attractions. Focusing on the details of the landscape in Epistle 1.16, he proposes that its poetic value derives from a coloring of utopian idealism. As he argues, Horace displaces reality by couching his descriptions within the formulas of an ethnographical tradition that signals their utopian quality. The resultant landscape, incorporating traces of the Golden Age into an ideal harmony between man and nature, is a product of poetic art.[8]

Since a view of this kind is theoretically better suited to the aesthetic nature of poetry than any concern with Horace's farm as a reality, one might be wise to let the issue rest here. All the same it is one thing to consider poetry as a source of biographical information, and another

[6]Rand, *A Walk* 40. He recalled how Horace in Ode 2.15 pronounced his disapproval of the "ten-foot porticoes" affected by contemporary villa architecture. Finally, he rationalized that the poet had probably assented reluctantly to improvements suggested by Maecenas. Material comforts seemed less compromising to Hallam, *Horace at Tibur* 15. He declared that the poet "had the moderation of the cultivated gentleman and practised the 'golden mean'."

[7]Bradshaw, "Horace," takes up the references chronologically, concluding that Maecenas did not give Horace the farm but only the means to purchase it. Degrees of independence are observed in a biographical way by Shackleton Bailey, *Profile* 37, 57, and in a more literary way (in *Odes*) by Santirocco, "Maecenas Odes" and *Unity* 153-68.

[8]Thomas, *Lands and Peoples* 8-34.

to interpret it within a historically and culturally informed context. In invoking ancient ethnographic writing as a model for Horace's description, Thomas pays tribute to cultural context, but the ultimate purpose of his observations is to illuminate Horace's poetic self-reflexivity. His conclusion that Horace wishes to display the farm as an ideal poetic environment differs from biographical criticism primarily in substituting an aesthetic frame of reference for a literal. Interpretation of this kind tends to pass over certain cultural considerations with a bearing on Horace's descriptive procedure.

The representation of spatial reality is a cultural issue that ought to concern us because it was of paramount importance to Horace's Roman contemporaries. As Claude Nicolet shows in discussing the implications of geographical awareness during the late Republic and Augustan Age, the Roman sense of national identity had by this time come to incorporate a consciousness of territorial possessions and the means both to control and to describe them.[9] This is, of course, the historical context to which one should refer Roman interest in ethnography with ramifications fully as practical as theoretical. Evidence for this large-scale geographical awareness is readily apparent in Horace's poems,[10] but the small-scale corollary to the poet's universal vision is the way in which he envisions the nature and position of his immediate world. This question involves not only the selection and ordering of descriptive details to convert topographical into literary space, but also the manner in which he, as speaker and possessor, administers this space and negotiates its boundaries.

The definition of boundaries involves context or the larger spaces within which Horace positions his descriptions. For the purpose of the literary and topographical interface I am discussing, contexts are of two kinds: poetic and cultural. The context to which our impressions of the Sabine Farm as literary space belong is not merely the immediate poem in which we read each description but also the genre of that poem as a component of the collection to which it belongs. The influence poetic genre exercises over the specifics of description is a factor to which scholars considering Horace's images of his property have given little attention. This is understandably true of Lugli, the topographer, for whose purposes in discussing the authenticity of the site evidence from *Satire, Odes,* and *Epistles* was equally pertinent, but it is also true of the

[9] Nicolet, *Space* 1–14.
[10] Luisi, "Significato politico."

modern critic, Thomas, who discovers similarly utopian characteristics in the landscapes of *Epistle* 1.16 and *Ode* 1.17.[11] By contrast, a reading that emphasizes the differences in conceptualization owed to genre will give us more clearly individualized views of the farm and its productivity as a source generating poetic texts. As a code of literary expectations that enables readers to understand a text within its appropriate discursive tradition, genre influences the postures a speaker adopts in presenting himself to his audience, the construction or identity of that audience, and also the selective focus he employs in creating a world. Which is to say that genre as a vehicle for territorial representation affects the two issues of administering property and defining boundaries I have mentioned. By viewing the farm from this vantage point we no longer need follow the dictates of a critical ideology that insists upon our choosing between a monolithic reality and an artistic fiction but can instead observe how a single reality interacting with diverse contexts yields diverse identities, each one a function of the specific text that it generates. These identities, as I shall show, are closer together in the hexameter discourse of *Satires* book 2 and *Epistles* book 1, despite the ten-year interval separating these collections, than in the intervening three books of *Odes*.

Insofar as the spatial image of Horace's farm located within a context of literary genre also comprises a descriptive topography positioned within a geographical context, the poetic space is simultaneously a cultural space. Administration and border definition constitute important facets of the cultural identity of Horace's property, because they affect its contingency upon its Roman social and political environment. Contemporary Roman culture is an area in which questions of misrepresentation, such as Rand asked, do figure significantly and should be addressed with reference to those customs or assumptions that Horace shared with his audience.

In this capacity it is important to know that Horace's Sabine property is a villa. Horace places it implicitly within that category by stressing both its extraurban location and its agricultural character. Therefore our understanding of the administration of the property and its contin-

[11] Thomas, *Lands and Peoples* 8–27, takes a progressive view of the image as a development marking Horace's career. He believes that the "poetically congenial environment" Horace creates in Ode 1.17 and Epistle 1.16 partakes of the same vision of an ideal harmony between man and nature that he had earlier ascribed to the mythical Islands of the Blest in Epode 16.

gency upon the world should take account of conditions of villa ownership during the late Republic. Since recent historical and archaeological investigations into the economic and ideological functions of villas have cast considerable new light on these conditions, it is worth pausing to review some points with a bearing on Horace's presentation of himself as proprietor.

Recent scholarship highlights the importance of the villa as an institution central to the personal and political interactions of senatorial society.[12] For this reason we should not think of these properties as a refuge from the complexities of urban life. From the rigors of Rome's summer climate villas did indeed provide refuge, but in this capacity villas functioned in the lives of Roman aristocrats as an extension rather than a denial of social and political activity. Visits and conversations that Cicero mentions in his letters show how aristocrats carried political concerns to their villas. Not without satisfaction he remarks to Atticus in May 51 B.C. that the large crowd gathered in the vicinity of his Cumanum is turning it into a *pusilla Roma*.[13] The Puteolan property he acquired a few years later was strategically even closer to the heart of commercial and political dealings in Campania.[14] In regarding villas from this socially oriented point of view, we must forget the post–Romantic notion that Romans sentimentalized nature in such a way as to oppose the worlds of city and country. Rather these spheres should be seen as intercommunicating with complementary functions. As we

[12] Revision of opinion is explicitly treated in the books D'Arms published at a twelve–year interval. While his *Romans on the Bay of Naples* tends to treat the issues of luxury and the employment of *otium* along the lines of our literary pattern, with emphasis on the recreational function of the Campanian villa, *Commerce and Social Standing* emphasizes a symbiosis between villa habitation of all kinds and the economic climate of the region. Also this more recent work (72–96) questions a fundamental tenet in the dialogue of luxury and frugality, the so–called nonproductivity of the luxury villa.

[13] *Ad Att.* 5.2. Hortensius was among the visitors; Cicero was never insensitive to the accolade of his attention, which he mentions here in criticism of C. Sempronius Rufus' failure to pay a call. The financial discomfort motivating Rufus' negligence, as explained by D'Arms (*Commerce* 48–50) is a good illustration of the practical functioning of the villa in senatorial life. Among the other visits Cicero mentions are those from Pompey at Cumae (*Ad Att.* 4.9, 10, 11; 7.4) and from Caesar (13.52), the latter more like a "billeting" than a visit.

[14] Crowds there are mentioned in *Ad Att.* 14.9, its advantageous natural situation in 1.13. A narrative of other social negotiations in Cicero's villas is provided by D'Arms, *Romans* 48–55.

shall see, it is this complementary role of the Sabine Farm that Horace develops in his writing.

The fact that Horace mentions agricultural activity at his villa does not set it apart from the aristocratic estates of Republican or Augustan Rome. This is a point on which revisionary scholarship is very important to our understanding. The celebrated *otium* associated with villas was by no means incompatible with economic self-sufficiency.[15] Even such a notoriously luxurious villa as that of L. Licinius Lucullus at Tusculum had a substantial agricultural component. As for the moral character of *otium,* when we divorce the general practice from censorious *invidia* directed towards individual proprietors,[16] we should see that it is less appropriately conceived as shameless self-indulgence than as a fostering of intellectual activity. If the Hellenistic world gave models for luxury, this very conceptualization of a life style implied cultural sophistication. Dramatizing such intellectual activity in his dialogues, Cicero pictures the way in which owners like Hortensius and Lucullus, not to mention himself, wanted their villa life to be seen. Implicit here is the Roman principle that houses furnish an enhancement of personal and political status identity.[17] Cicero explicitly codifies this principle in *De Officiis* 1.138–40, where he prescribes the decorum by which a house should suit the dignity of its owner. By this code, the plan and habilitation of the villa could reflect the owner's intellectual self-definition in the same manner that his Roman atrium house stood behind his political profile, with the important difference that villas, enjoying the more expansive opportunities of their extraurban location, arrogated a measure of spatial and architectural freedom not practically available in the

[15] Shatzman, "Senatorial Wealth," discusses the conduct and profitability of agriculture on senatorial properties. D'Arms (*Commerce* 78–86) suggests that the agricultural productivity of large-scale villas played a role in aristocratic finances from the first, but additionally that the pleasurable *villa maritima* was wholly capable of producing income. If this did not come from fishing or from productions on its own property, it was often associated with, and perhaps supported by, neighboring properties or land.

[16] As an example of such prejudicial talk one may consider Cicero's comments about Lucullus and Hortensius in letters (*Ad Att.* 1.18.6, 19.6, 20.3, 20.6; 2.1.7, 9.1). The particular acerbity comes from the fact that these retired statesmen are doing nothing for him.

[17] On patronage affiliations and obligations on the part of extraurban property owners see Rawson, "Ciceronian Aristocracy"; on the use of villas for enlarging clientage see D'Arms, *Romans* 48–53. On economic symbiosis between luxury villas and towns in Campania see D'Arms, *Commerce* 78–86.

town house.[18] When the villa furnishes a literary setting, this freedom of the extraurban environment fosters a corresponding intellectual expansiveness potentially relevant to the urban life.

Such cultural considerations, equally pertinent to Horace's lyric and hexameter presentations of the farm, provide a frame of reference within which specific differences have meaning. I introduce these differences by contrasting two descriptions, one in Ode 1.17, the other in Epistle 1.16. Substantially the two agree in their larger outlines. Each pictures a valley with such a degree of exactitude that the two are frequently invoked side by side to confirm identification of the site. We are fortunate in having a real Sabine property against which to evaluate the poet's technique, since the agreement of topography and description indicates that Horace wanted his reader to visualize the actual appearance of his place. In the *Odes,* however, he brings us to see this conformation through pictorial inference. The valley enjoys the divine patronage of Pan, exchanging Mount Lyceaus for Lucretilis and his native Greek guise for that of Italian Faunus. To this favor the poet attributes the protection of the flock from fiery summer heat and rainy winds:[19]

> Velox amoenum saepe Lucretilem
> mutat Lycaeo Faunus et igneam
> defendit aestatem capellis
> usque meis pluviosque ventos. (*O.* 1.17.1–4)

The poet shows us his flock wandering securely, untroubled by green snakes and Martian wolves whenever flute music fills the valley and the rocks of "reclining Ustica" resound. Immediately we see that Horace's lyric does not set itself apart by employing a poetically sanitized vocabulary. The poet depicts his animals with naturalistic language as wandering nannies, wives of the smelly he-goat, yet this earthy touch adds piquancy to the purely imaginative credence solicited by the poet's myth of divine guardianship through music. The unified coherence of this topography derives largely from the suffusion of its atmosphere by music:

[18] On the exercise of individuality in rebuilding and decorating villas to impose a "stamp of ownership" see Rawson, "Ciceronian Aristocracy," and LaFon, "Villae républicaines."

[19] All quotations from Horace follow the text of Shackleton Bailey, *Horatius.*

Hic in reducta valle Caniculae
vitabis aestus et fide Teia
dices laborantis in uno
Penelopen vitreamque Circen. (1.17.17–20)

In this situation we are given to see an interdependence of patronage. As Faunus protects the valley, so the owner of the farm himself offers sheltering patronage to Tyndaris, his invited guest and addressee. It is important to form a visual sense of the valley with its groves concealing arbutus and thyme, surrounded by the resonant rocks of *Ustica cubans,* since this combination of foreground and background details brings out the self–containment of the place. Even the place names, Lucretilis and Ustica, while no doubt informative to Horace's contemporaries, function as landscape features rather than geographical pointers.[20] The space in which Horace's valley exists is far less a geographically than an artistically conceived space, populated by figures drawn from the realm of literary allusion. Even the violence from which Tyndaris is promised protection belongs to a remote and indefinite sphere.[21]

This is Horace's introductory presentation of the farm in the *Odes* and very closely tied with the programmatic development of his poetic persona, yet his claims as an artist are understated. In his role as patron he honors the gods by *pietas* and cherishes the Muse. At the same time, the symposiast references and name of Tyndaris herself alert us to the active transformation of Greek lyric into Roman terms. Several readers have seen a bid for seduction as the primary motive for Horace's invitation,[22] but the erotic message is very artfully delivered through a subtle

[20] On difficulties in identifying Ustica and Lucretilis see Nisbet and Hubbard, *Commentary* 217–18, 221. No evidence exists to correlate these names with those currently attached to prominent features of the landscape, I can scarcely agree with N. and H. in terming these sonorous names "prosaic" on the grounds that their origins are Sabine.

[21] Nisbet and Hubbard, *Commentary* 226, cite precedents for Cyrus as a name in Hellenistic erotic verse.

[22] Thus Quinn, *Horace* 159: "The missing component in a complex ironical pattern now falls into place: Tyndaris has a husband (or regular lover) who corresponds to the *olens maritus* of line 7 and to Penelope in line 20. . . . Tyndaris' visit to the farm will make her *devia* like the *capellae* of line 6." This ingenious exposition differs from the idealized, art–centered interpretation of Fraenkel, *Horace* 205–7, which was further elaborated by Commager, *Odes* 348–52. Neither confronts Tyndaris as a genuine presence, but Nisbet and Hubbard (*Commentary* 216) emphasize literary allusiveness in the poem by assigning her a double identity: initially perceived as a "dream figure, belonging to the

integration of the speaker's literary and sexual propensities. Vitruvius mentions that Greek hosts issued dinner invitations by sending items of country produce to their guests, or else pictures of such items, called *xenia* (*De Arch.* 6.7.2). Horace's invitation includes a verbal *xenion* couched in suggestive double entendre:

> hic tibi copia
> manabit ad plenum benigno
> ruris honorum opulenta cornu. (1.17.14–16)

But whether this overflowing wealth is sexual or brought in from the garden, in this environment it seems like a magically spontaneous product bestowed by the tutelary gods and cherished Muse. As Ralph Johnson puts it, "artistic discipline" is matched by "moral discipline,"[23] yet both the restraint and the bounty are the apparent characteristics of a fortunate place.

Let us look at the same valley in Epistle 1.16. The speaker's first words are a move to forestall certain practical questions that Quinctius, the addressee, might conceivably ask:[24]

> Ne perconteris fundus meus, optime Quinti,
> arvo pascat erum an bacis opulentet olivae,
> pomisne an pratis an amicta vitibus ulmo . . . (*Ep.* 1.16.1–3)

What crops does the farm really produce? Having raised this question, Horace does not answer directly but only in a circumlocutory manner. First of all, he wants to tell Quinctius something about the shape and location of the place (*scribetur tibi forma loquaciter et situs agri,* 1.16.4). This language verges on technical geography, and is followed by one of Horace's most graphic visual sketches:

> Continui montes, ni dissocientur opaca
> valle, sed ut veniens dextrum latus aspiciat sol,
> laevum decedens curru fugiente vaporet. (1.16.5–7)

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world of Alexandrian pastoral," she becomes an urban *hetaira* in the two closing stanzas. Additional erotic readings appear in Pucci, "Horace's Banquet"; and Connor, *Force of Humour* 28–30.

[23] Johnson, *Idea* 140–41.

[24] Shackleton Bailey, *Horatius,* changes the spelling of Quinctius in Line 1 to the Quintius of the title.

Close attention to this passage forces the reader to construct a mental image, and thus to place the farm within an environmental structure by relating it both to its immediate surroundings and to a larger cosmological order represented by the daily course of the sun. A visitor, Horace goes on to say, will praise the moderate climate (*temperies*). The brambles bear cornel berries and wild plums. Oaks and ilex supply acorns for the flock, while the master enjoys their shade. Here is one difference from the *Odes,* where the goats cropped arbutus and thyme, the herbage of Vergilian pastoral. Given that goats will eat anything, we may attribute the difference to literary genre. This diet is the food of anthropological "hard primitivism."[25] We might expect to see the master's life from a similarly sociological point of view.[26]

The practical cast of Horace's hexameter topography in this passage is also enforced by his calling the property a *fundus*. The hypothetical questions he attributes to Quinctius locate his description within the discourse of agricultural self-sufficiency. All the products he has listed—crops, olives, orchards, pasturage, and vines—imply a major agricultural establishment, suggesting that the question being answered is really, "How large and how productive is the farm?"[27] If we were to answer this question on the basis of Horace's offerings in Ode 1.17 to Tyndaris, of *copia . . . ruris honorum opulenta,* we would have to say "very productive," but in the immediate situation Horace plays down productivity. Alert scholars have noticed the absence of any straightforward information on agricultural economy,[28] yet the humorously evasive allusion to primitivism is sufficient answer in itself. By this token Horace seems to say that his farm supplies fundamentals, with a metaphorical implication that a soundly balanced *modus vivendi* is the basis of its economic program.

Comparable intermingling of the practical and the allusive appears in Horace's description of the *fons* rising on his property: *ut nec / frigidior Thracam nec purior ambiat Hebrus* (1.16.12–13). Although this refer-

[25] Thomas, *Lands and Peoples* 13, citing L. Voit, calls this the food of the Golden Age, but one might notice that the animals, not their master, are eating the acorns.

[26] According to Vergil (*G.* 2.34) *corna* are *lapidosa,* so, presumably, not very appetizing.

[27] Kilpatrick, *Friendship* 97–98, cites Cato's hierarchy of profitable crops.

[28] McGann, *Studies* 73, suggests that Quinctius' questions estimate the farm simply as a source of wealth.

ence is instinct with literary implications,[29] Horace leaves the reader to interpolate these independently while he goes on to claim a practical value for his *fons*; its curative waters benefit both the weak head and the uneasy stomach. Orphic inspiration, as hinted by the encomiastic comparison with the Hebrus, scales down into practical magic upon an everyday plane. At the same time this designation of head and stomach as figurative references to the higher and lower man might well be seen as the preface to philosophical discourse, the chief product cultivated within Horace's particular economy.

The method of indirect description Horace employs in Epistle 1.16 provides for attribution of values by inviting the reader to construct his own hierarchy of tangible and intangible assets. I will return later to the specific importance of this ethical ranking for the entire poem, but for the moment let me elaborate its more general implications by a retrospective contrast with Ode 1.17. Proceeding in both cases from a recognizable reality, the healthful, shaded valley that contains his property, Horace has not only diversified the landscapes by elaborating their spatial relationships, but also made them house diversified visions of life. Ideas associated with enclosure—protection, resonance, patronage—develop an aesthetic of life in the ode, while the geographically positioned property in the epistle sustains an economy. The boundaries of the farm are drawn very closely in the ode, where the poet directs our gaze inward, but his own gaze in the epistle faces away from the farm. *Hae latebrae . . . tibi me praestant Septembribus horis,* he says to Quinctius in preface to the lesson he is about to extend.

The social outface is appropriate to the *Epistles* with their sequence of addressees, but it also suits the self-consciously conversational discourse that Horace develops in the *Satires*. The first literary mention of the Sabine property, in Satire 2.6, might be called the cornerstone on which subsequent images build. The opening lines of this poem give another picture so apparently explicit that it is frequently cited as topographical information about the farm:

> Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus
> hortus ubi et tecti vicinus iugis aquae fons

[29] Thomas, *Lands and Peoples* 15–19, notes two categories of literary association, observing on the one hand the importance of water in ethnographical studies, and on the other the inspirational stream of Callimachus. But he might have added the Orphic resonances of Hebrus.

et paulum silvae super his foret, auctius atque
di melius fecere . . . (*Sat.* 2.6.1–4)

Here also Horace is actually elliptical and indirect. The rural vignette shaped by these words does not convey straightforward information, but rather highlights an ambiguous difference between expectation and realization. Somewhere in the discrepant territory between the poet's modest prayer and his "more ample" possessions lies a latitude of definition which permits the introduction of such amenities as hot baths and garden colonnades into the actual Sabine property.

But the initial vignette, at the same time that it conveys the speaker's modest aspirations, also defines his wishes in a more technically explicit sense. If we consult Roman agronomic writing going back to Cato to discover the basic description of a working farm, we will find similar requirements specified: the best farms comprise a modest piece of land at the foot of a mountain with abundant water (*De Agri.* 1.3.7). Although Horace is not claiming that his initial formula constitutes the sum total of his possessions, he does, by this description, cast the discussion into a frame of rural economics. Furthermore he claims to be a sound, if cautious investor:

Nil amplius oro
Maia nate, nisi ut propria haec mihi munera faxis.
si neque maiorem feci ratione mala rem
nec sum facturus vitio culpave minorem. (2.6.4–7)

Scholars have speculated why Horace invokes Mercury in this context,[30] yet the choice seems quite logical in his capacity as a patron of commerce. In spite of the *vota* he has invoked, the speaker does not propose to base his fortunes upon miracles; he does not wish for additions to his property; he does not dream of stumbling upon hidden treasure (10–14), but merely nurtures hopes of reasonable prosperity. Appropriately he asks Mercury, as protector both of commerce and of speech, to fatten the flocks, but not their master's *ingenium*.

Like the Quinctius epistle, this description concerns valuations,

[30] Fraenkel, *Horace* 140, considers primarily the religious implications of the invocation, asking "Was Horace sincere?" Bond, "Dialectic" 70, 74–75, is still concerned with this dimension when he argues that Horace (although jocularly) means Mercury to be identified with Maecenas.

but its emphasis falls less on enjoyable assets than adjustment to circumstances. The master of the farm declares its adequacy to his needs. His assessment, nonetheless, plays its part in the framework of a diverse life where values are illumined by contrast. Even as the poet goes on to dramatize the perils of his days as a sought-after personage in the city, he betrays a mild satisfaction in his prestige. Without troublesome prestige his craving to creep away into rural solitude would have no justification. Few readers have failed to appreciate this point of ambivalence, but readers have less frequently observed how well-structured a literary program informs this professedly simple country world.

For one thing the Sabine farm is not solitary but enlivened by social intercommunication based upon identifiable literary models. Over the centuries readers have been captivated by the democratic perspective and the homely verisimilitude with which Horace casts himself as a member of a circle of rustic neighbors passing conversational evenings by the fire (2.6.65–75). Somehow this response has led to the surprising neglect of the kind of source recognition to which classicists are usually so alert. An initial clue is in the formula of drinking. Released from *insanes leges,* guests at their pleasure will drink from *inaequales calices,* either strong or weak as desired.[31] These are clear references to symposiastic conventions, even suggesting the opening passages of Plato's *Symposium,* where the assembling participants, still suffering the effects of the previous night's indulgence, agree to mix their wine at their individual discretion (*pinontas pros hēdonēn,* 176e). Within such a context it is quite suitable that the conversation should center about topics of ethical import:[32]

> sed quod magis ad nos
> pertinet et nescire malum est agitamus: utrumne
> divitiis homines an sint virtute beati;
> quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumne, trahat nos;
> et quae sit natura boni summumque quid eius. (2.6.73–76)

[31] Kiessling and Heinze, *Satiren* 310–11, observe the "Greek reference" without further comment. Horace's culturally self-conscious adaptation of sympotic conventions, primarily in lyric, is discussed by Murray, "Symposium." He makes an important distinction between the non-Roman symposium, appropriate to creating a sense of audience and performance in lyric, and the *convivium,* which is Roman.

[32] Fraenkel, *Horace* 143, compares *De Finibus,* but his intention is to deemphasize rather than to highlight the element of rural verisimilitude.

Beyond this allusive framework, however, Horace does not imply that his country symposia resemble Platonic dialogues in structure, but rather defines their procedures through a complex set of allusions to Greco–Roman literature and customs.[33] The primary reference, as Kiessling suggests, must surely be to Cicero's picture of Cato in his own Sabine preserve: *quae quidem etiam in Sabinis persequi soleo conviviumque vicinorum cotidie compleo, quod ad multam noctem quam maxime possumus vario sermone producimus* (*De Sen.* 14.46).[34]

But the original context for this vignette is scarcely rustic, since Cato is speaking with a degree of cultural sophistication of the *convivium* as a Greek social institution reshaped by Roman practices. He reflects on the fact that the Roman name *convivium* stresses the sociable intercourse of such gatherings in place of the Greek etymological association with comestibles (13.45, *compotationes, concenatio*). Nonetheless he praises the Greek custom of appointing a *magister bibendi* and alludes to Xenophon's *Symposium*. Whether these ideas about conversational gatherings belonged actually to Cato or only to Cicero's Hellenized recreation of Cato, certainly Cicero is the figure whom Horace's Sabine *cena* most readily calls to mind. Considered within this literary context, this scenario is an almost parodic reflection of images Cicero employs both in his letters and in his dialogues. The list of bread–and–butter topics—virtue and wealth, friendship and the *summum bonum*—suggests the need that Cicero underlines in the *De Finibus* for a Roman philosophical discourse dealing with fundamental issues (*quid sequatur natura ut summum ex rebus expetendis, quid fugiat ut extremum malorum,* 1.4.12).

Into this context is woven the tale of the country and city mice. Horace attributes the story to his talkative rural neighbor, Cervius. Although the garrulous rustic is a familiar literary figure, a real–life counterpart might be seen in one Attius, Cicero's next–door neighbor in Formia (*Ad Att.* 2.14), whose persistent visits make him a virtual *contubernalis*. Since Cicero has taken up residence, this fellow is so happy to philosophize all day long that he sees no need for going to Rome. Thus he is turning the country house into a *basilica*. Likewise in Horace's poem, the picture of rural society is a transplanted, scaled–down version of Roman urban life. In making a fable the primary instrument of philosophical communication Horace may again take Plato's *Sympo-*

[33] On the Italic tradition of the Greek symposium see Rathje, "Homeric Banquet."
[34] Kiessling and Heinze, *Satiren* 310.

sium for his model, but whatever the case, the comparison can be useful in prompting us to interpret this fable, similarly to Plato's, as a dramatized speech act whose import is closely bound up with contextual circumstance.[35] Whenever some short-sighted person (*quis . . . ignarus*) happens to praise Arellius' troubled wealth, Cervius produces his folk wisdom (*fabella ex re*). By calling the decorum of the story countrified (*anilis fabella*), Horace directs us to understand its substance as an aspect of its socioeconomic context. The moral is explicitly economic: "*haud mihi vita / est opus hac,*" proclaims *rusticus* as he returns to his safe, familiar home:

> "valeas. me silva cavusque
> tutus ab insidiis tenui solabitur ervo." (2.6.116–17)

This decisively stated moral concludes not only Cervius' fable but also Horace's satire, giving an effect both abrupt and open-ended. The absence of any interpretive intervention either by Cervius as teller or by Horace himself draws the reader into the dramatic audience for the fable. Like other immediate members of this audience, he is cast upon his own resources to put the story into place.

Many readers have accomplished this by understanding the story as a reprise of the satire with immediate relevance to Horace himself. Such readers argue that the style is remarkably polished for rustic narrative, while the dichotomous mice exhibit characteristics of the poet's rural and urban selves, even to the generally Epicurean idealism of the country mouse.[36] The conclusion thus frequently deduced is that Horace employs this literary embellishment in order to project his own internalization of Cervius' story.

Such a conclusion does, however, entail oversimplification, and I believe that the embedding of the story is more important to the reading than the notion of Cervius as Horace's surrogate spokesman would allow. In transmitting this tale, the poet does not characterize himself as a communal spokesman, but rather as a member of a community of listeners. Taking care to distance himself intellectually from the story by the designation *anilis fabella,* he relates what he has heard; this

[35] Such a reading of the *Symposium* was proposed by Bacon, "Socrates Crowned."

[36] Rudd, *Satires* 246, notes that "though told by a country neighbor, it shows the poet at his most urbane"; but we should keep in mind that Horace never specifies Cervius' actual background.

rhetorical premise gives us to understand a number of fortuitous circumstances in the interrelationship between story and context.

The content of the story makes far better sense if we consider Horace in the role of dramatic catalyst he specifies rather than as a thinly disguised teller. His presence convenes the symposium and inspires the well-turned form of the tale that he in turn reports to us. This very circumstance is a function of the itinerant role that carries the poet and public figure back and forth between places. Ostensibly the tale is about contentment and care. Should we think it accidental that its *mise en scène* involves country and city life, or does Cervius deliberately enfold Horace within the tale? If so, the poet should be identified with the city mouse and the moral might be taken to represent a lesson that Cervius has learned from watching his occasional neighbor come and go from the city. The resignation to available resources with which the tale concludes is a lesson of decorum perfectly appropriate to a rustic like Cervius whose secluded rural life style may limit him to taking a permanent spectator's view of the world of affairs. For Horace, a strict application of this moral would be more problematic.[37] Unlike the mice of the tale, who end by rejecting each other's values and presumably closing the route of communication between city and country, Horace's itinerant life style effects an exchange of perspectives capable of enhancing the values to be appreciated in each place. In this manner the farm takes its definite place within the purview of a larger Roman community.

Citations of local speakers or members of Horace's *familia* also figure in the *Epistles* as an important means of procuring a sense of communal participation for the Sabine property and its owner. This perspective enhances our image of the place as a territorial unit within the structure of a primarily agrarian region. Although Horace is insistent about his claims to membership in this world, his position can be subjected to an ironic double vision when skeptics question the single-mindedness of his commitment. The motif of adaptation to rural life figures prominently in Epistle 14, commonly cited for its evidence concerning the organization and economics of the farm.

Descriptions of real work are more extensive here than in any

[37] Rudd, *Satires* 252, sees this flaw in analogies between Horace's rural and urban characters and those of the mice, yet he labors to preserve the moral intact: "The fable does endorse Horace's original point." Bond, "Dialectic" 84–85, regards the two mice as representing the conflicting elements in Horace's personality.

other of Horace's Sabine poems, but the motif is employed to highlight contrasts. Nominally directed to the resident bailiff who manages the property, this epistle confronts the restrictions and deprivations of an isolated rural life as seen from a contentious point of view. Horace's monologue centers about the projected complaints of his bailiff, a former city slave whom he has humored by granting his "silent prayer" for a country life. In the absence of accustomed city diversions—baths and games, the brothel, cookshop, and nearby tavern—this naive desire has quickly faded at the same time that the new-made farmer discovers that the previously uncultivated state of his master's property demands unexpectedly hard work. This discontentment serves as a butt for Horace's own familiar complaints about the tedium of his urban responsibilities. For him the city offers no recreation; only in the country can he engage in non-serious activity, which is nothing other than those very field labors his bailiff detests. Just as Horace's epithets (*amoena* and *pulchra* opposing the bailiff's *deserta, tesqua, inhospita*) are a function of relative judgments, so also definitions of work and play become relative when the places of labor are seen reversed. Naturally all is spoken from a self-styled superior intellectual perspective. The realism of the pictures incorporates differences between the tastes and preferences of social classes. Such differences color the contrast with which Horace leads up to his philosophizing:

> certemus, spinas animone ego fortius an tu
> evellas agro et melior sit Horatius an res. (*Ep.* 1.14.4–5)

No democratic compunctions concerning the inequality of labor trouble Horace in posing this class distinction; nonetheless he drops certain hints to prevent us from an unqualified acceptance of his words. Since the bailiff is himself a reluctant thorn-grubber, the balance between master and slave remains uneasy. The epistle advocates maintaining decorum, yet we cannot fully appreciate this principle unless we see how Horace shows himself, in seemingly unselfconscious ways, transgressing the very doctrines he preaches.[38] By transplanting a city slave to the country, he himself has violated social economy, and the

[38] E.g., Rudd, *Themes* 133; he observes these inconsistencies, remarking, "Nevertheless we are left with the feeling that Horace has been not quite fair. . . . The poet is no philosopher. . . . The form in which [he] makes his rustic friends talk about the things which they hold most precious is . . . lent to them by the poet."

bailiff's disgruntled complaints are a predictable consequence. When Horace attempts to prove his own adaptability to rural life by attacking clods and stones in his fields, his ineptitude provokes the merriment of experienced neighbors (1.14.39). Because Horace employs the language of fieldwork metaphorically and invokes his intangible sense of values to define physical labor as play, he stands outside the real economy of the country. This position does not, however, negate the value he receives from the association. As Horace first describes it, the economic function of the farm is that of repaying the master to himself (*mihi me reddentis agelli,* 1.14.1). To the realization of this function, the poet's self-mockery is as important as his philosophizing, since both engage self-knowledge. His larger message has to do with the economy of practicing an art—whatever art is appropriate for the stage and condition of life. While treating the bailiff's discontentment as the opportunity for his own recreational thorn-grubbing, Horace subtly suggests that discontentment presents the sagacious individual with an occasion for studying how well his abilities are matched with his chosen art (*quam scit uterque, libens censebo exerceat artem,* 1.14.44).

Human discontentment is a recurrent Horatian theme, which the *Odes* also tap on occasion. Often Horace treats this theme by exploiting his personal foibles among the characteristic *exempla* of human conduct. While criticizing the ways of humanity, Horace also studies his own role within the contemporary social fabric and examines those aspects of his individuality built upon responses to other men. Within this complex, we can see why he gives particular emphasis to the farm as his ostensible sign of privacy and interior self-sufficiency, which nonetheless reveals the intensity of his social bonds. These are always complicated by paradox. Looking once more at the specific descriptions of Horace's urban life in Satire 2.6, we can see that it is not the mere fact of being sought-after that provokes his exasperation, but rather being sought on unwelcome premises, as a source of information or influence. As presented here, his friendship with Maecenas is a kind of recreational simplification that allows the statesman to escape from his weighty concerns by prattling about gladiators and the weather. More than one scholar has expressed disbelief in the accuracy of the picture. As Bradshaw explains this passage,[39] Horace demonstrates his discretion by stonewalling. He plays down the political significance of

[39] Bradshaw, "Horace" 164.

his friendship in order to illustrate his confidentiality and the skills by which he defends it. This ingenious inference makes good sense on a practical level, but within the structure of the poem there is more to the picture than diplomatic strategy. The role that Horace pictures himself playing with Maecenas, like William Empson's inverted pastorals, is a species of rustic life brought into the city; he is himself a living *posto di ristauro*. Thus Horace's self-portraiture does not so much display his heartfelt preference for the country as his exploitation of the rural affiliation to create the role I have earlier mentioned of a mediator traveling between two worlds. Even the often-cited outcry of exasperation *O rus quando ego te aspiciam*? (2.6.60) is embedded as a dramatic utterance in context. These words are not situated in the discursive present, but rather quoted from the characteristic speech of an observed self whose thoughts in the midst of urban activity are revolving about wasted time (*Deperit haec inter misero lux*). Like the initial wish for the farm, this utterance is typified by the word *votis* and reinforces the value of the farm as the resource that sets Horace apart from fellow actors in the urban milieu.

At the same time, the positive self-characterization with which Horace solicits the reader's sympathy for his rural inclinations in this satire must be weighed against the self-mocking reprise in the following poem. Here the city slave Davus shows us an urban Horace once again craving the country, but turns up the opposite face of the coin in portraying the poet's divided attention to city and country as a real division of loyalties:

> Romae rus optas, absentem rusticus urbem
> tollis ad astra levis, si nusquam es forte vocatus
> ad cenam, laudas securum holus. (*Sat.* 2.7.28–30)

Davus' unsparing interpretation reveals a status-seeking Horace, whose conduct is inconsistent and whose moralizing is no more than pure expediency. To the perceptive reader, all the same, Davus' revelations should pose no surprise since Horace himself has already implied something of this sort between the lines in Satire 2.6.[40] Likewise in the

[40] Armstrong, "Horace," discusses the interaction of the two poems with particular reference to Horace's development of persona. The "shattering transition," as he puts it (282–83), from Horace's discourse to Davus' scurrilous revelations is all part of an "elaborate literary and philosophical joke."

Epistles, the "simplicity" of the farm is a relative situation foregrounded by contrast. Manifestly clear in Epistle 1.14 is the impossibility that Horace himself could change roles with his bailiff without similarly regretting the loss of urban complexity. Horace's freedom to move in and out of the country marks the critical difference between the two men.

One may wonder why Horace so often reveals himself caught in inconsistencies.[41] Like discontentment, inconsistency figures as a literary theme, but one that functions in a larger capacity than discontentment as an underlying principle of the literary program. In Roman rhetorical practice inconsistency from one to another situation is no defect but a virtue, providing that it enables the orator to argue his case successfully. Cicero articulates the principle of expedient expression in *Pro Cluentio* 50.139. Horace in his introductory epistle shows himself employing the principle in a most eclectic way with reference to his declared intentions of writing philosophically, and therefore seriously:

> condo et compono quae mox depromere possim.
> ac ne forte roges quo me duce, quo Lare tuter,
> nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri,
> quo me cumque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.
> nunc agilis fio et mersor civilibus undis
> virtutis verae custos rigidusque satelles;
> nunc in Aristippi furtim praecepta relabor
> et mihi res, non me rebus, subiungere conor. (*Ep.* 1.1.12–19)

Here the statement has partially the function of a credo, or apologia, bridging Horace's turn from lyric to hexameter, but in the course of the *Epistles* Horace dramatizes his shifting perspectives as one of the ways that his personal perceptions can at one and the same time possess the freedom of detachment and also relate to the world of everyday men.

Both his *Satires* and *Epistles* are social in their focus, and their view of society presents an economy of interchanges and balances. Given this common ground, the *Epistles* differ, I think, from the *Satires* in creating a somewhat wider-reaching but also more categorically conceived panorama of persons and roles. Where the *Satires* often present

[41] McGann, *Studies* 12–13, attributes the emphasis primarily to the importance of consistency in Panaetius' philosophy, which may well be the case, yet the Roman overlay should not be ignored.

personalities in characteristic actions, the *Epistles* make use of personal identities as a grounding for characteristic social situations. So, for one reason or another, Epistle 1.18, addressed to Lollius Maximus, becomes a disquisition on the proper behavior of a *scurra*. Epistle 1.7, concerning the demands that a patron can legitimately make upon a beneficiary, also addresses this topic. To a certain extent this emphasis can be linked with the social typologies developed in certain of the *Odes*, but here the situations and tones are frequently hortatory. McGann, Kilpatrick, and others are correct, I believe, in proposing that Cicero's Roman philosophy of *De Officiis* figures as a major source of inspiration for the *Epistles*, with the effect that many of their situations are studies in decorum.[42] However, this concept of decorum does not focus as steadily as Kilpatrick indicates on the proprieties and amenities of friendship,[43] but has a subsurface ideological dimension. Cicero professes to be writing the *De Officiis* in a mood of constructive disillusionment, using philosophy and the concept of personal virtue to turn the "unwanted leisure" of his political retirement to good use.[44] Just as he adapted Greek ethics to Roman social decorum in order to formulate a retrospective conduct code for the lost republic, likewise Horace, writing within the principate that had ultimately succeeded Caesar's dictatorship, uses the notion of "retirement" as a literary *mise en scène*. His adaptation of Ciceronian decorum calls attention to new rules governing the interplay of public and private concerns.[45]

Syme observes that the addressees of the *Epistles* are generally men of lower social degree than those in other collections.[46] This point can be interpreted to enforce the "private" aspects of the poems. Horace's meditations shape a philosophy for a politically restructured world: that a man's primary moral responsibility is to himself, yet the field of application is not restrictively private. Epistle 1.16 is a case in point. Horace addresses Quinctius Hirpinus, who had earlier figured in

[42] McGann, *Studies* 10; Kilpatrick, *Friendship* xx–xxii.

[43] Kilpatrick, *Friendship* xxi–xxiv.

[44] *De Off.* 2.2–6. André (*L'otium* 205–34) analyzes the relationship between the sentiments expressed in this work and Cicero's career-long ambivalence towards *otium*.

[45] McGann, *Studies* 24, remarks on the singularity of Horace's "hidden life in the country" in conjunction with his adaptation of basically Stoic ethics, oriented towards a life of involvement. The singularity should be attributed to Ciceronian precedent and to Roman custom.

[46] Syme, *Augustan Aristocracy* 396.

Ode 2.11, as a potential public actor with his mind on military affairs.[47] This profile is in keeping with Horace's examination of the complexities of social role–playing in this epistle.[48] Often treated as an essay in antimaterialism aimed towards defining rational limitations for desires,[49] in fact the poem has at least as much articulated concern with the rhetorical construction of personality and its difficulties. *Tu recte vivis si curas esse quod audis,* Horace observes to Quinctius. Does he in fact know his own state of mind? Does he accept a popular definition of felicity, or his own? While he is no doubt sapient enough to distinguish the public persona of Augustus from himself, he may still be unjustifiably ready to claim such epithets as *bonus et sapiens* when he hears them applied to himself. External estimation is compared with public office as a detachable good that can quickly and capriciously be stripped away. We see the *fasces* given to an unworthy candidate who is immediately forced to relinquish the honor. Illustrations of conduct in the poem are drawn from the world of public activity. The image of the ideal jurisconsult looms large; the sacrificer performs his act for the welfare of the people on a conspicuous stage. Such public actors hope to be seen as *beatus* or *sapiens*. Corruption behind these facades is characterized as secret thievery. Such definitions merge into the great variety of roles to be played, of positions to be filled, many of these imposed by outside observers. It is a version of the philosophical quest for conformity between inner and outer virtue seen from a characteristically Roman perspective.

This is of course the importance of Quinctius' questions, to place virtues in a relative scale. Each person distinguishes both overt and hidden goods as his characteristic perception dictates. In noting how Horace structures an economy that illustrates his own values, it is useful once more to invoke Cicero's principle in *De Officiis* that an owner's reputation should distinguish his house (*domino domus honestanda est,* 1.139). Instead of thinking that Horace values the farm because it is simple, we should realize that it is simple because Horace's particular blending of ethics and aesthetics demands a decorum of simplicity. This

[47] Syme, *Augustan Aristocracy* 386, noting this exception to his rule of obscurity, reviews the family connections of the Quinctii and concludes that Quinctius is probably a senator.

[48] McGann, *Studies* 73–74.

[49] Kilpatrick, *Friendship* 96–102, emphasizes the "material and therefore illusory" concept of well–being attributed to Quinctius.

is, in fact, an Augustan/Callimachean decorum whose sophistication belies its simplicity. But where this aesthetic is personal and inspirational in the *Odes,* in the *Epistles* it has a more social dimension. Philosophical and poetic productivity is the mission of the villa, but quotidian economy must be realistically valued as the practical support for these matters. This economy also has its place in the larger Roman world. Comparing the *Satires* and *Epistles,* one may notice how many more place names appear in the latter; this is another aspect of their broad view. The poet's addressees are situated in a variety of places both within Italy and abroad. Florus is campaigning with Tiberius in Thrace or the Hellespont (1.3); likewise Celsus Albinovanus is with Tiberius away from Rome (1.8). Numonius Vala is at Salerno or Velia (1.11). Bullatus has been traveling among the splendid cities of the eastern Mediterranean (1.11), while Iccius is collecting revenues for Agrippa in Sicily (1.12). The motives are both business and pleasure. For one thing this cosmopolitan horizon reflects the role of Rome in a worldwide context.

In this geographical plan, it is notable that Horace travels infrequently and never very far. Winter, as he tells Maecenas, may send him from the Alban snowfields to seek warmth at the shore, but in the interim he prefers a stationary life (*Ep.* 1.7.10–12).[50] This and similar statements have given rise to the impression that Horace, by the time of the *Epistles,* had forsaken Roman life for the farm.[51] The inference may be accurate, since the book contains more Sabine references than others, while allusions to physical distance highlight the speaker's air of philosophical detachment; yet these points should not lead to the conclusion that his intellectual engagement in Rome had diminished. One should remember that Horace never in any place describes or even mentions a physical residence in the city. His identification with his alternative place as his main place makes him different from Cicero and other villa–owning aristocrats in such a way as to suggest that the life of a poet is always an alternative life with a consequent balance of advantages and disadvantages.

[50] The journey of 1.15 is merely putative. Since the cold–water cure of Antonius Musa has come into vogue, one no longer needs to travel to Baiae for hot baths, but Horace is willing to consider what amenities Vala has to offer in his villa further down the shore.

[51] E.g., Johnson, *Idea* 144–45; he takes this impression of retirement as the expression of a freedom finally achieved.

Tenuous communication is one potential disadvantage, and the importance that Horace assigns to his dialogic interaction with Roman life is underscored by the future that he envisions for his writings. His final epistle addresses his book at the moment that this restlessly ambitious offspring prepares to leave the farm for the allurements of Rome (1.20.3–5). The personified *liber* is breaking out of a condition of "unwilling servitude" recalling that in which Horace retains his bailiff. Figuratively also, in "fleeing the nest" the *liber* repeats the biographical history of an author who has "spread his wings" to rise above his humble origins as a freedman's son. Nothing but culture shock, Horace warns, will await such a nursling of private solicitude who plunges into the vicissitudinous process of being read, struggling to gain the right audience, to be seen in the right places. Couched in terms suggesting social politics, these perils adumbrate the precarious transformation of literary communication from a creative dialogue between book and author to an interaction of book and reader. In consequence we can see the book itself taking on that role of emissary between city and country that Horace had acted out in Satire 2.6.

To complete this consideration of Horace's topographical and cultural location of the Sabine Farm I now turn back for a second look at Ode 1.17 and what it contributes to its collection. At this point the reader may raise objections. Although it may be acceptable to talk about geographical and social perspectives in the hexameter poems—which after all Horace exempts from the category and requirements of poetry—these concepts can scarcely pertain to the more rarified and aesthetic locale of the *Odes*. Here surely should not the naturally enclosed and divinely protected Sabine property appear as a refuge, or a symbol of retreat into self? Is this not what the Lucretilis ode is about?

With its structuring of an enclosed and resonant landscape to intensify the value of music, the ode does strikingly embody a principle that W. R. Johnson has aptly singled out as one of Horace's inventions: "the creation of an illusion of music and performance."[52] Johnson is talking about Horace's bid to recreate that vital sense of interaction between poet and audience that Horace himself saw in Greek lyric tradition and celebrated in his vision of Alcaeus, the heroic lyricist transfixing the underworld shades (2.13). But the reader of Ode 1.17 ought to notice that this poem, which emphasizes the potency of song,

[52] Johnson, *Idea* 126–27.

does not feature Horace as a performer, but two other musicians: Pan and Tyndaris. Here the aspiring *vates* limits his personal function to creating the sympotic atmosphere that fosters performance. At the same time this is the only poem in which Horace explicitly pictures his property. Further references to the rural location occur in *Odes* 1.20, 1.22, 2.13, 3.1, 3.18, and 3.29. Within the collective sum of eighty-eight odes, these references are proportionately few, but their distribution and their reflection in one or another shape of the topography of Ode 1.17, delineated as a setting for a variety of performative self-dramatizations, give them the function of markers in an ongoing progress.

How Horace's artistic self-definition progresses with the progress of the collection is a matter on which many contemporary scholars have remarked.[53] Awareness of artistic self-definition is in itself a perspective that has shaped recent studies of Horatian lyric, redeeming the poet's one-time image as a jocund and comfort-loving wordsmith crafting platitudinous thoughts into elegant and intricate designs. Discussions of Horace's farm bear witness to this critical transformation. Thus E. K. Rand observed that "many miracles, good subjects for poems," happened within the context of the farm.[54] Approaching these from a contemporary critical point of view, William Anderson shows that they are miracles of poetic sanctity.[55] The Sabine wolf that fled before Horace's song about Lalage proved that love poets lead a charmed life (1.22). Faunus rescued the poet from the murderous tree (2.13, 2.17, 3.8). The first of these miraculous events is folkloric, the other brilliantly original; but both are related with a touch of self-caricature that solicits our imaginative assent to their fantasy. These events in combination with similar proofs of divine favor manifested in the poet's infancy on Monte Volture (3.4.9–20) and on the battlefield of Philippi (2.7.13–14) contribute to the cumulative myth of consecration by the Muses with which he bolsters his statements of poetic vocation. The elevation of poetic vocation through inspiration is associated with the genres of lyric and epic—the genres that Horace *does* call poetry—whose speaker in some manner addresses the community. In fact, the reason that poetic consecration is so important to the *Odes* is that the stakes are so high. Through ceremonial presentations of his credentials Horace engages in a dialogue with tradition that constitutes his per-

[53] Santirocco, "Maecenas Odes" and *Unity*; Porter, *Poetic Journey*.

[54] Rand, *A Walk* 4.

[55] Anderson, "Autobiography" 43–50.

sonal redefinition of the genre and its mission. His lyric persona counterbalances elements of idiosyncratic self-caricature and visionary responsibility.[56] As a parcel of real earth, the Sabine Farm provides the practical context that unites these disparate facets of self-presentation. To establish the authority by which he addresses his Roman audience the lyric speaker needs to define his spatial boundaries and his conduct as proprietor.

Although the boundaries of the Sabine valley are secure in Ode 1.17, in succeeding poems they exist to be challenged or violated; this is part of the process by which the poet establishes the scope and limits of lyric discourse. The noteworthy feature of the singer's encounter with a wolf in Ode 1.22 is its having occurred when his carefree absorption in song had led him to stray *ultra terminum* into the thick of the *silva Sabina*. Thus the heroic posturings of his opening lines: how an *integer vitae* can face Moorish darts or travel with impunity to the desert or wild Caucasus. A discrepancy between extravagant vision and small situation keeps the situation humorous. In conclusion the poem narrows its confines with the repeated name of Lalage.

By contrast, the disturbing accident of the tree in Ode 2.13 occurs within the farm's boundaries. That a fixture of his own valued property could thus threaten the security of its master offends the egotism of ownership. Horace denounces tree, planter, and the *dies nefastus* of the planting. He compares his misadventure with the unforeseeable dangers always dogging two practitioners of the restless, unstable life: the sailor and the soldier (2.13.13–20). Because Horace has frequently invoked these deliberate risk-takers as temperamental opposites of himself, the comparison signals a virtual crisis of identity, but Horace converts the precarious moment into an occasion for clarifying his poetic affiliations when he envisions Sappho and Alcaeus in the underworld performing endlessly for admiring crowds. By weighting the preference of this crowd towards Alcaeus' civic themes, Horace anticipates the civic turn of his own verse in the so-called Roman Odes. Before that moment, however, he will have upgraded his close escape into a divine rescue as proof positive of the favored status of the poet when he criticizes Maecenas' excessively morbid preoccupation with death (2.17).

Another way in which we should notice the function of boundaries and proprietorship in the evolution of Horace's lyric persona is those

[56] Connor, *Force of Humour* 28–30, discusses the intertwining of humor and poetic self-reflexivity.

moments when Roman visitors come to the farm. Here is another difference from the *Satires* and *Epistles,* in which Horace's own activity as a guest is frequently mentioned but visitors seldom come to him. (As Vitruvius notes in *De Arch.* 6.5.1, persons of ordinary station discharge social obligations by going around rather than by receiving.) In the *Odes* Tyndaris is only the first of a number of invitees or guests welcomed in Horace's territory. The majority of such hospitable occasions are convivial, and their literary significance is not far to seek. Just as wine in Horace's *Odes* has been shown to imply poetic self-reflexivity,[57] likewise sympotic occasions open the boundaries between lyric past and present, granting such Roman figures as Maecenas, Messala, or Numida entry into a privileged literary community of conviviality.[58]

But Horace also presents his proprietorship in terms suggesting the discourse of clientship. Focusing on this feature, Matthew Santirocco has proposed that the development of lyric *auctoritas* throughout the three books effects an eventual reversal in the roles of poet and patron.[59] In Ode 2.18.1–11 the poet formally styles himself as a patron in claiming that neither his clients nor his habitation are pretentious. The *dives* comes as visitor to seek him despite the absence of ivory, gilt coffers, and Hymettus columns from his atrium. Although *dives* is commonly referred to Maecenas, the epithet is no less relevant to other individuals addressed in book 2, a book that shows its engagement in the contemporary moment by its focusing on several prominent personages whose careers Augustus' political dispositions had affected. Ostensibly the collection is apolitical in its foregrounding of the good life, yet when we consider the presence of men such as Pollio, Sallustius Crispus, Quintus Dellius, or Pompeius—all pardoned by Augustus—we may begin to see that exhortations to good living are in themselves politic advice.[60] That Horace makes himself a model practitioner of the life style he recommends lends cogency to his message. While

[57] Commager, "Wine."

[58] Murray, "Symposium and Genre," examines the manifold transformations Horace effects by his adaptation of this form.

[59] Santirocco, *Unity* 166. In this context it is also useful to consider the idea of patronage as a literary theme, developed by Zetzel, "Poetics of Patronage."

[60] For the political tone see Santirocco, *Unity* 81–85. Syme (*Augustan Aristocracy* 384–93) reviews personalities and raises the issue of aversion to political life, noting how many of the named persons seem to behave like Epicureans. The point is valid, I think, that Horace, by emphasizing the good life as politically expedient, aims to extend the exhortation to Pollio in Ode 2.1 to turn away from the dangerous past.

encouraging Dellius, Postumus, or Grosphus to enjoy their own commodious villas, Horace also owns a property he enjoys.

These images prepare the way for Ode 3.1, where the enclosure of the farm takes its definition from contrast:[61]

> cur invidendis postibus et novo
> sublime ritu moliar atrium?
> cur valle permutem Sabina
> divitias operosiores? (*O.* 3.1.45–48)

Readers emphasize the poet's denial of luxury as a profession of inner freedom,[62] yet spiritual independence is not the whole sum of the message. Material luxury is inessential to this persona because Horace has created an authoritative status needing no symbols. In the opening lines of this ode he has claimed the role of *vates* to which he had confessed his aspirations in Ode 1.35–36. As a precinct to frame his hieratic performance, the Sabine valley functions no less as an atrium/tablinum where a Roman *dominus* advises his clientage.

The significance of this lyric space is always conceived with respect to Rome. Two odes specify the relationship. In 1.20 the city occupies the foreground. Horace has stored up a jar of Sabine wine for Maecenas on a noteworthy day when his friend was applauded in the theater. A concentrically visualized landscape bounded by the echoing Mons Vaticanus parallels the resonant valley we have already seen in the Lucretilis ode, so that the poem implicitly contrasts two worlds: that of Horace as private proprietor with that of Maecenas as an actor in the public world. A further distinction between Horace's *vile Sabinum* and the costly, choice vintages of Campania sets limits on the poet's individual powers. The duality of Roman and Sabine is recapitulated in the invitation of the penultimate ode (3.29), but here the topographical context within which the farm is situated is made continuous with Rome. Standing on some eminence amidst and above the "smoke, wealth, and clamor of blessed Rome," Maecenas can look outward to the surrounding hills of Tibur, Praeneste, and Tusculum. Horace encourages him to follow his vision and receive the benefits a modest accommodation can offer, yet this poem is far more than a summons to

[61] Witke, *Roman Odes* 24–25, perceives the balance between two worlds expressed by this image.

[62] Johnson, *Idea* 140–41.

escape. City and country participate in one and the same world. The summer is hot in both places. The lesson Horace has to offer concerns tempering anxieties.[63] The poet's own maturing of perspective is shown in the contrast between two descriptions of the Tiber in flood. In Ode 1.2 the poet attempts a rhetorical diminution of the threatening river through frivolous mythological exaggeration. Can this really be Deucalion's second flood? In 3.29 he confronts the turbulent waters as a regular phenomenon within nature's cycle of changes. The farm itself cannot be separated from the maturation of the wisdom it has fostered. As a projection of the poet's own identity it has become virtually synonymous with the odes he has composed.

By contrast, the farm of the *Satires* and *Epistles* does not so readily yield its material existence to the signified. This is because the world of these poems is not so easily to be reshaped by art. It is a world of social and political interactions where even a poet has to reconcile his own spellbinding magic with demands of practical life.[64] Epistle 1 shows the creator of the *Odes* seeking some identity even larger than what his vatic craftsmanship provides. The Sabine property of these poems does not need to be ideal in any utopian sense, since it fulfills its function most effectively by reflecting reality. In both genres of poems, Horace identifies this property with his social personality, as a Roman aristocrat identifies with his *domus*. The impression of accessibility that so many readers have received from the farm is not misled, even though the modern critic may interpret Horace's air of candid intimacy as part of a complex and sophisticated play of persona. The invitation to familiar acquaintance emphasizes the importance of self-presentation.[65]

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[63] I have discussed this poem and its relationship to landscape and Horace's poetic persona at greater length in *Rhetoric of Space* 291–97.

[64] Anderson, "Autobiography" 52–53, remarks a significant difference between *Odes* and *Epistles* insofar as what is called poetic inspiration in the former is replaced in the latter by "hard intellectual . . . effort."

[65] This paper was first presented at CAMWS in April 1989 as a part of a symposium in honor of A. G. McKay. Versions had been given as site talks for NEH Summer Seminars in 1986 and 1989 and for the Summer School of the American Academy in Rome in 1988. Versions focused on the hexameter poems alone were given at the Ohio State University and SUNY–Buffalo. I wish to thank those who offered hospitality on those occasions, and especially William Batstone for his very penetrating questions.

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